

PENNSYLVANIA IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

SITE NAME HICKORY CREEK / HEARTS CONTENT **COUNTY** WARREN **SITE #** 17
NATURAL AREA

APPROX. SIZE 8,763 ACRES **OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC (USFS-ANF) **LAT.** 41°41' **LONG.** 79°18'

DESCRIPTION

Hickory Creek Wilderness is located on the Bradford Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest. It is the only congressionally designated wilderness in Pennsylvania. The area is characterized by mature (80-100 years old) deciduous forest, mature mixed hardwoods, and forested streambottoms. It is drained by East Hickory and Middle Hickory Creeks; the latter flows through meadows studded with bogs and beaver ponds, and large White Pine scattered in open areas. Heart's Content Natural Area (100 acres) is adjacent to Hickory Creek Wilderness and consists of predominately old-growth (200+ years old) Eastern Hemlock and American Beech. Northern Water Shrew are present in the area.

Directions: From Warren, take SR 3005 S approx. 11 miles to Hearts Content Recreational Area.

BIRDS - SUMMARY

Hickory Creek is a very important, large block of near-natural and relatively undisturbed mature forest. Formal surveys have not been conducted in the wilderness, but numerous interior-forest songbirds nest in high densities throughout the site. About 250 acres of the wilderness were blown down by the 1985 tornado; these regenerating forests are important for early- and mid-successional species. Heart's Content also has not been formally surveyed, but it is thought to harbor exceptionally high densities of species found in old-growth hemlock-beech (see Tionesta, site #16).

REPRESENTATIVE BIRDS - BY CRITERIA

- 3 Swainson's Thrush (B - 10+ pair)
- 4a 4b Large block of mostly undisturbed, mature deciduous or mixed forest. Characteristic species include warblers, vireos, thrushes and other neotropical migrants. Old growth forest (Heart's Content)
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CONSERVATION / ADDITIONAL NOTES

Primary conservation threats to the area are overbrowsing by White-tailed Deer and natural pests and diseases affecting the forest, including Elm Spanworm and Gypsy Moth. As a congressionally designated wilderness, Hickory Creek is managed primarily to protect wilderness values for future generations, to preserve natural ecosystems, and to provide a wilderness experience. No motorized or mechanized equipment is allowed at any time. All mineral rights have been purchased by the federal government.

LOCAL CONTACTS

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SUBMITTED BY:

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