



Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative

2012 Conference

May 22-23, 2012

Big Stone Gap, Virginia

- **ARRI 2012:** The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy is pleased to host the 2012 ARRI conference with a theme **ARRI 2012: Branching Out**. DMME and the OSM Big Stone Gap area office will showcase reforestation efforts that implement the forestry reclamation approach on abandoned mine lands, legacy sites, and other innovative applications of the Forestry Reclamation Approach.
- **Where:** The 2012 Conference will be held at Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) in Big Stone Gap, Virginia. The college is directly off U. S. Route 23 and is adjacent to the DMME office. The physical address of the college is **3441 Mountain Empire Road, Big Stone Gap, VA 24219**. Upon entering the college campus, bear to the left and drive up the hill to parking lots adjacent to the Goodloe Center. A campus map is at <http://www.mecc.edu/map.htm>
- **Events:** There will be a field tour on May 22 departing the MECC campus at 9:00. Transportation will be provided for up to 100 participants. Lunch will be on your own, with busses/vans allowing choices of Italian, Mexican, Chinese, and traditional American. After a tour of FRA work at Virginia Tech's Powell River Project, tour participants can plan to return to MECC by 5:30. On Wednesday May 23, the Goodloe Center at MECC will be the site for reforestation presentations beginning at 9:00. Lunch (all you can eat barbeque) will be provided. The conference should finish at 5:00. If there is interest, there will be an early morning bird trip to see and hear neotropical migrants, including cerulean warblers, and an early visit to an old growth stand of eastern hemlocks, threatened by the hemlock adelgids.

- **Lodging:** A block of room is reserved for conference participants at Comfort Inn in Big Stone Gap. This hotel is a two-minute drive from the MECC campus. Comfort Inn has a government rate of \$77 plus tax. The block is reserved for the period May 21 through May 23, and the block of rooms will be held through May 1. Please reference the number 224445 when making a conference reservation. Comfort Inn's number is 276 523 5911. Other nearby lodging options include:
 - Ivy Inn (B&B) Big Stone (3 minutes) 276 523 0070
 - Holiday Inn Norton (12 minutes) 276 679 6655
 - Super 8 Norton (12 minutes) 276 67930893
 - Days Inn Norton (12 minutes) 276 679 5340
 - Inn at Norton Norton (12 minutes) 276 679 7000
 - Best Western Wise (15 minutes) 276 328 3500
- **Presentations:** The conference agenda includes reforestation presentation on Wednesday, May 23. Suggested topics include abandoned mine land reclamation, riparian/wetland establishment, wildlife, American chestnut restoration, GPS applications, and forest economics. Traditional forestry reclamation approach topics are also welcome. Presenters are asked to prepare a 20 minute PowerPoint, and have 5 minutes to answer questions. Interested presenters should submit an abstract to Richard Davis at Richard.Davis@dmme.virginia.gov or Tim Brehm tbrehm@osmre.gov by May 7, 2012.
- **Exhibitors:** Businesses interested are welcome at the ARRI conference. Exhibitors can set up between 7:30 and 8:30 on May 22, and after 5:30 on May 22. Exhibitors are asked to remove their exhibits by 6:00 on May 23. The exhibitor fee is \$100, which includes registration for two individuals.
- **Registration:** To encourage participation, registration fees are at a minimum level to cover conference expenses. The registration fee of \$30 includes field tour transportation, a 2012 ARRI cap, and the Wednesday all you can eat lunch. Registration for students is \$15. Registration information will be on the ARRI website by February 15, 2012.
- **Getting there:** Mountain Empire Community College is located on U.S. Highway 23 South in Wise County, in the southwestern tip of Virginia between Kentucky and Tennessee. MECC's address is **3441 Mountain Empire Road, Big Stone Gap, VA 24219**. Highway 23 is the main north-south highway in southwest Virginia and connects to the north with Interstate 64 and Route 119 in Kentucky, and Interstate 26 and Interstate 81 to the south in Tennessee.

COMING FROM THE NORTH

MECC is located on the right just past the second Big Stone Gap, Virginia exit (there are only two Big Stone Gap exits), on southbound US Highway 23.

COMING FROM THE SOUTH

MECC is located roughly 12.5 miles north of Duffield, Virginia, situated on the left as you drive north on US Highway 23.

- **Big Stone Gap:** While in Big Stone Gap, please take the opportunity to visit nearby places of interest. The Southwest Virginia Museum <http://www.swvamuseum.org/>

has fascinating exhibits on the early history and development of the coal industry. The Harry Meador Museum <http://www.bigstonegap.org/attract/coal.htm> focuses on the mining history of the area. Big Stone Gap has a greenbelt trail that can be accessed at several points in town. High Knob, at 4223 feet above sea level, is the highest point in far southwest Virginia and is a short drive from Norton. During the late 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the nearby High Knob Recreation Area.

- **More information:** ARRI 2012 contacts include:

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