

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) at Colorado State University

RREA programs help Colorado landowners to manage their land and its natural resources more efficiently and effectively. The funds provided by RREA are leveraged with state and private dollars and promote collaborative efforts with numerous partners to conduct research and provide educational programs to Colorado's landowners and land managers. In recent years, RREA funds have been used to support numerous programs, including:

Assistance with Using Forest Biomass as an Alternative Fuel for Heating Facilities

Facility-heating projects can provide a market for forest biomass being generated from forest management projects implemented to reduce fire risks and improve forest health, much of which is left on the forest floor or burned. RREA funding has assisted Colorado communities, small businesses, and individuals interested in implementing facility-heating projects. Assistance with supply assessments, chip handling logistics, system selection, financing is provided. There are currently no fewer than 30 facility heating projects underway across the state at various stages of development and implementation.

Policymakers Natural Resource Trail Ride

This 2005 event brought policymakers face-to-face with resource managers, the goal being to expose them to natural resource issues in a casual setting. Media representatives were allowed to accompany the legislators, their aides and CSU Cooperative Extension educators on the ride. Four television stations, two radio stations and 5 newspapers covered the event. Interactions and dialogue contributed to the development of a drafting team that worked with legislators to write and pass HB1150, which created conservation easement credits in Colorado. Members of the same team then collaborated to pass legislation which authorized the sale of tax credits. These two bills are responsible for the effective protection of over 100,000 acres in Colorado while still allowing traditional agricultural production.

Mapping, Monitoring, and Integrated Management of Key Invasive Plants Along Colorado's Front Range

RREA funds were matched 5 to 1 match with other dollars to support work to map the occurrence of several key invasive plants in the Colorado Front Range, including leafy spurge, Russian olive, salt cedar, teasel, and Eurasian watermilfoil. The project also initiated integrated management activities on these selected species through the use of biocontrol agents, mechanical control, and herbicides. The project will emphasize removal of invasive plants from key riparian sites, with the goal of building healthy ecosystems that resist future invasions from weeds.

Colorado RREA contact: Dr. Tony Koski, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523. Telephone: 970-491-7070. Email: tony.koski@colostate.edu