



LANCASTER

CONSERVANCY

50 YEARS *of* SAVING NATURE

Celebrating

50
YEARS

HOUSE ROCK NATURE PRESERVE

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50 YEARS AGO:

Standing on the Shoulders of Visionaries

The Lancaster Conservancy was founded by anglers, hunters and naturalists who witnessed the rapid development of Lancaster County. The question they faced? How do we hold back the tide of human destruction of our precious land?



BANDING TOGETHER IN 1969, these visionaries decreed that we need to acquire and protect our remaining forests, wetlands, and streams before they are destroyed forever. The premise that “some land is so beautiful, so rare, so natural it should be protected for public benefit” has driven our acquisitions as a land trust to this day.


Inspired by great visionaries the Conservancy stepped up when government stopped using eminent domain to save our wild areas.

For 50 years, we acquired land—an expensive undertaking. Today we are the largest private property owner for public benefit in Central PA. We manage over 6,000 acres, with 40 plus miles of trails and 42 miles of streams in dozens of nature preserves. Our beautiful properties are a gift, enjoyed by thousands of people who can take a walk in woods not more than 10 miles away from any home in Lancaster County.

But a huge challenge with owning public lands is that we have to steward them. This means balancing the impact of people who love to escape into nature with the ecosystems we strive to nurture and protect. We have had to create an army of volunteers and supporters to help care for our natural lands—saving our pollinators, saving our dwindling bird populations, saving nature! Our very future depends on it.

Looking into the Future

The question our founders wrestled with is still the question we face 50 years later. Population explosion in Lancaster and Central PA means we have to accelerate our land protection efforts. In 20 years, Lancaster is

A wooden sign stands in a forest with sunlight filtering through the trees. The sign reads: "TUCQUAN GLEN NATURE PRESERVE AND PYFER NATURE PRESERVE LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVANCY". Below this, a smaller sign says "PRESERVE CLOSED DURING THE WINTER". To the right, a small sign with a map icon says "PENNSYLVANIA RIVER".

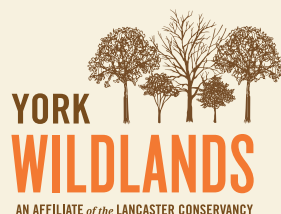
TUCQUAN GLEN NATURE PRESERVE
AND PYFER NATURE PRESERVE
LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVANCY
PRESERVE CLOSED DURING THE WINTER

OUR BEAUTIFUL PROPERTIES ARE A GIFT,
ENJOYED BY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO
CAN TAKE A WALK IN WOODS NOT MORE
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IN LANCASTER COUNTY.

projected to grow by 115,000 people, causing another 25,000 acres to be lost to development. We need to step up now to save everything we can.

By doubling down on acquiring land and expanding our existing preserves we will knit the land in the Susquehanna Riverlands into a destination worthy of national recognition.

To accomplish this we are launching an affiliate called York Wildlands. This will allow us to engage support in York to channel resources and land into our effort to preserve natural lands along the Susquehanna.



Over time some issues do change. Today we are faced with issues like clean water and climate change that were not the driving force for conservation 50 years ago.

The Chesapeake Bay cleanup requires us to focus on our impaired waterways. When we save our wooded hills and mountains, we also save our streams. Water Week has become a critical way to expand our partnerships and bring hundreds of new people into the movement to save the wild lands we love.

Climate change pushes all of us to act locally, saving trees and changing behavior to help save our planet. Educating the next generation is an important part of the solution. Susquehanna Riverlands Research and Education Center at Climbers Run brings students and adults together to learn about the importance of our natural lands.

Our efforts may feel like we've put our fingers in the dike of population growth and environmental destruction, but if we can save nature for future generations and protect our remaining natural landscapes along the Susquehanna and in the Highlands, our efforts will restore a balance to our lands.

Thank you,

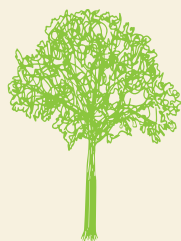
Phil Wenger, *President and CEO*





Saving Natural Lands

At the Conservancy, our job is to find, fund, preserve, and maintain natural lands in Lancaster and York Counties so that community members and visitors can enjoy them for years to come.



140 acres

of natural lands,
worth more than

\$1.3 million

were acquired in 2018.

1,331 acres

of natural lands are
slated for protection
in 2019.

Land protection

In 2018, we acquired new lands and moved various projects closer to completion:

- ▶ An agreement to acquire and preserve the Boy Scouts' 246 acre Wizard Ranch property in Hellam Township
- ▶ Acquisition of four acre Pole Island in the Susquehanna River
- ▶ Acquisition of three additional properties in the Susquehanna Riverlands

Partnerships, Grants and Support

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) awarded the Conservancy with \$638,800 in grants to protect 126 acres within the Susquehanna Riverlands and Pennsylvania Highlands. Another \$280,000 in private foundation grants moved us closer to our goal of preserving 1,000 acres in Hellam Hills Nature Preserve. Ongoing partnership with Brookfield Renewable saw the final steps completed in preparation for the donation of 545 acres of beautiful utility lands to the Conservancy for permanent preservation. We also facilitated an agreement between our sister organization Natural Lands, the Game Commission, and the Boy Scouts to protect hundreds of acres of forest—part of Camp Mack—in the nationally-recognized Highlands region.

Introducing Lancaster-York Natural Area Scoring (LYNAS)

In 2018, the Conservancy created an innovative, data-driven model to update our land protection priorities. Lancaster-York Natural Area Scoring (LYNAS) uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to automatically produce a score of 1-100 for any tax parcels in Lancaster County and the Susquehanna River-lands of York County, reflecting our focus on large landscapes.



2018 ACQUISITIONS

104-acre addition to Hellam Hills

Hellam Township, York County

The third tract identified in the Hellam Hills project consists of 104 acres that are entirely forested. The Conservancy worked with the Mason-Dixon Trail System to re-route the Mason-Dixon Trail, moving it off narrow roads and onto public nature preserves. **With gentle slopes, this tract will be fantastic for recreationists—especially once we incorporate an accessible trail and parking.**

FUNDING PARTNERS: THE KINSLEY FOUNDATION; PA DCNR; BROOKFIELD RENEWABLE

26-acre addition to Tucquan Glen

Martic Township, Lancaster County

This tract fills a critical gap at Tucquan Glen Nature Preserve, expanding its footprint to 401 acres. **The land supports sensitive habitat and was at risk for development and timbering.**

The property hosts two tributaries to Tucquan Glen and approximately eight acres of meadows that were previously managed for sustainable agriculture.

FUNDING PARTNERS: PA DCNR; J. MICHAEL FLANAGAN, BOARD MEMBER; PARTIAL DONATION FROM OWNER; WILLIS AND ELSIE SHENK FOUNDATION

6-acre addition to Hellam Hills

Hellam Township, York County

Located along the Susquehanna River, this property is situated on a rocky cliff that provides the perfect habitat for bats. **Previously threatened by development, the land provides core habitat and supporting landscape for the Wildcat Run Gorge Natural Heritage Area.** It also has a narrow strip of Susquehanna River frontage with potential for river access or viewing.


FUNDING PARTNERS: PENNS WOODS FUND

4-acre island in Susquehanna River

Conoy Township, Lancaster County

Pole Island represents the Conservancy's first foray into island acquisition. The shallow island is included within the Brunner (Lows) Island Natural Heritage Area, **featuring soft grass beds and bedrock riffles (shallow places where water runs quickly and is agitated by rocks).**

FUNDING PARTNERS: CONOY TOWNSHIP; PENN WOODS FUND

A person with long reddish-brown hair, wearing a dark red sweater and black pants, stands on a large, weathered fallen log. They are looking down at something in their hands. The log is positioned over a small stream with white water rapids. The background is a dense forest with tall, thin trees and foliage in various shades of autumn, including yellow, orange, and green. The lighting is soft, suggesting an overcast day.

WILDNESS REMINDS US
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE
HUMAN, WHAT WE ARE
CONNECTED TO RATHER
THAN SEPARATE FROM.

—Terry Tempest Williams



Caring for Nature

The Conservancy manages 46 nature preserves and 69 conservation easements—6,264 acres in total. Our preserves are managed to create habitat for animals, to protect plants and trees, and to provide public access to nature.



6,264

acres of natural land
protected since 1969

46

nature preserves

69

conservation
easements

40+

miles of trails

Integrated Land Management Plan

Our Stewardship Team is consistently balancing routine maintenance needs (ensuring ecosystem health through habitat restoration and invasive species removal) with infrastructure needs in order to provide a variety of recreation opportunities such as trails for hiking and access for hunting. To better address the needs of Conservancy lands, the Stewardship Team is developing an innovative Integrated Land Management Plan that will help to broaden our perspective, refine our scope, and address the difference between preserves' needs and Conservancy resources. By listening and responding to the natural and contextual landscapes that surrounds us, the Conservancy will be better prepared to continue our role of preserving vital natural lands.

The Conservancy continued to add professional staff over the past three years, including a Preserves Manager; a GIS Specialist/Project Manager; and a seasonal Land Steward. Other seasonal positions provide Interpretive Ranger services and paid summer-experience Land Steward opportunities for conservation-oriented college students. The Stewardship Program will continue to grow in 2019 to meet additional needs with a newly-created professional Forester position.



NATURE ISN'T A PLACE YOU VISIT.
IT IS HOME.

— GARY SNYDER

PHOTO: MICHELLE JOHNSEN





Restoring Habitat

The black locust coppice groves at Wilton Meadows, Falmouth Forest Garden at the Conoy Wetlands, and Pollinator Park at Kellys Run Nature Preserve are all examples of land management that incorporates native plants, which provide food and shelter, to benefit birds, bees, butterflies, and other insects that perform essential pollination services.

Key Stewardship Highlights

- ▶ Prepared and launched the black locust coppice groves at Wilton Meadows Nature Preserve as a keystone parcel in the Susquehanna Riverlands of York County, directly connecting Wrightsville with its surrounding natural landscape via the Mason-Dixon Trail. With its scenic meadow views and coppice groves, Wilton Meadows will help distinguish Wrightsville as a river town and a trail town.
- ▶ Established Falmouth Forest Garden at the Conoy Wetlands Nature Preserve—a trailside forest garden of perennial, native, crop-producing plant species designed to restore five acres of fallow Susquehanna River floodplain. Thanks to assistance from the Lancaster County Community Foundation and the Rotary Club of Lancaster, hundreds of visitors to the multi-modal trail (including those with limited mobility) will experience the bountiful garden of our region's native flora through fruit, nuts, and herbs including pawpaws, persimmons, black walnuts, and serviceberries.
- ▶ Completed the initial phase of a 14-acre meadow at the Pollinator Park at Kellys Run Nature Preserve (formerly known as Holtwood Park). Supported by Bayer's Bee Care Program, New Belgium Brewing Company, PPL Electric Utilities, National Wildlife Federation, Scouts, Willis and Elsie Shenk Foundation, and Holtwood residents Joe Fields and Jonathan Smucker (of Smucker's Fields of Honey), the Pollinator Park is directly addressing the decline of pollinator friendly habitat through an effort to reuse and revitalize an abandoned community park.
- ▶ Developed Emergency Response Plans and collaborated with first responders in a search and rescue training at the Welsh Mountain Nature Preserve.
- ▶ Implemented wayfinding and mile-marker signage across the six nature preserves that are in the Riverhills Conservation Area.



Providing wild and forested lands and clean waterways for our community, *forever.*



6,264 acres
of natural lands protected

40+ miles
of trails preserved



**42 miles of rivers,
streams and creeks
protected**



MICHELLE JOHNSEN

50 YEARS of
Engaging and
Educating our Community

3,000+ species
documented at
Conservancy preserves



MICHELLE JOHNSEN

Celebrating

50
YEARS



1.6 million trees
protected

50 YEARS of
Working together to
keep our lands clean
and protected



MICHELLE JOHNSEN

Engaging our Community

The Conservancy accomplished an astounding amount of work in 2018, thanks to generous supporters, volunteers, and community partners. Partnerships expanded our collective impact to all ages at Climbers Run Nature Preserve and beyond.



620 volunteers

donated

3,608 hours

on

18 preserves.

900+ hours

completed by

18 trainees

in partnership with
the Pennsylvania Master
Naturalist Program in
2018.

The Conservancy has partnered with NorthBay and the School District of Lancaster, thanks to a \$750,310 NOAA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Education and Training grant that will help us reach over 2,700 students and teachers over the next three years.

With the completion of the Climbers Run Conservation and Management Plan funded by the PA DCNR and the Thomas and Georgina Russo Family Foundation, the Conservancy will continue improvements to the preserve and center related to access, outdoor restroom facilities, pollinators, native habitat restoration and a natural playground.

Key highlights:

- ▶ More than 30 community partners led learning activities about trails, wildlife research, natural sciences, edible plants, pollinators, and native plants at Climbers Run Nature Preserve, serving as the Conservancy's community hub in southern Lancaster County.
- ▶ Through community driven partnership events and activities, we engaged more than 3,660 people eager to learn about saving habitat, wildlife, and natural areas for hiking and exploration.



Water Week

In its second year, Lancaster Water Week continued to build momentum toward clean streams and rivers in Lancaster County.

With over 4,500 people attending one of 22 events, the Conservancy and our partners gave out over 450 native trees and removed five and a half tons of refuse from the Conestoga River.

Our number one action step for 2018 was 'Create Habitat' and homeowners were encouraged to identify and remove aggressive invasive plants on their properties. Building native habitat is the quickest way to support wildlife and intercept and clean polluted water before it reaches our streams.

2017 & 2018 Water Week Impact

- ▶ \$80,000 Awarded through Water Week Grants
- ▶ 2,100 Riparian Trees Planted
- ▶ 5,876 People Attended Water Week Events
- ▶ 7 ½ Tons of Refuse Removed from Conestoga River
- ▶ 825 Native Trees Distributed
- ▶ 200 Students Educated
- ▶ 28 New Stream Monitoring sites



WATER CONNECTS US ALL!

Water Week's success is only possible through many partnerships. Our goal is streams and rivers that are fishable, swimmable, and drinkable. We need your help.



► Thanks to environmental education partners including NorthBay, Boy Scouts of America, Donegal Trout Unlimited, PA Master Naturalist, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, we reached 653 students from the School District of Lancaster, Penn Manor, Solanco, Eastern Lancaster County, and local and regional youth organizations serving elementary through high school students.

► Lancaster Tree Tenders is a collaborative effort of the Conservancy, the City of Lancaster and the Lancaster City Alliance whose goal is to enhance Lancaster's urban forest by empowering neighborhoods to plant and care for trees. This is possible through the help of residents, volunteers, and donors including the Rotary Club of Lancaster, Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster, and the Sierra Club.



Knitting Fragments into a Landscape

The Conservancy leads the **Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation Landscape**. Funded by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR), we bring together multiple partners including the Counties of York and Lancaster, Susquehanna Heritage, PA DCNR and the National Park Service. The landscape is a ribbon of land with river vistas, rocky cliffs and tumbling waterfalls. It hosts exquisite habitat for native plants while offering exceptional places to immerse oneself in nature along the lower Susquehanna.

In 2019 we are focusing our efforts and vision to protect more tracts along the Susquehanna, creating new trail connections for hiking and recreation and growing a strong brand for the Susquehanna Riverlands.

OUR GOAL IS TO WEAVE

6 county parks

2 state parks

public utility lands

5 major trail systems

WITH OUR

31 nature preserves

INTO ONE DESTINATION:

The Susquehanna Riverlands.

Thank You to our 2018 Donors

For a full list of 2018 donors, please visit www.lancasterconservancy.org/listofdonors

\$50,000 +

Brookfield Renewable
The Campbell Foundation
Clark Associates Charitable
Foundation
The Kinsley Foundation
Pennsylvania Department of
Conservation
and Natural Resources
Pine Tree Conservation Society Inc.
J. William Warehime Foundation

\$25,000-\$49,999

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\$10,000-\$24,999

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\$5,000-\$9,999

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\$2,500-\$4,999

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\$1,000-\$2,499

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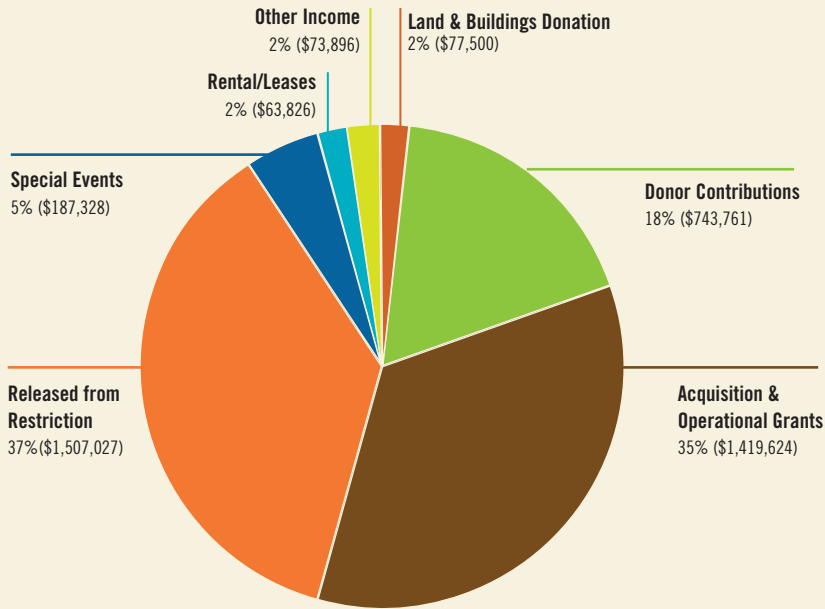
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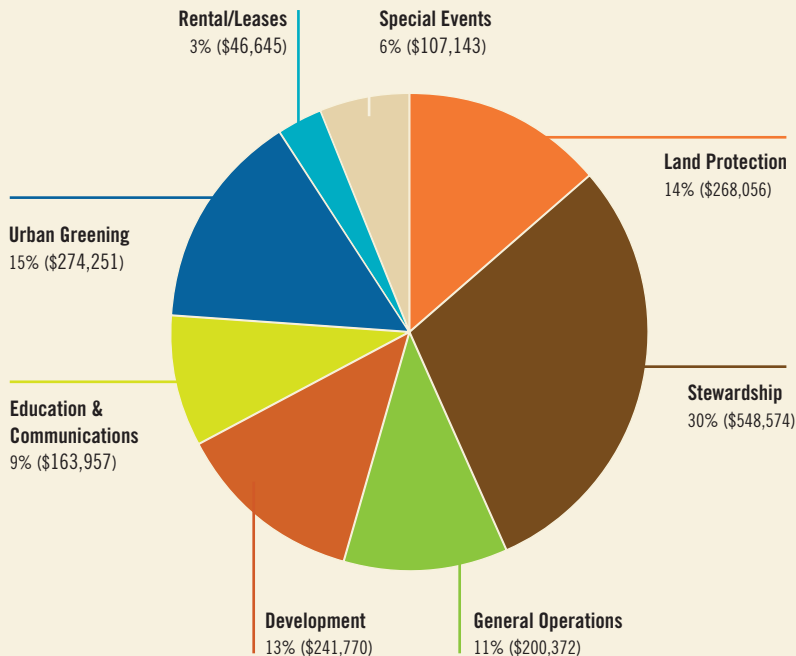
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 Toby Richards
 Rock Litz
 Rohrer's Quarry
 Eudora Roseman
 Kerry Sacco
 Donald Sanders
 Schroeder Gardens
 Fritz Schroeder Sr.
 Patricia Shenk
 Shirk's Bike Shop
 Shumaker PTD
 Shari Sikora
 Smuckers Fields of Honey
 Snyder & Mylin Septic Services
 Special Occasions/Queen Street
 Linens
 St. Boniface Brewers
 Stockyard Inn
 Stone Fly Guides
 Suko Thai
 Taj Mahal
 Tellus 361
 Tiger's Eye
 Turkey Hill Dairy Inc.
 Two Dudes Painting
 Ware Center of Millersville
 University
 Philip Wenger and Steven Dinnocenti
 Greg and Vicki Wilson
 John Wissler
 Wohlsen Construction Company
 Wood Designs by Ken Neumann
 Mark Workman
 Boni Ziegler

2018 REVENUE: \$4,072,962



2018 EXPENSES \$1,850,768





117 S. West End Avenue
Lancaster, PA 17603
www.lancasterconservancy.org

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Providing wild and forested lands
and clean waterways for our
community, forever.