

# IMPACT REPORT 2022



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Every conservation story told within these pages is made possible thanks to donors like you.



What a year! 2022 has delivered historic legislation on climate action in Pennsylvania and Delaware and at the federal level. In just 12 months, we've seen significant climate action that will go a long way toward achieving TNC's 2030 goals: driving down emissions, protecting our lands and waters, building strong communities, and enhancing equitable outcomes. These recent victories are worth celebrating, and your support makes our local-to-global work possible. Thank you!

Of course, there is much more to be done. We are facing the biggest, most complex challenges of our lives. And that calls for our biggest, most ambitious plans. Here in Pennsylvania and Delaware, we're developing creative approaches to conservation and implementing best practices to ensure that we meet the moment in order to address the environmental challenges before us. We are hard at work incorporating our most recent set of strategic initiatives, including an important focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. We're prioritizing community outreach, reaching across aisles, and forging long-term partnerships so that we can make durable, lasting progress in support of TNC's 2030 goals.

This year's report is full of exciting highlights: the completion of our green stormwater infrastructure project at the Holmesburg Baptist Church in Northeast

Philadelphia; successful reforestation efforts along the Kittatinny Ridge in the Appalachians; big state policy wins in Harrisburg and Dover; a first-ever leadership hire for Delaware's Oceans and Coasts program; and so much more. I often like to highlight the importance of resiliency—both within ourselves and our natural spaces—and the sheer breadth and scope of our recent work demonstrates that our chapter has emerged from these two pandemic-impacted years stronger than ever before.

From managing our forests to improving our water quality to improving green infrastructure in our cities, TNC's science-based approach is made possible through the tireless efforts of our staff, our volunteers, our partners, our dedicated Board of Trustees, and you. Your commitment to The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania & Delaware is a tangible investment for today and a legacy for future generations.

Please join us as we create a stronger tomorrow together.

Yours in Conservation,

Lori Brennan, Executive Director

ON THE COVER Oak leaves with sunshine at Milford Neck Preserve © John Hinkson/TNC  
THIS PAGE Lori Brennan © Samantha Aquila  
OPPOSITE PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM Bog turtle survey © Matt Kane/TNC; Pitcher plant flowers © Matt Kane/TNC INSET Rich Aneser  
Courtesy Rich Aneser

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## FROM THE **BOARD CHAIR**



2022 has been an eventful and important year for conservation here in Pennsylvania and Delaware. Even as our lands and waters continue to face significant challenges—many of which are the direct result of climate change—I'm optimistic that we can come together and find innovative solutions. Like you, I'm passionate about this work, and your support for our work grows more essential each day.

This year, we've seen tremendous progress within our chapter. Our Board of Trustees is becoming more diverse in its expertise and composition in order to represent our constituents across our area. As a group, we are committed to implementing the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice into our work. We've also welcomed new staff members to the team, all of whom are already making a big impact.

I've been inspired by the ongoing work at Cove Mountain, where a 1,200-acre expansion in 2021 has unlocked new opportunities for public education and habitat restoration along a critical migratory corridor in the Appalachians. We also expanded our Delaware Bayshore program in a big way when we hired our first-ever Director of Oceans and Coasts, who is helping us build out tools for climate resiliency along our low-lying beaches and wetlands. Our science-based management team remains second to none in preserving natural spaces for future generations.

Finally, I'm heartened by this year's historic policy wins in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and at the national level. These legislative achievements will bring much-needed resources for climate infrastructure and allow us to make faster progress on longstanding environmental priorities in order to meet our organization's 2030 goals. Governments, financial markets, and public corporations are increasingly driving progress for conservation. These accomplishments reflect many years of hard work and perseverance from our chapter and TNC's global team. There is still much more that can and should be done, and the momentum is building!

Most of all, I'm thankful to you and all of our supporters across our two states who are committing their time, talent, and treasure to make our communities and our world a better and more equitable place.

Rich Aneser, Chairman  
Pennsylvania & Delaware Board of Trustees

Lake Erie

P E N N S Y L



## As seen on Instagram

Our social media channels were more popular than ever this year, featuring delightful photography and garnering terrific public engagement. Check out a few of our top performing posts and be sure to follow us on Instagram: @conserve\_pa and @nature\_delaware.

TOP CLOCKWISE Bear tracks seen in the snow on the trail at the Tannersville Cranberry Bog © Elizabeth Hanson/TNC; Baltimore checkerspot butterfly at Cherry Valley © George Gress/TNC; A yellow crested orchid was observed for the first time at our Pemberton Forest Preserve after tree thinning reduced excess vegetation and allowed more light to reach the forest floor. © Natasha Whetzel/TNC; A box turtle dines on fungi at Cove Mountain Preserve. © Elizabeth Hanson/TNC

Harrisburg

Philadelphia

Wilmington

Dover

DELAWARE

Chesapeake Bay

Delaware Bay

Atlantic Ocean

### KEY

- TNC nature preserves
- ★ TNC public access preserves

4

2

1

3



1

## Rare Butterfly Sighting in Delaware

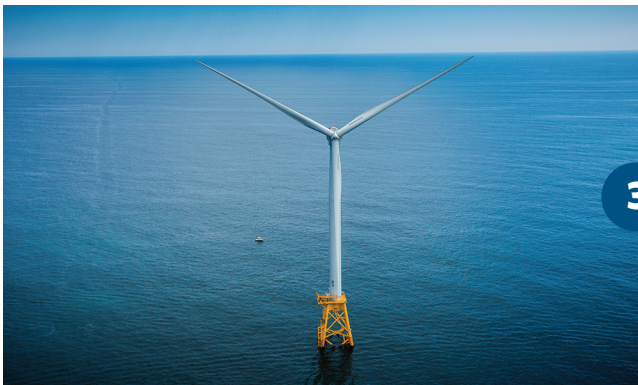
This spring, a Hessel's hairstreak butterfly (*Mitoura hesseli*) was observed on a TNC property in southern Delaware. Dr. Christopher "Kitt" Heckscher of Delaware State University confirmed the find on the Delmarva peninsula—the first in 27 years. This tiny green, black, and white butterfly has a wingspan of only one inch and spends much of its time near the tops of Atlantic white cedar trees, its host plant. It is on Delaware's endangered species list.



2

## Stormwater Management Initiative Launches

This spring, we launched the Resilient Communities Stormwater Initiative (RCSI) to manage stormwater runoff and advance community climate resilience goals in historically underserved neighborhoods using green stormwater infrastructure. In partnership with the Academy of Natural Sciences and Clean Water Action, the Initiative kicked off a series of community workshops that will take place across six Philadelphia neighborhoods. The workshops will gather input from residents on where green infrastructure can best mitigate climate impacts such as heat islands and flooding. The focal neighborhoods were selected from a spatial analysis conducted in 2021 in partnership with the Academy of Natural Sciences. The feedback will assist RCSI partners with project siting and ensure that projects have high climate adaptation benefits for people while also delivering water quality benefits.



3

## A Wind Win for Delaware

Every year, TNC's global office offers grant opportunities to local chapters for clean energy work. In 2022, Delaware applied for the first time ever and received \$60,000 to gather data on public opinions about wind power and then develop a communications strategy to increase support. The state is well-positioned to become a clean energy wind power hub in the Mid-Atlantic. Working with partners, TNC will design and implement a statewide poll and focus groups targeting diverse Delaware audiences. Later, the group will launch a communications toolkit complete with a webpage, fact sheets, and social media campaigns, as well as public events featuring elected officials and our partners.



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## Trustee Carol Collier Honored

PA/DE Trustee Carol Collier was recently honored with the Woman of Lifetime Achievement in Conservation award from PennFuture. With her tremendous accomplishments and tireless dedication to the field of conservation, the honor is well deserved. Congratulations, Carol!



# Appalachian Forests

Creating resilient and connected forests that support biodiversity and provide lasting benefits for both nature and humans



Scan this QR code to watch a video about this project at Cove Mountain.

## Ridgetop Revival at Cove Mountain

Last year with the support of our donors, we closed on a land deal to significantly expand the Hamer Woodlands at Cove Mountain Preserve. The purchase of 1,200 acres adjacent to the existing preserve quadrupled its size and—most importantly—filled a gap between existing conservation lands, creating a 14-mile protected stretch along the ridge.

Due to its north/south orientation, the 185-mile Kittatinny Ridge landscape serves as a critical climate refuge for species that are shifting their ranges north and upslope to find more hospitable conditions. The Hamer Woodlands at Cove Mountain sit along one of the premier raptor migration corridors in the northeast, and even the world. Tens of thousands of hawks, eagles, and falcons pass through each year alongside other notable species such as ruby-throated hummingbirds and monarch butterflies.

One major threat: Invasive species, which are degrading the forest cover and threatening to create a weak link in the chain of migratory habitat, pose a major threat. To combat this, recently TNC partnered with Audubon Mid-Atlantic on a proactive restoration project.

The restoration project began by tackling invasives such as Tree of heaven, a rapidly growing species that is native to China. The felled trees were left onsite to naturally decompose and add organic material to the forest floor over time. Next, the team focused on two other highly disruptive plants that had moved into the area: Japanese stilt grass and mile-a-minute. A selective herbicide targeted the invaders and will prevent their seeds from germinating in the next growing season.

Forests are dynamic, ever-changing places. Surrounded by much more mature stands of hardwood forest, this restored section of ridgetop in the Hamer Woodlands at Cove Mountain Preserve—and the entire Kittatinny Ridge of which it is a part—will continue to provide life-sustaining benefits to both people and nature in the decades and centuries ahead.

## Kittatinny Ridge Land Protection

In our ongoing efforts to protect an additional 15,000 acres of lands across the 185-mile-long Kittatinny Ridge landscape in Pennsylvania by 2025, TNC helped protect a 402-acre parcel in south-central Pennsylvania. The land provides more than three miles of ridge top habitat for migrating birds and wildlife including the Ruffed grouse, Pennsylvania's state bird. The land will be transferred to the Bureau of Forestry and become part of Buchanan State Forest, which will use the property to extend recreation access for the public.



## New Faces in Land Protection

Our chapter is growing fast. This year, we welcomed several new team members to increase our conservation capacity and help us achieve our strategic goals.

Our new Allegheny Front Land Protection Manager **Denny Nurkiewicz** will conduct landowner outreach, build partnerships, and oversee research in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia within the Allegheny Front Focal Landscape in the Central Appalachians. **Nicole Wooten** recently came aboard as our new Kittatinny Ridge land protection manager, working closely with the Pennsylvania Game Commission, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, local land trusts, and landowners to protect critical climate-resilient lands.

**Tyler Fisk**, Land Protection Program Specialist, will support legal reviews of real estate acquisition projects as well as track grants and contracts and manage our portfolio of conserved lands.

Finally, **Jake Leizear** joined us this summer as our new conservation GIS Specialist, supporting Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia with mapping, data management, and analysis.

### Family Forest Carbon Program Grows

As of August 1, 2022, the Family Forest Carbon Program (FFCP) has enrolled 20,310 acres across 130 properties in Pennsylvania. Developed by the American Forest Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, the FFCP enables family forest owners to access climate finance from carbon markets, empowering them to help address climate change while earning income from their land.

# Delaware River & Bay

Conserving the diverse waterways of Pennsylvania and Delaware to support biodiversity and build resilience against climate change



## Welcoming Our New Oceans and Coasts Director

Will Helt joined our team this year as our first Oceans and Coasts director. He most recently worked for TNC in Rhode Island, where he led coastal resiliency and marine science projects in the Ocean State.

Helt will collaborate with our partners to improve the climate resilience of coastal habitats and natural communities along the Delaware Bayshore and to help human communities adapt to the impacts of sea level rise. Delaware is the

home to iconic coastlines, important habitats, and almost 300,000 acres of wetlands. It is also struggling with the challenges of sea-level rise, a changing climate, and more intense storm events.

“I look forward to hearing the concerns of Delaware residents in terms of sea level rise and storms, and I’m excited to explore natural solutions that benefit both the residents and the environment,” Helt says.



## A Migratory Fish Restoration

The Delaware River was once home to some of the greatest migratory fish runs on the Atlantic Coast, but today the population of American shad is only 1 to 3 percent of its historic level. Earlier this year, TNC developed a Restoration Roadmap for American Shad, Alewife, and Blueback Herring in the Delaware River Basin. The report identifies 45 priority barriers on 13 tributaries across the basin to focus restoration efforts and highlights key actions to significantly improve fish passage and restore habitat.



Scan this QR code to read our Story Map “Tipping the Scales” with accompanying photos.







## A Mindful Approach to Nature

Saada Wing returned to our Stream Stewards program in Wilmington this summer as our Alliance for Watershed Education Fellow, developing new educational curricula focused on the mental health benefits of spending time in nature.

“I hope to reach the hearts and minds of my generation, to take better care of what Earth has given us, that this is our planet, and we must love it,” she said. “I would love for people my age to understand the importance of our planet and continue to spread the change we all wish to see.”

Launched in 2016, the Stream Stewards educational program took a big leap forward this year by hosting 60 students in grades K-6 for summer camp programs in First State National Historical Park and incorporating Saada’s new teaching tools. Stream Stewards is a partnership between TNC, the National Park Service, and Stroud Water Research Center, with funding from the William Penn Foundation.



Scan this QR code to watch a video about Stream Stewards and Youth Engagement.

## Holmesburg Stormwater Project Honored

In April, the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia awarded its highest honor of the year to our green stormwater infrastructure project at the Holmesburg Baptist Church in Northeast Philadelphia. The work—completed in partnership with the City of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Water Department, and design firm AKRF—will capture an estimated 3.5 million gallons of stormwater each year, mitigating harmful runoff into Pennypack Creek and the Delaware River and helping to make our urban waterways cleaner for both nature and people. The project was made possible by a contribution from the William Penn Foundation and private donors.





# Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Protecting lands, waters, and people along this critical watershed serving 18 million people across six states



## Farmer Outreach Trains the Trainers

As part of the PA 4R Alliance, TNC has helped facilitate a series of trainings for agricultural advisors. Focused on key 4R principles (right source, right rate, right time, and right place), the training will provide guidance on ways to keep nutrients on fields and out of our waterways. The kick-off session held earlier this year was a success with over a dozen agricultural advisors in attendance. Each of the participants in turn committed to working with 10 farmers to train them on 4R best practices.

In addition, we launched a program to help individual farms in Pennsylvania and on the Delmarva peninsula improve their nitrogen efficiency and timing of applications in manure and cover crop systems. The pilot, which rolled out to 25,000 acres, provides financial cost-share incentives and technical assistance to farmers.



## Moo-ving Forward on Emissions

TNC and agribusiness partners are developing a dairy-focused framework tailored to the Chesapeake Bay region. The goal is to increase the implementation of practices that improve water quality, reduce/mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and improve dairy farmer profitability in Pennsylvania. Currently, there are 5,430 dairy farms in Pennsylvania, representing 15.9 percent of the nationwide total.

# Climate, Energy & Policy

Pennsylvania remains one of the top contributing states to climate change pollution, while Delaware's low-lying land makes it particularly susceptible to inundation from sea level rise. Changes to our public policy are critical to addressing these problems. In 2022, our staff, members, and volunteers advocated for historic investments in conservation and transformative climate policies.



## A Keystone Win for Pennsylvania Conservation

In July, the Pennsylvania General Assembly approved the largest allocation for conservation and clean water in over 15 years as part of the state budget. It includes more than \$640 million for conservation, with \$100 million for the Outdoor Recreation fund (formerly called Growing Greener). The budget also significantly invests in water quality with \$220 million for a new Clean Streams Fund to support the efforts of Pennsylvania farmers to reduce water pollution.

## Conservation Investments for the First State

Following up on a historic \$50 million clean water investment in FY 2022, Delaware's General Assembly approved investments in open space funding. These included; \$20 million in agricultural lands preservation; \$66 million in state park infrastructure, shoreline, waterways, trails and pathways; and, investments in wetland management, and stormwater control.

# CLIMATE, ENERGY & POLICY



## Tackling Climate Change & Clean Energy

Climate and clean energy were also in our sights this year as we continued to push for more aggressive action to tackle climate change by supporting policies to accelerate the deployment of clean energy (including wind and solar power) and electric vehicles, as well as supporting limits on emissions from power plants. We also expanded our advocacy to connect with underserved communities and supported new policies to reduce air and water pollution in overburdened neighborhoods.



### ONLINE

Learn more about our work  
[nature.org/PAclimate](https://www.nature.org/PAclimate)



## Federal Wins in Pennsylvania and Delaware

Early in the year, funding from the 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) started to be released to communities. The bipartisan IIJA is helping to rebuild America's roads, bridges, and rails with an eye toward climate resiliency by creating new clean energy opportunities, expanding access to clean drinking water, addressing flooding and extreme weather events, and investing in communities that have too often been left behind. Funding will be spread over five years and vary by state based upon size and number of projects. To date, Pennsylvania has announced \$5.2 billion and Delaware has announced \$500 million in IIJA- funded projects.

Another big legislative win made headlines worldwide this summer: the U.S. Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in August. The bill puts the nation on track to reduce emissions by 40 percent by 2030. The IRA legislation invests about \$370 billion in clean energy over the next 10 years across all sectors of the economy, from transportation to power to industry. It also includes a \$25-billion investment in a range of agricultural and forest-focused natural climate solutions that harness nature's ability to revitalize our air, land, and water.

## County-Level Engagement in Delaware

As the state with the lowest mean elevation in the country, Delaware faces significant challenges from climate change and rising waters. The state's three counties directly influence how climate change will impact human and natural communities with their land use and planning decisions. For the first time in many years, TNC engaged on the county level advocating for increased waterway and habitat protections through buffers, planning that addressed flooding and water quality, and permitting processes that supported the expansion of solar power.

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As a father, I get to see nature through the eyes of my two boys as they experience its magnificence for the first time. My wife and I are looking forward to revisiting our favorite areas with them and exploring new ones, too. I appreciate TNC's non-partisan adherence to science, which informs the actions we can all take to preserve these spaces.

**Neil D. Shah,**  
Volunteer Advisor for TNC in PA/DE

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## First State Celebrates First Conservation Day

Earlier this year, the Delaware Land Protection Coalition—of which TNC is a founding member—hosted the first ever Conservation Day at Legislative Hall in Dover. Coalition members met with General Assembly members to seek additional funding for open space for the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. The legislature later approved a \$10 million increase in allocations for 2023, doubling the previous amount for a total of \$20 million.

## Internship in Action

This summer, Kaelyn Kobosko served as the TNC Delaware Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) communication, implementation and strategy intern, a position sponsored by the Delaware Sea Grant College Program with funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. She conducted research on how and when communities may access IIJA funding and helped develop a strategy to encourage the funding be spent on climate mitigation and resilience while addressing the needs of underserved communities.

“This internship has given me the opportunity to gain valuable skills in policy and communication strategies,” says Kaelyn.

Kaelyn is in her junior year at Hood College in Frederick, MD. She is majoring in Sustainability Studies with minors in Biology and Economics.



# Stewardship & Management

When TNC acquires a parcel of land, we commit both legally and ethically to steward that land. The chapter currently manages more than 74,000 acres across 31 nature preserves and 46 conservation easements in Pennsylvania and Delaware. Of those 31 nature preserves, 14 are open for public recreation, where our stewardship actions not only enhance the visitor experience but also place public safety as a top priority. Our preserves also provide engagement opportunities for hundreds of dedicated volunteers. Whether it's helping build new trails, removing invasive vegetation, or picking up trash, our volunteers are a huge asset to help us accomplish tasks both big and small.



## Bog Cleanup Highlights Restoration Efforts

In early spring, TNC staff—along with members of the chapter's board of trustees, students from the University of Maryland Terrapin Ecology Club, and long-time TNC volunteers—spent 10 days working on a quarter-acre of the Tannersville Cranberry Bog to restore and monitor vegetation changes. The group cut debris with chainsaws, lopped off smaller brush and limbs, and dragged cut material to the boardwalk where the brush was fed into a chipper and used as mulch on upland trails.

Reducing vegetation in this section of the bog will allow native plant species that require more sun or disturbance, many of which have not been observed for years, to return to this unique ecosystem. TNC will continue to monitor progress via our partners at the Monroe County Conservation District and the Kettle Creek Environmental Education Center, who are our regular eyes and ears throughout the year. We are already planning to do more bog restoration projects in 2023.



## Fired up for Prescribed Burning

At TNC, partnerships help us achieve our goals at scale. This is particularly true when it comes to prescribed burning. Not only do TNC staff members work across state lines to assist on prescribed burns, but we also regularly work with government agencies and other nonprofits to support training opportunities and to assist with burns on public and non-TNC lands. Returning fire to the landscape at an impactful scale will only be possible if we expand educational and training opportunities to our conservation partners.

To that end, we were thrilled to receive a Conservation Innovation Grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop a Certified Prescribed Burn Manager program for Pennsylvania. TNC will lead the grant, working closely with NRCS, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the PA Game Commission to develop the program.



### ONLINE

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Learn more about our restoration projects at [nature.org/PADERestoration](https://www.nature.org/PADERestoration)



## New Stewardship Staff

This year, we welcomed several new stewardship staff members to our team, helping to increase our conservation capacity and achieve our strategic goals.

Land Steward and Fire Specialist **Stephen Ruswick** will manage our Pennsylvania preserves to increase recreational opportunities, improve resilience, and enhance habitats for threatened fire-adapted flora and fauna. **Jacob McDaniel** came aboard in August as our new land steward in Delaware; he brings previous TNC experience working as part of the Sandhills Burn Crew in North Carolina.

## STEWARDSHIP & MANAGEMENT



### Biodiversity Thriving in Ponders Tract

At the Ponders Tract of Delaware’s Pemberton Forest Preserve, carefully planned timber harvests and prescribed burns are helping natural mixed pine and hardwood forests return. Since 2017, these low-intensity fires have knocked back fire-sensitive species such as red maple and sweetgum and reduced the number of pine saplings growing in the understory, allowing more sunlight to reach the forest floor. The increased sunlight, paired with the burning of the underbrush, helps grasses, forbs, and wildflowers return—including many species that were rarely seen prior to the burns.

After a prescribed burn, blueberry and huckleberry bushes quickly regrow from the blackened forest floor and provide fruits for birds like turkeys and thrushes.

“This land has come a long way since TNC acquired it nearly 20 years ago,” says TNC’s Delaware Stewardship Manager Natasha Whetzel. “It has been especially rewarding to see the beneficial impacts of fire after it had been absent on this land for so long.”

LEFT After years of thinning and prescribed burns, the forest is now much healthier. © John Hinkson/TNC MIDDLE TOP TO BOTTOM Dense forest at Ponders Tract prior to thinning and burns. © John Hinkson/TNC; Dantana major - Azalea caterpillars © Natasha Whetzel/TNC RIGHT TOP TO BOTTOM Pink lady slippers bloom weeks after a prescribed burn © Natasha Whetzel/TNC; Baptisia tinctoria has been seen in abundance after prescribed burns © Natasha Whetzel/TNC



# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice

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The Nature Conservancy is uniquely positioned to serve this planet and the people that inhabit it. And that starts with serving our staff and our communities. Because until we unequivocally demonstrate a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice, we remain a part of the problem. We must have the humility to accept and acknowledge that until our workplaces are living up to our own egalitarian values, we cannot claim to speak for those we work with or aspire to work with. Our vision of a world where people and nature thrive requires us to be a part of the solution.

**Anton Andrew,**  
DEIJ Ambassador and PA/DE Trustee

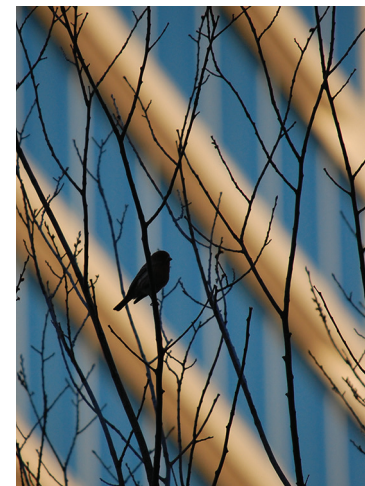
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The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania & Delaware is committed to creating an equitable work culture and taking a thoughtful, inclusive approach to conservation. We will live out these values by supporting the voice and vision of local communities in pursuit of greater health and well-being, creating sustainable spaces where people and nature thrive together.

To that end, our chapter has integrated diversity, equity, inclusivity, and justice (DEIJ) initiatives into our three-year strategic plan, striving to integrate these principles into all that we do. We have formed an internal working group, representing 26 percent of the staff, who meet regularly to develop ideas, share best practices, and provide recommendations for implementation.

**Tammy Bean**, our recently hired director of People and Operations, will lead our internal DEIJ activities and work closely with TNC Global to develop and implement new and inclusive processes across hiring, operations support, procurement, and trainings.

We are also honored that **Anton Andrew**, a member of our Board of Trustees, will serve as our inaugural DEIJ ambassador, helping to create a more inclusive environment for trustees by fostering an atmosphere of listening, learning, and reflecting while also broadening our trustee pipeline.





# Removing the O’Conner Dam

For over a century, the O’Conner Dam in northeastern Pennsylvania was a notable feature of the Dick and Nancy Eales Preserve at Moosic Mountain. The dam created a small reservoir along the mountain’s upper ridge fed by Sterry Creek; however, like all infrastructure, the dam had an expiration date.

With the support of a group of engaged donors, TNC was able to quickly raise funds to remove the dam before it became a hazard.

Your help makes conservation possible. Here’s a timeline of the dam’s history.



Scan this QR code to watch a video about the O’Conner Dam Breach and Restoration.



**1893**

The O’Conner Dam is built using stacked timbers and stone and serves as a water supply dam for the Mt. Jessup Coal Company.



**2001**

TNC acquires the 2,250-acre property at Moosic Mountain, a renowned “barrens” landscape of pine and oak forest that attracts a host of rare and native birds and butterflies.



**2009**

The property is renamed the Dick and Nancy Eales Preserve at Moosic Mountain.



**2020**

**SUMMER**

An inspection of the O’Conner Dam finds erosion is occurring and water escaping the reservoir, requiring immediate short-term repairs.

**2021**

**AUGUST**

Hurricane Ida drops heavy rainfall across the region, increasing the risk of a catastrophic breach.

**2021**

**SPRING**

Volunteers and TNC staff use siphons to manually lower the water level and reduce pressure on the dam.



**2021**

**SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER**

Design and construction plans are finalized.

**2021**

**DECEMBER**

Despite wintry weather, the dam is breached and the remaining water empties from the reservoir. The original stream bed of Sterry Creek is revealed.



**2022**

**JUNE**

Vegetation returns to the former dam site and Sterry Creek follows its original course again.



**GOAL**

Sterry Creek upstream of the former reservoir; over time, our goal is for the restoration site to look similar to this.

LEFT TO RIGHT © Andrea Campbell; © Matt Kane/TNC; © Bill Weihbrecht; © Bill Weihbrecht; © Bill Weihbrecht; John Hinkson/TNC

## VOLUNTEERS

# Volunteers in Action

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I was inspired while working with a group of 20-somethings to build new hiking trails in the Hamer Woodlands at Cove Mountain Preserve, expanding the existing trail network. These young people are passionately committed to preserving nature. I even finished the week with new skills, from swinging a McLeod hoe to levering a boulder with a heavy rock bar. You're never too young or too old to make a difference.

**Marla Neeson**, TNC supporter

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### LEARN MORE

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about volunteer opportunities at [nature.org/PAvolunteer](https://nature.org/PAvolunteer) and [nature.org/DEvolunteer](https://nature.org/DEvolunteer)

TNC volunteers were busy in the first half of 2022, coordinating trash clean-ups and trail work in Pennsylvania and Delaware and contributing over 1,800 hours to improving our preserves.



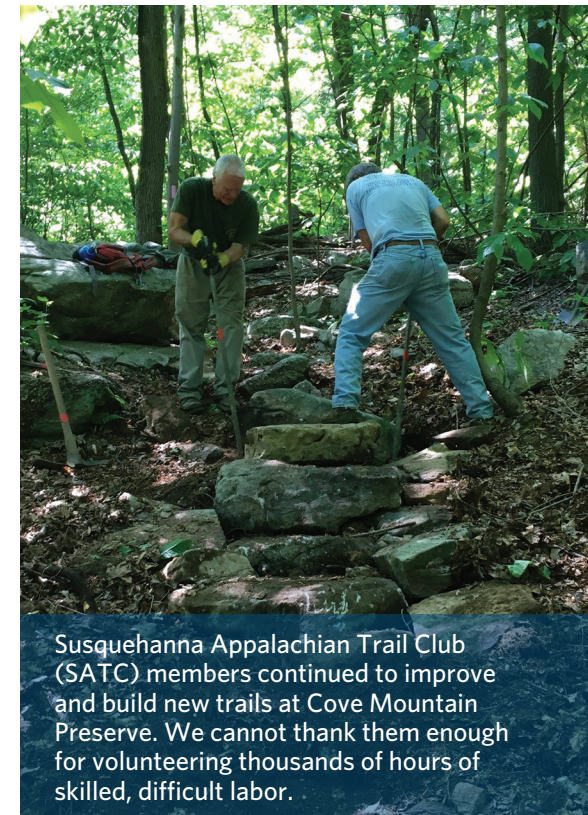
Stream Stewards Spring 2022 watershed cleanup in Wilmington.



Removing invasive plants at Cove Mountain Preserve.



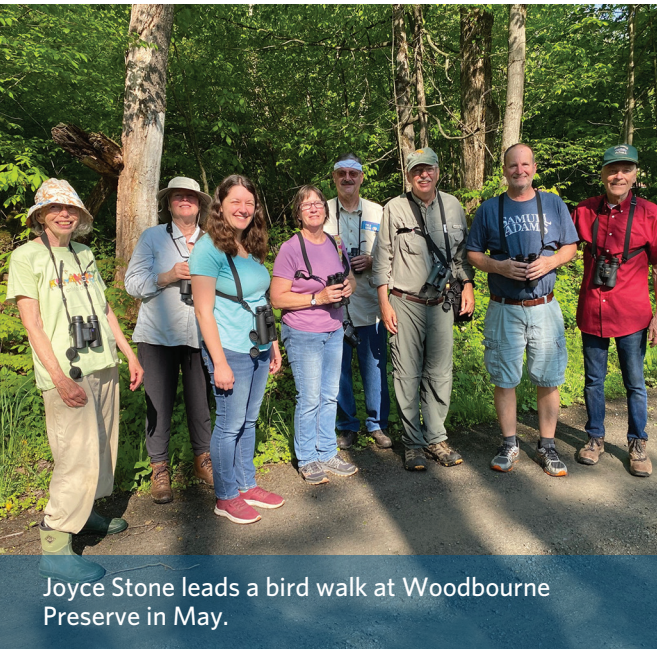
TNC's Chief Marketing & Communications Officer Meg Goldthwaite (left) and TNC in PA & DE's Executive Director Lori Brennan at a volunteer event in Delaware.



Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club (SATC) members continued to improve and build new trails at Cove Mountain Preserve. We cannot thank them enough for volunteering thousands of hours of skilled, difficult labor.



Marla Neeson (third from left) joined TNC staff and Outdoor Corps members to build trails at Cove Mountain Preserve this summer.



Joyce Stone leads a bird walk at Woodbourne Preserve in May.

## BY THE NUMBERS

**7** successful group workdays along with independent monitoring of TNC lands and trash clean-ups to celebrate Earth Day.

**2 tons** of trash and debris removed from the Delaware River and Chesapeake Bay watersheds.

**1<sup>st</sup> annual** staff project completed at the Tannersville Cranberry Bog Preserve, one of TNC's original Pennsylvania preserves. Staff, trustees, volunteers and members of the University of Maryland's Terrapin Ecology Club battled the cold and rain in early spring to clear overgrown vegetation.

**178 iNaturalist** app observations submitted at TNC preserves, bringing the lifetime total to **3,550** observations of **1,489** species.

## Inspiring Youth Engagement in Conservation

Jenna Baljunas, a student at Chatham University who is majoring in environmental science with a minor in botany, spent her summer on a unique flora scavenger hunt.

“My volunteer work with TNC involved visiting the Dick and Nancy Eales Preserve at Moosic Mountain and exploring the area of the O’Conner Reservoir to monitor the new vegetation growth since the recent dam removal,” says Jenna. “Through finding and identifying the vegetation, I am helping TNC to plan for further restoration of the area.”

Using the iNaturalist app, Jenna tracked and identified 56 plant species in one area of the restoration site during the summer. The most dominant species were three-way sedge (*Dulichium arundinaceum*), narrow-pinnacle rush (*Juncus brevicaudatus*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), and American burnweed a.k.a fireweed (*Erechtites hieraciifolius*).

In the course of her work with TNC, Jenna has seen real progress in the landscape.

“I have already seen so much change and the beginning of the area’s restoration,” says Jenna. “I am excited to see how much changes in years to come. I think it is so special to be able to hold the picture of what the land looked like at the very start of restoration in my head because I believe there will be a time in the future where the area will look established and significantly different.”

# Your Gift Makes Our Work Possible

## Doing Our Part for 2030

Driven by the mounting threats of climate change and global biodiversity loss, private philanthropists, public funders, and conservation groups around the globe are racing to protect 30 percent of the Earth's land, freshwater, and oceans by 2030. Targets set by the Paris Agreement of 2015, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals outline a path forward, but we'll need to act fast. The past decade was the hottest in history, so timing is critical and the challenge formidable.

TNC has committed to conserve 1.6 billion acres of land by 2030—and it starts right here in Pennsylvania and Delaware.

Together, with your generous support, we will restore and improve management of working lands and preserve the lands, water, and air on which we all depend. Thank you for considering a generous gift to accelerate our work.

## Leave a Lasting Conservation Legacy

What if you could leave a legacy for tomorrow and support work for nature today?

The Nature Conservancy's ability to take on global challenges and projects of enormous scopes is made possible by legacy gifts. Today we are facing the most complex challenges of our lives and there is critical work to be done now and for generations to come. That's why two generous donors have come together to create the Legacy Fund Challenge. For a limited time, you can make a difference for nature now and in the future.

### HERE'S HOW:

- Name The Nature Conservancy in your will, or as a beneficiary to a trust, retirement plan, or insurance policy or protect nature's future with a planned gift that provides income to you for life.
- Let us know of your plans.
- An immediate \$1,000 gift will be released to The Nature Conservancy in Pennsylvania & Delaware in honor of your Legacy.

Please act today to secure a greener tomorrow. Our development staff are here to answer any questions.

Contact us at [pdefundraisingteam@tnc.org](mailto:pdefundraisingteam@tnc.org) or call **610-834-1323**.





“

I have been riding my bike to work every day of my adult life. Seeing the sun, trees, and sky; hearing the birds; and feeling the wind on my face makes me feel alive every day. I am so grateful for the work of TNC, not just to protect our environment, but to improve it for the benefit of all.

**Thomas Burnett,**  
TNC Supporter




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Pitcher plant flower at Tannersville Cranberry Bog © George Gress/TNC



# Our mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

*We envision a future where people and nature thrive together across Pennsylvania and Delaware. As one united chapter, we protect our states' biodiversity, combat the effects of climate change, and ensure that conservation promotes equitable and just communities.*

Visit [nature.org/PADereport](https://nature.org/PADereport) or scan this QR code to visit our 2022 Impact Report webpage where you can watch videos about our accomplishments this year.

