



Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission

2015 Annual Report

Our Mission

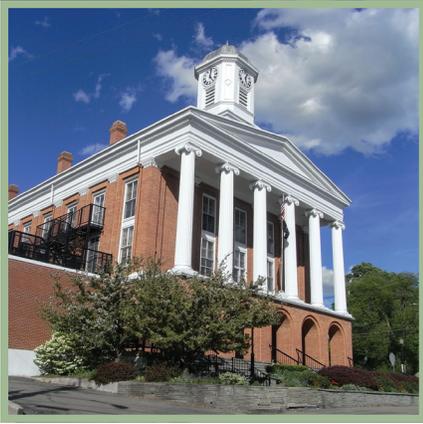
To help businesses expand their markets,
generate employment, improve the local economy,
and plan for the future development
of the Northern Tier region.

Our Vision

To be a leader in developing people,
businesses, and communities
for a globally competitive region.



Cover photo:
Star Lake, Susquehanna, PA
(Sarah Ross)



Scenes from Susquehanna County

April 2016

Throughout 2015, the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) continued to work to connect businesses, employers, and residents with opportunities for sustainable growth and development. With strong partnerships and continued collaboration, this year marked another year of success in promoting value-added development and building strong communities and businesses.

As industries continue to work to do business better and more efficiently, the Northern Tier region has seen the development of value-added natural gas utilization. Natural gas powered generation facilities in several areas of the region are under construction or became operational in 2015.

The Panda Power Plant in Wysox (Bradford County) is an 829-megawatt natural gas-fueled electric generating station. Once operational, the plant is expected to supply the power needs of up to one million homes and produce an estimated economic impact of \$5.9 billion in Northern Pennsylvania.

IMG Midstream has also been working in several locations in the Northern Tier to design, construct, and operate distributed power generation facilities. The company uses local low-pressure natural gas to create and deliver electricity to local substations, with a goal of increasing power generation efficiency and reducing emissions. IMG's Roundtop facility, located in Auburn Township on SR 267 adjacent to the Penelec substation, became operational in late 2015 and is one of several projects IMG Midstream has planned in the Northern Tier region. At full capacity, the site can provide 19.9 megawatts of electricity, which is enough to provide power to more than 13,000 homes.

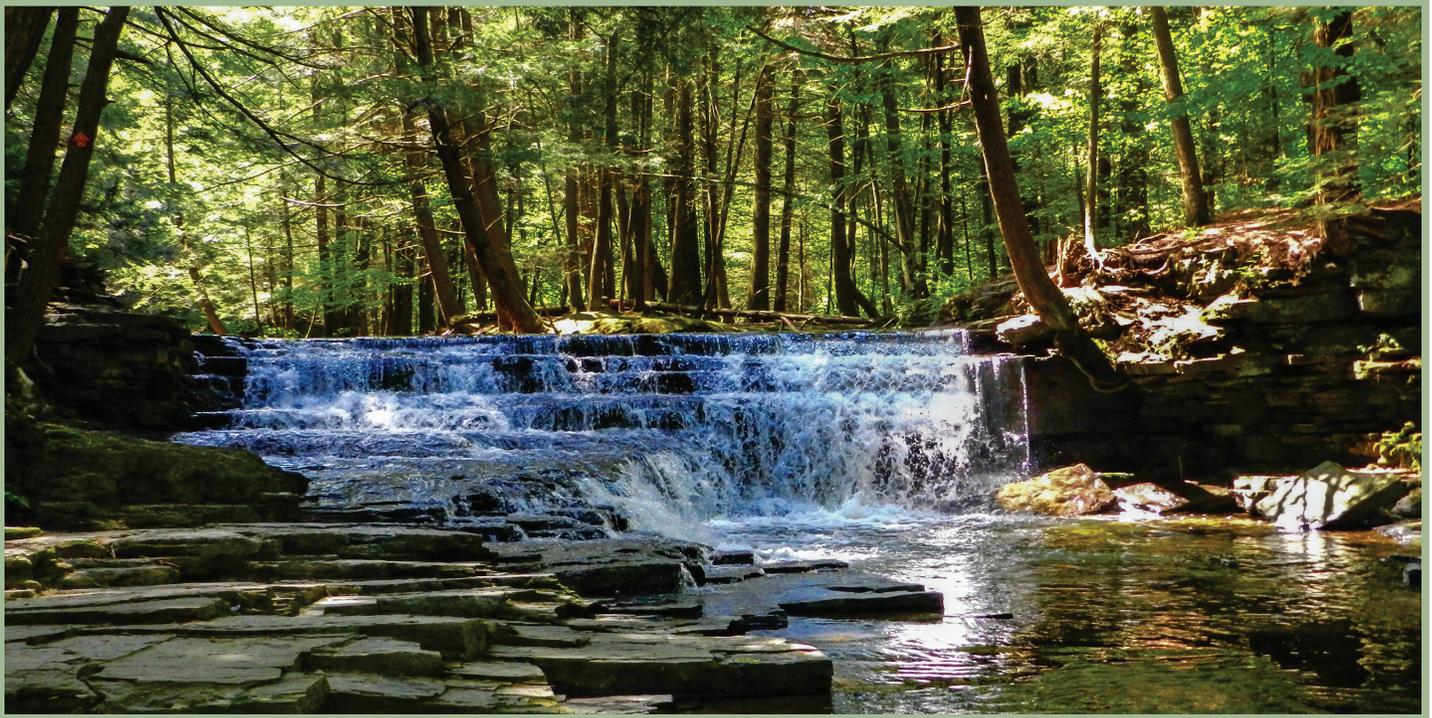
In addition to value-added development, NTRPDC has continued to work with businesses, schools, and residents to better understand and respond to the workforce needs in the region. In 2015, the NTRPDC Workforce Development Board operated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law in July 2014. The WIOA has strengthened relationships among workforce development practitioners, local employers, and training providers, resulting in more efficient implementation and operation of training programs. NTRPDC continues to work with local and regional workforce development partners to build the local workforce to meet employer needs. NTRPDC was awarded funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry for a Business-Education Partnership program, which brought career counselors into participating schools to help connect students to employers and also provide information on career opportunities throughout the region.

Once again, we thank our staff, Executive Board, Full Commission, and Advisory Committee members for their dedication and hard work during 2015. Their commitment and strong work ethic continues to move the Northern Tier forward.

Kevin D. Abrams
Executive Director
Northern Tier Regional Planning
and Development Commission

Alan M. Hall
Chair
NTRPDC Executive Board
Susquehanna County Commissioner

2015 Executive Board



Salt Springs State Park, Susquehanna County (Sharon Young)

Chair

Alan Hall
Susquehanna County Commissioner

First Vice Chairperson

Darla Bortz
Sullivan County Commissioner

Second Vice Chairperson

Roger Bunn
Tioga County Commissioner

Secretary

Daryl Miller
Bradford County Commissioner

Treasurer

Tom Henry
Wyoming County Commissioner

Ed Bustin
Bradford County Commissioner

Doug McLinko
Bradford County Commissioner

Bob Getz
Sullivan County Commissioner

Wylie Norton
Sullivan County Commissioner

Mike Giangrieco
Susquehanna County Commissioner

MaryAnn Warren
Susquehanna County Commissioner

Erick Coolidge
Tioga County Commissioner

Mark Hamilton
Tioga County Commissioner

Tom Henry
Wyoming County Commissioner

Judy Mead
Wyoming County Commissioner

Ronald Williams
Wyoming County Commissioner

Staci Covey
President, Guthrie Troy Community
Hospital

Tom Freeman
President, Betterment Organization of
Mansfield, Inc.

Craig Harting
CEO, Sullivan County Rural Electric
Cooperative, Inc.

Mike Narcavage
Community Relations Manager,
Southwestern Energy

Jody Place
Area Manager, Penelec
(A First Energy Company)

Rick Soden
Vice President, Pennstar Bank

Advisory Committees

Economic Development

Lynnelle Bennett
Robert Blair
Dan Close
William Dovin
Craig Eccher
Karen Evangelisti
Brian Hoffman
Tony Liguori
Chelsea Myers
Robert Neira
Lindsey Sikorski
Gina Suydam
Bobbi Jo Turner
Tony Ventello
Cathy Voda

Rural Area Transportation

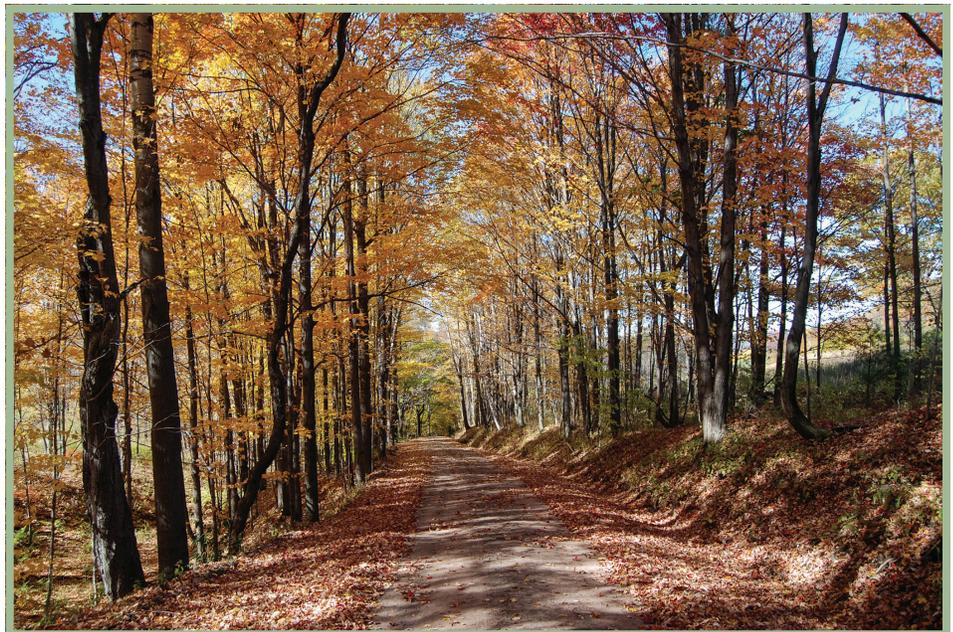
Lynnelle Bennett
Rick Biery
Bob Getz
Alan Hall
Mark Hamilton
Thomas Henry
Mike Hufnagel
Fred Jugan
Fred LaVancher
Rudy Mattes
Doug McLinko
Jean Ruhf
Ray Stolinias
Jim Weaver
Leonard Wheatley

Workforce Development Board

Sam Anderson
Robert Blair
Colleen Engler
Daria Fish
Tom Freeman
Amy Gilbert
Craig Harting
Lauren Hotaling
Jackie Johnson
Elena Kilpatrick
Mike Narcavage
Heather Nelson
Jody Place
Karen Russell
Lindsey Sikorski
Elaine Stalfa
Ron Vogel
Linda Walsh
Deb Wivell

Local Loan Review

Peggy Black
Robert Blair
Matt Dougherty
Joe Ferretti
Fred Fiester
Anthony Gabello
Keith Kline
James Rogers
Ryan Satalin
Richard Schwoebel
Rick Soden
Ronald Williams
Sue Williams
Jeffrey Wilson
Keith Yurgosky



Tioga County (Robert J. Blair)

Funding Sources July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Federal		
Appalachian Regional Commission		Federal Total \$3,412,672
Enterprise Development	\$285,000	
Local Development District	\$103,277	
U.S. Department of Commerce		
Economic Development Administration	\$84,287	
"Make it in America" (MIIA)	\$23,501	
U.S. Department of Defense		
Procurement Technical Assistance	\$62,082	
U.S. Department of Transportation		
Federal Highway Administration	\$293,803	
U.S. Department of Labor		
Workforce Investment Act	\$1,863,626	
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	\$697,096	
State		
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation		State Total \$652,912
Rural Transportation Program	\$26,725	
Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development		
Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP)	\$383,681	
Discovered & Developed in PA (D2PA)	\$22,895	
Office of International Business Development (OIBD)	\$45,439	
Online Broadband & Technology Training (OBTT)	\$26,737	
Municipal Assistance Program (MAP)	\$7,345	
Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry	\$140,090	
Local		
County Contributions	\$60,000	Local Total \$90,676
In-Kind Contributions	\$30,676	
Total Program Funds:		\$4,156,260

In 2015, NTRPDC helped create and retain jobs in the Northern Tier by providing low-interest loans to qualifying businesses seeking to expand their operations.

Borrower	Jobs Retained	Jobs Created	NTRPDC Loan Amount	Private Funds Leveraged	Other Public Funds Leveraged
Back Street Dreams, Inc.	22	1	\$50,000	\$105,000	\$50,000
Blue Harvest Grille	-	4	\$25,000	\$110,000	\$25,000
Campbell Creek Enterprises, LLC	34	-	\$50,000	\$573,825	\$50,000
Holdren Precision Machining, Inc.	10	-	\$35,000	\$4,000	-
Mark's Brothers Restaurant & Lounge	-	12	\$25,000	\$25,000	-
Mazy's Hair Design	1	-	\$10,000	\$1,000	-
MSPI Enterprises, LLC	6.5	2	\$100,000	\$499,000	\$150,000
PA Quarried Bluestone	7	1	\$100,000	\$145,974	-
Rakoski Enterprises, Inc.	7	-	\$100,000	\$465,000	\$85,000
Solid Ground Services	8	-	\$100,000	\$258,000	-
Song of the Bread Bakery	-	3	\$40,000	\$45,000	-



Krystle Bristol, President of Solid Ground Services, with her husband Kyle Bristol, Vice President.

Loan Program Success Story: Solid Ground Services, Inc., Troy, Bradford County

In Fall 2014, the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) met with Krystle Bristol, who was in the process of developing a business plan for Solid Ground Services, Inc., a start-up excavation and heavy equipment company in Troy. With SBDC assistance, Krystle completed a detailed and professional business plan that she could present to lenders to help secure financing for equipment purchases. The plan included a comprehensive working accounting document to track factors such as unit costs, billable/non-billable hours, fuel, licensing, and other costs to monitor productivity, profit, and trends. In 2015, NTRPDC closed a \$100,000 loan to Solid Ground Services. That funding, combined with additional bank financing, enabled the business to purchase additional equipment and expand. The business now employs eight people.

In addition, the NTRPDC Procurement Technical Assistance Center has assisted Solid Ground Services in targeting several niche markets, and guided Krystle through the process of becoming a certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. The certification opens opportunities in the government contracting market.

Community and Economic Development

“Many communities have project ideas but aren’t sure how to evaluate a project’s feasibility and benefits, obtain funding, and advance it efficiently. NTRPDC assists communities in taking projects from concept to completion.”

Rachel Hauser
Economic Development
Program Manager



Roundtop Park, Bradford County

In 2015, several Northern Tier community and economic development projects moved closer to completion.

NTRPDC worked with Bradford County, the Progress Authority, Guthrie Healthcare, and other partners to secure funding for a county-wide groundwater study. Using a random sampling technique and working with volunteer well owners, the study will test water from private domestic supply wells in Bradford County to establish updated baseline water quality data. Wells are randomly selected with the goal being to sample wells from throughout the county.

The study is necessary because most of the publicly available water quality data for Bradford County is from samples collected more than 30 years ago, and does not include measurements of certain chemicals that may be found in wells today. The objective of the study is to characterize the current chemical quality of groundwater from shallow freshwater aquifers used by private domestic supply wells. Well owners who choose to participate in

this study will have the opportunity to learn what is in their water as well as ways in which they can address any water quality issues or concerns. Reliable baseline water quality data is also important to several industries, health care institutions, and other entities. The study will use the same methods and approach as ongoing groundwater monitoring efforts in Lycoming, Wayne, and Pike counties.

Also in 2015, the Bradford County Commissioners developed an Act 13 grant program to assist the county in strategically awarding its Act 13 funds. The grant program opened in early 2015 and NTRPDC assisted several communities and non-profit organizations in applying for funding. Among those, Troy Heritage Farm and Museum was awarded grant funding for two projects: improving accessibility and drainage as well as restoring the historical doctor’s office. The Heritage Farm and Museum is an important historical resource of the Northern Tier and educates visitors on the area’s heritage.



Main Street, Mansfield, Tioga County
(Robert J. Blair)



Westfield Business Park groundbreaking, Tioga County



Troy Heritage Farm and Museum, Bradford County

2015 Grant-Writing Assistance Provided by NTRPDC

Project	Amount Requested	Total Project Cost
Marsh Creek Greenway Development	\$455,000	\$4,000,000
Athens Township Roundtop Park Expansion	\$330,000	\$834,000
Choconut Township Automated Red Light Enforcement Project	\$9,405	\$9,405
Westfield Business Park Redevelopment Project	\$1,500,000	\$3,000,000
Forest City Industrial Park Natural Gas Extension Project	\$201,000	\$250,000
WYCCC Tunkhannock Natural Gas Extension Project	\$3,000,000	\$5,000,000
Bradford County Groundwater Study	\$173,250	\$369,750
Warren Township Storage Shed	\$33,420	\$53,420
Warren Township Dirt and Gravel Roads	\$26,000	\$187,320
Valley Playland Redevelopment Project	\$405,069	\$561,231
Troy Heritage Farm and Museum Accessibility and Drainage	\$15,000	\$25,000
Troy Heritage Farm and Museum Doctor's Office Restoration	\$12,500	\$22,500
Westfield Business Park Creek Relocation Project	\$100,000	\$295,622
Lemon-Tunkhannock Township Sewer Authority Act 537 Sewer Project	\$405,223	\$405,223

Partnerships for Economic Performance (PREP)



Participants in MSPI loan closing, Tioga County

Working Together Toward Success

PREP is Pennsylvania's statewide network of economic development service providers working together to deliver vital business assistance services across the 10 regions of the commonwealth. These experts provide one-on-one counseling, specialized workshops, online training, and financial incentives to help businesses grow. In the Northern Tier, the PREP network of partners includes the Progress Authority, Tioga County Development Corporation, Sullivan County Planning and Development, Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) from the University of Scranton and Wilkes University, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center, Penn State's PennTAP, and NTRPDC, which serves as the PREP regional coordinator.

Success Stories: Helping Local Businesses

MSPI Enterprises LLC, Elkland Borough, Tioga County

In November, Tioga County Development Corporation (TCDC) and NTRPDC closed loans with MSPI Enterprises LLC. The TCDC loan of \$150,000 and the NTRPDC loan of \$100,000, coupled with private financing from Northwest Savings Bank and additional company funds, helped construct a 12,000-square-foot manufacturing building in Elkland. The new building allowed the company to consolidate operations into one location. MSPI currently employs five full-time employees and plans to add two employees during the next three years.

MSPI Enterprises LLC is a wholesaler of mufflers and exhausts systems, exhaust pipes for heavy duty trucks and buses, and customized steel tube bending for use in fabricating stair railings. They distribute to approximately 25 states, Canada, and Mexico, and are active with both the NTRPDC Procurement and Export Assistance programs.

Wyoming County Chamber Challenge

The Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce worked with its Board of Directors as well as PREP partners to plan and coordinate a Chamber Challenge business plan competition—similar to the television show “Shark Tank.” As part of the competition, entrepreneurs were invited to submit their business idea to a panel of judges. Participants also had the opportunity to network with each other, develop a business plan, market their business, and plan for the future of their business through in-person training from the University of Scranton SBDC.

There were 15 applicants; \$6,000 in cash awards was divided among the top three winners.

The grand prize went to Chippy White Table, a mother-daughter team that will rent out vintage supplies such as china, tablecloths, jars, bottles, vases, and furniture for weddings, dinner parties, etc. Second place was awarded to Krypton Design, LLC dba Kraken Boardsports, a company that develops action sports products. Third place was awarded to Off Road Additions, LLC, a local business providing quality automotive, work site, and off-road LED lighting and accessories at an affordable price.



Bluestone Brewing Company, Sayre, Bradford County

Bluestone Brewing Company, LLC, Sayre, Bradford County

With the goal of becoming the “premier brewpub destination in the Twin Tiers,” Brady Liechty and his business partners worked with the University of Scranton SBDC to develop a business plan for Bluestone Brewing Company, LLC; better understand their target market; and develop a financial projection analysis. Funding for their start-up came from Peoples State Bank and PREP partner Central Bradford Progress Authority, with a total project cost of \$575,000.

“Our goal for PREP continues to be working together with our partners to foster a ‘no wrong door’ approach for the delivery of business assistance services in our region.”

Kim Barnes
Deputy Director
Community and Economic Development

SBDC consultants assisted with Bluestone Brewing Company’s social media pre-launch marketing and continuity planning. The SBDC continues to work with Bluestone Brewing Company to develop ideas for craft brew marketing in the region and tourism signage.

Value-Added Natural Gas Development

In September, the PREP partners brought together more than 30 industry leaders and public officials for the Northern Tier Shale Gas Network roundtable. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) Commissioner Pam Witmer attended and discussed the PUC’s role in natural gas distribution in our region and beyond.

The progression of shale gas development in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties continues to have a profound impact on our region—now and into the foreseeable future. A critical piece to the sustainable development of our region is promoting value-added natural gas use and utilizing the resource here locally to promote sound and efficient development.

Helping Businesses Grow and Expand

To help spread the word about its services, NTRPDC business services and workforce development staff conducted workshops in each of the region’s five counties in October and November. The workshops brought together PREP partners, businesses, educational institutions, and other organizations to discuss services available for businesses in the region. NTRPDC staff highlighted finance, export, procurement, and workforce development assistance available.



Participants discuss government procurement opportunities at a regional outreach workshop in Susquehanna County.

Municipal Services

“NTRPDC helps connect municipalities with each other and with regional and state resources to support efficient operations and new opportunities.”

Ethan Sexton
Regional Planner



Above: Equipment shows give municipal officials an opportunity to examine equipment in person and interact with vendors.

Below: Municipal employees attended a bonus training session held in May to discuss details of the COSTARS cooperative purchasing system.



Equipment Shows

NTRPDC's 2015 equipment shows once again brought together municipal officials and equipment vendors, benefitting both groups. The Susquehanna/Wyoming equipment show was held July 30 at Lazy Brook Park in Wyoming County. Approximately 300 visitors and 51 vendors attended the event. The 2015 Tioga/Bradford show was held August 27 at the Troy Fairgrounds in Bradford County, attracting 280 attendees and 39 vendors. Vendors showcased equipment and networked with attendees; municipal officials had the opportunity to evaluate equipment in person and discuss their municipality's needs with vendors.

Local Technical Assistance Program

NTRPDC coordinated nine Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) classes in 2015, which provided training to 81 municipal officials. LTAP is a Federal Highway Administration initiative that updates municipalities on best practices in managing transportation infrastructure such as roads and bridges. 2015 classes included:

- Drainage: The Key to Roads That Last
- Unpaved and Gravel Roads – Common Maintenance Practices
- Work Zone (Temporary) Traffic Control
- Bridge Maintenance and Inspection
- Signs and Safety Features for Bridges/Culverts
- Traffic Safety Development Plan for Local Roads

Municipal Summit

The Annual Northern Tier Municipal Summit convened more than 70 municipal officials and employees to discuss their needs and learn about current issues affecting municipalities. The half-day seminar connected municipalities with information on the new floodplain boundaries, implications of Act 89 of 2013, and advantages of Pennsylvania's COSTARS cooperative purchasing program. Attendees included municipal officials, local elected officials, other local government and public service entities, as well as local and regional economic development professionals.

Don Free, PennDOT District 3-0 Municipal Services Supervisor, discussed the Act 89 transportation funding legislation. Jim Weaver, Tioga County Planning Director, gave an overview of the new floodplain boundaries and the implications for residents and future development.

Kim Bullivant, Marketing Manager for COSTARS, delivered the keynote address, speaking on how municipalities can use this resource to efficiently and effectively award contracts. Suppliers can register with COSTARS to have the opportunity to bid on statewide or COSTAR-exclusive contracts. Municipalities can use this cooperative purchasing program to competitively bid their projects.

Because of the interest generated at the summit for information on COSTARS, NTRPDC set up a separate subsequent training in May for municipalities on the specifics of the COSTARS program. Fourteen municipal employees attended this training and were provided one-on-one time with Bullivant to discuss the program and how it could assist their municipality.

Procurement – Government Contracting

The NTRPDC Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) works with businesses throughout the region, connecting them with opportunities to sell their product or service to state and/or federal government entities. The PTAC worked with 24 new businesses in 2015 and provided 376 follow-up counseling sessions.

In 2015 Procurement Program Manager Laurie Lentz earned Level 1 Federal Contractor Certification, completing training on federal contracting and the process of bidding on—and winning—contracts. “Many small businesses don’t have the time or resources to devote to navigating the world of government contracting. By obtaining Level 1 certification, I can better help small businesses make the best and most efficient use of their time and get access to contracts that will help expand their business,” said Lentz. The four-level certification program is coordinated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) and the Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (APTAC), with the assistance of the

Defense Acquisition University (DAU).

Lentz also trained and became a Certified Verification Counselor through the Center for Verification and Evaluation (CVE). Managed under the U.S. Department of Veteran’s Affairs, this verification authorizes the PTAC to assist business owners in verifying as a Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business and/or a Veteran-Owned Small Business. With this verification, these businesses owners can qualify for VA set-aside contracts.

Assistance provided by the PTAC includes guidance on:

- Dun & Bradstreet registrations
- System for Award Management (SAM) registrations
- PA Supplier Portal registrations
- Marketing reports on prime contractors and government contracting officers
- Applications for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise certification
- Procurement histories and government forecasts for specific products

“NTRPDC’s PTAC assists Northern Tier businesses in expanding their markets by selling their products or services to the government.”

Laurie Lentz
Procurement Program Manager

2015 Procurement Activities in the Northern Tier Region	
Initial Counseling Sessions	24
Follow-up Counseling Sessions	376
Outreach/Training Events	7
Federal Prime Contract Awards	\$1,557,047
Federal Subcontract Awards	\$4,671,647
State and Local Prime Contract Awards	\$1,735,462
Total 2015 Contract Awards	\$7,964,156



Procurement Success Story: Fowler’s Coal

Joseph Fowler, owner of Fowler’s Coal, LLC (New Albany), is a service-disabled veteran who wanted to achieve Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) certification through the Certification for Verification and Evaluation (CVE). As he began to navigate that process he learned that the NTRPDC PTAC was a certified counselor and could take him step-by-step through that process.

“As a recently retired service-disabled veteran with more than 20 years of service, it is critical that I use every tool available to me to grow and sustain my small business,” said Fowler. “I was astonished to find that a CVE expert was available in my rural location. Laurie Lentz made the time to meet with me and assist me with setting up all the required accounts, gathering documentation, and guiding me through the painstaking process of getting verified. I was pleased to find it was not the grueling procedure I imagined it would be. Thank you!”

The entire process took about six weeks, after which Fowler had the opportunity to bid on VA set-aside contracts.

International Business Development

“NTRPDC assists local businesses in reaching international markets to expand sales of their products and services.”

Cynthia Traore
Export Program Manager



Prospective students learn about Keystone College and other Pennsylvania institutions at the Taiwan Education Fair.

Throughout 2015, NTRPDC’s Export Program continued to work with and help local businesses expand their reach to an international market. A variety of services—from market research to export readiness to in-county assistance—is available. Program client Mansfield University says, “Appreciate all of the help...the program is knowledgeable and stays in touch with me.”

Company Highlights: What types of Northern Tier businesses are involved in exporting?

Rocky Ridge Maple (Middlebury Center)

Rocky Ridge Maple, a maple product producer that is already exporting to Norway, participated via catalog in the Seoul Korea Food Show. The authorized trade representative in Korea met with 18 companies on their behalf. Rocky Ridge Maple has shipped

a sample container of maple syrup to Korea to test the market.

Keystone College (LaPlume and Towanda)

Keystone College participated via catalog in the Taiwan Education Fair. The in-country authorized trade representative introduced the college to 54 prospective students and their families. The trade representative also translated a fact sheet about Keystone College into Chinese.

Cummings Lumber (Troy)

Representatives of Cummings Lumber traveled to China twice: once on a foreign business trip and once to exhibit at the trade show SilvaWood. Cummings Lumber also participated in a catalog show in India.

Snake Creek Lasers (Friendsville)

Snake Creek Lasers, a local laser manufacturer, sold its first commercial use cryogenic laser to the Russian

Academy of Science for molecular scientific research. During the process, the Russian trade representative provided translation and a foreign company background check. Snake Creek Lasers received a Market Access Grant to travel to Russia in April and May to train the end user.

2015 Export Program Clients

Number of Local Businesses	32
Total Export Sales Reported	\$20.5 million
Number of Countries Exported to	20
Top Five Countries Exported to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ China ▪ Canada ▪ India ▪ Vietnam ▪ Saudi Arabia

CORE PA Global is an initiative established to increase the visibility of a 53-county footprint of Pennsylvania to international and domestic investors and reshoring prospects. NTRPDC is proud to be partnering with over 50 economic development organizations, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the Team Pennsylvania Foundation on this project. CORE PA Global is 53 counties working together as one to attract, retain, and grow business and industry in our region.

Global Petroleum Show

In June, NTRPDC's Kim Barnes and Cynthia Traore attended the Global Petroleum Show (GPS) in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. As one of the largest energy events in the world, GPS brings together oil and gas producers, companies, and suppliers as well as economic development professionals. Approximately 63,000 people from 95 countries attended the show, with 2,000 companies exhibiting. NTRPDC also partnered with Williams Companies, which has an operation in Calgary and a presence in Northeastern Pennsylvania, to deliver a presentation on the benefits of doing business in Pennsylvania.



NTRPDC's Kim Barnes and Cynthia Traore represented the Northern Tier at the Global Petroleum Show in Calgary, Alberta.



Alex Fried of Proctor & Gamble, Wyoming County, discusses natural gas opportunities with journalists on a FAM tour in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Barnes and Traore joined other professionals from Pennsylvania and met with companies located in Calgary who are either doing business now or plan to do business in the Marcellus shale region. These meetings provided a valuable opportunity to learn about each business and discuss the benefits of doing business in Pennsylvania.

FAM Tour for International Journalists

In addition to GPS, a familiarization (FAM) tour was held in October in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The tour provided an opportunity for journalists from publications worldwide to learn more about oil and gas industry development in Pennsylvania. Four journalists attended, representing Canada, Australia, Texas, and Georgia.

The 3½-day tour included 7 site visits and 11 meal briefings featuring a total of 15 speakers. On the tour, visitors learned about the oil and gas industry supply chain, foreign investors already in Pennsylvania, as well as features that make the Northern Tier attractive to oil- and gas-related businesses. These include our developing infrastructure, the local workforce and education centers, the base of producers in the region, and the growth of value-added natural gas development and use locally. Two of the speakers were companies with operations in the Northern Tier region: IMG Midstream and Proctor & Gamble. These companies had the opportunity to share their story, how they do business, and how they have capitalized on natural gas development to expand their business and support the local economy.

The CORE PA initiative establishes a collaborative regional framework to support and enhance an environment that is ripe for reshoring by 1) building well-connected networks of industrial clusters that foster efficiencies, collaboration, and innovation between firms along supply chains and value streams; 2) fostering a collaborative environment between manufacturers and colleges and other research institutions that focuses not only on developing new technologies, but also on product development and process innovation; 3) building a strong pipeline of middle-skilled and highly-skilled manufacturing workers; and 4) enhancing the region's visibility to potential investors in international and domestic arenas.

Business-Education Partnership

“Receiving the BEP grant has allowed NTRPDC to provide career outreach to more than 1,300 Northern Tier high school students.”

Jody McCarty
Workforce Development
Program Manager

Participating Schools

- Athens Area High School
- Canton Area High School
- Montrose High School
- North Penn Liberty High School
- North Penn Mansfield High School
- Northeast Bradford High School
- Northern Tier Career Center
- Sullivan County High School
- Susquehanna Community High School
- Susquehanna County Career and Technology Center
- Towanda High School
- Troy Area Senior High School
- Wyalusing High School

In 2015, NTRPDC secured a Business-Education Partnership (BEP) grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry to provide career counseling and assistance in secondary schools across the Northern Tier. Every district was invited to participate in the pilot project, and 13 schools across the region agreed to be a part of the program.

Three counselors were hired by NTRPDC to meet with students and begin to identify and inventory interests, aptitudes, and strengths, and to complete career exploration activities. The counselors assist students in identifying career goals and determining pathways; older students are assisted with creating resumes and learning job search skills. The region’s students have been very receptive to this avenue of career counseling and are interested in exploring career information provided to them. Jerika Cummiskey, Patricia Chappell, and Renae Chamberlain, as the counselors, have met with more than 1,300 students this school year in the classroom or in a one-on-one environment.

One of the goals of the BEP is to educate and connect students to employers, businesses, and career opportunities available in the Northern Tier region. Career fairs provide first-hand knowledge to students about various local occupations and businesses. As a part of this program, NTRPDC and the BEP counselors have worked in conjunction with participating schools and many other partners to organize manufacturing and health care career days in Susquehanna County, a health care career day in Tioga County, and a college career day at Liberty High School.



Students learn about careers in physical therapy in the Northern Tier.

These events have brought more than 1,100 students together to learn from employers about the careers and opportunities available in the region. With the project running through the 2015-2016 school year, there are upcoming events planned in Bradford, Sullivan, and Wyoming counties.

“The Business-Education Partnership has been a huge success as a regional project,” said Jody McCarty, NTRPDC Workforce Development Program Manager. “The program has exceeded expectations to bring together school districts, businesses, and the workforce system to help ensure that students are aware of career opportunities throughout the region, and understand what is expected of them and what steps are necessary for those careers. The BEP enables students to make informed career choices and pursue educational pathways to succeed in the workforce. A great deal of the credit for the BEP’s success goes to our counselors.”

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board administered the grant, with oversight from the regional Workforce Development Program Manager, Youth Council, and partnerships with employers and counselors.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act



Congressman Glenn Thompson, who was instrumental in passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, is recognized at a February 2015 event.

“The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board, housed at NTRPDC, used the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 to provide expanded workforce development opportunities for both our business and individual customers in the Northern Tier.”

Frank Thompson
Deputy Director for
Workforce Development

The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which has guided workforce development activities across the U.S., was replaced by new legislation in late 2014. In July 2015, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) took effect and was implemented by the workforce development boards in each region. The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board, housed at NTRPDC, used provisions of the WIOA to bolster workforce development in the region. The WIOA strengthens relationships among workforce development practitioners, local employers, and training providers, resulting in more efficient implementation and operation of training programs.

One highlight of 2015 was the February gathering of local workforce development boards, businesses, educational institutions, and economic

development organizations to honor Congressman Glenn Thompson for his work in the development and enactment of the WIOA.

At the event, attendees discussed with Congressman Thompson their perspectives on the skills gap that often exists with a newly hired employee. Thompson sought input from both workforce development practitioners and employers regarding how the WIOA could support efforts to ramp up the skills of job-seekers and new hires to meet employer needs and expectations.

“Congressman Thompson has served on a local workforce development board and therefore understands the critical importance of providing relevant services to both our local employers and residents. The roundtable was

a great opportunity to discuss training needs, opportunities, and challenges that the workforce system and local businesses face with regard to the local workforce. Only with open lines of communication will we be able to better meet the workforce development needs of our region,” said Frank Thompson, NTRPDC Deputy Director for Workforce Development, the administrative entity for the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board.

Congressman Glenn Thompson represents Pennsylvania’s 5th district, which comprises five Workforce Areas. He sits on the U.S. House of Representatives Education and Workforce Committee, and sought input from Pennsylvania stakeholders for the legislation.

“In the Northern Tier, PA CareerLink® collaborates with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board to address workforce needs and match job-seekers with employers.”

Melissa Fleming
Workforce Development
Program Manager
PA CareerLink® Site Administrator



In 2015 PA CareerLink® continued its work to connect individuals with jobs in the Northern Tier, working closely with both employers and job-seekers. In May, PA CareerLink® exhibited at a Community Outreach Clinic in Towanda where representatives provided employment services and assisted attendees with their job searches. The clinic offered a wide array of learning opportunities from several exhibitors to address job search questions and help individuals better understand basic job requirements. In addition to the PA CareerLink® exhibit on employment services, attendees received information on the following from other exhibitors:

- Veterans claims
- Social Security claims
- Driver's license and ID questions
- Birth certificate questions
- Public welfare benefits

In addition to working one-on-one with job-seekers, PA CareerLink® sponsored unemployment compensation seminars throughout the region to guide employers through opening a UC claim with the Department of Labor and Industry's UC Service Center.

PA CareerLink® serves all five Northern Tier counties and provides services to both job-seekers and employers. Representatives can also help individuals utilize JobGateway, the Commonwealth's online job search posting system. PA CareerLink® staff is dedicated to providing resume writing assistance, support for job searches, coaching on interview techniques, and workshops on successful job searches. Employers work with PA CareerLink® to post available jobs and can conduct interviews and host job fairs at PA CareerLink® sites.

PA CareerLink® is comprised of partner agencies providing workforce development services in the region. As part of the Northern Tier Workforce Area, PA CareerLink® coordinates with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board to address workforce needs in the region. In the Northern Tier region, the comprehensive PA CareerLink® offices are located in Towanda and Wellsboro while affiliate sites are located in Dushore, Susquehanna, and Tunkhannock, ensuring accessibility to customers throughout the Northern Tier region.

Participants in one of several unemployment compensation seminars learned about opening a UC claim and had the opportunity to ask specific questions.



Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership

The NTRPDC Workforce Development Board (WDB) continued to provide needed training for health care employees in 2015. With funding from the Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership, the WDB was able to subsidize the training costs for 67 health care professionals in the region. Trainings included:

- Perfecting Patient Care (PPC)
- Building Strong Hiring and Employee Evaluation Practices through Values Matching
- Dementia Care and End of Life Training for Direct Care Workers
- Pennsylvania’s Approach to Impaired Nurses

In addition to these training opportunities, 50 health care professionals attended sessions on the PA Nurse Peer Assistance Program (PNAP) in May. The PNAP works with nurses and nursing students who struggle with addiction,

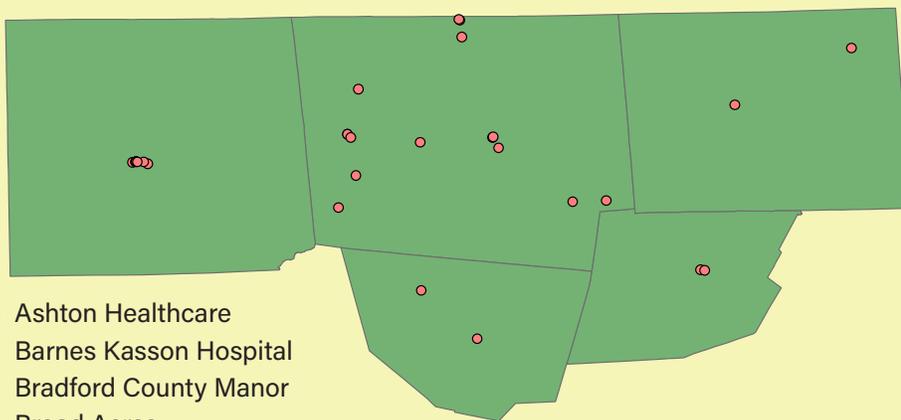
alcoholism, or a mental health disorder. Participants learned how to identify the incidence of and risk factors for addiction, recognize the signs and symptoms of addiction, comply with mandatory reporting, and understand how legal charges could affect a nurse’s ability to practice.

The Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership represents the Workforce Areas of the Northern Tier, Lackawanna, Luzerne/Schuylkill, and the Poconos. Sixty health care employers participate in the partnership, including every major health care facility in the Northern Tier. To date, worker training grant funding has been used to help upgrade the skills of more than 3,000 employees in the region, and annual health career fairs help youth better understand the vast career opportunities in the health care field.

“The NTRPDC Workforce Development Board subsidizes training for health care professionals in the Northern Tier.”

Jody McCarty
Workforce Development
Program Manager

Health Care Providers Participating in Subsidized Training



- Ashton Healthcare
- Barnes Kasson Hospital
- Bradford County Manor
- Broad Acres
- Carlton Senior Care & Rehabilitation Center
- Community Resources for Independence
- Darway Nursing Home
- Endless Mountains Health System
- Golden Living Center
- Greater Valley EMS
- Guthrie Clinic
- Guthrie Healthcare System
- Martha Lloyd Community Services
- Guthrie Towanda Memorial Hospital
- Mid-State Occupational Health Services
- ProCare Physical Therapy
- Sayre House
- Sherwood Personal Care Home
- Smith’s Personal Care Home
- Soldiers + Sailors Memorial Hospital
- Sylvan Ridge
- The Green Home
- The Highlands
- The Laurels Assisted Living
- Tunkhannock Manor
- Twin Oaks Personal Care Home
- Wellsboro Shared Home
- Wyalusing Valley Personal Care Home

Transportation

“NTRPDC works with PennDOT and regional partners to prioritize transportation needs that qualify for state and federal funding and administer those funds.”

Brian Baker
Regional Planning Program Manager



U.S. Route 15 near Blossburg (Tioga County)

As the Northern Tier’s Rural Planning Organization, NTRPDC works with PennDOT, regional and local partners, and stakeholders through the region’s Rural Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) to plan for and prioritize transportation projects throughout the region. NTRPDC leads biennial updates of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a list of roadway, bridge, and other projects expected to be undertaken within the next four years, based on anticipated state and federal funding levels. In our area, most projects involve repairs and rehabilitation of existing transportation infrastructure rather than new construction.

The current TIP covers projects that will be advanced between 2017 and 2020. Several projects are planned on U.S. Route 6, which runs through the region. Following are the total

amounts designated for transportation improvements in each county over the next four years:

- Bradford County – \$64,548,312
- Sullivan County – \$20,887,743
- Susquehanna County – \$36,878,770
- Tioga County – \$45,279,368
- Wyoming County – \$36,547,360

Highlights of Roadway and Bridge Projects Completed in 2015

Bradford County

U.S. Route 6 was lowered under the U.S. Route 220 bridge in Towanda to increase clearance for large trucks. The low bridge had been a safety issue for large vehicles traveling through Towanda and had caused traffic concerns as commercial vehicles were required to detour.

Sullivan County

U.S. Route 220 was rehabilitated to preserve existing infrastructure and incorporate center line and edge line rumble strips as an additional safety feature.

Susquehanna County

PA 706 was reconstructed for 1.3 miles through Montrose. Work included drainage improvements and a new center turn lane in the business district, as well as new concrete sidewalks within Montrose Borough.

Wyoming County

A structurally deficient bridge on PA 87 was reconstructed. The new bridge is wider and does not have overhead trusses, which allows it to be used by Proctor & Gamble trucks, improving shipping efficiency for the local manufacturer.

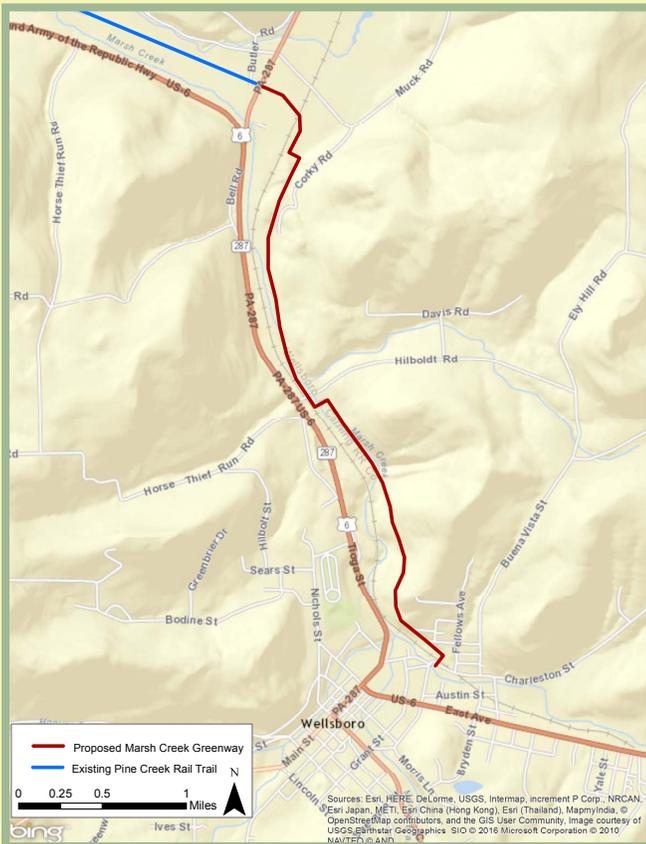


Tioga County

The intersection of U.S. Route 6 and PA 287 in Delmar Township was realigned. Work included installing a new traffic signal to enhance safety and replacing a structurally deficient bridge.

Intersection construction at U.S. Route 6 and PA 287 just west of Wellsboro, Tioga County (Mia Lisa Anderson)

Tioga County Project Awarded CMAQ Funding for Important Trail Connector



In 2015, the Marsh Creek Greenway (Tioga County) was awarded \$455,000 from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program to complete design and permitting for a three-mile trail to connect the Pine Creek Rail Trail to the Borough of Wellsboro. This project is a high priority for the local community and the county. It has garnered widespread support in Wellsboro, surrounding municipalities, and with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). It will complete a missing link in the North Central PA trail system and, when completed, will enhance the Route 6 corridor as well as tourism and economic development in Tioga County. Completing the engineering and design is a critical first step to advancing this \$4 million project.

The CMAQ Program allocates funds to counties with higher emissions (poorer air quality) to support projects that will contribute to attaining Clean Air Act standards by reducing emissions from mobile sources (motorized vehicles). In the Northern Tier region, Tioga and Wyoming counties qualify for CMAQ funding. This program is coordinated by Northern Tier RTAC, which is comprised of local and regional transportation professionals, stakeholders, and elected officials. The Marsh Creek Greenway was the only project submitted to the committee and, as a high priority in the local municipal comprehensive plan and also at the county level, the project was selected to move forward for funding.

Summer Employment



In 2015, the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board (WDB) continued to work with area youth through training and hands-on experience to introduce them to available career opportunities. Thirty-eight Northern Tier youth participated in the Summer Employment Program.

- Towanda Area School District
- Susquehanna Community High School
- TREHAB
- Tri-Boro Municipal Authority
- Annette's Agway
- Tioga YMCA
- Wellsboro Pet Complex
- Ebb's
- Endless Mountains Visitor's Bureau
- Wyoming County Senior Center



The program began in June with a week of employer and college tours as well as workshops on important job preparation skills. Workshop topics included interviewing, resume writing, career exploration, finance and budgeting, healthy habits, team building, and services available through the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA).

Youth were paid for their work and had the opportunity to earn the National Retail Federation's certification in customer service—a nationally recognized credential for those pursuing retail employment.



In addition to tours and developing skills to get a job, participants worked with one of the participating employers:

- Bradford County Manor
- Canton School District
- Northeast Bradford School District
- North Rome Christian School
- Northern Tier Career Center

The Summer Employment Program is funded through the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Above: Susquehanna County youth study macroinvertebrates during a field trip to Salt Springs State Park.

Below: Tioga County youth learned about geology on their field trip to Watkins Glen State Park.



“The Summer Employment Program enriches area youth with classroom and hands-on learning to build practical skills and give them an opportunity to explore career options in the Northern Tier.”

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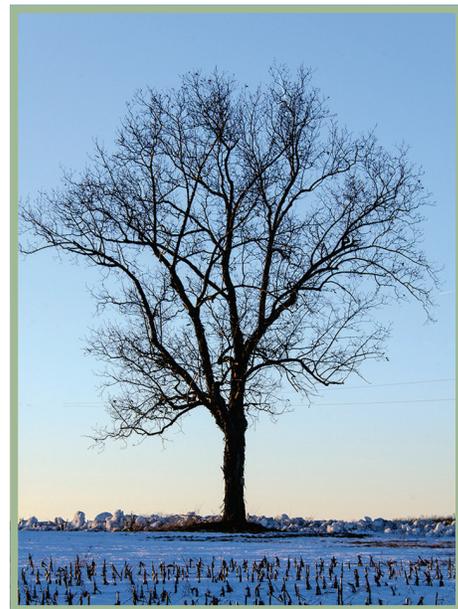
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