THE HORIZON

NORTH BRANCH LAND TRUST NEWS | FALL / WINTER 2025





CONTENTS

- 2 Letter from the Executive Director and Board Chair
- 3 North Branch Land Trust History
- 5 Environmental Education Events
- 7 Appreciating Public Land Management
- $oxed{1}oxed{1}$ An Interview with Diane Madl
- 13 Past Happenings

STAFF DIRECTORY

ELLEN FERRETTI

Executive Director ferretti@nblt.org

EMMA THOMPSON

Senior Director of Conservation & Operations thompson@nblt.org

LEAH MALARKEY

Environmental Education Coordinator malarkey@nblt.org

JOE BUTKIEWICZ

Director of Community Engagement butkiewicz@nblt.org

BRITTANY LYNN

Marketing Manager lynn@nblt.org

NATALIE WASILCHAK

Conservation Specialist wasilchak@nblt.org



Executive Director's Letter ELLEN FERRETTI

Hello Everyone,

We hope you enjoy North Branch Land Trust's Horizon newsletter. In this edition, we highlight our history, past and future events, sponsors and our very own Forest Echo Bird Sanctuary. It is a joy to be so integral as a part of our regional conservation community!

You will also read about our public land managers here in Northeastern Pennsylvania. In my career, I've worked with PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureaus of Forestry and State Parks, PA Game Commission and PA Fish and Boat Commission, although I'm most familiar with DCNR, and created and managed a few Preserves. In doing so, I learned to appreciate the missions that guide and the staff that act as stewards to thousands of acres here in NEPA and so much more statewide! We're all in this together, and mutual appreciation goes a long way.

It is my sincere hope that in reading these interviews, which created so much good information that we are offering most of the content online, that you not only appreciate the abundant natural resources under stewardship by these agencies here in NEPA, but you also gain an understanding and appreciation for all that is involved in the work.

Our region would be a very different place to live, work and play without our public lands, our most valued natural resources, from the forests to the fields, mountains and rivers. NEPA is an abundance of nature that we should all care for and appreciate. As your land trust, please know that your support, your help, your donations are conserving this region, and have been since the mid-1990's. Thank you for supporting North Branch Land Trust. Let's keep a good thing going!



A message from the Board Chair STEPHEN MAAKESTAD

For all who attended, I hope you all had a great time at the North Branch Land Trust Annual Barn Banquet at Friedman Farms. I enjoyed catching up with everyone as well as the excellent dinner that was catered by Bank and Vine.

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to take my family for a hike on the Mocanaqua Loop Trail in Pinchot State Forest. The walk was organized by NBLT in coordination with the Bureau of Forestry and it was a perfect day to get on the trail. Be on the lookout for our other educational events including:

- "Producers, Consumers, Decomposers, oh my!" at the Vosburg Neck State Park on October 25th
- Family Nature Walk Insects and Amphibians at the Butler Preserve on November 15th
- Nature Trivia Night at the American Legion Mountain Post 781 in Mountain Top on November 18th

Also, save the date for our annual dinner and auction which will be held at the Westmoreland Club on Wednesday, May 6th, 2026. We look forward to seeing you and as always appreciate your support as the Land Trust continues its mission in Northeastern Pennsylvania.





"Conserving precious land...forever."

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: A future where abundant conserved lands help maintain clean air and water, diverse forests and wildlife habitats, vibrant working farms, and inspiring natural beauty.

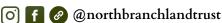
105 Lt. Michael Cleary Dr. Dallas, PA 18612



www.nblt.org

570-310-1781





The History of NBLT

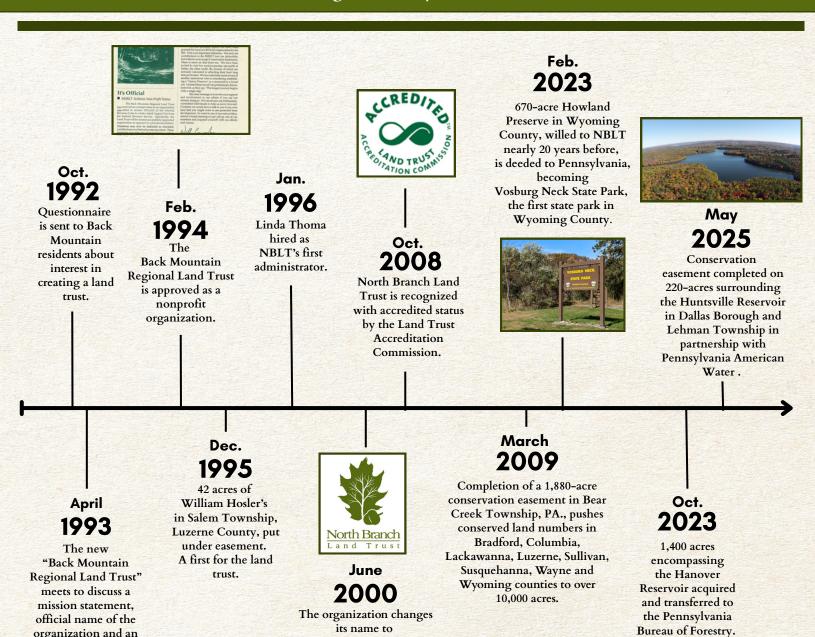
Decades of Dedication, Acres of Impact.

The driving force at the start of what became North Branch Land Trust was love of the land. A leader in conservation and natural resource protection in Northeastern Pennsylvania, North Branch Land Trust protects thousands of acres from development in eight counties.

The organization ranks number eight among 68 similar conservation groups in Pennsylvania in acreage protected according to the 2023 Pennsylvania Land Trust Census report by We Conserve PA. The accomplishments are a long way from the humble, grassroots aspiration of residents who, 30 years ago, were troubled by increasing residential and commercial development.

They dreamed of something better...

To read more on this article, visit nblt.org/our-history.



North Branch Land Trust

to reflect its regional conservation efforts.

organization and an

election of officers.

MOTH MONITORING

AN EVENING OF ENTOMOLOGY AND IDENTIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL EVENT SPOTLIGHT



On Saturday, July 19th, 2025, the North Branch Land Trust team and attendees spent an evening under the stars with entomology enthusiasts David Trently, Roxana Mery and Staci Gibson for an engaging program of attracting, observing, and identifying local moths at North Branch Land Trust's Butler Preserve located in Hazle Township, Pennsylvania. Fittingly, July 19th marked the beginning of National Moth Week, an annual event that raises awareness of the importance of moths.











Why Moths Matter.

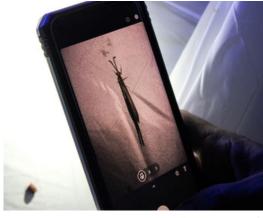
Moths are a vital part of ecological balance, serving as a food source to birds, bats and other smaller mammals. But did you know that these mostlynocturnal creatures also serve as a powerful pollinator?

While butterflies and bees do most of their heavy lifting during the daytime, moths spend the dark hours moving pollen from an array of flowers, particularly those who bloom at night.

Observing, identifying, and recording moths is crucial for scientific research conducted by entomologists.

Looking to identify moths? Attending a moth event is a great way to get started!





UPCOMING EVENTS

To register: visit nblt.org/events. For more information: call (570) 310-1781 or email info@NBLT.org.



Producers, Consumers, Decomposers, oh my!

Saturday, October 25 @ 12:00 PM

Vosburg Neck State Park | Tunkhannock, PA

Take a hike! Join NBLT at Vosburg Neck State Park, (formerly the NBLT Howland Preserve), and participate in a child focused-family event. Learn more about nature's food chain during this educational walk within the state park.



Family Nature Walks: What's Under That?

Saturday, November 15 @ 11:00 AM

† Butler Preserve | Hazle Township, PA

Do you know what lives under that rock? What about that log? Join North Branch Land Trust and The Greater Wyoming Valley YMCA for a child focused-family event. Be prepared to discover different insects, amphibians, and plant/fungi life!



Nature Trivia Night

Tuesday, November 18 @ 6:30 PM

• American Legion Mountain Post 781

Test your nature knowledge! Bring a group of up to 8 friends and meet NBLT for an evening of environmental-inspired trivia! Legion membership not required.



Native Wreath Forage

Saturday, December 6 @ 10:00 AM

ASTA Rimple Loop Trail | Dallas, PA

Rejoice in nature's own embellishments. Participants will walk the ASTA Rimple Loop Trail, located behind North Branch Land Trust's office, and forage natural items to decorate a wreath with just in time for the holidays. Afterwards, enjoy warm beverages and baked goods!

Become a member of NBLT and stay tuned for more 2026 North Branch Land Trust event dates!





Nature Ornament Decorating

Saturday, December 13 @ 10:00 AM

* ABIDE Coffeehouse | Wilkes-Barre, PA

Spend an morning at Abide Coffeehouse and decorate your very own nature-inspired holiday ornament. Enjoy environmental education and artistic tips and tricks.

Can't stay? Stop by for a coffee!

A percentage of the days profits will go to NBLT.



Family Nature Walk: Bare Tree ID

Saturday, January 10, 2026 @ 11:00 AM

George & Lillian Picton Wildlife Sanctuary White Haven, PA

How many trees can you identify... without leaves? Enjoy a familyoriented winter stroll through Picton Wildlife Sanctuary and discover different ways to identify common Pennsylvania hardwoods and conifers!



SAVE THE DATE

North Branch Land Trust

ANNUAL DINNER & AUCTION

conserving precious land... farever.

25 MARCH 2026 | 5:30 PM

CO CHAIRS: KELLY BRAY & JEREMY EDEN

THE WESTMORELAND CLUB 59. SOUTH FRANKLIN STREET, WILKES-BARRE PA 18701



PUBLIC LAND MANAGERS

ublic land managers play a vital role in conserving and caring for our commonwealth's natural resources, restoring wildlife habitats, and promoting forest health.

Their service is to advance the mission of each state agency charged with a different natural resource whether it be plants, animals, or water. Their work is understated and vital to the health of all living things through clean air and water, and a resilient food chain. These public servants provide for us all.

North Branch Land Trust recently had the opportunity to sit down with;



Nicholas Lylo

District Forester of Pinchot Forest District https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-forests/find-a-forest/pinchot



Rich Glinski

District Forester of Loyalsock State Forest https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-forests/find-a-forest/loyalsock



Brian Taylor

State Parks Regional Director
https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dcnr/recreation/where-to-go/state-parks



Michael Beahm

Northeastern Regional Director of the Pennsylvania Game Commission https://www.pa.gov/agencies/pgc/about-us/about-the-pgc



Mike Parker

Communications Manager of Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission https://www.pa.gov/agencies/fishandboat

to ask a few questions on the importance of land management and how the public can support their efforts.



APPRECIATING PUBLIC LAND MANAGERS & A

What is something you wish the public to better understand about your operations?



N. Lylo: "Having worked within this profession for over 30 years, the biggest thing I have found is explaining the difference between the Bureau of Forestry and other state forest lands along with other conservation state agencies. Within the Bureau of Forestry, our mission continually reflects having a passive recreation mission due to the legislation passed with Act 18."



R. Glinski: "It is important to understand that the Bureau of Forestry strives to manage our state forest lands using ecosystem management. Because of this, we have to balance all the different aspects of what we do so that human actions do not negatively impact or otherwise compromise the integrity of our natural ecosystems. Most often, our constituents are focused on their own individual interests and expect us to be able to accommodate their desires without exception."



B. Taylor: "Running a state park operationally is a lot more complex than what the average visitor may think or observe. There is a lot more to [state parks] than just running campgrounds, cabins, or simply monitoring trails. As we often describe them, it is like operating a town." "A lot of our state parks have miles of their own water lines, sewer lines, lift stations, water tower storage, and some parks even have wastewater treatment plants. As you can imagine, all of this on top of the campgrounds, cabins, and visitor centers that everyone is familiar with and the amenities that they use."



M. Beahm: "We are a relatively small agency with a complex mission to include law enforcement duties, resource management and wildlife management responsibilities across the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Game Commission manages more than 480 species of wild birds and mammals! This is a huge responsibility and undertaking. The Pennsylvania Game commission is funded through the collection of hunting license fees, natural resource revenue from State Game Lands, and federal excise taxes on firearms and ammunition. We are not funded by Commonwealth tax dollars.



M. Parker: "Funding. The PFBC is a user-funded agency receiving no Pennsylvania General Fund tax revenue to support its programs. The agency manages its operations through two special funds: the Fish Fund and the Boat Fund. Revenue for the Fish Fund is generated from sales of fishing licenses and fees (*66%) and federal funds (*22%) obtained from taxes on fishing-related items. Revenue from the Boat Fund is predominantly generated from boat registration/titling fees, and refunds of liquid fuels taxes on gas used by motorboats and federal aid."

To read NBLT's full interview of Land Managers, visit nblt.org/news-updates



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT:

VERVE VERTU ART STUDIO

Located in Dallas, PA, Verve Vertu Studio

is an inclusive community-based art studio that taps into the diversity of talents from people across the region. The studio itself works with many traditional mediums and features the use of a more unusual medium known as batik. Their work has been featured all throughout the region along with all over the world including countries like Denmark, Ireland, and England. Owner Gwen Harleman understands the importance and value of being in such a tight-knit community as the Back Mountain area.

What is something that people should know about Verve Vertu Art Studio?

GH: "As a non-profit ourselves, we at Verve Vertu understand that the community needs as many partners as possible. We try to open our doors for anyone and everyone, no matter what the skill level. Giving the community an opportunity to express themselves in the form of art is something which you do not really see too often in small communities, which is why we are so unique."

Why sponsor North Branch Land Trust?

GH: "North Branch Land Trust, like other non-profits, provides the community with a sense of awareness in the field which is becoming more relevant as time passes. We enjoy working with them in a sense, but most of all it is about giving back to the community. Often, non-profits work towards a shared goal or mission, and North Branch strongly supports the community because they preserve our natural resources. Working with other non-profits, we also hope to develop other opportunities for the community to get involved and support."

What is the importance of giving back to the community, like sponsoring North Branch Land Trust?

GH: "There are many factors that come into play when looking at the importance of giving back to the community whenever we can. The relevance of the environment and its importance to people is something which will continue to grow as we develop into the future. As artists, the environment is a big inspiration for the work we do and for that we would like to do everything we can to make it last for the future."

Ellen Ferretti,

NBLT Executive Director,
and Jamie Bobeck,
artist of Verve Vertue Studio
with her donated artwork, "Camouflage"
for the 2024 North Branch Land Trust
Annual Dinner and Auction.



LITTER-FREE STARTS WITH YOU AND ME!









SIN BASURAS

CUENTA CON NOSOTROS Y NOSOTRAS



NEPA PHILANTHROPIES

Supported by:

servación de Tierras





Going Green

Littering Awareness Initiative.

About two years ago, one of the Land Trust's friends, Ramah Hackett and The Altitude Foundation, started a discussion with North Branch Land Trust staff about developing actionable steps to reach the younger generation about the conservation and habitat dangers of littering. From Ramah's passion and idea sprang a project that is on the cusp of launching in local schools and centers of learning.

From the perspective of North Branch Land Trust, this is a stewardship message that we all can agree needs to be reinforced. Litter is not just a visual nuisance, it harms fish, birds and other living things that share this place with us. Accomplishments:

✓ Worked with Coal Creative to design a marketing poster that speaks to the heart.

✓ Leah Malarkey, NBLT's Environmental Education Specialist, designed several lesson ideas for various ages to be used by educators to achieve compliance with standards while delivering a fun and engaging Litter Free message.

✓ Created a home on our website for all our Environmental Education outreach materials and events, with a special tab for our Litter Free campaign designed so that all educators and anyone who hosts or has an outdoor location that is widely used can download and use these materials.

✓ Working with project partners to engage students and future teachers to create materials to be distributed as part of this program for use in schools.

✓ Working with local after school programs to meet with children and engage them in the perils of littering. Let's hope the Fox and Frog can reach them enough to care deeply and encourage their adults to not litter as well! ✓ In addition to educators, the poster and a link to download will also be sent to recreation groups and municipalities who have trails, parks, and other public settings with encouragement to post it in a high-profile area.

As we move forward, let us know your thoughts by emailing us at <u>info@nblt.org</u>.

And please, we all play a role in keeping our places litter free – so pass it on!

-Ellen Ferretti, Executive Director of NBLT

To view NBLT's available materials to download, visit nblt.org/litter-free

nvironmental ducation

Leah Malarkey, North Branch Land Trust's Environmental Education Coordinator, met with newly retired PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Hickory Run State Park Complex's Environmental Education Specialist (EES) Diane Madl. Diane was awarded 2025's Outstanding Environmental Educator Award for Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Education (PAEE). Receiving this reward was a beautiful way to celebrate the dedication and conclusion of her career.

Throughout her 30 years she taught and reached hundreds of students, teachers, and state park visitors through school programs, summer camps, and community programs. Diane was a graduate of Hanover Area High School and continued her education at East Stroudsburg University (ESU). Going into ESU undeclared, Diane wasn't sure where her future might lead, but she had a true passion for science and began to focus on education when introduced to biology courses and clubs. Diane was offered an internship through the Monroe Conservation District. This internship was the eye-opening work experience that would lead her to graduate from ESU with a dual degree of a BS of Biology and a BA in Environmental Studies.

Her first job was at the Delaware Water Gap Recreation Area, where she would don historic dress and educate the public about life back in the day. It wasn't long after that Diane hit her personal vision of success by securing a job at Dingmans Falls, then on to PA DCNR! Diane came to DCNR first at Beltsville State Park as their Engineer in Training and then Jacobsburg State Park as an EES, before finding her spot at Hickory Run State Park Complex as their EES. Throughout her transition, Diane mentioned how DCNR helped her receive excellent training in lesson planning, working with the public, and being a successful environmental educator.

Ellen Ferretti, Executive Director at North Branch Land Trust, has known Diane for a very long time.

"Diane embodies the kind, caring and creative environmental education professional. Her students and event participants became immersed in nature through her words and actions and left with a greater understanding and appreciation for the natural world.

Her impact will be timeless."

After their conversation, Leah asked Diane a few questions on her work experience...

LM: "In your entire work experience, what would you say was your favorite lesson, activity, or program that you've taught?"

DM: "DCNR's The Watershed Education Program. This is a program for middle schoolers or high schoolers, where local schools 'adopt' a stream and we do a stream assessment. This includes looking into the water and seeing what animals / macroinvertebrates live there to determine how healthy the water quality is."

LM: "If someone is interested in looking into becoming an environmental educator, what would you suggest they do?"

DM: "Job shadow! DNCR offers opportunities to shadow educators and other staff members. If they find success in job shadowing, the next step would be to be volunteering or applying for an internship. Many organizations will always accept volunteers and it's a great way to get hands-on experience and make connections/network. Internships, however, can be unpaid or paid, but they are another great option, since most internships offer temporary or seasonal work. Besides that, many jobs are looking for applicants who are involved in different areas. This can mean being involved in a club or an organization at school. Joining or attending local conferences that you can speak at also shows that you have public speaking experience and you're working towards gaining more experience for your career."

66 There is so much to learn. 99

LM: "How has your job as an EES changed your views on education, if any?"

DM: "I would say that it is important to get children and students outside. More schools and teachers should implement opportunities where students have the chance to explore nature, even if it is on campus. It is very different to hold a frog than to simply read about one. Adults shouldn't be afraid to get outside and explore. There is so much to learn and many places that offer learning experiences during the school year or even on weekends for the public."

66 Being in nature has a natural ability to calm people down.

LM: "What do you hope others (the people you have taught) have learned or took away from your programs?"

DM: "Again to simply get outside more.

Being in nature has a natural ability to calm people down. When you're stressed, go for a walk or sit outside and watch how it will take some of the stress from you. I also hope that children I taught, will go home and tell their adults that they had such a great time and should go back to visit again, which will create a chain reaction of getting others involved in experiencing the gifts of nature."

LM: "You have helped many other people learn more about nature, what is one thing you learned during your time as an EES?"

DM: "You never stop learning. You are learning all the time. As an educator you have to be open to constant changes in education. You must have a desire to learn more! Being a non-formal educator, you learn that everyone you meet comes from a different background, lifestyle, and culture, so not everyone you teach is meant to be taught one way. You must make your lessons/activities engaging and always keep a positive attitude. I noticed that keeping a positive attitude can help create a more positive learning experience, where children and adults are more likely to retain the information being said aloud."

Share your thoughts on retirement, Diane.

DM: "While working, you don't always have the time to take part in the activities you'd like to do.

I have already begun traveling but would love to travel outside of the United States, possibly Europe or Costa Rica for birdwatching. I have also had more time to manage caring for my health by going to the gym (when I can). There are so many things I can attend, like mid-week dinners with friends without worrying about work the next day. I also hope to learn more about the world on what changes are currently happening that I may have missed before."

PAST HAPPENINGS

NBLT IN THE COMMUNITY



pictured left: Don Jacobs, of DiscoverNEPA and Emma Thompson, Senior Director of Conservation and Operations, North Branch Land Trust

Go Wild! with DiscoverNEPA

Emma Thompson & Ellen Ferretti spent Friday, September 5th with Don Jacobs of "GO WILD with DiscoverNEPA", at North Branch Land Trust's Butler Preserve in Hazle Township, Pennsylvania. Emma and Don discussed the incredibly unique ecology found on the Butler Preserve, including globally rare pitch pine-scrub oak barrens.

The episode of GO WILD also discussed the Butler Preserve's connection to The Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails, utilized by many outdoor enthusiasts.

To view the episode of GOWILD: visit youtube.com/@DiscoverNEPA



Family Nature Walks

North Branch Land Trust and The Greater Wyoming Valley YMCA partnered to offer the community a free, monthly, nature based educational series of child focused-family walks. These walks, led by NBLT's environmental education coordinator, Leah Malarkey, focus on topics such as bird identification, recognizing native species, and understanding different ecosystems.

"This is a great partnership between the Y and NBLT that will bring outdoor educational programs to the community while discovering new outdoor areas in Luzerne County." said Jim Thomas, CEO of The Greater Wyoming Valley Area YMCA.

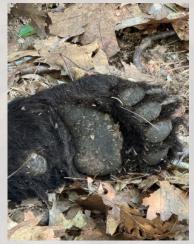
pictured above: Participants study the ecology and identify different wildlife of North Branch Land Trust's Hanover Crossings Marsh Sanctuary, September 13



a mature female black bear, or sow



Graham Rhone, Emma Thompson, Leah Malarkey and Brittany Lynn, weighing the sow.



bear paw: length and width measured for data entry

"The Bear Necessities" - Bear Collaring with The Pennsylvania Game Commission

On July 30th, North Branch Land Trust spent a day on State Game Lands 35 in Susquehanna County alongside Graham Rhone, black bear technician, and Kevin Wenner, Northeast Region Wildlife Management Supervisor of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, where they learned as part of a statewide bear survival study, the ins-and-outs of bear monitoring, including identification practices, health and age indicators, and just how strong the NBLT staff is!

Thank you, Pennsylvania Game Commission.







Harvey's Lake - swimmers take to the water



Race Director Dave Bass with Sprint distance 1st place female overall - Sarah Leskosky

Tabling A Triathlon

On Sunday, August 24th, North Branch Land Trust staff enjoyed a morning of rooting on participants of the Third Annual Back Mountain Triathlon held at Harvey's Lake, Pennsylvania. The event, presented by NEPA Racing, is a qualifier for USA Triathlon National Championships, and supports local nonprofits and community organizations, including North Branch Land Trust.

"We managed to raise over \$18,500 for local non-profits and First responders," said David Bass, race director. "Over 260 athletes registered this year, making it our biggest total so far." Despite the rainy forecast, participants, spectators, and volunteers alike came out to support this incredible event.

Thank You, David Bass and NEPA Racing!





Healing Our Planet.

On July 30, 2025,

North Branch Land Trust was chosen as a recipient of the 2025 Healing Our Planet Grant Program, presented by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, for an "Invasives to Natives" project. Funding from the awarded grant, provided by The Giant Company, was utilized to purchase 105 various native trees including basswood, sumac, tulip poplar, sycamore, service berry, cottonwood, and black gum, to be planted at Forest Echo Bird Sanctuary.

These native trees supports local biodiversity, improves soil and water health, provide habitat for wildlife, and requires less maintenance due to their natural adaptation to the environment.

pictured left: Delivery Day! North Branch Land Trust receives one hundred and five native trees, delivered to the office.



Celebrating Conservation

Pennsylvania Āmerican Water celebrated the completion of its first-ever conservation easement, which protected 220-acres of land around the Huntsville Reservoir and provides a new public access area and nature trail for the community to enjoy, in partnership with North Branch Land Trust.

"Pennsylvania American Water Company is committed to being a steward of our environment and protecting our watersheds," said Justin Ladner, president, Pennsylvania American Water. "Preserving this land through our partnership with North Branch Land Trust not only supports our company's mission to provide safe, clean drinking water, but also guarantees that future generations will continue to benefit from access to and conservation of the natural beauty of this local greenspace."

Congratulations, Pennsylvania American Water!

"FROM FIELDS TO FUTURE" **CELEBRATING CONSERVATION**

Landowners, conservation advocates, philanthropists, supporters, and friends of North Branch Land Trust gathered on Tuesday, September 16th for an evening of togetherness in celebration of NBLT's long standing commitment of conserving working farmlands and agricultural assets in Northeastern Pennsylvania. In the picture-perfect setting of Friedman Farms venue, complimented by Farm to Table fare provided by Bank + Vine, the Fourth Annual Barn Banquet encompassed all things agricultural.











"The Barn Banquet is one of my favorite occasions - especially since the Friedman Farms venue has such beautiful scenery in the Back Mountain. It's a perfect time to celebrate our mission to conserve land, whether it's completely natural or agricultural," said Stephen Maakestad, Chair of North Branch Land Trust. Founded in 1993, North Branch Land Trust is a nonprofit, community-driven organization dedicated to conserving the lands, waters, and natural resources of Northeastern Pennsylvania, a region highly populated by working farmlands. According to the USDA's 2022 Census of Agriculture, there are more than 7 million acres of farmland in Pennsylvania, with an average size of 144 acres per farm. From autumn orchard offerings of crisp cider and sweets, to local farmstands yielding freshly harvested produce, bee hives of local honey and fresh cut flower fields, farmlands provide the resources that feed us, provide jobs for our communities, and sustain environmental and economic stability.

"We thank our sponsors, Geisinger Health, DiscoverNEPA and Earth Conservancy, as well as Friedman Farms and Friedman Hospitality Group for their support of North Branch Land Trust in making this event about highlighting local and Pennsylvania Agriculture a wonderful reminder of how important and beautiful our agricultural lands are in Northeastern Pennsylvania," Ellen Ferretti, Executive Director, North Branch Land Trust.











A Focus on Forest Echo

FOREST ECHO BIRD SANCTUARY
Dallas Borough • 17 Acres • Open to Public

The 17-acre property, located off West Center Hill Road in Dallas Borough features a 0.6 mile loop trail through a bustling forest. Songbirds, woodpeckers, birds of prey, and more call these trees home. Small mammals like chipmunks and squirrels are plentiful, and you might even catch sight of the herd of whitetail deer who populate the Sanctuary.

The Land Trust would like to thank Wyoming Seminary and the Dallas Borough community members for helping to make this conservation project reality.

In 1907, Rachel and Dr. Sarah Wyckoff of Kingston purchased 177 acres as a bird sanctuary and summer retreat.

The Wyckoffs stewarded this idyllic piece of the Back Mountain until Rachel's death in 1946.

Rachel bequeathed her family property to the Wyoming Seminary Preparatory School with instructions to "Maintain the 17 acres of wooded lands around her cottage known as Forest Echo as a sanctuary for birds."

Wyoming Seminary upheld the wishes of the Wyckoff family but realized that a greater level of protection was needed. In 1993, Land Trust Board members recognized the Wyoming Seminary Forest Echo Bird Sanctuary as a priority property for protection, and in 2010 stepped in to help this dream be realized.

Support our mission.

Support Clean Water, Wildlife & Wild Places by Giving Through Your IRA!

IRA GIFT

If you're over 70 and required to take an IRA distribution, consider North Branch Land Trust as you make your plans! By directing a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) to NBLT, you can reduce your taxable income while advancing our mission to partner with landowners, communities, and stakeholders to conserve and care for Northeastern Pennsylvania's lands and waters.

How to give: Contact your IRA administrator and request a QCD to North Branch Land Trust.

It is that simple!





Clean Air. Clean Water. Lands You Trust.



What is a Land Trust?

A land trust is a charitable organization that works cooperatively with landowners to acquire land or easements and/or manage land or easements for conservation purposes.

Land trusts also work to ensure that land acquired or place under easement is properly conserved. They seek to bring lasting conservation benefits - permanent improvements - to communities.

Land for Life.

Since 1993, North Branch Land Trust (NBLT) has worked diligently to conserve Northeastern Pennsylvania's natural resources for future generations.

From the mountains and fields to the rivers, wetlands and lakes, Northeastern Pennsylvania sustains a wide variety of plants, birds, wildlife, and scenic vistas.

Northeastern Pennsylvania has vital natural and economic resource for agriculture, water, timber, recreation and tourism.

Service Areas

NBLT's service area includes land in Bradford, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Wayne and Wyoming counties. Tax deductible dollars fund conservation efforts that have a direct impact on the natural and scenic landscapes in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

What We Do.

CONSERVING YOUR LAND

NBLT works with private landowners to protect their land for conservation purposes. We work to ensure that their private land placed under easement is properly conserved and stewarded, bringing lasting conservation benefits.

CONSERVING NEPA

NBLT partners with stakeholders to find permanent stewards for conserved natural lands. We have helped conserve Vosburg Neck State Park with PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks, 6,340 acres of Pinchot State Forest with PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry, and 184 acres of State Gameland with the PA Game Commission.

RESPONSIBLE RECREATION

NBLT stewards nearly 1,000 acres of Preserves and Sanctuaries open to the public for research and passive recreation. Visit sensitive habitats by appointment only.

Support NBLT

Become a member through a tax-deductible gift

Volunteer: Check nblt.org for volunteer activities tailored to your interests and commitment level **Learn how to conserve your land:** If you are concerned about the loss of our wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, and farmland, now is the time to act!

For more information, visit www.nblt.org or call (570) 310-1781.



Fall into Greener Habits

ECO-CONSCIOUS PRACTICES FOR FALL & WINTER

North Branch Land Trust's mission is to conserve and care for our region's lands and waters.

Helping nature thrive during the cooler months is an impactful way to support and protect Northeastern

Pennsylvania's ecological balance and native species.

With simple, seasonal practices, you can play a part in positively attributing to the overall health of NEPA's wildlife during Autumn.



"Leave the Leaves"

Falling leaves and pine needles serve as a vital habitat utilized by living organisms for food, shelter, and material for nesting. Leaf litter also provides a place to call home for overwintering pollinators like butterfly and moth caterpillars. Similarly, dead flowers and annual plantings from our summer gardens serve as an alternative host for these organisms



Plant Native, Plant Now. October and other cooler months are an

optimal time to plant native species. Native wildflowers, like milkweed and goldenrod, go through a prolonged dormancy period during the cold months in order to germinate, influencing stronger root systems and promising an early Spring bloom, aiding in the support of species on their migratory return from the South.



Small Acts: Sky High Impacts

Many birds of Northeastern Pennsylvania, including chickadees, nuthatches, woodpeckers and owls, are cavity nesters, meaning they rely on cavities in dead trees for protection from the elements during the cold months. In areas where natural cavities like tree holes are slim, consider installing a nesting box, which provide a safe space for our resident birds.

NORTH BRANCH LAND TRUST 105 Lt. Michael Cleary Dr. Suite 102 Dallas, PA 18612





Platinum Transparency **2025**

Candid.

