

## Strategies

Land acquisition is just one strategy to ameliorate the impacts of development on critical natural resources. In order to comprehensively protect priority lands, a variety of tools must be brought to bear. Wise land use planning at the local level is as essential as a statewide support system of policies and programs that protect important habitat, drinking water supplies and other natural assets.

## Conservation Capacity

We work to secure funding and seek creative financing opportunities for Highlands conservation efforts from private foundations, individuals and at federal, state and local government levels, including appropriations through the Highlands Conservation Act (HCA), Forest Legacy Program and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

## Awareness & Public Support

Members of the Highlands Coalition provide unparalleled assistance in on-the-ground messaging, working within their communities to educate voters, advise planning boards, and encourage business leaders to better appreciate the many values of the Highlands. This is a critical contribution to thwart inappropriate development that threatens important Highlands resources and work with collaboratively. We foster regional approaches to planning for and managing growth across the four-state Highlands area, while addressing broader issues of conservation, land use, climate change, and stewardship. The Coalition's combined national, state, and local coalition-building efforts have resulted in a responsive conservation community throughout the region.

# Help support

## HIGHLANDS COALITION

520 Long Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
www.highlandscoalition.org

Phone: 610.868.6915  
Fax: 610.868.6975

Email: info@highlandscoalition.org

YES, I want to support the  
Highlands Coalition's efforts!

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student       | \$25   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter     | \$50   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Partner       | \$100  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leader        | \$500  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor    | \$1000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summit Circle | \$5000 |

Name

Address

Email

- Please add me to the High Ground newsletter mailing list  
 Please send me email alerts

Payment method:

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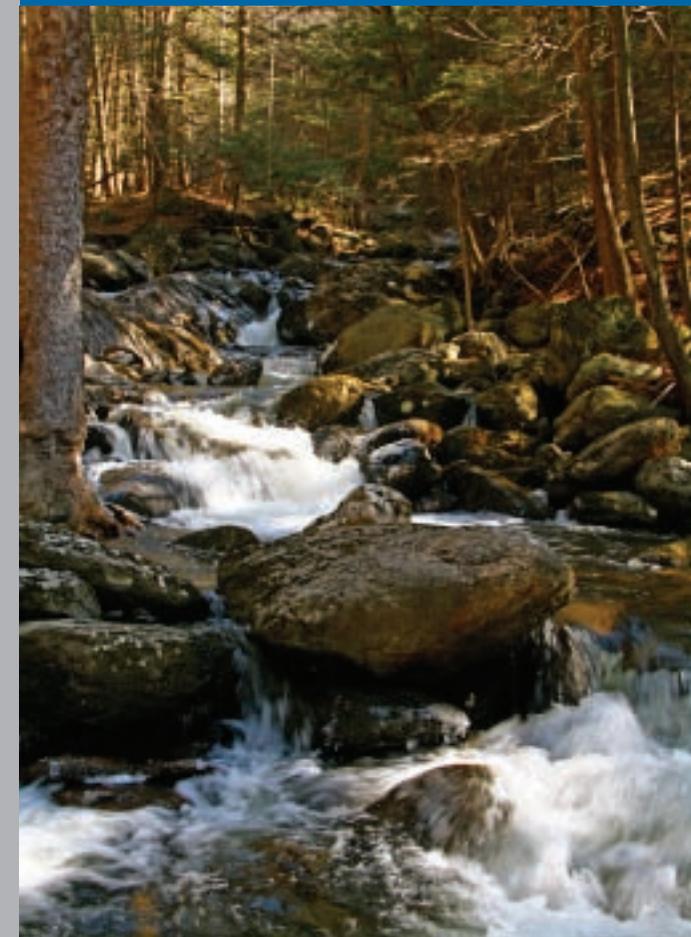


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## Our Geography

### PENNSYLVANIA

- 1.4 million acres  
35 Critical Treasures  
Conservation Projects:
- Oley Hills
  - New Holland Waters
  - Cooks Creek Watershed
  - South Mountain
  - Birdsboro Waters

Photo by Tom Gettings,  
Wildlands Conservancy

### NEW JERSEY

- 840,000 acres  
18 Critical Treasures  
Conservation Projects:
- Wyanokie & Farny Highlands
  - Sparta Mountain South
  - Passaic Ramapo Watershed

Photo by Wilma Frey,  
NJ Conservation Foundation

### NEW YORK

- 630,000 acres  
14 Critical Treasures  
Conservation Projects:
- Sterling Forest
  - Arrow Park
  - Great Swamp

Photo by Herb Chong

### CONNECTICUT

- 678,000 acres  
30 Critical Treasures  
Conservation Projects:
- Skiff Mountain
  - Deluca
  - Ethel Walker
  - Towner Hill
  - Litchfield Farms

Photo by Alden Warner

## Our Resources



**FORESTS** The forests of the Highlands provide important wildlife habitat, water resources, environmental benefits such as air filtration and carbon storage, and economic vitality for the region. However, while 2/3 of the CT Highlands is forested, 56% is privately owned. In NY and NJ, half of the private forests are less than 10 acres, comprising 84% of all forestlands. Fragmentation and conversion of forest land are grave threats to forest quality and the ecosystem services they provide.



**WATER** With climate change impacts readily apparent, the water resources of the Highlands will become even more important for the people and wildlife living in the region. Currently, more than 20 million people depend upon Highlands drinking water, and 3/4 of the lands with the most important water resources still remain unprotected. Even with the Highlands' five federal Wild and Scenic Rivers, decades of development have impaired water quality and increased impervious cover and flood impacts.



**WILDLIFE** The Highlands region is home to over 150 bird and mammal species of special concern. Black bear, bog turtle, hawks and bald eagles, Indiana bats, timber rattlesnake, and brown trout are abundant across the region. Whether large mammals or tiny birds, amphibians or insects, all are crucially important to a healthy and balanced ecosystem.



**AGRICULTURE** Agriculture is an essential part of the Highlands' working landscape and local food is not only a healthy choice but a wise economic investment. Much of the Highlands are in working agriculture and contain some of the most productive unirrigated lands in the country. Still, the region loses thousands of acres of prime farmland each year as farmers struggle to cope with development pressures.



**RECREATION** American activity levels are severely declining, causing a disturbing childhood obesity epidemic and eroding our connection to the outdoors. With close proximity to key urban areas, the Highlands are an accessible and affordable backyard paradise for more than 25 million Americans living within an hour of its thousands of miles of hiking trails, hundreds of canoeable river miles, dozens of lakes and reservoirs, and thousands of trout producing stream miles.

Photo credits (from top): J. Jeffrey Anzevino, courtesy of Scenic Hudson; Alden Warner; Tom Gettings, Wildlands Conservancy

## Mission

The Highlands Coalition is an alliance of more than 180 conservation organizations working to preserve the 3.5 million-acre Highlands region of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut – an area deemed “nationally significant,” by Congress with the 2004 Highlands Conservation Act. We seek to protect and enhance the sustainability of the natural and human communities of this special region. While the Highlands teem with important natural resources and watersheds, it is threatened by accelerating development pressure, causing increasing forest fragmentation, impairing water quality, and destroying vital habitat for the more than 150 plants and animals listed as species of concern living there.

## About the Coalition

The Coalition is a progressive organization focused on land acquisition and best management practices to combat threats to important Highlands resources. Protection of unfragmented forests, headwaters areas, farmland and riparian buffers are critical components of a strategy to ensure the viability of and balance between human and natural communities here in this nationally recognized landscape. Our approach focuses on federal, state, and local decision-making entities as well as embracing the public and the media. The Coalition continues to grow, working to protect resources with new models of conservation focused on sustainable agriculture, urban renewal, health, and recreation.