

A UNIQUE COLLABORATION PROTECTS LAND ON THE ALLEGHENY FRONT

Land ownership can be a very personal concept, especially when a property has been in a family for generations.

Each generation has a choice to make about staying or leaving, preserving the landscape or changing it, or even leaving the decision up to someone else. Conservation easements can allow the best of all worlds, keeping the land and conservation value intact while ensuring that a new owner will enjoy the property like generations before them had.

Last year, the Conservancy learned that it was the beneficiary of a beloved farm in Altoona, thanks to the generosity of Shirley Long. Shirley was the last member of her immediate family when she died in 2021 at the age of 92. She lived on her family's 74-acre farm in Logan Township, Blair County her entire life. She was a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and was founder and president of Marketing Services Centre, Inc., a business that created marketing manuals for the global steel industry. Her career required her to travel all over the world, yet she always called the family farm home.

In her will, Shirley made the intention known that she wanted to keep the family property intact and undeveloped, maintaining its "green condition," and bequeathed it to the Conservancy for permanent protection. The mostly forested property is located along

slopes near State Game Lands in the middle of the Allegheny Front, a ridge that runs from West Virginia and Maryland into northern Pennsylvania. The Allegheny Front is an important continental migratory corridor with varied microhabitats that allow for species to migrate and become more resilient and adapt to climate change.

The Conservancy's land protection work is guided by a conservation blueprint that helps prioritize opportunities to protect and restore native plants, animals, habitats, and ecosystems. This helps us to maximize conservation impact by identifying the areas where conservation efforts should be focused, and the Allegheny Front is one of these areas.

WPC worked closely with ClearWater Conservancy (CWC), an important local partner, to make sure Shirley's wishes were fulfilled. CWC's primary focus is land and watershed protection in the central part of the state. Together, we

worked out a unique arrangement to benefit all interests. WPC will convey the property and conservation easement to CWC, which will continue to steward and monitor the property after it is sold to a private owner. The sale proceeds will be split to support a stewardship endowment for CWC and future land conservation projects for WPC.

Michael Knoop, senior director of special projects, had the opportunity to meet with Shirley and her executor to finalize the donation. "We're grateful that Shirley's love of her family land will help protect the Allegheny Front and help support CWC and WPC in their future land conservation work in the region."

If you would like to learn more about conservation easements or including the Conservancy in your estate plans, please contact Julie Holmes, senior director of development, at **412-586-2312** or jholmes@paconserve.org. 



CGA Rates Have Gone Up Again!

The news keeps getting better for the gift that pays you: a charitable gift annuity (CGA). For the second time in just six months, payout rates have increased. They are higher than they have been in more than a decade, making now a great time to consider this gift that benefits you and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

A Charitable Gift Annuity provides you with stable, regular income — regardless of the economy. After your lifetime, the remaining amount becomes part of your legacy at the Conservancy, allowing us to continue the work you love far into the future.



How It Works

With a CGA, you can make a donation using cash, marketable securities or other assets, and we, in turn, pay you a fixed amount for life. You'll receive reliable, predictable payments for your lifetime (and the lifetime of a loved one, if you choose).

NEW OPTION FOR YOU! If you are 70½ or older, you can now make a one-time election for a qualified charitable distribution of up to \$50,000 (without being taxed) from your IRA to fund a CGA. Some limitations apply, so contact Julie Holmes at **412-586-2312** or jholmes@paconserve.org for more details and a personalized illustration. 🌿

Find Your New Favorite Place

Spring is a great time to branch out and experience nature...and now it's even easier to find a WPC preserve to explore.

Visit our new online guide that allows you to search preserves by county and specific activities, such as hiking, fishing, paddling and more! Find important information to help you plan, from directions to parking. 🌿

WaterLandLife.org/land-conservation/explore-our-preserves



Paddling on
Lake Pleasant,
Erie County



Scenic view from the Joshua C.
Whetzel, Jr. Memorial Recreational
Area, Somerset County



The trail at Wolf Creek
Narrows Natural Area,
Butler County

Major Preservation Effort Underway at Fallingwater

In late 2019, after receiving the honor of inscription to the UNESCO World Heritage Site list, Fallingwater launched a major campaign to raise funds for the most comprehensive preservation project since the reinforcement of the cantilevers twenty years ago. World events put plans on pause for a time, but we are pleased to announce that the *World Heritage Preserved: Forging a Future for Fallingwater* campaign has raised more than \$5.4 million in grants and donations.

And now the work begins! A project started in the guest house this year, and next year's focus will be on the main house, with completion set for 2025.

The preservation effort will address Fallingwater's major structural systems such as roofing, stone masonry and concrete, with an overall theme of waterproofing. One of the most fragile balances at Fallingwater is protecting it from water infiltration that deteriorates the structure and can damage artwork and furniture.

Last winter, in preparation for the World Heritage Preserved projects, staff repointed the mortar in the guest house bedroom, Edgar Kaufmann Sr.'s dressing room and Edgar Kaufmann Jr.'s study, which were the areas most impacted by leaks. The main reason for this water infiltration is that the stacked stone walls are actually hollow and filled with rubble, as was the common masonry practice at the time. This construction allows unpredictable seepage in the spaces between rocks. The solution to this is to inject the



This historic photo from the original construction reveals the rubble in the walls, soon to be injected with grout.

walls with grout to fill those spaces, a technique that wasn't available twenty years ago and is currently being tested in the guest house. This work will begin in 2024, followed by waterproofing terraces and adding new roofing membranes across each of the Fallingwater's roofs.

For the remainder of this year, technicians will conduct grout testing and conserve steel window and door frames before the grout injection process begins on a selection of the stone walls.

After many years of planning and fundraising, we are excited for work to finally begin! Stay updated on progress throughout the year and other developments at [Fallingwater.org](https://fallingwater.org). 🌿

The Lower Elk Creek Project

Protecting a World-Class Trout Stream

The Conservancy recently completed a major streambank stabilization project to protect a world-class steelhead trout stream in Erie County that attracts anglers from all over the region. In 2012, the Conservancy protected this 92-acre reserve that has more than half-mile frontage along Lower Elk Creek, which flows into Lake Erie. This project at Lower Elk Creek Nature Reserve was more than a decade in the making, but the benefits to water quality and wildlife are priceless and will extend for many decades to come. Watch the WPC webinar "Helping Elk Creek Thrive: Our Decades-Long Commitment to a Local Treasure" at WaterLandLife.org/events-volunteer-opportunities/webinars to learn more.

This program will also be featured in a brief presentation with other WPC projects at Members' Day and Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 6. Register at WaterLandLife.org/MembersDay2023. 🌿





Members' Day and Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 6

Thank you for supporting WPC!

Join us at Members' Day at Bear Run Nature Reserve for a day of guided hikes, information sessions, free tours of Fallingwater and other activities. Get outdoors, be inspired and learn something new!



Visit WaterLandLife.org/MembersDay2023 for a schedule of activities and to register.

Wildflower Hike at Wolf Creek Narrows

**May 18th is Pennsylvania
Native Species Day!**

Celebrate with WPC on a guided hike at Wolf Creek Narrows Natural Area in Butler County. Land Stewardship Director Andy Zadnik will lead this hike featuring spring wildflowers and other native species.

Space is limited to 20 people.

Contact Nicole Walsh at
nwalsh@paconserve.org
or 412-586-2322 to make
reservations.



Mission Statement: The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy protects and restores exceptional places to provide our region with clean waters and healthy forests, wildlife and natural areas for the benefit of present and future generations. The Conservancy creates green spaces and gardens, contributing to the vitality of our cities and towns, and preserves Fallingwater, a symbol of people living in harmony with nature.