



Christmas trees improve fish habitat in Lake Vesuvius

Recycled Christmas trees get a new purpose when used as fish habitat on the Wayne National Forest.



Division of Wildlife biologists prepare a boat-load of Christmas trees to be submerged in Lake Vesuvius.

Wayne National Forest biologists, the Ohio Division of Wildlife, the Lawrence County Solid Waste District and the Ashland Federal Prison Inmate Crew partnered together on January 30th, 2007 to improve fish habitat in Lake Vesuvius. Approximately 300 recycled Christmas trees were submerged in Lake Vesuvius to improve habitat for bass, catfish and a variety of other species that will use the tree reefs for hiding, resting, feeding and spawning.

The Lawrence County Solid Waste district collected used Christmas trees from drop-off points throughout the county during the month of January. The trees were brought to Lake Vesuvius, where they were tied into bundles and weighted with cinder blocks with the help of the Ashland Federal Prison Inmate Crew. On Tuesday, January 30, the Ohio Division of Wildlife brought two boats and several people to Lake Vesuvius to help WNF biologists, volunteers, and the inmate crew transport the trees out into the lake. The bundles were submerged near popular fishing areas, including the boardwalk and shoreline fishing spots, to improve fishing opportunities.

Biologist Kari Kirschbaum notes that this program is a great way for people to recycle their Christmas trees, rather than sending them to a landfill, and to improve fishing opportunities for themselves and others.

Jake Emmett, a volunteer who helped with the tree drop, said that the day was very enjoyable, despite the cold and snow. He also noted that the improved habitat would likely improve fishing events held at Lake Vesuvius, such as Wheelin' Sportsmen and future Kid's Fishing Derbies.

Chad Kirschbaum, district botanist, says "I was impressed by how the DNR boat drivers and the rest of the participants worked together to make the event a success despite the cold, windy weather and blowing snow."

For more information contact Kari Kirschbaum at 740-534-6531