Tionesta Lake, authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1938, is one of 16 flood damage reduction projects in the Pittsburgh District. Tionesta is a key link in a system of flood control projects for the Allegheny and upper Ohio Rivers. Since its completion in 1940, Tionesta has prevented more than $536 million in flood damage.

The project’s flood control capabilities were dramatically demonstrated during the 1972 flooding resulting from Tropical Storm Agnes when more than $62 million in damage were prevented by Tionesta alone.

Recreation

Winding its way through the rugged hills of northwestern Pennsylvania, Tionesta Lake offers a unique setting for outdoor recreational opportunities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers invites you to visit and discover Tionesta’s delightful lake and the natural beauty of the surrounding forest.

For those looking for a memorable outdoor experience, Tionesta Lake offers a mix of beautiful scenery and recreational activities that will not soon be forgotten. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy boating, camping, hunting, fishing, hiking, waterskiing, picnicking, sightseeing, and much more.

Fishermen have found the variety of waters in the area enticing and productive. The mountain streams, placid lake and nearby Allegheny River yield many fine trout, muskie, walleye, bass, and pan fish.

The lake and its miles of unspoiled shoreline offer unlimited opportunities for water-based recreation. Watercraft of all types and sizes can be found on Tionesta Lake.

Campers will find a welcome change of pace from everyday urban life at one of Tionesta’s many tree-shaded campsites. Camping facilities range from rustic in nature, which are located at lakeside and accessible only by boat, to campsites equipped with full hook-ups.

Home to a remarkable variety of wildlife, Tionesta is one of Pennsylvania’s best big game regions. Hunters will find deer in abundance as well as bear, turkey and small game.

If sightseeing for the day, visit Tionesta Lake and enjoy a leisurely picnic with family and friends or a walk on the self-guided nature trails. There are also several scenic overlooks that provide exciting vistas of the lake and wooded hillsides.

Lake and Dam Statistics

Location: On Tionesta Creek, 1.25 miles above the confluence of the creek with the Allegheny River at Tionesta, Pa. The project is located in Forest County.

Total Area: 3,184 acres
Drainage area above dam: 478 sq. mi.
Construction costs: $6,000,000

Dam

Type of structure: Compact earth-filled with impervious core
Volume of earthfill and rockfill: 1,772,000 cu yd
Maximum height above streambed: 154 ft.
Total length: 1,050 ft.
Maximum width at base: 1,080 ft.
Outlet works: 19’ x 1,875’ concrete lined tunnel
Three 7.5’ x 16’ vertical lift gates
Two 24” gate valves

Lake

Length at normal pool: 6.3 mi.
Normal (summer) pool: 480 acres
Maximum pool: 2,770 acres
Elevation above sea level:
Streambed at dam: 1,043 ft.
Normal (summer) pool: 1,089 ft.
Maximum pool: 1,170 ft.
Enjoy a safe outing. 
Observe these safety tips!

Water Hazards 
Boat with caution! Be especially aware of the existence of underwater obstructions. In addition, floating debris may be at or near the lake surface as a result of fluctuating lake levels. Boaters and skiers should be watchful for these hazards; because of these floating and underwater hazards, diving is discouraged.

Life Jackets 
When boating, the best protection against drowning is to wear your life jacket. U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are required if you are less than 13 years of age, a non-swimmer, are on a boat less than 16 feet in length, or are in a canoe or kayak. Know the rules before you go out on the water.

Alcohol and Boating Don't Mix 
Don’t drink while operating a boat. Alcohol is involved in at least 50 percent of all drownings and a major cause of death in recreational boating accidents.

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on all Corps of Engineers lake lands and waters!

Be alert to changing weather/lake conditions 
Storms can come on very quickly. If lightning is spotted, head for shore immediately and seek out a safe location.

Hunters 
Hunting is permitted on Corps and adjoining National Forest lands except in developed recreation areas and posted areas. Exercise extreme caution with firearms at all times. The area is used by others throughout the hunting season.

Cold Weather Activities 
Stay dry, dress in several layers of clothing and wear a hat to conserve body heat. Severe shivering, lack of coordination and confusion are symptoms of hypothermia, a critical condition due to subnormal body temperatures.

Play it Safe 
Swimmers are encouraged to swim only at designated areas. NEVER SWIM ALONE! Children should remain under close supervision at all times, especially when playing in or around the water.

Remember...
The major causes of drowning are insufficient swimming skills, use of alcohol, failure to wear a life jacket, and hypothermia associated with cold water.

Firearms and ammunition 
The US Army Corps of Engineers does not honor State-issued concealed weapon permits, prohibits loaded concealed weapons, the possession of loaded firearms or ammunition on lands and waters administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers per 36 C.F.R. § 327.13(a).

Federal rules and regulations concerning the use of this lake are set forth in Title 36, Chapter III, of the Code of Federal Regulations and are on display in public areas of this lake.