

NEWSLETTER

101 N. Front St.
Harrisburg, PA 17101
www.kta-hike.org

Preserving Pennsylvania's Footpaths

November 2008



KTA Web Site Now Offers E-Commerce and New Features

Thanks to the skills of Scott Adams, the KTA web site now offers the convenience of online commerce. Friends and members can easily purchase guides, maps, apparel, patches, and even gift certificates with the click of a mouse. You can join KTA, renew your membership, or make a contribution online.

New Features

The web site offers other new pages:

- Read the full color versions of the KTA Newsletter published since November 2005. Click on the About KTA tab and choose Newsletters.
- View photos of recent KTA and Trail Care events in the photo gallery pages of the On The Trails section of the website. Find your picture at one of our events, or view the fun you missed if you did not attend. You are invited to submit photographs.
- Sign up for KTA Action Alerts. You won't miss the latest hiking news when you subscribe to this service. See the right side of the KTA home page to register.
- Learn about 28 major hiking trails by clicking on the new interactive state map that enables users to view the location of hiking trails around the state and then read information about the trail, including how to obtain a map or guide and links to other sources of information. Click On The Trails, then Guide to Major Trails.

Other Features

In addition to the new content, the KTA web site contains a wealth of other pages. You can find the KTA Bylaws, history, and strategic plan, as well as the Trail Care schedule and information about the KTA hiking awards. There is contact information for KTA member organizations and links to state agencies and national hiking organizations.

Make the KTA web site www.kta-hike.org your first choice for state hiking information. Bookmark it today!

EHT Follow-Up Meeting: January 10, 2009

By John Motz

A follow-up workshop to the Endangered Hiking Trails training session that was held last May is scheduled for January 10, 2009 at KTA's Harrisburg office. The group will work to further implement the recommendations from last spring. More details will be posted on the KTA web site as they become available. Save this date and plan to attend!

Direct questions to Conservation Committee Chair John Motz at trailbuilder@enter.net or 570-236-1462.

KTA Officers

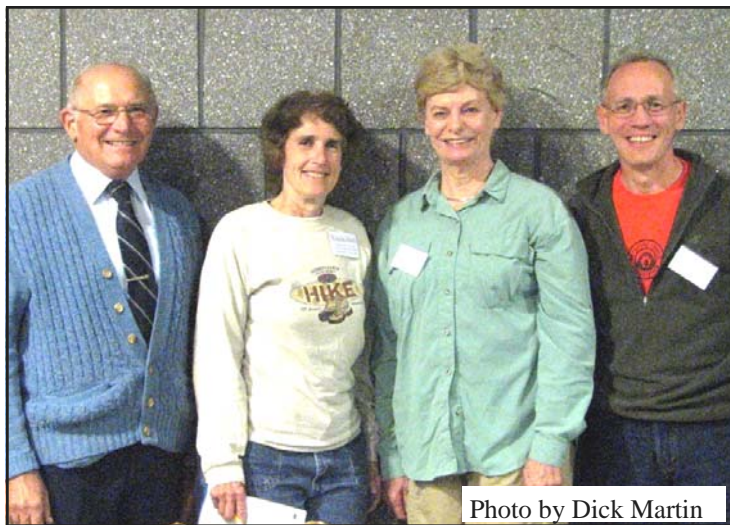


Photo by Dick Martin

New KTA officers were elected by the KTA Council at the Fall Meeting at the Pocono Environmental Education Center. They are (from left) Norm Lacasse, Secretary; Wanda Shirk, Vice-President; Thyra Sperry, President; and Tom Kelliher, Treasurer.

For the complete write up on Board and Council actions at the Fall Meeting and the list of hiking awards, see page 4.

Trail Care awards are listed on page 2.

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OFFICERS

President: Thyra Sperry, *Boiling Springs, PA*
Vice-President: Wanda Shirk, *Ulysses, PA*
Secretary: Norman Lacasse, *Harrisburg, PA*
Treasurer: Thomas Kelliher, *Baltimore, MD*

DIRECTORS

Robert Davey, Jr., *Flemington, PA*
Rick Carlson, *Harrisburg, PA*
Jeffrey Mitchell, *Tunkhannock, PA*
Molly O'Brien-Foelsch, *Lewisburg, PA*
Paul Shaw, *Sunbury, PA*
Steve Stroman, *Harrisburg, PA*
Mary Young, *Enola, PA*
Barbara Wiemann, *Northampton, PA (ex-officio)*

REPRESENTATIVES-AT-LARGE

Joyce Appel, *East Brady, PA*
Kathryn Barker, *Carlisle, PA*
Carl Davis, *Shippensburg, PA*
Linda Enders Roxberry, *Shillington, PA*
Henry Frank, *Philadelphia, PA*
Wayne Gross, *Canadensis, PA*
Michael Jackson, *Everett, PA*
John Motz, *Stroudsburg, PA*
Janice Reich, *Reading, PA*
Debra Smith, *Landisburg, PA*
Thomas Thwaites, *State College, PA*
Barbara Van Horn, *Duncannon, PA*

ADVISORS TO THE BOARD

Craig Dunn Karen Lutz
Rep. Robert Freeman Dave Raphael
Charles Glanville George Spring
Carl Lorence John Stein
 Ron Stanley
Carol Witzeman, Honorary Chair

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This newsletter is published four times a year as a service to its members by Keystone Trails Association. Deadlines for submitting material are 1/1, 4/1, 7/1 and 10/1. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The Editors encourage submissions reflecting all viewpoints, but reserve the right to edit material. You are encouraged to submit your material on disc or via e-mail.

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2008/2009 Trail Care Schedule

Trail Care weekends begin Friday evening at the designated campsite. A full day of trail work on Saturday is followed by an evening of campfire sociability and possibly a meal out at a local restaurant (Dutch treat). After a morning of additional trail work, the weekend concludes about noon on Sunday. If you can't spare an entire weekend, you can join the group for whatever portion is convenient. No experience or special skills are required. Tools and work gloves will be provided.

You must contact the trip leader in advance to register for Trail Care weekends.

Nov. 7-9 – Quehanna Trail
Leader: Ralph Seeley - 814-355-2933
Camp at Parker Dam SP in cabins.

March 27-29 — Raccoon Creek State Park
Leader: Mark Christy - 724-910-3682
Camp in cabins at the park

April 17-19 — Loyalsock Trail
Leader and camping to be announced

May 5-17 — Mid State Trail, Woolrich Region
Leader: Joe Healey - 570-655-4979
Camping to be announced

2008 Trail Care Awards

Attended 5 events (t-shirt)
Tom Bastian
Joe Clark
Joe Healey

Attended 3-4 events (bandannas)
Betty Clark
Woody Loudenslager
Ed Lawrence
John Motz
Rich Scanlon
Tom Thwaites
Dave Walp



Awardees John Motz, Joe Healey, and Ed Lawrence display the Trail Care bandannas awarded at the Fall Meeting to those who attend three or four Trail Care weekends.

Upcoming KTA Meetings and Events

- January 3 — Board of Directors Meeting, Harrisburg, PA**
- January 10 — Endangered Hiking Trails Workshop, Harrisburg, PA**
- April 24-26 — Spring Meeting and Hiking Weekend, Coudersport, Potter County, PA.** Hiking program by Susquehannock Trail Club.
- July — Board of Directors Meeting, Harrisburg, PA**
- July — Prowl the Sproul, Renovo, PA**
- September — Fall Meeting and Hiking Weekend, Marienville, PA.** Hiking program by Allegheny Outdoor Club

President's Message



The Pocono Environmental Education Center was the site of our fall membership and hiking weekend. By noon on Friday, the first fifty hardy hikers arrived on a drizzly day equipped to hike under the leadership of Tom and Rosemary Miller, Pocono Outdoor Club. Off they went into the rainy wet woods in their rain gear, eager to be outdoors. I chose the three waterfall hike and was rewarded with spectacular views of bubbling rushing water. In the evening we had a night hike and an indoor fire as the rest of the weekend hikers arrived. This was the most congenial group of people that you could ever want to be with on a rainy weekend. Being in the forest does wonderful things.

Fifty more hikers joined us on Saturday in the mist and managed to return to the PEEC glass walled dining area for the Board and Council Meeting in late afternoon. Elected board members for the 2008-2011 term of office were Butch Davey, Tom Kelliher, Jeff Mitchell, and Paul Shaw. Wanda Shirk was appointed to complete the final year of the un-expired term of Charles Glanville. Officers elected were myself as President; Wanda Shirk, Vice President; Tom Kelliher, Treasurer; and Norm Lacasse, Secretary.

Karen Lutz, Mid Atlantic Regional Director of ATC and KTA life member, has joined us as an Advisor to the Board. The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor was approved as a new member organization.

Amendments to the By-laws that will streamline the election of Directors and Representatives at Large and permit us to use e-mail to contact the Board and the Council for official matters were passed.

Our work is cut out for us this year, as we have a deficit budget. Our revenue was down, so we need to dig deep in our pockets and I am asking every member to choose KTA as one of your top three organizations to donate to. We are very optimistic that as we continue to implement our membership development plans, we will be successful.

An Ultra Hike (26 miles) in the Susquehanna Gorge in 2009 is being planned and will be organized by Paul Shaw. This is an exciting event for hikers who enjoy the fast pace and who seek a personal challenge. The event will attract a new generation of hikers. Please consider joining us to volunteer for this fun event or maybe you will opt to hike it. We will keep you posted.

Following the PEEC weekend, Curt Ashenfelter and I participated in the Greenways and Trails Summit, sponsored by the PA Recreation and Parks Society, which gave us an opportunity to interact with and learn from leaders of the trails movement on a state and national level. There are many opportunities to reconnect people to the outdoors and it is so energizing to know that so many people are working to preserve land and protect trails in Pennsylvania. We are a major player in this movement.

In the meantime,
Get outdoors and protect your favorite trail,

Thyra

Corporate Matching Funds and Grants

Does your employer make charitable contributions or grants to non-profit organizations such as KTA? If so, contact the KTA office and we can supply the information that you will need to apply for these funds.

Are you employed by a corporation or business that matches their employees' charitable contributions? Applying for the corporate matching funds can increase your gift to KTA.

Leave a Legacy

You can join those special individuals whose legacies ensure that Keystone Trails Association will continue to connect people with nature for generations to come. Put KTA in your will. It's easy to do and won't affect your current cash flow.

By naming KTA as a beneficiary of your estate, you will help secure our future. You will have the great satisfaction of knowing that a portion of your assets will continue to work in perpetuity to help implement the mission of a group whom you warmly supported as a hiker and lover of the outdoors.

You can choose to donate a specific sum from your estate, for example \$5,000, or you may allocate a percentage of your estate. Please contact Advisor to the KTA Board, Charles Glanville, at glanvillehike@aol.com for bequest language or help with questions you may have.

KTA News

Board and Council Actions

Directors Elected

KTA's Council elected **Robert Davey, Jr.**, **Thomas Kelliher**, **Jeffrey Mitchell**, and **Paul Shaw** to three-year terms on the Board of Directors.

Shirk Appointed to Board

Wanda Shirk of Ulysses, PA, has been appointed by President Sperry to the Board of Directors. She will serve the remaining one year of the un-expired term of Charles Glanville. Shirk was also elected Vice President for the next year.

A life member of KTA and hike leader for spring meetings in Wellsboro and Renovo, Shirk has also volunteered with Trail Care and served as a cook for three trail crew weeks. She worked to secure land-owner agreements for numerous sections of the new northern extension of the Mid State Trail in Tioga County. As a nine year member of the Potter County Planning Commission and chair for the past five years, Shirk is a leader in efforts to bring a major alternative energy project to the county. Shirk is a high school English teacher with more than 30 years of experience.

Reich Nominated As New Representative

Janice Reich of Reading, PA, has been nominated to fill the Representative-at-Large seat vacated by Wanda Shirk when she became a Director.

Bylaws Changes

Council voted to make several changes to the Association's bylaws:

- To emphasize that members join KTA to support the Association's mission and contribute to that effort, the word "dues" has

been replaced with "membership contribution" wherever it occurs.

- Nominations by petition for the Board of directors must be submitted 90 days prior to the annual meeting so that the name(s) can be included in the Newsletter. Nominations that do not meet the deadline may be made from the floor at the meeting. (Article 5.1.2)
- To streamline the election of Representatives-at-Large, reduce the cost of the election, and provide the opportunity for nominations from the floor, the election of Representatives will now take place in odd-numbered years at the Membership Meeting of the Annual Meeting. Those elected will take office upon election. (Article 5.1.3)

The complete bylaws are available on the KTA website, or by request to the KTA office.

Lutz Joins Advisory Group

Karen Lutz, ATC's Mid Atlantic Regional Representative and a KTA life member, was appointed by the Board of Directors to the KTA Board of Advisors. Advisors, who are appointed to five-year terms, have expertise and experience that they are willing to share with the Board of Directors when needed.

Budget Adopted

The budget adopted by Council contains a projected deficit of \$60,000. (See the Treasurer's commentary on page 5 for strategies to balance the budget).

Challenge Hike

The Board voted to conduct a challenge hike in 2009. Paul Shaw will coordinate the event, basing it on the framework he prepared as KTA executive director.

2008 Hiking Awards

Appalachian Trail Award

(hike AT in Pennsylvania)

Steven Everett, Zion Grove, PA

Douglas Foster, Williamsport, PA

Ed Lawrence, Orangeville, PA

Rick Martin, Mechanicsville, PA

Catherine McLaughlin, Orangeville, PA

Tom Piaskowski, Orwigsburg, PA

John Potter, Montoursville, PA

John Springman, Williamsport, PA

Jane Wolfe, Fleetwood, PA

Merit Award

(AT Award + hike 200 miles on PA trails)

Douglas Foster, Williamsport, PA

Ed Lawrence, Orangeville, PA

Catherine McLaughlin, Orangeville, PA

John Potter, Montoursville, PA

John Springman, Williamsport, PA

Western Award

(hike 200 miles on trails in western PA)

John Greecher, Mechanicsburg, PA

Pennsylvania Award

(hike 500 miles on PA trails)

John Potter, Montoursville, PA

State Forest Trails Award

(hike 798 miles of designated state forest trails)

William Geiger, Allentown, PA

John Potter, Montoursville, PA

(see page 5)

Young Hiker Award

(hike 25 miles on PA trails, age 12 or younger)

Tabitha Bentz, York, PA

Zoie Glatfelter, York, PA

Nile Ulmer, Montoursville, PA

For complete details about the KTA hiking awards, lists of eligible trails for each award, and an application form, see the KTA web site or contact the KTA office.

New Organizational Member

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.

2750 Hugh Moore Park Rd.

Easton, Pa. 18042

610-923-3548

www.delawareandlehigh.org

Save On Your Taxes

**Give A Gift To
Keystone Trails Association
From Your IRA**

The Pension Protection Act passed by Congress enables donors 70 1/2 years old or older to make tax-exempt charitable gifts from their IRAs through Dec. 31 2008. Call us at 717 238-7017 to learn more.

KTA News

KTA FY 2009 Budget Commentary

By Tom Kelliher

During the past year, we have had four staffing changes which have made it difficult to establish momentum. We have fine, capable staff in place currently. Our development plan is underway and should begin to bear fruit. Our cash balance as of August 31 was \$101,271. The Fiscal Year 2009 budget contains a deficit of \$60,000, which would leave us with a projected cash balance of \$41,201 at the close of Fiscal Year 2009. It is important that our development efforts begin to take effect during this coming year. Due to the changes in staffing, some initiatives, notably the Mega-Hike, were dropped. This had an effect on the overall budget. If similar changes occur in the future, the budget itself should be revised to reflect the new situation.

Looking back at Fiscal Year 2008, total actual expenses were less than total budgeted expenses. Unfortunately, total actual revenue was significantly less than total budgeted revenue. I had suggested at the June Board meeting that we be more conservative when projecting revenue for the Fiscal Year 2009 budget. This recommendation has been followed in developing this budget. For example, the Fiscal Year 2008 budget projected \$6,000 of revenue from the spring and fall meetings, whereas the Fiscal Year 2009 budget projects we break even on these two events.

A year ago I wrote that it's important to take the long view, and that it could take a few years for our initiatives to bear fruit. I am still optimistic that our efforts will bear fruit, but we must be careful in responding to changes as they occur.

Keystone Trails Association can attain a balanced budget by acting on five recommendations of the Comprehensive Development Plan.

The recommendations are:

1. Grow membership from 1,100 members to 1,400 members in 2009. Net gain \$4,500.
2. Increase basic membership contributions to \$35 a year. Net gain \$10,000.
3. Schedule three special appeals in 2009. Net gain \$18,000.
4. Cultivate major donors program. Net gain \$26,000
5. Seek corporate and/or foundation support. Net gain \$14,000.

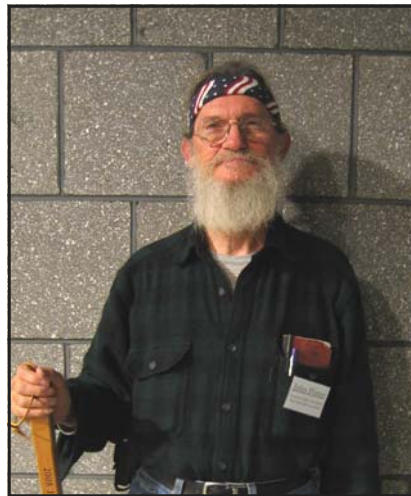
Photos Needed for PA Appalachian Trail Guide

By Wayne Gross

The Publications Committee is searching for either slides or digital photos of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania for the next edition of the *Pennsylvania Appalachian Trail Guide*. The photographs should be taken from the Trail or be of well known landmarks along the trail. We are looking for a variety of scenes of vistas, trail maintenance, shelters, flora and fauna, taken in all four seasons. In particular, we are looking for historical landmarks. Photographers will be credited. Please indicate the location of the photo and where along the trail it was taken. Photographs for the *Pennsylvania Appalachian Trail Guide* should be submitted by December 1, 2008. Send photographs to Publications Committee Chair Wayne E. Gross, RR#2 Box 2228 Canadensis, PA 18325. Email wegseg@msn.com if you have any questions.



William Geiger



John Potter

State Forest Hiking Trails Award

William Geiger of Allentown and John Potter of Montoursville were honored as the sixth and seventh recipients of the State Forest Trails Award. Sponsored by Keystone Trails Association and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources since 2003, the award recognizes individuals who have hiked all 798 miles of 18 designated state hiking trails on State Forest Lands. Recipients receive a patch, certificate, and a ceremonial hand crafted walking stick with their name carved into it.

Complete information, exact mileage requirements, and award applications are posted on the DCNR web site www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/trailaward.aspx.

Donors to KTA

(July 1-Sept. 30, 2008)

John Arrigo, Monroeville, PA

Charles Connor & Family, St. Louis, MO

Scot Fleischman, Elk Ridge, MD

Peter Fleszar & Krista Cessna, Hummelstown, PA

Harry Hansell, Richland, PA

Annie Law, Honey Brook, PA

Mark Press, Middletown, PA

Kathleen Sieminski, Nazareth, PA

Phil Williams, Oreland, PA

To Support Endangered Hiking Trails:

Ellen Draegert & Thomas Imke, Amler, PA

George & Sally Farley, Lock Haven, PA

Henry Frank, Philadelphia, PA

Charles Glanville & Elizabeth Brecht, West Chester, PA

Keith Groff, Ronks, PA

Marshall Hamilton, Media, PA

Donald Kirkland, Devon, PA

Mary Pitzer, Pittsburgh, PA

Donald Rodomanski, Jermyn, PA

Along Our Trails

Appalachian Trail Trail Relocation on Stony Mountain

The Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club dedicated a one-mile relocation of the Appalachian Trail on the north side of Stony Mountain in June. Jeff Buehler, SATC's trail master, spearheaded the two and a half year effort, leading more than a dozen work trips with 29 club volunteers tallying 826 work hours. The trail's designer, Tom Scully, also did significant work during his free time, as did rock man Tim Bachmann, who enlisted the help of other club volunteers to move the BIG rocks. It is estimated that their unscheduled work trips bring the total hours to well over 1000 hours of field work on this project.

Pedestrian Underpass at PA 944

A pedestrian underpass at heavily traveled PA 944 (Wertzville Rd.) in Cumberland County was installed during the Labor Day weekend. In just 48 hours, the contractor excavated a trench, lifted eight culvert sections into place, sealed the sections, refilled the trench, and repaved the roadway.

Design and engineering funding came from DCNR and construction funding from PennDOT through the transportation enhancement section of TEA-21.

A ribbon cutting celebration is scheduled for November 15.



The contractor repaves PA 944 after installing the underpass. Landscaping will screen the underpass, trail, and hikers from passing motorists. Photo by Karen Lutz.

Earl Shaffer Shelter Disassembled

Hikers from all over Pennsylvania gathered on Saturday, August 2 at the Earl Shaffer Shelter for a ceremony marking the 60th anniversary of Shaffer's pioneering Appalachian Trail thru-hike and to disassemble the shelter. The three-sided primitive shelter, built about 1960, was the last remaining one built by Earl that was intact and still being used by overnight hikers.

The ceremony included reminiscences about Earl, a native and lifelong resident of York County, and one of the founders of KTA. A three-time thru-hiker, Shaffer relocated a large stretch of the A.T. on both sides of the Susquehanna River. Earl also wrote many poems, songs and essays, as well as *Walking With Spring*, an

account of his 1948 hike.

During the ceremony, the following recently discovered poem by Earl Shaffer was read:

Trail Builders

Building the trail we work all day
Out out on the mountain far away
Up where the stars and clouds are near
And city tensions disappear
Building the trail we live again
Almost as free as frontier men
Out on the trail we live supreme
In deep fulfillment of a dream

AT Museum Society

The Earl Shaffer Shelter is being preserved by the Appalachian Trail Museum Society and will be the featured artifact in its collection. The Society is pursuing a home at Pine Grove Furnace State Park near the mid-point of the AT. If that is successful, the Shaffer Shelter will be reconstructed only a short distance from where Earl grew up and lived most of his life.

To help raise the funds needed to construct the Museum, the Society will hold a Walkin' Jim Stolz multi-media benefit concert on Saturday, November 8, at the Carlisle Theater, 40 West High St., Carlisle, PA at 7:30 PM. A folksinger and backcountry traveler, Stolz celebrates wilderness in his songs, stories, and photos. For more information, contact Larry Luxenberg at 845-708-5306.

PATC Builds New Bridge



The PATC Yankee Clippers trail crew is hard at work replacing a 35-foot long bridge just north of Pen Mar. The original bridge's demise was hastened by a group of young hikers conducting an impromptu physics experiment. Jumping up and down in unison on a bridge does indeed create waves that provide excessive stress that can lead to structural failure.

PATC used grants of \$3,000 each from LL Bean and the American Hiking Society to pay for the building materials.

Photo by Catherine Kelleher, used with permission of *Potomac Appalachian*.

Along Our Trails

Baker Trail



Photo by Patty Brunner

Baker Trail volunteers constructed this 75 foot suspension bridge over Cherry Run near Crooked Creek this summer.

In the 1960s, a double cable spanned the creek, but it failed by the 1980s, leaving hikers to fend for themselves.

The bridge was constructed in two phases. First, with the help of a backhoe to dig the holes, the anchor points were formed and set. During the second phase, the cables were strung and the decking laid.

Great Eastern Trail

The Great Eastern Trail (GET) took another step forward on July 26. A work party consisting of fifteen members of the Board of Managers of the Finger Lakes Trail Conference and 25 community members broke ground in Addison and began to clear and mark a 40+ mile side trail which will connect the Finger Lakes Trail with the Mid State Trail.

Located in Steuben County, the trail will run from the FLT at the Moss Hill Lean-To near South Bradford to the recently opened MST north of Cowanesque Lake. This new trail is unnamed, and the FLTC would like to select a name with the help of the local

community.

To help advance the FLTC goal of gaining the support of neighbors and educating communities about the benefits a trail provides, officials from both New York state and local governments, local landowners, and the media attended the groundbreaking ceremony. Construction is expected to take ten to fifteen years to complete.

The GET is a network of trails, approximately 1600 miles long, that will eventually run from the Florida/Alabama border to the FLT in New York. In Pennsylvania, the GET utilizes the Mid State, Standing Stone, and Tuscarora Trails. For more information about the GET, go to www.greateastertrail.org. Information about the FLTC is available at www.fingerlakestrail.org.

Mason-Dixon Trail

DuPont has donated a ten-acre parcel along Christina Creek between Elkton and Barksdale Roads to the city of Newark, DE. The M-DT is located on this tract and the M-DTS is pleased that this land is now in public ownership. The city has always welcomed the recreational value of the M-DT for city residents and the access that a maintained trail affords for monitoring the stream.

Mid State Trail

Hiker Alert – Tom Thwaites reports that the Dominion pipeline construction project in Detweiler Valley has been completed and the deep trench that was dug for the installation of the line has been filled in. The trail is no longer severed. The area is devoid of vegetation, but the bare ground should begin to re-vegetate next year.

Warrior Trail

Hiker Alert – The coal beltway in Monongahela Township has been removed. A new landowner has taken over the right of way and wants the Warrior Trail off his land. The Warrior Trail Association is exploring its options.

EHT Highlighted at Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails Summit

By Curt Ashenfelter

John Stein and I had the opportunity to share KTA's concerns about Endangered Hiking Trails with attendees at the statewide 4th Annual PA Greenways & Trails Summit. The goal of the conference was to build a movement in Pennsylvania that will get our citizens outdoors on trails. For KTA it was an excellent opportunity to share our concerns about endangered hiking trails and build support for their continued survival. The summit agenda write-up concerning Endangered Hiking Trails read:

"Are some trails destined to be like dinosaurs and become extinct? Some of our well-known regional hiking trails are at extreme risk of vanishing from the landscape. The threat of development, changing landowners and sprawl have put these most valuable resources on the endangered list. The Keystone Trails Association will raise your awareness of the issues surrounding these endangered trails and provide some solutions to preserving these gems."



Treadway damage caused by ATVs on the 18-mile long John Saylor Trail in the Gallitzin State Forest in Somerset County. This trail is one of the 18 State Forest Hiking Trails. Photo by Jeffrey Mitchell.

KTA News

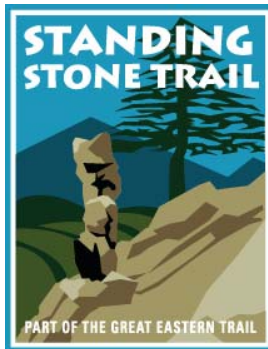
KTA – Your Hiking Advocate in Action

By Curt Ashenfelter

Keystone Trails Association is your advocate for preserving, protecting, maintaining and creating hiking trails in Pennsylvania. Below are just a few examples of our recent efforts.

DCNR Secretary DiBerardinis Pledges Support for Mid State and Standing Stone Trails

Carl Lorence, Tom Johnson, Lee Peters and I met with DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis, Deputy Secretary for Parks and Forestry James Grace and Manager of Education and Outreach Brook Lenker on July 29 to discuss various challenges facing the hiking community in Pennsylvania. One item of discussion focused on land use issues facing the Mid State Trail and the Standing Stone Trail. Both of these trails cross many miles of private land and are constantly challenged with relocations. KTA asked DCNR to reconsider its decision to not designate the Standing Stone Trail as a State Forest Trail. This designation would elevate the status and influence protection of the entire route of the Great Eastern Trail through Pennsylvania. Secretary DiBerardinis offered to provide the same level of protection from DCNR with or without making the Standing Stone Trail a designated trail. KTA believes DCNR's position is helpful. In the future KTA will provide a more specific list of needs for the Great Eastern Trail in Pennsylvania.



Bridge Catalog Issues Discussed

Earlier this summer DCNR released a draft copy of a proposed Bridge Catalog. The catalog is intended to give volunteers guidelines for design and material requirements for wilderness bridges.

Ralph Seeley, Joe Healey and I met with Eugene Comoss, Director Bureau of Facility Design and Construction and others at DCNR on July 30 to express KTA's concerns about the catalog. KTA's major concerns are that the bridge catalog specifies the use of materials that are too heavy for volunteers to move any distance and are too expensive. Joe and Ralph described previous bridge construction projects that taxed volunteers' capabilities to move heavy materials long distances. Joe suggested that if DCNR could provide logs at the site, volunteers would not need to move the logs long distances. Director Cosmos agreed to provide logs at the bridge sites.

Next steps include identifying bridge sites for the 2009 bridge building season and DCNR providing the logs.

Logging on the Donut Hole Trail

On September 16 KTA received a letter informing us of future timber management activities in the Hevner Run Watershed of the Donut Hole Trail. An attached map showed the location of the trail and also the location of a potential timber sale haul road to remove damaged wind-thrown and wind-snapped trees from a storm earlier in the summer. The road would parallel the trail for approximately 200 feet and would be inside the buffer zone of the trail. KTA was invited to comment.

Our concern was twofold. First, the haul road came off an ATV

road; ATVs would have new unimpeded access to the trail. Second, the wilderness experience of the trail would be significantly degraded if a logging operation occurred in the buffer zone.

Butch Davey and I met with Forester Robert Fitterling and hiked the effected area. A trail relocation of only a few yards was proposed that would take the trail off the ridge line, thus obscuring the view of the lumbering operation and preserving the buffer zone. Additionally the relocation would separate the haul road from the trail and deter illegal ATV crossover from the haul road to the trail.

Logging on the Mid-State Trail

KTA received another letter informing us of future timber management activities on the Mid-State Trail. We will seek to meet with DCNR in the near future to learn more about the proposed activities and protect the trail in the most appropriate manner possible.

DCNR Proposed Blazing Side Trails Yellow

In July DCNR released final regulations concerning blazing side trails in state parks and state forests yellow. Their goal is to standardize trail blaze colors in their parks and forests. Many KTA members called and emailed our offices in Harrisburg expressing their disappointment in DCNR's decision. Many members vowed not to paint blazes in the future.

Karen Lutz, Appalachian Trail Conservancy Mid Atlantic Regional Director and I met with Daniel Devlin, State Forester, and Matt Beaver, Recreation and Safety, to express KTA's concerns with DCNR's decision to ask volunteers to blaze side trails yellow.

Dan stated that he understood there would be some resistance to change, but questioned, "Do people hike the trail or the color. As a compromise he expressed the desire to know how many clubs absolutely refuse to blaze side trails yellow. He volunteered that if we provided him with a list of trails that refuse to go yellow, that he would consider offering those trails an exception to the rule. A list is being compiled and will be presented to DCNR in the near future.



Jean Aron blazing.

Introductory Letter to State Legislators

KTA sent a letter to all State Senators and State Representatives. In part it read:

"Preserving Pennsylvania's footpaths is the mission of the Keystone Trails Association. We are the statewide voice for trail protection in Pennsylvania.

"Most people think the state maintains hiking trails in Pennsylvania. That is not true. Each year volunteers from the Keystone Trails Association donate over 3,000 hours cutting blowdowns (trees that have fallen over the trail), clearing trails of ground growth with hand held bushwackers, lopping off tree branches that have grown into the trail, relocating heavily eroded trails onto more hiker friendly switchbacks, painting blazes on trees to guide

(Continued on page 9)

KTA News

Trail Mix by Curt Ashenfelter

PA Hiking Trails Map

Recently I met with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) about the Pennsylvania Hiking Trails Map and Trails Inventory Assistance Project. KTA has been told by DCNR that we have been awarded a grant to prepare and publish 25,000 folding maps that show the location of Pennsylvania's 18 designated hiking trails and other significant trails frequented by hikers in Pennsylvania. The contract is expected soon.

The map will include state forest and game lands, major road crossings, and adjoining towns. The Peter Gould Center's Cartography Lab at Penn State University will prepare the map from materials available from PennDOT, DCNR, the Game Commission, and KTA.

Map Review Committee

The reverse side of the map will include brief descriptions of each trail and links and contacts for more detailed maps, guides and other information. KTA is seeking to obtain the most accurate trail locations from trail clubs. We will be forming a Map Review Committee to review map content, map layout and double check for accuracy.

One item that DCNR has added to the mix is a request for accurate depictions of trailhead parking on the maps. Identifying where trails cross roads is not helpful for parking purposes. Some trail/road intersections have parking and some do not. DCNR would like to identify trail/road

intersections that offer parking with a map symbol.

GPS Trail Data

We have also been tasked to assist DCNR in its inventory of hiking trails in Pennsylvania. We are looking to secure your input on the location of trails through the presentation of DCNR maps and materials at our events. KTA would like to recruit experienced volunteers from clubs with GPS units to obtain data for selected trails.

Volunteer Opportunity

If you would like to participate in either the Map Review Committee or the GPS effort please contact me by phone or email. (see page 2 lower left corner for contact information).

Fun or Work?

Earlier this year, John Motz, Chairman of our Conservation and Advocacy Committee, suggested that we conduct a poll on our website to ask if trail care is work, fun, or both work and fun. And the results are in: both work and fun wins hands down with 88% of the vote total versus 6% for fun and 5% for work.

Having worked a trail care section on the Mid-State Trail in the State College Region on a hot summer day in July and Goat Hill in the Serpentine Barrens in Chester County during Hurricane Hanna and the ensuing four inches of rain, I can attest to the fact that trail care is both work and fun. It is very rewarding at the end of the day to look over a clear trail that in the

morning had been nearly impassable.

It is still not too late

to participate in a Trail Care weekend. Ralph Seeley is leading a Trail Care weekend November 7 to 9 on the Quehanna Trail. Free camping is provided at Parker Dam State Park in cabins.

Trail Building

I also had the opportunity to attend a meeting/hike of trail builders who were scouting out a trail relocation. I now look at trails in a new way.

Over the years I have hiked a lot of forest land without the benefit of a trail, so I am not new to virgin woods, but I never hiked the forest thinking in terms of would a trail be better here or there, are these rocks too dangerous for hikers, or is that ridge top, while presenting a wonderful view, much too difficult to build a trail to.

E-Commerce

As promised in the previous newsletter e-commerce has been instituted on our website. New members have joined, existing members have renewed, and merchandise has been sold. KTA is reaping the benefits of the information age and moving aggressively to embrace a new generation of hikers.



(Continued from page 8)

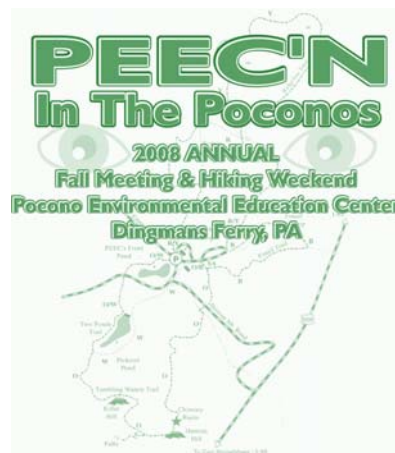
hikers through the woods, fields and mountains, and building bridges to cross swift flowing streams. This year a 44 foot span topped the list of our bridge building efforts.

"Each year over 3.5 million Pennsylvanians take a hike on some section of the trails that we have built and maintained. Many of those hikers are your constituents.

This year we are working hard on trail maintenance and protecting endangered hiking trails. Endangered hiking trails are trails that have significant sections that cross private property because not all trails are on state land. We have begun an effort to work with landowners to replace oral agreements with written agreements in order to insure permanent access.

"Recently we have established an office in Harrisburg to advance our advocacy efforts. If you have any questions or concerns about hiking trails in your district or anywhere else in Pennsylvania, please call me. If you want to learn more about Keystone Trails Association or hiking in Pennsylvania, check out our web-

site at www.kta-hike.org or contact me directly. We look forward to working with you and your staff in support of hiking in Pennsylvania."



New KTA T-shirt

Order your new KTA t-shirt now. The shirt is a pale yellow; on the back of the shirt is a green design commemorating the Fall Meeting. The shirt is available in men's and women's sizes for \$17.95 plus \$3.80 for shipping. Order from the KTA office or the new online store on the KTA web site.

News from Our Partners

Elk Country Visitor Center

Construction is underway on Winslow Hill in Benezette Township, Elk County, for the Pennsylvania Wilds Elk Country Visitor Center, the largest elk watching and conservation education center in the eastern United States. DCNR has a 30-year partnership agreement with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation for construction and operation of an 8,400-square-foot green building that will include interpretive exhibits, wildlife trails, viewing blinds and parking for cars and buses.



Green building features will include rainwater collection and reuse; night sky friendly light fixtures; use of locally available materials and sustainably harvested timber; and use of low emitting paints, adhesives and carpets. The building will be eligible for Gold Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. Construction completion is projected for fall 2009.

Total costs for completion and 30-year operation of the center are \$12 million. The state is providing \$5 million for design and construction of the center, and the foundation is committing an estimated \$5.6 million over 30 years for the operation of the facility. The 245-acre site was acquired with a grant from the Richard King Mellow Foundation.

Pennsylvania's wild elk herd, the largest in the Northeast, currently attracts more than 75,000 visitors to the Pennsylvania Wilds each fall.

Outdoor Task Force Report

The task force appointed by Governor Rendell after last year's Governor's Outdoor Conference has issued its report and is proposing establishing a Governor's Commission on People and Outdoor Connections. The task force report summarizes the findings of the two-day Conference and the five public meetings that followed.

In addition to recommending a commission, the task force suggested 42 other action items to be pursued by the commission, government agencies, organizations, businesses and educational institutions.



**governor's
outdoor conference**

Governor Rendell hosted the Outdoor Conference to address the trends that show that citizens, and especially children, no

longer spend much time connecting with the outdoors. DCNR is responsible for overseeing the post-Conference efforts to protect and enhance people-nature connections and develop good stewards of the natural world.

The complete report and a summary is available at www.connectoutdoors.state.pa.us/FINALREPORT.ASPX.

PA's Water Trails

Pennsylvania has 21 water trails (totaling more than 2,000 miles) that have been mapped or are under development. Water

trails are boat routes suitable for canoes, kayaks and small motorized watercraft. Like conventional trails, water trails are recreational corridors between specific locations. Water trails include access points, boat launches, day use sites, and, in some cases, overnight camping areas.

The Commonwealth is one of the leading states in water trail development. The Fish & Boat Commission, DCNR, the National Parks Service, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and local agencies are the partners responsible for the growing network.

For more information on water trails, visit www.fish.state.pa.us/watertrails.

DCNR Releases Forest Biomass Guidelines

Pennsylvania's 17 million acres of forests have generated significant interest from people seeking new sources of energy. Forest biomass, the woody material that includes trees, tree branches and other vegetation, can be burned for heat and steam, or it can be turned into a gas to generate electricity. Technology is also being developed that would allow wood to be converted into ethanol and be used as a replacement for gasoline in motor vehicles.

DCNR has developed guidelines, the result of a two-year study, that attempt to balance the need for alternative energy sources with the need to protect forests. The 50-page document is available online at www.dcnr.state.pa.us, under "Hot Topics."

2009 State Parks Calendar

DCNR is again selling a Pennsylvania state parks calendar. Proceeds will benefit the state park system. In addition to full color photographs, the calendar notes significant environmental observations, provides outdoor recreational facts, tips, and guidelines, and highlights state park information and activities. Photographs in the calendar may be viewed at www.dcnr.pa.us; select "State Parks".



The calendar is \$8.49, plus tax and \$1.95 for postage. It can be purchased at 28 participating parks or by calling 1-888-PA-PARKS.

Poe Valley State Park Closed

Poe Valley State Park lake has been drained and the park will be closed until sometime in 2010. No camping is available. Questions may be directed to the office at 717-667-3622.

Trees for Our State Parks

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation announced that more than 19,000 trees will be planted in Pennsylvania's State Parks, courtesy of the Odwalla Juice Company of Dinuba, California. And all that it required was a click of a mouse.

Odwalla worked with the Foundation to donate up to five trees for each person who visited a special Odwalla "plant a tree" website. Marci Mowery, president of the Foundation, thanks everyone who participated in the tree planting campaign.

News from Our Partners

Possible ANF Recreation Closures

As part of a nationwide US Forest Service Recreational Facilities Analysis, Allegheny National Forest officials have recommended that a number of locations be either closed or partially or wholly decommissioned in an effort to trim operating costs. Officials say increasing maintenance costs coupled with lower visitation levels have required forest officials to make the recommendations.

Among the ANF recreation areas on the chopping block are: Dewdrop Recreation Area, Kiasutha Recreation Area, Kinzua Beach, Roper Hollow Boat Launch, Timberdoodle Flats Trailhead, Tracy Ridge Recreation Area, Beaver Meadows Campground and Recreation Area, Loleta Campground and Recreation Area, and Twin Lakes Campground and Recreation Area.

Bradford District Ranger Anthony Scardina defends his recommendations, saying by closing these sites the Forest will be able to "focus more money towards priority sites."

By following through with the proposed closures and decommissioning, officials say the national forest could save \$109,309 on annual operating costs, \$325,887 on annual maintenance costs, and \$2,546,072 of deferred maintenance costs, expenses associated with repairs or major maintenance of a facility.

Controlling Gypsy Moths To Improve Wildlife Habitat

The Game Commission sprayed almost 43,000 acres in 38 Game Lands during April and May to prevent defoliation by gypsy moths. To prioritize and focus spraying efforts, the Commission examined the importance of oaks, socio-political impacts, Important Bird and Mammal Areas and critical/unique habitats, past gypsy moth impacts and resulting habitat conditions, and the financial values of timber stands.

According to William Capouillez, Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management director, "In the 1940s, after the chestnut blight nearly wiped out American chestnuts, which provided the best and most reliable wildlife foods, oaks filled the void for wildlife. Unfortunately, in some areas, we now are seeing birch and maple replace the oak stands lost to gypsy moth defoliation.

"Prior to gypsy moth impacts, oak trees in Huntingdon County reportedly were producing 173 pounds of acorns per acre. After gypsy moths, the same areas were seeing only 67 pounds of acorns per acre. Seven of the eight lowest acorn production years occurred after gypsy moths hit the area, and 43 percent of oak trees were lost."

"We know that mixed oak habitats are important for all wildlife," Capouillez said. "Squirrel populations fluctuate with acorn crops. If acorn production is low, bears will den earlier, weigh less, produce fewer and smaller cubs and get into more nuisance situations. Deer overwinter survival and reproduction suffers when acorns are sparse. Neo-tropical birds, such as cerulean warblers, only occupy habitats dominated by oaks. Wild turkey and ruffed grouse populations also depend on acorns."



Capouillez noted that, based on the value of SGL oaks for wildlife, the agency simply could not afford not to invest in spraying this year.

The Game Commission paid \$1,350,000 from its Growing Greener II funding to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, which oversees the Statewide Cooperative Spray Program for gypsy moths, to spray its land. Over 35,600 of the sprayed acres were in the Southcentral and Southeastern areas of the state.

Natural Gas Bids On State Forest Land Bring In \$190 Million

DCNR received bids totaling \$190 million for Marcellus Shale natural gas drilling rights on State Forest lands. Bids were sought on 18 tracts, totaling over 74,000 acres, in Tioga and Lycoming Counties. The money will fund State Park and Forest improvement projects.



Five companies were awarded 10-year leases. Annual per-acre rental fees start in the second year; the sale price counts as the first year's payment. A 16 percent royalty on any natural gas production goes to the DCRN Oil and Gas lease Fund.

Winning bidders must comply with the permit requirements of the Dept. of Environmental Protection and DCNR. Effective Aug. 23, companies that want to develop wells in the Marcellus Shale are required to submit a Permit Application Addendum to the Department of Environmental Protection, as well as a permit application for gas well development.

DEP Work Load Increasing

DEP has requested 68 more employees in this fiscal year to handle the increase from 4,500 permit requests in 2004 to 7,200 requests this year. So far this year, 257 permits for Marcellus Shale drilling have been approved, just about doubling the approvals since 2005. Adding to the department's financial pressure, the \$100 permit application fee has not increased since the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act was passed in 1984.

Environmental Concerns

DEP must attempt to balance its duty to protect the environment with the potential economic benefits of natural gas drilling in rural areas. The Pennsylvania Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs has expressed serious concerns about what it considers the "frenzy" taking place to drill natural gas wells, especially on state land and game lands in particular. The group is also concerned about the potential for water pollution from the use of water during drilling.

The Marcellus Shale is a rock formation that underlies much of Pennsylvania and portions of New York and West Virginia at a depth of 5,000 to 8,000 feet. Extracting natural gas from the formation requires a relatively new drilling process known as horizontal drilling, which uses far greater amounts of water than traditional natural gas exploration.

DCNR does not expect any activity on its leases for two years. For more information, visit the Forestry pages of the DCNR website www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry and the Energy section of the DEP web site www.dep.state.pa.us.

Ecology

20 Year Milestones in PA

400,000 Acres Of Farmland Preserved

The Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Board has preserved its 400,000th acre. Pennsylvania leads the nation in the number of acres preserved.

In its 20-year history, Pennsylvania has become the national leader in farmland preservation, covering 3,634 farms and 401,185 acres. Since 1988, state and federal funds, along with counties and local municipalities, have contributed more than \$1 billion to preserve farmland.

The state's farmland preservation program works through the Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program to help slow the loss of prime farmland to non-agricultural uses. The program enables state, county and local governments to purchase conservation easements, also called development rights, from owners of quality farmland.

Curbside Recycling Reduces Landfill Waste

On July 28, Pennsylvania celebrated the 20th anniversary of curbside recycling. More than nine million Pennsylvanians in 1,364 communities are recycling.



Initially, grants to municipalities paid for 90 percent of the cost of setting up local programs, which were required to recycle at least three of seven materials outlined in Act 101 and separate leaf and yard waste from other trash for handling.

Since 1988, these programs have resulted in the recycling of over 45.3 million tons of municipal waste. This is almost the same amount of municipal waste that's

disposed of in Pennsylvania in two entire years.

Pennsylvania's recycling and reuse industry includes more than 3,247 businesses and organizations, generated more than \$18.4 billion in gross annual sales, paid \$305 million in taxes, and provided jobs for more than 81,322 employees at an annual payroll of approximately \$2.9 billion.

Aside from the economic benefits, the environmental benefits have been significant. According to the Department of Environmental Protection, recycling has saved enough energy in one year to provide power to 940,000 homes for one year.

Roadside littering of beverage containers, now collected in recycling programs, declined by 64 percent between 1988, the first year of the program, and 1999, according to a state Department of Transportation survey.

Recycling Plastic Bags

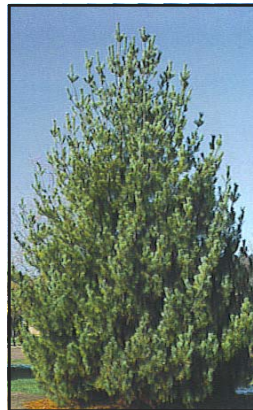
The Progressive Bag Affiliates, a group of top plastic bag producers and recyclers and part of the American Chemistry Council, has launched a major initiative to promote bag recycling throughout the nation. Several of the country's biggest bag manufacturers will begin printing a clear message on their bags to encourage customers to recycle bags at participating stores.



The PBA also unveiled a new comprehensive at-store recycling toolkit designed to make it easy for stores to recycle plastic bags. The toolkit offers bins and signage for store entrances and exits, checkout signage and pins to raise awareness, and municipal bins to be used at curbside.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, 100 billion single use plastic bags are discarded each year in the US. They require the equivalent of 12 million barrels of oil to make, and only 5.2 percent are recycled. The bags will take more than 1000 years to degrade.

Seedlings For Schools and Habitat



The Wildlife For Everyone Endowment Foundation and the Pennsylvania Game Commission jointly sponsored two programs aimed at helping students discover the vital role of trees to wildlife, people, and the environment.

Seedlings for Schools attracted 312 participating schools. The Game Commission's Howard Nursery provided third grade teachers with seedlings for students to take home and plant. The second program, Seedlings for Habitat, offered seedlings to older grades for planting on school or community grounds to improve habitat for wildlife.

Schools had two types of trees to choose from – silky dogwoods, a small flowering tree, and Eastern white pine. The organizations intend to expand the program to more schools to get more youngsters involved

Water Bottle Update

Nalgene Outdoor Products has responded to the increasing concerns of hikers about the possible adverse health effects of bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical used in plastics such as Lexan. The company has replaced all of their water bottles with a BPA-free plastic known as Triton. For more information about the BSA safety debate, see the National Institutes of Health web site at www.niehs.nih.gov/news/media/questions/sya-bpa.cfm.

Did You Know...

A 2005 study by the American Institutes for Research revealed a 27 percent increase in science test scores for California students who took part in outdoor, science based learning.

Since 1982, Pennsylvania's urban areas have grown by 47 percent, while the state's population has increased by only 2.5 percent. Four acres of land were developed for each new resident.

Plants and Animals

White Nose Syndrome Endangers Bats

Bats in New York and New England are dying in record numbers from a new threat, dubbed White Nose Syndrome because some of the victims have a strange white fungus on their muzzles.

First Documented in 2006

WNS was first documented in New York in late 2006. Its discovery occurred during routine surveys counting endangered Indiana bats, a large portion of which had inexplicably disappeared from one hibernaculum. The problem worsened in 2007 as officials investigated reports of bats flying from hibernacula in mid-winter and in broad daylight, when they were supposed to be hibernating. Some bats bore no sign of disease or sickness, but were underweight and leaving their wintering quarters, which is abnormal. Others had white fungus around their noses and/or on their ears and wings.

Is PA Next?

"This spring, New York and New England sustained terrible losses," according to Pennsylvania Game Commission biologist Greg Turner. "Should Pennsylvania - with more than 4,000 mines and 1,000 caves - become the next hotbed, we could sustain even larger losses."

Cause Unknown

All affected states and the US Fish and Wildlife Service have sent afflicted bats to laboratories throughout the United States. Included are several bats from Barton Cave in Forbes State Forest in Fayette County and Hartman Mine, because some white fungus was found on otherwise apparently healthy bats in recent Game Commission fieldwork. But lab work has yet to shed further light on anything.

It is unclear what is killing bats: a fungus, an up-until-now unrecognized byproduct of cave hibernation, or a secondary opportunist attacking already weakened bats. Currently, the best WNS indicators are mass mortality, early emergence from hibernacula and erratic daytime flying.



Effect on Healthy Bats

An associated problem that WNS causes in hibernacula occurs when movement by afflicted bats awakens healthy bats hibernating nearby. These repeated disturbances may cause healthy bats to draw from critical fat reserves they will need to make it through winter. When a bat awakens from hibernation, its body temperature rises from around 45 degrees, to about 100, burning up considerable fat reserves unnecessarily. Awakened too often, a bat cannot sustain hibernation, and it will starve to death foraging for food in a winter landscape.

Importance of Bats

Bats are a tremendous asset to wildlife communities and humans. Collectively, they eat insects by the tons and spare Pennsylvanians from backyard flying pests and crop-damage issues. Unfortunately, people know more about elephants than they do about bats. Misinformation about bats often overshadows the good they do and their importance in Pennsylvania's biodiversity.

For more information on bats, visit the Game Commission's website at www.pgc.state.pa.us. To learn more about WNS, visit

the USFWS's website at www.fws.gov/northeast/white_nose.html.

Common Buckthorn: A Pesky Invasive

Common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) is a troublesome invasive exotic species. Buckthorns are small trees reaching 20-25 feet in height and 10 inches in diameter. Most often they grow in a large shrub form, having a few to several stems from the base, with spreading, loosely-branched crowns. Their bark is gray to brown with prominent, often elongate, lighter-colored lenticels. Cutting a branch exposes a yellow sapwood and a pinkish to orange heartwood.

The leaves are one inch to two and a half inches in size, broadly elliptical, finely wavy-toothed, and may be arranged both alternately and oppositely on the same branch. In the fall, leaves remain green and attached after most other species have lost theirs. The fruits are about five-sixteenth inches in diameter (similar in structure to a cherry), containing more than one seed, very dark colored, and numerous. The seeds can remain viable on the forest floor for several years.



The fruits are eagerly eaten by songbirds, and so the seeds are spread widely. Since the fruit of buckthorn causes a severe laxative effect (hence the species name *cathartica*), the birds quickly pass the seeds in their droppings. When the trees reach maturity, they produce abundant fruit and within a few years there are commonly thousands of seedlings around the base of each mature tree. Cut stumps will sprout vigorously.

Common buckthorn grows in extremely dense thickets that all but eliminate any chance for native vegetation to reproduce on the forest floor. It can be described literally as a "plague" on the landscape, since its rate of spread is truly unprecedented and unequalled.

Young buckthorn trees five-feet or smaller can be pulled out of the ground roots and all. But cutting them down will only encourage accelerated growth from the cut stump.

Critter Quest PA Available Online

Critter Quest PA, a unique online activity created by the Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education, is available at www.pcee.org. Developed as an environmental teaching tool primarily for middle school students, the program combines computer technology with a natural history database to generate distribution maps for the 'critters' of Pennsylvania. The web site is <http://pcee.org/critterquestpa>.

Pennsylvania is home to more than 80 species of threatened and endangered plants. Included in the list are several species of orchids: the Showy Lady's Slipper, the Swamp Pink and the White Fringed Orchid.

Around The Clubs

Berks Community Hiking Club/ Blue Mountain Eagle Climbing Club

To commemorate the July 4th holiday, the clubs offered a joint hike around Indiantown Gap Cemetery, traversing the "Avenue of Flags" and taking in the history of the area. The group ate lunch at Memorial Lake State Park and then hiked around the lake.

Butler Outdoor Club

BOC manned a booth at the Regatta at Lake Arthur at Moraine State Park on August 2-3, handing out literature about the club and KTA and offering two hikes each day. Over 150 people participated in the hikes and toured the Davis Hollow Cabin. The shuttle bus was so full that not everyone could fit on the bus each time. What an awesome problem to have!!!

The club entered the "Anything That Floats Race." Their entry - a barrel with a skit called "Goldy and the Three Bears in the Bear-el of Fun" - didn't win the race, but did capture the award for costumes and skit.

BOC sponsored Tuesday Workdays in July on the Butler Freeport Trail. The volunteer hours helped the Trail meet its match requirements toward a grant.

Mason-Dixon Trail System

MDTS donated \$100 to the York County Parks Foundation, which has been very supportive of M-D efforts to protect the trail in the county.

Philadelphia Trail Club

Since its establishment in 1931, PTC required prospective members to complete three club hikes before applying for membership. In an effort to encourage membership, the club is now allowing membership after a hiker participates in one hike. A tabulation of membership participation during the previous year showed that 130 members did not join a club hike, 51 members

hiked once, and only 66 members hiked 25 miles or more.

Flora Cathell, a PTC member for 60 years, died recently.

Potomac Appalachian Trail Club

PATC's Student Trail Steward program had a very successful first year. The eight high school juniors and seniors spent 2,200 hours outside in nature; maintained a half mile section of trail; educated 200 people, including 100 elementary students, in Leave No Trace; and identified and inventoried over 100 plant and animal species on their school campus and a local park.

At the request of a Boy Scout leader, PATC volunteers helped train 14 Boy Scouts and 7 adults as Leave No Trace Trainers. These new trainers used their newly acquired knowledge to teach LNT skills and ethics to other scouts and leaders during their Scouting District's Spring Camporee.

A German filmmaker joined a PATC trail crew to record trail workers in action. Max Von Klitzing was following two thru hikers for a documentary that will air on German public television in December and, may, hopefully, be picked up for a wider European audience in January.



All KTA Organizational Members

Has your club conducted an unusual hike? Offered an outstanding program? Held a community service project? Celebrated a milestone event? Please let KTA know so that we can share your news.

All organizational members should send copies of their member publication to the KTA Newsletter editors, either in print or electronically. See page 2 for addresses.

Meet Our New Organizational Member



The Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor is working to conserve cultural and natural resources in Bucks, Northampton, Lehigh, Carbon, and Luzerne Counties and promote tourism in the region.

Central to that effort is the completion and maintenance of the 160-mile long D & L Trail, which runs from Bristol in southern Bucks County to the Ashley Planes near Wilkes-Barre. Most of the route follows the Delaware and Lehigh Canal towpaths.

Four regional Trail Tender groups have been organized to maintain and enhance the trail.

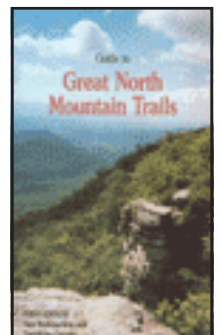
For more information, visit the Corridor's web site at www.delawareandlehigh.org. Complete contact information is on page 4.

Do You Want to Hike the AT?

The Mohican Outdoor Center, an AMC facility near Delaware Water Gap, will host an AT Thru-Hike Planning Weekend Dec. 5-7. The weekend will focus on planning for the hike; participants may bring their gear for evaluation by three thru-hikers. Cost of \$115 for AMC members, \$122 nonmembers, includes two nights lodging and breakfasts, Saturday dinner and instruction. Register by emailing/calling MOC at mohican@mindspring.com or 908-362-5679.

New Hiking Guide

Guide to Great Mountain Trails by Glenn Palatini, second edition, describes more than 45 hikes of various lengths and difficulties in the Lee Ranger District of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. Due to changes in the trails in this region, hikers should not rely on the previous edition. The guide is available from the Potomac Appalachian Trail club at www.patc.us/store for \$7.50 for non-members, \$6.00 for members.



Along Our Trails

My Favorite Hike...Slippery Rock Gorge

Some of the best day hiking in western Pennsylvania can be found in McConnell's Mill State Park in Lawrence County. The choices range from a one mile round trip to Hells Hollow Falls to the six mile Slippery Rock Gorge Trail. Or you can combine the two trails for a longer hike.

Hells Hollow Falls

Starting at the Hells Hollow parking lot, this smooth and level half-mile trail follows (and twice crosses) Hells Run before ending at the Hells Hollow Falls. A bonus attraction on this hike is a lime kiln.

Slippery Rock Gorge Trail

This blue blazed trail is the crown jewel of the park. KTA's Trail Crew helped construct the trail, and Tom Thwaites considered it one of the Crew's finest accomplishments. It is now a segment of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

Although it is only six and a quarter miles long, the trail is not an easy hike. There are plenty of ups and down as the footpath negotiates Hell Run Valley and Slippery Rock Creek Gorge.

The hike begins at the Hell Hollow parking lot. The blue blazed Slippery Rock Gorge Trail soon splits from the Hells Hollow Trail and traverses the upper Hell Run Valley for two miles. The remaining four miles follow the Slippery Rock Creek Gorge, ending at Eckert Bridge.

At the three and a half mile mark, the path descends into the steepest part of the gorge to an alluvial flood plain known as Walnut Flats. The terrain becomes very steep as the trail ascends to the uplands, and finally drops back down to the creek level. There are several waterfalls along the route. Hiking in spring when native wildflowers carpet the forest and in fall during the spectacular autumn foliage displays is highly recommended.

Since this is a linear hike, a shuttle is necessary. Due to the elevation changes, hikers should allow sufficient time for the hike.

Alpha Pass and Kildoo Trails

For those who would choose a shorter hike, these two hikes are



Hikers at Hells Hollow Falls. Photo by Joyce Appel.

enjoyable options. The mile and a half long Alpha Pass Trail begins at the scenic vista of the same name and follows Slippery Rock Creek. The two mile Kildoo Trail is a delightful loop that also follows Slippery Rock.

Other Park Attractions

The State Park offers other outdoor recreational opportunities, including whitewater boating and climbing/rappelling. History buffs will want to visit the covered bridge and operational gristmill.

The McConnells Mill State Park brochure and map, available at the park and on the DCNR web site at www.dcnr.state.pa.us, shows the trails and parking areas. It also outlines the other recreational activities available in the park. The Portersville topographic map covers this area.

Prowl the Sproul Report

By Becky Schreiber

The Fifth Annual Prowl the Sproul weekend was held on July 18-20, 2008 in Hyner, PA. Our host for the weekend was the Western Clinton Sportsmen's Association (WCSA). WCSA President Ray Werts welcomed KTA members to his facility with comfortable campsites, hot showers, and an evening fire. Alice Tarr and her volunteers prepared Saturday meals that were plentiful and delicious – an essential part of a successful hiking weekend.

District Forester Ted Ligenza organized the hike schedule. Guided hikes were available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with a variety of distances, difficulty levels, and terrain to suit hikers of all backgrounds and ability levels. Hikers thoroughly enjoyed this guided experience in the Pennsylvania Wilds, where DCNR and KTA hike leaders guided hikers off the beaten path to visit the hidden jewels of the Sproul State Forest.

On Saturday, Rick Henrich of Rock River & Trail Outfitters (www.rockriverandtrail.com) in Lock Haven, PA, also guided 13 people on a kayak trip down the Susquehanna River. Although water levels were low, the near 90° temperatures ensured that participants still enjoyed their time on the river.

Saturday's events also included a 10K race through the mountains of the Sproul State Forest. 74 runners competed. The trail for the race utilized a 6-mile section from the Hyner View Trail Challenge. Visit www.hikerun.com for more information about the next Hyner View Trail Challenge to be held April 18, 2009. KTA is an official sponsor of the event.

Thank you to all the event organizers, hike leaders, and volunteers who worked to make the Fifth Annual Prowl the Sproul weekend a success!



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A hiker explores the Sproul State Forest while on a Prowl the Sproul hike. See the event recap on page 15. Photo by Dick Martin.

*For man, autumn is a time of harvest,
 of gathering together.
 For nature, it is a time of sowing,
 of scattering abroad.*

~Edwin Way Teale

(quoted in the Warrior Trail Association
 Newsletter, October 2008)

PA Forest Facts ...

There are 16.8 million acres of forest land in Pennsylvania. Approximately 70% of that land is privately owned. In the public sector, the Department of Natural Resources (State Parks and Forests) owns 12%, the Game Commission 9%, the Allegheny National Forest 3%, and local governments another 3%.

Until well after the Civil War, Pennsylvania was the number one timber producer among all the states. By the early 1900s, this rating had dropped to 23rd place. Today, Pennsylvania stands at number eight.

KTA Membership Form

Name: _____

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E-mail: _____

Club Affiliations (if any): _____

_____ Receive newsletter in full color via e-mail by 1st of issue month instead of by postal mail and save KTA paper and mailing costs

Member organizations are welcome and should forward the name and contact information for the group's designated KTA representative along with appropriate membership contribution: \$50 per year for clubs; \$100 for commercial enterprises; \$10 per year or \$25 for three years for youth groups. All member contributions and correspondence should be mailed to: 101 North Front St., Harrisburg, PA 17101.
 *KTA is an Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are deductible to the extent permitted by law.

Basic Membership (New Member Only) Individual - \$15 Family - \$20	\$
Basic Membership (Renewal) Individual - \$25 Family - \$30	\$
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Trail Builder Membership Individual - \$100 Family - \$125	\$
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