

## Shenango Lake Handshake Partnership Project with The American Chestnut Foundation

Shenango Lake Rangers Rich Egger and Kyle Kraynak assisted with the completion of an American chestnut orchard at the campground of Shenango Lake on 23 July 2013. Many other staff and volunteers helped with clearing, prep work and planting of the site. The site was fenced in with an 8 foot tall fence to prevent deer browse and allow the trees to become established without interference.

The site is planted with the most advanced back-crossed American chestnut material, pure American and Chinese chestnuts. The seeds were donated through the Handshake Partnership between The American Chestnut Foundation and Penn State University. The area will provide further research into the genetic resistance of the advanced back-crossed species of American chestnuts and will also provide interpretation to the thousands of visitors that recreate at Shenango Lake.

The American chestnut was once the most abundant and largest hardwood in the Eastern United States until an Asiatic canker blight decimated the entire native range by the mid 1950's. The work and research being conducted at sites like these across the native range will hopefully on day produce a blight resistant American chestnut capable of filling its historic role as the "Redwoods of the East Coast". More information on this topic can be found at: <http://www.acf.org/>.



