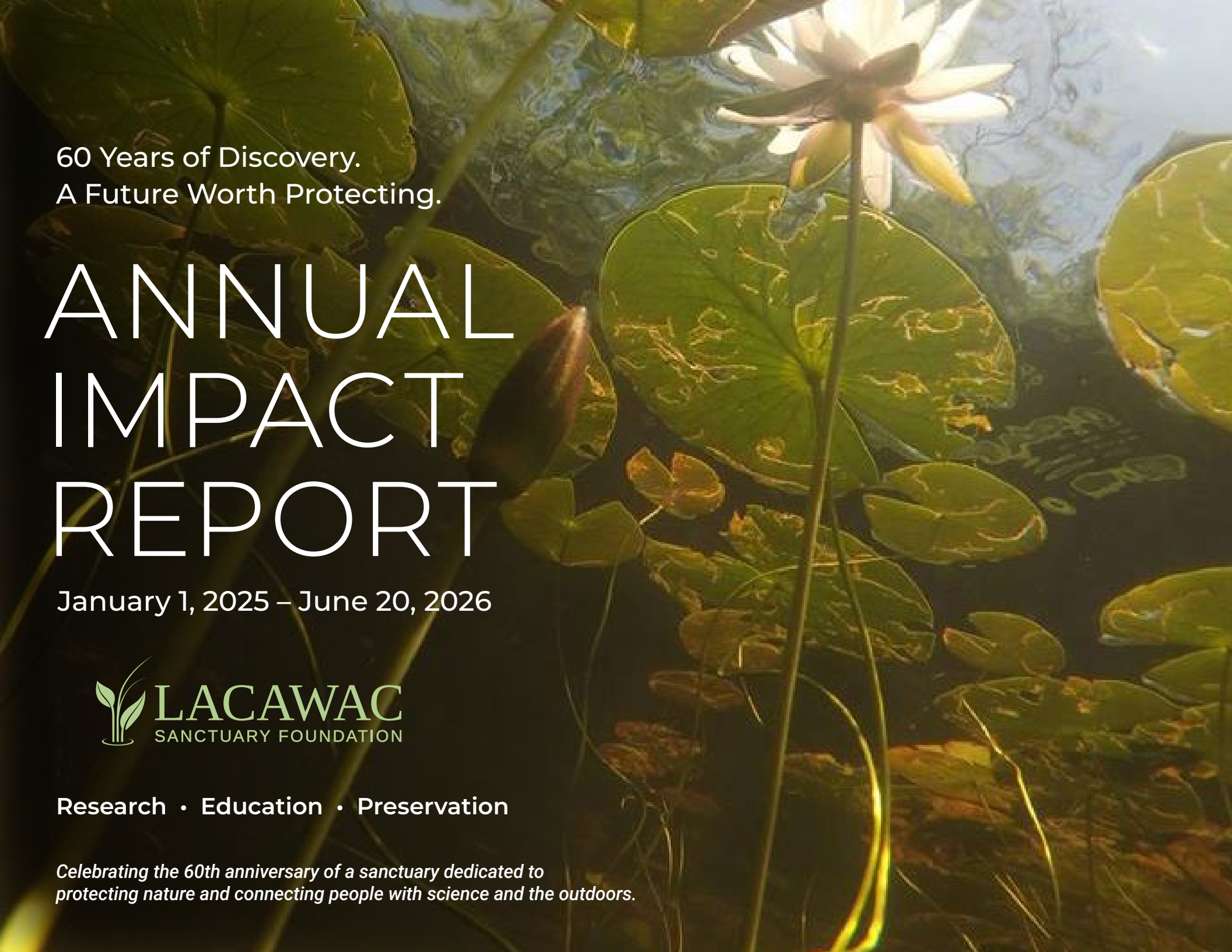


60 Years of Discovery.
A Future Worth Protecting.

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

January 1, 2025 – June 20, 2026

LACAWAC
SANCTUARY FOUNDATION

Research • Education • Preservation

Celebrating the 60th anniversary of a sanctuary dedicated to protecting nature and connecting people with science and the outdoors.

A Message from the President

For sixty years, **Lacawac Sanctuary** has demonstrated what is possible when people come together to protect a special place. From the preservation of Lake Lacawac and its surrounding forests to the thousands of educational experiences made possible across northeastern Pennsylvania, our mission has grown while our commitment to nature has remained constant.

Between January 2025 and July 2026, we strengthened our physical campus, improved access to our preserves, invested in educational facilities, and continued connecting young people and community members to scientific discovery. Our growing work in citizen science, watershed education, environmental learning and veterans programming reflects the many ways a protected landscape can serve the public.

This anniversary is both a celebration and an invitation. With the help of our foundations, businesses, donors, volunteers and research partners, we can safeguard the landscapes we cherish while creating new opportunities for students, researchers and visitors of all abilities.

Thank you for helping Lacawac remain a place for discovery, belonging and stewardship.



Craig Lukatch
President



Our Mission and Reach

Founded in 1966, Lacawac Sanctuary Foundation is a nonprofit nature preserve, environmental education center and biological field station. Its work is grounded in research, education and preservation, with a commitment to making outdoor experiences inclusive and welcoming.

60 Years

1966–2026

Conservation and environmental learning since 1966

749 Acres



Total protected lands

1996 Students & 31 Programs



- Spring 2026 classroom and field-program participation
- Nine classroom programs and 22 field trips in spring 2026

266 Campers



Summer 2026 camper participation

215 Participants



Reported 2026 Water Quality in Action engagement

4 Mobility Devices



All-terrain wheelchairs and scooters funded through Veterans Trust Fund

The organization stewards approximately 749 acres across its protected properties, including the primary Lacawac Sanctuary and Lake Lacawac, a 52-acre National Natural Landmark. Historic Watres Lodge and the sanctuary's forests, wetlands and trails create a distinctive setting for science, education and public engagement.

Financial Stewardship | *Audited Fiscal Year 2025*

Lacawac's financial reporting for calendar year 2025 was independently audited by Kohanski & Company. The auditor presented an unmodified (clean) opinion, as summarized in the July 30, 2026 Board meeting record. The Board accepted the audited statements and Form 990 at that meeting. This governance action occurred after the program reporting cutoff and is included only to describe the status of the 2025 audit.

Audited Financial Statement Summary

2025 Total Support and Revenue



$1,235,616

2025 Total Expenses



$933,242

2025 Change in Net Assets



$302,374

Assets December 31, 2025



$7,948,004

Liabilities December 31, 2025



$157,497

Net Assets December 31, 2025



$8,105,501

The auditor's presentation described an approximate $165,000 increase in total assets, a $137,000 decrease in liabilities and a $300,000 increase in net assets. Program revenue rose approximately $100,000 compared with 2024; public support declined approximately $127,000, and expenses increased approximately $159,000 as operations and programming expanded. These are rounded changes, not audited statement totals.

Foundation Partners | *Philanthropy that Creates Opportunity*

Foundation support expands access to environmental education, camp scholarships, scientific programs, conservation and outdoor experiences. During this reporting period, charitable support helped Lacawac serve students who might otherwise face barriers to participation, develop stronger educational offerings and invest in the future of its facilities.

Walmart Foundation

IF/THEN® Champions Network

Schwartz Mack Foundation

Statewide Waterway Access Grant (SWAG)

2025 Tomorrow's Leader's Today (TLT)

Honesdale National Bank Foundation

Schiel Family Foundation

M&T Bank Foundation

Wayne County Foundation Women in Philanthropy

Pike County Foundation - Richard L. Snyder Fund

Hawk Family Foundation

Michael J. Bryant Memorial Fund

United Way Lackawanna, Wayne and Pike Counties

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Scranton Area Community Foundation

Bonnie Yablon Foundation

American Water Foundation

Kate Svitek Memorial Foundation

Allyn Family Foundation

PPL Foundation

Robert Y. Moffat Family Charitable Trust

John and Helen Villaume Foundation

Robert L. and Margaret K. Balmes Family Trust

Overlook Estate Foundation

Sanofi

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

John and Margaret Post Foundation

A Donald & Mary G Behler Foundation

Pennsylvania Veterans' Trust Fund

William E. Chatlos Foundation

The Shema Family Foundation

Corporate and Business Partners

Local Commitment, Lasting Impact

Business and corporate partners strengthen Lacawac through program sponsorships, charitable contributions, in-kind assistance and community engagement. Their investments help sustain field trips, public programs, STEM opportunities and signature events while building a culture of environmental stewardship across the region.

Brookfield Renewable N.A. • Glenn Eyre Farms
Sigrid's Animal Trust

The Dime Bank • Scartelli & Olszewski, P.C. • The French Manor
Century 21 *Lake region*

Grimm Construction Inc. • NBT Bank

Signal 1 Fire Equipment • Onvo • Phoenix International Business Logistics • LHTC Broadband
Frey-Fetsock Funeral Home, Inc. • Blue Ridge • EXCAB • Wayne Bank

Paupack Plumbing Heating AC • Kiley Associates LLC • Reinfurt Excavating Inc. • Top Notch Distributors • Lewith & Freeman Real Estate Inc. • National Wild Turkey Federation • Turano Insurance • Wallenpaupack Veterinary Clinic • Legdale Recreation Area

Dirlam Bros Lumber Co • Greentown Agway • Woodloch • The Honesdale National Bank • Cove Haven • Van Gorders Furniture • AM Skier Insurance • Citizens Savings Bank • Wallenpaupack Lake Estates • Brian Kelly & Associates • MNM Roofing Professionals • Mick's Barber Shop • USA Metal Roofs • Cresswell Drilling Company • Kohanski Company PC • Kanga Roof • Dutch's Market

TOPP Business Solutions • Wayne Memorial Hospital • Case Tire Service Inc. • Murray Physical Therapy • Seamen's Dock Systems • Platform Industries
Lackawanna College • Debbie Friese Realtor, Iron Valley Real Estate

Investing in Our Sanctuary | *Facilities and Access*

Thoughtful improvements to Lacawac's buildings, trails and satellite sanctuaries protect the visitor experience while expanding the capacity for research, education and public use.

2025 Improvements



Constructed the William E. Chatlos Education Pavilion, creating a dedicated covered setting for outdoor learning and gatherings.



Added showers to the Coachman's House bathrooms, improving amenities for overnight visitors and program participants.



Completed upgrades and installed new signage at Browning Beaver Meadow Sanctuary, strengthening orientation and interpretation.

These investments are more than construction projects:

they create new ways for people to explore, learn and belong!

2026 Improvements *& initiatives June 30, 2026*



Replaced the Lake Lacawac boardwalk to support safe passage and protect sensitive habitat.



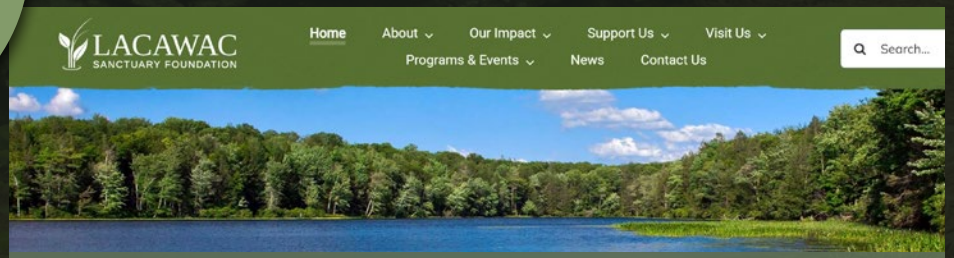
Built the Patrick Center Cabin, expanding the site's accommodation capacity and honoring an influential freshwater ecologist.



Added parking spaces and signage at Price Simpson Sanctuary, improving the visitor arrival experience.



Received a Veterans Trust Fund grant for four all-terrain wheelchairs and scooters, making outdoor experiences accessible to veterans with mobility challenges.



Advanced the redesign of Lacawac's website to improve access to visitor information, programs and ways to support the organization.

Environmental Education | *Curiosity in Action*

Lacawac's education team translates ecology, earth science and environmental stewardship into hands-on experiences for children, teachers and families. Students investigate habitats, water quality and the relationships between living systems, often in settings where science can be observed rather than simply described.

In spring 2026, Lacawac recorded nine classroom programs and 22 field trips, reaching a combined 1,996 students. Public programming and seasonal camps provided additional opportunities for community learning.

These spring figures are a defined program snapshot, not an 18-month total.







STEM access and leadership

LeadHER in STEM and the **Girls in STEM Symposium** connect young women with scientists, role models and pathways to careers in science and technology. Related initiatives include mentorship opportunities and field-based learning. Ignite STEM initiatives seek to bring accessible science education to Title I schools in northeastern Pennsylvania. In October 2025 over 300 students and teachers attended the return of the Girls in STEM Symposium.

PLEON | *Citizen Science for Healthier Lakes*

Lacawac's Pocono Lakes Ecological Observatory Network (PLEON) brings together lake communities, volunteers, and researchers to support consistent, science-based monitoring and protect northeastern Pennsylvania's freshwater resources. During the field season, PLEON monitored 21 lakes in partnership with 11 lake associations, completing 29 site visits and eight additional laboratory analysis sessions. Two college interns gained valuable hands-on research experience, while new lake partnerships expanded the program's reach.





The 2026 Lake School

Held June 5–7, welcomed 16 participants representing 11 lakes, including four new lakes joining PLEON. Participants gained practical knowledge of lake ecology, water quality, and monitoring techniques.

The Lake Wallenpaupack Citizen Science Program

In 2025 the program engaged nine community volunteers and two students, completing eight monitoring visits around the lake. PLEON also hosted four public educational events, including a five-year review of the Citizen Science Program, a Lake Appreciation Month paddle, and two presentations on harmful algal blooms.

Through research, education, and community partnerships, PLEON continues to empower residents to better understand, monitor, and protect our region's lakes for future generations.



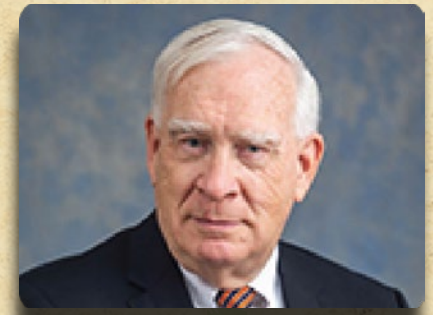
With Gratitude | *Leadership and Community*

Lacawac's impact is made possible by its Board of Trustees, staff, scientific partners, volunteers, foundations, businesses, donors and the many families who participate in its programs. Their shared belief in research, education and preservation makes every accomplishment possible.

Executives



Peter Paul Olszewski, Jr. Esq.
Chair



Jack Spall, Esq.
Vice Chair



Mary Ellen Bentler
Treasurer



William Leishear
Secretary

Members at Large



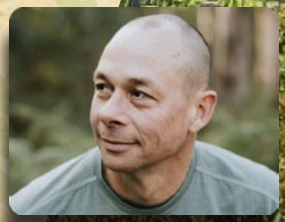
Phil Hobson



Dr. Kathleen Sottile



Emily Grillo



Chad Reed-Watres



Milton D. Roegner



David Velinsky, Ph.D



Terri Marcellus



Genevieve Reese



Dr. Mark Peterson

An Invitation to Invest in the Future

Sixty years ago, a commitment to conservation created a sanctuary. Today, every gift helps protect its remarkable natural resources, inspire the next generation of scientists and stewards, and make meaningful outdoor experiences possible for more people.

Celebrate the past. Invest in the future. Support Lacawac Sanctuary Foundation.

lacawac.org | **Lake Ariel, Pennsylvania**







LACAWAC SANCTUARY

Lacawac c.1960


60 Years of Discovery.
A Future *Worth* Protecting.
LACAWAC
SANCTUARY FOUNDATION