Project Funding Application submitted to Public Lands Alliance, Find Your Wild "national multiplier fund" for partial funding, November 2025 – AWARDED $500 toward project costs.

Friends of Turnbull NWR Pine Lake Viewing ADA Overlook Project

The Friends of Turnbull NWR propose to improve and install an ADA accessible overlook for the Pine Creek wetlands. The Pine Creek wetlands are located along the entrance road to Turnbull NWR, and are open to visitor use year-round. The area is accessible by an ADA trail head across from the comfort station restrooms. The Pine Creek trail is approximately 1 mile and hosts more than 10,000 visitors a year. The trail provides access and views of the Pine Creek wetland complex which covers approximately 50 acres.

The ADA overlook project will be the beginning of a larger project scheduled for Turnbull within the next 3 years. The large wetland enhancement project includes improvement of the water management, wetland topology and vegetation diversity. The project will enhance the habitat and provide resources for migratory birds including waterfowl, moose, deer, and small animals such a porcupine and beaver. The current ADA 1-mile trail around the wetlands will be repaved during the Wetland Restoration. Wetlands, which have naturally filled in, will have vegetation management activities to reduce cattails and reed canary grass and provide more open water, as designated in the most recent wetland review (June 2025).

The Friends of Turnbull purchased and put in place sets of viewing scopes over the last 20 years. Those scopes have unfortunately had a very short life and need to be removed. The overlook has been a favorite place for visitors, including an elderly couple often seen bringing their own folding chairs to face the wetlands and watch the wildlife and enjoy sunsets from this site. This project will provide a larger concrete pad for ADA access and an accompanying Companion Bench facing the wetlands. The overlook will include a natural rock wall along the front edge to meet ADA standard for safety. This project will be completed with labor from the Refuge Heavy Equipment operator and experienced volunteers.