

# Habitat Enhancement for Warm Water Gamefish Species



*Shoreline of Quarry lakes, devoid of fish habitat.*

Artificial reefs are being created from unsold Christmas trees to enhance the underwater environment of some of the District lakes.

On January 11, 2003, over 120 volunteers gathered at Quarry Lakes and Lake Chabot Regional Parks to spend the morning improving habitat for fish! The volunteers attending represented a number of Northern California Bass Clubs, the Black Bass Action Committee, (BBAC), and several a local Boy Scout Troops. Under the direction of EBRPD's Fisheries Program Manager, Pete Alexander and BBAC's Mike Riehl, the volunteers assembled Christmas

tree reefs along the shores of two of the Quarry Lakes, (Horseshoe and Rainbow) in Fremont/Union City, and also at Lake Chabot in Castro Valley/ San Leandro.

The Christmas tree reefs when submerged, offer a three dimensional habitat to enhance feeding and refuge for a variety of reservoir fish species including



*Unsold Christmas Trees, and volunteers ready to place the trees as habitat.*



*Submerged trees grow algae supporting insects and fish which feed and are protected.*

largemouth bass, bluegill and other sunfish species. Once submerged, these trees serve as media for the growth of algae. This attracts insects and other invertebrates, which provide food for small fish. The

new reef structures also provide a hiding place for small gamefish, to better avoid larger predatory fish.

For more information about our Fisheries program contact Pete Alexander at [palexander@ebparks.org](mailto:palexander@ebparks.org) (510)544-2342 OR Joe Sullivan at [jsullivan@ebparks.org](mailto:jsullivan@ebparks.org) (510)544-2329



**East Bay Regional  
Park District**

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“Quarry Lakes, being a former gravel quarry pit, was devoid of adequate fish habitat.” states Alexander.



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*Chains are used to connect and anchor trees.*



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*Christmas trees linked as future habitat.*

“Creating more underwater habitat for bass and bluegill fisheries is a means to increase the numbers of these gamefish, and so provide more and larger fish available to anglers.”

Similar habitat improvement projects at Del Valle

over the past decade have resulted in a large increase in largemouth and smallmouth bass as well as red eared sunfish.



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*Quarry lakes anglers fishing between the reefs.*

The volunteers were well fed before and after the event thanks to a contribution by the Alameda County Fish & Game Commission, and lunch provided by the BBAC caterer. This recreational fisheries enhancement project is expected to take place on an annual basis each January, assuming there are plenty of unsold Christmas trees donated to the parks, and volunteers willing to spend a few hours of labor anchoring the trees to the bottom of the lake.



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*Christmas tree reefs are pulled by boat into position for sinking.*



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*The BBAC Caterer cooked up a fine tri-tip lunch for the 120+ volunteers.*

mission, Walton’s Pond and the 120+ volunteers who made this habitat restoration project possible.

Special thanks to the Black Bass Action Committee, the Alameda Co. Fish & Game Commission,



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