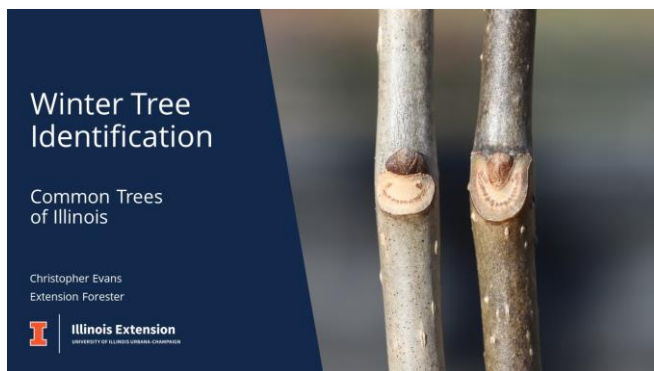Illinois' 188,000 private woodland owners, who control an estimated 82% of the state's 5.02 million acres of forestland, are the primary audience targeted by RREA funds. RREA funding is leveraged with additional funds from private gifts and funding from the state and we estimate these amounts equal $50,000/yr.

One of many online courses produced by Extension Forestry during the height of the COVID pandemic.

Extension forestry staff monitoring tick abundance and diversity.

Virtual courses help extend program's reach:

With the pandemic continuing to limit in-person training opportunities, Extension Forester Chris Evans utilized virtual classrooms and videos to provide quality forestry content to Illinois landowners. One great example is the three-part Winter Tree Identification Course that was held in February that had collectively over 2,200 in attendance. In addition, the series is available on the Extension Forestry YouTube Channel, where it has been viewed nearly 4,000 times.

"*The tree identification course was so well done. It was presented in a manner that you didn't have to have a botany degree to understand, which is much appreciated. Such useful tools that I can't wait to get outside and see what I can identify!"* Winter Tree Identification Course Participant, Winter 2021.

Extension Forestry Embraces Online and Video Programming During COVID:

UI Extension Forestry is part of a diverse collaborative at the University of Illinois that is examining how forest management and invasive plants influence tick abundance, tick diversity, and the prevalence of tick-borne diseases. This research, supported by non-RREA funds, will provide a solid foundation for developing recommendations to reduce the risk of tick-borne diseases through the implementation of forest management practices and serve as the basis for future Extension programming and publications.

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