



DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
CONSERVANCY

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



DELAWARE
HIGHLANDS
CONSERVANCY

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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



Honoring the Past, Protecting the Future

In 2025, the Delaware Highlands Conservancy continued to grow its impact across the Upper Delaware River region. We advanced two land conservation projects—completed in early 2026—and stewarded more than 19,000 acres of lands, waters, and wildlife habitat permanently protected to date. Our popular workshops and demonstration programs at the Van Scott Nature Reserve and across the region continued to foster learning, connection, and conservation action.

Support from our community remained stronger than ever. The Green Lodging Partnership, which offers visitors the opportunity to contribute to local conservation with every reservation, raised nearly \$70,000. Our dedicated team of more than 100 volunteers donated countless hours of their personal time serving on committees and on our Board of Directors, assisting around the Reserve and on visits to protected properties, and supporting our winter Eagle Watch program. The annual *Confluence: Land, Water, Wildlife* photo contest and gallery show celebrated the creativity of community members of all ages and highlighted the scenic beauty and unique wildlife of our region.

2025 also brought a change in board leadership. After nine years of service on the Board of Directors, including the last two as President, Doug Hayes retired, and Jacqueline Sailer was elected President. Michael Cann and Sabry Mohideen also retired as Secretary and Treasurer, respectively.

Finally, 2025 was a year of reflection as we mourned the passing of the Conservancy's founder, Barbara Yeaman, at 100 years of age. Barbara's vision and determination laid the foundation for everything we have accomplished over the past three decades, and her leadership continues to inspire our work each day.

We also said goodbye to Dr. Eugene Van Scott at 103 years of age. A passionate and dedicated conservationist, Dr. Van Scott, together with his family, generously donated the Conservancy's headquarters and the 144-acre Van Scott Nature Reserve in 2020, creating a permanent home for our education programs and a beautiful space for the community to walk the trails and enjoy nature.

While we mourn their loss, we are deeply honored to carry their legacy forward through our land conservation and education efforts at the Van Scott Nature Reserve and throughout the region. Many friends and family members chose to honor their memories with contributions to the Conservancy and to the Barbara Yeaman Fund for Land Conservation, which was established in celebration of Barbara's 100th birthday in December 2024.

Looking Ahead

With several land protection projects underway, programs scheduled throughout the year, and exciting activities planned at the Reserve—including accessible community and demonstration gardens that are continuing to take shape with the help of our dedicated volunteers—our team is busier than ever. We're looking forward to seeing you in 2026!

This work is made possible by the generosity of our members, friends, and volunteers. Whether through financial contributions, volunteer service, or participation in our events, you make our mission possible. **Thank you for your continued support!**



Conservation in Action

Local Businesses Champion Conservation Efforts



In 2025, local businesses demonstrated their commitment to conservation and education. **Harmony In The Woods** hosted a **benefit concert** at their beautiful outdoor venue featuring the Carole King tribute band *Home Again*, raising funds in support of the Conservancy's mission. This year, the Conservancy was also approved to receive Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) funding and received generous contributions from **The Dime Bank** and **Weis Markets**. This support will help bring local students to the Van Scott Nature Reserve for educational field trips and hands-on learning experiences. [Learn more about becoming an EITC supporter at DelawareHighlands.org/eitc](https://DelawareHighlands.org/eitc).



Habitat Restoration at the Van Scott Nature Reserve

This year, we were pleased to welcome volunteers to the Van Scott Nature Reserve for a **hands-on habitat restoration project** as part of our *Bugs, Balance, and Biodiversity* workshop series. Guided by partners from the Wayne Conservation District and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, participants planted native shrubs to help restore vital shrubland habitat that supports birds, pollinators, and other wildlife. With active management to address canopy encroachment, invasive species, and deer browse, this important work is strengthening forest health and biodiversity at the Reserve. [Learn more about joining our volunteer team at DelawareHighlands.org/volunteer](https://DelawareHighlands.org/volunteer).

Community Raises Funds for Memorial Scholarship



The Vanessa Joy Van Gorder 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 2025, the scholarship was awarded to Allison Sterner, a graduate of Wallenpaupack Area. Allison is attending Wilkes University and majoring in education. The \$2,500 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](https://DelawareHighlands.org) or by mail to **571 Perkins Pond Rd, Beach Lake, PA 18405**.



Protecting Forests and Clean Waters for Wildlife

Whether it's the resident pairs that build nests, raise their young, and live here year-round or the hundreds that flock here in the winter in search of clean water to fish and large stands of trees for perching and roosting, **the bald eagles that share our region are thriving**. The Upper Delaware River region is one of the largest wintering habitats for eagles in the northeast United States, and protected lands provide the safe habitat the eagles need, now and for future generations.

[Learn more about the eagles in our region, their habitat and behavior, and the best places to safely view them at DelawareHighlands.org/eagles](https://DelawareHighlands.org/eagles).

2025 Donors

River Club Member

Individual donors of \$2,500 or more annually (from July 1, 2024 through July 31, 2025) become members of the Conservancy's River Club. Learn more at www.delawarehighlands.org/membership-support/river-club.

\$100,000 or more

Kentfields Foundation
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

\$10,000 or more

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Helen Early (deceased)
Mary Evans
Arnold Friedman (deceased)
Linda Gearhart (deceased)
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Harold MacGregor (deceased)
Dorothy Merrill (deceased)
Mary Sue Sweeney Price
Kimberly (Mimi) Raleigh
Brenda Seldin
Richard Snyder (deceased)
Charles Victor Traeger (deceased)
Sigrid Wilshinsky (deceased)
Jonathan Wind
Barbara Yeaman (deceased)

In 2025, the Conservancy received donations in memory of Peter Bernstein, George Borecky III, Michael Chiuchiolo, Douglas Kelley, Vanessa Joy Van Gorder, Dr. Eugene Van Scott, Ed Wesely, James and Rosalyn Williams, and Barbara Yeaman, and in honor of Jeffrey Moore and John Mark Thomas.

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 Samantha Mango at 570-226-3164 ext. 9 to discuss your gift.

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Stewarding Conserved Lands

What Happens Once a Property is Protected?

In 1995, our first two conservation easements protected 182 acres of forested land. More than thirty years later, those early efforts have grown into over 19,000 acres conserved across the region through land transfers, conservation easements, and partnerships. Of those conserved lands, the Conservancy directly holds 92 conservation easements protecting more than 12,000 acres of forests, farmland, and wildlife habitat in the Upper Delaware River region of Pennsylvania and New York. Another approximately 7,000 acres were conserved with our support, now protected under easements or full ownership held by partner organizations. These milestones reflect the dedication of our region's landowners who have partnered with us to safeguard their land today and help ensure its protection for the future.

Stewardship, the act caring for conserved land, is how the Conservancy carries that responsibility forward. In 2025, our dedicated team of 28 monitoring volunteers joined staff for annual monitoring visits to each protected property, meeting with 61 landowners and contributing more than 113 hours in the field. These visits ensure easements are being upheld, support landowners in managing their land sustainably, and allow us to observe each property's condition firsthand, preventing potential issues before they arise.

Stewardship extends beyond annual visits. Throughout the year, our staff remain in touch with landowners—providing guidance, answering questions, and offering educational resources on sustainable land management. By combining regular monitoring, collaboration, and engagement, we ensure these conserved lands continue to thrive today and remain protected for generations to come. [Learn more about protecting and stewarding your land at DelawareHighlands.org/landowner.](https://DelawareHighlands.org/landowner)



Green Lodging Partners ...

Boarding House at Seminary Hill
Brookmill Cabin
The Chestnut Inn on Oquaga Lake
Himalayan Institute

Hotel Anthracite
Hotel Fauchere
La Posada
Ledges Hotel

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The Settlers Inn
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Woodloch Resort



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Susan and Joe Mele
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President's Remarks

Dear Members, Partners and Friends,

Thanks to your strong and continued support, the Delaware Highlands Conservancy had a great year. We have helped to protect over 19,000 acres of land to date, owned by 92 landowners, and over 100 volunteers serve on our board and committees, participate in the stewardship of these protected properties, and take visitors on the Eagle Watch tours. Local business support has also grown. This year we were approved to receive funds under the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, which increases the ways that local businesses can support our programs.

While I am saddened at the passing this past year of our founder, Barbara Yeaman, I know that somewhere, she is smiling. It takes a community to accomplish Barbara's vision, and I am proud and excited to see our connections and support deepening and growing. Whether your contribution is in volunteer hours, bearing witness to the glorious land under the Conservancy's stewardship, attending the Conservancy's programs or events, donating financially, or simply enjoying an afternoon on the Van Scott Nature Reserve, thank you for your invaluable participation.

I am especially excited about ongoing developments on the Van Scott Nature Reserve. With our improved driveway access, local organizations and schools can now bring busloads of participants to avail themselves of the Reserve's open spaces and pavilion. Also, where once Barbara opened her Butterfly Barn and her meadows to anyone curious to learn and share in the excitement of nature's bounty and beauty, now in progress at the Van Scott Nature Reserve, we are creating two gardens where you will be able to spend time, including the Conservancy's community garden and the beautiful demonstration garden that will showcase plants that are indigenous to this area and at the Reserve. I hope you will stop by and see firsthand how our gardens are growing, and perhaps get your hands dirty in the process.

2025 also marked the first year that members of the Conservancy's board and staff joined other land trusts in Washington, D.C. for a Hill Day with our representatives to highlight the myriad benefits we have brought to our communities and to advocate for their continued support. The respect the Conservancy commands among fellow land trusts and elected officials is galvanizing and motivating.

I see the fruits of the Conservancy's hard work everywhere I go in the Upper Delaware Valley. Biking with other Conservancy members on the back roads of what Barbara liked to call the Delaware Highlands takes me past many of our conserved properties. I never grow tired of the stunning visual beauty of the undeveloped forests and meadows, the fresh smells of nature after a rainfall, the sounds of birds and wind in the trees, the beautiful streams and, of course, the Delaware River. I am eternally grateful to the Conservancy for what it does, and it motivates me to try harder. I hope you are too.

Warmly,

Jacqueline Sailer, President

2026 CORPORATE SPONSORS



Brian T. Kelly, CPA
& Associates, LLC



Learn more at delawarehighlands.org/corporate.



Operating Income 2025

Donations & Bequests	\$291,000
Grants	\$349,000
Investment Income	\$486,000
Education & Engagement	\$73,000
Land Protection & Services	\$18,000
Total:	\$1,217,000



Operating Expenses 2025

Program Expenses	\$685,000
Management and General	\$169,000
Fundraising	\$85,000
Total:	\$939,000



Select Assets as of 12/31/25

Fund for the Future	\$2,163,000
Property & Equipment	\$1,151,000
Stewardship funds	\$1,384,000
Cash and Reserves	\$185,000
Eagle Habitat funds	\$101,000
Educational Scholarship funds	\$65,000
Accounts Receivable & Prepays	\$76,000
Land Protection funds	\$28,000
Total:	\$5,153,000

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

Upcoming Events

Most events require advance registration, and a registration fee may be requested. Visit DelawareHighlands.org/events or call 570-226-3164 ext. 4 for additional details, to register, and to view our complete Calendar of Events.

Meadows 101: Learn, Plant, Grow

April 18 • 10am-3pm • Van Scott Nature Reserve

Discover the beauty of meadows at the Van Scott Nature Reserve with Leigh Allison of Project Meadow and Lucas Green, the Conservancy's Reserve and Facilities Coordinator! This hands-on workshop is perfect for those who want to connect with nature and gain practical experience in recreating this vital habitat in their own spaces.

Monitoring Volunteer Training

May 22, July 24, Sept 25 • 1pm-5pm

Van Scott Nature Reserve

Join our Stewardship Staff for an informative Monitoring Volunteer Training to learn more about our monitoring program and how volunteers can participate in annual visits to protected properties.

Foods of the Delaware Highlands Dinner

June 6 • 5pm • Van Scott Nature Reserve

This relaxed yet elegant dinner in the meadow will be held for the first time at the scenic Van Scott Nature Reserve, celebrating the beauty and bounty of the Upper Delaware River region. Guests will enjoy artisan wood-fired pizza and seasonal small bites, live music by the Marc Von Em Electric Trio, and an evening of drinks, dancing, and camaraderie. Silent and live auctions will feature distinctive experiences, art, and local offerings inspired by the Upper Delaware River region.

Women and Their Woods Retreat

September 11th-14th • Lukan's Farm Resort

Save the date! Join us for four days and three nights of learning, networking, and applying new knowledge about forest stewardship at Lukan's Farm Resort in Hawley, PA.

To learn more about...

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