Sussex Osprey Platform Installation:

- 1. Using a post-hole digger, dig 8” hole 4’ deep in marsh or suitable substrate.
- 2. Slide 8” casing pipe into hole to ground level, backfill outside of pipe.
- 3. Prep platform: place predator guard on 12’ pole, secure collar of platform to top of post using lag screws, screw in 4 braces under platform.
- 4. 3-4 people drop pole with attached platform down into casing pipe.
- 5. Level pole, backfill inside casing pipe. Tamp down soil.
- 6. Screw 4 ground boards around base of pole, continuing to level.
- 7. Use suitable size extension or step ladder to place starter nest bundle of native sticks inside platform.
- Tip: Notch top of casing pipe and angle base of pole for easier installation into pipe.

Installation instructions and image provided by Jodi McLaughin.

Osprey Nest Platforms—Guidance for Placement

**To best ensure use and nesting success, the following considerations should be given when choosing a site to place an osprey nesting platform.*

Proximity to Water: Osprey feed almost exclusively on fish so as a general rule; The closer to the water, the better!

Potential for Predation: Osprey platforms should not be placed near forests or hedgerows as this will provide easy access for predators like great horned owls.

Potential for Disturbance: Osprey platforms should be placed in areas that are isolated from human disturbance during the nesting season by several hundred feet. If a nest location does experience some level of human activity near the site, it is best if the activity is already occurring prior to the nesting season. That way, if an osprey nesting pair choose to nest at a site that is already experiencing disturbance prior to their arrival, it is more likely that the osprey will be able to tolerate that activity for the duration of the breeding season. Alternatively, if activity near the site increases after the osprey have begun nesting, they may be disturbed from incubating eggs or feeding chicks and the young will die. Moreover, it may be too late for them to attempt nesting elsewhere.

- *Note that ospreys are most sensitive to disturbances during April, when they are laying eggs, and are most likely to abandon the nest if disturbance is too great. They will grow more defensive of the nest area in May and June when they have chicks, and both males and females must forage and feed their chicks often to keep up with all the appetites. It is important that disturbance is avoided during this time as well.*

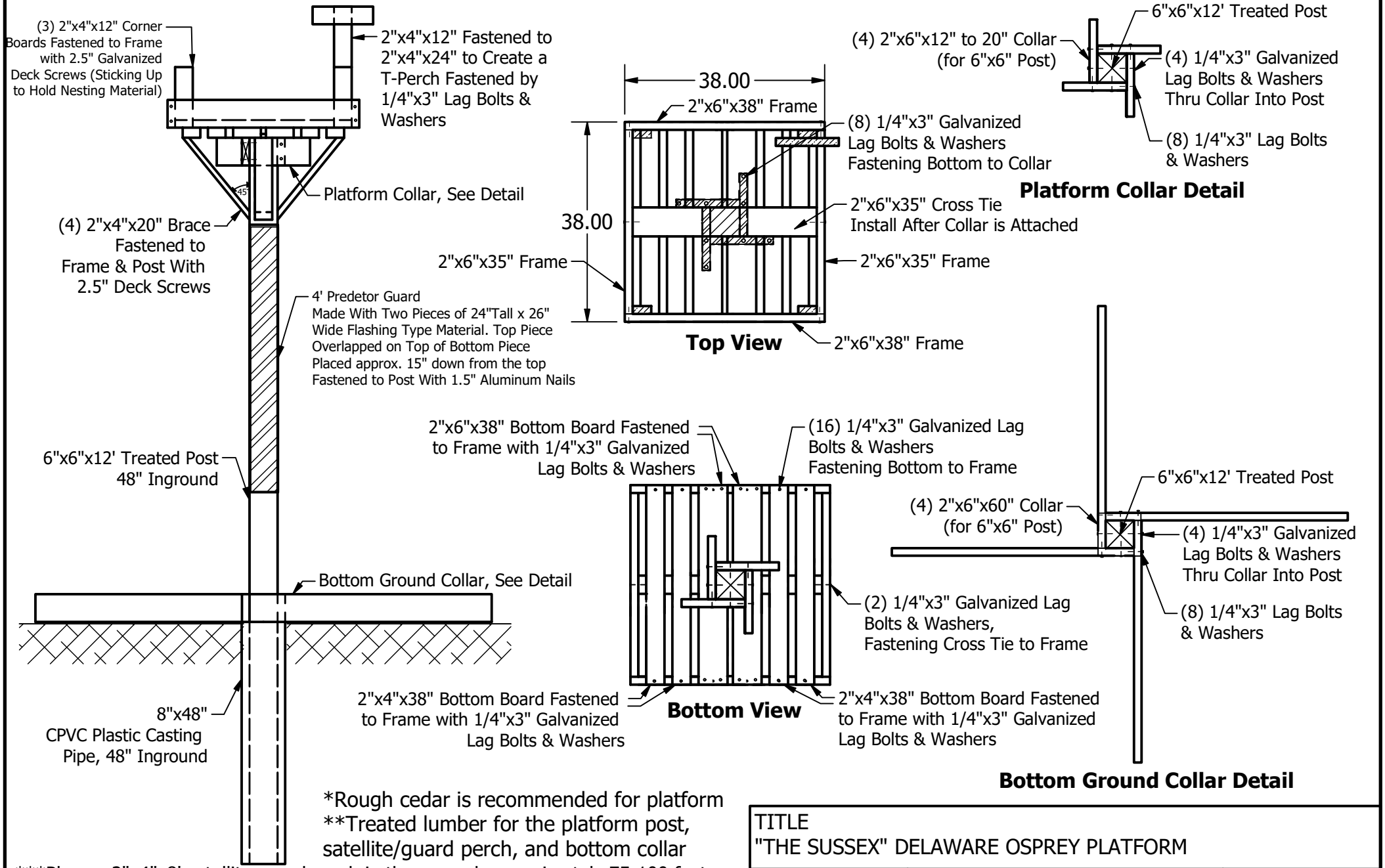
Timing: Osprey will start returning to Delaware by Mid-March, so it is best to have a structure in place prior to March 1. This will ensure it is available for the upcoming breeding season.

Platform Height: In the Inland Bays region, ospreys are often found nesting on low-profile structures such as duck blinds and low-profile platforms. However, in Kent and New Castle County, ospreys are typically found nesting on much taller structures. 12 foot poles are standard, though larger poles may be installed.

Predator Guards: In general, we recommend single pole structures with a platform on top. In mainland areas and any area where raccoons and other predators are present, we recommend outfitting the pole with a predator guard (inverted cone, or a sleeve (24-48") of aluminum flashing) to prevent predators from climbing in to the nest.

Landowner Permission: It is necessary to obtain permission from the land owner prior to installing a nest platform. Landowner information can be obtained at a county or municipal office.

Permit requirements: A permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is necessary prior to placing any platforms within water bodies designated as Waters of the United States. Currently placing osprey platforms in state-regulated wetlands does not typically require a permit from the DNREC Wetlands and Subaqueous Lands Section. However, you should contact this agency directly to receive the latest information (302)739-9943.



*Rough cedar is recommended for platform
**Treated lumber for the platform post, satellite/guard perch, and bottom collar
***Place a 2"x4"x8' satellite guard perch in the ground approximately 75-100 feet from the new platform, along the water if possible, to attract the adult male and the fledglings.

TITLE
"THE SUSSEX" DELAWARE OSPREY PLATFORM

Designed by:	Architectural Drawing by:	Date:
Jodi D. McLaughlin	Kaitlyn Johnson & Gregory Bird	5-12-2023