

# Newell Recreational Preserve

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The Newell Recreational Preserve is named in honor of Owen Davis Newell and Betty (Anderson) Newell for the purpose of the preservation of the natural wetlands, some of which has been converted to farm lands. Additionally, providing educational opportunities regarding the native people and flora that once, in its original state (without crop production) sustained human life.

The Newell Recreational Preserve is located in Licking County, being at the NW portion of Lot 5, Section 2, Township 4, Range 15, United States Military Land ceded to the United States upon the signing of the Greenville Treaty in 1795. Ohio was then part of the NW Territory of the United States. This parcel was a portion of 8000 acres of the original survey set aside to fund schools at the time of Statehood In 1803. The first to hold deed to this property was John C Gault, who purchased it in 1839 for \$1.06 an acre plus \$0.27 an acre for the cabin and improvements. Given that the property had these dwellings on it when sold, chances are that squatters, trappers, or Native Americans had built them. During the years between Statehood (1803) and being offered for sale (1839), the property was public land. There were a few squatters from time to time, but mostly it was inhabited by Native Americans who had been forced off of adjoining lands. They were predominately of the Wyandott tribe with some members of the Shawnee tribe and others scattered about. Over time, the tribes and the generations of settlers mixed blood lines. There are still descendants of all these people living in Ohio.

1843 was the year that most Native Americans moved to an area near present day Emaline, Iowa, this is when the Wyandotts left Ohio en masse. Connected or coincidence? I am in contact with descendants of the group that left here at that time. Many arrowheads and stone tools in the area have been found. In fact, a stone ax of museum quality was found on this property.

During the period from the 1790's to the 1890's, this property and surrounding land was the second largest settlement of Native American's in Ohio. The largest was the reservation at Upper Sandusky. Note, this 8000 acres was not a reservation but the last area of undeeded land in this part of Ohio.

Time passed and property ownership took place, tensions rose, discontent, and loss of life mounted. Native Americans of the ancient cultures including Adena, Hopewell, along with more modern Wyandott, Shawnee, and other tribes were well-known to have lived in this area. Beyond the artifacts, mounds, and arrowheads, not much information on the ancients and their activities in this area has been recorded throughout history.

This area, in its natural state, was a mesophytic forest. The soil type is silt-clay loam and is naturally wet and poor draining. A large variety of trees would have been found here including pin oak, white oak, red oak, white ash, black ash, American beech, American sycamore, black cherry, soft and hard maple, buckeye, black walnut, and sassafras. Undoubtedly, there were lots of spice bush, daisys, golden rod, and other plants common to virgin forests mixed with swamp/marsh lands. Bear, deer, and turkeys were here in abundance coexisting with snakes, otters, raccoon's, and other fur bearing animals. This abundance of flora and animals could and did sustain life.

Now, imagine this land as it was, then see it in today's context. Realize that the difference constitutes generations of hard work that required taming it with axes, hand saws, human, horse, and ox power, along with sheer grit and determination to turn the forest into the productive farm land it is today. Four

generations of the Newell Family had the privilege of being able to clear, drain, and make a portion of this land better and more productive than they found it.

It is the intent of the Newell Family that this preserve be set aside to offer an educational opportunity to capture early Ohio history, to honor those Native Americans, and all those since that were able to live and prosper on this land. They are our ancestors and we are the purveyors for future generations.

Welcome to the Newell Recreation Preserve!