

CENTER FOR PRIVATE FORESTS AT PENN STATE



Working at the Intersection of People and Forests



2018

ANNUAL REPORT

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Since its start in 2011, the Center for Private Forests at Penn State has been working at the intersection of people and forests to ensure the health and vitality of forested landscapes. Key to developing effective research and resources is understanding the questions and challenges landowners face in active stewardship of their land. We're listening to forest landowners. We're fostering communication and building relationships to create relevant and engaging learning opportunities and materials that speak to where landowners are on their journey of learning and practicing woodland stewardship.



From the Director

Dear friends,

We are pleased to share with you the Center for Private Forests at Penn State's 2018 Annual Report. We work at the intersection of people and forests, elevating the conversation about the importance of privately-owned woods, expanding the understanding around the opportunities and challenges landowners face, and guiding the creation of the resources that will help improve the overall health and well-being of the forests of the state, region, and beyond. Working at this intersection requires great nimbleness and creativity, as well as deep, abiding commitment to the land and the people owning the land.

The story of this annual report is one of why and how we do the work that we know has impact on the land and the people who own it. The



Allyson Muth
Interim Director

story contains projects that we've carried with us for years. There are also new areas we've explored and new questions we've sought to answer. It's been a year of accomplishment and taking the steps we need to ensure the continued strength that is the Center for Private Forests.

Peer volunteers remain integral to the Center. This was a year of growth and activity for the Pennsylvania Forest Stewards volunteers and Women and Their Woods. In 2018, we trained our 30th class of PA Forest Stewards, raising the total trained to 703; and we trained our fifth class of Women and Their Woods, with 22 attending the training – many of them professionals who hope to start their own programs in their states. We look to these volunteers to help us spread the word of good forest stewardship as well as help us listen well to unengaged landowners. Learn more about the Center-supported peer volunteer networks on pages 2 through 5.

One area where we've focused a great deal of attention is to better understand and work to positively influence the relationship between natural resources professionals and forest landowners. From presentations and skill sharing with our natural resources professional peers (see page 19), to research conducted about the interactions between consulting foresters and landowners (pages 10 and 11), our goal is to elevate the profession and elevate the resources available to assist with good forest care.

We continue to partner with many organizations, from educating and engaging the public with Walk in Penn's Woods and sharing presentations with landowners and

professionals to guiding outreach and serving on advisory groups. You can find examples throughout, but particularly on pages 20 and 21. One new direction came at the behest of Paul Solomon, Pennsylvania Forest Stewards volunteer. Paul and fellow Pennsylvania Forest Stewards volunteer Jeanne Riley created a guide to help municipalities understand the importance of forests to their communities. This has led to some additional opportunities. Check out the story on pages 12 and 13.

In 2018 we created a new structure that will help guide the future work and engagement opportunities of the Center, through working groups led by landowners and topic experts (pages 22 and 23). While 2019 is the official kickoff of the four groups investigating Forest Economics, Legacy, Practices, and Values, 2018 set the stage and built the foundation for these groups to be successful. We're excited by where these innovative groups will take us.

We hope you enjoy reading this annual report of our 2018 accomplishments. We want you to understand why and how we've chosen and continued the work of this year. The intersection of people and forests is an exciting place to be!

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'AM' or a stylized version of the name Allyson Muth.



Peer Volunteer Networks

For decades, peer volunteer networks have been a strong, informal pipeline to put valuable resources into the hands of forest landowners. Programs like the Pennsylvania Forest Steward volunteers and Women and Their Woods share knowledge and resources with peer leaders. These leaders then share their forest stewardship experience and knowledge with others “like me.” These programs are integral to the success of the Center. And, based on the numbers of landowners and friends these peer volunteers reach, we can say that these programs are very successful. The value of the volunteer time shared and numbers of people reached more than double the investment in the groups by the Center and our partners.

Pennsylvania Forest Stewards

*According to the US National Woodland Owner Survey, only **15%** of family forest owners nationwide sought any type of management advice in the previous five years from professionals, and only **1 in 25** had a written management plan.**

The Pennsylvania Forest Stewards are a longstanding, growing network of landowners and others who care about good forest stewardship. With over 550 currently active and over 700 total trained through the program, these volunteers help spread the word of caring well for the woods through engagement with and education of other forest landowners, as well as community organizations and youth. Their efforts expand the impact of the Center tenfold, often reaching people who are hesitant to engage with professional or government entities.

We draw on the diverse talents and connections of this group in many ways. Henry and Barbara Williams serve as officers in the Central Susquehanna Woodland Owners Association; Rita Stevens is involved in forest restoration at the Ardsley Wildlife Sanctuary; Adam Katrancha teams up with the PA Game Commission, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement projects; Nancy Baker teaches at *Women and Their Woods*; Ben Vaupel shares the outdoors with 4th and 5th graders through Envirothon; and Jon Ahrens helps others do physical improvements to their forestland, such as planting trees and clearing overgrowth and invasives. These are just six examples of what our trained leaders are doing across the state.

In 2018, 19 new Pennsylvania Forest Steward volunteers completed basic training. Nearly 100 Pennsylvania Forest Stewards and their guests joined us for the 2018 Summer Meeting, which featured educational tours and presentations geared toward enhancing the knowledge and resources of the volunteers. And, at two in-service training events, volunteers learned about silviculture and how landowners can engage consulting foresters to guide the care of their woods through the timber sale process, and attended sessions on how to host a woods walk, how to use the *Peers and Pros – 360* tool to engage woodland owners in conversation around myths about forest management, and ways to engage youth in forest stewardship.

*Butler, B.J. 2008. Family forest owners of the United States, 2006. General technical report NRS-27. Newtown Square, PA: USDA Forest Service, Northern Research Station.



The number of Pennsylvania Forest Steward volunteers trained since 1991. These trained leaders work hard to get the right tools, resources, and connections into the hands of their fellow woodland owners so that they can apply sound stewardship practices to care for their forests.



In-service trainings for Pennsylvania Forest Stewards included a tour of the Penn State Stone Valley Forest with Penn State Forester Joe Harding and discovering ways to engage youth in forest stewardship.

A Forest Steward's Story: Building a Legacy

By Rebecca Trigger, Pennsylvania Forest Steward

In 2015, I attended the Pennsylvania Forest Steward Basic Training through the Center for Private Forests at Penn State. I had owned my 140 acres since 1994 and longed to learn what I was looking at while walking in my woods.

Was it ever an eye opener! They taught me the history of Penn's Woods, how to identify trees, what specific trees need to grow, how to care for the trees, how to claim some of the care on my taxes, and why one should care to do it.

There was the shock: I was nurturing the invasive tree-of-heaven because I thought they were pretty trees. There was the awe: I have some northern red oaks growing. And while looking at the bottom of their trunks in early spring, I saw all the white trilliums growing there. I had not noticed them before. I learned to discover my forest, tree by tree. The good ones (northern hardwoods), the bad ones (invasive like tree-of-heaven), and the ugly ones (they won't even amount to firewood).

This program was just the beginning because it doesn't stop there. The staff continue to provide me with a network of resources, teaching, skill building, and meeting other folks in my area who also enjoy doing this sort of thing. This means a lot because not all women get the same thrill as I do, walking into my woodlands, with chainsaw in hand, to do some light cleaning.

I can talk of and do hack and squirt: when, where, and how. Most importantly, my forest loves it!! It's growing into a mighty woodland.

It wasn't long before my son, Mark, who lives in New York, became intrigued by my work. I began to teach him some of the things I learned. Soon he caught the same "bug" I did and went through the Basic Training in 2018. He told me what he learned and talked of a sight he had never seen before. It was during one of their field trips. They were looking up at the trees, and there it was - a porcupine sitting in a tree!

Since I became a Pennsylvania Forest Steward, we've gone to the Landowners Conference, attended the Game of Logging to further our chainsaw skills, and we work as often as we can, side by side, in the wonderful, wonderful, forest. We discover something new each time and enjoy having each other to share it with.

Now my granddaughter is beginning to catch this "bug" as she rides in my side-by-side along the trails with the deer and turkeys jumping across the path in front of us, and watches her daddy, with chainsaw in hand, as he studies the best way to free up a red oak. Even the dog loves a day of running and barking in the woods! Family and friends now visit my woods, walking along the trails as we teach and show them little wonders here and there. It's a healthy and happy way of life.

Our learning through the Pennsylvania Forest Steward Program provided us with a bond from one generation to the next, a living legacy. We now have understanding of the importance of the continual care of our small piece of Penn's Woods. It's given us a whole new meaning of the phrase "the family tree."

Nurturing our woodlands has enriched our lives as much as we have enriched the lives of our trees. And we give our sincere gratitude to all of the staff at the Center for Private Forests for what you have taught us and for all you do for Penn's Woods.

Besides working on and enjoying her woods, Rebecca gives tours of her property, teaches children about the forest, hires high school shop students to work on her forestry endeavors, and is part of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association.



Rebecca and her son, Mark Foley: "...we work as often as we can, side by side, in the wonderful, wonderful forest."

Women and Their Woods

Occurring in even years, the Women and Their Woods educational retreat affords the opportunity to expand the network of women landowners and natural resources professionals. In 2018, 22 participants attended the four-day training, bringing the total trained through this program to well over 100. Center staff and Pennsylvania Forest Stewards volunteers have played an integral role in teaching women good forest stewardship through this in-depth, fun, engaging, and thought-provoking workshop coordinated by the Delaware Highlands Conservancy.

This year, Pennsylvania Women and Their Woods served as a shadowing opportunity for natural resources professionals from other states interested in starting dedicated programs for women, helping to create resources beyond the mid-Atlantic.



Women learned how to assess the value of the timber in their forests, using Biltmore sticks to measure tree dimensions such as diameter and height, as well as estimating tree volume and practicing plot sampling. A field trip to observe a private woodland owner's timber harvest was part of the educational retreat.





The US Forest Service predicts that over 23 million acres of US forestland will no longer be forests 50 years from now. Most of these acres will be privately-owned forestland converted to residential subdivisions. The Center is partnering to create resources and provide solutions to guide forest landowners in making critical decisions about the future of their land, working to keep forests as forests.

Program collaborators: Center for Private Forests at Penn State (lead institution) and the Universities of Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont. Participating states include Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. New resources were branded for all of the participating states.

Funding provided through the US Department of Agriculture, National Institute for Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) National Focus Funds grant program, under award number 2015-46401-24238.



Woodland Legacy Planning

*In Pennsylvania, the average age of forest landowners is 57, setting the stage for an unprecedented transfer of forest ownership in the next decade. At least 80% of these owners intend to leave their forestland as a legacy to their heirs or other beneficiaries. Only 40% have actually discussed a legacy plan; fewer still have a plan in place. Unfortunately, forests are most at risk for conversion and loss when land transfer takes place.**

Forest legacy planning remained an important component of the Center's work in 2018. We wrapped up the USDA NIFA grant, *Planning the Future of the Forest: Seeing Landowners "Like Me,"* with the creation of a collection of case studies for the northeastern US. Twelve woodland owner individuals and families shared their stories to inspire others to make decisions about the future of their land. This new publication, titled *Legacy Planning Stories: How Forest Landowners "Like Me" Are Ensuring the Future of Their Land*, is a collection of stories ranging from individuals with no heirs leaving their land to their town and multi-generation owners who created companies to keep the land in the family, to siblings choosing informal strategies to protect the future of the land. This publication joins the new guide, *Protecting Your Legacy: a Pennsylvania Landowners Guide to Conservation-Based Estate Planning* as resources for woodland owners seeking guidance on their path to a plan. You can find both resources, as well as the three-minute, easy-to-follow whiteboard video at ecosystems.psu.edu/legacy.

*Metcalf, A.L., J.C. Finley, A.E. Luloff, and A.B. Muth. 2012. *Pennsylvania's Private Forests: 2010 Private Forest Landowner Survey Summary*. Report for the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry.

Graduate Research

Center Supports Legacy Planning Project

Paul Roth, Ph.D. Candidate

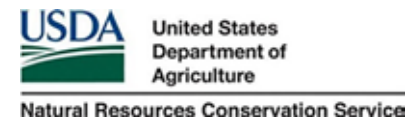


Paul's research continues to investigate legal and financial options for forest landowners to achieve conservation-based outcomes through estate/forest legacy planning. Through a series of interviews conducted with attorneys and financial planners, a rich data set is emerging that presents a complex model of considerations and options available to forest landowners to reach their long-term stewardship objectives. Similar to developing a long-term forest management plan, the starting point in the estate/forest legacy planning process is to determine the primary objective or desired future condition, and then work with planning professionals to identify the means available to get there successfully. Sounds simple, but as we've found in many of the interviews so far, getting the conversation started continues to emerge as one of the most significant challenges. After getting it started, getting the right people involved and at the table is another challenge!

The great news is the preliminary results point to a host of new legal and financial tools available that can assist forest landowners in meeting their objectives. With a growing number of customizable trust options, and new life insurance options that assist in capitalizing estate plans at the crucial moment of land transfer, landowners can now avoid the potential pitfalls that tax liabilities, probate, and the Medicaid five-year lookback period can cause. One very positive theme Paul's research is showing: there are in fact options! While no "one size fits all" solution has emerged, we are seeing a model take shape that combines key moments, questions, and considerations – coupled with available legal and financial tools – to offer solutions that will help landowners achieve their conservation objectives while transitioning forestland ownership to the next generation.



Successful forest regeneration, or regrowth, is key to forest sustainability. We are working to adapt and implement an assessment process to raise awareness about inadequate regeneration, one of Pennsylvania's top forest health concerns.



This material is based upon work supported by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, under NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant 16-042.

Fostering Regeneration

Work continues with the Federal Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grant. The primary objective of this work is to raise awareness among landowners – especially “beginning” woodland owners – of the need for active stewardship relating to forest regeneration. Inadequate regeneration is one of Pennsylvania’s top forest health concerns and is linked to the challenges of competing vegetation (native or non-native invasive), overabundance of deer causing legacy impacts in some areas, and insufficient light to help tree seedlings grow.

In preparation for peer-led field days, public presentations describing threats and recommended actions were delivered to a combined audience of 140 at the Woodland Owners of the Southern Alleghenies Annual Landowner Conference, and at a monthly meeting of the Westmoreland Woodland Improvement Association. Landowner field days were held in Bedford, Fulton, and Cameron Counties for 55 landowners of varying experience levels. Participants learned to assess woodland health and regeneration potential, as well as identify next steps for action (e.g., removing invasive shrubs, stand improvement). Three field days with the same focus are already planned for 2019, with another three field days expected. This work was also presented to the Pennsylvania NRCS State Technical Committee, which had a distinct benefit of promoting the need for and value of forestry-specific CIG and EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) efforts and funds.

From 1954 to 2014...

*Small size-class trees decreased from 4 million acres to about 1.25 million acres. As Pennsylvania’s forests age, insufficient regrowth of new trees has become a concern.**

With 70% of Pennsylvania’s forests privately-owned by about 740,000 woodland owners, active attention is needed to control competing vegetation, deer impact, and light.

*Albright, Thomas A. 2017. *Forests of Pennsylvania*, 2016. Resource Update FS-132. Newtown Square, PA: US Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. 4 p.





Like Penn State's Director of Forestlands Joe Harding, many of Pennsylvania's foresters serve the public well, prescribing sustainable forest management practices so that healthy forests will thrive for generations to come. The Center for Private Forests is working with its partners to build a strong network of resource professionals to come alongside Pennsylvania's private forest landowners and help them care well for their land.

We are working with our partners to bring more cost-effective management options to owners of privately-held forests.

Our 2018 survey of Pennsylvania's consulting foresters showed that foresters perceive cost as one of the greatest barriers to woodland owners implementing sustainable management practices on their forestland.

Enrolled Foresters Program

*One-fifth of forest landowners who harvested timber in the last ten years received no advice prior to cutting. When asked to describe the type of harvest, the majority (54.2%) said “only cut a few select, large trees,” which is a common way to describe a high grade.**

Research and anecdotal evidence show an unmistakable gap between Pennsylvania’s private forest landowners and the foresters who serve them. Many landowners aren’t aware that resource professionals exist to help them care well for their woods. And with no licensure or registration of foresters in the state, anyone can call themselves a forester. When undertaking a critical action such as a timber harvest, doing it alone or getting poor advice can have devastating results.

Elevating Pennsylvania’s forestry profession

We are partnering with an advisory group of consulting foresters to determine the feasibility of establishing a statewide voluntary program that would hold foresters to a higher standard – elevating awareness of the profession and providing assurance to landowners that sustainability is foremost in activities prescribed. Through peer review, continuing education, and independent oversight of foresters by their peer group, this program aims to build strong working relationships between landowners and foresters that yield positive outcomes.

In 2018 we conducted two concurrent surveys: one to forest landowners asking about their experiences working with a forester, payment, activities they have or would like to undertake, barriers to using a forester, and other relevant questions. The second survey, sent to all the foresters on the state’s consulting forester listing, asked about their practice, fee structure, and changes and opportunities in their interactions with landowners. The surveys generated a response rate of 60% for the consulting foresters and 45% for the landowners, providing a source of valuable information about the interactions between professionals and landowners. In 2019, the results of these surveys – and previously-held focus groups and facilitated discussions – will inform the work of the advisory group to justify and create a program to support more sustainable practices.

*Metcalf, A.L., J.C. Finley, A.E. Luloff, and A.B. Muth. 2012. *Pennsylvania’s Private Forests: 2010 Private Forest Landowner Survey Summary*. Report for the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry.



We are working to increase awareness and build better relationships between private forest landowners and foresters.

Our 2018 survey of landowners in three Pennsylvania counties showed that of the almost 40% of the respondents who had conducted a recent timber sale, nearly half did not use a forester. Reasons ranged from landowners believing they could negotiate the sale themselves or believing a forester’s benefit was not worth the cost, to not knowing better or not knowing foresters existed.



Forests are present in nearly every county and municipality across Pennsylvania, providing a broad range of essential economic, environmental, health, and recreational benefits to residents and visitors alike. They are the foundation of a \$19 billion-dollar forest products industry and a key component of the state's \$21.5 billion outdoor recreation industry. As an essential component of the green infrastructure, they contribute valuable ecosystem services – such as pollution mitigation, stormwater management, watershed protection, and air quality – to counties and municipalities. Yet many public officials and citizens alike are unaware of how vital a role Pennsylvania's forests play in shaping what they love best about their communities, and few county and municipal plans make explicit strategic decisions to create or maintain forestland.

Raising Public Awareness

Developing Tools to Inform Local Policymakers

Realizing how many county and municipal comprehensive plans fall short in protecting Pennsylvania's forestland, Paul J. Solomon, a Shrewsbury Township Supervisor, planning professional, and forest landowner, wanted to change that. With co-author Jeanne M. Riley, forest landowner, these two Pennsylvania Forest Steward volunteers developed a publication directed to county and municipal policymakers and planning professionals that highlights the importance of forests and brings attention to the many threats they now face. The authors encourage taking stock of the many benefits forests provide when developing comprehensive plans. They also advise developing land use management strategies that conserve forests as unique natural resources, as provided for in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The publication introduces various tools available to protect forests, using thoughtful land use planning to ensure retention of forested land and to encourage the responsible practice of sustainable forestry. The publication also encourages public officials to educate their citizens about how much forests contribute to the quality and character of life in their communities. The publication, entitled *Sustaining and Improving Pennsylvania's Forest Land through Comprehensive Plans: The Vital Role of Counties and Municipalities*, is available online and in print free-of-charge.

Through volunteer efforts and research, the Center is committed to providing tools to educate public officials so that they can make sound stewardship decisions for Pennsylvania's beloved forests.



Graduate Research

Financial Gift Supports Further Comprehensive Plan Research

Kalaia Tripeaux, MS Student

To develop a deeper understanding of how municipalities approach forestland, Jeanne and Tony Riley gave a gift to the Center to hire a summer intern to assess the consideration of rural and urban forests in 65 county comprehensive plans. The gift allowed incoming Masters student Kalaia Tripeaux to begin her research with Dr. Bill Elmendorf, Community and Urban Forestry Extension Specialist at Penn State. Kalaia used simple word searches and descriptive statistics to assess how comprehensive plans addressed rural and urban forests. Based on this work, Kalaia and Dr. Elmendorf are developing a study of county planning commissioners to understand their knowledge of and attitudes toward forests.



Kalaia Tripeaux (left) and Center Interim Director Allyson Muth review Kalaia's research findings.



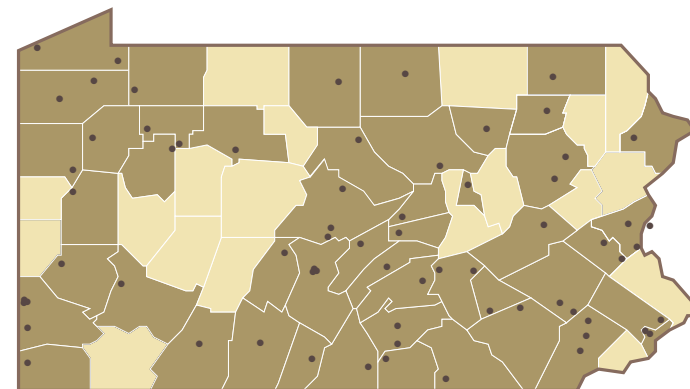
"...our Walk in Penn's Woods...was a smashing success! The weather was perfect, the presenter was outstanding, and the diverse group of attendees made for a wonderful afternoon."

Walk in Penn's Woods

"...we ended up talking about invasive plants and insects, and management of those, the importance of forests to our watershed, streamside forests, and beavers!"

Chester County Native Tree ID and Fall Foliage Walk

On sunny (for the most part), summer-like October 7, the second annual Walk in Penn's Woods happened, with 67 walks occurring around the state (plus one in New Jersey), representing 48 counties, with a goal of getting the public out enjoying and learning about Penn's Woods. Partnering on the event were the Center, the PA Forestry Association, Penn State Extension, PA Sustainable Forestry Initiative Implementation Committee, PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry, the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Association of Consulting Foresters, and the PA Forest Stewards volunteer program. Walks were held on state land, federal land, conservancy properties, watershed authorities, at sawmills, and on privately-held properties. We had over 1,100 people in the woods taking part in organized walks. The walk hosts were almost unanimous in reporting on the tremendous enthusiasm of the participants – many new to the event and thrilled to be out and learning about Penn's Woods. We owe a tremendous thanks to all the PA Forest Stewards, Woodland Owners Associations, natural resources professionals, and friends who made the 2018 Walk in Penn's Woods an outstanding success. Based on tremendous support and positive feedback, this will continue as an annual event, led by the Center. Calendars are already being marked and walks are being planned for the 2019 Walk in Penn's Woods on October 6. To find out more visit www.walkinpennswoods.org.



68 walks,
48 counties,
over 1,100 participants!



Woodland Enterprise

Two key fundamental strategies the Center staff use for improving woodland health and function in Pennsylvania's 12 million acres of privately-owned forests are encouraging active control of invasive plants, and promoting other woodland improvement/restoration to diversify age classes and species composition. Many landowners have difficulty in finding someone to do the improvement work—especially owners of smaller acreages where an economic harvest isn't possible or desirable when considering long-term woodland health. In addition, the idea of small businesses generating products from small-diameter or poor-quality wood has gained traction in the past decade or so. The team has been strategically building a conversation among partners to identify practical business/enterprise development ideas for primary or supplemental income. A Woodland Enterprise Development webinar presented by a Center staff member shared new ways of thinking about getting work done in the woods, focusing on small business development around restorative forestry services

and value-added products. Also in 2018, at a Biochar and Torrefication Biomass Short Course held by an interdisciplinary Extension team, a Center staff member gave the closing remarks to link the technological discussion with emerging markets and forest improvement activities. High marks in the evaluations and following conversation were a good indication of the interest and growing momentum in forest restoration and new small business models, including cooperatives. Key partners who engaged in this growing conversation include the Pennsylvania Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry, the multi-stakeholder ad-hoc "Pennsylvania Agroforestry Braintrust," and the newly-convened Pennsylvania Woodland Stewardship Innovation Team. This work dovetails with Governor Wolf's Green Ribbon Task Force planning initiative, which found the need for innovative job creation in Pennsylvania's woods, noting that "what's good for the woods is good for jobs."



Scotia Barrens Project

Partnering to Conserve Large-scale Landscapes

Helping landowners to see their connection to the broader landscape, and thereby the health and function of Pennsylvania's woods is one core element of the Center for Private Forests. Our partnerships with other land care-related organizations and agencies plays an important role in our success. In 2018, we saw the continued growth of one of those partnerships. Building on the groundwork of the cross-boundary landowner education and engagement efforts in 2015 and 2016, staff of the Center, funded in part by the Hamer Foundation, have been once again working with the ClearWater Conservancy in their new initiative to encourage landowners to provide early successional habitat within the corridor of privately-owned woodlands adjacent to the Scotia Barrens in Centre County. In support of this conservation initiative, Center staff held a group discussion with landowners who were part of the Buffalo Run landowner learning network, to garner advice for ClearWater in engaging neighboring landowners. The staff of the Center also provided critical guidance in developing the overall strategy and materials to engage these previously unengaged landowners, including the use of targeted marketing to appeal to and inspire this intended audience.



Young forests are essential for wildlife diversity. With the rapid decline of Pennsylvania's young forests – only about 7% of the state's forestland is less than 20 years old – we have seen a decline in more than 30 bird species and other wildlife populations. The Center for Private Forests is supporting ClearWater Conservancy's Young Forest Initiative to provide educational events and opportunities for landowners in the corridor adjacent to Scotia Barrens to become part of a broader landscape effort to create and sustain young forest wildlife habitat.



Extending Our Impact

The Center continues to increase its reach and grow the community of informed woodland owners through educational materials and opportunities, including newsletters, monthly news releases, online courses and webinars, workshops, and presentations. Whether we are teaching a hands-on woodland stand assessment workshop to a small group of landowners, sharing our expertise at regional and national levels, writing articles for distribution to thousands, or taking a phone call, Center staff are always ready to get the right resources and information into the hands of woodland owners and those who serve them.

The invasive tree-of-heaven (Ailanthus altissima) is the preferred host for the spotted lanternfly. Through our network of communication, the Center is keeping landowners informed about this potentially devastating threat.

Forest Leaves Newsletter

As one of the most widely-distributed forestry publications in Pennsylvania, *Forest Leaves* reaches nearly 14,000 print and email subscribers, getting important news and information into their hands. This newsletter is a long-standing collaboration between the PA Forest Stewardship Program, the Center for Private Forests at Penn State, the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Penn State Extension, the USDA Forest Service, the PA Tree Farm®, the PA Forestry Association, and the PA Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Implementation Committee.

Stewardship News Releases

News releases are another important educational and awareness-building tool the Center uses to reach landowners and the public. Center staff write monthly news releases on topics relevant to woodland owners, forestry, and land stewardship. These news releases are sent to almost 900 recipients, and are picked up by newspapers, included in newsletters, and shared among woodland owners.



Online resources covering many topics, such as timber harvesting, can be found on the Center's website at ecosystems.psu.edu/private-forests.

Speaking Invitations

Featured presentations, workshops, and webinars led by Center Staff in 2018:

- *The Land Ethic and the Future of Forests*. Clarion County Forest Landowner Meeting, Clarion, PA.
- *The State of the Forests*. Woodland Owners of the Southern Alleghenies, Bedford, PA; Cumberland Woodland Owners Association, Carlisle, PA.
- *Woodland Legacy Planning: Carrying Stewardship Forward*. Mifflin, Perry, and Juniata Counties Woodland Owners Association meeting, Blaine, PA.
- *The Woods in Your Backyard: Why Are They Important?* Woods in Your Backyard Workshop, Lewisburg, PA.

Leslie Horner presented a talk on her ongoing applied research project, *Growing Awareness and Active Stewardship to Improve Regeneration*, to the national Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals at the organization's 11th biennial conference on April 30 in Biloxi, MS. The talk emphasized strategies to help Extension professionals effectively reach and engage audiences such as "beginning" landowners, including targeted messaging, peer learning, and demonstration, and highlighted a woodland health and regeneration assessment tool developed to help landowners find a starting place in woodland stewardship.

- *Past and Future of Pennsylvania's Forests*. Young at Heart, State College, PA.
- *Forest Conservation Easements and Tour*. North Central Forest Landowners Association and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Ridgway, PA.
- *Woodland Enterprise Development* Webinar for natural resources professionals and landowners.
- *Syrup Production*. Central Pennsylvania Non-timber Forest Products, Reedsville, PA.

- *Women's Woods Walk*. Foundation for Sustainable Forests' Loving Your Land Through Working Forests Conference, Girard, PA.

As part of a new book, *Community-Based Control of Invasive Species*, Allyson Muth shared the chapter she and colleagues Mike Reid, Ted Alter, and Paloma Frumento wrote, titled *Collective Reflection: Addressing Wicked Issues in Natural Resource Management Issues*, at the International Symposium on Society and Resource Management in Snowbird, UT. The presentation and chapter highlight collaborative skills natural resources professionals should develop to work better with communities, drawn from work in Australia and the US.

- *Social, Ecological, and Professional Legacy*. Southeastern Consulting Foresters Meeting, Dauphin, PA.
- *Sustainable Forestry Loggers Course*. Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Galetton, PA.
- *Growing Together: Creating Collaborative Women-Centered Programming*. Land Trust Alliance Rally, Pittsburgh, PA.
- *Closing Remarks, Biochar and Torrefication Biomass Short Course*. State College, PA.
- *Weaving a Tapestry of Conservation*. Kendall Crossroads, Kennett Square, PA.
- *Collaborative Learning and Facilitation*. Northeast Regional Society of American Foresters Leadership Academy. Matamoras, PA.

As part of a national webinar series aimed at helping new Extension professionals establish themselves in their careers, Allyson Muth and Jim Finley presented a module titled *Seeding Success for Extension Professionals: Finding Financial Support for Program Enhancement*.

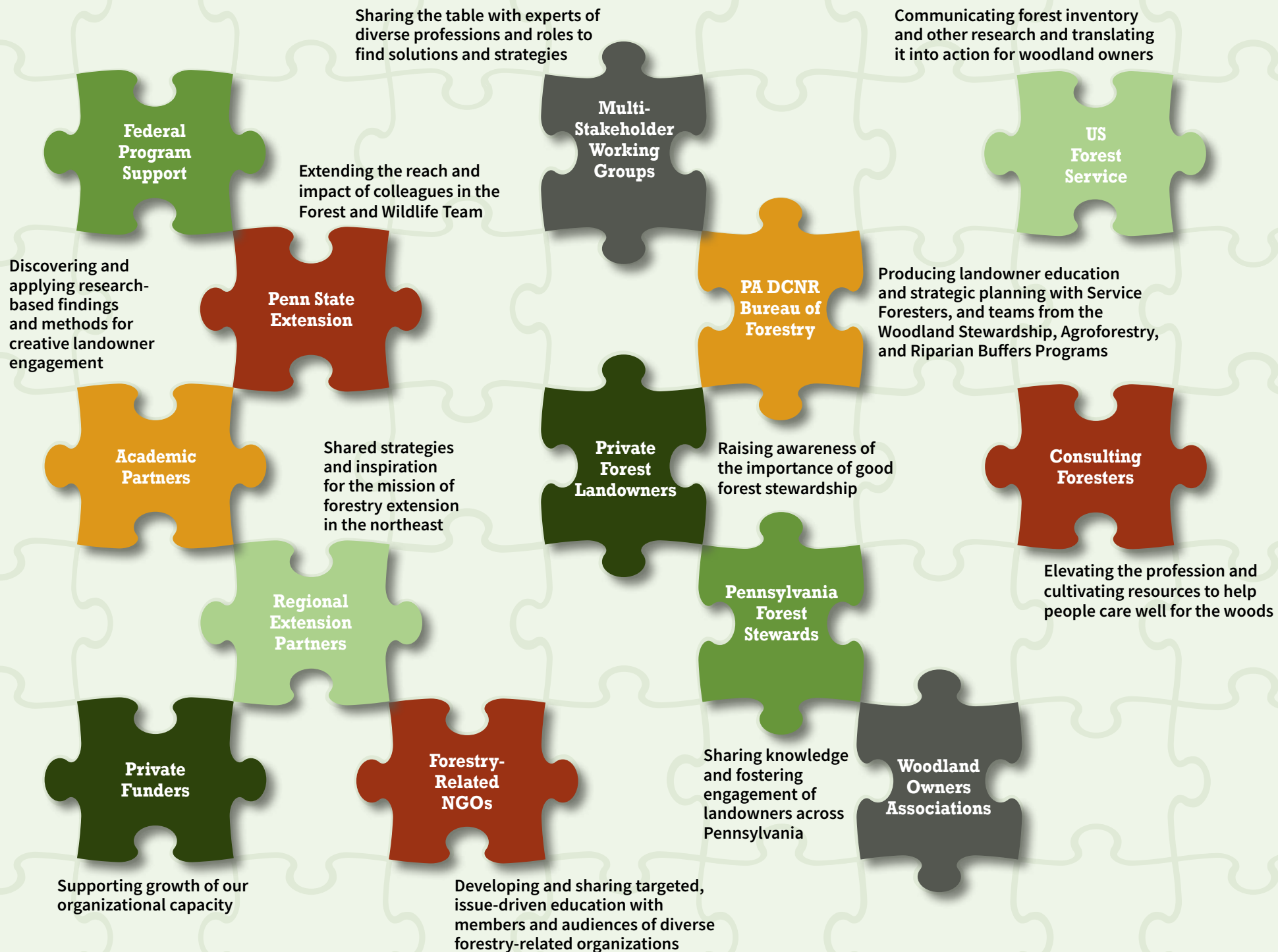
Our Partnerships

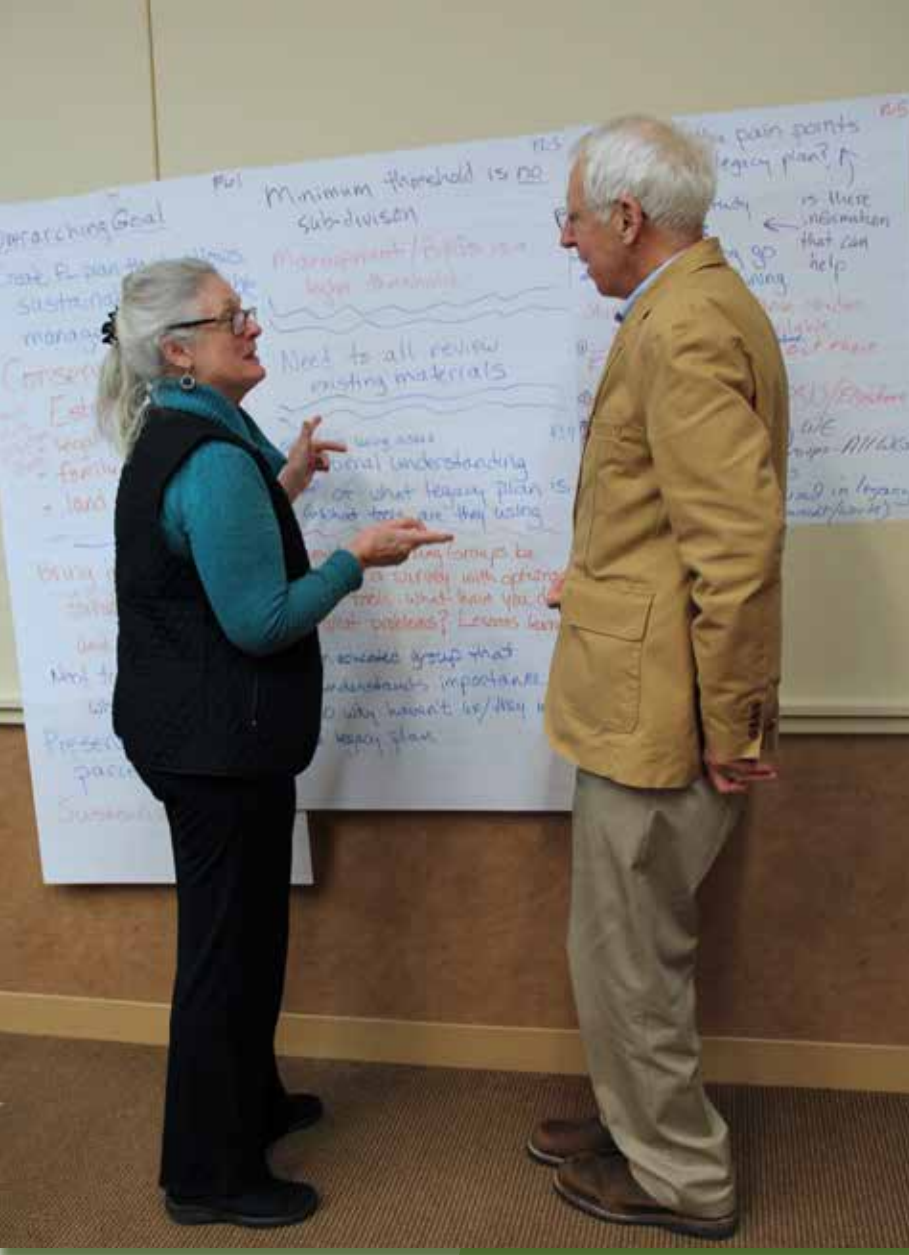


Partnerships and collaborations are vital in building community and solving the complex challenges landowners face in today's changing landscape. Our work should complement that of our partners as we piece together the puzzle and build the resources to influence good on-the-ground care of the woods, restoring and maintaining their health and vitality. The Center is fortunate in the breadth of partners with whom we work. They represent a wide range of organizations and opportunities. We continue to cultivate and expand our partnerships in order to inspire good forest stewardship in the Commonwealth and beyond.



OUR WORK	OUR PARTNERS
28 years of the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, Woodland Legacy Planning Partnership, Agroforestry Brain Trust, Forested Riparian Buffers, Walk in Penn's Woods, Woodland Stewardship Innovation Team, Governor's Green Ribbon Task Force, Enrolled Foresters Project, Prime Prospects for Riparian Buffers Project, SilviaTerra	Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry
Planning the Future of the Forest: Seeing Landowners "Like Me" Project	USDA National Institute for Food and Agriculture, Universities of Maine and Massachusetts
28 years of the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship Program, Prime Prospects for Riparian Buffers Project	USDA Forest Service
Women and Their Woods	Delaware Highlands Conservancy
Pennsylvania Implementation Committee, Walk in Penn's Woods	Sustainable Forestry Initiative
Woods in Your Backyard, Ag Progress Days, Walk in Penn's Woods, Pennsylvania Forests Web Seminar Center, Biochar and Torrefied Biomass Short Course	Penn State Extension
Forest Stewardship Program Associate	The Hamer Foundation
Improving Forest Regeneration and Engaging Pennsylvania's Beginning Forest Landowners through Peer-Led Demonstration Project	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Bald Eagle Area School District Forest Stewardship	Domtar
Prime Prospects for Riparian Buffers Project	Richard King Mellon Foundation
Woods in Your Backyard, developing trainings for green professionals to provide services to woodland owners with small acreages	Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, University of Maryland, Virginia Extension
Walk in Penn's Woods, <i>Pennsylvania Forests Magazine</i>	Pennsylvania Forestry Association
Walk in Penn's Woods	Association of Consulting Foresters, Pennsylvania Chapter
Scotia Barrens Project: The Scotia Young Forest Conservation Initiative	ClearWater Conservancy





This year saw the formation of four working groups to delve into the critical issues – both old and new – of private forest landowners and their land. By carefully crafting these all-volunteer teams with strong landowner representation, key natural resources professionals, and dedicated University faculty, the Center is positioned to launch new research, give fresh guidance, and broaden its expertise. We are excited about the positive impact on forest sustainability that this collaborative "deep dive" will bring.

Working Groups

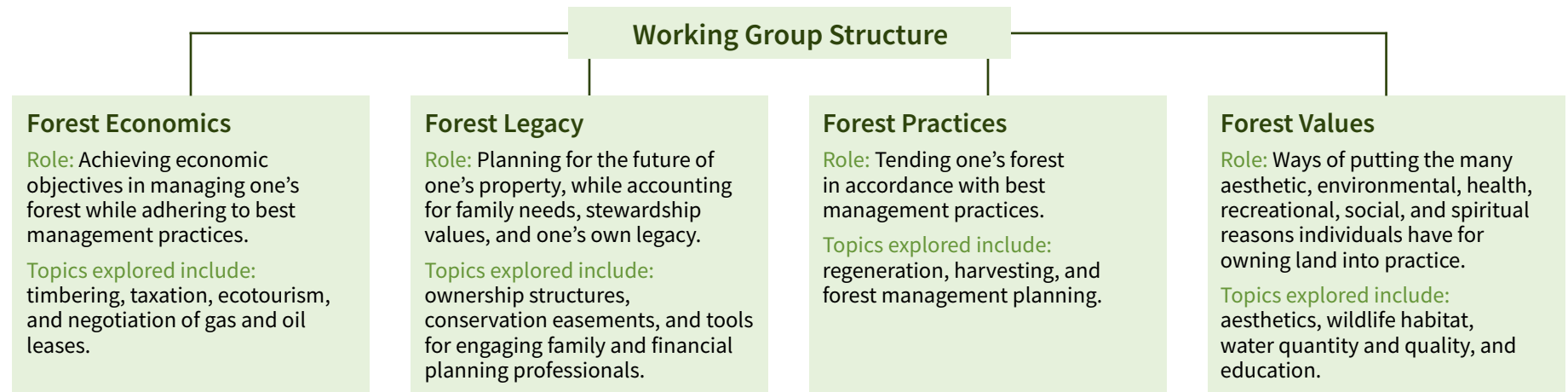
Since 2014, the Center has benefited from guidance by an all-volunteer council of landowners, faculty, and natural resources professionals, including retired USDA Forest Service and current Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry personnel.

In addition to its full-time staff and volunteer leadership, the Center has a longstanding 500-plus strong network of Pennsylvania Forest Stewards. These volunteers engage in a variety of activities with private forest landowners as well as with organizations and government agencies dedicated to stewardship of natural resources. The evolution of the Center provides fuller opportunities to draw upon the diverse talents of this group and for a wider range of projects in the future.

The Center enjoys a strong relationship with faculty and staff in the Ecosystem Science and Management Department at Penn State and elsewhere across the University. Center leadership, staff, and lay volunteers collaborate extensively with department and Penn State Forestry and Wildlife Extension faculty and staff on research and service opportunities related to privately-owned forests. The Center's past research on private forest landowners, as well as its readily available network of volunteers, the majority of whom are forest landowners

themselves, make it an essential resource for faculty interested in private forests and their landowners. Center leadership and council members also have strong, longstanding relationships with representatives of natural resource organizations and government agencies, and the Center has a track record of working collaboratively with these organizations and agencies on a variety of projects.

To expand the Center's role as an essential source of expertise for landowners, faculty, natural resource organizations, and government agencies, it has established four volunteer-led working groups, shown below, that reflect the major areas of importance to landowners identified from prior research. These robust working groups of volunteers serve as resources for Center staff and University faculty in each topic area, identifying critical research questions and aiding the development of educational resources. This in-depth expertise in forest landowners' opportunities, challenges, motivations, and practices will position the Center to conduct its own research, advise other organizations interested in privately-owned forests and landowners, and convene multiple natural resource organizations to explore how to address complex challenges together.



Our Financials

Through the Center for Private Forests at Penn State Endowment, we are building a nest egg to support outreach and education about the importance of forests for both today and tomorrow. The endowment ensures that the Center has resources to develop the knowledge to inspire forest stewardship.

How does the endowment work? Any funding the Center receives into the endowment is labeled for our exclusive use. It becomes part of Penn State's larger endowment-based investments so that it earns dividends, which become working funds in future years. Under the University's rules, the Center has access to half of the dividend accrued in any given year. The remaining unallocated funds return to the endowment to build the capital basis, which essentially covers inflation and helps to retain the value of the fund. Of course, gifts to the endowment for the Center are tax-deductible. Through the endowment, the Center has the ability to build capacity and create resources that will remain in place, with or without state and federal support.

The Center for Private Forests at Penn State Endowment provides the opportunity for everyone who cares about the future of privately-held woodlands and forests to ensure that the Center helps undergraduate and graduate students to work with landowners on forest issues, and extends its research efforts to address salient questions that challenge our forest's health and vitality. We welcome your support and questions about how you can help.



The Center for Private Forests at Penn State is one of the key initiatives in A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence, Penn State's five-year, \$1.6 billion current fundraising campaign. For more information about this campaign, contact: Lauren Steinberg, Senior Director of Development for the College of Agricultural Sciences, lxs229@psu.edu, 814-865-0158



Commitment to fostering opportunities for Penn State students to interact with landowners is important to the Center. This face-to-face communication provides a deeper understanding of landowners, and their concerns and needs.

ENDOWMENT PRINCIPAL ACCOUNT

	BOOK VALUE	MARKET VALUE
Initial Balance, July 1, 2017	\$210,796.73	\$227,538.36
Cash Flows		
Gifts and Transfers	70,358.40	70,358.40
Funds reverted from spending account	0.00	0.00
Market Appreciation/(Depreciation)		
Includes any market changes for above cash flows	–	6,199.34
Ending Balance, June 30, 2018	\$281,155.13	\$304,096.10

SPENDING ACCOUNT

	VALUE
Initial Balance, July 1, 2017	\$349,343.89
Inflows	
Endowment Spending Allocation	10,482.27
Additional Gifts and Transfers	3,194.90
Fiscal 2017-18 Total Available Spending	\$363,021.06
Outflows	
Expenditures	(123,511.61)
Unused spending allocation reverted to principal	0.00
Ending Balance, June 30, 2018	\$239,509.45

Funding the Endowment

As we continue the ambitious challenge of raising \$10 million for the Center's endowment, we are grateful for every single donation the Center receives. We are inspired by our supporters, who continue to affirm the value of our work through their donations, both large and small. With your support, we will grow our capacity and carry our work forward in perpetuity, helping to meet future needs of woodland owners and woodland health through applied research, landowner engagement, and education.

Ways to Give

- If you're 70-½ or older with a Roth or traditional IRA, you can ask the administrator of your fund to make an IRA Charitable Rollover. If you're under 70-½, you can make a withdrawal and donate a charitable contribution after taxes.
- Gifts of land — Penn State will accept gifts of land and help landowners protect the land with a conservation easement. Only in rare instances will the University hold property.
- Stock or income distribution — Make contributions directly through your investment fund portfolio administrators.
- Outright charitable contributions — All donations to the Center through Penn State count as charitable contributions and can be deducted from your income tax.



Employ
one student for
a 14-week
summer internship



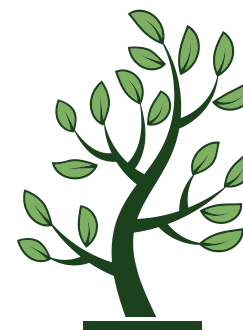
Empower
40 people with
**Pennsylvania
Forest Stewards
Basic Training**



Provide a
**Center for Private
Forests Fellowship**
award of tuition
and stipend for one
graduate student



Compensate the
**Director of the
Center for
Private Forests,**
including health and
retirement benefits



Bring together
1,000 landowners
and others for the
**Biennial Forest
Landowners
Conference**

Funding the Endowment in Perpetuity

\$180,000
funds one
internship program
in perpetuity

\$450,000
sponsors training
for 40 people
each year
in perpetuity

\$1,000,000
funds one
graduate student
each year
in perpetuity

\$2,500,000
sponsors the
Center
directorship
in perpetuity

\$2,000,000
ensures a
low-cost biennial
conference in
perpetuity

Thank You for Your Support

The Center staff and council want to express our gratitude to forest landowners and partners who are supporting our work and helping to expand a vision for the Center's future.

We believe that private forest landowners hold the key to the future of Pennsylvania's forested landscapes. For many decades, natural resources professionals have worked to bring knowledge and assistance to these landowners in the service of forest stewardship. Yet progress in achieving widespread adoption of sustainable management practices remains elusive. With our forests facing regeneration challenges as well as rising threats of forest loss, invasive plants, diseases, and pests, now is the time to put the practices into place that will improve long-term forest health and vitality.

The Center for Private Forests works at the intersection of people and forests. It is the ideal organization to inspire development of new approaches for promoting adoption of sustainable forest practices. The Center recognizes we have much to learn about the large and changing private forest landowner community. Knowing this, the Center strives to create vital new knowledge to inspire innovation and collaboration among both landowners and natural resources professionals who care about all the benefits and values forested landscapes provide today and tomorrow.

Aldo Leopold, author of the *Sand County Almanac*, championed the land ethic, which

recognizes that sustaining community with nature depends on understanding the interdependence among people and ecological systems. The Center for Private Forests uses research and education to strengthen the community of people and organizations seeking to care well for forests.

Gifts from people like you to special projects or the endowment for the Center for Private Forests at Penn State help ensure that our work continues. If you have questions about how you can give to the Center, please contact Allyson Muth or the Development Office in the College of Agricultural Sciences.

Why We Give

We chose to donate to the Center for Private Forests because we have lived around trees our whole life. We both grew up in the country and still own 95 acres that my parents bought in 1945. I remember "sneaking" to the woods when I was about 6 years old to watch the loggers cut standing, dead chestnut trees – with two-man crosscut saws! And, we chose to donate because it sets a good example for those who follow us. Hopefully our children, and grandchildren, will continue to love, appreciate, and want to protect our woods.

- Scott and Joyce Ladner

Since childhood, Penn's Woods has been my refuge from the foibles of humanity. Now, as a more seasoned landowner and forest ecologist, I see Homo sapiens as the dominant influence on our woods. Today our woodlands are, for me, less a sanctuary as they are increasingly fraught with disorienting disturbance. The Center for Private Forests sits at the intimate juncture between man and nature; it's at the critical confluence of research into what makes the forest work and what makes its landholders tick. Finding, balancing, and using that knowledge is our single route to a sustainable future. I find it imperative to support the Center financially, because I care about that future.

- Nancy G.W. Baker

Our forests provide vital health, ecological, and recreational benefits to communities, while also contributing to the economic vitality of the Commonwealth's forest products and tourism industries. We are excited to support the Center, which has become a distinctive voice in shaping the understanding of academic institutions, government agencies, natural resource organizations, industry and the public about private forest landowners and their woods.

- Tony and Jeanne Riley

List of Donors

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We are grateful to all who choose to support the work of The Center for Private Forests through gifts and partnerships. With your support, the Center looks forward to continuing to serve as a leader in connecting people to resources that foster the growing community of all who are committed to the stewardship of our forested landscape well into the future.

ecosystems.psu.edu/give-to-private-forests

* General donation

¹ In honor gift

² In memory gift

³ 2018 Walk in Penn's Woods supporter

Looking Ahead

With 10,000 new woodland owners joining the population each year,* the size of parcels is getting smaller and the knowledge level of those owners is uncertain. Many landowners mistakenly believe that natural resources take care of themselves. Yet, at the same time, they want to leave the land better than when they acquired it. At the Center, we recognize that, in order to develop the most effective research and resources, we must deeply understand these landowners and what motivates them, how they interact with natural resources professionals, and what they need to care well for their land. Here's a look at two future key opportunities to hear the range of stewardship needs and challenges faced by landowners across the state:

2019 Forest Landowners Conference

2018 has been another year of extensive planning and preparation for our 4th Biennial Forest Landowners Conference. The theme for the conference, which takes place March 22-23, 2019 is “Working Woodlands for Today and Tomorrow” and will showcase a variety of resources and learning opportunities for landowners to tap into while stewarding their land. The Center for Private Forests staff and conference planning committee are thrilled to see the growth of the conference over the past several years. The 2019 conference will be held at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center in State College, which can accommodate our growing number of attendees. As we’ve experienced increasing participation over the past three conferences, we are heartened to see the interactions and enthusiasm of attendees blossom. The learning and connections that occur at the conference play a significant role in helping to spread the woodland stewardship message to the growing number of woodland owners in Pennsylvania.

2020 Private Forestlands Pennsylvania Survey

In 2020, we plan to cooperate with the DCNR Bureau of Forestry to repeat the 2010 statewide forest landowners survey. This work will give us a ten-year perspective on the change in landowners and landownership, as well as guide future applied research and the creation of outreach strategies for our educational programs and partners. The survey will expand on past work with landowners and natural resources professionals, helping us to better understand the activities landowners are taking, or not taking, in planning for what happens to their land next.

*Metcalfe, A.L., J.C. Finley, A.E. Luloff, and A.B. Muth. 2012. *Pennsylvania's Private Forests: 2010 Private Forest Landowner Survey Summary*. Report for the PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry.



Over 600 participants shared learning experiences and made valuable connections at the 2017 Forest Landowners Conference.

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Coordinator

PA Forest Steward Affiliates



Blaine Aikin*



Nancy Baker*



Renee Carey*



Laura Jackson*



Tony & Jeanne Riley*



Craig Schwegman*



Bob Slagter*

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* Denotes Center for Private Forests Council Member



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<http://ecosystems.psu.edu/private-forests>



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