

# Tom's Run Preserve 'Field Tour'

## THE PRESERVE

The West Virginia Land Trust's **Tom's Run Preserve** is a 374-acre tract of primarily mixed-mesophytic and mixed-oak forest in Monongalia County, West Virginia. Comprised of three contiguous tracts, the preserve is generally characteristic of the hills and slopes along the Monongahela River in the foothills of the Alleghenies. The stands at Tom's Run vary from early successional 'old-fields' of red maple, black cherry, poplar, and locust to 'almost old-growth' oak-hickory and mixed-mesophytic stands that are between 100 and 140 years old.



This [virtual tour](#) will look at the three tracts on Tom's Run: a transitioning old-field site, an older oak-hickory stand, and a recently high-graded mixed-mesophytic stand. We will compare how the management of each stand has influenced species composition and structure.

As you're watching, keep these questions in mind:

- What could have been done differently to protect and sustain the previous stand's species composition and diversity?
- What would you do moving forward?
- How does thinking about hydrologic impacts fit in when working in sites such as these?

## ON THE LANDSCAPE

Tom's Run Preserve sits right on the edge of the Appalachian plateau and the Allegheny mountains. This area of the Central Appalachians contains high species richness, diversity, and uniqueness and is considered a Critical Biodiversity Area by the Forest Stewardship Council. What drives this area's uniqueness are the incredibly diverse deciduous forests and aquatic habitats influenced by the region's geologic history, diverse topography and climate, and hydrologic connectivity.

While Tom's Run Preserve is managed for restoration and recreation, it can't escape common factors that threaten the forests of this region. Particularly noticeable within the preserve are the effects from historical agricultural land uses, non-native invasive species such as Japanese barberry, and incompatible harvesting practices (i.e. high-grading).

