

Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

An Update on Operations

A Message from René Carey, NPC Executive Director

As I'm writing this, it's late June and all the counties the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy works in are in the "green" phase of Pennsylvania's COVID-19 restrictions. We've resumed conservation easement site visits (see 'Highlights' write up on page 2). Stream projects with our partners are moving ahead (see 'Reunited' on page 1). We've conserved an additional 112 acres of land with the recent Bar Bottom acquisition (see page 1). And more staff are spending time in the office (rather than working from home).

The Board decided it would be a better use of staff time to not plan and then re-plan, and then possibly plan again events in 2020. So, at least for now and for this year, we're not going to see your smiling faces. Although feel free to send us photos of you enjoying the great outdoors. We love to see it when members and partners are using the places they've helped conserve.

While staff is coming into the office more, we're also still working from home and have less "office hours" than we did before March. We'd request that you email or call if you have questions, or need something from staff.

Thank you for helping to build an organization that can adapt and meet challenges. Thank you for supporting conservation even during a pandemic.

Reunited at Sechler Run

In mid-May, NPC and the rest of the Northcentral Stream Partnership eagerly rolled their sleeves back up to kick-off work at the Sechler Run project site in Danville. This was the team's first time back together at a project site since COVID-19 mitigation efforts were put in place. So yes, the job site looked a little different than seasons past - social distancing and facemasks - but, by the end of the project, the crew built log and rock structures stretching across 1,000 feet of stream from structure to structure, stabilizing the eroding streambank and providing fish habitat.

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NPC Conserves 112 Acres with 'Bar Bottom' Acquisition

As you may have already heard, the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy was the high bidder for 112 acres adjacent to the Loyalsock State Forest. The property includes steep, forested hillsides, a

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Bar Bottom

Highlights from the Field

by Tamara Wagner, NPC Land Steward Specialist

For all of us, 2020 has proven to be an unprecedented year. We here at NPC have revamped our site visits to the conservation easements, to be mindful of the health and wellness of our staff and landowners! Although I currently am not able to meet with landowners face-to-face while visiting properties, I'm always happy to discuss any property concerns or issues via phone or email. If I haven't already been in contact with you, I will be soon! Please don't hesitate to contact me at: **twagner@npcweb.org**

I have loved getting acquainted with the conservation easements here in northcentral PA. Each property has proven to be a unique treasure! I have made well over a dozen stops in the past weeks and here are some of the highlights:



Axe Factory

Finding remnants of old abandoned charcoal flats during an incredible drive on an old logging road. Also, finding an American Chestnut growing as a stump sprout.



Rogers

Having a red-winged blackbird yelling at me while climbing up to see the pond onsite. (I imagine I was too close to a nest!)



John Logue

Inspecting a deer fence that indeed appears to be working to keep deer outside of it, along with finding endless mushroom treasures along my walk.

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Highlights... (Continued from page 2)



Nicholas

Being warned pre hike that a large black bear has been spotted in the area. (I was thankful yet a bit anxious about the bear warning, but no sighting of *Urus americanus*)



Crisanti

Finding some good sized Hemlocks along the trails that are still hanging in, even with the woolly adelgid and Hemlock scale continuing their devastation on this species.

NPC Conserves 112 Acres...

(Continued from page 1)

trout stream, and a rocky cliff along Loyalsock Creek.

The property is not on the same side of the 'Sock as Route 87, but we'll use the Route 87 side of the 'Sock to help you understand where the property is. It is almost directly across from where Little Bear Road (and Little Bear Creek) intersects with Route 87. You might catch a glimpse of some of the trees on the ridgeline, but the valley is pretty narrow there. To get to the property, you have to come in from the "backside" and the road ends before you actually get to the property.

Part of Bar Bottom Hollow is on the property. Bar Bottom is a Class A, naturally reproducing trout stream that winds through the property. The stream is somewhere between 2.3 and 2.9 miles long (depending on your informational source). There are a series of waterfalls on the portion of the stream already on State Forest Land. On the property we just purchased, Bar Bottom almost levels out and traverses a flat before entering the 'Sock.

The property shares a long boundary with the Loyalsock State Forest, and will eventually become part of the State Forest system.

During initial project talks between NPC and the Bureau of Forestry, we also discussed the possible acquisition with people involved with the Loyalsock Creek Watershed Association, Lycoming Audubon, and the Loyalsock Creek Men's Club. All those groups were supportive and the Susquehanna Chapter of Trout Unlimited threw their support in too. We reached out to individuals familiar with the property's location who live in the "neighborhood" or spend a lot of time in the "neighborhood." Everyone we spoke to was hopeful the property could become part of the State Forest system.

Similar to the Cavanaugh Access acquisition, this was another situation where the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy was asked to act quickly. One of the reasons NPC is able to respond to these

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Reunited at Sechler Run *(Continued from page 1)*



Before: The stream team meets at the Sechler Run project site last fall.

This project was a unique opportunity for the Partnership to work with Geisinger as the landowner. The project site on Sechler Run is along Route 11, next to Geisinger's Woodbine Lane campus, and across the street from the Danville Sheetz.

Al Neuner, Geisinger's vice president of facilities operations, said the project is important to Geisinger because it affects the public's health. "We kind of take a holistic approach," Neuner said. "As we improve our environment, we improve everyone's health."

Geisinger further helped support the project by providing manpower, tools, and equipment during construction.

After construction, Native Creations Landscape Services, planted over 400 native trees and shrubs,

NPC Conserves 112 Acres...

(Continued from page 3)

opportunities so rapidly, is because of the support of our members. Having unrestricted funds allows NPC to do quick legwork to explore ideas as they arise. THANK YOU to our members for allowing NPC to have the resources for a quick turnaround, and a posthumous thanks to Alfred and Helen Buck, whose donations formed the land acquisition fund that allows NPC to take on these exciting, new projects!



After: Native plantings and a series of log and rock structures help stabilize the streambank on Sechler Run.

transforming the previously mowed streambanks into a multifunctional riparian forest buffer. And the pollinators sure were quick to find the new plantings! In fact, the team had to call in a local beekeeper to help relocate a swarm from a red maple, in order to finish the project. That was a first!



Bar Bottom Hollow

NPC Turns the Big 3-0, Hosts Virtual Birthday Party

On April 16, 2020, NPC turned 30 years old! It was on this date in 1990 that NPC was officially incorporated. While NPC's big, 30th Anniversary Celebration at Herman & Luther's had to be cancelled this year (we're REALLY looking forward to celebrating at the same venue in 2021!); we couldn't let that particular date pass by without sharing some joy.

You see, because, A LOT went on behind the scenes building up to that date 30 years ago, including a chance encounter between two founding members on a paddling trip gone awry down Pine Creek; a public informational meeting about the startup that sparked interest throughout the community and attracted many of NPC's charter members (pre-social media, mind you!); and broad-minded support from partners like the Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and the First Community Foundation Partnership (then Williamsport-Lycoming Foundation).

Today, NPC currently holds 47 conservation easements and 1 facade easement on over 4,735 acres. Another 6,300 acres are conserved through ownership with the Bureau of Forestry, Pennsylvania Game Commission, local government, or other conservation organizations. Adding to that, another 112 acres recently conserved through the Bar Bottom acquisition!

These are BIG numbers. Along with a 30-year legacy continuing to conserve and enhance the lands and waters in the region - all made possible by YOU. Thank you!!

To help virtually celebrate this milestone, NPC members and supporters shared their own photos and messages celebrating the land. Thank you to everyone that contributed. Here are a few highlights!



Baby Garrison sure is one happy (and adorable!) hiker



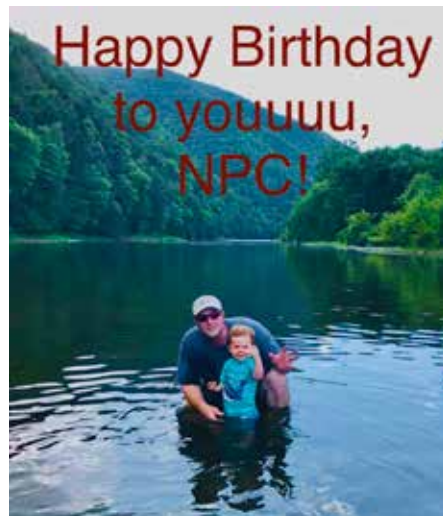
Birthday wishes from this nature-loving crew



Celebrating on top of the world at the Allegheny Front Vista



Pup Piper celebrates stream access



Celebrating in Pine Creek



A much-appreciated birthday note (and nice hat too!)

Volunteers Share Their Expertise

As COVID-19 mitigation efforts played out and events were cancelled, NPC reached out to a trio of volunteers to help provide information and inspiration for people to enjoy and learn about the natural world while they were keeping close to home. Thank you to NPC members Bob Ross, Susan Sprout, and Aaron Lewis, for volunteering your time and expertise!

In case you missed it, here's a little bit about each contribution:

In celebration of World Migratory Bird Day in May, ecologist, **Bob Ross**, shared photos and insight on three species that both migrate through Pennsylvania annually and breed in Pennsylvania as well. To learn more visit: www.npcweb.org/birds-connect-our-world.

Environmental Educator, Susan Sprout, has had a recurring series, *Underfoot*, on the NPC blog where she shares her botanical knowledge. To view one of her most recent issues and links for past issues, visit: www.npcweb.org/underfoot-goldthread-wild-ginger. Susan's series will continue on the blog.

Forester, outdoor recreation enthusiast, and NPC board member, **Aaron Lewis**, took us on a virtual hike of the Butternut Trail in Worlds End State Park and the Loyalsock State Forest. Portions of the Butternut Trail traverse NPC's Flynn conserved lands project. For the photo gallery and insight on this popular loop trail, visit: www.npcweb.org/the-buttternut-trail.

Whether it is the awakening of spring blooms, the marvel of migration, or the call of the wild and outdoor adventure that speaks to you, nature provides an endless source of inspiration. Thank you, again, to these wonderful volunteers for sharing their knowledge and letting us all learn a little more about the world around us!



Discover the Butternut Trail in Worlds End State Park with Aaron Lewis

"Trickling brooks, a stately rock outcropping, and a wonderful view of the Loyalsock Creek can be found on the rigorous Butternut Trail Loop. Go after a rain event and expect the small trickles to transform into cascading streams."

~ Aaron Lewis, NPC Board Member and Forester with Dwight Lewis Lumber Company



Learn about Wild Ginger from Susan Sprout.

DONATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS • April 1 to June 30, 2020

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Watershed Association
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& James Brague*
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*In memory of
Enid Yealy*
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Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy

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Changes in the Charitable Gift Deductions for 2020

If you don't itemize and take the standard deduction:

For the 2020 tax year you can take an additional, "above-the-line" deduction for charitable gifts made in cash of up to \$300.

If you itemize your deductions:

The adjusted gross income (AGI) limit for cash contributions was increased for individual donors. You can elect to deduct up to 100 percent of your AGI (increased from 60 percent) for the 2020 tax year.

See the CARES Act and your tax advisor for details and more information.



Pictured here are longtime members, John and Bobbie Way. John served on NPC's technical committee for many years, and as a retired geologist, he was a tremendous resource for the organization. Both he and Bobbie held a deep love and respect for the land, which they infectiously shared with others. After John's passing, NPC was the recipient of numerous memorial gifts and then a bequest from Bobbie's will. We are deeply humbled and honored by these lasting gifts. *If you, too, are interested in leaving a planned gift, please reach out to Renee' so that we may thank you in this lifetime.*