

FEDERATION OF SOUTHERN COOPERATIVES/LAND ASSISTANCE FUND

2018 FORESTRY CAMP

JUNE 11-15th , 2018

EPES, ALABAMA

DEBRIEFING REPORT

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives held the 25th Annual Forestry Camp, June 11-15th, 2018 in Epes, Alabama at its Rural Training and Research Center. The history and purpose of the Alabama Forestry Camp is to:

- ✓ Introduce campers to careers in natural resources
- ✓ Create meaningful connections, and build life and outdoor skills.

Many dedicated volunteers, sponsors, and supporters made the camp a success.

Primary contributors:

- The Alabama Forestry Commission
- Alabama Division of Wildlife & Freshwater Fisheries
- National Park Service
- Tuskegee University Extension/Alabama A&M/Auburn
- University of Alabama
- USDA Summer Feeding Program
- Regions Bank
- NRCS
- Tuskegee University
- United States Forrest Service.

The Federation received 2 pre-applications for the Camp the opening day of camp, 10 students registered. Of those 10 students, 3 paid the registration fee and 7 students who were not able to pay but wanted to attend camp were given scholarships.

Camp day opened with greetings from the Director of the RTC, Dr. Marcus Bernard. At the opening meeting, students were given the history of camp, provided with rules/regulations for camp, given safety briefing precautions, disciplinary procedures, other housekeeping details, and served lunch. Camp was officially opened at 1:00pm and from that point students followed a schedule of activities. There were many adjustments and schedule time changes that where necessary but all the planned activities were done. Campers ended the day with a

wrap-up discussion of what they learned during the day from various field trips and presentations.

Daily Camp Schedule

Campers were treated to 5 off-sites trips. (Camp Schedule attached)

Day 1: The first off-site trip was to Tuscaloosa to tour the University of Alabama tree campus and attend presentations by UA arborists, landscape architects, as well as a community planning activity led by the UA Extension Office.

Day 2: Lock and Dam tour in Demopolis (Site 2) led by the Army Corp of Engineers. Following the tour, students attended a forest hike with a sack lunch at Fosque Park (Site 3). After lunch, campers traveled to Westervelt Mill (Site 3) in Tuscaloosa County. Campers were given a full tour of the mill, that included an explanation of responsibilities in the many job positions in milling as well as sustainable and conservation practices in milling.

Day 3: Willie Adams from the National Park Service, and Freddie Davis, a local forester discussed careers in forestry after breakfast. Later in the afternoon campers went to Hodges Smith (Site 4) property to explore his treasured forest and property. They also stopped by the Greene County Forestry Office (Site 5) and viewed equipment used in forestry management. That evening Doug Darr, from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources taught the students important skills for fishing at the RTC property lake.

Day 4: The day started early and campers were transported to practice new fishing skills at Hodges Smith with Mr. Darr. After having lunch at the RTC, the campers attended Career Night presentations. Willie Adams discussed with the campers the impact current life decisions and choices had on future career success. Managers from Regions Bank talked with the campers about money management and the importance of having good credit. Lovie Parks, from NRCS did a presentation on resume building and careers in conservation. The night ended with a fish fry and a bonfire.

The final day of camp students were presented with certificates of achievements along with their counselors. Parents and relatives of the campers were also invited to attend the closing ceremonies and enjoy a special luncheon with the campers. Ben Malone, the State Conservationist of Alabama NRCS was secured as the luncheon speaker for closing ceremonies.

SUMMARY

Overall camp was a huge success for campers and for The Federation. All 10 students registered for camp successfully completed the entire week. Students were accompanied by counselors and EMTs throughout the day and evenings at camp. We have received emails and phone calls regarding the wonderful experience at camp this year.

Feedback- Email from Parent

Hello Mr. Jacobs,

I just wanted to thank you for an awesome experience for my son at your camp. He truly enjoyed himself to the fullest. He is already talking about attending next year and bringing a friend with him. I'm not sure what all you did, but as a parent I'm very thankful. You kept him engaged the entire week. For me to hear him say he will use what he learned at your camp at his other camp this week made me feel like I made a great choice. Yes, it's other camps that teach about forestry and other natural resources but was drawn to the federation. Continue to succeed in all you do and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

Thanks,

Kim Greene Phillips

*Respectfully Submitted
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FSC/FLS*