



THE EDWARD L. ROSE CONSERVANCY



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Update on the Riparian Buffer Project

Thanks to a partnership between the Edward L. Rose Land Conservancy, Waterman Conservation Education Center, and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), over 53 acres of riparian buffers have been protected in the Susquehanna River Watershed. This project will help protect water quality and wildlife habitat in and along the Susquehanna River.

Riparian buffers are areas of trees, shrubs or grasses growing next to streams, rivers, and wetlands. Plants growing in the buffer help to protect water quality and stream habitat by reducing the amount of nitrogen, phosphorous, and sediment entering the Susquehanna River and, eventually, the Chesapeake Bay.

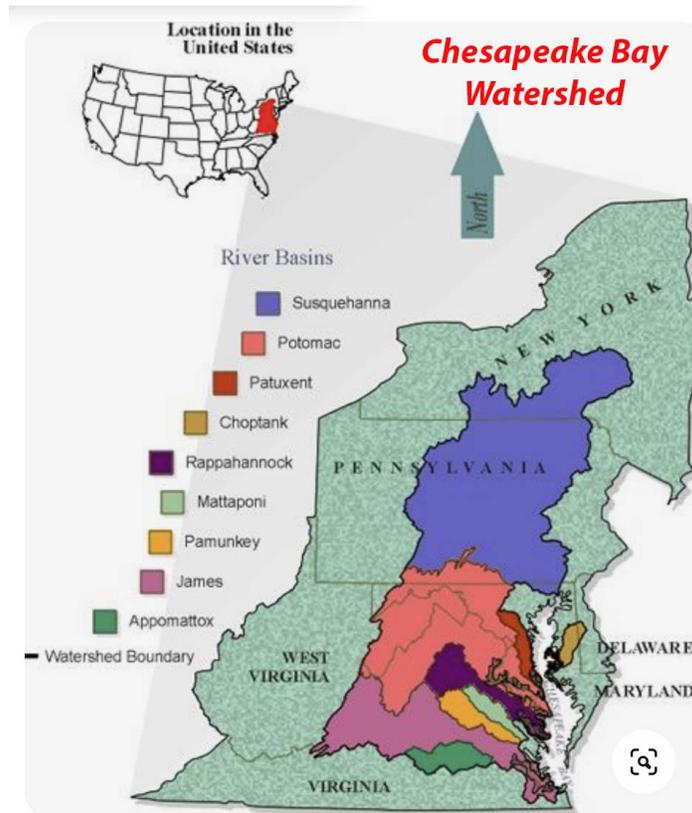
The photo to the right shows an admittedly exaggerated, though accurate, representation of a riparian buffer protecting a waterway from adjacent agricultural land in Iowa.

Funded through a Chesapeake Bay Riparian Buffer Grant from DEC, and administered by our Conservation Specialist, Kristi Sullivan, the project protects land at three properties owned by the Waterman Conservation Education Center in Tioga County, New York.

The first conservation easement secures land along the Susquehanna River itself, protecting water quality and bald eagle nesting habitat across from Hiawatha Island. The second protects the wetland and stream in Owego known as Brick Pond, a favorite spot for songbirds and waterfowl. The third protects a beautiful little hemlock gorge and headwater stream that flows into the Susquehanna River.



The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the United States. It is home to more than 2,700 species of plants and animals and produces about 500 million pounds of seafood per year. The Bay's watershed covers portions of six states and Washington, D.C. In New York, the Susquehanna River is a large part of the northern headwaters of the Bay.



Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements that permanently limit future development in order to protect the land's conservation value. The land remains in private ownership and on the tax roll.

Letter from the President

The Edward L. Rose Conservancy protects forests, farms, wildlife habitat, and water quality. In doing so, it provides scenic beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities, serving as a foundation for a strong, healthy environment.



The Conservancy receives most of its operational funding from annual memberships, donations and gifts, all of which are tax deductible. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter, providing regional land conservation news and project updates.

Members also have access to hiking trails on E.L. Rose-owned properties and are invited to special events, including our annual members meeting, held each year on the last Saturday in July. Becoming a member is a

great way to join the growing land conservation movement and make a positive impact on the environment.

A standard voting membership costs only \$100 per year. Please visit E.L.Rose.org to obtain details and to establish or renew your EL Rose membership.

What Are the Challenges of Operating a Land Conservancy?



Undoubtedly, you have heard the buzz about Artificial Intelligence and, specifically, a new tool called Chat GPT, now part of the Microsoft empire, which initially invested \$1 billion in the company that originally developed it - Open AI - and has recently committed another \$10 billion!

At the end of November, 2022, OpenAI allowed the public to take the Chat GPT web application for a test drive. That entailed a user typing in a simple question. The application is designed to "understand" human dialogue and scan relevant information across the worldwide web about the question posed, and then to generate a cogent response. There may be a dark side to this sort of innovation, as some are suggesting, but we were curious...

Curious about how "relevant" and "intelligent" it might be, so we established an account on the Chat GPT website and asked the question which is the title of this newsletter article. A few seconds later we received the following response:

Operating a land conservancy involves various challenges, including:

- 1. Funding: One of the biggest challenges of operating a land conservancy is finding sustainable funding. Most land conservancies rely on grants, donations, and other external funding sources to support their operations, which can be unpredictable and inconsistent.*
- 2. Land acquisition: Acquiring land for conservation can be a lengthy and complex process. It requires negotiating with landowners, identifying potential properties, conducting due diligence, and securing funding for the purchase.*
- 3. Stewardship: Once the land is acquired, maintaining it can be challenging, as it requires ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and management. Land conservancies need to develop and implement plans to protect and restore the natural resources on their properties, which can be time-consuming and costly.*
- 4. Community engagement: Building and maintaining relationships with the local community is crucial for the success of a land conservancy. Land conservancies need to engage with the community to build support for their mission, gain access to resources and volunteers, and address any concerns or conflicts that may arise.*
- 5. Legal and regulatory compliance: Land conservancies must comply with a wide range of legal and regulatory requirements, including zoning laws, environmental regulations, and tax laws. Failure to comply with these requirements can result in legal and financial consequences.*
- 6. Staff and volunteer recruitment: Finding and retaining qualified staff and volunteers can be challenging for land conservancies, as many conservation professionals are in high demand and may be difficult to recruit and retain.*

Overall, operating a land conservancy requires significant resources, expertise, and dedication. It involves navigating complex legal and regulatory frameworks, engaging with diverse stakeholders, and managing natural resources to achieve conservation goals while balancing multiple competing interests.

Hard to argue. We have our marching orders!! Hope you are on board to help us achieve these lofty, and certainly not artificial, goals.

Highpoint Trail Clearing

Our Highpoint Preserve trail maintenance day will be Saturday, April 29th, starting at 9:00AM in the Butterfly Garden at the end of South Lake Rd.

All members and their guests are welcome. The cleanup usually takes about 3 hours.



In addition to removing fallen trees and branches, we may be improving drainage, repairing bridges, and paint blazing trails. You are encouraged to bring your own tools, but some will be provided as needed. Chainsaws, loppers, limb saws and shovels may prove useful.

Remember to wear gloves and sturdy shoes. Call Keith Oberg at 570-663-3118, or email keithaoberg5@gmail.com to sign up, and for more information.

In Memoriam

We regret to report that long-time friend of E.L. Rose, Nancy Wottrich, recently passed away after battling a prolonged illness. Nancy did our easement monitoring, was instrumental in putting together many of our easements, and was our advisor during our initial accreditation process.

An excerpt from her obituary reads:

From road trips across our country to countless seasons in The White Mountains of New Hampshire and time spent at the pond on their property here in Susquehanna county, her heartbeat was the outdoors. Nancy's unwavering love for the environment was contagious and she made an impact on everyone that she met. She left a lasting impression on those who she taught and a love that will extend beyond her time here on earth.

Nancy was a founding board member of the Pennsylvania Alliance for Environment Education and served on the Stewardship Committee at the Woodbourne Sanctuary, in Dimock, PA.

We hold a conservation easement on the property that she and her husband, Bruce McNaught, own between Montrose and New Milford. Bruce was on our board and served as Treasurer for several years. Nancy and Bruce were both talented naturalists and dedicated to the protection and preservation of our environment.



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