

Introduction

Beginning in the 1930's, the Honey Hollow Watershed developed unprecedented soil, water and wildlife conservation measures that served as a national model for cooperative and inter-governmental approaches to watershed preservation. Building on a rich legacy, the Honey Hollow story is an invaluable resource for our ongoing education on national watershed viability.

Location:

The watershed is located approximately 30 miles northeast of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in Solebury Township, Bucks County. Honey Hollow is composed largely of farms which can trace their lineage back to the original 1682 land grants of William Penn. Although located in the highly popular central Bucks County region, the watershed still contains gently rolling fields, 18th century farm buildings and ancient fieldstone fences.

Agricultural Legacy

As an area of abundant and rich farmland soil, Honey Hollow farmers utilized the area for over 200 years to provide food for their families and community. However, by the mid 20th century, the area soon began to show evidence of erosion and soil depletion as the farming practices of those days did not employ modern conservation or tillage methods. In the spring of 1939, the farmers living in the area realized they had erosion problems that they alone could not solve. They sought assistance from the regional office of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. The regional director at that time (Dr. John Paul Jones) quickly diagnosed the erosion problems as a watershed issue. He offered technical assistance if the farmers united and worked together. They agreed and the project took shape. Many of the techniques they implemented are still in use today.



NHL Historical Marker

“Comprised of five farms on about 650 acres, Honey Hollow Watershed is the first small upland watershed in agricultural use and multiple private ownership to demonstrate that cooperative local action, supported by Federal technical assistance, is a practical method of achieving national goals in soil, water and wildlife conservation, and flood prevention. As such, it has served as a prototype for thousands of similar small watersheds throughout the nation.”

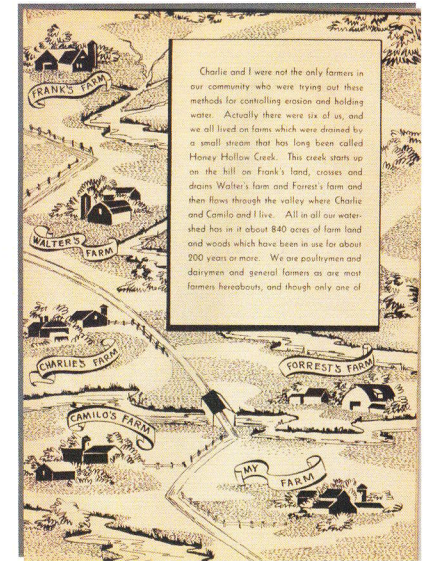
National Historic Landmark Statement of Significance
(as of designation - August 4, 1969)



“We owe these men a debt of gratitude for what they have done – not only for the soil they have protected, but also for showing us that it can be done as they have done it. In spite of many handicaps and with only limited help they have put a big program into effect all over their watershed.”

This is nearly a unique thing, but my prediction is it will not be unique for long. After all, this country of ours is made up of a lot of watersheds, and what can be done in one watershed can be done on other watersheds and will be done.”

Dr. Hugh H. Bennett, Soil Conservation Service, 1942 in forward to Six Farmers on an Upland Stream later retitled Teamwork to Save Soil and Increase Production (SCS Misc. Publication #486).

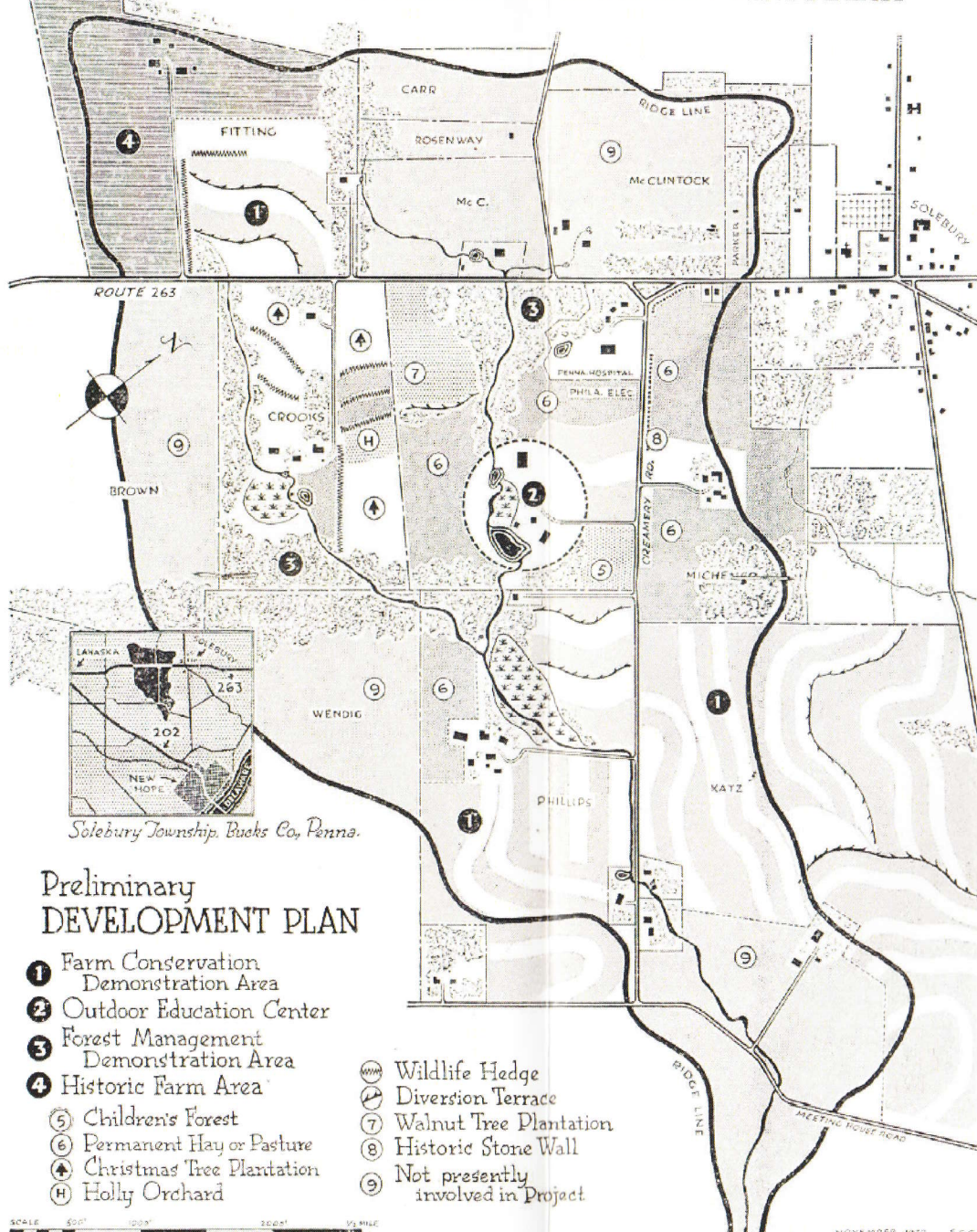


“My parents and I felt strongly this should remain an agricultural area and should by all means be used for educational purposes and not be developed.”

Malcolm Crooks quoted in Bucks County Herald, May 2, 2013. Malcolm's father Forrest Crooks was one of the original landowners who worked together in the 1930's to implement conservation practices in the Honey Hollow Watershed.

HONEY HOLLOW WATERSHED

A NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK



Preliminary DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- ① Farm Conservation Demonstration Area
- ② Outdoor Education Center
- ③ Forest Management Demonstration Area
- ④ Historic Farm Area
- ⑤ Children's Forest
- ⑥ Permanent Hay or Pasture
- ④ Christmas Tree Plantation
- H Holly Orchard

SCALE 0 500' 1000' 2000' 1/2 MILE

1970 Development Plan

HONEY HOLLOW

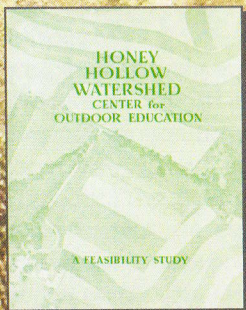
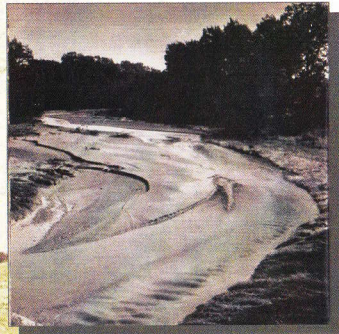
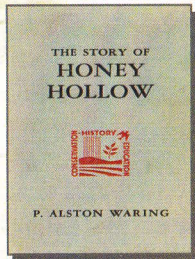
LAND USE and WILDLIFE PROJECT



Map of Honey Hollow cir. 1943



Color Aerial of Honey Hollow cir. 1940



History of Honey Hollow

1397—1700

Lenni Lenape Indians live here along creeks and the Delaware River

1709 The Scarborough Tract of which Honey Hollow EE Center is a part, is granted by William Penn

1830 Peg Tuckamony died. One of the last Lenni Lenape Indians to live in Solebury Township, Peg lived in several outbuildings in the community, one of which was just outside the front door of the Isaac Pickering house

1920s Fields begin to show tremendous soil loss, gullies form, soil is deposited downstream, and farms decline

1930s Farmers in the Honey Hollow Watershed seek help from the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, new agency formed under the Roosevelt administration to combat severe soil loss nationwide (dust bowl)

1939-1941
Water Conservation Plan implemented

1940s - 1960s
Conservation education expands in the Honey Hollow Watershed through interest and dedication of local farmers. Students and teachers visit

1980 Crooks family donates land and buildings at Tuckamony Farm for environmental education. Honey Hollow Watershed Association and Bucks County Audubon officially form the Honey Hollow Environmental Education Center and hire first staff

1998 Bucks County Audubon renovates historic barn to become new Visitor Center

1397 The Lenape Indian Tribe is believed to have settled in the Mid-Atlantic Region around this date

1682 William Penn first visits the New World

1747 Isaac Pickering builds stone farmhouse on Tuckamony Farm.

1837 John Deere introduces steel plow

Early 1900s Vansant family operates dairy farm on lands where Audubon Visitor Center is now located. It is during this period that farmers change from horse drawn plows to tractors. This change allows farmers to till more land, but causes soil erosion due to lack of understanding of modern conservation techniques

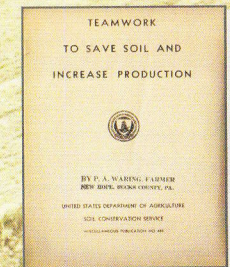
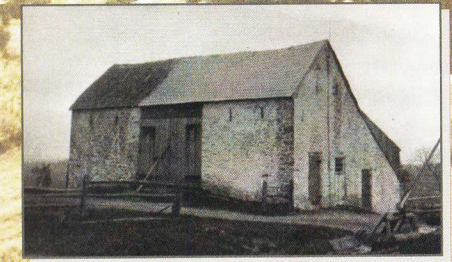
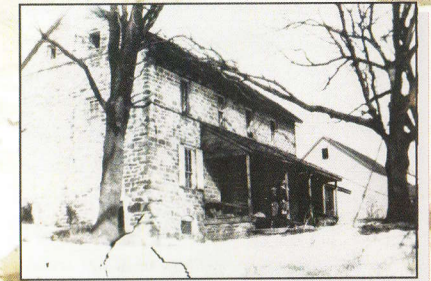
1934 Robert Boltz purchases Vansant farm, tears down original farmhouse and builds manor house on hill. Hires esteemed architect Bernhard Okie to design stone barn, which is today the site of Audubon Visitor Center

1940s Honey Hollow Watershed used as a model by federal and state agencies for watershed management and soil conservation

1969 Designation of Honey Hollow Watershed as a National Historic Landmark
Honey Hollow Watershed Association founded by neighbors
Bucks County Audubon Society founded as a chapter of National Audubon

1994 Bucks County Audubon purchases farm adjacent to Tuckamony Farm from PECO Energy to protect it from development and expand the education programs

2013 Symposium held to celebrate the Story of Honey Hollow Watershed



Downstream to the Future

Resource Information:

Aquetong Watershed Association
www.aquetongwatershed.org/

BioOrganics
<http://www.bio-organics.com/>

Bucks County Audubon Society
www.bcas.org

Bucks County Conservation District
www.bucksccd.org

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.
www.delawareandlehigh.org/index.php/visit/honey-hollow-environmental-education-center/

Delaware Valley College
www.delval.edu/

Heritage Conservancy
www.heritageconservancy.org

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
www.agriculture.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/

Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission
www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/about_the_phmc/1579

Penn State University Cooperative Extension
<http://extension.psu.edu/>

Primrose Creek Watershed Association
<http://www.primrosecreek.org/>

US Department of Agriculture – Natural Resource Conservation Service
www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/

US Department of the Interior – National Park Service – National Historic Landmarks Program
www.cr.nps.gov/nhl/designations/listsofNHLs.htm



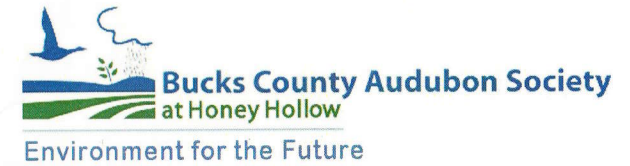
Bucks County Audubon Society promotes environmental education, the demonstration of energy and resource conservation and advocacy for local, state and national policies that support sustainability of the natural world.

Visit the Bucks County Audubon Society's Visitor Center to learn more about the history of Honey Hollow. The property boasts 110 beautiful acres of woodland, meadows and wetlands and is easily explored when you enjoy our many miles of trails. Learn more about our educational programs and free bird walks when you visit www.bcas.org.



2877 Creamery Road
New Hope, Pennsylvania 18938
215-297-5880
www.BCAS.org

NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. INDEED IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.
MARGARET MEAD



Honey Hollow Watershed:

A Model for Conservation and Watershed Protection



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