



Spring/Summer 2008

POCONO HERITAGE LAND TRUST

NEWSLETTER

PO Box 553 / Pocono Pines, PA 18350 / (570) 424-1514 / www.phlt.org



PHLT Protects 12 Miles of McMichael Creek

Working with one of Monroe County's oldest private fishing clubs, Chestnuthill and Jackson townships purchased a conservation easement that will permanently protect 794 acres of land and approximately 12 miles of one of the best trout streams in the Pocono region. Pocono Heritage Land Trust was named to hold the conservation easement, which means the trust is legally responsible to monitor and protect the property. PHLT has received a \$30,000 endowment from the fish club to help pay the costs of providing this protection.

The agreement with the Pohoqualine Fish Association bars all development on 30 contiguous parcels of land along McMichael Creek and three of its tributaries, Hypsy Creek, Fall Creek and Bowers Creek. The protected area extends from State Game Land 38 in Jackson Township through the picturesque hamlet of McMichaels, Pa., and southeasterly along State Road 715 to the edge of Hamilton Township. "Ecologically, it's a huge victory and it wouldn't have happened if it weren't for the Pohoqualine Fish Association," said Chestnuthill Supervisor Chuck Gould, who negotiated the agreement for the two townships. The club's landholdings were rated as the number one priority for environmental protection by the county natural area review committee in 2003.

The conservation easement's appraised value was nearly \$1 million -- \$901,836. But the fish club, which has been seeking to preserve its land for nearly 15 years, donated \$225,459 of that total. The balance, \$676,377, was funded by a Natural Areas Grant from Monroe County's Open Space Program. The fish club also agreed to reinvest \$250,000 of the proceeds of the sale to protect additional acreage in the McMichael Creek watershed. The club also agreed to open 520 acres of land along Hypsy Creek and Fall Creek for public hunting. "PHLT is honored to be part of this huge achievement for open-space protection in Monroe County," said PHLT President Tom Morganthau. "The Pohoqualine easement is a big responsibility. We need plenty of help to monitor the property, and we'll be organizing a group of volunteers very soon."



Pat Dougherty Elected to PALTA Board

Former PHLT President Patrick Dougherty was elected to the board of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association at PALTA's annual meeting in Malvern, Pa., on April 5th. PALTA is a statewide conservation group that includes 80 local land trusts -- including PHLT -- as members. "I'm really honored to be asked to serve on the board of a nationally recognized organization," Pat says. "I hope I can contribute, but I know I'll learn more than I'll bring to the table." Pat served as PHLT president for 3 years and was instrumental in greatly expanding PHLT's protected lands. A Barrett Township resident, he now serves as chairman of PHLT's Acquisitions Committee and secretary



Friends of Jonas Mountain Mix Fun and Stewardship

Thanks to the tireless efforts of PHLT board member Linda Snyder, PHLT's Jonas Mountain Nature Preserve now has its own stewardship group, the Friends of Jonas Mountain. After getting organized in January, the group met for its first work day on March 15 at Laura and Ken Kostovich's house in Jonas. Splitting into three groups, the volunteers walked the perimeter of the 288-acre property to familiarize themselves with the property and mark the boundaries with "Jonas Mountain Nature Preserve" signs. The Friends of Jonas Mountain performs an invaluable service by helping PHLT to keep tabs on the property, and the work days -- just one or two per year -- are fun. Anyone who lives near the preserve is welcome to join. For information, please email PHLT at info@phlt.org.

Pocono Heritage Land Trust Awarded \$248,000 Grant

Pocono Heritage Land Trust was just awarded a \$248,000 state grant to help protect the 52-acre Fieldstone Farm on Devils Hole Road in Paradise Township. The property is close to PHLT's Kurmes/Paradise Creek Nature Preserve and to State Gamelands 221. It straddles the boundary lines of Mt. Pocono Borough and Paradise and Coolbaugh Townships. PHLT plans to combine the state grant, from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with a grant from Monroe County's Open Space Program to complete the purchase of the property later this year.

The project area is identified in both the regional and county open space plans as a site for a potential greenway/trail connection between Gamelands 221, a county owned industrial park in Coolbaugh Township and open space properties in Paradise and Coolbaugh Townships and Mt Pocono Borough.

Fieldstone Farm includes wetlands, springs and ponds that provide much of the water flow for Tank Creek, a high quality tributary of Paradise Creek. Its combination of old farm fields, mixed forests, and the headwater stream area makes it valuable as wildlife habitat, and it also boasts a spectacular view of Paradise Valley and the Delaware Water Gap.

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CALENDAR / UPCOMING EVENTS

May 18, 2-4:30 pm - **Cherry Valley Ramble**. Spend an afternoon learning why many residents now favor the creation of a Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge to protect one of the most beautiful areas of Monroe County. Participants must sign up before noon on May 17 by calling Anne Fetherman at 570-424-8121 or emailing Anne at fethermana@verizon.net. Go to www.phlt.org for more information.

May 28, 6-7 pm - Pocono Heritage Land Trust **Annual Membership Meeting** and Wine & Cheese Party at Shawnee Inn. All members welcome.

June 1, 1-4:30 pm (rain or shine) - **Natural Places and Open Spaces Hike**. Join PHLT board member and well-known naturalist Don Miller on a "Spring Splash" nature hike through the forested headwaters of McMichael Creek, permanently protected by a conservation easement held by PHLT. Pre-registration is recommended; call Chestnuthill Township at 992-9733. Go to www.phlt.org for more information.



Fourth Graders Raise Funds for Conservation

Fourth graders at Clear Run Elementary Center in Tobyhanna raised almost \$1,000 this spring for Pocono land conservation projects. Pictured here with fourth grade teacher Jennifer Limani and technology instructor (and PHLT board member) Don Miller, the students sold "Smencils," which are large, scented pencils made from 100% recycled newspaper. Clear Run students previously

raised money for tropical rainforest protection, but this year after learning about the rapid loss of habitat in the Poconos, they decided to target their fundraising closer to home. The students donated their earnings to Pocono Heritage Land Trust to be used for two current land conservation projects near the Clear Run Campus, the 52-acre Fieldstone Farm property, and the possible creation of a small nature preserve at Lynchwood Lake, adjacent to the Clear Run campus. PHLT says THANK YOU to Mrs. Limani and the students.