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FROM THE CEO:

The Promise We Make to the Land

by Carrie Gilbert | President & CEO

When people think about land conservation, they often picture the moment a property is protected. The agreement is signed. The celebration is held. The land is conserved.

It's an exciting moment, and it should be. Every acre protected represents years of relationship-building, planning, partnership, and generosity. Every acre tells a story.

As I've spent my first year with Allegheny Land Trust walking our properties, meeting staff and volunteers, and learning the history behind the places we protect, I've found myself thinking about an essential question in our mission:

What happens after we close the deal?

Conservation is often described as protecting land forever. It's a phrase we use frequently, but I think it's worth pausing to consider what "forever" actually means.

Forever means caring for a trail long after it is built. It

means monitoring the health of forests and streams, restoring habitat, maintaining trails and access, welcoming visitors, and responding when storms, erosion, invasive species, or changing conditions affect the land. It means being present for these places not just once, but continually.

In other words, every acre we protect comes with a promise.

That promise is stewardship.

Today, ALT has helped conserve more than 4,128 acres across the region, including more than 3,000 acres entrusted to our long-term stewardship. As we look toward the milestone of 5,000 conserved acres, I find that number inspiring not because of the acreage alone, but because of what it represents.

Every acre we conserve today becomes a responsibility we accept tomorrow.

Some of my favorite moments since joining ALT have



(top left) Hikers take in a view at Audubon Greenway's forest edge. (top right) A student volunteer prepares to plant a native species at Girty's Woods. (bottom) A Shaler Area high school student carries a tray of natives during a volunteer workday.



been seeing stewardship in action. I've met volunteers who can tell you exactly how a trail has changed over the years because they've helped care for it. I've watched neighbors gather to celebrate a new community green space and seen the excitement of young people discovering nature through ALT programs. Again and again, I've been reminded that stewardship is ultimately about relationships.

It's a relationship with the land itself. It's a relationship with the people who use and love these places. And it's a relationship with future generations who will inherit the decisions we make today.

That responsibility extends far beyond our most visible conservation successes. It includes caring for neighborhood green spaces, protecting community gardens, maintaining trails, restoring habitat, improving public access, and ensuring that the lands entrusted to us remain healthy and welcoming for decades to come. Much of this work happens quietly, often out of sight, but it is essential to delivering on the promise we make when land is protected.

“The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time.”

— Terry Tempest Williams

The truth is that conservation is not measured only by the land we protect. It is also measured by how well we care for that land over time.

A restored habitat may not make the headlines. A trail that remains safe and welcoming year after year may go unnoticed. Yet these ongoing efforts are what transform protection into lasting impact.

When I think about the future of ALT, I think about both the beginning of the trail and the journey that follows. We will continue working to protect important places across our region. We will also

continue investing in the stewardship that ensures these places remain healthy, resilient, and accessible.

Because conservation is not simply about protecting land. It's about keeping a promise.

And thanks to our members, volunteers, partners, and supporters, that promise can endure for generations to come.



(top) hikers cross a bridge over the channelized Chalfant Run at Churchill Valley Greenway. (right) Students run along the former country club's trails.

A Brighter Future for Churchill Valley Greenway

by Caitlin McCalla | Vice President of Stewardship

Since acquiring Churchill Valley Greenway in 2021, Allegheny Land Trust has worked alongside community members, partners, and supporters to restore and re-imagine this unique landscape for both people and wildlife. Together, we've made meaningful progress on the community informed vision for the conservation area, planting thousands of native trees across former fairways, managing invasive species, and developing a comprehensive Stewardship & Management Plan to guide improvements through 2035.

Now, we are in the process of launching the next major phase of restoration at Churchill Valley Greenway. We are undertaking a transformative, two-part ecological restoration project focused on improving the health of Chalfant Run and restoring natural habitat across the property.

Healthy Water Restoration: Abandoned Mine Drainage

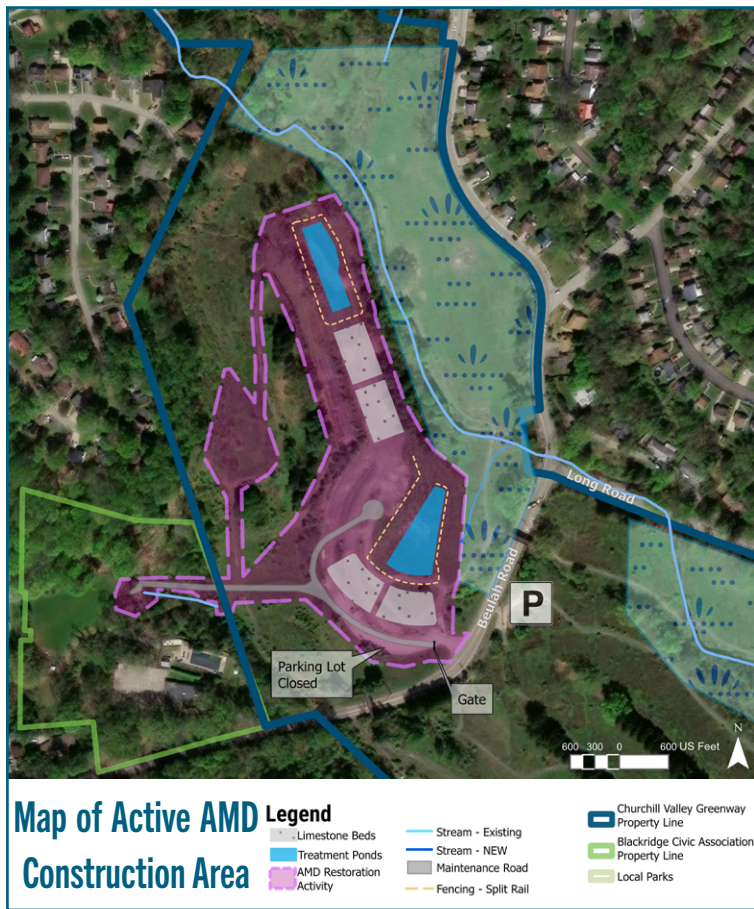
This summer, ALT is partnering with Hedin Environmental to install a passive Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) treatment system on the former country club site. This \$2.7 million investment – funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection AMD/AML Grant Program through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act – will address acidic mine drainage entering Chalfant Run from a buried tributary

connected to historic coal mining and stormwater infrastructure in the surrounding watershed.

For many longtime visitors, this means the stream's familiar aluminum-blue coloration that is a result of dissolved metals and acidic water will gradually become a thing of the past. The new treatment system will use limestone beds and settling ponds to neutralize acidic water and remove pollutants before clean water flows into Chalfant Run. The former footprint of the country club building, parking lots, and tennis courts will be transformed into functioning ecological infrastructure that improves habitat, supports biodiversity, and lays the groundwork for future trail and visitor improvements.

Healthy Water Restoration: Stream Renaturalization

Following the installation of the AMD system, ALT will begin stream and wetland restoration work with Naturion in late 2026 through 2028. Chalfant Run will be re-naturalized by removing the channelizing, outdated rock gabions and allowing the stream to return to a more natural flow pattern. While visitors will initially notice significant construction activity and landscape disturbance, these changes are essential to restoring the stream's long-term health and resilience.



(left) A map showing areas that will be impacted between now and fall 2026.
(right) A hiker enjoys Churchill Valley Greenway at sunset.



Why Is This Important and Why Now?

This restoration is needed because many of the environmental challenges at Churchill Valley Greenway were created through decades of human alteration to the landscape. The former golf course reshaped the stream corridor, limited natural floodplain function, and contributed to downstream flooding concerns. Simply allowing the site to “heal itself” would not correct these issues. Active restoration is necessary to undo those impacts and rebuild a healthier ecosystem.

Over time, this work will improve aquatic habitat, strengthen flood resilience in the Turtle Creek watershed, and support native wildlife throughout the Greenway. Areas that once experienced damaging flood events and washed-out bridges will function once again as healthy wetlands and floodplain. Native trees and shrubs will be planted as part of the restoration effort, with ALT planning to add another 3,500 native trees through 2030; this will create more than 25 acres of restored forest habitat across the site. And – importantly – fish will once again swim in the stream.

How Will This Impact Visitor Experience?

As construction begins, visitors should expect temporary but significant changes to parking access and trail routes. The western parking lot at the former country club site will permanently close as it becomes home to the AMD treatment system. Parking will remain limited during construction through the end of 2027, and visitors should not use construction entrances or restricted work areas. Some trails near the stream corridor will also be removed or

rerouted until new bridges and trail connections are completed in future phases.

The visitor experience will undoubtedly be altered during this period. Trees will be removed, earth will be moved, and heavy equipment will be active across portions of the green space. However, much of the removed tree material will be reused on site as part of the restoration, and some of the trees being removed are invasive or non-native species that limit long-term ecological recovery. These short-term disruptions are part of a long-term investment in the future of Churchill Valley Greenway. This type of restoration is most effective when completed comprehensively and all at once, and ALT has a rare opportunity to align major funding, restoration expertise, and construction resources to accomplish this work now.

When ALT first protected Churchill Valley Greenway, the community made it clear they wanted to see habitat restored, meadows maintained, and trails preserved. This project directly advances that vision. While the next several years will require patience and flexibility from visitors, the long-term result will be a healthier stream, restored wetlands and forests, improved flood protection, and a more resilient and vibrant green space for both wildlife and the community to enjoy for generations to come.



For more information visit:
alleghenylandtrust.org/churchill-restoration

by Sarah Costlow | Vice President of Land Protection

Conserving Land, Creating Connected Corridors

When Allegheny Land Trust (ALT) protects land, we are doing our best to ensure that the property's conservation values are at the forefront of how that land is used for generations to come. Every property is different, but the lands we protect often hold a powerful combination of ecological, agricultural, scenic, historic, or recreational value.

What makes these conservation values especially meaningful is how they connect and strengthen one another across a landscape. That is why ALT's land protection often focuses on greenways: intentional, connected corridors of open space bring together communities, recreation, habitat, history, and conservation in ways that create a greater collective impact over time.

Greenways create connections between people and place and strengthen the long-term health and resilience of the community. As these green corridors grow over time, each protected parcel strengthens the value and function of the land around it. Forests, waterways, trails, habitats, parks, and neighboring communities

begin to work together, creating benefits that are larger, more resilient, and more lasting than any single property could provide on its own. The result is connected green space that supports both ecological health and quality of life across an entire region. Two of ALT's current greenway efforts, the Panhandle Greenway and the Lowries Run Greenway, illustrate how connected conservation corridors can protect natural resources, strengthen communities, and create lasting regional impact.

The Panhandle Greenway Conservation Project

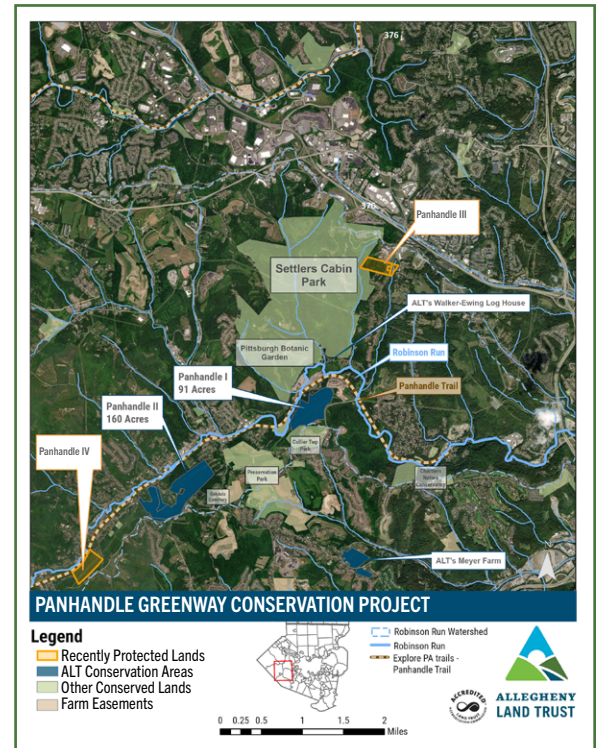
ALT added another 32 acres to our Panhandle Greenway conservation effort, strengthening its growing corridor of protected lands within the Robinson Run Watershed that follow the Panhandle Trail through western Allegheny County (see map).

The land directly borders the wooded portion of Settler's Cabin Park, an Allegheny County park. Because of its location, the land will be transferred to the County for permanent stewardship as part of the park system.

The tree canopy cools surrounding neighborhoods and trails while improving air quality. Protected habitat supports biodiversity and wildlife movement. Publicly accessible green spaces and trails create opportunities for recreation, connection, and health across communities. While there are more connections to be made, the effort acts as a blueprint of what this corridor could be with collaboration made across communities.

You can already see this connectivity where Settler's Cabin Park links with ALT's first acquired parcel of the Panhandle Greenway project, which connects to Preservation Park and is near the project's second acquired parcel. To date, ALT has protected four properties, approximately 323 acres, along the Panhandle Trail.

The properties provide water retention and filtration in a flood-prone watershed, scenic vistas and shade along the Panhandle Trail and neighboring towns, habitat for plant and animal species, and maintenance of the area's historically rural character. They bring people together across municipal lines from Collier to Carnegie, from Primrose north on the Montour Trail up through Coraopolis and the Pittsburgh Airport. The result is a continuous landscape that retains its wooded and rural character while providing neighboring communities with publicly accessible green space.



Lowries Run Conservation Project

The same theme of connectivity is unfolding in the Lowries Run Corridor. ALT is working to conserve a 27-acre property in Ross Township comprised of woodlands near ALT's Lowries Run Conservation Area and two municipally-owned green spaces – Ross Township's Marion Doulton Green Space and, though separated by one wooded parcel, Ohio Township's recent 138-acre acquisition. If successful, this acquisition could create a permanently protected, connected greenway of over 256 acres, with the potential to expand over time.

In a relatively developed area of Allegheny County, this greenway provides all the benefits that smaller isolated parks simply cannot. It will create meaningful habitat and migration corridors for local endangered species like the Indiana Bat and the Scarlet Tanager, create opportunities for trail connections between municipalities, and improve water retention in a flood-prone watershed.

This parcel falls into what Ross Township defined on their zoning map as the Rochester Rd/Lowries Run Conservation Corridor, further supporting the town's plans to protect its green character and quality of life.



(top) A young robin flies through a connected ALT green space. (bottom) Lowries Run conservation area on a spring afternoon.

In Allegheny County, we are fortunate to still have opportunities to protect and connect landscapes at the scale of projects like these. For some cities and counties, that's no longer the case. Whether greenways emerge through long-term conservation efforts or through proactive planning by municipalities and partners, ALT is proud to help communities create these connected landscapes so that both people and wildlife have a space to enjoy and thrive for generations to come.



To learn more, follow along with each project's status, and donate, visit alleghenylantrust.org/current-projects



ALT and Pine Township leadership walk along an Irwin Run trail maintained in part by volunteers and the township.

Featured Supporter:

Pine Township



(left to right) ALT President & CEO Carrie Gilbert, volunteer Ray Morris, volunteer Ken Knapp, Pine Township Manager Jason Kratsas, and on-leash volunteer Wilson The Dog overlook a view of Irwin Run from Wilson's Trail.

by Lindsay Dill | Senior Director of Marketing & Community Engagement

“We want to see Pine stay Pine.” This sentiment is echoed among Pine Township’s residents and its leadership.

Pine Township affords an experience of balanced proximity between lush, green places to live and play as well as accessible city amenities where you can work and shop for needs. As any engaged neighbor of an urban community knows, that is by no accident.

“Our neighbors want to access open space; they want a beautiful community to live in and nearby places to enjoy a walk outside,” Township Supervisor Jack Donahue said. “Through good zoning ordinances, strategic planning, and a good comprehensive plan, we have been able to shape our community responsibly.”

Donahue once watched a pristine, healthily flowing stream near his home turn to a frequently flooded, stagnant body of water when development utilizing poor building practices moved into a higher elevation. This influenced his world view; he understands the important services farms, fields, and forests provide to the community while also respecting that development is necessary to build a community.

When a plot of land became available adjacent to North Park in 2009, township leadership jumped on the opportunity to

collaborate with Allegheny Land Trust to see the land conserved forever. That land, now called Irwin Run, is beloved by direct neighbors, the Pine Township community, and explorers of North Park seeking a little bit more trail. Importantly, Pine’s support didn’t stop when ALT closed on the land.

Irwin Run’s trails, habitat, bird boxes, and access road are all stewarded with the help of the township and several passionate volunteers. This alliance with ALT means we’re able to collaboratively ensure Irwin Run’s trails and habitat are open, healthy, and enjoyable.



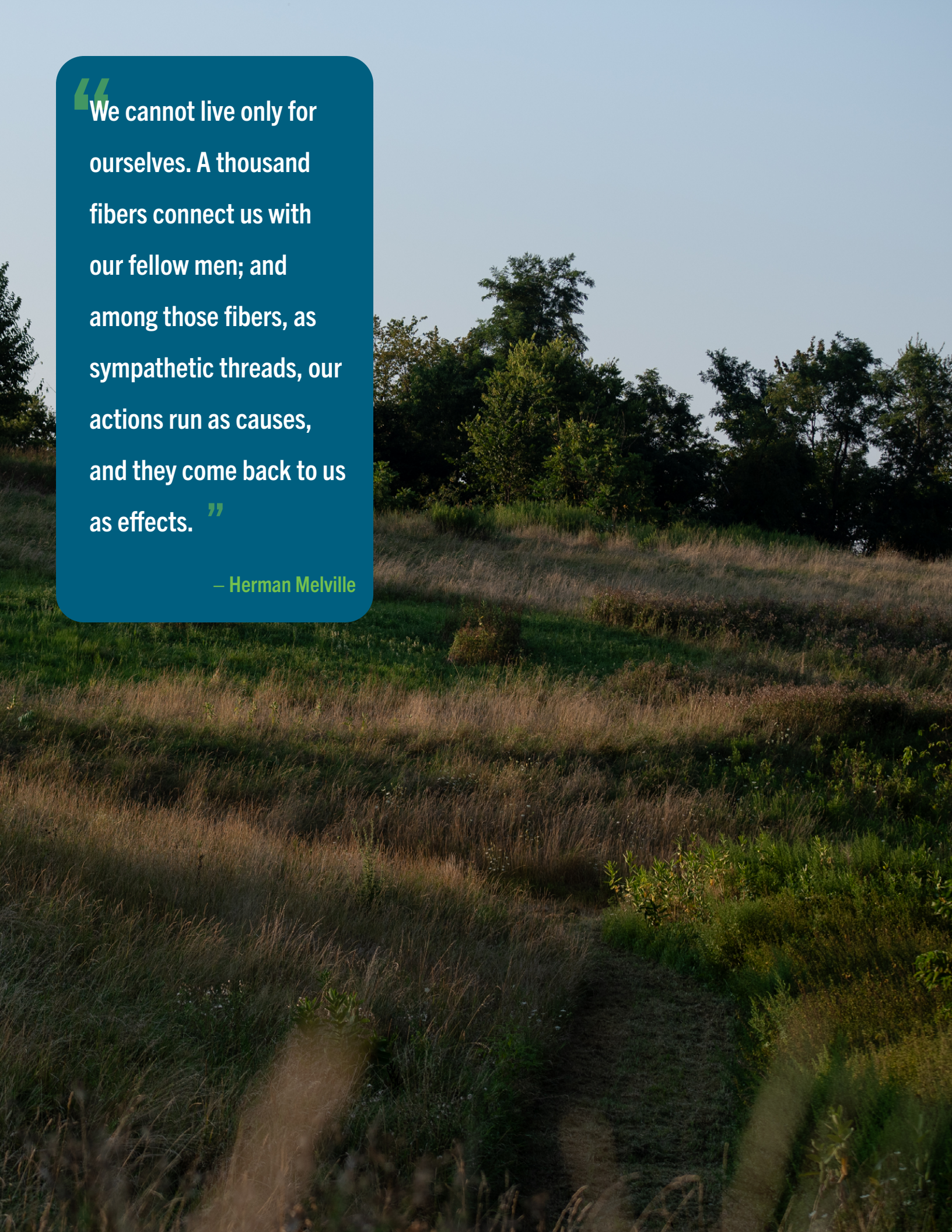
Pine Township Board of Supervisors Chair of Jack Donahue.

When a monumentally large tree came down across a trail, the township sent a work crew to clear ALT’s trail. When sprouting spring plants turn into tall, trail-impeding grasses, Pine Township and volunteers work to mow the trails. When special weather events impact trailheads and habitat, the Township picks up the phone and calls ALT’s staff. This collaboration makes for a well-maintained, beloved community green space.

“If you don’t focus on achieving something big, something special, then you can’t get it done,” Donahue said. “With ALT, we have a chance to do something special. We don’t want to become victims [to development]. So, we’re proactive and we engage the right team.”



To find more information about Irwin Run, visit alleghenylandtrust.org/green-space/irwin-run

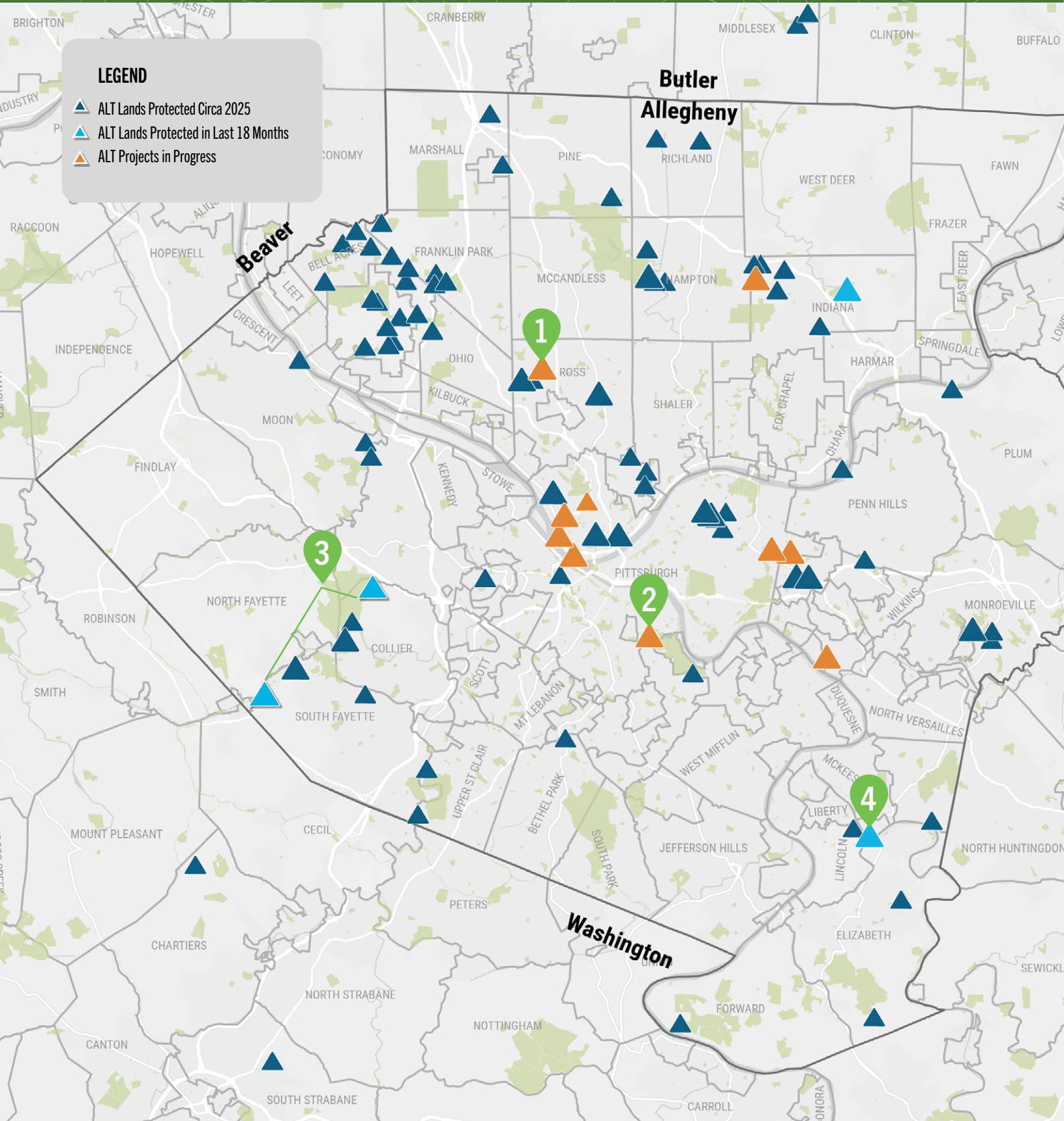
A landscape photograph showing a field of tall, dry grass and green shrubs in the foreground. In the background, there is a line of trees under a clear, light blue sky. The lighting suggests it might be late afternoon or early morning.

“We cannot live only for ourselves. A thousand fibers connect us with our fellow men; and among those fibers, as sympathetic threads, our actions run as causes, and they come back to us as effects.”

— Herman Melville

Where Are We Now?

A look at Allegheny Land Trust's existing and newly-protected lands, and current projects in progress.





For more information on how to support these projects, visit allegHENYlandtrust.org/current-projects



1

Lowries Run Expansion Project

27 Acres | Ross

In the early 2000s, ALT conserved Lowries Run Conservation Area to support the health of and remove additional flooding risk for the Lowries Run waterway. Since then, we've grown the green space into a 67-acre contiguous greenway. This year, we have the opportunity to expand this effort to support waterway health, wildlife habitat, and the growing network of valuable green space.



3

A Growing Panhandle Greenway

323 Acres & Growing | South Fayette & Collier

In a cross-community collaboration, we've proactively conserved several parcels that are adding to a growing network of green spaces in communities that want to balance development with thoughtful land protection. This spring, we closed on another of these parcels, and are in the process of identifying new places to add to this network of lands that we aim to connect into a contiguous greenway.



Photo courtesy of Hilltop Urban Farm.

2

Hilltop Urban Farm Conservation Effort

75.7 Acres | St. Clair Neighborhood of Pittsburgh

ALT is collaborating with community partners to conserve the Hilltop Urban Farm (HUF). This project's completion would permanently protect a beloved community farm that serves as an asset to those who enjoy close-to-home opportunities for growing food, gathering with neighbors, learning about urban agriculture, and exploring entrepreneurial ventures.



4

A Connected Dead Man's Hollow

460 Acres | Elizabeth, Lincoln, Liberty, & McKeesport

Dead Man's Hollow was ALT's first conserved conservation area and it remains among our most popular places to visit. This year, we grew the green space, adding to its connections with the Youghiogheny River, the Great Allegheny Passage Trail, and Boston Ballfield Park. This marks the Hollow's first accessible river frontage. We're grateful to have been able to grow this green space and create its first accessible river frontage access point.



(left) Mason Heberling and a researcher conduct phenology field work at Barking Slopes. (right) Wild Ginger grows at Barking Slopes. Photos by Sara Klingensmith.



PHENOLOGY:

Where Community Science and Research Intersect

by Sara Klingensmith | Environmental Education Associate

Barking Slopes has endured industrialization, once housing coal-mining operations and the working community known as the “little Village of Barking.” Today, it is a 151-acre Biological Diversity Area along the Allegheny River, directly across from Springdale.

With high wildflower diversity, this green space is a hub for ecological research and community science, highlighting its ecological significance and inspiring a sense of shared stewardship among residents.

If you walk along the lower trail, you might notice signs labeling plants—these are important markers for our phenology project.

Phenology is a study dedicated to capturing the specific timing of life stage events. The Barking Slopes Phenology Project was established with support from Mason Heberling, Curator of Botany for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Since then, he and his team of students have stayed busy. Read their summary of the effort below and find Barking Slopes phenology calendars on the next page.

“Our team from Carnegie Museum of Natural History has been studying the plants at Barking Slopes since 2020, launched with the support of the US National Science Foundation and encouragement of ALT.

The botanically hyper-diverse site has been a place of curiosity, joy, and exploration for us. It is a special place. By our count, there are 389 vascular plant species at the site (and we are still counting and finding more!).

Our primary research has focused on two aspects: the impacts of climate change and invasive species on native wildflowers.

Many undergraduate students have been involved in this work, from University of Pittsburgh, Chatham

University, and beyond. With the support of the museum and student-driven research awards from Pitt Honors College Brackenridge Fellowship, Torrey Botanical Society, Botanical Society of Western PA, Society of Herbarium Curators, and Southern Appalachian Botanical Society (to name a few!), students have asked interesting questions at Barking Slopes, such as investigating differences between knotweed species at the site.

We have been measuring the following species: giant knotweed (aptly named with huge leaves), itadori (Japanese) knotweed (smaller, rounded leaves), and their hybrid, Bohemian knotweed (with a range of leaf shapes and sizes). Students in our research team have been asking: which species has more “aggressive” traits?

This summer, led by students in a new museum internship program launching this year, we will be measuring photosynthetic rates of these species across the season. However, it is difficult for us to monitor phenology regularly. This is where the community science program is beneficial.

We will use the data from this project in our studies. Do the species differ phenologically? Do they emerge and flower at the same time? How does this relate to other traits and its invasiveness?

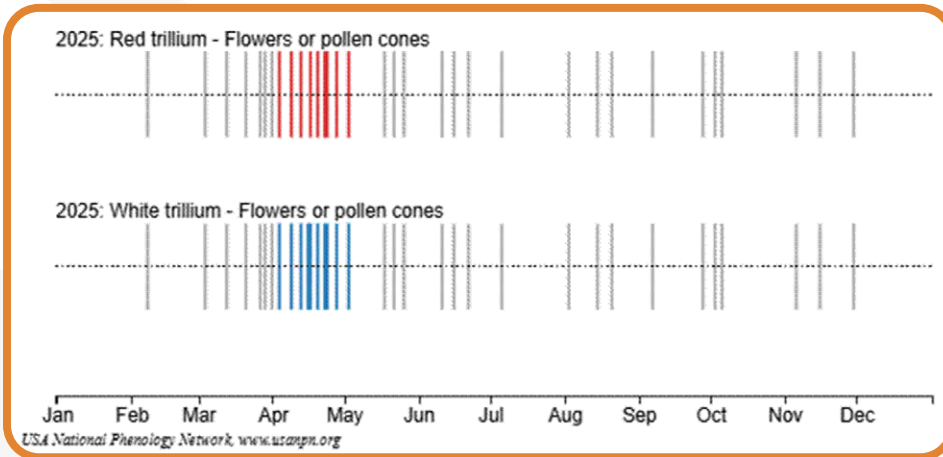
Thanks to the ALT community and contributing volunteers, we will know the answers to those questions soon!”

- Mason Heberling, Curator of Botany for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Phenology Discoveries at Barking Slopes

Phenology calendars display the timing of activity. With these calendars, we can see the occurrence and duration of certain life events, such as initial growth, leaf appearance, and flower appearance. The calendars show “yes” and “no” reports for the selected phenophase—with “no” reports displayed as gray bars. From this graphic, we can see that trillium at Barking Slopes had flowers from April to early May in the year 2025.

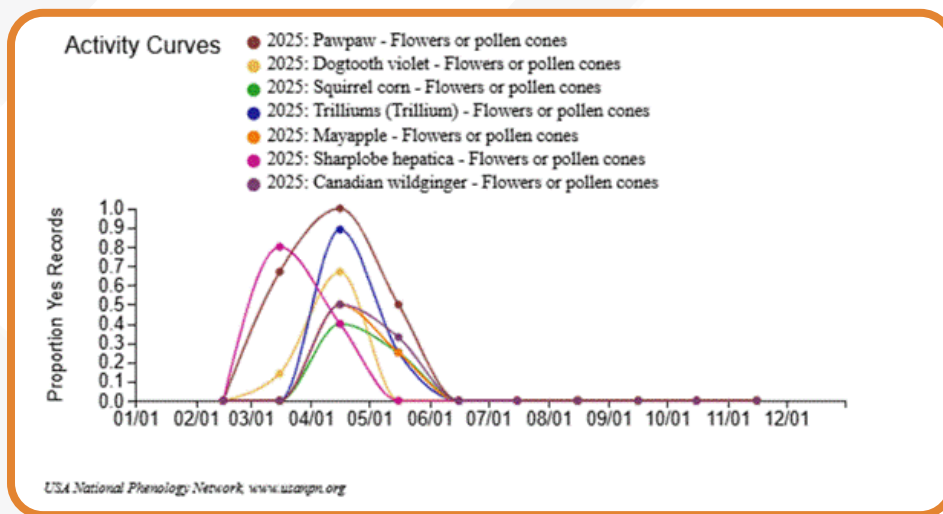
Barking Slopes Red and White Trillium Flowering Period



White (*Trillium grandiflorum*) and red trillium (*Trillium erectum*) are favorite spring wildflowers to observe at the site. They form colonies along rhizomes and are sensitive to deer browsing and hand-picking. People may travel or plan events to observe blooming trilliums cascading down hillsides. Trilliums have impressive longevity, living up to 30 years, and may take 7-9 years to form flowers once established.

A graduate student has examined leaf senescence in trilliums to better understand the ecological drivers of leaf senescence. Senescence is defined as “the process of biological aging in a plant or plant part (such as a leaf) from full maturity to deterioration and death.” According to researchers, “there are many hypotheses on why leaves may turn red before falling—the anthocyanins may protect the remaining nutrients from degradation via sunlight (redistribute light to protect photosynthetic machinery), parasites, herbivory, and drought.”

Barking Slopes Wildflower Activity Curves



The graph depicts activity curves for a variety of charismatic wildflowers that are monitored at Barking Slopes, including flowers (open and unopened) over months. Peaks indicate when a high proportion of observers reported a “yes” record for the flower phenophase. Flowering activity peaked in mid-April, possibly hinting at an optimal window for wildflower viewing at Barking Slopes.



Trillium growing at Barking Slopes.



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If you're interested in becoming an ALT sponsor, please contact Tyler Chilcott at tyler@alleghenylandtrust.org



A row of beets at an Allegheny Land Trust protected garden.

Urban Agriculture in the City of Pittsburgh

by Tom Mulholland | Senior Director of Community Conservation

The growing season is here, bringing major milestones for urban agriculture across the City of Pittsburgh. This summer, Ballfield Farm and Garden Dreams – two of the very first applicants for our garden protection program – will become fully and permanently protected. Simultaneously, we continue our work to advance other community-driven urban agriculture operations, including Hilltop Urban Farm, towards long-term secure land tenure.

These milestones inspire us to reflect on the deeper impact of our urban conservation work. Getting outdoors doesn't look the same for everyone, and close-to-home green spaces support our neighborhoods in unique, powerful ways. Beyond providing healthy food, cultivating these urban green spaces actively drives traditional environmental benefits and meaningful community resiliency.

At its core, a community garden is a place to grow healthy food. This, alone, is a meaningful impact of urban agriculture. Yet, there are many additional benefits that might seem incidental to farming, which, in our Community Conservation program, we are particularly excited about.

First, these spaces help shape and strengthen community identity. A thriving garden instills local pride, transforming not only how a neighborhood sees itself, but how it is perceived by the wider world. Gardens can serve as visible, living symbols of care, stewardship, and shared investment in place.

Second, urban agriculture is inherently social. Operating a garden requires neighborhood organization, which naturally sparks conversation, fosters deep personal connections, and builds social cohesion that are vital to public health. Through partnership with Grow Pittsburgh, gardens are supported in fostering the social infrastructure that central to the impact of the garden and that supports their sustainability and continued impact in other areas.

Finally, a community garden or farm expands access to quality green space. Even small-scale urban green spaces can deliver major mental and physical health benefits that result from time spent outdoors. We are excited about ensuring close-to-home access to quality green space to hundreds of households with each community garden that we protect.



TRALI Ballfield Farm Spotlight

Ballfield Farm is a longstanding, community-led urban agriculture site on Pittsburgh's North Side; gardeners transformed a former baseball field into a thriving, productive landscape. Established in 2007 and volunteer-run since 2011, the farm is stewarded by a dedicated group who collectively manage production and distribution of food on the site. This year, ALT will protect the farm, ensuring long-term land tenure for the growers and stewards of this community green space.

(top) ALT's staff and board visit Ballfield Farm during the growing season.
(bottom) Vegetables and flowers grow next to a cleared path at Ballfield Farm.

TRALI Garden Dreams Spotlight

Garden Dreams is a long-standing hub for community-oriented nursery operations in Wilkinsburg, supporting residents and strengthening the region's urban agriculture network. In 2019, a portion of the property was transferred to ALT for permanent protection, ensuring that the site will remain dedicated to community-centered growing and green space. Since then, Grow Pittsburgh has managed the site, building out its capacity as a production nursery that supplies plants and resources to gardens and urban farms across the city. This year, we are set to acquire the last remaining parcel to complete the land protection strategy for this project and enable plans to continue growing the impact of Garden Dreams.



(top) The greenhouses at Garden Dreams expand the growable space and seasons on site. (bottom) Beans are grown on a trellis at Garden Dreams. Photos courtesy of Grow Pittsburgh.

WAYS TO GIVE

Put Your Donor-Advised Fund to Work for Conservation

by Nikole Sheaffer | VP of Advancement

Did you know that donor-advised funds are one of the fastest-growing ways people support charitable causes? If you have already set aside charitable dollars in a donor-advised fund, consider recommending a grant to Allegheny Land Trust.

Your support helps protect local forests, waterways, wildlife habitat, and community conservation projects throughout the greater Pittsburgh region. With several important conservation opportunities underway, now is a great time to put your charitable dollars to work where they can create lasting impact.

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.



Visitors of Devil's Hollow Conservation Area enjoy the scenery of the green space.



Please contact Nikole Sheaffer at nikole@alleghenylandtrust.org to discuss ways to give.



Introducing Our New Board Members

We are excited to announce that Allegheny Land Trust's Board of Directors has three new members. Sharing a passion for conservation, these new members bring different backgrounds and perspectives to our mission of conserving and caring for local land for the health and well-being of future generations.

ALT's board members approve major items and decisions for the organization including the strategic plan, annual budget, policies and all land acquisitions and easements.

These new members will serve three-year terms for a maximum of three consecutive terms (or nine total years). We appreciate all our Board members and look forward to working with our new directors on several important conservation projects in the coming months.

Ryan Edmondson | Realtor, Edmondson Real Estate Group

Ryan is a Pittsburgh native who boomeranged back after exploring other parts of the world. Together with his wife Heather, he leads the Edmondson Real Estate Group, a real estate sales team at Keller Williams. He began his career in Finance at PPG, including a role as Senior Internal Auditor leading teams across 26 locations in 11 countries. A renovation project during his time at PPG sparked a passion for real estate, leading him to earn a Master's in Real Estate Development from Columbia University. In addition to working in sales, he has built a rental portfolio spanning the East End, Northside, and Southside. He holds a B.S. in Finance from Penn State.

Stemming from a passion for fishing and hunting in his youth, he now enjoys most of his outdoors time by foraging for mushrooms with his vegan wife and fishing with his young boys.



Jad Mahsoob | Director, BNY

Jad brings more than 20 years of leadership experience in risk, governance, and large-scale business initiatives. He is honored to join the Board of Directors and support a mission that is deeply personal to him. Jad grew up on an old farm in the north hills of Pittsburgh where he spent countless hours exploring the woods, fields, and creeks that first inspired his love of nature. Those early experiences shaped a lifelong appreciation for conservation and the importance of protecting natural spaces for future generations. He lives in Wexford, and is grateful for the opportunity to help advance ALT's work in preserving the landscapes and green spaces that make this region so special.

Jad says the ALT green space that most resonates with him is Fern Hollow "It feels so much like the woods I explored as a child growing up on my family's farm. When I think about the places ALT protects, Fern Hollow especially reminds me why this work matters so much. Preserving spaces like this means protecting not just land, but also the sense of wonder, peace, and connection to nature that those places can inspire in all of us."



Luke Onorato | Executive, Malakye

Luke is a lifelong outdoorsman with a deep appreciation for the forests, streams, and wildlife of western PA. Whether he's fly fishing a small mountain stream, hunting upland birds behind his English Setters, or exploring public lands, he believes time spent outdoors creates a lasting connection to conservation. Professionally, Luke is a finance executive with more than 25 years of experience helping organizations grow through strategic planning and financial leadership. He currently serves as President of the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society, leading efforts to raise funds for wildlife habitat improvement and conservation initiatives throughout region. Luke is honored to support ALT's mission and the efforts to make southwestern Pennsylvania a special place to live, work, and explore.

Growing up just a few miles away from Dead Man's Hollow, Luke spent many days of his childhood exploring the woods and the factory ruins. To this day, he finds himself coming back—whether it's to hike the trails, enjoy the quiet of the forest, or take his English Setter for a walk. He loves how the Hollow blends history with nature, where the remnants of a once-thriving industrial site have been reclaimed by towering trees, rock formations, and abundant wildlife. "It's a powerful reminder that, given time, all things return to nature."



UPCOMING EVENTS

E Education Events

V Volunteer Events



Public Information Session: Restoring Churchill Valley Greenway Virtual

August 13 | 6 - 7:30 pm

Since acquiring Churchill Valley Greenway, we've collaborated with local leadership, partners, neighbors, and volunteers to restore and re-imagine this unique land for both people and wildlife. Following our community-informed management plan, we've made meaningful progress at this green space. Now, we're launching a significant restoration effort of the waterway and wetland. Join us to learn about the bright, green future ahead for Churchill!

All Ages | Cost: Free



Volunteer Workday: Trail Blazing Girty's Woods

August 15 | 9 am - 12 pm

Mile by mile, volunteers have been building and maintaining Girty's Woods' network of hiking trails. It's time to paint! Volunteers will hike together painting blazes on trees and install painted stakes in areas where there aren't ideal trees to blaze. We need folks who are willing and able to work as a team and carry heavy wooden stakes through the woods for up to five miles. Together, we'll ensure that explorers stay the course in Girty's Woods.

All Ages | Cost: Free

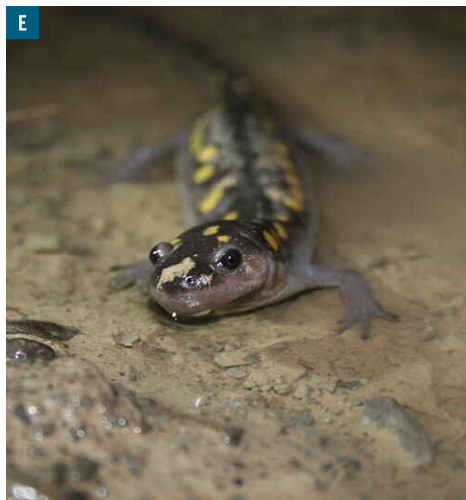


Photo courtesy of Flickr Creative Commons.

Webinar Series

August 19 | Salamanders of PA

September 16 | Fall Wild Edibles

Webinars Run From 5 - 5:45 pm

Learn about a variety of topics relating to the natural world around us with our environmental educators. Each webinar will feature a presentation on a different topic and will leave time for questions. These lessons are a great way to continue our nature knowledge from home, work, or wherever you have an internet connection.

All Ages | Cost: Free



SAVE THE DATE

Allegheny Land Trust 2026 Day of Giving

September 17, 2026

Every one of us has a place that has given us something—a favorite trail, a peaceful walk in the woods, a creek that sparked curiosity, or a neighborhood green space where we gathered with family and friends. This Day of Giving is an opportunity to give something back. Your gift helps Allegheny Land Trust protect and care for the places that enrich our region today while ensuring they continue to inspire, restore, and sustain life for generations to come.

You can contribute to our 2026 Day of Giving by visiting alleghenylandtrust.org/donate during the Day of Giving. Closer to the date, we'll mail a letter to all current members along with a remittance envelope for your use.



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BYO-Boat Volunteer Workday Sycamore Island

August 28 | 9 am - 12 pm

Bring your own boat and paddle to Sycamore Island from Verona Public Docks with a group of dedicated volunteers! Together, we'll manage invasive Asiatic Bittersweet and Giant Knotweed, and we'll learn about the story of Sycamore Island and how ALT manages different invasive species. The campsite will be reserved for those who wish to stay and make an adventure of it!

All Ages | Cost: Free

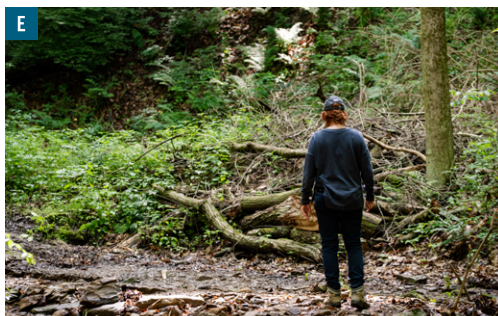


eDNA Mushroom Walk Audubon Greenway

September 9 | 5 - 7 pm

Join ALT staff and Western PA Mushroom Club Identifiers and Mycologists in collecting eDNA for research! eDNA, or environmental DNA, is a way for us to learn about the fungus that resides in the soil that may never produce a fruiting body (mushroom). Recently, WPMC received a grant for sampling and eDNA work around the region to learn more about the fungus growing beneath our feet.

All ages | Cost: \$5



AARP 50+ Walking Series September 18 | Girty's Woods

October 3 | Bethel Green

Hikes Run From 10 - 11:30 am

Join us for our 50+ Walking Series, sponsored by AARP Pennsylvania. Geared for those ages 50+, we will hike ALT's lands over moderate terrain and distances (about 1.5 - 2 miles), taking breaks to learn about our local flora and fauna. In September, we will discuss the conservation history and scenic views at Girty's Woods. In October, we will identify invasive species and discuss their impact and management at Bethel Green.

All ages | Cost: Free



Science Stroll: Fall Migration Wingfield Pines

September 26 | 9 - 10:30 am

Join an ALT educator for a Science Stroll at Wingfield Pines! Learn about birds that use Wingfield's wetland habitats and how they prepare for their long migratory journey. Feel free to bring your favorite pair of binoculars and field guide; a limited number will be available to borrow.

All Ages | Cost: \$5



For registration & more information, visit:
alleghenylandtrust.org/events





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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 4,100 acres of green space in 43 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 Environmental Education.

There is now an ALT conservation area within 8 miles of every Allegheny County community member. 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

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FRONT COVER: Neighbors celebrate the grand opening of St. John's Green.

BACK COVER: Virginia bluebells bloom in spring at Dead Man's Hollow Conservation Area.

All photos by Lindsay Dill unless otherwise noted.



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