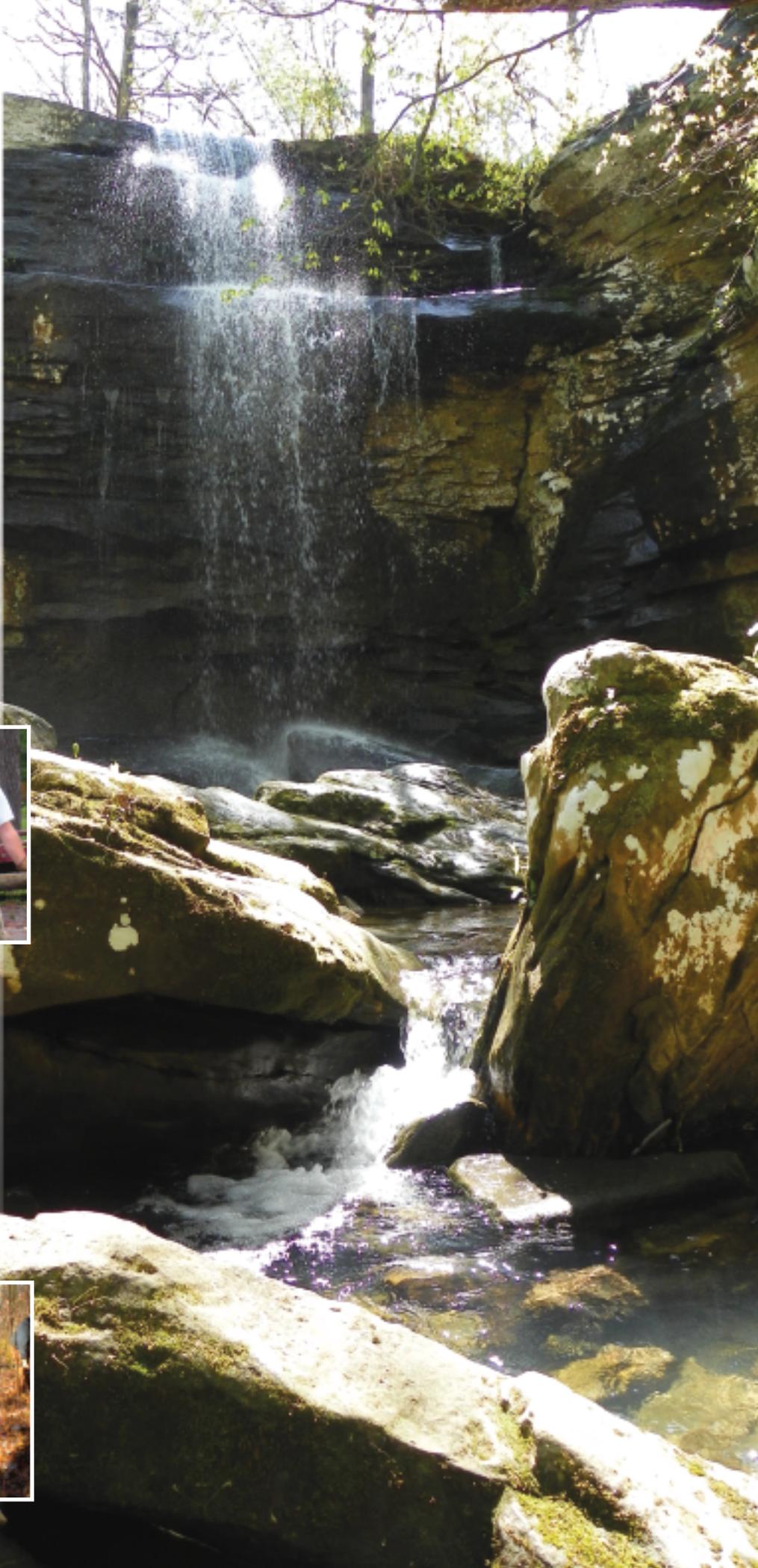




On The Forest

**VOLUNTEERS
ON THE
SHAWNEE
NATIONAL
FOREST**



Volunteers



Volunteers working on the Forest.

■ Americorps VISTA volunteers completed 1,680 combined work hours on the Forest. They have been involved in community outreach; expanding capacity in interpretive programming; recruiting; organizing and leading trail volunteer service projects; assisting the newly formed "Friends of the Shawnee National Forest;" attending training in interpretation, fire and grant-writing; integrating interpretive programs into schools; starting a "yahoo" group for SIU students to carpool to volunteer projects; updating "twitter" with Shawnee Volunteer Corps opportunities and conducting wilderness monitoring for impacts.



■ Volunteers from Southern Illinois University, Southern Illinois University School of Engineering Mining and Mineral Resources, the Shawnee National Forest Master Trail Stewards class, Carbondale Community High School Environmental Club, the Sierra Club, a local attorney and a local organic farmer joined Kelly Pearson, Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District Trails and Volunteer Coordinator, for trail work on Crooked Tree Trail in LaRue-Pine Hills.

■ The Prairie du Rocher Saddle Club assisted Technician Kay Bushno in the removal of ten foot bridges and repaired a foot bridge in the Johnson Creek Recreation Area.

■ The Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Geography Club worked on the Little Grand Canyon Trail. They marked locations of down trees on a map where trees were across the trail, installed signs and took measurements of holes in the trail tread from the May 8, 2009, wind storm.

Land and Minerals

■ The Forest is proceeding with the sale of the former Elizabethtown Ranger District administrative site in Hardin County. The 2.27 acre property with six associated buildings will be sold through a GSA online auction process.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

■ **General Forest Road Maintenance**—This project consists of maintenance of 136.7 miles of road.

■ **Inventory, Closing and Capping of Wells and Cisterns**—These wells and cisterns are essentially large holes in the ground located across the Forest.

■ **Lincoln-Douglas Debate Site Rehabilitation**—This project comprises several actions aimed at rehabilitating this historic site, located adjacent to the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger Station. To date, accomplishments include: 1.) the construction of a small play area for the younger citizens of Jonesboro, 2.) construction of a new picnic shelter complete with stone foundations, and 3.) refurbishing the gazebo and restroom with new stonework reflecting the CCC heritage of the site. Repair of the Lincoln Memorial Pond is progressing, and when completed; replacement of the pond-side walking path will begin.

■ **Openlands Management**—In this project, a 363-acre area will be retained in grasses and shrubs, providing for wildlife species that require a more open habitat.

■ **Motor Vehicle Use Map (MVUM) Signing**—Roads are being signed to reflect information contained in our MVUM map.

■ **Recreation Site Improvement**—This project is a partnership between the Shawnee National Forest, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Resource Conservation and Development and the Golconda Job Corps Center to improve lakes on the



Forest. These man-made lakes lack the natural habitat required by fish for resting and feeding purposes.

■ **Southern Illinois Cooperative Dispatch Center**—The Dispatch Center, located on the Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge, is where all personnel from the Shawnee and cooperating agencies statewide are dispatched to all-risk incidents. This project consists of a porch roof modification and sewer system upgrade.

■ **Completed Kaskaskia Experimental Forest Project**, removing brush, blading roads and placing aggregate surfacing.

■ 200 miles of trail maintenance was completed on the forest this year.

■ 21.37 miles of new trail reroutes were constructed.



Natural Resources

■ Developed a Non-Native Invasive Species brochure.



■ The Stiltgrass summit had over 100 people who participated in a scientific conference looking at the latest research on the invasive Japanese Stilt Grass.

■ In partnership with Bat Conservation

International (BCI) and personnel from the George Washington-Jefferson National Forest, three bat gates were constructed at Rich's Cave (two gates) and Dutchman Cave (1 gate). BCI contributed about \$10,000 funding (1) a contractor to construct one of the gates, (2) purchase of steel materials for gate, and (3) three temperature/humidity/light data loggers. The George Washington-Jefferson National Forest provided design plans, cost estimates and two people to help construct the gates. Removing human disturbance from bat caves is necessary to protect bat population.

■ In partnership with Ball State University and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, winter hibernacula surveys were conducted on Ellis Cave, Equality Cave, Brasher Cave, and Griffith Cave. Additionally, working in partnership with the Forest, researchers from Ball State University monitored Indiana bat summer maternity colonies at Oakwood Bottoms and Upper Bluff Lake. Radio transmitters were placed on

20 adult bats and tracked to determine summer maternity roost sites and foraging distances. One little brown bat was tracked over 18 linear miles from its capture site.

■ In partnership with Ball State University, Western Illinois University, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, a new gray bat summer maternity colony was documented at Cave Springs Cave in Hardin County. The colony was found to comprise approximately 3500 individuals. In addition, both Indiana bats and southeastern myotis were found using the cave as a summer roost site.

■ In partnership with Western Illinois University, the University of Florida, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources surveys were conducted in six caves. Over 700 bats were captured,

over 500 bats banded and released and about 120 wing swab samples collected for white-nosed syndrome monitoring. To date, white-nosed syndrome has not been found on the Forest.

■ Through a partnership agreement with Dr. Tim Carter, Ball

State University (BSU), researchers ran a series of Anabat acoustical monitoring routes across the Forest, as part of a larger acoustical monitoring project involving national forests from both Region 8 and Region 9 to monitor bat population changes over time due to the effects of white-nosed syndrome.

■ Shawnee NF personnel completed restoration activities on about 1000 acres of openlands, which included disking, seeding of annual food and cover plantings, prescribed burning, and



seeding of native grasses-forbs-legumes.

■ The Forest, in partnership with the Fish and Wildlife Lab at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, accomplished bird monitoring of 27 transects. This annual monitoring provides information on population trends for management indicator species, neotropical migratory birds and Regional Forester's sensitive bird species across a wide range of bird habitats on the Forest.



■ Abandoned mines across the Forest have become the winter home for many bats including the endangered Indiana Bat. This year the Shawnee continued their partnership with Unimin Specialty Minerals in an effort to close these hazardous

mines from the public but protect them as bat hibernacula.

■ The Middle Mississippi River Partnership, including the Shawnee NF and over 20 state, federal, and non-governmental organizations, have made significant achievements over the last 10 years. This year, the partnership designed and printed the first Birding the Bottomlands Brochures. The guide highlights important birding areas across the Middle Mississippi River floodplain including several sites on the Shawnee National Forest.

■ Seeds from sensitive plants were collected for preservation at the National Seed Lab. Seeds were harvested from two Regional Forester Sensitive Species; French's Shooting Star and Smooth False Indigo. This is part of a national effort to ensure the survival of sensitive species in response to climate change.



About 900 acres of invasive species treatments were accomplished. Each district completed over 50 acres of direct treatment of invasive species by hand-pulling, torching or herbicide treatment.

■ The Forest is working in partnership with Shawnee Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc., Shawnee Audubon Society, Shawnee Group of the Sierra Club, SI Audubon Society, SIU Restoration Club, Vienna High School and Anna-Jonesboro Garden Club to develop pollinator gardens at the Hidden Springs Ranger District office. The two new gardens were established by transplanting over 60 native species from a volunteer garden. Some native plants for the gardens were also rescued from mowed forest roadsides. Maintenance work was accomplished at pollinator gardens at Johnson Creek Recreation Area, Murphysboro Work Center, Mississippi Bluffs District Ranger office in Jonesboro.



Fire



■ 13 Golconda Job Corps students completed S130/S190 fire training.

Spring prescribed fire season brought a first for the Shawnee fire program; aerial ignitions. In March, 2010, a type 3 helicopter was brought in from the Hoosier National Forest to aid in burning 1100 acres on the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger District. Using a plastic sphere dispensing method, aerial ignitions were a huge success.

■ The forest spent significant time and

energy working with our interagency partners. Facilitating cooperative fire agreements with local fire departments and providing training to these departments took place throughout the year. The forest has a strong working relationship with over 30 fire departments, IDNR, and USFWS in Illinois, participating in all aspects of fire management. Shawnee fire and Law Enforcement personnel worked with the IL National Guard and local sheriff's departments to help facilitate RAID flights on the Shawnee National Forest.



Recreation

- The River to River Trail restoration contract has been completed.
- Over 10 miles of new or re-routed trail were accomplished
- 175 miles of existing trails were maintained.
- There were nine miles of restoration and aggregated surfacing applied to the River to River trail.
- 18 Special Use Recreation permits were administered to standard.
- The 2010 YCC crew cleaned the road which was originally part of the Cherokee Trail of Tears.



Conservation Education

- Staffed the Forest Service booth all ten days of the DuQuoin State Fair, participated in the Hunting and Fishing Days, National FFA Convention and numerous Smokey Bear visits.
- The Annual conservation education event called Critter Night took place at the Mississippi Bluffs Ranger Station where participants learned about the nocturnal animals of Illinois such as bats, coyotes and opossums through crafts, activities and games.



- Fish Tales celebrated its 10th anniversary.
- Arborwild, a day of Conservation Education at Evergreen Park in Carbondale, IL included a bird obstacle course, fishing, mammal identification, music, a Forest Service fire engine, crafts, a recycling relay and a visit from Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl.

Engineering

- The contract for the Jackson and Union County Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads (ERFO) West Road repair has been completed. Repairs for damage done by the ice storm in 2008 and wind storm in 2009 on several forest roads have been completed.
- Completed the Alexander County ERFO project on FR220 through the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division, repairing and resurfacing.

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Safety

■ New publications have been printed: Forest Emergency Contact information materials (brochure and laminated poster for trail-heads and recreation areas.)

This effort was to inform the public about the hazards found while recreating.



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