



DELAWARE  
HIGHLANDS  
CONSERVANCY

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

VAN SCOTT NATURE RESERVE  
PHOTO BY NICOLE DECAROLIS





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*Conservation Programs Associate*

#### CONTACT US

Van Scott Nature Reserve  
571 Perkins Pond Rd  
Beach Lake, PA 18405  
DelawareHighlands.org  
info@delawarehighlands.org  
PA: 570-226-3164 • NY: 845-583-1010



## Thank You!

**2023 was an eventful year for the Conservancy as we continued to grow into our home at the Van Scott Nature Reserve,** offered a variety of educational programs for people of all ages in our community, completed two exciting new land protection projects, and successfully defended a conservation easement following a timber theft.

This year also brought a change in board leadership. After serving on the Board of Directors for nine years, the last year as President, Mary Sue Price retired and Douglas Hayes was elected as President. Doug initially joined the board in 2016 and previously served as Treasurer. Several new members also brought their expertise to the board for new three-year terms, including Sabry Mohideen who has been elected Treasurer, Jacqueline Sailer, and Louise Washer. Karen Lutz has also returned to the board after retiring as President in 2022.

We continued to host our popular programs in 2023, including the *Confluence: Land, Water, Wildlife* photo contest with The Artery Gallery in Milford, PA. The Green Lodging Partnership, which offers visitors the opportunity to contribute to the conservation of the Upper Delaware River region with every reservation, raised more than \$70,000 in a record year. Our dedicated team of more than 80 volunteers donated countless hours of their personal time serving on committees, on our Board of Directors, helping out around the Reserve and on visits to protected properties, or on our winter Eagle Watch program. And, with many land protection projects underway, a comprehensive strategic planning process ahead in 2024, and a continued focus on our Fund for the Future capital campaign, our staff, board, and committee members are busier than ever.

#### Looking Ahead

In 2024, we are delighted to celebrate the Conservancy's 30th anniversary. Since the organization was founded in 1994, we have protected nearly 19,000 acres of working farms and forests, clean waters, and wildlife habitat, and look forward to continuing this important work.

**We invite you to join us on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at Silver Birches in Hawley, PA for Foods of the Delaware Highlands, an elegant evening of glamour and generosity as we celebrate our 30th anniversary and invest in the future of our conservation mission. Tickets for the event are available at [DelawareHighlands.org/events](https://DelawareHighlands.org/events).**

This work is made possible because of the support of the members and friends who generously contribute to the Conservancy, whether through financial support, volunteer time, or attendance at our events. Thank you for your continued investment in a sustainable future for the Upper Delaware River region, and we look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events in 2024!

*\*Directors who served on and retired from the board in 2023.*



VAN SCOTT NATURE RESERVE  
PHOTO BY KAYLAN HUBBARD



# Protecting Land and Celebrating Community



**Land Protected in the Upper Delaware River Region**

**Two more properties in the Upper Delaware River region are now permanently protected with a conservation easement.** Victoria Kohler's (pictured) property, "Sometimes Brook," is 49 acres located in Sullivan County, NY, adjacent to the 1,036-acre Hickok Brook Multiple Use Area and helps to provide important wildlife habitat and protect water quality. "Confluence Flats," 63 acres in Wayne County, PA, protects the confluence of the East and West branches of the Delaware River and includes 5,300 feet of frontage on the West Branch and main stem of the Delaware River. [Read these stories and learn more about protecting your land at \*\*delawarehighlands.org/landowner-stories\*\*.](https://delawarehighlands.org/landowner-stories)



**Cutting the Ribbon on a New Pavilion at the Reserve**

In September, we were thrilled to cut the ribbon on the brand-new *Eugene and Mary Van Scott Pavilion* at the Van Scott Nature Reserve. Generously donated by Stephen and David Van Scott in honor of their parents, **the pavilion is located on the highest point of the property with beautiful surrounding views**—all the way to the Catskill Mountains in New York and to High Point State Park in New Jersey! We'll host our outdoor educational events and programs here, and it will be a great place to take a break from your hike, sit in the shade, and enjoy the scenery. The surrounding area will be restored to a wildflower meadow. [Read more at \*\*delawarehighlands.org/news/\*\*.](https://delawarehighlands.org/news/)



**Community Raises Funds for Memorial Scholarship**

The Vanessa Joy VanGorder Memorial Scholarship Fund was **generously supported by the Fall Music Festival at Dorflinger, with a contribution of \$2,000** from funds raised during their fall event. In 2023, the scholarship was awarded to Bailey Tesseyman, a graduate of Sullivan West Central High School. Bailey is attending the University at Albany (SUNY) to study sociology. The \$2,000 scholarship is awarded annually to a student in one of the nine school districts in the Upper Delaware River region. [Contributions to the scholarship fund may be made at \*\*DelawareHighlands.org\*\* or by mail to \*\*571 Perkins Pond Rd, Beach Lake, PA 18405\*\*.](https://delawarehighlands.org)



**Conservancy Defends Protected Property After Timber Theft**

In 2019, a landowner of a conserved Sullivan County, NY property discovered that **a logger had crossed her well-marked property boundary, illegally cut down and removed 120 mature trees, and destroyed a memorial site**. Since this discovery was made, the Conservancy worked in partnership with the landowner, the New York State DEC, and legal counsel for restitution. In 2023, a settlement was reached between the Conservancy, the landowner, and the defendants to provide remediation and restoration of the trees that were removed and to repay the Conservancy's legal expenses in defense of this conservation easement. [Read the full story at \*\*delawarehighlands.org/conservancy-responds-to-timber-theft-on-protected-property/\*\*.](https://delawarehighlands.org/conservancy-responds-to-timber-theft-on-protected-property/)



# 2023 Donors

## River Club Member

Donors of \$2,500 or more annually (from July 1, 2022 through July 31, 2023) become members of the Conservancy's River Club. Learn more at

[www.delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/river-club](http://www.delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/river-club).

### \$100,000 or more

Estate of Helen Early  
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Helen Weary

In 2023, the Conservancy received donations **in memory of** Major Arnold and Patricia Baum, Phil Fitzpatrick, Timothy Lorch, Margaret Sandercock Freeman, and Vanessa Joy VanGorder. The Conservancy received donations **in honor of** Michael Finamore, Lauren Hermley, Nicholas Joralemon, Karen Lutz, Bill Niles, Conrad Raabe, and Beth VanGorder.

**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](https://DelawareHighlands.org) to donate now, or contact Samantha Mango at 570-226-3164 ext. 9 to discuss your gift.





### Up to \$500, continued

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Joseph and Dorothea White  
Kevin and Pat Whitehead  
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Larry Williamson  
Emily Wilson  
Elliot and Lori Winick  
Lindsay Wright  
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Faith Zerbe and Gokhan Seker  
Tom Zibinski  
Tracie Zirpoli  
Edward and Amber Zygmunt

### Legacy Leaders

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

### Volunteers

Hope Abrams  
James Asselstine  
Courtney Barden  
Jack Barnett  
Cyndee Cann  
Mary Anne Carletta  
Tina Carr  
Francis Cerra  
Paula Colbath  
Heather DePietro  
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Krista Gromalski  
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Edith Idell  
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Lake  
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## Thank You to Our 2024 Corporate Sponsors

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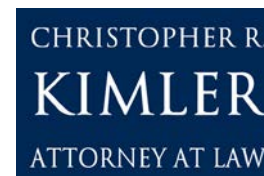


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Learn more at [delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/corporate-sponsorships/](https://delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/corporate-sponsorships/).



# President's Remarks

Dear Members, Partners, and Friends,

If you are reading this it means that you are probably already a member and/or volunteer supporting the Delaware Highlands Conservancy, so let me start by saying **THANK YOU!**

In 2024 the Delaware Highlands Conservancy will celebrate our 30th anniversary. Way back in 1994 Barbara Yeaman founded the Conservancy because she recognized the need to protect and preserve the natural beauty of the lands surrounding the Delaware River. If you know Barbara, it will not surprise you to learn that she still regularly checks in on the progress of her Conservancy and she continues to serve as a Director Emerita.

Over the past 30 years the Conservancy has grown into full-fledged accredited land trust serving the two-state region that forms the Upper Delaware River. We work with concerned landowners who come to us wishing to preserve and protect their land. The result of our work is that now we help to conserve 18,950 acres for 80+ landowners.

In the next 30 years our organization will continue to protect land and broaden the role that we play encouraging environmental awareness in our region. With the help of our supporters, we will build a new education center at our Van Scott Nature Reserve. The center will host indoor classroom educational and experiential events.

If you have not yet visited our new headquarters, I want you to stop by our 144-acre Van Scott Nature Reserve. We welcome visitors seven days a week during daylight hours. The Reserve features three miles of groomed trails through beautiful meadows, ponds and forests as well as a breathtaking hill-top overlooking three states. We are in Beach Lake only 10 minutes from Narrowsburg and 20 minutes from Honesdale or Hawley. *Seriously... you need to come for a hike and check us out!!*

Let me close with another thank you to our staff, our volunteers, our corporate sponsors and my fellow board members who make the Delaware Highlands Conservancy successful. Our ranks include long time residents, new residents, farmers and business owners. We all work together to advance our commitment to conservation and clean water. We make our region a special place where people want to live or just visit. We aim to keep it that way for many years to come!

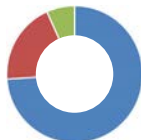
All the best,

**Doug Hayes, President**



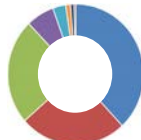
### Operating Income 2023

Donations & Bequests	\$606,000
Grants	\$436,000
Investment Income	\$370,000
Education & Engagement	\$136,000
Land Protection & Services	\$64,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1,612,000</b>



### Operating Expenses 2023

Program Expenses	\$673,000
Management and General	\$176,000
Fundraising	\$61,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$910,000</b>



### Select Assets as of 12/31/23

Fund for the Future	\$1,808,000
Property & Equipment	\$1,212,000
Stewardship funds	\$1,157,000
Cash and Reserves	\$317,000
Eagle Habitat funds	\$146,000
Educational Scholarship funds	\$55,000
Accounts Receivable & Prepaids	\$40,000
Land Protection funds	\$19,000
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$4,754,000</b>

Unaudited financials. For the full audited financial report and our 990, visit [www.DelawareHighlands.org](http://www.DelawareHighlands.org).



VAN SCOTT NATURE RESERVE  
EXPLORED TRAIL



# Upcoming Events

Events require advance registration, and a registration fee may be requested. Visit **DelawareHighlands.org/events** or call 570-226-3164 ext. 2 for additional details, to register, and to view our complete Calendar of Events.

## “Over and Under the Pond” & Craft

**April 6 • 11am-12:30pm • Van Scott Nature Reserve**

Join us to read the story “Over and Under the Pond” by Kate Messner and learn all about animal life in and around the water. Following the reading, we will create a small craft for you to take home!

## Foods of the Delaware Highlands

**May 4 • 5:30pm • Silver Birches, Hawley, PA**

Join us for an elegant evening of glamour and generosity as we celebrate our “Pearl” anniversary and three decades of success in protecting the Upper Delaware River region. Enjoy a four-course dinner featuring seasonal ingredients from local farms. Silent and live auctions will feature fun and unique activities, art, and more highlighting the beauty and bounty of the Upper Delaware. Tickets are \$185 per person with additional opportunities to support the event as a sponsor.

## Finding the Rainbow Scavenger Hunt

**May 17 • 12pm-4pm • Van Scott Nature Reserve**

Spring has arrived and color is starting to peek out into our world again! Drop by anytime between 12pm and 4pm to see if you can find all the colors of the rainbow at the Van Scott Nature Reserve. A small prize will be awarded to those who complete the scavenger hunt!

## Pond Investigation

**May 25 • 1pm-3pm • Van Scott Nature Reserve**

Join us as we take an in-depth look into life in a pond! During our pond investigation, you will be getting your hands dirty looking for insects known as macroinvertebrates. We will use our findings to determine the quality of our pond!



## 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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