



Volume 35
Issue 4



**Westmoreland
Conservancy**

Protecting Nature's home, enriching yours

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Save These Dates!

Witch Hazel Hike at McGinnis Reserve- 10/3 at 10AM



The McGinnis Reserve on Hunter Drive is home to all sorts of interesting flora. It boasts large colonies of the autumn-blooming Witch Hazel, a native shrub known for its medicinal qualities.

The group will leave the parking lot at 10AM and follow the blue trail to the meadow and into the woods. The delicate yellow blooms are a lovely addition to the colors of the autumn leaves!

Let us know you're joining us at:

www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration

New Moon Orionids Meteor Shower at Morosini – 10/9 at 7PM

THIS EVENT IS WEATHER-DEPENDENT!

Enjoy an Autumn evening under a dark, New Moon sky. It should be a fairly dark night, perfect for checking out the stars and planets. You might even listen for owls!

Park at lot #1, on the left side of Morosini Farm Road at the bend after coming under the trestle. Bring a blanket to get comfortable while looking UP!

Our events are always free; but PLEASE register on our website:

www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration



Sounds of the Night Walk at Morosini – 10/24 at 7PM



Autumn nights are cool! (Literally AND figuratively!) Leaves fall and grasses rustle in a breeze, nuts and apples hit the ground, mice and rabbits skitter about... but you won't hear the owl gliding past!

Join us at the Universal Pedestrian Trail (UPT) kiosk at the upper parking lot by 7PM. Be ready to exercise your imagination and your ears as we quietly explore the sounds of nature in the dark!

Please register to attend: www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration



DHCT Opt-Outside Hike – 11/27 at 11AM

The Don Harrison Community Trail (DHCT) is a 5.25 mile east/west trail across Murrysville. We invite you to join us at the Townsend Park Ballfield Trailhead by 11AM Black Friday (because who needs to battle crowds anymore??). The trail utilizes 4 Westmoreland Conservancy Reserves, 3 Murrysville parks/properties, a Sloan School/Franklin Regional



trail agreement and 3 trail easements. It is truly a COMMUNITY trail. Don Harrison was president of Westmoreland Conservancy from

1996-2000, during which time the organization experienced transformational growth and vision. It took many years to realize the greenway he envisioned, and we celebrate each year by walking off the annual turkey stupor.

Leave a car at the Walter Reserve lot on Weistertown Rd. to experience the entire trail. The Caywood lot on Hills Church Rd. is the midpoint if you prefer a shorter outing.

Sign up! www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration.

Winter Solstice Walk at the Morosini Reserve – 12/21 at 4:30PM



Park at the upper lot at the end of Morosini Farm Road. Winter officially arrives at 3:50.

We'll leave the UPT kiosk at 4:30PM, working our way around the trails. We'll take in the first sunset of Winter at 5:10PM from our observation platform in the eastern field! Please register:

<http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration>

First Day Hike at the McGinnis Reserve – 01/01/2027 at 11AM

We'll welcome 2027 at the McGinnis Reserve on Hunter Drive. It will be our first 1st Day Hike at this reserve! Come out and join us as we continue our quest to show that Nature is beautiful ALL YEAR!

www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration



Hot Chocolate Hike with Murrysville Rec – 01/16/2027, 10AM



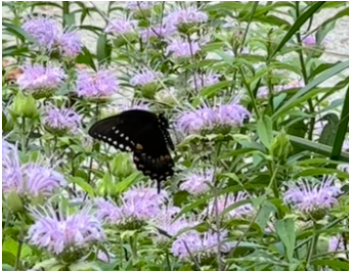
Hike at the Tomer Reserve on Twin Oaks Drive North with Murrysville Recreation. We'll be leaving the parking lot at 10AM to hike yellow trail loops around the reserve. We can see what birds might overwinter locally. There should be plenty of activity in the branches.

We'll enjoy some hot chocolate back at the parking lot!

Please register: www.westmorelandconservancy.org/event-registration

Third Quarter Events

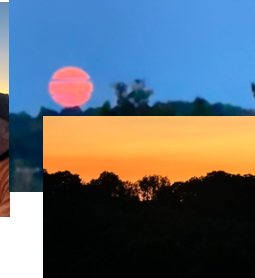
Enchanted Evening Walk



Seasons on the Land Educational Walk Series with Lindsey & Rose Pink Hike at Walter



Full Moon & Autumn Equinox Walks at Morosini



New Eagle Scout Project at Morosini

You'll find a brand-new Eagle Project near the Parking Lot #1 Kiosk. The original Insect Hotel, created by Eagle Scout Kevin Reisch in 2017, unfortunately sustained catastrophic damage in 2023.



Enter Sadie Sarver in 2026. To prevent similar damage, Sadie created her Insect Hotel with stone & brick, mixing the mortar and stacking stone, brick and other found materials with her fellow scouts.

We hope you visit the project, take pictures, and share your observations of the various insects that use this wonderful project.



National Land Conservation Conference, Rally 2026

~Shelly Tichy

Pennsylvania has THE HIGHEST vehicular animal strike percentage in the country. This translates to higher insurance due to high collision rates, high animal AND human casualties, and generally unsafe driving conditions. Now, I don't see anyone thinking that they'll just stop driving.... But there is a viable, intelligent solution. Humans put roads through habitat. The creatures need to cross those roads to forage, breed, and survive.

This September I attended the Land Trust Alliance National Land Conservation Conference in Denver, Colorado. In addition to workshops that lay out foundational building blocks to enhance and simplify our goals, I attended field trips that actually illustrate working practices. One such trip took us to visit what is currently the largest wildlife corridor overpass in North America, the I-25 Greenland Wildlife Overpass. It measures 200' wide and 209' long. Sounds.... Extravagant? Difficult? Problematic? **NO**. Insert: Necessary. Life-saving. Fiscally responsible. [Note: there are many other, smaller projects underway, as well as an even larger example being built in California]



The Wildlife Crossing looks like any other overpass from the road... 6' walls hide the animals from view, preventing visual distractions. Data collected since the crossing's completion in December of 2025 (9 months) shows an incredible 91% drop in collisions. The combination of the overpass and several (5 in this case) wildlife-friendly UNDERPASSES has nearly eliminated the scenario! Think of the numerous "culverts" being modified to allow small mammals, reptiles and amphibians to cross quietly and safely. It would require cooperation from BOTH sides of the roadway... another way for conservation to improve lives. It CAN be done!! PennDOT and county governments, municipalities, and landowners CAN work together IF we make it a priority.



Westmoreland Conservancy has been protecting land and habitat for 35 years. In 1991 a team came together to protect the 56-acre Kellman Reserve. The Municipality of Murrys ville partnered with our young organization to acquire the grants necessary to complete the project and owns the reserve. Since that time Westmoreland Conservancy has protected more than 600 additional acres over 10 reserves. 80% of our holdings have been donated by people wanting to protect special places. And we are by no means finished growing!

There are all sorts of unpublished projects throughout the year. Seeding parties, trail maintenance, wood sealing and clean-ups name a few. If you’re interested in lending a hand, please send us an email at contact@westmorelandconservancy.org and tell us what you would like to do to help.

DONATIONS

Donations and support are ALWAYS welcome. Your donations help to support our projects and events. They help us achieve our goals and continue to grow, making nature available to EVERYONE!

- Student (under 18):\$10
- News Recipient.....\$25
- Conservation Ally.....\$50
- Steward Supporter.....\$100
- Resource Partner.....\$500
- Or: Any Monetary Donation



Your commitment to making an annual donation helps us plan our operating budget, knowing what amount we can expect to receive every year. Any tax- deductible donation of \$25 or more qualifies for free membership, which gives you the right to vote at our Annual Members Meeting in April. You can renew your annual donation through the site or support us with a new donation.

Any donation can be easily managed through our website:
<http://www.westmorelandconservancy.org/donate>; or mailed directly to:
Westmoreland Conservancy, 1 Priority Lane, Unit 446, Murrys ville, PA 15668.



Westmoreland Conservancy

1 Priority Lane Unit 446

Murrysville, PA. 15668

contact@westmorelandconservancy.org



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Schedule of Events

****Watch our Facebook page or sign up for email reminders for work days!****

Please wear sturdy shoes, leg protection and weather-appropriate attire.

Scheduled Events may be canceled in the event of Unsuitable Weather.

10/03/2026: Witch Hazel Hike, McGinnis Reserve, 10AM

10/09/2026: New Moon Orionids Meteor Showers, Morosini Lot #1, 7:30PM

10/24/2026: Sounds of the Night Walk, Morosini UPT Lot, 7PM

10/28/2026: October Meeting, Delmont Public Library, 7PM

11/18/2026: **November Meeting, Delmont Public Library, 7PM

11/27/2026: DHCT OptOutside Hike, Townsend Park Ballfield Lot, 11AM

12/16/2026: **December Meeting, Delmont Public Library, 7PM

12/21/2026: Winter Solstice Walk, Morosini Reserve UPT Lot, 4:30PM

01/01/2027: First Day Hike, McGinnis Reserve, 11AM

01/16/2027: Hot Chocolate Hike w/Murrysville Rec., Tomer Reserve 10AM

01/27/2027: January Meeting, Delmont Public Library, 7PM

**** Holiday Schedule**