



# Connetquot River State Park Preserve

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It's Past and Present  
Hatchery Operations

# Friends of Connetquot River State Park Preserve

FOC is dedicated to the preservation, conservation and history of the 3,473 acre CRSPP. We work to protect the environment, historic buildings and artifacts.

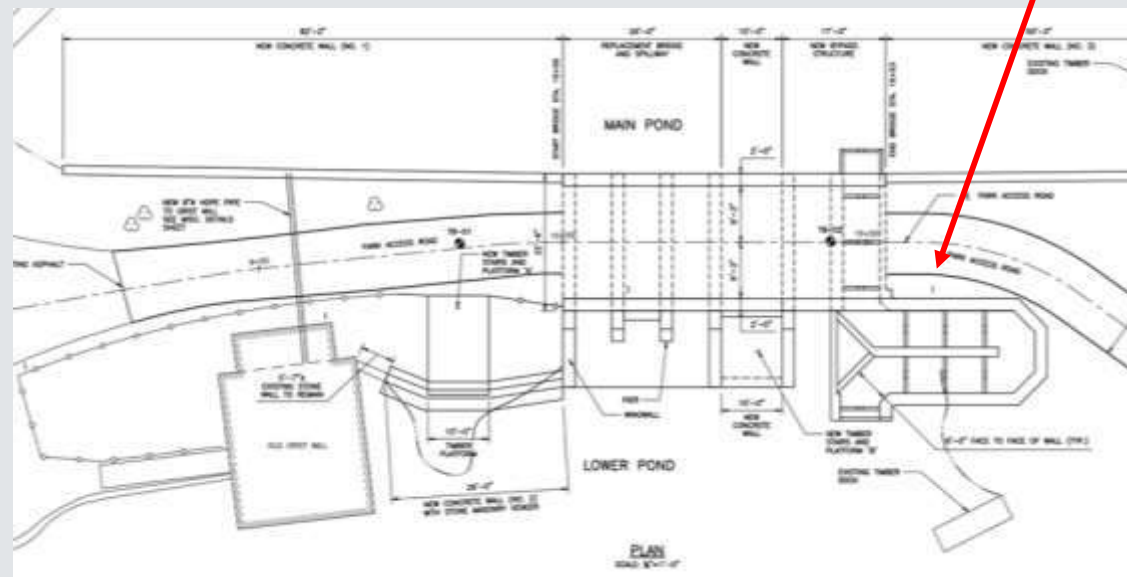
Join us! Help keep Connetquot “as it was” and have some fun with friends!







- Red Trail ADA walkway
- Hatchery Interpretive signage
- Fish ladder/passage at the Grist Mill



01-06 Life Cycles below spinners

# Fishing During the Pre-Club Era

- Indigenous people lived along the banks of the Connetquot River dating back to 3,000 B.C. An archeological survey conducted in 1974 revealed that netting and smoking of fish occurred at the River Bend site on the East Bank of the river.
- In the 1700s, the Nicholls mill and mill dam were constructed which created a pond which became an ideal spot for trout fishing.
- The Snedecor Inn was opened in 1820 to accommodate visitors traveling East. It became one of the most popular places to fish on Long Island. Main (Mill) Pond was fished from boats and 12 fish were allowed to







On April 3, 1866 the South Side Sportsmen's Club was established "for the protection, increase and capture of game, birds and fish, and for the promotion of social intercourse among its members". The club and the river quickly became known throughout the world for its excellent trout fishing. It did not take these men very long to understand the importance of protecting the river from development. By the early 1900s, the club owned the 3.473 acres we know as CRSPP.

Members of the Club recognized that a hatchery and conservation practices were very important to maintain adequate levels of trout for fishing.



# Mill Preserves

Established 1871

The building on the left was originally a hatchery. Fluctuations in water flow as a result of mill operations and seasonal variations in temperature did not produce the quantity that the members wanted and in 1883, hatchery operations were moved to East Brook.





EAST BROOK HATCHERIES ABOUT 1888

## East Brook Preserves

Constructed in 1875 and contained two hatching houses.

The Preserves were  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile in length, constructed in a continuous line having water flow from one sluiceway to another. By the time the water reached the farthest pond, it was too warm to sustain life.

## Screen Preserves

In 1879, further north on the property, areas of the river were screened off to hold growing trout before they were released into the river. A hatching house was built to provide a safe place for eggs and sac fry to grow. Fire destroyed the hatching house and new facilities were constructed in 1900. This is the building that we see today.





# Cold Clean Water

- The canal was dug almost 130 years ago by hand. During the summer, the water in the pond and marsh flow slowly and the hot summer sun warms the water. Trout like cold water, so the members of the South Side Sportsmen's Club dug the canal to bypass the warm areas and bring the clear, cool water directly to the trout in the Hatchery.



# IPN

- In 2008, a virus called IPN, or Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis was found in the hatchery. This virus infects juvenile trout and salmon. NYS DEC closed the hatchery.
- The hatchery was reopened upon updating the water supply. Operations resumed using disease-free water well to incubate disease-free trout eggs.



## Dr. Richard Steinberger



- Perhaps you've seen a plaque near the hatchery honoring Dr. Richard Steinberger. (It's the one with the misspelled "Connetquot!") Indeed as brilliant as Doc was, he would have appreciated the unintended humor. His ability to share a joke was as precisely executed as a surgical procedure.
- Dr. Richard Steinberger, passed away December 10, 2021. A great friend to many, he freely shared his knowledge, (both medical and flyfishing), and time with anyone who asked. His fly-tying and knot-tying were superb; he impressed many with his left-handed casts. However, his devotion to Connetquot River State Park Preserve far surpassed his flyfishing skills. His research played a pivotal role in saving the CRSP trout hatchery from destruction. He thoroughly researched Infective Pancreatic Necrosis, providing the Friends of Connetquot with academic information to support the reopening of

## Current operations presented by Hatchery Manager Matthew Caputo

- Good Morning and thank you for listen to us chat about our little piece of Paradise.
- Let's begin with current hatchery maintenance, "A Day in the Life".
  - Every day the screens leading into each pond are removed and cleared of leaves and debris. This task becomes almost an hourly task in the fall months as the leaves if left on the screens block the water flow.
  - Feed the ponds – different amounts and occurrences depending on the age of the trout.
  - In the hatchery building, the troughs are cleaned daily and the fry are fed.
  - In the summer months, maintaining the grounds becomes a major task – mowing, pruning and lopping
    - Summer projects include "rebuilding" the diverters; the rock jetties you see throughout the river. The diverters increase the oxygen in the water while increasing the flow. We realize the diverters look like great spots to cast from, but they are there for the health of the trout and the river. Please stay off of them.
    - We also plant perennials and trees around the ponds in the summer to provide shade as well as attract bugs.
    - Summer is a good time for working in the tributaries which increase flow as well as introduce wild trout to the main river.



## Fishing Protocols

- The rules are available online and on the back of the fishing map, but not much has changed
- Those who aren't familiar, there are just a few **MAJOR NO NOs**
  - 1 angler (1 working rod) per site
  - You can keep No more than 2 fish per person per session
  - No Barbed hooks
  - No lead on lines
  - No Stringers
  - No Neoprene waders or felt bottom boots. These can transport diseases and invasives.
- Staff check the river daily. Feel free to approach us with any questions or comments you have. We're happy to talk to anglers. We like to know what they're biting on too!
- All of these rules have been in place for decades to protect the fishery and to keep the Connetquot River one of Long Island's prestigious Fly Fishing Destinations
- When you fish at Connetquot, you do so just as United States Presidents, European Royalty, Heads of State and business magnates have enjoyed since 1860.

## Future Projects & Plans    presented by Hatchery Manager Matthew Caputo

- This past winter for the first time in approximately 17 years, Connetquot Hatchery Staff stripped eggs from 3 year old Brook trout that yielded approximately 400 “homegrown” trout.
  - Great learning experience for the staff
  - Looking forward to doing this again on a larger scale.
- The old Nursery Building and it's pond are currently under repair and the pond is being cleared.
  - Once repairs are completed, the Nursery will house the homegrown Brook Trout.
  - We will pull from that population future strip spawning.

