

## Kerr Lake State Parks Source Water Protection (SWP) Awards Summary 2014

In 2006, the Kerr Lake Regional Water Treatment Plant agreed to be the first water system in North Carolina to participate in the SWP planning process, and to develop a pilot SWP Plan for the state. Their surface water intake is located on Anderson Creek as it flows into Kerr Lake. A nearby stakeholder with significant property and public access to the creek is Kerr Lake State Parks and more specifically Satterwhite Point State Park. A representative of Kerr Lake State Parks, the Parks Superintendent, agreed to serve on the SWP Committee during the process. Being the first SWP Plan to be developed in the state, there were a number of meetings, both informational and brainstorming, to determine the best courses of action to protect water quality at the intake.

Educating the public became one of the major components of the SWP Plan. Coincidentally, during the process of developing the SWP Plan, Satterwhite Point Recreational Area was constructing an exhibit hall in its Visitor Center for all of Kerr Lake's eight parks. As a result of discussions about protecting the drinking water in a five county area, the State Park placed a lot of emphasis on protecting the water quality in Kerr Lake in their educational display in the exhibit hall. Kerr Lake State Parks personnel estimate that the exhibit hall is accessed by an average of approximately 600 people per month April - September and an average of approximately 100 per month October – March each year since construction in 2008, for an estimated yearly total of 4,140 people. The educational displays in the exhibit hall serve as reminders to people to do their part to protect drinking water quality in Kerr Lake and across the state.

Additionally, since 2008, the staff has hosted 21 Field Day events, an annual Big Sweep trash clean-up and other educational Field Days. Within these Field Day events, there were a total of 84 programs with a water resource theme. Attendance for these Field Day events totaled 2,078. Grades for attendants range from elementary through high school age. Also since 2008, Park staff have given a total of 304 programs with a specific topic of water quality/resource. Attendance for these programs totaled 5,748. Other programs given include the Water Cycle and Water Conservation.

Kerr Lake State Parks has set an excellent example for other State Parks to take advantage of the opportunity to educate their campers and other visitors about the importance of protecting water quality and conserving water for the future. Thousands of people from all over this country and others visit the center and tour the permanent exhibit hall every year. Those visitors have the opportunity to learn not only about protecting Kerr Lake's water quality, but the visitor's own local waterways and sources of drinking water.

Pictures are included of the water related educational displays in the Exhibit Hall at the Satterwhite Point Visitor's Center.