

The Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) at West Virginia University (WVU)

RREA supports education programs developed for the 270,000 private landowners in the state. These programs aim to demonstrate the importance of natural resources and how these resources can be managed to assure they are available for current and future use. Much of this work is conducted in partnership with the Appalachian Hardwood Center (AHC), the joint WVU Extension Service/ Davis College forestry and forest industry outreach unit. Outreach programs are leveraged with volunteer services (Master Gardeners, Master Forestland Owners, and Woodland Owners Association members) as well as with funds from associated educational grants (e.g., NE Sustainable Agriculture, Education, and Research Program, WV Forest Stewardship Program). Some of the recent programs supported by RREA include:

- ❖ General forest stewardship outreach programs. The WV Coverts/Master Forestland Owner project has trained 125 private landowners with the intent that these “cooperators” communicate the forest stewardship message to their local communities. RREA also supports many of the “woods walks” and value-added seminars (portable sawmills, shiitake mushroom production, etc.) that are held annually for diverse audiences and partners with diverse organizations in these activities.
- ❖ Despite the fact that WV is 79% forested and natural regeneration is usually spontaneous and abundant, reforestation efforts are extremely important in the state, especially on drastically disturbed sites like roadcuts and surface mines. Research and outreach supported by RREA has provided insights into how to most effectively establish native vegetation on these sites to promote better wildlife habitat and inhibit the development of invasive species.
- ❖ The “business training for loggers” workshop is a program that qualifies for continuing education credits for certified loggers. This well-attended program is administered by the West Virginia Forestry Association, but was created and is conducted by WVU Extension Service specialists. These training sessions help loggers better manage their companies in a highly complex, hazardous, and financially marginal manufacturing industry.

“We left [the Coverts training] more knowledgeable than when we arrived, primed to tap into a network of forestry, wildlife and conservation experts who can address our questions and concerns and those of our friends and neighbors.” ~Workshop participant.



West Virginia RREA contact: Jennifer Williams, Director, Agriculture and Natural Resources Development, PO Box 6130, Morgantown, WV 26506. Telephone (304) 293-6131, email: JOWilliams@mail.wvu.edu.



West Virginia State University (WVSU) used the \$11,137 allotted in October 1, 2005 – September 30, 2006 to continue planning and building an Urban Forestry Extension program. In West Virginia about 55% of the population lives in urban communities. The program will be designed to provide information to better manage and steward the woody resources within urban areas of the state. We envision the Urban Forestry Extension Program at WVSU to be an educational outreach network which will focus on areas such as tree care and maintenance, valuation, ecology and economics in education of citizen groups, professionals, municipalities and agencies.

- A tree planting program is co-sponsored WVSU and West Virginia's Division of Forestry. Arbor Day is usually when a tree is planted in every county within the state of West Virginia. "West Virginia State University has been a great partner in our Urban Forestry projects. This donation has allowed foresters to plant a tree in each county at school, libraries, or other public property sites" said Andy Sheetz of the West Virginia Division of Forestry.
- A brochure has been developed, funded, and distributed across the state using RREA monies for West Virginia's Division of Forestry (WVDF) about proper tree planting.



Arbor Day Tree planted in West Virginia Sponsored by WVSU Extension

RREA Contact: West Virginia
Dr. Almeshia Brown
Extension Specialist, Agriculture and Natural Resources
West Virginia State University Extension
901 Curtis Complex
Institute, WV 25112-1000
Phone: 304-204-4021

Email: abrown23@wvstateu.edu