

## Young Fishing Enthusiasts Flock to Fishing Derby

**Weaverville, Calif.** -- If you start with 246 kids, add nearly 50 adult volunteers, throw in 1,700 rainbow trout and 1,200 worms and allow four hours of time you can expect nothing less than a fun day. The Willow Creek Fire Safe Council, California Department of Fish and Game and Shasta-Trinity National Forest's SkyCrest Lake Youth Fishing Derby and Firewise Day was a terrific success. "Children came from as far away as Eureka and we had one child from Kamuela, HI," said Willow Creek Fire Safe Council President and the fishing event chairperson, Barbara Darst.

The Derby took place on Saturday, June 9 at SkyCrest Lake in Burnt Ranch, Trinity County, Calif. The private lake is owned by Greg and Brenda Simmons who donated the use of the lake to the fishing derby.

The children and their families were treated to a host of activities and information about fire safety and nature. "The children learned about wildland fire safety and engaged in nature-related activities at booths put on by the Fire Safe Council, PG&E and other participants. The Shasta-Trinity National Forest brought a fire engine, firefighting equipment and a wildlife display that included a fox an owl and a wolverine," Darst said. "They also coordinated the parking and helped clean the fish. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service scooped water from the lake into small fish tanks so the children could see the organisms and aquatic life of the lake. They brought microscopes to see organisms that could not be seen with naked eye. Humboldt Cattlewomen provided information about beef and explained how beef byproducts make fire retardant material; AmeriCorp Watershed engaged the children in fish painting."

The children were also treated to food and entertainment by Sparky the Fire Dog, Smokey \Bear, Watershed volunteers in fish costumes and Dandy the Smokeless Dragon bounce house. "We cooked over 550 hot dogs and provided chips and ice cream and every child received a prize," Darst said.

Several organizations donated items to make the event a success. "Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers provided the worms, stringers and rods/reels combos with the assistance of Phil Grunert of All Sports Supply. The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary donated life jackets and other gift pack items and B2 Squid donated plastic squid baits. The California Department of fish and Game made arrangements for the 1,700 rainbow trout from Darrah Springs Hatchery," Darst said. "Humboldt County Cattlewomen

donated money to purchase the all-beef hot dogs and Coast Central Credit Union sponsored the Schwann's ice cream truck with treats for everyone.”

Generous cash donations that came from many individuals, businesses, organization and grants from the Trinity Trust and the Trinity County Fish and Game Committee made the event possible.

“Many families come each year because it’s a fun, free family event in a beautiful setting,” Darst said. This year we had 46 more children than we had last year and next year, we’ll probably have even more participants. We plan to have next year’s event on June 8.”



**Gone Fishing.** Left to right: Ollie, Ella, and Brynna proudly show their catch of the day. “I was so proud of my four-year-old daughter, Ella,” said her father, Cliff Hart. “This was her first year and she reeled them in all by herself. Brynna, had some help from her parents Ryan and Lyndsey Chamberlain.”



**Wildlife.** The Shasta-Trinity National Forest brought a wildlife display, providing information about wildlife in the forest. The display included an owl, a fox and a wolverine.



**Close to 250 Children, 1,700 Fish and 1,200 Worms** made the SkyCrest Lake Youth Fishing Derby and Firewise Day a huge success.