



DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
CONSERVANCY

2020 Annual Report





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PA: 570-226-3164
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Thank You

As we reflect on 2020 and look toward brighter days in 2021, we are reminded of the strength and resiliency of our shared Upper Delaware River region community.

Our work is made possible by the support of our members, partners, and friends, and that has never been more clear than in 2020, when we all faced unprecedented challenges and learned what is possible when we look for creative ways to work together.

In 2020, **54 volunteers donated countless hours of their personal time**, whether as a member of our Board of Directors, serving on a committee, or helping residents and visitors look for and learn about bald eagles during our winter Eagle Watch program. Two dozen participants joined us for our first fully virtual **Women and Their Woods Retreat**, learning about forest stewardship from expert presenters and connecting to other women forest landowners. And thousands of people joined us online for our **virtual educational nature walks and explorations**.

Despite facing their own significant challenges this year, the local businesses in the **Green Lodging Partnership** together contributed nearly \$60,000 toward local conservation in 2020. Learn more about our partners at www.DelawareHighlands.org/greenlodging.

We are deeply grateful to all those who continued to find ways to support the Conservancy—whether turning Foods of the Delaware Highlands dinner sponsorships and ticket purchases into donations when the event was cancelled due to COVID, contributing to a fundraising appeal, participating in the photo contest, purchasing a redbud in the sapling sale, bidding on an item in the online auction, or simply sharing our posts on social media.

Thank you for being part of our community and for your investment in a healthy, sustainable future for us all.

The Van Scott Nature Reserve A New Home for the Conservancy and a Place to Learn and Explore

In spring 2020, the Van Scott family generously donated a 144-acre property in Berlin Township, Beach Lake, Pennsylvania to the Delaware Highlands Conservancy to develop as an environmental learning center, Conservancy headquarters, and for use as a nature reserve.

This special property, the Conservancy's first nature reserve and headquarters, will be known as the Van Scott Nature Reserve (*photo below*). As the stewards of this historic dairy farm, the Conservancy will honor the land and the families who farmed it for generations while welcoming the public to visit the property, learn about our shared local history, and explore this beautiful Reserve.

The property features diverse habitats with abundant opportunities for conservation, environmental education, and outdoor recreation on self-guided trails, including forested areas, two ponds, a tributary to Beach Lake Creek, and wetlands. Wildflower meadows provide important habitat for ground-nesting birds like the bobolink on the cover of this report.

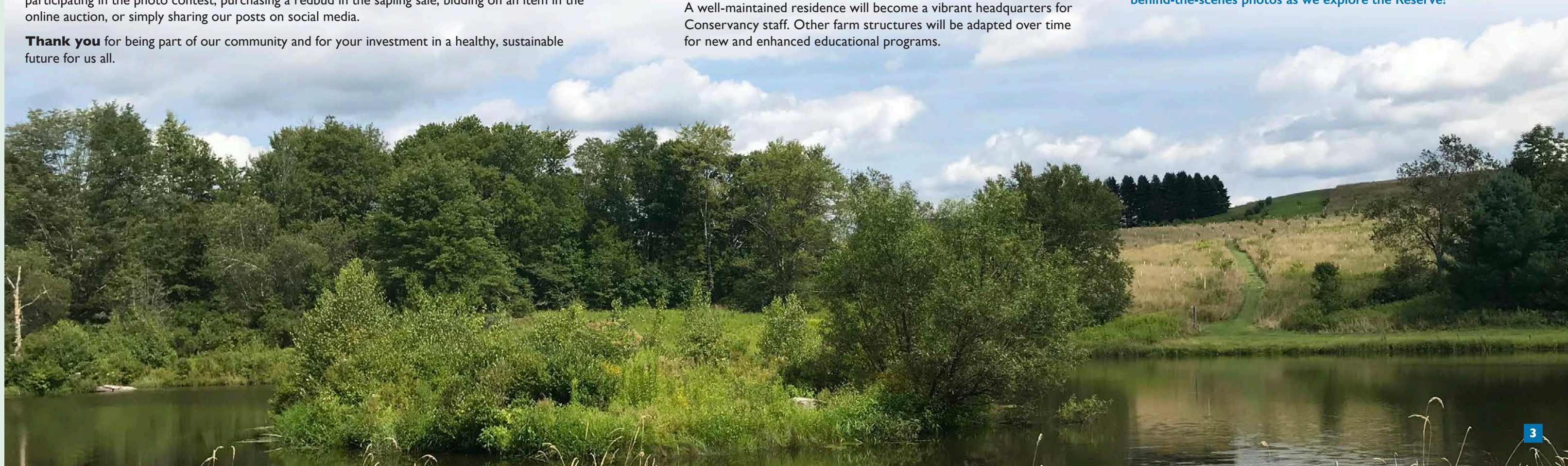
A well-maintained residence will become a vibrant headquarters for Conservancy staff. Other farm structures will be adapted over time for new and enhanced educational programs.

A major feature of the Reserve will be over 3.5 miles of self-guided hiking trails through woodlands and meadows, and throughout the year the Conservancy will welcome visitors to nature walks, workshops, and volunteer activities.

“Since the Conservancy was first approached with this offer, the Board of Directors and staff have undertaken an intensive planning process and consulted with members of the community to determine how this significant gift will best serve as an environmental education center to benefit the entire region,” stated Board President Karen Lutz. As part of this planning process, the Conservancy Board of Directors is focused on a \$5 million capital campaign to fully realize the value of this gift and to sustainably support the expanded operations of the organization with a newly established Fund for the Future.

The Conservancy staff and Board of Directors are working hard to complete the necessary updates to the buildings and property at the Van Scott Nature Reserve, and we look forward to welcoming you when the work is complete and the property is open to the public.

[Follow the Conservancy on Instagram at @DHConservancy for behind-the-scenes photos as we explore the Reserve!](#)



2020 Donors

River Club Member
Donors of \$2,500 or more annually (from July 1, 2019 through July 31, 2020) become members of the Conservancy’s River Club. Learn more at www.delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/river-club.

\$500,000 or more
The Van Scott Family

\$100,000 or more
The Estate of Harold MacGregor
William Penn Foundation

\$25,000 or more
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Sonja Hedlund & Richard Riseling
Land Trust Alliance & the New York State Conservation Partnership Program
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Kelly Nywening
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Tom Zibinski
Doreen Zicolello

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Patricia Diness
Mary Evans
Arnold Friedman
Linda Gearhart
Susanne Hand & David Kinsey
Susan Hartney
Harold MacGregor (deceased)
Dorothy Merrill (deceased)
Mary Sue Sweeney Price
Kimberly (Mimi) Raleigh
Brenda Seldin
Richard Snyder (deceased)
Charles Victor Traeger (deceased)
Sigrid Wilshinsky
Jonathan Wind
Barbara Yeaman

Volunteers
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Courtney Barden Peterson
Jack Barnett
Cyndee Cann
Mary Anne Carletta
Jim Carney
Francis Cerra
Kim Christie
Jan DeHaan
Heather DePietro
Janice and Stephen DiMaio
Lisa and Matt Dobroski

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

In 2020, the Conservancy received donations **in memory of** Ann Cartwright, Barbara Curry, David Diness, Marion Beck Finch, Bill and Alice Froelich, Sheila Hodges, Jim Maneval, Harold L. Rosencrance, Frank Schooley, Vanessa VanGorder, and Ermalinda White. The Conservancy received donations **in honor of** Jim Bacon, Greg Belcamino, Jesse Berman, Lauren Hermley, Karen and Charlie Lutz, Jeff and Maggie Moore, Ollie Red Sox, Richie and Jackie Shannon, Laura and Eric Steifman, Mark Wiggins, and Judy and Janet.

You too can support the Delaware Highlands Conservancy with a one-time, sustaining, or legacy gift. Our Legacy Leaders have included the Conservancy in their will or estate plans, or have helped a parent, partner or loved one leave a legacy. Visit DelawareHighlands.org to donate now, or contact Bethany Zarnowski at 570-226-3164 to discuss your gift.



Volunteers continued... ...
Sean Duffie
Ed Duvinski
Kerry Engelhardt
Pat Erhard
Amy Erlwein
Keith Fitzpatrick
Denise Frangipane
Adam Freedgood
Paul Gamer
Mary Ann Geary-Halchak
Jeanne Genzlinger
Elizabeth Green
Krista Gromalski
Re Hagele
Marta Hallett
Kate Hayes
Edith Idell
Heather Jacksy
Kevin Keller
Tracey Kelly
Don Kenny
Nancy Kiesendahl Bloch
John Kocijanski
Dianna Levine
Donna Levine
Sandy Long
Joseph LoSauro
Lisa Lyons
Terri Marcellus
Roger McCullough
Maureen McGowan
Traci Mengle
Joel and Kate Murphy
Tess Murray
Ken Myett
Peter and Julie Oberstoetter
Mitch Opresnick
Brad and Denise Orey
Christopher Pettinato
Joe Price

Sandra Rinehart
Robin Rosenbluth
Diana Samona
Steve Schwartz
Carolyn Seifried
Michael Shatt
Gary Silien
Dave Steckel
Louise Washer
Larisa Yusko

Green Lodging Partners ...
The 1924 Bungalow and The 1925 Cottage
The Anthracite Hotel
Apple Pond Farm
Himalayan Institute
Hotel Fauchere
James Manning House
Ledges Hotel
The Lodge at Woodloch
Lower Catskills Fields & Forest
Pepacton Cabins
Santosha on the Ridge
The Settlers Inn
Silver Birches
Woodloch Resort

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

Dear Members, Partners, and Friends,

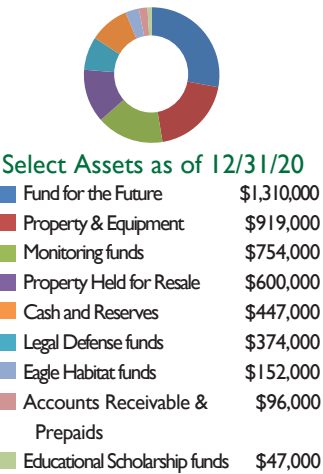
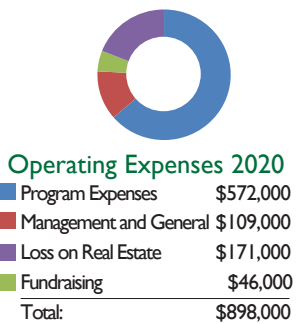
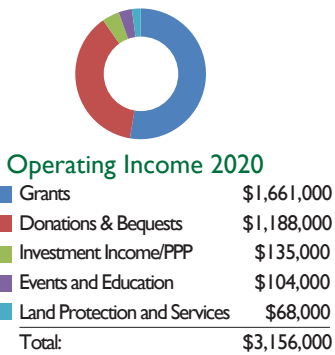
Our 2020 Annual Report is a story of exceptional generosity and our deep and abiding gratitude for the unwavering support from you—our community. During a year that presented untold challenges all around the world; here in the Upper Delaware Region we were able to carry on. And carry on we did under the leadership of our Executive Director, Diane Rosencrance and the members of our staff who have been working remotely for over a year and doing so very creatively and effectively. The Conservancy’s Board is known as a working Board but last year we took that to an extreme with all of our volunteers meeting regularly via Zoom to set the stage for our new headquarters in Beach Lake and exploring all of the possibilities that the Reserve has to offer.

In this report you’ve read about the gift of the Van Scott Nature Reserve and the extraordinary generosity of the Van Scott family. You’ve seen the long list of donors whose support allowed us to continue offering many of our educational programs online and the wonderful dinner sponsors who sponsored a dinner that didn’t happen. And you’ve noted the ongoing support from the Green Lodging Partnership despite the hardships suffered in the hospitality industry. This commitment is truly exceptional.

As we move forward in 2021 we will be opening the doors of our new headquarters at the Van Scott Nature Reserve for the public to visit and explore, and we can’t wait to show it to you! We’ve laid out a new four-year strategic plan that places a heavy emphasis on the educational opportunities at the Reserve which will strengthen our message of sustainability. And, we have just launched our \$5 million capital campaign that will allow us to pursue our plans to grow in our new location. If you’d like more information we’ll be happy to tell you more about it!

During a year of vulnerability and hardships, our generous donors, our partners, our volunteers and our friends stepped in to support the Conservancy to ensure that we could continue to look forward. Because of you and your faith in us, we are very well-positioned for the future. Thank you. We are deeply, deeply grateful.

Karen Lutz



Unaudited financials. For the full audited financial report and our 990, visit www.DelawareHighlands.org.

The Upper Delaware River Region Featured in National Geographic

The bald eagles that share our region are thriving. They find safe habitat here, whether they are year-round residents or winter migrants searching for open water for fishing and healthy forests for nesting and roosting.

The eagles of our region were featured in National Geographic in “Winter is prime time for watching bald eagles—here’s how.” Read the article here: www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/winter-is-prime-time-for-watching-eagles-heres-how-to-see-them.

In 2020, our Eagle Watch educational programming successfully reached thousands of people, thanks to support from our partners, grant funders, and a dedicated group of volunteers donating hundreds of hours of their time.

To learn more about the recovery of the bald eagle from near extinction, eagle-viewing in our region, or to become an Eagle Watch volunteer, please visit www.DelawareHighlands.org/eagles/.

EAGLE PHOTO © DAVID B. SOETE



Scholarships Awarded to Local Students

In 2020 the Conservancy awarded our annual “Delaware Highlands Conservancy/Yeaman Scholarship” for \$1,000 to Mia Van Wie (left), a 2020 graduate of Delaware Valley High School and the “Vanessa Joy Van Gorder Memorial Scholarship” for \$1,000 to Kara Campbell (right), a 2020 graduate of Wallenpaupack Area HS.

Mia will attend Kenyon College in Gambier, OH, where she will major in environmental studies and political science. Kara will attend the University of Vermont in Burlington, VT, to major in environmental studies with the goal of becoming an environmental educator.

Sustainability, Community, and Friendship
The Legacy of Apple Pond Farm

Since 1865, the 81-acre Apple Pond Farm in Callicoon Center, Sullivan County, NY has been an active farm and a cornerstone of the local community. For landowners Sonja Hedlund and Dick Riseling, it is their home of forty-seven years, their sustainable community business, and a place for people from all over the world to come together as strangers and to leave as friends.

In 2020, Apple Pond Farm was permanently protected with a conservation easement with the Conservancy. The easement will protect the property from development and subdivision and ensure the land will forever remain affordable and viable as a farm.

Dick and Sonja have owned and cared for their land since 1973. Over the years, they produced a variety of vegetables, fruits, and meat products including sheep, goats, chickens, and turkeys. In 2003, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation became a major focus and they began offering agricultural, ecological, and renewable energy tours, classes, and workshops attended by thousands of people.

For generations, Apple Pond Farm has been an important part of our shared local history and a prominent fixture in the local community. Thanks to Dick and Sonja’s foresight in protecting the farm, it will remain that way for generations to come.

Read the full story and watch the mini-documentary about Apple Pond Farm at DelawareHighlands.org.



Upcoming Events

Most events require advance registration. Visit

DelawareHighlands.org for additional details, to register, and to view our complete Calendar of Events for 2021.

Earth Day Cleanup at the Barbara Yeaman Eagle Observation Area

April 22, 2021 • Barryville, NY

Join Conservancy staff, volunteers, and partners on Earth Day as we participate in the Upper Delaware Council's litter sweep to clean up the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway.

Women and Their Woods Chainsaw Safety Class

May 15, 2021 • Honesdale, PA

Join the Conservancy, Women and Their Woods graduates and guests, and the Northern Tier Hardwood Association as we learn Chainsaw Safety with a Game of Logging instructor. Bring your own gas-powered chainsaw and safety equipment if you have it. Space for the event is limited and registration is required.

Native Plants Walk

June 5, 2021 • Smallwood Forest Reserve in Bethel, NY

Visit the Smallwood Forest Reserve for a walk along the wooded trails and learn about our region's native plants from The Botanical Hiker, Heather Houskeeper. Protected with a conservation easement in 2013, the property is home to scenic waterways, forested areas, and diverse wildlife habitat. Space is limited and registration is required.

Photo Contest

May through August 2021

Stay tuned for an announcement in May about our upcoming 2021 photo contest! Submissions will be accepted in August with a gallery show at The Artery in Milford, PA in November.

Back to Nature Celebration

September 19, 2021 • The Van Scott Nature Reserve and the Inn at Woodloch

Save the date for a special event beginning with an exclusive tour of the Van Scott Nature Reserve in Beach Lake, PA followed by a delicious lakeside dinner at the Inn at Woodloch.

To learn more about...

the Delaware Highlands Conservancy or to make a donation in support of our work, visit **DelawareHighlands.org**.

Find us on  @DelawareHighlandsConservancy  @DHConservancy  @DHConservancy

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