

Edward L Rose Conservancy

Conservancy Currents

Summer - 2025



Pond in Forest Lake Township

Summer Events Calendar

Don't miss our August event at Woodbourne this summer!

“For the Love of Forests”, by Rick Marsi

Sunday August 3rd, 2:00PM. Members and public welcome.



Location: Woodbourne Forest Preserve-Meet at the parking lot, east side of Rt. 29, one mile north of Dimock four-corners, 5.1 miles south of the light in Montrose.

Nature columnist and author Rick Marsi will be presenting a slide program based on his book, “For the Love of Forests” at our new pavilion below the north parking lot, followed by a guided hike into the old growth forest.

Woodbourne Inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network

The Woodbourne Forest and Wildlife Preserve in Dimock was inducted into the national Old-Growth Forest Network on July 27, 2025. The Woodbourne Preserve is the 39th Pennsylvania forest to be inducted into the Old-Growth Forest Network and the second in Susquehanna County.

The Old-Growth Forest Network (OGFN) connects people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, publicly accessible, native forests. OGFN intends to preserve at least one forest in every county in the U.S.



that can sustain a forest. OGFN works to identify forests for the Network, ensure their protection from logging, and inform people of the forest locations. Founded in 2012, the Network has grown to over 300 forests across 39 states. OGFN also recognizes exceptional forest advocates, educates about the extraordinary ecological benefits of old-growth forests, and speaks out regarding immediate threats to specific ancient forests. Learn more at <http://www.oldgrowthforest.net>.

Brian Kane, Mid-Atlantic Regional Manager with the Old-Growth Forest Network, talked about the organization and its mission. Keith Oberg spoke about the history of the Preserve and the process that led to its preservation. Joyce Stone, Chair of the Stewardship Committee discussed the characteristics of Woodbourne's old-growth forest. After the ceremony, attendees enjoyed a two-mile hike through the old-growth portions of the Preserve.

About Old-Growth Forests: Pennsylvania's Ancient Woodlands

Before European settlers arrived in North America, the northeastern United States was covered by vast, uninterrupted tracts of old-growth forest. In what is now Pennsylvania, towering white pines, eastern hemlocks, oaks, chestnuts, and a rich variety of hardwoods blanketed millions of acres. These forests had developed over thousands of years, shaped by natural disturbances like windstorms, lightning fires, and the grazing patterns of native species such as elk and bison. Indigenous peoples also played a role, carefully managing the landscape with controlled burns and selective clearing.

With the arrival of European settlers in the 17th and 18th centuries, the fate of these ancient forests began to change dramatically. Driven by the demand for timber, farmland, and fuel, settlers rapidly cleared the land. By the late 1800s, Pennsylvania—once home to some of the most expansive old-growth forests in the country—had been almost entirely deforested. Massive logging operations, especially during the lumber boom of the 19th century, decimated forests that had stood since before recorded history.



Old-growth forests are ecologically unique and valuable. These mature ecosystems support a diversity of plant and animal life not typically found in younger forests. Their complex structure—marked by large, old trees, standing dead wood, and multilayered canopies—creates habitat for less common species. The deep, undisturbed soils and slow decomposition cycles of old-growth systems also play a vital role in carbon storage and water regulation, helping to buffer against climate change and flooding.

Despite the large-scale destruction, pockets of old-growth forest in Pennsylvania and the broader Northeast have survived, often in places too remote or rugged for logging. Sites like the Conservancy's Woodbourne Forest Preserve continue to protect significant remnants of old-growth. In recent decades, there has been a growing effort to identify, protect, and study these remnants. Conservation groups, ecologists, and state agencies have worked together to map and safeguard old-growth areas, raise public awareness, and promote the restoration of forests to more natural conditions. Educational initiatives, research into old-growth dynamics, and land acquisition programs continue to play key roles in preserving what remains of these ancient ecosystems. The Old-Growth Forest Network is one of these organizations working to recognize and help preserve these ecological treasures. The Edward L. Rose Conservancy is delighted to have the Woodbourne Preserve included in this national registry of protected old-growth forests.



Notes from the Annual Members Meeting

Acting President Keith Oberg called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. on July 19, 2025 in the Susquehanna County Conservation District (SCCD) pavilion on State Route 29, introducing guest speaker Lillian Theophanis, former Executive Officer of the SCCD. Lillian welcomed the E.L. Rose members and outlined the history and present activities of SCCD.

President's Report – Keith outlined the major projects and accomplishments of the past year, including:

- Maintenance and upgrades at the Woodbourne Forest Preserve,
- Development of a new Strategic Plan,
- Updating of the Bylaws (previously emailed to members),
- Improvement of our website's membership pages and payment link,
- Preparation work for professional accreditation and
- Moving the paper files and historical documents to our new location in the Pink Arrow Arts building in Montrose.



As a part of the business meeting, a motion was made and approved to adopt the new revised Conservancy Bylaws, and Wendy Neuberger was elected to the Board of Directors.



Treasurer Tom Stoll distributed the 2024-25 year-end financial report and the budget for the upcoming 2025-26 fiscal year, reporting a very successful fiscal year. The large difference was due to a sudden increase in natural gas royalties from the Greenwood Sanctuary.

Stewardship Committee Report: • “Great strides” at Woodbourne, including a lot of previously deferred maintenance of trails, structures and parking areas. This included moving the parking area to a

safer location, building a new pavilion, new footbridges and other trail improvements, and the sale of the former naturalist’s residence, with proceeds going to the Woodbourne stewardship fund. Keith noted two upcoming events at the Preserve: a 7/27 celebration of Woodbourne’s inclusion in the Old Growth Forest Network and an 8/3 presentation and hike led by Rick Marci, a local author with ties to the reserve. • High Point trails have been maintained and are in good shape. A new round of hemlock disease treatment is being planned in conjunction with the Silver Lake Association, along with some necessary maintenance of the butterfly garden. • The Greenwood Preserve trails will need some care as does the access road. The road project has been approved and contracted, but work has not yet begun. • The sixteen conservation easements, on property owned by others but held by ELRC, are being professionally monitored and are presently under our protection per the terms of each of the individual easements.

From Joyce Stone, Chair of the Woodbourne Stewardship Committee: • The Woodbourne



Forest Preserve was the first Pennsylvania land acquisition of the Nature Conservancy, the national conservation non-profit, and has been in existence for 67 years. • Under Keith’s leadership E.L. Rose has made a number of improvements this year • An audio program for Woodbourne’s trails is under development and will be available to smartphone users. • The Woodbourne Committee is collaborating with Syracuse University to introduce a new, disease-resistant strain of the American

Chestnut tree at the Preserve. • The sale of the caretakers’ house doubled the size of Woodbourne’s stewardship fund. • She concluded by thanking the Conservancy for all of the recent improvements.

Conservation Specialist, Kristi Sullivan reported that: • Revised trail maps are available on the E.L. Rose website for the Woodbourne, Greenwood and High Point properties. • Kristi is working on a management plan for the Woodbourne Forest – a first draft is currently

available for review. • The *Laricobius nigrinus* beetle, which preys on Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) larvae, has been identified at the Woodbourne Preserve and at Silver Lake near the High Point Preserve. Since the beetle has not been deliberately introduced within 50 miles of either property, it is likely occurring naturally, a positive sign. Time will tell whether *Laricobius n.* will have a significant impact on the spread of HWA. • The silver fly, another HWA predator, was introduced at



Woodbourne last year. We have to wait one more year to see whether it has established a sustainable population that could help eradicate HWA.

And last, but not least, Keith announced that Giulia Fantini, age 14, had received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Conservancy for raising over \$500.00 from her bake sale to be used to treat the ailing hemlock trees along the west shore of Silver Lake.

ELRC Announces its New Officers for the 2025-26 Fiscal Year

The Conservancy held its election of officers subsequent to the annual meeting. Elected to office by the Board were Keith Oberg, President, Bill Fischer, Vice-President, Tom Stoll, Treasurer and Scott Heckman, Secretary. Please welcome them and let them know your thoughts and concerns regarding the Conservancy, its mission and its plans for the future.

New Parking Lot and Picnic Shelter at Woodbourne



It was clear when ELRC acquired the Woodbourne Forest Preserve, that covid and the lengthy transition process had resulted in an urgent need for upkeep and upgrades at the Preserve. The ELRC Stewardship Committee along with the Woodbourne Stewardship Committee got right down to work. Besides the presently well-maintained trails, the Preserve now has a new safer parking lot and a new larger picnic shelter, thanks to Shawn Aukema of Aukema

Construction. The old lot was dangerous due to poor sight distance when exiting onto the highway and the old pavilion was run down, too close to the road and too small for its envisioned future use. The new lot is shaded and slightly larger than the old and the new shelter is comfortably distant from the road providing a much improved atmosphere for nature programs.

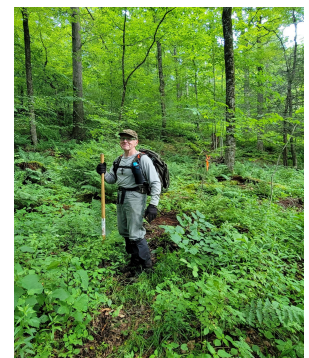


KTA Event a Great Success

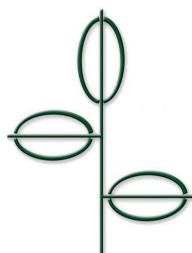
The Keystone Trails Association, (KTA) is a statewide organization dedicated to assisting in the maintenance of public access trails throughout Pennsylvania. Based in central PA, this organization draws volunteers from all over the state for a day to an extended weekend of



trail work at various sites around Pennsylvania. KTA spent a couple very productive days at the Woodbourne Forest Preserve in late June adding a trail around the wetland, (appropriately enough named the Wetland Trail), rerouting the Woodruff Hill Trail around a swampy area and building four wood walkway/bridges on the Nature Trail. Many thanks to a hardworking bunch of wonderful volunteers.



More info at [ELROSE.ORG](https://www.elrose.org)



The Edward L. Rose Conservancy
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