

Photo courtesy of Arkansas Game and Fish Commission



Members of the Lake Ouachita High School fishing team and officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers help sink brushpiles in Lake Ouachita to create fish habitat in July.

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## Youth bass fishing team earns \$1,000 grant for building habitat

**MOUNT IDA, Ark.** — The anglers of the Lake Ouachita High School Fishing Team may still be a few years from taking on the challenge of top-level tournament angling, but they recently showed the character of true sportsmen and women through their conservation actions. The team netted a \$1,000 grant from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to help fund their organization after successfully completing a fish habitat project on Lake Ouachita this summer.

Tilly Davis, who organizes and helps manage the fishing team, says her two sons approached her about the project.

“We heard about some of the grants the AGFC gives for the shooting sports team, and I asked the school if it was possible to use some of those funds for the fishing team,” Davis said. “Robbie Strother and Alex Gilbert from the AGFC spoke up and told us we didn’t have to share that grant, we could apply for this one.”

Davis then asked Stacy Sigman, resource officer for the Corps of Engineers at Lake Ouachita, if the Corps would be willing to help with the project.

“He was like, ‘Oh yeah, we’d like to help and know where there are some dead and dying trees that need to be removed that you can use for the brushpiles,’” said Davis.

Early in the morning on July 26, eight young anglers went to work, dragging brush onto boats and sinking it in the lake to create fish habitat. The grant money was then supplied by the Youth Tournament Organization Habitat Grants Program offered by the AGFC’s Black Bass Program.

Although the program has been available since 2017, the Lake Ouachita Youth Fishing Team is only the second team to ever apply for the grant program and is the first to complete a project and collect the grant money.

Grants ranging from \$500 to \$1,000 are available, depending on the amount of work done. Some of this money may be used to reimburse the team for any expenses from the project, but a little resourceful thinking can capitalize on donated materials.

Visit [agfc.com/bbp](http://agfc.com/bbp) for more information on the AGFC’s Black Bass Program and Youth Tournament Organization Habitat Grants.

ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH COMMISSION



Brayden Pennington

Submitted photo

### New IGFA record smallmouth

**DANIA BEACH, Fla.** — Seven-year-old angler Brayden Pennington recently tied the IGFA Male Smallfry World Record by catching a 5-pound, 13-ounce specimen from Burt Lake, Michigan.

The fish hit a Poor Boy’s Baits tube lure and was brought in after a three-minute fight.

Smallfry World Records are kept for the heaviest fish of each eligible species in any line class up to 130 pounds. Smallfry records are kept for both male and female anglers ages 10 and under.

All species recognized for Line Class records and Tippet Class records are also recognized for Smallfry records. All IGFA International Angling Rules apply, with the exception that fish do not have to be weighed on land.

INTERNATIONAL GAME FISH ASSOCIATION



AmeriCorps team (left to right: Amy Skotek, 19, Texas; Eric Cullen, 25, Massachusetts; and Eric Ba...

## Renovations Lakepoint State Park

**EUFAULA, Ala.** — A six-person AmeriCorps team recently spent seven weeks working on renovations at Lakepoint State Park.

Renovations included the rebuilding of a retaining wall behind the park’s lodge, improvements to the day-use bathrooms and replacing rotten decking in the cabin areas.

AmeriCorps is a national volunteer program similar to the Peace Corps. Volunteers commit to full-time or part-time positions offered by a network of nonprofit community organizations and public agencies to earn college credit and scholarships. Approximately 75,000 Americans volunteer with the program each year.

Eufaula Mayor Jack Tibbs welcomed the AmeriCorps volunteers to Lakepoint during the team’s orientation Nov. 5.

“It is an honor for our city to

## South Carolina kill invasive snakehead

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** — South Carolina Resources officials are warning snakehead fish is caught in the state immediately and by all means

In early October, a Georgia angler caught a northern snakehead, an aquatic invasive species, on private property in Gwinnett County. The snakehead has been found in the Southeast, northern snakehead in South Carolina and Florida.

“Our first line of defense is to educate anglers about the species, such as the northern snakehead,” said Ross Self, chief of freshwater fisheries for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Department of Natural Resources anglers catch a northern snakehead and report it to SC

Snakehead, found in 14 states and is a long, thin, native bowfin. They can have a long, whole back appearance and survive in low

The snakehead introduction poses a substantial threat to native species.

South Carolina anglers who catch a northern snakehead are advised to report it. If possible, take pictures of the fish’s mouth, fins and tail. Note any landmarks or GPS coordinates (800) 922-5431.

For more information, visit [snakehead.html](http://snakehead.html).

SOUTH CAROLINA

