

ELLISON POND: FROM SWIMMING HOLE TO FISHING HOLE



Source: West Virginia Blue Book | 1942

A Fishing Hole

Ellison Pond evolved to offer the Kanawha Valley local recreational fishing opportunities after swimming conditions were deemed unsafe. The pond was stocked with catfish, sunfish, and other native fish species and was specifically promoted as a recreational fishing pond for children. *Charleston Gazette (February 17, 1950)*. In 2000, the pond was officially designated as a Class-Q fishery.

Throughout the years, Ellison Pond accumulated large amounts of sediment carried downstream from Davis Creek, which required removal every six years to keep the pond habitable for aquatic life. However, due to the high cost associated with each removal, continued periodic dredging efforts became infeasible. As a solution to this problem, a stream restoration project was proposed to remove the Ellison Pond Impoundment. *MetroNews (2022)*. Construction began in September 2021 to restore the Davis Creek stream channel through the former pond. In-stream structures were installed to improve the fisheries habitat throughout the reach. New Class-Q fishing platforms were also installed along the newly-constructed section of Davis Creek.

A Swimming Hole

The swimming pool was large enough to support ample recreational development. The additions of the bathhouse, storage facilities, and new diving platform, along with minor beach improvements, completed the pool project. As of July 31, 1941, before it could be opened, the pool was found to be contaminated with bacillus coli-typhoid bacteria. Correcting this serious health issue delayed the opening of the lake for swimming until the summer of 1942.

Charleston Daily Mail (July 1, 1942).

In 2000, Governor Underwood posthumously dedicated Ellison Pond to Charles E. "Chuck" Ellison, the proponent of early restoration efforts on Davis Creek throughout Kanawha State Forest.



Source: Calvin White Collection | West Virginia Archives



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