

# 2024 Fall Newsletter



*Protecting Forested Land and Supporting  
Rural Communities Through Working Forests*



## Greetings from the Executive Director

What a whirlwind of activity FSF has seen this autumn season. It was so wonderful to see many of you face-to-face at our recent events! The *Friends of the Foundation Dinner* and *Loving the Land Through Working Forests Conference* were both inspiring, fun, and energizing – in large part due to your participation and engagement. Thank you to all who contributed to the vibrancy of the weekend. Jim Finley Stewardship Day in Chautauqua, NY also brought a wonderful mix of faces new and old as FSF engages with new community members in New York through the First Forest and Subagh Preserve sites.

Behind the scenes, we are capping off our 20th year with impactful projects, many of which have been years in the making. This year, we have conserved over 800 acres to date. These lands represent five landowners, multiple grants, and valued supporters, all of whom recognize the importance of conserving forests today for a sustainable, resilient future. These are 800 acres that will remain as intact ecosystems and diverse habitat. They will be working forests that are managed to ensure a sustainable timber resource. All of these acres are open to the public to enjoy.

With these new forests and additional projects that we are on track to complete before the end of the year, FSF’s staff and Board of Directors are tackling important questions about FSF’s next 20 years. For example, we recognize that many of these sites will require significant stewardship investments in the near-term to improve the trajectory of forest condition in the long-term, especially in the form of invasive plant management.

Simultaneously, our region is facing new pressures to convert forestland to other uses. In response, we are working to maintain the present conservation momentum, in pursuit of a balance of healthy, intact forest ecosystems alongside other land uses.

Through all of these efforts, your continued support and involvement remain critical to this organization. As a core team, Bennett, Guy, Troy, and the rest of our Board have had many reasons to celebrate this year, but I want to remind you that these 800+ acres are *your* acres, and all of the ways in which they will enhance and support the region are reasons for *you* to celebrate too.

So, allow me to say: Congratulations! In this season of thanksgiving, I thank you for making 2024 this organization’s most impactful year yet.

Sincerely,

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**Cover Image:** Volunteers at Northwestern REC Community Forest, including the Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps’ Meadville crew, show off the newly raised kiosk and bat box.

# Jim Finley Stewardship Day



Subagh Preserve in Mayville, NY received some “tender loving care” during our annual Jim Finley Stewardship Day. Volunteers planted acorns, walnuts, hickory nuts, and an assortment of native tree seedlings to reforest sections of old field. We also completed maintenance on one of the property's walking trails and raised a bat box constructed by Terry Lobdell and the PA Outdoor Corps (see pg. 6). Thank you to everyone who came out to care for Subagh Preserve, work side-by-side, and honor Jim's memory.

## Meet FSF's newest addition to the Board of Directors, David Yasenchack

Please welcome David Yasenchack as the newest member of the Foundation for Sustainable Forests Board of Directors!

David and his family live in Cambridge Springs, where he is a timber-framer by trade, a true craftsman. He is involved with the Northwest Pennsylvania Woodland Association, among other local organizations, and his beautifully designed and constructed outdoor classroom at an independent school in Meadville was featured in our newsletter just last spring.

David comes with a unique combination of skills, interests, and involvements that have already done much to support this organization's mission. His appearance in photos above (Jim Finley Stewardship Day) and on Page 6 are two great examples of this. We are grateful to David for volunteering his thoughtful presence to the organization's leadership as well, particularly at a pivotal time of growth in FSF's development.



# Coming Together to Connect & Learn

In September, the FSF community gathered in Cambridge Springs, PA for the *Loving the Land Through Working Forests Conference* and *Friends of the Foundation Dinner*. The conference offered a diverse slate of woods walks, presentations, and workshops against the beautiful backdrop of the Northwestern REC Community Forest. Thank you to all who attended, presented, and supported these impactful events!



## Thank You to Our 2024 Conference Sponsors!

### GOLD



Jim & Connie Thompson



THE JAMES C. FINLEY CENTER FOR PRIVATE FORESTS

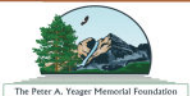
### SILVER



Bob & Jane Slagter

Emil & Kathy Spadafore

### BRONZE



# Loving the Land - Landowners Tell Their Stories

## Introducing the Mallory Family Woodland

Sometimes you visit a place for the first time and you just have a good feeling. My first visit to the Mallory family's property in August of 2023 alongside Bennett, Guy, and Troy, was one of those times.

That walk in the woods was the culmination of nearly four years of emails, video, and phone conversations with the California-based family consisting of Sue Mallory and her daughters, Stacy and Holly. Stacy began the conversation with the Foundation for Sustainable Forests at the suggestion of her cousin who lives nearby. She was seeking options to care for and conserve their nearly 80 acres in Concord Township, Erie County. From afar, the Mallorys took impressively proactive steps during those years to explore their options and understand the forests' needs, including having a DCNR Service Forester visit the site and draft a forest evaluation with stewardship recommendations.

During that summer day when the FSF team first explored the property, there were plenty of "moments of wonder" that furthered our resolve to see this property conserved – we spotted a barred owl gazing down at us, Bennett and I climbed an upturned hemlock tree root

system that was one of many hemlock "dominos" that had fallen in a recent windstorm, we found cardinal flowers in full bloom along a wooded wetland, and followed Lilley Run, a tributary to the South Branch of French Creek, as it wove its way through the forest.

This property, now known as "Mallory Family Woodland", became one of FSF's newest acquisitions in July of this year by way of a charitable bargain purchase from a family that is deeply rooted in Pennsylvania's heritage, even though they live a few time zones away. For Sue, Stacy, and Holly, the decision to protect the property is not only in line with their own conservation ethic, but also honors the legacy of their late husband and father, Jack Mallory.

Jack Mallory was born and raised in Erie and a graduate of Penn State University, where he met his wife Sue, a fellow PSU alum who grew up in Bellefonte. Jack was a descendent of Nathaniel Mallory, a Revolutionary War patriot who was an early settler in northwestern Pennsylvania, arriving circa 1798.

Jack's career took him and his family to California,

*(Continued on page 7)*

*Left: Lilley Run flows through the property and is a tributary to the South Branch of French Creek.*

*Right: Jack Mallory with Stacy (left), Holly (right), and two grandchildren at Indian Head Cemetery in Waterford, where their ancestor, Nathaniel Mallory, is memorialized.*





# PAOC at Northwestern REC Community Forest



FSF hosted a Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps (PAOC) crew at the Northwestern REC Community Forest this summer. They made access improvements and took on additional projects to prepare the property for public use, including putting in a walking trail on the property's east side. PAOC is overseen by PA-DCNR and the Student Conservation Association with teams around the state performing conservation and stewardship work on public lands. We appreciate the hard work of the Corps, FSF volunteers, and staff!



1) Frank Zalik and PAOC members Nick College and Kaylee Roofner (*left to right*) pause for a photo as they clear a new walking trail loop off of Wenner Drive.

2) Local bat expert Terry Lobdell explains his designs for conventional and “rocket box” bat houses. The Corps built seven houses, all of which will be placed on FSF properties. Northwestern Rural Electric Cooperative line workers donated a utility pole and used their bucket truck to install a large bat box along Rt. 86.

3) Board Members David Yasenchack (*left*) and Pat Maloney (*orange helmet*) discuss rafter construction with the team as they build the welcome kiosk. The structure features local hemlock, oak, and larch lumber.

4) PAOC members Alyssa Bancroft (*left*) and Logan Oblinski (*middle right*), Land Manager Guy Dunkle (*middle left*), and David Yasenchack (*right*) attach rafters for the property's welcome kiosk.



*Save the Dates!*



## Our Woods & Waters Film Series

*Two evenings of conservation-minded short films:*

*Friday, Jan. 17, 6:30 pm, Virtual Zoom webinar*

*Friday, Feb. 21, 6:30 pm, In-person, location TBA*

For more information, visit:

[foundationforsustainableforests.org/events/](https://foundationforsustainableforests.org/events/)

## The Mallory Family, *continued*:

where he lived for the majority of his life until his passing in 2023, and where his wife and daughters still reside. Despite the distance, Jack remained “all things Pennsylvania”, recalls his family. As proof, for 16 years, he convinced the local Penn State club to host an annual Groundhog Day Party, an event that was immensely popular and featured “imported” PA delicacies, such as soft pretzels, Dutch apple bars, and Rolling Rock beer. Naturally, a life-sized Punxatawney Phil costume was part of the annual tradition!

Even though Jack and Sue no longer called the Commonwealth their home, they still wanted to remain connected in some way. The opportunity to purchase the initial tract of the Mallory Family Woodland arose in 1972, and they later purchased additional acreage in 1982.

Over the years, Jack’s brother Tom, who lives in Erie, spent considerable time on the property, but Jack and his family could only visit occasionally. During their time there, Sue recalls enjoying the stream and checking on the chestnut trees that Jack’s brother had planted.

The distance created some challenges for the family as landowners. Their neighbors, with whom they visited when in town, were instrumental in protecting it during that time. For example, their watchful eye helped to prevent an “aggressive” timber sale that had been marked on the property without their knowledge or permission.

Over the years, the Mallorys received several offers and inquiries regarding the property’s timber resource. It was inquiries such as these that raised the family’s concern for the future of the property. In California, Jack and Sue had cultivated their love for nature together while hiking among the redwoods with their children. Stacy and Holly recall that they didn’t always “love” those hikes, but they still had a lasting impact. As Holly described, “we are all conservationists and wanted the land to be sustainable for the future”.

With the conservation of the Mallory Family Woodland, the Foundation for Sustainable Forests is honored to have been entrusted with this piece of Jack’s legacy and the whole family’s proud Pennsylvania



*Mallory Family Woodland is open to the public for recreational uses such as hiking, birdwatching, and hunting.*

heritage. It has truly been a pleasure engaging with them every step of the way, and we look forward to continuing the partnership and commemorating the site with Sue, Stacy, Holly, and their families the next time they are in town.

Under FSF’s ownership and stewardship, the property is open to the public for hunting and leave-no-trace recreational uses such as hiking and birdwatching. In the near term, FSF will seek to conduct a biological inventory of the property’s diverse ecosystem types and habitats.

There are no plans for intensive management activities in the near future, but the site will be monitored closely for opportunities to enhance understory regeneration and with the anticipated arrival of the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) in mind, so that we may attempt to mitigate the impact of HWA on stand integrity.

*Prepared by Annie Maloney in collaboration with Holly, Stacy, and Sue. To learn more about how you can access and enjoy the Mallory Family Woodland, visit [foundationforsustainableforests.org/conserved-lands/](https://foundationforsustainableforests.org/conserved-lands/)*



*Left to right: Holly Fidrych, Sue Mallory & Stacy Tredennick, who worked together in the conservation of this unique and ecologically important site.*

*Protecting forested land &  
supporting rural communities  
through working forests*



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*The Foundation for Sustainable Forests is a 501(c)3 charitable organization dedicated to conserving and stewarding working forests, and promoting forestry practices that enhance health, resilience, and habitat diversity across the region.*



A “Fall Peeper”, a seasonal aberration of the Spring Peeper, joined volunteers during Jim Finley Stewardship Day. Soon, this little frog will enter a state of torpor through the winter, ready to breed - and sing! - when the spring thaw arrives.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Jan. 17- Our Woods and Waters Film Series**

*6:30pm, Virtual via Zoom, Registration required*

### **Feb. 21 - Our Woods and Waters Film Series**

*6:30pm, In-person, Location to be announced*

**For more information, call (814) 694-5830 or visit  
foundationforsustainableforests.org/events/**