



"Conserving working farms and forests"

REPORT TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Volume 17, Issue 4

Fall 2007

NORTHCENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY

BEDNAR EASEMENT COMPLETED

In 1970 Dr. Charles Bednar and his wife, Beluse, purchased property in northeastern Tioga County as a retreat from the increasing urbanization of the Lehigh Valley where they reside. The Bednars purchased an adjoining property in 1974 and another in 1983. Eventually they came to own 107 acres containing both mature and young woodland, old roads, reverting fields, a small wetland and stone walls bordering long-abandoned fields. Open places on the property's highest point offer views across the gentle hills and valleys of northern Tioga County.

The Bednars converted an old sugar house into a cabin, constructed a pond and built a writing studio where Dr. Bednar worked on his book "Transforming the Dream." The book presents an outlook that values living in harmony with the natural environment over unlimited growth, and addresses the ecological and social limits of economic growth, as well as the ethics of human interaction with the natural environment.

In accord with his philosophy, the Bednars decided to protect their property with a conservation



A view of the Bednar property

easement held by NPC. As part of the process, the property was surveyed to resolve several deed discrepancies and an appraisal was done.

Recently, a landowner familiar with the Bednar property, and two other NPC protected properties, has begun working with NPC to conserve his own property.❖

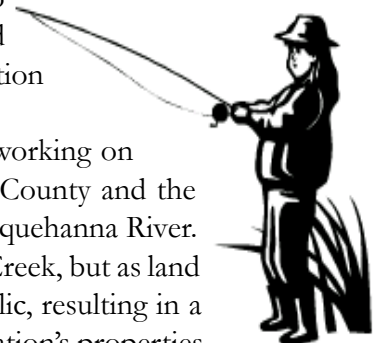
FISHING CREEK PUBLIC ACCESS PRESERVED

The Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy worked with the Fishing Creek Sportsmen's Association of Benton in Columbia County to conserve and provide public access to three properties along Fishing Creek (*see descriptions on page 5*). The properties total 92 acres and provide over 6,500 linear feet of creek access.

The Sportsmen and NPC want to provide permanent public access to the properties and Fishing Creek and ensure that the open space, forests and water resources would be conserved. The tool used to achieve permanent protection was a conservation easement agreement.

There are several Fishing Creeks in Pennsylvania, but the one we're working on begins on Sullivan County's North Mountain and passes through Columbia County and the communities of Benton, Lightstreet, and Bloomsburg before it enters the Susquehanna River.

Traditionally, landowners allowed neighbors and visitors to access the Creek, but as land is sub-divided and ownership changes, properties are being closed to the public, resulting in a lack of public access to Fishing Creek. The Fishing Creek Sportsmen's Association's properties are the only public access points on the central portion of the stream.



Fishing Creek continued on page 4...

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY FROM 6/1/2007 THROUGH 8/31/2007

Black Bear (\$500- 999)

Alan Viani & Jane Morgenstern
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Charles & Helen Schwarz
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Susan Joshi
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Alvin L. Snowiss
Linda Stein
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Red Oak (\$50- 99)

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Andra DeHart-Robbins
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D. Richard & Shirley Wenner
Jane B. Williams
Andrea Young

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Michael & Mary Ditchfield
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Torrance W. Englert, Sr.
Donald Faulkner
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John Hopkins
Harvey & Anne Katz
Ken & Jane Light
Linda C. Murray
Casey Pfitzenmayer
Becky Sanguedolce
Jerry & Melinda Updegraff
Armine Wodehouse
Chris Young

Honorariums

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by W. Holmes & Enid Yealy

Joanne Fisher
by Anne Rice & Rick Matukonis

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Many thanks to our corporate members. Please show your support of those businesses which have shown they care about the future of our communities.

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REGIONAL DINNERS PLANNED

Join NPC this October as we hold our regional dinners in Wellsboro and Lock Haven.

The Penn Wells Hotel in Wellsboro will again be the location of the **Tioga County Dinner**. Join us on October 18 for socializing, dining, and learning.

NPC was part of the Pine Creek Watershed Council that developed the Pine Creek Watershed Rivers Conservation Plan. Once the plan was complete, the group began working to implement some of the recommendations and wanted to continue studying the watershed.

This group got a two-for-one bargain. Jason Weigle, a former Tioga County Watershed Specialist, was looking for a thesis topic for his Masters degree. Jason began work on a thesis that would look at actual and perceived social and economic changes in the watershed and region over time and the current pattern of land ownership within the watershed. Jason transcribed oral histories and collected additional audio histories (this is part one of the two-for-one bargain). This information, as well as census information, and data provided by the counties' various departments helped him research the topic (this is part two, his research and study). So, what did Jason learn? Come to the dinner to find out!

The cash bar and socializing begins at 5:30pm. Dinner is set for 6:00pm with the program beginning after dinner. We'll be having a seared and roasted chicken breast stuffed with sun-dried tomato and goat

...Dinners continued on back page.

CAMPER COURT DEDICATION

DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis, Representative Garth Everett, and Arnie Kriner (representing Senator Roger Madigan) joined NPC in celebrating the inclusion of the former Pine Creek Camper Court in the State Forest system. The celebration was held on September 12, 2007 on Pine Creek, literally – the water level was so low that a piece of exposed bedrock was used as the site for the event.

Thanks to our donors for their help in this success! Thanks also to Paul and Nancy Yoder, Gene and Marva Brown, Elizabeth Dugan, Woodlands Bank, Vassallo Engineering and Surveying, McCormick Law Firm, and DCNR's Bureau of Forestry.❖

SUMMER KAYAK FLOAT GREAT FUN



By mid-July the watershed of the Susquehanna River's West Branch hadn't received much rain and the water was low. Even so, 16 NPC members and friends boarded Canoe Susquehanna's kayaks for the eight mile trip from Montoursville to Muncy.

The group paddled past Racetrack Island and King Island, through riffles and beside tree-covered banks. They saw an immature bald eagle fly along the river and perch in a large tree, swallows flying overhead, killdeer calling from gravel bars, and a fisherman landing a smallmouth bass. They passed a stone wall built in the early 1800s as part of the Pennsylvania Canal, and extensive river-bottom ledges exposed by the low water.

This delightful section of the West Branch is also called "The Wild Reach" since there is no road beside the river and the railroad has little traffic. If the river had been higher, the group could have paddled up the long sinuous backwater called "The Gut" which approaches Lycoming County's oldest house, the Samuel Wallis house, built in 1769.❖

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NPC OFFICERS ELECTED

Our Board's organizational meeting is always held at the first board meeting following the Annual Membership Dinner. During the organizational meeting, the board elects officers – Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Gail Zimmerman was elected Chairman. Gail is a realtor with Fish Real Estate. Her two sons are grown and living in Arizona and Florida. She and her husband, Mel, live along Mill Creek near Montoursville.

Matt Cramer was elected Vice-Chairman. Matt is Vice-President at Merrill Lynch's Williamsport Office. He and his wife, Lisa, have two sons and a daughter. They live in Williamsport.

Richard Schluter was elected to continue as the Secretary. Rich is an attorney at McCormick Law Firm. He and his wife, Beth, have a son and a daughter. They live in Loyalsock Township.

Steve Deitrick was again elected Treasurer. Steve is an accountant with Lori Moore, CPA. He and his wife, Teri, have a daughter and a son. They also live in Loyalsock Township.❖

LAND TRUST ACCREDITATION SOUGHT BY NPC

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association recently hosted a pilot course on “Managing Conservation Easements” designed by the Land Trust Alliance. The course is part of an educational program being developed by the Land Trust Alliance to assist land trusts in preparing for land trust accreditation. Renee Carey, NPC Executive Director, attended this course.

Land trust accreditation is a new program. The goal is to ensure that land trusts understand various aspects of land transactions and organizational sustainability. Accreditation will also provide land owners with an assurance that the land trust they are working with is well-prepared to handle transactions.

While NPC has never had to defend a conservation easement, the organization knows it is inevitable. Presenters discussed what, when and how to document it. Another topic was how to manage changing conditions with conservation easements. The group also learned more about the range of options available to address enforcement and amendment options.

NPC is going to begin preparing for accreditation this fall. Look for more updates on this process in upcoming newsletters.❖

“THE PULSE OF THE HEARTLAND” REPORT PUBLISHED

This summer NPC coordinated the writing and production of “The Pulse of Heartland.” The report highlights the various research projects underway by the Susquehanna River Heartland Coalition for Environmental Studies (SRHCES).

The feature article of this report is on abandoned mine drainage and highlights some of the efforts underway to remediate this river-wide impact. This feature article ties together the research of various professors participating in the coalition. On the science side, there are tie-ins to both biological studies that are underway and geological studies in progress. On the humanities side of the academic aisle, professors are looking at Centraia, and poets who write about the “orange” water of their waterway. The publication will be first distributed during WVIA’s premiere of “Hope for Polluted Water,” a new documentary examining the issue of AMD, abandoned mine drainage.

Molly Clay, a graduate student in Bucknell’s English program, researched and wrote the articles. Molly is originally from the Kutztown area and has a Bachelor’s Degree from Bloomsburg University.❖

NPC is part of SRHCES, a watershed organization whose geographic focus is the entire Susquehanna River West Branch and the lower North Branch watersheds in Pennsylvania.

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Interested people gather at the dedication ceremony to learn more about the Fishing Creek access.

...Fishing Creek continued from page 1.

NPC received financial assistance from the Columbia County Commissioners, DCNR, the Columbia-Montour Visitor’s Bureau, Columbia County Trout Unlimited, the Wal-Mart at Buckhorn and numerous individuals to complete easements on the three properties (*see descriptions on page 5*). A well attended dedication ceremony and picnic was held adjacent to the Sportsmen’s fish hatchery in Benton on July 10. Several Columbia County Commissioners spoke to express their appreciation for the efforts to retain public access to Fishing Creek.

Now, thanks to the Fishing Creek Sportsmen’s Association, NPC and our other partners, fishermen rich and poor, old and young, novice and expert are assured that portions of Fishing Creek will always be open to them.❖

FISHING CREEK PUBLIC ACCESS SITES

Power Dam –located about two miles north of Benton on both sides of Fishing Creek along PA Route 487. The protected property's 19 acres contain over 2,900 feet of the stream as well as the remains of a concrete dam that once provided water to a millrace which, in turn, fed an electric generating station. Dense forest on both sides of the stream shades the water, helping to maintain the cool temperatures required by trout. A parking area (which will remain unpaved) just off Route 487 facilitates public access.



Overlook – located one mile from Benton on Pennsylvania Route 239; with over 2,600 feet of frontage on Fishing Creek. This 42 acre property also has a beautiful vista along Route 239 providing motorists with views of the Fishing Creek valley. The creek frontage is on the east side of the stream and may be accessed by parking at the roadside vista.

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Zaner – 2 ½ miles south of Stillwater on the east side of Fishing Creek; the unpaved parking area is accessed from a township road near Zaners Bridge. The protected property contains 31 acres with over 1,000 feet of frontage on the stream; its woodland, which has a management plan written by a forester, shades the stream. The abandoned grade of the historic Bloomsburg and Sullivan Railroad borders the property for approximately 2,500 feet. The railroad carried passengers and freight between Bloomsburg and the village of Jamison City at the base of North Mountain.



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...Dinners continued from page 3

cheese. The cost is \$20.00 per person. Reservations are due by October 15.

The **Clinton County Dinner** is planned for Tuesday, October 30 in the Lock Haven University's Parsons Union Building. The cost is \$17 per person and reservations must be received by October 23. Dinner is at 6pm with the program beginning at 7pm.

The program this year will be on the efforts being coordinated by national Trout Unlimited to restore the West Branch Susquehanna River by remediating abandoned mine drainage (AMD). A strategy for remediation is being developed now, and an economic assessment is being done.

Amy Wolfe, Director of Abandoned Mine Programs with Trout Unlimited, will be the speaker. Amy is a graduate of Lock Haven University and has been with national Trout Unlimited for over 8 years. Amy and her family live in Mill Hall. ♦

Please mail reservation form and payment to:
NPC, PO Box 2083, Williamsport, PA 17703
Checks should be made payable to NPC. You can use VISA or Mastercard by calling the NPC office at 323-6222 (M-Th).

Regional Dinners Reservation Form

Name: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Tioga County Dinner - October 18

_____ Number of attendees x \$20 = _____

Reservations are due by October 15

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Clinton County Dinner - October 30

_____ Number of attendees x \$17 = _____

Reservations are due by October 23

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Guest Name: _____