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# VISTAS

An Allegheny Land Trust Publication

Summer 2020



# notes

## FROM THE LAND:

### Silver Linings, Green Values

by Roy Kraynyk | VP of Land Protection & Capital Projects



**A**LT has observed a surge of visitors to our conservation areas over the past several months. Our land trust, rail-trail, and park department colleagues are also reporting heavy usage as people seek safe opportunities to exercise, or to just to get out of the house for a walk and fresh air. The same is being reported from all over the country from urban parklets to national parks - people are clamoring for open spaces.

Locally, I've noticed many more people of all ages walking and biking the streets around my neighborhood than there were prior to the pandemic arriving in western PA and the shelter in place order given by the Governor.

One example is a gentleman I know in his mid-70s that rides past my house on his bicycle. I've never seen him riding in my neighborhood before, and for good reason - he lives about 10 miles away. Not that 10 miles is far on a good bike, but this is not a level 10 miles. He lives at an elevation of about 600' near the Ohio River, and I live at 1,161'. This

is still not a big deal - 500' or so of elevation in 10 miles. But, every route between my house and his is a roller coaster involving multiple descents and climbs.

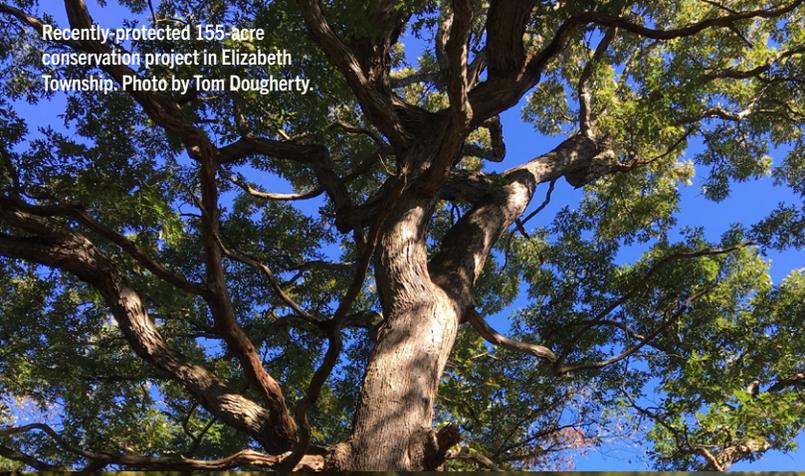
So, he's climbing that elevation several times. It's literally uphill both ways for him. Impressive! And inspiring - his daily ride inspired me to dust off my bike.

A study published in the European Journal of Social Psychology states that it takes about 2 months for a new habit to become automatic. It's now been more than 4 months since Governor Wolf initiated the state-wide shutdown.

So, I wonder if one silver lining of the lock-down cloud might be that some people may have created a new healthy habit: walking/hiking/biking. Maybe the benefits of weight loss, feeling better, and getting stronger will be a factor in their decisions to continue.

And now that the economy is reopening and people can

Recently-protected 155-acre conservation project in Elizabeth Township. Photo by Tom Dougherty.



155-acre Girty's Woods conservation project, Reserve Township. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



148-acre Churchill Valley Greenway conservation project, Churchill & Penn Hills. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



mingle a bit more, solitary hikes and rides might become group events with folks showing off cool things they discovered during their adventures. Perhaps we'll find more folks spending time hiking and biking on a beautiful evening or weekend rather than spending money at the mall.

The surge of visitors to ALT's conservation areas is rewarding and inspires us to ramp-up our efforts to protect more land for the passive recreation that it provides for people, and the other economic and environmental reasons we frequently write about. In June 2020, we protected 155 acres in Elizabeth Township (top left photo), and we currently have 2 other large tracts under contract totaling 303 acres in Churchill/Penn Hills (bottom photo) and Reserve Township (top right photo). We're in the process of raising the \$3.75 million to acquire them.

Acquiring these two large tracts of 148 and 155 acres will make a substantial contribution to protecting more habitat for regional wildlife. Ample and wide ranges of habitat are

beneficial for maintaining a biologically diverse genetic pool among animals, and provides them the opportunity to migrate to higher, wetter, dryer, hotter, cooler, or whatever micro-climate a particular species needs to survive as the climate changes.

There may even be a relationship between biodiversity and virus. There's been lots of reporting recently about the relationship between healthy biodiversity and viruses. Two common themes among them are:

- 1) habitat loss has created more frequent and closer human/animal contacts that create more opportunity for animal to human transmission of disease.
- 2) research has also discovered that viruses are not as prevalent in lower density populations of animals living in more diverse ecosystems. Just Google "Biodiversity and Virus" and you'll find a long list of articles on the matter.



If you're interested in protecting your land or land within your community, contact Roy Kraynyk at [rkraynyk@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:rkraynyk@alleghenylandtrust.org).



A volunteer prepares to water a newly-planted tree at Wingfield Pines conservation area. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

## Distanced Hands on the Land

by Caitlin Seiler | Director of Volunteer and Land Resources

Summer is in full swing on our properties; wildflowers are in bloom at Dead Man's Hollow, a variety of migrating birds are observed at Wingfield Pines, and land across the county is teeming with life. With benefits to mental and physical health, outdoor recreation has been one of the best places to practice social distancing, but with the increased usage on all our public green spaces we are seeing some activity that threatens the ecological values of the sites. The creation of rogue trails threatens sensitive habitats like native wildflower patches and vernal pools. Trash and debris (rubber gloves and masks...) find their way into streams and waterways putting our small fish and crayfish at risk. Several properties have experienced vandalism of signs and other infrastructure. An overall rise in numbers of individuals causes wear and tear on parking areas, on (and off) trails, and can cause a general disturbance to wildlife during breeding and nesting times.

Our stewardship team and volunteers have continued to focus on the quality of our land, and together we are working to protect the conservation values and maintain these spaces for everyone to enjoy. "Friends of" groups at Sycamore Island and Irwin Run have maintained contact with ALT and each other, lead Stewards are sharing updates from the land, and individuals are volunteering on their own or in small, socially-distanced groups. Trail stewards at Dead Man's Hollow and Venango Trail send pho-

tos and reports to staff about downed trees or trail conditions that need support. Scouts and school students have also reached out to volunteer independently during their increased time at home. Boy Scouts worked in small, socially-distanced groups to clear out several bags of trash and a patch of aggressive invasive lesser celandine from the Linbrook Woodlands conservation area.

Areas like these provide a refuge from stresses and a space to step outside your homes and explore the world around. Now, more than ever, we should appreciate and conserve the access to local green spaces in our communities. Donating to your favorite conservation area's maintenance fund will help our staff and volunteers by assuring we have the tools and resources to maintain access for the public. Taking the step to commit as an annual member will help ALT to better protect the spaces we have and conserve more green space in the region.

If volunteering and donating are not options for you, please do continue to explore your local lands. Pack your safety supplies (water bottles, or doggie bags) in and out, stick to the trails, and - if a parking lot is full - check our website for another nearby green space to explore the outdoors.



To volunteer, share stories, or ask questions, contact Caitlin Seiler at [cseiler@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:cseiler@alleghenylandtrust.org).

# Bring Healing Outdoors

by Christopher Beichner | President & CEO

Nature heals us. We are living in a time of uncertainty and unrest. During these turbulent days, we look for calmness, comfort, and relief from what is troubling us, and often times, we turn to our family, friends, community, and nature to ease the pain.

During a global pandemic, maybe you wouldn't think about the local park, trail, or nature preserve as a place to help you through a crisis. Green spaces serve so many purposes and functions, and they are the model of resiliency. Protected land growing and thriving through our history's industrial scarring will forever clean the water we drink, filter the air we breathe, stabilize our backyards, and serve as habitat for thousands of native species. But just as importantly to you and me, these green spaces serve as tranquility away from the global problems and from our local fears.

Leading experts have shown how green spaces can improve mental health, decrease stress levels, reduce anxiety, and improve physical well-being. At the height of COVID-19, green spaces were one of the only places we were both safe and permitted to visit other than the grocery store and our own homes (which we are now tired of).

Recognizing the increased usage, we asked our visitors to tell us about their experiences at one of our conservation areas. Why did they visit? How did the experience make them feel? What were the benefits of them being there?

Respondents told us the stress of this global pandemic has been reduced by a walk in the park, a ride on the trail or a hike in the woods. We heard that 76% of respondents visited one of our conservation areas more often during COVID-19. Eighty-six percent saw a noticeable increase in visitors to our preserves as more people have the desire to benefit from nature. A whopping 95% chose to visit a local green space for their own mental health or peace of mind for their family.

If you would like to tell us about your experiences, please visit this case-sensitive link:

[bit.ly/covidlandsurvey](https://bit.ly/covidlandsurvey)

These unsettled times can cause increased anxiety and fear as we stress about the spread of a virus and racial injustice. Our goal as a conservation land trust is to conserve and care for local land within close proximity of every resident of Allegheny County. You can help us to achieve that goal by becoming a member or volunteering your time to our organization. Your time and resources to support our stewardship efforts allow for everyone the opportunity to temporarily escape our troubles and to heal with what nature has to offer.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Begin or renew your Allegheny Land Trust membership.**
- **Invite a friend or neighbor who is passionate about the outdoors to become a member.**
- **Ask your employer to become a Partner in Stewardship to get your team out to a green space while financially supporting the protection of land.**



Tell your story at this case-sensitive link:  
[bit.ly/covidlandsurvey](https://bit.ly/covidlandsurvey)

An ALT conservation easement donor hikes a trail on their Sewickley-area land in summer 2020. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



# Addressing Our Region's Challenges: CONSERVATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

Before March 15, 2020, I'd have told you my biggest concerns for our region and planet – which I would have said were shared with many others in our region at the time – were environmental. Global warming, air and water quality, flooding, landslides, and rampant development of green space, etc. affect all of us, though disproportionately.



A young learner explores Barking Slopes conservation area in New Kensington in April 2020. Photo by Cedar Rzotkiewicz.



The Churchill Valley Greenway conservation project in Churchill & Penn Hills has seen full parking lots on a near-daily basis during the current global pandemic. Photo by Lindsay Dill.

As we release this issue of Vistas, however, we're now in the midst of a complex global pandemic, an awakening to and reckoning with all the facets of our country's racial inequities, and an unknown economic future for not only our nation but the world. It's hard to find any silver linings as the issues I worried about before pandemic still exist—and still will exist if and when we develop a vaccine or create real race equity.

What hope I do have, however, lies in where we have all flocked to seek safety, refuge, and connection during these crises: The Outdoors. As written in other articles of this Vistas, our team has not only seen an increase in visitors to ALT and other green spaces close to our homes, we've also received data from supporters like you confirming this. More than 80% of participants in our survey about green space visitation during the pandemic have said they themselves have visited green spaces more regularly than they typically would this time of year, and more than 75% have said they've noticed an increase in visitors to their regular green space locations.

Our survey isn't the only report finding that people are flocking to the outdoors during these uncertain times. According to a May through July 2020 United States Mobility Report conducted by Google's location services, visitation to Parks saw an increase of 86% nationwide and of 152% in Pennsylvania!

Why does this bring me hope? This visitation increase demonstrates the value of close-to-home green space to all of us in the most dire of times, reinforcing the importance of nature in all of our lives. Our hope at ALT is to share and instill a value in the environment to maintain and improve the quality of life for all - equitably - in our region.

I hope that the joy, peace, and quiet brought to individuals through their enjoyed time at green space will translate to passion for its protection with, by, and for their community. I hope that passion inspires more people to take action by donating, volunteering, and advocating for the protection of green space not only in their own backyards, but across our region - and especially in our Environmental Justice communities that so often are given the short end of every stick including green space.

So, as our reality continues to shift, change, readjust, and redefine, we hope you'll stick with us as a member and work with us to support the conservation of one of our region's most valuable assets: its close-to-home green space.



Support the protection of more close-to-home green space for all by becoming a member today:  
[alleghenylandtrust.org/become-a-member](https://alleghenylandtrust.org/become-a-member)

A visitor to Wingfield Pines in Upper St. Clair enjoys the sound of birds at sunset. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



# Thanking Our Former Board Members, Welcoming Our New Members

by Christopher Beichner | President & CEO

Every June 30th brings ALT's fiscal year to a close. This date is also significant because it marks the end of at least a few of our long-serving board member's terms. This year, four outstanding board members, all who served their maximum nine years of service with ALT, will be moving on. We will miss their 36 years of combined knowledge, passion, and dedication to ALT and the mission they serve.

On behalf of ALT's board of directors and staff, I would like to thank Sue Broughton, Fred Brown, Ken LaSota and Jess Mooney for their many hours of commitment, prob-

lem-solving, thoughtful conversation, and leadership. They provided skills and great oversight during a time of historic growth within the organization.

As with any Gregorian calendar, July 1 follows June 30, and with a new fiscal year also brings new board leadership. After an extensive vetting and interview process, the Governance Committee recommended and the board approved three individuals at their May 2020 board meeting. We want to welcome the new board members, and we are excited to work with them over their term.

## Lauren E. Terpak

**Water Resources Group Technical Services Manager**  
*ms consultants, inc.*



**Lauren Terpak** is an engineer with 17+ years of experience in wet weather planning assisting municipalities and agencies response to regulatory requirements to resolve wet weather issues. It was Lauren's given enthusiasm for the outdoors, the environment, and naturally-built world that lead her to obtain a B.E. in Civil Engineering with a focus in environmental engineering from Youngstown State University. Currently, Lauren is the Technical Services Manager of the Water Resources group at ms consultants, inc., a multi-discipline engineering firm located in Coraopolis.

## Sherwood Johnson

**Veterinarian**  
*Pittsburgh Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Center*



**Sherwood Johnson** is a veterinarian who has lived in a green home with his family and pets in Pittsburgh since 2004. His first involvement as an ALT member was contributing toward conservation of Irwin Run, which he frequents with his family and dogs. He left work in 2019 to devote more time to his family, hobbies, and volunteer opportunities. He has interests in conservation, anything involving water or fish, gardening, race relations, energy efficient construction, clean energy... and the intersection of all of these. (They DO intersect).

## Patricia DeMarco

**Patricia DeMarco** is a native of Pittsburgh with a doctorate in Biology from the University of Pittsburgh. She has spent a thirty-year career in energy and environmental policy in both private and public sector positions. She is a Rachel Carson Scholar and served as Executive Director of the Rachel Carson Homestead Association and Director of the Rachel Carson Institute at Chatham University. She holds the office of Vice President of the Forest Hills Borough Council. She sits as Secretary on the Board of Trustees for Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens.



## 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

- PA Chapter Wild Turkey Federation - Gold
- EIS Solar - Supporting

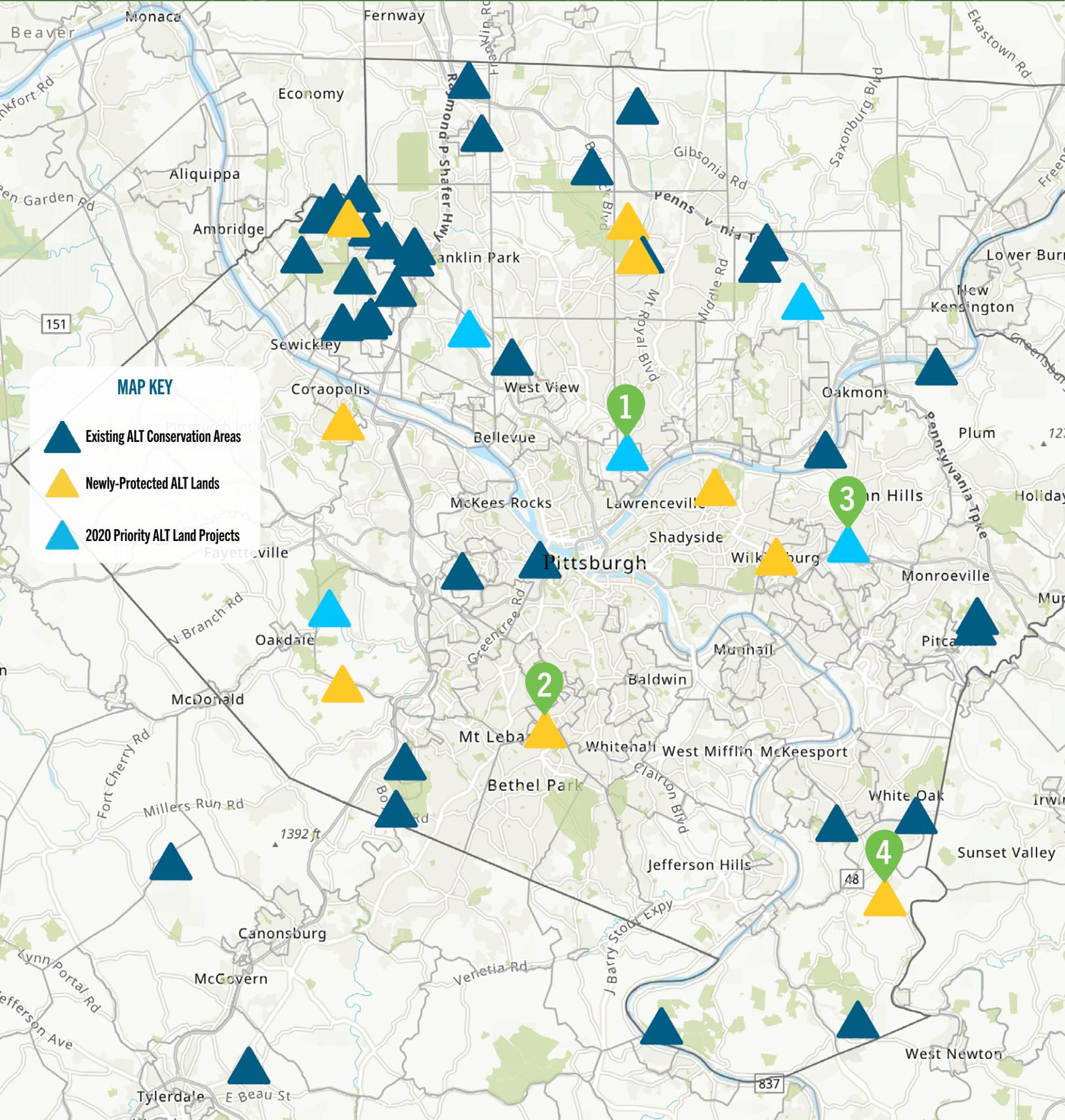
### RENEWING

- EQT - Platinum
- Dollar Bank - Other

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

# Where Are We Now?

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





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



Photo by Lindsay Dill.



1

**Girty's Woods Project | Reserve, PA**  
Protecting Central Green Space

ALT currently has this land under contract. Were this land to be protected, its 155-acres would absorb 133 million gallons of rainwater annually, provide green space access for 100,000 residents living within a 3-mile radius, and preserve not only the character but also the habitat unique to this area.

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



2

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

Thanks to residents, the Municipality of Bethel Park, and various funders, ALT was able to protect this rare 40.5-acre tract of green space in the South Hills. ALT is now working to establish recommended access points, parking, and trails.

Photo by Lindsay Dill.



3

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

The contract to protect the former Churchill Valley Country Club in Churchill and Penn Hills has been extended to March 2021. ALT has raised \$1.1 of the \$3 million needed to protect this rare and spectacular 148-acre green space. This includes an amazing \$130,322 (and growing!) donated by the surrounding community. Additional grant requests totalling \$1.5 million are currently pending, and ALT and grassroots organizers continue to pursue other funding sources.

Photo by Tom Dougherty.



4

**Elizabeth Green Space | Elizabeth, PA**  
Protecting Quintessential Southwest PA Green Space

On June 30, 2020, ALT officially closed on these 155-acres for permanent protection. Protecting these highland woods will preserve unique scenic character, biodiversity, the water quality of small tributary, and the peace of the surrounding communities.



# Featured Supporters:



## VISITORS DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

(left) Water flows through the abandoned mine drainage treatment system at Wingfield Pines conservation area in April. (right) A couple escapes the indoors to seek peace and scenery at Audubon Greenway. Photos by Lindsay Dill.

by Lindsay Dill | Marketing Communications Director

Each issue of Vistas, we bring stories featuring individuals who support Allegheny Land Trust and/or conservation in some capacity. From volunteers and grassroots organizers to Board members and dedicated donors, these stories represent the myriad of characters who value the many benefits green space provides to our communities, region, and world.

During this current global pandemic, as we've written in every single article of this issue, the benefits of green space have been utilized by, realized by, and expanded for many more people than we've ever seen before. We're grateful to be able to protect more than 2,700 acres of green space across the region for current and future generations. And we're humbled by all of the stories submitted by participants in our survey on green space usage during the pandemic.

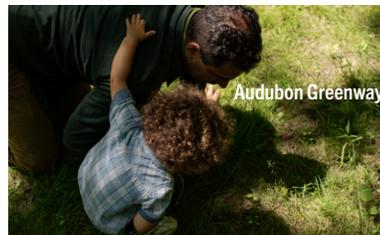
About 75% of respondents have cited an increase in their own visitation of ALT and other green spaces during this time of year, 80% have noticed an uptick of fellow explorers at their usual spots, and 75% have indicated that the pandemic has made them wish for more public green space near their homes.

Nearly every respondent cited mental health, physical health, and de-stressing as reasons they've visited green spaces during this current global pandemic. Our team feels beyond energized to continue the work of protecting more and maintaining existing green spaces to benefit the overall quality of life in our region during the most trying of times. Below we've shared a few stories submitted by survey respondents, as utilizing green spaces is one of the best ways to support their value.



Dead Man's Hollow

"I rely on green space to be my Everything-Away-From-Home that I cannot otherwise get during lock-down: consistent exercise, motivation, scenery, human interaction (while minding social distancing), and mental stress relief." - *Lenny L.*



Audubon Greenway

"It has been really good for our kids to get out and get a change of scenery. ... It's also been good for our mental and physical health to be outdoors surrounded by plants and trees, making observations of native plants and how living things move and grow." - *Dierdre K.*



Girty's Woods.

Walking through a park is the only place I can relax. Home feels like both a workplace and a prison. Shopping feels like a dystopia. A walking trail feels normal. - *John R.*



Sewickley-Area Conservation Easement.

"I have lived in and visited a number of developing countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean where there simply is no public open space - no parks, no greenways, no nature reserves. It is maddening to long for a place to walk in quiet solitude and find nowhere that isn't walled-off and overcrowded. Those experiences make ALT's conservation areas and other public open spaces all the more special to me as we work our way through the coronavirus shutdown." - *Brian J.*

## Share Stories from Outdoor Ventures During These Trying Times

Have you explored your favorite ALT green space more often this year? Had time to visit a new ALT or other green space that you've never before visited? Enjoyed a slice of peace you didn't think you could find during this moment? Seen more visitors on your favorite trail than ever before? No matter your experience, we want to help remember the stories of our region's relationship with the outdoors during this unprecedented time. Take the short survey here: [bit.ly/covidlandsurvey](https://bit.ly/covidlandsurvey)



# science at home

## 5 Ways to Stay Engaged While Staying Home

by Julie Travaglini | Education Program Director

### 1. Allegheny Land Trust

Check out our website for the ever changing and growing list of virtual programming for you and your family:

[alleghenylandtrust.org/events](http://alleghenylandtrust.org/events)

### 2. National Geographic

Skype a National Geographic explorer, learn what is under our oceans, discover how to reduce plastic waste, and much more:

[nationalgeographic.org/education/classroom-resources/learn-at-home/](http://nationalgeographic.org/education/classroom-resources/learn-at-home/)

### 3. Science Tots

From deep space to deep oceans and robots to circuitry, join Science Tots mailing list for free virtual STEM programming for early learners:

[sciencetots.org](http://sciencetots.org)

### 4. Jared Goodykoontz at Little Adventures Big Connections

Mr. Jared offers daily interactive and entertaining nature shows on YouTube. Simply search “Little Adventures Big Connections” on YouTube to view his video collection.

### 5. Zoos and Aquariums

Lots of places are offering virtual tours and programs. Check out websites for virtual programming by The Cincinnati Zoo, Shedd Aquarium, San Diego Zoo, Georgia Aquarium, the Houston Zoo, and more.



(left) A young explorer and his dad enjoy a physically-distanced day of learning outdoors along ALT's June StoryWalk at Audubon Greenway in Sewickley. Photo by Lindsay Dill. (below) Two young learners participate in an ALT virtual nature-based education program from home in April 2020. Photo by Christopher Beichner.



# Staying Safe, Continuing Learning

by Julie Travaglini | Education Program Director

If you are like me, you can't sit still. I prefer days spent full of tasks, to-do lists, and productivity. Down time is spent outside or with friends enjoying a meal or finding bargains at a sale. Vacation time means traveling to Chicago to see my nephew or visiting my childhood best friend in Seattle. Work means teaching students in-person, engaging in experiments, field trips, and outreach visits. But all of this, for now, is on hold.

If you are like me, those first few weeks of the COVID-19 stay-at-home order were tough. The sheer uncertainty of what lay ahead was daunting, and for the first week or so I could barely function. What will happen with summer camps? Are small group programs okay? Can our green spaces remain open? Will schools be back in session in the fall? My brain rattled on and on, engaging in plenty of what-ifs, but coming up with few solutions.

But, again: if you are like me, you learned to adjust quickly to our new normal and have managed to stay engaged while staying safe at home. I planted what I call my “Corona Victory Garden,” growing enough veggie plants to share with my neighbors and coworkers. I finally bought a kayak for some much-needed and socially-distanced time on the water. I spent my time working from home coming up with educational programs I thought you and your family may enjoy.

I hope that we here at ALT have helped you during this crisis in some capacity by providing you with fun, as-hands-on-as-possible webinars on a variety of topics. So far, we've learned about Pennsylvania's eight species of owls and birds of your backyard, basic composting and making nature kaleidoscopes, pool noodle hydroponic gardens, and nature journals - just to name a few. If you've been tuned in, you'll have heard me make ridiculous owl and bird call noises and humored me while I told you (probably more than 10 times) why snakes are the coolest animals ever. Your kids have joined me for countless nature story times on Facebook and you've sent me adorable photos after they made their nature kaleidoscopes. We've come together to learn together while staying apart for the benefit of all our well-being.

ALT's Education Team is working hard to digitize and supplement existing programs to be able to offer them virtually to schools, libraries, educators, and more. While we certainly can't wait for programs and educational events to go back to pre-COVID-19 times, we are up for the challenge of providing you and your families with high quality environmental education opportunities - they may just look a little different for the time being, and I hope you'll join me online until we can be together again in-person.

Community garden members tend to their beds. Photo courtesy of Grow Pittsburgh.



# COMMUNITY GARDENS BECOME COMMUNITY RESOURCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

by Alyson Fearon | Community Conservation Director

Based on recent events, it is clear our government officials are starting to recognize the importance of communal green spaces and gardens, and we are encouraged to see progress. The City Council of Pittsburgh recently passed Resolution 2020-0281 directing the departments of Finance and City Planning to locate suitable city-owned vacant lots to foster urban agriculture. Communication with our officials is critical at this point in time and we encourage residents to contact their representative to bring attention to existing projects that may need resources. Municipalities of all sizes have an opportunity to become a partner with their community: from simply providing access to a location to having Public Works donate time or resources, support occurs in many forms.

Access to food is not the only critical service these gardens provide. Especially in times of stress, studies show gardening is good for your health and regular visits to gardens and green spaces improves physical and mental health outcomes. One of the most important things to remember as a new gardener is to understand a successful harvest isn't the only outcome of maintaining a garden; the act of gardening itself is what provides the most benefits.

Not only do community gardens provide availability to infrastructure, such as garden boxes and water, they also serve as a way to meet gardening mentors and improve connection to the local community. Gardeners don't have to go it alone! Joining a community garden can improve your overall success rate by helping ensure your garden is watered, and sharing information on what works for the local condi-

tions. A garden can make visible both the assets and the inequities and challenges of a neighborhood and provide a space to bring neighbors together to improve the overall strength of community and generate resilience during disasters.

The sense of community in a garden can falter when the garden is built on land that doesn't belong to the gardening group. This can create disinvestment instability for the garden. Knowing the benefits and being concerned about the status of current gardens, ALT and Grow Pittsburgh formed the Three Rivers Agricultural Lands Initiative (TRALI) in August of 2017 because too many gardens have disappeared due to property ownership concerns. The ability to invest in the longevity of the garden creates a community asset for generations to come.

Towards that end, ALT and Grow Pittsburgh established TRALI to permanently protect and steward lands in the urbanized areas of Allegheny County currently being used for both commercial and non-commercial agriculture, and to acquire, protect and steward new land in the urbanized areas of Allegheny County for future commercial and noncommercial agricultural use.



Local community gardens can use your support with landscaping, box/bed repairs, and more. Find a garden near you using Grow Pittsburgh's Grower's Map: <https://www.growpittsburgh.org/garden-and-farm-resources/growers-map/>. If you are interested in starting a new garden project, please contact Rayden Sorock, Director of Community Projects, [rayden@growpittsburgh.org](mailto:rayden@growpittsburgh.org).

# INNOVATIVE WAYS TO GIVE BACK

by Tom Dougherty | VP of Development & External Affairs

We are thankful for the committed and growing group of people who choose to support our work by making personal financial contributions. Most of these supporters make standard “cash” donations made through check or credit card.

Depending upon your personal financial situation and goals, there are other creative ways that you can provide financial support now or in the future. Here are some additional opportunities to discuss with your financial advisor, tax professional, or other advisor:

## GIFTS OF STOCK

A gift of appreciated stock is a tax-wise way to support ALT because the full value of the stock can be donated without you or ALT paying taxes on its appreciated value.

## GIVING FROM A DONOR-ADVISED FUND

Give to ALT during your lifetime from an established donor-advised fund and/or designate ALT as a future beneficiary of your fund.

## GIFTS OF LAND

There are many ways for a real estate gift to support ALT's efforts. These include direct conservation of the land if suitable, resale to generate funds (if land is not appropriate for protection), or to generate on-going revenue. Gifted land value is eligible for a federal tax deduction.

## BARGAIN SALE OF LAND

Selling your land for less than the appraised value allows ALT to raise grant dollars to pay the balance for the land, and the gifted land value is eligible for a federal tax deduction.

## GIFTING FROM YOUR IRA

If you are 70½ or older, you may make direct charitable contributions from your IRA. Legislative changes to the rules governing retirement plans went into effect January 1, so check with your financial planner or tax advisor for details.

## ALT AS YOUR BENEFICIARY

Another popular way to make a planned gift is to name ALT a beneficiary of all or a portion of your retirement plan assets, other investments, or bank accounts. It's as simple as filling out a form and can provide tax benefits.

## ALT IN YOUR WILL OR REVOCABLE TRUST

Anyone can make a gift in their will or revocable trust. The benefit of this method of giving is that you can make a lasting impact on the future of our region without impacting your immediate finances. You can adjust this pledge of support during your lifetime should circumstances change.

Please note that the above suggestions are not intended to be financial planning, legal, or tax advice. Please consult your planner, lawyer, or accountant to determine if these forms of giving would be appropriate for your circumstances.



A visitor of Dead Man's Hollow Conservation Area takes in the scenery of the green space. Photo by Lindsay Dill.



Please contact Tom Dougherty, ALT's Vice President of Development, at [tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org](mailto:tdougherty@alleghenylandtrust.org) to discuss possible gifts of these types.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**E** Education Events

**V** Volunteer Events



Photo by Caitlin Seiler



Photo by Lindsay Dill

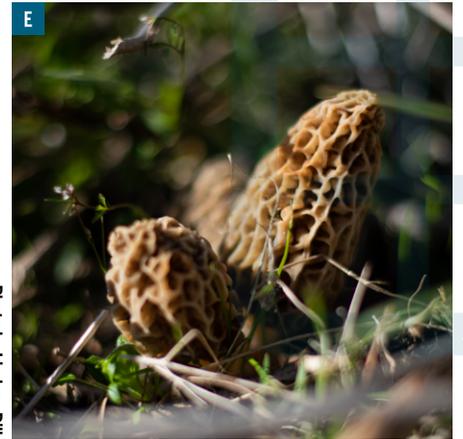


Photo by Lindsay Dill

## Trail Tuesday Series

### Dead Man's Hollow

3rd Tuesdays | June - October | 6 - 8 pm

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

All Ages | Cost: Free to Attend

## Sewickley StoryWalk® Series

### Various Sewickley Locations

August 10 - 31 | Dawn to Dusk

Take the family for a StoryWalk®, which places pages from a children's picture book along a walking path so families may enjoy nature and reading together, outdoors. The books will be posted along the path at the locations and dates below.

Audubon Greenway (August 10 – 31), Fern Hollow Nature Center (August 10 – 31), and Mary Roberts Rinehart Nature Park (August 14 – 16, August 21 – 23).

Ages: Young Families | Cost: FREE

## Fungus Among Us

Aug 15 | 9 am - 12 pm | Devil's Hollow

Sept. 26 | 10 am - 12 pm | Wingfield Pines

Ever wonder what that mushroom is you see growing on a log? Join our education team and the Western PA Mushroom Club experts at the Pavilion at Linbrook Woodlands in search of the myriad of fungus species that can be found. Please keep in mind that although we will be collecting specimens for educational purposes we will not be harvesting for food.

All ages | Cost: \$5



Photo by Lindsay Dill

## Getting Little Feet WET

### Virtual Workshop

Aug. 18 | 10 am - 12 pm

Sept. 17 | 4:30 - 6:30 pm

Oct. 7 | 6 - 8 pm

Educators, tune into this now-virtual workshop including free resources mailed to you after the program. Hone your skills in bringing water education to your lessons during our Virtual Getting Little Feet WET workshop.

Intended for early childhood classrooms (Pre-K and K-2), this workshop correlates with educational standards and will focus on our changing climate. ACT 48 and PQAS hours if applicable. This workshop is offered at a reduced cost thanks to cosponsored grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

All Ages | Cost: Free to Attend



Photo by Lindsay Dill

## SAVE THE DATE | DAY OF GIVING

### ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST 2020 DAY OF GIVING | SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Your gift will go twice as far in supporting our efforts to protect more land, maintain our green spaces, and provide nature-based education to more communities during our upcoming Day of Giving. The members of our Board have generously pledged to match every dollar donated by supporters on September 17 with a dollar of their own up to \$25,000! This commitment of a DOLLAR-FOR-DOLLAR match can help us to turn \$25,000 into \$50,000 for conservation! PLEASE HELP US TO MEET THE CHALLENGE AND TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF THIS AMAZING OPPORTUNITY.

Why give during our Day of Giving? Quite simply because gifts made on September 17 and the matching dollars they will generate will provide much-needed operating support during these very challenging times. So, please, help support Allegheny Land Trust as we continue helping local people save local land in our region.

You can contribute to our 2020 Day of Giving by using the enclosed VISTAS envelope and mark the "Day of Giving" checkbox, or by visiting [alleghenylandtrust.org/donate](http://alleghenylandtrust.org/donate) and checking the "Day of Giving/General Fund" box.



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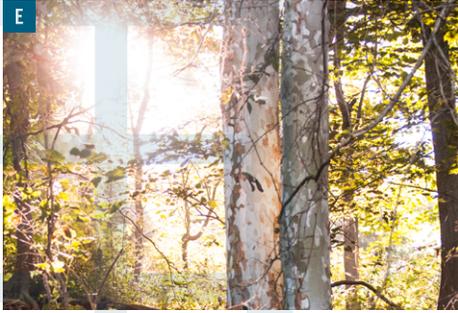


Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### National Eat Outside Day Wingfield Pines

August 31 | 6 - 7 pm

Join us at Wingfield Pines as we celebrate National Eat Outside Day! Stop by any time during the hour and enjoy hot dogs, s'mores, and other snacks around the campfire.

All Ages | Cost: \$5



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Brownie's Woodlands Wonder Day Linbrook Woodlands

October 3 | 10 am - 12:30 pm

Join ALT for the first-ever Brownie Woodlands Wonder Day! Girl Scout Brownies can enjoy the outdoors while earning their Hiker and Bugs badges with hands-on programming.

All Ages | Cost: \$20



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Webelo Woodland Adventure Day Wingfield Pines

October 4 | 12 - 3:30 pm

Join ALT for our first ever Webelo Woodland Adventure Day! Boy Scouts will enjoy the day in the great outdoors while completing their Into the Wild and Into the Woods adventures.

All Ages | Cost: \$20



Photo by Lindsay Dill.

### Starlight Stroll: Not So Spooky Stroll Dead Man's Hollow

October 24 | 6:30 - 8 pm

Ever wonder why pirates wear an eye-patch or how an owl can hunt in the dark? Join us on this not-too-scary night hike where we'll explore the science and stories behind many of our favorite fall creatures! Explore myths and legends and learn about the creatures of the autumn night.

All Ages | Cost: \$5

*Generous support from PPG has enabled us to provide these one-of-a-kind environmental education programming in 2020.*

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

**EVENTS & THE PANDEMIC** | The health, wellness, and safety of all ALT visitors, volunteers, and staff are our top priority. As we continue to follow this fluid situation with COVID-19, we will adhere to recommendations from the PA Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, and local authorities.

At the time this newsletter was created, the above events are scheduled to occur. We'll update event attendees as the situation develops to protect the health and safety of the public. We will make efforts to reschedule events, and cancel when necessary. We look forward to gathering at our green spaces as soon as it's safe to do so. To stay up-to-date, visit: [alleghenylandtrust.org/coronavirus/](https://alleghenylandtrust.org/coronavirus/)





# ALLEGHENY LAND TRUST

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# ABOUT ALT

**Allegheny Land Trust is a nationally-accredited land conservation nonprofit that has been helping local people save local land in the Pittsburgh region since 1993.**

ALT has protected more than 2,700 acres of green space in dozens of municipalities to preserve our region's unique natural beauty, provide expanded outdoor recreational opportunities, protect and improve water and air quality, sustain biodiversity, and enhance the quality of life for all in our region. ALT's areas of strategic priority include Land Conservation, Land Stewardship, Community Conservation, and Nature-Based Education.

With conservation areas in 31 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.



KEEP IN TOUCH

### FOLLOW US:



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Vistas is underwritten by an anonymous donor. Thank you!

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**FRONT COVER:** Explorers take a physically-distanced hike at the Churchill Valley Greenway conservation project in the Penn Hills and Churchill area.

**BACK COVER:** An Eastern Swallowtail butterfly enjoys swamp milkweed at Dead Man's Hollow Conservation Area in the McKeesport area.

Photos by Lindsay Dill.



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