

## ClearWater Conservancy

ClearWater Conservancy of Central Pennsylvania, Inc. is a 501(c)3 land trust and natural resource conservation organization formed in 1980. We are governed by a 19-member board of directors, support four full-time and two part-time staff, and have over 800 members and sponsors.

Our mission is to promote conservation and restoration of natural resources in central Pennsylvania through land conservation, water resources protection, and environmental outreach to the community.



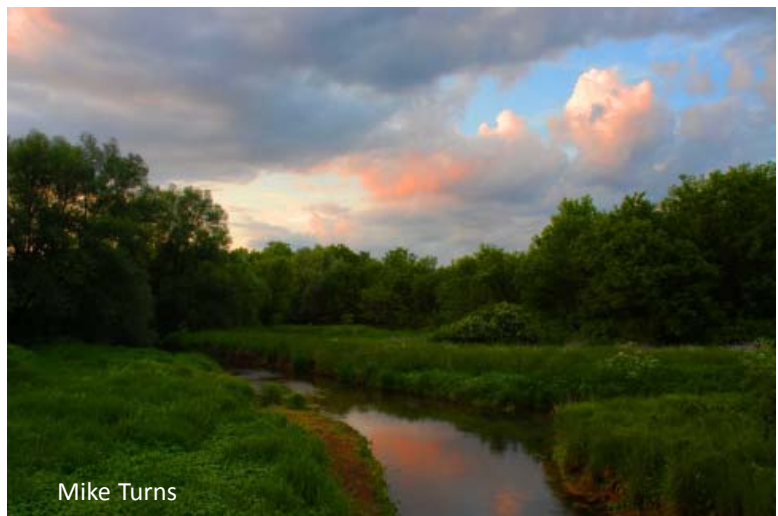
*Everyone working together to conserve natural beauty and the environment in the heart of Pennsylvania.*

## Land Conservation

ClearWater Conservancy's Land Conservation Program seeks to balance the rapid growth of central Pennsylvania with the conservation of important ecological, cultural, and historic places. We work with landowners and managers to determine appropriate conservation methods, including land management recommendations, conservation easements, and land acquisition.

To date ClearWater has protected over 4,150 acres of land through conservation easements and conservation partnerships resulting in public ownership of unique habitats and landscapes. Projects which have created publicly-accessible protected properties include Musser Gap, Thompson Woods Preserve, Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, and State Game Lands #323.

Privately-owned protected properties include Rhoneymeade Farm, Nittany Farms, Eagle Field, Potter Farm, Kettle Run Farm, Fisher Farm, McCorkel Tree Farm, the Lisle property along Spring Creek, and the Hilton Garden Inn's portion of wetlands bordering the Millbrook Marsh fen. ClearWater also owns 5.5-acres which are home to a rare wetland community, a calcareous fen, adjacent to Millbrook Marsh.



Mike Turns

## Water Resource Protection

ClearWater's Water Resource Protection Program focuses on protecting, maintaining, and restoring the ecological integrity of watershed systems. Our goal is to retain the high quality of life in central Pennsylvania through watershed-based planning that balances environmental, social, and economic needs. We raise awareness of watershed issues and provide the tools and information needed to encourage sustainable decisions by community leaders and citizens.

ClearWater assisted with the formation of two important entities: the Spring Creek Watershed Community and the Spring Creek Watershed Commission. We currently partner with both of these groups on a new Sustainability Initiative for the Spring Creek Watershed. We also manage the Spring

Creek Water Resources Monitoring Project, which includes base flow, groundwater, stormwater, and spring monitoring.



Jennifer Shuey

In response to findings by the PA Department of Environmental Protection that many segments of Spring Creek and its tributaries are impaired, ClearWater Conservancy is working with other major stakeholders to improve the water quality on those reaches. Through our Riparian Conservation Program, ClearWater is involving volunteers in the planting of vegetated buffers along streams and teaching streamside landowners about stream conservation.

## Environmental Outreach

The goal of our Environmental Outreach Program is to increase public awareness and involvement in the conservation and restoration of natural resources in central Pennsylvania. ClearWater Conservancy representatives frequently give talks to local groups and organizations to increase the community's awareness of conservation issues.



Environmental outreach efforts include annual events such as the Spring Creek Day Family Festival, Watershed Cleanup Day, and an Arbor Day planting. Our Adventures in Conservation program series features fun and informative walks and talks on a variety of interesting conservation topics.

Through our Connections program, the Conservancy provides scholarships to school children for educational field

trips to Millbrook Marsh Nature Center.

For more information visit [www.clearwaterconservancy.org](http://www.clearwaterconservancy.org).

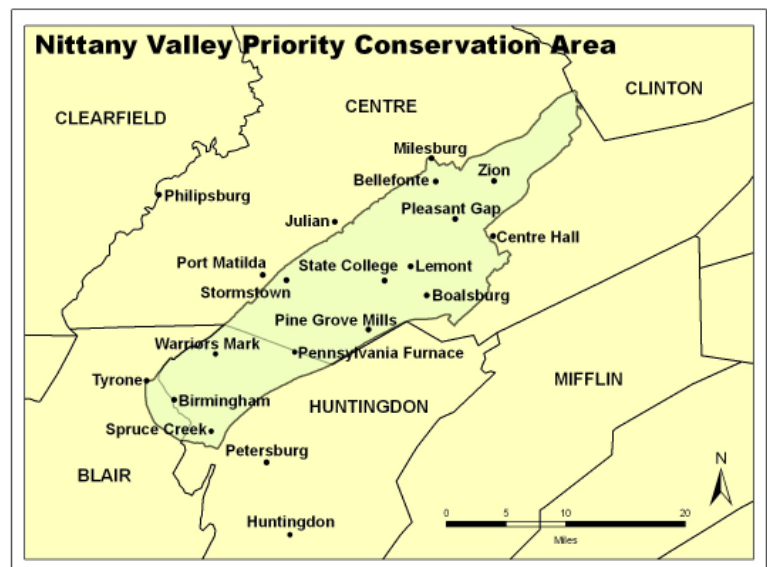


Christopher Shannon

## Nittany Valley Conservation Action Plan

In 2007, ClearWater Conservancy and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy joined forces to prioritize conservation initiatives for the Nittany Valley using a conservation tool developed by The Nature Conservancy called *Conservation Action Planning*. Western Pennsylvania Conservancy identified the Nittany Valley as one of its eight most important areas in the western portion of the state for protection, conservation, and restoration of land and water that supports native plants, animals, and important habitats.

The landscape referred to as Nittany Valley lies precisely at the geographic center of Pennsylvania in Centre and Huntingdon counties between two long mountain ridges: Bald Eagle Mountain and Tussey Mountain. The bedrock geology in the valley between these two ridges is composed of multiple limestones and the rare gravelly Gatesburg Formation, resulting in distinctive topography, soils and habitat types. In addition to the mountains, this landscape is defined by the watersheds of three streams: Spruce Creek which flows south to the Little Juniata River and Spring Creek and Little Fishing Creek, which flow north to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River.



Within the Nittany Valley, a high-caliber volunteer core project team assisted ClearWater Conservancy and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy with the identification of **ecological systems** that are critical to the conservation of biodiversity (i.e. the conservation targets), **stresses** on these conservation targets and the **sources** of the stress, **strategies** for conservation of the targets, and measures of conservation **successes**.

The Conservation Targets identified for the Nittany Valley include:

- Barrens plant communities
- Valley bottom mesic forests
- Subterranean ecosystems
- Limestone cliffs and glades
- Ridge tops and slopes
- Limestone springs, streams, wetlands, and floodplains in both Spring Creek and Spruce Creek
- Mountain saddles, water gaps, and freestone streams
- Vernal pools



Matt Dallos

## Community Benefit

The communities in Nittany Valley are vibrant and growing, but conservation is not keeping pace with development. The focus of the growth and development is Penn State University, State College, and the surrounding municipalities. According to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, “the urgency to act is probably no higher anywhere else in Pennsylvania.”

We must protect our drinking water, biodiversity, scenic beauty, outdoor recreational assets, and our community’s sense of place as we continue to grow, or we risk losing these valuable qualities.

Our region is scenically beautiful, with a backdrop of forested ridges, open vistas across the valleys, and cool, clean streams winding through the landscape in ribbons of greens and blues. Our outdoor recreational resources attract nature lovers to the area and are a definite plus for the local economy.

From a biological perspective, the Nittany Valley is one of the most unique landscapes in the state and includes a mixture of pitch pine-scrub oak sand barrens habitat, dotted with vernal pools; the Spring Creek valley with its alkaline soils, limestone cliffs, streams, springs, and rich vegetation; mountain slopes, gaps, and saddles; and karst valleys underlain with limestone aquifers, sinkholes and solutional caves.



The outflows from plentiful groundwater reserves form some of the largest natural springs in the region and are the source for high quality cold water streams such as Spruce Creek and Spring Creek, which are prized by fishermen for their bounty.

The underground aquifer is also the source of our population's drinking water. Our public wells are high-quality and abundant. Safeguarding our community's drinking water from potential sources of pollution saves our citizens money by reducing the need for expensive technological fixes to restore water quality.

Our most unusual ecosystems harbor rare species, such as Stellmack's cave amphipod and Franz's cave isopod, crustaceans found in few other places on earth. There are 22 occurrences of globally rare plants, invertebrates, and vertebrates; four Biological Diversity Areas totaling 13,400 acres; and 17 miles of important stream ecosystems in the Nittany Valley.

## **The Need To Act**

Large intact forests exist on the adjacent mountains, but lower limestone soil-based forest types are now limited due to a high degree of fragmentation. Nearly 20% of Spring Creek's stream miles have been designated "impaired" by pollutants in urban stormwater, excess nutrients and sediments in agricultural runoff, or increased sediment from earth-moving activities.

The main threats to the Nittany Valley environment include sprawling development, new roads, outdated agricultural practices, and the spread of invasive species. But with proper protections, proactive conservation, and targeted restoration, we can temper these threats and keep a vibrant community that respects and sustains its natural environment.

## Conservation Projects in the Works

### Conservation Easements

In 2009, we will complete the 190-acre Strouse conservation easement and the associated transfer of 70 purchased acres to Rothrock State Forest to protect the headwaters of the main stem of Spring Creek. We are also negotiating conservation easements along Bald Eagle Creek and in the Penns Valley. We intend to complete several high-priority easements each year.

### Scotia Barrens Conservation Project

Scotia Barrens is a rare habitat and one of the largest examples of a pitch pine-scrub oak barrens remaining in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It has extraordinary value as a home for a wide variety of wildlife, a primary source of our groundwater supply, and a place to teach our children about the natural world.



ClearWater is working with concerned and willing landowners around the periphery of the currently protected State Game Lands #176 portion of Scotia Barrens to protect lands through wildlife habitat enhancement, conservation easements, land donations, and outright purchase. We are also working to maintain natural connections between Scotia Barrens and Bald Eagle Ridge to the north and Tussey Ridge to the south.

### Halfmoon Wildlife Corridor

Significant development pressure along the northern border of Scotia Barrens imminently threatens to isolate Scotia Barrens from the large forested tracts of Bald Eagle Mountain, itself an important natural resource because of its large, relatively unfragmented forest habitat and rich wildlife populations.

ClearWater Conservancy is negotiating with a developer to protect 106 acres of the wildlife corridor through a combination of land purchase (40 acres) and the Halfmoon Township Open Space Preservation Program (66 acres). Protection of this 106-acre property is key to protecting two additional adjacent properties; discussions with adjacent landowners to widen the corridor have begun.

## Musser Gap Greenway

ClearWater Conservancy and Penn State University are addressing the need for a safe connection to Musser Gap for pedestrians and bicyclists by creating a greenway between it and the neighborhoods across Whitehall Road and beyond to town and campus. Musser Gap is a gateway to Rothrock State Forest purchased by ClearWater in 2007 and turned over to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry.



## Riparian Buffer Restorations

ClearWater Conservancy will restore streamside vegetated buffers on several more properties in 2009 through our Riparian Conservation Program, including notably the site of the former McCoy Dam, where we will also be developing a stream access for people who boat, fish, and otherwise want to enjoy the stream. In 2008 ClearWater Conservancy and our partners re-established 1.7 miles of riparian buffer to help protect Centre County streams and riparian wildlife.

## Spring Creek Canyon

According to the *Spring Creek Corridor Study*, "the most extraordinary and ecologically important assemblage of natural landscapes and scenic beauty is found in the dramatic canyon the stream has carved through the limestone bedrock as it descends from State College toward Bellefonte."

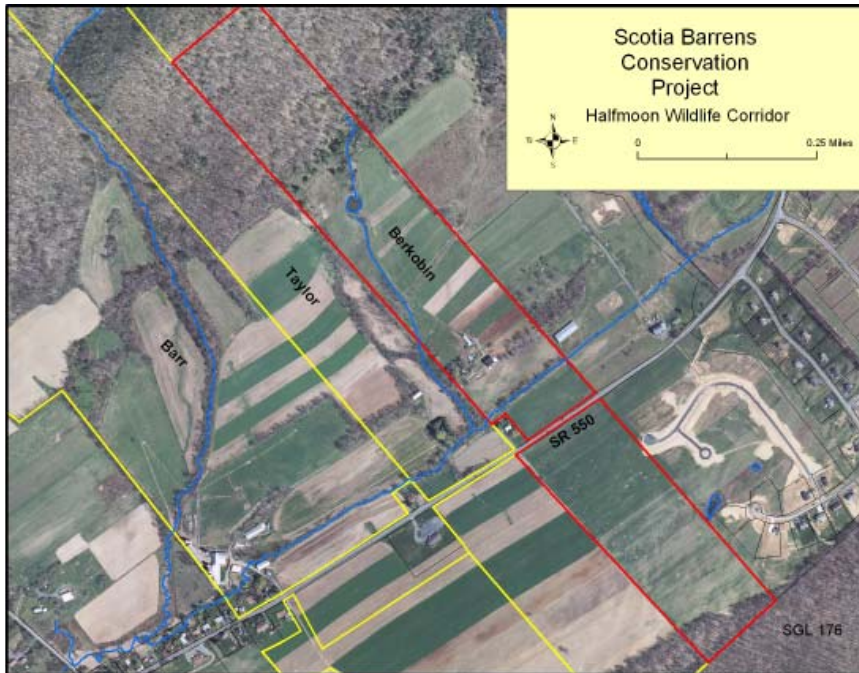


ClearWater took on a leadership role in the Spring Creek Canyon Master Planning Process and will protect the canyon with a conservation easement jointly held with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. A strong partnership must be forged among the landowners, conservation easement holders, and other community stakeholders to effectively manage this landscape through time. ClearWater Conservancy's actions and direction will be critical to successfully maintaining and enhancing the natural and cultural resources of this exceptional site.

## Operation Conservation

In 2009, ClearWater Conservancy's Strategic Funding Committee launched a five-year fundraising campaign called **Operation Conservation** to help achieve the organization's conservation, restoration, and education goals through the Nittany Valley Conservation Action Plan.

Our objective is to raise \$500,000 from major donors and concerned citizens through multi-year pledges and contributions to supplement and leverage the grants that we successfully receive for our projects. This follows on the \$150,000 raised in our 2007-2008 Campaign for Conservation, for a combined total of \$650,000 for our land conservation program.



Our immediate funding need in 2009 is to raise an additional \$150,000 to complete the initial acquisition in the Halfmoon Wildlife Corridor. ClearWater has already raised over three-quarters of the amount needed to purchase this parcel from its current landowner, whose original intention was to develop the property.

Our partnership with Western Pennsylvania Conservancy is laying the foundation for accessing additional funding sources that have been beyond ClearWater's reach until now.

But to attract new foundation and grant funding, ClearWater must demonstrate a strong base of local community support. Our members, volunteers, corporate sponsors, and major donors are the backbone of a healthy organization.

We need dedicated financial resources from our supporters to advance and implement our Conservation Strategies. This investment will be greatly leveraged through grant and foundation funding for specific land conservation transactions. Our staff and volunteers are committed to picking up the pace of conservation and protecting the places that matter most before it is too late.

**Please join us by giving generously to Operation Conservation!**

# Operation Conservation Contribution Pledge Form

## CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_, First Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Numbers: Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *I would prefer that this contribution and/or my name be kept confidential. Thanks!*

## DONATIONS

### A ONE-TIME DONATION, IN THE AMOUNT OF:

\$100,000 \$50,000 \$25,000 \$10,000 \$5,000 \$2,500 Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### MULTI-YEAR PLEDGE:

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Over: 2 Years 3 Years 5 Years

### A REPEATING DONATION, AS FOLLOWS:

A sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Once Every: Month Quarter Year, amounting to a Total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Does your employer match donations? YES / NO

Please enclose a signed Matching Donation Form from your employer if applicable.

## METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check enclosed. Please make checks payable to "ClearWater Conservancy"

Please bill my credit card. Card type: Visa MasterCard

Account number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Securities or stocks. Please call (814) 237-0400 to discuss.

## NOTES

- Contributions to ClearWater Conservancy of Central PA, Inc. are deemed charitable under section 501(a) of the internal revenue code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3). U.S. Federal Tax ID 25-1413990. Please consult your accountant for any clarifications.
- Payments must be received before the end of the year to be eligible for a tax deduction in that year.
- There is no minimum contribution amount.
- For more information please visit [www.clearwaterconservancy.org](http://www.clearwaterconservancy.org) or call (814) 237-0400 or email [jennifer@clearwaterconservancy.org](mailto:jennifer@clearwaterconservancy.org)

Please forward completed form and payment to:

**ClearWater Conservancy**  
2555 North Atherton Street  
State College, PA 16803  
Or fax to (814) 237-4909

