

Recycled Christmas trees spruce up Lake Glenview's fish habitat



Trees tied to pallets, shown above, have been pushed out onto icy Lake Glenview. When the ice melts, the trees will sink to the bottom to create a habitat for the fish living in the lake. (Provided photo / Robyn Flakne)

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Christmas trees that once stood in residents' homes adorned with lights and ornaments will soon sleep with the fishes of Lake [Glenview](#).

Pine trees tied to pallets were recently pushed out onto icy Lake Glenview with the idea that they will create a new habitat for the lake's fish population, officials said.

Bricks were tied to each pallet so that the trees sink to the bottom of the lake when the ice melts, said Robyn Flakne, the village's natural resources manager. The pallets were strategically placed in areas where the water depth is great enough to entirely cover the trees, said Glenview Park District Spokeswoman Michele Fiore in an email.

Lake Glenview is a man-made lake created in 2000. The trees create a new home for the fish and other organisms that live in the lake, Flakne said, adding that the village hires a lake management contractor to help with the project.

“There’s not a lot of habitat structure in the lake itself, so (the trees) are essentially artificial habitat structures that we’re installing for the fish to find hiding places and breeding places,” Flakne said.

Steve Silic, fisheries biologist for the Forest Preserves of Cook County, said he has heard of other municipalities putting pine trees into lakes to create habitats. The Forest Preserves of Cook County does not use the method in its lakes because pine trees decay quickly, which would just add to the muddy lake bottoms, Silic said.

“It’s completely a preference,” Silic said, adding that the forest preserve uses plastic structures, like buckets and pipes, to create habitats in its lakes.

The village aims to put between 150 to 300 trees in the lake about every two years to replace the decaying habitat, Flakne said.

So far this year, 150 trees have been pushed out to the lake, and more trees can be added, Flakne said.

The trees on the lake are recycled Christmas trees that residents dropped off at various locations around the village, she said.

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