

## Audubon Society has plans for pond

By LINDA JUMP  
Staff Writer

MORRIS — The Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society will meet Sept. 13 to discuss the future of a mud pond to be donated to the society as a public wildlife sanctuary.

The society, working with the Morris Rotary Club and Morris residents, has developed a two-page draft statement outlining a proposal for the land now owned by Maurice N. Bridges of Morris. Society President Andrew Mason said about a dozen residents had input on the plan, which calls for the property to be used for education and recreation.

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**— Maurice N. Bridges  
pond owner**

Otherwise, the land should remain undeveloped, the statement reads, except the society will consider a smooth path for wheelchairs.

Plants and wildlife in the sanctuary would be protected under the plan. Eventually, the society hopes to print brochures explaining appropriate uses of the area and describing its flora and fauna, the plan states.

The area would be closed at night, and fees, alcohol and firearms would not be permitted. Fishing may be allowed, but only in Butternut Creek.

"We want to protect the wildlife as well as make the area accessible for public viewing," Mason said.

The Audubon Society wants to keep the area forever wild, but needs an organization to manage it, he said. A board of directors would include representatives of Morris-area organizations.

Mason said 80 acres of wood and pasture land in the Town of Davenport may be donated to the society as well. "More and more people are coming forward to offer their properties and that's good, but we don't want to overextend ourselves," he said.

The Audubon Society owns about 11 acres at its Delaware-Otsego sanctuary on Franklin Mountain, he said. The society leases the rest of the 100-acre site.

The Morris land surrounds a mud pond, a settling pond for silt that was part of the Linn Tractor Corp.'s water power project. The pond is mostly filled, but Mason said it is an ideal wetland habitat.

The pond's owner agreed. "The area is full of cattails and is an ideal location for mud pond life," Bridges said. He said the Audubon Society approached him about allowing the public to view the area and he agreed to give the land to the group.

"I thought the Audubon Society would be the most likely to continue to make the area more accessible to the public," said Bridges, who also owns Hargrave Pond near the mud pond and water rights up to Butternut Creek.

He said he approved of the two-page draft statement for use of the property. "I like the idea of no firearms being allowed," he said.

Delaware

# Audubon Society considers saving Mud Pond.



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**bob\_thomas\_wk**  
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