

ANREP 2012 Conference Update

The ANREP 2012 Conference arrangements are progressing! We received over 160 abstracts for presentations and posters, our diligent crew of volunteer reviewers has completed their task, and all submitters should soon be hearing from the committee. It looks to be a great program! Stay tuned for updates on the specific concurrent session tracks.

Our opening **plenary speaker** will be Dr. Katherine Ledford, Director of the Center for Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University. Dr. Ledford is an author and scholar in Appalachian culture and social history. Her opening talk will help set a sense of place as we come together in the magnificent Southern Appalachians, the world's oldest mountains.

Volunteer Opportunities: There will be gracious plenty opportunities for you to volunteer and show your ANREP spirit by helping us deliver the best ANREP conference yet! We will need poster judges, session moderators, room monitors, bus captains, silent auction overseers, and surely more things we have not yet thought of! After the first of the year, we will send an announcement on the ANREP listserv with a weblink where you can sign up to volunteer.

Networking Events: Mixed in with all the learning and scholarly activity will be ample opportunities for networking informally with your colleagues - we have planned two evening socials and a genuine North Carolina pig pickin'! For those of you unfamiliar with this local culinary tradition, you are in for a succulent delight! It's a finger lickin' good

feast of pig (cooked all day over the charcoal pit), hush puppies, coleslaw, baked beans, banana pudding, sweet tea; and, of course, adult beverages for those of legal age. (Don't worry vegetarians; we'll have something for you too!)

Preconference Tour: Have you checked out the awesome preconference study tour that we've put together? Go to www.anrep.org/conferences/2012/preconference-tour for all the details, but as a teaser: it includes a Ranger-guided tour of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, a visit to the Cherokee Reservation, a hike in Joyce Kilmer Wilderness (some say the only remaining old growth forest east of the Mississippi), rafting on the Nantahala River, and a relaxing drive with many stops along the incredibly scenic Blue Ridge Parkway. Sign up now, space is limited!

Registration is open! Go to www.anrep.org/conferences/2012/registration. Early bird registration ends January 31.

Questions? Contact Susan Moore, Conference Co-chair at susan_moore@ncsu.edu



Focus on the Western Region

Education to Action

Land Stewards is a new inter-disciplinary Extension program focusing on stewardship of small acreage properties in the Wildland-Urban interface. The pilot Land Stewards training was delivered in Jackson County,

southwest Oregon, in fall 2009, with 30 landowner participants. Since then, two additional Land Stewards cadres have been trained; reaching an additional 50 owners, most of whom were relatively new to the area or lacked experience in one or more facets of land stewardship.

Small parcels are a defining feature of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), the zone of land between urban centers and wildlands. In Jackson and Josephine Counties in southwest Oregon, there are tens of thousands of these tracts, many of which are wooded. The ways these parcels are managed has major implications for fire risk, air quality, water use, the spread of invasive species, forest health, and wildlife habitat. However, existing Extension programs seldom directly target this huge audience in a holistic way - that is, one that encompasses a full range of land management issues.

The 12-week, 35-hour Land Stewards curriculum consists of eleven modules covering stewardship, ecology, management planning, water, weeds, tree and woods care, wildlife, wildfire, waste reduction, and pasture management. The initial approach featured a blend of classroom instruction and field trips. Instructors included local resource management professionals, and local landowners hosted field trips. This year, the program was modified to make it largely field-based, using primarily experienced landowners as peer-to-peer instructors, but also included resource professionals. Moving to a daytime schedule to accommodate the field-based sessions has resulted in slightly lower attendance, but has significantly improved participant learning.

Each Land Steward is required to complete an action plan for his or her property, and to get follow-up technical assistance from the local Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), or another agency, to implement the plan. The action plan is not intended to be a full-blown management plan, but

rather helps the Steward develop a strategy to address at least one major resource concern or objective. Our partnership with the SWCD, which helps fund the Land Steward program, has ensured that the program directly links educational and technical assistance, resulting in on-the-ground stewardship activities ranging from invasive weed eradication to thinning overstocked forests.



Land Stewards range management field trip

Land Stewards are also required to provide at least 20 hours of volunteer service for Extension or partner organizations. Among the volunteer service projects undertaken to-date include: serving on fire prevention education teams, recycling projects, developing a forage demonstration plot for OSU's small farm program, creating a fire-resistant plant demonstration garden, and hosting a Living on the Land conference. Volunteer activities have greatly increased the "horsepower" of the program, and have reached many other small acreage owners in the community.

Feedback from participants has been largely very positive, with the majority saying the course has increased their knowledge, confidence, and ability to be good stewards of their land. "Should be almost a requirement for those buying rural acreage" and "should be a must for all owners in the urban interface" are typical of the

comments received. For some, however, certain topics were not relevant to their individual situations, or conversely, were not covered in enough depth.

Initial funding for the program came from a federal grant, administered through the Oregon Department of Forestry. Based on the success of the pilot, funding was subsequently obtained from the local SWCD and the state forestry agency; new partnerships to sustain and expand the program are being pursued.

Submitted by Max Bennett
Forestry/Natural Resources Agent
Oregon State University
max.bennett@oregonstate.edu



1) provide a hands-on water-education curriculum that teaches youth about water conservation, water science, and water quality issues;

2) focus youth learning experiences on small watersheds, where their daily lives have the greatest impact; and

3) promote community service and outreach projects that youth take ownership of in their own small watersheds.

In the first two years of this pilot program, with the help of 36 dedicated volunteers, over 2,350 youth have been reached through 4-H Stream Team activities.

4-H Stream Teams

In 2010, youth in Pennsylvania's Dauphin, Lebanon, and Lancaster Counties were invited to be part of a unique opportunity: a chance to learn, hands-on, about the water in their own community and how their daily lives impact that water. This is the mission of the *4-H Stream Teams* program, currently in its second year within the Conewago Creek Watershed and surrounding communities. This small, 53 square mile watershed is the focus of much attention, as partners from a wide-variety of government agencies, universities, and non-government organizations come together to see what a fully collaborative effort (in this case the Conewago Creek Collaborative Conservation Initiative) can do to restore a small watershed and ultimately improve the quality of water entering the Chesapeake Bay. Thanks to the efforts of Penn State Extension Educators and to funding from a USDA-NIFA Integrated Water Quality Program Grant, youth are included in this collaborative effort.

The three major components of the 4-H Stream Team concept are:

For those youth who have completed Stream Team activities and participated in evaluations, there has been demonstrated knowledge gained in water topics. Ninety-three percent of participating youth demonstrated increased knowledge about the physical properties of water, 60% demonstrated increased knowledge about water use and conservation issues, 76% demonstrated increased knowledge about watersheds and associated landforms, and 61% demonstrated increased knowledge about water quality issues and measurement. In addition, 76% of *4-H Stream Team* Members demonstrated increased knowledge of their own local watershed boundaries and 166 *4-H Stream Team* Members have participated in 10 different community service and outreach projects that directly benefited their local watersheds in and around the Conewago Creek pilot program. Participating youth are also being evaluated on their skills, attitudes, and interests in science education and science careers.

As the pilot program approaches the end of its second year, efforts are beginning to spread the *4-H Stream Teams* program outside of the USDA funded pilot region and

into the entire state of Pennsylvania and beyond. To learn more about the program and some of the resources that have been developed to make the program a success, visit the Penn State Extension 4-H Stream Teams website at:
<http://sfr.psu.edu/youth/4-h-stream-teams-information>

Submitted by Jennifer Fetter
Extension Educator
Watershed & Youth Education
Penn State University
jrf21@psu.edu

Conservation Subdivision Handbook

Rapid urbanization, population movement into suburban and rural areas, and the ensuing land use changes affect people, businesses, and government agencies, as well as threaten biodiversity and availability of open space. In fact, these trends could be the greatest threat to biodiversity, because the conversion of forested areas and farmland associated with substantial population growth can negatively affect wildlife habitat and threaten or entirely change ecosystems. Conservation subdivisions (CSDs) have emerged as an option for communities to conserve open space, maintain scenic views, and preserve habitat without compromising property rights or economic return. CSDs use a design strategy that attempts to conserve undivided, buildable tracts of land as communal open space for residents; and they offer environmental and economic benefits compared to conventional developments in a similar market. Despite their benefits, CSDs are an under-used option in most communities. That's why NCSU Forestry Extension created the new publication, *Conservation Subdivision Handbook*, to help communities use conservation design in their land use planning. The publication can be found at: www.ces.ncsu.edu/forestry/pdf/ag/ag742.pdf.

Submitted by Susan Moore
Dir. Forestry & Environmental Outreach
NC State University
susan_moore@ncsu.edu

Initiative News:

NNSLE

Help! The Walk our Talk subcommittee is seeking folks who like wading through data to help compile survey write-in responses (Excel datasheet). Yes, this will lead to a publication!! The next subcommittee conference call is Dec. 5th, at 3 pm eastern time. If interested, contact Diana Rashash.

Last but not least: a word from your editor...

Thank you Western region and others who submitted articles for this issue of the ANREP newsletter. Northeast region: you're up next! The submission deadline & schedule for the various regions is as follows:

Winter issue: Jan. 15 - Northeast
Spring issue: April 15 - North Central
Summer issue: July 15 - Southern
Fall issue: Oct. 15 - Western

Articles should be 600 words or less, and saved as either a .doc or .docx file. Photos are great. Please provide photo credit and caption. The editor retains the right to make minor word and grammar changes, and to reorganize content to improve "fit" within the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Diana M.C. Rashash

Diana Rashash, ANREP newsletter editor
Area Specialized Agent - Natural Resources
NC State University
diana_rashash@ncsu.edu

