

# Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

In 2007 the Campbell County Conservation District was awarded a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board (KHLCFB) to purchase 135 acres of land along the Licking River in Campbell County. In 2014, Allen Weber of Newport, Kentucky, donated 11.5 acres of land adjoining the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area to the Campbell County Conservation District. The Allen and Loureana Weber Conservation Area will be managed as a natural area in perpetuity, protecting the land, flora and fauna, that the Webers held dear.

The KHLCFB grant included funds to acquire the land as well as to assist with land restoration and making the area accessible for compatible public uses such as hiking, bird watching, environmental study, scientific research, and canoe and kayak access from the Licking River.

This is the first project funded by the KHLCFB in Campbell County. The property is managed to protect and restore the land. The Licking River in this area provides critical habitat for freshwater mussels, many of which are on the state threatened and endangered species list.

Biological and archaeological inventories have been completed. This work was done to ensure that natural resources and cultural resources are not disturbed by habitat restoration work or installation of parking facilities and trails that will allow visitors on the site.

Conservation, Forest Stewardship and Wildlife Habitat Plans have also been developed and are a part of the resource management plan. Restoration work began with a project designed by the Northern Kentucky University Center for Environmental Restoration that restored degraded stream banks and removed invasive species.

**The Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board (KHLCFB)** was established by the 1994 Kentucky Legislature and is administered by a 12-member board. The

board's mission is to award funding for preserving and conserving natural areas that possess unique features such as:

- \* Areas that are a habitat for rare and endangered species.
- \* Areas important to migratory birds.
- \* Areas that perform important natural functions that are subject to alteration or loss.
- \* Areas to be preserved in their natural state for public use, outdoor recreation and education.

Land is acquired only from willing sellers. The fund is supported by the state portion of the unmined minerals tax, environmental fines, the \$10 additional fee to purchase a Kentucky Nature License Plate, and interest on the fund's assets. To learn more, visit <http://www.dnr.ky.gov/heritageland/> or call 502-573-3080.



## Campbell County Conservation District

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### District Board Supervisors:

Ron McCormick, Chairman  
Rick Simon, Vice Chairman  
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Don Girton, and Bill Landon

### District Staff:

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### Ky. Division of Conservation:

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Purchased from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board with funds

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Habitat restoration and protection are the primary goals of this project. The Conservation District and partners will host demonstration projects and workshops about habitat restoration and management practices that may benefit other landowners.

## The property is currently closed to public use.

The property will be open in the future for compatible public uses, including hiking and educational programs. When the property is opened to the public, some areas may be restricted based on the sensitivity of plants or animals that are being protected, or for safety reasons. Property lines will be marked with signs and a red line around trees and fence posts to mark the boundaries. Rules for the property will be posted at each corner and at strategic sites, including entry areas.

## Contact Us

To help us be good stewards of the land, and good neighbors, please report any problems or issues that may arise. Our contact information is listed in this brochure. In the event of an



emergency, contact local law enforcement officials.

The land is protected by a Conservation Easement held by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. That easement is a condition of accepting the grant funds for the purchase of the property and outlines uses that can and cannot be permitted on the land.

Please help us protect Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area. Uses that are *not permitted* include:

- Use of all-terrain vehicles or other motorized vehicles;
- Mountain bikes and bicycles;
- Overnight parking or camping;
- Hunting;
- Horseback riding;
- Domestic animals, with the exception of service animals;
- Fires;
- Collecting plants, animals, soil, rocks or other specimens (i.e. shells, berries, nuts, mushrooms and wildflowers);
- Removal, disturbance or defacement of natural and built features;
- Introduction of non-native plant or animal species.

Activities that are planned to be permitted include:

- Hiking;
- Scientific research;
- Nature study and educational programs;
- Bird watching;
- Photography;
- Canoe/Kayak access from the Licking River;
- Vehicles will be permitted only in parking areas and on designated roads;
- Service animals welcome.

## A History of Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area, Campbell County's first natural area, was acquired through the combined efforts of the Campbell County Conservation District, The Campbell Conservancy Inc., and the Campbell County Fiscal Court. The property is bordered by the Licking River and Ripple Creek, both of which give a unique character to the land. Two knolls, often disappearing in the morning mist, provide outstanding views of the river valley.

The property came to the attention of the Campbell Conservancy when it was listed for sale in 2006. The Conservancy pursued private funding to purchase the property and ultimately turned to the Campbell County Conservation District to assist. Being a governmental unit of the state, the Conservation District was eligible to apply for, and received, a grant through the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund. In August 2008 the Conservation District purchased 135 acres of land. The Campbell Conservancy, Inc., with assistance from the Campbell County Fiscal Court, acquired an additional five acres. Those five acres were given to the Conservation District in April 2012.

The name Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area was chosen to honor the history of this land. In earlier days, the shallow riffle in the Licking River near the community of

Hawthorne allowed travelers an easy crossing into present-day Kenton County. The community of Hawthorne has since disappeared, although its name still appears on county maps.

Although history is silent on the origin of the name, Hawthorne was once a thriving community with a school, businesses, and a post office. Service was discontinued in August 1914 and mail was sent to Alexandria. The 1930

census lists a population of 26.

One of the early families to settle on what is now Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area and the adjoining area, was the Trapp family. The Seibert

family recalls stories of the midwife who lived in the log cabin on the hill. A member of the Seibert family ran a blacksmith and wagon shop in the community. An inn, the Ten-Mile House, was located just south of the property. Farmers would stay

at the inn on their way to Newport and Cincinnati to sell their pigs, herd animals and produce. The Mile Houses are named for how many miles away the building was located from Newport, Kentucky. An old toll gate was located in the community, lending its name to the present day Tollgate Road.

*Compiled from: An oral history project conducted by students of Dr. Doug Hume, Northern Kentucky University; Mr. Buck Seibert; and the Campbell County Historical Society.*

*PHOTO CREDITS: Larry Varney - cover photos of Licking River and Monarch Butterfly; David Peck - silo and barn; Mark Leopold - students planting trees; Mary*

