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# VISTAS

An Allegheny Land Trust Publication

Winter 2019







A Modcloth volunteer digs a hole to plant a single tree at our Wingfield Pines conservation area. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

# notes

## FROM THE LAND:

### Why Bother Planting a Single Tree?

by Roy Kraynyk | VP of Land Protection & Capital Projects

**F**requently, I get questions from community members about the details of ALT's conservation work, and I wanted to take this opportunity to answer a good one that gets to the core of our work.

#### **Q: With so many alarms sounding for the environment globally, why should I worry about protecting the 100 acres down the street from me locally?**

The consistent stream of news about the serious environmental issues facing our planet can feel overwhelming and leave us searching for what if anything we can do to address the situation. When we hear about sea level rise, the Amazon (and California) burning, the dramatic decline in the bird population nationwide, the increase in extreme weather events, and the many other serious global environmental challenges we may sometimes wonder if we can really make a difference.

But we must remember that the antidote to despair is action. Most global environmental issues are the cumulative result of millions of destructive decisions made all around the globe, and likewise the solutions to those issues will come about from millions of positive and restorative actions taken all around the globe. We contribute in a very meaningful and tangible way to global environmental solutions when we take bold and definitive action locally. Actions like land conservation and sustainable stewardship.

Consider the power of a single tree—one average size tree sequesters 12.6 pounds of carbon and absorbs 263 gallons of stormwater each year—positively impacting our environment.

Multiply the impact of that single tree by the 327 estimated mature trees per acre and the incredible benefits of trees start to become more clear.

It is easy to see then why there is great discussion around the world about the need to plant xyz million trees over the next xy years as a major tool to combat climate change. Of course, ALT fully endorses all tree planting initiatives everywhere and we are encouraged by the great efforts being made by many nations and many organizations around the world to do so. We plant trees on our conservation areas too.

But there is another activity that has an even more immediate impact than planting new trees, and that is conserving existing trees. It takes newly planted trees many years to reach their full capacity as air filters and water sponges—but mature trees are already delivering those benefits every day.

So, when you help us to protect that “100 acres down the street” together we are protecting 32,700 trees that take 412,020 pounds of carbon out of the air and absorb and purify 8.6 million gallons of stormwater each year. When ALT protects 500 or so NEW acres in any given year we are protecting over 163,000 additional trees that take 2 million pounds of carbon out of the atmosphere and absorb 43 million gallons of additional stormwater each year. Preserving this incredible capacity for renewal is extremely impactful.

We will continue to work together, acting with urgency to “help local people save local land” with the knowledge that we are preserving the quality of life in our region while contributing to the solution to global environmental challenges.



A child plays at Audubon Greenway Conservation Area. Photo by Lindsay Dill.





# habitat at home

## 5 Ways to Help Wildlife this Winter

by Julie Travaglini | Director of Education

**1) Leave the leaves!** Many types of insects, including butterflies, may overwinter in your fallen leaves. Not raking and disposing of leaves provides a safe, warm place to pass the winter months.

**2) Keep a source of non-frozen water available.** Fresh water can be hard to come by in the colder months, so keep a filled and clean bird bath for our feathered friends.

**3) Mess is best!** Instead of trimming back year-end garden plants, leave them until spring. The flower heads will provide a source of seeds for birds when fresh flowers are scarce.

**4) Provide high fat foods** in your bird feeder such as meal worms, nuts, and mixed seeds. These provide energy birds and small mammals need to stay warm.

**5) Remove garden netting.** Any type of garden netting or covering should be taken off the ground to prevent creatures that emerge from the soil in the spring from becoming entangled.



(left) Scott Schutte of Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and Wingfield Pines land steward Barb Paul practice identifying and logging lichens using the iNaturalist app at a Bioblitz event. (below) Collected mushrooms are displayed and identified by community members at the same Bioblitz. Photos by Lindsay Dill.



## Become a Community Scientist

by Jessica Kester | VP of Education

**S**ince the publishing of *Science* journal's report on bird population decline, people ask us, "How can I help at home?" Our answer: become part of the fast-growing Community (or Citizen) Science movement.

Community Science allows anyone to contribute to research by applying the idea that "many hands make for light work" on a global scale.

In the past, if I wanted to know where hummingbirds are at any given point in their migration, I would have to track a single bird using satellites/radio signals. Today, I can visit the JourneyNorth.org website where birders are eagerly awaiting the birds' return to their backyard feeders and post when one arrives. By crowd-sourcing the observation portion of research, scientists can gather large amounts of global data that can be shared in real-time, allowing research to move at a faster pace while covering larger spans of time than were previously possible.

For instance, the National Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count, which began in Texas in 1900, is the longest running citizen science survey in the world. ALT and the Upper St. Clair Citizens for Land Stewardship will be doing our part to help count our local birds on Saturday, December 14 at Wingfield Pines Conservation Area. Additional hikes can be found all over our region and no experience is necessary to participate. If you

are a birder, be sure to log your observations any time using eBird.

Apps like iNaturalist can help you record and identify any living organism by crowd-sourcing the identification process and may only require you to know the most basic level identification of "bird". However, if you are more knowledgeable, you can help identify a specific bird photo to its species such as American Robin (*Turdus Migratorius*).

You don't have to focus on just one thing! Help celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day by joining in the City Nature Challenge as part of the Pittsburgh Region (Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties) anytime between April 24-27, 2020. No experience is needed. Simply find and photograph any living thing (captive/cultivated things not included) and upload it to iNaturalist and allow experts from around the world to do the identification! You can also be one of the experts and help identify things from the comfort of home.

Appalachian Bat Count, Butterflies & Moths of North America, Nature's Notebook, PA Amphibian & Reptile Survey: these are only a few examples of how you can help make a difference while enjoying the outdoors. My preschooler and toddler contribute to iNaturalist and have joined me on many bird counts. If you're already outdoors, utilize these opportunities to participate in Community Science and you can make a big difference worldwide in documenting our natural world.



For more tips & information, visit:  
[www.gardenlines.co.uk/articles/10-tips-helping-wildlife-over-winter](http://www.gardenlines.co.uk/articles/10-tips-helping-wildlife-over-winter)



# Addressing Our Region's Challenges:

## GLOBAL INDICATORS, LOCAL REALITIES

by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

In 1962, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was published and detailed how human activity was marring our land, air, and water. The Pittsburgher's legacy lives on—even in the naming of one of the Three Sisters Bridges downtown—but have we learned from and sustained action on her wisdom?



An Aquatic Entomologist identifies macroinvertebrates found in the Big Sewickley Creek in early November to help analyze water quality of the watershed. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Nature has largely recovered an area that a former mine used to deposit slag. ALT is now looking to protect this reclaimed green space, called Bethel Green, to encourage permanent recovery. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

It's easy to wax poetic on activists and movements gone by, but we need to rise to the challenge of responding to the literal and metaphorical canaries of today's coal mines. In mid-September, the journal *Science* published a report detailing the decline of North America's bird population by 25% since 1970. Several days later, the *Tribune-Review* published an article revealing that Western Pennsylvania is seeing the same decline in bird population locally.

The issues caused by environmental degradation are not relics of the past or tales from faraway lands—they are current and they are local. As written in previous issues, you can see these issues in our backyards in the form of heavier rain, flooding, landslides, poor air quality, degraded watershed quality, lost green space, and our own birds gone from the treetops.

We'd like to share a brief analysis written in August by The Nature Conservancy's Tom Jennings and Jessica Oglesby. We believe its comments are important in our conservation landscape both nationally and locally:

“The United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published its *Special Report on Climate Change and Land*. A follow-up to last October's “Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C”, this latest report examines the complex relationships between a shifting climate and the lands we rely on for our food, livelihoods and wellbeing - encompassing threats including desertification, land degradation, sustainable land management and food security.

Commenting in response to the IPCC's findings, Jennifer Tabola - Director for Global Climate Strategy at The Nature Conservancy - said:

“In the same way last year's IPCC special report on 1.5°C focused global attention on the threats of climate change like never before, today's new report promises to do the same for the complex challenges of land use. We already knew that humanity's over-exploitation of the Earth's lands is a key driver of climate change, and that we need to take urgent, ambitious action to address these issues. The IPCC's land report simply puts this situation into





A red wing black bird calls at Wingfield Pines. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

sharper focus – and presents us with the opportunity to define our generation.

As with climate change in general, we have a choice: do we balance the needs of human development and nature, or do we sleepwalk into a future of failing farmlands, eroding soil, collapsing ecosystems and dwindling food resources? Can we look at the powerful tools conservation science has already put at our disposal to help combat these threats and have the courage to take the urgent policy decisions now necessary to see these deployed at scale?

We know that natural climate solutions like reforestation, avoided deforestation and wetland conservation can together deliver a third of the carbon reductions necessary by 2030 to put us on a trajectory to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. We have the sophisticated tools to help us concentrate renewable energy infrastructure on already-degraded lands, rather than on sensitive wildlife habitat or precious farmland. We understand the importance of working in close collaboration with the indigenous communities who are stewards of so much of our planet's remaining wild lands.

So many of the tools we need already exist. It now falls to global leaders, policymakers, corporations and communities the world over to show their courage, and invest in the vision and ambition necessary to drive their adoption of these tools. If we can muster the collective courage to make bold decisions now, together we can ensure the worst-case scenarios outlined in this latest, timely IPCC report will not become reality.’”

We couldn't agree with this urgency more. To elaborate further on the urgency of acting now to conserve our remaining natural

spaces, we'd like to share the major results from a Conservation Science Partners study released in January 2019.

“Due to the expansion and intensification of human land uses that lead to modification, natural areas in the conterminous US were steadily lost between 2001 and 2017. Over this 16-year period, the total amount of natural area lost to development was over 24-million acres, roughly equivalent to nearly nine Grand Canyon National Parks (~2.8 million acres) or 49 Great Smoky Mountain National Parks (~520,000 acres). This equates to more than 1.5-million acres lost annually. Notably, and in terms of acres as a percent of change, the most rapid rate of loss from 2001 to 2017 occurred in: North Dakota (5.3%), Oklahoma (2.9%), and Pennsylvania (2.4%).”

These global and national reports apply locally and tie directly to our work at ALT. Our current efforts focus on many high-impact land protection, stewardship, and environmental education initiatives in Allegheny County to help address these global issues in our region. We believe that global awareness and local action is the best way to make the most effective, lasting change.

Our work has the power to transform communities and our region by protecting green spaces that enhance scenic beauty, provide close-to-home places for healthy recreation and environmental education, protect wildlife habitat, clean our air, and absorb stormwater to mitigate flash-flooding and landslides. Together, we can conserve our region's land that is both nice to enjoy and necessary to protect. We ask that you not be discouraged by daunting global challenges, but that you instead seek solutions to global issues by impacting change locally.

Read more about global, national, and local issues and studies referenced in this article at the following links:

- NATIONAL BIRD POPULATION DECLINE: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/19/science/bird-populations-america-canada.html>
- WESTERN PA BIRD POPULATION DECLINE: <https://triblive.com/local/regional/western-pennsylvania-experiencing-same-bird-declines-being-seen-nationwide/>
- THE NATURE CONSERVANCY ARTICLE ON IPCC REPORT: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom/ipcc-special-report-on-climate-change-and-land/>
- CONSERVATION SCIENCE PARTNERS STUDY ON LAND IN CONTERMINOUS US: <https://www.csp-inc.org/public/CSP%20Disappearing%20US%20Exec%20Summary%20011819.pdf>





## Addressing Climate Change Locally

by Christopher J. Beichner | President & CEO

**T**here is no need to look far to observe evidence of a changing climate affecting all of us. When it rains, it pours transforming our neighborhood streets into raging rivers. With the relentless rain, our steep slopes erode causing destructive and costly landslides.

When we over-develop our communities, highways, parking lots, driveways, sidewalks and buildings all inhibit rainwater from absorbing back into the Earth. As a result, the increased rainwater flows into infrastructure combined with our sewers. This infrastructure becomes overwhelmed with heavy rain and subsequently dumps raw sewage into our iconic three rivers.

All these extreme issues have a detrimental effect on our ecology and economy. These local problems can be directly attributed to global change being accelerated by human influence.

So, what are we doing to educate ourselves on the effects of climate in our communities? What are we doing to become a more resilient region?

ALT's vision is "to imagine a resilient region with abundant green space that is easily accessible and recognized as essential to the quality of life for all."

Our 2020 work plan includes protecting green spaces that strategically address global and local issues - for example, by protecting high quality wildlife habitat and absorbing rainwater to prevent it from flash flooding our communities.

We hope to conserve seven

new lands totaling 580 acres next year.

Caring for the land we conserve helps create a resilient ecosystem. Planting diverse, native plants attracts a variety of desirable species and prevents our landscapes from lacking plant diversity. Our stewardship team is planning several volunteer workdays in 2020 and looking for individual and corporate partners.

ALT's education team will evaluate all our program offerings next year while continuing to offer outstanding curriculum for people of all ages to appreciate water, land, climate, ecology and the world around us.

Each year, the World Economic Forum develops their top ten risks facing the world. In 2019, their list included FIVE threats directly related to the current climate crisis.

Our international challenges are enormous. We hear with regularity the unprecedented forest loss in the Amazon, the three billion birds lost globally, or a football field of green space lost every 30 seconds in our country. It may seem overwhelming, and at times, you may feel helpless and hopeless.

Except, you **can** make a difference. You have an uplifting voice that cannot be silenced. You have amazing ideas that will not be ignored. And, you have an impenetrable resolve to keep solving our world's biggest problems, and in my opinion, it all starts locally in your neighborhood. Let's work together to do it.



ALT staff member Caitlin Seiler hikes the cart paths of the proposed Churchill Valley Greenway in October 2019. This green space is one of ALT's active land protection projects that can make a difference in our communities. Photo by Lindsay Dill.





## 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)

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



Guido Girimonti, ALT's newest staff member, at Devil's Hollow conservation area. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

“I saw the opening as my turn to step up and become a member of a team that will make sure future generations will have the same opportunity as I have to enjoy the outdoors.”

Guido Girimonti

## Growing Our ALTeam

by Caitlin Seiler | Director of Volunteer & Land Resources

Volunteers are the backbone of ALT's stewardship team, especially Land Stewards and Friends Of groups who are on the land daily or weekly and will be the first to call if something goes awry like "There is no water in the Wingfield Pines water restoration system!"

Our organization is growing and we are protecting more green spaces faster, while at the same time our region faces growing threats that affect the lands we protect, such as flooding and landslides. In addition to managing these threats, many of our conservation areas are open to the public to enjoy. As we do more to improve accessibility for more groups to explore our spaces, we want to make sure these areas can be located, and visitors can safely get in and out.

Based on this, we found that our stewardship team could be better prepared to address these challenges if we had staff on-hand primarily focused on land management.

Earlier this year, we began the search for a Land Manager. This part-time position

involves being out on our Conservation Areas helping us stay on top of accreditation requirements like annual monitoring and ensuring boundaries are marked, as well as maintaining our progress on restoration projects, supporting volunteers, and keeping trails open and signage visible.

Just after Labor Day, Guido Girimonti joined our team as our Land Manager. A US Army Veteran, with 39 years of experience in Emergency Services, including being a first responder at Ground Zero and 20 years at the County Airport, he has a wealth of knowledge and expertise to help our team address the ever-changing needs of managing Conservation Areas.

His endless energy and positive attitude are a great addition to the team. When he is not with ALT he's likely to be found training beagles at his local hunting club or whipping up something in the kitchen at home with his wife and dogs. You're likely to catch Guido out on the land wearing his high-vis green ALT shirt, feel free to stop and say hello!





(left) Audubon Greenway pictured in the fall; it's one of Kathy's favorite ALT projects, as she enjoys watching it grow with each new acquisition. (right) Kathy Frankel. Photos by Lindsay Dill.

## Featured Supporter:

# Kathy Frankel



by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

Think back to the last walk you took through a park, the last community day you attended, the last stream you visited. Do you know who owned that land? Have you wondered how that place came to be—how conservation happens?

There are many hands that go into protecting, maintaining, improving, and providing programming on our spaces. Kathy Frankel has been involved in ensuring many Western Pennsylvania spaces are well-planned, protected, and programmed since 1996.

Kathy is the regional Western Pennsylvania Recreation & Conservation Manager for the Bureau of Conservation and Natural Resources at the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and she's been the professional to whom we propose our land protection projects in need of state funding.

You'd be hard-pressed to hear Kathy sentimentally recounting the protection of any one piece of land, but her passion comes through in forging partnerships and connecting communities to accessible spaces near their homes.

"It's rewarding to help groups come together, focus, and make a project happen with sweat equity," Kathy said. "If communities were more aware of what they could do to augment their spaces, it would be helpful and have a really big impact."

Kathy helps groups like ALT in identifying valuable projects, helping to form the vision for those projects, connecting projects for greater impact, and communicating best available grants and timelines. Her work is in seeking great local projects for state-wide impact, as that is what the state-level DCNR examines when seeking to best allocate funding for projects across the commonwealth.

In her time at DCNR, she's seen a lot of positive change. Where once communities often didn't have a say in what happened with vacant land, Kathy is happy to see that there are now mechanisms in place to enact community-inclusive planning. In 1984, when she started in Cranberry Township as the Director of Parks and Recreation, she was one of few

women in leadership roles. Now she's inspired to see that there are many more women in leading roles within the programming and parks sectors. Finally, Kathy is encouraged to see more communities engaging in long-term, conservation-based planning.

"Many decision makers in municipalities need to be educated on the opportunities for recreation and conservation in their communities," Kathy said. "We're seeing more groups thinking this way in early planning stages, but more need to know that green and sustainable practices — these projects are worth the investment."

This guidance has helped ALT in growing our education efforts into

educating not only budding naturalists on the flora and fauna surrounding them, but also in educating community planners on the potential for resilient green investment opportunities that already exist right in front of them.

Kathy has seen ALT grow from our very first green space, Dead Man's Hollow, through the acquisition of many parcels now forming the still-growing Audubon Greenway, and is still advising us on best initiatives to approach in our grant applications for projects today.

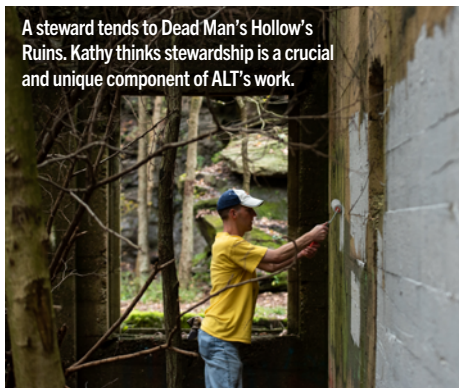
"I like that ALT takes into consideration the long-term stewardship of a space—it's one thing to acquire it, but land needs on-going care to get

the most value out of that green space," Kathy said. "ALT is really good at planning for that."

Kathy said retirement is now within view for her, and when she reflects back on her career, she often thinks of her recently-passed mother's words. When Kathy first started pursuing a degree in parks and recreation, her mom would tell family friends, "She's going to be like Julie the cruise director from 'The Love Boats.'" After years of watching Kathy grow and lead in her career, her mom grew more and more respect for Kathy's impact.

"Did you ever think that you would go this far?" Her mom asked her with pride.

A steward tends to Dead Man's Hollow's Ruins. Kathy thinks stewardship is a crucial and unique component of ALT's work.







Wingfield Pines provides habitat for many creatures. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

## Wingfield Pines Back in Action



A cyclist rides through the boardwalk in October 2019, which winds explorers through the wetlands. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Water from an abandoned mine is directed through a pipe that provides oxidation for iron which is then filtered from the water using gravity and natural filtration. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Educators learn best practices for spotting, identifying, and logging birds. ALT will host Bioblitzes in 2020 at Wingfield Pines to encourage more community science by logging flora and fauna activity at the green space. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

by Emilie Rzotkiewicz | VP of Land Resources

There is great news this month for Chartiers Creek and everyone who appreciates clean water (who doesn't?!). The passive abandoned mine drainage treatment system at Wingfield Pines Conservation Area is once again transforming 1,500 gallons a minute of polluted, abandoned coal mine drainage (AMD) into clean water before it flows into Chartiers Creek and onto the Ohio River.

The operation of this highly-acclaimed system was disrupted by an underground geologic event in November 2017, causing water to bypass the treatment system and flow directly into Chartiers Creek as it did for decades prior to ALT's acquisition of Wingfield Pines and installation of the system.

Over the past two years, we have worked diligently to assess the issue, secure funding, and manage the restoration of the system. Partners included the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation, a local geotechnical engineering firm (Tetra Tech), and the original designer of the system Hedin Environmental to develop a solution that has restored the AMD system to its full effectiveness. Construction work is now complete and the Wingfield Pines landscape along Chartiers Creek is now transforming back into the beautiful and serene space it is known to be.

Initially protected for its ability to absorb and filter millions of gallons of flood water from Chartiers Creek during periods of heavy rain, Wingfield Pines has become so much more than a giant sponge to mitigate downstream flooding. Through ALT stewardship efforts, this special place has made a dramatic impact in the lives of both humans and animals.

The abandoned mine drainage treatment system cleanses polluted water, its trails serve as a place for passive recreation, and its wetlands are outdoor laboratories for students of all ages. The quality habitat found at Wingfield Pines has drawn in more than hikers and students as the green space has become known as one of the top birding spots in Western Pennsylvania. The thriving wetlands have drawn in locally rare birds, including the Virginia Rail and Snowy Egret.

This effort to provide habitat to rare and migratory birds is a management goal for the site. In addition to the AMD system repairs, we recently completed a 10-year master plan to guide the on-going management of this conservation area to effectively balance its many uses for the good of the environment and the community. With recent news about the dramatic decline in bird populations, ALT is confident we are doing our best to make a local impact on not only the water at Wingfield Pines, but the many species that call it home.



## Taking Local Action to Help Combat Global Crises

by Tom Dougherty | VP Development & External Affairs

Here at ALT, we frequently try to make the case that how we treat our remaining green space in Allegheny County will either help to mitigate or further exacerbate many of the critical issues facing the region.

We will continue to deliver this message through public presentations, grant requests, press releases, fundraising solicitations and all other communications because we believe that it is important for people to clearly understand the connection between green space and quality of life.

In addition to aesthetic and recreational benefits, the preservation of green space reduces landslides, flooding and combined sewer overflow, preserves land for local food production, and improves air and water quality. In short, abundant and accessible green space is a vital component to the overall quality of life in our region.

In its recently released *Special Report on*

*Land and Climate Change* (referenced on page 4 in this issue of *Vistas*) the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change addresses, with great scientific rigor, the critical role that land use decisions around the globe will play in either helping to mitigate or further exacerbate climate change and its far-reaching and devastating impacts. In short, abundant green space and prudent land use planning are critical elements to the very sustainability of our world.

With your ongoing support we will continue to act with great urgency here in Western Pennsylvania to strategically identify and conserve green spaces that help to provide natural solutions to regional issues, and thus contributing in our own local way to essential global conservation efforts.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our local land conservation work thus far in 2019 by making a general donation, contrib-

uting to one of the several ongoing property acquisition campaigns, pledging your participation in the unique Campaign for Conservation, becoming a business sponsor, and/or donating on the recent Day of Giving.

While the Day of Giving has successfully come and gone (raising more than \$56,000 from individual donations matched by ALT's Board of Directors) the other campaigns are still active and very much in need of your support.

You can make a general donation or learn more about the Campaign for Conservation, the Churchill Valley and Bethel Green property acquisition campaigns, and business sponsorship opportunities by visiting our website at [www.alleghenylandtrust.org](http://www.alleghenylandtrust.org) or calling me at 412-741-2750 x211.

Thank you for being a local part of the global solution.

## Your Support Helped to Protect New Green Space



Montour Greenway Expansion.  
Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### MONTOUR GREENWAY EXPANSION Moon Township, PA | 38.5 Acres

Working together with neighbors, the community of trail users, the Montour Trail Council, and Hollow Oak Land Trust, we've just protected green space along the Montour Trail and Montour Run in Moon Township. Located near Mile Marker #1 of the trail, these 38.5 wooded acres will ensure that the trailside remains forever green providing a buffer from air and noise pollution for trail users, maintaining habitat for wildlife, and absorbing rainwater to prevent downstream flooding.



Meyer Farm.  
Photo by Roy Kraynyk.

### MEYER FARM McDonald, PA | 46.7 Acres

We've assumed ownership of 46.7 acres in South Fayette Township that was bequeathed to us by Harry T. Meyer. For years, we'd worked with Harry as he sought to ensure the permanent protection of his family farm upon his passing. Harry wanted his land to be protected for the benefit of future generations and for the education of young ones. We are honored to carry on the legacy of Harry and his special land, and look forward to beginning the process of making the most of his gift to the community. We'll share a longer feature on this green space in a future issue of *Vistas*.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## E Education Events

## V Volunteer Events



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Starlight Stroll: #OPToutside

#### Dead Man's Hollow

Nov 29 | 5 - 6 pm

Ever wonder what nature is up to at night? What does the full moon bring to green space? Join our environmental educators for a stroll under the stars to find out. Topics vary depending on the evening's leader and can include nocturnal and crepuscular creatures, astronomy, lore, and much more! This program occurs on Black Friday to offer an opportunity for folks to #OPTOUTSIDE!

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



Photo courtesy of Becky Matsubara via Flickr.

### Twitter in the Trees & Bird Count

#### Wingfield Pines

Dec 14 | Hike: 8 - 10 am

Count: 10 am - 4 pm

Become a citizen scientist (no experience required) as we learn how to use field guides and iNaturalist to identify and catalogue birds. Stick around after the hike from 10 am - 4 pm with the Pittsburgh South Hills Bird Circle & USC Citizens for Land Stewardship as they host a Christmas Bird Count in support of the Audubon Society.

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



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Getting Little Feet WET: Teacher Professional Development Series

9 am - 3 pm each day | April 18 @ Fern Hollow Nature Center

May 2 @ Upper St. Clair Library | June 18 @ Steel City Rowing Club

Developed specifically for teachers working with young children (ages 3-6) in coordination with early childhood experts and educators, Getting Little Feet Wet is Project WET's early childhood curriculum. Getting Little Feet Wet contains 11 interactive, hands-on activities for young learners to explore different aspects of water—from water properties to water sounds. Each activity offers both Pre-K and K-2 options and is correlated to respective educational standards and will focus on our changing climate. This workshop is offered at a reduced cost thanks to cosponsored grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Lunch, Act 48, and PQAS hours included with registration.

**Ages: Educators | Cost: \$15**



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## ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST

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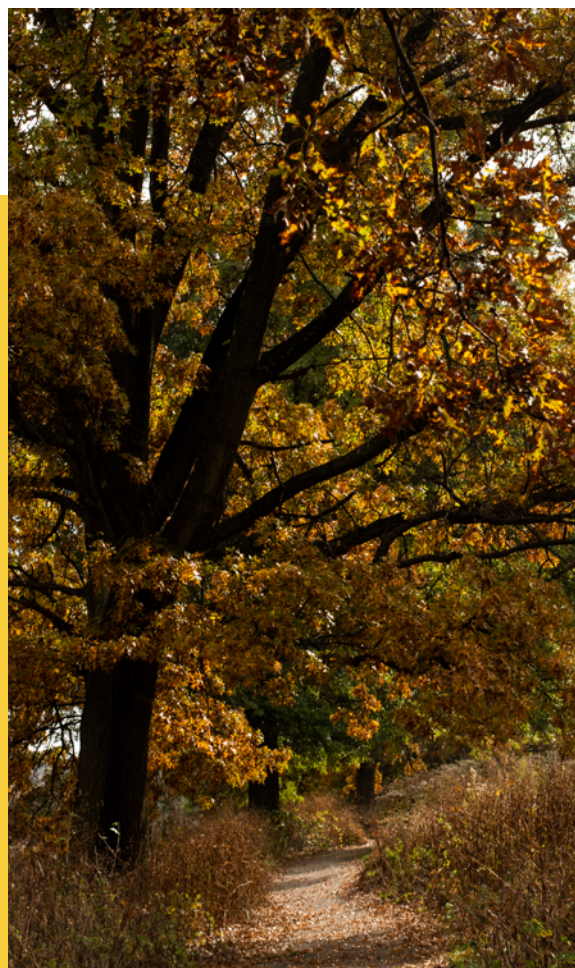
# ABOUT ALT

**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 2,700 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 Duquesne University biology professor electrofishes in Big Sewickley Creek to analyze the water health near Linbrook Woodlands conservation area.

**BACK COVER:** A sunset filters through trees in late fall at the site of the former Churchill Valley Country Club, land which ALT currently has under contract for protection. Photos by Lindsay Dill.



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