



Renewable Resources
Extension Act (RREA)
Program at North Carolina
State University, FY 2008

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) program funds allocated to North Carolina State University provide support for faculty of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service to develop and implement programs that enhance and conserve the natural resources of North Carolina. The RREA funds are made available to faculty primarily through a competitive proposal process. Oftentimes, a small grant allows for major impacts through program delivery or the leveraging other funds. The Natural Resources Leadership Institute, in its 13th year, is a training program focused on professionals and interested citizens involved in natural resources issues. In 2008, 26 people participated and acquired knowledge and skills in collaborative decisionmaking and negotiation. The impacts of this program during its history have helped resolve many issues at the local level as well as change processes and procedures for stakeholder involvement in state and federal agencies in North Carolina, private organizations, and corporations. Results from a previous participant culminated in a local leadership program in that agent's county. An extension agent participating in 2008 used the skills learned to address the rapid loss of farm and forest land to urbanization. As a result, his county established a Voluntary Agricultural District, bringing together several organizations and agencies. RREA funds invested in this leadership program have been used to leverage additional state and private contributions at the rate of \$4 for every \$1 invested.

FY 2008 provided an opportunity to address energy challenges by conducting programming on woody biomass and renewable energy sources. A significant conference, Biomass South 2008, and a web portal were produced (www.ces.ncsu.edu/forestry/biomass.html). Programming outcomes have lead to seven resource analyses for major utilities, private industries, and one university. More than 1000 people were reached in 11 different educational events. More than 1400 continuing education credits were supplied to resource professionals. These events increased professional knowledge by 20% and landowner knowledge by 88% about the economic opportunities related to renewable energy derived from woody biomass. In cooperation with North Carolina Sea Grant, North Carolina Cooperative Extension initiated an environmental issues program focused on coastal communities. To date, one county impacted by significant growth has established a multiagency working group to look at land use, water quality, and environmental quality issues.

The second of three North Carolina Birding Trails was completed and inaugurated. This program encourages bird watching in North Carolina and works with local businesses to be birder friendly. This effort also encourages sound wildlife habitat management and economic opportunity for rural communities.



North Carolina State University RREA Contact: Edwin Jones,
Associate Director and State Program Leader for Agriculture, Natural Resources and Community
and Rural Development, NCSU, CB 7653, Raleigh, NC 27695-7653; telephone:
919.515.3252; email: Edwin_Jones@ncsu.edu.