

Lake Lost

Glade Run officially closes

Visitors can still walk the grounds

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Middlesex Twp -- The gate was locked and the last remaining fish that are going to be moved were transported Wednesday as Glade Run Lake was officially closed.

A popular destination for three generations of fishermen, the 52-acre lake has been drained over the past several weeks because the state does not have enough money to fix its faulty dam.

The estimated \$4 million to repair the dam is not in the state Fish and Boat Commission's budget, which is mainly funded through license and permit sales.

Tim Wilson, a fisheries biologist with the commission, led a team of about 12 co-workers and volunteers on Wednesday morning as they completed the lake's drainage by capturing many of the remaining fish and placing them in a stocking truck.

Wilson said teams from the commission have "electrofished" the lake three times and have taken the fish they collected to Lake Arthur at Moraine State Park or the lake at North Park in Allegheny County. He said in electrofishing, fish are temporarily stunned with an electrical device so they float to the surface.

Wilson said the electrofishing saved 250 to 300 bass and about 1,000 panfish.

Wilson said he didn't expect many of the fish still in the remains of the lake to live because the hot, dry weather is poor for their health, especially when they are in the worst water since the lake has been draining so much.

"There are always a lot of dead fish," said Wilson, who added that they would be buried on-site.

Only sport fish were saved, and the huge carp would be left behind. Wilson said carp are an invasive species not native to Pennsylvania waters, and they are plentiful elsewhere.

The dam was drained gradually by commission workers, who systematically removed the "logs" that held the water in the lake until the lowest log was removed Wednesday.

Wilson said people can still walk in and access the lake property, but the gate allowing vehicles on Lake Road will be closed indefinitely. He said parking is still available at the property's entrance.

Wilson also dispelled reports that the former lake will become the site of a Marcellus Shale natural gas well.

"No on the Marcellus Shale," Wilson said with a chuckle. "The lake will sit there until the (dam repair project) is funded."

Scot Fodi, Middlesex Township manager, said he has contacted several legislators and the Fish and Boat Commission for help in funding repairs at the lake, which he called "the gem of our community."

Fodi said while he has had no luck finding funding, he is considering hosting a public forum at the township building, where residents can vent their frustrations over the lake's closure, learn why it was closed, and determine together how to have it refilled.

Fodi said he learned from his discussions with the Fish and Boat Commission that residents should contact their state legislators and report that they want the dam repaired.

"It's definitely going to be residents and leaders of the community persuading levels of government above us to get that dam repaired," Fodi said.

On Tuesday afternoon, Jim Leslie of Renfrew and his daughter, Cheryl Burtoft of Sarver, sat in the shade and watched the water recede 12 to 15 feet in the span of a few hours.

Burtoft's children caught a large carp in the small vein of deep water remaining. A pair of great blue herons appeared apprehensive about landing on the mud that only a few days earlier had been their watery home and feeding ground.

"It's sad," said Burtoft. "My husband grew up fishing here, and our kids enjoy fishing here. It's a nice place to come and hang out and have fun with your family."