



**University of California, RREA Popular Report, FY 2015**

The University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources administers the Renewable Resources Extension Act (RREA) Program of California. It uses the RREA federal funds allocated annually to implement a competitive grants program that requests proposals to develop and/or support projects/activities that address the educational and extension needs in the management of California's valuable renewable resources on forests and rangelands. This RREA funding brings valuable Extension programs and materials to a wide range of California citizens including range and forest landowners and managers, local and state policy makers, and school-aged youth. For each RREA dollar invested typically \$8 is leveraged from other sources such as state, private, and local government funds. During FY 2015 the California RREA competitive grants program funded seven Extension projects and while each of these deserves special recognition for their accomplishments, only a few can be highlighted.

➤ ***Building Environmental Literacy through the Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT)***



Educators explore natural materials with smartphone mini microscopes at the Forestry Institute for Teachers.

This RREA funded project evaluated and expanded the effectiveness of our Forestry Institute for Teachers (FIT) program. The evaluation showed past FIT participants had greatly increased their awareness of forest health and resource management, and had more awareness of natural resource issues. Expanding FIT's effectiveness a hands-on activity was developed and Summer 2015 FIT participants, after presentations on forest dynamics, were instructed on how to build and use miniature platform microscopes, including smartphone mini-microscopes. These novel teaching tools provide a simple way to look more closely at the natural world and since many past FIT participants have implemented forest-focused activities in their classrooms the information and tools should similarly reach students throughout California. *“Great! I will definitely be building and using the platform microscopes”* FIT participant, 2015.

➤ ***Aquatic Invasive Pest and Plant Species Online Detection and Prevention Education for Users of California’s Freshwater Ways and Wetlands***



California Aquatic Invasive Species website  
<http://ucanr.edu/sites/calais>

Aquatic invasive pest and plant species cause great ecological harm and ecosystem economic loss to California’s freshwater ways and wetlands. Partially funded by RREA, the California Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) website was created to educate and empower agency, volunteer, and recreational users of California’s impounded freshwater ways and wetlands to report suspected AIS. The AIS website has tools available to help identify and report suspected AIS and information on how to properly decontaminate gear and vehicles to avoid spreading AIS. *“Can’t wait to share it with others! Great tools to make a difference for AIS”* Participant in beta test of California Aquatic Invasive Species website.

Federal partnerships, like those supported through UC Cooperative Extension and RREA continue to make a difference at the local level and expand our impacts. Please visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/sites/rrea/> for full stories of our RREA successes. Contact: William Frost, Associate Director, UC Cooperative Extension, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1312, wefrost@ucanr.edu.