

This is part five of a series of articles that inform the public of an ambitious project that will benefit our local communities in many ways. Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative has undertaken a lawn-to-native pollinator habitat transition project on the grounds of their headquarters building, located along Route 6 in Wysox, Pennsylvania. Expected benefits include improved environmental stewardship, evaluating new right-of-way management strategies, educational opportunities for local students and groups, and reduced maintenance costs. Claverack is a rural electric cooperative that is owned by the members we serve.

An Invitation to Visit

Many have asked about our native pollinator habitat program, and I have been sharing information one-on-one, giving formal presentations, and writing about our project in this series of articles. People often ask how we plan to use the site.

If you google an image of a mature, flowering, native pollinator habitat site, you might agree we're creating a special environment. We're hoping you'll come see it in person, experience and enjoy the site, and learn about the species in our native ecosystems.

Our plots are located in the lawn to the west of our main driveway, and we have another larger pollinator habitat plot across Route 6, near our pond. There is a small parking area near the pond and plenty of room to park vehicles including school buses in our front parking lot.

We are hoping that our pollinator plots will be appealing to local elementary and high school science and biology students who are participating in class field trips or conducting individual studies. We anticipate civic groups like Master Gardeners and beekeeper associations may find the site beneficial to their research. We also think there will be incredible opportunities for photographers to stop by and take pictures of flowers, plants, insects and birds.

We are currently designing informative signs for the landing area that will be located near the parking lot that is adjacent to our building. These large on-site signs will be used to share information about pollinators and about our project. They will include before and after photos of the area and explain why we chose to design and construct a native pollinator habitat site.

We are also designing a webpage with detailed information about pollinators and native plants. Extensive start-to-finish photos of our project will be available on the page along with links to articles and videos about the project. Scanning the QR code on our landing signs will take you directly to the webpage.

Because the site is accessible from a public highway, we expect visitors may also stop to visit even on the weekends and in the evenings. Although the site is on property owned by the cooperative, it is available for public enjoyment and use, much like the Claverack pond. We just ask that you leave the site as you found it and avoid picking flowers or disturbing the pollinators.

We're not ready for visitors yet, but when our plots bloom, we plan to issue press releases and give you an invitation to visit. Save the date for next summer.