

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) Program at West Virginia University, FY2008

The purpose of the Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) program funds allocated to West Virginia University (WVU) is to put landowners in touch with natural resources professionals and to educate citizens about forests, wildlife, and water resources. Education programs developed for the 270,000 private landowners demonstrate the importance of natural resources and how these resources can be managed to ensure they are available for current and future use. Outreach programs are leveraged at approximately 1:7 with volunteer services (Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, WV Woodland Stewards, and Woodland Owners Association members) as well as with funds from associated educational grants (e.g., NE Sustainable Agriculture, Education, and Research Program and WV Forest Stewardship Program). Highlights of recent programs supported by RREA are presented below.

- RREA general forest stewardship outreach programs. The WV Coverts/Master Forestland Owner project trained 160 private landowners in this intensive three-day workshop. These trained “cooperators” then communicate the forest stewardship message to their local communities.
- RREA supported Extension specialists who facilitate and participate in the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area (AFHA), a grass-roots level organization promoting tourism and education based on forests and forestry heritage.
- RREA assisted with program and administrative development at the WVU Extension Service Appalachian Hardwood Center (AHC). The AHC web page provides easier access for citizens interested in information about sustainable forest management and the forest industry.
- RREA funds were used in several collaborative projects with the Mountain Loggers Cooperative Association, including a live equipment demonstration and log harvest that provided educational outreach plus fundraising for the Log-a-Load For Kids charity.
- The Extension Reclamation specialist prepared and conducted the annual Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative Conference meeting in August 2008, in Logan, WV, with approximately 250 people in attendance.



Quote: A great and useful workshop, especially for the clueless woodland owner looking to start into timbering/forest management and stewardship. Participant at 2008 Woodland Stewards Workshop.

Photo: Landowners attend workshop to discuss forest stewardship, control of invasive species, and best management practices.

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