



HATCH RUN CONSERVATION DEMONSTRATION AREA



The Hatch Run Conservation Demonstration Area (HRCDA) is a 347-acre parcel located at the intersection of Hatch Run Road and Conewango Avenue Extension.

In 1997 the Conservation District took over the management of the property. Our goal was to develop a conservation demonstration area to showcase and demonstrate conservation best management practices (BMPs) in agriculture, forestry, water resources, and wildlife management that improve water quality and reduce non-point source pollution. The result is the development of the Hatch Run Conservation Demonstration Area. The District was able to purchase the property in 2004 thus giving the District the ability to plan on a more long term basis. A public meeting was held in January 2008 in order to gather public input into the development of a long range plan for the property.

Since 1997, the District has implemented a variety of improvements to the property including the construction of a ½ acre pond, the development of over 4 miles of nature trails, a parking area, a timber harvesting demonstration area, and a 24-acre rotational grazing area.

In 2004, with the help of the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps (PCC), many other improvements were made. These include: a picnic pavilion with 10 picnic tables, a vault-type comfort station, and the renovation of the west wing of the old barn complex. The crew also constructed a fly-in area for

migratory birds and a deer exclosure fence around a 27-acre section of the property to promote tree seedling regeneration.

The pavilion has been used by the District as part of our environmental education outreach to area schools and other groups, and especially for our camps each summer. In recent years the pavilion has also been rented by several groups for a small fee. The HRCDA is a perfect place for workshops and wildflower walks. We hope to use the renovated barn complex for programs such as watershed festivals, the annual tree sale, and other events.

A Dirt and Gravel Road project was done on the main access road in 2005. This project provided improvements to the existing narrow road while reducing the environmental impact on nearby Hatch Run.

The District has partnered with the USDA Forest Service-Allegheny National Forest (ANF) to install a weather station on the property. The weather station collects raw data. That data will be used to develop fire danger indicators. We plan to work with USDA Forest Service-ANF to include the weather station in our educational programs.

In May of 2008 we hosted Bish Day in conjunction with DCNR's Bureau of Forestry. Thirty students from the Warren County Career Center assisted District staff planting trees, completed a stream clean-up on a small section of Hatch Run, installed benches near the pond and built fish habitat structures for the pond.

After lunch the group participated in an electro-fishing demonstration.

Also in the spring of 2008 the District offered for rent ten community garden plots. All ten plots were rented for the 2008 growing season. There are plans to offer additional garden plots for the 2009 growing season.

The HRCDA averages over 1000 visitors per year including school groups, civic organizations, and individual members of the public. The area is open to public hunting and fishing. Everyone is welcome to enjoy a walk or cross-country skiing on the property.

An Education Center is currently being constructed. This has been a painfully slow process due to a lack of funds. A large portion on the work has been completed by PCC and a large number of volunteers from the District board, staff, and many other volunteers. A flag pole was erected in memory of Clarence Kellogg by his family during 2007.



*Education Center/Office Complex
under construction*

For more information, to make a donation, or help at a workbee contact the Warren County Conservation District office at (814) 563-3117.



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