

West Virginia Division of Forestry

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WV State Conservation Camp accepting applications for campers

Romney, WV — "I give my pledge as an American to save and faithfully to defend from waste the natural resources of my country -- its soil and minerals, its forest, waters and wildlife."
Campers at West Virginia State Conservation Camp have recited this pledge for more than 66 years. Since 1941, Conservation Camp has introduced thousands of West Virginia's young adults to natural resources conservation and environmental awareness. Once again Conservation Camp will open its doors to campers ages 14 - 18 from around the state. Applications currently are being accepted for this year's camp, which is scheduled for June 9 – 14, 2008, at Camp Caesar in Webster County. To find out more about camp, check out the new Web site, www.wvconservationcamp.com.

Throughout the years, the camp has laid the foundation that has been followed by more than 17,000 campers, counselors and instructors. They come through the gates of Camp Caesar to share in a once-in-a-lifetime camping experience. Many state and federal agencies provide professional staff and support to the camp program. A unique factor of the camp is that some of the staff have been campers themselves and have gone on to pursue natural resources careers and give back to the camp through their time and experience.

A typical day at camp begins with a flag raising, followed by field and classroom activities in Forestry, Law Enforcement, Recreation, Wildlife and Fisheries, Watershed Resources and Management, Youth and Soil Conservation. During the week, campers also experience a variety of assembly programs that include trout stocking, hunter safety, wildlife management and wildfire control.

Afternoons offer something for everyone, whether a novice or an avid outdoors-person. Campers have the opportunity to develop and sharpen their skills while participating in a .22 rifle marksmanship course, trap shooting, archery, outdoor cooking, boating and kayaking, and rappelling. They also can visit a trout hatchery during one of the field trips. Wednesday afternoon offers some unique cultural elements from around West Virginia with the Jackson's Mill wagon, blacksmithing, wood-turning, rock wall climbing, old-time music and a historical re-enactor.

Swimming, sports and campfires are examples of evening activities. A highlight of the sports program is the annual competition between the campers and the staff in softball and volleyball. The day draws to a close as the glow of the campfire signals a time of reflection. The program is rounded out with career guidance, a wide spectrum of activities, and the general excitement of camp life.

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The cost is \$150 per camper that comes in the form of scholarships from sponsoring agencies or donors. The scholarships cover the cost of cabin-style lodging, meals and insurance during the week of camp. Campers are recommended by educators, clubs, professionals in the field, and other individuals committed to the future of conservation in West Virginia. This year, campers who have attended in years past may attend the camp again, although space is limited.

If this week of activities sounds right for you, contact Alan Miller, Camp Secretary/Treasurer, at (304) 358-3298, Mike Hall, Camp Director, at (304) 847- 2727, any WVU County 4-H Extension Agent, DNR District Office or conservation officer. Written inquiries or applications should be mailed to Alan Miller at HC 32, Box 33, Upper Tract, WV, 26866. For more information about West Virginia State Conservation Camp, visit the new Web site at www.wvconservationcamp.com.

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