

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

Family forest landowners own more than 20% or 5.4 million acres of Washington's total forestland, and 149,934 land stewards strive to manage their lands to achieve personal goals in a sustainable manner consistent with forest practice rules. In addition, the state has substantial natural rangelands. RREA funds allocated to Washington State University (WSU) provided the impetus to provide guidance in rangeland stewardship and health. WSU Extension used the RREA funds to provide education and research-based information to help family forest owners and ranchers make ecologically and economically sound management decisions. RREA funding leveraged with other sources funded nine field educators, allowing 180 educational events with an impact for 12,439 individuals on topics, including coached forest stewardship planning, youth education, managing natural areas on small acreages, generational transition planning, logger education, wildfire education, and rangeland stewardship and health.

### Advanced Forest Stewardship

An advanced forest stewardship curriculum was offered in 2008. This advanced class, built on the success of the popular Forest Stewardship Coached Planning program, taught advanced topics, such as wildlife and biodiversity, hardwood management, forest finance, and managing a timber sale.

*"To be a successful tree farmer, you must first learn forestry basics such as silviculture, and then stay up to date. . . The advance course does this, and challenges the existing conceptions and practices the tree farmer has. . . ."—Chuck Holland*

### Youth Education: Ferry-Okanogan County 4-H Natural Resource Camp

A three-day camp brought together youth, ages 9-19, from across two counties to learn about the natural resources of their area. In surveys, 78% of the youth said that they had learned how to use natural resources wisely and better understood forest insects, freshwater fish, forest ecosystems, and GPS use. WSU, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Okanogan and Ferry Counties, Colville Confederated Tribes, and many 4-H volunteers collaborated. WSU in King County held a similar youth activity.



### Wildfire Protection

Landowner outreach is a top priority action item. For example, in Pend Oreille County, a rural county in northeastern Washington, 222 landowners attended Extension Firewise Landscaping classes and more than 80% implemented what they learned at home. County Wildfire committee partners contacted more than 5,000 people at festivals, county schools, and other events. A Bead Lake area collaborative project was completed this year, reducing fuels on 160 acres of land and protecting 25 homes.

### Rangeland Stewardship and Health

The Rangeland Stewardship Team conducted a train-the-trainer program to enable key Extension educators, agency personnel, and non-government organization (NGO) educators to assist 40 ranchers in rangeland monitoring. Rangeland health monitoring is a critical tool in adaptive management, and ranchers will be able to conduct monitoring for early warning of negative trends, such as invasive species, soil loss, species declines, or shrub encroachment. Positive stewardship practices indicators were also monitored.

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