

Pomeroy McMichaels Creek Nature Preserve



Persistence plus 40 years form new Stroudsburg preserve

IF YOU GO

Pomeroy McMichaels Nature Preserve is less than 10 minutes from downtown Stroudsburg, Pa., at 675 Hickory Valley Road, Stroudsburg, Monroe County. GPS: 40.961387, -75.249603

The preserve boasts a half-mile of McMichaels Creek and connects to Stroud Township's Hickory Valley Park. Trailhead is along the Stroud Greenway/Bike to Nature Trail, and features a bike pump and repair station behind the kiosk sign, courtesy of a 1% for Nature grant.

Activities: Walking, catch-and-release fishing, spring wildflower spotting, photography, daydreaming. No facilities or trash cans. Please pack out what you pack in. Leashed dogs of considerate owners welcome. Watch for poison ivy, which is abundant along the trail.

By Carol Hillestad

For Pocono Heritage Land Trust

More than 40 years ago, land that had once been part of a pig farm caught the attention of a local educator, naturalist and conservationist.

It's easy to see why this particular Stroudsburg, Pa., parcel caught his eye. There were pristine woodlands. Limestone cliffs. A beautiful stretch of McMichaels Creek. Wetlands and wildflowers. And although Pocono Heritage Land Trust didn't exist yet, future board member Don Miller couldn't help dreaming — and acting.

He started talking with the owners, and it became clear that, at the time, the Pomeroy family were not interested in protecting the property. In fact, at one point they tried marketing it as a million-dollar private estate.

No matter. Over years to come, Miller kept the conversation going. In time, he and others met with the Pomeroy children and grandchildren. More seasons passed. Meetings sporadically continued.

GRAND OPENING

Please join Pocono Heritage Land Trust members and friends at 1 p.m. Sunday, June 5, 2022, to celebrate the grand opening of the Pomeroy McMichaels Nature Preserve.

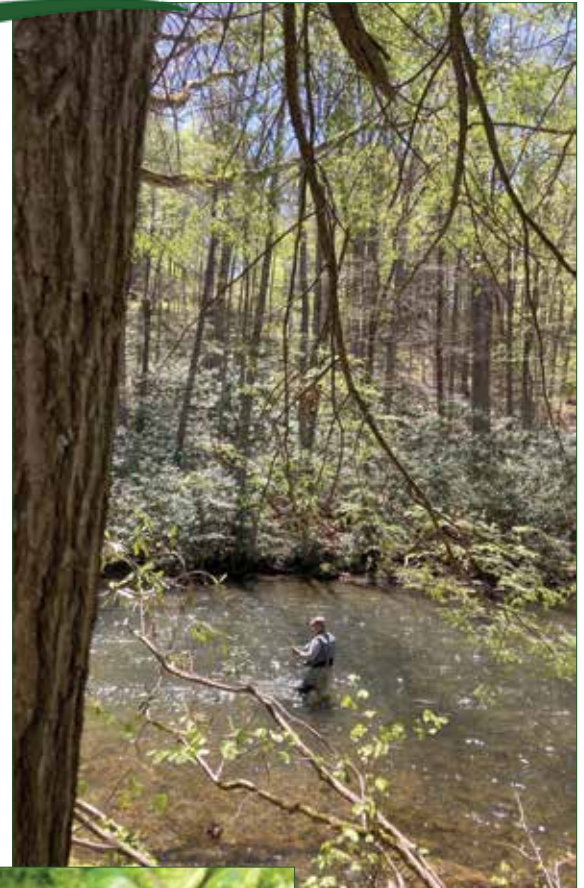
Eventually, the conversation turned to “yes.”

Now, after talks with three generations — and the creation of Pocono Heritage Land Trust (phlt.org) — the Pomeroy McMichaels Creek Nature Preserve will officially open to the public with a ribbon-cutting on June 5, 2022, and a guided walk to follow.

This time of year, the meadow that surrounds the trailhead is unassuming; its beauty will blossom with the summer heat. A short walk leads to a



Pictured, top to bottom: An angler enjoys McMichaels Creek in mid-May. A tiny ant investigates a spring beauty wildflower. Tulip poplars are among the tallest of American hardwoods. (Carol Hillestad photos)



SOMETHING FISHY

The waters of Pomeroy McMichaels Nature Preserve are part of the Keystone Select Waters program. That means that well-grown trout, measuring between 14 and 20 inches, will be stocked here for fishing under special “delayed harvest” regulations.

The creek is also scheduled for major fish habitat improvement this summer and into 2023, spearheaded by Brodhead Trout Unlimited (brodheadtu.org), with support from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (fishandboat.com).



Continued on reverse



Pomeroy McMichaels Creek Nature Preserve

Continuing from front

broad, fast, sparkling reach of McMichaels Creek. The silvery, swirling water dazzles the eyes; its splash and ripple seem to slow the heartbeat and relax the mind.

A well-worn trail hugs the bank and leads downstream, past a shimmering wetland and the “kuk-kuk” call of a wood frog. On a recent May day, native spring wildflowers such as trout lily, spring beauty, violets and pearly everlasting put on a show, along with skunk cabbage, false hellebore and May apple. Jack-in-the-pulpit and red trillium glowed in a setting of emerald mosses.

Past a grand old ironwood tree, the trail enters a quiet hemlock wood as the creek swings wide, bends, and deepens. A steep limestone cliff on the other side is mantled in native rhododendrons, some rooted in the bare rock. Nearly hip-deep in the flowing stream, a fisherman is intent on the mesmerizing rhythm of casting and retrieving, over and over and over again.

But you don't have to love fishing to enjoy this jewel of a place. Come introduce yourself to the Pomeroy McMichaels Nature Preserve. After more than 40 years, isn't it time?



Skunk cabbage is common in and near wetlands in spring. (Carol Hillestad photo)

CLEAN, CLEAR WATER

The upper part of the McMichaels and its headwater creeks — Fall Creek, Bowers Creek, Hypsy Creek — are protected as Exceptional Value waters, which means that by law the quality of the stream may not be degraded. These clean, clear waters rise in wetlands high on the Pocono Plateau, dropping 1,700 feet and flowing 19 miles to Brodhead Creek in Stroudsburg, on the way to the Delaware River and the Atlantic Ocean.

MORE ONLINE



Scan for updates at phlt.org

- For 24 seconds of relaxation on McMichaels Creek, see PHLT's video at <https://youtu.be/akCt7Zalw10>
- Information on Keystone Select Waters: fishandboat.com/Fish/PennsylvaniaFishes/Trout/Pages/KeystoneSelect.aspx
- For a map of adjoining Hickory Valley Park, go to srosrc.org/files/ugd/9061a1_81b6410eb647424496ef6145dad33f31.pdf



POCONO HERITAGE LAND TRUST

ABOUT CONSERVING LAND

Founded in 1984, Pocono Heritage Land Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Pocono region by conserving land and inspiring people to care for, enjoy and explore their natural world. PHLT works cooperatively with landowners to preserve their property and leave a legacy of protected natural habitats, healthy forest, clean waterways and open space for future generations.

You can help Pocono Heritage Land Trust protect land for the future. Learn about membership and volunteer opportunities at www.phlt.org.

PLEASE DONATE to preserve important lands and natural resources in the Poconos, for generations to come.

- \$25** provides supplies for one trash cleanup day, or one planting of wildflower seeds for meadow habitat restoration.
- \$50** buys tools for managing invasive plants on volunteer days.
- \$150** prints 500 trail brochures to guide visitors on preserves.
- \$500** builds a streamcrossing bridge to improve trail access.
- \$1,500** covers the cost of an appraisal, the first step in acquiring new land for preservation.
- \$3,000** funds construction of a sign kiosk on a new preserve.
- \$5,000** enables development of a new nature trail network, including trail marking, clearing, signage and maps.

Donate online at phlt.org/donate.html

or clip this form and send it with your check made out to Pocono Heritage Land Trust to:

PHLT, 1539 Cherry Lane Road, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Name: _____
 Address: _____

 Phone: _____
 Email: _____