

The Pinchot Eagle



Friends of Pinchot State Park

October/November/December 2011

Aquatic Turtles Receive a Helping Hand

By Sally Ray, Board Member



PHOTO BY SALLY RAY

Turtles using a basking platform.

Forty-three turtle basking platforms now float in Pinchot Lake thanks to the efforts of over 20 people who helped construct these platforms on August 30, 2011. The basking platforms are part of a 3-year lake habitat improvement project at Gifford Pinchot State Park.

Aquatic turtles naturally seek out logs or rocks where they can warm themselves in the sun if they are cool. Their body temperature tracks that of their surroundings. Painted turtles do not begin to feed until water temperatures have reached 59° F. The rate at which a turtle can digest food is directly linked to body temperature. It takes twice as long for a painted turtle to digest a meal when their body temperature is at 77° F as opposed to 86° F. Basking platforms provide a safe place where a turtle can bask while watching for predators from the slightly raised platform.

Turtles make use of them especially during the spring and fall months. While the platforms are designed for use by turtles, it is not uncommon to see herons, egrets and ducks standing on them as well.

Funding for this project was provided by a grant to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation from ArcelorMittal of Steelton, PA. Fish habitat struc-



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Unloading the lumber for the platforms.



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Assembling the 43 turtle basking platforms.

tures are scheduled to be built during the second and third years of the project. In addition to the funding, ArcelorMittal will be donating man-hours towards the other two projects.

The Friends of Pinchot State Park (FOPSP) would like to thank the staff of Gifford Pinchot State Park and the PA Fish and Boat Commission for their support of the lake habitat improvement project and the work they did in assembling and placing the turtle basking platforms.



PHOTO BY SALLY RAY

Blocks, used to anchor down the basking platforms.

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DID YOU KNOW...

...Pinchot Lake is a 340-acre impoundment, formed in 1959, by placing a dam across Beaver Creek?

- The first water spilled over the dam in February of 1960.
- Pinchot Lake's maximum depth is 29 feet, with 7.5 feet as the average. There is a channel, 10-20 feet deep, on the Harrisburg side of the lake.
- Approximately every three years, the lake is lowered to improve the overall quality of the lake's fishery. Other benefits of the drawdown include the reduction of invasive vegetation, and the accessibility to conduct maintenance on the boat moorings.

Improvements to the Lakeside Trail

By Pat Sabold, Board Member

Have you hiked the Lakeside Trail lately? If so, you have probably noticed the improvements made to approximately two-thirds of the 8.5-mile trail.



PHOTO BY TED PRINDLE

Lakeside Trail, a portion cleared and trimmed.



PHOTO BY TED PRINDLE

Repositioning the side walls of the bridge to make it more stable.



PHOTO BY TED PRINDLE

Stone bridge after repairs were made.

A group of volunteers, led by board member, Jim Grove, spent many hours during the 2011 summer and fall seasons, working on the Lakeside Trail. They removed fallen trees, cut back overgrown vegetation, trimmed low branches and repaired bridges.

Those who assisted Jim were Ted Prindle, Dean Gibbons, John Boob, Rudy Euler, Larry Reddy, plus others. Several of these folks also volunteer their time as campground hosts.

In addition to the work completed on the Lakeside Trail, this group of volunteers also trimmed up campsites and maintained the landscape at the campground entrance. ■



PHOTO BY TED PRINDLE

Jim Grove working on the Lakeside Trail.



PHOTO BY TED PRINDLE

Removing overgrowth on the Lakeside Trail.

Volunteer Awarded

Jim Grove was awarded the 1st Annual "All Star Pinchot Park Volunteer" award. It is in recognition of all the hard work and volunteer time Jim put in during the 2011 season.

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Thanks also to all the Friends' volunteers who came out and quickly transformed a dump truck load of lumber into turtle basking platforms.

The highlight of the day came when the basking platforms were taken out on Fish Commission boats to various coves throughout the lake and dropped into the water. Before the last platform was put in place, one of the platforms was already in use by a painted turtle. If turtles could talk they would be sending out a huge "Thank You" to everyone who made the project a success! ■



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Turtle basking platform being launched into Pinchot Lake.



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This volunteer advisory board is dedicated to preserving, protecting and enhancing the natural and recreational resources of Gifford Pinchot State Park for present and future generations.

Friends of Pinchot State Park is a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Newsletter Editor: Pat Sabold
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Publication deadlines are the 5th of each quarter (March, June, September, December). The Advisory Board reserve publication decisions.



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Cutting wire which was used to connect the anchor blocks to the platforms.



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Carrying a turtle basking platform to the boat.



PHOTO BY PHYLLIS CROOKS

Basking platform being secured on a conveyor, ready to launch.



PHOTO BY BETSY LEPP

One of many crews returning after launching platforms.

*Happy Holidays
from the Friends of
Pinchot State Park!*



FRIENDS OF PINCHOT STATE PARK

2011-2012 Annual Membership Application

Make checks payable to: PPFF
(include FOPSP on the memo line)

Mail form with payment to: Friends of Pinchot State Park, 2200
Rosstown Road, Lewisberry, PA 17339

NEW MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

__ Senior (age 65+)	\$10.00	__ Corporate	\$250.00+
__ Individual	\$15.00	__ I'd like to make a	
__ Family	\$25.00	tax-deductible	
__ Damselfly Sponsor	\$50.00	contribution of \$	_____
__ Dragonfly Sponsor	\$100.00	TOTAL \$	_____

Name(s) _____

Street _____

City _____

State/Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

- I would like to receive my newsletter via email.
- I am interested in volunteering.

Friends of Pinchot State Park was formed in March 2009 as a chapter of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation (PPFF). The PPFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions to PPFF are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. The official registration of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Memberships are for one year, June 1 through May 31.