

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

An Artisan Shop and a Garden for the Food Bank

Landowners often ask NPC's staff how a property can be used after a conservation easement is placed on it. The landowners are concerned that the conservation easement's requirements will be too restrictive and not allow for the property to adapt to new owners and new ideas.

Two properties with conservation easements held by NPC have adapted to new owners with new ideas. One property, on Pepper Street outside of Muncy, is now home to an artisan shop; another property, outside of Wellsboro, hosts a garden for the local foodbank.

Helen McMahon and Marvin Eichenlaub worked together for years running "Riverstone Antiques" out of the barn at Riverstone. The antique shop focused on Pennsylvania primitives. Helen lived on the property with her sister, Marie, and Marie's husband, Al Logue. Riverstone is in the Port Penn area outside of Muncy.

Using Marvin's carpentry skills and materials from historic structures, the barn was renovated into a shop that was sympathetic to the historic nature of the property and the goods for sale in the shop. Helen, Marvin, and Al all had their own role in making the business work. The shop moved from the barn into a section of the house before eventually closing.

Helen and Marie continued to live on the property, enjoying the views of the river and farm fields. The sisters donated a conservation easement on their 19.5 acres in 1994.

When Lara Schmitt purchased the property in 2008 the barn was being used for storage, and

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Penns Creek Property Conveyed to the Bureau of Forestry

In the Spring newsletter we reported on the acquisition of 13.25 acres along Penns Creek in Hartley Township, Union County. The project started several years ago when NPC staff began working with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry on creating access to Penns Creek in Union County.

NPC worked with Richard and Janice Layton to purchase the property he and his sister had inherited. The property was then sold to the Bureau of Forestry over the summer and is now part of the Bald Eagle State Forest. A trail down to the stream will be developed to help fishermen and paddlers get to the Creek.

While this property can now be used for recreation, please keep in mind that the neighboring properties are private, and you should only park in designated parking areas. The Bureau of Forestry already owns a parking area nearby, at the site of the former railroad station. It's only a short walk from the station to the property. A dedication is planned for 2012. Keep an eye out for more details.

Kayak the West Branch...Next Year

Due to flood damage at various river access points, changes in the River's channels, debris that is now in different places, and the rain cycle we were in, the October 2 kayak trip on the West Branch was cancelled. Hopefully 2012 will be a better year for River events.



Conserving working farms and forests



Foodbank Garden created on the Rogers Conservation Easement

Artisan Shop and Garden for Food Bank...

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didn't look like a shop. Lara moved things out, dusted things off, and cleaned things up. In the summer of 2011 she and her business partner opened Port Penn Peddler, selling both the work of local artists and merchandise lines that are distributed nationally.

Schmitt contacted NPC early on with her idea and a list of questions. She kept NPC's staff in the loop as she worked through the Township's requirements for the business. Signage, parking, and restrooms were the major items that needed to be coordinated and addressed. Port Penn Peddler's door opened in August 2011.

Another property that has had new owners with new ideas is the Rogers Conservation Easement in Charleston Township, Tioga County. The property was sold in 2006 and the new owner, Timothy Keller, worked to get some things updated, and address issues related to a failing bank behind the house.

The family planted their garden and spent time weeding and watering. In 2007 Timothy and Joan added a second garden. This garden would be weeded and watered too, but the harvest would be taken to the local foodbank. The Kellers do most of the work, but have some friends and neighbors that come to help pick and gather.

Keller estimates that nearly 400 pounds of produce went to the foodbank from the garden in

2010. He's not sure what the total will be for 2011, but is pleased with this year's crop to date. They are considering expanding the garden next year to help the foodbank serve more clients.

These are just two examples of how properties under conservation easement have adapted to new owners.

Board of Directors "Advance" in Loganton

Here at NPC we use one of Will Rogers's quotes, "...land, they ain't making it anymore..." in our presentation on conservation easement basics. Mr. Rogers also said, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." This is probably the best way to describe the purpose in this year's Board Advance.

This year, the Board focused on taking the existing strategic plan and breaking it down into specific actions. The group felt the plan had a lot of "good stuff" in it, but it needed to be put into doable action steps to help get more things underway. Using a process and worksheets developed by the Board Development Committee, the Board spent the morning working in groups and outlining the various action steps needed to continue progressing on NPC's goals.

The regular Board meeting was two days later and focused on the follow-up actions to keep the process moving forward. The Board also reviewed their committee assignments, and discussed the various roles committees have at NPC.

The Board is planning to use their October meeting as a work session. The group will review and refine the ideas discussed at the September Advance. The timing coincides with the budgeting process, and each will help inform the other.

Thank you to Glenn and Claudia Vernon for hosting the group at their offices, Albertin Vernon Architecture, just outside of Loganton. The property sits along Fishing Creek and provided inspiration on a quiet Sunday morning.

MEMBERSHIP ACTIVITY • July 1, 2011 to September 30, 2011

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Many thanks to our corporate members for their support of NPC's mission. Please take note of those businesses which have shown they care about the future of our communities with their corporate memberships and show them YOUR support.

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Memorial for the Swoyer Family
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IN-KIND DONATION

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Thank You...to all those who continue to support the work of the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

Regional Dinner Recap

Thank you to all the members who came out for one of NPC's regional dinners in Lock Haven and Mansfield! Stella A's was our venue in Lock Haven. Pete Lopes (Clinton County Economic Partnership) and Doug D'Amore (Sproul State Forest) provided the group with an update on outdoor recreation's role in Clinton County's economy, and the plans for the river access point at Bakers Run.

In Mansfield, the group assembled at Lamb's Creek. Jason Weigle is analyzing data from the census to determine what documented population changes, if any, are taking place in the region. He used this information to also discuss perceived change versus real change in communities.

Thank you again to everyone who came out.

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

PO Box 2083
Williamsport PA 17703
570-323-6222
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“Some Good News” on the Stream Restoration Projects

The subject line on Carol Kafer’s email read, “Some Good News...” Was she right!

Carol is the President of the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association and a biology professor at Pennsylvania College of Technology and Science. In 2009 she helped coordinate a stream restoration project on Wallis Run. The project involved NPC’s Growing Greener Grant from DEP, funding from the State Wildlife Grant program, and the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission’s (PFBC) habitat staff.

PFBC staff visited the stream section and designed some basic structures (log vanes and a mudsill) to increase aquatic habitat and help alleviate erosion at the site. The location is on the Loyalsock State Forest, which allowed PFBC to work with Forestry staff and volunteers during construction in July 2009.

The site is about 2 miles from where Wallis Run enters Loyalsock Creek, and about 4 miles from the Slabtown Bridge. During the September flooding caused by Tropical Storm Lee, Loyalsock Creek is reported to have crested at its highest level on record, higher than the Agnes Flood in 1972 or the 1996 Flood. This unprecedented water level caused major flooding and destruction. Wallis Run Road, about 2.5 miles from the stream project site is gone and portions of Slabtown Bridge collapsed.

NPC staff and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission staff discussed the flooding and assumed substantial repair work would be needed at the 2009 Wallis Run site. During the design

process, a lot of things are considered. However, a 500 year flood (maybe larger) 2 years after construction is not normal.

PFBC was going to visit the site after their construction season wraps up in October to assess the damage and determine what remediation was needed. Carol got there first. She visited the site on September 25 and was pleasantly surprised to find very little damage and the structures still in place. The before photo was taken about 2 months after construction was completed in 2009. The after photo is courtesy of Carol. The water level is still up in the after photo, but you can see the log vane and several of the anchor stones are still there.

Thank you Carol for checking on the site and sharing photos! This certainly was “some good news”!

