

# Pennsylvania Land Trust Association

## Program Report 2017

Keeping the “Public” in Public Lands	1
Improving Conservation Easement Practices	2
Facilitating Outdoor Recreation, Trails, and Land Acquisition	3
Creating and Improving Guides	4
Directly Assisting Organizations and People	5
Fostering Peer-to-Peer Relationships	6
Connecting, Educating, and Inspiring People	7
Making News and Information Easily Accessible	9
Land Trust Standards and Practices	10
Recognizing and Promoting Conservation Excellence	11
Working for Better Public Policy	12

### Keeping the “Public” in Public Lands

#### **PALTA Advances Permanence on Multiple Fronts**

##### PA Supreme Court Rules for Parks

On June 20, 2017, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled on the Kardon Park case, adopting the rock-solid, reasonable *amicus curiae* arguments that the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association made in defense of all parks and rejecting those of the developer and municipality, which sought to liquidate parkland for development. The Court found that:

- Parks must serve public purposes. A municipality can’t grant easements through parks for private purposes.
- A municipality can’t sell off park land without first proving to a court that the park use is “no longer practicable or possible and ceased to serve the public interest.” The General Assembly can lift restrictions on the land that were established in conjunction with the state providing grant funds (in this case, Project 70 funds) for park development, but this doesn’t eliminate the requirement that the local government must prove that the park can no longer serve its public purpose.

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association has a lengthening track record of successfully defending Pennsylvania’s parks and public open spaces in the courts and the General Assembly. It does so with the support of the Pennsylvania Constitution, which in essence says neither state nor local government own these lands; rather, they hold them in trust for their owners and beneficiaries—the public.

Learn more at <https://conserveland.org/blog/supreme-court-rules-for-parks/>

## **PALTA Develops Tools to Help Local Governments Formally Dedicate Parks and Other Open Spaces to Public Purposes**

Local governments have no consistent practices for formally establishing parks and other public open spaces. And in the absence of a formal government dedication, there can be gray area in determining whether a county or municipal property is truly parkland or other open space held in trust for the public (as contrasted with, for example, a municipal composting facility or maintenance area). Even when formal dedications occur, there can be questions as to whether a particular government action affecting the land is allowable. This state of affairs can lead to confusion, misunderstanding, and ill will among citizens and officials regarding acceptable and non-acceptable uses of county and municipal land.

During 2017, PALTA developed a groundbreaking tool to ameliorate these problems. The Association's [\*Model Declaration of Public Trust with Commentary\*](#), a set of three model document alternatives, including an optional grant of conservation easement, helps local governments formally dedicate lands as public recreational and natural resources and clarify appropriate and inappropriate land uses.

Even as this new tool undergoes additional rounds of public and expert review in 2018, early adopters are making use of it. PALTA will make final refinements and formally publish the first edition of the model in 2018. Learn more at <https://conserveland.org/blog/revised-draft-for-public-review-model-declaration-of-public-trust-with-commentary/>

## **Improving Conservation Easement Practices**

### **PALTA Updates and Expands Models and Commentaries**

#### **Model Conservation Easement Donation Agreement, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition**

PALTA completed the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of its [\*Model Conservation Easement Donation Agreement with Commentary\*](#), which was introduced in 2012. The many and sundry improvements include updates to account for the 2017 edition of *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, the LTA advisory on tax shelter abuse, and IRS Notice 2017-10.

The model helps land trusts avoid getting stuck with unreimbursed major expenses if a would-be easement donor walks away from a project. It outlines the steps to completing a project and the responsibilities of the land trust and donor. It also helps the parties avoid common misunderstandings.

#### **Model Grant of Conservation Easement and Declaration of Covenants for Riparian Buffer Protection, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition**

PALTA published the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of its [\*Model Grant of Conservation Easement and Declaration of Covenants for Riparian Buffer Protection with Commentary\*](#). The model document is tailored specifically for the protection of a riparian buffer along a waterway. Unlike the [\*Model Grant of Conservation Easement and Declaration of Covenants\*](#), which provides for three levels of protection to address variations in conservation objectives across a property, this model addresses situations where you want to apply a uniform set of objectives and restrictions to the protected area. The commentary

addresses issues unique to protecting riparian buffers, most particularly the reality that waterways can shift over time.

## Model Policy for Conservation Easement Amendment

PALTA updated the [\*Guide and Model Policy for Conservation Easement Amendment\*](#), which was first published in 2014. Improvements include changes to ensure consistency with the 2017 update of *Land Trust Standards and Practices*. The model can be used as a template for a policy or, especially if a land trust prefers a short and simple policy, as a thorough, practical guide to responsible amendment decision-making.

## Stewardship Costs Calculator

PALTA updated its Excel-based [\*Stewardship Cost Calculator\*](#) to address Terraforma insurance premiums. Other modest improvements also were made. The calculator was first offered in 2007 and revised in 2011.

## Model Grant of Conservation Easement and Declaration of Covenants

PALTA made improvements to the commentary of the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the [\*Model Grant of Conservation Easement and Declaration of Covenants\*](#) to address newly identified issues and the 2017 update of *Land Trust Standards and Practices*. Also, a clarification was made in §3.02(c) of the model.

## Facilitating Outdoor Recreation, Trails, and Land Acquisition PALTA Introduces Model Partnership Agreement and Updates Other Models

### Model Maintenance and Operation Agreement

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association published the [\*Model Operation and Maintenance Agreement with Commentary\*](#) to help local governments and private sports leagues or other recreational groups establish partnerships for providing recreational facilities and programming on public lands. It helps them define their respective roles and responsibilities so as to avoid misunderstandings.

### Model Trail Easements

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association completed and offered for public review drafts of new editions of its long and short-form trail easement model documents: the [\*Model Trail Easement Agreement\*](#) and the [\*Model Grant of Trail Easement\*](#). In addition to improvements to the models, the explanatory content and optional provisions in both commentaries were expanded by roughly 50%. The models, which are used nationwide, were last updated in 2010. (The new editions were finalized in early 2018.)

### Model Grant of Purchase Option

PALTA made improvements to the commentary of the [\*Model Grant of Purchase Option\*](#), which was first published in 2014.

## **Creating and Improving Guides**

# **PALTA Publishes Nine New Guides and Refreshes 21 More**

### **Nine New Guides Published**

PALTA completed its 100<sup>th</sup> *original* guide (and several more) in 2017. All are published at [ConservationTools.org](http://ConservationTools.org). The title of each new guide and brief description are provided below.

#### **[Recordkeeping for Conservation Easement Stewardship](#)**

Organizing essential documents in a secure, accessible system is a fundamental part of conservation easement stewardship. This guide describes the systems of 14 land trusts.

#### **[Conservation Easements: An Introduction for Private Landowners](#)**

A conservation easement limits certain uses of the land in order to advance one or more conservation objectives while keeping the land in the owner's control.

*PALTA's conservation easement guides tend to go deep into topics. This guide keeps the information relatively short and simple. It also covers topics important for landowners to understand that are seldom addressed in marketing pamphlets.*

#### **[What Is a Land Trust?](#)**

Simply stated, a land trust is a charitable organization that acquires land or conservation easements, or that stewards land or easements, for conservation purposes. However, this simple definition leaves much to be explained.

*You'd think that a piece like this already would have been written. Not so.*

#### **[Why Preserve Farmland?](#)**

Farms feed us and provide a host of other public benefits. However, every day the amount of fertile farmland diminishes as development spreads. This guide describes the economic benefits of farmland preservation and its role in protecting national security and sustaining traditions in rural communities.

#### **[Farm Preservation Options for Landowners: Government and Private Approaches to Conservation Easements in Pennsylvania](#)**

Fifty-seven Pennsylvania counties have agricultural land preservation boards that purchase agricultural conservation easements. Sixty-five private charitable organizations accept donations of conservation easements or, less commonly, purchase them. These two paths to farmland preservation differ in many ways.

#### **[Bird Research and Conservation](#)**

Initiatives in Pennsylvania and on a national level promote the study of bird populations and the protection of their habitat.

#### **[From Lawn to Meadow: Protect Water and Provide Habitat While Saving Money](#)**

Converting areas covered by turf grass to meadows can be financially rewarding and relatively simple on both public and private land. It can also deliver substantial environmental and aesthetic benefits.

## [How Pennsylvanians View Government Funding of Conservation: An Overview of Polling and Voting Results](#)

An overwhelming majority of Pennsylvanians—regardless of party or region—value open space and state investments in conservation.

## [Polls Show Pennsylvanians Support Environmental Protection](#)

Polls show that Pennsylvanians are concerned about a range of environmental issues, from clean water and wildlife conservation to global warming and renewable energy.

## **Twenty-One Guides Refreshed**

Of equal importance to developing new material is ensuring that PALTA's growing body of guidance doesn't grow stale. In 2017, staff dedicated substantial effort to refreshing and making improvements to PALTA guides, including 15 that dated to 2009 when ConservationTools.org was just getting underway. Several guides were essentially rewritten to better communicate information and address user needs. Others were greatly expanded or updated to address changes in the law. The titles of the refreshed guides are listed below:

- *Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program: A Pennsylvania Tool for Preserving Farmland*
- *Agricultural Security Areas: Protecting Farms from Condemnation and Unreasonably Restrictive Ordinances*
- *Amending and Restating Grants of Conservation Easement: Best Practices to Document Changes*
- *Build-Out Analysis: Projecting the Impact of Current Law on Future Development*
- *Clean and Green: Pennsylvania's Preferential Tax Assessment Program*
- *CommunityViz®*
- *Cost of Community Services Studies*
- *Development Threat Analysis*
- *Donation by Will: Options and Issues Regarding Gifts of Cash, Land, and Other Property*
- *Global Positioning System (GPS)*
- *Guide and Model Policy for Conservation Easement Amendment*
- *Land Trust Accreditation*
- *Land Trust Standards and Practices: Guidelines for the Responsible Operation of a Land Trust*
- *Lighting Ordinance*
- *Model Conservation Easement*
- *Model Legal Documents*
- *National Poll Results: How Americans View Conservation*
- *Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program*
- *Prioritization of Conservation Resources*
- *Referendum to Authorize a Tax or Bond for Conservation*
- *Traditional Neighborhood Development*
- *Tree Ordinance*

## **Directly Assisting Organizations and People**

### **One-on-One Assistance**

During 2017, PALTA staff helped dozens of organizations with their questions and problems via telephone and email as well as in person. Whether a matter took seconds, minutes, or days to resolve, no issue was left unaddressed.

## Conservation Easement Assistance Program

The Conservation Easement Assistance Program (CEAP) seeks to increase the quantity of special places protected as well as increase the quality and long-term viability of easements. In 2017, PALTA made 27 grants totaling \$119,840.34, providing land trusts the means to use best practices in their easement projects:

- 22 grants to complete new easement projects
- 1 grant to amend and restate older easement documents
- 2 grants to establish or improve baseline documentation.
- 2 grants to install signs.

Since 2004, CEAP has helped create 260 new easements protecting 22,030 acres in 35 counties. For these projects, landowners donated \$50.3 million in easement value and land trusts secured \$1.79 million for stewardship.

## Fostering Peer-to-Peer Relationships

### Mentorship Program

PALTA launched its Conservation Professionals Mentorship Program in 2017 and established three mentor-mentee pairs over the course of the year.

*Please consider volunteering to be a mentor if the role might fit you. Email Nate Lotze at [nlotze@conserveland.org](mailto:nlotze@conserveland.org) for more information.*

The program pairs experienced conservation professionals with younger professionals or those new to the field. Mentors offer guidance, share knowledge, and help mentees achieve career goals, while honing their own communication and leadership skills. Designed using elements from other successful mentorship models, the program fosters connections within the Pennsylvania conservation community and empowers the next generation of conservation leaders.

### Land Stewardship Network

PALTA facilitated its Land Stewardship Network—land trust staff and volunteers involved in land stewardship—to promote the sharing of ideas, experiences, and knowledge. PALTA provides the dozens of participants with an online platform to post questions and share resources and hosted calls to discuss specific stewardship topics. The network developed a half-day program for the 2017 Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference that provided stewardship people the opportunity to discuss key topics and learn from others' experiences.

### Environmental Advisory Councils

PALTA continued its management of the EAC Network. PALTA aims to provide meaningful support to Environmental Advisory Councils and those who seek to create new EACs within the constraint of limited funder interest in subsidizing the network. 2017's activities included the organization of an EAC Network Conference in Lancaster.





## Connecting, Educating, and Inspiring People

### Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference

The annual Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference is Pennsylvania's premier training, networking, and inspirational event for those involved with private and public land conservation. The three-day event brings together land trust professionals and volunteers; municipal officials; state agency staff; attorneys, planners, and other professionals from across Pennsylvania and beyond.



#### Quick facts about the May 4-6, 2017 conference in Lancaster County

332 attended.

Attendees rated it a 4.3 out of 5.

The average participant attended for 1.6 days.

Instructors delivered 37 half-day, full-day, and shorter sessions.

109.25 hours of instruction were offered.

### Western Pennsylvania Land Conservation Summit

Eighty-seven individuals participated in this day-and-a-half summit on November 2 and 3. Attendees weren't asked to rate the summit overall, but they provided detailed ratings of all the summit's elements. The 16 component workshops, which ranged from 75 minutes to 3 hours in length, were rated a 4.5 out of 5 on average, and the anecdotal but bountiful oral feedback was overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic.

This was the most ambitious event PALTA has ever held west of State College, and PALTA engaged western PA leaders to help develop the agenda. Of particular note was the composition of the attendees, with 48 board members in attendance. PALTA, in its marketing, had placed substantial focus on attracting board members to the event. 59 individuals attended both days.

Accolades to individuals and organizations that volunteered their time and services to the event! Pat Pregmon delivered Friday's land conservation track sessions. Reneé Carey staffed the registration desk for most of the event. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy provided volunteers to help staff the registration desk. And the Allegheny Land Trust provided a walking tour of its nearby preserve.

### Other PALTA-Organized Events

#### For the Trail, On the Trail

This two-day event in Downingtown, Chester County, on September 8-9, was not rated overall but the constituent workshops received overall ratings ranging from 4.4 to 4.8 out of 5. Forty-one people, 39 excluding instructors, attended the two-day event. Eighteen individuals participated in both days.

#### The Power of Drones and New Technology to Advance Conservation

Fifty-four people participated in this hugely popular, September 19 seminar. Attendees rated the program a 4.44 out of 5 overall. The program was hosted by Natural Lands at its ChesLen Preserve.

**DRWI Land Protection Cooperative Group**

On September 22, twenty-three individuals from land conservation groups in the Delaware River watershed participated in the first meeting of this group, which is facilitated by PALTA and supported by the William Penn Foundation.

**A Roundtable on Land Trust Endeavors Regarding Agricultural Lands**

On January 18, PALTA held a roundtable session addressing farmland preservation, conservation of agricultural soils, water quality protection, state and federal funding, the results of PALTA's study on the state/county program, conservation plans, and partnerships. Brandywine Conservancy hosted the event.

Seventeen land trusts were represented. Forty-one people attended including 13 from Brandywine. Attendees were asked to rate three facets of the roundtable; these ratings averaged 4.5, 4.5, and 4.8 out of 5.

**Webinar on the New Edition of Land Trust Standards and Practices**

On March 15, PALTA held a webinar that reviewed the major changes made for the new edition of Land Trust Standards and Practices. Staff, board members, and other volunteers of PALTA member organizations were invited to participate. PALTA also created a version of the 2017 *Standards and Practices* in which were highlighted the significant additions and changes from the 2004 edition.

Thirty-three people (excluding PALTA staff) participated. Although no formal ratings were sought, all the comments received were quite positive.

**Conference Call on Conservation Easement Valuation**

On July 25, PALTA hosted a conference call that explored the question of how to value conservation easements when filing Form 990 in light of the recent Brookings Institution report on "Charitable Contributions of Conservation Easements" (Looney, May 2017). Organizations shared their approaches; they didn't conclude that any organization needed to change its present practices.

**Conservation Network**

PALTA organized and hosted a Pennsylvania Conservation Network meeting in Harrisburg on March 17. Conservation Network meetings, which have a public policy focus, are open to representatives of Pennsylvania 501(c)3 and 501(c)4 organizations that seek to protect and improve Pennsylvania's environment. (Additional meetings were postponed to free up participant time for the Common Agenda process.)

**Sampling of Presentations**

Faraguna facilitated a session on the concept of establishing a land protection cohort for the Delaware River Watershed Initiative at its February 8 Winter Gathering. Thirty-five participants engaged in a productive discussion regarding how a cohort could support land protection work.

Faraguna presented on Environmental Advisory Councils to the Conservation Union, a consortium of conservation organizations working across Union County.

Loza presented on "Conservation Easements: What Landowners Should Know" at the Forest Landowners Conference on March 25 in Blair County.

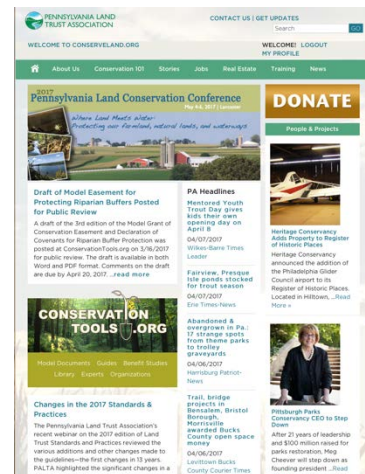


## Making News and Information Easily Accessible Marketing and Communications

### ConserveLand.org Refreshed

ConserveLand.org is the place to go to find out what's new in land conservation in Pennsylvania including news about people, projects, and resources. In 2017, PALTA refreshed the ConserveLand.org website to better convey information to conservationists.

*Please make sure that your organization is including Nate Lotze ([nlotze@conserve-land.org](mailto:nlotze@conserve-land.org)) in distribution of e-newsletters, news releases, and other communications that you want to share with the land conservationists outside your organization.*



### ConserveLand Updates and Newsletter

Whenever there was news to report of significant new tools or issues impacting conservation, PALTA emailed ConserveLand Updates (usually every week or two). To supplement electronic outreach, PALTA also prepared and distributed the ConserveLand newsletter and postcards describing new resources.

## Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund

### 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In 2017, PALTA convened major Keystone Fund stakeholders several times to explore and implement ways to educate on the Keystone Fund as it turns 25 in 2018 and set the stage for another quarter century of successes. *If interested in adding your creative talent and energy to the effort, please let Nicole Faraguna ([nfaraguna@conserve-land.org](mailto:nfaraguna@conserve-land.org)) know.*

### “My Story”

In 2017, PALTA recruited 83 individuals from across the Commonwealth to tell, *in their own words*, stories about projects supported by Pennsylvania’s Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund. These stories are written by people who experience the benefits of Keystone-funded projects in their communities during their everyday lives. PALTA is using these stories by educators, hikers, cyclists, dog-walkers, parents, and others to tell the human story of conservation and the Keystone Fund.



Including the 26 stories told in 2016, PALTA has now printed and **posted 109** stories at [KeystoneFund.org](http://KeystoneFund.org). PALTA also added a map feature to [KeystoneFund.org](http://KeystoneFund.org) that helps visitors to easily find Keystone Fund stories in their geographical area of interest.



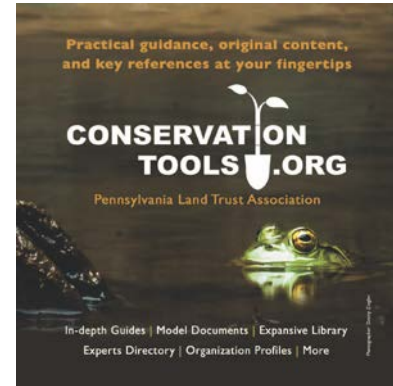
## Keystone Fact Sheets

In 2017, PALTA also prepared a new fact sheet focused on the economic benefits and public support of programs like Keystone and developed other content for the educational website [KeystoneFund.org](http://KeystoneFund.org).



## Marketing ConservationTools.org

It's not enough to produce great technical guidance. People, especially newcomers, need to be reminded again and again of where to find the guidance. To this end, PALTA designed two screen wipes to promote ConservationTools.org and had them produced in 2017. (They work great with computer screens and glasses, even after many washings.) The wipes are being made available at all relevant PALTA events and exhibits.



PALTA also had two tablecloths made for promoting ConservationTools.org on which PALTA can place its various guides and models at conferences and other events. If you're near them, you can't miss them.

## Get Outdoors PA

Get Outdoors PA markets the outdoor recreation programs taking place across Pennsylvania in order to connect people with outdoor recreation activities and increase their active use of parks, forests, and public spaces. As a flagship partner, PALTA advances GOPA efforts in a variety of ways, including with communications, strategic marketing efforts, and education. Most notably in 2017, PALTA led efforts to increase tick awareness.



## Annual Trail Report

To help people better understand trail opportunities and learn from the trail projects of others, PALTA writes and researches content, designs, and edits the DCNR Annual Trail Report. The report is released through DCNR's Trail Advisory Committee.

## Land Trust Standards and Practices

The Land Trust Alliance published the new edition of *Land Trust Standards and Practices* in February 2017. PALTA executive director Andy Loza served on the 14-member Standards Advisory Team, which helped in collecting public feedback and deliberated at length on potential changes. Team members were not unanimous in supporting each of the final elements, but Loza believes that they all walked away satisfied that (1) the revision was a substantial improvement over the 2004 edition; (2) the process was good and excellently supported by Alliance staff; and (3) all points of view regarding each standard and practice were reviewed and reasonably considered. During the revision cycle, PALTA analyzed the various drafts, submitted comments, and encouraged land trusts to do likewise. More information is available at <https://conservationtools.org/guides/14>.

## Recognizing and Promoting Conservation Excellence Conservation Leadership Awards

### Lifetime Leadership Award

The Lifetime Conservation Leadership Award honors individuals for their decades of dedication and leadership in conserving Pennsylvania's special places and landscapes. It also serves to inspire others to seize the conservation opportunities that lie before them. Each year, PALTA solicits nominations from across the Commonwealth and the awards committee reviews the submissions. In 2017, the committee selected **Tom Kerr**, former president of Wildlands Conservancy and a founder of PALTA, as the 14<sup>th</sup> individual to receive the award. The award was presented at the Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference. Thanks go to committee members Jeff Marshall of Heritage Conservancy, Kim Murphy of Berks Nature, and Andy Pitz of French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust for their time and effort in reviewing nominations.

For more information, see [ConserveLand.org/blog/tom-kerr-recognized-for-conservation-career](http://ConserveLand.org/blog/tom-kerr-recognized-for-conservation-career).



*(from left to right): Jeff Marshall, PALTA President, Chris Kocher, Wildlands Conservancy, Tom Kerr and his wife Carla, and Andy Loza, PALTA Executive Director*

### Government Leadership Award

The Government Conservation Leadership Award honors municipalities and counties that have demonstrated leadership in conserving their special places and landscapes. The government awards committee selected **Union County** to receive the 2017 award, which was presented at the Pennsylvania Land Conservation Conference. Thanks go to committee members Drew Gilchrist of PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Kris Kern of Heritage Conservancy, Roy Kraynyk of Allegheny Land Trust, Denny Puko of DCED, and Jeff Swinehart of Lancaster Farmland Trust for their time and effort in reviewing nominations.

For more information, see <https://conserveLand.org/blog/palta-honors-union-county-for-leadership-in-conservation/>



*(from left to right): Andy Loza, PALTA Executive Director; Susan Warner-Mills, Merrill Linn Conservancy; Union County Commissioner John Showers; Bill Deitrick, Union County Commissioner Conservation District; Geoff Goodenow, Merrill Linn Conservancy; and Jeff Marshall, PALTA President*



## Leadership in Advancing Conservation Law, Policy, and Practice

At its 2017 policy dinner, the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association recognized **Pat Pregmon** for her steadfast commitment to conservation excellence and contributions to the advancement of conservation law, policy, and practice.



## Working for Better Public Policy Other PALTA Education and Advocacy Endeavors

PALTA staff engaged in a variety of public policy education and advocacy efforts in 2017. The public benefits provided by land trusts and by state conservation investments, including the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and Growing Greener, continued to be a major focus.

### Outreach to Legislators

As part of its ongoing, proactive outreach, PALTA staff had 78 face-to-face meetings with state senators, representatives, and their staff.

PALTA thanks land trust leaders who took the time to meet with their local legislators, either in their districts or with PALTA staff in Harrisburg, during 2017. Helping policy makers understand conservation matters and the people advocating for conservation greatly improves the likelihood that, when a legislative issue arises, they will pay attention to the concerns and requests of land trusts and the Association when making decisions.

### Select Public Policy Actions

PALTA, with the help of its member organizations and other partners, led the 2017 **fight to stop huge and devastating cuts to state conservation investments** made through the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and Growing Greener. PALTA appreciates the efforts of all who reached out to their legislators when called upon. Thank you.

PALTA provided the House Tourism and Recreational Development Committee with testimony regarding House Bill 544, which would strengthen the **Recreational Use of Land and Water Act**, which limits the liability of landowners, including land trusts and governments, who allow the public to recreate on their land free-of-charge.

PALTA joined in an *amicus curiae* **brief** for the PA Supreme Court in the case of EQT Production Company v. DEP. The best article on the issue is at <http://www.paenvironmentdigest.com/newsletter/default.asp?NewsletterArticleID=39651>

DCNR convened working groups to explore possible implementation of recommendations from the final report of the Governor's Green Ribbon **Task Force on Forest Products, Conservation and Jobs**. PALTA staff chaired a group looking at how a working forest conservation easement purchase program might be designed and implemented.

PALTA researched and sketched alternatives for expanding the **Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program** to support land trust projects.

PALTA assisted LTA in shaping its communications regarding the **Uniform Conservation Easement Act** in the face of a potentially damaging effort led by non-land trust practitioners to revamp that national guidance.

PALTA signed onto the Community Letter in Support of Nonpartisanship:

<https://www.givevoice.org/community-letter-support-nonprofit-nonpartisanship>

The letter, which was initiated by the [National Council of Nonprofits](#), the [Independent Sector](#), et al., begins:

The undersigned organizations strongly oppose proposals that would politicize the charitable nonprofit and philanthropic community by repealing or weakening current federal tax law protections that prohibit 501(c)(3) organizations from endorsing, opposing, or contributing to political candidates.

### Leadership and Advisory Roles

PALTA staff partnered with others and helped advance conservation issues of shared interest by serving on a variety of leadership and advisory bodies ranging from the national Land Trust Leadership Council to the State Outdoor Recreation Plan Advisory Committee.

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The board of directors and staff of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association thank PALTA's generous contributors for making the Association's conservation work possible. Your support is appreciated and vital to PALTA's continued success.

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association is effective and efficient.

\$9 out of every \$10 are spent on technical assistance, research, education, training, advocacy, and other programmatic work.

Only 10% of revenue is spent on management and fundraising.

The Association's audited financial statements are available upon request.

## PALTA's Mission

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association helps people conserve the lands needed for healthy, prosperous, and secure communities—the forests, farms, parks, urban gardens, and other green places that safeguard our drinking water, prevent flooding, protect wildlife, provide recreational and economic opportunities, and preserve scenic beauty and community treasures. The Association accomplishes this by helping nonprofits and local governments improve their effectiveness and efficiency in acquiring and stewarding land and easements, advancing sustainable land use practices, and connecting people to the outdoors; the Association also fosters public understanding of conservation, advocates for sound governmental policy, and leads state and national endeavors to achieve far-reaching advancements in conservation.

## PALTA's Strategies

Build tools that facilitate the pursuit of excellence in the accomplishment of effective and efficient conservation acquisitions, land stewardship, land use planning, and organizational operations.

Train, deliver technical assistance, and foster stronger communications and relationships to empower and inspire people to achieve more in their conservation work.

Change and improve the systems in which conservationists operate to achieve better conservation outcomes and keep conservation and land trusts vital in a changing world.

Advocate for better public policies impacting land conservation and water resource protection.

## PALTA's Strategic Plan

The Pennsylvania Land Trust Association's strategic plan is available at [ConserveLand.org](https://www.conserveLand.org).

## PALTA's Websites

ConserveLand.org   ConservationTools.org   ConservationAdvocate.org  
GreenwaysAndTrails.org   EACnetwork.org   KeystoneFund.org   GrowingGreener.info   GetOutdoorsPA.org   PALandchoices.org

## Pennsylvania Land Trust Association 2017

### Board of Directors

Renee Carey, *president*  
Kim Murphy, *vice president*  
John Conner, *treasurer*  
Tom Saunders, *secretary*

Chris Beichner  
Ellen Ferretti  
Jeffrey Marshall  
Karen Martynick  
Molly Morrison  
D. Andrew Pitz  
Steven Schiffman  
Phillip Wenger

### Staff

Andrew M. Loza  
*executive director*

Nicole D. Faraguna  
*dir. of outreach & education*

Carolyn Grayshaw  
*project & office coordinator*

Nate Lotze  
*communications specialist*

Joshua VanBrakle  
*gis specialist*  
(started January 2018)

### Policy Advisory Committee\*

Kevin Abbey  
George Asimos  
Oliver Bass  
Cynthia Carrow  
Jim Engel  
Brian Gallagher  
John Goodall  
Debra Wolf Goldstein  
Kathie Gonick  
Dawn Gorham

Sean Kenny  
Kristine Kern  
Chris Kocher  
Pat Pregmon  
Diane Rosencrance  
Kyle Shenk  
Jeff Swinehart  
Sally Zaino

\* at-large members  
as of 12/31/17

### Voting Member Organizations

Allegheny Land Trust  
Allegheny Valley Conservancy  
Allegheny Valley Land Trust  
Allegheny Valley Trails Association  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Armstrong County Conservancy Charitable Trust  
Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania  
Berks Nature  
Brandywine Conservancy  
The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation  
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Centre County Farmland Trust  
Chestnut Hill Conservancy  
ClearWater Conservancy  
The Conservation Fund, Pennsylvania Office  
Countryside Conservancy  
Delaware Highlands Conservancy  
Earth Conservancy  
East Nantmeal Land Trust  
Eden Hill Conservancy  
Edward L. Rose Conservancy  
Evergreen Conservancy  
Farm and Natural Land Trust of York County  
Foundation for Sustainable Forests  
Fox Chapel Land Conservation Trust

French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust  
French Creek Valley Conservancy  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association  
Heritage Conservancy  
Hollow Oak Land Trust  
Independence Conservancy  
Lacawac Sanctuary Foundation  
Lackawanna Valley Conservancy  
Lancaster County Conservancy  
Lancaster Farmland Trust  
Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County  
Land Conservancy of Adams County  
Land Trust of Bucks County  
Lebanon Valley Conservancy  
London Britain Land Trust  
Lower Merion Conservancy  
Manada Conservancy  
Merrill Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy  
Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy  
Mokoma Conservancy  
Montour Trail Council  
Mount Nittany Conservancy  
Natural Lands  
The Nature Conservancy  
Neighborhood Gardens Trust

North American Land Trust  
North Branch Land Trust  
Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Open Land Conservancy of Chester County  
Pennsbury Land Trust  
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society  
Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust  
Pine Creek Land Conservation Trust  
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Association  
Pocono Heritage Land Trust  
The Radnor Conservancy  
Regional Trail Corporation  
Schuylkill County Conservancy  
Somerset County Conservancy  
Susquehanna Greenways Partnership  
Tinicum Conservancy  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Wallace Trust  
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Westmoreland Conservancy  
Westmoreland Land Trust  
West Pikeland Land Trust  
Wild Waterways Conservancy Inc.  
Wildlands Conservancy  
Willistown Conservation Trust  
Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association





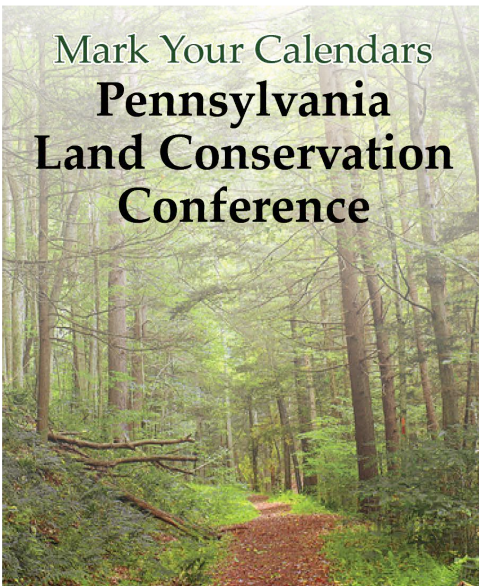
**PENNSYLVANIA  
LAND TRUST  
ASSOCIATION**

119 Pine Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

717.230.8560

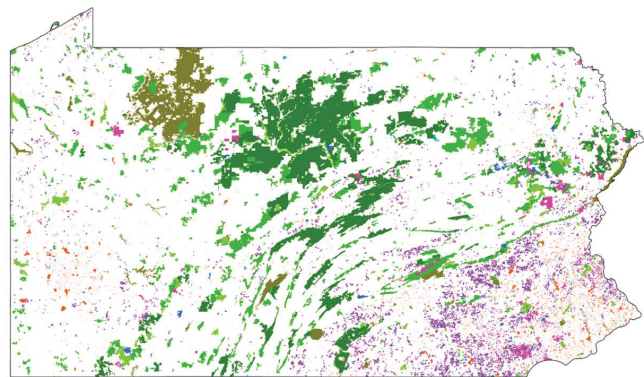
[info@conserveland.org](mailto:info@conserveland.org)

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Conference**



**May 16-18, 2019**  
Skytop (Monroe County)

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