



"Conserving working farms and forests"

Report to the Membership

Volume 16, Issue 4
Fall 2006

NORTHCENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA CONSERVANCY

Conservation Coalition Meets

NPC coordinated the meeting in Clearfield of a number of land trusts and water resource groups earlier this year. The purpose was to help start a dialogue among the conservation groups working in the PA Wilds and the West Branch Susquehanna River drainage. The PA Wilds and the Susquehanna drainage areas cover much of the same territory, with the Wilds extending beyond the Susquehanna drainage on the west, and West Branch drainage extending farther south than the PA Wilds region.

Currently the Commonwealth is working to promote the PA Wilds as a region for outdoor recreation and an opportunity to tell Pennsylvania's conservation history. There is also focus being placed on the abandoned mine drainage problem in the West Branch Susquehanna drainage from the state level.

The non-profit conservation groups (or non-governmental organizations) at work in this region see the need and opportunity for greater communication within the "conservation community." Funded by the Western Pennsylvania Watershed Program, the organizations were able to meet again this summer. This is a great opportunity for the conservation community to work together. Keep an eye out for more updates in our newsletter. ❖

NPC Now ... DCNR later

NPC has protected another property – this time through acquisition. The Pine Creek valley in Tioga and Lycoming counties has been a NPC land protection priority for many years. The first property NPC ever protected was the 176 acre Townsend tract near Ramsey back in 1991.

Now NPC has acquired the former Pine Creek Camper Court's 176 acres just

south of the village of Slate Run. Several times over the years high water had flooded the campground, sending trailers downstream and littering Pine Creek's banks with their remnants and contents. In addition, the mowed lawn of the campground had eliminated wildlife habit.

When the campground's owners decided to downsize their operation, NPC saw an opportunity to eliminate repeated problems along Pine Creek from high water flooding in the campground, and an opportunity to protect the riparian area along the stream as well as the Pine Creek and Route 414 view of the property's hillside.

With over 2,300 feet of frontage on Pine Creek and over 3,000 feet of the Pine Creek Trail, this property has significant recreation value. The former campground

NPC NOW continued on page 5.

"It is not enough to understand the natural world; the point is to defend and preserve it."

-Edward Abbey



NPC Closing in on 10,000 Acres

It is hard to believe, but NPC is approaching 10,000 conserved acres. We anticipate reaching this incredible milestone by the end of 2006 and are beginning to plan for a celebration of this great achievement. If you are interested in helping with this event in any way, please contact the NPC office.

It has been only with the support of our members that we have been able to focus on protecting the resources that we have here in northcentral Pennsylvania.

Thank you. ❖

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Membership Activity from 6/1/2006 through 8/31/2006



CORPORATE MEMBERS

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 membership and show YOUR support to them.

Osprey

(\$1000- 1999)

Mark C. Oberheim DMD
Montour Oil Service Company

American Kestrel

(\$500- 749)

Jersey Shore State Bank
Keystone Forging Co.
Lycoming Co. Resource
Management
Glenn O. Hawbaker Inc.

Small Business

(\$100- 499)

PMF Industries Inc.
Wayne Twp. Landfill CCSWA
Raup & Wiley, Attorneys at Law
Clinton County Economic
Partnership

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Bobcat (\$1000- 4999)

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Black Bear (\$500- 999)

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Charles & Helen Schwarz
William & Kimberly
Van Campen
Charles & Jane Darrow

White-tailed Deer

(\$250- 499)

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Robert & Sarah Newcomb
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Len Richards &
Maureen McClure
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White Pine (\$25- 34)

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Max Geise
Jack & Michele Davidson
Michael & Mary Ditchfield
Linda C. Murray
Dave Winton
Mountain Graphics
Casey Pfitzenmayer
James Geurts
Donald Faulkner
Conrad Schlesinger
John B. Raymond
Ken & Jane Light

Additional Donations

Alan Viani &
Jane Morgenstern

Western PA Watershed
Program

Byers Island Project Donations

Susquehanna River
Wetlands Trust

The Degenstein
Foundation

Honorariums

Sam C. Schon
by William & Ruth Correll

Memorials

Ruth Burns
by Joanne Fisher

Maurice Sheaffer
by George & Shirley
Durrwachter

Item Donation

Dunkin' Donuts

Is the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy in your will? Remembering NPC in your will is a way to leave a legacy to future generations. If you will a gift to NPC, please include our full name and federal id number (23-2606163) to ensure that your wishes are carried out as you intend, as there are many organizations that use the word "conservancy."

Federal Legislation Helps Promote Land Conservation

By Andrew M. Loza, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Land Trust Association

In the odd way of politics, the new Federal Pension Protection Act helps protect family farms, working forests, wildlife and water. Provisions in the law expand tax benefits for families who enter into agreements to conserve their land. These agreements, often called conservation easements, protect special places and natural resources while keeping land in private ownership.

Conservation agreements establish conservation goals for a property and set limitations on uses of the property to achieve these goals. The landowner keeps control of the property subject to the limits. The agreement is tailored to the character of the property, the wishes of the owner and the purposes of the participating conservation organization. For example, an agreement might prohibit construction within 200 feet of a stream but allow it everywhere else. Another agreement might support farming and building a residence but forbid any other development. Another might allow sustainable timbering but restrict most other uses. The agreement applies to present and future landowners, protecting the land forever.

With the new tax provisions, federal law now works much better for folks who conserve their valuable land for the benefit of all. (For tax purposes, the value of a conservation easement is the difference between the land's value with the easement and its value without the easement.) Previously, a family earning \$50,000 a year who donated a \$1 million conservation easement could take a total of \$90,000 in charitable deductions distributed over six years. The new law allows that same family to use \$400,000 in deductions over 16 years – a substantial improvement. If the landowner qualifies as a farmer, they might receive up to \$800,000 in deductions for their million dollar gift for the public good.

Donations and partial donations that meet IRS requirements can take advantage of the federal tax benefits. Note that even with tax benefits, a landowner can still make more money by selling their land for development. Consequently, the decision to enter a conservation agreement is not just about tax benefits; it is about conserving natural resources and places that matter for our children.

Fifty charitable conservation organizations working in communities across the Commonwealth have

partnered with landowners to conserve 150,000 acres of forest, farm and community open space using conservation agreements.

Senator Rick Santorum wrote and championed the act's conservation provisions in Congress. Thanks to his hard work, the generosity of conservation-minded landowners, and the efforts of charitable conservation organizations, more of the forest, family farms and other special places that make Pennsylvania great will be protected for present and future generations.

The enhanced tax benefits are only available through 2007, so now is the time for conservation-minded landowners to act. They can find a local conservation organization to partner with and other information by visiting www.conserveland.org. ❖

Annual Appeal Letters Coming Out in November

Every fall NPC gives you an opportunity to make an extra year end donation to continue your support of land conservation. This year your letter should be arriving in your mailbox in late November. We hope you will read the letter and consider making a gift to help NPC in its mission of conserving the working farms and forests in Northcentral Pennsylvania. ❖

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Need a Speaker?

If a club or organization you belong to needs a speaker or program, keep the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy in mind. A staff member or volunteer can attend your meeting and provide a presentation on the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, or a specific project on which we have worked. Call the NPC office if you are interested. ❖

Correction to Summer Newsletter

In the Summer newsletter we reported on a mailing some of our members may be receiving. Regrettably, the article left some people with a wrong conclusion. There is not an agreement between The Nature Conservancy and the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy for a direct mail partnership. The Nature Conservancy did not share any member names and addresses with NPC.

Restoring Streamside Buffers

In NPC's Fall 2005 newsletter we explained our involvement with CREP. In case you missed that issue, CREP is the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program established to protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion and protect water quality on cropland by planting trees and shrubs. In 2004 NPC entered into an agreement with PPL to restore the forested riparian (stream-side) buffers on 128 acres of cropland along Chillisquaque Creek in Montour County. NPC has been working with PPL and the US Department of Agriculture's CREP to establish the buffers.

Tree planting began in 2004 on 35 acres and continued in 2005 on an additional 37 acres. In the spring of 2006, more than 41 acres were planted with 5,700 trees and 3,700 shrubs. This fall the remaining 15 acres will be planted and the stream-side buffers will be well on their way to keeping sediment and agricultural chemicals out of the water, to shading the stream and to providing wildlife habitat.

If you drive along Route 54 between Turbotville and Washingtonville you may notice the light-colored tree tubes which protect the planted seedlings from deer. Already some of the planted trees have grown out of the top of the tubes, which act as miniature greenhouses, giving the seedlings a boost in their first few years.

NPC leases the 128 planted acres from PPL and, in turn, NPC receives payment from the US Department of Agriculture for the land taken out of crop production and put into the CREP program. Our responsibility is monitoring the survival of the tree seedlings and notifying the planting contractor regarding how many need to be replaced.

Water quality, wildlife, PPL, NPC and all of us benefit.❖

Greenway Moving Forward

The West Branch Advisory Committee has been working on updating the list of potential greenway projects for implementation. If you or your organization is planning a project that is related to the River- or if you just have an idea for such a project - we need to hear from you! The Greenway goal is to "think regionally and develop locally" - and we need your ideas if we are going to succeed with this being a comprehensive, grass-roots effort.

Through Susquehanna Greenway funding we can offer technical support to help you develop your project scope, assist with a grant application, identify potential funding sources, introduce you to potential partners, and help you transform your great idea into a great project. Contact the NPC office for more information.❖



NPC Awarded Grant for Byer's Island

Back in the Spring NPC took title to the Byer's archipelago. The name "archipelago" is the name Brook Lenoir of the Susquehanna River Trail Association used to refer to the five islands in the Susquehanna River near Shalomokin Dam. One word is easier to say and sounds better than "five islands in the Susquehanna River near Shalomokin Dam", so we will use the term too!

Since the last issue of the newsletter, NPC was awarded a grant from the Degenstein Foundation in Sunbury to assist with this project. The grant from the Foundation is allowing NPC to offset the project costs.

NPC executed an option to purchase agreement with the Commonwealth. It should take about six to eight weeks for paperwork processing and the archipelago should be in state ownership before the end of November.❖

Golf Outing Cancelled

Due to unforeseen circumstances, NPC has cancelled the fall Golf Outing which had been scheduled for Monday, September 25th at White Deer Golf Course.

Since we will not have the projected income generated from this annual event, we welcome recommendations from NPC's membership for a replacement fundraising activity. Perhaps you know of an event that has worked well for another organization, especially if it is something that this region has not utilized as an organization fundraiser. Your input is important.

Thank you again to everyone who planned to be a part of this year's event. NPC is very appreciative of the pledged support we received from sponsors and donors.❖

Regional Programs Planned



Fall is the season for NPC's regional membership programs! Come learn about Hellbenders as well as the proposed trail linking

Wellsboro and Wellsboro Junction. Please let the NPC office know if you plan to attend either of these programs.

Clinton County Regional Program

On October 23, 2006, Dr. Peter Petokas of the Lycoming College Clean Water Institute will provide an overview of hellbenders and the research he is conducting on its populations in local waterways. Known also as "mud dogs", hellbenders were once "hunted" because they were thought to feed on trout eggs (they do not).

This program will be held on Lock Haven University's campus and is free and open to the public. There will be a casual dinner buffet in the Eagle Wing Snack Bar in Lock Haven University's Parsons Union Building before the program for a cost of \$16.00 per person. The program will also be held in the Parsons Union Building in the multipurpose room.

Tioga County Regional Program

Want to know more about the possibility of a trail linking Wellsboro Junction with Wellsboro? Then attend our Tioga County dinner on November 2. Jim Weaver, Tioga County Planning, will provide us with an overview of the project, why its needed, and what it could mean for Tioga County.

The program and dinner will be held in the Penn Wells's back dining room. The cost for the evening is \$20.00 per person. ❖

NPC Now continued from page 1.

occupied 19 acres along the stream, acres which now present the opportunity to restore streamside vegetation. The remaining 155 acres are on a steep hillside rising 945 feet from the valley floor. The mountain top contains an impressive stand of red pine near the southern edge of its natural range. The hillside is covered by a mixed oak forest with a scattering of large old white pine.

The purchase of this property brings NPC's total protected acres to just under 10,000. The former campground will be transferred to the Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry for inclusion in the Tiadaghton State Forest and will then be open to the public. ❖

Grant Receipt Misconception

Recently the Williamsport Sun-Gazette printed an article describing a generous donor's large gift to a conservation organization. NPC thinks this is wonderful because all support for nature and land protection benefits everyone.

However, there has been a bit of confusion over the article. Several NPC members commented to NPC staff that they were delighted we had received a \$2.5 million gift. That would be wonderful, however the recipient of this money was not the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, but rather a large national conservation organization that has recently become more active in our area. Please keep in mind that NPC is your local land conservation organization, serving the 12-county area of the north central region of Pennsylvania. ❖



Member Get a Member Campaign

Please don't forget! The Member-Get-a-Member Campaign is still underway. Ask your family and friends to join you in supporting land conservation in this region. Cut out the form below and hand it to a potential member, or ask them to visit www.npcweb.org to download a membership form.

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Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone (area code): _____

Email Address: _____

NPC Member Referral Name: _____

Please enroll me at the following level:

____ White Pine (\$25)

____ Sugar Maple (\$35)

____ Red Oak (\$50)

____ Black Cherry (\$100)

____ White Tail Deer (\$250)

____ Black Bear (\$500)

The official registration and financial information of the Conservancy may be obtained by calling the Pennsylvania Department of State toll-free within PA 800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. The Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

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Upcoming NP Events

October 23 Clinton County Regional Program

This free program will be held at Lock Haven University and will provide an overview of hellbenders and the research being conducted on its populations in local waterways. There will be an optional, casual dinner buffet for a cost of \$16.00 per person.

October 29 Waterfalls of McIntyre

In conjunction with the Alpine Club we'll pass the waterfalls of Miners Run and go through the location of the old mining village of McIntyre, on our way to a rock outcrop with views of Lycoming Creek valley. On the way back, we'll use the old railroad switchbacks to make our way to Rock Run Road. This rugged, six mile hike will be on the Loyalsock State Forest.



November 2 Tioga County Regional Program

Come learn more about the possibility of a trail linking Wellsboro Junction and Wellsboro. An overview of the project, why its needed, and what it could mean for Tioga County will be discussed. The program and dinner will be held at the Penn Wells in Wellsboro. The cost for the evening is \$20.00 per person.

November 3 Don't miss First Friday!

NPC will be hosting Roger Shipley's students on Friday, November 3. Roger's Lycoming College class will be displaying the landscapes they painted this semester. The exhibit opens at 6:00pm and will be open until 8:30pm.



Please call the Conservancy office at 570-323-6222 to pre-register for all events. NOTE: Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.