

WPCC construction tech students learn through service

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MORGANTON — Students and instructors in Western Piedmont Community College's Building Construction Technology (BCT) give their time and talents each year to help build a better way. College students working with the North Carolina Forest Service and Friends of DuPont Forest recently built a bridge to cross Cripple Creek in DuPont Recreational State Forest (RSE) in Cedar Mountain.

The Cripple Creek Bridge will serve to complete a new trail to reach the impressive High and Triple Falls. Previously, visitors would undertake a long, dusty service road from a parking lot to High and Triple Falls, a filming

location for the movies "The Last of the Mohicans" and "The Hunger Games." The new trail will bring walkers deeper into the forest, allowing them to enjoy more of the beauty and native habitat of the nature experience.

Instructor Eric Hurley and his BCT students have had a six-year tradition of civic engagement projects at DuPont RSE. During that time, students have built piers, stairs, bridges and even renovations to an old cabin that will be used as DuPont's Visitor's Center.

To learn more about building or how to improve your own natural space, contact Hurley at 828-448-3557 or ehurley@wpcc.edu. Spring class registration for new students is Jan. 3.

Service learning at Western Piedmont combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility. Service learning programs involve students in activities that address local needs while developing student academic skills and commitment to their community.

Western Piedmont Community College was one of six community colleges in North Carolina named to the 2008 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. In 2007, the college was one of eight community colleges in the nation awarded a three-year Horizons Service Learning Grant.



PHOTO SUBMITTED

WPCC building construction technology students assisted the North Carolina Forest Service and Friends of DuPont Forest to build this bridge constructed across Cripple Creek in DuPont Recreational State Forest in Cedar Mountain.