

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) at the University of Florida

RREA programs help prepare Florida landowners to manage natural resources more effectively on their forest and rangelands. RREA funds are leveraged with state, private and institutional funds to deliver educational programs to landowners and land managers. In public educational programs conducted by the University of Florida, each RREA dollar is leveraged with \$ 7-15 of state, private and/or local funds. Examples of 2006 RREA funded activities are described below:

- Leveraged RREA funds to obtain \$200,000 from the Southern Group of State Foresters and USDA Forest Service to develop training materials for natural resource professionals faced with the changing landscape of the growing wildland-urban interface (WUI). Held regional workshop and distributed materials to over 400 Extension and state agency leaders who will advise landowners and community leaders in managing fragmented lands in the WUI.
- Leveraged RREA funds to produce a TV program on "Conservation Easements." Over 40 TV markets throughout the Southeast air the Living Green series. It will be broadcast nationally through the National Educational Telecommunications Association in 2007 with audience in the millions. Developed a public website as an added resource (<http://livinggreen.ifas.ufl.edu>). Produced and distributed DVDs to Extension agents and land trust staff. Past TV programs with RREA support have focused on "landscape for wildlife" and "invasive species."

"... We are using the DVD in our easement seminars with landowners their legal and tax counsels. Feedback received from both private landowners and land trusts on the DVD has been outstanding..."

- Kevin McGorty, Tall Timbers Land Conservancy (TTLC)

LIVING GREEN

- Determined needs relevant to quail and other economically valuable wildlife on rangelands, through surveys and meetings with landowners. Leveraged RREA funds for research and extension programs of more than \$300,000. Developed two quail management workshops attended by over 200 landowners who represent the major public and private landholders in the state. Developed the "Florida Quail" website that is receiving more than 50,000 hits per month. (<http://floridaquail.wec.ufl.edu>)

"...I have been able to share the information with many landowners and ranch managers which has stimulated their interest in the programs and to go forward with habitat restoration, predator control, establishment of food plots and supplemental feeding practices."

- Terry Terlep, Rancher and DVM, Ft. Myers, FL



Quail Management Field Workshop

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Florida A&M University
October 1, 2005 – September 30, 2006

Land loss among limited resource landowners has increased dramatically, and the remaining landownership is concentrated in limited acreage with small, usually idle parcels of land. The increasing number of these small tracts has resulted in a significant amount of forest land that can no longer be actively managed for economic returns to the landowner. There exists a need for innovative opportunities for forest-based systems designed for small parcels of land that can provide more profitable alternatives for landowners. Examples of alternative forest management systems include utilizing technology and low-cost agroforestry systems suitable for limited resource landowners and farmers.

For delivery of educational and outreach programming conducted by Florida A&M University Cooperative Extension Programs, RREA dollars are leveraged with federal funds, as well as private support by community-based partnering organizations. RREA funds were used as follows:

- ▶ RREA program outreach reached over 120 limited resource adult and youth clientele. Educational and outreach activities are designed to increase awareness of natural resource management practices and alternatives suitable small-scale landholdings for farmers, landowners and community residents.
- ▶ Two demonstration sites established to demonstrate alternative forestry management practices (integrating trees and fruit crops, silviculture) for landowners with small landholdings. Demonstrations are designed to showcase suitable sustainable management practices, as well as evaluate economic opportunities to enhance land value for landowners with small landholdings.
- ▶ Program outreach also includes exposing future landowners (youth) to the benefits of land ownership and stewardship. Youth clientele assisted in maintaining one of the demonstration sites and sold approximately 50-70 gallons of blackberries per week over a four week period. All four have submitted and were approved for USDA Farm Service Agency Youth Loans for agricultural entrepreneurship projects.



Agroforestry demonstration site – Integrating tree and fruit crops to enhance land value.

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