

**Environmental Education Exhibits
Montour County, PA**



Project Description:

The Montour Environmental Education Center sits on a 965 acre preserve owned by the utility company, PPL (Pennsylvania Power and Light).

With more than 200,000 visitors to the Montour County preserve each year, the education center is a busy place. It also serves 25 school districts



Quote: Kevin Drewencki, PPL-Montour Preserve Superintendent

“With the high cost of gas we’ve seen an increase in visitors because it’s not a far drive. It’s not hours away and it’s an interesting place to see.”

in the surrounding area on a regular basis. The staff’s commitment to education is what makes it so popular for fieldtrips.

“We have a naturalist on staff who will do a specific program for a school group based on what they’re learning. If they’re learning about birds of prey, that’s what [the naturalist] talks about,” said Kevin Drewencki, PPL-Montour Preserve Superintendent.

Hands-on exhibits in the center are directed toward multiple age groups and focus on a wide range of topics. Displays focusing on local wildlife and nature include information on animals living in and around the preserve, honey bees, fish, waterfowl, birds of prey and the importance of trees. Historical timelines and maps of Native American trails and encampments center on the local area’s cultural

heritage.

DCNR granted Growing Greener funds in the amount of \$100,000 toward the cost of creating the environmental education exhibits.

“[The center] really provides a sound educational base for students from first grade to college. Our workshops [aimed at educators] give teachers the opportunity to come and learn about the area then take it back to their classrooms,” Drewencki said.

“We tried to demonstrate our stewardship, conservation and education goals through the exhibits.”

It’s not just school groups who can enjoy the preserve – the public is welcome. Educational programs for everyone include lectures on butterflies, demonstrations on wilderness first aid, presentations on woodcraft skills, live music and organized nature hikes.

“We can still preserve land while we produce electricity at the Montour plant two miles down the road,” Drewencki said of PPL’s commitment to conservation.

Montour County visitors and residents are enjoying the results of that commitment as the preserve offers recreational activities such as fishing boating, hunting, picnicking and hiking on 15 miles of trails.

Amount of Growing Greener funding awarded, year and matching sources:

2000: \$100,000

Local Match: \$115,000