



# 2023

## NORTH BRANCH LAND TRUST ANNUAL REPORT

# From Our Chair:

So much has been accomplished by the North Branch Land Trust in 2023 under the leadership of Ellen Ferretti, Executive Director, and Christina Dilks-Taylor, past Chair of the Board. With the support of Karley Stasko, new staff Emma Thompson and Sue Libertoski, Board and Committee members as well as volunteers, the Land Trust has steadily continued to preserve land through conservation easements while taking on several other initiatives. For example, the Land Trust relocated to a new office in the Dallas Township building where several meetings and events have already taken place with great success. We are also happy to announce that the Board has developed and finalized a strategic plan which will guide the Land Trust for years to come. In addition, our team implemented grant funding to finalize a phase of the D&L trail and has worked with Pennsylvania American Water to conserve important land around the Huntsville Reservoir. It is an honor to be part of the team that is making influential changes to our community, and I look forward to serving the North Branch Land Trust with its renewed vision and mission through 2024.



Please keep an eye out for monthly events on the NBLT website and don't forget to register for the Annual Dinner and Auction which will be held at the Westmoreland Club, on May 1st. This is always an enjoyable event and I am excited to offer congratulations to Pennsylvania American Water on their award for their dedication to conservation. I thank you for your continued support over the years. Best wishes to you and your family in the year ahead,

—Stephen C. Maakestad

## Our Board of Directors

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*Vice Chair*

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Kay Strickland

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Tiffany Maakestad  
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Cathy O'Donnell, Esq.  
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Christina Taylor  
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DeRocco

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Tracey Williams  
DeRocco

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Fred Valentine  
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James Shoemaker  
Kelly Bray Snyder, Esq.  
John Zemruski, Esq.



# Thank you Christina!

of Directors. Christina saw many changes during her time at NBLT. From the completion of several key conservation projects, to retirements and new staff, to a whole new office location, Christina has been an exemplary leader at your Land Trust. Christina, your talents will be dearly missed!

2023 marked Christina Dilks Taylor’s final year as the chair of NBLT’s Board

of Directors. Christina saw many changes during her time at NBLT. From the completion of several key conservation projects, to retirements and new staff, to a whole new office location, Christina has been an exemplary leader at your Land Trust. Christina, your talents will be dearly missed!

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## About Us

*North Branch Land Trust partners with landowners, communities, and stakeholders to conserve and care for Northeastern Pennsylvania’s lands and waters.*

North Branch Land Trust is a registered 501(c)(3) conservation nonprofit operating in Northeastern Pennsylvania. NBLT conserves properties in an eight-county region of Pennsylvania (Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Wayne, Wyoming, Lackawanna, Luzerne, and Columbia) in the Upper Lehigh and Susquehanna Watersheds.

For more information, including our public documents, visit [nblt.org](http://nblt.org)

## Our Staff



Sue Libertoski  
*Office Administrator*

Karley Stasko  
*Marketing & Development*

Ellen Ferretti  
*Executive Director*

Emma Thompson  
*Land Conservation & Stewardship*





# Newly Conserved in NEPA

Private landowners Suzanne and George Croll donated a Conservation Easement on their 105-acre farm in Schuylkill County, near Zion Grove, PA. In 1902, this land was part of approximately 200 acres purchased by George’s grandfather. Once passed down through generations, George was granted 100 acres. The easement has been in development for a long time now, and the Crolls greatly appreciate the work and collaboration with the North Branch Land Trust.

**Our land is so peaceful, it is such a pleasant place to be** said Suzanne.

The land itself consists of 60 acres of pristine farmland and 45 acres of woodland habitat. The Croll family history and connection were a deep, driving factor towards why they wanted their land protected. Along a timbering road back through the woods, George had built a big picnic pavilion to host family gatherings and a treehouse for the kids to play on. Enshrining the legacy which the Crolls have established has been at the forefront of their minds ever since the easement process started.

Tomhickon Creek runs through the farm and is home to a rich population of native brook trout. Once a thriving creek, historic mine drainage and run-off destroyed much of the trout population and the macroinvertebrates that once lined the bottom of the Tomhickon. The Crolls were able to rehabilitate the creek itself using limestone and continue to monitor the pH of the water.

“About 15 years ago, I started to finally see crayfish in the water and catch some of the native trout after the destruction the mine run-off brought,” Suzanne said.

With the idea that Suzanne and George wanted to conserve their land forever, they started to realize what their efforts would mean for the community and future generations.

“All of the farms around us have been bought out by housing developments, George watched it all happen in front of his eyes... it is really sad to see. It was apparent that few of the farmers wanted to or were even able to actually farm,” Suzanne mentioned this among other concerns they had with the future of working agricultural lands and conservation, including the effects of invasive species like the emerald ash borer and woolly adelgid on local ash and hemlock tree populations respectively.

Looking into the big picture of NEPA conservation, it was apparent the Crolls wanted to leave an everlasting effect on nature for generations to come. Suzanne and George agree, “People are interested in the farm. Local, blue-collar, and factory workers are coming up to us and asking why we have solar panels in the pasture. **We really just want to spread awareness by setting a good example** – living off the land, self-harvesting, using no pesticides or herbicides, and things of that nature.”

We at North Branch Land Trust are honored to have worked with the Crolls to conserve this precious land...forever!



Alpacas in the pasture



George, Suzanne, and Emma Thompson NBLT



# Beavers at Randall Lake

Bill & Margaret Allen



We have been the lucky stewards of Randall Lake since 2007. For the first ten years, we hiked, swam, and enjoyed camping lakeside as often as we could. How glorious it was to fall asleep to the sound of peepers and wake to a dense fog that burned off to reveal a beautiful morning. It was truly spectacular and reinvigorated our souls.

## Then came the beavers.

Actually, the beavers were there all along, peacefully coexisting for years. They would make appearances now and then to tell us we were too loud with a slap of their tail.

Then, everything changed. We are not sure what. A new leader? The kits grew up and became ambitious? Whatever the reason, the beavers started damming the spillway of the lake. The water level of the whole lake rose and rose until our beloved lakeside campground was 2 feet under!

Please understand we acknowledge the benefits of beavers and their activity in general. In areas where they dam streams, they create whole new ecosystems that benefit many flora and fauna. However, Randall Lake is a glacial lake, a bowl carved into the rock millennia ago. The beavers' damming the outlet does not create any new habitats or support more plants or animals. It simply raises the water level in the bowl.

So, we were determined to reclaim our lakeside campground. Every visit to the lake meant two or three hours of clearing the beaver dam. It was always replaced, sometimes overnight!

## We now fully understand the phrase "busy as a beaver"!

We tried a motion detector device that flashed a strobe light and barked all kinds of noises when triggered.

No success.

We tried placing objects in their way. The beavers simply used the objects as part of their new dam! The damage to the saplings around the lake was getting serious.

We thought about hunting or trapping and relocating the beavers. After discussions with several experienced naturalists, it became clear that eventually they or new beavers would come back. They like the beautiful setting as much as we do!

The beavers had won. We started thinking of a way to peacefully coexist, like we had for so many years. With help from plans provided on the web site of The Beaver Institute, we learned of a way to let the beavers have their dam while we could return the water to its previous level. Sometimes called a "beaver deceiver" or "pond leveler", we set out to construct such a device.

Finding the right materials and pulling it all together took a while but, over a series of weekends, we gathered the material, constructed the device and carefully placed it in the lake. It is "simply" a pipe, placed through the beaver dam, extending 40 feet into the lake with a cage around the end to prevent the beavers from detecting the flow of the water. The level of the lake drains to the level of the pipe.

The beavers get their dam, and we get our lakeside campground back. This will be our first spring with the device in place but it's looking like it is working well.

**Here's to peaceful coexistence!**



"Beaver Deceiver"



Drainage



Floating into place



Dam & Flow

# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

**22.3k**

Total acres conserved with NBLT help since 1993

American Toad



**12k**

Acres of Conservation Easements since 1993



Chipmunk by Cheryl Miller

**250**

Native trees and shrubs planted

Coral Fungus sp.



**369**

NBLT Members



Maple Seedling

**1440**

NEW Acres Transferred to Conservation Partners



Pixie Cup Lichens

**12**

Social, Educational, and Volunteer Events



Painted Turtle



Blooming Laurels





# Thank you for the adventure!

We are so happy that you joined us for guided hikes, educational visits, dinners, plantings and cleanups in 2023.

## We can't wait to see you in 2024

Clockwise from bottom left: Botanical Drawing Basics; NEPA Barn Banquet; Pennsylvania American Water planting at Forest Echo; Fearsome Critters Hike at Vosburg Neck State Park; Junior Achievement Aspire; Mrs. Deborah Pike's 5th grade class of conversationists at Dallas Intermediate School; Hanover Crossing Marsh Earth Day cleanup; Karley Stasko looking for Bigfoot at Picton Hike.







# Transferred Land

## NBLT & the BIG PICTURE of NEPA Conservation

There are many ways North Branch Land Trust works with our communities and stakeholders to make the most of our efforts to benefit NEPA conservation. In addition to protecting the conservation value of private easements and conserving and stewarding our own preserves, NBLT also receives grants to purchase and transfer land to conservation-minded organizations for care and sound natural resource management. Transferring lands allows NBLT and partners to maximize conservation for future generations while maintaining oftentimes large, intact natural landscapes for people to cherish.

The transferring of the land follows a process where NBLT owns and stewards a conservation-worthy property until we can find a suitable long-term

conservation partner. Sometimes, we need a land trust partner to provide ethical monitoring of eased lands we own in fee, such as the George and Lillian Picton Wildlife Sanctuary. At other times, we work with estates to find new stewards for legacy donations protected under easements. But most often, NBLT works with other regional organizations who can provide the greatest conservation benefits to the greatest number of people long into the future. With partners such as the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry, DCNR Bureau of State Parks, Earth Conservancy and Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor among others, your Land Trust makes a larger impact conserving NEPA's lands, waters, and vistas.



## **Hanover Reservoir now Pinchot State Forest (pictured) 1,400 acres · 16-acre reservoir · 3 perennial cold-water streams**

The Hanover Reservoir is one of NBLT's newest transferred lands, completed in 2023. The reservoir itself was built by the Lehigh & Wilkes Barre Coal Company before 1885, used as a water supply for mining operation at the Espy Tunnel while also furnishing water to homes of the mine workers.

Earth Conservancy's original mission committed to reclaiming 10,000 acres of abandoned mine property for recreation use, and with the help of NBLT, they are now within about 800 acres of their goal. Over 5,700 acres have been transferred to DCNR for incorporation into the Pinchot State Forest through Earth Conservancy's and NBLT's historic partnership. "That includes the Hanover Reservoir tract and 1,400 acres along Little Wilkes-Barre Mountain which was complete late last year," said Terence Ostrowski, Executive Director. "While past coal mining heavily damaged our landscape, our partnership has allowed us to address some of those issues through protecting local watersheds, conserving habitat, and preserving the views of tree-covered, mountaintop ridges for generations to come."

Offering a broader perspective, Nicholas Lylo of PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources mentions, "The inclusion of the 1,400-acre Hanover tract into the Pinchot State Forest and the state forest system is a continuation of efforts started over 20 years ago to conserve the Penobscot Ridge landscape which captures the beauty and vitality of our region."

## **D&L Trail - CLOSED FOR PUBLIC ACCESS 6 mile trail · 2.8 miles improved by NBLT · 90 acres**

In 2023, North Branch Land Trust also completed 2.8 miles of the section of the D&L Trail in Luzerne County and transferred ownership of the land to the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry Pinchot District. The remainder of this trail segment will be designed and constructed by the Department of Environmental Protection Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

Claire Sadler, Executive Director of Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, said, "Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is grateful that North Branch Land Trust is one of over 30 landowners connecting the D&L Trail. NBLT's efforts to take on the historic rail corridor from Laurel Run Road around Wilkes-Barre Mountain, and their continued collaboration with state and local partners to reutilize this route as a trail, has made it possible to welcome 6 new miles of D&L Trail to the Corridor within the next year." Through this project NBLT is providing land protection, outdoor recreation, and heritage tourism benefits to the region. Ultimately, the completed trail will provide access from Northampton Street to Oliver Mills through a trail on the historic coal and iron transportation railway. Nearby, but unconnected, is the Seven Tubs Recreation Area, a longtime local hot spot for enjoying nature at its core.

## **Other Notable Transfers**

**First of its kind, Vosburg Neck State Park**, originally known as Howland Preserve is a 669-acre state park that was transferred to the DCNR Bureau of State Parks in 2022. The park itself boasts many features including eight miles of trail, a house built in the early 1800s, a cemetery with burials from that era, remnants of the North Branch Canal, and much more for visitors .

NBLT's **largest transfer, 3000+ acre Mocanaqua Highlands**, is now under stewardship by the DCNR Bureau of Forestry Pinchot State Forest. The addition of this land into the State Forest allows for sustainable resource management and extended public recreation for those looking to enjoy the outdoors year-round.



# Sponsor Spotlight: NEPA Racing



NEPA Racing is a non-profit organization that provides the community with races and events all while giving back to the community. Owners **Steve Tarren and Dave Bass** continually stress the importance of the work they do, allowing for a brighter future doing what they love. Their success sprouted at the thought of planning a race together. When NEPA Racing first began, it started off with the New Year's Eve 5k, now the biggest race in the Valley boasting upwards of 750 runners. NEPA Racing raised \$28,000 to support non-profits in the Back Mountain area of Luzerne County. They now host eight races a year—three run exclusively by NEPA Racing.



## Tell us about your races!

DB: All the races rely on volunteers and sponsorships, with 100% of the profits going back to the community. I'm probably most excited about the Back Mountain Triathlon, formerly known as the Wilkes-Barre Triathlon, which was a 35-year professional event that became known across the country. NEPA Racing resurrected the Triathlon after it lay dormant for 7 years. This event alone raised upwards of \$20,000 all to be given back to the community.

ST: We like to concentrate most of our work on holidays so that relatives and visitors have something to do that is fun and gets everyone out of their houses during the holiday seasons. Another big race that has gained lots of traction is the Thanks-For-Giving-Day 5k, which is held on Thanksgiving. Proceeds from this race fill food banks like Sara's Table and others in the Wilkes-Barre Area.



## And your commitment to the Back Mountain Area?

ST: One thing that people may not know about us is that we like to focus our efforts on supporting first responders, food banks, North Branch Land Trust, and the Back Mountain Trail. For each race, we try to give

back to around 16-20 charities... it's a lot of labor, but the payoff is really what drives us to keep doing what we do. People keep calling us because they know NEPA Racing is a true non-profit.

DB: The valley is great, and it provides people with lots of outdoor activities and opportunities. In the past few years, NEPA Racing has also timed other non-profits for their races. We aren't working for a paycheck. People might turn away from supporting our cause if they looked at our organization and saw we only looked for personal gain.



## Why North Branch Land Trust?

ST: North Branch Land Trust has been a great partner, and we could not be more thrilled to sponsor them and work together. I am proud to say that I live on a 37-acre property with an original Land Trust Conservation Easement. Ellen Ferretti runs a great show and is truly committed to the work she does.

DB: I also lived on 35-acres of land conserved with an NBLT conservation easement, which I wanted to preserve and maintain its character. Years ago, my veterinarian was Dr. Doug Ayers, who happened to be one of the founders of North Branch Land Trust.

He would always talk so passionately about his work.

## How do you see NEPA Racing fitting into the big picture of NEPA conservation?

DB: I'm a board member with Anthracite Scenic Trails Association (ASTA), and our main goal is to bring people's attention to resources in the area. All of the events we host are about health, wellness, conservation, and the outdoors, which are all tied together to some extent.

ST: NEPA Racing believes in land conservation in all forms; land is the resource that allows us to host all of our races after all.

*To encourage continued community engagement, NEPA Racing has trademarked some of their signature activities including goodie bags, a DJ at every race, and even hoodies donated by Steve's company, Wet Paint Printing, as ways to invite a more diverse crowd. Overall, the Back Mountain Trail has seen an influx of thousands of people due to these races and awareness of such a pristine location. We cannot thank them enough!*





## Sponsors

North Branch Land Trust expresses our sincerest gratitude to all those who have supported our conservation mission in 2023 through our Annual Dinner & Auction! We want to share an extra thanks to the sponsors below who supported our mission at the highest levels:

Altitude Foundation  
 DiscoverNEPA  
 Geisinger  
 Kenneth & Caroline Taylor Family Foundation  
 James & Florence DePolo Foundation  
 NorthPoint Development LLC

Sordoni Family Foundation  
 Community Bank  
 M&T Bank  
 PNC Bank  
 Riggs Asset Management Company

## Strategic Plan: 2024-2028

### Our Mission

North Branch Land Trust partners with landowners, communities, and stakeholders to conserve and care for Northeastern Pennsylvania's lands and waters.

### Our Vision

*We envision a future where abundant conserved lands help maintain clean air and water, diverse forests and wildlife habitats, vibrant working farms, and inspiring natural beauty. We envision a future in which North Branch Land Trust is a highly respected leader in conservation and a vital institution that enhances the quality of life for all.*

### Our Core Values

Dedication To Our Mission

Encouraging Responsible Outdoor Recreation

Partnership

Leadership

Excellence and Integrity

Financial Responsibility

## Strategic Goals

### Conservation & Stewardship:

Strategically conserve more land.

### Community Engagement:

Provide experiences and leadership that shape the way members of the community value and care for our natural resources.

### Marketing & Awareness:

Strengthen the recognition of NBLT by advancing awareness, knowledge, and appreciation for land and water conservation.

### Organizational Excellence:

Maintain a positive, engaged culture that empowers staff and Board to fulfill NBLT's mission.

### Financial Sustainability:

Advance financial viability and position NBLT for future growth.

Through the past year the North Branch Land Trust has embarked on crafting a new 5-year strategic plan to serve as our North Star as we carry out the important work we do. The process was driven by a dedicated committee and a highly engaged staff. An experienced facilitator kept the project on task and on time. Input was garnered from scores of NBLT members, directors, stakeholders, recipients of services, partners, community members and counterpart organizations.

The result is an aggressive plan which redefines the NBLT mission, vision and core values. It also establishes ambitious goals and objectives to be carried out over a timeline with checkpoints and milestones.

NBLT maintains its commitment to conserve land while ensuring clean air and water, abundant forests, diverse wildlife habitats, vibrant working farms and inspiring natural beauty. All of us associated with NBLT are truly excited to begin the work of carrying out this new strategic plan with an eye toward making northeastern Pennsylvania an even better place to live, work and play.

-- John Lloyd, Chair of Strategic Plan Committee





## North Branch Land Trust's Mary Louise and Eberhard Faber Conservation Scholarship at the Luzerne Foundation

At North Branch Land Trust's 2023 Annual Dinner and Auction, we formally announced our **Mary Louise and Eberhard Faber Conservation Scholarship** at the Luzerne Foundation. With the generosity of the Faber Family and passionate donors, enough funds have been raised in 2023 to support two internships during the 2024 calendar year.

In announcing the Fund, daughter Deidre Smith said, "This scholarship is in the spirit of spreading the love around, in honor of both Mom and Eb, and in honor of the land they loved so much and that we have enjoyed for 40 plus years! The goal is to fund internships at the Land Trust so that young people have the opportunity to learn about conservation and other environmental issues.

**Not only is it crucial that the next generation be exposed to nature, but also that all communities be exposed to it, and learn to love and care for it.**

Mom and Eb had a big impact on that small community and will be remembered by many, many people with love and affection."

Mary Louise and Eberhard Faber were so much to so many people here in Northeastern Pennsylvania. While all knew them through enterprise and philanthropy, North Branch Land Trust has always known the Fabers as ardent conservationists. We are thrilled to see their passion live on.

Committee members worked hard to develop a robust internship program that will both support North Branch Land Trust's conservation mission in Northeastern Pennsylvania and provide important hands-on opportunities for the next generation of conservationists.

The first Faber Conservation Outreach Intern, Nick Splain, is already hard at work in the NBLT offices. You can see some of his work in this Annual Report and on our website!

**Visit [nblt.org/faberfund](https://nblt.org/faberfund)**







## Tributes & Memorials

*Donations have been made in honor and memory of the following.  
Thank you so much for allowing North Branch Land Trust to  
share your memories*

Lauren Benner  
Barbara Cianfichi  
Barry Dyller  
Edgar Engelman  
Eberhard Faber  
John C. Foster III  
Lois Jarrard  
Kenneth Keib

Richard Mooney  
Lillian & George Picton  
Bill & Mary Pukatch  
Marshall Rumbaugh  
James Shoemaker  
Daniel Sullivan  
Juliana Tolles  
Carl R. Urbanski, OD

## Guardian Society

### Highlands Guardian

DiscoverNEPA  
Bill & Wilma James  
NEPA Racing

### Woodlands Guardian

Sarah P. Carr  
Doris Chechotka McQuade & John McQuade  
Matthew Sordoni  
Thomas E. & Karen Sox  
Fred Valentine



Golden-crowned Kinglet

### River Guardian

Sarah Block  
Kelly Bray  
Earth Conservancy  
Hal & Jean Flack  
Ryan & Katie Flood  
Richard J. & Kimberly Hazzouri  
Theresa Karambelas  
Thomas R. Kneidinger  
David & Mary Kolessar  
Kathleen Leclerc  
John & Elizabeth Lloyd

Marc & Susan Magnotta  
Michele Millington & Marty Wentz  
Neil T. & Catherine O'Donnell  
Guy & Christine Rothery  
Brian & Lauren Stahl  
Kay Strickland & Thomas Delehanty  
Robert & Virginia Tambur  
Christina & Trey Taylor  
Alan R. Viani  
Mike & Caitlin Weaver



## Protector

Julianne Chrisman Daly  
Dr. Seth & Carolyn Fisher  
Carol J. Douds  
David & Sharon Hourigan  
Barbara & George Hugo  
Robert Finlay  
Christine Jenkins  
Steve & Robin Kaminstein  
Richard Maslow

Millard & Judy Mertz  
Thomas M. Ogorzalek  
Tony & Elaine Palischak  
Thomas & Christine Pugh  
Jill Robinson  
Phillip Roth  
Drs. Henry F. & Catherine Smith, Jr.  
Stephen J. Taren  
David L. Wagner & Elizabeth Cecil  
Robert Williams

## Conservator

Kermit & Sally Ayres  
Margaret Bakker  
The Bevevino Family  
Richard Biddle  
Candice Cilvik  
Frank E.P. & Marion  
Conyngham  
Margaret Cramton  
Mark & Traci Cross  
Joseph & Nan DeMarco  
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Samuel F. Rhodes  
Mike & Rachael Dziak  
Dr. Gretta Gross  
John Hanish Jr  
Sandy Insalaco  
Bill, Kim & Kaelee  
Kane  
Mike Kohanski

Dr. Kurt D. & Sylvia  
Maas  
Guthrie Mitchell  
Ellen & Dale  
Parmenteri  
John & Katie Parsons  
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Michael & Mary Rosto  
Megan & Timothy  
Rutkoski  
Winifred Shortz  
Bonnie Silvetti  
Jon & Melissa Sordoni  
Christopher & Gail  
Stasko  
Cindy & Karl  
Swankoski  
Michael Tomalis &  
Theresa Gatusky  
Marleen Troy  
Marcia Wazeter & Albert Jesikiewicz

## Sustainer

Joan E. Abrey  
Nancy Alonzo  
George Audi  
Edward Banaszek, Jr  
Dorrance R. & Susan Belin  
Sandra & John Bensinger  
Eileen & Chris Blazic  
Barbara Bradley  
Peter & Lesa Butera  
Dr. Alfred & Mary Casale  
Thomas & Patricia Finan Castellano  
Joseph P. Chollak  
Stephen Chronowski  
Frank Lombardo  
Kate & James Crowley  
George & Carol Daru  
Diane Davies & Sara Thompson  
Debra Dick  
Jim & Laura Dickson  
Thomas Dorko & Helene Roccograndi  
The Freedmans  
Clarence Givens, Jr.  
Thomas & Judith Hall  
Sid Halsor & Cydney Faul-Halsor

William E. Hine, Jr.  
Margie & Bill Host  
Alice M. & Frank R. Hughes  
Dr. Elizabeth Hughes  
Wendell & Kathy Jones  
Terry & Wendy Jones  
Stephen B. & Estella Killian  
Lance & Sandra Kittelson  
Glynis Koehler  
Allen Kropiewnicki  
Dr. William J. & Nancie Krywicki  
Dr. Paul & Alice Rae Kutish  
Lake Wesauking Conservancy, Inc  
Carol Lizell  
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Carolyn Konopski  
Dr. Michael A. & Tina MacDowell  
Liz & Bob Martin  
T. Bryant Mesick  
Dr. Renee Monahan  
Dave & Denise Moore  
Dr. Phil A. & Rev. Barbara C. Muntzel  
Diane L. Nagle & Joseph G. Schneiderite  
Russell G. Newell  
Shep Pawling  
Robert A. Piccone

Mrs. Pike's 5th Grade Class  
Barbara Reel  
Harry & Liz Reich  
Christine & John Romani  
Michelle & Robert Rowlands  
Joanne & Bill Runner  
Pam & Theron I. Russell  
Jane Rutledge & Albert Them  
John Santulli III  
Susanne Schmitthener  
Simon & Co. Jewelers  
Barbara Smith  
Alan Snelson  
Gerald & Sandra Stankiewicz  
Joe Supulski  
Barry & Shirley Trieval  
Bruce & Roberta Troy  
Lenny Trolio  
Carl J. Urbanski & Martha Shipe  
Bruce & Gert Whipple  
Regina Williams  
Gary & Denise Williams  
Raymond Youngblood  
Suzanne M. Young  
Ed & Amber Zygmunt





## Steward

Lynn K. Aldrich  
Margaret W. Alexander  
Dr. Joseph & Maureen Anistranski  
Back Mountain Bloomers Garden Club  
Michael Bertram  
Richard & Faye Bishop  
Anthony T.P. Brooks & Matthew Malani  
Melody Buck  
Kim Carpenter  
Mike & Alene Case  
Lawrence Cohen  
Steve Davenport  
Jay & Valerie Delaney  
Jean Demko  
Dr. Wayne & Bonnie Dombroski  
Brooks Eldredge-Martin

Ellen Ferretti  
Thomas J. & Barbara H. Field  
Alison D. Flanagan  
Trudy D. Gerlach  
Joe & Steve Germick  
Maureen Givnin-Haas  
Rich & Bonnie Gower  
Robert Grajewski & Susan Garing  
Ellie Harding & David Birchler  
Leigh Ann Henry  
Anne & Frouke Holmes-de Quillettes  
Patty & Ted Horn  
Robert C. & Nancy Houck  
James & Eileen Hoyson  
Carol Hussa  
Beverly Johnson  
Robin & David Johns  
Commissioner Ernie King  
Theresa Langan  
Ming & Anne Lew

Sue & Frank Libertoski  
Edward Lipski  
Amanda MacTarnaghan  
Sandy McGovern  
Chris Miller  
Jack Monick  
James & Mary Ann Murphy  
Verlon & Mary Lou Nichols  
Paul O'Connell  
Janine Oliveri  
Rick Patoski  
Debra Pavlico  
Charlie & Marion Boyle Petrillo  
Michele Phillips  
Sandy Piccone  
Michael & Jacqueline Pramick  
Ron & Gloria Rawls  
Lydia Rossiter  
Joan Schooley & Fred Willauer  
Julie Schneggenburger  
Daniel Schreffler

David Shinaly  
Bob Sprague & Amy Levensgood  
Duane Sprau, DMD  
Marilyn Stark  
Theresa Stewart  
James & Shirley Strohl  
Joan & Steven Taylor  
Michael Thomas  
Jon Thomas  
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Thompson  
Amy Ticer  
Josh Turel  
Jane & Jim Turner  
Dr. Brian E. Whitman  
Theodore S. Wiaterowski  
Tracey Williams DeRocco  
John Witinski  
Janet & Richard Zimmerman

## From Our Executive Director

Hello Dear Reader,

This past year saw some departures and some newcomers. Our Board Chair, Christina Dilks Taylor, stepped down after many years of magnificent leadership at the helm of our Board of Directors. We will all miss Christina, her drive, her vision, and her conservation passion, and hope she never strays too far! Long-time Board member Guthrie Mitchell came to the end of his very active Board term, and we will miss his talents.


We are thrilled that Stephen Maakestad stepped into the role as Board Chair. Steve has been a very active participant on our Land Committee and Board for many years and was always there to lend a hand. Steve hit the ground running and is already thinking of new Board Members who share the Land Trust's mission and values. We also welcomed new Board Members Kay Strickland and Attorney Cathy O'Donnell. Very exciting!

With these changes our work and momentum stayed on track. This past year we saw the completion of 2.8 miles of the D&L National Heritage Rail Trail and its transfer to PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry. We saw the acquisition of 1,400 acres of Earth Conservancy lands: valleys, mountains, forest, and waters, that are now also under the ownership and management of PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry as a key connector to the Pinchot State Forest. These lands will protect large intact forests, water bodies, and wildlife habitats, as well as providing trails and other ways to responsibly enjoy the nature-based outdoor recreation that we've come to appreciate from our State Forests.

Staff continues our conversation with private landowners to conserve their precious lands, a keystone of the work this land trust has been steeped in since its inception. These are dreams realized for these landowners. We are hosting more and more events - Karley and Emma's creativity and expertise shine these days! From tree ID to mushroom ID, staff are creating fun and engaging venues for all ages.

Our sites are expanded toward more personal ways to be good stewards of the earth, *and in particular our corner of it*, by starting a program with schools to reawaken awareness of the perils of littering. Many of us remember the classic commercials and Woodsy Owl's "Give a Hoot, Don't Pollute", but why on earth is there still litter along our roadways, in our streams and in our natural areas? All we can do is try, but it starts here – the appreciation of the very ground we walk on, the trees that clean our air, the water that sustains us.

Thank you for your support of your Land Trust. ***I cannot say this enough – without you we simply cannot do this work.*** We welcome your ideas of new ways to advance our Mission, get involved, and help us be a conservation leader in Northeastern Pennsylvania.







105 Lt. Michael Cleary Dr.  
Suite 102  
Dallas, PA 18612

## **Become a member of North Branch Land Trust or renew your membership today!**

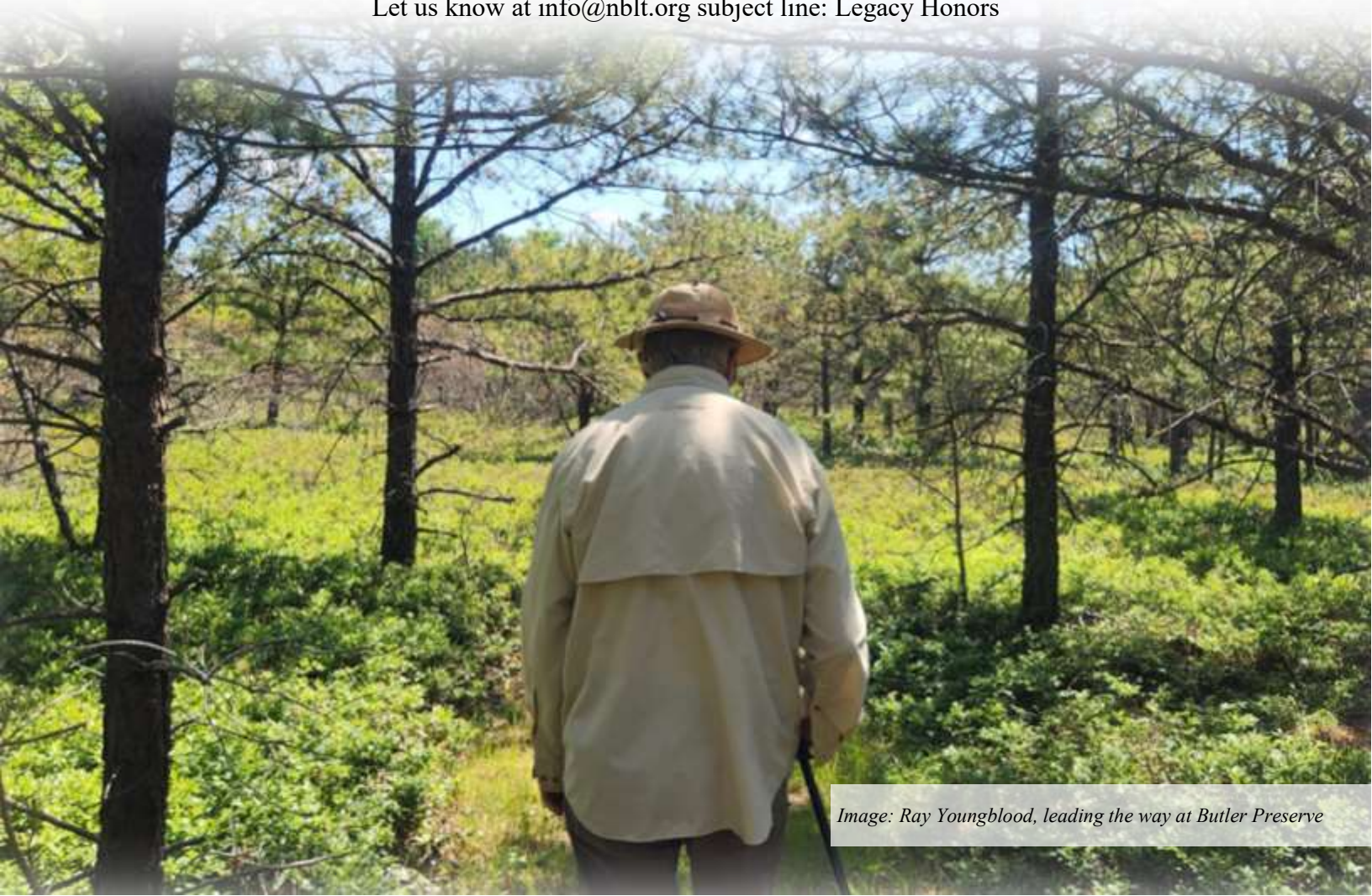
### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- Free or discounted admission to guided nature walks, naturalist programs, and NBLT events
- Early invitation to special events
- Opportunity to conserve the great outdoors
- Help ensure future generations enjoy NEPA's natural assets
- Updates on NBLT's progress through newsletters, web updates, and annual reports
- And more!

Visit [nblt.org/member](http://nblt.org/member)

### **Is NBLT part of your planned giving?**

Let us know at [info@nblt.org](mailto:info@nblt.org) subject line: Legacy Honors



*Image: Ray Youngblood, leading the way at Butler Preserve*