

2009  
COOPERATIVE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT  
PROJECT AT KEYSTONE LAKE,  
WESTMORELAND COUNTY



WESTMORELAND COUNTY  
SPORTSMEN'S LEAGUE  
CONSERVATION SCHOOL



**PROJECT:** Volunteer Scale- Cooperative Habitat Improvement Program (CHIP) Project

**LOCATION:** Keystone Lake, Westmoreland County, Keystone State Park

**DATE:** July 29, 2009



DERRY, PA- Despite hard rain the 25 students of the Westmorland County Sportsmen's League Conservation School worked hard building artificial fish habitat structures with hammers, nails and hemlock lumber. The 2009 fish habitat project was part of an ongoing habitat improvement effort that started seven years ago. The habitat program gives the kids a chance to see firsthand what it is like to be a resource manager. Supervised by the PA Fish and Boat Commission, the

students constructed 15 PA Porcupine Crib Juniors and placed them in Keystone Lake. The Conservation School has become an important part of the cooperative habitat partnership between the PA Fish and Boat Commission, DCNR/Keystone State Park and the Loyalhanna Bassmasters. All three partners contribute important components that make the project happen. Keystone State Park and the PA Fish and Boat Commission both provide equipment, staff and the materials; while the Loyalhanna Bassmasters recruit and provide the volunteers who do a majority of the construction and placement work. The students of the Westmorland County Conservation School have been the volunteer construction crew of the project ever since the habitat work began seven years ago.

The students started the day under the blue shelter building the structures one stick at a time. Before the end of the project, the kids were building two structures at a time and didn't seem to mind the steady rain on their shoulders. Once the structures were built, the hard working youths carried each one out to the PFBC habitat boat. Each structure received eight concrete blocks before being nailed together and strapped with nylon banding. The PFBC habitat manager then drove the boat to the pre-determined habitat site on the opposite end of the lake. Two



conservation students were responsible for pushing the structure off the rollers on the bow of the boat. Then the fish structure sank to the lake bottom where it will be utilized by a variety of gamefish in Keystone Lake. At the end of the day an underwater, artificial stump field was created in which bass, panfish and other species can use for daily and seasonal survival tasks.



## **Thank you to all who participated!**

*DCNR/Keystone State Park*

*Loyalhanna Bassmasters/B.A.S.S.*

*Westmoreland County Sportsmen's League Conservation School*

*Hauck Hardwoods and Millwork*

*Greensburg Concrete Block Company*