

COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVANCY

2017 NEWSLETTER AND ANNUAL REPORT



Countryside Conservancy is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit land trust committed to protecting and connecting greenspace in and near the Tunkhannock Creek watershed for the public benefit, now and for future generations.

Dear Members & Friends of the Conservancy,

With more than 460 acres of land owned outright and permanently protected by the Conservancy, we thought that this newsletter would be a great opportunity to highlight some of those properties. The bulk of that acreage is made up of our preserves that surround Lackawanna State Park and contribute 5.2 miles of singletrack to that trail system. Our most popular property however, continues to be our Little Rocky Glen Preserve in Wyoming County, and we're in the process of creating our first Susquehanna County preserve which will be in Dimock Township.

While not featured in this newsletter, we have also permanently protected 920 acres of privately owned land through Conservation Easements. These properties are spread throughout the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed and include portions of Lackawanna, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties. Our most recently conserved parcel is with Carol Gargan in Clifford Township, Susquehanna County. Carol's love for her land and desire to see it permanently protected are evident to anyone visiting her slice of paradise in the shadow of Elk Mountain. As we move forward with our conservation work in the area, we look forward to working with more landowners who desire the peace of mind that comes with a permanently protective conservation easement with our organization.

None of this work would be possible without the dedication and support of our volunteers, members, funders, Board of Directors, staff and conservation partners. We thank you for your generosity and hope that you take some time to get out and enjoy our incredible countryside!



Bill Kern, Executive Director



Bill Kern

Planned Giving Can Change Our Community

In 1994 a small group of concerned citizens in the Abingtons decided to form a conservancy in an effort to preserve the rural character of the area. Since that time, the Countryside Conservancy has protected over 1400 acres in Lackawanna, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties. Roz Peck was the single most influential force in the establishment of the Countryside Conservancy. Her family's gift, in her memory, of the Northern Electric railroad property to the Conservancy has created the opportunity to develop the Trolley Trail, connecting Clarks Summit and Dalton now used by hundreds of walkers and bikers weekly.

Roz' dream to create a continuous pedestrian walking and biking trail from Clarks Summit to Lake Winola is moving ahead...as are other land preservation projects throughout the three counties.

We invite you to walk this path with us. Through planned giving you too can provide a legacy that will be enjoyed now and by future generations. Please help fulfill Roz's dream by making a bequest to the Countryside Conservancy.

For more information call 570 945-6995

In 2016 the Countryside Conservancy reviewed our Mission Statement to see if we were truly performing in line with that message. The statement indicated that our goal was to protect the land and water in and near the Tunkhannock Creek Watershed. However, as we have spent much of our time and resources on trails, we have made the following revision:

Countryside Conservancy is committed to protecting and connecting green space in and near the Tunkhannock Creek watershed for the public benefit, now and for future generations.

I recently learned a new word, vitwaaien, pronounced "out vine", a Dutch word meaning "to take a break in the countryside to clear one's head" or "the revitalizing effects of taking a walk in the wind". Countryside Conservancy offers to all, The Trolley Trail, Little Rocky Glen, Meadowsweet and many other properties, perfect places to enjoy vitwaaien.

Thank you for your support.



Will Chamberlin, Board President



Will Chamberlin



One often hears it said at retirement parties or work places, when someone is leaving, that he or she will be a “tough act to follow.” Never do those words ring more true than when they are said of George Ginader!

Countryside Conservancy has truly been blessed to have George holding the financial reins of the organization for over fifteen years. As Treasurer of the Board, George has guided and maintained the fiscal integrity of Countryside through the course of three Executive Directors and four Office Managers.

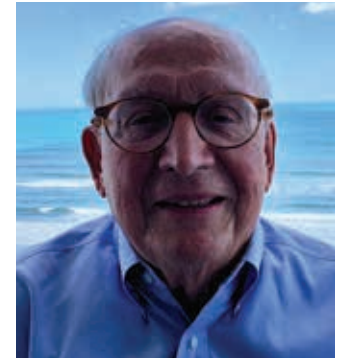
His hallmarks of respect, teaching, and freely lending assistance are truly appreciated by all of the staff members who have had the pleasure of working with him.

George created a financial framework for Countryside in the very early years of the organization. His attention to detail enabled the organization to lay a solid foundation of appropriate and competent accounting principles. His constant monitoring and training of personnel insured that throughout periodic changes in staff, all things financial remained carefully safeguarded and consistent. George personally trained or enlisted the assistance of his professional colleagues to guide Conservancy staff through the often complicated world of payroll taxes, audits, grants and routine book work. Throughout the years, George and his firm Ginader, Jones & Company did so with utmost respect and support for what were surely novices in his field! Without George’s acumen and willingness to lend his time over and over again, the Conservancy might not have survived many difficult years. Additionally, George has been a pillar of strength for the Conservancy’s Annual Auction since it began in 2000. Many staff recall the hustle and bustle of “check out” on a warm summer’s evening in Waverly! With George’s knowledge and reinforcements, this annual event has proven successful time and time again.

Although many paragraphs can be written of the hours George has spent teaching the Conservancy staff the ropes of financial competency, much more can be said of the character of the man.

George always responds to questions and needs with both professionalism and kindness. No matter how busy he is, he always returns calls and frequently stops at the office out of his way to assist staff members. George has also participated faithfully in Board meetings for over fifteen years. He has quietly worked alongside other Board members on protecting land, which requires complex financial and legal transactions not always fully appreciated by the public at large. George is an unsung hero because he has done so much without the least regard for any credit or kudos. George has a kind word for all and frequently asks others how they and their loved ones are faring. He is a gentleman, a colleague, a friend and a teacher.

We love you, George, and on behalf of all the staff at Countryside who have had the pleasure of your mentorship, we thank you for all you have done for us and the organization. We will sorely miss you!



George Ginader

What Exactly is a Conservation Easement?

A legal agreement between a private landowner and a nonprofit land-conservation organization such as Countryside Conservancy. The agreement permanently and legally restricts the types of subdivision, development, and activities allowed on a property. It is a powerful tool for preserving the important natural, scenic or recreational values of a property.

Under a conservation easement, the landowner retains ownership of the land and all rights not covered by the easement, while the Conservancy takes on legal responsibility for enforcing the easement restrictions.

A conservation easement is a voluntary initiative on the landowner’s part. The easement document itself is tailored through discussions between the landowner and the Conservancy, and is designed to protect the values of the land in a way that reflects the owner’s needs and wishes.

The landowner benefits from an easement through the assurance that the important values of the land will be protected permanently, even after it passes into other hands. In certain cases, the landowner can take a Federal income tax deduction for donating a conservation easement.

The Conservancy holds conservation easements on properties in Lackawanna, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties, totaling 920 acres. Nationwide, over 16 million acres have been protected through voluntary conservation agreements of this type.

Gardner Property

With a grant from the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), the Conservancy is in the process of acquiring 82 acres in Benton Township, Lackawanna County. This acquisition will add to the Conservancy's 35-acre Ziegler Preserve and connect to Lackawanna State Park

to the east. The acquisition will extend the current 24-mile Lackawanna State Park/ Countryside Conservancy Trail System for hikers and bikers, and it will also buffer Lackawanna State Park from development in what is a highly desirable area between Lackawanna State Park and Interstate 81.



Auction 2016

Our 17th Annual Auction proved to be one of our most successful. Led by event chair, Elaine Shepard, the committee worked hard to make this biggest fundraising night one to remember. The talented committee included Tara Atkins, Sandy Boyle, Shannon Cantner, Will Chamberlin, Dani Dilarso, Nora Dillon, Kathleen Graff, Kim Kost-Scanlon, and Jim Vipond. They brought many unique items to the auction block and made this evening filled with food, fun, dancing, and giving!

This year brought a few changes to the venue, which included the relocation of our silent and live auction items to indoors at the Waverly Club. This provided much needed relief from the heat outdoors and gave everyone the opportunity to view and bid on all the superb auction items while sipping a cool beverage and savoring delicious hors d'oeuvres. Once the sun set, guests continued bidding on the wonderful items and were entertained throughout the evening with lively music from Marko Marcinko & Music for Models. They also enjoyed the stunning décor placed throughout the venue from Greystone Gardens.

We look forward to our upcoming 18th auction being held this year on July 15th. This year we will be expanding our silent auction items to include a few more unique offerings, from alluring travel destination packages as well as signed sporting/musical memorabilia. As we did in the past, we will continue to utilize our auction software, which allows the ease of bidding anywhere you are on a smart phone. For the past four years Graystone Gardens has transformed our auction site into an enchanted garden. Thank you Paul and Susan!



Countryside Conservancy Trolley Trail Phase Two

2016 marked a very active and productive year for Countryside Conservancy's Trolley Trail Project. Two major accomplishments were the installation of signature historical signage along Phase 1 in the Clarks Summit - Dalton area, and the beginning of construction on Phase 2 of the Trail, a partnership with Keystone College in La Plume, Pennsylvania.

In 2014, Countryside Conservancy partnered with Keystone College and applied to Penn DOT's Transportation Alternative Program for funding to build a section of trail that traverses the back campus of Keystone College. A grant was awarded to Keystone and Countryside late the same year. Early 2015 saw collaborative work with Penn DOT, Keystone and Countryside begin. TPW Designs, Tim Wilson, provided the plans that were ultimately bid out via Penn DOT's system to result in startup construction on Phase 2 in the fall of 2016.

Rutledge Excavating Inc. was awarded the contract and began the clearing and grubbing process on Phase 2 at Keystone College in late September. This section of Trolley Trail, although not contiguous to Phase 1, still represents the second installment of surfaced/finished original Trolley Right Of Way in the Conservancy's overall planned trail system. If possible, this phase is even more beautiful as the Trolley traveled through beautiful wooded tracts of land consisting of rock ledges and deep ravines where stands of pines and hard woods abound. Phase 2 will ultimately connect Keystone to the town of Factoryville and provide residents and college students with a reciprocal amenity. It is anticipated that construction will be completed in the early spring of 2017.

As the year draws to a close, Countryside has already been informed that they will receive monies from the Commonwealth Financing Authority Act 13 Program in 2017. These monies will hopefully be matched by monies from DCNR's C2P2 Program to start work on what will be Phase 3 of the Trolley Trail system. Phase 3 will connect Keystone via on-road signage to, to a segment of ROWs adjacent to Route 6/11. This Phase will head back toward Phase 1 with the ever present goal of crossing Route 6/11 in sight.



Clearing the path



Truck and gravel



Rough path



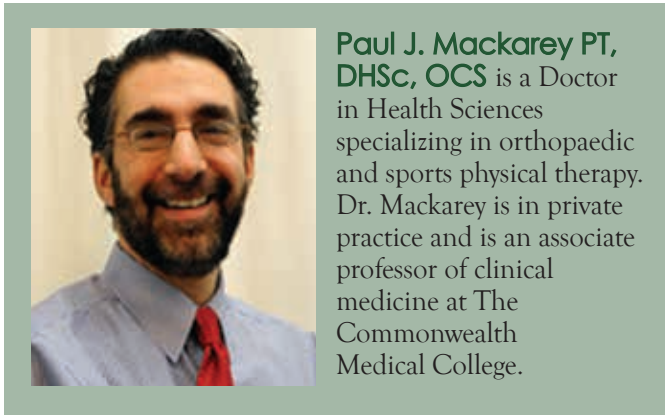
Intermediate path



Finished path

Stages of Phase II looking west toward Factoryville.

Spend Time Outdoors - It's Heathy!



Despite the lingering winter temps, spring and summer will soon return to NEPA. So, get ready to enjoy the great outdoors because research shows that it is good for your health!

Hundreds of studies support the fact that getting off the couch, away from the television and video games to increase physical activity, is only one of the many reasons people benefit from green space. One study demonstrated that children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) functioned with more focus when placed in a natural setting. Other studies found that children demonstrated lower risk for asthma and elderly improved their longevity, when they lived in greener spaces. Most impressive, was a study published in the British medical journal, *Lancet*, which found that health disparities between wealthy and poor were neutralized when both groups lived in greener spaces.

Plenty of Green Space in Northeastern Pennsylvania!

Keep in mind, living in NEPA offers plenty of options for healthy green space. You do not have to travel far to get our city or state parks. Nay Aug Park and Lackawanna State Parks are two good examples. A short drive will take you to Ricketts Glen State Park for a beautiful hike along the waterfalls. If you don't mind a little longer drive, The Pennsylvania Grand Canyon will bring you closer to a healthy mind, body and spirit.

It is reported that Americans spend 90% of their lives indoors and that number increases with age. Worse yet, for some, venturing outdoors is considered risky behavior with fear of the sun, ticks, wind, mosquitoes and other creatures of God. Well, the truth of the matter is the risk of being one with nature is far less than the ill effects of a life stuck indoors. Please consider the following benefits of spending time outdoors.

- **Nature's Vitamin D** - Current research suggests that Vitamin D (The Sunshine Vitamin), may offer significant disease prevention and healing powers for osteoporosis, some forms of cancer and heart disease. Of all the methods of

getting an adequate amount of Vitamin D, none is more fun than spending time outdoors in the sunlight.

- **Increase Activity Level** - While exercising indoors in a gym is valuable, research shows that time spent indoors is associated with being sedentary and being sedentary is associated with obesity, especially in children. Some studies show that children in the United States spend an average of 6 ½ hours per day with electronic devices such as computers, video games and television. It is also reported that a child's activity level more than doubles when they are outdoors. So, get out of the office, house and gym as often as possible. Consider weight training at the gym and doing cardio by walking, biking or running outdoors.
- **Improved Mental Health** - It is well documented that light affects mood. So, unless you live in a glass house or a light box, getting outdoors is important to your mental health. Furthermore, studies show that exercising outdoors in the presence of nature, even for as little as 5- 10 minutes has additional mental health benefits. For those less active, read or listen to music in a hammock or lying in the grass.
- **Improved Concentration** - Richard Louv, author of the book, "Last Child in the Woods," coined the term, nature-deficit disorder." This term is supported by research that found children with ADHD focus better when outdoors. Furthermore, it was discovered that these children scored higher on concentration tests following a walk in the park than they did after a walk in their residential neighborhoods or downtown areas,
- **Improved Health and Healing** - Researchers at the University of Pittsburgh found that patients recovering from surgery recovered faster with less pain and shorter hospital stays when they were exposed to natural light. Next time countrysideconservancy.org ▯ Annual Report 5 Prudential volunteers, led by board member Mike Williamson, once again help us work on the trail in Spring 2016 - Great Work! you're recovering from an illness, discuss this with your physician.
- **Improved Breathing** - In general, breathing fresh air is good for you. Some exceptions might be those with severe allergy problems when the pollen count is high. In spite of this, it may be better to take allergy medicine and enjoy the benefits of being outdoors than to be stuck inside. Many pulmonologists believe

people with pulmonary problems would benefit from outdoor activities such as a 10-15 minute walk because they are prone to osteoporosis and Vitamin D deficiency. Local pulmonologist, Dr. Gregory Cali, DO, agrees and also adds that studies do not show that high humidity is dangerous for respiratory patients but it may be uncomfortable. In cold temperatures, those with

ulmonary problems must avoid directly breathing cold air by covering up their mouths when walking outdoors. Overall, the benefits far outweigh the risks..

This article is a combination of two of Dr. Mackarey's articles from "Health & Exercise Forum" appearing every Monday in the Scranton Times-Tribune.



Prudential volunteers, led by board member Mike Williamson, once again help us work on the trail in Spring 2016 - Great Work!



Local artist and sign maker, Joe Kluck, along with Trail steward, Jeff Fleming, install the new sign at the head of the Trail in Clarks Summit.

New Signage

Conservancy Trail committee veteran Amy Broadbent led and coordinated efforts to compile and pictorially bring the history of the Northern Electric Trolley to life for local trail users. Amy researched and found numerous historical post cards from the Trolley's interesting past and then worked with Diane Turrell of DDH Design out of Tunkhannock to create and highlight significant and interesting signs unique to the local area where the Trolley Trail meanders. The signs created were completed by Fossil Industries Inc., out of New York. The monies obtained for the signage were a combination of funding from the 2015 Pocono Forest and Waters Conservation Landscape Mini-Grant Program and the Overlook Estate Foundation. Twenty first century trail users had no idea that over a dozen dairies supplied the local area as well as Scranton with fresh milk and dairy products carried daily on the Trolley's Milk Express. Our thanks go out to Amy and other committee members for a job well done.



Little Rocky Glen

This 26-acre property contains a spectacular sandstone gorge on the South Branch of the Tunkhannock Creek in Wyoming County. Steep hemlock-clad slopes rise to either side of the gorge. This has historically been a popular fishing and picnicking spot; a picnic shelter was opened here in fall 2008. Short trails around the picnic site augment creekside views and fishing spots. The property is open to hiking. Swimming, biking, and hunting are not allowed.

From SR 6 between Tunkhannock and Factoryville, turn south onto Lithia Valley Road for 0.3 miles. A parking area is on the right, just before the bridge.



Davis Crossing



This 61-acre preserve in Wyoming County was donated to the Conservancy in 2013 by the Lackawanna Audubon Society. The property has several easy hiking trails and is a great birding location. A one mile easy loop trail through woods offers pond side bird viewing while a straight out-and-back path on the old trolley trail crosses the dam and leads to a viewing stand overlooking

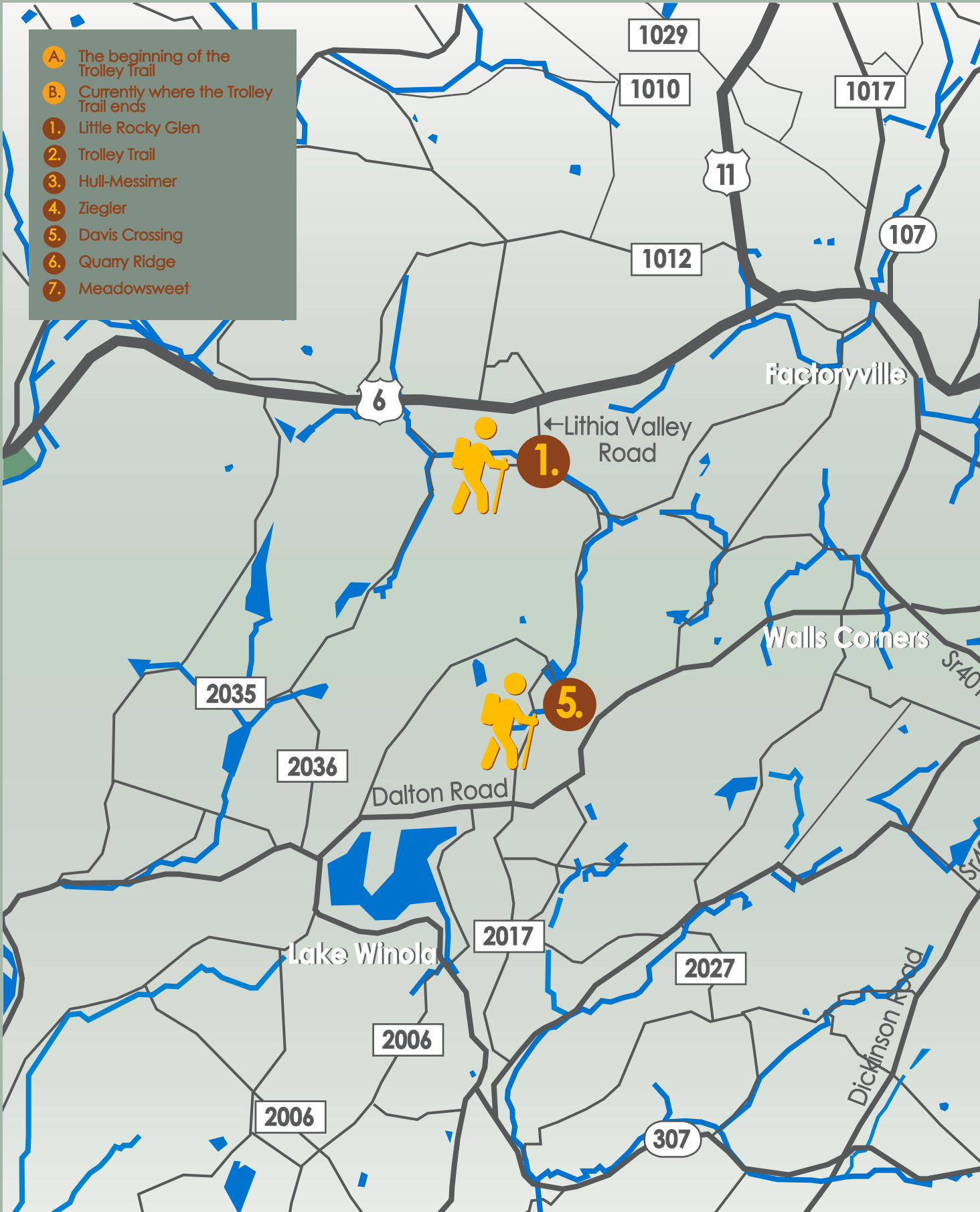
A view of the lake in autumn.

Davis Crossing the pond. Biking and hunting are not allowed.

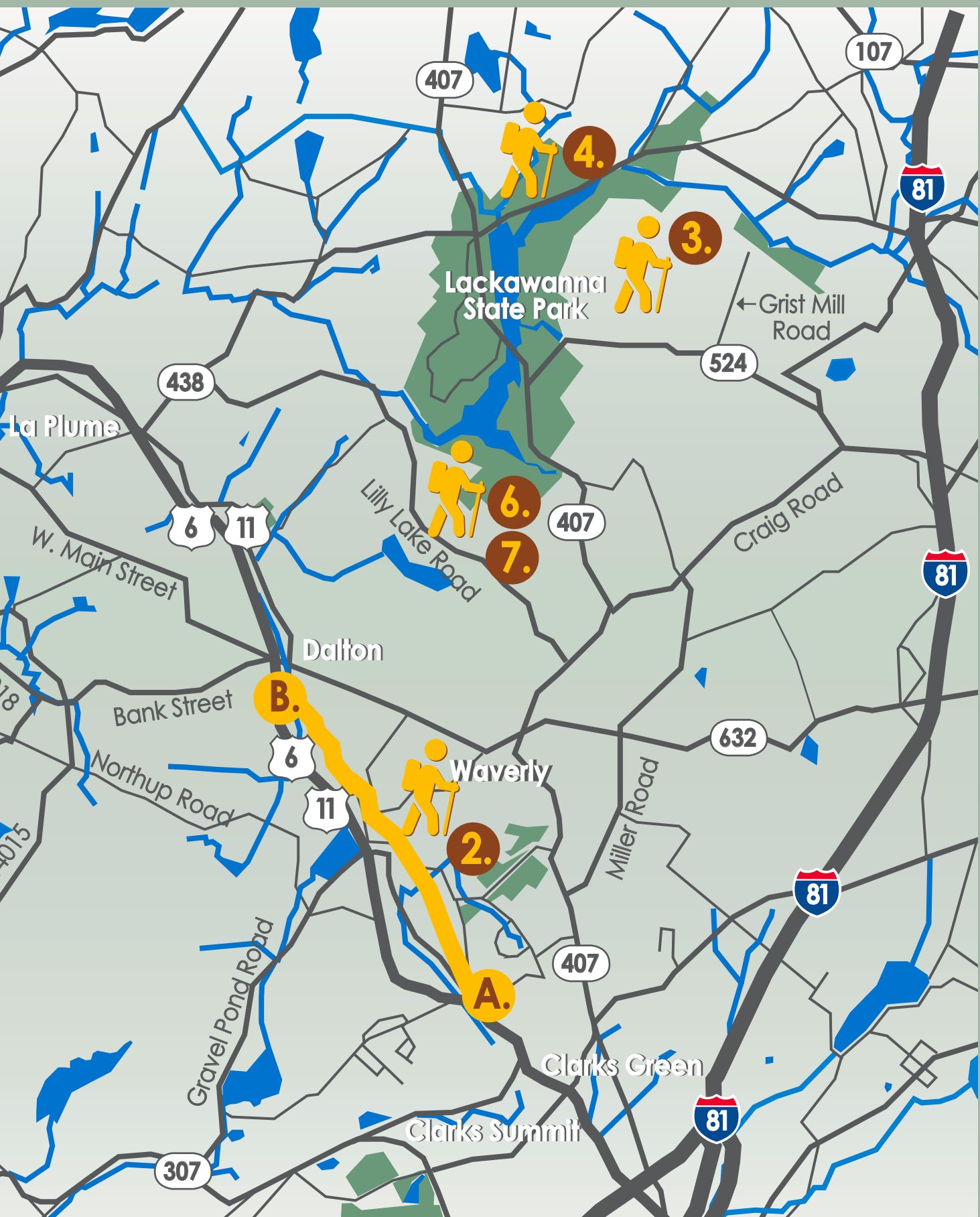
From SR 6 between Tunkhannock and Factoryville, turn south onto Lithia Valley Road for 1.1 miles. Turn right onto Lake Winola Road for 1.2 miles. Turn left onto Erhardt Road (T-432). Go 0.2 miles; access to the property is on the left under the power line. Parking is along the road.



The renovated boardwalk and lookout stand done by Jon Master Jr. of Troop 175 of Factoryville as an Eagle Scout project.



- A. The beginning of the Trolley Trail
- B. Currently where the Trolley Trail ends
- 1. Little Rocky Glen
- 2. Trolley Trail
- 3. Hull-Messimer
- 4. Ziegler
- 5. Davis Crossing
- 6. Quarry Ridge
- 7. Meadowsweet



Hull-Messimer

This 75-acre forested Creekside property is on the South Branch of the Tunkhannock Creek in Lackawanna County. Majestic woods rise on steep slopes above the creek. This preserve protects lands from near the ridgeline down to the creek to maintain water quality, stream life, and recreational opportunities, as well as Lackawanna Lake and Lackawanna State Park downstream. This mostly flat trail parallels the Tunkhannock Creek for 1.5 miles, crossing a State Park field before entering the hemlock woods. Hunting is not allowed on the Hull portion of the trail but is allowed with a Conservancy permit on the Messimer Preserve.

From Clarks Summit, take East Grove Street for 0.4 miles. Turn left onto SR 407 North. Go 6.1 miles and turn right on SR 438. Go 1 mile. Turn right onto Rowlands Road. Parking is on the right and South Hull-Messimer Branch Trail access is just after the bridge, on the left. Follow this trail east along the creek for approximately 1 mile to reach the Messimer preserve.



Recent Stewardship Hike

Ziegler

This 35-acre property adjoins the north edge of Lackawanna State Park. Mature woods and numerous old stone walls distinguish this preserve. A mile-long hiking and mountain-biking loop trail zigzags through the wooded hillside, connecting to Lackawanna State Park's Bull Hill Trail. Hunting is allowed on Ziegler with a permit from the Conservancy.

From Clarks Summit, take East Grove Street for 0.4 miles. Turn left onto SR 407 North. Go 6.1 miles and turn right onto SR 438. Go 1 mile. A gravel parking area is on the left.



Before



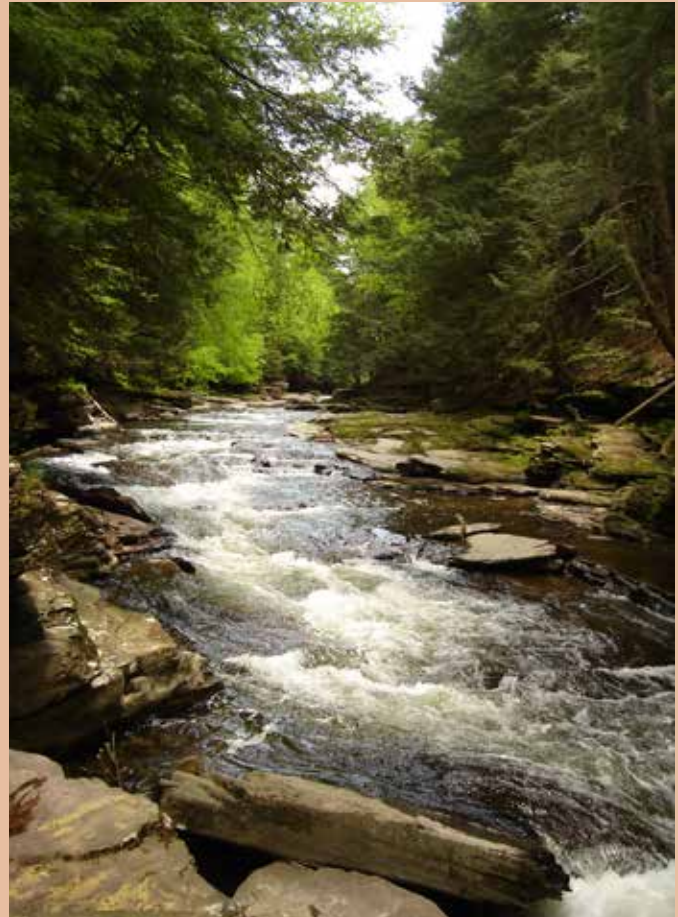
After

Tailgate Picnic Potluck

Our Annual Potluck Tailgate Picnic was held at our Little Rock Glen preserve on Sunday, September 18, 2016.



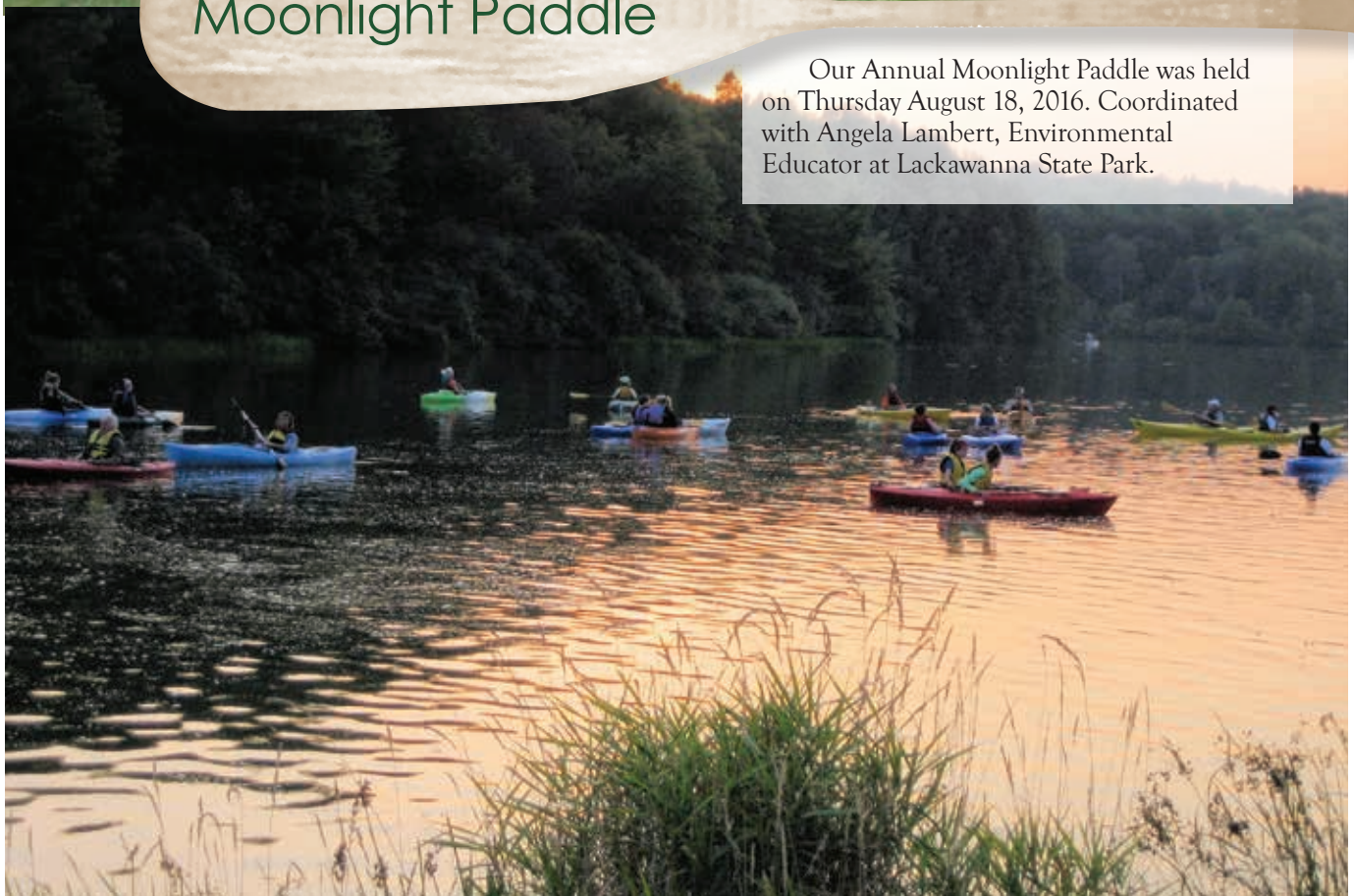
A big thanks to Pat and Will Acker for providing corn and s'mores for everyone.





Moonlight Paddle

Our Annual Moonlight Paddle was held on Thursday August 18, 2016. Coordinated with Angela Lambert, Environmental Educator at Lackawanna State Park.



Thanks to our Members and Donors

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Over the years, we have had many supporters who share our passion for conserving greenspace and connecting communities in our region. We wish to acknowledge the following:

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|--|--|---|

Membership Reply Form

- Yes, I want to become a member of Countryside Conservancy!
- Membership level: Student \$25 Family \$50 Friend \$100 Founder \$150 Patron \$250
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Enclosed is a check for \$_____ payable to Countryside Conservancy

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- I would like to receive information about planned giving.
- I would like to receive information about conserving my land.
- I am interested in volunteering for the Conservancy in the area of _____

As a member, you'll receive our annual newsletter, free admission to our fall Tailgate Picnic, and invitations to other Conservancy events.

Please return this form with your payment in the envelope provided to: Countryside Conservancy
 P.O. Box 55, La Plume, PA 18440 ■ cconserv@epix.net ■ (570) 945-6995 ■ www.countrysideconservancy.org

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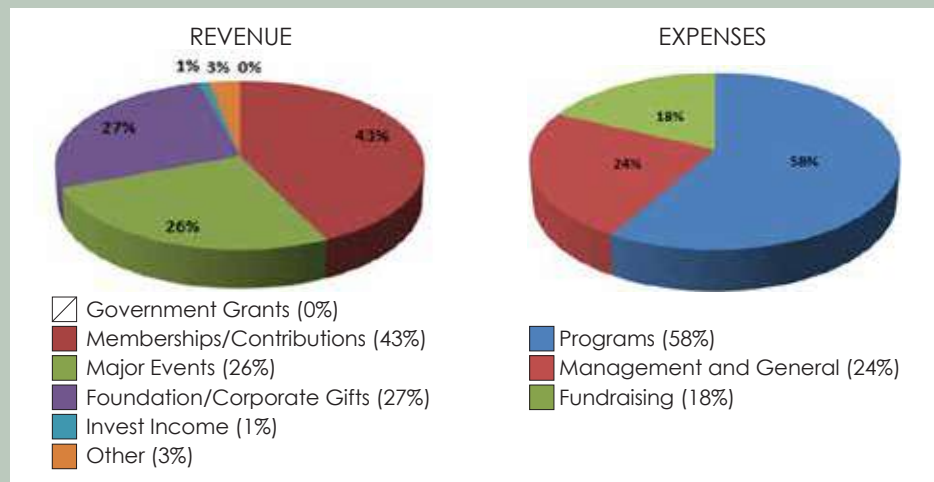
Growth and Sources of Support

In 2016, memberships, appeals, and special donations contributed close to \$110,000 toward Conservancy operations and programs. Our Annual Auction netted over \$61,000 which represents a \$10,000 increase from 2015.

Grants and donations totaling just over \$88,000 from government agencies, private and corporate foundations, and private citizens were received to complete to be applied to the construction of the Factoryville Connector Trail. This connector directly connects Phase 2 of the Trolley Trail, scheduled to be completed in Spring 2017, with the small Wyoming County town of Factoryville. Construction of the connector just began in March 2017. Private grant funders included Overlook Estate Foundation, Factoryville Mens Civic League, Frieder Foundation, Prudential, PNC Foundation, Sordoni Family Foundation, Proctor and Gamble, PEC Pocono Forest & Water Conservation Landscape Mini Grant Program, and Wyoming County United Way .

At year's end 2016, Conservancy assets stood at just over \$2.3 million dollars, almost two-thirds of which are non-liquid assets representing the value of preserved land.

Once again we are asking for your continued financial support of Countryside Conservancy. In 2017 the Conservancy plans to work with the Trolley Trail Committee and State agencies to plan Phase 3 of the Trail. This segment is in La Plume Township and will bring a connection between Phase 1 and Phase 2 closer. Additionally efforts will be made to preserve and conserve key parcels of land in Tunkhannock Creek watershed that has been under discussion for several years. Another exciting auction is planned at the Waverly Country Club for July. Lastly, work will begin on the Conservancy's re-accreditation process by year end.



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Upcoming Events

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Annual Conservancy Meeting and Stewardship Award Presentation

7 p.m., Evans Hall, Keystone College

Hear about the Conservancy's activities over the past year and learn about our plans for the future. Also help celebrate our Stewardship Award recipient! Free and open to the public.

Sunday, May 14, 2017

Edible Landscaping Workshop

2 p.m., Garden Life Outfitters

1273 Country Club Road, Clarks Summit, Pa.

Saturday, June 3, 2017

Wildflower Walk with Jane Frye

10 a.m., Trolley Trails

Meet at the Church of the Epiphany upper parking lot.

Saturday, July 15, 2017

18th Annual Conservancy Auction

6 p.m., Waverly Country Club

Dance the night away with Marko Marcinko's Music for Models and support the Conservancy by bidding on tons of excellent silent and live auction items!

July 17-21, 2017

August 14-18, 2017

Nature Day Camp at Little Rocky Glen

3 p.m., Little Rocky Glen

Join Rebecca Lesko and the Endless Mountains Nature Center for a fun-filled week of outdoor learning and exploring. Go to www.endlessnature.org for more information.

August 4, 2017

Moonlight Paddle

7 p.m., Lackawanna State Park.

To register for the event, and make kayak reservations if you want to use a park kayak, call Bill at (570) 945-6995.

Sunday, September 17, 2017

23rd Annual Tailgate Picnic Potluck

3 p.m., Little Rocky Glen Preserve

Lithia Valley Road, just off of Route 6 in Clinton Township, Wyoming County, from 3 p.m. until dusk. Please bring a dish to share!

Free to Conservancy members and \$10 per car for non-Conservancy members