saving open sp

March 1 – August 31, 2019

BERKS COUNTY, **PA**

1 Staudt Property
51 acres
South Heidelberg Township

***Key Partners**: PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Bureau of Forestry; PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Community Conservation Partnership Program; US Forest Service – Highlands Conservation Act*

The Staudt property is 51-acre parcel adjacent to the George W. Wertz tract of the William Penn State Forest in South Heidelberg Township, Berks County. Through funding from PA DCNR and the US Forest Service, Natural Lands purchased the property and transferred it to the Bureau of Forestry where it will now be open to the public for hunting, hiking, and bird watching.

Forested land like this offers essential environmental services like cleaning the air, filtering sediment and other pollutants from the watershed, slowing stormwater during major rain events to reduce flooding, and storing carbon.

"In an area of the state where it is needed most, Natural Lands has emerged as one of this department's strongest allies when it comes to land protection," said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn.

Said Darlene Staudt, former owner, "This property was in my late husband's family for three generations. I know it would make my husband, Phil, happy to know it will be a forest forever."

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BUCKS COUNTY, **PA**

2 Keller Property

8 acres
Haycock Township

***Key Partners:* PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks; US Forest Service – Highlands Conservation Act; Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation**

This eight-acre property is immediately adjacent to Nockamixon State Park in Haycock Township, Bucks County. Using the Highlands Act to obtain funding, Natural Lands acquired the property and then immediately transferred ownership to the State Park. The Highlands Act authorizes the Department of the Interior, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to provide federal matching grants to support the agencies in purchasing land, or an interest in land, from willing sellers. Congress appropriates funding annually under the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Nockamixon State Park draws thousands of visitors every year to its hiking and biking trails, diversity of birds and other wildlife, and large lake used for boating, paddle-boarding, and fishing. Now part of the Park, the Keller property will be open to visitors for recreation.

"This acquisition fills a longstanding inholding and will further conserve Nockamixon State Park's natural resources and provide protective enhancements to the Park boundary in a region with significant development pressure around our public lands," said John Hallas, director of the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of State Parks. "We are pleased that this new parcel will provide expanded recreation opportunities to the citizens of the Commonwealth at this already very popular destination park in Bucks County."

Bryn Coed

CHESTER COUNTY, **PA**

3 Bryn Coed | *a conservation community*

East Pikeland, West Pikeland, and
West Vincent Townships

***Key Partners:* Chester County Preservation Partnership Program; East Pikeland Township; PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund; West Pikeland Township; West Vincent Township; William Penn Foundation; and gifts via the Campaign for Bryn Coed Farms, chaired by George and Christy Martin and Peter and Eliza Zimmerman**

In 2017, Natural Lands purchased the 1,505-acre Bryn Coed Farms property, which was the largest remaining undeveloped—and unprotected—property in the Greater Philadelphia region. Since that time, we've created the

map: Holly Harper, *above:* Caleb Arrowood

520-acre Bryn Coed Preserve and sold 72 acres to West Vincent Township for the creation of a public park. The remaining parcels are being sold to conservation-minded buyers and placed under easement to preserve them permanently. Proceeds fund an endowment that will provide for the long-term stewardship of Bryn Coed Preserve.

In the past six months, conservation buyers have taken ownership of eight lots totaling 256 acres. There are seven remaining lots available for purchase. (For more information, visit liveatbryncoed.com.)

4 Glenderro Property

58 acres
Highland Township

Key Partner: Chester County – Preservation Partnership Program

The scenic Glenderro property is located in the heart of Chester County in what was once part of the famed King Ranch's holdings. Today, more than 33,000 acres of this region is protected under conservation easement—an impressive figure that now includes 58 acres of Glenderro property. The easement will forever preserve the scenic, sweeping views and highly productive agricultural soils.

5 Piccoli Property

28 acres
West Nantmeal Township

Key Partners: Chester County – Preservation Partnership Program; Open Space Institute's Delaware River Watershed Protection Fund (made possible with funding from the William Penn Foundation for its Delaware River Watershed Initiative, which seeks to protect water quality in the Delaware River Basin); PA DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation – Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund; PA Game Commission; Virginia Cretella Mars Foundation; William Penn Foundation

Natural Lands purchased and transferred this 28-acre property to the PA Game Commission as an addition to Game Lands #43, bringing its total acreage to 2,517. Located in the heart of a massive expanse of contiguous forest known as Hopewell Big Woods, this wooded property contains a first order tributary of French Creek, which was designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection as an "Exceptional Value" stream, the highest water quality ranking in Pennsylvania.

This is the second addition to Game Lands #43 that Natural Lands has completed in the last two years. Game Lands #43 spans both Chester and Berks counties, and is the only Game Land located in Chester County.

Glenderro Property

Carissa Alza

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, **PA**

6 Meng Preserve

101 acres
Lower Frederick Township

Key Partners: The Mennonite Foundation; Valley Forge Audubon Society

This past summer, Valley Forge Audubon Society transferred ownership of the 101-acre Meng Preserve in Lower Frederick Township, PA to Natural Lands. The property was once the home of Eva R. Meng who gifted the land in her will to Valley Forge Audubon Society in 1994. Like all of Natural Lands' preserves, the space is open every day, free of charge, from dawn to dusk.

"Natural Lands has held the conservation easement on Meng Preserve for many years, ensuring this property would remain open space," said Valley Forge Audubon Society president Vince Smith. "As the owners of 44 natural areas across the region, Natural Lands has the expertise to steward and care for Meng. We know it will be in great hands."

Meng Preserve is a steeply sloped, forested property with impressive outcrops of diabase rock and vernal pools. It is part of a larger landscape—the Stone Hill Greenway—notable for its vast, unbroken forest. This wooded greenway is essential habitat for wildlife, including several species of migratory songbirds whose numbers are in decline such as Kentucky Warbler, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Hooded Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Ovenbird, and Magnolia Warbler.

Eva Meng and her sister, Edna, were avid preservationists. For many years, the property was used as "Camp Ivy" for Girl Scout Troop #3 of Schwenksville to engage in the natural world. The preserve includes two miles of hiking trails, including trails named in honor of both Eva and Edna Meng.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, **NJ**

7 Nocon Property

41.5 acres
Downe Township

Key Partners: Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation; William Penn Foundation

The Nocon property is located in the heart of the 7,440-acre Glades Wildlife Refuge, Natural Lands' largest preserve. The property consists of a wooded wetland typical of the area, where sweetgum, holly, and red maple jockey for position with pitch pines. Now under conservation easement, the inholding's important natural resources and the scenic viewshed of the area are forever protected. ■

Meng Preserve

Mae Axelrod