

*This is part three of a series of articles that inform the public of an ambitious project that will benefit our local communities in many ways. Claverack Rural Electric Cooperative has undertaken a lawn-to-native pollinator habitat transition project on the grounds of their headquarters building, located along Route 6 in Wysox, Pennsylvania. Expected benefits include improved environmental stewardship, evaluating new right-of-way management strategies, educational opportunities for local students and groups, and reduced maintenance costs. Claverack is a rural electric cooperative that is owned by the members we serve.*

## Pick The Right Partner

One of the most impactful things you will ever do is choose a partner. This is true for marriage, for business, and most certainly, for contractor selection. The right contractor will make the project pleasurable and provide lasting satisfaction. The wrong partner leaves you with a lot of regrets.

When Claverack chose to move ahead with our native pollinator habitat project on the grounds of our headquarters campus in Wysox, we knew we wanted to get it right the first time. We selected credible, competent partners who we trusted and who were as excited about the project as we were.

First, we chose Mike and Laura Jackson from Bedford County, PA. They previously established multiple native pollinator habitat projects on their property. The Jacksons are retired educators and are also very talented photographers. They helped me understand the process, select the seed mixes, layout the site and create the signs. Laura took many of the photographs that we used on our signs, website and in print.

Ernst Conservation Seeds in Meadville, PA is our seed supplier. Founded by Calvin Ernst in 1964, Ernst Conservation Seeds is the largest native seed producer and supplier in the eastern United States. Their expertise in native habitat planting options is deep and wide.

The Bradford County Conservation District is highly regarded throughout the state and is very supportive of our project. They have provided staff consultations and encouragement and have also donated funds to the project. They plan to promote our site with their educational offerings in the future.

The mission of Pheasants Forever is to conserve pheasants, quail, and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public access, education, and conservation advocacy. They support our project with consultations from their Certified Wildlife Biologist and have offered to provide specialized planting equipment.

Rovendale Ag & Barn is a local New Holland farm equipment dealer who continually supports our project. They provided sprayers for herbicide application and tractors for the operation of the no-till planter. Not only are they a great partner, but they are also a good neighbor, providing agricultural support in our communities.

Holbrook Landscaping in Montrose, PA is working with us on the design and construction of our landing area, providing labor and materials in support of our project. They will also

be recommending and planting native woody plant species along the western edge of our native pollinator habitat site.

We are thrilled to have these professionals partner with us on this project, and we are thankful for their efforts. As our site blooms next year and our signs are installed, please plan to visit to see this collaborative project. Our project goal is to engage with and benefit our communities, and our selected partners will help us achieve that goal.