

Bring one for the Chipper/Fish Habitat Partners receive State and Local Awards



Marietta BassMasters

Marietta Bass Masters receive Bartow County Volunteer Recognition Award Trophy for their outstanding commitment

Lake Allatoona Fish Habitat Project will henceforth be known as an Award Winning Program. On December 7, 2016 at 10 AM - in the Commissioner's Meeting Room - Bartow County Sole Commissioner Steve Taylor opened that day's public meeting by recognizing Lake Allatoona US Army Corps of Engineers & GA DNR – Fisheries for a 2nd place win in "Community Greening". The announcement was made during the annual KGB conference - our state affiliate Keep Georgia Beautiful - for their efforts in the Fish Habitat project. Bartow County also recognized the Marietta Bass Masters for their contribution to the project.



Since 2012 the Marietta Bass Masters have logged 330 volunteer hours and installed approximately 1,300 trees providing the necessary volunteer hours to not only keeping this project afloat but making it possible to win a state award. Melissa Phillips (KBB) Bartow County Environmental and Green-space Programs Director, submitted the nomination to Keep Georgia Beautiful.

Bartow County
Government
(Keep Bartow Beautiful)

recognizes

Marietta
Bass Masters

2016 State Award
Winning
- Lake Allatoona -
"Fish Habitat" Project



Bring one for
the Chipper

Christmas Tree Recycling

Phillips built her case by using statistics that demonstrate both economic and environmental benefits brought about by the project.

One such set of statistics are the studies performed by the Corps which indicate that Lake Allatoona fuels the regional economy by nearly \$250 million annually. While Phillips could not rationally say this was all related to "fishing", the sheer number of people using Bethany Bridge jetty for fishing seems to indicate a decent per

centage of it is. The Corps of Engineers reported that Red Top/Bethany Bridge Jetty attracted 16,080 "day use" visits during a six month period in 2015 and the majority of those were for fishing.

Phillips explains in her application that the Fish Habitat project not only provides economic benefits through the lucrative sport of fishing, but it enhances KBB's Bring one for the Chipper program by providing yet another very viable and popular way to



recycle Christmas Trees as well. Over the 10 years that Keep Bartow Beautiful has been involved an estimated 6,000 Christmas trees have been recycled through the program. Phillips believes this estimate is on the low end.

KBB is always looking for ways to enhance our programs' impacts and we have found that the best way to do that is to add partnerships that have compatible purposes. These are the collaborations that have proven to be the most sustainable.

In this case, the project meets each partner's needs more or less equally. ▪ The Corps' stated mission statement involves *managing and conserving water resources* while also *maximizing experiences for public use of outdoor recreation for the present and into the future*. ¶ The Department of Natural Resources Fisheries mission is to conserve, enhance and promote Georgia's wildlife resources, including the "Go Fish Georgia" Initiative. ¶ Keep Bartow Beautiful's mission is to *encourage community environmental activities and behaviors*. KBB reports this as well toward Bartow County Government's report to fulfill part of its *public education and outreach* that is required all operators of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems or MS4's by the Environmental Protection Division (EPD).

In addition, the project's most significant volunteer base, Marietta Bass Masters' statement of purpose reads: *The purpose of our organization is to bring together dedicated bass fishermen for the exchange of ideas, betterment of the environment, and for the fellowship derived from Club functions.*

The Lake Allatoona Fish Habitat/Christmas Tree Recycling project is a shining example of a partnership that works.

Adding to the value of the program is an established structural value. With 7 sites that currently have the infrastructure in place, there is relatively minimum maintenance required each year. (This does not include a new one created this year as an Eagle Scout project at Cooper's which happens to be nearest to the Lake Operations Management Office.) The seven sites are: Bethany Bridge, Galt's Ferry, The Blockhouse, Paw Paw's, Victoria Landing, Proctor Creek and Red Top.

The estimated total value (materials and labor) of these 7 sites estimates to \$3,840.80 per site or **\$26,885.60 for all 7 sites**. Of course this value does not include intrinsic values related to the economical or educational impacts nor the potential of environmental services.

All of KBB's partners realize that partnerships are the key to effectively leveraging all our possible resources. But even Phillips is impressed that ten years in this collaboration has proven to be such a successful example of a "Community Greening" project between three government entities: The US Corps of Engineers Lake Allatoona (a federal agency under the Department of Defense), Keep Bartow Beautiful (County Government), and the Department of Natural Resources Fisheries (State government), scores of volunteers, and a volunteer group in particular that is as invested as the Marietta Bass Masters.