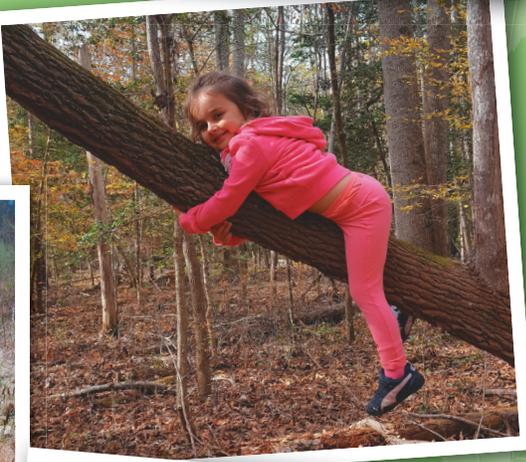


North Branch Land Trust

2018 | ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from the Executive Director

Richard Louv, author of the groundbreaking book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, and an NBLT event speaker this past year, tells the story of interviewing a child who told him that he liked playing indoors more than outdoors “‘cause that’s where all the electrical outlets are.”

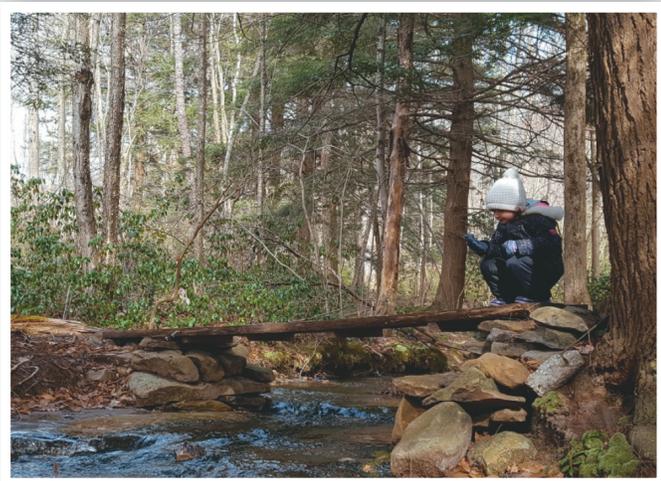
There have been many studies conducted over the years that clearly show the benefits and importance of getting kids outdoors and connecting them with

nature. Specifically studies show time and again that allowing kids to play in nature promotes creativity and imagination, teaches responsibility, improves health and wellness, reduces stress and fatigue, and improves critical thinking.

So while screen time is the easier, more popular choice, it’s important to set aside time for unstructured outdoor play. This unstructured style of play allows kids to interact meaningfully with their surroundings. They can think more freely, design their own activities, and approach the world in inventive ways.

NBLT is committed to promoting and holding activities in nature for children. We feel connecting kids, as well as adults, to nature is extremely important as it improves their wellbeing and builds awareness of nature in their lives. Conserving land ensures that our children will always have the opportunity to enjoy and reap the benefits of nature’s bounty. Our children are our future!

Thank you for supporting NBLT and land conservation in Northeastern Pennsylvania.



Young hiker observing a stream

Paul Lumia, Executive Director



Toasting marshmallows at Taste the Local Harvest



Elizabeth Hughes (Earth Conservancy), Mike Dziak (Earth Conservancy), Paul Lumia, and Wyoming Seminary Lower School Environmental Club students discussing their artwork donated for the Annual Dinner.

Mission Statement:

The North Branch Land Trust works in partnership with landowners and their communities to conserve the natural, working, and scenic landscapes in Northeastern Pennsylvania that sustain us.

YEAR IN REVIEW

NATURE IS THE BEST PLAYGROUND FOR ALL AGES!

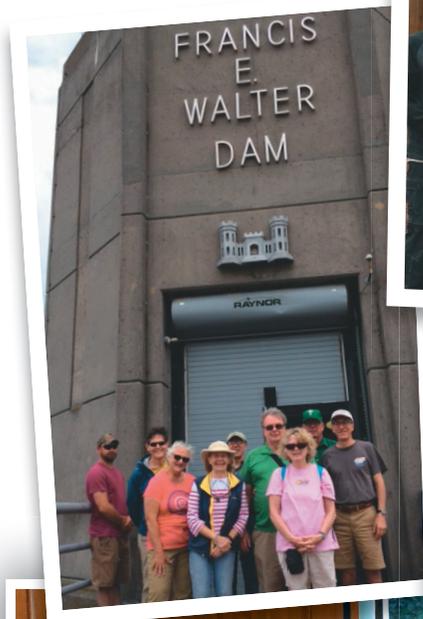
North Branch Land Trust offered many programs and events during 2018. The highlight was welcoming renowned *New York Times* bestselling author, Richard Louv to Wyoming Valley on October 17. Through the partnering of Geisinger, NBLT, Riverfront Parks Committee, and Wilkes University, Mr. Louv addressed an audience in the Dorothy Dixon Darte Center at Wilkes on *The Nature Principle: Nature-Deficit Disorder, Vitamin N and the New Nature Movement*. Following his talk, Mr. Louv answered a number of questions from the audience and ended the evening with a book signing.

During Mr. Louv's talk he spoke of the many benefits of modern technology and spoke of studies showing positive health benefits for children who have a strong "nature connection." From his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* he explains nature-deficit disorder (a phrase he coined) as describing "the human costs of alienation from nature, among them: diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illness. This disorder can be detected in individuals, families, and communities."

As studies have shown, our natural world is vital for our good physical and emotional health. NBLT will continue to offer opportunities for all ages to discover the wonders of our land and nature.

“Time in nature is not leisure time; it's an essential investment in our children's health (and also, by the way, in our own).”

~ Richard Louv



Chesapeake Bay Foundation tree planting by NBLT volunteers

NBLT on safari with Africa Through Your Lens

Winter hike

Winter Picnic

Taste the Local Harvest

Richard Louv (center) with NBLT staff

Get Your Tail on the D&L Trail

Have you heard? Pocono Forests and Waters Conservation Landscape and the City of Wilkes-Barre have joined forces with St. Luke's University Health Network and Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (D&L) to launch the Northeastern Pennsylvania chapter of "Get Your Tail on the Trail." The free program aims to help people of all ages and abilities meet their personal fitness goals and experience the value of local trails through day-to-day challenges, public events, and incentives. The announcement was made Friday, July 13, 2018, as state Senator John Yudichak (D-Luzerne/Carbon counties) finished the last leg of his *Senator Takes a Hike Initiative* on the D&L Trail into Wilkes-Barre.

To help with this initiative North Branch Land Trust is working hard to complete the final six miles of the D&L trail from Oliver Mills to Northampton Street. NBLT just completed the engineering plans and is now applying for construction permits, hoping to break ground in early summer 2019.

So what is this "*Senator Takes a Hike Initiative*?" Senator Yudichak, a long-time D&L trail advocate, fulfilled a promise and brought awareness to the trail project by hiking the entire 165 miles from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre. Senator Yudichak stated at a trail planning meeting in early 2018 that if the Philadelphia Eagles won the Super Bowl he would hike the trail from start to finish. And he did. Thank you Senator Yudichak!!!

For more information about the D&L Trail from Bristol to Wilkes-Barre visit:

THE D&L MAP WEBSITE

<https://delawareandlehigh.org/map/>

GET YOUR TAIL ON THE TRAIL WEBSITE

<https://tailonthetrail.org/chapters/northeast-pennsylvania/>

THE NBLT WEBSITE

<https://www.nblt.org/>



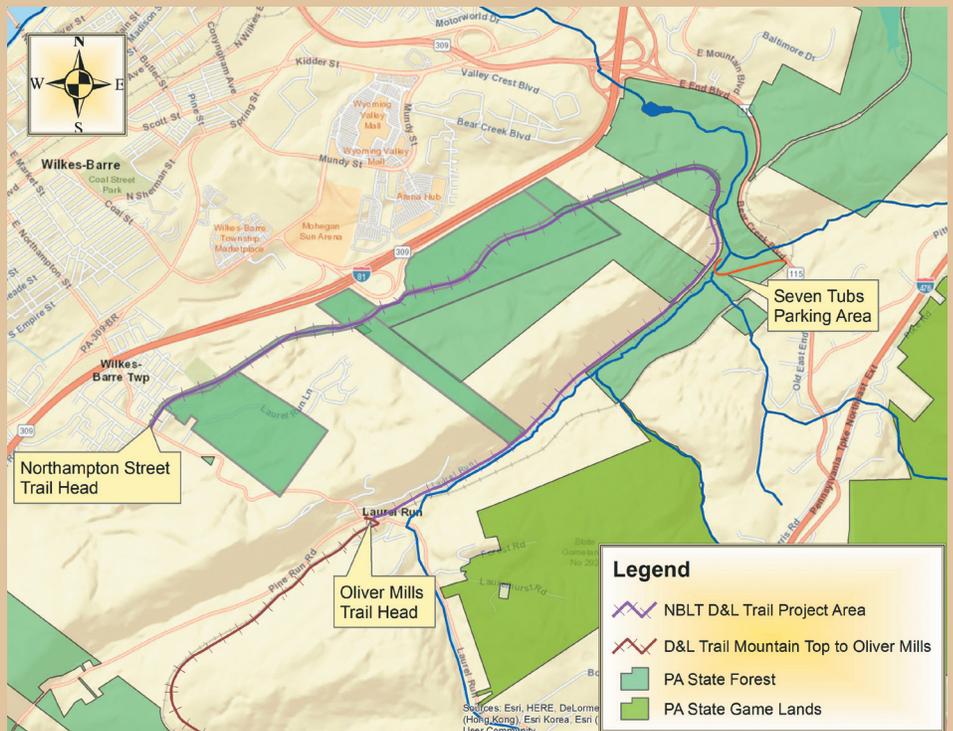
Rylan Coker (NBLT), Senator Yudichak, and Elissa Garofalo (D&L)



Senator Yudichak and Elissa Garofalo (D&L)



Senator Yudichak and Cindy Dunn, PA Secretary of Conservation and Natural Resources



Leaving a Lasting Legacy – The Bierly Estate Conservation Easement

On July 6, 2015, George W. Bierly passed away at the age of 93. He and his wife Betty were always full of adventure and found their “heaven on earth” on their 106-acre farm in Sweet Valley, PA. George’s sense of humor brightened many lives.

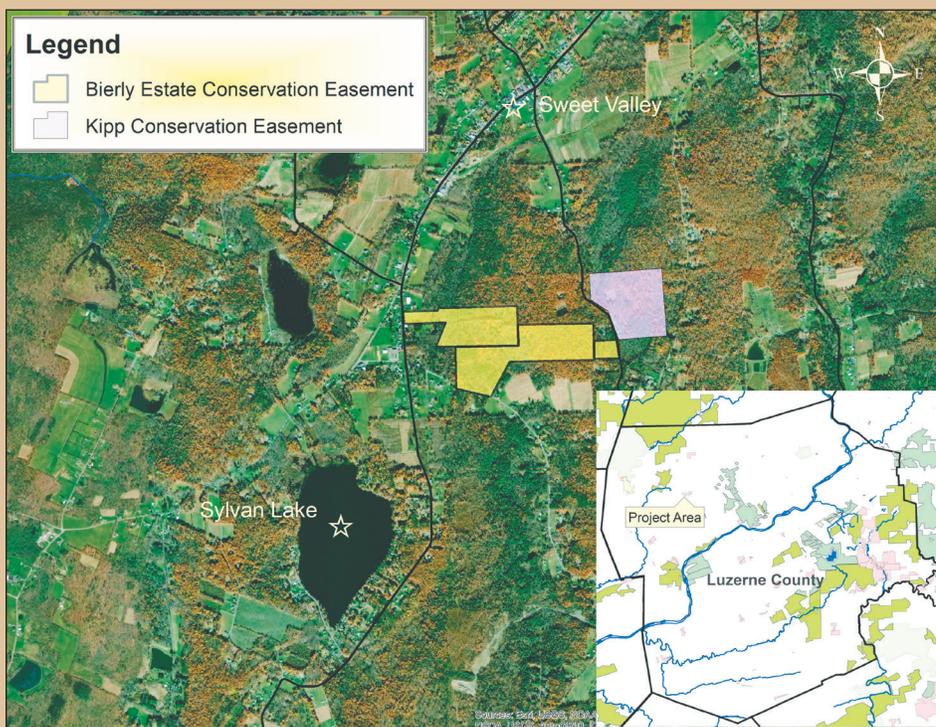
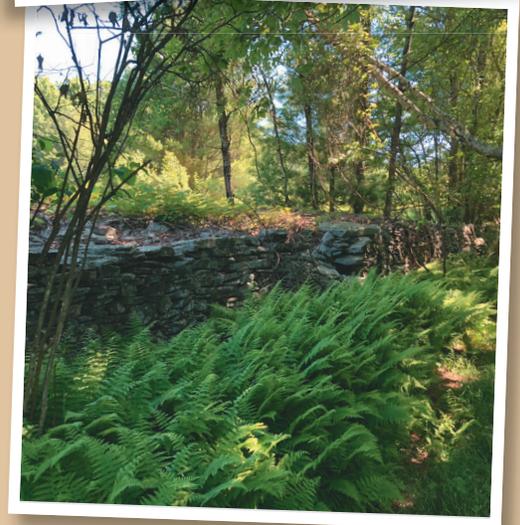
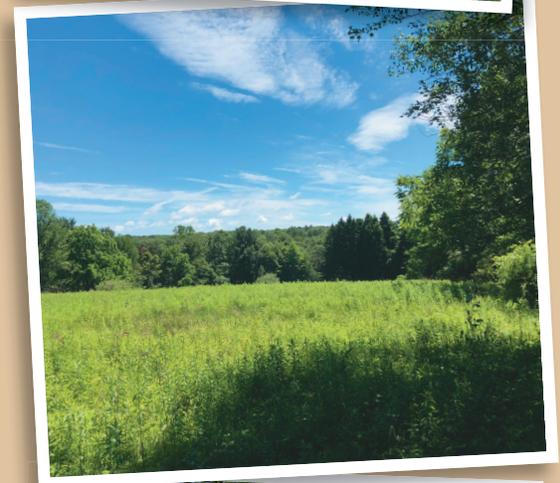
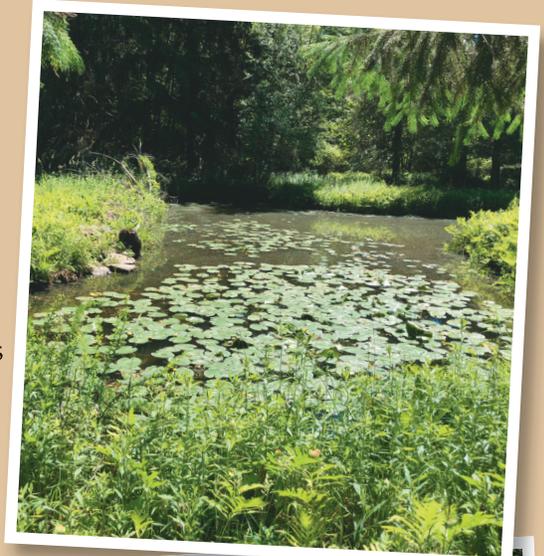
George was a successful businessman and leader in his community. He graduated from Bucknell Junior College, Wilkes-Barre, in 1940 and went on to earn a graduate degree in engineering from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1943. From 1943 to 1945 he was honored to serve his country in Italy during World War II.

George wanted to ensure that his beloved Sweet Valley farm would be protected in perpetuity from any development. He consulted his attorney and directed in his will that the farm be donated to an organization capable of ensuring the preservation of its natural character. After George’s death, the executor of his estate was referred to North Branch Land Trust. The Estate and NBLT together concluded that donating the property, with

permission to sell it subject to a conservation easement, would be the best approach to protect the farm forever.

On August 21, 2018, NBLT permanently protected 100 acres of the Bierly Farm with the recording of a conservation easement at the Luzerne County Courthouse. Establishing a conservation easement fulfilled Mr. Bierly’s wishes while supporting the conservation mission of the Land Trust. His estate was entitled to a tax deduction for the donation and NBLT was able to protect another beautiful farm including its old growth timber and stunning stone walls.

There are many ways you can ensure that the property you love is protected forever. The Internal Revenue Service has determined that the permanent protection of woods, forests, and fields is worthy of a tax deduction for individuals or estates. To learn more about all the available land conservation options and tax savings, please contact NBLT at 570-310-1781 or email info@nblt.org. Thank you for considering conserving your land.



Three Land Projects Completed on the Penobscot Mountain Highlands

The Penobscot Mountain Highlands, which frames the southern border of the Wyoming Valley along with highlands in Mountain Top and Bear Creek, are listed in the *Luzerne County Open Space and Recreation Master Plan* and the *Luzerne County Natural Areas Inventory* as high priority areas for conservation due to their scenic beauty and unique habitat for a host of plant and animal species. North Branch continues to work in these areas and is happy to report that in

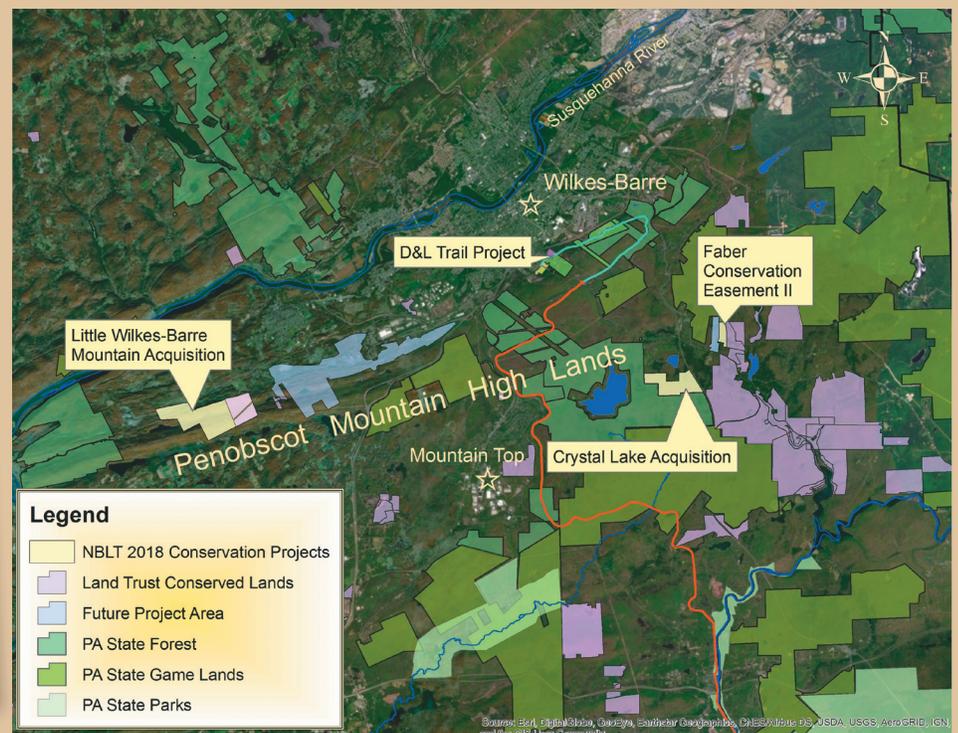
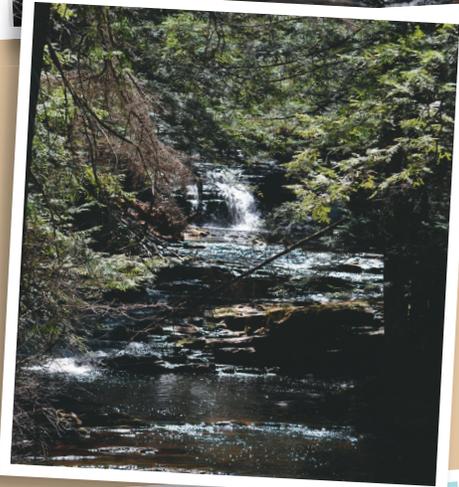
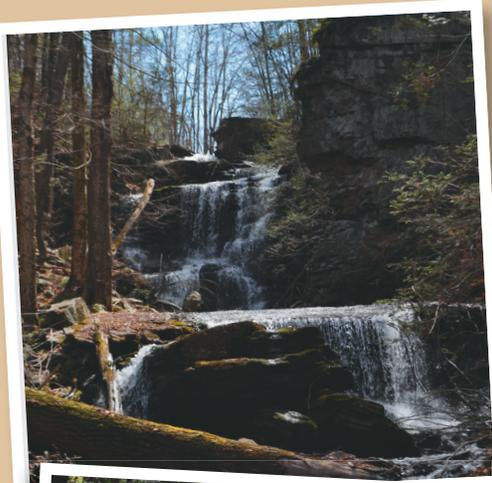
2018 three additional conservation projects were completed.

Little Wilkes-Barre Mountain Acquisition, Newport Twp. - In keeping with NBLT's strategic conservation plan to protect the Penobscot Mountain Highlands, the Land Trust worked with one of its great conservation partners, Earth Conservancy, and acquired from them 1,131-acres of prime forests, fields, and streams on Little Wilkes-Barre Mountain. Some of this land had been mined for coal and was in rough shape, but Earth Conservancy stepped in and reclaimed much of the scarred area. The property has a native brook trout stream, wonderful stands of pines and hemlocks, and fields of native grasses. Thanks to a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and funding from the Bureau of Forestry, NBLT was able to acquire the property and transfer it into the State Forest system. It is now available for the public to enjoy.

The Bear Creek Properties Acquisition, Crystal Lake - This 389-acre tract of land at the southern edge of the Pocono Plateau is quite amazing because it literally straddles both the Delaware and Susquehanna River watersheds. It is also contiguous to many thousands of acres of State Forest and State Game lands. In 2016 NBLT approached the out-of-

town landowner about conserving the property and the landowner was interested in selling it outright. With its unique wetlands, bogs, and scrub lands along with its proximity to Crystal Lake, the property was one NBLT wanted to acquire. In 2017 the Land Trust was fortunate to be awarded a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Community Conservation Partnership Program with funding from the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund, and the Open Space Institute's Delaware River Watershed Protection Fund which is made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation for its Delaware River Watershed Initiative to protect water quality in the Delaware River Basin. NBLT closed on the property in August 2018 and transferred it to the PA Pinchot State Forest.

The Faber Conservation Easement II, Bear Creek - Eberhard and Mary Louise Faber conserved their lovely 231-acre property in 2007. In 2017 an adjoining property, part of Bear Creek Village founder Albert Lewis's original estate, came up for sale. This 79-acre parcel has frontage on Ten Mile Run and Red Run, headwater streams for the Bear Creek, and the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers. The Faber's purchased the property and in the summer of 2018 NBLT rolled it into their existing conservation easement.



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR — Michael Tonkin



Mike Tonkin (left), Paul Lumia (right)

Michael Tonkin of Duryea, Pennsylvania was named NBLT's 2018 Volunteer of the Year and was recognized in November at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Get-Together held at Sabatini's Bottleshop and Bar in Exeter. Mike was chosen to receive this award for his commitment, reliability, and sense of adventure as a volunteer land monitor. Volunteer land monitors visit NBLT's 60 conserved land easements yearly to be certain that the properties are in compliance with the terms of the conservation agreement. Rylan Coker, NBLT's Land Protection and Stewardship Coordinator stated, "It is volunteers like Mike who help NBLT in its mission of land conservation." Three cheers for Mike!

TO ALL OF NBLT'S VOLUNTEERS

An extra special THANK YOU to all of NBLT's dedicated volunteers! Volunteers are the life blood of the Land Trust and whether you are attending meetings, stuffing thousands of envelopes for mailings, monitoring conserved properties, restoring an old house and barn, building trails, clearing brush, leading hikes, planting trees, or hauling trash, you are most appreciated! The Land Trust is honored that you are willing to donate your time, energy, and talents to NBLT's land conservation mission.

WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The NBLT welcomed four new board members: Peter Butera, Mollie Maseychik, Guy Rothery, and Fred Valentine. Peter, Mollie, Guy, and Fred bring their talents and professional skills

in the areas of finance and business to help the NBLT with its land conservation mission throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania.



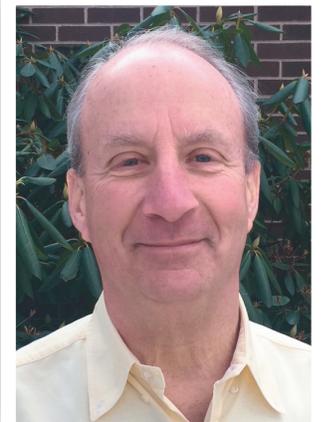
Peter Butera



Mollie Maseychik



Guy Rothery



Fred Valentine

Donors

January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018

We extend sincere thanks to the conservation-minded friends whose commitment and support make possible North Branch Land Trust's efforts to conserve land and connect people to nature in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The donors listed on the following pages provided meaningful support throughout the year.



Turkey eggs in nest at base of a tree



Neoscona domiciliorum a.k.a. Spotted orbweaver

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Artist Earl Lehman giving an art lesson to Tunkhannock area students at Howland Preserve

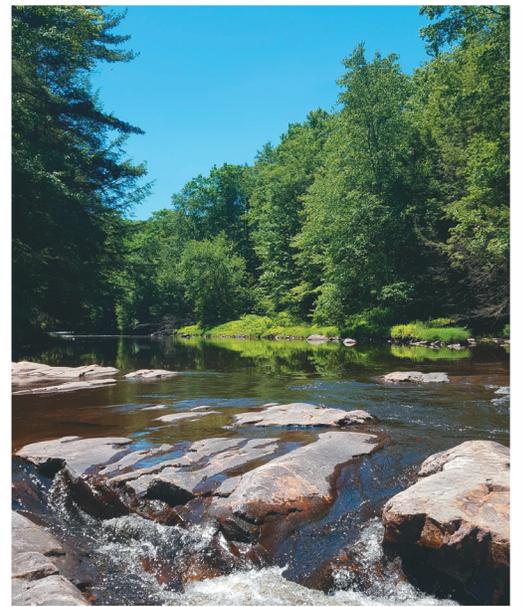
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Ramaria – orange coral mushroom

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 Woody Haydt
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Anaxyrus americanus, American toad

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 Dr. Donald J. Reese
 Reeves Rent-A-John, Inc.
 John Riccetti
 Judy Rice
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 Michele Schasberger & Michael Polgar
 Scott Serafin
 Daniel & Bonnie Shane
 Maya Shikhman
 Joe & Rose Slusark
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 Linda Sproul
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 Sugar Plum Chocolates
 Tallulah
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 Wild Birds Unlimited
 Woodside Trust
 Raymond Youngblood
 Ed & Amber Zymunt

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\$49-\$35

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 The Frederick Stegmaier Mansion
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 Marcie Walsh
 Regina Williams
 Martin & Kathy Wise
 Jim & Rebecca Wolfe
 Lauren Zluchowski

GIFTS IN MEMORIAL

Donations were made in memory of the following:
 Donna Illuzzi
 Sera Jane
 John N. Shoemaker

GIFTS IN HONORARIUM

Donations were made in honor of the following:
 Paul & Colleen Lumia
 Dr. Carl Urbanski

MATCHING GIFTS

The following organizations matched donations from members:
 Benevity Community Impact Fund
 Bank of America Charitable Foundation

NBLT makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of these listings. If you find an omission or a misspelling, please excuse our error and contact us at smith@nblt.org or call (570) 310-1781 to update our records for future donor listings.

Financial Information

North Branch Land Trust financial statements are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with standards established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) for external financial reporting by non-profit organizations. The charts below provide a breakdown of where our operating funds come from and how they are spent. As a community based non-profit, the Trust relies heavily on contributions from individuals, businesses, and foundations within its service area. The Trust staff spends the majority of its time and resources on land conservation projects and education and outreach activities. All funds raised stay local!

REVENUE BY SOURCE

| | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Contributed Support | 75.17% |
| Earned Revenues | 16.34% |
| Special Events | 8.49% |
| TOTAL | 100.00% |



■ Contributed Support
■ Earned Revenues
■ Special Events

EXPENSES BY TYPE

| | |
|------------------|----------------|
| Program Services | 82.45% |
| Administrative | 10.92% |
| Fundraising | 6.63% |
| TOTAL | 100.00% |



■ Program Services
■ Administrative
■ Fundraising

At year end 2018, North Branch Land Trust assets stood at about \$6.2 million dollars, 82% of which are non-liquid land assets and assets set aside to monitor and defend conserved lands.

Currently the Trust has a modest endowment to help fund the organization's operations. However, this endowment is not large enough to support the entire budget and additional funds must be raised on an annual basis. It is the goal of the North Branch Land Trust staff and Board of Directors to grow this endowment to a level that will support a robust conservation budget and the advancement of the Trust's land conservation mission in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Thank you for your continued support!



Partridge berries

2018 Board of Directors and Staff

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| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
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| John L. Zembruski, Esq. | <i>Secretary</i> |

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| | |
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| Rylan Coker..... | <i>Land Protection & Stewardship Coordinator</i> |
| Paula Fall..... | <i>Land Steward & Activities Coordinator</i> |
| Barbara Romanansky..... | <i>Director of Development</i> |
| Rebecca F. Smith | <i>Communications Director</i> |
| Maureen Whipple | <i>Office Administrator</i> |
| Lena Williams..... | <i>Social Media & Communication Associate Intern</i> |

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Master of Ceremonies

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Karen Labbate
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Ellie Harding
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Constance Orchard
Elaine Palischak
Tony Palischak
Paul Pryor
Rachelle Pryor
Mary Annette Rawls
Bruce Troy
Roberta Troy
Charlene Wildes
Gary Williams

Picton Wildlife

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Paula Fall
Brian Gettig
Mike Gondell
Ellie Harding
Jim Ridolfi
Bob Romanansky
Rebecca F. Smith
Charlene Wildes

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Rylan Coker
Barbara Romanansky
Rebecca F. Smith
Maureen Whipple

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Scott W. Watkins, DMD

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Paul Lumia
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Taste the Local Harvest

Barbara Romanansky, *Chair*
Stacey Fay
Paul Lumia
Mollie Maseychik
Cathy McHugh
Terri Morgan
Scott Simko
Rebecca F. Smith
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Sandy Bensinger
Cindy Beaumariage
Tina Fiorani
Brian Gettig
Mike Gondell
Bob Romanansky
D. Kay Strickland
Mike Tonkin
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Charlene Wildes
Edward Zygmunt

North Branch
Land Trust



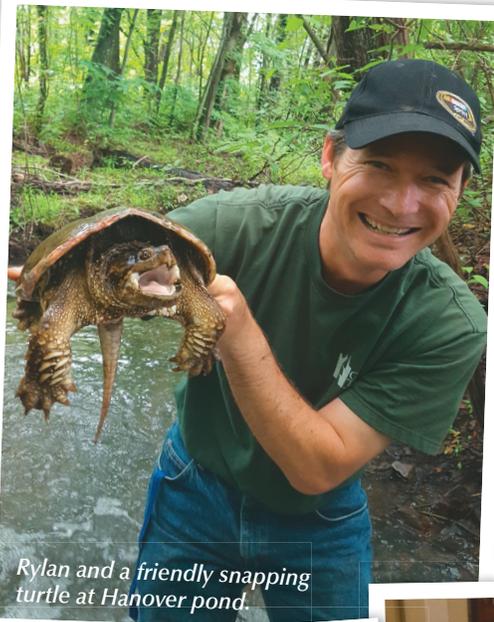
Guardian Society

The Charter Members of the Guardian Society were recognized at a gathering on November 14, 2018, and are listed in the Donors section of this report. We encourage others to become members and take advantage of the Guardian Society's benefits which include exclusive invitation-only events, complementary tickets to Taste the Local Harvest and The Annual Dinner & Auctions, personal guided tours of privately owned conserved land, acknowledgement of your exceptional generosity in NBLT newsletters and Annual Report, and the recognition of being a Guardian Society member.

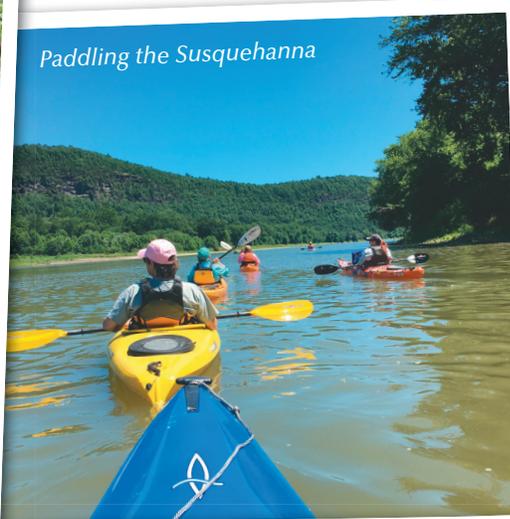
Your membership at the \$1,000 level or above will help increase the pace of land conservation in Northeastern Pennsylvania and ensure a legacy for all generations to come: the opportunity for children to experience nature and have it always be part of their lives. For more information or to inquire about ways to give, please call or email Barb Romanansky, Director of Development at (570) 310-1781 or Romanansky@nblt.org

In 2018, North Branch Land Trust launched its new giving club, the Guardian Society, comprised of individuals, businesses, and foundations who donate \$1,000 or more annually to NBLT. With its own branding and logo, the Guardian Society is a way to acknowledge those donors and includes three levels of giving:

- River Guardian \$1,000
- Woodlands Guardian \$2,500
- Highlands Guardian..... \$5,000+



Rylan and a friendly snapping turtle at Hanover pond.



Paddling the Susquehanna



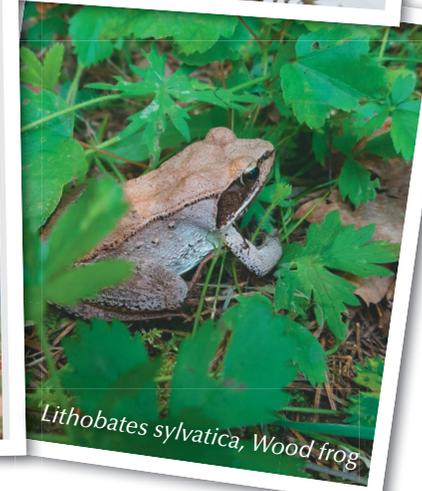
A Pileated woodpecker was here!



Grass pink orchid, Valmont Bog



Helping hands



Lithobates sylvatica, Wood frog

Working together, we can conserve the places in nature that we cherish and leave a legacy for all generations to come: the opportunity for children to experience nature and have it always be part of their lives.

Membership in North Branch Land Trust Helps Conserve What Matters Most!

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP, BECOME A NEW MEMBER, OR GIVE A GIFT MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

THE GUARDIAN SOCIETY

- Highlands Guardian\$5,000+
- Woodlands Guardian\$2,500
- River Guardian\$1,000
- Protector\$ 500
- Conservator\$ 250
- Sustainer.....\$ 100
- Steward.....\$ 50

Membership at any level runs July 1 to June 30

MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM

Does your company have a matching gift program? Please enclose your matching gift form with your membership donation.

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

Name(s): _____
 Address: _____
 City _____
 State, Zip: _____
 Phone: _____
 Email: _____

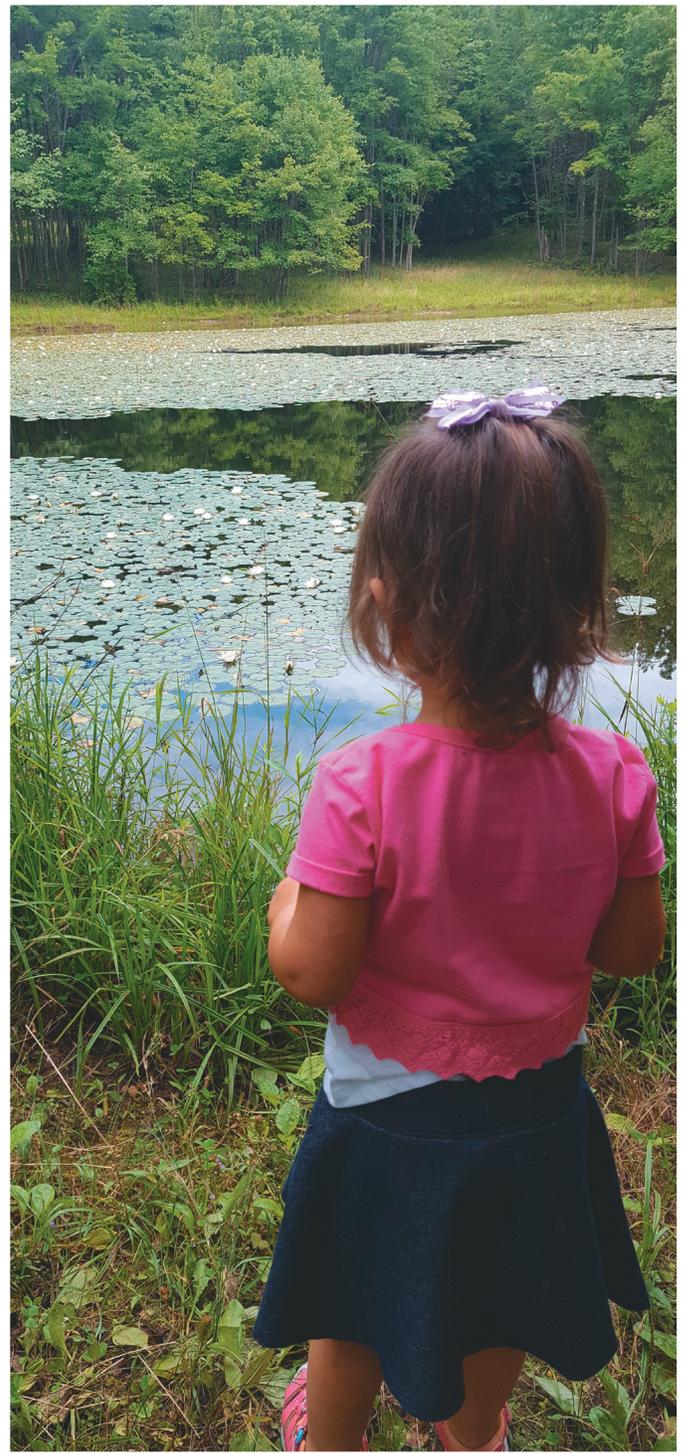
PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO:

NORTH BRANCH LAND TRUST
 251 Huntsville-Idetown Road
 Dallas, PA 18612
 Or to make a donation online, visit www.nblt.org

FOR MORE INFORMATION SEND AN EMAIL TO INFO@NBLT.ORG OR CALL THE OFFICE AT (570) 310-1781

Please remove my name for your mailing list.

North Branch Land Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is tax deductible to the fullest extent permitted by law. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State. Call 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement



What's under those lily pads?



Birthday tree planting tradition begins.

“ The times I spent with my children in nature are among my most meaningful memories – and I hope theirs. ”

~ Richard Louv

PHOTO CREDITS:

- MIKE BURNSIDE – Page 10: Working farm; Page 13: Partridge berries
PAULA FALL – Page 2: Young hiker; Page 3: C. B. F. tree planting;
Page 8: Turkey eggs in nest; Spotted orbweaver; Page 9: Conservation easement in Bear Creek; Page 11: Orange coral mushroom; Page 12: American toad; Page 14: Rylan and snapping turtle; Grass pink orchid; Wood frog; Page 15: What’s under those lily pads?
- TINA FIORANI – Page 3: Winter hike; Page 14: A Pileated woodpecker was here
PATTY HORN – Page 11: Lillian’s Pond, Picton Wildlife Sanctuary
RICH NAUSE – Page 3: NBLT on safari with Africa Through Your Lens
NBLT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS – Front cover photos;
Page 5: photos of Bierly Estate C. E.
Page 6: photos of Three Land Projects; Page 9: Earl Lehman and students
BARB ROMANANSKY – Page 14: Paddling the Susquehanna
REBECCA F. SMITH – Page 2: Toasting marshmallows; E. Hughes, M. Dziak, P. Lumia, and W. S. Lower School Environmental Club students;
Page 3: Winter Picnic; F. E. Walter Dam; Taste the Local Harvest;
Page 7: M. Tonkin and P. Lumia; Page 14: Helping hands
CHRISTOPHER WHIPPLE – Back page: Birthday tree planting tradition begins
BOB WHIPPLE – Page 3: Richard Louv (center) with NBLT staff