

About ClearWater Conservancy

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

With the completion of three new conservation easements in 2007 (Eagle Field, Kettle Run Farm, and Fisher Farm), we nearly doubled the amount of land that we protect with conservation easements, now 1,170 acres. Altogether, we have protected over 4,000 acres through easements, ownership, and purchase and transfer to state agencies.

About Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust or governmental body. The agreement limits certain uses on all or a portion of a property for conservation purposes while keeping the property in the landowner's ownership. The easement is nearly always perpetual—applying to all present and future owners of the land—and is recorded at the County Recorder of Deeds office.

The restrictions contained in an easement are tailored to the particular property and to the goals of the landowner and conservation organization. An easement might state, for example, that no building or road may be placed within 200 feet of a stream passing through a property; however the easement might allow for a house to be built elsewhere on the land. Another easement might support farming but forbid development. Yet another easement might prohibit all activities except for sustainable forestry and recreation. The flexibility of the easement tool is endless.

Most conservation easements held by land trusts are donated by landowners who wish to protect a beloved place. In rare cases, they are sold at a bargain price or fair market value. Federal tax benefits are available to easement donors whose donations meet IRS requirements.

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



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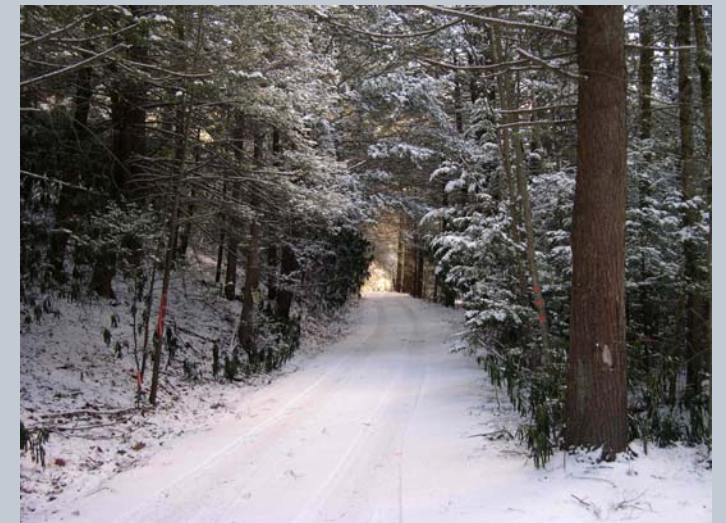
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Stories of Land, Water, and People

Kettle Run Farm Where Kindred Spirits Gather

When Ralph Lingle decided to let Kat Alden and Warren Leitzel have their 1983 wedding on his property, he had no idea the transformation he had started. The owner of Kettle Run Farm in Penn Township, Ralph Lingle was using his family's homestead as a hunting camp and potato patch in its fertile and wildlife-inhabited woodlands. The farm had been virtually visitor-free, as Lingle—whose name was given to the road leading to the property—was known among Centre County residents as a fierce protector of his land, reluctant to allow anyone to set foot on the property.

When the couple began their search for a site for their marriage in 1983, they contacted Lingle and discovered that the lush green property was the ideal location for a beautiful outdoor ceremony. The ceremony took place in the northern portion of Kettle



Run Farm, complemented by a patch of sweet ferns growing in a natural amphitheater.

A nature enthusiast, Kat fell in love with Kettle Run Farm, bordered to the south by 2,871 feet of Bald Eagle State Forest and traversed by 2,600 feet of Kettle Run and the streams and seeps that feed it. She and Warren continued to visit Lingle and eventually made an offer to purchase the farm from him. Under Kat and Warren's ownership, a sweeping transformation began—they had much different plans for the property than sequestering it from the public.

The first residence, built in 1870, was uninsulated and lacked running water. Warren's first task was to remodel and insulate the home. As they continued to improve the property, Kat nurtured an idea about opening it up to the public and using its resources to spread environmental awareness. In 1987, the property became the site for a nonprofit organization called One World Environmental Center. Kat then started a summer camp for children and teens, where she taught them about the environment and the need to protect it.

That first year of running summer camps and afternoon programs coincided with the first of five annual Kindred Spirits Gatherings. "It was a kind of networking group," recalled Kat. "It was an effort to create a common gathering of people from all over Centre County involved in environmental issues."

As the summer programs grew, Kat constructed a yurt as a place for children to play and learn. With donations and volunteer help, an old box-

car-turned-chicken coop was converted into an indoor summer kitchen, where she prepared meals for the program attendees.

The summer camps shared a deep love of nature with children, utilizing Sunship Earth curriculum and environmental activities like composting, organic gardening, tanning hides, beading with porcupine quills, overnight hiking, and rock climbing.

The center's current focus is on healing gatherings, such as mindfulness, stress reduction, yoga, and advanced movement therapy. Kettle Run Farm has also been used as a site for seasonal celebrations with young children, a recording studio, and a site for individual retreats.

The growing pressure on the habitat surrounding Kettle Run Farm, prompted Kat to begin searching for additional ways to protect it. Already safeguarded under Pennsylvania's Clean and Green Act, which preserves areas being used as agricultural or forest lands, it was relatively safe from development. However, Kat was also concerned about insuring protection for the fragile watershed located on her property—Kettle Run stream and the palustrine emergent wetland.



*Lupine;
Frosted
Elfin
butterfly*

"I wanted to protect the spring and creek, which to me are the farm's most valuable resources. I also wanted to reserve our rights to continue harvesting firewood and running educational programs while ensuring the availability of the property for our children," Kat said. "I believe that our location will form a buffer for the animals living in Bald Eagle State Forest, whose habitats are already changed because of housing development in the area."

In July 2007, Kat and her second husband Bill Torretti began to explore additional conservation options with ClearWater Conservancy. They signed a conservation easement on December 20, which protects 112 acres of their environmentally-important property, including all of the Kettle Run Farm Biological Diversity Area, designated by Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory in 2002.

The plot is home to multiple habitat types, including old field, hemlock-northern hardwood forest, wetlands, and riparian areas. Most notably, the easement protects one of the early-succession meadows containing lupine, a nitrogen-fixing purple-blue wildflower that is a larval host to Frosted Elfin butterflies, a globally rare species.

The conservation easement was made possible by Attorney Amos Goodall, of Goodall and Yurchak, P.C., Attorneys at Law, David Sweetland and

Mac Blizzard of Sweetland Engineering and Associates, Inc., and William Brusse P.G. of Converse Consultants, all of whom generously donated hours of service. Kat's donation to ClearWater's Conservation Easement Stewardship Fund ensures the capacity of ClearWater Conservancy to protect her land in perpetuity.

When asked why he chose to help with the project, Goodall replied, "I think at least one reason we're all here is to try to leave the world a slightly better place when we pass on. I can't think of an easier way to have a positive, permanent impact than to participate in the preservation of land."



Bill Torretti and Kat Alden (center) with Amos Goodall, Bill Hilshey, Jeff Sturniolo, and Jennifer Shuey.

The easement has allowed Kat and Bill to continue using their land and to promote environmental protection. "The best part of my ownership of this property is that I get to share my love of the wild with others. What I remember most as a child is the sense of wonder I experienced whenever I was surrounded by nature, and now I provide opportunities for kids to feel that sense of enchantment and formulate a positive association with being outside," Kat said.

"I can only hope they will continue to spread what they learn to generations to come and that Kettle Run Farm will benefit from the respect and reverence future generations feel toward their natural world, their *one and only* world."