The press of possessing the earth makes the expropriation of passing on the better for our posterity insensible to considerations of the present. Life and death, the nature of which is lost sight of in time. — Aldo Leopold

Children’s Lake

Conserving a Trail and Community

Do you like all the ducks? “Yeah!” “Catch any fish?” “Once, but it was little, and I let him go.” “I’ve caught three,” his buddy chimed in.

A land trust can acquire a property, place a conservation easement on it, and then sell it to a conservation buyer who wants to own a conserved property. Sometimes a municipality or state agency wishes to conserve a property but can’t meet the financial or timing demands of the landowner. A land trust can help by acquiring and then donating or selling the land to the Appalachian Trail Conference Land Trust (ATC) for a price using donations from others.

The Appalachian Trail Conference is a volunteer-based organization dedicated to providing protection, promotion, education and recreational opportunities for the Trail. The ATC protects the Appalachian Trail—3,000 miles of path stretching from Mount Davis, Pennsylvania, to Mount Katahdin, Maine—by purchasing or accepting donations of land and conservation easements. Land trust work is based on voluntary agreements with landowners and creating projects with win-win outcomes for communities.

Conservation Options

Land trusts and landowners as well as government can acquire a variety of voluntary tools for conserving special places. The basic tools are described below. A land trust can acquire land. The land trust then takes care of the property as a wildlife preserve, public recreation area or other conservation purpose. A landowner and land trust may create an agreement known as a conservation easement. The easement limits certain uses on all or a portion of property for conservation purposes while keeping the property in the landowner’s ownership and control. Many localities have developed and agreements. These charitable gifts may qualify the donor for federal tax deductions. In unusual cases, the land trust may offer to purchase a property interest for an agreed-to price using donations from others.

Pennsylvania’s Land Trusts

Conserving our Commonwealth

About Land Trusts

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Produced by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association working in partnership with Pennsylvania’s land trusts with financial support from the William Penn Foundation, Andrew M. Loza, editor and writer

Donna T. Morelli, writer and researcher

Bureau of Recreation and Conservation

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A history with the community

Boiling Springs was part of a start concept in 1762 by the Commonwealth’s founding family. Emma and Owen Engle deal with the threat to their community, the Appalachian Trail Conference Land Trust was trying to deal with its own problem. Decades before, when the Appalachian Trail had first been pieced together through Cumberland County, the trail had been routed along farms and each in an isolated rural area. Now, increasing development and real traffic in the Cumberland Valley made it necessary to dedicate a 16-mile section of trail.

A trail had been looking at potential new routes in the vicinity of Boiling Springs. ATC was in the Baker property at opportunity to both help the local community and Appalachian Trail users. The Baker property could provide part of the route as a trail route for the trail relocation.

Local residents and a historical preservationist, Craig Dunn, the ATC initiated negotiations with the Baker family to purchase their property on behalf of the residents and various organizations interested in protecting the property’s cultural and historical value. Eighteen months later, the deal was reached. ATC bought the property and then transferred ownership to appropriate government agencies. The National Park Service received the trail land, which extends 111 feet back from the lakefront. A short half-mile walking path for the trail is also included in this acquisition.

Today, the lake and its surroundings are a public asset, providing picnicking, fishing, walking and other recreation to residents and visitors. Historic structures, including the gristmill, decorate the shores. The sounds of ducks, geese, and children at play fill the air.

The Appalachian Trail is the longest skinniest National Scenic Trail, which extends 2,190 miles through 14 states and is serviced by a trolley line from Carlisle. Pennsylvania claims 239 miles of the trail.

Thirty years from now, will Appalachian Trail users find that their thoughts about having children will be really bad outside for us to miss it?

Elaine always pictured when she thought about having children.

“We seek and hold easements on countryside that is determined to be significant to the trail experience. That could be property with a view shed or another reason, whether that be bear habitat or important to protect water resources,” Williams said.

Now that protection of the footpath is nearly complete, the land trust can focus more on preserving the scenic outlooks, historical and natural features that enhance the trail experience,” said Robert B. Williams, director of the ATC Land Trust.

“We are building momentum on controls that is determined to be significant to the trail experience. That could be property with a view shed or another reason, whether that be trout habitat or important to protect water resources,” Williams said.

“This scene is the life Elaine always pictured when she thought about having children.

The first time she saw the lake, a vision of raising children in the village was established in her mind.

Thanks to the Appalachian Trail Conference-Land Trust, the lake will always be accessible to ducks, geese, and children at play.

For more information, visit www.conserveland.org