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News Release



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Forest Service honors employees and partners

Forest Service-Savannah River garners two awards

(AIKEN, SC) December 7, 2016—The U.S. Forest Service honored employees and partners in November for exemplary work, dedication and commitment in the Southern Region at the 2016 Regional Forester’s Honor Awards. This year’s theme was “Resilient People, Resilient Forests.”

“Our employees have worked so hard this year to achieve the safest, highest quality outcomes. I am proud to recognize their outstanding accomplishments,” said Regional Forester Tony Tooke. “Our success would not have been possible without the support and efforts of our partners, volunteers and others who I am proud to honor as well.”

Awards were presented in 13 categories to individuals and groups throughout the region, which includes 13 southern states and Puerto Rico. The U. S. Forest Service-Savannah River timber crew received the One Region, One Team, One Approach Award; the Aiken Sertoma Club received the Volunteer Program Award.

One Region, One Team, One Approach Award: This award is the Southern Region’s newest category of special awards that recognizes employees who have demonstrated exemplary teamwork and commitment to safe, high-quality accomplishments not only on their own units, but also on other units in the region.

The U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River timber crew is responsible for the timber sale preparation at the Savannah River Site either directly or through unit layout and contract oversight. Despite personnel transitions, the timber crew reached the forest’s annual target of over 7 million cubic feet while helping the Sam Houston National Forest in Texas as well as the Kisatchie National Forest in Louisiana. The timber crew marked over 340 acres on the Sam Houston National Forest, which included a shortleaf pine restoration project; they proceeded to the

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Forest Service-Savannah River



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Kisatchie National Forest where they marked over 450 acres to restore and improve the resilience of the forest.

“Tree marking is a management tool that provides for multiple benefits including providing suitable habitat for wildlife,” said DeVela Clark, U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River forest manager. “I am proud that our timber crew was able to share their expertise to help other forests reach annual targets while ensuring goals were met on our local unit.”

Volunteer Program Award: This award recognizes volunteers who partner with the Forest Service to help preserve and protect the forests and ensure visitors have a pleasant experience.

Under the leadership of Sam Cox, the Aiken Sertoma Club catered a banquet for over 100 people and luncheon for over 60 Wheelin’ Sportsmen, wounded warriors, volunteer escorts, and guests at Savannah River Site’s 2016 Ultimate Turkey Hunt. This event provides a rare hunting opportunity for those with a variety of physical challenges. The Aiken Sertoma Club provided a full-scale meal for this event for 13 years running with no pursuit of reimbursement.

Throughout the 13 years of volunteering their time and efforts, the Aiken Sertoma Club has provided meals for over 1500 participants and attendees. This includes gathering the food, setup at the outdoor venue, and complete cooking and catering for all attendees. Additionally, they catered the luncheon for the first and second annual Savannah River Site’s Ultimate Fishing Challenge in May 2015 and 2016, where anglers with disabilities enjoy a fishing competition at Savannah River Site.

“The generosity of time, talents, and treasure that Aiken Sertoma exhibits is a perfect complement to the agencies efforts in collaboration and teamwork,” said Andy Horcher, U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River natural resources operations manager. “Thanks to their volunteered time, donated food and equipment, even the less successful hunters and anglers leave our events with a full belly and a smile.”

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(Left to right) U.S. Forest Service Southern Regional Forester Tony Tooke, Sam Cox of the Aiken Sertoma Club, U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River Forest Manager DeVela Clark and U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River Deputy Forest Manager Don Walker



U.S. Forest Service-Savannah River Timber Crew awards recipients (First row) Lead Forestry Technician Joshua Crocker, Silviculture Technician Lyndie McDaniel, Forestry Technician Denise Leiferman. (Second row) U.S. Forest Service Southern Regional Forester Tony Tooke, Forestry Technician Bernard Smith, Forestry Technician Sara Carter, Forest Manager DeVela Clark and Deputy Forest Manager Don Walker. (Not pictured) Forest Service Representative Jim Segar and Sale Administrator Robert Williams.



Aiken Sertoma Club serving food at the 2016 Savannah River Site's Ultimate Turkey Hunt

