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Profile of a Conservationist

Julie Ulrich

Director of Urban Conservation

An engineer by training, Julie Ulrich spent her education and early work experience solving problems. Today, Ulrich brings that experience and training to bear on water quality and flooding problems in Philadelphia, where The Nature Conservancy is working to build green stormwater infrastructure projects in support of the city's Green City, Clean Waters plan.

Ulrich leads a team that is focused on nature-based solutions to environmental challenges in Philadelphia and Wilmington. "What I love most about my job," shares Ulrich, "is showing how nature—in our cities, across our neighborhoods, in our urban rivers, in our backyards—can achieve significant and long-lasting benefits for nature and people."

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Bob Harris (center), Employee Training Specialist at the Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH), mentors trainees in a workforce development program, in partnership with TNC, to provide job training while enhancing green space in Wilmington, DE. © Jordan Bush

Building Green Cities Creates Green Jobs

A post-COVID economic recovery and environmental action must go hand-in-hand

For decades, cities across the country have been experimenting with solutions to legacy problems faced by many urban communities in the United States—problems rooted in the nation's history of racial discrimination in housing and urban planning. For the past few years, The Nature Conservancy has worked with community-based organizations in Philadelphia and Wilmington to support two separate workforce development programs that combine environmental equity with jobs training.

In Philadelphia, TNC is partnering with the Friends Rehabilitation Program (FRP)—a local nonprofit providing affordable housing and social services in low- and moderate-income communities. TNC and FRP have been working together in Philly's Belmont neighborhood to expand urban tree canopy.

Today, TNC and FRP are in the process of planning and constructing 10 green stormwater projects across four city blocks in Belmont that will filter stormwater pollution, restore urban habitat, create new green space and more.

The stormwater projects will create living wage jobs opportunities in operation and maintenance of green infrastructure—jobs that will continue to grow in demand as a result of the city's Green City, Clean Waters plan.

"To have many projects across multiple neighborhoods, you start to get a cumulative benefit in terms of pollution reduction, habitat, aesthetics, maintenance and workforce development."

Julie Ulrich, Director of Urban Conservation

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The nearly 400-acre Cove Mountain Preserve is adjacent to a nearly 1,200 acre parcel that TNC is working to acquire. © Matt Kane/TNC

Fitting the Last Piece of the Puzzle

The final push to create a 14-mile corridor of protected land along the Kittatinny Ridge

The Kittatinny Ridge runs through Pennsylvania for 185 miles, from the Mason-Dixon Line to the upper Delaware River. The Ridge is the first prominent landscape feature you encounter as you move north or west from Philadelphia, and it marks the entrance to Pennsylvania's Ridge and Valley region. The Kittatinny Ridge is a globally important corridor of forest, connecting the Southern and the Northern Appalachian Mountains, a climate resilient landscape that stretches almost 2,000 miles from northern Alabama to Canada, across 14 states and three Canadian provinces.

"This project will create a 14-mile corridor of protected land in the heart of Pennsylvania. We can't miss this once-in-a-generation opportunity."

Keith Fisher, Director of Conservation

Between now and the end of 2020, TNC has the opportunity to purchase the roughly 1,200-acre parcel of forest along the Kittatinny Ridge. The parcel is adjacent to TNC's 400-acre Cove Mountain Preserve, which would triple the size of the property and would complete a 14-mile corridor of protected lands, connecting the preserve to state game lands and legacy TNC easements.

The landscape harbors irreplaceable biodiversity and provides tremendous benefits to society, including wood products, clean water and outdoor recreation opportunities for both locals and visitors alike. Protecting this parcel of land is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for both people and nature. Join our campaign and soon, you will be able to visit Cove Mountain and stand on your legacy.

Support the Cove Mountain Preserve Expansion

Contact Donna Bowers (dbowers@tnc.org or 717-232-6001 x205) to learn more about how you can help TNC reach its \$4.5 million goal to purchase these 1,200+ acres by December 31, 2020.

NATURE

PENNSYLVANIA/DELAWARE

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TNC's Maria Dziembowska poses with DCH's Vikram Krishnamurthy. © Jordan Bush

In Wilmington, TNC is partnering with the Delaware Center for Horticulture's (DCH) return to work program to enhance green space in the city while providing job training. Most recently, TNC and DCH worked with the Wilmington Neighborhood Conservation Land Bank and other community partners to bring vacant lots to life. Replacing trash, debris and invasive species with native trees and vegetation creates social, economic and environmental benefits for the local community and the city at large.

Sharing experiences, lessons, science and best practices both locally and globally is what sets TNC apart. Now that TNC's conservation efforts in Philadelphia and Wilmington are being integrated into one program, TNC stands to have a more regional conservation impact, embedding both cities into the broader landscape of the lower Delaware River.

As the nation works to rebuild the global economy, the recovery process must include opportunities not only to resume our old way of life, but also to rebuild businesses, industries and jobs in ways that enhance equity, Strengthen resilience and support a healthy environment. Economic recovery and environmental action must go hand-in-hand. Nature's future is our future.

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