

HAWTHORNE CROSSING  
CONSERVATION AREA

ORAL HISTORY AND  
COMMUNITY OPINION STUDY



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## Introduction

This report documents the oral history and community opinions of the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area (HCCA) as collected by the Applied Environmental Anthropology Research Group at Northern Kentucky University. The methods of data collection and analysis are described first, followed by a detailed explanation of the findings. This report concludes with several recommendations to the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Joint Management Team for continued relationship with the community surrounding the HCCA.

## Methods

Douglas Hume attended meetings with Conservation District of Campbell County, Campbell Conservancy and Campbell County Fiscal Court members of the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Joint Management Team from February 2009 through October 2009. The Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Joint Management Team appears to have a good working relationship and share common goals for the HCCA. During several of the earlier meetings, Douglas Hume coordinated meetings with the community surrounding the HCCA and reported on the progress of the AEARG in collecting the oral history of HCCA and community opinions of the HCCA project.

During a community meeting held at the Licking Valley Baptist Church on the evening of March 30, 2009, Douglas Hume and the students of his Applied Anthropology course<sup>1</sup> at NKU were introduced to the community surrounding HCCA by the Conservation District of Campbell County. Over 50 community members attended the meeting and much interest was expressed in oral history and expressing their opinions of the HCCA project.

Douglas Hume and five students<sup>2</sup> from the Applied Anthropology course were given a tour of the HCCA by David Peck on April 4, 2009.

Interviews were conducted with the community at the Licking Valley Baptist Church on the evenings of April 6 and 9, 2009. Approximately twenty community members attended and consented to be interviewed by students. Follow up interviews with the community members were conducted by phone, email and in person. Several interviews were conducted after the community meetings with individuals that could not attend.

During May and June, 2009, Lindsie Barley consolidated the oral history data

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<sup>1</sup> Students of the spring 2009 Applied Anthropology course at Northern Kentucky University included: Lindsie Barley, Laura Burford, Justin Davis, Tom Diebel, Tim Carpenter, Emela Halilovic, Ashley Huntley, Christopher Hutchinson, Susan Krech, Daryl Manley, Casey McCann, Kimberly McLean, Matthew Moddrelle, Jessica Ritter, Natalie Root, Marissa Rossine, Farah Wolfe, Kathryn Wood, and Marcia Young.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Carpenter, Justin Davis, Susan Krech, Casey McCann, and Kathryn Wood.

collected by the Applied Anthropology course into narrative form. Lindsie Barley also visited the offices of the Campbell County Conservation District to collect addresses for mailing labels where she was assisted by Mary Katherine Dickerson, Campbell County Conservation District Coordinator.

Laura Burford and Timothy Carpenter created propositional statements for the questionnaire from the interview notes of students in the Applied Anthropology course. The statements that appear in the questionnaire were created from statements community members made during interviews.

Eighty oral history drafts and questionnaires were mailed to the community surrounding the HCCA on July 30, 2009. Nineteen drafts and questionnaires were returned during August and September 2009. One of the 19 declined to participate and one questionnaire was not answered. Only five returned comments on the oral history draft.

During September 2009, Douglas Hume analyzed the data collected in the oral history draft and questionnaire. A final report was written by Douglas Hume and edited by Lindsie Barley, Laura Burford, and Timothy Carpenter.

## **Findings**

### Oral History of Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

The oral history (see Appendix I) of the HCCA appears to now be generally acceptable to the community members who responded through mail to the draft. Disagreements about the oral history that remain are due to community members adding information about their family history in Hawthorne that are not directly related to the HCCA. A graduate student at NKU, Susan Krech, is collecting oral history stories of several families that have a long history on the Hawthorne Community. Her project will be available to the HCCA and the Campbell County Kentucky Historical and Genealogical Society upon its completion. A disclaimer has been added to the end of the oral history indicating that the narrative is a summary of the history of the HCCA and not the greater Hawthorne area. Also, it is suggested that for more information interested parties should contact the Campbell County Kentucky Historical and Genealogical Society.

### Questionnaire of Community Opinions

Seventeen community members completed the questionnaire. The data collected in the questionnaires must be interpreted with the understanding that the members of the community that completed the questionnaires are very interested in the HCCA and therefore their answers may or may not represent the entire community surrounding the HCCA. Mostly older (average age 60.93 years old) men (70.59% men, 17.62% women, and 11.76% unknown) answered the questionnaire.

## Participation in the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

Most of the community members responded that they wanted to be involved with the HCCA (64.71%). Several members indicated that they would like to donate equipment (such as farm equipment) if a museum is made out of the barn (23.53%). About half of the community members would either like to help in the construction of new projects, preserving old structures and the bridgework or participate in the trail maintenance of the HCCA (52.94%). Several community members mentioned in the comments that they would be interested in rebuilding the bridge, volunteering and donating Native American artifacts collected on the HCCA.

## Uses of the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

The majority of community members would like to see the HCAA used for scientific research (88.24%). Most community members would like to see the HCCA used for kayaking (88.24%) and canoe access (82.35%). Most community members would like to see the old barn and silo restored and preserved (70.59%). A slight majority of community members would like to see the HCCA used for fishing (64.71%) and picnics (64.71%). Half of the community members would like to see the HCCA used for biking (52.94%).

Although it has been stated that hunting is not allowed on the HCCA, a few community members indicated that they would like to see the HCCA used for hunting (11.76%). This question provoked one community member to write in the comments:

You accepted grant money for this project with the intent for a nature preserve, and we were assured this property would be kept in its natural habitat. Therefore, why the questions about using this for picnics, fishing, etc.? There are guidelines in the grant that you must ADHERE to, and not change due to a survey. NO hunting - why is this even a consideration? Again, we were strongly assured there would be NO hunting on this property, why are these questions even asked? I am very concerned you are going to turn this property into something other than a nature preserve, and this land will be destroyed.

One community member wrote that they “prefer primary use to be for education and research... recreation use to be limited.” Lastly, another community member suggested that:

A lot more research is needed on the property. Federal Grants should be applied to remove all invasive species (amur honeysuckle etc.) and native grasslands, shrubs and trees planted in their place. A caretaker or tenant needs to live near the property to take care of the above. A portable office (trailer) and portable restrooms for workers need to be on the property.

Permanent offices, restrooms, shower facilities, store, etc. should be part of the overall plan for the property.

### What is conservation?

Partly as a function of the self selection of the community members who chose to invest the time in filling out the survey, there were unanimous agreement with the following statements: (1) conservation is wise use; (2) conservation is good stewardship of the land and natural resources; (3) conservation is important to me; and (4) we must care for the water, trees, and creatures. Most of the community members think that conserving green space in Kentucky is important and conservation is doing no harm, working with the land and helping it heal (94.12%). Many of the community members would define conservation as the protection and preservation of wildlife and our natural resources such as forests as well as preserving something before it is wasted or gone (82.35%). Finally, community members mostly agree that conservation is getting areas to their previous state and preserving them from there so that later generations are able to enjoy them as well and that conservation is keeping it as natural as possible without interrupting nature (76.47%).

### What is nature?

The majority of the community members responded that nature is all natural things: animals, plants and the ecosystem (94.12%). Many of the community members believe nature is God's Creation and that wildlife should not be disturbed (82.35%). A small majority responded that nature is freedom for all to exist (70.59%) and that nature is the state of the world as it is without mankind's intervention (64.71%).

Finally, only a few community members agreed that nature is the community and the houses that are a part of the area (35.29%). This suggests that the community members that responded to the questionnaire, while they believe the conservation of nature is important, they do not consider humans communities part of nature.

## **Recommendations**

Continuous and regular communication about the progress and goals of the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Joint Management Team is essential to keep the community involved and ease any concerns that arise.

When communicating the results from the questionnaire, it is recommended that the community be told that while the land may only be used for certain purposes, the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Joint Management Team wanted to know what people thought, even if they disagreed with the rules. Open and honest communication should always be the goal.

It is recommended that a mailing be sent to the community surrounding HCCC about the plans for the property owned by the Conservation District and the Conservancy. For example, the limitation of picnic areas and parking to the Conservancy property would ease any concerns that the HCCA is being turned into a recreational park rather than a nature preserve.

The community surrounding the HCCA wants to be involved. Make every effort to inform them about when and how they may volunteer to help in small (e.g., trash cleanup along the Licking Pike) to large (trail creation) projects.



## Appendix I

### Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area Oral History\*

The Licking River and Ripple Creek, both of which give the landscape a unique character, border Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area (HCCA) along Licking Pike in Campbell County. Two knolls, often disappearing in the morning mist, provide outstanding views of the river. 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 endures in people's memories and in print, on county maps.

The earliest historic records indicate that temporary hunting parties of Native Americans first occupied Hawthorne. Remains of one of their campsites are still located on the property near the river. Hawthorne was named after Howard Hawthorne, who was a Second Lieutenant in the cavalry that fought in the battle at Wounded Knee, for which he received the Medal of Honor for his actions during battle. Howard Hawthorne retired with the rank of Colonel. Colonel Hawthorne died of meningitis and influenza on April 10, 1848, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. The 1883 Campbell County map indicates the land as belonging to the heirs of Howard Hawthorne. The 1930 census lists Hawthorne Crossing as having a population of 26 people. Records show that James H. Rusk was postmaster in 1880, followed by Thomas Jenkins in 1893, and Theodore Shanks in 1913. Service was discontinued in August 1914 and mail was the sent to Alexandria.

The Trapp family emigrated by boat from Germany to Hawthorne Crossing in 1855. The Trapp family included four sons (John, Nick, Leonard [known as George] and George Leonard [known as Len]) and a daughter who died during the voyage. Shortly after arriving, a fifth son (Andrew) was born on September 18, 1855. A month later Mrs. Trapp died. The Trapp family lived in the lower house at Hawthorne Crossing. The family kept dairy cows, pigs, and farmed crops on the property. John Trapp and his family resided in a house west of the Tollgate and north of Low Gap Road. Len Trapp resided in a stone house adjacent to the HCCA. Len Trapp's son, John, owned the river bottoms in the present day HCCA. The Trapp family also barged coal up the Licking River using scales near the road to weigh the coal. After a tax was levied on scales, the scales were removed.

An inn known as the Ten Mile House was located just south of the property. Farmers would stay at the inn on their way to Newport and other towns to sell their produce. The Mile Houses are named for how many miles away the building was located from Newport, Kentucky. The Ten Mile House was a lunch and dinner restaurant that also sold gas, beer, and candy. At one time the price for gas at the Mile houses was 15 cents a gallon, two cents of which was tax. The Ten Mile House may have also served as a brothel at one time. Farmers would go and rest for the night during the process of shipping their pigs and herd animals to the markets in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Ten Mile House was still in operation until it was destroyed by fire in the 1970s.

In the 1950s the Army Corps of Engineers surveyed the property and surrounding area, labeling it Hawthorne Crossing. The engineers determined the rise in water level prior to constructing the dams in the Ohio River. The dams raised the water level obliterating the riffle that had been the crossing.

Richard "Ace" Doran, a wealthy man, bought the property in the 1950s. He owned Ace Doran Company, which was a hauling and rigging company. He used the property to house chickens, pigs, and ponies. Ace wanted to buy back all the land his grandfather had owned. Pud Nickels rented the old John Trapp house from Ace Doran and served as a caretaker.

Ace Doran died from falling down a staircase and his family inherited the land, which they sold off in sections. One of those sections was bought by the Seiler family, which later sold the property to the Campbell County Conservation District and Campbell Conservancy.

An old tollgate was located in the Hawthorne community, lending its name to the present day Tollgate Road. John Trapp also owned the Tollgate Road that passes close to the property. Ms. Quinn last owned the Tollgate Building. Inside the Tollgate Building was a slot machine. The Tollgate House burned down in 1972.

The flood in the creek along Licking Pike took out the old makeshift walk bridge by the lower house and barn in the mid-1990s. The present day walk bridge was constructed from the beams of a 1970 70-foot Vindale mobile home. In 1997, the bridge survived a flood that left a watermark on the barn and almost reached the house.

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 Country 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, with the Campbell County Fiscal Court, acquired an additional five acres. The combined area is now known as the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area.

\* The oral history above focuses on the HCCA and represents only a small part of the rich history of the community of Hawthorne. For more information about the history of Hawthorne, please contact the Campbell County Kentucky Historical and Genealogical Society, 8352 E. Main Street, Court House Second Floor, Alexandria, Kentucky 41011.

## Appendix II

### Questionnaire Results

#### Demographic Information

1. Age of respondents:

Average	Minimum	Maximum	Not Answered
60.93	37	82	2 (11.76%)

2. Sex of respondents:

Male	Female	Not Answered
12 (70.59%)	3 (17.65%)	2 (11.76%)

#### Participation in HCCA

1. I would like to be hands on with the landscaping of HCCA.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
9 (52.94%)	6 (35.29%)	2 (11.76%)

2. I just want to be involved in the extent of communicating the oral history of the HCCA.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
4 (23.53%)	10 (58.82%)	3 (17.65%)

3. I want to be involved with the HCCA.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
11 (64.71%)	4 (23.53%)	2 (11.76%)

4. I believe there should be an effort to recycle on the HCCA.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
12 (70.59%)	2 (11.76%)	3 (17.65%)

5. I would like to donate equipment (such as farm equipment) if a museum is made out of the barn.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
4 (23.53%)	6 (35.29%)	7 (41.18%)

6. I would like to help in the construction of new projects, preserving old structures and the bridgework.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
9 (52.94%)	6 (35.29%)	2 (11.76%)

7. I would enjoy participating in the trail maintenance of the HCCA.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
9 (52.94%)	5 (29.41%)	3 (17.65%)

8. My idea of conservation is saving the HCCA in its original state, but preserving it.	Agree 13 (76.47%)	Disagree 3 (17.65%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
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### Uses of HCCA

1. I would like to see the HCCA used for sightseeing.	Agree 13 (76.47%)	Disagree 3 (17.65%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
2. I would like to see the HCAA used for scientific research.	Agree 15 (88.24%)	Disagree 2 (11.76%)	Not Answered 0 (0.00%)
3. I would like to see the HCCA used for kayaking.	Agree 15 (88.24%)	Disagree 2 (11.76%)	Not Answered 0 (0.00%)
4. I would like to see the HCCA used for canoe access.	Agree 14 (82.35%)	Disagree 3 (17.65%)	Not Answered 0 (0.00%)
5. I would like to see the HCCA used for fishing.	Agree 11 (64.71%)	Disagree 5 (29.41%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
6. I would like to see the HCCA preserved and maintained.	Agree 16 (94.12%)	Disagree 1 (5.88%)	Not Answered 0 (0.00%)
7. I would like to see the HCCA used for hunting.	Agree 2 (11.76%)	Disagree 14 (82.35%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
8. I would like to see the HCCA used for biking.	Agree 9 (52.94%)	Disagree 7 (41.18%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
9. I would like to see the HCCA used for conservation.	Agree 15 (88.24%)	Disagree 1 (5.88%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)
10. I think the HCCA should be used for picnics.	Agree 11 (64.71%)	Disagree 5 (28.41%)	Not Answered 1 (5.88%)

11. I would like to see the HCCA used for hiking.
- |             |           |              |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 15 (88.24%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (11.76%)   |
12. I would like to see the old barn and silo restored and preserved.
- |             |            |              |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree   | Not Answered |
| 12 (70.59%) | 2 (11.76%) | 3 (17.65%)   |
13. I believe the HCCA should not be interfered with and instead let nature manage itself.
- |            |             |              |
|------------|-------------|--------------|
| Agree      | Disagree    | Not Answered |
| 4 (23.53%) | 11 (64.71%) | 2 (11.76%)   |

### What is conservation?

1. Conservation is wise use.
- |              |           |              |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree        | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 17 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%)    |
2. I think conserving green space in Kentucky is important.
- |             |           |              |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 16 (94.12%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (5.88%)    |
3. Conservation is getting areas to their previous state and preserving them so that later generations are able to enjoy them as well.
- |             |            |              |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree   | Not Answered |
| 14 (82.35%) | 2 (11.76%) | 1 (5.88%)    |
4. Conservation is good stewardship of the land and natural resources.
- |              |           |              |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree        | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 17 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%)    |
5. We must care for the water, trees, and creatures.
- |              |           |              |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree        | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 17 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%)    |
6. Conservation is important to me.
- |              |           |              |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree        | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 17 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%)    |
7. Conservation is doing no harm, working with the land and helping it heal.
- |             |           |              |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 16 (94.12%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (5.88%)    |
8. Conservation is keeping it as natural as possible without interrupting nature.
- |             |           |              |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| Agree       | Disagree  | Not Answered |
| 13 (76.47%) | 1 (5.88%) | 3 (17.65%)   |

9. I would define conservation as the protection and preservation of wildlife and our natural resources such as forests.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
15 (88.24%)	0 (0.00%)	2 (11.76%)

10. Conservation is preserving something before it is wasted or gone.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
14 (82.35%)	2 (11.76%)	1 (5.88%)

### What is nature?

1. Nature happens to be anything that occurs in the natural world.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
12 (70.59%)	2 (11.76%)	3 (17.65%)

2. Nature is the community and the houses that are a part of the area.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
6 (35.29%)	9 (52.94%)	2 (11.76%)

3. Nature is the state of the world as it is without mankind's intervention.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
11 (64.71%)	3 (17.65%)	3 (17.65%)

4. Nature is all natural things: animals, plants and the ecosystem.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
16 (94.12%)	0 (0.00%)	1 (5.88%)

5. I believe nature is God's Creation.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
15 (88.24%)	2 (11.76%)	0 (0.00%)

6. I believe wildlife should not be disturbed.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
14 (82.35%)	2 (11.76%)	1 (5.88%)

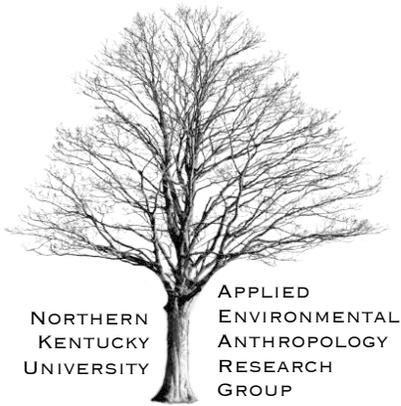
7. Nature is freedom for all to exist.

Agree	Disagree	Not Answered
12 (70.59%)	0 (0.00%)	5 (29.41%)

### Comments

1. In general, I believe the land could best serve the public as an open park. Hiking, canoeing, picnicking, etc. should be afforded as well as public education programs and historic and natural museums would be a definite plus. When all surveys and censuses etc. are completed I would be willing to volunteer to help in any way.

2. Preserving the old barn and silo is a wonderful idea. Old bridge should be rebuilt. I would like to play a part. Thanks for the history!
3. You accepted grant money for this project with the intent for a nature preserve, and we were assured this property would be kept in its natural habitat. Therefore, why the questions about using this for picnics, fishing, etc.? There are guidelines in the grant that you must ADHERE to, and not change due to a survey. NO hunting - why is this even a consideration? Again, we were strongly assured there would be NO hunting on this property, why are these questions even asked? I am very concerned you are going to turn this property into something other than a nature preserve, and this land will be destroyed.
4. I personally have a collection of Indian artifacts collected on the property. I would willingly donate them. I have knowledge of a stonewall used to unload coal. There is a high water mark on the barn from the 1937 flood.
5. A lot more research is needed on the property. Federal Grants should be applied to remove all invasive species (amok honeysuckle etc) and native grasslands, shrubs and trees planted in their place. A caretaker or tenant needs to live near the property to take care of the above. A portable office (trailer) and portable restrooms for workers need to be on the property. Permanent offices, restrooms, shower facilities, store, etc should be part of the overall plan for the property.
6. I really do not have time to donate in shaping this preserve right now, but I am very interested in what is going on at the Hawthorne Crossing. I have been there it is a very pretty place. Really happy with the potential there. Very interested in both Native American and the study of early whites history. For my family is not from this area. I am from Milford, Oh., but live in Covington now. I love natural Kentucky and its history. I have also visited Quiet Trails State Nature Reserve a few times. Very nice. Thank you for this opportunity.
7. Prefer primary use to be for education and research. Prefer recreation use to be limited.



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