



Arkansas Game & Fish Commission Fisheries Division



Youth Tournament Fishing Organization Aquatic Habitat Project Application

The AGFC Fisheries Division has been dedicated to improving aquatic habitat for sportfish in our aging reservoirs for several years. When many reservoirs in Arkansas were first constructed, lake bottoms were bulldozed and the trees either harvested for lumber or burned. In some instances, trees and brush were left in place and flooded providing abundant cover during the early years in these new impoundments. However, over decades the terrestrial vegetation gradually decayed, reducing the amount of complex habitat available in our reservoirs. Additionally, water level fluctuations, turbidity, water chemistry, and presence of aquatic herbivores have all played a role in preventing aquatic plants from establishing naturally in many of our impoundments.

For many years, the AGFC Fisheries Division has been investing in reservoir habitat enhancements and focusing on improving fish habitat with additions of artificial and natural cover. These efforts have consisted of using various tree species, polyvinyl chloride (PVC) configurations, rock piles, aquatic vegetation, wooden pallets, gravel beds, or combinations of these materials in habitat improvement projects around the state. Cedar trees have been used extensively by AGFC for fish cover as they are slow to decay and have complex branch structure. The AGFC has also constructed structures from PVC pipe which have the advantage over trees by being permanent and by being a lot less likely to be hooked by anglers. GPS waypoints are collected for all fish structures placed in lakes around the state and are available for viewing and downloading on the AGFC Interactive Map located at <http://gis.agfc.com/>.

In some impoundments natural spawning substrate is lacking due to siltation and can benefit with the addition of gravel beds to improve available spawning habitat. Additionally, aquatic vegetation provides significant benefits to reservoirs by providing a home for invertebrates which in turn serve as a food supply for young fishes, nursery cover for young fishes to escape predation, and helps to stabilize shorelines and bottom sediments. The AGFC has conducted aquatic plant establishment projects in an effort to establish a self-sustaining community of native plants in select lakes where they are lacking.

The AGFC strongly supports **Arkansas Jr. High, High School, and College Fishing Teams**, and would like to enhance our relationship with them by initiating a new aquatic habitat project development program. This program is designed to promote conservation awareness and stewardship in young anglers by involving them in hands-on aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement projects in Arkansas reservoirs. Additionally, aquatic habitat provided by young anglers through this program will be very beneficial to the sport fisheries in our aging reservoirs. Youth fishing teams interested in conducting a project that contributes to the establishment, maintenance, restoration, or enhancement of reservoir habitat should fill out and send in the attached application for a \$500-\$1,000 award from the AGFC Fisheries Division. Equal consideration will be given to all applications, regardless of school or team size. Funds will have to be routed through the team's account at their school, so a school official should be listed as the contact person. An alternative contact person may be listed who will supervise/lead the implementation of the project.



Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
Fisheries Division



**Youth Tournament Fishing Organization
Aquatic Habitat Project Application**

Club Name and # of Students: _____ #

School Name: _____

Contact Person and Phone #: _____

Alternative Contact Person and Phone #: _____

Contact Person Email Address: _____

Alternative Contact Person Email Address: _____

Contact Person Address: _____
Street City Zip

Project Name: _____

Proposed Start and End date: _____

New project or continuation of existing project: _____

Project Site Location: (Attachment A – Provide project location map):

Attach additional pages as necessary for the following sections

Project Objectives (What will the project accomplish?):

Methods (How will work be accomplished? Provide sketch or diagram - Attachment B):

Youth Angler Involvement (Describe how many youth, and specifically how they will be involved in the project):

Partners and Contributions (List the names and locations of partners and their cash contributions or donated materials toward the project):

Total Estimated Project Costs (Materials toward the project and Youth Volunteer Labor at \$10/hr):

AGFC Funds Requested (\$500 - \$1,000): _____

If application is approved, I am aware that funds will not be available until after the project is completed and a final summary project report including GPS waypoints and pre-, during, and post-project photos are submitted to AGFC.

Contact Person: _____
Sign Date

Alternative Contact Person: _____
Sign Date

Please feel free to contact the Black Bass Program if you have any question regarding the application process.

Jeff Buckingham
Black Bass Program Biologist
Jeffrey.Buckingham@agfc.ar.gov
P: (501) 525-8606 | M: (501) 802-5739

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission | 350 Fish Hatchery Road | Hot Springs, AR 71913

Please send completed application and attachments to:

AGFC
c/o BBP
350 Fish Hatchery Road
Hot Springs, AR 71913

Or

jeffrey.buckingham@agfc.ar.gov

*****COMMISSION USE ONLY*****

Waterbody and Ownership: _____

Ownership Contact Person and Phone #: _____

Title: _____

Email Address: _____

Address: _____
Street City Zip

Are permits required? Yes _____ No _____ Permit details: _____

