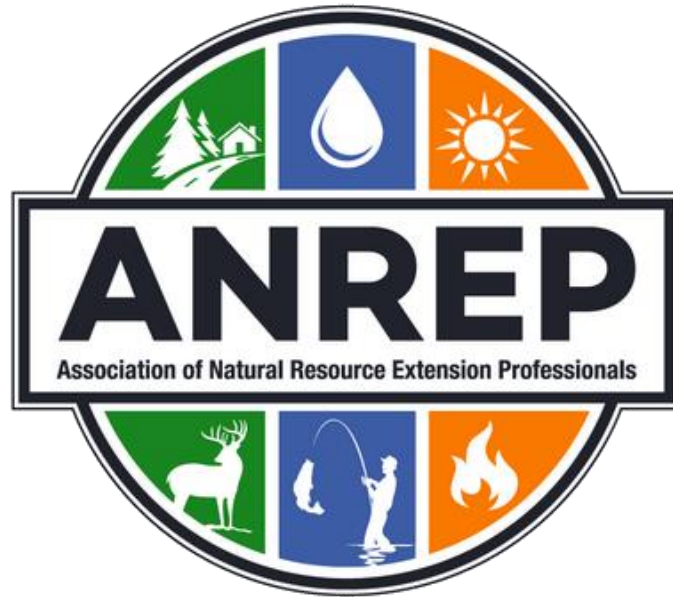


Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals



Award Recipients 2024

The ANREP Awards Program fosters high standards within the membership, recognize significant achievement, and expand the use of high quality, innovative materials and programs by honoring the outstanding members and partners who developed them.

Outstanding Educational Materials Awards

Webinars

Gold Award

Online Forest Stewardship Coached Planning

Kevin Zobrist, Washington State University; Grace Garrison, Washington State University; Patrick Shults, Washington State University

Forest Stewardship Coached Planning is a multiweek forestry course for people who own forested/wooded property. This comprehensive course teaches property owners what they need to know about forest stewardship, and it helps property owners identify and achieve their long-term objectives such as forest and ecosystem health, wildlife and biodiversity, aesthetics, and periodic income. The course includes nine live webinars taught by a variety of experts, an in-person Saturday field trip, a digital library of reference materials and how-to guides, weekly reading and writing exercises, and a site visit from a service forester. The course was offered twice in 2023. The winter course ran January 25th – March 22nd, and the spring course ran March 16th – May 11th.

Silver Award

Cultural History of Wetlands Webinar Series

Maeve Snyder, North Inlet - Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Brooke Saari, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Amy Scaroni, Ph.D., Clemson Extension; Abigail Locatis Prochaska, Land Trust Alliance; Kaitlyn Dirr, ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve/S.C. Department of Natural Resources

Wetlands are vital to wildlife habitat, management of water quality and quantity, carbon sequestration, and more. Our team partnered together to host a successful two-part webinar series called Cultural History of Wetlands in Coastal South Carolina. After an initial unsuccessful planning effort, learned lessons, and determination we created a more intentional and impactful 2.0 version. This program taught us many lessons, that we happily share, to promote these types of opportunities. This webinar series, and its planning process, served as a training opportunity for all involved.

Bronze Award

Rutgers Earth Day Every Day webinar series

Amy Rowe, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Michele Bakacs, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Jean Epiphan, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Sal Mangiafico, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Steve Yergeau, Rutgers Cooperative Extension; Doug Zemeckis, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

Rutgers Cooperative Extension faculty continued to offer the Earth Day, Every Day webinar series throughout 2023 that focused on steps ordinary people could take to protect the environment. Everyone can take actions that make life more sustainable; from considering renewable energy for their home to reducing food waste to participating in trash clean up events. The weekly webinars featured a different subject matter expert that spoke for about 45 minutes, followed by a 15-minute question and answer session that was moderated by that week's host. The rest of the Rutgers team watched the chat box, provided resources to participants, and handled the session evaluation. The spring and fall series consisted of 10 sessions total. The sessions were live and the recordings were made available on the program's website: <https://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/earth-day-every-day/>

Websites/Apps/Educational Technology

Gold Award

2023 Soil Health Tour StoryMap

Rachel Cochran, The Ohio State University; Sarah Noggle, The Ohio State University; Matthew Romanko, The Ohio State University

This online programming was created to educate farmers and the public about different types of conservation best management practices that are in place across the Western Lake Erie Basin of Northwest Ohio. This tour showcased seven farmers in the region who implemented conservation practices, and interviews with each farmer go in depth to discuss why they implemented the practices, what benefits they have seen on their farms, and any advice they have for new adopters. This year's tour was published online as a StoryMap, and includes an interactive map, written descriptions, videos, and photos of each site. In addition to serving as programming, this tour allowed extension staff to connect and form working relationships with new farmers, conservation staff, and landowners across the region.

Silver Award

Improving Stormwater Management with Web Based Resources

Bob Simmons, Washington State University; Dr. Anand Jayakaran, WSU and the WA Stormwater Center; Darcy McNamara, WSU; Carly Thompson, WSU; Erica Guttman, WSU; Brandon Boyd, WSU; Andrew Mack, WSU; Darrell Killgore, WSU; Matthew Ziegler, WSU

WSU Extension and the Washington Stormwater Center have developed a suite of online educational materials to help landowners in rural areas manage stormwater issues and reduce polluted runoff. All the materials are available on the website: ruralstormwater.wsu.edu. Resources include videos, fact sheets, a white paper, demonstration sites, and a glossary of terms. These resources provide in-depth information on stormwater in rural areas, understanding site conditions, creating a site drainage map, and options for drainage management.

Bronze Award

Erie PrOH Guide Certification Program

Tory Gabriel, Ohio Sea Grant and Ohio State University; Angela Greene, Ohio Sea Grant and Ohio State University; Chris Winslow, Ohio Sea Grant and Ohio State University; Jill Bartolotta, Ohio Sea Grant and Ohio State University; Scott Hale, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Travis Hartman, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Matt Leibengood, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Eric Weimer, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Abigail Rhodebeck, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Johanna Dart, Ohio Division of Wildlife; Melinda Huntley, Ohio Travel Association

Erie PrOH is a voluntary certification course for fishing guides and crew members working on Lake Erie. It empowers participants to promote their industry and sustainable angling while using conservation-oriented best practices. The need was identified through fisheries manager partners, surveys, and a focus group with fishing guides. Online modules developed by Ohio Sea Grant and Ohio Division of Wildlife provide training and materials that clarify Lake Erie topics, and help guides educate the public about the fishery and attract environmentally aware clients. 65 people completed the course since launch in August 2023, with 89% reporting they intend to modify a business practice and 98% reporting improved Lake Erie literacy.

TV/Video

Gold Award

Solar Grounding is Easily Overlooked, but Critical

Drew Schiavone, University of Maryland

The Maryland Energy Extension program initiated a new series of Solar Grounding videos in 2023 as part a broader practice-based learning program for solar deployment. While electrical grounding is a complicated, and often misunderstood concept, it serves as a critical safety requirement within all electrical systems, protecting against electrical shock and ensuring correct operation. The two videos produced in 2023 were shared with 31 energy workshop participants and made available through a webpage and YouTube. Videography improved educational efficacy and reach; helping viewers navigate electrical codes and configure electrical grounding. Video engagement rose with 8,260 new subscribers in 2023, with the new videos receiving 9,183 views and 301 likes. Video engagement led to 75 consultations constituting annual savings of 1,724 MWh, \$252,868, and 63,918 MTCO_{2e}.

Silver Award

Fifteen Minutes in the Forest

Jennifer Gagnon, Virginia Tech; Neil Clark, Virginia Cooperative Extension; Adam Downing, Virginia Cooperative Extension; Jason Fisher, Virginia Cooperative Extension; Karen Snape, Virginia Tech; Bill Worrell, Virginia Cooperative Extension

In-person programming is the mainstay of most family woodland owner engagement and education. While the value of hands-on and peer to peer learning at these events is the gold-standard for effective impact, this was not an option for most of 2020 and 2021. And even though, since 2022, we have fully returned to in-person programming, some of the creative ways we developed to engage woodland owners during the pandemic have remained due to their popularity, impact, and effectiveness to engage a broader diverse audience. To keep woodland owners engaged and learning in the absence of in-person programming, the Virginia Forest Landowner Education Program (VFLEP) turned to developing new virtual learning opportunities. Many of these took the more formal structure of webinars. However, we also wanted something different and engaging for those less likely to commit to a full-length virtual program. So, we turned to social media.

Bronze Award

Educational Video for Fertilizer Retailers and Consumers

Tina McIntyre, UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Thomas Sacher, Seminole County; Ally Linville, Seminole County; Kurt Slafkovsky, Seminole County; John McClelland, Seminole County

Seminole County is home to the National Wild and Scenic Wekiva River and many other valuable waterbodies. However, those waters are impaired for phosphorus and nitrogen, and data from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection shows fertilizer as a significant source. To this end,

the county has had a robust fertilize appropriately campaign since 2017, first focusing on residents, then professional landscapers and more recently fertilizer retailers. When first approaching fertilizer retailers we learned that there is high turnover and they can be difficult to reach. We decided a short video would be ideal for the employees to watch during their downtime. This video was created to educate fertilizer retail employees about slow-release nitrogen products and effects of fertilizer on our local waterways.

Short Publication

Gold Award

Tackling A New Invasive Parasite Head On

Lara Milligan, University of Florida; Jenna Palmisano, University of Central Florida

A new and deadly parasite is making its way through Florida, impacting native snake populations. To aid in expanding research, Agent collaborated with local researchers to assist with data collection of roadkill snakes. Utilizing the existing partnership with the local Parks and Conservation Resources Department, Agent worked closely with Park staff to get permission and train the 87 County Park Rangers in the County's 24 parks. To ensure Park Rangers and their supervisors, the Chief Park Rangers were prepared to participate in the research and data/specimen collection, Agent designed a document to outline the need for this research and the process for collecting and storing specimens in an easy-to-read publication.

Silver Award

Preventing Phytophthoras in Woodland Restoration Plantings

Norma Kline, Oregon State University; Dan Stark, Oregon State University; Marianne Elliott, Washington State University; Jennifer Parke, Oregon State University; Beatriz Botello Salgado, Oregon State University; Aaron Groth, Oregon State University; Janet Donnelly, Oregon State University; Diana Reyes, Oregon State University.

Phytophthoras are microscopic organisms that cause root, stem and leaf diseases in crops, ornamentals and native plants (including forbs, shrubs and trees). Our group of OSU Extension educators and plant pathologists developed innovative messaging in a peer reviewed brochure, available in the OSU Extension Catalog in English and Spanish, to ensure that small woodland owners and their contractors received straight forward Phytophthora prevention information to help them successfully achieve their management objectives. The topics covered include: a background on Phytophthoras and why these invasive pathogens are so damaging to our native ecosystems, why we need to focus on prevention, best practices for restoration planning, how to keep planning projects clean, a planning checklist with practical preventative steps small woodland owners and their contractors can take.

Bronze Award

Chainsaw Safety: Ergonomics

Bence Carter, Alabama Extension; Beau Brodbeck, Alabama Extension Wesley Anderson, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Kerry Steedley, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Margaret Barse, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Cole Sikes, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Bruce Dupree, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Joy Scott, Alabama Cooperative Extension System; Anna Katherine Underwood, Alabama Cooperative Extension System

The “Chainsaw Safety” article provides forest landowners with an overview of the safety features of modern chainsaws, the personal protective equipment that should be worn, and covers safe handling practices. Chainsaws are still a common tool used by forest owners and homeowners alike. However, little information is provided to forest landowners on the safety aspects of chainsaws and the potential danger of injury. This article attempts to bridge this gap and provide general safety information for a nationwide audience, including several pictures of safety features, PPE, and safe handling practices.

Silver Award

Lend an EAR Virtual Storytime Series

Dr. Karnita Garner, Alabama A&M University; Dr. Roosevelt Robinson, Alabama A&M University; Allyson Shabel, Alabama A&M University; Bronson Lubresky, Alabama A&M University; Joel Potter, Alabama A&M University; Shannon Schmalfeldt, Alabama A&M University; Wendi Williams, Alabama A&M University

In 2023, the Lend an EAR Virtual Storytime Series and its Reading Challenge placed its emphasis on schools identified in Governor Kay Ivey’s Alabama Turnaround Schools Initiative. This \$15 million effort was designed to transform fifteen failing schools with high poverty levels. Each school is majority-African American, with only 38% to 65% of third graders reading on grade level (AL.com, 2022). Lend an EAR is ideal for this Initiative because it improves student achievement inside by offering imaginative nature exploration outside. In recent years, we have seen tremendous setbacks in youth literacy. Although there are countless story time series online, few are hybrid, interactive, natural resource based, and designed to help underrepresented youth learn to read more efficiently while becoming better stewards of the environment.

Bronze Award

South Carolina Stormwater Awareness Week

Brooke Saari, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Samantha Porzelt, Clemson University Cooperative Extension; Emmi Palenbaum, Coastal Conservation League; Maeve Snyder, North Inlet - Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Kaitlyn Dirr, ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve/SC Department of Natural Resources; Ellen Sturup Comeau, Clemson University Cooperative Extension; Catherine Watts, Clemson University Cooperative Extension

SC Sea Grant Consortium, Clemson Extension's Carolina Clear programs and the two state National Estuarine Research Reserves provide public education opportunities on stormwater topics to raise awareness of actions and behaviors that can help protect our water resources. The Stormwater Awareness Week social media campaign was created through a coastal collaborative effort with education and municipal stormwater partners to produce a comprehensive social media campaign that was implemented to address this need. Stormwater Awareness Week was a week-long campaign that reached new audiences in South Carolina.

Podcast/Radio

Gold Award

Wild Turkey Science

Dr. Marcus Lashley, University of Florida; Dr. Will Gulsby, Auburn University; Charlotte Nowak, University of Florida

Wild Turkey Science is a science-based podcast serving as a resource for all aspects of wild turkey management. Hosted by Dr. Marcus Lashley at the University of Florida and Dr. Will Gulsby at Auburn University, Wild Turkey Science bridges the gap between citizen and science by connecting listeners to available scientific literature, providing ongoing research updates, and fostering communication between stakeholders. In 2023, Wild Turkey Science was downloaded a total of 315,689 times, in all 50 states, and across over 100 countries. It reached #8 in Top 100 Shows under the 'Science' category of Apple Podcast Charts. A survey of Wild Turkey Science listeners indicated >1,500,000 acres of land were impacted in 2023 from information gained from our podcast.

Silver Award

The Garden Thyme Podcast- Backyard Animal Mating Habits

Mikaela Boley, University of Maryland Extension; Rachel Rhodes, University of Maryland Extension; Emily Zobel, University of Maryland Extension

The Garden Thyme Podcast is a podcast that features three University of Maryland Extension professionals: Mikaela Boley (Senior Agent Associate), Rachel Rhodes (Agent Associate), and Emily

Zobel (Senior Agent Associate). Episodes are recorded, edited, and released monthly, and feature a variety of topics related to Home Horticulture and Environmental Stewardship. With 29 episodes released since October of 2019, the podcast has built a following reaching over 10,000 downloads since its creation with listeners across the world. Episodes are approximately 35-45 minutes long, and feature a main topic or interview of a specialist, plus 3 recurring segments for native plant, bug, and tip of the month.

Bronze Award

Radio Interview: The Florida-Friendly Landscaping Program Celebrates 30 Years

Tina McIntyre, UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County

The Florida friendly landscaping program celebrated 30 years in 2023! Tina McIntyre was invited to speak about the 30th anniversary on the better lawns and Gardens radio show. During the show they talked about the benefits of Florida friendly landscaping and all that has been accomplished for water conservation and water quality over the last three decades. Better Lawns and Gardens is hosted by Teresa Watkins, local landscape designer, and the show is syndicated in Florida and Georgia reaching over 8500 people.

Newsletter/Series of Articles/Blogs

Gold Award

Climate-ready woodlands: Rewilding your backyard woods?

Anna Stockstad, Emily Dombeck, and Angela Gupta – University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota Extension Forestry team responded to demand for climate-resilient tree and plant recommendations with 22 region-specific lists benefiting woodland stewards and Minnesota's ecosystem. Launching a blog series on Arbor Day, they produced 19 articles covering diverse ecological issues, species spotlights, and climate adaptation frameworks. Timely topics helped garner attention, and the series attracted over 10,500 page views. Well-received by stewards and professionals, the blogs fostered discussions on climate adaptation, especially assisted migration. Content migration to the project webpage aims for broader accessibility, continuing the series' role in advancing climate-ready forest management discussion in Minnesota.

Silver Award

Grasses at a Glance Blog

Erin Garrett, University of Illinois Extension

Extension Educator Erin Garrett writes a blog titled Grasses at a Glance. The blog focuses on bite-sized grass identification tips, tricks, and species profiles for natural resource professionals, landowners, and plant enthusiasts. Blogs are posted one to two times a month. Over 1,210 subscribers of the blog

receive an email each time a new post is written. In 2023, the blog received 49,450 views from 20,142 users.

Bronze Award

The Great Southeast Pollinator Census E-Newsletter

Becky Griffin University of Georgia Extension; Rich Braman University of Georgia Extension; Megan McCoy University of Georgia

The Great Southeast Pollinator Census E-Newsletter is an educational companion to the Great Southeast Pollinator Census (<https://GSePC.org>), a project culminating each year in August where participants count and identify pollinators. The newsletter is created for non-scientific community members who are Census participants and is sent approximately every four weeks. Information on insect identification, pollinator habitat, and other relevant Census topics are presented through this media. Thirteen newsletters were sent out in 2023, all with an open rate of over fifty percent. As of December 2023, there are 5,640 subscribers from the United States as well as countries such as Sweden, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Long Publication

Gold Award

Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes

Amy Jo Detweiler, Oregon State University, Stephen Fitzgerald, Oregon State University, Ariel Cowan, Oregon State University, Neil Bell, Oregon State University, Thomas Stokely, The Nature Conservancy

The purpose of this publication was to address the problem of landscape plants contributing to fuel around the home. Our objective was to provide homeowners, wildfire specialists, wildfire agencies and educators with wildfire prevention materials to better protect our homes, environment, and communities. This publication includes an introductory section on protecting your home from wildfire, followed by a pictorial plant guide with 150 plants including groundcovers, perennials, trees, and shrubs. Each plant profile includes photos, characteristics, and cultural care. The online publication was released in October and has 2500 views including 991 new users to the website and 1,975 engaged sessions. Multiple wildfire agencies, extension, and homeowners' associations have requested the guide for use in educating homeowners. We have secured funding from multiple agencies to use for printing per their request. A broad promotion of this publication is slated for Spring 2024 followed by an evaluation of use.

Silver Award

Nuestro Futuro en Nuestras Manos/Our Future in Our Hands

Carrie Berger, Oregon State University; Emily Jane Davis, Oregon State University; Aaron Groth, Oregon State University; Kara Baylog, Oregon State University; Dusti Linnell, Oregon State University; Oralia Mendez, Oregon State University Center for Health Innovation; Glenn Ahrens, Oregon State University; Christina Frieauf, Bold Ampersand

It is our most vulnerable populations, such as older adults, disabled, low-income and non-English speakers who are disproportionately affected by disaster. For example, guidance on planning, mitigating, and recovering from wildfire is often lacking for non-English speakers or is not created in a way that is culturally appropriate. Our team sought to create a fire preparedness resource for Spanish-speaking community members in Oregon as one initial step towards a more focused effort aimed at supporting vulnerable populations. We developed a short series of informational cards in Spanish (and English) and combined the cards into one resource published as “Nuestro Futuro en Nuestras Manos (Our Future in Our Hands).”

Bronze Award

Emerald Ash Borer and Its Implications for Washington State

Kevin W. Zobrist, Washington State University; Rachel A. Bomberger, Washington State University; Molly N. Darr, Washington State University; Jenny R. Glass, Washington State University; Joseph M. Hulbert, Washington State University; Emily S. Roberts, Washington Department of Natural Resources

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is an invasive insect pest of ash (*Fraxinus*) species. Since the late 1990s, it has killed millions of ash trees in the eastern U.S. and Canada. In 2022 it was discovered outside Portland, OR, very close to the Washington border. This is the first known occurrence in the Pacific Northwest. While not yet discovered in Washington, it is likely that it is either in Washington but not yet sighted or will be in Washington soon. This publication takes a comprehensive look at the current state of knowledge of EAB and how lessons learned in the eastern U.S. can be applied to mitigate impacts in the Pacific Northwest.

Book or Comprehensive Program Curriculum

Gold Award

4-H Community Action Projects for the Environment (CAPE)

Sarah Davis, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Sarasota County 4-H; Megan Ennes, University of Florida Museum of Natural History; Grace Carter, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Duval County 4-H; Beth Kerr, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Hamilton County 4-H; Kimberly Davis, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Extension 4-H; Sarah Wolking, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Alachua 4-H; Meryl Klein, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Alachua 4-H; Gabby Salazar, University of Florida School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences; Ailee Odom, University of Florida School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences; Martha Monroe, School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences; Shannon Paulin, J & S Design; Eleanor Sommer, University of Florida.

Community Action Projects for the Environment (CAPE) [<https://programs.ifas.ufl.edu/cape/>] is a 4-H project that blends community service, civic engagement, and environmental education. The Leader Guide outlines an eight-meeting process of exploring local issues, understanding local governance, and planning to ask a decision maker to make a change that will help create community-based and sustainable solutions to local problems. The program was originally co-developed by agents and faculty at UF and FAMU, pilot tested with 4-H agents in 5 states and territories then revised, and introduced to museums and zoos in Florida for use with local after-school programs. Evaluation data suggest the program builds team skills and efficacy for engaging in problem solving.

Silver Award

Guidebook for Prescribed Burning in the Southern Region

Leslie Boby, Southern Regional Extension Forestry; Jennifer Fawcett, North Carolina State University; David Clabo, University of Georgia; Hallie Harriman, Piedmont Environmental Council; Adam Maggard, Auburn University; Barry Couilliette, Alachua Conservation Trust; Laurel Kays, The Nature Conservancy; Sarah McNair, University of Georgia

The Guidebook for Prescribed Burning in the Southern Region was developed by numerous Extension professionals as a comprehensive resource focused on practical application for new to experienced prescribed burners in the Southern U.S. The Guidebook is the first of its kind to provide step-by-step instructions from start to finish and provides in-depth information with innovative graphics on key concepts. The Guidebook was designed to present information at multiple levels while focusing on the action items and timelines and is an excellent companion for prescribed burning workshops. Thousands of copies of the Guidebook have been printed, and it has been described by multiple people as the most comprehensive resource that is available and focused on practical application for prescribed burners.

Bronze Award

Treasure Quest: A Self-Paced Outdoor Education 4-H Program

Jackie Leboutitz; Katherine Clements; Sarah Davis; Ashley Ellis; Forest Hecker; Mindy Hanak; Alia Garrett; Armando Ubeda; Lee Hayes Byron; Maria Portelos-Romero; Carol Wyatt-Evens; Abbey Tyrna; Emma Bittar; Hailey Jones; Nicole Barber

Treasure Quest, developed by UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County, is a self-paced, educational opportunity for youth and their families. Fashioned after a treasure hunt, it combines exploring and education, covering a range of topics, including plants, animals, insects, local history, wellness, and environmental protection. Outdoor exploration provides an array of mental, physical and social benefits, studies show, but many youth can find it difficult to find the time or place to get outside. Treasure Quest provides the perfect opportunity, connecting youth to natural and historical features of our area at their convenience. The prize at each location is a unique, collectible pin based on the host site. As a bonus, participants who complete at least five booklets can earn an exclusive Treasure Tote, packed with prizes.

Achievement Awards

Achievement Awards recognize exceptional ANREP members who exhibit outstanding leadership and program excellence individually and in teams.

Innovative Program

Family, Forests, Future

Dr. Patrick Hiesl, Clemson University; Dr. Molly Darr, Washington State University; Janet Steele, Clemson University

Forestry education programs, such as Master Tree Farmer, are frequently offered by Clemson University Cooperative Extension, but many of these are designed for landowners with previous forestry knowledge. The “Family, Forests, Future” program was developed to connect new and beginning forest landowners to a network of forestry professionals across the state and provide a baseline of forest health and management information. Enrolled participants ranged from 30 to over 70 years of age and were equally divided among male and female participants. One-third were minority landowners, a group often unengaged in extension programming. A pre-and post-course survey reflected a knowledge increase among participants on all the program’s topics.

Outstanding Team

The South Carolina Water Chats Program

Brooke Saari, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; C. Guinn Wallover, Mount Pleasant Water Works; Matthew Gorstein, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Emmi Palenbaum, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Caitlin Bolger, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Amy Scaroni, Ph.D., Clemson University; Heather Nix, Clemson Cooperative Extension; Jeffery Allen, Ph.D., South Carolina Water Resources Center

After identifying water quality research needs in South Carolina, the program team developed an advisory committee representing water quality stakeholders and guided the development of a comprehensive technical training program called Water Chats. Effective leadership and collaboration directed Water Chats toward success in both the planning stage and the execution of the program. The 2022-2023 season of Water Chats was immensely successful by meeting the program objective “to facilitate access to and use of new and emerging water quality research to inform natural resource management decisions in South Carolina” and addressing stakeholder needs. The success is largely attributed to the strong, collaborative team effort exemplified throughout all the program components.

Early Career Leadership

Danielle Rhea, Penn State Extension

Danielle Rhea is a Water Resources Educator for Penn State Extension. She has demonstrated excellence in programming as well as in leadership. She has been a co-principal investigator on several grants that have improved the management of private water supplies as well as provided hundreds of thousands of dollars of free water testing to Pennsylvanians. Her involvement in stream health programming has increased the understanding of ways to improve backyard streams, leading to over 8 acres of riparian buffer installments. Finally, her pond management programs have increased knowledge of addressing water quality to solve problems. Danielle is in her second term as Northeast Regional Representative for ANREP, leads the statewide Extension Ag-Water Subteam, and serves on many local steering committees and advisory groups.

Distinguished Career Leadership

Beth Clawson, Michigan State University

Throughout her illustrious career, Beth has consistently exemplified strong leadership within the field of Extension. With a keen ability to develop, deliver, evaluate, and report on impactful programs at the state, national, and international levels, Beth has now marked 23 years of successful leadership in extension natural resource programs. Her journey began humbly, as she chose extension as her second career, returning to college to start anew. Since then, she has continuously elevated the level and sophistication of her programs and program delivery.

In 2001, Beth's duties included a three-way split in Resource Recovery, Master Gardener, and Natural Resources. From there she went on to contribute significantly to signature programs like Master Gardener, Master Composter, Community Food Systems, Water Quality, Clean Boats Clean Waters, Conservation Steward, and Master Naturalist. Presently, Beth holds the position of State Coordinator for the Michigan Naturalist Program, and she spearheads the Wild About Conservation summer webinar series. She plays a crucial supporting local role in programs such as Conservation Stewards and other initiatives focused on natural resources and water quality.

Beth's leadership extends beyond program management; during her extension career, she identified critical needs that impacted both her role and the broader extension work supporting natural resources programming. She completed her master's thesis on a real world's practical need, initiating a local dune restoration project for Van Buren County in South Haven. Beth demonstrated effective coordination among agencies, secured funding, and engaged impacted property owners. She also led the update of the County Recycling plan, involving coordination with multiple government agencies and private interests. Over the past decade, Beth authored and published over 131 articles, recorded, edited, and published 85 video lectures, and revised the Michigan Master Composter manual twice. Her media presence extends to radio and TV interviews, covering various community concerns, including a feature on a Canadian radio station about the Canada goose. In 2018, Beth accepted the task of transforming the Michigan Master Naturalist Program from a county offering to a statewide comprehensive initiative. Collaborating with numerous partners, planners, and developers, she successfully rebranded the program as

the Michigan Naturalist Program. In its fifth year, the program has trained over 387 individuals on how to preserve Michigan's natural heritage. The Wild About Conservation Webinar Series, initiated during the COVID lockdown, has witnessed a remarkable surge in popularity, with registered viewers increasing from about 150 in 2022 to almost 600 in 2023, including 14 international participants. Both programs address contemporary interests and critical topics for today's audiences.

Assessing the success of a program and its impact on people, communities, and the environment is vital. The Michigan Naturalist program, with its focus on creating a basic conservation plan for participants' properties, has seen positive follow-up surveys, indicating continued implementation of conservation changes and practices. The Wild About Webinar program's survey tool supports positive reactions, intended behavior changes, and the implementation of lessons learned from the webinars.

In addition to her regular extension educator duties, Beth has consistently demonstrated genuine leadership among her colleagues. Actively engaged in professional organizations, she has served in leadership roles throughout her career. Beth's roles include serving as a state board member of the Michigan Recycling Coalition trustee (MRC), Michigan Organics Council Chair, Michigan Association of Extension Agents (MAEA) representative, and Community and Natural Resources Development Association (CNRDA) representative and treasurer. She is concluding her service as a national leader for ANREP, NREEF, and JCEP boards. Beyond her professional commitments, Beth has contributed as a board member and secretary for the Liberty Hyde Bailey Museum for the last 6 years.

2024 ANREP Awards Committee: Terra Freeman, Dean Solomon, Victor Blanco, Pat Williams, Holly Abeels, Alicia Betancourt, Tim Daly, Megan Weber

2024 ANREP Awards Judges: Mikaela Boley, Carolyn Kovacs, Rachel Cochran, Karen Bennett, Brenda Jackson, Carrie Brown, Jim Davis, Holly Abeels, Sharon Ashworth, Cory Farnsworth, Erin Garrett, Bence Carter, Amy K. Stone, Taylor Clem, David Outerbridge, Justin Mansberger, Jim Ekins, Michele Bakacs, Laura Tiu, Laura Mirarchi, Martin Wunderly, Laura Milligan, Brooke Saari, Rachel Sutz Pienta