

---

## Tree planting helps health of Big Bone Lick

BY MIKE RUTLEDGE | [MRUTLEDGE@NKY.COM](mailto:MRUTLEDGE@NKY.COM)

A decade from now, when a three-acre hillside near Big Bone Lick State Park's campgrounds and miniature golf course is covered with trees, more than 110 people will be able to look back and smile.

That's how many helped reforest the area Saturday with white and red oak, red buds and yellow poplar seedlings. It's the first of what officials hope will be many plantings, which the Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council borrowed from the Lexington area's Reforest the Bluegrass concept.

Leah Eubanks and her son, Will Goderwais, 7, of Edgewood, planted some seedlings "just to help give back to our parks in Boone County," Eubanks said. "We enjoy the parks. We're big parkgoers."

**ADVERTISEMENT** Before rain started about noon, "this whole field was filled" with people, said Todd Young, the new naturalist at Big Bone. "This is what it's all about. Restoring the park's natural environment."

"This is part of a long-term conservation effort for stream protection," said Mark Leopold, an agronomist with Northern Kentucky University's Center for Applied Ecology.

The streamside reforestation will help keep Big Bone Creek and its tributaries free of silt and an overabundance of nutrients that can kill aquatic life.

With rain threatening through the morning, to have about 110 people show up, "that's pretty impressive," Leopold said. "I think that shows what trees mean to people around here."

Cyndi Johnson, 37, of Florence, said she decided to help when she saw a sign-up sheet at her church, Fellowship of Believers in Florence.

"I like to come out and do things in the community. You leave a place better than you found it," said CJ Altendorf, 17, of Florence, a member of the Boone County Youth Cabinet. Also, "I had to get some more hours for National Honor Society."

Meanwhile, Kentucky's state parks have started using no-mow zones, Young said. As a result, "the deer look much more healthy in just a couple of years. The raccoons look better."