

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) Program at Colorado State University, FY 2008

The diverse natural resource environments of Colorado vary from wilderness forests to intensively managed grazinglands and heavily used recreational waters. In parts of the state, conversion of forest and rangeland is occurring at extraordinary rates, and a bark beetle epidemic has had significant impact on lodge pole pine forests statewide. RREA-funded programs provide science-based answers to environmental and natural resource issues, using an interdisciplinary approach.

Ranchers organized to learn about management tools to address the spread of juniper on rangelands. These tools included fire, mechanical clearing, and livestock grazing. There are now 20 ranchers involved with an estimated 400,000+ acres of fee /title ownership. Other organizations have joined the partnership: Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Colorado State Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, several conservation districts, Colorado Division of Wildlife, County Sheriffs, and local volunteer departments. Six meetings of the ranchers and stakeholders were held with four additional field sessions and two demonstration burns. Outcomes include improved communication among various partners, and a multi-jurisdictional and diverse land ownership partnership to address juniper encroachment in southeast Colorado.



Two wood utilization workshops were held in 2008 (122 participants). Audiences included landowners, contractors, forest businesses, industry, and forest agency personnel. One workshop provided presentations on business insurance, forest health issues, and upcoming forest product sales (federal, state, and private). The other event was a follow up to a series of workshops hosted by the Steamboat Springs Bark Beetle Coalition. Members of this group included the U.S. Forest Service, Extension, City of Steamboat Springs, and the Colorado State Forest Service. The group held a series of meetings to encourage local use of blue stained wood, working to collaborate on effectively using the large amounts of beetle-killed wood. Training for private consultants and service industry partners on current forestry issues and opportunities was also held. The theme for the day's training was forest health. Mountain pine beetle was a major topic as well as how to manage the forest that has sustained such heavy losses due to this insect.



Colorado State University RREA contact: Dr. Deborah Young, Director, Colorado State University Extension, 4040 Campus Delivery, Fort Collins, CO 80523-14040; Tel. 970-491-2858; Email: Deborah.Young@Colostate.Edu