



Wildlands

FALL 2010

THE NEWSLETTER OF WILDLANDS CONSERVANCY

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Future of Conservation

This past summer, I was one of 100 environmental leaders in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be invited to attend the Conservation Leaders Summit. This two-day event held in mid-June was designed to be a discussion of the future of Pennsylvania's natural resources; conservation leaders throughout the state were brought together to discuss pressing environmental issues such as urban sprawl, habitat loss, natural gas extraction, disconnection with nature, climate change, and decreasing state budgets for conservation. Based on the presentations and discussions at this event, environmental leaders are developing recommendations that will help to shape the future of conservation in the Commonwealth. This experience will help to bring innovative thinking to dealing with our region's pressing environmental challenges and ensure the future of our important conservation work in these troubling economic times.

The Summit focused on four major strategies to advance conservation in Pennsylvania:

- protecting and restoring our lands and waters,
- preserving parks and connecting (through greenways and trails) our special places,
- conserving our working landscapes (farmland and forests), and
- greening our built environment.

These four key strategies are the focus of Wildlands Conservancy and have been for quite some time. I take great pride in knowing that the themes chosen for the Conservation Leaders Summit, the key future strategies to forward conservation, are activities long understood and adopted as important parts of Wildlands Conservancy's conservation agenda. And most importantly, the future of conservation in the Commonwealth is aligned with our historic work and the future work identified in our current strategic direction.

One project in particular that encompasses these four strategies is the Jordan Creek Greenway and Trail. As a key regional initiative under the leadership of Wildlands Conservancy, the project will connect communities and conserve land. This project will result in the protection of natural resources and enhanced recreational opportunities that will benefit both people and wildlife for generations to come.

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Land Protection is the Key to Sustainability

BY KENT BAIRD, *Director of Land Conservation and Planning*

Land conservation in the United States is by all accounts the granddaddy of the "Green Movement." It was here, in the late 1800s, that national parks were born. It was here that hunting, timbering and soil conservation rules were written. Without these places, and these rules, the Environmental Movement of the 1970s would never have passed critical legislation to protect our air and water. Without the science gleaned from the 1970s, an entire generation of students and professionals would not now be engaged in the "Green Movement."

What does it really mean to be a part of the Green Movement and where does land conservation fit? Well, for starters, *green* is a marketing term meant to simplify the topic of sustainable development. While it might get tiring to hear the term green, keep in mind it really does refer to something bigger.

Beginning in the 1980s, the United Nations, and its World Commission on Environment and Development, took on the extraordinary task of documenting the effects of environmental

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Cont'd from p1

The activities surrounding the project **protect and restore our land and water** by preserving the riparian corridor along the creek, which provides water quality benefits and critical streamside habitat. In addition, work has been completed to restore degraded sections of the creek in the Trexler Nature Preserve and work is being planned to remove environmental impacting dams and promote streamside vegetation and other best-management practices.

The project will also **preserve parks and connect our special places**. The greenway and trail will provide a physical connection to five existing township-, city-, and county-owned parks and recreation areas. In addition, the project will allow for the ecological connection of these existing protected open spaces, enhancing the environmental health and biodiversity of the system.

The project will also **conserve our working landscapes**. The greenway project will provide the opportunity to connect protected open spaces including our working lands like farmland. Having farmland protected adds to the scenic values of the region and provides a source of locally grown foods.

Lastly, the project will lead to a **greening of our built environment**. The greening will occur through the protection of our green infrastructure and through the construction and implementation of the project using state-of-the-art greening principles.

The Jordan Creek Greenway and Trail project is just one example of how Wildlands Conservancy is working strategically in our community to

achieve conservation and protection of our natural resources that is in line with the identified future strategies to advance conservation in Pennsylvania. Wildlands Conservancy is focused on protecting the environment and the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley and the Lehigh River watershed that surrounds us. The environmental challenges we face are significant and will require attention, innovation and resources. With the decreasing state funding for conservation and the current state of the economy, we are broadening and building our sources of support, looking to maximize the synergistic effect of our strategies, and ensuring we work on the projects and activities with the highest conservation value. In addition, we are leveraging our expertise and relationships to help our partners and the community work together most effectively in combating the region's environmental issues.

As always, thank you for your support. If you haven't yet this year, please give or give again using the enclosed envelope. Our ability to protect and connect critical open space, improve the regions water resources, and educate the next generation of environmental stewards depends on you now more than ever. I look forward to your help and support as a partner in enabling us to protect our critical natural resources and ensure our region remains a wonderful place in which to live, work, and play.

Yours in Conservation,

Christopher M. Kocher, *President*

LAND PROTECTION Cont'd from p1

degradation across the globe. The results of the study were presented in the Commission's *Brundtland Report* and, for the first time, detailed the negative impacts that excessive and destructive use of our world's natural resources have on our economy and our society. Most importantly, it revealed that each decision made for the benefit of the economy or society which did not consider the health of our environment, in turn, had a more costly impact on future economies and society at large.

To that end, and recognizing the survival of our species in some way depends upon progress, the Commission refined our economic and social relationship with the environment to be one in need of sustainable development. By definition, sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Our health and well-being are intimately

connected to and now shown to be more economically connected to the health of the environment than ever. If we want to leave our great-great grandchildren a world similar to, or better than, the one we currently enjoy, we must be willing to incorporate concepts of sustainability into our daily living.

One such step we can take is to protect land. As we know, undeveloped land, whether it is currently farmed or exists as a natural area, has the potential to feed, teach, inspire and heal future generations. If we choose to develop land in a way that only addresses short-term economic gains or only supports one segment of society, we should expect the

costs of that decision to be greater in the future. The conservation of land in key areas will help to curtail the loss of productive farming soils, the destruction of habitat which filters and cleans our air and water, and the disappearance of plant and animal species unique to our area and which may have the potential to cure disease or pollinate our gardens.

Our health and well-being are intimately connected to and now shown to be more economically connected to the health of the environment than ever.

Wildlands Conservancy has been protecting land in the Lehigh River watershed since 1973. From the top of the river, at its headwaters in Wayne County, to its confluence with the Delaware River in Northampton County, the Conservancy holds to its promise to protect the quality of the water in the river by protecting and restoring the land beside it. The Conservancy acquires land and conservation easements to protect open space and natural areas, monitors these properties accordingly, and assists municipal and county government in setting the land-use planning policies and procedures to help protect the watershed.

Over the years, Wildlands has protected a variety of undeveloped land including farmland, parks and natural areas. Farmland types range from traditional crop and livestock to the highly acclaimed Rodale Institute Experimental Farm. In all categories, nearly 1,000 acres of farmland were protected with help from Wildlands. If national trends hold, these farms will likely provide produce to a more locally sourced food market. In some cases, the produce might be provided by a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm or an organic pick-your-own farm. CSA's are growing in numbers because they provide a source of guaranteed fresh produce to local buyers. At the start of each year, a customer pays an upfront fee for a share of each seasonal harvest. Prices don't fluctuate and the food is fresh and home grown. Similarly, the pick-your-own farms have been converting to more organic methods of farming to attract more customers and to sustain their operations longer. Studies at the Rodale Institute have proven organic farming yields produce which is healthier for the consumer, sustains the soil longer, and costs less in farming equipment and energy to run. With each farm protected by Wildlands, a future farmer has the opportunity to experiment, operate and share with local customers the best farming has to offer.

Wildlands has also played a major role in protecting land meant for the public's use and enjoyment. Partnering with local municipalities and counties, the Conservancy has helped create parks, gateway gardens, scenic wildlife corridors and linear parks. Wildlands Conservancy provides expertise and leadership for the open space planning needs of municipalities including setting strategies for the location of parks and conservation areas and helping acquire or protect these properties for public use. By far the greatest impact Wildlands Conservancy has had in terms of acres of land protected has been thorough partnership with the Pennsylvania Game Commission. Since 1981, the Conservancy has leveraged nearly four million dollars of donations for thirteen million dollars worth of land acquisitions. The result is more than 40,000 acres protected for wildlife habitat, hunting, fishing,

hiking, bird watching and other outdoor recreation – especially along the Kittatinny Ridge.

In all categories of land to be protected, Wildlands has focused mostly on natural areas. Over 80% of the Conservancy's conservation projects have protected woodlands, wetlands or streamside habitat. From a four-acre wetlands easement to our 1,281-acre Thomas Darling Preserve, each tree, salamander and sedge protected will lend itself to a goal of cleaner air and water and greater biodiversity from which future generations can learn. After a piece of land is protected, Wildlands Conservancy must steward the land in perpetuity. Currently, the Conservancy is revisiting its land and habitat management goals for each of its 11 nature preserves. The new plans will provide short and long term stewardship goals for each habitat type, budget estimates for dealing with invasive species, and provisions for public access. Stewardship of our properties includes the creation of a management plan for each preserve, site monitoring, boundary marking, and trail develop-

ment or other visitor enhancement projects if appropriate. Continuous monitoring and maintenance is necessary to ensure protection of the land that donors entrusted to Wildlands Conservancy.

Wildlands Conservancy works with other land trusts, local and state agencies, and private consultants to see that its goals and objectives are in keeping with the conservation community's broader vision of a protected landscape and create broader support for the Conservancy's mission. The Conservancy is an active partner in the Kittatinny Ridge Alliance, the Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative, the Highlands Coalition, the Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape Initiative, the Lehigh Valley Land Recycling Initiative and various open space and environmental advisory committees. Additionally, under contract with various municipalities, the Conservancy is preparing land-use and open-space plans to guide future land-protection measures throughout the Lehigh River watershed. When appropriate, private land owners have engaged the Conservancy for the opportunity to carefully design developments which identify natural resource protection as the primary concern of a project.

Wildlands Conservancy envisions a Lehigh River watershed with clean streams, protected habitat, and open space to be enjoyed for generations to come. This will only be realized through the Conservancy's continued partnering with like-minded organizations, agencies and donors – each making the best and wisest use of the available natural resources without detracting from future generations doing the same.

By definition, sustainable development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Land Conservation Basics

The Conservancy protects open space and natural areas by acquiring or receiving all of the ownership rights of a piece of land or just a portion of those rights.

While the majority of the Conservancy's land and conservation easements have been received through donation, state and local grants are often sought to assist in a purchase. In the future, the most important funding for land protection will come from the passing of new municipal open-space bonds or other voter-supported funding.

Definitions:

FEE SIMPLE OWNERSHIP:

The unconditional ownership of all the rights of a property.

CONSERVATION AND FARMLAND EASEMENTS:

A legal document recorded with a property's deed declaring the Conservancy's ownership of a portion of the rights of the property with restrictions on its use and protection of the conservation or farmland values.

MUNICIPAL OPEN-SPACE BOND:

Voter-approved borrowing of funds which a municipality deems will be sufficient to support the goals of a local land-protection program. The borrowed monies are repaid by the municipality over a set period of time and by general tax revenues.

Wildlands Conservancy Welcomes New Board Members

Wildlands Conservancy is pleased to announce the appointment of four new board members for 2010. The appointees, as well as existing board members, are charged with providing oversight of the non-profit organization's mission to preserve, protect, restore and enhance the land, water, ecological and recreational resources of the Lehigh Valley region. The following were elected to their first term as board members: Anita Kingsbauer, executive director, St. Luke's Hospital & Health Network, Riverside Campus; Patrick Loughlin, vice president environment, health, safety and quality, Air Products; J. Scott Pidcock, The Pidcock Company; Pat Waller, Ed.D., educational consultant and retired science teacher.



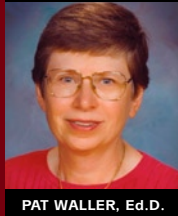
ANITA KINGSBAUER



PAT LOUGHLIN



J. SCOTT PIDCOCK



PAT WALLER, Ed.D.

"At a time when protection of our natural resources is critical, the collective knowledge and expertise of our new members will be invaluable to furthering the mission of conservation in the Lehigh Valley region," states Stuart G. Rogers, Wildlands Conservancy Board Chair.

The outgoing members of the Board of Directors, who all served two three-year terms are: Deirdre Kwiatek, Ph.D., associate, Spillman Farmer Architects; Anthony Scarcia, owner, Allied Building Corporation; David Shaffer, co-CEO, Just Born, Inc.; Susan Williams, owner, Susan Williams & Associates. Wildlands Conservancy president Christopher M. Kocher remarks, "Our organization is incredibly grateful for the time, talents and knowledge that Deirdre, Anthony, David and Susan have provided during their tenure with Wildlands Conservancy. The work they accomplished helps direct our organization in our shared effort to ensure the protection of our natural resources and to improve our quality of place for all residents."

Please join or renew your Annual Membership Support of Wildlands Conservancy today!

AS OF JUNE 31, WE HAVE RAISED \$206,360 TOWARD OUR \$350,000 GOAL! THANK YOU!

We need to raise an additional \$144,000 by December 31, 2010, and we can do it with your help.

Your annual membership support provides critical funding for the Conservancy's core programs: land protection, river restoration, environmental education, and greenway and trail development. Please use the enclosed envelope or go to our web site, www.wildlandspa.org and click **Donate**.

If you have any questions or would like additional information about how you can support conservation in your community, please contact Nancy Stansbery, at 610.965.4397, ext. 116 or nstansbery@wildlandspa.org.

Leave a Legacy

A bequest from your will or estate can ensure your continued support of conservation in the Lehigh Valley. Your tax advisor can inform you of the many ways you can make a charitable bequest to Wildlands Conservancy, through your will or gifts of stock, bonds, or IRAs.

We would be honored to be named in your will or trust. For more information on creating a lasting gift to Wildlands Conservancy, please contact Nancy Stansbery, Chief Development Officer, at **(610) 965-4397, ext. 116**.

SAVE THE DATE DINNER • SILENT & LIVE AUCTION



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2010
Brookside Country Club
901 Willow Lane, Macungie, PA

5:30 p.m. Reception/Silent Auction
7 p.m. Dinner followed by Live Auction

GREEN GALA

RSVP by Friday, November 5, 2010
\$135 per person / Cash bar / Cocktail attire

\$75 will be considered a charitable contribution.
For more information, call 610.965.4397, ext. 126



Thank you, Olympus Fellows!

Working in partnership with Olympus Corporation of the Americas, Wildlands Conservancy helps mentor a sense of philanthropy for the participants of the corporation's Fellows program, a leadership-development program designed for new college graduates who have a strong desire to pursue a career with the company. The partnership has resulted in improved environmental awareness, stewardship, and an opportunity for Fellows to contribute to the quality of life in the Lehigh Valley region by helping to support Wildlands Conservancy's conservation mission.

Over the past two years, the Fellows helped plan special events and assist in supporting programs that advance Wildlands' fundraising efforts. This past June, new Fellows joined the program and concluded their weeklong orientation by volunteering for a clean-up day at the Pool Wildlife Sanctuary. The 11 Fellows helped with trail maintenance, mulching, and planting native plants on the property.

"The Fellows have embraced the relationship with Wildlands Conservancy to lead our organization in active philanthropy," remarks Dan Wagner, a 2009 graduate of the program. "Since the inception of our partnership, the program has afforded our developing leaders the opportunity to learn from one another outside of our normal roles in Olympus and take ownership within the community."

Through this partnership, Olympus donates matching funds to each volunteer hour worked with Wildlands Conservancy, helping support the organization's mission.

Adventure Camp Encourages Youth to Explore the Outdoors

BY: KEVIN FISTER, *Outdoor Recreation Manager*

In late June, Wildlands Conservancy introduced 15 youth from Bethlehem's Southside district to the great outdoors through a weeklong Lehigh Valley Adventure Camp. The program, funded in part by the Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and in partnership with the City of Bethlehem, introduced local, urban youth to outdoor activities while promoting environmental stewardship of our natural resources.

Fifteen teens participated in a nine-mile paddle along the Lehigh River, biked 11 miles along the D&L Trail through Lehigh Gorge State Park, explored Boulder Field at Hickory Run State Park, hiked over five miles along the Appalachian Trail atop the Kittatinny Ridge, challenged themselves at North Summit Rock Climbing Gym, fished at the Lehigh County Seed Farm lake, and learned about animal habitat, adaptations and unique characteristics at a Wildlands Conservancy education program.

The program is available in conjunction with DCNR's urban recreation initiative that introduces young people to the adventure, natural beauty and learning opportunities offered by Pennsylvania's state parks in partnership with local nonprofits such as Wildlands Conservancy.

Strategic Planning Sessions Provide Direction for Wildlands Conservancy

Wildlands Conservancy's Board of Directors, Council of Advisors (comprised of former board Members) and leadership donors attended two Strategic Planning Sessions in May to provide input on the mission, vision and goals of the organization. Their input, coupled with the information collected from our Community Survey, will be used to help develop the next Strategic Plan for Wildlands Conservancy, a document that guides the organization's focus for the next five years. The document will be completed by December, 2010.



The Lehigh River Sojourn 2010

BY: JERRY MISTAL, *Lehigh River Sojourn Committee Volunteer Chair*

The Lehigh River Sojourn is a journey that celebrates the life, vitality, and different personalities of the Lehigh River as it progresses through its natural life. We start by experiencing the wild youth of the Lehigh Gorge. Days later in Northampton, the river slows, matures, and welcomes wildlife as if it were its children. The Lehigh, in many ways, mirrors our own lives.

The Sojourn makes me feel like a kid again but also reminds me that I am an adult with responsibilities. There is fun and adventure to be found in this three-day trip, while also being reminded how vital the river is to the region and introduced to the significant threats this resource faces. Run-off of sediment, fertilizer, pesticides and trash-impaired tributaries are a few of these threats, while each day thousands of pounds of abandoned mine drainage-related pollutants enter the Lehigh River. As a steward of the Lehigh River, these impairments bring to heart a sense of responsibility and make me think about what I am doing to protect the river.

Throughout the Lehigh River Sojourn, participants learn about their

role in the process of helping restore water quality and protecting wildlife habitat along the Lehigh. This year, more than 170 paddlers experienced the wonder and beauty of the Lehigh River on the Sojourn, inspiring each of them to become better stewards of the environment. I'd wager many of them felt like kids again.

To borrow the words of Aldo Leopold, "... perhaps our grandsons, having never seen a wild river, will never miss the chance to set a canoe in singing waters ... glad I shall never be young without wild country to be young in."

By supporting Wildlands Conservancy, you protect the Lehigh River. This protection allows the experience of a Sojourn. Let us pass on this legacy, and when our grand-children reach adulthood, the Sojourn will remind them that they were once kids playing in the river.

Special thanks to the following 2010 Lehigh River Sojourn Leadership Sponsors: C.F. Martin & Co.; Nestlé Waters North America; Conectiv Energy; Lafarge North America; Jim Thorpe River Adventures; Northeast PA Kayak School; Pocono Whitewater Adventures; Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers; Panther Creek Partners and PPL.

Celebrate the Lehigh River!

Wildlands Conservancy donors, board members and Sojourn participants joined together for the Sojourn's Closing Ceremony at the Allentown Brew Works. During the event, Wildlands Conservancy presented the 2010 Friend of the Lehigh River Awards to Jan Creedon, Director of General Services for Lehigh County; the late John Schneller; Diane Kripas, Division Chief of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Greenways for the Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; and the Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation. The awards honor those who have made significant contributions to preserving and protecting the Lehigh River. Attendees of the event also enjoyed the music of Steve Brosky and Jimmy Meyer. Special thanks to Bennett Family Dealerships for sponsoring the hors d'oeuvres.



Christopher M. Kocher, President, Wildlands Conservancy (center), presented the award to the late John Schneller (son Tom Schneller accepted); Jan Creedon, Director of General Services, County of Lehigh; Robert Hughes, Executive Director of the Eastern Pa. Coalition for Abandoned Mine Drainage Reclamation; Diane Kripas, Division Chief, Greenways and Conservation Partnerships Division, Pa. DCNR

Wildlands Conservancy Helps Protect the Little Lehigh Creek Watershed

BY: BENJAMIN GREEN, *Bike & Boat Volunteer & Development Dept. Intern*

As of June 30, Wildlands Conservancy completed an environmental conservation effort known as the "Little Lehigh Landowners Outreach Project." The initiative, to conduct landowner outreach and create a comprehensive process for interested partners to develop future critical restoration projects, was considered the critical next step to the Little Lehigh Coldwater Conservation Plan.

The Little Lehigh Creek, classified by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as a high-quality coldwater fishery, hosts an important ecosystem to the Lehigh Valley which supports reproducing brown trout as well as several other endangered and threatened species. Due to this, restoring and protecting the Little Lehigh Creek's watershed is a priority at both the local and state level.

Through outreach, Wildlands Conservancy has developed partnerships with interested landowners to conduct more conservation projects in the watershed. Five dam-removal projects have been proposed for the creek including one upstream from Wildlands Conservancy's offices at the Pool Wildlife Sanctuary. Removal of these dams will provide significant measurable environmental benefits by improving water quality, restoring free-flowing water for fish passage, and creating recreational opportunities.

Wildlands also expanded a partnership with the City of Allentown through the development of a no-mow buffer protection campaign and a riparian buffer project to restore water quality and wildlife habitat. The outreach project also resulted in the development of the Trout Creek Restoration Project to help restore and protect the natural resources along a 1.5-mile stretch of the creek through Trout Creek Park.

Wildlands Conservancy hopes that this project will be a catalyst in large-scale efforts to restore the Little Lehigh Creek and its watershed.



▲ Paddlers traveled an average of 10 miles a day on the Lehigh River. Here are some happy paddlers traveling from Jim Thorpe to Walnutport.

2010 Lehigh River Sojourn



Father and son, **David and Ian Lowe**, search for macro-invertebrates during Monday's educational program. The Sojourn focuses on teaching participants about the **environmental issues** the Lehigh River faces while providing ideas on how to help protect the natural resource.



Special thanks to **Pocono Whitewater Adventures** for starting the Lehigh River Sojourn off with a splash! Paddlers rafted through the Lehigh Gorge on a dam-release weekend and learned more about the natural resource through a lunch-time educational program by **Rob Kneitz** of Pa. DCNR's Bureau of State Parks.



Lehigh River Sojourn Safety Team member **Joseph Bennett, II** and Safety Team Chair **Jerry McAward** provide safety tips and friendly smiles throughout the trip.

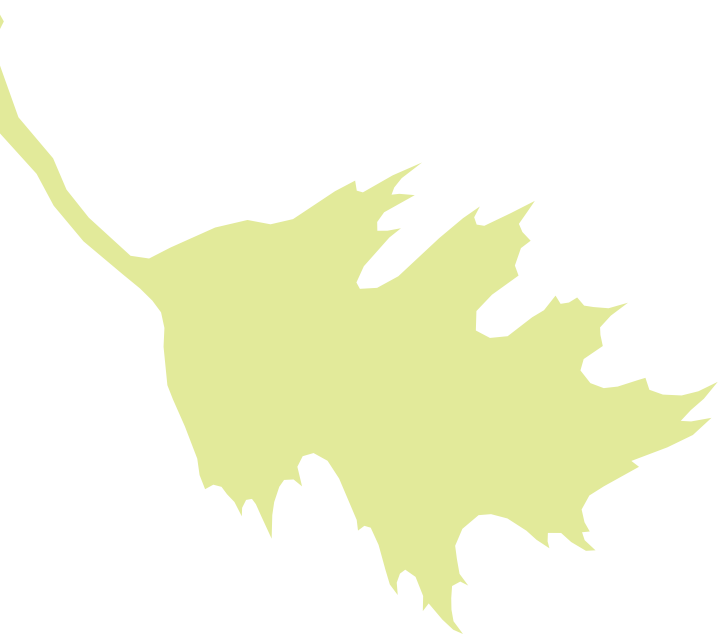


Wildlands Conservancy

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