



USDA-CSREES 2006 National Water Quality Conference

[Sustaining the Natural and Cultural Resources of Kentucky's Bluegrass Region](#)

The land use and subsequent culture of Kentucky's Bluegrass Region is deeply rooted in its natural resources. Exploring these natural resources helps us understand the choices individuals make in using the land and conserving it for future generations. Increased development and urbanization have significantly impacted the Bluegrass, and educators needed the information and resources to include this topic in their curricula. The University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service partnered with Floracliff Nature Preserve to offer two educator workshops addressing the natural and cultural resources of Kentucky's Bluegrass Region. These workshops gave educators a clear understanding of the ecological, cultural, and historical parts of the region through hands-on field experiences and expert-facilitated tours and discussion. Fifteen Bluegrass region educators (formal and non-formal) spent three days in June 2004 exploring the water, geology, soil, and plants at Floracliff Nature Preserve. A pre- and post-workshop concept map evaluation showed a significant increase in knowledge ($P < 0.05$) in the participants. Building on the foundation laid in the 2004 workshop, ten Bluegrass region educators spent four days in June 2005 exploring animals, human history, agriculture, and industry in effort to make connections with the land and people of this unique area. A pre- and post-workshop concept map evaluation showed a significant increase in knowledge ($P < 0.10$) in the participants. These educators will pass along knowledge that will lead to a deeper appreciation and desire for preservation of the Bluegrass region's natural and cultural resources. In this way, the next generation of voters, consumers and homeowners will understand their environment and make educated decisions concerning their community.

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