

WESTMORELAND
LAND TRUST
ANNUAL REPORT 2024





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Front cover photo of duckling courtesy of Judi Carvell



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October 20, 2025

Dear Friend of the Westmoreland Land Trust,

In December 2007 the Westmoreland County Commissioners established the Westmoreland Land Trust (WLT) to conserve special lands in Westmoreland County. Since then, WLT has enlarged county and local parks, supported extension of recreational trails, and established and maintained nature preserves. WLT has also built a highly valued educational program and worked to establish noteworthy destinations in Westmoreland County.

Once again 2024 was a significant year for WLT, as described in this Annual Report. WLT developed a master plan for the St. Xavier Nature Preserve and completed initial improvements at the Schwarz future art and nature park. WLT's board continued to meet at the J. Roy Houston Conservation Center, but WLT's work was now based at the St. Xavier and Schwarz properties, as well as project sites.

WLT continued extensive nature programming throughout the year, both at Westmoreland County public schools and at libraries throughout Westmoreland County. During 2024 WLT also was selected by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC) to apply for accreditation, an investment that in the words of the LTAC reflects a land trust's "commitment to sound finances, ethical conduct, responsible governance and lasting stewardship". Application for LTAC accreditation will continue throughout 2025, and disposition will be made in 2026.

We are profoundly grateful to our supporters and volunteers who make our work possible. Thanks to you we have been able to conserve or help to conserve over 600 acres of land of special value in eight townships and municipalities. We have reached thousands of students with nature programming; and advanced visionary projects like the Schwarz Art and Nature Park and the St. Xavier Nature Preserve. Let us continue to work together to protect and enjoy special places in Westmoreland County!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill".

Bill Mihalco
Chair

The Westmoreland Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Contributions to the trust are tax-deductible under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code to the extent of the law.

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Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission

To conserve and steward land in Westmoreland County of special ecological, cultural or recreational value, for public benefit.

Vision

Throughout Westmoreland County open space and recreational land abounds, water resources are protected, and wildlife flourishes.
Westmoreland County is known to families, businesses, and visitors for its high quality of life.

Values

The Westmoreland Land Trust values:

- **Conservation** of diverse real property that is:
 - in, or in close proximity to, Westmoreland County, and
 - culturally, historically, ecologically, recreationally, or scenically valuable.
- **Restoration, protection, and maintenance** of conserved property as appropriate for its best long-term stewardship.
- **Partnership** with public or private entities where beneficial to encourage collective effort.
- **Research and planning** in support of conservation efforts.
- **Promotion** and education of conservation opportunities and benefits.
- **Conformance** with the Land Trust Alliance Land Trust Standards and Practices.



*Thank you to all who share
appreciation of Westmoreland County's
extraordinary natural resources and
commitment to their conservation.*

WLT Highlights of 2024

- Master planning for the St. Xavier Nature Preserve
- Applying for Land Trust Alliance Accreditation (application continues throughout 2025)
- Maintaining extensive conservation plantings at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve
- Completing initial improvements at the Carl A. Schwarz Memorial Art and Nature Park
- Continuing to maintain and improve the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve
- Continuing to manage and learn from the Twin Lakes Meadow
- Engaging Chris Reed as a Facilities and Land Manager
- Hosting AmeriCorps Service Members Sarah Poklembo, Dominic Demangone and Monica Rebar
- Developing the 2024 Westmoreland Ramble
- Providing nature workshops at Westmoreland County schools and libraries
- Securing grants to support projects and operations
- Continuing to build WLT's community of stakeholders and supporters
- Evaluating and selectively advancing conservation projects
- Securing invaluable assistance from supporters and volunteers

New Land Conservation

During 2024 several prospective projects were evaluated and selectively advanced. One focus was advancing acquisition of a 102-acre property adjacent to the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, to increase the size of that preserve to 350 contiguous conserved acres.

Background

On August 26, 2022, WLT acquired the Unity Township property now known as the St. Xavier Nature Preserve from the Sisters of Mercy, for conservation as a nature preserve open to the public. This 248-acre property is situated along Monastery Run, a tributary to Loyalhanna Creek, and US Route 30.

Even before WLT completed purchase of the St. Xavier land, WLT recognized the value of increasing the size of that conserved block of land. The Brandt family acreage is situated immediately adjacent to the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, sharing a long boundary with the Preserve. Discussions with the Brandt family about conservation of some of their acreage commenced in January 2022.

In spring 2023 WLT entered into an agreement with the Brandt family for sale and purchase of 102 acres adjacent to the St. Xavier Nature Preserve. The agreement identified several contingencies including WLT securing sufficient funding for the purchase and long-term maintenance of the land.

Throughout 2023 and 2024 WLT proceeded with due diligence and other steps necessary for acquisition while gathering sufficient funding for the project. This conservation acquisition was completed in June 2025 with funding support from the Katherine Mabis McKenna Foundation, Colcom Foundation, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, and Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Work to Advance the St. Xavier Nature Preserve

Background

The site of the former St. Xavier Academy and Convent, the St. Xavier Nature Preserve has special significance for the Sisters of Mercy, for the former Academy and Convent were established by the first seven Sisters who came to the United States from Ireland in 1843. Since purchasing the St. Xavier property in 2022, WLT has undertaken extensive conservation work. WLT enrolled much of the former farmland in the United States Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Enhancement Planting (CREP) program to secure extensive conservation plantings of former farm fields. WLT also completed rehabilitation of the large Civil war-era guesthouse known as "Bellbrook", which now serves as WLT's primary base of operations. WLT Board member Kim Miller very generously coordinated this project on a pro-bono basis.

Land Management

Throughout 2024 WLT managed the extensive CREP conservation plantings at St. Xavier - both over 80 acres of native grass and wildflower meadows, and broad riparian buffers planted with nearly 3,000 native trees and shrubs. Assistance of WLT board members, students, and volunteers was invaluable for these plantings, as it has been in the past.

Ongoing stewardship effort included management of Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) in the meadows, and maintenance of protective tree tubes, netting, and cages for the riparian



Late summer visitors to St. Xavier were treated to the spectacle of thousands of black-eyed Susans (*Rudbeckia hirta*) in bloom

buffer plantings. Throughout 2024 WLT also continued contracted management of Tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) in St. Xavier's woodlands and former campus area. Contracted work to control Tree of heaven will continue during 2025 and beyond. During the year WLT volunteers also maintained trails, cleared many fallen trees on trails and in the Grove, and built a bridge over a tributary to Monastery Run. St. Xavier graduate Dr. Bernard Scherer started restoration of a woodland grotto and statue not far from Bellbrook.



Rehabilitation of Gazebo



In September 2024 Ty Schlesman of Boy Scout Troop #226 of the Bushy Run District completed rehabilitation of the gazebo in the backyard of Bellbrook as his Eagle Scout project. The gazebo had become dilapidated, necessitating a complete rebuild of its roof, rework throughout, and staining. Ty planned the effort and secured remarkable donations of materials including composite roof tile delivered from Iowa (see list on following page).

Ty recruited volunteers and undertook much work himself to yield a safe and attractive structure that was beautifully renovated at minimal cost to WLT. Thanks to Ty the structure will provide shelter and add to the beauty of the Preserve for years to come.

Rehabilitation of the gazebo was supported by generous donations from:

Brava Roof Tile, Washington, Iowa
Frontier Railroad Services, New Stanton
MBM Painting, Pittsburgh
Sherwin Williams, Latrobe & Monroeville
Home Depot, Greensburg (Eagle Scout Discount)

St. Xavier Planning and Research

Stewardship Plan

In January 2024 WLT's board approved an extensive Stewardship Plan for the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, prepared by engineering and landscape architecture firm Fahringer, McCarty, Grey, Inc. The plan includes inventory of features of the property, and guidance about management of the land. Preparation of this comprehensive plan was very generously underwritten by WLT supporter Ben Sampson.



THG Geophysics

In February 2024, THG Geophysics completed their pro bono project using ground penetrating radar and terrain conductivity mapping to reveal the location of foundations of the former St. Xavier Academy and Convent buildings. This information they obtained will be used by WLT to develop interpretive materials about the site, and also will be invaluable for any future archeological exploration of the site.

Master Planning

In March 2024, WLT engaged landscape architect Richard Rauso for preparation of a Master Plan for the St. Xavier Nature Preserve. Planning effort ensued throughout the year, including discussions with a steering committee, input from WLT's board, and public meetings at Bellbrook. This collaborative effort culminated in a Master Plan approved by WLT's board on November 15th.



Grove Mapping

AmeriCorps Service Member Sarah Poklembo identified and mapped the trees throughout the St. Xavier arboretum known as the Grove, and gathered information about their age and time of planting. Many of the trees had been planted to commemorate a class's graduation from St. Xavier Academy. The information that Sarah gathered will be used to develop a visitor's guide to the arboretum.

History Project

In November 2024 WLT received a grant from McAuley Ministries to support collection of oral histories and historical information about the St. Xavier property. AmeriCorps Service Member Dominic Demangone undertook extensive outreach to the St. Xavier community to advance this project. Archivist Casey Bowser from Seton Hill University handled oversight of the project, which continued with Casey's interviews and videography by Sanders Video during 2025.

Throughout 2024 Dominic also received and catalogued donations of photographs and memorabilia from members of the St. Xavier community. To supplement the collection of historical information about St. Xavier, metal detecting volunteers Adam Thomas, Sam Mormack, and Mike Zalich worked throughout the year to retrieve dozens of metallic artifacts around Bellbrook and the former campus area.



Metal detecting finds include a class ring from the early 1900s and a medallion depicting St. Joseph with the student's initials on the reverse side (photos courtesy of Dominic Demangone)



Avian Research

Throughout 2024, WLT Board member Bill Powers of PixCams and Dr. Jim Kellam of St. Vincent College continued avian research at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, maintaining nest boxes and a feeding station with nest cams and BirdNETPi acoustic monitoring equipment to identify bird calls.



Powers of PixCams for retrofitting the boxes with bat cams and installing them.

Many thanks to Hadley Hogg, Ellie Petruzzi, Isla Purvis, Cori Gardner, Cailyn Janos and Leaders Aimee Hogg and Laura Gardner of Girl Scout Troop 16327 for constructing bat boxes, and to WLT board member Bill

Girl Scouts of Troop 16327 with a bat box for St. Xavier (photo courtesy of Aimee Hogg)



Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve

The Ackermann Preserve continues to be a favored destination of many visitors, who come to enjoy its abundant wildflowers in the spring and the beauty of its forest and quarry throughout the year. Stewardship throughout the year once again focused on trail maintenance and continued control of knotweed and Japanese stiltgrass in the floodplain of Blue Dell Run.

Research at the Ackermann Preserve

WLT has had an unusual opportunity to support research about forest sustainability at the Ackermann Preserve as a result of a 2021 discussion between Loree Speedy and Dr. Robert Loeb at a land stewardship roundtable in Pittsburgh. Dr. Loeb is a Professor of Biology and Forestry at Penn State University's Dubois Campus, and at the time Loree Speedy - who has helped WLT in many capacities - was providing assistance to WLT as an AmeriCorps Service Member.



Hillside site of research at the Ackermann Preserve (photo courtesy of Dr. Robert Loeb)

Dr. Loeb's research focuses on conservation of old-growth forests growing near human settlements, with specific interest in the effect of soil pH and chemistry on forest composition. Since 2022 a portion of the Ackermann Preserve adjacent to the Quarry Trail has become a site for extended study by Dr. Loeb. Over time, it became apparent that seed and sapling predation by mammals significantly affected seed viability and growth of seedlings. To address this challenge to long-term sustainability of so many forested areas, Dr. Loeb has developed and progressively refined prototypes of seed shelters, based on testing with chestnut oaks (*Quercus montana*) at the Ackermann Preserve.

WLT is pleased to be part of this worthwhile collaboration, and is grateful for the opportunity for the Ackermann Preserve to contribute to this research about the important issue of urban/suburban forest regeneration.

Rescue Training



In 2024 the Ackermann Preserve became a site for rescue training by the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group, with its steep slopes and quarry face offering excellent opportunities for on-the-ground training.

Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group training at the Ackermann Preserve (photos courtesy of Michelle Bothun)



WLT thanks the Ackermann family for their conservation of the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve, and for their ongoing commitment to its stewardship.

Carl A. Schwarz Memorial Park

Background

In January 2023 LaQuatra Bonci Associates completed a conceptual plan for the Schwarz property's phased development as an art and nature park that will feature significant works of outdoor sculpture and other art. Throughout 2023 WLT worked to gather funding to advance the initial stages of the project.

During 2024 WLT Board member Richard Kacin made the extremely generous in-kind donation of his firm's project management for the park's initial improvements. Improvements took place throughout the year, including modifications to the farmhouse interior to secure ADA compliance for its public spaces, rework of the farmhouse driveway, and construction of two parking areas.

The 2024 improvements were made possible by the support of the Allegheny Foundation, Roberta N. Schwarz Charitable Foundation, and the Richard King Mellon Foundation.

Clint Olson of Boy Scout Troop 211 of Delmont, PA initiated his Eagle Scout project at the Schwarz property, organizing extensive clean-up of a wooded hedgerow and establishment of a woodland gathering area behind the farmhouse. Clint's 2024 work included planning the project, coordinating considerable volunteer assistance, and undertaking much work personally.

Forthcoming effort at the Schwarz property will include design and construction of a Children's Discovery Area, landscape design for the front of the farmhouse, and design and construction of an ADA-compliant front porch.

To support advancement of the art and nature park, WLT engaged Christopher Ruane and Aydaen Lynch of True Interactive to prepare renderings of select future views of the park. Their future work will incorporate these renderings in a promotional video about the park project.



Rendering of some possibilities for the Children's Discovery Area by Christopher Ruane and Aydaen Lynch

Throughout 2024 the Schwarz fields were leased to farmer Mike Kepple; year by year farm use of the fields will continue while WLT assembles the funding needed to establish meadows of native grasses and plants.



During 2024 WLT's stewardship activities at the Schwarz once again focused on control of Asiatic bittersweet in wooded areas and unfarmed field areas. Continuation of this work will be needed over future years.

The future nature and art park at the Schwarz property will become a noteworthy destination for visitors as well as an important cultural and recreational amenity for central Westmoreland County.

Twin Lakes Meadow

In March 2024 WLT was awarded a Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape grant to fund visitor amenities and other improvements at the Twin Lakes Meadow. WLT Operations Assistant Karen Rose Cercone led this project undertaken in partnership with Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation. It included placement of an Information Kiosk, a dog comfort station, and signage at the Meadow; mapping of trails; and creation of an interpretive brochure about the Meadow.

Other ongoing effort at the Meadow has included maintenance of mowed walking trails and strategic control of invasive plants.



In July 2024 members of Scout Troop #211 helped to control invasive plants at the Meadow (photo courtesy of Julie Olson)

From a Facebook Post



WLT is grateful to Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation and volunteers for their partnership for these improvements and their ongoing assistance, which has been key to successful maintenance of the Meadow.

Evaluating and Selectively Advancing Conservation Projects

WLT evaluated several potential new land conservation projects during 2024. Evaluation entails research, site visits, discussions with landowners, and qualitative and quantitative assessment (i.e. "scoring") of the conservation value of the project. For evaluations WLT's Projects Committee makes use of an extensive list of "Selection Criteria" covering a property's attributes and the public benefit anticipated from its conservation.

When considering a project WLT also takes into consideration any resources available for the project, and constraints including availability of funding, project partners, and WLT capacity. To make best use of available resources, it is necessary for WLT to select those projects with the greatest conservation value.



Environmental Education

WLT's designation by the state of Pennsylvania (PA) as an Educational Improvement Organization enables businesses and individuals to apply for substantial PA tax credits to support WLT workshops under the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program.

Apply to Pennsylvania for generous PA business tax credits! If credits are awarded, secure them with donations to WLT for EITC workshops.

Environmental Education

- Improves critical thinking
- Enhances academic performance
- Supports physical and mental health
- Increases civic engagement
- Fosters enjoyment of nature

Dr. Paula Purnell, WLT Coordinator of Educational Programming, has developed a series of environmental education workshops that are offered free of charge to participating public schools (to the extent that EITC funding allows). The programs are extremely well received and are equally popular with both students and teachers.

For the 2024-2025 school year, the following Westmoreland County school districts authorized teachers' use of WLT's nature workshops:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| • Belle Vernon | • Kiski | • Norwin |
| • Derry Area | • Latrobe | • Penn Trafford |
| • Franklin Regional | • Ligonier Valley | • River Valley |
| • Greensburg Salem | • Mount Pleasant | • Southmoreland |
| • Jeannette | • New Kensington | • Yough |

During the 2024-2025 school year Dr. Purnell reached over 3,000 students with in-school workshops.

During 2024 Dr. Purnell also reached hundreds more children and family members with other programming including **Bugs and Buds** programs presented at libraries throughout Westmoreland County. These interactive programs explained and encouraged use of nature backpacks previously prepared and distributed by WLT to the libraries.





*Let (children) once get in touch with nature
and a habit is formed which will be
a source of delight and habit through life.*

Charlotte Mason



Sampling of Activities throughout the Year



On February 16th Environmental Educators Kara O'Neill and Gretchen Barbara of Fern Hollow Nature Center kindly hosted WLT's visit and tour of their indoor and outdoor facilities.

WLT was pleased to host a table at Westmoreland County's 22nd annual *March for Parks* on March 23rd. The March brought out many supporters in spite of a cold and wintry day.

On April 4th, Paula Purnell and Karen Rose Cercone presented a workshop "STEELS*: The What, Why and How of Pennsylvania's New Academic Science Standards" at the annual WeConservePA Conference in Bethlehem, PA. *STEELS refers to Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy and Sustainability.



On May 22nd & 23rd, AmeriCorps Service Member Dominic Demangone hosted students of Carlow University's Lab School for field trips to the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.



On April 20th, volunteer David Muchoney and family conducted extensive spring clean-up at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve. (photo courtesy of Dave Muchoney)





On April 6th, AmeriCorps Service Members Sarah Poklembo & Dominic Demangone hosted a day of service at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.



On April 17th, the Pittsburgh Ramblers explored the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.

On April 22nd, WLT hosted a geology and watershed walk at the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve. Karen Rose Cercone described the geology of the Preserve; Bill Mihalco explained the Preserve's role in the Turtle Creek Watershed; and Loree Speedy provided information about the history of the Preserve.



On April 23rd, Betsy Aiken welcomed the Irwin Garden Club for a guided tour of the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve.

On May 4th, Andy Mack led a Spring Migration Bird Walk at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, the first in a series of "Birds Across the Seasons" talks and walks throughout the year.



On May 11th, WLT hosted an early morning bird walk at the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve.



On May 11th, WLT was honored with the 2024 Community Service Award from the Murrysville Chapter of the American Association of University Women.

On May 13th, WLT hosted a Green Gathering at the Schwarz property for participants to learn to play *Wingspan*.

On June 1st, Aaron Capouellez of PA Woods and Forests led an evening nature walk at the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.



On June 2nd, WLT hosted a volunteer work day at the Schwarz future art and nature park.

WLT hosted Westmoreland Nature Explorers workshops at Hempfield Park throughout the summer.



Paula Purnell and AmeriCorps Service Member Sarah Poklembo presented Bugs and Buds programs at Westmoreland County libraries throughout the summer.



On June 30th, Karen Rose Cercone and Chris Reed led a St. Xavier Nature Preserve Firefly Walk.



On July 13th, AmeriCorps Service Member Sarah Poklembo led a Tree Walk through the St. Xavier Grove.



On July 20th, WLT hosted the Westmoreland Bird and Nature Club's exploration of the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.





On August 4th, PA Master Naturalist Patti Schildkamp led a Wildflower Walk through the Twin Lakes Meadow.



On August 7th, Garbrielle Marsden led a butterfly and pawpaw walk at the Otto and Magdalene Ackermann Nature Preserve.

ST. XAVIER OPEN HOUSE
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 WLT OPEN HOUSE PLANNING COMMITTEE

On September 7th, WLT hosted an Open House at St. Xavier. The Open House featured Celtic harp music performed by Sarah Middlemiss, a buffet from Simply Good of Ligonier and The Lunch Lady of Irwin, and tours of the property led by WLT Board members in golf carts generously lent by the Westmoreland Arts and Heritage Festival.



Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation provided considerable assistance with the loan and set-up of tents, tables, and chairs, and WLT Board members helped throughout the day.

A highlight of the day was the opportunity for visitors to learn about the proposed Master Plan for the Preserve (*photos courtesy of Cary Bohl*).





In September WLT hosted a Legislative Breakfast at Bellbrook, in the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.



Throughout the year, AmeriCorps Service Member Dominic Demangone led tours of the St. Xavier Nature Preserve.



On September 9th, WLT received a Lewis Award for exceptional service at Westmoreland County's annual Green Luncheon.

On October 2nd, WLT held two public meetings at St. Xavier Nature Preserve's Bellbrook facility for those interested to view and comment on the Master Plan.



On October 6th, WLT hosted the Westmoreland Woodlands Improvement Association's *Walk in Penn's Woods* at St. Xavier.

WLT published the 2024 Westmoreland Ramble for an enjoyable fall drive.



On October 27th, Chris Reed hosted Seton Hill students for a day of volunteer service at St. Xavier.

At year end WLT set up and maintained a lovely walk through the Grove at St. Xavier illuminated with luminaria made using recycled milk cartons.



AmeriCorps

Nonprofit organizations, schools, public agencies, and community and faith-based groups may apply to Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps (PMSC) to host an AmeriCorps Service Member.

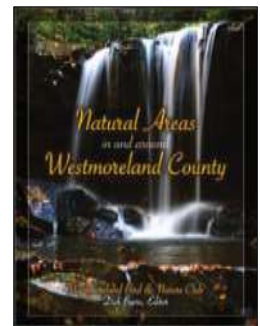


From September 2023 through August 2024, WLT benefitted from the assistance of Sarah Poklembo as an AmeriCorps Service Member. Sara provided invaluable assistance with environmental education, outreach, stewardship, and mapping and research into the arboretum at St. Xavier known as the Grove.

Throughout 2024, WLT enjoyed the assistance of Dominic Demangone as an AmeriCorps Service Member. Dominic is based at Bellbrook in the St. Xavier Nature Preserve, and assists with environmental stewardship, building and maintaining trails, as well as outreach and historical research about St. Xavier.



From September 16th WLT benefitted from the assistance of Monica Rebar as an AmeriCorps Service Member. Monica assisted with environmental education and outreach including use of social media. Monica also undertook organization of WLT's archive of photos.



Natural Areas in and around Westmoreland County

Throughout 2024 WLT continued to offer copies of the excellent **Westmoreland Bird and Nature Club** book, **Natural Areas in and around Westmoreland County** at cost.

Board News

During 2024, WLT welcomed Richard Kacin, Bill Powers, Cokie Lindsay, and Ed Zlnkan as new members of the Board of Directors. At the November Board meeting, Board Chair Bill Mihalco recognized departing Board Member Joe Romano on behalf of WLT for his dedicated service to the organization.



Staff News

On May 10th, WLT welcomed Chris Reed as WLT's Facilities and Land Manager. Chris brings a wide range of education and experience, and is a PA Master Naturalist volunteer. Chris's knowledge, enthusiasm, and commitment to the environment have been invaluable for WLT's operations. *(Photo courtesy of Cary Bohl)*

Thank you, WLT Donors and Supporters

In 2024, the WLT's fall fundraising campaign once again coincided with "Give Big Pittsburgh". *WLT was extremely fortunate to have invaluable support and assistance from so many individuals and groups during 2024.*



*Thank you to everyone who supported WLT in some way during the year.
It is your support that makes our work possible!*

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\$10,000 and above

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*The tributes for tribute gifts are shown on page 19.

Thank you, WLT Donors and Supporters

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Dr. Robert and Dr. Susan Loeb

Dr. Andrew L. and Lydia Mack
Linda Madden-Brenholts*
Robin Mattes
Barbara and David McMillan
Art McSorley
Helga Mears
Janet Merelli
Kestrel Michaud*
Tom and Billie Moser*
Lauren and Clint Mullen*
Robert Mulvihill*
Helen and Doug Murray
Nickos Chimney Company
Kelly Paal
Kathy Panepinto
Thomas Patts*
Jack and Debra Paulik
Mary and Bob Pelland*
Greg and Leanne Phillips
Bill and Donna Powers
Quatrini Law Group
Sally and Bob Ralph
Cynthia and Jack Roberts*
Patrick Roberts
Sandra Rosvanis
Susan Salata
Dr. Bernard and Elaine Scherer
Sendell Motors, Inc.
Malcolm and Patti Sias
Brandon and Alicia Simpson
Virginia McCracken Stump*
Sr. Kathi Sweeney
Alexander Taylor
Lauren Jones Titterington
Vittone's Music Center
West Central Equipment LLC
Westmoreland SCORE*
Judith Wilson

Thank you, WLT Donors and Supporters

*Tribute Gifts

Joanne Ackermann, in memory of Nobi Ackermann
Betsy Aiken, in memory of Eileen Byers
Betsy Aiken, in memory of Arvind Paranjpe
Jack and Valerie Baker, in memory of Eileen Byers
Antoinette Brant, in memory of Jerry Hamerski
Mary Beth Cannon, in memory of Arvind Paranjpe
Joyce Clohessy, in memory of Nelson Herbert Gundy
John Conti, in memory of George and Kate Conti
Dianne Henderson, in honor of Joanne Ackermann
Dr. Mary Ann Hvizdos, in memory of Grandmother Mary K. Pevarnik
Megan Kellogg, in honor of William Mihalco
Linda Madden-Brenholts, in memory of Sr. Maxentia Fey, Sr. M. Ruth Fey, and Joseph Fey
Kestrel Michaud, in honor of Gene and Meccy Grapes
Tom and Billie Moser, in memory of Eileen Byers
Lauren and Clint Mullen, in honor of William and Kathy Mihalco
Robert Mulvihill, in memory of Richard and Eileen Byers
Kiran and Tonnie Paranjpe, in memory of Arvind Paranjpe
Thomas Patts, in memory of Elizabeth Ann Pitts, Mary A. Pitts, Regina Pitts Roefaro, and Marcia Pitts Dishman
Pam and Barry Paulisick, in honor of Arthur and Annie
Pam and Barry Paulisick, in memory of Robert Goralzick
Mary and Bob Pelland, in memory of Eileen Byers
Cynthia and Jack Roberts, in honor of Patrick Roberts
Virginia McCracken Stump, in memory of Mary Lou Critz
Westmoreland SCORE, in memory of Arvind Paranjpe
Judith Wilson, in memory of Eileen Byers



In-Kind Donations of Services or Goods (does not include St. Xavier memorabilia, see next page)

During 2024 the WLT also received substantial in-kind donations including office space, specialized services, supplies, and legal advice. Contributors of in-kind donations included:

Betsy Aiken	Dr. Andrew L. and Lydia Mack
Cary and Ken Bohl	MBM Painting
Fred Bononi	Walter Meshaka
Emil Bove	Sarah Poklembo
Brava Roof Tile	Bill and Donna Powers
Judi Carvell	Paula Purnell
Aaron Capouellez, PA Woods & Forests	Monica Rebar
Karen Rose Cercone	Chris Reed
Pat and Dennis Comas	Dr. Bernard Scherer
Fran DeLallo	Sherwin Williams, Latrobe
DJ Demangone	Sherwin Williams, Monroeville
Dominic Demangone	THG Geophysics, Ltd.
Michelle Demangone	Jessi Wagner
Julia Ecklar	John Ward
Frontier Railroad Services	Westmoreland Arts & Heritage Festival
Judy Ross Gutowski	Westmoreland Conservation District
John Hapach Creative Direction and Design	West. County Parks & Recreation
Home Depot, Greensburg	Pati Lindauer Wolinsky
A. Richard Kacin	Ed Zinkan

2024 Donations of St. Xavier Memorabilia

WLT thanks members of the St. Xavier community for their generous donations of St. Xavier documents and memorabilia

Mary Ann Calabrace, Class of '56
 Patricia Darbus, Class of '59
 Patty Debone Farrell, Class of '56
 Rita Zuzik Gyurke, Class of '56
 Latrobe Historical Society
 Pat Lawlor, Class of '61
 Sue Lawlor, Class of '64
 Nan Loncharich, Class of C'62
 Agnes Munchinski, Class of '59
 Dr. Bernard Scherer, Class of '72
 Stella Smetanka, Class of '65



*April 1900 issue of the St. Xavier Monthly
 donated by the Latrobe Historical Society*



*Book cover
 donated
 by Patty
 DeBone
 Calabrese,
 Class of '56*



*Class
 ring donated
 by
 Agnes
 Mary
 Munchinski,
 Class of
 '59*



*The last diploma issued by St. Xavier Academy,
 donated by Dr. Bernard Scherer, Class of '72*

Good actions give strength
 to ourselves and inspire
 good actions
 in others.

Plato

Thank you, WLT Volunteers

Note: This list does not include WLT Board members, who every year devote many hours of volunteer work to the organization!

Bruce Adamson	Gabriella DiPerna	Bill Mehalic	Adam Ryzenga
Katie Amond	Gianna DiPerna	Bob Mihalco	Bernard Scherer
Frank Antonishen	Michael Dominick	Jacob Miller	Elaine Scherer
Alex Balog	Maddie Duda	Rob Moffa	Patti Schildkamp
Jace Banner	Chuck Duritsa	Sam Mormack	Ty Schlesman
Trent Barnhart	Julia Ecklar	Aianna Mucci	John Schlesman
Jeff Bauer	Jonathan Emert	David Muchoney	Kresta Schlesman
Logan Bauer	Cindy Lou Fiorna	David K. Muchoney	Chase Schlesman
Emily Beam	Katherine Folmar	Dannike Mucino	Steven Schmitt
Marian Bellack	Candice Frolo	Clint Mullen	Jacob Shaffer
Lee Bickerstaff	Jim French	Lauren Mullen	Alicia Shaffer
Belle Blossey	Jason Fronczek	Lane Mullen	Jerry Shepler
Brylee Bodnar	Wesley Garotalo	Mae Mullen	Jacob Shepler
Jacey Bodnar	Katie Glasser	Willow Murphy	Judy Shultheis
Mark Boettner	Joe Guy	Warren Murrman	Luke Shultheis
Lynn Boschert	Marnie Guy	Adam Musick	Mike Shultheis
Mark Bowers	Fr. Earl Henry	Rose-Marie Muzika	Malcolm Sias
Lucas Briola	Aimee Hogg	Nico Myers	Michael Simmons
Aaron Brownley	Hanna Howard	Michael Naggy	Melissa Sinemus
David Bulebosh	Derek Hussak	Luke Nichols	Rachel Snyder
Colleen Caldwell	Linda James	Clint Olson	Loree Speedy
Dan Caldwell	Brayden Johnson	Doug Olson	John Stait
George Caldwell	James Kellam	Julie Olson	Karen Stait
Aaron Capouellez	Megan Kellogg	Tyler Patterson	Scott Steele
Susan Caroleo	Nancy King	Shawn Patterson	Jared Stein
Christian	Burl Knupp	Brian Paul	Ben Stratton
Chambers	Dan Krinock	Dalton Paul	Nicholas Stump
Lillian Climo	Andy Krinock	Jace Pedicone	Leo Sun
Bill Cole	Jake Krinock	Maddy Petrucci	Gunnar Swartz
Amanda Cole	Dan Kucherer	Franklin Pipe	Keith Terney
Brady Cole	Dan Kuhen	Mary Piper	Adam Thomas
Tristan Cole	Kendal Laboon	Jacob Pittman	Jim Thompson
Tammy Colt	Levi Lansen	Sarah Poklembo	Nancy Thorne
Daniel Cowell	Robert Long	Melinda Powell	Maureen Tuttle
Jacob Cramer	Rachel Lyons	Calvin Rebar	Jeremiah Ulishney
Reese Crick	Rick Maga	David Rebar	Olivia Ulishney
Chandler Crusan	Mary Maher	Isaac Rebar	Mike Uschak
Brian Davis	Zach Marazza	Christopher Reed	John Ward
Kate Ferri Dawson	Jim Markiewicz	Nicholas Reed	Caden Watson
Michelle Demangone	Matt McCreary	Lucy Rodell	Barry Williams
Mason Dempsey	Sharon McElhoes	Sheri Rolain	Ava Yurko
Jacob Denne	Kate McKinley	Nancy Rusbosin	Michael Zalich

Thank you, WLT Volunteers

WLT also thanks these groups and organizations who generously provided assistance during 2024:

AmeriCorps
ATI Specialty Products – Latrobe Operations
Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.
Greater Latrobe High School
Loyalhanna Watershed Association
PA Master Naturalists
PA Mountain Service Corps
PA Woods & Forests
THG Geophysics, Ltd.
Westmoreland Arts & Heritage Festival
Westmoreland Bird & Nature Club
Westmoreland Conservation District
Westmoreland County Parks & Recreation
Westmoreland Library Network
Westmoreland Pollinator Partners



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Opst & Associates, LLC completed audit of the Westmoreland Land Trust financial statements for 2024.

Westmoreland Land Trust	
Statement of Financial Position	
December 31,	2024
Current Assets	
Cash	\$ 1,924,302
Investments	1,455,599
Grants receivable	<u>177,400</u>
Total Current Assets	3,557,301
Property and Equipment - net	<u>3,272,979</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 6,830,280</u>
Current Liabilities	
Contractor payables	\$ 184,486
Accrued expenses	<u>375</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>184,861</u>
Net Assets	
Without donor restrictions	3,669,824
Without donor restrictions - Board designated	190,758
With donor restrictions	<u>2,784,837</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>6,645,419</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 6,830,280</u>

Notes to these financial statements, which are an integral part of the statements, are available upon request.

To do more for the world than the world does for you -
that is success.

Henry Ford

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Westmoreland Land Trust

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the Year Ended December 31,	2024		
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Public Support and Revenue			
Corporate and foundation grants	\$ 88,250	\$ 667,500	\$ 755,750
Government grants	85,600	214,074	299,674
Donations and contributions	130,161	-	130,161
EITC revenue	-	11,889	11,889
Investment income	100,354	-	100,354
Unrealized gain (loss)	99,490	-	99,490
Miscellaneous income	48,672	-	48,672
Book and logo sales	973	-	973
Net assets released from restrictions:			
Satisfaction of donor restrictions	92,707	(92,707)	-
Total Public Support and Revenue	646,207	800,756	1,446,963
Expenses			
Program services	262,709	-	262,709
Management and general	77,248	-	77,248
Fundraising	10,198	-	10,198
Total Expenses	350,155	-	350,155
Change in Net Assets	296,052	800,756	1,096,808
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	3,564,530	1,984,081	5,548,611
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 3,860,582	\$ 2,784,837	\$ 6,645,419

Notes to these financial statements, which are an integral part of the statements, are available upon request.

Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.

Aldo Leopold



... *SAVING SPECIAL PLACES IN WESTMORELAND COUNTY*

Properties Conserved

From its founding in December 2007, the Westmoreland Land Trust has acquired properties **in eight distinct Westmoreland County communities** totaling 618 acres.

Properties Conserved by the Westmoreland Land Trust (December 2023)

Property, Size	Location	Year	Valuation¹	Ownership
Ackermann Reserve, 59 acres ²	Ardara, North Huntingdon	2009	\$ 148,000	Westmoreland County
Skena Reserve, 22 acres ²	Murrysville	2009	\$ 415,000	Mun. of Murrysville
Budd Parcel, 21 acres ²	Rostraver Township	2009	\$ 21,500	Westmoreland County
Cabin Hill, 3.5 acres ²	City of Greensburg	2009	\$ 262,000	Westmoreland County
Pingor Property, 4 acres ³	Ligonier Township	2011	\$ 265,000	Loyalhanna Watershed Ass'n
Yerick Parcel, 9 acres ²	Murrysville	2011	\$ 36,000	Mun. of Murrysville
Van de Venne Parcel, 49 acres ²	Murrysville	2013	\$ 150,000	Mun. of Murrysville
RDE Land Parcel, 16.5 acres ²	Murrysville	2013	\$ 32,000	Mun. of Murrysville
Manno Parcel, 22 acres ⁴	Murrysville	2014	\$ 84,000	Mun. of Murrysville
Marziano Parcel, 1 acre	Mount Pleasant Township	2015	\$ 4,451	Westmoreland County
Zimmaro Parcel, 28 acres ²	Rostraver Township	2016	\$ 127,500	Westmoreland County
Schimizzi Parcel, 39 acres ²	Hempfield Township	2018	\$ 194,916	Westmoreland County
Schwarz Farm, 96 acres ¹	Hempfield Township	2021	\$ 232,000	Westmoreland Land Trust
St. Xavier Property, 248 acres ¹	Unity Township	2022	\$ 2,180,000	Westmoreland Land Trust
Brandt Property, 102 acres ^{1,5}	Unity Township	2025	\$ 720,000	Westmoreland Land Trust
TOTAL	720 acres with valuation of		\$ 4,872,367	

Footnotes:

- 1) The appraised value at/near the time of purchase; if this is not available, then the sum of purchase price + other expenditures directly associated with the purchase.
- 2) Conserved in partnership with Westmoreland County.
- 3) Conserved in partnership with the Western PA Conservancy and the Loyalhanna Watershed Association
- 4) Conserved in partnership with Westmoreland County and the Municipality of Murrysville.
- 5) Acquisition completed on June 27, 2025.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

*It is your support, contributions and assistance that make our work possible!
Here are some ways to get involved ...*

Volunteer

Volunteers are key to our success! Volunteer as much or as little as you like. Possibilities range from fieldwork to outreach, programming, administration - or most anything of interest to you!

Land Conservation

WLT will help you explore possibilities to conserve your land, or other land in Westmoreland County.

Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC)

Apply for generous Pennsylvania business tax credits, and if awarded secure them by a contribution to WLT for STEM nature workshops in Westmoreland County public schools. Pass-through entities such as S-Corporations, Partnerships, LLCs, etc. may also apply for these tax credits.

In Kind Contributions

WLT welcomes and values contributions of needed materials and services.

Funding

Funding is essential for acquisitions, stewardship of conserved land, and WLT operations. Gifts may be made at any time of the year. ***Have your gift matched*** if your employer has a matching gift program. ***Make a gift to honor, or in memory of, a family member or friend.***

Gift of Securities

A gift of securities has great value to the WLT, and may yield a tax advantage to you.

Gift from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

If you are age 70-1/2 and older, you may make a Qualified Charitable Distribution as described in the Internal Revenue Code, as part or all of a Required Minimum Distribution from your traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA), up to a limit of \$100,000 (if you file jointly, your spouse can also make a Qualified Charitable Distribution within the same tax year for up to \$100,000).

Planned Giving

Include WLT into your estate planning by identifying the WLT as a beneficiary in your will, IRA, trust, or life insurance policy.

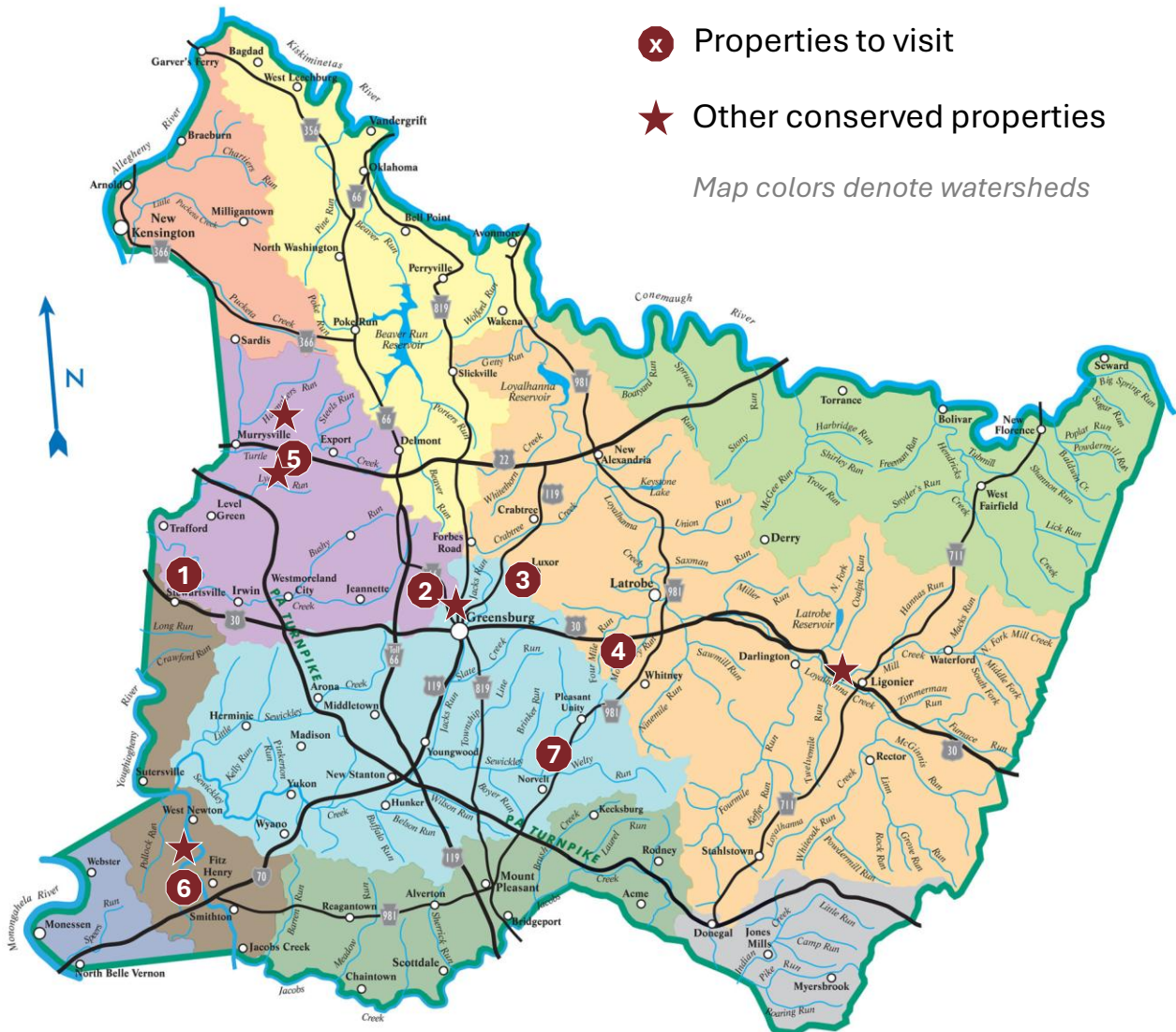
Email westmorelandlandtrust@gmail.com or call 724 325-3031 to learn more.

*The Westmoreland Land Trust is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.
Contributions are tax deductible under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code
to the extent of the law. For any gift or transaction, it is important that you obtain
independent legal, financial, and tax advice.*

www.westmoreland-landtrust.org

Back cover photo of American toad courtesy of Judi Carvell

Locations of Properties Conserved in Perpetuity



1. Ackermann Nature Preserve (13260 Ardara Rd, Ardara, PA 15615)
2. Schwarz Farm Future Nature & Art Park (530 Beech Hills Rd, Jeannette, PA 15644)
3. Twin Lakes Meadow at Twin Lakes County Park (333 Streetpark Lp, Greensburg, PA 15601)
4. St. Xavier Nature Preserve (106 St Xavier Rd, Latrobe PA 15650)
5. Duff Park (4500 School Rd South, Murrys ville, PA 15668)
6. Cedar Creek Park (453 Evergreen Dr, North Belle Vernon, PA 15012)
7. Mammoth Park (171 County Park Rd, Mt Pleasant, PA 15666)

WESTMORELAND LAND TRUST
106 ST. XAVIER ROAD | LATROBE, PA 15650
(724) 325-3031
westmoreland-landtrust.org



The Westmoreland Land Trust is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and is an Educational Improvement Organization under the PA DCED Educational Improvement Tax Credit program.

Contributions to the Westmoreland Land Trust are tax-deductible under the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code to the extent of the law.

