

MARTINSVILLE, Ind. - A local troop of Boy Scouts of America braved this year's Earth Day to plant low-growing trees and bushes with South Central Indiana Rural Electric Membership Cooperative's (SCI) arborists and biologists.

"This was a great learning experience for the Scouts," said Jonathan Crocker, District Executive of Boy Scouts of America Hoosier Trail Council said. "They were able to work hand in hand with the SCI crew and learn about the various trees, bushes and shrubs."

The boys spent the day on a right of way with internationally certified SCI arborists Larry Terrell and Randy Brumfield and Dave Neu, a National Wild Turkey Federation regional biologist. The industry experts taught the troop why wildlife need the plants and how the right of way would become prime wildlife habitat after it was planted with persimmon trees, serviceberry bushes, black chokeberry bushes, hawthorn trees and paw paw trees.

"Rights of way are great wildlife habitat because they are long and narrow and animals feel really comfortable in that type of edge habitat," said Neu. "Low-growing plants don't interfere with power lines, and they provide food, cover and nesting habitat for lots of birds and mammals."

During the day, the troop planted 240 trees and bushes on the SCI right of way on the Ravinia Woods portion of the Yellowwood/Morgan Monroe State Forest.

The SCI arborists teamed up with the NWTf's Energy for Wildlife program for the Earth Day celebration. Energy for Wildlife is a membership-based certification program for all energy companies with the primary goal of enhancing wildlife habitat on company-managed, -owned or -influenced lands. These lands include power line and gas rights of ways, plant sites, forestlands and other properties.

NWTf's Energy for Wildlife program staff works directly with energy companies to integrate wildlife management activities into their land management programs. When participating companies have implemented the wildlife component of their management plans, they will become a certified member of the program.

In 2003, SCI became a certified member of Energy for Wildlife. Since joining the program, SCI's Right of Way department has planted more than 2,100 wildlife food source trees and bushes on company-managed land.

For more information on Energy for Wildlife, email Jay Jordan at jjordan@nwtf.net or call (803) 637-3106.

About the NWTf: In 1973, when the National Wild Turkey Federation was founded, there were an estimated 1.3 million wild turkeys and 1.5 million turkey hunters. Thanks to the work of wildlife agencies and the NWTf's many volunteers and partners,

today there are nearly 7 million wild turkeys and nearly 3 million turkey hunters. Since 1985, more than \$202 million NWTF and cooperator dollars have been spent on over 31,000 projects benefiting wild turkeys throughout North America.

The NWTF is a nonprofit organization with nearly 525,000 members in 50 states and 12 foreign countries. It supports scientific wildlife management on public, private and corporate lands as well as wild turkey hunting as a traditional North American sport.

For more information on the National Wild Turkey Federation, call (803) 637-3106, check out our web site at www.nwtf.org or e-mail questions to nwtf@nwtf.net.

Wm. Brian Dowler
Public Relations Specialist
National Wild Turkey Federation
1-800-THE-NWTF

For more information, contact: Jonathan Harling or Brian Dowler, 803-637-3106.