

VISTAS

A publication of Allegheny Land Trust

Spring 2013

A Call to Action

by Chris Beichner, Executive Director



In the spring edition of VISTAS, ALT likes to recognize the countless, and sometimes nameless, friends of land conservation. This year's edition will be no different, but with a small twist. While we would like to thank the tremendous donors, contributors and investors in 2012, we also want to

challenge folks with a call to action.

First and foremost, we could not have protected close to 130 acres and continued to work on another 1,000 acres without you. Thank you! Our investors are listed in this publication. Individual donations went down from \$1,309,854 in 2011 to \$770,724 in 2012. However, the 2011 donations include three major donors for direct property acquisition totaling \$549,514. Take those donors out of the equation and our 2012 donations went up by \$10,384. Thank you! The total number of donors also increased from 626 in 2011 to 703 in 2012. Thank you again! You make land conservation happen by making the resources available to protect vital land in Allegheny County.

People want to protect land for many reasons. It could be to protect a high quality water supply or maybe to preserve a mature forest. It might be to protect endangered wildlife or to increase property values. We agree with all these reasons and many more. Why have you contributed, and why haven't more people heard the call to action?

With over 1,000 acres squarely in our sights for 2013, we need your help to spread the word about land conservation and what ALT is doing across the county. Pass this newsletter on to a friend, neighbor or family member. Consider volunteering as a site steward or Urban EcoSteward on one of our properties. And please, keep the donations coming

and dedicate the funds to our Stewardship Fund, Land Protection Fund, Wingfield Pines Maintenance Fund, for the acquisition of Pittsburgh Cut Flower or for general operating support.

THANK YOU AGAIN to our hundreds of donors from 2012! Do you have a story about your contribution to ALT, either through a monetary or volunteer role? Please tell us about it. We are looking for new testimonials and opportunities to create short videos explaining why you contribute to ALT. If you are interested in writing a testimonial or participating in a short interview, please let me know by emailing me at cbeichner@alleghenylandtrust.org.

Have a Happy Spring and I look forward to seeing you at one of our conservation areas soon!

A Call to Action!

More Inside:

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8...Upcoming Events



What is this?
And what is it for?
See page 2 to find out!

PHOTO BY EMILIE RZOTKIEWICZ

A SPECIAL *Thanks!* **TO OUR 2012 DONORS**



Interpretive signs provide self-guided tour.



Three Rivers Heritage Trail mile marker to encourage visitors.

Sycamore Island Transformation

ALT supporters can be proud of the transformation they have helped to create on Sycamore Island.

We believe the new interpretive signage adds to the island experience. But don't take our word for it, see the signs for yourself and let us know what you think! Contact Mike at mgood@alleghenylandtrust.org for volunteer opportunities and a calendar of spring events at Sycamore Island.



A new trail enables visitors to safely explore the island.



Planting new trees to attract native wildlife—perhaps an eagle in the future.

ANSWER FROM PAGE 1: The Discharge Fountain Pipe at Wingfield Pines shoots water through 150 jets. This aeration of the water helps accelerate solidification of the bright orange sediment known as iron oxide, or rust, so it can be naturally filtered from the water before it enters Chartiers Creek. Iron oxide is a natural product that has been used throughout history to make dyes and stains, as a pigment in paints, art materials and clay for making pottery and bricks.

NOTES FROM THE LAND



Community Rallies for Pittsburgh Cut Flower

by Roy Kraynyk, Land Protection Director

This article is about land, the people who treasure it, how they've come together to protect it and shape its future. It's about the individuals and businesses that have risen to the opportunity to affect the future of their community in a way that will last for generations.

"We need to raise how much?!" exclaimed Annette Robinson at the first meeting of people interested in learning about ALT and our effort to acquire the former Pittsburgh Cut Flower (PCF) property. This is a common response when I meet with a group of citizens for the first time to discuss a new land conservation effort in their neighborhood. Approximately \$40,000 later the group has grown and their work helped to leverage a \$509,500 grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and \$300,000 from the Colcom Foundation. \$1,139,000 has been raised as of March 2013. "We are always pleased when our investment leverages local and private dollars to accomplish these goals," said DCNR Secretary Richard Allan about the grants that help communities protect their natural and cultural assets. Another grant is pending and staff are drafting more grant applications to submit.

On Saturday, February 9, over 170 enthusiastic citizens including Richland Township representatives attended a community gathering at the Northern Tier Regional Library in Gibsonia. They were anxious to learn more about the acquisition of the 180-acre property, see a display of artifacts from the former flower plantation that was once there, and submit their ideas for the future.

- Brian Newhouse, former curator for the George Westinghouse Museum, gave a short talk on his displayed collection of unique artifacts that he has collected and restored from the heyday of the flower growing operation.
- Landscape architect Sara Moore and Chatham University Graduate Student candidate James Snow facilitated a visioning charrette that had residents looking at maps of the property and jotting down ideas for the 150 acres of green space and for the reuse of the blighted 30 acres.
- Dean Bastianini, Richland Township Manager who attended the event with Herb Dankmeyer, chairman of the Richland Township board of supervisors, look forward to the finished product. "The award of the DCNR grant provides both a boost of energy and the luster of credence to Richland Township's partnership with ALT to transform this once thriving property, which today has fallen into blight and decay due to hard economic times and neglect, back into an asset which complements the surrounding properties and once again makes the community proud," Bastianini pointed out.

Support from local and state officials is critical for a complex and challenging project like this. "Acquiring this property fits perfectly with our goals of conserving lands in Allegheny County for recreation and engaging communities, families and children," says Rep. Mike Turzai (R – 28th Legislative District). "We are thrilled this property will be a shared community asset."

The public input collected at the charrette will be presented as a draft conceptual master plan for the property at 2:00 on April 20 at the Northern Tier Regional Library, 4015 Dickey Road, Gibsonia, PA. Keep an eye out for updates on our website and local media.

February 9 Community Visioning Charrette held at the Northern Tier Library.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Looking for some spring activity? Get out to an ALT stewardship event and blow off the winter blues. Check our online calendar for details or contact us at 412-741-2750.

- **AUDUBON GREENWAY TREE PLANTING**
Thursday, April 25
- **SYCAMORE ISLAND TREE PLANTING**
Saturday, April 27
- **SYCAMORE ISLAND BIRDFEST WITH AUDUBON SOCIETY**
Saturday, May 11
- **DEAD MAN'S HOLLOW BOSTON ENTRANCE CLEAN UP (with Allegheny CleanWays/Three Rivers Water Keeper)**
Friday, May 17
- **UES SUMMER GATHERING/TREE ID/KAYAK**
Saturday, June 8



What will be your legacy?

You can make sure that future generations will be able to enjoy the same views and conservation benefits by helping to protect the land we cherish.

Learn more about ALT's Legacy Society and making a gift that costs nothing during your lifetime, with possible tax benefits:

- Adding Allegheny Land Trust as a beneficiary in your will;
- Making Allegheny Land Trust a beneficiary of your IRA or retirement fund;
- Naming Allegheny Land Trust as a beneficiary of an insurance policy.

Please visit www.alleghenylandtrust.org and click How to Help/Legacy Society or call us at 412-741-2750.



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