



What are we leaving for the children?



Kids deserve safe water, natural beauty, and a livable world. Pocono Heritage Land Trust is working for them – today, tomorrow and forever. Join us! (Contributed photo)

By Carol Hillestad

For Pocono Heritage Land Trust

Of all the states in the Union, only a handful promise their citizens a livable environment. Pennsylvania's guarantee is one of the strongest:

The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment.

Beautiful words. Self-evident values. Everyone wants these things for themselves, for their children and grandchildren. And yet, what are we actually doing?

We're still using oil and gas like there's no tomorrow. We promote fast fashion that turns one minute's trendy jeggings into landfill waste that lasts for lifetimes. We turn a blind eye to single-use plastic bags, straws and packaging — whose useful life may be less than an hour, but whose tiny, indestructible bits and pieces will invade air, soil, water, and our great-great-grandchildren's very bodies.

Warehouses suffocate the land, with our officials' blessing. The trees that used to pump carbon out of the air and oxygen into it on that land are gone. Bears, birds, mushrooms, salamanders, the whole intricate web that nature depends on — gone. The daily natural beauty we took for granted — gone. Manmade water "control" systems support zero plant and animal life, require constant maintenance, and regularly stress creeks and groundwater.

Continued on reverse



What are we leaving for the children?

Continuing from front

Maybe you think all the talk about “climate change” and “the environment” is just hype.

The kids disagree. And all across America, they’re stepping up to protect themselves and their future by petitioning state governments to back their constitutional guarantees with action. Just this August, a group of young plaintiffs won their court case in Montana: The judge found that “young people have a fundamental right to a climate system that is safe and stable for their lives.”

Will more states and courts follow? Time will tell.

Pocono Heritage Land Trust isn’t waiting to see what others will do. PHLT permanently conserves forested land that protects clean, drinkable water, natural views, and pure, breathable air. Many of PHLT’s preserves are open to the public for hiking, fishing, hunting, and simply being in nature.

If you’d like to help, become a member of PHLT. And just say “no, thanks” to that plastic straw.

ABOUT THE PEOPLE’S ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS IN PA

More than 50 years ago, three out of four Pennsylvanians voted to make the people’s right to a clean environment part of our constitution.

Since then, the state Supreme Court has ruled that the Commonwealth has two duties: “to prohibit the degradation, diminution, and depletion of our public natural resources” whether by the state itself or private parties, and “to act affirmatively via legislative action to protect the environment.”

See dcnr.pa.gov/GoodNatured/pages/Article.aspx?post=171

And PA’s Environmental Rights Amendment has been successfully used in several recent cases — know hope!



PHLT volunteer Don Miller, left, shares his joy and respect for nature with a father and son on a PHLT hike. (Contributed photo)



POCONO HERITAGE LAND TRUST

ABOUT CONSERVING LAND

Founded in 1984, Pocono Heritage Land Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Pocono region by conserving land and inspiring people to care for, enjoy and explore their natural world. PHLT works cooperatively with landowners to preserve their property and leave a legacy of protected natural habitats, healthy forest, clean waterways and open space for future generations.

You can help Pocono Heritage Land Trust protect land for the future. Learn about membership and volunteer opportunities at www.phlt.org.

PLEASE DONATE to preserve important lands and natural resources in the Poconos, for generations to come.

- \$25** provides supplies for one trash cleanup day, or one planting of wildflower seeds for meadow habitat restoration.
- \$50** buys tools for managing invasive plants on volunteer days.
- \$150** prints 500 trail brochures to guide visitors on preserves.
- \$500** builds a streamcrossing bridge to improve trail access.
- \$1,500** covers the cost of an appraisal, the first step in acquiring new land for preservation.
- \$3,000** funds construction of a sign kiosk on a new preserve.
- \$5,000** enables development of a new nature trail network, including trail marking, clearing, signage and maps.

Donate online at phlt.org/donate.html

or clip this form and send it with your check made out to Pocono Heritage Land Trust to:

PHLT, 1539 Cherry Lane Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____