



Keystone Recreation, Park & Conservation Fund

Wingfield Pines Conservation Area A Conservation Makeover

The decade-long journey from environmentally unfriendly ground to a source of community pride and recognition began with a land purchase.

The 80-acre neglected property meant little to the community but for the many hundreds of gallons of abandoned mine drainage it sent into Chartiers

Creek every minute of every day. Allegheny Land Trust, however, saw potential and moved to buy the land. A Keystone Fund grant together with contributions from local foundations and citizens provided the financing to seal the deal.

Strip-mined in the 1940s and later host to a failed golf and swim club, the land begged for a major makeover. Allegheny Land Trust rose to the challenge, engaging graduate students to create a master plan and 50-year vision for restoring the site.

Allegheny Land Trust then set out to make the vision a reality.

Today, the site features exquisite wildlife habitat, community green space and an abandoned mine drainage passive treatment system that has raised the bar on aesthetics, design, technology, and function. The treatment system is visually appealing, with pie-shaped wetlands bordered by pathways, boardwalks and stepping-stones. Interpretive signs guide visitors through the system, describing the history, biology and habitats of Wingfield Pines. It is a living laboratory for local college students.

The values that have been attained through the efforts to restore this property are both tangible and priceless.

Water quality is enhanced, flood control is provided, and two miles of impaired stream are restored. While creating significant public benefit, the innovative technology draws international visitors, and has helped to solidify a proud community.

The project is an educational model for restoration and a hands-on teaching site. Community awareness is raised through public walks, conference workshops and demonstrations. It has become a valuable repository of natural diversity, a popular birding location and a symbol of pride for the community. 



Project Spotlight

Keystone investment: \$225,000

Total project cost: \$450,000 for land purchase (more than \$750,000 for treatment system)

Project leader:
Allegheny Land Trust

Key local partners:
Upper St. Clair, South Fayette, Upper St. Clair Citizen for Land Stewardship, The Outdoor Classroom

County: Allegheny

Fun fact: The abandoned mine drainage system captures 43 tons of iron oxide per year that otherwise would pollute Chartiers Creek.



The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund was established in 1993 with overwhelming bipartisan support both in the General Assembly and through a voter referendum. A portion of the state Realty Transfer Tax has been dedicated to the Keystone Fund for more than two decades. Each dollar of Keystone Fund investment typically leverages three dollars or more in direct local investments in our parks, trails, community green spaces and libraries.

Read more about the Keystone Fund at KeystoneFund.org