

Pigeon River Country Association Newsletter

Fall 2014



Seven weeks into the drawdown, the Pigeon River was already several feet below the boathouse shoreline at Song of the Morning. | © Joe Jarecki



Some of the
30 top logs.
© Dale Franz

Pigeon River runs healthy through entire drawdown and now flows freely

The Pigeon River runs clear and purposely undammed through Pigeon River Country for the first time in a century. The last stop log was lifted out of the dam below Lansing Club Pond on Sept 11.

The entire four-month drawdown went without a single incident of sediments ranging too high or oxygen too low for aquatic health in the prized stream. The next steps are digging sand traps to slow down and capture upstream sand as it comes loose, and to dismantle the dam itself by next year and replace it with a bridge.

The pond is no more.

How antagonists began working together

On the morning of July 4 [1984] the ranch was handed a cease and desist order that said the gates were to be left open. The Pigeon River ran free for the next 10 days ... It was clearly a decision supported at the time by field personnel ...

Asked how the ranch would deal with a state agency that could sustain a long legal battle, Mr. Black responded

that he would sue for damages. The dam would not be removed, he said.

[In a 2005 interview, Carol Armour, resident agent for Golden Lotus] was asked about the impression among DNR field staff that members of the ranch wanted ... to reduce negative impacts short of removing the dam ... Her response was to [say] ... the ranch would never remove the dam ... from "The Dam" chapter, Pigeon River Country

The following account by Dale Franz begins a series examining how feelings about the dam changed from hostility on all sides to cooperation, even enthusiasm, in removing the dam the most responsible way possible to protect the river and its natural conditions. The series starts with an interview July 16, 2014, with Linda Gabby, chair of the Golden Lotus board of directors. Golden Lotus owns the yoga retreat that occupies the 800-acre Pigeon River Country inholding, known as Song of the Morning Ranch.

As a newly-heard expression, "song of the morning" resonates with the freshness and beauty of Pigeon River Country itself. To typical 1980s high school students in Gaylord, it was rumored to be a nudist camp. To many supporters of the forest in the 1980s, it was a suspicious entity, and to some, a naive group of people ignorant of the environmental conditions surrounding them.

But to others, particularly those associated with Gaylord arts activities, the ranch was a fine resource of people highly trained in the arts, especially voice and theater, people experienced as well in examining our inner spiritual natures, including our sensitivities to the natural world. Their spiritual inspiration, Paramahansa Yogananda, encouraged people to remain true to their own religious backgrounds, saying that if you're a Christian, great, go deeper! If you're a Buddhist, great, go deeper!

So it was a complex situation when the 1984 dam spill that killed many aquatic life forms left members of the ranch defending the dam against opponents trying to defend the natural world. How did this situation move to one of cooperation? In some ways, it began then, in 1984, when the various perspectives started getting aired and people began talking to each other.

Oliver Black, the ranch's beloved teacher, or Yogacharya, died in 1989. There were adjustments to policies in the fol-

lowing years as members sought their way forward. By the time the dam again spilled in June 2008, some members were convinced the river should be returned to its natural flow, with the dam removed. Some were working informally with DNR field staff to address the negative impacts of the dam, whether or not it would be removed. The various “sides” were tentatively interacting.

Some at Song of the Morning, however, were resisting the change. In 2012 its board elected a new chair, Linda Gabby, an English teacher who had moved with her husband, Sam, the year before from Milwaukee to their retirement home, one of eight houses in the ranch’s planned unit development, which is walking distance west of the Pigeon River.

She explains the situation:

“Aside from having a beautiful water element here, in a spiritual community— it doesn’t even matter what your path is—water is a kind of profound element in spirituality, whether it’s baptism or purification, that reflection of divinity, that you’re looking at something spacious and expansive.

“Along with that, Yogacharya had said—I don’t know if this is an exact quote—that ‘when the dam goes, I go.’ Among those who spent time with him—and he was a compelling, wonderful leader— that’s a strong statement. It engendered loyalty toward preservation of the lake. You know, you’ve experienced it yourself. You drive through the woods and then suddenly, there you are, it’s open and it’s lovely. And so to lose an aspect of yourself as an organization that you identify at least on the physical level as what you’re about, it’s really on a spiritual level a big thing.”

Ranch members also had felt that using a dam for alternative energy was good for the environment.

“When I moved here [in 2009], there was still not agreement. There was difficulty, and there was sorrow, and disagreement about what should happen. There were practical people who felt that—and we had been told in 1984 by our attorney, Ron Powers, who was on our board, that this dam is a liability to Golden Lotus. There was still that feeling [from] 1984—Yogacharya was here, and he wanted the lake to stay at that time. I believe that if he had continued to live, he would have eventually seen that there really was no choice. We [in 2010] were dealing with all of that. And yet there was a growing realization that the dam was a liability.”

It also became clear to many members that a naturally free-flowing river was a worthwhile goal, consistent with their feelings about the natural world in general. Of course, the devil was in the details. The ranch and the state interpreted the agreement as allowing some of the dam to re-

main as support for their bridge, but Trout Unlimited (TU) and the Pigeon River Country Association (PRCA) said the wording made clear that all the dam had to go, while the existing bridge could remain, or if there were structural concerns, it could be replaced with a new bridge for the only roadway into most of the retreat’s buildings. The court agreed with TU and PRCA.

The ranch’s four board members invited representatives of Trout Unlimited and the Pigeon River Country Association to sit down with them in the fall of 2012 without attorneys. Linda remembers it as a turning point for many. Around the room, each participant talked about what the river meant to them. It was heartfelt and moving, she says, remembering for example how Dave Smethurst talked about the stages in a fisherman’s life, ranging from active to reflective.

Ranch members generally came to hold the view that restoring the natural flow was what should be done. As some of its hitherto opponents continued to question whether the ranch was seriously trying to remove the dam, Song of the Morning Ranch demonstrated its commitment by conducting a drive asking for \$1,000 from each member to be used for dam removal.



Dam across Pigeon to be removed late next summer or early fall and replaced by a bridge, if funds can be raised.

© Dale Franz

Some had the financial means to pay at once, but others were of such modest means that payment plans were worked out. There have been many payments required of the ranch before and since, hundreds of thousands of dollars. This particular fund drive put its members firmly in the position of working on the same side as TU and PRCA.

It also brought into focus the issue of how to afford a bridge to replace the dam. The ranch’s engineer found a flat rail car from Canada might work as the structure with modifications and thus solve what could have been an otherwise insurmountable problem of cost.

Such an effort to voluntarily restore a free-flowing Pigeon made that part of the project eligible for grants. But the drawdown itself remained apparently ineligible for funds, meaning the ranch had to carry that burden. As the former litigants navigated the tricky waters of cooperation over these and other issues, people saw various individuals as particularly helpful or as obstacles. Linda Gabby praised the Jackson attorney hired by the ranch, Bill Schlecte, for his skills in building cooperation, even as some of his opponents characterized him as the biggest impediment.

This perhaps illustrates how such a dynamic enterprise cannot be seen totally from a single perspective. On the other hand, the process itself clearly energized the parties. Linda's husband, Sam Gabby, a psychologist with a knack for keeping careful records, became a key figure in the effort to draw down the pond in a responsible way, collecting water samples daily, logging meticulous data, and alerting the other parties to what was going on.



Linda and Sam Gabby at advisory council field trip July 16. Director Creagh is second from left. | © Dale Franz

John Walters, member of TU and chair of the Pigeon River Advisory Council, interacts on good terms regularly with Linda and Sam, as do Joe Jarecki and others, in what all now agree is a collaborative effort to keep refining the process on behalf of the Pigeon River's best health. And Linda and Sam have joined the Pigeon River Country Association.

DNR chief visits Pigeon, sees much health ahead

Keith Creagh, appointed director of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources in mid-2012, spent July 17, 2014, in Pigeon River Country and ended the day telling the Pigeon River Country Advisory Council that its advice will continue to be valuable:

"Somebody out front said, 'Sometimes we give you advice and you don't like it.' If we always agree, we'd never change anything. It's okay to have that innovation. Conflict will be more robust. And we have to get it right. You bring your passions. What a great concept."

He talked about the startling turnaround in natural resources funding. Last year the legislature gave the department a 28 percent increase in general funds, this year a whopping 91 percent. The meeting room at forest headquarters hadn't heard about budget increases in decades.

"We did really well. We've got a research vessel that can operate out of Alpena," and more money for conservation officers: "We were at bottom with 104 sworn officers. We used to have 260. There were counties without COs. You can't have that..."

"We're getting great support. And that means from the governor, the stakeholders, and the legislature. Go figure that out. People have run and been elected on beating up on the Department of Natural Resources. We've been able to turn that corner with engagement, protecting the resource for future generations..."

"To finally connect the resource to the economy—it's a great opportunity. If you believe our long term competitive advantage is natural resources," if you have transportation, education, and what other states offer, "then natural resources will define us... Who has the number one fly-fishing stream picked by Field and Stream? Michigan." Who, Creagh asked, has the number one bass fishing lake? "Michigan," he answered himself. "Who is number one for rails to trails in this country? Michigan. Who has the most natural gas storage capability in the country? Michigan, right? Who's got the most public land use? Michigan. Who's got 20 percent of the fresh water? Michigan. There's a theme here..."

"We've been made full partners in this conversation."

David Smethurst, who has been on the advisory council since the beginning 40 years ago, responded that, even with challenges we haven't had before, "we are on the cusp of a golden age. We haven't had such consistent leadership to get the legislature" to support natural resources. "We know so much more today than 40 years ago, about fisheries, about forestry, about wildlife, about oil and gas. ..." There are other organizations, "equally knowledgeable, equally committed. And when you put that together with leadership" and partnering, "we may be able to do things we haven't been able to do before."

Creagh said we see natural resources invited into the room, but we're not sure why.

John Walters, chair: “It’s because you started going to county commissioner meetings, saying, ‘You know who we are, but we don’t know who you are, and that’s not very good partnering.’ In our case, it started with Scott [Whitcomb, forest manager] and I going to township meetings, county commission meetings. That word spreads quickly. Instead of getting the response, ‘What are you guys doing here?’ it was, ‘Hey, you’ve got it.’ It’s a big difference.”

Don Horrocks, Cheboygan County commissioner: “One of the things I’ve noticed in Cheboygan County” is that DNR officers “talk with these young people. They have a commitment to make sure these young people know what our resources are. These DNR officers are probably the greatest educators we can have. ... We have a large cookout a week before deer season, probably 80 to 90 people. A couple, three of the DNR officers will show up, just to eat and answer questions. You’d be surprised how much impact they have.” He said, “I just hope we can get more officers into the forest, onto the roads, to stop some of the stuff that happens.”

Creagh said, “I think we’ll be up to 240 officers by next year.”



Advisory council visits river cabin, a walk-in site in Green Timbers now in jeopardy. | © Dale Franz

Walking a fine line requires some balance

The DNR director described to the Pigeon River Country Advisory Council how it requires some careful give and take to benefit our natural resources in a hostile political environment. Asked how the Pigeon’s advisory council made up of citizens fits in, Keith Creagh said there were a couple of factors he saw as key to good decisions. One was

to recognize the financial hardship of some localities. Some counties have as high as 80 percent public ownership of land. “I went to Roscommon and had a conversation with them.” They needed some land put back on the tax rolls in a trade for some trailhead property, “and I’m ok with that.” For some in the department, he said, it was “unethical to sell any state land. I think that there are instances where” that is appropriate. “I think we should acquire more land in areas where we need it.”

On the other hand, some flexibility is essential, he said, describing how the DNR gave Whitefish Township 350 acres for airport expansion and got local support for acquisition of Crisp Point, 3,200 acres bounded by the Lake Superior shoreline, in return. Whitefish Point is north of Tahquamenon Falls State Park.

“Where does the DNR get its authority? Is it the constitution? No... It’s the legislature,” Creagh said. The flexibility is essential so that, “finally, we’ll have that conversation because of our relationship with the boss. But at the end of the day, the land strategy—I’m not happy with it. I’m not willing to give away the store. But remember, there were more than one or two” in the legislature voting to seek control over land strategy, a majority of both houses. Creagh said he was able, from relationships built during his days running the Agriculture Department, to “change the construct a little bit, and say no when you needed to say no, but also that you could say yes every once in awhile.” “So now we sit down and figure what are the best areas—for public safety and the resource, as opposed to” having an inflexible policy.

“I truly believe now that we’re being viewed as a solution provider. The state’s not for sale, but we can think about what’s reasonable and flexible as we move on down the road.”

He said it was a great policy question the council asks, and that the conversation is needed. “You know, at one time, the legislature wanted me to go out and appraise every piece of land known to figure out the highest and best use. Good luck with that. So there is that tension and that pressure over what’s the right thing to do.”

Pressures to diminish the wild feel of Pigeon River Country and other Michigan natural lands have increased in recent years as legislators toy with funds, enact restrictions on private land sales that would add inholdings to forests, and otherwise seek to turn natural resources to profit instead of quality outdoor opportunities. The trust fund set up to compensate for the impact of oil and gas development in Pigeon River Country has itself been severely hogtied by the legislature. The legislature now requires it give special permission for the purchase of private land becoming avail-

able in Pigeon River Country. The only exception is that the DNR director can make purchases without special approval until he reaches a cap the legislature put on land ownership. Legislators from the northern Michigan forest areas have in fact been elected by campaigning for such restrictions.

Michigan's 105th house district includes the southern half of Pigeon River Country. None of the candidates for the seat has emphasized forest values, and there has been, if anything, opposition to the idea that the state might hold land for all its citizens to experience the land's own virtues, or that the state could manage forests better if private inholdings become part of the publicly-held, overall ecology that a forest represents.

As the advisory council pondered the director's comments in July, the three Republican contenders were preparing answers to questions posed by the Petoskey News-Review and published Aug. 1 in the Gaylord Herald Times, including this one:

"Should there be a cap on the amount of land the DNR owns and manages?" Michael Vickory responded, "The DNR should not own any land." He garnered 8 percent of the Aug. 5 primary vote. The party's winner, Triston Cole, answered the question "Should there be a cap?" in part this way:

"Yes. Currently the state of Michigan today owns over 4.3 million acres of land. I believe the state should focus on managing current holdings before acquiring more." He said state law prevents the DNR from exceeding a 4.626-million-acre-cap "until the agency develops a land acquisition strategy approved by the legislature." He added with apparent approval, "The DNR must also receive legislative approval before purchasing any more land north of Clare."

Cole's Democratic opponent in November is Jay Calo, who makes no mention of natural resources in his webpage section "On the Issues." He told a reporter his campaign is centered on education, employment, and the elderly.

One member of the advisory council, Brad Garmon, commented on the trust fund restrictions in a West Michigan Environmental Action Council report last year:

"We need to place a priority on getting the important inholdings when we can to solidify the boundaries so we don't have parcels within the forest selling and getting intensely developed. It's really frustrating when those key parcels pop up and we're not able to go and get them. It makes it harder and more expensive for the DNR to manage the area, and it compromises the wild feel of the place."

His predecessor on the advisory council, Bob Hess, was also quoted: "If it's a high-priority area, the landowners aren't

going to wait to sell it to the state. A lot of people would love to have a private inholding in the Pigeon."

The West Michigan council reports this "case in point: While the Pigeon's managers were writing grant applications for the purchase of an 80-acre tract called the Bryce Trust that would have connected a fragmented section of the Pigeon's southern border, a private party bought the land." [see <http://environmentalcouncil.org/priorities/article.php?x=339>]

Bob Hess is a retired Department of Natural Resources wildlife biologist.



Honeymoon Cabin is in jeopardy. Advisory council visited the walk-in site that has a spectacular view. DNR parks division doesn't want to maintain it, so forestry is looking for a way to save it and the other cabin in Green Timbers from destruction in the face of aging and graffiti. Stay tuned. | © Dale Franz

Effort underway to help the public understand forest

The advisory council launched a wide-ranging effort to educate the public about the Pigeon River Country, adopting a proposal drafted by Brad Garmon, chair of the standing committee created in 2013.

Aims include reaching out to neighboring communities to establish "gateway" status. The idea is to develop a partnership approach in emphasizing the forest's wild character and its special qualities with signs, kiosks, trailheads, and other educational facilities—all outside forest boundaries. One theme specifically identified:

"The PRC provides opportunities for renewal and solitude that are becoming increasingly rare in modern society. By virtue of its reliance on primarily primitive and unconfined

recreation, the PRC serves as a haven from the pressures of modern society.”

Council members noted that some initially had reservations about promoting the forest publicly but came to see value in the three objectives drawn from the Concept of Management itself and the original director’s charge to the advisory council in 1974:

Increase awareness, increase public support, and inspire knowledge of and respect for the forest.

Council adopted the 13-page plan unanimously, along with appendices detailing who would take which initial steps; what the director, Gene Gazley, told the council in 1974; what the concept, updated in 2007, says about education; and how the National Park Service addressed similar educational goals for Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Members also approved a letter asking DNR Director Keith Creagh to task field staff to assist in implementing the plan, make available such DNR resources as its website and media outreach, and assign a DNR photographer to get pictures of the forest, ideally in all four seasons, for use in educational efforts.

Garmon, affiliated with the West Michigan Environmental Action Council and council member since January 2013, was praised for his efforts in working out the plan with other members over the last several months. “The pressures that are on this place call for some sort of active engagement on our part,” he said.

Song of the Morning has video about its new relationship with the Pigeon River, posted at <http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=37130599&msgid=1370340&act=HoEI&c=976703&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DnpW8D3NYj2Y%26feature%3Dyoutu.be>

Huron Pines filmed as the last stop log was pulled from the dam, posted at http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=37130599&msgid=1370340&act=HoEI&c=976703&destination=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DR5UNSe_1DEY%26feature%3Dyoutu.be

Easiest access to these sites is by clicking on links in this newsletter as posted at www.pigeonriver.org.



© GL Stock Images



© Dale Franz & Julie Feldpausch

The advisory council spent nearly two hours talking about signs after Dave Smethurst expressed concern that visitors get lost without them. The committee that is drafting proposed sign guidelines was surprised, expecting to hear mostly about keeping signs out of the forest. The upshot: GPS (global positioning system) screens in new cars can accurately identify even the most remote named trails in Pigeon River Country. But GPS currently does not offer much context to show, say, exactly where Vanderbilt is when you’re motoring along Tin Bridge Road.

A navigation tool is also available for the Black River, allowing visitors to find reference points by downloading Google Earth maps to their mobile devices. The tool is at www.upperblack.org, thanks to Paul Rose of the Upper Black River watershed group and chair of the advisory council’s committee on signs, which is still drafting proposed policy language that includes signs at entry points, county road intersections, various postings of regulations, and at locations having “significant wildlife viewing or public educational opportunity.” For those pesky road signs, this language is being considered:

Forest entrance signage will advise that special rules and regulations apply in the Pigeon River Country State Forest (PRCSF). Such signage shall appear at primary entrance corridors and size and design shall be generally consistent with those which have historically been used for that purpose and consistent with the Concept which states: “Signs

will be placed at points where roads enter the area, advising visitors they are entering Pigeon River Country State Forest. Signs will advise that special rules and regulations apply in the PRCSF.”

Inspiration for those special rules come from P.S. Lovejoy who said long ago, “I’d like to see the Pigeon opened up to ensure really good fire protection and damn little more ... so that it isn’t too damn easy for the beer-belly gents and the nice old granmaws to get to, set on and leave their tin cans at. ... [S]ide-road country should be left plenty bumpy ... and some so you go in on foot — or don’t go at all. I don’t want any pansies planted around the stumps.”

A mile of Pigeon River is added to forest, 8 miles of Black River habitat reconnected

Huron Pines provided a link in its July 3 enews mailing to a DNR feature “on our work in the PRC at Saunders Dam and the Sinkhole Lakes.”

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/FRD_Acc_Report_13_460700_7.pdf?20140625151431

The link takes you to the DNR’s Forest Resources Division Accomplishments Report, fiscal year 2013, which includes this information on page 19:

“Key Acquisitions for Fiscal Year 2013 Included:

... • The purchase of a 480-acre parcel in Cheboygan County. This property contains more than a mile of Pigeon River frontage. It is adjacent to state forest land on two sides and is directly adjacent to the Pigeon River Country State Forest. ...

“The Pigeon River Property ... [was] funded through grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The acquisition of these parcels will result in approximately 4,800-plus acres of timber that will now be managed for wildlife habitat enhancement and the timber resource to grow and sustain the forest products industry in Michigan.

“... Pigeon River Country

In fiscal year 2013, DNR staff, partnering with Huron Pines and other conservation groups:

- Oversaw the removal of Saunders Dam on the Black River in Otsego County, which reconnected 8 miles of cold-water fish habitat and completed restoration of a 517-acre land acquisition at the Pigeon River Country State Forest.
- Completed an erosion-control project at the Sinkhole Lakes that repaired erosion on steep slopes and established more sustainable access routes to water.

... In fiscal year 2013, 45 organizations, in addition to many dedicated individuals (including [a large Huron Pines crew

in photograph]), volunteered or spent time working in the Pigeon River Country.”

Huron Pines also reports that more than 30 volunteers cut a new, shallow-sloped walking path down to Section 4 Lake on Aug. 9, planted trees to stabilize the old gully path, and conducted other measures to reduce sediment running into the sinkhole lake that is a short walk off the road along the High Country Pathway in the Pigeon River Country.

The volunteers shoveled loose material into 5-gallon buckets and carried all of it to the old gully to help fill it in and deter further foot traffic.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided funds and several local conservation organizations did the work on the steep, fragile slopes, including Trout Unlimited and the Upper Black River Council. Similar work has been done at three other sinkhole lakes in the Pigeon.

Summer intern inspired by work in forest

We asked this year’s intern to tell us about herself. Our association provided the grant allowing her to work in Pigeon River Country, and we observed first hand that she indeed worked hard, and loved it. She drove a truck transporting some of us during the July field day and seemed to know more about the forest than we did.

A little about me...



Miranda Millikin
© Dale Franz

My name is Miranda Millikin. I was born and raised in Gaylord, Michigan. I grew up on Heart Lake just outside Waters.

I enjoy hunting, fishing, trapping, and hiking. My love for the outdoors came from my dad and uncles loving to hunt and fish. I started coming out to the Pigeon when I was about 16 to swim in the sinkhole lakes. In 2013 when I was working at Otsego Lake State Park, I learned about the job openings for

state workers in the PRC forest and I jumped on the opportunity to work out here.

I loved it so much in the PRC. I would come back after work on my own time with my bird dogs and friends. While working out here I learned about the intern position that Sarah Topp was in, and a while later I was asked by Scott Whitcomb if I would be interested in the intern position. Again, I jumped right on that!

I have had some of my best experiences out here in the forest as the PRCA intern, from banding ducks and geese to marking and cruising timber. The foresters, wildlife techs, and biologists have taught me so much that I cannot wait to go back to school, finish my degree, and come right back out and give back to the PRC!

I am planning to attend Michigan State University for a forest management degree after I finish my associate of science at NCMC in Petoskey. I thank everyone who is involved with the PRC, and especially the PRCA for supporting me and allowing me to have this opportunity.

More happening in the PRC...

—MUCC and RMEF came out to help clean up the Hackett Lake property. After a long day of work they had almost a mile's worth of barbed wire fence taken out and put several posts and signs in the keep ORVs out and several "Walk in, Keep it Wild" signs on wildlife gates (June).

—Glen Lake football team came out to help finish up the Hackett Lake property. They took out about one-half-mile-worth of fence and a very large garbage and scrap pile. We have only about one-half mile of fencing and posts left to remove, and the property will be all cleaned up (July).

—A biology class from Troy stayed at Wolverine camp and came out for one morning to volunteer and help Miranda Millikin and Kyle Bartowitz [of AmeriCorps] with Kyle's birding studies (June).

From Ray Hoobler, association president:

This summer has seen the long awaited slow, so safe, draining of the Song of the Morning pond. The channel of the Pigeon is now apparent but may still change as the current, possibly aided by a weather event, erodes the newly formed banks. These banks, while becoming vegetated, are still largely composed of very fine silt-like organic material. Next is dam removal. Several engineering companies came in August to evaluate the dam and surroundings before submitting bids for its removal. We should have results soon.

Meanwhile we've become involved in an interesting new project. Through Scott, the PRC manager, we were introduced to the Lunden family and their interest in honoring Herman Lunden who came over from Sweden in 1882 and played a major role in both the development of sustainable logging in northern Michigan and the development of forests and roads around here. They wanted to honor his memory by establishing a museum in the unit manager's cabin built next to DNR Headquarters by the CCC in 1935.

**Would you like to join us?
Membership available at
www.pigeonriver.org**

Since this fits so well with the association's educational mandate, we have been actively involved in carrying this out along with the Otsego County Historical Society and Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the group that provides volunteers on Saturdays at headquarters from May through October.

We have submitted a proposal to the DNR that describes both our goals and the capabilities we have to carry it out. A copy is on our website www.pigeonriver.org. We would like your feedback. Do you like this idea? What topics should be covered? What displays would you like to see? Please send us a message at info@pigeonriver.org with your thoughts.



Entry to possible museum. | © Dale Franz



Main room of proposed museum, currently unused.
© Dale Franz