

## BEFORE YOU GO!

- ☑ Visitors to the Conservation Area should wear weather-appropriate clothing and footwear suitable for outdoor activity, and bring adequate sunscreen and insect repellent.
- ☑ Anticipate steep hills, mud, water, rocks, sticker bushes, poison ivy, bugs, snakes and other natural hazards.
- ☑ Avoid playing near high walls and never enter old coal mining auger holes or other entrances.
- ☑ There are **NO RESTROOMS** or sanitary facilities unless portable toilets and hand-washing stations are reserved in advance.
- ☑ Generally, cell phones **DO NOT** work at the Conservation Area.
- ☑ People with physical disabilities, very old or very young or simply “out of shape” will find portions of the Conservation Area to be inaccessible. Know your individual limitations. The Meigs SWCD will attempt to make reasonable accommodations.
- ☑ Other people or hunters may be using the Conservation Area at the same time as you; be courteous and respectful to other people you may encounter enjoying the Conservation Area.
- ☑ **ABSOLUTELY NO ATVs** are permitted. Park only in designated areas.
- ☑ Property boundaries are marked with white paint or flagging on trees. Please respect our neighbors by not trespassing.
- ☑ **Try to leave the Conservation Area cleaner than you found it. Take only photographs, leave only footprints. Please don't litter.**

### USDA's nondiscrimination statement

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Meigs County's Destination for Conservation Education!

# Meigs SWCD Conservation Area



Located in rural, scenic Meigs County, Ohio between the communities of Rutland and Harrisonville, the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area consists of 174 acres of land ranging from wetlands, prairies, streams and ridges, and a little bit of almost everything in between.



**Youngsters from Meigs Intermediate School examine macroinvertebrates caught in the wetland during a field trip to the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area.**

The Meigs SWCD Conservation Area is open to the public and permission is not necessary for general use, hiking, bird watching, and other non-consumptive activities.

Group and school activities including educational field trips, “field days,” and other outings should be scheduled through Meigs SWCD Education Coordinator Jenny Ridenour who may be able to assist you or help avoid potential scheduling conflicts. Call 740-992-4282 for more information.

Contributions for maintenance and improvements to the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area may be made in care of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 33101 Hiland Road, Pomeroy OH 45769.

## History of the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area

Aerial photos taken in 1939 and during the 1950's and 1970's show different land use practices and habitat throughout the years at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area.



In 1939, the land was primarily used for produce, agriculture and pasture with relatively small areas of woodland. In the 1950's the Conservation Area was strip mined for coal. Although the mine was never reclaimed, vegetation managed to return on its own.

However, much evidence of the property's mining history remain, the "cliffs" along the upper portion of the Atkins Trail are actually vertical "high walls" left as the last cut of the strip mining operation, also remaining are auger holes along the coal seam, water impoundments along the face of the high wall and overburden on the downhill side of the trail.

In the 1930's and 40's a vegetable cannery was located on the property. People would take their produce there for canning. A concrete wall foundation in the field near the parking lot is all that remains of the building.

There was once a dam across Little Leading Creek on the Conservation Area. Two pieces of concrete, one on each side, and a concrete slab on the bottom of Little Leading Creek are still visible today and are located near the parking lot just downstream of the New Lima Road bridge.

For many years the land lay vacant, but in 2003 the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District bought the property through a grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Later that year the overgrown fields were cleared, and the parking lot was constructed the following year. In 2006 the Pauline H. Atkins Memorial Trail was dedicated in honor of this community leader and member of the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors. The year 2007 saw construction of the wetland.

Native prairie grasses and wildflowers were planted in spring, 2008, and plans call for the construction of a picnic shelter and recreational and fitness walking trail if funding is available.

## Conservation Area Partners



Wise Use and Protection  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources



Rutland Township Board of Trustees



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA  
Troop 299



Buckeye Hills  
RC&D

