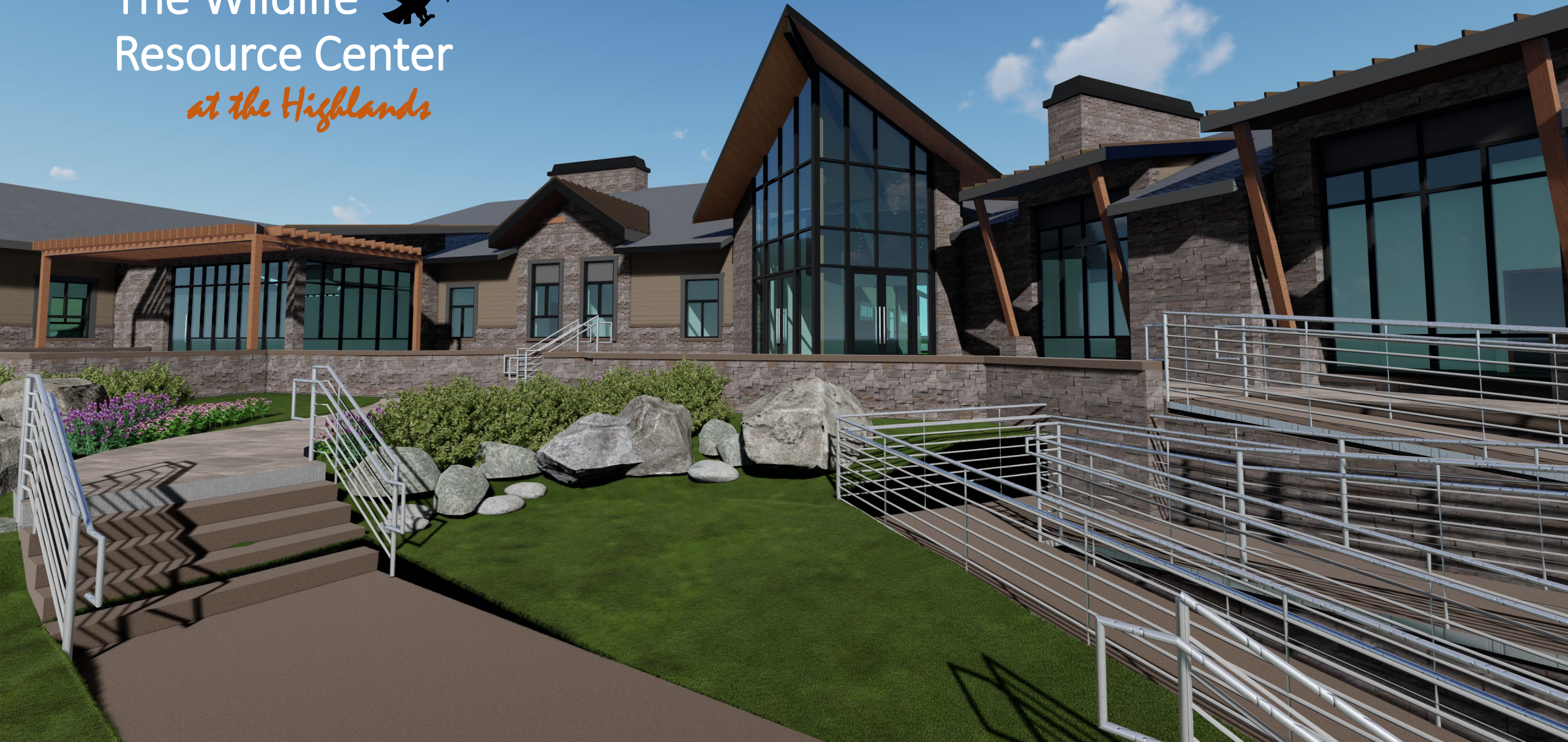


The Wildlife  
Resource Center  
*at the Highlands*



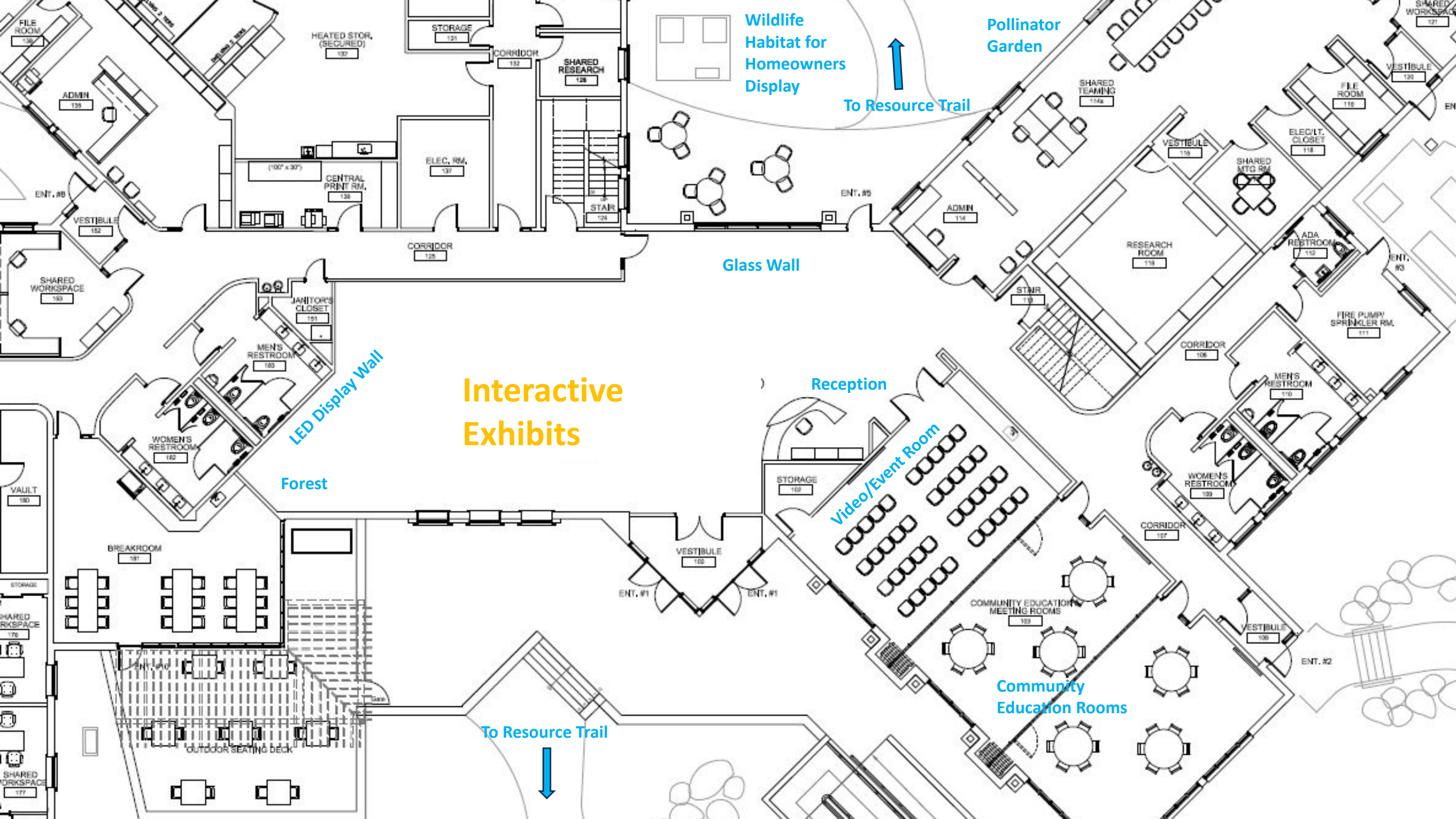


# The Wildlife Resource Center @ the Highlands

- Initiated design in 2020
- Focus on public access & wildlife interpretation
- Consolidate 5 existing field offices
- DEP Fish & Wildlife office space (5 programs)

Work ties to WSFR Federal Grants and therefore allows for use of Federal funds





Wildlife  
Habitat for  
Homeowners  
Display

Pollinator  
Garden

To Resource Trail

Glass Wall

Interactive  
Exhibits

LED Display Wall

Forest

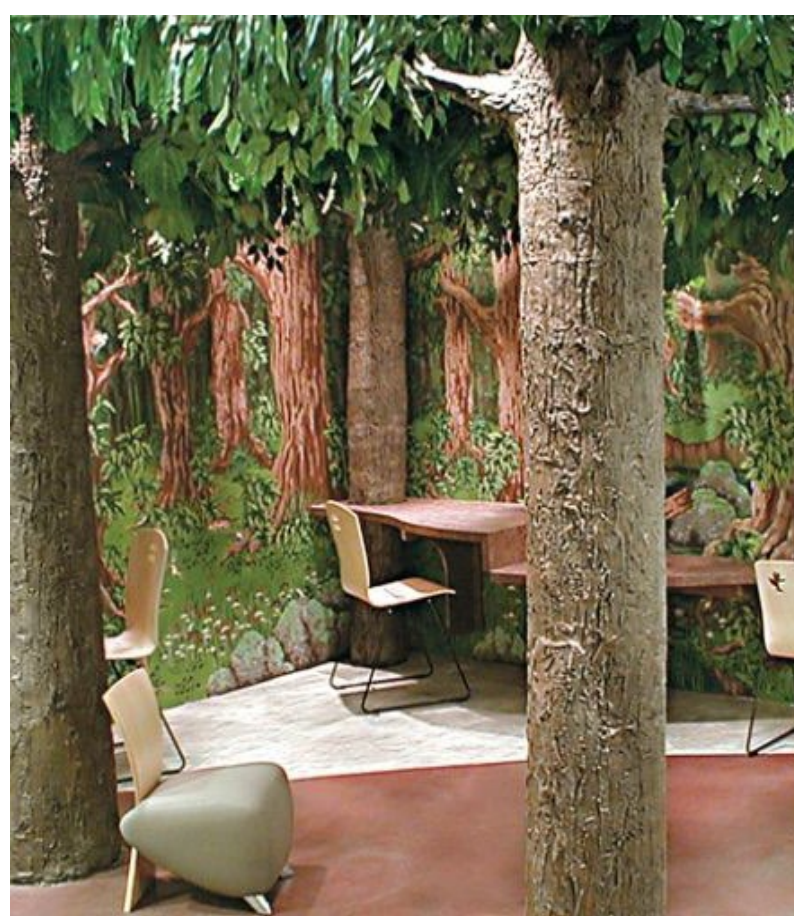
Reception

Video/Event Room

Community  
Education Rooms

To Resource Trail





# The Wildlife Resource Center

*at the Highlands*



# Resource Center

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- 2,380 sq. ft. exhibit center
  - Interactive LED Displays
- 1,774 sq. ft. Community Engagement
  - 100-person video/event room
  - Community Program/Meeting Rooms
- 1.2 mile Resource Education Trail





# The Wildlife Resource Center @ the Highlands

## ➤ DEP's Lead by Example Initiative

- LEED Certified – Silver

## ➤ 100-person meeting room

- Educational programs (including Highlands)
- Bear Aware
- Meeting options for NGOs, Conservation Groups

## ➤ Parking/bathrooms for public for the Highlands Trail/Clinton WMA (70+ spaces)

## ➤ EV Charging Stations

## ➤ Information and licenses

## ➤ Large scale outdoor events

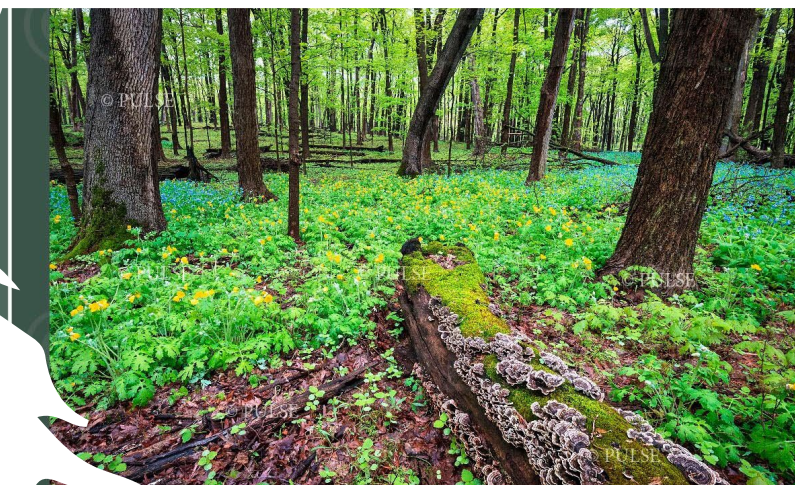
- Department-wide events/programs
- Shooting Sports

## ➤ Fishing Programs (Spruce Run Reservoir)



# RESOURCE EDUCATION TRAIL

- 1.2 mile Resource Education Trail
  - Connected to Highlands Trail
    - 168-mile trail NY/NJ (122 miles NJ)
  - Connects to exhibit room
  - Connects w/Spruce Run Recreation Area
  - Parking/restrooms for trail users
- Imperiled wildlife habitats and wildlife that use them
  - Pollinator, grassland, early successional, Forb meadow, savannah, grain cropland, pine plantation, pollinator garden
- Wildlife viewing locations
- Black Brook spur (Native Brook Trout)
- Importance of Highlands
- Aquatic feature (retention pond designed for wildlife)
- Informational kiosks



Woodland habitat in spring with Turkey Tail fungi, Virginia Bluebell and Celandine Poppy flowers.

This woodland is a community of trees, shrubs, fungi, and animals that depend on one another. As you look closely, you'll find a wide variety of trees growing here, as well as a diverse community of wildlife that calls this place "home." Use your observation skills to find trees with different bark textures, flowers, and fruits. Look for birds,

## SPRING COLORS

Yellow-rumped Warbler  
*Setophaga coronata*

Wildflowers show off their colors during the early, cool months of spring. Some resemble common garden perennials.



Maidenhair Fern  
*Adiantum pedatum*



Mayapple  
*Podophyllum peltatum*



Dutchman's Breeches  
*Dicentra cucullaria*



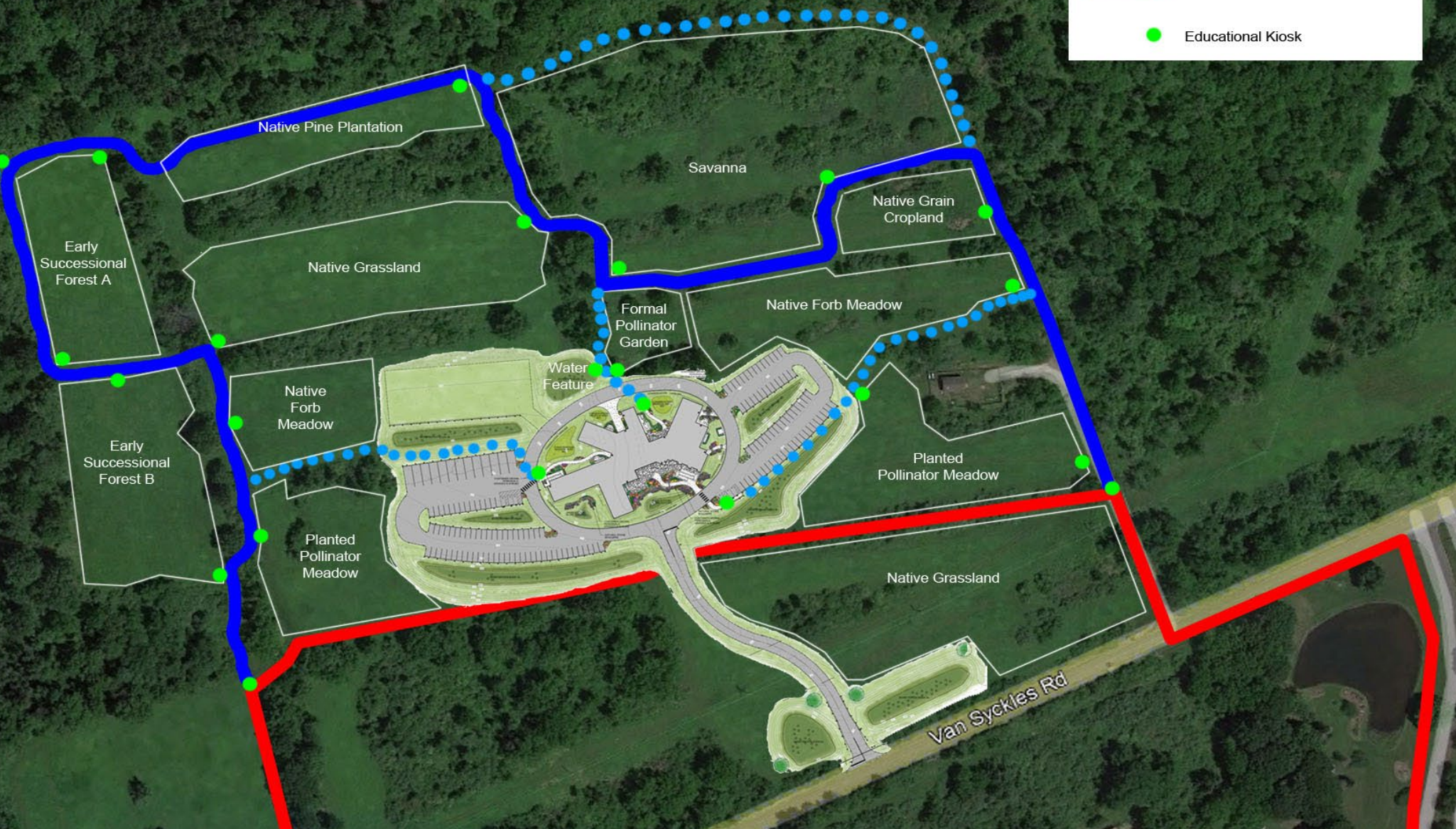
Wild Geranium  
*Geranium maculatum*



# New Jersey DEP Fish and Wildlife Resource Education Trail System



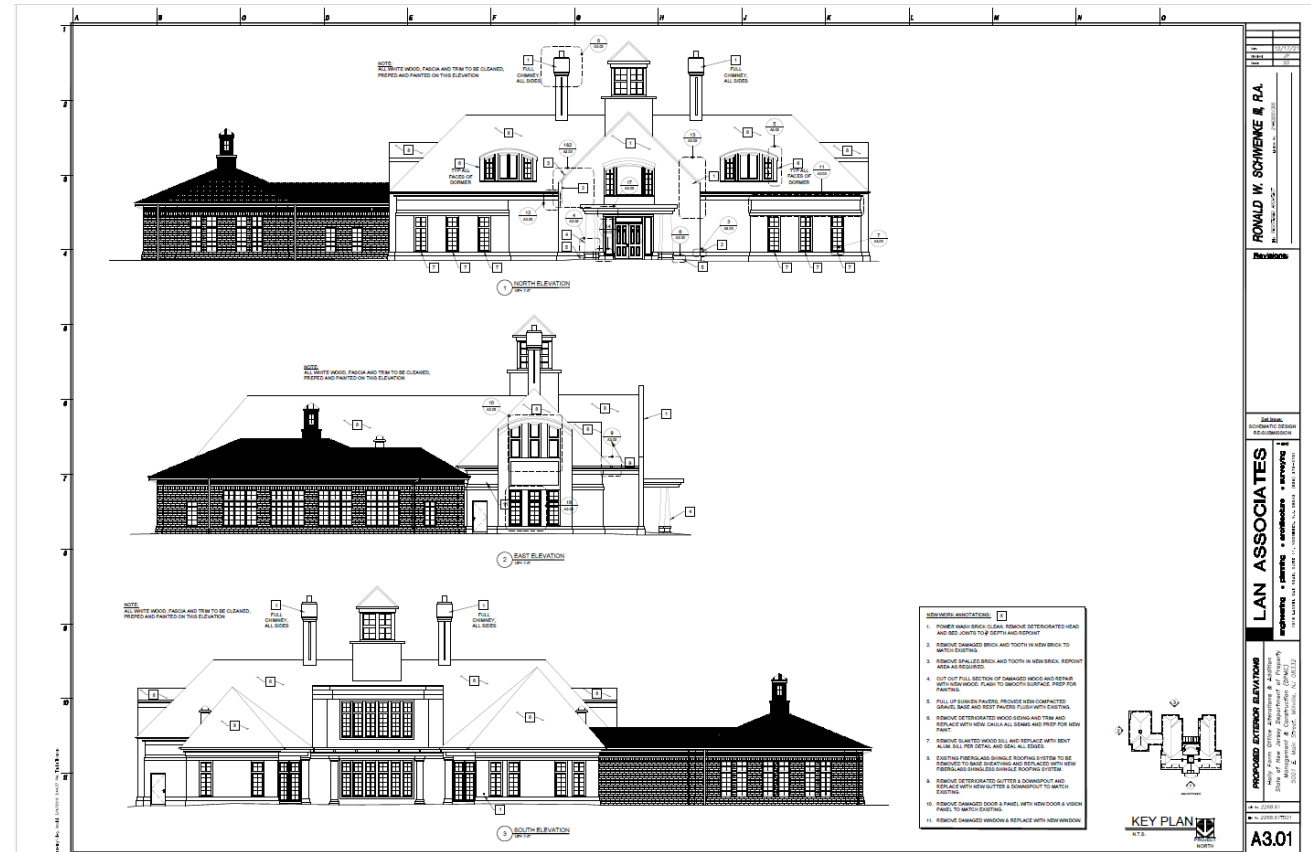
Black  
Brook





# Holly Farm Update

- Construction reviews are complete
- Design firm developing bid documents
- DPMC reviews bid documents, forwards to Treasury for review and advertisement







# Habitat Restoration

Completed and in management rotation:

- Habitat Succession Demonstration Area
- Pollinator Habitat Demonstration Area
- Forage & Cover Plot Demonstration Area

Future management plans:

- Prescribed Fire Demonstration Area (NJFFS)
- Vernal pool installation/enhancement
- Forestry mowing rotation
- Northern pine snake management



# Menantico Wildlife Management Area Habitat Management Proposal

The mission of New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife is to protect and manage the State's fish and wildlife to maximize their long-term biological, recreational, and economic values for all New Jerseyans.

This habitat management proposal is no exception. Here you will find a careful balance between the needs of game, non-game, and threatened & endangered species. Also considered is the variety of wildlife related recreation New Jerseyans enjoy year-round, including regulated hunting seasons and wildlife watching.

Planned at this site is a walking trail with interpretive habitat signs. This trail will assist us in our goal to foster a positive human/wildlife co-existence by educating the public of the benefits of proactive habitat management.

## Forestry Mowing Rotation

Within the boundary of Menantico wildlife management area, you will see several irregularly shaped areas colored in Blue, Red, Green, and Orange. Each color represents 25 acres of prior forestry cuts that, in their current states, are excellent candidates to be put on a forestry mowing rotation. A forestry mower is a heavy piece of equipment capable of mowing anything from grasses to small trees. The purpose of this rotation is to maintain a consistent presence of grassland and early succession habitat types on this tract, which benefits a variety of wildlife. This rotation is for example only. More research to be done to determine optimal rotation.

Red: Year 1  
Green: Year 2  
Blue: Year 3  
Orange: Year 4

Coyote



Henslow's Sparrow (Endangered)



## Northern Pine Snake Habitat Management

Menantico wildlife management area contains several acres of "Evesboro Sand" soil types. This substrate provides optimal Northern Pine Snake (below) nesting habitat. The Division of Fish and Wildlife can further assist the nesting of this threatened species by scarifying .25 acre plots to create areas of barren sand. Plots will be made at a distance from forest edges to maximize sun exposure to the nesting area.



## Habitat Succession Demonstration Area

This area will be used to demonstrate the benefits of providing a smooth transition between grassland and forests habitats. The range of growth between grassland and forests is referred to as "early-succession" habitat. This habitat type generally consists of a mix of native grasses, shrubs, and young trees. Many species, such as the eastern cottontail rabbit, depend on early succession habitat to survive.

## Pollinator Demonstration Area

This area will be planted with pollinator mix and accompanied by an interpretive sign to educate the public about the importance of managing land to benefit pollinating insects such as butterflies and bees. These insects serve a key role in assisting the reproduction of many native flowering plants, as well as agricultural crop production.

## Vernal Pool Installation

Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands that are typically flooded in winter & spring, and may entirely dry up in summer. Many of New Jersey's amphibians are dependent on vernal pools to lay eggs, including the endangered Eastern Tiger Salamander (below)



## Forage & Cover Plot Demonstration Area

Every year, nearly 600 acres of forage & cover plots are planted on southern region wildlife management areas alone. These plots not only provide food and cover for a variety of wildlife, but also provide quality regulated hunting opportunity for New Jersey licensed hunters.

## Prescribed Fire Demonstration Area

New Jersey State Forest Fire Services will manage this area to demonstrate how forests regenerate and benefit from prescribed fires.



0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles

74°58'20"W 39°22'9"N