

Friends of the Gile Flowage (F.O.G.) Newsletter



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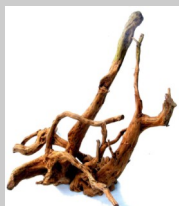
*Protecting and enhancing the Gile Flowage for now...
and future generations*

Winter 2009

ADDITIONAL FISH CRIBS ON FOG'S LIST OF 2009 PROJECTS

Flowage Factoids WHY FISH CRIBS?

Some may remember the time when the Gile Flowage was full of old stumps, logs, woody debris left behind after the land was cleared to create the Flowage. We may curse the old snags that still remain when they catch our fishing lure or snub our motor, but this woody material provides critical habitat for fish and other species.



Woody material, like old logs, if submerged, can remain in lakes for decades and centuries providing structural

habitat value for fish.

However, the Gile's fluctuating water levels tend to dislodge this material removing it from places where it could provide habitat. Instead woody matter tends to float around the Flowage or piles up along shorelines as driftwood rather than remaining submerged in the littoral zone where it would provide better cover for fish and other aquatic organisms.

Aquatic vegetation and coarse woody debris provide important fish habitat and effect the health of the fishery. Fish cribs provide man-made woody structure and habitat to benefit water bodies like the Gile Flowage.

GILE FLOWAGE FISH CRIB PROJECT

By: Jeff Roth, WDNR Fisheries Biologist

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT versus FISH ATTRACTORS

Log fish cribs have been constructed and placed in the Gile Flowage since 1989 as a means of improving the overall fish habitat. As a matter of fact, to date, a total of 93 cribs have been made on four separate occasions with the intent of providing long term fisheries improvements for the flowage. This improvement project involves construction and placement of log fish crib shelters into the open water regions of the lake where natural cover is lacking.



A fish cribs resembles a small log cabin created by overlapping 5-10 inch hardwood logs, stuffed with brush. They provide habitat and cover for fish hereby improving the fishery.

Fish cribs have been in use by fisheries managers for over 60 years in Wisconsin. Years ago they were constructed on the ice and allowed to fall to the lake bottom at ice-out. The problem with that method is that the ice would move cribs to unsuitable areas of the lake before they would sink. Today, we have found it more efficient to construct them during the winter over shallow water and relocate them exactly where they will be most useful after ice-out. In the past, the purpose of making fish cribs was to provide habitat to attract fish to a designated area for increased harvest. Managers knew at that time, if they would place habitat in an area where natural cover was lacking, fish would be attracted to the area and fishing success would improve.

That same principle is true today, however over-harvest is now proven to be a management problem when trying to maintain long term fishing quality. As a result, we try to construct and place numerous cribs in several areas of the lake that are devoid of cover and not concentrate them for fish harvest purposes. The goal is to restore and enhance the habitat that supports the

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DON'T FORGET...IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME !

Gile Flowage Fish Crib Project, by Jeff Roth, continued from page 1

basic life functions of fish and aquatic life in hopes of improving overall fish productivity and ultimately fishing quality.

Log Fish Crib Longevity

Records show that many of the cribs built during the 1930's remain intact today except for the brush component which deteriorates with time. On some projects divers have been used to re-brush old cribs to revitalize their effectiveness. However, the standing log structure alone still provides valuable fish habitat for countless years. Knowing that these are long-lasting improvements provides motivation to the construction crews who work allot of hours in adverse conditions building the cribs during the winter months.



FOG members cut brush for the 2006 fish crib project. FOG has installed 29 fish cribs to benefited the Flowage's fishery.

Work Force

The Department of Natural Resources and volunteers from the Friends of the Gile Flowage have teamed-up to build fish cribs this coming winter. A project goal of 27 cribs is expected to be built and placed in the Flowage by May, 2009. Without the help of the many volunteers, a project of this magnitude would not be possible.

Editor's Note: The FOG Board unanimously voted to approve the purchase of up to 10 cords of wood suitable for constructing fish cribs and are now in the process of securing these items. Thanks to cooperation by the City of Montreal, we have approval to deck the wood at Gile Park where the cribs will be constructed. We'll be looking for help over the winter to construct the cribs. Watch for a call out to members and friends of the Flowage to join in upcoming Fish Crib Building Parties!



FOG SUGGESTION RESULTS IN SAFETY SIGNING

Thanks to FOG Board member Jim Kaffine's suggestion, there are new traffic signs on Spring Camp Rd. to improve safety at the Pence 4H Boat Ramp. Jim noticed that drivers needed a reminder to slow down as they approached the ramp to avoid a collision with boaters loading and unloading their boats. At his suggestion, FOG wrote to the Town of Pence Board with this idea. The Pence Town Board promptly acted on the suggestion and installed new traffic signs to alert drivers to boat ramp traffic. Thanks Jim, for helping make the Flowage safer!

Treasurer's Report

Financially FOG is doing well at this time. We have ample funds available for projects, newsletters and other routine needs. FOG had a recent generous donation from a member. The donor requested that the funds be used for additional fish cribs to be placed in the flowage. This project will be completed this winter. FOG is very grateful for this donation since fish cribs are a costly endeavor and much appreciated by all who fish the Gile Flowage. It is time for membership renewals so a membership form is included with this newsletter. Membership dues have not increased and FOG is still a bargain at \$20 for an individual and \$30 for a family. We still have FOG caps available for the affordable price of \$8. Thank you all for your financial support of FOG's mission.



Jeanne Matchefts
FOG Treasurer

NEW GILE FLOWAGE BROCHURE PRINTED

In 2006, FOG created the first brochure and map of the Gile Flowage. The brochure was one of the educational tools funded under a Wisconsin DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Grant to help educate Flowage users on how they could stop the spread of invasive species into and out of the Flowage. The brochure gave FOG a “double bump” because it also provided a much needed tool to promote the Flowage and FOG and educate users about it. The most popular feature was the Flowage map, created by FOG member Joel Enking which provided the first map of the Flowage for public use.

The new brochure proved so popular that the first printing of 1000 copies were distributed by summer 2007. Most were given out to Flowage users in “boater welcome kits” or distributed by FOG members to family and friends.

Thanks to a generous matching donation by Xcel Energy, FOG has been able to update and reprint 2500 copies of the Flowage brochure. Important information contained in the first brochure has been retained including the popular map and information about stopping the spread of aquatic invasives. New features include information about the Flowage provided by Xcel Energy including clarification about Xcel’s policies on use of their Flowage property. The brochure cover features an peaceful summer Flowage scene taken by Peg Sutherland, former FOG Secretary. The back cover delivers the message that the Flowage is a Northwoods experience for all through a photo of the Gary Hopp family in their motorboat.

A copy of the new brochure is included in this newsletter. Your input is always welcome to help us improve the brochure or any of our FOG projects!.



FROM THE FLOWAGE



IN APPRECIATION

*The Friends of the Gile Flowage
thanks the Chuck Waldschmidt Family for the
generous donation toward the purchase of materials for fish cribs
in remembrance of Chuck Waldschmidt.
Chuck loved the Gile Flowage and was an avid fisherman,
a dedicated FOG member, and a friend to all.*

Box 227, Montreal, WI 54550
 Phone: 715.561.2185
friendsofthegile.org



WE WANT YOU!

IT'S E-Z TO BE A FOG MEMBER

Membership in FOG is open to
anyone!

Annual membership dues are:
Individual: \$20.00/year
Family: \$30.00/year

* A "Family" is defined as up to two adults and their unemancipated children.

10 REASONS TO JOIN FOG You Can...

- 10: Enjoy the Annual meeting, raffle, cake, and camaraderie
- 9: Wear cool FOG hats and shirts
- 8: Help build fish cribs
- 7: Discover the secret fish cribs locations (well, maybe)
- 6: Enjoy great newsletters filled with news about the Flowage
- 5: Get copies of the newest Flowage brochure
- 4: Impress friends about your Flowage knowledge
- 3: Meet your Flowage neighbors and other Flowage lovers
- 2: Provide a voice for the Flowage on issues affecting it

#1: Join others committed to improving the Flowage for now and the future

DON'T FORGET, DONATIONS TO FOG ARE TAX DEDUCTABLE

FOG is officially a non-profit organization for federal tax exemption under section 501 (c) (3) of the IRS Code as of February 8, 2007. Anyone donating to FOG after this date may deduct these donations from their taxes in 2008. FOG also received a WI state sales tax exemption in 2007 which will help greatly, especially for large purchases.

Thank you all for your continued support of FOG and remember that 2009 memberships are due as of January 1st. (Note: memberships fees do not qualify for tax deductions).

The mission of the Friends of the Gile Flowage, Inc.

...is to preserve and protect the **Gile Flowage** and its surroundings, and to enhance the water quality, fishery, boating safety, and its aesthetic values, as a public recreational facility for today and for future generations. Membership in FOG is open to any individual, family, business, or organization that subscribes to this mission.

2008-9 FOG Board of Directors

President: Cathy Techtmann
 Phone: 715.561.2185
Vice-President- Dan Bormann
Secretary- Joel Enking
Treasurer- Jeanne Matchefts
Board Members At Large
 Gary Miles Jim Kaffine
 Gary Hopp Alan Sobczak

Website Update friendsofthegile.org

Due to family issues this summer, a computer crash, and software issues that followed, I have not been able to update the FOG website.

We are working on the problem and appreciate your patience. We should have the website back in business soon.

Past newsletters, are posted on the FOG website, but only current members receive the most recent copy.

FOG board minutes, and other items of interest about the Flowage are also featured on the website.

Thanks for your patience,

Cathy
 Cathy Techtmann, FOG President