



**2013 Georgia Department of Natural Resources
7th Annual Equestrian Workday
March 9, 2013**

By Diane Ayres Cochran

A resounding success! 204 volunteers worked 1105.5 hours at our State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas with horse facilities. Organizations represented included Friends of AH Stephens, Friends of Watson Mill Bridge, Friends of Chattahoochee Bend, Chattahoochee Trail Horse Association, Back Country Horsemen of North Georgia, Back Country Horsemen of Northwest Georgia, Back Country Horsemen of Middle and South Georgia, Bent Tree Saddle Club, Cherokee County Saddle Club, Kel-Mac Saddle Club, and Circuit Riders. If I missed any, I apologize.

Our volunteers in charge of organizing this workday are Kathy White at A. H. Stephens, Lisa Boone at Charlie Elliott, Larry Wheat at Chattahoochee Bend, Keith Flory at FDR, Susan Shedd at Fort Mountain, Dayle Faulkner at Hard Labor Creek and myself at Watson Mill Bridge. A very special thanks to all of you.

A. H. Stephens had 25 volunteers that worked 184.5 hours. They installed stall mats in 10 stalls in the brand new barn, installed water bucket hangers, hay racks and locks in the stalls, clipped and trimmed trails, painted and stained picnic tables, painted grills, cut and beveled 20 timbers for campsite posts, drilled campsite signs, marked and started 20 post holes, painted the trash rack, finished out two campsites, and improved the drainage in the campground.

Charlie Elliott Wildlife Management Area had 13 volunteers that worked 72 hours with 2 rangers. They removed an old fence and wire, pruned trees and removed fallen trees from the trail. Horses were utilized to access remote areas on the trail, which proved to be very effective in meeting trail objects.

Chattahoochee Bend State Park had 32 volunteers that worked 165 hours. They cut trees and brush at the trailhead staging area. The cut brush was placed on burn piles for later burning. Ronny Jones and the RDJE, Inc. donated a large machine and operator on Friday before the workday to pick up old slash timber and build the burn piles. They also cut brush along the access road and had hands-on training for building sustainable trails at the park.

FD Roosevelt had 40 volunteers that worked 210 hours and got all of the trails marked and clean except one.

Fort Mountain had 10 volunteers that worked 52 hours. They worked on about four miles of horse trails, cutting several downed trees on the trail, cleaning out a couple of culverts, and trimming back along the trail.

Hard Labor Creek had 41 volunteers that worked 234 hours. They performed the following tasks:

At Camp Rutledge they trimmed trees around cabins, hauled in fill dirt, scraped and pulled ditches in the driveway, put down gravel, and scraped entire length of Camp Rutledge Rd.

On the Red and Blue Horse Trails they hand debarred 3/4 mi. of trail from Creekside Farm Drive to the stable and used a bobcat to reopen the grade dips.

On the Orange Trail and Fambrough Bridge Rd. they covered hazardous holes with stone in the damaged culvert area, placed two horse crossing road signs, removed a truckload of trash, re-marked and weed eaten the orange trail entrance, and installed trail signs to notify riders of road crossing.

In the stable and parking area they painted the kiosk, garbage can holders, manure pit and stable braces, leveled thirty stalls with sand and crushed gravel, installed two tie post in the wash rack area, dug two drainage ditches to correct water pooling in the parking area, leveled hitching pole areas in stable yard and parking lot with sand and crushed gravel, leveled the shoulders of the driveway and road entrance with crushed gravel and cleaned up the natural area in the parking lot, removing many large fallen trees.

Watson Mill Bridge had 43 volunteers that worked 188 hours. They put stall mats in one barn (6 stalls), leveling the dirt, adding 2 inches of gravel and cutting mats to fit. Weyman Cochran worked on the green, red and brown trails with his excavator. Volunteers also cleaned up the horse camp, feeding the chipper and removed several dead trees from the trails.