

# CONSERVE

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## WPC in the Community

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy



[waterlandlife.org](http://waterlandlife.org)





WPC has a legacy of extensive land and watershed conservation work in and around the Allegheny National Forest, located in Elk, Forest, McKean and Warren counties.

## Northern Woods

The Northern Woods stretch across 12 counties in Western Pennsylvania: from Warren, Forest and Clarion counties. Also known as the Pennsylvania Wilds, the Northern Woods is defined by unfragmented expanses of forestland, as well as many miles of ecologically important rivers and streams.

WPC's work in the Northern Woods is longstanding, with the protection of more than 100,000 acres in this vast forested region over the last 45 years. WPC also helped conserve the Allegheny National Forest's Hickory Creek Wilderness area and the Allegheny River Islands Wilderness.

To better serve this key protection area, WPC opened the Allegheny Regional office in Ridgway in 2006. This visible presence has been well-received by the community.

"With a local office in Ridgway, WPC is more aware of the challenges facing our region's natural resources," said Harriett Moyer, longtime Conservancy member and member of WPC's Ridgway Advisory Committee. "We have the Allegheny National Forest and wonderful streams in our backyard that we need someone to protect."

Currently, Matt Marusiak serves as the land protection manager in the Allegheny Regional office. When Marusiak joined the Conservancy in 2011, the Jefferson County native brought extensive experience in community and economic development. In addition, Marusiak is a partner on the Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team and a chair of the Headwaters Resource Conservation and Development Council.

Two members of the watershed conservation staff — Kylie Maland, Upper Allegheny and Lake Erie region watershed manager, and Luke Bobnar, watershed technician — also work from the Allegheny Regional office. They coordinate closely with Marusiak, keeping each other abreast of projects and funding.

Maland and Bobnar also work closely with the local community, watershed organizations and state and federal governments as part of the Allegheny Watershed Improvement Needs (WINs) Coalition. Established in 2007, the coalition's most recent projects include work on the Morrison Run watershed in Warren County, Pa., a major tributary to Browns Run and ultimately the Allegheny River.

In May, the Allegheny WINs coalition was recognized for its contributions and leadership in the category of Collaborative and Aquatic Stewardship in the Allegheny National Forest at the U.S. Forest Service Rise to the Future Awards ceremony.



The Allegheny Regional office, located on Main Street in Ridgway, Pa.



WPC Watershed Technician Luke Bobnar and his family participated in an overnight trail stewardship event hosted by the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness at the Hickory Creek Wilderness Area.

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