

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Advancing Idaho forest stewardship through Extension forestry programs

AT A GLANCE

University of Idaho Extension Forestry programs engage over 800 stakeholders statewide to support stewardship on Idaho's 21 million acres of forestland.

The Situation

The forest products and natural resource industries have long played an important role in the economic, cultural, and social fabric of rural Idaho communities. Many families and communities continue to rely on these industries for employment, economic stability and stewardship of local landscapes. While many forest landowners understand basic forestry principles through family history, personal experience or community connections, direct access to hands-on educational opportunities that build a deeper understanding of modern forest stewardship practices and management strategies is critical for Idaho's forest stakeholders.

Providing experiential learning opportunities helps landowners develop a stronger understanding of Idaho's forests and the many factors that influence forest health, wildfire resilience, watershed protection, timber management and long-term sustainability. These programs increase forest literacy while helping landowners make informed management decisions that support healthy forests, resilient landscapes and productive working lands for future generations.

Partnerships with local communities, land management agencies and forest industry professionals



Randy Brooks points out forest insect damage during landowner field day. Photo by Ryer Becker.

provide an effective way to deliver these educational opportunities directly to landowners. By connecting research-based information with practical, real-world applications, these partnerships strengthen stewardship skills, encourage active forest management and support the long-term sustainability of Idaho's forest resources and rural communities.

Our Response

In response to these needs, University of Idaho Extension Forestry has developed and delivered research-based educational programs that strengthened forest stewardship knowledge and practical management skills among Idaho landowners and natural resource stakeholders. Through workshops, field days, tours and hands-on learning opportunities, Extension

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faculty and industry partners provided science-based information and practical skills-building opportunities focused on forest health, wildfire preparedness, tree planting, thinning and pruning, stream restoration and sustainable forest management practices.

During 2025, Extension forestry delivered 36 educational programs and reached 804 participants across Idaho while also expanding statewide outreach through the Idaho Master Forest Stewards volunteer program. Through partnerships with diverse forest products industry stakeholders, landowners and local communities, University of Idaho Extension Forestry programs continue to support healthy forests, resilient landscapes and sustainable stewardship across Idaho.

Program Outcomes

Participants reported substantial increases in knowledge across a wide range of stewardship topics, including a 100% increase in knowledge of Idaho commercial tree species, a 97% increase in knowledge of wreath-making from Idaho forest products, a 94% increase in knowledge of white pine pruning practices, an 88% increase in knowledge of forest stewardship practices and a 60% increase in knowledge of successful tree planting techniques.

Program evaluations also demonstrated strong intended adoption of stewardship practices. Following participation in Extension programs, landowners reported plans to implement practices such as developing forest management plans, reducing wildfire fuels, planting forest seedlings, monitoring insect and disease impacts, safe use of power tools for management activities, thinning and pruning trees and improving invasive species management.

The Idaho Master Forest Stewards program further expanded statewide impact through volunteer leadership and peer-to-peer outreach. Between 2024 and 2025,

volunteers contributed 532 hours of service and reached 4,173 individuals through workshops, fairs, educational events and landowner assistance activities.



Participant demonstrates safe saw operation during chainsaw basics workshop. Photo by Ryer Becker.



IDL forester Robbie Easley discusses management strategies during forest landowner field day. Photo by Ryer Becker.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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