

## Conservancy working on three projects

The Seneca Highlands Conservancy is in the midst of three projects to turn more private land to public hunting and recreation grounds.

John Young, a member of the conservancy, told The Era on Friday that a major land project between Eldred and Coryville is about 54 percent complete.

That project will ultimately result in some 2,000 acres under the jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which has designated the tract State Game Lands 301.

Young said that commitments for additional land have been received in recent weeks, including 40 acres from the Oscar Carpenter heirs and 58 acres at one time owned by the

Holmes family.

In addition, the Ethan Allen Corp. has donated four acres it owned in the middle of the area.

"We have over half the land that the state would like in the long run," Young said.

A second project, near Port Allegany, will end up being about 1,250 acres. The acquisition of the largest part of that parcel will be closed after the first of the year when the Gittelman farm will come under the control of the conservancy.

Two more pieces of that puzzle, totalling about 72 acres, are also about to come together, Young said.

"We are working on a third area near Port Allegany, but haven't gotten enough commitments as yet," Young said. This third project is

located east of the Gittelman farm, "a sort of high wooded area overlooking Hamilton Creek."

The conservancy has identified about 1,200 acres, but so far has received sales commitments for only about 125 acres.

He said the snag with that project is that much of the land being offered has carried price tags higher than the Game Commission is able to pay.

"The thing that has been helping us in Eldred," Young said, "is a lot of people have contacted us with offers to sell at reasonable prices."

In particular, he credited officials at Ethan Allen. Although the amount of acreage donated was relatively small compared to other tracts acquired, it took a lot of work by plant manager Bob Warner to turn the

land over to the conservancy.

Young said the Ethan Allen land was important because it was right in the middle of the Game Commission's parcel.

The conservancy works with private landowners for the acquisition of property by the state Game Commission, first securing options on the land and then turning over those options to the commission.

Young said the conservancy is in the process of drawing up some maps of the Coryville area tracts in an effort to help sportsmen discern private from public lands.

"I'm sometimes concerned," Young said, about sportsmen not knowing the boundaries of the public hunting lands and straying onto private property.