

Brandywine Red Clay Alliance

FALL 2026

Land Preservation Update

Brandywine Red Clay Alliance (BRC) protects our region's open spaces and natural resources through a variety of methods.

Our primary tool is the conservation easement where a landowner chooses to eliminate development rights on their property while retaining ownership and the right to continue to use their property while protecting the critical resources of the land. BRC holds 48 easements on over 1,300 acres across eight municipalities. We own an additional 1,056 acres across five municipalities with protected lands in eleven unique municipalities.

How does a non-profit land trust protect lands? Over half of our conservation easements were donated along with several of our fee lands. For the others, BRC raises funding to purchase the development rights or the land outright. Funding comes from a variety of sources including local municipal open space funding, county and state funding, along with private foundations and individuals. We have to get creative, but because the bulk of our lands lie in Chester County, we have had great resources for partners through our municipalities that have passed open space referendums (just over half!) including Chester County that approved an open space bond back in 1989. These funding sources help us protect our open space, critical habitat, waterways, and create recreational opportunities for area residents. County funding supported half of our fee acquisitions and eleven of our 48 conservation easements and has been a critical source of support for our work.

BRC's primary protection focus lies within the Brandywine and Red Clay watersheds. This includes a portion of Delaware County, PA and New Castle County, DE. Delaware County has put open space on the ballot this November when they will ask residents to vote yes or no to authorize the County Commissioners to go out for up to a $120 million bond within the next ten years. A yes vote would not mean that the County would immediately secure a bond, but would have the authority to do so. The calculated cost to residents would be $24 annually on a house with a fair market value of $400,000 (7/17/26; delcotimes.com). This cost incurred by residents would allow Delaware County to fund projects by municipalities and land trusts to protect open space, plant and maintain trees to help cool our communities, protect water quality, conserve wetlands to help prevent flooding, and support additional trails and parks.

Delaware County residents can look to Chester County's success with their funding established in 1989 to see the impact a bond could have. Since the initial County bond, the county has supported countless projects and now has just over 32% of the County protected. Almost 90,000 of those 156,000+ acres have been protected since 2000.

While we may look at the Delaware County bond referendum as coming a little late, there is still land to be protected and we hope residents understand the benefits and support the vision to help protect what open space is left in Delaware County and fund projects to enhance the parks and open spaces that currently exist. Study after study has shown that eliminating development rights does not just protect our air and water and enhance quality of life, but keeps the costs of community services down as well. More houses equals greater costs for utilities, schools, road repairs, and emergency services as well as higher risks of flooding. Many people see new residences as more tax dollars to support those costs, but studies have repeatedly proven that for every dollar earned in taxes from a residence, more than a dollar is spent on those services. Housing hurts the bottom line for most municipalities.

A vote in support of the open space referendum is a vote in support of both your wallet and your quality of life, including that of your neighbors, both human and animal.

Summer Nature Camp

Our 43rd season of summer camp ended on a very successful note.

We saw 606 campers this year! Forty-nine of them were awarded scholarships this year, totaling over $15,000. Look for exciting changes next year like weekly STEM experiments, some kind of mini "Tough Mudder" / Ninja Warrior / obstacle course and the ability to pay by installments.

SAVE THE DATE

Registration will open
Monday, February 1, 2027



Campers having fun with the parachute



Another successful summer camp



Education update

We take pride in the education department as we share the significance of the natural connections between people, place and various elements that interact to create the communities in which we live.

It's important that we instill environmental stewardship and a curiosity for life-long learning. Enjoy this blog post that reviews the power of outdoor learning!



Environmental Education For Schools and Groups

The 2026-2027 education brochure is now available on our website, and we will gladly mail a hardcopy if you call the office and request one! Since we had significant changes last year due to the changes in Pennsylvania State Standards, we did not make many changes to this year's brochure.

Last year we expanded on our community enrichment programs and introduced outreach programs for the mobility impaired.

SEE PAGE 41!



School groups learn to team build



School program pond investigation

Public & Member Programs

We're excited to announce several public & member programs for the Fall 2026 season...in addition, we're working to schedule our "Day Off From School" camps for the 2026 – 2027 school year.

VISIT OUR PUBLIC PROGRAMMING PAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION!

Programs on deck include:

Salt Snapshot
October 14, 2026

Fall Fest
October 17, 2026

Living History Hike
November 7, 2026

Pictures With Santa & His Animals
December 5, 2027



New Members

Brian Abt
Andrew Shearn
Angeline May
Sharon Anghel Schilling
Elizabeth Appelbaum
Joseph Artim
Nick Bacci
Kathleen Bankert
Clare Barrett
Erin Barron
Rose Bart
Jessica Beebe
Abby Bell
Anne Berry
Scott Beveridge
Heather Biddle
Jordan Blum
Mrs. Valerie Gawthrop
Mary Bowen
Tamatha Bowes
John Bozic
Heather Brady
Mark Brennan
Nancy Brooks
Ms. Emilie Brown
Claire Brown
Al Brown
Kate Burke Blackburn
Michelle Burroughs
Michael Carahaly
Trisha Carroll
Marnie Carroll
Lora Carter
Kate Chalfin
Brenda Chando
Larry Charney
Chris Chiari
Carrie Childress
Rachael Clark
Charles Clark
Allison Connell
Wendy Cooper
Catherine Copplestone
Barbara Crisafulli
Kevin Cullison
Jan Curran
Nicole Currie
Coleen Damon
Heather Danchik
Danny Jones
Tracey Desjadon
Julie Diaz
Patrick Digiacomo
Corrie Distefano
Lauren Douglas
Katie Dubow
Jason Eckert
Dawn Edwards
Alicia Ely
David Erfle
Dr. Ruth Eriksson
Cara Fay
Odalys Ferguson
Robert Ferry
Blaze Feury
Erin Field
Jim Flannery
Barbara Forney
Katie Forrest
Christy Francart
Nicole Frees
Aldo Gaspari
Jessica Gehman
Hillary Giampietro
Monica Gillespie
Joe Gioffre
Mark Goossen
Michael Gray
Steve Grebloskie
Leah Greenspoon
Christopher Griest
Brian Griffith
Caroline Griffith
Jonathan Gross
Greg Gurev
Jessi Haemmerle
Kevin Halloran
Brian Hamilton
Sean Handforth
Mary Harrison
Whitney Hartshorne
James Heisman
Megan Helmuth
Nigel Holcombe
Amanda Holm
Donna Hosler
Melissa Hurley
Ksenia Ireland
Charles Jacien
Steve Jensen Jr.
Mr. John Percival
Gina Johnson
Dan Johnson
Mr. Joshua Grove
Christa Kaiser
Andrew Kanemori
Mike Kelley
Ryan Kelley
Kellie Murphy
Kathryn King
Todd Kitchin
Billy Knox
Anna Koczirka
Cari Landman
Pete And Sandy Lee
Jessica Lefler
Jennifer Lowes
John Malm
Katherine Mangum
Cynthia Maningas
Phil Marion
Mary Smucker
Neal Mcfaddin
William Mcgonegal
Michael Mclaughlin
Kerry Merlo
Michele Long
Jim Miller
Becky Miner
Elizabeth Mock
James Moore
Dan Mottram
Jen Munro
Louis Murray
Kevin Needham
Phillip O'Brien
Barbara Orcutt
David Ormond
Perry Overchuk
Mohan Paribrajak
Rachel Parisi
Cheryl Paxson
Carolyn Peterson
Jess Peterson
Elizabeth Phung
Jackie Picariello
Jason Pilkington
Sidney Pinnie
Lynn Plepis
Rebecca Polito
Ciara Price
Mark Prince
Kristin Proto
Claudia Quinlan
Dan Ritchie
Maeve Raak
Christine Racobaldo Ciccarone
Andria Rafferty
Randall O'mahoney
Meg Reece Pennington
Jeremy Rhoads
Aliza Richman
Christian Rising
Scott Rosenthal
Jonah Rouizem
Rebecca Roy
Mollee Rudolph
Erik Rushton
Spencer Rybinski
Kimberly Salls
Jason Saltarelli
Chris Sandland
Christian Sarnese
David Scranton
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Danielle Shultz
Joseph Simonis
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Kyle Spence
Erik Stefferud
Kenneth Sterling
Katy Sullivan
Carl Taggart
Tammy Manuel
Jennifer Thomas
Micah Tischler
Rachel Toop
Ann Trethewey
Bill Tryon
Keith Turner
Nancy Tutor
John Twohig
Tyler Mayes
Gwendolyn Unangst
Heidi Van Every
John Vitsorek
Suzanne Walstrum
Erik Watkin
Sara Watt
Whitney Webb
Dan Welch
Adam Wenger
Crystal Whaley
Shannon Wheeler
Kalli Wheeler
Kelli Wilke
Dan Williams
Shanna Wilson
Lindsey Winkler
Robert Witt and
Carol Landenfield
Elisa Young
Daniel Young
Matthew Zapp
Tom Zeberkiewicz
Ken Zinn

In Memorium

Remembering David L. Myers (1941- 2026)



It is with heavy heart that we share the passing of a pillar of our community and a true champion of conservation., David L. Myers, who passed away on August 25, 2026. A long-time resident of Kennett Square, Dave spent his life working to make our region a better, more beautiful place to live.

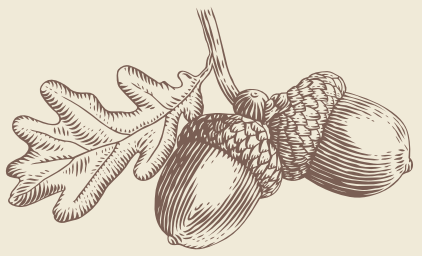
For members of BRC, Dave's legacy is unparalleled. First joining the board in 1977, Dave was our longest standing board member, serving with distinction as a board member and board member emeritus., dedicating nearly a half-century of service to our mission. His legal and financial expertise, sharp mind and deep love for our natural resources helped lay the groundwork for our two mergers, watershed protections, land preservation milestones and environmental education initiatives we celebrate today.

Beyond BRC, Dave was a renowned civic leader. A practicing attorney in Kennett Square since 1972, he lent his time and leadership to numerous and vital institutions.

We extend our deepest condolences to his wife of 58 years, Susan, his children Elizabeth and Dave and his numerous grandchildren. Dave's legacy lives on in the protected lands, clean flowing waters and vibrant communities of the Brandywine and Red Clay Watersheds.

Memorial Donations

In honor of Dave's extraordinary 49 years of stewardship, his family has requested that memorial donations be made to the Brandywine Red Clay Alliance. Donations can be made at www.brandywineredclay.org or sent to BRC at 1760 Unionville-Wawaset Road West Chester, PA 19380.



EVENTS

Trout Stocking and Trout Rodeo

BRC had busy spring with trout in 2026. The annual Trout Rodeo was held in conjunction with Anson B. Nixon Park, and we were also able to stock trout in both Pennsylvania and Delaware at twelve locations, including two with our Amish neighbors in western Chester County.



2026 Trout Rodeo

Thanks to everyone who came and enjoyed this year's

Summer Music Festival and 16th Annual Dead Fest.

Mother Nature gave us some weather challenges, but we hope that everyone who came out enjoyed the sweet sounds and delicious food!



Dead Fest

83rd Running of the Brandywine Hills Point-to-Point

Photos by Tisa Della-Volpe

The oldest point to point in the Delaware Valley was held on a rainy Easter Sunday in April. Those in attendance witnessed some very competitive pony and horse races.



Side Saddlers - 2026



Hunter Holm & Dr. Mary-Anne Ost



Side Saddle Race -
Lauren Apple & Audrey Buchanan
over the stonewall



Amateur Apprentice Race -
(l to r) Eric Poretz & Hunter Holm



Open Race - (l to r) Teddy Davies, Eric Poretz and Elizabeth Scully



Ladies Race - Over the Stonewall



VIrginia Korrell



Julie Nafe - Over the Stonewall
in the Side Saddle Race

Proceeds from the event help The Brandywine Red Clay Alliance continue their work of promoting the restoration, conservation, and enjoyment of the natural resources of the Brandywine and Red Clay watersheds.

Annual Campaign

We ask you to consider an Annual Campaign donation to BRC in 2026 so that we can continue our efforts to preserve our natural resources for tomorrow, next year, and future generations.

We would like to offer our sincerest thank yous to our anonymous donors on their generous challenge gifts which help your gifts go even further as part of this campaign

If you've already made a gift to BRC's Annual Campaign this year, thank you! Please share these opportunities with friends and family or consider an additional gift to help us reach our challenge goals.

Want to support BRC for years to come? Learn how easy it is to include us in your will or estate plan. Contact Jim Jordan, Executive Director, CEO for more details.





Upcoming Events

Wild and Scenic Film Festival
March 2027

Red Clay Valley Clean Up
March 20, 2027

Brandywine Hills Point to Point
April 4, 2027

Brandywine Clean Up
April 2027

FIND EVENTS HERE

Save The Date

Please join us as we shine a spotlight on our accomplishments over the last year, including our accreditation!

We'd like to thank the following sponsors for their support of this year's event!

Presenting Sponsor
Flyway Excavating, Inc.

Reception Sponsor
Hicks Brothers, IV LLC

Crabcake Sponsor
The Hounds Foundation

Brandywine Sponsor
Brandywine Science Center

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Lester Water Inc.
McGovern Environmental
Pratt Insurance

Water Conservation Update

Planning For Future Dam Removal on Red Clay Creek

For many of our stream restoration and tree planting projects, the work the public sees during construction and tree planting is actually the end of three to five years of strategic planning, site identification, landowner contacts and agreements, grant writing, and design and planting plans.

All of this work is done behind the scenes with our conservation partners, scientific consultants, funders, state and federal regulators, and landowners.

A new priority for BRC is to research and plan for future dam removal on Red Clay Creek, especially in the lower section in Delaware where there are 10 dams impeding a free-flowing stream from the mouth at the Christina River to the Pennsylvania state line. This research began with BRC participating in a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant with the University of Delaware Water Resources Center and Delaware Sea Grant from 2022 to 2024. The project hired a consultant with expertise on dam removal to assess all 10 dams on the Red Clay while fish biologists at UD assessed the presence of migratory fish such as Shad that historically migrated from the Atlantic Ocean in such great numbers that it was a major source of food for indigenous people and later a huge fishing industry in our watershed. BRC completed a stakeholder assessment of 41 community members, businesses and groups to determine public interest and support for dam removal on the Red Clay, which turned out to show significant support from the local community.

This past spring BRC began the next planning step working with state and federal agencies to determine the next steps to begin dam removal on the Red Clay. It was determined that analysis of sediment behind each dam is a federal requirement that often impedes dam removal permits. The Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) offered to run lab analysis and review of sediment samples for all 10 dams. Similarly, an historical review of each dam is another frequent impediment to dam removal permits, so BRC is partnering with

University of Delaware Center for Historic Architecture and Design to complete a historical review of all 10 dams as well. BRC put these assessments into a grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation that would also include funding for the design phase for removal of one dam on the Red Clay Creek as well. If funded, the assessment work on Red Clay dams could begin in 2027.

A significant goal of dam removal is for migratory fish from the ocean to be able to once again swim upstream to spawn as they did over 300 years ago. Dam removal has many other water quality benefits such as increased oxygen levels and lower temperatures in free-flowing streams that increase the biodiversity of aquatic wildlife, including native freshwater fish. While we know that it may not be feasible to remove all 10 dams, some could be modified to allow a more free-flowing stream that would also allow migratory fish passage.

As with all of our major stream projects, it takes years of planning before the first dam may be removed, and it all starts with planning and collaborations.



Dam #1 - Red Clay



Breached Dam

Two New Riparian Buffers in the Red Clay Watershed

This spring BRC planted over 450 trees and shrubs on 3 acres on two riparian sites in the Red Clay Creek Watershed.

These projects were part of our goal to plant seven acres of trees in the Red Clay Creek Watershed funded by a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant. In April we worked with an HOA in Chadds Ford to improve the riparian corridor running through the HOA open space. Running Kit Run is a tributary of Burrows Run and this buffer reforested the last stretch of the stream before it joined Burrows Run. Upstream from this property is forested land conserved through the former Land Conservancy of Southern Chester County and across from Spar Hill Farm Preserve. We thank Shaw and Carol Taylor for making this planting a huge success!



Millbrook volunteers work on riparian buffer

On a very hot day in May, with the help from players and families associated with Unionville Recreation Association, Phase 1 of a riparian buffer planting was completed at the ball fields across from Hoods BBQ restaurant. This riparian area was once dominated by invasive phragmites but with the help of Weeds, Inc and East Marlborough Township, the area was ready to be improved.

Already we have seen native vegetation return and the buffer area is alive with pollinators and amphibians. Phase 2 will be completed in September.



Unionville tree planting



Millbrook volunteers work on riparian buffer

Red Clay Valley and Brandywine Spring Litter Clean Ups

Over 900 volunteers helped with our annual watershed clean-ups this past spring. Red Clay Clean Up was held March 28th with 700 volunteers recovering over 12 tons of trash and 100 tires along 106 miles of roads and streams in both Pennsylvania and Delaware. On April 18th the Brandywine Clean Up covered 5 clean up sites in 12 municipalities in two states with 268 volunteers filling four dumpsters with trash collected along 52 miles of roads and 25 miles of streams.



Brandywine Clean up volunteers



Brandywine Clean up at Modena



Brandywine Clean up at Downingtown



Red Clay Cleanup



Red Clay Cleanup

Together, these clean-ups help to keep our waterways clean from the headwaters to the Delaware Bay.

Green Jobs Interns Learn How to Fish and Canoe with BRC

One of our most rewarding outreach activities is working with the City of Wilmington Green Jobs high school intern program for the eighth year in a row.

New this summer was a day of fishing at a private pond where nearly every intern caught a bluegill or large mouth bass, many larger than a dessert plate! While most fish were caught on worms under a bobber, the interns also had a fly-fishing lesson from our Executive Director, Jim Jordan. BRC promotes fishing as a hobby with trout stocking and fishing lessons because we believe that fishing is a lifelong hobby that provides not only outdoor enjoyment but promotes a greater interest in protecting water quality among participants. As always, our Green Jobs interns also enjoyed a day canoeing on the Brandywine Creek at Northbrook Canoe this summer.



Green Jobs Fishing

Victory Garden

Now in its seventh year, our Victory Garden donated over 1,200 pounds of fresh produce to Kennett Area Community Services.

Many thanks to volunteers at Chatham Financial for helping to plant the garden this spring as well as to our summer interns and summer campers for helping with weekly harvests.



BRC Intern Ben with Victory Garden harvest



Brandywine Red Clay Alliance

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contact@brandywineredclay.org | brandywineredclay.org

Address Correction Requested

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In Kind Item Request

Woodburning Tools (Up to 10)

Pond Nets (Up to 10)

Magnifying Lenses (Up to 25)

As of September 9, 2026

brandywineredclay; #weheartbrc **Brandywine Red Clay Alliance**