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SHAWNEE NATIONAL FOREST VOLUNTEERS SPEND A BUSY WEEKEND ON FOREST PROJECTS

Harrisburg, IL, October 26, 2009 – Forest Supervisor Allen Nicholas, and Mississippi Bluffs District Ranger Dan Lentz recognize the importance of the work done by volunteers on the Shawnee National Forest. On one day in particular, October 17, 2009, the Shawnee National Forest was a busy place for 40 local and regional volunteers. These volunteers formed three groups, traveled to different locations and completed projects.

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 the Crooked Tree Trail in LaRue Pine Hills. The group enjoyed the cool temperatures and majestic fall back drop of the bluffs and the Mississippi Valley as they worked to improve the trail tread, clear brush away from the trail and install water bars.

From the oldest to the youngest, 14 members of the Prairie du Rocher Saddle Club offered a hand in the removal of ten foot bridges and the repair of one foot bridge in the Johnson Creek Recreation Area. Volunteers also picked up trash on road ways and trails in the area.

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While the men toiled to remove the bridges, the ladies, the future volunteers and Trails Technician Kay Bushno worked on trail improvements within the area. The work-day was a huge success. We take our hats off to Prairie du Rocher Saddle Club for all of their hard work.

The Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Geography Club spent the beautiful fall afternoon working on Little Grand Canyon Trail. Adopted by the Geography Club for the past three years, Little Grand Canyon Trail is by far the most visited trail on the west side of the Shawnee National Forest. Their work day included a hike of the trail to mark locations on a map where trees had fallen across the trail, installing signs and taking measurements of holes in the trail tread resulting from the May 8, 2009, severe wind storm. The Geography Club will be returning to Little Grand Canyon on November 7, 2009, to assist the Forest Service in repairing the damaged trail tread.

If you are interested in participating in other volunteer events on the Shawnee National Forest please contact the Shawnee Volunteer Corps at 618-687-1731 ext. 125.

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