Spring . 2011 CountryVie THE NEWSLETTER OF THE COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY

Trolley Trail Update

By Cheryl Ellsworth, Trail Coordinator



Trolley Trail Now

diminish in the current economy. The Conservancy did not obtain funding through PennDOT's transportation initiative program and is extremely hopeful that the state, private foundations and supportive donors will provide better returns.

The winter months have found the trail committee working hard to conclude two highly complex easements in the LaPlume area. At the same time they've been planning for actual trail work (bollard installation and hedgerow planting), and participation in Clarks Summit's Centennial Celebrations for publicity and fundraising efforts for the Phase 1 segment. To become involved in volunteer work on the trail, or if you have any specific questions, contact Cheryl Ellsworth, Trail Coordinator for further information at 945-6995.

Countryside Conservancy is now in receipt of a Master Site Plan for Phase 1 of the multi-use Trolley Trail project! At this time, Phase 1 begins at Clarks Summit and travels to the Dalton line separating Dalton from Glenburn Township. This plan was completed by Arora & Associates PC, directed by on-site coordinator Tim Wilson. The completion of the plan prompted a recent meeting with Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Recreation and Parks Advisor Lorne Possinger. According to Mr. Possinger, Countryside is now positioned to seek grant monies from the state (April 2011) for trail development.

As reported in the previous newsletter, the Conservancy is exploring all possible funding avenues as construction costs are high and grant possibilities continue to



Trolley Trail Near Future



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Countryside Conservancy

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Upcoming Events

With spring just around the corner (maybe), the Conservancy invites you to take part in the following events we have lined up for the next few months:

Adopt A Highway Cleanup: Sunday, April 24—The South Branch Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Coalitionon has organized an Adopt A Highway Cleanup on Route 632 from Dalton to Waverly. If interested, please meet the group behind the Dalton Fire Hall at 9:00 am.

Annual Meeting and Stewardship Awards: Wednesday, May 4—Meet outstanding caretakers of our region's lands who will be honored at this year's Stewardship Awards! Enjoy coffee and a delicious assortment of desserts, and catch up on the Conservancy's activities over the past year. This event will be at 7 pm in Evans Hall, Keystone College and is free and open to the public.

Tunkhannock Creek Paddle Trip: Saturday, May 7—Weather and creek levels permitting, we will put in near Bardwell at the confluence of the South Branch and the main stem of the Tunkhannock Creek, and then paddle down to the Susquehanna River in Tunkhannock. Last year this trip took about 3 hours at a leisurely pace. Only some experience is required.

Stone Wall Workshop: Saturday, June 11—Join stone wall expert Ken Ely at Lackawanna State Park and the Conservancy's Ziegler Preserve for a presentation on the techniques of stone wall restoration, then put your new skills into practice in restoring stone walls at the Ziegler Preserve in Benton Township!

12th Annual Auction: Saturday, July 9—This year's auction will take place on the lawn at the Abington Executive Center in Clarks Summit, once again courtesy of Allied Services. Save the date and plan to be there!

17th Annual Tailgate Picnic Potluck: Sunday, September 18—For a new twist on an old favorite, please bring a dish to share! Enjoy the festivities at Meadowsweet Preserve, Lily Lake Road, Waverly from 3pm till dusk. Free to Conservancy members.

Go Green Bike Tour: Saturday, October 1—The Second Annual Go Green Bike Tour is on schedule for Saturday, October 1 at Lackawanna State Park. We're still in the early planning stages for this year's tour. As the details unfold we'll post them to our website. Please check in there or watch for more information in our Summer newsletter.

Drilling Rig Tours: Dates to be announced—The Conservancy is finalizing tour dates with both Chesapeake Energy and Cabot Oil & Gas for Conservancy members. If you would like to go on one, please call our office and we will contact you when the details are set.

For more information on these events please visit our website www.countryside conservancy.org or call our office at (570) 945-6995

Mission:

The Countryside Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to protecting lands and waters in and near the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed for the public benefit now, and for the future.

The Countryside Conservancy is a tax-exempt organization as provided by IRS regulations. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Tunkhannock Creek Paddle Trip - May 7

The Conservancy is teaming up with David Buck of Endless Mountain Outfitters on Saturday, May 7th, to offer you an up-close and personal view of the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed!

Weather and creek level permitting, we will put in near Bardwell at the confluence of the South Branch and the main stem of the Tunkhannock Creek, and then paddle down to the Susquehanna River in Tunkhannock. Last year this trip took about three hours at a leisurely pace and only some experience was required.

You are welcome to use your own kayak or rent one from Endless Mountain Outfitters. We will be charging \$10 per person if you use your own kayak but want to be shuttled. Kayak rentals should be arranged directly with Endless Mountain Outfitters at 570.746.9140



Ali Wilson and Jamie Donahue enjoying last year's paddle trip

Call or email the Conservancy to let us know if you're interested in participating and watch our website for more details as we get closer to the date.

What's Brewing?

Fair trade is an organized social movement and market-based approach that aims to help producers in developing countries make better trading conditions and promote sustainability. The movement



advocates the payment of a higher price to producers as well as higher social and environmental standards. It focuses in particular on exports from developing countries to developed countries, most notably handicrafts, coffee, cocoa, sugar, tea, bananas, honey, cotton, wine, fresh fruit, chocolate, flowers and gold.

Freshly brewed at the Conservancy office today is the Café Estima Blend from Starbucks – Fair Trade Certified, of course! Look for this logo when buying all sorts of goods, especially coffee. If you don't see it, ask for it, and if they don't have it then encourage them to stock it in the future.

Drilling Rig Tours

By Bill Kern, Executive Director

As I opined in the fall newsletter, fear of the unknown is the worst fear of all. If you are concerned about gas drilling, then I strongly encourage you to go on a rig tour. While some fears will never be assuaged by a tour, understanding the process better will at least help you to focus your worrying on legitimate concerns and eliminate the overwhelming stress of infinite fears.

The Conservancy is finalizing tour dates with both Chesapeake Energy and Cabot Oil & Gas for Conservancy members. If you would like to go on one, please call our office and we will contact you when the details are set. In no way are these tours an endorsement of the industry or these companies; we are simply striving to educate the public on the greatest land use impact of our time.



Mark Ralston and Barron Ralston overlooking a Cabot drilling operation on family property in Springville, PA

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Save the Date for Auction 2011!

The Conservancy will hold its Twelfth Annual Auction on Saturday, July 9th on the lawn at the Allied Services Corporate Center, at the Abington Executive Park in Clarks Summit. This is the same venue we enjoyed the last two years, which has been immensely popular with the guests in attendance. We couldn't be happier to be holding the event there once again. Our warmest gratitude goes out to Allied Services for their invaluable support.

Auction Committee members, led by Elaine Shepard, are organizing the lineup of items for bidding and other key details of the event. Additional volunteers are invited to join the committee and help with any aspect of organizing the event, from donations to sponsorships to guest lists to decor.

Several sponsors have already lent their support to this year's event, including Peoples National Bank, Keystone Community Resources, Marworth, Prudential Retirement, Merrill Lynch, Janney Montgomery Scott and Penn Security Bank & Trust Company.



Additional sponsors and donations of auction items are greatly welcomed.

Please contact our office at 945-6995 to find out more. Auction proceeds promote the Conservancy's mission of protecting lands and waters in and near the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed for the public benefit.

As always, the evening will feature great music, open bar and a mouth-watering array of dining choices. Please save the date, and remember to call the office soon to book your seats!

Wedding at Little Rocky Glen

On May 28, 2010, Frank and Amanda Armanini were joined in marriage at Countryside Conservancy's Little Rocky Glen Preserve in Wyoming County. In a thank you note to the Conservancy, Amanda wrote:

"Thank you so much for allowing us to hold our wedding ceremony at Little Rocky Glen. It was where we had our first date, which made it extra special! It gets more and more beautiful down there every time we visit. Thank you for everything!"

While the Conservancy did not request any contribution from the new couple for using the Glen, they graciously made a donation to the Little Rocky Glen stewardship fund. This fund helps to cover the costs associated with the maintenance and upkeep of the Glen as well as the insurance costs that the Conservancy incurs from owning the Glen and keeping it open to the public.

As Amanda mentioned in the note, Little Rocky Glen looks better with each passing year and that is because of the fine work done by our Glen Stewards – Paul Maleski, Mike Koval and Al Deutsch. Thanks guys for the great work that you do!



Watershed Events: News from the South Branch Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Coalition

The South Branch Tunkhannock Creek Watershed Coalition is an arm of the Conservancy that focuses on raising awareness, connecting people with the watershed, and encouraging them to protect water resources.

On March 14th, the Coalition hosted Daniel Farnham for his presentation: "The Reality of Natural Gas Exploration in Northeast PA: The Good, the Bad and the Controversial."

Mr. Farnham, an environmental consultant and president of Farnham & Associates, is the lead technical expert in the Dimock and Lenox drinking water contamination cases, in addition to being involved with approximately a dozen other drinking water contamination cases across the state. He holds advanced degrees in chemistry and mechanical engineering from the University of Scranton and Lehigh University and has been involved with the gas industry for over 13 years.

Coincidentally, Mr. Farnham's presentation fell on the same day that he was called to testify in the Dimock contamination case, and after many hours of testimony he was visibly rattled. Despite not being able to share details of the case, Mr. Farnham clearly demonstrated the importance of hiring an experienced water tester that can withstand the scrutiny of multiple attorneys for hours on end.

More than 100 people were in attendance and most had plenty of questions for Mr. Farnham. One audience member, Tom Frost, recorded the presentation and was nice enough to share his video with the Conservancy. Bill Kern is working to get the video up on the Conservancy's new website, so look for it to be there soon. We'd like to thank Mr. Frost for his



generosity and Mr. Farnham for his willingness to speak despite the stress of his current involvements.

In other Coalition news, we have begun water quality testing for 2011, including a new test location specifically geared toward the impacts of gas drilling on surface water. The new site will be tested as many times as possible prior to drilling activity, and will also be monitored during and after drilling. Results for this new site, along with the results from all of our testing locations will be available on the Conservancy's website: www.countryside conservancy.org.

Gifts in Honor, Memory and Celebration

We offer our thanks to the following individuals who have made gifts to the Conservancy in honor of friends passing a special milestone in their lives, or in memory of friends and family members who are no longer with us. These gifts are placed in the Conservancy's Land Fund to support our land protection activities throughout the region.

In honor of Susan & Dorrance Belin: Anthony Rhodes and Diane Dietzen

In honor of Jim & Penny Steele: Anthony Rhodes and Diane Dietzen

In memory of Hank Belin: Anthony Rhodes and Diane Dietzen

Build a Bond with Birds

By Jason Martin, NestWatch



Whether in a shrub, a tree, or a nest box, bird nests are all around us. By monitoring a nearby nest you can help

scientists study the biology of North America's birds and how it might be changing over time. Every spring and summer, volunteers from across the country visit nests and report their findings to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's NestWatch program. As a NestWatcher, you keep tabs on bird family life, following the progression from incubated eggs, to fuzzy chicks, to gawky youngsters ready to take their first fluttering flight. All the information you gather is submitted online to the NestWatch database.

"NestWatch helps people of all ages and backgrounds connect with nature," says project leader Jason Martin. "The information that our dedicated citizen scientists collect allows us to understand the impact that various threats, such as environmental change and habitat destruction, have on breeding birds. Armed with this knowledge, we can take the necessary steps to help birds survive in this changing world."

Instructions and all the materials you need to participate are available on the NestWatch website at www.nestwatch.org. You'll also get directions on how to find and monitor nests without disturbing the birds. It's fun, it's easy, and it's free.

The Cornell Lab's immensely popular NestCams are back too. Cameras broadcast live video over the web from the nests of Barn Owls, bluebirds, wrens, Wood Ducks, and many other species. Our newest camera is focused on a Great Horned Owl family in Houston, MN. Check it out at www.nestcams.org.

And please join us for NestWatch this season—you'll build a bond with birds and with nature in your own backyard!

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COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY

ANNUAL REPORT 2010



The Countryside Conservancy is a nationally accredited, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to conserving lands and waters in and around the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed for the public benefit now, and for the future.



President's Message for 2010

By: Jack Müller - President of the Board of Directors

Executive Director Change

After an intense search, the board has been most fortunate to welcome Bill Kern as our new executive director in March 2010. Raised locally and with an education and experience in the conservation and energy management field, Bill has picked up the reins without a hitch. Being a serious bicyclist and outdoor enthusiast, his goals and life interests blend well with those needed to provide the board and staff with a fine leader.

Mary Felley, executive director for the previous seven years, has moved on to discover new horizons. She distinguished herself as a person with a sharp focus on all areas pertaining to the conservation of land and waters, here and in general. Fortunately, she is still able to assist Countryside Conservancy on occasion with our mission through grant writing and other endeavors.



One of Bill's initial tasks was to secure a new office manager. Again, we are pleased that he advertised, interviewed, and selected just the right person for this position. A resident of Tunkhannock, Jennifer Forster now manages the many tasks to maintain an effective office operation. She has been a very competent asset, especially in a year with many important transitions.

Trolley Trail

Countryside Conservancy has seen a banner year with success in acquiring easements and in fee purchases of lands that will form the basis of the entire three miles for the first section of the proposed multi-use Trolley Trail. This trail follows the alignment of the Dalton Street Railway, which provided transportation for passengers and freight from Scranton to Montrose, with a spur to Lake Winola during the early part of the Twentieth century. Operating from July of 1907 to September of 1932, the Northern Electric, as it was best known, was instrumental in growth of the area from Clarks Summit to Factoryville, west to Lake Winola and north toward Montrose. Cheryl Ellsworth, a member of the Conservancy staff since 1999, now a part-timer as trail coordinator, has done a most impressive job of shepherding this entire activity.



Hiking and bicycling along this first trail segment will provide an excellent nature experience for those wishing to enjoy the nature and sights from Clarks Summit Borough to Dalton Borough. Plans call for Americans with Disability Act (ADA) access for this soon to be built, first three mile stretch of the six mile section extending to Factoryville. Expansion from Factoryville to Lake Winola along the old streetcar roadbed in the near future is next in the effort to avail outdoors lovers with a place to share the beauty of the entry to the Endless Mountains area of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Natural Gas Activity

Entry of the Marcellus Shale natural gas play to the areas where Countryside Conservancy strives to protect the beauty and conservation values has created a moratorium on conservation easements and land sales. Most landowners are not sure what to anticipate from this, and are reticent to enter an agreement until they see where the Marcellus will lead. We are working with those landholders who see our mission as theirs, and are moving ahead with easements.

We continue to strive to educate ourselves, members, and landowners with the activities and details of the Marcellus. Many facets of this constantly changing activity call for cautious monitoring and education to assure protection now and in the future. Meetings concerning the topic abound, locally and elsewhere, and we participate in the various issues for the benefit of all.

Annual Meeting & Stewardship Awards

Spring 2010 brought the Annual Meeting and Stewardship Awards event. Here, we bring the membership up to date on Conservancy activities, followed by the popular Stewardship Awards presentations. Local property owners were sighted for their care of and dedication to their lands through constant improvement and monitoring. 2010 Stewardship Award winners included Mr. & Mrs. Martin Stuble of Fleetville, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mallery of Clarks Summit, Mrs. Robert Warriner of Agawam Farm in Montrose, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Meagher of Branch Brook Farm in Nicholson, Mr. Joseph Uhrin and Ms. Elizabeth Uhrin of Uhrin Farm in Jermyn, Mrs. James Hagendorf for the "The Oldest House" in Laceyville, Mr. & Mrs. Gary Toczko for Nimble Hill Vineyard & Winery in Tunkhannock, and Mr. & Mrs. Charles Strickland for the Woodburne Farm in Dimock. The slide show was quite indicative of their labors and award winners were encouraged

to speak of their land and love, rounding out a most enjoyable evening. Plan now to join the staff, board, Conservancy members and recipients this May 4, 2011 for this informative event.

Events

At the Conservancy, diverse activities abound. In July we again held the annual Countryside Conservancy Auction at Allied Services headquarters in Clarks Summit. With Allied providing a lovely dinner at such a fine location, we were successful in raising more funds for our goals in land and water preservation. Local artists and business owners are very instrumental in providing great items for this enjoyable social event.

September brought our annual Tailgate Picnic, a fun family event, held at Meadowsweet Preserve, Lily Lake Road, Waverly. These lands are owned and protected by the Conservancy. Games and kite flying are just some of the activities for the young, as well as a corn and marshmallow roast, provided by the Acker family. Music was provided by one

of our local groups. An added treat this year was an informative nature presentation by Angie Colarusso. She operates an animal rescue operation from Wyoming County, and presented a variety of protected wild animals for our enjoyment.

October 2010 marked our first "Go Green" Bike Tour, a most successful event that brought out 111 riders on a beautiful autumn Saturday. Lackawanna State Park was the location and a great one it was. Tours from one half mile to 62 miles in length were planned along seven different routes, providing recreation and challenge to all. Volunteers to guide and coordinate the tour came out in strength to assure the riders were accommodated with preparation to begin and refreshments on their return. Already in the planning stage, this year's tour is set for Saturday, October 1, 2011.

The October meeting of the board of Directors was held at a charming little chapel at Lake Carey. A focus area for the last decade, this area was the topic of the Lake Carey Conservation Plan. Walter Broughton, board member and summer



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Events (Continued)

resident of Lake Carey, hosted a most delightful gathering to provide board members with a taste of this beautiful area on a clear and crisp autumn afternoon.

A Fall board retreat at the Pond House at Hull's Christmas Tree and Maple Syrup Farm provided the board with an excellent opportunity to review Conservancy goals. Specifically focused discussions on raising the much needed funding were facilitated by Kim Murphy, executive director of The Berks Conservancy, a sister land preservation group to the south. Kim's guidance has given our board new fundraising avenues to explore and implement for continued success in preserving conservation values in the Tunkhannock Creek watershed. Additionally, Mary Felley provided an update on Marcellus Shale activities. Mary is especially well versed on this topic and her presentation dovetailed well with the funds being realized by landowners involved and benefiting financially with the Marcellus activity.

Another successful fundraising effort was held in the Fall. This was a raffle for a beautiful piece of artwork created by the talented local artist, Christopher Ries. Participants were treated to a lovely cocktail party at the home of Elaine Shepard, chair of our fundraising effort, and it featured the drawing for the lucky winner of the piece.





Growth and Sources of Support

Memberships and appeal gifts from over 450 active members contributed over \$57,000 toward Conservancy operations and programs in calendar year 2010. The Auction attracted over 150 guests and netted almost \$28,000.

Grants of over \$81,000 from government agencies, private and corporate foundations were disbursed to support acquisition and planning for the Trolley Trail, improvements and stewardship at Little

Rocky Glen, capacity building and public outreach in 2010. A government grant came from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Private grant funders included the Overlook Estate Foundation, the Ross Family Foundation, the Sordoni Foundation, and the Frances Fuller Charitable Lead Trust. Corporate support was received from P&G Paper Products, PPL, and Prudential.

At year's end 2010, Conservancy assets stood at over \$1.7 million dollars, almost two-thirds of which is non-liquid assets representing the value of preserved land. Approximately \$400,000 of the remainder are funds temporarily restricted for land or easement purchase, and funds restricted for land and easement stewardship.

Please continue to support Countryside Conservancy, or join if you have not yet taken the opportunity, as we strive to further our efforts in this most worthy endeavor. Opportunities abound through land conservation easements and the recreational Trolley Trail. With your assistance, financially and in volunteering in our many activities, we can achieve much in 2011 and into the future.

Thanks To Our Supporters

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals and businesses who made membership contributions (including memorial and honor gifts) to the Countryside Conservancy in 2010.

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