

IMPACT

University of Idaho
Extension

Panhandle Area Forestry, 208.446.1680,
Fax: 208.446.1690. UI Extension—Kootenai County
1808 North 3rd Street, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

UI Extension brings current science to Idaho Panhandle foresters in 2013-2014

AT A GLANCE

UI Extension provides local continuing education opportunities that help foresters and other natural resource professionals stay up to date on current forest science and technology.

The Situation

Forests are vital to the economy and quality of life in the Inland Northwest. Foresters and other natural resource professionals must continually sharpen their skills and stay current with emerging scientific and technological developments to sustainably produce more wood and forest biomass and simultaneously improve forest biodiversity and health. To that end, the forestry community has established credentials to document foresters' continuing education efforts (e.g., The Society of American Foresters "Certified Forester" program).

Many continuing education venues do not fit the needs of individual foresters due to budget limitations, time and travel constraints, or other factors. UI Extension is uniquely situated to provide local continuing education opportunities for field foresters.

K-12 teachers must also stay updated and are continually looking for local opportunities to hone their skills. They also value research-based sources of forestry education to integrate into their classrooms.

Our Response

UI Extension provides continuing education for foresters, teachers, and other professionals in many ways. Some programs are developed specifically for particular audiences. For example, University of Idaho Extension and Washington State University Extension cooperate to hold an annual forum for con-



Foresters learning about managing forest biomass.

sulting foresters, state-employed service foresters, and other natural resource professionals working with family forest owners. The program, titled "The Family Foresters Workshop," updates participants on emerging technology and knowledge applicable to family-owned forests.

Other efforts involve adjusting programs developed for forest owners or other groups to simultaneously meet foresters' or teachers' needs. For example, in 2013-2014, Society of American Foresters' "Continuing Forestry Education" (CFE) credit was provided for UI Extension programs on forest insects and disease, online computer mapping programs, and global positioning systems. We also offer University of Idaho credit for applicable UI Extension programs, such as "The Forestry Shortcourse." This allows teachers to obtain university credit for programs that help them integrate local forest science into their classrooms.

Program Outcomes

One hundred forty-five foresters and other natural resource professionals attended UI Extension forestry programs in the Idaho Panhandle in 2013-2014, for 766 contact hours.

Participants in the 2014 Family Forester's Workshop, indicated percentage knowledge increases ranging from 16% to 65% on: forest certification, establishing western red cedar, non-timber forest products, carnivore management, managing ponderosa pine forests for cavity-nesting birds, and family forest economics/policy.

Three panhandle teachers took the Forestry Shortcourse for credit in 2013-2014. Some teachers have used the short course to develop innovative high school forestry classes.

The Future

Future UI Extension programming in this area will evolve to reflect emerging technologies and professional education needs in the Idaho Panhandle related to forestry.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

- Washington State University Extension
- Society of American Foresters
- Idaho Department of Lands

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Chris Schnepf, Area Extension Educator
Panhandle Area Forestry
University of Idaho Extension, Kootenai County
1808 North 3rd Street
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814-3407
Phone: 208.446.1680
Fax: 208.446.1690
E-mail: cschnepf@uidaho.edu
Web: www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry

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