

NEW EAGLE OBSERVATION BLIND OPENS

Structure makes viewing easier on people, birds

December 23, 2007

MINISINK FORD — A new eagle observation blind along the Delaware River in Minisink Ford is now ready for use and offers an additional safe opportunity for viewing without disturbing the eagles. The Eagle Institute celebrates its 10-year anniversary with the opening of this new viewing blind.

The new blind, an open-air structure that keeps eagle watchers hidden from sight while providing a clear view of a section of the river known for eagle activity, replaces an informational sign that was lost in last year's floodwaters.



It was built with grants from the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway and Sullivan Renaissance as a cooperative effort of the Eagle Institute, Highland Renaissance, Town of Highland, the Kiwanis Club of Minisink Valley, state Department of Transportation, state Department of Environmental Conservation and the National Park Service.

The new blind offers a comfortable perch to watch eagles as they fly down the river, fish for their supper or soar above the Pennsylvania tree line.

And if you don't see an eagle right away, the educational exhibits and interpretive signs, including life-size silhouette cutouts that illustrate the enormous size of a bald eagle compared to other birds of prey, are worth looking over while you wait.

Special care was taken to construct a ramp for accessibility, provide native plantings and build the blind on a trailer so that it can be hauled away quickly in case of flooding.



A fold-down desk was constructed so visitors could record their sightings, thoughts and observations. The Eagle Institute will include the information in its annual EagleWatch! report.

Binoculars and spotting scopes are recommended for better viewing. Eagle Institute volunteers can provide binoculars and scopes when they staff the blind on weekends in January and February to assist visitors as they watch for wintering bald eagles.

This winter the National Park Service will be installing a solar-powered transmitter at the blind so visitors can receive eagle information on their automobile radios.

For more information about the new blind or about eagle watching in the Delaware River valley, contact the Eagle Institute at 570-685-5960 or 845-557-6162 or by e-mail at eagleinstitute@yahoo.com.

To view photos of some of the volunteers at work at the new blind, visit minisinkvalleykiwanis.org/eagleinstitute.htm.

In addition to the Minisink Ford blind, eagle watchers have four other safe locations where they can view eagles in winter: the viewing deck in Narrowsburg (*maintained by the Chamber of Commerce*); the state Department of Transportation pull-off in Barryville; the state Department of Environmental Conservation's viewing blind on the Mongaup Falls reservoir in Forestburgh; and the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission access area in Lackawaxen, PA. Eagle Institute volunteers staff those locations to assist visitors on weekends in January and February.

