

Eagle Watch -- February 4th 2012
Big Bend Recreation Area at Kinzua Dam
Warren County, PA



For nature lovers interested in seeing American Bald Eagles in the wild, there is a great opportunity to do so on Eagle Watch Day, held annually at Kinzua Dam in Warren County, PA. When the cold expanse of Allegheny Reservoir behind the dam freezes over and ice forms downstream in Allegheny River, the open tailwaters below the dam become prime fishing waters for eagles.

On an arctic-like day during February 2011, nearly 500 visitors to Big Bend Recreation Area saw approximately 10 eagles, mature and immature, just downstream from the dam. Other wintering birds and cold-water creatures were observed as well.

For 2012 this event will be held on Saturday, February 4th from 8:00am until 2:00pm. Sponsors include US Army Corps of Engineers, Pennsylvania Game Commission, Penn Soil Resource Conservation and Development Council, Kinzua Cachers, and Allegheny Outdoor Club.

In addition to wildlife observation, activities include an audio-visual program detailing eagle restoration efforts presented by David Donachy, PA Game Commission Wildlife Conservation Office, and a geomeet – “Caching with Eagles” - organized by the Kinzua Cachers. Several temporary caches will be set up around the recreation area.

Kinzua Cacher leader Liz Dropp remarked on last year’s Eagle Watch: “It was a very nice event! The cachers were thrilled to see eagles and walk on the dam! They loved the eagle talk (by Officer Donachy) too. We had 52 people sign the cache log. The farthest places they came from were Ontario, Canada; Erie, Harborcreek, and nearby Northwestern Pennsylvania towns; Machias, Mayville and South Dayton, NY.”



Three public areas of interest will be open for public viewing and learning about America’s national bird: Big Bend Visitor Center, Riverside Watchable Wildlife Trail and Viewing Platform (located along Allegheny River overlooking tailwaters), and Kinzua Dam roadway. Observation stations will be manned and spotting scopes will be available to better observe the awesome eagles. Persons 18 years of age and older will be required to show identification to gain access to the roadway at the dam.

This program is recreational, observational, educational – and FREE to the public. For visitors Warren’s Hampton Inn has offered special rates for the weekend. Interested persons should mention the event when inquiring about rates and availability of rooms. For additional information contact Steve Lauser, US Army Corps of Engineers at (814)726-0661, or Bill Massa, Allegheny Outdoor Club at (814)723-2568.