

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

The Positive Impact of Public Lands During the Pandemic

A Message from NPC Executive Director, Renee' Carey

There's no doubt about it. COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus 2019) has changed how we are living our lives and how we are conserving the rural landscape and waterways of this region. But because of our members and donors it's also changed how we look at the places we conserve.

There are the obvious changes to how we're doing our work – I'm typing this from my bedroom at home and have a list of all the things I need to grab or upload when I stop

in the office to check the mail. Which by the way, I'm only doing twice a week. There's the less obvious – what do you do when the metal shop calls to tell you the 400 pieces of rebar you ordered are ready for pick-up and the people who normally pick those up are unable to pick them up due to work restrictions.

We have postponed or cancelled all of the NPC events that were scheduled through mid-May. A lot of meetings are now Zoom video calls or conference calls. There are more emails to/between NPC's staff and no face to face discussions.

Things have changed, but it's not bad. It's just different. We're getting to see our colleagues dining rooms during video calls, and see their kids hop by ponytail flopping (she literally

hopped by) while we discuss the potential long term impacts and changes from COVID-19. We're talking to other land trusts at least weekly to share what we're facing and how we're approaching the new challenges.

Tamara, NPC's new Land Steward Specialist, got 6 conservation easement site visits completed before we stopped. The visits will get done. They just aren't going to get done like we planned in February.

How we are working as we conserve the region has changed, but we are still working to conserve the region. And we're seeing the value in the work our members and donors have already allowed to happen.

Maybe it was the timing of COVID-19 ramping up as the weather turned nice, but as the sporting world shut down and schools were closed people turned outside. People started going for walks and hikes and riding their bikes.

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Hikers find respite at Jacoby Falls during the pandemic.



Tamara Wagner joined the NPC staff as the new Land Steward Specialist in February 2020. Tamara has a BS in Environmental Resource Management with a Minor in Marine Science from Penn State University. Previously, she has served as a Fish and Wildlife Biologist with the USFWS and a Natural Resource Specialist with the USDA. Tamara is also a certified CrossFit Trainer and enjoys daily farm life with her family on their homestead in rural Danville. To welcome Tamara to NPC and/or reach out to her with any questions, please feel free to contact her at twagner@npcweb.org.



Johnson Easement

the Johnson Easement. This easement has a picturesque creekside path for anglers, nature lovers and quiet meditators alike!



Ault Easement

Ault Easement

Meeting with landowners is part of the fun of being a Land Stewardship Specialist! Hearing the stories and history of a particular piece of land helps to better understand its story! While being introduced to the Ault Easement, Mr. Tom Ault took time out of his day to give me some of the archeological history of this site. With its proximity to the West Branch Susquehanna River, it served as a prime location for Native Americans. NPC, with the help of landowners, is helping to conserve this local cultural history.

Spring Easement Visits

by Tamara Wagner, NPC Land Steward Specialist

Hello to the members and landowners supporting and working hand-in-hand with the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy! I was recently hired at NPC as the Land Stewardship Specialist, to fill the “hiking” shoes of longtime employee Charles Schwartz. I am excited to begin this chapter with NPC and have already completed early spring site visits. Let me update you on some of my adventures!

Johnson Easement

My inaugural site visit began here at Penns Creek. On a cool crisp morning, a slow and winding road brought me to this easement. My familiarity of this area comes from my husband’s uncle, Jay Livziey, whose family continues to own property on Penns Creek. He had a deep rooted love of conservation and habitat creation and preservation. I was pleasantly surprised to pass his property en route to

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Spring Easement Visits

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PPL Wetlands Easement

PPL Wetlands Easement

This wetlands site is a quick drive from my house! Wetlands provide essential habitat and protection from erosion, along with numerous other environmental benefits. Birdwatchers, wildlife observers, and recreational enthusiasts have championed for these properties! With this easement having adjoining lands focused on riparian tree plantings, this wetland site is benefitting from additional upstream restoration!



Benton Overlook



Power Dam

Fishing Creek Sportmen's Association Easements (Benton Overlook, Power Dam, Zaner)

On an overcast day that later turned into sunshine, Renee Carey and I set out to explore these three easements. Offering recreation and sporting benefits to local anglers and hikers, Renee and I set off on foot to access Fishing Creek and all it has to offer!

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Leave a Legacy

Anyone can leave a lasting legacy by naming NPC as a beneficiary in their will or living trust, life insurance, or retirement accounts. It is easy to do and it costs nothing during your lifetime. If you decide to do this, please let us know so we may thank you for this significant gift.

The Positive Impact of Public Lands During the Pandemic

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We're seeing photos from family and friends as they ride their bikes on the Pine Creek Rail Trail. We're seeing five times the normal number of people on a Sunday hike to Jacoby Falls. We're seeing people turn outside and to nature when they need a break from the "new normal."

The reason they can do this. The reason they have spaces outside to turn to is because of people who saw the value in conserving it and setting aside some spaces for public recreation. It's because of all the people who have donated and supported conservancies like NPC.

A lot of people are visiting these places for the first time. Hopefully they'll be back and continue to enjoy hiking and walking and biking when the stores re-open and schedules start to fill up again. In the meantime, we'll continue to call landowners and check email and discuss projects and ideas and move things ahead.

Did you know that you can set up a recurring, monthly donation with NPC?

Becoming a Monthly Giver is:

- **Convenient!** Your monthly donation will process automatically, with no calls to make or envelopes to mail.
- **Environmentally friendly!** It reduces the need for mailings from NPC and, in the process, reduces your carbon footprint.
- **Easier on your budget!** Spreading your support over the year monthly makes it easy to give generously.

Having reliable, recurring support from Monthly Givers helps increase NPC's efficiency and ability to do the most for northcentral PA year round. Visit [NPCweb.org/donate](https://npcweb.org/donate) to become a Monthly Giver today.



Through all the uncertainties, nature continues to bring joy and peace of mind to so many!

Spring Easement Visits

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Mexico Road Easement

My last site visit this quarter was to NPC's Mexico Road Easement in Montour County. These sprawling farm fields, complete with a riparian buffer next to its' stream were a delight to hike. I'll be looking forward to being able to get back out to visit and explore more of these beautiful lands!



Mexico Road Easement

Northcentral Stream Partnership Gets Underway (for a day)

The weather this winter was overall pretty mild, but the partners who work on the stream bank projects were still ready to get out of the office (away from the paperwork) and on a stream – pounding rebar and nailing geotech fabric.

And that's just what they did on March 16. They got out to Turtle Creek and had over 200 feet of stream done.

Now, if you remember back, the afternoon of March 16 is when Governor Wolf announced PA's state agencies were closing their offices and would be moving to telecommuting in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Not what you want to hear when you've got a bunch of logs and rock and rebar sitting on a site and an equipment operator digging trenches and setting logs.

A quick call to the equipment operator (he's the only one with his phone on him during projects) got word to the crew that we needed to talk as soon as possible. When we did talk we quickly figured out how to "close up" the site so we could walk away for a couple weeks (hopefully not longer) and not cause a problem for the landowner. We were working in March because we wanted to be in and out before the landowner planted the fields along the stream. Walking away we knew we had to leave the site so he could get that planting done if we didn't get back.

So, we started on March 16 and closed the site on March 17. While this isn't the end of the 2020 construction season it's certainly an interesting start. Stay tuned. We'll be providing updates on the projects and things underway.



Stream work kicks off for a day at a site along Turtle Creek.

Clinton County Tourism and Recreation Grant Awarded to Help Avis Canoe Launch

The final puzzle piece is in place! NPC received a grant from the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's Canoe Access Development Fund back in January to help cover the costs of purchasing the materials to improve the parking area and creek access at the Avis Canoe Launch. We still needed \$4,300 and applied to the Clinton County Tourism and Recreation Grant program for the funds. The grant was awarded!!!

If all goes as planned the work will begin in late July or early August when the water levels are down.

NPC on the Target Circle Ballot

We are honored to have been selected again as a non-profit partner in this quarter's Target Circle program!

Last campaign, you helped direct over \$2,200 in charitable giving to NPC from

Target - simply by voting! Online shopping counts towards earning votes.

The voting period ends June 30, 2020. To learn more, visit: www.circle.target.com.





5 Ways to Celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. While many of the community events and group clean-ups have been cancelled, there are still plenty of things you can do on this international day of environmental action.

1. Go Digital

Join Earth Challenge 2020 and become a part of the world's largest citizen science effort. Visit www.earthday.org for details.

2. Get Your Hands Dirty – Plant a tree.

As the saying goes, "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now."

3. Make Everyday Earth Day

Make a pledge to change at least 3 daily habits; such as avoiding single use plastics, composting your kitchen scraps, or unplugging your devices! Consistent, small acts like these will reduce your carbon footprint and lead towards a more sustainable future.

4. Make a Donation

Support NPC's ongoing mission to sustain the rural landscapes and waterways of Northcentral PA with a special Earth Day donation.

5. Get Outside (of course!)

Take some time to get outside and really soak up the natural world around you on this particular day. Whether it's for a hike through the woods or a simple meander along the creek, finding time to enjoy our environment strengthens our resolve to protect it. Just be sure to maintain your social distance!

Tales from a Traveling Stream Table

The stream table did not sit around this winter. The Columbia County Conservation District had the table at Central Columbia High School and Agricultural Safety Day.

The Northumberland County Conservation District used it at a pancake breakfast sponsored by the Warrior Run Watershed. NPC took the stream table to the Science Festival held at Pennsylvania College of Technology (Thank you Brad and Rich for volunteering!).

If you haven't seen the table in action yet, plan to attend the Friends of Worlds End State Park's July 25th event at the Park. We'll have it up and running all day.



Renee and Volunteer Brad with the stream table at the 9th Annual Science Festival at PCT.

DONATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS • January 1 to March 31, 2020

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NPC Spring Events Rescheduled*

In light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have rescheduled NPC's 30th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Membership Meeting and Celebrity Waiter Night.

We remain hopeful that we'll get to see so many of your familiar faces this summer, but will continue to monitor the situation and make any necessary changes as needed for the safety of our communities.

NEW DATES:

NPC's Annual Celebrity Waiter Night

Friday, May 29, 2020 • 6pm – 11pm
Peter Herdic House, Williamsport

NPC's 30th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Membership Meeting

Thursday, July 16, 2020 • 5pm – 9pm
\$40/per person • Cash bar
Herman & Luther's, Montoursville



We sure do miss these friendly faces! Here's to hoping that we will be able to celebrate together this summer.

* For up-to-date event information and NPC happenings, follow NPC on Facebook, Instagram, and subscribe to the NPC bimonthly e-newsletter. Email HByers@NPCweb.org to subscribe.