

Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central Partnership

This partnership, made possible by the Corps of Engineers Handshake Partnership program, provided a facility that meets the needs of our area fishing tournaments, which are an important part of both the local culture and the regional economy. Before this project, Twin Ridge Park had a double boat ramp, a courtesy dock and a vault toilet. It also had a capped water well and plenty of room for parking, the remnants of a marina that had burned down at this site in 2001. This site was chosen for two reasons: it was the most under-utilized park on the lake and it was geographically at the center of the lake.

The promise of Handshake Partnership funding was enough to entice partners to the table. Our very first telephone call, to the Director of Commerce and Leisure Services, ended with the question, "Would \$50,000 give you a good start?" We brought BASS, DAV, VFW and Anglers Choice (local boat retailer and tournament coordinator) to the table to assure that our plans would meet the needs of the tournament boaters as well as the needs of our large population of retired and disabled military veterans.

This project became a priority to the Philpott Lake management team when it became clear that tournaments were leaving Philpott Lake for lack of such a facility. The Board of Supervisors of Franklin County joined their Director of Commerce and Leisure Services in appreciating the need to do something to keep from losing these tournaments. With their support, the partnership came together quickly, planned the project, successfully negotiated the proposal process, and built a facility that has become the pride of tournament coordinators in the area.

The success of the project came largely through the local appreciation of the economic benefit of having Philpott Lake in the region. The local area benefits by \$15-20 Million per year from the visitation to the lake, and local leaders are quick to act when a need is clearly identified to protect or increase that visitation, tempered with the appreciation that the pristine beauty of the lake is highly cherished and a major drawing card to the area. A local dock builder was successful in bidding to provide the docks for the project, such that the entire \$50,000 County investment was immediately pumped right back into the County's economy.

Within six months of the completion of this tournament facility, the tri-county area was given the opportunity to host a large FLW tournament that brought an estimated \$500,000 to the local economy. Their minimum facility requirements would not have been met without this new facility. The fact that the County's \$50,000 investment brought back a ten-fold return-on-investment within six months has left local leaders looking for the next opportunity to work the Corps of Engineers and other partners on Philpott Lake.



Handshake Partners (left to right) Marc Thomas, DAV Commander; Nick Loganadon, Anglers Choice owner; Rick Huff, Franklin County Administrator; LtCOL Charlie Pelham, SAW Deputy Commander; Doug Stewart VFW Commander; Mike Bryant, BASS Federation State President



New Picnic Shelter for Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central Handshake Partnership



Forming ADA Sidewalks for Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central Handshake Partnership



Launch Dock Bulkhead for Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central Handshake Partnership



Aerial Photo of Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central Handshake Partnership
(before launch dock placed on boat ramp)



Satellite image of Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Central finished Handshake Partnership



Winners of 2012 FLW Northern Conference College Fishing Tournament



Morning Flag Ceremony - 2012 FLW Northern Conference College Fishing Tournament

WVD CHAMPIONS 3X

Franklin County's football team shuts out long-time gridiron rival Patrick Henry, 34-0, to claim its third straight district championship and third consecutive berth in the Division 6 Northwest Regionals. See story on Page 4.



Melissa Teeple

wins her third straight Western Valley District girls' cross country championship during the league's postseason meet Thursday in South Boston. See story on Page 4.



The Franklin County

High School Air Force JROTC Marksmanship team kicked off its season against 12 schools in Bedford. See details on Page 4.



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Volume 106, Number 129 Serving The Land Between The Lakes — Philpott and Smith Mountain Rocky Mount, Virginia

Twin Ridge upgrading facilities



Improvements to accommodate fishing tournaments, tourism

By **JOHNNY BUCK**
 Martinsville Bulletin

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers signed a partnership agreement with five groups Thursday to construct the Twin Ridge Tournament Facility on Philpott Lake in Franklin County.

The facility, designed for fishing tournaments, will feature a large mooring dock, a launch/retrieve dock, a picnic shelter and restroom facilities. Added parking will be located at the current Twin Ridge boat ramp off Church Knob Road in Franklin County, near the geographic center of the lake.

The project is expected to be completed by March 1, 2012.

Craig Rockwell, operations manager at Philpott Lake, said the project is "meant to facilitate tournaments, boaters and everyone else on the lake."

Current boat ramps at Philpott are not specifically designed to accommodate the numerous tournaments that occur on the lake. Such tournaments often feature dozens of boats, most of which return to the dock with live fish that need to be weighed in a timely manner, said Rockwell.

Congestion at a ramp during a tournament can make it difficult for anglers to get their boats in and out of the water quickly. The congestion also may deter pleasure boaters who otherwise would head to the lake on a tournament date, according to Rockwell.

The new facility "will give (tournament anglers) the docks that they can moor while they're doing their weigh-in, which they don't have now," he said. "So currently, they're having to take their boats out of (See Twin Ridge on Page 7)

Twin Ridge will be the sight of a new facility for fishing tournaments on Philpott Lake.

Courtesy Photo

Twin Ridge

(Continued from Page 1)

the water while they're trying to weigh in."

The project, which will have no impact on discussions concerning a fully operating marina on Philpott in Henry County, is expected to cost a little more than \$200,000, Rockwell said. Of that, \$50,000 will come from the Franklin County Parks and Recreation Department, one of the six partners in the facility. The remaining money will come from the corps' budget.

The corps has estimated the projects' cost to be \$75,000 for both docks; \$40,000 for the construction of two concrete bulkheads, which will anchor the docks; \$40,000 for the picnic shelter; \$40,000 for the bathroom facility; and \$10,000 for the well and costs associated with preparation work.

Advising partners in the project include the BASS Federation of Virginia, United Henry Post 28210 VFW, Chapter 52 Martinsville DAV, and Anglers Choice Marine in Martinsville, a boat dealership.

The current ramp site has a double-lane ramp and a small "courtesy dock" that accommodates no more than three boats at a time. The site also has marked parking for 14 boat trailers and 10 cars.

The new project calls for a T-shaped mooring dock 140 feet in length that will extend 70 feet from the shore. The new launch/retrieve dock will extend from the center of the ramp into the water, and the parking area will be expanded to hold up to 80 vehicle-and-boat trailers, Rockwell said.

"This is going to be a great facility for Philpott Lake," he said. "It will make it much more convenient for everybody. It's one of those projects that's been a pleasure to work on because there's no negative. It's all been positive (response)."

Tournament anglers still will be able to launch and retrieve from any of the current ramps, though tournament weigh-ins typically will take place at Twin Ridge, Rockwell said.

"We have started doing some of the ground prep," he said. "The only part going to be built as the partnership are the docks themselves."

The rest of the construction, including the picnic shelter, toilets and parking spaces, will be funded with money from the corps, he added.



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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For Immediate Release:
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Twin Ridge Fishing Tournament Facility Ribbon Cutting Ceremony 2:00 p.m. - May 12, 2012 - Twin Ridge Park, Philpott Lake

Philpott Lake, Franklin County, Va. –Wilmington District Corps of Engineers held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the new Fishing Tournament Facility at Twin Ridge Park on the Franklin County side of Philpott today at 2:00 p.m. The actual ceremony lasted less than 30 minutes.

The event was held in conjunction with the Fishers of Men Legacy Youth Tournament to celebrate efforts to reconnect youth with the outdoors. Tim Campbell, Tournament Coordinator, thanked the partners for the great new facility that will meet the needs of fishing tournaments on Philpott Lake.

Bobby Thompson, Franklin County Supervisor for the Blue Ridge District, talked about how nice it was to see all the youth taking advantage of this new facility, and about how the new facility will help Franklin County.

Michael Burnette, Franklin County Director of Commerce and Leisure Services, spoke of the importance of meeting the water-based recreation needs of Franklin County through both Philpott Lake and Smith Mountain Lake, and how this new facility fits into that focus.

'Rocky' Craig Rockwell, Philpott Lake Operations Project Manager thanked all of the partners that made the new facility a reality, and discussed how the new facility will meet the needs of fishing tournaments, as well as help separate different types of use on the lake. Rockwell also broke down the project cost \$180,000; \$50,000 came from Franklin County, \$25,000 came from a Corps of Engineers Handshake Partnership Grant. The rest was funded from Philpott Lake O&M funds. The new facility is the result of a partnership between Franklin County, the Corps of Engineers Partnership Advisory Committee, Wilmington District Corps of Engineers at Philpott Lake, and advisory partners: DAV, VFW, B.A.S.S. and Anglers Choice Marine.

Also in attendance were Marc Thomas, Commander of Chapter 52 Martinsville DAV, Doug Stewart, Commander of United Henry County Post 2820 VFW, Earl Wright, Philpott Lake Assistant Operations Project Manager, and Jeff Spencer, Regional Manager for RBS, Philpott Lake O&M Contract Company who built the new facility, except for the mooring dock, which was built by Turner Construction Company of Franklin County.

Friends of Philpott provided food for the event.

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