

Three projects currently in development by eXtension Virtual 3D November 10, 2012

Montana Ecosmart House:

Montana State University CRLab and a team of experts collaborated to research, design, and build a sustainable, low-energy, accessible design model home in Bozeman, Montana. An interactive walk-through 3D model of the home will be located on eXtension's Morrill4 region, adjacent to the Virtual State Fair, along with exhibit space and an outdoor classroom. Not-possible-in-real-life features such as disappearing walls will enhance the user experience. Teaching guides will be available, and instructional video will be produced. Articles featuring the virtual house will be published in leading architectural media. Learn events will be held in the space, featuring guest experts involved in the Bozeman project. More information is available at <http://www.montanaecosmart.com/> or <http://www.montanaecosmart.com/docs/rehau-ecosmart-factsheet.pdf>

The virtual project is being developed collaboratively by Terry Beaubois, CRLab Director at Montana State University, LuAnn Phillips eXtension Virtual 3D Coordinator, and Dmitre Raposo, eXtension 3D builder, and is targeted for launch on Earth Day, April 2013.

AgrAbility Farm:

The AgrAbility Farm located in Tifton, Georgia will serve as a place to see the latest assistive devices and worksite accommodations to aid agricultural workers with disabilities or chronic health conditions. Once complete, AgrAbility Farm will be open to the public and will encourage school groups, health care and rehabilitation professionals to attend a wide variety of trainings that will be held at the facility. Prior to construction of the actual facility, a virtual 3D prototype of the facility will be built in eXtension's Morrill 2 region in Second Life. The virtual AgrAbility Farm will feature working replicas of actual adapted farm equipment and custom animations to show the item in use. Activities used by AgrAbility educators will be adapted to the virtual environment, and curriculum guides will be developed for virtual field trips to the project. Beyond use for prototyping, the virtual build will continue as a teaching environment that anyone anywhere in the world, can use as a teaching space.. More information about the farm is here <http://www.farmagain.com/agrabilityfarm.html>

The project team includes Glen Rains and Becky Brightwell, Co-Directors of Georgia AgrAbility, LuAnn Phillips, eXtension Virtual 3D Coordinator, and Dmitre Raposo, eXtension Virtual 3D builder. The anticipated completion date is June 2013.

Virtual Coworking Space:

This is a project involving the Network Literacy CoP, initiated by Jerry Buchko. Virtual worlds function as social networking spaces with the unique ability to provide a sense of co-presence. The project will design a coworking space within Second Life, located on eXtension's Morrill3 region, based on recognized best practices in real world design, but also leveraging the qualities of virtual environments. Further, we will develop a community of educators outside eXtension who wish to network with Cooperative Extension professionals in an informal environment, providing a "campfire-like" space where folks can drop in and connect along the day. The space will require a commitment to provide volunteer hosts and mentors on a regular basis, so that any time someone drops in, they find a populated space. Over time, the objective is to build an informal learning community whose regular meeting space is the virtual world, to foster new relationships and broaden participation in eXtension Communities of Practice.

Questions about these projects can be directed to LuAnn Phillips, eXtension's Virtual Worlds Coordinator, luann.phillips@extension.org