

3/15/19

Mike Ezell-Park Naturalist- Lake Guntersville State Park

The American Conservation Experience

This past week at Lake Guntersville State Park, we had the pleasure of hosting a crew of dedicated young men and women from ACE. These young people were interns in a trail crew from the Southeastern division of American Conservation Experience (ACE) out of Asheville, NC. American Conservation Experience is a 501(c)(3) registered non-profit organization that provides a range of voluntary service programs for both American and international participants. They provide young men and women the opportunity to change their future and restore our lands by sending crews to state and national parks all over the nation. To parks like ours they provide services and expertise in areas such as trail building and restoration, tree planting, invasive species removal, habitat restorations, erosion control, and historical preservation. These participating interns can receive valuable instruction and vocational guidance in pursuit of outdoor related careers. They can choose between 450 or 900 hours of service, receive an educational stipend to go towards college, and get to explore and visit beautiful and scenic places all over our country.

Most important of all is the investment of ACE services in the young people of America. These are the men and women that will inherit the natural resource stewardship from us old folks in the near future. Their participation in these science-based natural resources projects now will help insure our descendants will also get to enjoy the benefits of recreation, clean air, clean water, good soil, and abundant wildlife.

Our little corner of the planet, Alabama, is blessed with the top biodiversity of plants and animals east of the Mississippi River. We are a biological superstar. We also hope that our future generations will say that we took good care of it. Programs like ACE go a long way in making this come true. Check out ACE's programs at <http://www.usaconservation.org/locations/southeast/>. Get outside, come out to the park and enjoy the rebirth of spring. Bring a kid; you will be glad you did!

Thank you ACE for all you do.