

The Wilderness Center Announces Staff Awards and Appointments

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – (March 24, 2021) Wilmot, OH - The Wilderness Center is pleased to announce the following awards, additions and appointments to our staff.

With the launch of TWC's Backyard Habitat Initiative, TWC is excited to invite more community members to join in efforts to steward the land around us - specifically those lands in our own backyards! Through this program, TWC will focus on educating and supporting our community to make small changes at home that collectively, over time, will have big impacts. **Lynda Price**, who has been with TWC for 25 years, will move into the newly created position of Backyard Habitat Program Lead. Lynda will be responsible for leading a variety of science-based Backyard Habitat and native plant programs for people of all ages, creating a Backyard Habitat Certification program, and managing TWC's native plant greenhouse.

Tiffany Leeper has been appointed to the position of Development Coordinator. In this role she will coordinate all development campaigns, sponsorships, fundraising events and donor relations. Tiffany's past experience has included positions with North Union Farmers Market, Wooster Local Foods Cooperative, United Way of Wayne and Holmes Counties, Alaska Conservation Foundation, and Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association. Her knowledge of nonprofit management and enthusiasm for conservation and sustainability will make her a valuable asset to the organization.

TWC Consulting Forester **Adam Beichler** was recently named as the Ohio Forestry Association's Outstanding Individual in Private Industry. Adam was singled out for recognition due to his work with Cleveland Metroparks, Holden Forests and Gardens and the Ohio Division of Forestry. TWC Consulting Forestry assisted in the creation of high-profile demonstration sites to model the benefits of responsible tree harvest as a management tool to maintain forest health and sustainability. Adam has led multiple tours through the sites to demonstrate how a properly-marked sustainable timber harvest should look when finished, striving to get this valuable information about conservation out to the general public and to change the narrative around resource management in northeast Ohio.

TWC Conservation Manager **Gary Popotnik** was invited to serve on the Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership for Biodiversity (LEAP) Conservation Fund Committee. LEAP is a consortium of organizations operating within a wide spectrum of conservation missions, but sharing a common goal: to enhance the biodiversity of our habitats and ecosystems. The LEAP Conservation Fund was established in 2009 to finance projects that promote and protect our region's biodiversity. The goal of the Conservation Fund is to attract funds for conservation projects from sources not previously available to our individual members and to distribute these funds through a collaborative, community driven process. Through his involvement, Popotnik will be working to promote projects that could have a vital and lasting effect on the health of our region.

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About The Wilderness Center

Founded in 1964, The Wilderness Center is dedicated to connecting our community with nature, educating people of all ages and conserving natural resources. Through the generous support of private donors and foundations, The Wilderness Center offers a wide range of ecological programming for all ages and protects approximately 4,000 acres of natural land across the state of Ohio.