



# National 4-H Forestry Invitational

August 4, 2016

## NEWS RELEASE

### **Arkansas Team Earns Top Honors at National 4-H Forestry Invitational**

Arkansas placed first among 17 states that competed in the 37<sup>th</sup> annual National 4-H Forestry Invitational from Sunday, July 31, through Thursday, August 4. Teams from Tennessee and Florida placed second and third, respectively. Alabama, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin were also represented at this year's Invitational.

The invitational was held at West Virginia University Jackson's Mill State 4-H Camp and Conference Center near Weston, West Virginia. The event is sponsored by Farm Credit System, Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc., USDA Forest Service State and Private Southern Region, West Virginia University Extension Service, American Farm Bureau Federation, American Forest Foundation, Southern Regional Extension Forestry, Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals, and National Woodland Owners Association.

While at the Invitational 4-H members competed for overall team and individual awards in several categories. Events included tree identification, tree measurement, compass and pacing, insect and disease identification, topographic map use, forest evaluation, the forestry quiz bowl, and a written forestry exam.

Arkansas was represented by Ethan Boykin, Hunter Saunders, Cade Wilkerson, Connor Wilkerson all from Hermitage. The team was coached by Taylor Gwin also from Hermitage.

Kyle Weiner from Tennessee received the high point individual award. Second place high individual award was given to Cade Wilkerson from Arkansas and third place high individual award was given to Henry Keating from Florida.

The Joe Yeager "Spirit of the Invitational" award was given to Holden Doane from Indiana. This award recognizes an outstanding 4-H contestant at the Invitational. It is presented to the individual who takes initiative, is enthusiastic, and is eager to lead academic and social situations.

4-H is a youth education program operated by the Cooperative Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture and the state land grant universities. More than six million youth, 540,000 volunteers, and 3,500 professionals participate in 4-H nationwide, and nearly 100,000 are part of the 4-H Forestry Program.

The event would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors;

Farm Credit System (FCS) supports rural communities and agriculture with reliable, consistent credit and financial services. FCS has been helping areas grow and thrive for a century by providing farmers with capital and by financing infrastructure and communication services.

The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI®), Inc. is a fully independent, charitable organization dedicated to promoting sustainable forest management. The SFI® label is a sign you are buying wood and paper products from a certified source, backed by a rigorous, third-party certification audit.

USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry, Southern Region programs bring forest management assistance and expertise to a diversity of landowners through cost-effective, non-regulatory partnerships. The staffs also play a key role in implementing the National Fire Plan.

West Virginia University (WVU) Extension Service educators and volunteers build and sustain partnerships with people and organizations in West Virginia, to improve their lives and communities. WVU's programs and services strengthen individuals of all ages.

American Farm Bureau Federation, (AFBF) is the unified national voice of agriculture. Working through its grassroots organizations AFBF enhances and strengthens the lives of rural Americans to build strong, prosperous agricultural communities.

The American Forest Foundation® (AFF) works with families, educators, and elected officials to promote stewardship and protect our nation's forest heritage. AFF works with its partners to provide hands-on support for America's 10 million family forest owners.

Southern Region Extension Forestry serves as a liaison between the USDA Forest Service and the thirteen Extension Forest Resources units in the South. The position has evolved into a regional programming, representation, promotion, and communication role within the forestry and natural resource communities.

The Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals (ANREP) is a professional society for natural resource Extension professionals. The mission of ANREP is to bring Extension professionals together to discuss mutual natural resource issues, needs, and opportunities and to advance natural resource Extension through continuing education.

The National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA) is a nationwide organization made up of non-industrial private woodland owners. Membership includes landowners in all 50 states and Canada. The mission of the NWOA is to use unbiased, research-based, objective and factual information to inform, educate and advocate ensuring a sustainable managed forest resource in the United States.

For more information on the National 4-H Forestry Invitational, go to:  
<http://4hforestryinvitational.org/>.

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ARKANSAS TEAM



Left to Right: Taylor Gwin (Coach), Cade Wilkerson, Hunter Saunders, Ethan Boykin, and Connor Wilkeson