

Environmental & Natural Resource Issues

Newsletter of ENRI Task Force
University of Kentucky • College of Agriculture

Winter 2006

Conservation Reserve Program vs Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

If you have been confused by the differences between the Conservation Reserve Program and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, this summary might help. It was prepared by Jim Roe, Kentucky Division of Water.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a federally administered and funded land retirement conservation program targeted to address state and nationally significant agriculture-related environmental effects. This voluntary program uses financial incentives to encourage farmers and ranchers to enroll in contracts of 10 to 15 years in duration to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production. It is authorized pursuant to the 1996 Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act.

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a part of the overall CRP program. The two primary objectives of CREP are to coordinate federal and non-federal resources to address specific conservation objectives in specific geographic areas and to improve water quality, erosion control, and wildlife habitat related to agriculture use in those areas.

There are four primary differences between CRP and CREP:

1. CREP is targeted to specific geographic areas. CREP is designed to focus conservation practices on addressing specific environmental concerns in a high priority area.
2. CREP is a joint undertaking among states, the Farm Service Agency, and other stakeholders (local governments, private industry, grass roots organization, etc.) who have an interest in addressing particular environmental issues.
3. CREP is results-oriented and requires states to establish measurable objectives and conduct annual monitoring to measure progress toward implementation of those objectives.
4. CREP is flexible within existing legal constraints, and can be adapted to meet local conditions on the ground.

Upcoming Events and News to Use

Watershed-Based Planning Workshop

The Watershed Based Planning Workshop will be held at the Marriot Griffin Gate in Lexington, KY on March 1 at 9:30am – 4:30pm Eastern Standard Time. The workshop will focus on issues related to the watershed planning process, including presentations on water resource programs, watershed plan development, and watershed plan implementation. The program is designed for public agency staff, watershed organizations, and individuals involved in watershed plan development and implementation. A registration fee of \$50 before February 17 and \$60 after February 16 includes materials and lunch. To register or for more information contact Director@KWAlliance.org or call 270-932-2884.

Kentucky Water Resources Research Institute Annual Symposium



The Kentucky Water Resources Research Institute (KWRI) Annual Symposium will be held at the Marriot Griffin Gate in Lexington, KY on March 2. The symposium allows individuals to network and exchange information related to water research, management, and education. For information and details on the symposium visit the KWRI website at www.uky.edu/WaterResources/ or call 859-257-1299.

Mercury Disposal

As we find ourselves in the winter season of colds and colder temperatures, you may find that your existing household thermostats or medical thermometers may be faulty, damaged, or need replacing. These items often contain mercury, and need to be disposed of properly. If these items break and mercury is spilled, it could produce vapors that can make you sick. For local information for proper mercury disposal, contact Kerri Cope with the Kentucky Division of Waste Management in Frankfort at (502) 564-6716.



Ideas to Share



A Kentucky Adventure

Written by Doug McLaren, UK Extension Specialist in Forestry

Many of us in natural resources education are extremely fortunate to be outside many days of the week accomplishing our work. Our educational opportunities take us to many and varied locations throughout the state providing us with diverse audiences and a chance to have hands-on teaching opportunities.

Periodically natural resource educators need to take time out to review and refresh our basic skills involved in our specific subject areas. Where better to do this than in the field? During the early fall of 2005, several natural resource educators took some time to immerse themselves into the natural world of Kentucky's abundant resources.

Plans were made to make this alternative "fact finding" exploration a multifaceted opportunity. The classroom would be the Sheltoewe Trace Trail, extending northward from the Tennessee state line to Morehead, Kentucky, over 200 miles in length. The Sheltoewe Trail provides many educational experiences and opportunities as it winds its way along a well-defined walking path traveling through the Daniel Boone National Forest.

The hikers wanted to use the trail as our "working lab" and to incorporate several other objectives. First, the resource educators wanted to highlight and promote this hiking trail that exists in Kentucky as one that can be used by citizens to explore the sights and natural beauties that abound in similar areas east of the Mississippi. Secondly, the project wanted to promote the many health and exercise benefits associated with hiking. The last great tie to the Sheltoewe Trace Trail project was to help in celebrating the 100 years of existence of the US Forest Service. The timing, location and learning objectives all were natural blends that provided for a successful educational experience.

One Foot at a Time...

The group wanted to experience as many educational benefits as the trail could provide. To accomplish this, it was attempted to have a daily natural resource educational "experience" that related to one of Kentucky's natural resources.



Our daily educational "classes" were taught usually on the trail interrupted only by the walking that we did moving from one location to the next. The group averaged about seven or eight miles of hiking a day. The natural resource subjects that were covered during the mini learning sessions consisted of subjects of water, soil, natural history associated with native American



Indians, coal mining, the coal mining communities development, as well as their demise, forestry, and critical habitats for water species of fauna. We also learned how tourism is greatly tied to the natural resources that exist all along the Sheltoewe Trace Trail. Geology education came in the lesson explaining how Kentucky's many water falls such as Yahoo Falls and Cumberland Falls were formed. We were introduced to the effects of the recent snow and ice storms and how they altered the US Forest Services timber management plan. Many of us saw our first American bald eagle, while simultaneously exploring and being introduced to how manmade lakes alter the landscape, while at the same time improving the economy of an area.

Our group of educators saw many and varied aspects of Kentucky's natural resources. Much of the learning was experienced as a hands-on opportunity, a most valuable tool in any educational experience. The walk on the Sheltoewe Trace Trail accomplished all of the objectives that were set out by the natural resource educators/hikers. The most important

objective was to become better acquainted with Kentucky's natural resources. The experience of hiking the trail made this an overwhelming success. Because of the success of the hike and the educational opportunities that were experienced in 2005, the walk will continue in 2006. The 2006 experience of learning natural resources, one foot at a time, will begin near London, Kentucky and continue to the northern terminus of the Sheltowee Trace Trail near Morehead, Kentucky.

Hikers Welcome in 2006...

This unique educational activity is open for other natural resource educators in 2006. You can become part of the walk by either hiking its entirety with the original hikers or in smaller segments. Pick your comfort zone and join the planned walk in late September 2006. Anyone involved in natural resource education is invited, really encouraged, to participate. Please contact the Sheltowee Trace Trail walkers if you feel that this method of learning about Kentucky's natural resources is an opportunity that you would like to experience.

Surfing the Internet



Alternative Fuel Station Locator <http://afdcmap.nrel.gov/locator/LocatePane.asp>

Visit the Alternative Fuel Station Locator website to find stations across the U.S. that sell alternative fuels, such as biodiesel, ethanol (i.e., E85), etc.

Volunteer Water Quality
Monitoring Resources <http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/pages/listwatershed.html#cat2>

This website contains links to various websites related to volunteer water monitoring. Resources include government agencies and local non-profit volunteer monitoring organizations.

EPA Children's Environmental Health Database <http://www.epa.gov/teach/index.html>

This site contains information pertaining to scientific literature in the field of children's environmental health for 18 chemicals or chemical groups of concern to children, which may potentially impact children's health.

About this newsletter... This newsletter is available on the World Wide Web in a PDF or html format at <http://www.ca.uky.edu/enri/news.htm>. This newsletter is coordinated by Amanda Abnee (acabne0@uky.edu) and Ashley Osborne (arich2@uky.edu), Extension Associates for Environmental and Natural Resource Issues.