



Friends of White's Woods Monthly Newsletter



Huplits Grant Awarded to FWW

On June 30, the Friends of White's Woods was notified that the group has been awarded a 2021 Huplits Grant for continuing efforts to find a permanent solution to protecting White's Woods.

Sponsored by The Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club, the Huplits grant seeks to help protect animal wildlife and wildlife habitat in Pennsylvania. Projects that directly impact wildlife in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on a regional or statewide level are funded through the grant process and entries that involve public education, grassroots campaign organization, litigation, land acquisition, or research that directly focuses on protecting Pennsylvania wildlife, its habitat, and preventing cruelty to animals are evaluated.

FWW President Sara King said, "Representatives of the Sierra Club Allegheny Group also took the time to come to Indiana and take a walk in White's Woods. We are really grateful for their interest and support." Members of the Allegheny Group of the Sierra Club also wrote a letter in support of FWW's grant application.

In the grant application, FWW wrote: "Friends of White's Woods' (FWW) overall purpose is to preserve the 250-acre White's Woods Nature Center (WWNC) for future generations, in ways consistent with its original Project 70 designation as a natural area to be 'left largely in its natural state.' The WWNC is home to an array of wildlife: bears, coyotes, gray fox, red fox, white-tail deer, rabbits, mink, groundhogs, porcupine, multiple species of squirrel, along with numerous other small mammalian species that have been spotted in these woods within the last year. The WWNC hosts dozens of resident and migratory avian species, including a dozen or more of the birds identified by the DCNR Fish and Boat 2015-2015 Wildlife Action Plan (WAP) as species 'in greatest need of conservation.' What's more, these woods are home to the Eastern Box turtle, also listed in the WAP as a species 'in greatest need of conservation,' as well as the Seal Salamander, currently listed by DCNR as a 'species of special concern.'"

Past winners of the Huplits grant include: The Philadelphia Metro Wildlife Center, Chalfont Run/Thompson Run Watershed Association, Lehigh Valley Group of the Sierra Club, and The Allegheny Land Trust, among others.

Painting in the Woods: An Invited Artist Experience in White's Woods this Fall

In the artistic tradition of 19th century art, The Friends of White's Woods is organizing an opportunity for a selected group of local and regional artists to explore White's Woods this fall as subject for unique interpretation. This will be the first of what FWW hopes to see becoming an annual event to create an artistic tradition with our beloved woods acting as muse.

"Painting in the Woods: The White's Woods Open Air Painting Experience" will be initiated via the participation of 12-15 invited artists exploring the woods over a period of two months (September & October) with sketchbook and easel in hand in order to realize one to three paintings destined for a public exhibition in late November.

Saturday, October 2nd will be designated as the "media day" for this project with available artists working on site. The public is encouraged to take to the trails as part of the statewide "Walk in the Woods" fall excursion and encounter artists in the act of interpreting White's Woods.

On the occasion of the exhibition opening in late November, prizes will be awarded with the grand prize also being designated as the subject for the 2022 White's Woods Print. This print will then be available (with contribution) to the public in the manner that Chuck Olson's "In White's Woods" image was recruited for the 2021 campaign. All work in the exhibition will be for sale.

The participating artists for 2021 will be announced along with other updates in the next newsletter. Stay tuned for more details!

Upcoming Events

Sept. 16, 2021: 5:30 p.m., Medicinal Plant Walk in White's Woods conducted by Dana Driscoll, IUP faculty member and traditional western herbalist. (see July's newsletter at www.friendsofwhiteswoods.org for more information).

September/October: "Painting in the Woods: The White's Woods Open Air Painting Experience," coordinated by Indiana artist Chuck Olson. (see article in this newsletter).

Oct, 2, 2021: "A Walk in the Woods" in partnership with the statewide "Walk in Penn's Woods" October program that highlights the beauty of Pennsylvania's wooded areas.

**For more information, visit: friendsofwhiteswoods.org
Like us on FaceBook: Friends of White's Woods, Inc.
Follow us on Instagram: [friendsofwhiteswoodsinc](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofwhiteswoodsinc)**

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Family “Forest” Farm: (photo on left) Pictured is a portion of the 150-acre farm owned by Vernon and Jeanne Blystone of Creekside (photo on right) being considered for the Family Forest Carbon Project in Indiana County.



Family Forest Carbon Project Offers Opportunities for Farmers to Conserve, Protect, Earn

Mailbox money!

That’s what Vernon and Jeanne Blystone of Creekside are expecting when the Family Forest Carbon Program approves their application for participation. The Blystones, married for more than 50 years, live on the farm where his grandparents lived.

A new program, created by the American Forest Foundation and The Nature Conservancy, the Family Forest Carbon program empowers America’s rural family forest owners to address climate change – and lets them earn money by doing so.

The Blystones’ 150-acres of forested land, filled with oak, hickory, maple and evergreen trees, qualifies for participation in this program, which has opened in select Pennsylvania counties (including Indiana).

Vernon first learned about the program from an Indiana Gazette article where Sara King, president of the Friends of White’s Woods, explained the program being explored in the March 5th webinar by Kevin Yoder of The Nature Conservancy and co-sponsored by the Indiana County Sustainability Economic Task Force and the Friends of White’s Woods.

“I saw her (Sara’s) name in the newspaper, and I called her,” Vernon said, “because I have woods that I don’t want cut down and the tax reassessment on my farm (which has been fallow for years) is very high. This sounded like a good way to receive some income without having to sell off my trees.

“A neighbor of mine sold off some of his trees,” Vern said. “The company that came in and cut down the prime trees also injured and killed other trees through their use of heavy equipment and disregard for where the trees fell. The ruts that were left on his property made his forest ugly and almost impassable.”

“When Vernon called me,” Sara said, “I put him in touch with the Family Forest Carbon program people. And, in no time, someone was at Vern’s farm to assess his property for participation in the program.”

According to their website, the Family Forest Carbon program partners with family and individual landowners with small forest holdings to manage their forests in ways that help the planet. More specifically, the program pays family forest landowners to implement carbon-friendly forest management practices that result in additional carbon sequestered and stored on the landscape. This provides landowners with new revenue streams to help care for their land and keep it in trees. In addition, the Program helps landowners transition to long-term sustainable management to better manage their forests for overall health, wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

What does all this “carbon talk” mean?

Carbon in the air is a primary greenhouse gas, trapping heat in the atmosphere. It is the key factor in global warming. Trees are one of the greatest absorbers of carbon and essential for

mitigating climate change. In the U.S., forests occupy roughly one-third of our land cover and serve as our nation’s largest terrestrial carbon sink, offsetting 11.3% of our country’s annual carbon emissions.

“Buying a carbon offset is when a participant (person, company, government, other group) voluntarily buys a unit of carbon, usually a ton, to counteract greenhouse gases released by their activities.” (Norman, 2020, Carbon Markets 101.) Carbon-offset projects generate credits that give big companies an inexpensive way to claim large emissions reductions. It is a trading system: industries release carbon, on the one hand, while protecting or increasing carbon storage, on the other. The Family Forest Carbon program is part of this carbon offset/carbon sequestration initiative.

To check and see if your family farm is eligible, go to: <https://www.familyforest-carbon.org/>

Indiana County is moving ahead with investigation of a carbon sequestration project for the county parks.



Close-up of some of the magnificent hardwood trees on the Blystone property.

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