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# VISTAS

An Allegheny Land Trust Publication

Summer 2019



A vertical photograph of a forest stream. The water is shallow and flows over rocks and fallen branches. The surrounding forest is dense with green foliage and trees, creating a serene natural setting.

# notes

## FROM THE LAND:

### ALT Submits Record Number of Grants for Green

by Roy Kraynyk | VP of Land Protection & Capital Projects

**O**n April 10, ALT submitted seven grant applications to the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for more than \$2.6 million to support the acquisition of six tracts of land, and to develop a Master Plan for the 45-acre Meyer Farm in South Fayette Township. This is by far the largest single group of applications ALT has ever submitted to DCNR in our 26-year history.

A total of 420 acres will be protected over the next 12 – 18 months in South Fayette, Moon, and Elizabeth Townships, and in Churchill, Penn Hills, and Bethel Park Boroughs if ALT receives full funding from DCNR, and we are able to raise the local 50% match that the DCNR grants require. In two cases, the local match is being satisfied with land value that is being gifted to ALT. Therefore, the amount of cash that we need to raise is roughly \$2 million.

Please see the map spread on pages 8 and 9 showing the locations of the land that ALT has under contract to purchase to ensure it remains permanent green space. If you are interested in learning how you can help with the local campaign to raise the match for a project in your community, please contact Tom Dougherty at [tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org). Admittedly, \$2 million is a heavy lift but the fact that these properties are spread over six municipalities and have 250,000 people living within a three-mile radius makes the lift significantly more manageable.

We will spend the summer writing grant applications to our major funding partners, so we are not expecting individuals to fund the match entirely. However, our funding partners want to see that residents and businesses support protecting local green space in the project communities. So, the number of people who give is as important as the amount that he or she gives. Financial support from residents and local businesses also indicates to local, county, and state officials that their constituents support land conservation.

For people living in one of these communities, this is your chance to have a permanent, positive impact on the future of your community or neighborhood by supporting one of these projects. For those of you living farther away, please consider making a contribution because not only does protecting land provide convenient access to nature but also helps to reduce floodwater and clean the air we all breathe. The American Lung Association just announced in April that the air quality in Allegheny County is worse than any other county in the United States outside of California. Protecting tree canopy is one of, if not, the most effective ways to sequester carbon and other air pollution. Although these lands may not be in your neighborhood, we all benefit from the green space because we all live downstream or downwind.

Please use the enclosed envelope to make a generous contribution towards protecting these lands forever. Also let your local, county, and state elected officials know that local green space is important to you and to the future quality of life in your community.



## OUR SPONSORS

help us expand and improve our work and bring its benefits to more community members.

Many thanks to our new and renewing sponsors listed below. To view a full list of our current sponsors, visit: [alleghenylandtrust.org/our-sponsors](http://alleghenylandtrust.org/our-sponsors)

Please recognize and patronize our sponsors.

### NEW

- ModCloth - Other
- American Eagle Outfitters - Other

If you're interested in becoming an ALT sponsor, please contact Tom Dougherty at [tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org)



A robin sings in the trees in spring 2019. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

# Carbon Credits and Conservation

by Alyson Fearon | Community Conservation Director

**What are “Carbon Credits”?** A carbon credit is defined as “a quantified environmental benefit that is designed to compensate for impacts to habitat, environmental functions, or ecosystem services.” The current industry standard to measure one unit of carbon for carbon credits is the equivalent of one metric ton of Carbon Dioxide emitted in no specified period of time.

Taking that a little further, Forest Carbon Credits use the natural process of carbon sequestration in healthy, protected forests to offset other carbon producing activities. Landowners enter contractual agreements to protect areas of forest to ensure carbon offset and sell those carbon credits on a market, which industries and corporations use to offset their carbon footprints.

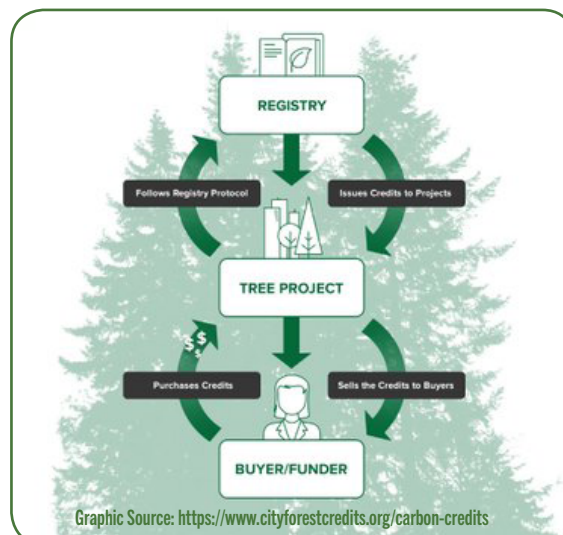
**Why does this matter to ALT?** ALT manages land in perpetuity; we have the potential to generate income from our managed forest areas, potentially enabling us to protect more land or more effectively steward our existing conservation areas.

While we have not yet entered into any carbon credit agreements, we are actively exploring the possibility. In the meantime, consider all the good existing green space is doing simply by remaining green.

### Additional Information:

<https://www.arborday.org/carbon/carbon-credits.cfm>

<https://extension.tennessee.edu/publications/Documents/W217.pdf>



Graphic Source: <https://www.cityforestcredits.org/carbon-credits>

# Addressing Our Region's Challenges:

## AIR & WATER QUALITY

by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

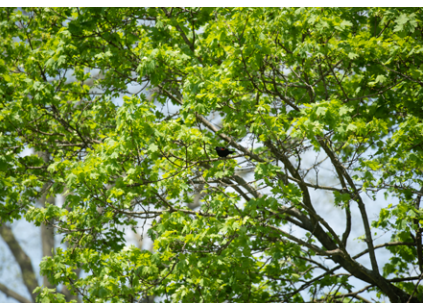
If you received an “F” on the same exam, two times in a row,  
wouldn't you say it was time to make a change?



An employee of ModCloth plants a tree at Wingfield Pines. The green space is designed to take on water to ease the burden on downstream communities. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



A tributary of Little Sewickley Creek expands and contracts according to recent weather conditions. The image shows a bank that indicates how high the water rises. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Trees provide wildlife habitat, maintain and improve our air quality, stabilize slopes, absorb rainwater, offer scenic views, and so much more. It's in our own interest to protect and plant more of them. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

If you've glanced at any local news source lately, you'll likely have noticed the increased attention surrounding Pittsburgh's air quality. The American Lung Association's national air quality report gave Allegheny County all “F”s for the second year in a row, and we're the only county outside of California to receive such poor marks. This air quality threatens the health of everyone within the Pittsburgh metro area and has led to our region exceeding the nation's average for regional asthma cases.

Meanwhile, our waterways are frequently overwhelmed by increasing volumes of rainfall. In 2018, according to the national weather service, the Pittsburgh region experienced its largest volume of rainfall in its history: 57.83 inches. This record-breaking amount of rainfall broke the previous record of 57.41 inches, which was set in 2004—the year of Hurricane Ivan. The trend continues, and as of May 13, the Pittsburgh region was already 2.5 inches above its average rainfall for the year.

Beyond fewer days to explore the outdoors on a sunny day, more rain leads to more landslides, more flooding, and altered ecologies. Flooding and landslides combine with existing pollution in our region threaten our region's water quality.

As with many of our area's challenges, our region's failing air quality is a complex issue—caused by several sources. From our region's steel and coke industry to our personal car use, our pollution comes from a variety of sources. This is exacerbated by the occurrence of inversions, which causes air to sit in our valleys, where our most populated areas are, making everyone more susceptible to the effects of poor air quality.

Our region's water quality is also threatened by rainfall-induced Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) events, industry, abandoned mine drainage, stormwater runoff, and more.

Our work as a conservation land trust plays a key role in what needs to be a multi-pronged solution to improving air and water quality in our region. As we lose 2,000 acres of green space each year to development, ALT's work in protecting more and more acres of green space actively protects natural solutions to these and other regional challenges.

On average, one acre of green space protects 327 trees, removes 80 pounds of carbon, and absorbs 860,000 gallons of rainwater every year. With 2,500 acres of existing green space protected and hundreds more acres in the pipeline, ALT and conservation organizations like ours are ensuring that ours and future generations are saving the assets already doing so much good to keep us drinking clean water and breathing healthy air.

The land we have already protected is valuable, but it's not enough. We need to do more to not only balance current levels of rainwater runoff and air pollution, but to plan for contingencies such as heavier, more frequent rainfall and increased industrial activity.

We hope you'll help us ramp up our efforts in addressing regional challenges through land conservation by joining our Capital Campaign for Conservation, Partners in Stewardship program, general membership program, volunteer opportunities, or outdoor environmental education events for all ages.

Join Our Capital Campaign for Conservation

An unprecedented window of opportunity



A red bud flowers in spring at an Allegheny County green space. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

by Tom Dougherty  
VP of Development & External Affairs

ALT is fortunate to draw support from a variety of sources, including individual donors, foundations, businesses, and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Our intensified fundraising efforts are yielding results and have recently led to an unprecedented opportunity to unlock an additional \$1.5 million over the next three years for land protection. The urgency of the situation has inspired a local foundation to award ALT an annual, dollar-for-dollar \$125,000 challenge grant for land protection for each of the next three years.

This means that, if ALT can raise \$125,000 per year from other sources, the foundation will match that amount and contribute \$125,000 each year to this conservation campaign. This will generate an additional \$250,000 per year for land conservation for each of the next three years for a total of \$750,000.

This incremental \$250,000 per year generated by your gift plus the foundation match can then be leveraged as the required local match to unlock additional matching funds

from the DCNR, thus doubling the overall impact to \$500,000 per year — generating an incremental total of \$1.5 million to protect Allegheny County green space over the 2019 to 2021 period.

While raising \$125,000 per year for the next three years will be no easy task, this is a window of opportunity that we simply must capitalize on if we are to urgently address the loss of green space that is threatening our region. It is for this reason that ALT is launching the Capital Campaign for Conservation.

Through this campaign, we are asking donors to rally around protecting green space by pledging to make an annual contribution over the next three years to unlock \$1.5 million of new conservation funding.

While all contributions to this campaign will be greatly appreciated, we need supporters who are willing to make an annual commitment for each of the next three years at one of the specific levels as depicted in the table below. If we can successfully obtain the specified number of donors at each pledge level, the goal will be accomplished.

ALT applies for and receives grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources annually, but our ability to take full advantage of available funds is severely limited by our lack of local matching funds. Over the last three years, 86% of DCNR grants have been awarded for conservation projects in Eastern Pennsylvania, while only 14% have been awarded for Western Pennsylvania projects. The successful execution of this program will help to rectify this imbalance.



Contact Tom Dougherty at [tdougherty@alleghenylantrust.org](mailto:tdougherty@alleghenylantrust.org) to discuss pledging your support.

	ANNUAL SUPPORT	NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS	SUB-TOTAL
	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
	\$10,000	3	\$30,000
	\$5,000	6	\$30,000
	\$2,500	10	\$25,000
	\$1,000	12	\$12,000
	\$500	26	\$13,000
			\$125,000

# New Project



## Planning for the Big Sewickley Creek Watershed

by Alyson Fearon | Community Conservation Director

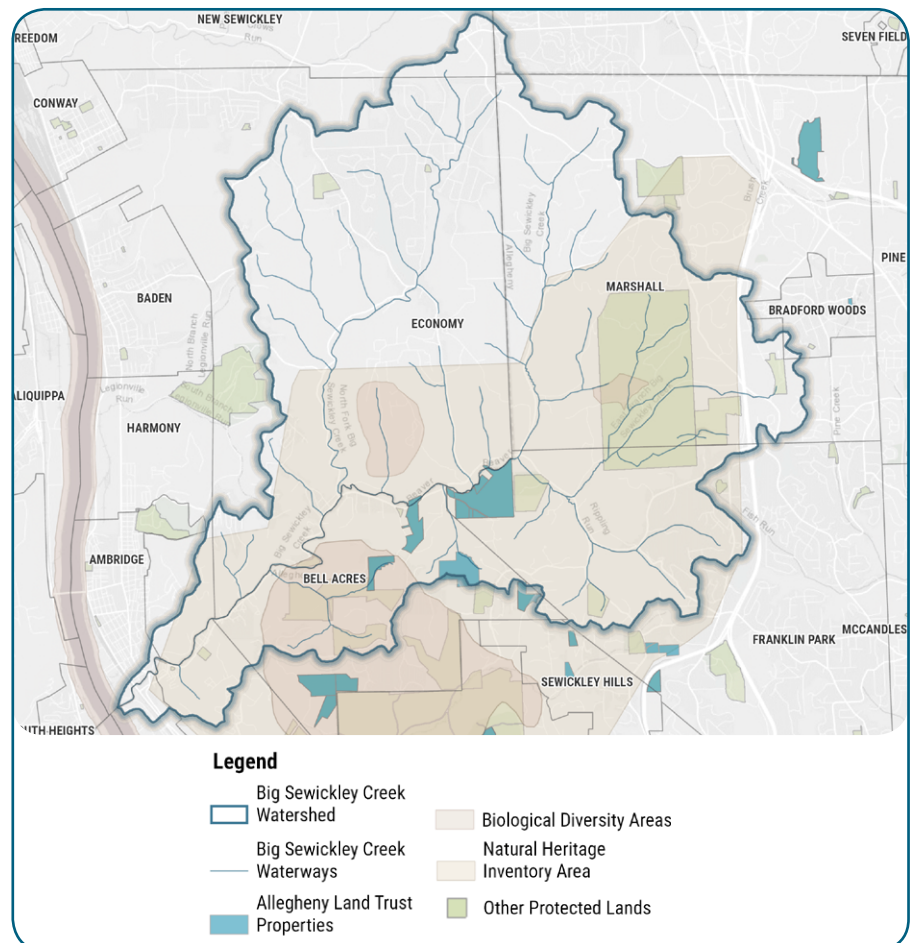
I am excited to share that we have launched the Big Sewickley Creek Watershed Rivers Conservation & Stewardship Plan process. ALT began efforts in 2017 to create

a plan that would produce a better public understanding of the watershed's natural and cultural assets, identify threats to water quality and property due to flooding, recommend-

ed resolutions to conflicting land and water usage interests, and prioritize opportunities to maintain the watershed's quality, beauty, and use through land protection.



Water flows through a tributary of Big Sewickley Creek in fall 2018. Photo by Lindsay Dill.





(LEFT) An afternoon view of a Big Sewickley Creek Tributary. (Right) A girl scout explores a tributary of the Big Sewickley Creek. Photos by Lindsay Dill.

Big Sewickley Creek is one of the largest watersheds in our area without a DCNR Rivers Conservation Plan, which aims to protect and enhance all of Pennsylvania's waterways, not just rivers. These plans are registered with DCNR to place the watershed on the Rivers Registry, which is a clearing house for all DCNR-funded Rivers Conservation Plans. This state-level resource serves to provide critical information on the watersheds to state and municipal agencies and improve cross-boundary consideration to watershed impacts. Acceptance to the Rivers Registry also creates access to additional DCNR grants for watershed protection and restoration projects recommended in the area.

The size of this watershed - 46-square miles - and number of municipalities - 12 - presents a challenge for ALT to ensure we are accurate and representative of all participants. For this reason, we have contracted with Pashek+MTR to assist in the public outreach for our plan; they will focus on the public survey development launch and review, as well as the public meetings. We are also working with the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy for biodiversity analysis, BAI Group to repeat previous water quality testing, CivicMapper to assist in GIS product development, Chris Kubiak for Bird Counts/Surveys, and the Allegheny, Beaver, and Butler Conservation Districts for additional biodiversity and watershed assessment concerns.

As part of this process, we conducted the Big Sewickley Creek Watershed Festival on May 5th at the Bell Acres Fire Hall. The festival brought together our education team, partners, and vendors to promote conservation, raise awareness on water quality issues, and otherwise create an educated and engaged group of watershed residents. We highlighted ALT's conservation work in the watershed, discussed how conserving lands protects water quality, engaged residents in water quality issues through hands on activities, and trained the next generation of environmental stewards through the STREAM Girls Program and other Environmental Education activities.

STREAM Girls is a project of Trout Unlimited that provides middle school girls with a two-day, immersive outdoor experience. The program is designed to combine science, technology, recreation, engineering, art and mathematic skills while engaging the girls as citizen scientists, artists, and anglers while building their appreciation for the natural world. Each program includes a STREAM Walk, fly-casting, stream velocity study, macroinvertebrate collection and analysis, fly-tying, self-reflection, and group discussion. For this year's training we were lucky to have the majority of volunteers be female anglers from the Penn's Woods West Chapter of Trout Unlimited. They acted as angling mentors and career examples throughout the program.

### Rivers Conservation & Stewardship Plan Goals:

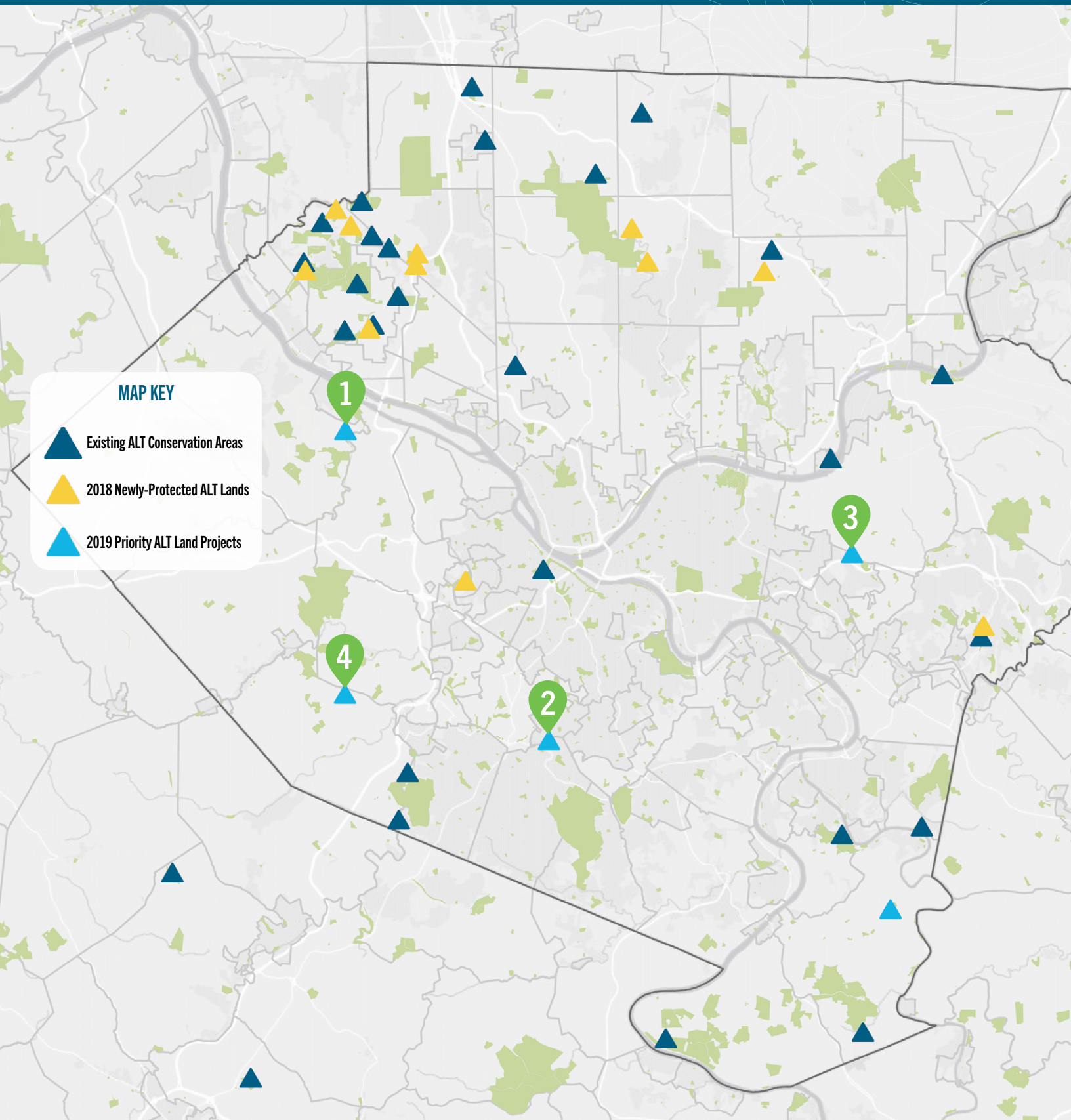
- **Raise awareness and increase cooperation among 12 municipalities in the watershed to view the watershed as a natural planning unit**
- **Locate unique or exceptional recreational, cultural, and natural amenities in the watershed and develop realistic strategies to protect them**
- **Improve the natural flow of water**
- **Identify natural lands that contribute to the watershed's recreation potential, natural beauty, water quality and flood control, and wildlife habitat**
- **Maintain water quality and reduce flood risk**
- **Promote (re)organization of a Big Sewickley Creek Watershed Association**
- **Petition to have BSCW placed on the PA Rivers Registry**



Find more information and follow progress updates for this project at:  
[alleghenylandtrust.org/big-sewickley-creek-watershed/](http://alleghenylandtrust.org/big-sewickley-creek-watershed/)

# Where Are We Now?

Allegheny Land Trust's existing, new, and current conservation projects





For more information how to support these projects, visit [alleghenylandtrust.org](http://alleghenylandtrust.org)

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



1

### **Montour Greenway | Moon Township, PA** **Protecting Trail-Side Nature**

In partnership with the Montour Trail Council and Hollow Oak Land Trust, we're ensuring that the Montour Creek & Trailside remains green for current and future generations by protecting 38.5 trail-side acres in the Montour Run Valley.

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



3

### **Churchill Valley | Churchill & Penn Hills, PA** **A Green Oasis in an Urban Landscape**

We're working to protect the former Churchill Valley Country Club in Churchill and Penn Hills. This rare and spectacular green space has great potential to be a premiere conservation area protecting habitat and creating an outstanding opportunity for passive recreation for area residents. We look forward to working with the community to protect these 148 acres.

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



2

### **Bethel Greenway | Bethel Park, PA** **Reclaiming Former Mine Land**

We're working with the Municipality of Bethel Park and local community members to protect one of the largest remaining green spaces in the South Hills. If we're successful in raising the necessary funding, this 40.5-acre hidden gem will be forever protected for the health and well-being of the community.

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



4

### **Meyer Farm | McDonald, PA** **Using Land to Connect People with Food**

The Meyer farm is a 45-acre green space project in progress that was bequeathed to ALT by Harry Meyer. Harry's dream for the land was preserve the farm so that it remains an outdoor classroom of natural and agricultural conservation. Harry hoped the land would be utilized to help educate more and more students about agriculture and inspire people to treasure the outdoors for generations to come.



Volunteers do trail work to improve sustainability at Dead Man's Hollow. Photo by Keri Rouse.

## Planning Trails Around Water

by Emilie Rzotkiewicz | VP of Land Resources

Did you know last year Pittsburgh had the highest amount of rainfall since the National Weather Service started recording it in 1837, and 2019 is trending to be the same? That is a lot of water! Excessive waterflow is going to cause issues for any landowner, ALT is no different.

Whether the rain causes us to cancel a public event, get our tractor stuck in the mud, or deal with overflowing stream banks, we are faced with the unexpected effects of water. One of the biggest challenges with water is how it affects our trails, which is a concern for ALT because no one wants to hike on wet, soggy, and eroded trails.

In trail-building, water always flows along the path of least resistance, and if it has nowhere to go, it puddles. When it rains, water flows faster on slopes and sits longer in low flat areas. So, how are we dealing with it? We are going around, over, and under to deal address water flow and keep our trails dry and sustainable. The following are three examples of how our stewardship department is working to minimize the negative effects water has on our trail systems.



A “before” and “after” of Dead Man’s Hollow’s Cool Spirit Trail. On the left, water damage is apparent, and on the right is the rock armoring used to address the issue. Photos by Caitlin Seiler.

### Around It

We’re finishing up a 10-mile trail system at Dead Man’s Hollow designed to be sustainable, which means it should hold up to the stresses of human use and water flow requiring little on-going maintenance. Past trails were not built in the right location with topography in mind; they were built to get you to a destination in a straight line. This resulted in severely eroded trails that were difficult to walk on and some that quickly became streams when it rained. Working with the land, we have built the trails to allow the water to run directly off the trail. In some areas, we face unexpected water obstacles, such as spring seeps which flow out from a groundwater source and are only discovered after we begin building. By using trail building techniques such as dips, bars, and rock-armoring, we are doing our best to make them truly sustainable. Check out this awesome work-in-progress by our DMH Trail Tuesday Crew addressing one of these seeps along the Cool Spirit Trail.



A “during” and “after” of Audubon Greenway’s stream crossing. On the left, a pipe is being installed to continue water flow. On the right, is the finished bridge, connecting trails on either side of the stream. Photos by April Claus.

## Over It

Audubon Greenway Conservation Area is a major trail connection in Sewickley Heights, linking the Sewickley Heights Borough Park to the Sewickley Hills Park and many other private trails. Some of the trails within the region have existed for over 100 years! The erosion of a small tributary broke one of these historic trail connections and required more than just a single rock in the middle of the stream to open the trail. In order to allow for all trail users - bikers, hikers, and horseback riders to safely cross, we installed a small rock ford which keeps explorers safe and dry while continuing to allow the water to flow underneath. Getting traffic out of the stream also improves the quality of the watershed, which is a priority as a small tributary to Little Sewickley Creek, a high-quality stream.



An explorer hikes the flooded trails of Wingfield Pines after a heavy storm in 2018. The site is designed to take on water to relieve downstream communities of more runoff. However, ALT is working to ensure trails maintain integrity through the flooding events, which are becoming more frequent. Photo by Tom Dougherty.

## Under It

Of all of ALT’s conservation areas, Wingfield Pines is best known for its relationship to water, primarily through its abandoned mine drainage water treatment system. However, several times a year, Wingfield is full of water, millions of gallons overflow the banks of Chartiers Creek and fill the floodplain, where the land does its natural job of storing it to prevent flooding of homes and businesses downstream. The increased amount of flooding in recent years has damaged several primary trail areas, eroding creekside trails, creating potholes, and having washed away multiple bridges. Repairs at Wingfield often require more time and resources to prepare for extensive stress with the continuous and increasing flooding. Our most recent challenge is the stream-side berm that was created years ago when the site was developed for a golf course. We’re working to prevent the water from coming in; now it mainly acts as a barrier for the water to flow back into the stream. As a result, standing water is a problem at Wingfield Pines and with standing water comes unwalkable trails, stressed vegetation, and mosquitoes! To release the water, ALT is exploring the underground drainage system that was in place when the property was a golf course. We have found that some pipes have collapsed, preventing water from free-flowing back into Chartiers Creek. Restoring this water flow will help to keep the trails a bit more dry at Wingfield Pines as we explore a long-term solution.

Next time you walk on an ALT conservation area, look down and remember water might have been an issue here, but ALT Stewardship is doing its best to keep your feet dry! To help maintain sustainable trails at Wingfield Pines or another conservation area near you, contact Caitlin Seiler at [cseiler@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:cseiler@alleghenylandtrust.org).

# Protecting Green Space is Only the Beginning

Caring for our conservation areas requires substantial financial investment and hard work, and ALT relies heavily on volunteers to make this happen. Much of this support comes from corporate groups who donate time and funds to “adopt” a green space.

These partnerships provide ALT with much-needed stewardship assistance and the partnering businesses with an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to the

community, while providing a team-building volunteer opportunity for employees.

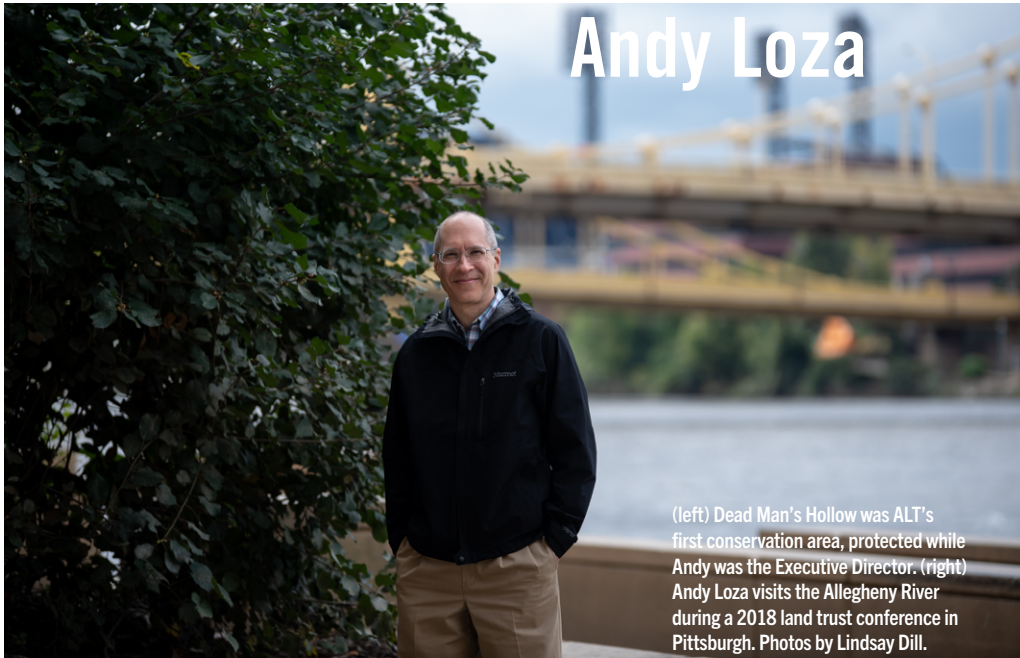
Our “Partners in Stewardship” program typically brings a group of 5-25 employees for a three-hour volunteer session at a conservation area of their choice. ALT provides an efficiently-run volunteer event (complete with tools, refreshments, and supplies), and a professionally-conducted, team-building exercise or environmental education session.

Volunteer tasks typically include trail building and maintenance, native and invasive species management, trash clearing, tree planting, and more.

To discuss how your group can become a “Partner in Stewardship”, contact ALT VP of Development Tom Dougherty at [tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org).



## Featured Supporter:



Andy Loza

(left) Dead Man's Hollow was ALT's first conservation area, protected while Andy was the Executive Director. (right) Andy Loza visits the Allegheny River during a 2018 land trust conference in Pittsburgh. Photos by Lindsay Dill.

by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

Throughout his childhood, Andy Loza loved to spend time reading science fiction and playing outside in a few favorite wooded areas. When he started to see the places he loved as a kid slowly disappearing to the bulldozer in favor of sprawl, Andy longed for the utopic scenes found in his science fiction novels where communities had stunning, enviable balances of development and nature.

In his books, he read about and saw sketches of places that were clearly developed and occupied by many people but at the same time had large areas right there for wildlife and provided great utility absorbing floodwater, air pollution, and filtering drinking water.

"I wanted these places to exist, where areas were developed and occupied by many people, but simultaneously had large areas for wildlife," Andy said. "I've always felt that it's possible for us to live in a place and derive great enjoyment from it without destroying its value for every other organism that we share this place with."

In 1991, while working for Allegheny County, Loza found himself researching a concept called "land trusts", as he'd just been placed in charge of the panel discussing the creation of one. The more he learned, the more he realized this was a real way to create utopic communities that could both live and work in their surrounding spaces while also protecting the habitat that supports the wildlife and nature that drew humans there in the first place.

Following the committee's recommendation, Allegheny Land Trust was eventually created, and it was Andy who led the organization as its first Executive Director from its founding in 1993 through 2000.

The land trust was to serve as a local protector of green space that didn't fit the criteria of existing conservation organizations, but that nonetheless could address the county's desire to protect

its remaining green space to see a visible difference in the health and well-being of its communities.

"In a highly urbanized area, beautiful greenery was relative, and I wanted to look at where we could make the biggest difference, not on a 10-year scale, but on a 50-year scale," Andy said.

Andy led ALT through acquiring its first conservation area, Dead Man's Hollow, into conformance with Land Trust Standards & Practices, helped to ensure the ongoing care of lands in perpetuity by building a stewardship endowment, developed the organization's pipeline of conservation projects, kickstarted the county's awareness of the opportunity to conserve land, saw the organization through its early, hard hurdles, and so much more.

For seven years, Andy built and ran the organization as its sole employee with a Board of Directors and a vision. He left the organization in 2000 to become the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association's executive director.

Now, he helps 75 land trusts across the state of varying sizes and capacities to overcome challenges he himself faced at ALT. He's developed dozens of guides and models to lessen various burdens on land trusts in areas such as achieving national accreditation, working through easements, enacting land use policies, creating stewardship endowments, and instilling a lasting community appreciation of and value for protecting its land.

"At ALT, I saw it as important to preserve things in a relatively wild state, so people can experience that wildness close-to-home," Andy said. "Sometimes it can take decades of maintenance, improvement, and use for communities to broadly appreciate the importance of these spaces. It's important to connect with communities on which aspect of land is important to them and protect these places before conservation of them is no longer an option."

## Be The Water

by Jessica Kester | VP of Education

Close your eyes and let me take you on an adventure! Ok, wait - you're reading this, so maybe just use your imagination as you pretend you are a drop of water floating high in a cloud.

The cloud begins to cool, more drops condense around you and you fall, tumbling to the earth. You splatter on a leaf. Some of the drops are absorbed into the plant while you slide down the stem, twig, and trunk and plop onto the soil. Again, more drops gather around you, but this time you're lapped up by a thirsty critter on the forest floor; and we all know what happens when creatures drink, you guessed it: they have to excrete the excess!

Now, you're dripping into the grass and filtering into the soil where after many decades in the aquifer you spill out into a stream. Bouncing and tumbling over rocks and logs you're carried swiftly from a small stream to a larger one and then a river until you slowly flow out into the ocean. Carried by the currents, passed islands, and over undersea mountains, you eventually warm and evaporate as you rise to the clouds once again.

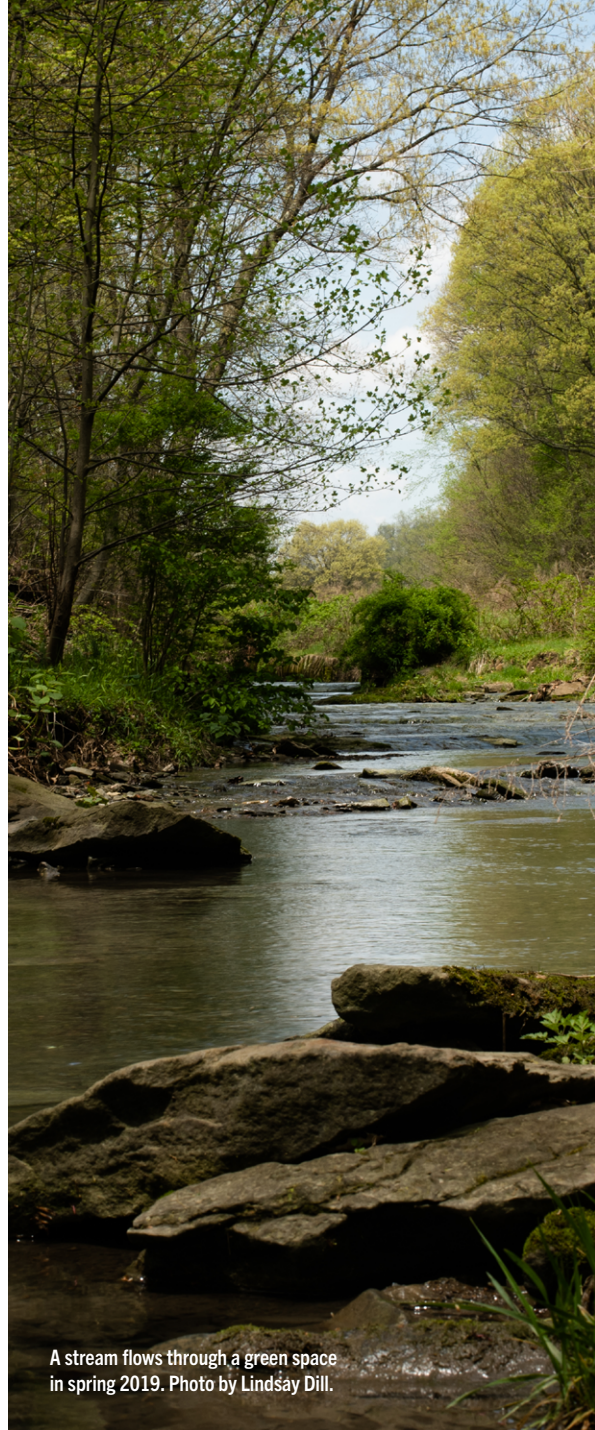
Now, think of how you felt as you were that drop of water. Did you feel free? Needed? Did you ever once feel that you were dirty? Polluted? Were you unusable? This is one example of the many activities that the Environmental Education Team does with students of all ages to begin to think about the water cycle and pollution. While ALT looks at preserving green space for biodiversity and beauty, we also consider the functions that the space will provide to the overall ecological health of an area. Functions pertaining to the water cycle deal with topics such as runoff, flooding, filtering, remediation, and sequestration.

The Environmental Education Team integrates water lessons into our programs over a wide age range- from adults with international water curricula like Project WET, Healthy Water Healthy People, and Getting Little Feet WET, to children via our partnerships with Trout Unlimited and their STREAM Girls program (ages 11-14), Pennsylvania American Water's Wonderful World of Water Camp for ages 7-11, and our Wonderful Water program for ages 2-7. We also engage families with our Creek Critters programs on our conservation areas each summer to encourage water exploration and appreciation.

So, make a splash this summer in a creek or stream near you or visit one of our conservation area waterways to explore the importance of water and how it makes the world go around in so many ways.



Experience the expertise of our education team first-hand at an upcoming event: [bit.ly/altoutside](http://bit.ly/altoutside)



A stream flows through a green space in spring 2019. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

Girls wade through a stream at Linbrook Woodlands as they find plants and critters while they analyze water health. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



## A Water-Themed Summer Camp for Kids

Wonderful World of Water | July 15-17 | 9 am- 3 pm | Mingo Creek County Park

Looking for ways to get your 7-11-year-old outdoors and engaged in water education topics this summer? Sign up for our free "Wonderful World of Water" summer camp that runs from July 15 to 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. This annual Pennsylvania American Water camp is held at the Mingo Creek County Park. Registrants must attend all three days.

Water is a resource that is essential to life, and yet often taken for granted. Day-campers aged 7-11 will explore watershed basics, learn how human activity on the land affects the quality of water in rivers and streams, and discover solutions to water pollution. We'll hike the park's nature trails, conduct water experiments, make water-related crafts, and get our feet wet in the creek. Sign up and receive your registration packet by visiting: [bit.ly/altoutside](http://bit.ly/altoutside)

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**E** Education Events

**V** Volunteer Events



Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

## Trail Tuesdays

### Dead Man's Hollow

June - September | 5:30 - 7:30 pm

Lace up your boots, get outside, and lend a hand in helping improve local land! Join us every third Tuesday (April-September) as we work to improve and expand the Hollow's trail system.

**All Ages | Cost: Free to Attend**

## Free Steward Training Series

### Wingfield Pines

June 20, September 15 | 9 am - 12 pm

Become a skilled ALT steward or hone your existing steward skills. These workshops equip attendees with the knowledge and resources to work as an independent volunteer steward at any of our conservation areas around the county.

The July workshop focuses on sustainable trail building and maintenance as well as the potential dangers of working outdoors - creatures, climate, and common sense. The September training covers restoration area management, including tree planting, identification, and protection of newly-planted trees.

**All Ages | Cost: Free to Attend**



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

## Pre-K Summer Camp: Animal Architects

### Audubon Greenway

July 8 - July 12 | 10 am - 11:30 am Daily

Do you have a nature lover between the ages of 3 and 5 years old? Bring them to our first-ever Animal Architects camp at Audubon Greenway Conservation Area! Each day of camp, we'll discuss a different animal that builds and creates unique things in nature. Topics include birds, bees, spiders, and more! Each day will include a hike, story, and make-and-take item. Join us for select days or enjoy the entire series at a discounted rate.

**Ages: Pre-K & Accompanying Adult | Cost: \$18/daily session, or \$80 for all 5 days**



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

## Fungus Among Us: Mushroom Walk

### Sycamore Island

July 13 | 9 am - 12 pm

Join Allegheny Land Trust & the Western Pennsylvania Mushroom Club as we journey to Sycamore Island in search of seasonal fungi aboard the Allegheny Cleanways Tireless Project pontoon, "The Rachel Carson". We will shuttle from the Verona Public Docks to explore the island and collect mushroom samples, then return to shore for identification to discover what treasures we uncover.

**All Ages | Cost: \$20**



To register and find more information, visit this case-sensitive link:  
[bit.ly/altoutside](https://bit.ly/altoutside)



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Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Plant Pursuit: Plants for Pollinators

July 14 | Audubon Greenway | 3 - 4 pm  
Aug 3 | Linbrook Woodlands | 3 - 4 pm  
Sept 8 | Irwin Run | 3 - 4 pm

Led by our partner Jen Dalke of Blue Heron Nature Skills, these hikes will help you hone your plant identification skills while enjoying a hike in the woods. July's "Buds & the Bees" pursuit will explore pollinator habitats, benefits, and active programs supporting them. August's "Medicinal Plants of the Wild" will discuss the medicines and highly-studied species growing in our forests. September's "Foraging 101" will teach attendees best foraging practices.

**All Ages | Cost: \$5**



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Creek Critters Wingfield Pines

July 27, Aug 31 | 10 am - 12 pm

Join our trained education team as we wade into the waters that flow through Wingfield Pines in search of the "creek critters" that call these waters home. Attendees will gather macroinvertebrates and learn what they indicate about the water's health. Great for families and community groups.

**All Ages | Cost: \$5**



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Fungus Among Us

July 20 | Audubon Greenway | 9 am - 12 pm  
Aug 17 | Dead Man's Hollow | 9 am - 12 pm

Ever wonder what that mushroom is you see growing on a log? Join our education team & the Western PA Mushroom Club experts as we search for the myriad of fungus species that can be found. We will collect, identify, and release specimens, but will not harvest for food.

**All Ages | Cost: \$5**



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Friends of DMH: Ruins Workday Dead Man's Hollow

September 22 | 9 am - 12 pm

Do you consider yourself a friend of the Dead Man's Hollow Conservation Area? Help us improve the land by clearing trash, making repairs to infrastructure, removing or adding plants, and addressing other needs at the property.

This workday will focus on the Ruins trail, entering from the Boston Trailhead. Specific details to be shared prior to the workday.

**All Ages | Cost: Free to Attend**



## ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST

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# ABOUT ALT

**Allegheny Land Trust (ALT) is a nationally-accredited, independent, non-profit organization that has been helping local people save local land in the Pittsburgh region for a quarter century.**

Founded in 1993, ALT has protected more than 2,500 acres of green space preserving our region's unique natural beauty, providing enhanced outdoor recreational opportunities, improving water quality, fostering biodiversity, and enhancing the overall quality of life for our communities. ALT's areas of strategic priority include Land Conservation, Stewardship, Education, and Urban Greening.

ALT's mission has expanded in recent years to include innovative methods of land conservation in support of community needs for urban green space as well the addition of a professional environmental education team, which provides programming for all ages to foster future generations of stewards.

With conservation areas in 30 municipalities, there is now an ALT conservation project within 12 miles of every Allegheny County resident. The benefits of ALT's efforts can be experienced across the region from McKeesport to Franklin Park, Upper St. Clair to Blawnox, Mt. Washington to Plum, and many places in between.



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**FRONT COVER:** A mushroom ages on tree bark at a new ALT land protection project in Allegheny County.

**BACK COVER:** A garter snake samples their surroundings at a new ALT land protection project in Allegheny County.

Photos by Lindsay Dill.



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