

# Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

## Conservation Easement Visits for 2017 Wrapped Up in November

*Thanks to the support of our members and the landowners who want to conserve their property, NPC holds conservation easements on 47 properties in nine counties in northcentral Pennsylvania. Each of those properties must be inspected at least once a year to insure that the terms of the conservation easement are being met. Some highlights from the final four easement inspection visits of 2017 –*

**Robwood Mountain** – High atop Bradford County's Robwood Mountain lies one of the largest properties conserved by NPC, the Robwood Mountain easement. Much of the property was cleared for farmland in the mid and late 1800s and abandoned in the early part of the 20th Century. The abandoned farms reverted to forest which is now crisscrossed by stone walls built to confine or exclude livestock and clear stone from the fields as well as the cellar holes of the homes. Those walls bespeak of the unending labor required of the early settlers and remind us of how quickly changing agricultural technology made these farms a place a family couldn't make a living.



*Conserving working farms and forests*



*An 1800s stone wall on Robwood Mountain*



*The remains of a minor forest fire at Green Hills farm*

**Green Hills Farm** – Not far from Williamsport, the Green Hills Farm reaches from a stream valley to the crest of the hills on either side of the valley. During one visit before the conservation easement was put in place a pair of courting black bears was encountered. This year the monitoring visit was uneventful – but several weeks later the landowner called to say that a

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## 283 Structures and 1.5 Miles of Stream Later...

The partners we work with in the stream restoration partnership always do a super job of finding projects. The 2017 construction season was no exception. The partnership worked with 12 landowners this year.

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's reports show the partnership:

- Constructed 283 structures (multi-log vanes, single log vanes, muddills, etc.)
- Planted buffers at 3 sites
- Installed streambank fencing at 4 sites
- Built 8 crossings (an area where farm equipment or animals can cross the stream safely and without damaging the streambank or streambed)

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## Conservation...

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forest fire had burned part of the property. The fire had started elsewhere and burned several acres of the conserved property's woodland. The fire was not particularly hot and will probably do minimal damage.

**Nichols Run** – Nichols Run bisects the property NPC calls the Nichols Run easement; a public road closely parallels the stream. As typical for the area, a fair number of white ash trees grow on the good soils near the stream. Now the invasive emerald ash borer is resulting in most of the ash trees succumbing to the insect attacks. The property owner is concerned about the dead ash trees falling on the road and resulting in injury to people on the road and requested permission to cut the dead trees. NPC granted a waiver to the conservation easement's restriction on cutting trees along the stream. The waiver permitted cutting the trees provided there would be no mechanical logging.



*Nichols Run*

**Laning Creek** – The final conservation easement inspection of 2017 was of the Laning Creek property; hay is now the only crop raised on this old farm. The landowner has established food plots for wildlife on some of the old fields and on an abandoned road on a hillside. Because of his interest in wildlife, several trail cameras watch over a few of the food plots, three were seen during the inspection visit. The cameras have obtained photographs of deer, bear and bobcat as well as some guy from NPC walking past.



*A trail camera on the Laning Creek easement*



*Watershed Specialists observe the river simulator*

## River Simulator

Even big kids like to play with the river simulator. The educational tool the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania's Bernard and Eva Bredbenner Fund and the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association provided funding for was used in a training for the Watershed Specialists from regional conservation districts. While several of them were familiar with the simulator, others were not. NPC has some rocks and "logs" that allow participants to build single log vanes and muddills.



## Think Warm Thoughts and Plan to Paddle

It's not too early to start thinking about NPC's 2018 kayak trip. You can kick off the summer by paddling with NPC and Canoe Susquehanna. We're going to be paddling on May 27, 2018.

Betsy will be updating the Canoe Susquehanna website over the next month or so. For now, mark the date on your calendar and keep an eye out for more information.

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## Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

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## **283 Structures...** *Continued from front page*

The work will continue in 2018. A DEP Growing Greener Grant was awarded to NPC to continue working with our fabulous partners and stabilize streambanks and improve water quality. Site visits are being scheduled now so a projects list and schedule can be developed for 2018.

The work focuses on Ag. sediment impaired streams. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection classifies a stream as impaired if the aquatic community (fish, macroinvertebrates, plants, and algae) is not healthy and there are pollutants or pollution that needs to be minimized or eliminated to return the waterbody to a healthy condition. The causes of the impairment can come from a variety of sources. Ag. sediment impaired streams typically have sedimentation coming from cut streambanks, stream crossings for equipment and animals, or soil washing into streams from plowed fields.

***If you have included NPC in your will, please let us know so that that we may thank you during your lifetime.***



## **Celebrity Waiter Night**

We're making calls now to line up our Celebrity Waiters for March 23, 2018, but you can call The Peter Herdic House anytime to make reservations.

## **Annual Membership Meeting**

More information will be sent out in late March, but for now, you can mark "May 1, 2018" on your calendar as NPC's 2018 Membership Meeting. We'll be at The Peter Herdic House with socializing at 6:00pm, dinner at 6:30pm, and the membership meeting to follow dinner.