



# THE DAM NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF RAYSTOWN LAKE

WINTER 2019+ ISSUE 1+ VOL 23

## WELCOME, RALPH!

The Friends of Raystown Lake are excited to Welcome Acting Operations Manager (OPM) Ralph Antonelli to the Raystown Lake Project. Ralph was selected to participate in the 2019 National Operations Project Managers Career Assignment Program. This program provides Corps Employees an opportunity to gain valuable cross training experience and insights serving as an Operations Project Manager, as well as an opportunity to work in another district. Ralph arrived at Raystown on January 7, 2019 and will serve as the Acting Operations Manager until May 7th. Ralph is joining us from his position as the Natural Resources Manager for the Mobile District's Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway Project. He has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District for 20 Years where he began his career as a Park Ranger.



After serving as a Ranger and then as a Park Manager he moved into his position as the Natural Resource manager and has been serving in that role for the past eight years. Ralph has a bachelors degree in Outdoor Recreation and Park management from the University of Southern Mississippi. He and his wife Karla have been happily married for 30 years. (but he says it only seems like 5). 😊

**Farewell, Nick Krupa!**  
OPM from 2014-2018



Wondering where Nick Krupa went? Nick accepted a position at the Baltimore District as a project manager at a levee construction project at Codorous Creek. Don't worry, he is a lifetime FRL member so you'll see him at lake cleanup events and other volunteer projects! We wish you luck, Nick!

**FRIENDS OF  
RAYSTOWN LAKE  
P.O. BOX 87  
HESSTON, PA 16647**

**Board of Directors  
President + Ron Rabena  
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**Cooperative Agency  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
Raystown Lake Project  
6145 Seven Points Road  
Hesston, PA 16647  
(814) 658-3405**



**Park Manager + Ralph D Antonelli**

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## Help Us Clean Up Raystown



It was 31 years ago when a small group of lake enthusiasts began organizing an annual lake cleanup. The Friends of Raystown Lake sure has grown and there's no better way to connect our roots and love of the lake than at the Raystown Lake Cleanup Day. New and long time members, young and old, individuals and groups are invited to join this legacy and share in their commitment to Raystown. Join us on Saturday, May 11th to remove and recycle shoreline trash, and encourage future generations to do the same. An army of volunteers are needed, but especially those with boats who can help transport people and trash. Raystown needs a morning of your hard work and support! For more information, please contact Park Ranger Jacob Hohman at (814) 658-6813 or [Jacob.T.Hohman@usace.army.mil](mailto:Jacob.T.Hohman@usace.army.mil)



Pictured Top: Boy Scout Troop Leader/FRL Member & high water event debris near 994 bridge.

Pictured Bottom: 2 ton dumpster full of recyclables collected from Raystown Lake in under 4 hours!

## Captain's Quarters

by Ron Rabena, President

Although the groundhog said an early spring, old man winter is hanging on tough with storm after storm. Friends of Raystown Lake is getting busy for the annual lake cleanup on May 11th at Tatman Run and fish structure construction scheduled for April 28-29 at Snyder's Run boat launch. RayCEP is accepting applications for two interns this season. Plans are underway for Dirt Fest, May 17-19. Putt's Camp is receiving bookings for the year and major work is ready to begin at the camp pavilion. Before long the temperatures will rise and spring will be here. Just remember your membership is used in all of our projects!





## Bald Eagle Nesting Update

The most noticeable and recognizable member of the Raystown Threatened and Endangered Species program is the Bald Eagle. The growth of the Bald Eagle in PA, and specifically Raystown Lake, has resulted in sightseers and birdwatchers trekking to Raystown in search of the majestic bird. Raystown Lake staff is partnering with Juniata College wildlife society students this spring to monitor the Bald Eagle nests weekly at the Raystown Dam, MM 10, Shy Beaver and Trough Creek. We are happy to confirm incubation at the Raystown Dam as of the last week in February! Last summer, three eaglets fledged from the Raystown Dam so we are hoping to have the same success this year. Since nesting was first observed in 1999; 86 eaglets have fledged from nests on Raystown Lake. Because incubation is about 35 days, the first eaglets might appear by mid-April, with the eaglets fledging (leaving the nest) about 8 weeks after hatching, or mid-June to mid-July. Juveniles will remain near the nest and the Raystown area throughout the fall observing other eagles and practicing their hunting skills.

To spot the eagles look skyward or toward shoreline trees with open branches. The easiest nest to view is the Raystown Dam nest located on the hillside directly south of the hydro-power plant. While adult eagles are easy to spot with their signature white head and tail, juvenile eagles prove to be a slightly greater challenge to properly identify. We encourage you to take the challenge and visit Raystown for the opportunity to observe these powerful yet graceful bird of prey as they hunt and raise their young. We do ask that you observe posted restrictions and not encroach upon the nests as we take every precaution to encourage successful nesting and development.



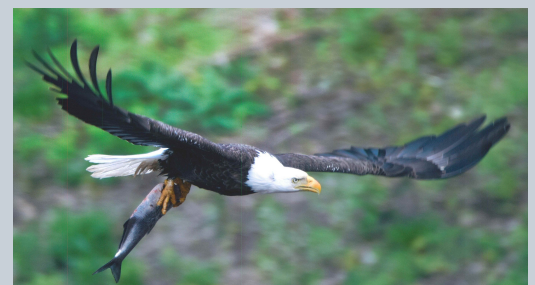
Pictured: Bald Eagle incubating at the Raystown Dam.  
3.5.19 Photo by Alicia Palmer



Pictured: 2018 Eaglets at the Raystown Dam.  
Photo by Tom Smith

### Bald Eagle Biology Facts:

- The Bald Eagle is truly an all-American bird; it is the only eagle unique to North America.
- Nests are sometimes used year after year and can weigh as much as 4,000 pounds.
- Bald Eagles may live 30 years in the wild (even longer in captivity).
- Bald Eagles pair for life, but if one dies, the survivor will accept a new mate.
- In hot climates, like Louisiana and Florida, Bald Eagles nest during winter
- Bald eagles get their distinctive white head and tail only after they reach maturity at 4 to 5 years of age.



Pictured: 2018 Raystown Bald Eagle soaring with fish.  
Photo by Tom Smith

# UPCOMING EVENTS

**CAMPGROUND OPENING:** Select campgrounds in the Seven Points Recreation Area will be open beginning Friday, April 5th. All campsites will be available on a first come –first serve basis until reservations begin on Thursday, May 16th. The Susquehannock Campground will be open beginning on Thursday, May 23rd.

**FISH STRUCTURE BUILDING DAYS:** Fish Structure Building Days will be held on Sunday, April 28th and Monday, April 29th beginning at 8:00am at the Snyder's Run Boat Launch. Volunteers are needed for Sunday, April 28th. Light refreshments provided!



**FRL ANNUAL LAKE CLEANUP:** The Annual Friends of Raystown Lake Cleanup Day will be held on Saturday, May 11th at the Tatman Run Boat Launch. Groups and individuals are both welcome and needed.



**DIRTFEST:** The Annual DirtFest sponsored by DirtRag Magazine is scheduled to be held on the Allegrippis Trails beginning on Thursday, May 16th through Sunday, May 19th.

**FRL Meetings:** The Friends of Raystown Lake will hold the monthly board meetings on Thursdays March 14, April 11, and May 9th. Meetings will begin at 7:00 pm at Hoss's Steak and Sea House, Huntingdon.

**For more information on any upcoming event, please contact the Friends of Raystown Lake or the Raystown Lake Ranger Office at 814-658-3405.**

## Membership Application

Please complete this application and send it along with a check payable to:

Friends of Raystown Lake  
PO Box 87  
Hesston, Pa 16647

- ☐ New Member   ☐ Renewal  
☐ Special Friend \$500 (lifetime)  
☐ Individual Friend \$10/year  
☐ Family Friend \$15/year  
☐ Club / Organization Friend \$25/year  
☐ Business Friend \$50/year  
☐ Corporate Friend \$100/year

Extra Embroidered Patches: \_\_\_\_\_  
@ \$3.00 each

Extra Decals: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$1.00 each

Pins: \_\_\_\_\_ @ 5.00 each

Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send my quarterly newsletter by email

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You !



## Membership Reminder

The year **2019** membership dues have started! Our memberships are set up on a calendar basis—January through December. As you may know, the bulk of our operating budget comes from membership fees. Please help to keep FRL strong and renew your membership today.



# Allegrippis Action

By: Brent Radar (FRL Board Member/Allegrippis Volunteer)

There's snow on the ground as I write this, but soon the birds will be chirping and the flowers blooming. Spring brings a flurry of activity to the Allegrippis trails. As the animal residents of the Allegrippis ridge come out of their winter slumber, so do mountain biking enthusiasts. Already folks are hungry for that first chance to get some dirt on their tires.

Trail users will notice many flowers in bloom as they take their first ride. Daffodils are a giveaway to an old homestead site, and occur throughout the trail system. Dogwoods, barberry, and roses are also an indication that the trails weren't the first occupants of these ridges. Be sure to keep an eye out, there's much to see if you look closely.

The spring weather also brings new challenges at the trail system. Trail maintenance volunteers will get their first look at how the trails fared during the winter. The last several years have been difficult due to frequent freeze/thaw cycles disturbing the trail surface. We'll also get a good look at where we need to improve drainage, remove hazards, and repair or replace signs and infrastructure.

This spring also brings the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Allegrippis trail system. The past ten years have been great, with increased usership every year. Folks should be proud of this world-class trail system, right here in our backyards. Stop by the Baker's hollow lot on any sunny weekend, and it's hard to find someone without a smile on their face. With all this use, though, maintenance becomes more important than ever.

With an eye on the future, the Friends of Raystown Lake are considering something that we've never done before: bringing in a professional trail builder to handle the bulk of the spring repairs. This will allow trail volunteers to focus their time on being available to clear obstructions, do normal maintenance, and (most importantly) get out to ride their bikes without being bogged down with dirt work on the scale of a trail system like the Allegrippis. It'll also help to bring the trails up the condition where they can handle the wetter weather we're likely to have going forward.

No spring Allegrippis article would be complete without mentioning the upcoming DirtRag Dirtfest. This event, held annually the third weekend in May, draws in mountain biking enthusiasts from all over the northeast and beyond for a weekend of riding, fellowship, cutting loose, and having fun. This is also the largest fundraiser for the trail system. Local volunteers help out at the festival in exchange for Rotating Mass Media, the parent company of DirtRag Magazine, making a generous donation towards maintenance and upkeep of the trails. To date, we've received nearly \$60,000 dollars from this partnership.

Watch for announcements of volunteer opportunities as we ramp up spring trail work. We'd love to have you come out and help out for a day. We have jobs for anyone young, old, or in between that's interested in helping out. I hope to see you on the trails this spring!



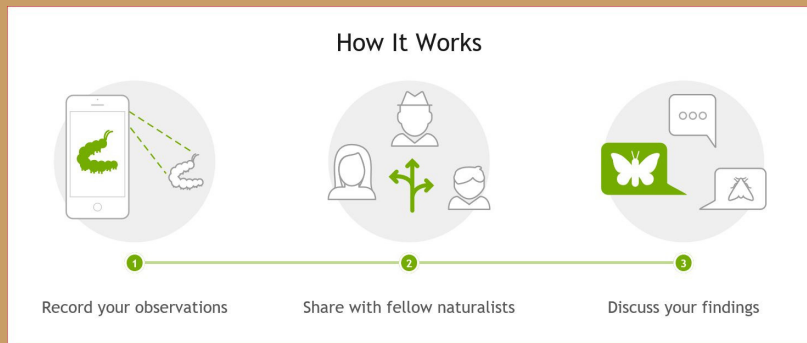


# i Naturalist



## Working with i Naturalist to identify Raystown Lake plants and animals.

Have you ever discovered a unique plant, insect or animal that you couldn't identify or had time to look for a field guide? Now that we all have technology at our fingertips, you can now use the iNaturalist app to take a picture and get an ID on your specific observation! This is a great tool to use for children as Raystown Lake is filled with unique species. iNaturalist is a citizen science project and online social network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists built on the concept of mapping and sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe. Every observation can contribute to biodiversity science, from the rarest butterfly to the most common backyard weed. iNaturalist shares your findings with scientific data repositories like the Global Biodiversity Information Facility to help scientists find and use your data. All you have to do is observe! Please visit <https://www.inaturalist.org/> to learn more information and how to download the app.



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