



First Annual Eastern Regional Wetland Restoration Institute (September 10-15, 2006)

Institute Summary

To view photos, visit http://www.kypride.org/photos/categories.php?cat_id=397

The First Annual Regional Wetland Restoration Institute was a week long, 12-hour per day program of instruction that trained diverse groups of individuals how to carry out wetland restoration, construction, education, and management projects in their communities. The event was held in Bath County, Kentucky within the community of Olympia Springs on the Daniel Boone National Forest. Participants gained the skills necessary to effectively design and restore wetlands across forested and open landscapes. The Wetland Restoration Institute provided the environment where 27 students and 16 instructors interacted one-on-one to learn more about wetlands and successful restoration programs.

Most unique about this training was its hands-on emphasis, for instance students worked alongside experienced heavy equipment operators to actually construct two wetlands during the week, one by using clay soils, and the other with a synthetic liner and geotextile pads. They then jumped in to plant native species and place woody debris for the benefit of amphibians, reptiles, and birds.

Participants traveled from Kentucky, Georgia, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, British Columbia, and India to attend. They represented seven National Forests, the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Eastern Kentucky PRIDE, Kentucky Department of Transportation, Kentucky Rural Water Association, University of Kentucky, Morehead State University, Ecosystem Engineering Corporations, Private Consultants, and other nonprofit organizations.

Students examined all facets of wetland management, from identifying destroyed wetlands hundreds of years after drainage to learning how to complete wetland projects for the benefit of endangered species, shorebirds, waterfowl, wastewater treatment, and for environmental education. They visited with farmers who have drained wetlands all their lives, and gain knowledge concerning how eliminated wetlands appear years later.

Financial support (including scholarships) was provided by Eastern Kentucky PRIDE and Agri-Drain Corporation. The following organizations provided instructor salaries and logistical support:

- University of Kentucky Tracy Farmer Center for the Environment
- Forest Service San Dimas Technology and Development Center
- Eastern Kentucky PRIDE
- FMSM Engineers
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
- USDA Forest Service, Daniel Boone National Forest
- Agri-Drain Corporation
- Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
- USDI Fish and Wildlife Service



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- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Shelton Environmental Education Coalition
- British Columbia Ministry of Environment
- British Columbia Wildlife Federation
- Copperhead Environmental Consulting, Inc.
- Association of State Wetland Managers
- East Kentucky Power Cooperative, Inc.

We're pleased to report that instructional goals for the Institute were met; with those attending now equipped and inspired to initiate or expand their wetland restoration program. Evaluations show strong support from both students and instructors for holding an *Eastern Regional Wetland Restoration Institute* in 2007.