

# High School Students Plant Trees and Gain Knowledge about Arbor Day

## *THOMPSON CREEK PROJECT*

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Photos by Linda Keene

**CAMPBELL COUNTY, TN** - The Knoxville Field Office and the Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI) hosted their third annual Arbor Day celebration March 19, 2007.

Forestry students from Campbell County High School (CCHS) and their teacher, Bill Grieve, helped personnel from several State and Federal agencies plant 400 red oak, and white oak tree seedlings and American chestnuts. Jamis Khoshaba, a sophomore at CCHS, said, "Events like this helps me better understand my surroundings."

The Thompson Creek Project (TCP) is located in Campbell County, Tennessee. It is owned by the State of Tennessee and managed by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA).



Steve Roark, TN Division of Forestry, provides a tree-planting demonstration to local high school students.

TCP is an abandoned mine land that was reclaimed in partnership by the TWRA, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's Clean Streams Initiative, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). TDEC had two sections at the event, their Land Reclamation Section and the Section of Surface Mining.

Demonstrations and lectures were presented to Campbell County students throughout the course of the event.

Steve Roark, of the Tennessee Division of Forestry (TDF), spoke about tree planting and demonstrated how to plant a tree using a dibble bar. Vic Davis (OSM) briefed students about ARRI and career opportunities with OSM. Jonathan Bray, a senior at CCHS said, "I hope to gain some knowledge to help me in my logging business." Stan Stooksbury (TWRA) discussed the Thompson Creek Project and the benefits of developing partnerships. Dave Turner of TDEC explained information and issues surrounding such topics as water sampling, acid mine drainage treatment, and treatment results.

After lunch the students visited a native stand of Big Bluestem grass where Mr. Stooksbury talked about the importance of preserving and re-establishing native warm season grass species. The celebration concluded at a site near TWRA's office where genetically improved American chestnut seeds, donated by the American Chestnut Foundation, were planted.



Vic Davis of the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and students plant American Chestnuts.

In response to the day's activities, Grieve stated, "Anytime students have the opportunity to experience and participate in events such as ARRI and meet and work with people in different environmental careers, it broadens their views of the jobs available and what they do. It also lets them see our environment as it is, and what we can do to improve it."