

WEST VIRGINIA'S APPALACHIAN HARDWOOD CENTER WINS THE FAMILY FORESTS EDUCATION AWARD

The Appalachian Hardwood Center at West Virginia University has won the competitive Family Forests Education Award for 2006. Six university forestry programs in the U.S. competed this year for the national recognition and honor.

The Award, sponsored jointly by the National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA) and the National Association of University Forest Resources Programs (NAUFRP) is given to the educational institution recognized as having delivered the best educational program benefiting family forest landowners, technically known as Non-Industrial Private Forest landowners (NIPF) in the United States.

The Appalachian Hardwood Center in Morgantown, WV provides many natural resource-based outreach and extension programs, as well as technical assistance and research for business, communities, and family forest landowners in the Appalachian forest region. The program, which is housed in the WVU Extension service, was launched in 2001 and has worked with the Woodland Owners Association of West Virginia (NWOA affiliate), the West Virginia Forestry Association, as well as other partners including Master Woodland Owners, and Forest Stewardship Program landowners.

Initially the Center offered tours of exemplary family forestlands and the development of a forest stewardship website. This was followed by applied research including landowner satisfaction with timber harvesting, characteristics of forest roads, and the role of private landowners in promoting forest heritage in growing timber and non-timber forest products.

First presented 1997, the National Family Forests Education Award is presented by the National Woodland Owners Association and America's University Forest Resource Programs to recognize the very best private forestry education programs. Collective, family forest landowners produce 50% of America's home-grown wood supply.