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SPRING/SUMMER 2019

# COMMON GROUND

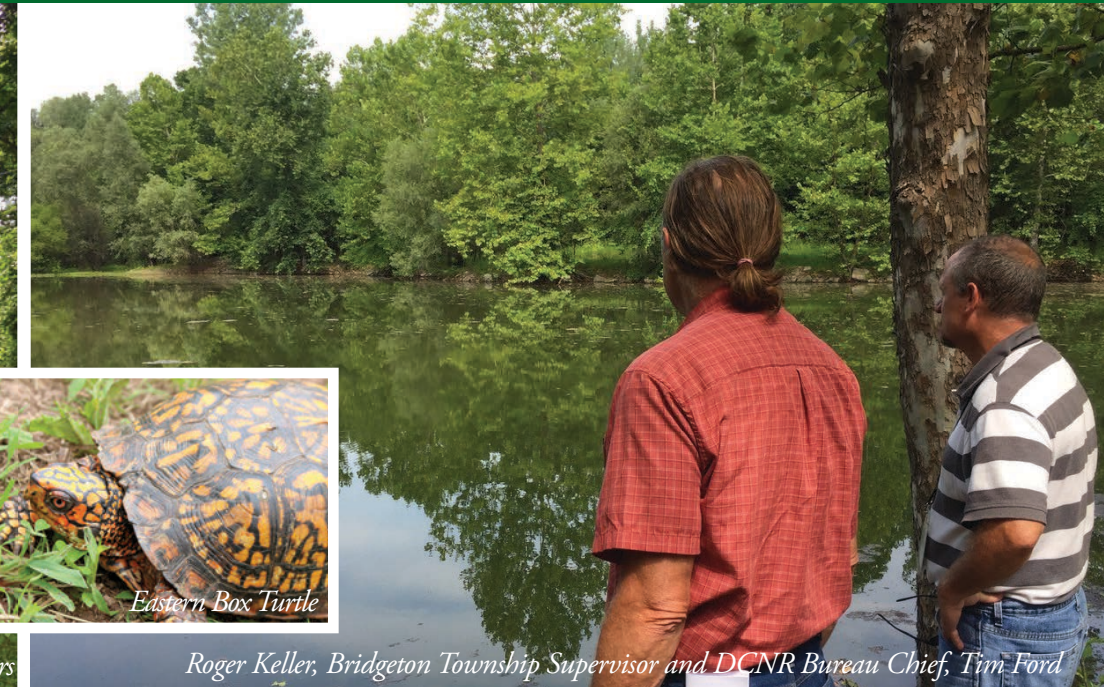
*"Protecting our rural character and natural resources through community-based land conservation."*



*Tinicum Creek, Wieand/Rothkopf conservation easement*



*DCNR staff and Bridgeton Township Supervisors*



*Roger Keller, Bridgeton Township Supervisor and DCNR Bureau Chief, Tim Ford*



*Eastern Box Turtle*



*Save the Date!*

## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Community Celebration

**Saturday, Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> 3:00pm - 5:00pm**

*(2:00 optional pre-event walk of the property)*

### Home of Paul Wieand and June Rothkopf

Protected in 2003, this 14-acre conservation easement is located on a pristine stretch of the Tinicum Creek and connects to hundreds of acres of conserved land. Come join the fun and meet your neighbors, catch up with friends and learn about the Conservancy's latest projects.

### Gathering with appetizers and drinks

**Open to all residents. Call by Sept. 9th to RSVP and get directions.**

**Call 610-294-1077 or [mfell@tinicumconservancy.org](mailto:mfell@tinicumconservancy.org)**

## WANTED

### Volunteers Needed

Tinicum Conservancy would not exist without its volunteers. We need help with mailings, research, event planning, and more!

*Please contact Tinicum Conservancy trustee, Karen Budd at (610) 294-9069 or email [kbudd3030@gmail.com](mailto:kbudd3030@gmail.com) for questions and more information.*

Visit [tinicumconservancy.org](http://tinicumconservancy.org)

## 107-ACRE DELAWARE RIVER VALLEY PROPERTY SAVED

In early April, Bridgeton Township completed the purchase of a 107-acre tract near the Delaware Canal and within walking distance of the newly established Pennsylvania Highlands Trail. A former quarry, the site is framed by the dramatic and rugged palisades to the west and the Delaware River bottom lands to the east. Abandoned for more than 40 years, it has become a refuge for a wide variety of wildlife, including otter, coyotes, frogs, salamander and reptiles. Small ponds — remnants of the original sand and gravel pits — dot the property.

In late 2017, township officials saw an opportunity to convert the abandoned quarry property into a preserve and recreational area and contacted the Tinicum Conservancy. Conservancy officials helped the township develop an acquisition strategy and negotiate the

purchase. The Conservancy also helped secure more than \$600,000 in grant funding from the Bucks County Natural Areas program, the State's Community Conservation Partnerships Program, and a private foundation.

"This is an exciting project for us to assist with," explained Boyce Budd, Conservancy President. "Funding was never a sure thing. It took real dedication by all parties to make this dream come true."

The township will lead a public discussion and planning strategy session to assist it in determining how the property will be used, with the goal of balancing environmental protection and public enjoyment. Development of a parking area and trail system is anticipated to be part of the preserve plan, along with possible tree planting and habitat restoration. Opportunities will exist for people to get

involved in all these activities.

"We look forward to hearing from everyone who is interested in the future of this new preserve," said Gard Holby, Chair of the Bridgeton Supervisors. "We hope that once a plan is developed, people will lend a hand and help us make this a place where everyone can visit and enjoy."

This is not the first time the Conservancy and Bridgeton Township have worked together. In 2012, they joined forces to conserve the largest remaining farm in the township: a 75-acre historic property located on Bridgeton Hill Road.

— J. Engel



*Bridgeton residents Spring 2018 Walking Tour*





#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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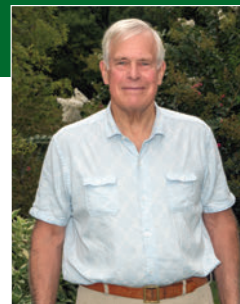
Land trust accreditation is a mark of distinction awarded to land trusts meeting the highest national standards for excellence and conservation performance.

The Tinicum Conservancy is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization established in 1992. Donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS & REINTERPRETING BOUNDARIES

I am struck by how often we set boundaries that are mostly in our minds – political, philosophical and personal boundaries to name a few. Several articles in this issue of “Common Ground” are wonderful examples of what can be accomplished when we question those limitations and take chances by imagining, “What if...” Lauren Rosenthal, a local artist, re-imagines the place where we live as defined by watersheds that provide essential clean water for humans and nature as well as inspiration for us all — a place where waters flow together through a common connection of landscape. Her drawings not only give us a connected, visual perspective from above, but they are constructed with actual soil from the place they represent. A very “grounded” approach if I might say. Several other stories in this issue discuss our latest conservation triumphs, ranging from a small but important piece of land located



in the Roaring Rocks Watershed to a much larger piece along the Delaware River. Most interesting to me is that, in spite of the artificial boundaries set up by many, these conservation successes are defined by the committed people who came together to make them possible. Landowners willing to create a legacy for their community, political leaders with vision to see a better future, and dedicated Conservancy staff who used every bit of their knowledge and passion to succeed against great odds are why the conservation triumphs were achieved. In an instant. Because of their commitment. Boundaries are shattered, and the future looks much brighter.

Boyce Budd, President

### THE BOARD BIDS FAREWELL TO CHUCK SCHOLER.

Chuck finished his second three-year term with the Conservancy at the end of 2018. During his tenure, he played an active role in many leadership responsibilities, including the development and modification of policy and the consideration of members for our Board of Trustees and steering committees. He guided the Conservancy through a strategic planning process that helped the Conservancy identify new opportunities

and challenges in the years ahead. His steady and logical approach to strategy was just what the Board of Trustees needed to ensure meaningful progress on key conservation initiatives. Most importantly, Chuck has a passion for our community and protecting the places that are important to all of us. He used that passion to focus on making our community a better place. *Thank you, Chuck!*

### The Conservancy welcomes new board members!

This year we welcomed four new members to the Board of Trustees. Please join us in welcoming Nick Forte, Michael Kauffman, Patty Leonhardt, and Kelly Simcox! Our new members bring diversity

along with a wide range of talent and accomplishments to the board. We thank them for their willingness to join the ranks of those who help make our community a very special place to call home.



### There's a new kid in town: battling the Spotted Lanternfly

The Spotted Lanternfly is an invasive insect from eastern Asia that has spread throughout southeastern PA since its discovery in Berks County in 2014. This colorful devil covers trees and other surfaces by the thousands and is a significant threat to Pennsylvania's hardwoods, fruit trees and grape vines.

On Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, the Tinicum Conservancy sponsored and coordinated an event to help us learn what we can do

to stop the spread. Nick Flax, Penn State Extension Educator, delivered an in-depth presentation at the event, which was held at Tinicum Elementary School.

To learn more about the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF), and what action you can take to stop the spread of this invasive insect, visit [extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly](http://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly) or call 888-4-BADFLY (888-422-3359) toll-free.



Please join us! Contact Graham Place at [riverroadcleanup@tinicumconservancy.org](mailto:riverroadcleanup@tinicumconservancy.org) for meeting time and more info. Help keep our adopted stretch of River Road trash-free. We clean five miles starting at Tinicum Park all the way up to Bridgeton Hill Road. “Many hands make quick work” truly applies to this

good deed. Plus, you never know what treasures might be unearthed. Meet at the Schneiderwind Farm parking lot on River Road, across from the Frenchtown Bridge. (Vests, gloves, bags, water, and pastries provided.) Hope to see you all at the next one on June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2019 River Road Clean-Up

Spring **Sat Jun 15<sup>th</sup> 8:00am**  
 Summer **Sat Aug 24<sup>th</sup> 8:00am**  
 Fall **Sat Oct 12<sup>th</sup> 8:00am**

Please join us! Contact Graham Place at [riverroadcleanup@tinicumconservancy.org](mailto:riverroadcleanup@tinicumconservancy.org) for meeting time and more info.

### Guided Bird Walk

with Ornithologist Diane Allison

**Sat June 1<sup>st</sup> 8:00am-10:00am**

Diane will share with us her extensive knowledge of bird identification and behavior. Location to be determined. RSVP Karen Budd at 610-294-9069 or [kbudd3030@gmail.com](mailto:kbudd3030@gmail.com).

### Delaware River Boat Tour

with Captain Dee Keller

**Thurs July 25<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm-8:00pm**

Calling all TC members and families! Join us on a great river adventure for **FREE!** Discover macroinvertebrates, fish species and all sorts of insects that are part of the Delaware aquatic life. Space is limited. RSVP by June 27<sup>th</sup> to 610-294-1077 or [mfell@tinicumconservancy.org](mailto:mfell@tinicumconservancy.org).

### Kayak Paddle on the Canal

**Sun Sept 8<sup>th</sup> 9:30am-12:30am**

Kayak on the canal with DCNR's Katie Martens, Environmental Education Specialist for the Delaware Canal State Park. Check website for details. RSVP Karen Budd at 610-294-9069 or [kbudd3030@gmail.com](mailto:kbudd3030@gmail.com).

### Community Celebration!

**Sat Sept 14<sup>th</sup> 3:00pm-5:00pm**

This year's 12<sup>th</sup> annual celebration is open to all residents. Thank you for making it possible to protect our forests, farms, water and way of life. RSVP by Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> to 610-294-1077. *See back cover.*

### Guided Property Tour

Keller Property Walk

**Sat Oct 12<sup>th</sup>**

Learn about leaf color, why some trees lose their leaves and some don't, and the importance of warm season grasses in meadows. RSVP Karen Budd at 610-294-9096 or [kbudd3030@gmail.com](mailto:kbudd3030@gmail.com).

**NOTE:** Dates above may change. Stay connected for the latest information by visiting [tinicumconservancy.org](http://tinicumconservancy.org), like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter. 3

#### STAY CONNECTED WITH NEWS & EVENTS

➤ Sign up for email news at [tinicumconservancy.org](http://tinicumconservancy.org)

➤ Like us on Facebook

➤ Follow us on Twitter





Twenty-four years and the battle rages on for the Lower Tohickon Creek. We aren't giving in, and we're asking for your help. Previous issues of Common Ground (Winter '16, Spring '13 and Winter '13/'14) have described our nearly 24-year effort to achieve Exceptional Value status for the Lower Tohickon Creek. That's an 11-mile stretch from Nockamixon Dam to Point Pleasant at the Delaware River that provides exceptional habitat for aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna, exceptional



recreational opportunities, gorgeous scenic values for every Tincum resident and visitor, and clean drinking water for every private well in the watershed.

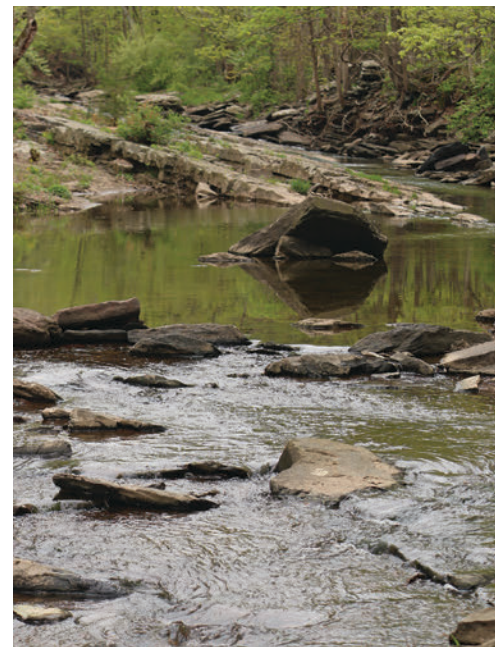
Why do we persist? Because rivers and streams designated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

(PADEP) as High Quality (HQ) or Exceptional Value (EV) are afforded the strongest legal protections against stream pollution from private, public, commercial or industrial sources. We strongly believe the Tohickon Creek's exceptional qualities deserve exceptional protection. The original petition and supplemental information packages we've submitted since 1995 have been thwarted by the PADEP's changing and/or outdated quality standards, lack of accurate stream data, and even the prevailing political atmosphere for environmental concerns. Each time our petition was denied, we sought to address the reasons by providing more studies, more data and whatever the PADEP requested.

Based on their last denial in 2009, we lacked only the temperature data that would meet their requirements. So, in January 2016, with a year's worth of new temperature data in hand (thanks to Princeton Hydro, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Bucks County Conservation District and a cadre of volunteer monitors), we provided a supplement to our petition for the Lower Tohickon's upgrade to Exceptional Value

status. And for three years, we waited. Despite calls, emails and meetings, PADEP would not give us an answer. In late April 2019 we received a letter saying that they recommended denying our petition and, based on their own studies and a comparison with another EV stream very unlike the Tohickon, PADEP is recommending a downgrade from its current status of Cold Water Fishery-Migratory Fishes to Trout Stocked Fishery-Migratory Fishes, essentially stripping it of the protections it currently has against polluters and degradation. **Permanently.** We will not accept this recommendation. We won't stop fighting. Our beloved Tohickon Creek needs YOU.

We have a 30-day\* public comment period prior to the PADEP making a final



determination. Tincum Conservancy and Delaware Riverkeeper Network are reaching out to the public, local and regional agencies, politicians and legislators and landowners to request support of the upgrade and opposition to the downgrade and to request at least 90 days for the public to comment.

Here's what you can do:

- 1) Please go to [tincumconservancy.org](http://tincumconservancy.org) or our Facebook page and click on "Save Our Tohickon." Read our **Action Alert** response letter and add your name and comments.
- 2) (Search "PADEP eComment") Please go directly to the PADEP eComment website and click on "Draft Stream Evaluation Report: Tohickon Creek, Bucks County" to read their report. Click on "submit comment" to leave a comment directly. The more comments they receive, the better our chances of opposing the downgrade. Please also consider asking your PA elected representative to write the DEP in support of EV protections for the

Tohickon Creek and to urge DEP not to downgrade the stream.

What's next? This was an unexpected blow, no doubt. But, if the PADEP receives enough resistance to their recommendation, we may be able to stop it and find a path for its future protection. We wholeheartedly believe the Lower Tohickon Creek is worth protecting and has long been deserving of its rightful designation as EV. Please join us in delivering a powerful message to PADEP.

*\*We have requested an extension to 90-days to properly and fully respond to the PADEP recommendation. We are waiting to receive confirmation of that extension.*

## National Recognition for the Conservancy

The Land Trust Alliance's Spring 2019 edition of Saving Land Magazine highlights our work to extinguish gas leases.



Schauffler, Marina. Excerpt from "A Growing Force, Land trusts engage people in climate change solutions." *Saving Land Magazine*, Spring 2019



## MOVING AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS

In Pennsylvania, the accredited Tincum Conservancy in Upper Bucks County is working on a different facet of energy siting, extinguishing natural gas leases signed by more than 300 landowners in the mid-2000s. Tincum Executive Director Jim Engel says, "A lot of people had regrets afterward," as they learned about the many negative impacts of fracking (including emissions) and realized that the leases lowered property values and could jeopardize prospects for a home sale or construction loan.

Landowner interest in shedding those leases "occurred at just the right time," Engel recalls, when the land trust sought to expand the pool of landowners willing to consider conservation easements. Tincum Conservancy secured the cooperation of the gas company and covered associated costs through grants to help landowners extinguish the leases. That process, in turn, fostered helpful discussions about long-term property plans. "Removing the lease provided an essential first step toward conservation," Engel says.

## Join Today

Every gift makes a difference. Use the envelope provided or visit [tincumconservancy.org](http://tincumconservancy.org) to donate today. *Thank you.*



The Tincum Conservancy is a private non-profit organization that depends on charitable contributions to steward over 4,900 acres conserved through our efforts, to protect the environment, and to educate the community about our mission. Your support is essential to realizing our shared purpose.

We've come a long way thanks to people like you who care about the land on which you live, but there's a long way to go. The current threats to our natural world are real, and it's up to all of us to help keep our forests healthy, our land fertile and our waters clean. Our goal is to use every dollar given to directly support all efforts to protect these natural resources and preserve our precious land.

If you haven't donated before, or if your membership has lapsed, please consider what new milestones we can reach with your support. Annual memberships of \$50, \$250, or the \$1000 Friends of Conservation are critical to protecting the land we love. Please use the envelope in this newsletter or visit [tincumconservancy.org](http://tincumconservancy.org) to join today.

*Thank you for your support!*





Jeff and Lorraine Keller

## NATIVE GRASSLANDS CONSERVED NEAR TINICUM CREEK

Perched on a slope overlooking the Tincum Creek Valley, the 27-acre property of Jeff and Lorraine Keller has now been protected in perpetuity. This adds an important link to over 200 acres of conserved property along the lower part of Tincum Creek. High priority in the quest for land protection is the formation of natural corridors that benefit movement and habitat for wildlife, enhance water quality, and establish cleaner air. Featuring mostly open meadows, the Keller property drains toward the Tincum Creek, a Pennsylvania Exceptional Value stream and therefore a high priority for

protection.

Jeff and Lorraine took advantage of the generous funding granted by Tincum Township and the Tincum Conservancy. It was also very important to them to ensure that the property they love will never be threatened by poor development and consequently will benefit the whole community. Their conservation easement, the legal document that guarantees protection for the property in perpetuity, will be held by both the Township and Conservancy.

*article by K. Budd*



Photos by P. Leonhardt

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY

### Get involved — volunteer!

Tincum Conservancy would not exist without its volunteers. We need help with mailings, research, event planning, and more! For those who prefer the outdoors, we need folks to take part in our River Road cleanups and invasive plant removal. Visit [tincumconservancy.org/volunteer](http://tincumconservancy.org/volunteer) for more information.

### Double Your Impact with an Employer Matching Gift.

Maximize your Conservancy support with an employer matching gift. Many companies make it easy to double or triple the amount you donate! Check with your human resources department.

### Leave a Legacy, Plan a Gift.

When you include the Conservancy in your estate plans, you help secure the future of our communities' natural resources and rural character for future generations. Planning today extends your impact beyond your lifetime.

### Conserve Your Property.

Preserving your land is a profound way to contribute to our community.

*Please contact our executive director, Jim Engel, at 610-294-1077 or email [jengel@tincumconservancy.org](mailto:jengel@tincumconservancy.org) for questions and a confidential discussion about your options and opportunities.*



Gallery Showing. Photo by Elsa Mora, Artistic Director & Curator at the Art Yard



Artist Lauren Rosenthal



Tincum Creek, 2017 / 15" x 11" ground rock, water, & gum arabic on paper

## LOCAL ARTIST ENVISIONS WATERSHEDS THROUGH THE STREAMS

A different perspective: Lauren Rosenthal

*"It is only by selection, by elimination, and by emphasis that we get at the real meaning of things" -Georgia O'Keefe*

Ecology serves as my starting point to make sense of the natural world and maps provide the visual language for my expression. I make prints, drawings, and sculptures that use watersheds as symbols of interconnectedness.

My work leads me into the landscape in multiple ways: walking into the woods and along stream banks awakens an immediate sensory experience of place; composing images provides an expansive geographic perspective; repetitive actions open a meditative path that offers insights gained through sustained focus. Together, these practices define my creative exploration about how we understand and imagine ourselves in relationship to the natural world.

One body of work that has emerged from this inquiry is an ongoing series of watershed maps, created using pigments made from rocks collected along lakes and streams. These maps are a tangible result of my connection with nature. In this way, each map is a visual artifact of my

experience exploring a particular stream, river, or lake.

I ground the stones by hand with a small mortar and pestle, mixed the resulting powdery pigment with river water, and brushed it directly onto the gallery wall in long, horizontal strokes, coating the entire 10ft tall by 15ft wide surface in a wash of reddish dust.

I've depicted several local watersheds, including the Tincum and Tohickon Creek Watersheds, in this fashion, painting directly onto gallery walls with the most basic substances of rock and water, and then washed them away at the conclusion of each exhibition. I've also developed a more permanent series of works on paper which have been displayed at locations such as the ArtYard in Frenchtown.

Each of my maps selectively depicts only the hydrological and/or topographical features within the boundaries of a specific watershed. I've eliminated the markers by which we usually locate and navigate, such as labels, political boundaries, and built structures. These choices emphasize the patterns of nature and reframe community

boundaries around our shared natural connections.

It was the Frenchtown exhibit that first caught the eye of Jim Engel, The Conservancy's executive director. "I knew that Lauren had captured in art the essence of what we are trying to do in the communities we serve," explained Engel. "Breaking down barriers by helping people to see the connections we share through nature and our local way of life."

By exposing such similarities, my maps remind us that in a world that often seems chaotic, there is a natural order to which we belong and to which we are responsible. These maps offer an opportunity to reorient, to identify with watersheds, and to find meaning in our connection with each other and the natural world.

Lauren Rosenthal McManus can be contacted at:

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Website: [laurenrosenthalmcmanus.com](http://laurenrosenthalmcmanus.com)