



About Dark Hollow Park

FACT SHEET #2 — The Proposed Dark Hollow Dam and Neshaminy Creek Stormwater Management

Hidden in special corners of Bucks County are natural gems that are unique and irreplaceable. Traveling down the main stem of the Neshaminy Creek south of Route 263, with Warwick Township on your right and Buckingham Township on your left, the first striking feature is the historic **Eight Arch Bridge**, last remaining eight arch bridge in Pennsylvania. A hand laid stone and mortar 218 foot long structure with distinctive and graceful arches, the bridge was built in 1803. As you follow the tree-lined stream south you enter a quiet, meandering stream that seems separate from present day space and time.

You pass under the iron **Mill Road Bridge**, a rock escarpment rises on your left, the creek narrows, rushing a little faster over rocky riffles. Brooks join the creek as you go; back channels, flooded in high flows, break off and come back again. Closing in from the right, remarkable overhanging rock cliffs, known as the **Neshaminy Palisades**, decorated in moss, ferns, and lichens create the heart of Dark Hollow--shady, quiet, and cool. An impressive rock ledge cuts all the way across the creek, and just below, another part way across, making small waterfalls. The stream slows, changing course from northeast to southeast, as this remarkable right angle causes the stream to almost double back on itself. Some say this is the origin of the Neshaminy's Indian name--place where we drink twice.

A **mature stand of hardwoods** border the floodplain that abuts historic Worthington Farm on the right. Historically known as **Indian Neck Farm**, it is said that a Native American Village once covered the plateau--it is mentioned on an 1682 deed for William Penn's first land purchase from the **Lenni Lenape's**. Early in this century, bathers and picnickers flocked here to enjoy the Neshaminy waters and the large pool that was formed by a mill dam.

You round the next curve and ahead is the **Dark Hollow Bridge**, standing strong and angular, like a vision from the past. As you leave this secluded world, you feel as though you've been transported, experiencing one of the region's secret treasures.

The Bucks County Commissioners dedicated Dark Hollow Park in 1989 when they cancelled the Dark Hollow Dam proposal. The 610 acre maximum flood pool of the dam project includes acreage or flood easements that were bought by the County over two decades. Some of these parcels were sold after 1989, but the bulk of the land was put under the Bucks County Parks Department.

What you're likely to find in Dark Hollow Park:

Lowland and upland **hardwoods**: oaks, maples, ash, bitternut and shagbark hickory, beech, sycamore, black walnut, tulip, elm, box elder, wild black cherry. Mature and very old oaks, tulip, beech and hickory.

Evergreens: old hemlock, red cedar, white pine, and taxus.

Small trees and shrubs: viburnum, spice bush, elderberry, ilex, mountain laurel, bladdernut, witch hazel, and wild berries.

Plant communities: a splendid population of Neshaminy bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), many species of common and rare ferns, partridge berry, native and naturalized grasses and wildflowers including goldenrod, evening primrose, butterfly flower, native snapdragon, wood asters, and many spring ephemerals.

Historically reported **rare plants**: Rock crowfoot (*Ranunculus micranthus*), Marsh pennywort (*Hydrocotyle umbellata*), Stuve's bush clover (*Lespedeza Stuvei*).

In the **water**: catfish, carp, sunfish, bass, trout (trout stocked from Rt. 611 to Rt. 263 in spring), eels, crayfish, mussels, macroinvertebrates, diverse insect life. Classified as warm water fishery.

On the **land**: muskrat, fox, skunk, opossum, and other small mammals

In the **air** and in the trees: Resident bird species include owls, ducks, herons, hawks, vultures, osprey, kingfishers, ...

How to Experience the Park:

Series of **foot trails** along the west side of the creek with parking at Rt. 263 and at Mill Road.

Canoes can be put in just above the Eight Arch bridge at Rt. 263 and taken out at the public access area at the train trestle on Old Sackettsford Road in Rushland or go further south until you hit dams at Tyler State Park.

Viewed from Valley Road, Old York Road, Eight Arch Bridge, Mill Road Bridge, Dark Hollow Bridge.