



# Forestry Competition Returns to Alabama Forestry Camp

*By Karl Byrd, Alabama Forestry Commission*

**F**ocusing on friendships, team building, and exposure to the Forest and Natural Resource Fields, a total of 35 high school boys and girls attended Alabama Forestry Camp this past June. For the 12th year, the camp was held once again at the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund's Rural Training and Research Center located in Epes (Sumter County), Alabama.

This year brought the return of forestry-related competitions with both individual and team concepts. Training in different competitive challenges throughout the week culminated with an

exciting final day of competition to wrap up the annual camp. Students competed individually in tree identification, measurements, tree aging, as well as compass and pacing. Group activities included archery, pulpwood toss, bucksaw, and crosscut saw. These events brought a cross-section of students from across Alabama, allowing them to bond as teams to accomplish the challenges set before them.

Coordinated jointly by the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC), The Federation, and Tuskegee University, this year's camp was conducted by an

Incident Command Team comprised of AFC personnel directing the daily activities. Each day students ventured out on field trips including tours of a TREASURE Forest owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Williams (sponsored by the Alabama TREASURE Forest

Association), Westervelt Management Area (sponsored by the Westervelt Company, Inc.), Tom Beville Lock and Dam/Visitors Center on the Tenn-Tom Waterway (coordinated by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers), Oakhurst Farms commercial fishery, Westervelt Sawmill, and Moundville Archeological Park and Museum.

Additionally, students were also treated to presentations on various topics during the week such as urban forestry presented by Auburn University, hunting and fishing demonstrations by Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries, a wildlife presentation by Alabama A & M University, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology presented by the AFC's Brad Lang, an arson investigation demonstration by "Blaze" the Arson Dog and Officer Donnie Parker of the AFC, and a motivational lecture given by the Alabama Department of Agriculture Assistant Commissioner, Teresa Smiley.

The success of the Alabama Forestry Camp each year is dependent on those organizations and individuals that sponsor the camp in cooperation with those who assist with its daily operation. 🌲

