

ClearWater Conservancy's  
**Campaign to Connect**





*Deb Nardone, Executive Director*

## Dear Friends,

Can you remember the last time you watched the sun rise or set? As it rose or sank down over the horizon, did you feel more deeply connected with the natural world for those few brief moments?

Our desire to connect with people and places remains constant as we go about our daily lives. Yet maintaining these connections is becoming more and more challenging with so much constantly competing for our time and attention.

Streams, wildlife, and forests are also struggling to connect here in central Pennsylvania and around the world. While communities for people expand, communities of plants and animals are shrinking and becoming less and less resilient.

As local and global environmental challenges grow, ClearWater is expanding the scope and pace of local conservation efforts. This work depends on everyone working together in innovative ways to protect and connect local landscapes and waterways.

To fully support these expanding goals, ClearWater has identified a central location in the center of the Spring Creek watershed where these efforts can grow and succeed. With your help, ClearWater's Community Conservation Center will soon become a place where we can all connect and learn how to best protect nearby natural places.

Your contribution to the Campaign to Connect is greatly needed and deeply appreciated at a time when threats to the health of our environment are outpacing solutions. The positive impact of your gift to ClearWater will never stop growing to help the places and wildlife that define our region flourish forever.

All the very best,

*Deb Nardone*

Deb Nardone  
Executive Director  
ClearWater Conservancy

## ClearWater's Campaign to Connect

**...will connect and protect priority landscapes and streams while enhancing everyone's appreciation and understanding of the natural world. Your contribution to the Campaign to Connect makes it possible to achieve these long-term goals at the scope and pace necessary to nurture a resilient region and planet now and forever. Thank you for your generous support!**





Barrens to Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor



Large, connected landscapes are the backbone of a resilient region. Just as we depend on paved roads and gas stations to travel from town to town, animals from around the world rely on migratory corridors to travel to and from southern regions of the continent all the way into the most northern regions of North America.

ClearWater Conservancy manages a multitude of projects and partnerships to weave together strategies to protect and connect high priority landscapes that support plants and wildlife along one of North America's most active wildlife corridors — the Appalachian Mountain Range.

For example, the **Slab Cabin Run Initiative** aims to connect key landscapes in and near State College and Rothrock State Forest, and the **Scotia Barrens to Ridgelines Initiative** includes conservation successes such as the Barrens to Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor and 1,270 acres of land in Warriors Mark that is now part of Rothrock State Forest and accessible to the public.

ClearWater has conserved or helped facilitate the conservation of nearly 10,000 acres of land since 1980. Today, more than 5,000 acres of regional core forest and wildlife habitat have been identified as in need of current conservation efforts.

## Barrens To Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor

ClearWater Conservancy conserved and currently restores and maintains the Barrens to Bald Eagle Wildlife Corridor in Stormstown, PA. Once a farm field, the 103-acre area of land is now a habitat hot spot that functions as a safe passage for wildlife species between two ecologically significant forest blocks — Bald Eagle Mountain and the Scotia Barrens. Vernal pools allow for breeding amphibians. Young forest supports the golden-winged warbler, American woodcock, and ruffed grouse. The wildflower meadow provides pollinator habitat for bees, moths, insects, and birds while controlling invasive species. This important corridor is protected in partnership with private landowners, Halfmoon Township, and ClearWater Conservancy.

# CONNECT

...our region's land, water, and wildlife for local and global resilience

Sun peeking through the forest at Dry Hollow, a 1,271 acre property conserved by ClearWater that is now part of Rothrock State Forest. Photo by Thomas Bathgate





# PROTECT

...the region's natural resources for everyone, forever

Visitors explore Rhoneymeade in Centre Hall, PA, during a Centred Outdoors guided walk. In 1986, the 150-acre property was the first to be permanently conserved by ClearWater Conservancy.



Joel and Emily Kuhns

## Generations of Conservation

In 2014, Larry Kuhns and his family acquired a 189-acre property in Centre Hall, PA, that is home to forests, fields, streams, and a headwater of Spring Creek. Larry, who passed away in 2019, was an avid conservationist and Penn State horticulture professor with a strong commitment to supporting the health and resilience of wildlife and Spring Creek. Larry's son, Joel, daughter-in-law, Emily, and two grandsons now live on and care for the property.

"My dad referred to this property as his magnum opus," said Joel. "He had conservation strategies and plans for each unique area and a deep understanding of how restoration efforts here made a difference in the grand scheme of things."

Larry researched the many options for best caring for his property and the wildlife it supports. For the forested area, he completed a forest stewardship management plan, followed by a cerulean warbler habitat improvement project and the planting of 1,000 hybrid American chestnut seedlings. Non-native invasive plant control was a critical step to his efforts, as was a small-scale timber harvest to thin the forest canopy to provide light to the native understory plants and wildlife habitat.

In the meadow and streamside areas along Spring Creek, the Kuhns family coordinated a streamside forest planting of native trees and shrubs that continue to grow today with stewardship, maintenance, and technical support from ClearWater and volunteers. Consistent with Larry's lifelong commitment to conservation education, the property also serves as a demonstration and teaching site.

"Living here has given us the chance to experience the realization of Larry's vision while we watch it unfold through our children's eyes," said Emily. "We sense his passion for conserving this beautiful place when we see plants and animals thriving and nurturing his grandchildren's curiosity for the natural world."

**W**ith an understanding that the health and resiliency of the natural world is more strained than ever due to climate change and overuse, ClearWater looks generations ahead to prioritize conservation efforts that will protect our drinking water supply, air quality, local food sources, and recreational opportunities at a pace that can meet the region's pace of growth and development.

Ongoing support from donors and community partners makes this work possible and strengthens all subsequent efforts to permanently protect the most vital natural places and support the health of communities of people and wildlife.





Jamie SanFilippo, local community leader and angler, fly fishing in Spring Creek

# RESTORE

...the long-term health of Spring Creek and surrounding watersheds

A view of the nearly 9-acre property along 1,300 feet of Spring Creek in Houserville that was purchased by ClearWater in 2022 to be conserved and become ClearWater's office with community gathering spaces and conservation demonstration areas.

Local streams like Spring and Spruce Creek flow through and connect our communities, defining the character of the region. These beautiful waterways attract visitors and wildlife from far and wide. Unfortunately, the delicately balanced ecosystems of some of these streams are threatened from development and climate change, and there is an urgent need to protect and restore their health with the planting and maintenance of streamside forests.

With more than 40,000 plants and trees in the ground and thousands more to plant and maintain, ClearWater Conservancy's Streamside Forest program requires significant ongoing support to meet the challenges to the health of our beloved local waterways.

## Spring Creek: A natural treasure to enjoy and protect

As State College grows, so does ClearWater's commitment to protecting Spring Creek while promoting public access to its countless recreational opportunities. Thompson Woods Preserve and Millbrook Marsh, both protected by conservation easements held by ClearWater, are two examples of places in the heart of State College where protection and enjoyment of our natural resources occur in the same space. Thompson Woods is a publicly accessible 43-acre preserve consisting of forested land in an otherwise urban area. The preserve offers a peaceful setting for visitors while the undeveloped land prevents stormwater runoff and pollution from entering Thompson Run and Walnut Run, which connect with Spring Creek and 50 acres of sensitive wetlands at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center.





Participants during a Centred Outdoors guided adventure



# STEWARD

*...nearby nature while prioritizing access to the outdoors for all*

*A pond at Scotia Barrens, (Game Lands #176), Patton Township, PA. In 2022 ClearWater conserved Gray's Woods, a 149-acre property bordering the Barrens that is now permanently open to the public.*

**W**hen we connect with nature, our physical and emotional well-being improves. As our sense of awe and gratitude grows, so does our willingness and desire to care for the nature all around us.

With this understanding, in 2017 ClearWater launched Centred Outdoors, an initiative to engage everyone — of all ages, backgrounds, and fitness levels — in outdoor activity at some of the most scenic and awe-inspiring natural places in and around Centre County. The program strives to remove any barriers preventing individuals, including underrepresented and marginalized communities, from enjoyably and comfortably accessing nearby natural spaces.

## Making a difference with kindness and care

Compassion and kindness can truly change the world we live in, as proven by Martha Goodwin. Martha was a professional writer who spent time living in State College and deeply valued friendships, time spent outdoors, and environmental stewardship. Martha passed away in 2017 at the age of 62 after making many long-lasting and positive impacts in the lives of others.

With the understanding that “ClearWater has successfully completed many projects that protect natural resources and contribute to the quality of life in central Pennsylvania,” Martha left a transformational gift to ClearWater Conservancy, establishing the Martha Goodwin Stewardship Fund.

As the organization’s stewardship and environmental outreach efforts grow and expand, ClearWater is forever committed to sharing Martha’s enthusiasm for meaningful connections with the outdoors and others.





# NURTURE

*...a working space in a special place where ClearWater and the community can connect, learn, and grow together*

In 2022, ClearWater purchased a property situated along a quarter-mile of Spring Creek in Houserville, PA, in the center of the Spring Creek Watershed. The goal is for this property to become ClearWater's Community Conservation Center, where people and partners can collaborate and contribute to today's most effective conservation strategies.

The property will offer an area for every aspect of the organization's projects and programs, with space for everything from tools for stream restoration efforts, to native gardens and streamside forest demonstrations, to indoor and outdoor spaces to spark conversation with a wide diversity of people and perspectives. The center will also support a growing team of staff and volunteers working together to expand the scope and pace of local conservation strategies.

Your support is needed to establish the ClearWater Community Conservation Center, a place where everyone, including you, can work together to realize the strategic vision of the ClearWater Compass and protect the future of our region's natural beauty and resources.





ClearWater makes sustainable investments a priority today to support the health of future generations. Pictured, a Centred Outdoors team member works with "Jr. Naturalists" exploring tools for their nature walk.

# SUPPORT

...people and projects connecting and protecting regional landscapes, waterways, and wildlife.

A view of Mt. Nittany from Harvest Fields, Boalsburg, PA

**Y**our contribution to ClearWater Conservancy's Campaign to Connect signifies your commitment to scientifically proven strategies and actions that will enhance the resilience of central Pennsylvania's vital ecosystems while improving the quality of life for people who live, work, and play among them. The gift you make today will never stop growing to support this important work, as ClearWater's sustainable investing practices ensure it becomes part of a legacy that lasts forever.

**Thank you** for taking this important step to support the many efforts of ClearWater to connect woods and wildlife habitat, protect sensitive ecosystems and water supplies, restore local streams and waterways, and share the wonders and importance of nature with those who will be responsible for caring for these natural resources in the future.



- Sound Finances
- Ethical Conduct
- Responsible Governance
- Lasting Stewardship

## Sustainably investing in the future

ClearWater's mission drives decisions across the organization, including how ClearWater stewards its long-term investment funds. Applying the concept that investing is ownership and aligning the organization's investments with the ClearWater Compass Points, the language from the Investment Policy Statement is as follows:

*ClearWater seeks to invest in securities that are aligned with the organization's vision, values, and mission. ClearWater favors investments in companies that have responsible and sustainable business practices with regards to environmental impact. This includes favoring investments in companies that exhibit practices that are more sustainable than those of industry peers, companies demonstrating an effort to reduce environmental impact over time, and companies using and/or producing energy from more efficient and cleaner energy sources. ClearWater also seeks to avoid owning companies engaged in fossil fuel exploration, extraction, and production and utility companies with material exposure to coal-fired power plants.*





# GROW

...the scope and pace of local conservation efforts.

Wooden bridge along the Musser Gap Trail. ClearWater played a key role in making the trail and new entrance to Rothrock State Forest possible by acquiring the 423-acre property in 2006 and conveying it to PA-DCNR in 2017.

## Joining the Lisle Circle:

Members of ClearWater's Lisle Circle have made a gift through their will, trust, retirement plan, donor advised fund, or with the gift of land or real estate. These tax-efficient options help ClearWater grow!

### Wills or Trusts:

You can make a bequest gift by naming ClearWater Conservancy in your will or trust.

### Life Insurance Policies:

You can name ClearWater Conservancy as a beneficiary.

### Retirement Plans:

You can name ClearWater Conservancy as a full or partial beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k) or other qualified retirement plan, thereby avoiding the income tax liability incurred when most retirement accounts pass to individuals.

### Real Estate Property or Development Rights:

in addition to land that can be conserved as nature preserves or conservation easements, ClearWater accepts gifts of all types of property, including houses and other types of real estate that can be sold to further the organization's mission.

Thank you for joining thoughtful supporters generously contributing to a resilient region where people and wildlife can grow and thrive.

*"We are amazingly lucky to live in a place where we are still able to work on preserving the natural resources of the Spring Creek Watershed. Science has given us the knowledge to understand what needs to be done, and ClearWater is doing those things. I support that as a long-term goal."*

— Terry Melton, Ph.D., Lisle Circle Member and ClearWater Board Member



Terry Melton stands with ClearWater staff, board, and partners at ClearWater's newest purchased property in Houserville

## The Lisle Circle: A gift that grows forever

Elsa Lisle loved gardening and the outdoors, and admired the natural beauty of Centre County after moving to the area after college to become a librarian. She was dedicated to protecting Spring Creek and the meadow of wildflowers that grew alongside it — 155 species of plants and flowers — on her property in State College. With a vision to create a large "Ribbon of Green" through what is now a bustling town, Elsa worked with ClearWater to permanently conserve this special property of hers by finalizing the organization's first riparian conservation easement in 2004.

Several years later in 2009, Elsa made a significant bequest to the organization, establishing the Lisle Circle. Since then, more than 36 members have followed in Elsa's generous footsteps by joining the Lisle Circle and making it possible for ClearWater's programs and projects to amply grow and respond to the many threats to the forests, waterways, and wildlife in our region caused by climate change and a fast-growing region.



## OUR VISION

Working together for people and place to nurture a healthy environment and thriving communities in the heart of Pennsylvania.

## OUR VALUES

**Focus on the Future:** We are optimistic about the future of central Pennsylvania and the ability of our communities to conserve their ample beauty and bounty, now and for future generations.

**Lead through Engagement:** We lead by engaging all who wish to collaborate in effective and lasting conservation.

**Inspire Exploration and Curiosity:** We value education and foster a strong sense of place to encourage lasting citizen stewardship.

**Apply Sound Science:** We make strategic choices guided by objectivity, current science, and innovation.

**Strive for Impact:** We guide the community in setting and achieving aspirational goals for environmental health and justice across the region.

**Act with Integrity:** We practice transparency and always act with integrity and honesty.

## OUR STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

**The Clearwater Compass** is ClearWater Conservancy's strategic vision to connect communities and landscape throughout central Pennsylvania. View the full strategy and learn more at [www.clearwaterconservancy.org/compass](http://www.clearwaterconservancy.org/compass).



# The ClearWater Compass

a strategic vision to connect communities and  
landscapes throughout central Pennsylvania



## PASSPORT



**Get Involved Today!**

[clearwaterconservancy.org/letsgrow](http://clearwaterconservancy.org/letsgrow)

Winter sunset with profile of Purdue Mountain in the Bald Eagle Valley. Photo by Thomas Bathgate





CLEARWATER  
*conservancy*