

# THE MINING Journal

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## Recycled 'turtle' inhabits Teal Lake

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MARQUETTE — A turtle of a very different sort slowly made its way across Teal Lake in Negaunee Saturday.

The large turtle sculpture, made of wooden slats, was being pushed and dragged across the snow-covered lake by Northern Michigan University students and artists from Chicago.

The sculpture will stay on Teal Lake through the winter and into spring, until the ice melts when it will sink into the bottom of the lake and become a fish habitat. The wooden structure will be weighted down to keep it on the bottom.

"Because this lake doesn't have a lot of tree line cover it doesn't have a lot of natural places for the fish to hide out," NMU student Erik Coursey said. "Usually if a tree falls into the water that usually provides them with cover."

The project was a collabora-

tion of NMU's DeVos Art Museum, the Chicago-based artist collaborative Material Exchange, local NMU and North Star Academy students and the Superior Watershed Partnership.

DeVos Director Melissa Matuscak said the museum sponsored Sara Black and John Preus, artists involved with Material Exchange, to come to NMU to work on a design challenge using reused materials.

"These artists, Sara Black and John Preus, they use a lot of recycled, reused materials in their artwork ... We consulted with the watershed partnership on what kind of design parameters we would need in order for something to function as a fish habitat because that's going to be our final product," she said.

Matuscak said the sculpture is made from an old wooden boat, which had been stripped off all paint and chemicals. The boat was first turned into



From left, Mike McCarthy, Erik Coursey and John Preus move a large wooden sculpture of a turtle on Teal Lake in Negaunee Saturday. The sculpture will sit on the ice through the winter, and when the ice melts in the spring it will settle on the bottom of the lake and become a fish habitat. (Journal photos by Christopher Diem)



a truck topper, so it could be transported before becoming a turtle.

A turtle shape was used because a turtle's dual habitats — land and water — symbolized "transformation," Matuscak said.

"It's been a fun experience. I learned a lot about green design and it's been quite fun to work with everybody and take something that had one function, change it to something else and then change it to something else," Coursey said.



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