

version of the Wilderness Letter to outline the essential value of rural places to the character, history, and spirit of America.

Wallace Stegner wisely saw that America would lose a piece of itself if the wilderness were lost. Wisely, American leaders listened to him. As a result, America's wild places are exponentially healthier today than they were in 1960. On the other hand, rural America has continued its multi-decade decline. America will lose an invaluable piece of itself if its rural places fully give way to the march of "progress" and technology." But it is not too late to see those rural places thrive, if perhaps, American leaders will listen to the rural leaders of today.

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O.H. Ivie Back on the Board with Another ShareLunker

O.H. Ivie Lake chalked up its second Legacy Class largemouth bass of the 2023 Toyota ShareLunker season Sunday afternoon. Kyle Hall of Granbury hauled in 13.58-pound ShareLunker 635, registering a Legacy Class bass in consecutive seasons. Hall's fish is the third submitted by anglers during the 2023 collection season.

"O.H. Ivie continues to produce Lunker after Lunker, and this season is no exception," said Natalie Goldstrohm, Toyota ShareLunker program coordinator. "Even pro anglers like Kyle are drawn to fish O.H. Ivie because of the quality bass fishery."

Hall turned in one of 2022's largest catches on March 1 when he landed ShareLunker

624 at O.H. Ivie. The fish topped the scales at 16.10 pounds, one of three that surpassed the 16-pound mark during the last collection season. Hall returned to O.H. Ivie this year in search of another Legacy fish; as he was wrapping up the trip Sunday, his persistence paid off.

"It's pretty unreal to get a ShareLunker in back-to-back seasons," said Hall. "I have spent a lot of time out on the lake the last three weeks and really wanted another Lunker. The last couple of days were slow but I finally got one to bite."

Hall was targeting fish in roughly 40 feet of water and staying on contour lines. He arrived at a hump where some friends had found success catching fish. It proved to be the perfect spot.

"There was a whole school of 9- to 11-pound fish that came up following the swim jig I was throwing," said Hall. "They probably followed the bait for 30-45 seconds. From out of nowhere, the fish came off the bottom, flew past the other fish and ate it."

Hall contacted the ShareLunker program and transported the fish to the holding tank.

"Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff arrived quickly, took some photos and got her ready to go back to the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center," he said. "It was an awesome experience to be a part of the ShareLunker program again."

O.H. Ivie's incredible run continues after producing two dozen combined ShareLunkers in the past two seasons, including a new waterbody record of 17.06 pounds in 2022. It was the biggest catch in 30 years and the seventh-largest largemouth bass ever verified in Texas in public or private waters.

During the first three months



4-H! Coke County 4-H members participated in the San Angelo Livestock Show and Rodeo/District 7 Food Challenge contest on Wednesday, January 25, at the San Angelo Fairgrounds. There was a total of 162 teams with 600+ kiddos competing.

The Texas Food Challenge contest is where a team of 3 to 4 youth have 40 minutes to create a dish using only a predetermined set of ingredients. From these ingredients, team members must identify and prepare a dish, then make a presentation about it to the judges.

Coke County 4-H members have been practicing weekly since November after school to "sharpen" their skills on how to prepare nutritious and safe meals and snacks and adopt behaviors that can help reduce their risk for chronic disease.

The objectives of the Food Challenge contest provide: opportunities for participants to exhibit their knowledge and skill when preparing and presenting a dish; opportunities for participants to learn from other team members; promote teamwork; give participants opportunities for public speaking; and provide leadership opportunities.

The support of each parent that took the time to drive their child/children to weekly practices is much appreciated. If you see a Coke County 4-H member, ask them about the Food Challenge competition and they can probably tell you how to prepare a recipe!

of the season (January through March), anglers who reel in a 13-plus pound bass can loan it to TPWD for the ShareLunker selective breeding and stocking program. These anglers call the ShareLunker hotline at (903) 681-0550 to report their catch 24/7 through March 31.

Anglers who catch and donate one of these 13-plus pound Lunkers earn Legacy Class status, a catch kit filled with merchandise, a 13-plus

pound Legacy decal for their vehicle or boat, VIP access to the Toyota ShareLunker Annual Awards event and a high-quality replica mount of their Lunker fish from Lake Fork Taxidermy. These anglers will also receive entries into two separate contests — a Legacy Class drawing and the year-end Grand Prize drawing. First place in either wins a \$5,000 Bass Pro Shops shopping spree and a resident (or non-resident)

annual fishing license.

The year-round Toyota ShareLunker program offers four levels of participation for catching bass over eight pounds or 24 inches in Texas. In addition to Legacy Class (13-plus pounds between January and March), ShareLunker entry classes include the Lunker Class (8-plus pounds), Elite Class (10-plus pounds), and Legend Class (13-plus pounds from April to December).

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