



**PA WILDS CENTER**

FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**2018, 2019 COMBINED  
ANNUAL REPORT**



# CEO's MESSAGE



A lot can change in five years. It was five years ago - July 1, 2014 - that the PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship began its operations. We started with a \$150,000 budget and a belief that the strategy of working together to marry conservation and economic development in our most rural, forested quarter of the Commonwealth was critical to its future and that this work needed a dedicated organizational home to flourish.

Since then the Center has grown at an incredible pace - more than 900 percent if you go by straight budget numbers - to meet demand for its programs and services.

The results of the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape effort, which our nonprofit now helps lead and coordinate in conjunction with federal, state and local partners, has grown, too. From young people stepping up or moving home to start place-based businesses, to a record-setting \$1.8B year in visitor spending, to braiding new investors into the PA Wilds network, to having what our region is doing held up as a model for sustainable rural development in two national studies - the last two years have been incredible, and incredibly inspiring.

I want to personally thank my Board of Directors, staff, the PA Wilds Planning Team, our local, state and federal government partners, and the many individuals, businesses and organizations who have thrown a shoulder to the wheel with us. Together, we are defying the tired stereotypes you often hear about rural places, the private sector, and government. Together we are moving closer to the long-term goal of making the Pennsylvania Wilds a household name, inspiring the next generation of stewards, and growing and retaining our region's working age population.

I especially want to call out my Board of Directors and my founding executive leadership team - the Center's Executive Vice Presidents of Economic Development (Kristin Lewis); Creative Commerce (Abbi Peters); and Finance (Julie Iaquinto) -- and the talented people they've hired to join their teams. There is no blueprint for what we - the Center and all its partners - are building; it is part of the reason we are getting national attention.

## **Our region is trying a fresh approach to revitalizing communities on a highly rural landscape - and it's working.**

Developing, implementing and scaling the Center's programs and models is painstaking work, both strategic and tactical, and Lewis and Peters and their teams are on the front lines. Peters is founder of the PA Wilds Conservation Shop, our growing network of gift shops to move local products, as well as co-founder of the Wilds Cooperative of PA, one of rural America's fastest growing networks of entrepreneurs and supporting organizations that is at the heart of the PA Wilds entrepreneurial ecosystem. Lewis, a fifth generation local, brings nearly 20 years of private sector experience growing emerging businesses nationally and globally and is our chief strategist on scaling the Wilds programs and partnerships and attracting investment capital. She's led our relaunch of the PA Wilds brand, and her fingerprints are on pretty much every major investment and partnership you'll read about in the pages ahead.

Over the last two years the Center has focused its work in four main strategy areas, and readers will find highlights from each of these in this report. The PA Wilds Conservation Landscape effort is more than 15 years old, but our nonprofit is much younger. Over the last two years we continued our start-up strategy of pursuing major grant investments to build out high-mission-impact revenue-generating programs so that these programs can continue to create opportunities for our communities long after the initial grant investment is gone. This aggressive grants strategy would not be possible without our EVP of Finance, Julie Iaquinto.

Iaquinto worked with several nonprofits in the region before joining the Center. She is direct; a stickler for tracking every penny and committed to financial transparency. She was the first person I called when I decided to found the Center. I think my exact words were: "I'm not doing this without you." With Iaquinto's help, the Center's aggressive grants strategy will continue in the years ahead as we look to scale the Wilds entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Like the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape effort, the PA Wilds Center's work is organic and entrepreneurial, so it is difficult to predict exactly how things will unfold in the years ahead. But as we begin to look at engaging partners on our next Strategic Plan, and travel the region listening to conversations in communities and talking with core stakeholders, several questions keep popping up:

How does the Center grow capacity for this landscape-level work by creating new partnerships and deepening existing ones, locally and nationally? Are there new ways we can use the *PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship* to help our communities grow while staying true to their roots? Growing outdoor recreation - our focus these last few years - is a huge part of our working forest economy, but so are forest products. Are there more ways we can involve forest products companies and private forest landowners in our entrepreneurial networks and platforms and conservation messages? And ultimately, how do we get more capital moving around the different pieces of the PA Wilds work, from entrepreneurship and business development to community character stewardship to conservation?

"The will to invest in rural places is growing," writes the Aspen Institute - our 2019 PA Wilds Awards dinner keynote. "But there is less clarity about how."

We want to drill into the how. Impact investors are out there, but the mechanisms to allow for investment in the Wilds strategies don't yet exist. We want to change that.

Are there ways the Center can help existing funds that align with our mission transcend barriers to better serve our highly rural region? New and innovative ways to stack capital to help advance our working forest economy and make us more climate resilient? Funds the Center should look at piloting to improve quality of life in rural towns through entrepreneurship, building more rooted local wealth and helping to address workforce issues our region is facing? We know unique small businesses, community character and recreation amenities make our towns more vibrant and make it easier for major employers to attract and retain talent. Helping to advance entrepreneurial clusters around PA Wilds strategies is something the Center excels at. Readers will find examples of it in the pages ahead. The question is, how do we scale? How do we get more funds moving around place-based entrepreneurs and do it in alignment with other workforce efforts in the region?

This level of finance can be daunting and uncomfortable, but the underlying concept is not: our place and the Wilds strategies are worth investing in, and we need to find more ways to make those investments happen to help build vibrant rural communities.



**Tataboline Enos, Founder & CEO**

## USING THIS REPORT

### **Section Guide**

Bring.....	pages 4-6
Unify.....	pages 7-8
Deliver.....	pages 9-10
Steward.....	pages 11-12

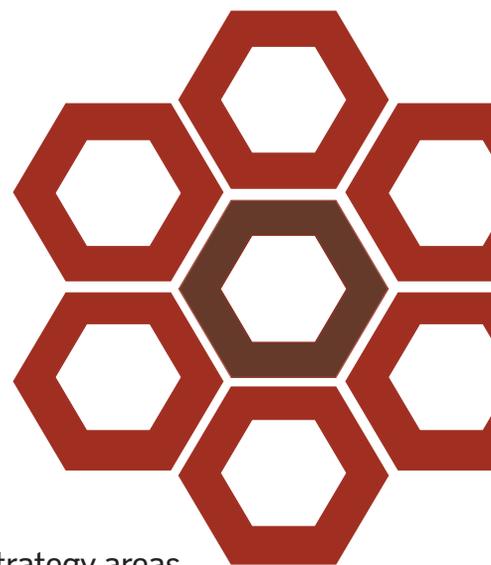
### **Other Information**

Key Financial Highlights.....	page 13
Stakeholders.....	page 14

What is included in each section?

- Highlights of activities and initiatives within each of these strategy areas
- Key numbers, statistics and results
- Information about how you can help

Timeframe: Activities and data presented in this Combined Annual Report are based on two fiscal years, from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019.



# ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION

## Conservation + Economic Development

*Our mission is to integrate conservation and economic development in a way that strengthens and inspires communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds.*



pennsylvania  
**WILDS**™

  
**PA WILDS  
PLANNING TEAM**  
Jeremy Morey  
Chair

  
**PA WILDS CENTER**  
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kate Brock  
Chair

**Founder & CEO**  
Ta Enos

**EVP Creative  
Commerce**  
Abbi Peters

**EVP Finance**  
Julie Iaquinto

**EVP Economic  
Development**  
Kristin Lewis

**Admin Support**  
Carol Szymanik

**Logistical & Meeting Support**  
Potter County Education Council

### PROGRAMS

Wilds Cooperative  
of PA

**Admin Support**  
Elk County Council  
on the Arts  
**Scouts**  
Clarion University SBDC

Business +  
Revenue  
Modeling

Lifestyle Branding

PA Wilds  
Conservation Shop  
shopthepawilds.com  
+ Conservation  
Fundraising

**Manager**  
Libby Bloomquist and  
Customer Service Reps

**Marketing + PR**  
Contractors

**Communications  
Manager**  
LaKeshia Knarr

PA Wilds  
Media Lab

Licensing

Youth  
Programming

Design Guide  
Promotion /  
Distribution

The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc. (PA Wilds Center) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Our work is sustained through partnerships, program fees, philanthropic giving, grants, and entrepreneurial activities related to the Pennsylvania Wilds brand.

PA Wilds Center is the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) external lead organization for the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape; the nonprofit works with state partners at the policy level and helps coordinate activities in the landscape by a wide range of public and private partners at the local, state and national level.

PA Wilds Center is the administrative home for the PA Wilds Planning Team, a 13-county stakeholder group formed through a groundbreaking Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement. The Planning Team helps shape the Center's programs and services.

# Major Wins in the Last Two Years

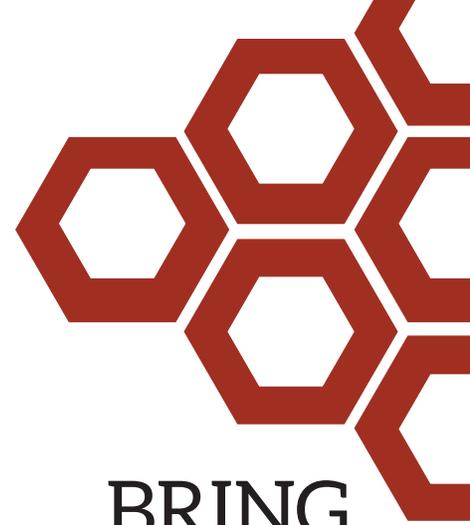
Building awareness and sustainability for the Pennsylvania Wilds as a destination and lifestyle brand was a major undertaking over the last two years. This included building staff capacity to manage the visitor site pawilds.com, which the Center acquired and overhauled in 2017; launching a content team of contributors for the site and its related social media channels; investing in digital ad campaigns; and working with local visitor bureaus, place-based businesses and event organizers to help them leverage the PA Wilds brand. The results? More than doubling new users to pawilds.com since relaunching the site (148% increase) - increasing website visitors from more than 100 countries (Canada tripled, India - up 265%, France - up 757%, and Australia - up 229%) - fast approaching 1 million page views (an increase of 34%) - national media coverage, and a record-setting year in visitor spending.

PA Wilds Center also assisted local organizations and partnerships spearheading place-based development projects tie into PA Wilds strategies and branding. Some of the most visible included a new riverfront recreation hub in Warren involving three entrepreneurs in The Wilds Cooperative of PA; the new Wilds Sonshine Factory and several uptown investments in Kane, McKean County; the Marsh Creek Greenway project in Tioga County; Straub Brewery's new taproom and visitor center in Elk County; and the NorthCentral PA Launchbox & Innovation Collaborative in Clearfield County. We congratulate all these partners on their amazing efforts!

The PA Wilds Center continued to work closely with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) over the last two years as its 'external lead' organization for the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape, a unique program developed by DCNR to advance place-based partnerships around conservation, recreation and community development at a regional or landscape scale. DCNR manages much of the public land in the PA Wilds and many star attractions (more than 3.5M people visited the region's 29 state parks in 2018 alone!). DCNR also invests directly in the PA Wilds Center and in community projects that align with the PA Wilds effort.

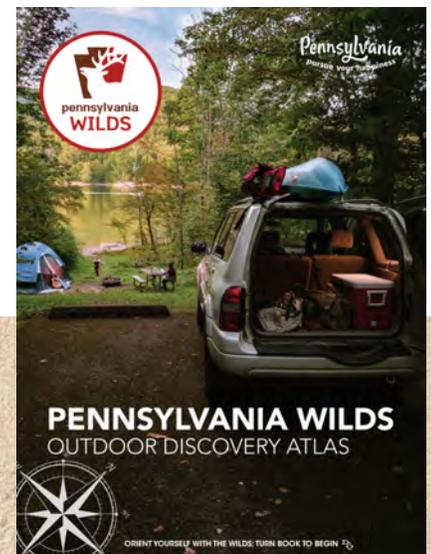
Over the last two years, DCNR invested \$5.4M in locally-driven trail, parks, water quality, forest protection and partnership projects across the PA Wilds region through its C2P2 Grant program. It also completed Master Plans for two popular state parks - Denton Hill and Leonard Harrison - and opened new park offices at Cook Forest and Bald Eagle State Parks. In 2018, it also signed a 'Good Neighbor Agreement' with the Allegheny National Forest - another star natural asset and economic engine in the region.

**COMING IN 2020:** *The PA Wilds Outdoor Discovery Atlas, a free, in-market print piece, will showcase the region's star recreation assets on navigable maps. It also highlights inspiring conservation practices by some of the region's major employers. And from sourcing paper made in the PA Wilds, to the layout, photography and design, to the printing - the Atlas was 100% locally-sourced and made. Special thanks to the Center's LaKeshia Knarr for managing the project.*



## BRING

**OUR VISION -**  
*Strengthen the Pennsylvania Wilds as a premier outdoor recreation destination and lifestyle brand and grow PA's ranking as a Top 5 US state for annual consumer spending on outdoor recreation. Attract investment to grow our region's economy, improve quality of life for residents, and attract new residents and workforce.*



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Sign up for our newsletter at [pawilds.com](http://pawilds.com).
- Encourage five friends to check out [pawilds.com](http://pawilds.com) and follow us on our blog, The Pennsylvania Wilds Are Calling.
- Like us on [facebook.com/thepawilds](https://www.facebook.com/thepawilds).
- Use our hashtags on your next outdoor adventure **#pawilds #pawildsmade #pawildsproud**.
- Show us YOUR Pennsylvania Wilds! Good at writing, video or photography and passionate about the Pennsylvania Wilds? Consider contributing content at [pawilds.com/submit](http://pawilds.com/submit).
- Learn more about what we are working to accomplish under “Bring” in our latest Strategic Plan, available at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org).



Entrepreneurs from Bent Run Brewing, Allegheny Outfitters and Goat Fort rock gym celebrate the opening of a new waterfront recreation hub in downtown Warren with city, regional and state leaders.

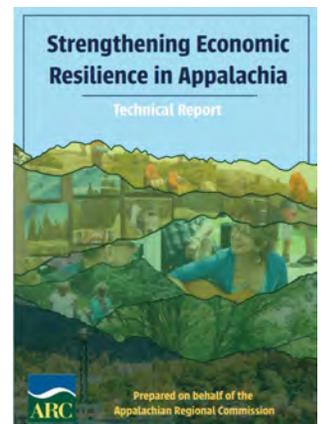
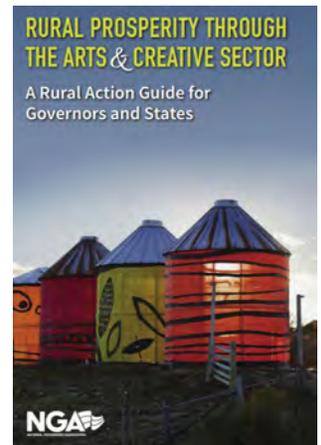
DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn says, “Our Bureau of Forestry and Allegheny National Forest have maintained a long history of cooperation on natural resource management issues, ranging from wildland fire suppression to watershed habitat improvement. Working closer together the agencies will be able to better leverage resources; learn from each other; and conserve the state’s natural resources for current and future generations.”

PA Wilds Center continued to tie the PA Wilds Conservation Landscape to national conversations on rural development and landscape conservation as a guest speaker at The Conservation Fund’s Balancing Nature and Commerce conference; the 2019 North America Landscape Finance Forum; The National Summit for Gateway Communities; presenting at national events hosted by the Appalachian Regional Commission; as well as participating in Rural Rise, a national movement committed to growing rural entrepreneurship.

PA Wilds’ place-based strategies were featured in two national reports in 2019 -

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) “Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachia - 10 Case Studies” - featuring PA Wilds & McKean County, Pennsylvania, and National Governors Association Report “Rural Prosperity through the Arts & Creative Sector”

Sharing the story of our region’s incredible working forest, outdoor recreation experiences, rural lifestyle and conservation ethic with visitors and potential investors will continue to be a priority for the PA Wilds Center in coming years.



Follow us on Instagram @thepawilds



“The PA Wilds initiative has literally expanded Straub Brewery’s home market by a factor of 12. The ability to use the tag “Brewed in the PA Wilds” expands our local market by twelve counties and tens of thousands of people. Further, the region is finally fortunate enough to have an organization championing “locally” produced products. The PA Wilds Center platform not only helps businesses reach internal and external markets but it also works to create a region-wide awareness among local residents and the vital importance of supporting these businesses through the purchase of locally made goods and services. The work being conducted by the PA Wilds Center is necessary and quite serious. The effort is about building a region and creating the infrastructure for economic prosperity. Marketing plans and taglines are important components of any efforts to regionalize, but alone they are not enough. The PA Wilds is about meaningful quantitative analysis, economic modeling and forecasting, program evaluation, programmatic linkages, innovation and all of the other requisites of a highly functioning public organization. The work produced by this team is deliberate, meaningful and achieves the desired impact.” - **Bill Brock, CEO, Straub Brewery, St. Marys, PA**

**\$1.8  
BILLION**

Travelers spent \$1.8 billion in the Pennsylvania Wilds in 2017 - a record high!  
- Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania, 2017, Tourism Economics

According to data from the Bureau for Economic Analysis released in fall 2019, GDP for the outdoor recreation economy is growing faster than the overall US economy, and guided tours and outfitter travel services is one of the fastest growing activity categories – accounting for \$12.9 billion in economic impact alone. Growing this industry in the PA Wilds is also key to improving quality of life and helping our region’s major employers attract and retain talent.

**\$12.9  
BILLION**

**\$887  
BILLION**

Outdoor recreation is an \$887 billion annual industry in America. PA ranks No. 5 among all states for annual consumer spending on outdoor recreation.  
- Outdoor Industry Association, 2017 Report

**300%**

In the last two years, people following the ThePAWilds on facebook has nearly doubled and the PA Wilds Instagram account grew more than 300%.

**42%**

Between 2009 and 2017, the latest data available, visitor spending in the Pennsylvania Wilds grew an average of 42.6 percent; and tourism employment 20 percent. State and local taxes collected from tourism categories during this time grew 27 percent; federal taxes collected, 30.3 percent. –Economic Impact of Travel in Pennsylvania, 2009-2017. Distributed by PA State Tourism Office.

Allegheny National Forest, which collects visitation stats every five years, estimates it had 910,000 recreation visits in 2015. Source: U.S. Forest Service

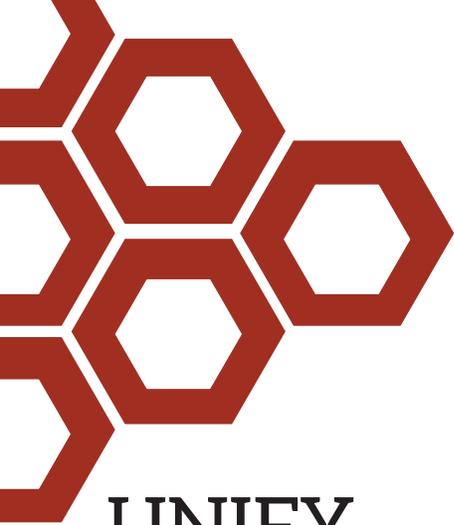
**910,000**

“The Pennsylvania Wilds provides Lycoming County with the ability to align our outdoor product with a larger brand that has greater reach given the expanse of the area that it represents. While we have a key well known outdoor asset in the Pine Creek Rail Trail that is shared with Tioga County, it alone cannot carry our other quality but lesser known recreational amenities in the county. Through the Pennsylvania Wilds all our outdoor recreation assets get greater exposure through the marketing activities undertaken. This helps drive other components of the travel and tourism industry by getting visitors to book rooms, eat at area restaurants, purchase locally created arts and hand-crafted pieces along with a host of other traveler induced activities. Lycoming County Visitors Bureau has made a conscious effort to align our outdoor promotion activities with the Pennsylvania Wilds and sees great value back to our business community from this decision.”

- **Jason Fink, President and CEO, Lycoming County Visitors Bureau**



Check out the PA Wilds Media Book to see how the Pennsylvania Wilds made national headlines as a travel destination. Special thanks to the PA State Tourism Office, local visitor bureaus, heritage partners and Wilds Cooperative members for for helping make the coverage - and an estimated 3 million views and 100k Facebook shares! - happen.



## Major Wins in the Last Two Years

PA Wilds Center is proud to be building The Wilds Cooperative of PA (WCO), one of America's fastest growing rural networks of entrepreneurs and supporting organizations. Major gains were made on this entrepreneurial ecosystem in 2018-19 with an overhauled website (WildsCoPA.org), expanded member types (towns, chambers, historical societies + more!) and the move to a free membership model. Want to learn more about how this program can help your business or community thrive? Request a presentation for your community today.

# UNIFY

### OUR VISION -

*Build and steward a resilient, high-performing partnership around the Pennsylvania Wilds effort that engages the private sector, foundation, nonprofit and government sectors.*

PA Wilds Center held its first-ever Creative Entrepreneur's Conference geared toward connecting entrepreneurs involved in the WCO with each other and industry thought leaders. The event was tied to the PA Wilds Annual Awards Dinner held in April 2018 at the historic Pajama Factory complex in Williamsport, PA. The conference included panel discussions on "Capitalizing on PA's Booming Outdoor Recreation Economy," "Unifying Your Community with the PA Wilds Design Guide," "Marketing Across Digital Platforms and Within Four Walls," and "Demystifying Entrepreneurship." More than 70 people registered for the conference; another 200+ attended the awards dinner. Earl Gohl, former Federal Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission, was the dinner keynote.

The PA Wilds Planning Team - the PA Wilds' longest-standing stakeholder group, now housed at the Center - completed a major update to its policies and procedures and budgeting process in 2018-19, including putting a process in place to allow its committees to bring forward projects with region-wide benefit for funding. One 2019 project included helping Route 6 Alliance bring in a national expert to hold workshops for communities in the PA Wilds on how they can leverage the region's growing bicycle tourism. The workshops built on a trails conference the Planning Team hosted the year prior in Forest County called "Opportunity Knox - the Knox and Kane Rail Trail is a Reality.... Now What?" which focused on opportunities along the four-county Knox and Kane rail bed recently acquired by Headwaters Charitable Trust. The Pine Creek Rail Trail is a star attraction in the Wilds - and Knox-Kane promises to be, too. Tioga County partners made great headway over the last year on connecting the

**2,047**

Center staff conducted 78 outreach presentations in the last two years, reaching 2,047 participants.

Membership in The Wilds Cooperative of PA, the Center's network of entrepreneurs and supporting organizations, grew from 275 in 2017 to 307 today.

**307**

**300+**

The Number of photos of rural makers in the WCO that are part of the Creative Makers of the PA Wilds Exhibit, which has so far been displayed across seven venues, including the east wing of the capitol rotunda in Harrisburg. The exhibit will soon have a permanent home at the PA Wilds Media Lab (see page 11 for more information on this exciting new space!).

"It just makes sense for our rural communities and counties to partner on a regional level. Our partnership with the PA Wilds has helped us attract support and learn about new models for community development. On a rural landscape, we really are stronger together! I'm honored to serve a town that has inspired new models for rural development and collaboration."  
- **Brandy Schimp, Mayor of Kane, PA**



In 2018, the Stackpole-Hall Foundation teamed up with PA Wilds Center to bring together local foundations from across the PA Wilds, and other foundations serving the region, for an update on the PA Wilds effort and to discuss regional collaboration among the foundation community.

Pine Creek Rail Trail to Wellsboro via their Marsh Creek project; the Planning Team and Center provided support letters for funding for this important regional connector. PA Wilds Center is proud to support the Planning Team's work through meeting participation and an annual in-kind contribution of approximately \$17,000 to provide accounting, administrative and project support.

PA Wilds Center continues to work closely with longtime investors in the PA Wilds strategy - the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, PA Department of Community and Economic Development, and the federal Appalachian Regional Commission. Leveraging these are new investments over the last two years by the PA Council on the Arts, USDA, the U.S. Economic Development Administration, The Collins Companies Foundation, Northwest Charitable Foundation, Whirley Drinkworks and West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund.

"The PA Wilds Planning Team meetings and subcommittee meetings I attend - 10 a year - are a great adventure for me. Our varied gathering places across all 12 counties guarantee me a beautiful drive through gorgeous Wilds scenery. And I leave the meetings refreshed and feeling positive, just from hanging out with the PA Wilds leadership. The Center staff, county planners and agency representatives I've met through this staggeringly large intergovernmental partnership care deeply about the environments and economies they serve. They are forceful, imaginative collaborators and willing to work very hard. They are also very professional about having fun, so I'm getting a brilliant education in how to enjoy every nook and cranny of the Wilds."

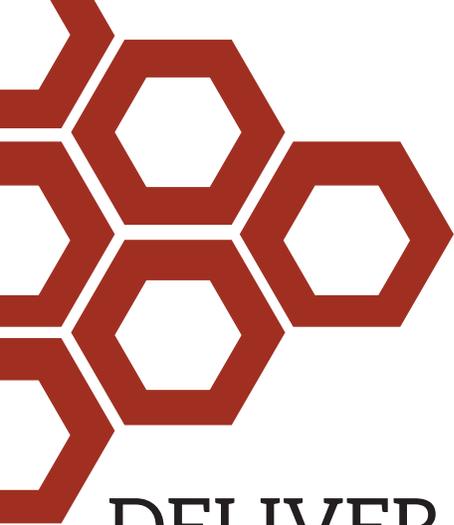
**- Katie deSilva, Clinton County Planning Director  
+ Vice Chair PA Wilds Planning Team**

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Thank your county commissioners for investing in the Pennsylvania Wilds work.
- Tell your state legislator why the Pennsylvania Wilds effort matters to you.
- Learn more about what we are working to accomplish under "Unify" in our latest Strategic Plan, available at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org).
- Attend the PA Wilds Annual Awards Dinner; learn more at [pawildscenter.org/awards-dinner](http://pawildscenter.org/awards-dinner).

"As a resident and a conservation professional, I recognize how much our conserved lands - both public and private - contribute to the quality of life and economic wellbeing of the region. The PA Wilds tells the conservation story of the area in a compelling way, linking the conservation landscape initiative with local communities, artisans, entrepreneurs, and visitors. The PA Wilds provides an identity to the big woods region of Pennsylvania and helps support the work of conservationists like me to ensure future generations can live, work, and recreate in the PA Wilds as I do."

**-Matt Marusiak, Land Protection Manager, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy + Pennsylvania Wilds Planning Team Member**



## Major Wins in the Last Two Years

Tourism and outdoor recreation are major - and growing - industries in the Pennsylvania Wilds. According to 2015 numbers, our region hosted 7.6M day-trip visitors - 15.2 times our population! PA Wilds Center is building an entrepreneurial ecosystem to help revitalize communities and meet the demand of this growing industry. This ecosystem has many components - a value chain of rural place-based businesses; a commerce platform to help move products and services; connecting businesses and entrepreneurs in our value chain to capital and professional development opportunities. Major wins over the last two years include:

# DELIVER

### OUR VISION -

*Build an entrepreneurial ecosystem tied to the region's lifestyle brand and public lands that moves \$4 million annually in local products and services and helps rural businesses and communities thrive.*

- Expanded our public-private partnership with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to operate PA Wilds Conservation Shops at busy state parks in the region. Our Conservation Shops sell 90 percent local products from our rural value chain, The Wilds Cooperative of PA.
- Tripled the square footage of our first Conservation Shop at Kinzua Bridge State Park, which allowed us to create new jobs, better serve the traveling public, add 15 additional rural producers to our inventory line, and increase product offerings from existing producers.
- Secured funding to open a second Conservation Shop in 2021 at Leonard Harrison State Park in Tioga County.
- Secured funding to transition ShopthePAwilds.com to a true maker marketplace model by 2022 so rural businesses selling there can drop ship from their locations and keep a larger cut of each sale, helping them thrive. Our e-commerce platform and brick and mortar gift shops will help open up regional, national and even global markets to rural businesses in the Pennsylvania Wilds.
- Opened first pop-up gift shop in the former M&T Bank, now the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau, in downtown Williamsport. The Visitors Bureau provides information on entertainment and events and offers a selection of gifts and souvenirs from Penn and Lycoming College, The Lumber Heritage Region, and Little League Baseball Museum.
- Partnered with Clarion University Small Business Development Center to be a scout to help bring new businesses into our value chain to meet demand; teamed up with North Central Regional Planning and Development Commission to help connect growing place-based businesses to financial and technical resources.
- Secured funding from PA Council on the Arts to team up with the Covation Center, a nonprofit, to offer professional development to arts-related businesses in our value chain that are poised for growth in our commerce platform and others. First cohort to launch in 2020!

Pop-up gift shop located at the Lycoming County Visitors Bureau



**\$9,300**

**BRAND POWER:** Local companies are teaming up with PA Wilds Center to bring PA Wilds-branded products to market. Under these license agreements, a standard royalty is paid to the Center on products sold, which helps support the PA Wilds Center's mission. Royalties have grown from \$2,933 in 2017 to \$9,300 in 2019 as gross revenues on products sold have also climbed for these companies.

**JOB:** WCO businesses reported that the Pennsylvania Wilds effort helped them create 99 jobs over the last two years.

**99**

“PA Wilds has been and continues to be a vital part of our business. As our growth does depend on our local makers. I have worked here for seven years and have seen the great growth not only in the number of makers but the creation of a better marketing plan that was offered to them from this organization. They are given opportunities I believe are only made possible by the PA Wilds. Thank you for your continued efforts to expand and grow.”

- **Brandi Hanes, Elk County Visitors Center + Keystone Elk Country Alliance, Benezette, PA**

“Sharing the creativity of local artisans and entrepreneurs and giving them new opportunities to grow their businesses in the ever-changing and challenging retail landscape is vital for rural regions. PA Wilds visitors will enjoy their customer journey whether they are shopping at the store or online for a special gift. I recently purchased gifts on ShopthePAWilds.com and was very impressed with the presentation when the products arrived. Beautiful packaging, product neatly wrapped in tissue, and even a special window decal to promote my favorite PA Wilds region. With that kind of service, there is no doubt that the PA Wilds is creating loyal and returning customers like me every day!”

- **Kathy Jones, Manager of Retail Marketing at Zippo, Bradford, PA**

PA Wilds Conservation Shop located inside the Kinzua Bridge State Park Visitors Center.



“The Wilds program has given my small business a platform in which to stand out amongst other businesses. It’s a community that is proud of the area in which we live and proud of the talent in which it produces. In a world of big business and technology it’s hard to compete when you are small. The Wilds program has given my business a bigger voice and presence.”

- **Tara Heckler, Blackberry & Sage Market, Punxsutawney, PA**

**\$324K**

**NEW MARKETS:** The PA Wilds Conservation Shop at Kinzua Bridge State Park, which focuses on selling regionally-made products from small businesses in the Wilds Cooperative, saw sales climb from \$113,000 in 2017 to \$324,000 in 2019. Over the next two years, PA Wilds Center looks to open a second flagship store and transition ShopthePAWilds.com to a maker marketplace to expand this market to help rural businesses thrive.

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP

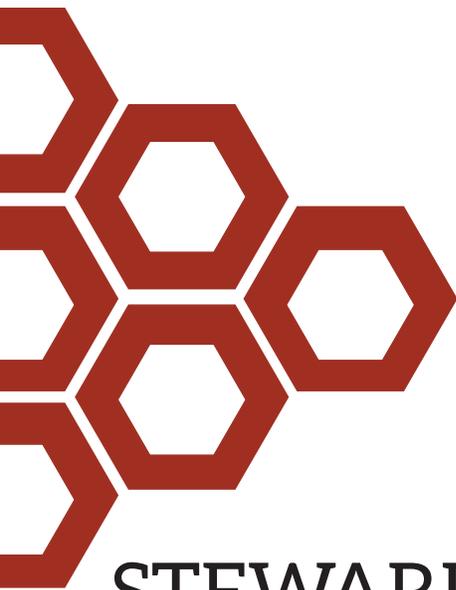
- Shop with us at [ShopthePAWilds.com](http://ShopthePAWilds.com) - encourage a friend to, too!
- If you are involved in providing products or services to the traveling public, consider joining the Wilds Cooperative of PA (WCO) at [WildsCoPA.org](http://WildsCoPA.org) - it's now FREE!
- Keep more dollars local by buying or sourcing products to the WCO.
- Learn more about what we are working to accomplish under “Deliver” in our most recent Strategic Plan, available at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org).



## Major Wins in the Last Two Years

PA Wilds Center made strides toward its “Steward” goals in 2018 and 2019. Major initiatives included:

- The Center kicked off what it envisions to be a permanent charity check-out campaign for conservation at all of its stores (physical + online), with 100 percent of donations collected from the public donated to the PA Parks and Forest Foundation (PPFF) for reinvestment back into state parks and forests in the Pennsylvania Wilds. PPFF has documented a \$1B maintenance backlog at state parks and forests statewide. The PA Wilds has the greatest concentration of public lands in the Commonwealth - including 29 state parks and 8 state forests - which are star tourism assets and economic drivers in the region.
- An important milestone for any young nonprofit, PA Wilds Center broke ground on its first physical office and program space, the PA Wilds Media Lab, in Kane, PA with funding and in-kind support from USDA, The Collins Companies Foundation, Laughing Owl Press Company, and others. The space will have tools, technologies and classrooms to support the Center’s growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, and to support the regional storytelling and conservation messaging it does on pawilds.com and on other media channels. West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF), another nonprofit, is a major investor in the project - and also bought the building next door to it. WPPSEF is helping with energy efficiency upgrades and accessibility solutions that will be interpreted so they can be used as a model for other main street revitalization efforts in the region and around the state.
- The PA Wilds Planning Team completed a new print run of its PA Wilds Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship 2nd Edition, a free resource for communities, developers and property owners. It also worked with the Center, Route 6 Alliance, the PA Department of Community & Economic Development and the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to parlay the Design Guide into a regional façade mini grant pilot program that spruced up 48 establishments along Scenic Route 6 in the PA Wilds, leveraging \$203,000 in private investment.

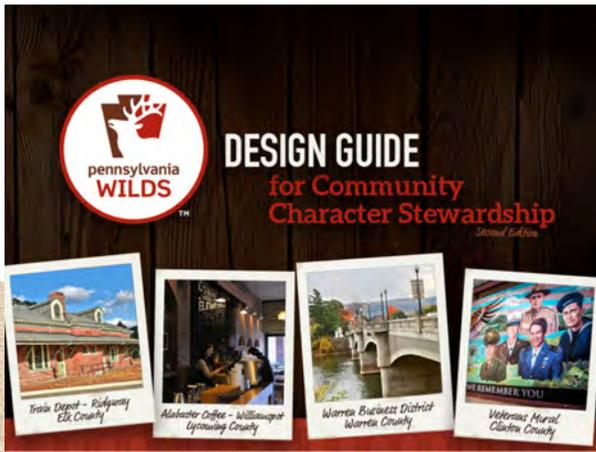


# STEWARD

### OUR VISION -

*Steward and reinvest in our region’s public lands and natural assets, unique community character and rural lifestyle; sustain our organization and vision so these can be handed off to the next generation.*

(photo, left) The West Penn Power Sustainable Energy Fund (WPPSEF) and the PA Wilds Center are collaborating to showcase high performance buildings across the PA Wilds. The collaboration has resulted in recent investments to co-fund the development of a PA Wilds Media Lab and the renovation of an adjacent building in Kane, PA. “WPPSEF efforts to blend high performance sustainable energy projects with local economic development betterment is a growing focus of the Fund” said Joel Morrison, WPPSEF Fund Administrator. “The PA Wilds Center is a natural fit for the Fund and its efforts to showcase how sustainable energy investments can drive local economic development in rural communities across Pennsylvania.”



**NEW PA WILDS DESIGN GUIDE:** *The PA Wilds Design Guide was created to protect the authentic character and lifestyle of the Pennsylvania Wilds. Find out more and download the Design Guide at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org) under Programs & Services.*

“As a lifelong resident of Pennsylvania, I have many fond memories of family outings to rural sites that are part of what is now called the PA Wilds. Pennsylvania has continued to preserve these destinations, but, unfortunately, through my 43 years, I have also seen many businesses, as well as many of my friends and neighbors, leave Pennsylvania. Our rural areas have become less populous, our buildings have been left vacant, and our neighbors left with a higher rate of poverty. For those of us that proudly remain, it is our job to reverse this atrophy. I love this area, don't you? The minute you opened this report, I knew you did. And that's why I thank you for investing in the PA Wilds and why I thank you for taking the time to read this. Along with many partners, the PA Wilds has forcefully and staunchly protected and enhanced this significant footprint within Pennsylvania. Its board, staff and partners have remained focused with a laser precision on protecting this area, reinvesting in its communities, promoting its tourism attractions and, perhaps most importantly, permanently bringing business and people back into the PA Wilds. This is why I believe in the Wilds. This is why I will do my part to further its mission.”

**- Shane Oschman, Independent Financial Consultant + PA Wilds Center Board Treasurer/Secretary**

#### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Check out the PA Wilds Design Guide and related videos and resources at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org).
- Encourage your municipal officials and business community to utilize the PA Wilds Design Guide.
- Volunteer for a conservation stewardship project in the Pennsylvania Wilds - contact your county Conservation District about potential projects.
- Learn more about what we are working to accomplish under “Steward” in our most recent Strategic Plan, available at [pawildscenter.org](http://pawildscenter.org).

The PA Wilds Planning Team's Design Guide for Community Character Stewardship served as the foundation for a regional facade grant program that helped dozens of local businesses and organizations improve their signage and building exteriors.

“North Central was an original partner in the PA Wilds Initiative and a proud supporter. We recognized early on the impact that the tourism industry has on our regional economy and continue to work with partners on how we can best plan and leverage resources to encourage entrepreneurial opportunities and better develop our communities to support this growing industry.”

**- Jim Chorney, Executive Director, North Central PA Regional Planning and Development Commission**



# KEY FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

These figures are based on two years of the PA Wilds Center's fiscal year, July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2019.

<b>Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>June 30, 2018</b>	<b>June 30, 2019</b>
Government Grants	\$363,691.00	\$473,945.00
Nonprofit Grants	\$99,029.00	\$39,087.00
Corporate Contributions	\$11,500.00	\$45,881.00
Foundation Contributions	\$29,972.00	\$2,234.00
Individual Contributions	\$100.00	\$700.00
Program Income		
Gift Shop Revenues	\$183,741.00	\$324,953.00
Other	\$26,363.00	\$17,438.00
Interest Income	\$63.00	\$17.00
New Federal, State & Local Grant Awards	\$235,000.00	\$410,500.00
<b>Expenses</b>		
Program Services	\$587,293.00	\$774,016.00
Management & General	\$92,542.00	\$74,298.00
<b>Net Assets End of Year</b>	<b>\$228,069.00</b>	<b>\$284,010.00</b>

The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship (PA Wilds Center) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. The official registration and financial information of PA Wilds Center may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. This organization is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chair - Kate Brock**, Executive Director, Community Education Center of Elk and Cameron Counties

**Vice President - Sam MacDonald**, President, Elk County Catholic School System

**Treasurer/Secretary - Shane Oschman**, Independent Financial Consultant

**Cathy Lenze**, Vice President of Sales, Marketing & PR, Straub Brewery

**Dan Glotz**, Director, Warren County Planning

**Jim Weaver**, Retired, Tioga County Planning

**Kathleen Jones**, Manager, Retail Marketing, Zippo

**Jason Fink**, President & CEO, Williamsport-Lycoming County Chamber and Visitors Bureau

**Nick Hoffman**, Community Initiatives Coordinator, Varischetti Holdings

### Ex Officio/non-voting

**Deborah Pontzer**, Economic Development and Workforce Specialist, Congressman Glenn Thompson's Office

**Meredith Hill**, Director, PA Wilds Conservation Landscape, DCNR

### PA WILDS PLANNING TEAM

**Chair - Jeremy Morey**, Director, McKean County Planning Commission

**Vice Chair - Katie DeSilva**, Director, Clinton County Planning Commission

**Treasurer/Secretary - Will Hunt**, Director, Potter County Planning Commission

Land Use Committee Chair - Jerry Walls

Community Development Committee Chair - Dan Glotz

Natural Resources Committee Chair - Matt Marusiak

Cameron County Office of Community and Economic Development  
Clarion County Department of Planning & Development  
Clearfield County Department of Planning  
Clinton County Planning Commission  
Elk County Planning Department  
Forest County Conservation District & Planning Department  
Jefferson County Department of Development  
Lycoming County Planning and Community Development  
McKean County Planning Commission  
Potter County Planning Commission  
Tioga County Planning Commission  
Warren County Planning and Zoning Department  
County Conservation Districts  
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Headwaters Charitable Trust  
PA Historical and Museum Commission  
Northwest Commission  
North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission  
SEDA-COG  
Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission  
PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)  
PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED)  
U.S. Forest Service/Allegheny National Forest  
PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship  
Potter County Education Council  
Route 6 Alliance  
Lumber Heritage Region  
PA Lumber Museum  
Susquehanna Greenway Partnership



**PA WILDS CENTER**  
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



**PAWILDSCENTER.org - WILDSCOPA.org - PAWILDS.com - SHOPTHEPAWILDS.com**

PA Wilds Center, PO Box 285, Sugar Grove, PA 16350

Designed by Sara Frank, Ridgway, PA

Front cover - Hunter Casilio, St. Marys, PA | Back cover - Ellen Matis, Bellefonte, PA



**"I'm proud to be a member of the PA Wilds and aligning with an organization that equally advocates for the natural beauty of PA and our makers & producers!"**

**- Karl Fisher, Alabaster Coffee Roaster & Tea Company, Williamsport, PA**

**"The PA Wilds has worked incredibly hard to promote the natural beauty and talented artisans that make our state such a great place to visit and live. Their genuine passion for Pennsylvania and ability to adapt has positioned them as a leader in the region."**

**- Geno Boni, Co-owner, Mudslide Pottery, Ridgway, PA**

**"The PA Wilds effort has multiplied our region's champions and instilled a new sense of pride among our residents. That has huge positive impacts for our communities."**

**- Kate Brock, Executive Director, Community Education Center of Elk and Cameron Counties + Chair of the PA Wilds Center Board of Directors**

**"The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation is proud to partner with the Pennsylvania Wilds Conservation Landscape in an effort to create a new generation of stewards for the regions tremendous assets. Our shared missions of celebrating our rich natural assets and connecting people to these special places makes a partnership a natural fit."**

**- Marci Mowery, President, Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation**