

Region 8 Southern Region

The following report highlights the accomplishment of the USDA Forest Service, Urban and Community Forestry (U&CF) Assistance Program, delivered in partnership with the 13 State forestry agencies in the South.

Fiscal year (FY) 2002 was a very successful and challenging year. Federal funding, combined with State and local matching funds, has resulted in an estimated \$17 million worth of activities directly related to the program, including approximately 400 grants to communities and partner organizations.

The U&CF Program in the South was delivered under a set of guiding principles and with regionwide emphasis areas. Developed by the USDA Forest Service and the urban coordinators of the Southern Group of State Foresters, these guiding principles include:

- Recognizing urban forests as valuable and essential resources that benefits all citizens. The increased urbanization of all Southern States is creating opportunities for urban forests to improve the economic, environmental, and social quality of life in towns and cities.
- Acknowledging State forestry agencies as essential to successful urban forestry programs. They possess the unique and qualifying ability to deliver State-supported urban forestry program assistance. This ability is deeply rooted within the success of each State agency's traditional forestry program. State urban forestry programs are an extension of traditional forestry programs in that they promote the scientific and sustained management of our urban forests for human benefit.
- Assuring the urban forestry program provides equal access and equal opportunity for all segments of the population.
- Addressing common emerging local and regional issues on a multi-State or regional basis. It is preferred that States cooperate and coordinate with other groups and organizations.
- Recognizing the unique urban forestry needs of each State and working with the State-Federal partnership. The combined resources of the USDA Forest Service and the 13 Southern States can develop new solutions to common problems and serve as models for State action.
- Accepting the responsibility of using Federal funding for U&CF. Federal funds should be used in the most cost-effective manner to achieve the goals of the State's strategic plan for urban forestry.

The regional emphasis areas that have been guiding the program direction include:

- Emerging Issues Related to Urban Land Use. Land use change is generally the result of urbanization into forest and agricultural land along the urban fringe or in the rural countryside. This urbanization can result in changes in forest ownerships, fragmentation, challenges to forest management,

changes to public values and perceptions, loss in forest cover, and subsequent changes to environmental quality. Working through U&CF, communities have an opportunity to address growth management issues in the context of natural resources and through the employment of technology, such as remote sensing and computer-aided mapping. With this technology, communities can better understand how and why their natural systems are changing, and how local public policy could guide land use change and development in ecologically sustainable ways.

- Support of State Urban Forest Councils and Nonprofit Organizations. A community that owns its urban forest takes care of its urban forest.

Successes over the years have demonstrated the benefits of having nonprofit organizations participating in U&CF programs. These groups influence and deliver programs at the local level, yet still need technical and program information and assistance from State forestry agencies, including support in building the capacities of their organizations. State urban forest councils have been providing a substantial base of support for State U&CF programs, including their role in expanding program delivery. Efforts to build state-wide, self-sufficient capacity of nonprofit organizations and State urban forest councils will result in the ultimate strengthening of State U&CF programs. In FY 2002, Southern State urban forestry council representatives established the Southern Urban Forest Cooperative. They compiled a detailed contact list and identified issues to address in FY 2003.

- State U&CF Strategic Planning. State U&CF strategic plans are valuable tools in delivering USDA Forest Service/State U&CF programs. These plans provide statewide direction for the program, and engage the public in a process, which increases awareness and participation in U&CF. These plans also provide an opportunity for the States to monitor and measure program results. To be used as a valuable leadership tool, these plans should be updated every 5 years and incorporated into routine program activities. Several of the Southern States have requested the U&CF staff to provide oversight to their strategic planning workshops.
- Financial Assistance through the U&CF Assistance Program. The U&CF Grant Program has been ongoing for 11 years, a length of time that provides an opportunity to evaluate the program's effectiveness in terms of program intent, the development of State and local capacity, and the improvement of urban forest resources, management, awareness, etc. Part of the evaluation should include program outreach, participation by nontraditional populations, relevancy and effectiveness of grants, and effectiveness of State delivery.
- Communicating Program Successes. U&CF is a successful State and USDA Forest Service program. Communicating its accomplishments will help

improve public perception of forestry in general, and will help build continued support for U&CF at the local, State, and Federal levels.

- U&CF Technology and Training. The availability of tools, information and technology, and continuing education and training supports U&CF Program development at all levels. Web-based technology transfer provides immediate and interactive opportunities for technological support and distant learning. Many emerging opportunities are available for expanded and cost-effective technology transfer and programs in U&CF, using Web-based technologies, among others.

Regionwide, State, and Title VIII projects that are being conducted and completed within these emphasis areas are highlighted within this report. Some of the regionwide activities include technology training for the southern urban forestry coordinators and extension foresters; the addition of a USDA Forest Service urban forestry trainee; urban forestry technical assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for Hurricane Lilli storm damage tree assessment; enhancement of the Southern Region Urban Forestry Web site; ecosystem modeling in Houston, using the Urban Forest Effect Model (UFORE) analysis model; development of a living memorial program in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks; and continuation of the American Forests City Green projects.

Although the cost for emergency wildfire suppression in the western regions delayed funding for regional emphasis projects, the following projects were eventually

funded for completion by the end of FY 2004:

- Tree Cops: Making Trees Part of the Solution, Not the Problem (Virginia Community College System and Virginia Tech)
- The Southeastern Natural Resource Leadership Institute (University of Virginia)
- Making Our Urban Forests Safer for People: A Homeowners Guide (Alabama Cooperative Extension System)
- Research Financial Mechanisms for Sustainable Urban Forests (The Hammond Tree Foundation)
- Create a Statewide Green Infrastructure Network (The Conservation Fund, Arlington, VA)
- Geo-Referenced Database and Mapping System (USDA Forest Service, R-8)
- The Influence of State U&CF programs on Commercial and Consulting Arboricultural Firms in the Thirteen Southern States: An Econometric Impact Analysis (Clemson University)
- Determining Urban vs. Rural Effects on Current and Future Tree Species Composition of Two Known Forests in the Louisville Area (University of Louisville)

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 2,508

Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 1,782

Number of hours of volunteer assistance generated: 32,486

Number of Tree City USA communities: 588

Alabama

Program Overview

During the FYs 1991 to 1998, the Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) was the lead agency in carrying out the State's U&CF Program. Emphasis was placed on developing program capacity, increasing professionalism, and enhancing volunteers and new partnerships. As a result, the State has witnessed the emergence of 115 legally constituted municipal urban forestry programs, an increased hiring of city foresters and arborists, a growing urban forestry-related private sector, and a growing nonprofit urban forestry sector. Many of these urban forestry programs and efforts can attribute their growth and development to State and Federal assistance. A historic agreement was signed in 1999, which greatly expanded Alabama's U&CF Program capability. Auburn University (AU), AFC, Alabama Urban Forestry Association (AUFA), and the USDA Forest Service agreed to a new partnership to coordinate the resources of each group in carrying out the U&CF Program. In the agreement, AU has the responsibility for statewide leadership and delivery of the program with support from the other partners. The AFC agreed to an Interagency Personnel Agreement (IPA) that assigns the State's U&CF Program coordinator to AU. This position remains an AFC employee, but will be supervised and funded by AU. The volunteer/partnership position operates out of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. The position is an AU employee, supervised and funded by the university. The other partner groups and agencies will cooperate and assist AU in carrying out the State's U&CF Program.

Program Accomplishments

As part of this project, the City of Fairhope will perform an inventory of trees with a spatial map locating where new trees are needed. The data will be used to develop

a comprehensive master tree-planting plan. This process will use new technologies (i.e., global positioning system mapping), while providing educational opportunities for students majoring in geography at the University of North Alabama. A professional landscape designer will be contracted to develop the tree-planting scheme. The designs and layouts of trails and walkways will focus on new tree plantings and existing old trees to enhance opportunities for visitors to learn about the value of urban trees. Data collected and produced by the University of North Alabama will be used to produce a digital map with a complete database on each tree.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 153
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 166
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,912
Number of trees planted: 5,000
Number of Tree City USA communities: 86

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Arkansas

Program Overview

The U&CF Program is designed to provide communities, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions with the necessary tools, information, and technology to be good stewards of the urban and community forest. Engaging these groups helps build the capacity of the program and encourages urban forestry at the local level. To meet the growing demand for technical assistance, the Arkansas Forestry Commission provides assistance through urban forestry representatives from the 11 districts. These representatives work closely with their communities, schools, and various organizations to increase public awareness of the value of urban trees and improve standards for tree planning, planting, and care.

Program Accomplishments

In the Arkansas Delta Region, the Arkansas Forestry Commission began a new partnership with the Delta Research Design Center (DRDC), a nonprofit outreach office of the University of Arkansas Community Design Center.

The DRDC focuses on creating plans for sustainable development throughout the Arkansas Delta. Local residents and communities are encouraged to incorporate a participatory approach to comprehensive planning

that includes environmentally sound development policies coupled with economic and social improvements.

The AFC participated in the final presentation to the community and discussed programs such as Tree City USA, a program the community can understand and embrace to address community forestry issues and citizen involvement.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 279
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 347
Number of training hours provided: 260
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,508
Number of trees planted: 5,080
Number of Tree City USA communities: 15

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Florida

Program Overview

The U&CF Program is designed to educate the public on the full benefits of well-managed urban forests. The goals of the strategic plan created by the Division of Forestry and the Florida Urban Forestry Council include: promoting the active involvement of citizen groups and volunteers; fostering professionalism; promoting best practices in tree care, production, and management; seeking legislation and funding to support urban forestry programs; encouraging research; and promoting fire safety.

Program Accomplishments

The purpose of the Venetian Waterway Park in Venice, FL, is to build a sustainable resource for public enjoyment that incorporates the character of the area and its natural resources, as well as the widely diverse interests of the communities that provides recreational, environmental, historical, and cultural perspectives, and establishes an eloquent legacy for generations to come. At this time 2-1/2 miles of a 10-foot-wide, universally accessible path have been installed. A Volunteer Trailblazer program is under way, and more than 3,500 hours of volunteer participation have been logged. Venice Area Beautification, Inc. (VABI), a subsidiary of the Venice Area Chamber of Commerce, has raised more than \$3.2 million in donations toward the park. The program has hired a grants coordinator, using funding from the USDA Forest Service through the Florida Division of Forestry U&CF Grant Program. The grants coordinator has secured nearly \$1 million in grants, garnered excellent press coverage for the Venice Waterway Park, produced a full-color donor brochure, and published a quarterly newsletter.

One section of the trail has been complemented with lighting and the installation of a butterfly garden.

Two other sections have secured grants from the Recreational Trail Program. VABI also received a \$10,000 grant to remove exotic Brazilian pepper on one section of the trail. Funding has been secured for three separate segments of the trail for 3 years from the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program is funding improvements such as a boardwalk, fishing pier, and picnic facility, as well as nature, bicycle, pedestrian, and exercise trails. The Land and Water Conservation Fund and Sarasota County jointly funded installing a canoe launch and a 100-person picnic shelter at one end of the trail near Caspersen Beach. The Venice High School Interact Club, the Boy Scouts, and the Leadership Sarasota Class of 2001 have all adopted projects along the Venetian Waterway Park. During the first annual Volunteer Trailblazers banquet, the program recognized many individuals for their continued efforts. Once completed, the trail is expected to serve more than 180,000 people annually.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 228
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 66
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,300
Number of trees planted: 20,599
Number of Tree City USA communities: 127

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Georgia

Program Overview

The U&CF Program provides communities, large and small, with resources to help citizens become more aware and appreciate the benefits of a healthy and sustainable urban and community forest. The 5-year plan for Georgia's U&CF Program identifies six key issues that will be addressed through goals and activities in FY 2000 through FY 2004. Key issues include (1) reducing tree loss and conserving essential green space, (2) understanding the resource value of trees, (3) advocating proper tree maintenance, (4) understanding and adopting local ordinances that regulate land development, (5) incorporating professional expertise to promote sustainable urban forestry programs, and (6) designing infrastructure with urban forestry in mind. By addressing these statewide issues, the U&CF Program is helping to build local capacity and form vital cities through healthy and sustainable urban forests.

Program Accomplishments

The "Terrific Trees: Building Partnerships for Increased Awareness of the Benefits of Trees" project of Sandy Springs/North Fulton County, GA, is expanding community outreach in tree education to audiences not typically served by current programs and building existing school and community programs and partnerships. The Terrific Trees program of Keep Sandy Springs/North Fulton Beautiful, an affiliate of Keep Georgia Beautiful, provides more than 60 tree education

and Arbor Day programs for 22 North Fulton schools, serving nearly 3,000 students. In addition, this organization conducts outreach efforts to educate their target audience—real estate agents—about the value of trees in this heavily populated and developed area within the city limits of Atlanta. Using a presentation that emphasizes tree benefits to real estate agents and new homeowners, they have been engaging agents from Harry Norman Realtor groups in Buckhead and Sandy Springs to be the "ambassadors" that carry the message of the value of trees. Workshops for homeowner associations on the benefits of trees are being promoted through Harry Norman Realtors.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 425
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 360
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 8,540
Number of Tree City USA communities: 96

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Kentucky

Program Overview

The Kentucky Division of Forestry continued to expand its urban forestry program throughout the commonwealth. Perhaps the most important aspect of this program is the U&CF Grant Program. The number of grant applications reached an all-time high in FY 2002, nearly double the amount from a couple years ago. With this, the quality of applications continues to improve, and the division has developed relationships with new partners. In FY 2002, 25 grants were awarded. The impact that they have made, and will continue to make, is impressive. In FY 2002, the division's urban forestry program held urban forestry training for its employees, gained two new Tree City USA communities, worked on tree-planting programs with volunteers, and had a highly successful Arbor Day. The success of urban forestry in Kentucky can be seen in the tree boards and councils that continue to grow across the commonwealth.

Program Accomplishments

In the past several years, the Northern Kentucky Urban Forestry Council has accomplished much, including the work required to hire an executive director. To prepare for the director's arrival in January 2003, the council had much work to do in FY 2002 to make a paid director a reality. The council completed an assessment of Boone County, one of the

three counties its program reaches. Because Northern Kentucky is an extension of southern Cincinnati, the impact of monitoring the urban forest is paramount. The study will serve as means to educate decision-makers and citizens, encourage new land development policies, and potentially revise current zoning. It is hoped that the study will eventually continue to the neighboring two counties, so that this growing area is a success story for the urban forest. Also in FY 2002, the council established a small grants program, provided arborist training for public works employees, and worked with newly established tree boards.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 145
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 145
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 400
Number of Tree City USA communities: 28

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Louisiana

Program Overview

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry's U&CF Program provides technical information to all communities and organizations in Louisiana requesting assistance. The Louisiana Urban Forestry Council serves as an advisory body to the department on community forestry issues. The council also is the main author of the State strategic plan for community forestry activity and uses this document as a road map to develop sound, long-lasting community forestry projects and programs across the State. The strategic plan has five broad goals: (1) create financial stability, (2) continue implementation of a comprehensive public relations plan, (3) continue high-quality educational programs, (4) assist in improvement and delivery of the Federal U&CF Grant Program, and (5) promote the elements of the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program.

Program Accomplishments

The Second Annual Tree School in Metairie, Jefferson Parish, LA, promoted the importance of formal community tree management programs to local community leaders in Jefferson Parish and other areas of Metropolitan New Orleans. On April 18, 2002, Friends of Jefferson the Beautiful hosted the Second Annual Tree School event, which attracted nearly 275 attendees from around the State. The 1-day, free-of-charge educational tree session touted nationally known speakers such as Dr. Kathleen Wolf, University of Washington; Dr. Edward Gilman, University of Florida; Dr. Kim Coder, University of Georgia; and Dr. Neil Odenwald, Louisiana State University. The entire program was

funded through private and corporate donations. Attendees included arborists and urban foresters, Louisiana Urban Forestry Council members, local government leaders, and concerned citizens. The day's highlights included technical tree care information, including basic tree biology, protecting trees during construction, tree values to local economies, and maintaining newly planted trees. The program again in FY 2002 awarded continuing education credits from the International Society of Arboriculture and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The Jefferson Parish Council has been so impressed with the Tree School that they adopted a resolution proclaiming Thursday, April 18, 2002, as official "Tree School Day" in Jefferson Parish.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 136
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 49
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 473
Number of trees planted: 911
Number of Tree City USA communities: 26

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Mississippi

Program Overview

Urban forest management is a key to providing quality of life for Mississippians. The urban forest provides economic, environmental, social, and health benefits. Urban forestry programs provide a means for managing urban natural resources to maximize those benefits. Of Mississippi's 2.8 million people, roughly 47 percent live in urban areas. There are a large number of small communities in the State, which creates a special challenge in assuring high-quality urban and community forest management. It is difficult to make all the communities aware of the importance of U&CF, and many do not have the financial means to support their own programs. Working with volunteers has become very important in reaching the public in those communities.

Program Accomplishments

The Lake Hazle Trails project in Hazlehurst, MS, is designed to develop a series of trails at Lake Hazle that will be located through the trees and bordered by fragrant and beautiful plants. Seating areas at designated intervals will culminate at a building overlooking Lake Hazle, with a community room and outdoor classroom for the children. Trails will be available to all, including the visually and physically challenged residents of the city and county. They will use touch-tone panels, which identify the shape of the

leaves of the trees and describe to the visually challenged the appearance and the use of the wood. Approximately 50 species of trees will be labeled, along with an interpretative booklet to be made available at a kiosk to be installed at the beginning of the trail. To accommodate the hundreds of visually impaired citizens of the community, touch-tone panels will be installed along the trail, together with audible descriptions of the tree species. This project will greatly enhance the quality of life for all residents, regardless of age or physical capability.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 94
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 113
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,070
Number of Tree City USA communities: 26

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North Carolina

Program Overview

North Carolina continues to be affected by rapid urban growth and an accompanying sprawl development pattern. Local governments continue to develop and strengthen policies to help direct the management of depleting forest canopies through tree conservation ordinances; riparian buffer regulations; and various planning, zoning, and development policies. Strong partnerships with the North Carolina Urban Forest Council, Cooperative Extension Service, and many other statewide and community-based agencies continue.

Program Accomplishments

The Tree Masters course was a comprehensive 12-hour curriculum using the Plant Health Care resource materials from the International Society of Arboriculture. Committee members from the Master Gardener Volunteer Program attended two or more of the 4-week series. During February 2002, the Tree Masters grant provided funding to hold two successful community tree care workshops for green industry professionals. More than 145 professionals attended the training, with 55 participating in the Hazard Tree Field Day. The grant proposal allocated funding for a program assistant position to handle requests by schools for tree planting, identifying trees on nature trails and maintaining existing tree plantings in two parks. Through the program assistant's efforts, 40 trees were planted on six school campuses.

The Cooperative Extension Service introduced the Trees of Strength Program in FY 2001, and, as a result of the September 11 tragedy in New York City, it evolved into a statewide initiative in FY 2002. Under this program, the partnership was able to market this effort and sponsor two tree-planting events. Six trees were planted with Duke Power Company at Petree Elementary in Winston-Salem. A formal ceremony and tree planting were held in Tanglewood Arboretum to honor law enforcement and firefighting personnel in the United States. The representatives received framed certificates and assisted with the planting of a memorial oak tree to the victims of September 11, 2001. The North Carolina School of the Arts received a Tree Stewardship certificate at the county awards program for saving a 100-year-old white oak from removal slated in the college expansion project. The Treasured Tree Program committee sent a letter and educational materials to the school's chancellor in the effort to save the tree.



Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 155
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 131
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 77
Number of Tree City USA communities: 51

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Oklahoma

Program Overview

Oklahoma's Urban Forestry Program provides communities and professionals with the most advanced technical information available. It provides guidance in establishing long-range urban forestry programs both in municipalities and for volunteer/nonprofit organizations. Each local forestry program in Oklahoma has its own set of circumstances and special needs. Forestry Services continues to provide support to all communities interested in building or developing programs. The program's continued assistance helps to monitor progress and improvements in the overall health and well being of trees in those communities. It is a slow process, but as more people learn what it takes to keep trees alive and healthy, the program sees a greater number of successful tree-planting projects. As a result, communities are investing more in tree planting, maintenance, and local community forestry programs. The program's technical support, combined with funding through grant programs, is providing communities with seed money to build and expand their local programs much more quickly than would otherwise be possible. The Urban Forestry Program will continue to implement the 5-year urban forestry strategic plan. Forestry Services will continue to cooperate with the State U&CF Council and consider its advice in developing programs.

Program Accomplishments

As Oklahoma approaches its centennial celebration of statehood, The Tree Bank Foundation will encourage its partners and statewide volunteer network to begin planning for the establishment of Centennial Tree

Groves throughout Oklahoma communities. During the settlement of Oklahoma, many trees were cleared but also planted as a result of various land runs. The Tree Bank will help communities establish local educational programs to help highlight the important role trees have played in the settlement of the Oklahoma Territory. Historic and special trees will be highlighted, and educational efforts addressing the many values and benefits of community trees will move forward. The Tree Bank Foundation has recently secured endorsement of the Statewide Centennial Coordination Committee for this phase of Oklahoma's Centennial Celebration. For the next several years, the committee will also be traveling the State, helping communities, town, and cities begin the planning process for establishing Centennial Tree Groves on public lands.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 143
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 119
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 1,472
Number of Tree City USA communities: 21

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South Carolina

Program Overview

The U&CF Program in South Carolina provides communities of all sizes with technical assistance to help citizens become more aware and appreciative of the benefits of a healthy and sustainable community forest. South Carolina's U&CF 5-year strategic plan identifies 11 key issues that will be addressed through action items from FY 2001 through FY 2005. These issues include, but are not limited, reducing tree loss and conserving essential green space; advocating proper tree maintenance, removal, replacement, and protection; understanding and adopting local ordinances that regulate land development; incorporating professional expertise to promote sustainable community forestry programs; and designing public areas and rights-of-way with trees in mind. By addressing these statewide issues, the U&CF Program is helping to build local capacity and form vital partnerships in communities through healthy and sustainable urban forests.

Program Accomplishments

Accomplishments for FY 2002 include the establishment of a functional living buffer using native plant material for the community to observe and emulate, the publication of a citizens 'how-to' booklet, *Backyard Buffers for the SC Lowcountry*, and the creation of an educational Web site. The buffer plan, plant list, and the importance of river buffers can be found at <http://www.co.beaufort.sc.us/planning/riverbuffer/workingbuffer>.

The Beaufort County Model River Buffer Demonstration will create a project adjacent to the county's government complex that will demonstrate river buffer standards. This demonstration project will also educate the community on the aesthetic, economic, and functional values of forested, vegetated buffers along the waterways.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 151
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 80
Number of training hours provided: 10,495
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 206
Number of trees planted: 537
Number of Tree City USA communities: 31

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Tennessee

Program Overview

The Tennessee U&CF Program celebrated continued success in FY 2002 in a number of areas. These include increases in Tree City USA and Tree Line USA programs, completing the State Champion Tree list, revitalizing the ReLeaf project, and continuing the Arbor Day Poster Contest. Additional successes were achieved by assisting the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council, especially in arboretum certification; sponsoring the State urban forestry conference; and administering the pass-through grants. These activities and accomplishments occurred with funding assistance from the USDA Forest Service.

Program Accomplishments

In FY 2001, East Tennessee State University (ETSU) became interested in participating in the State arboretum certification program. Arboretum Certification is a partnership program between the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council, the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, and the State Department of Agriculture, Forestry Division. After reviewing the requirements and making certain the university met them, ETSU submitted its application in the spring of 2002. After representatives of the partnership inspected the campus, ETSU was approved for level 4 status, which means it has 120 species labeled, has a map and list of the trees for self-guided tours, sponsors an arboretum newsletter, and has staff or volunteers available to

conduct tours when requested. ETSU Arboretum has gone beyond the requirements to include labeling additional trees, establishing the nonprofit group Friends of the ETSU Arboretum, providing an announcement about the arboretum to area high schools, developing a Web page, and installing interpretive signs. It is currently in the process of developing an audiotape for self-guided tours that can be checked out of the campus library. Dedication of the ETSU Arboretum was listed in the State highlights for Tennessee in the May 2, 2002, edition of USA Today.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 51
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 60
Number of training hours provided: 36 (estimate)
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 331
Number of trees planted: 1,223 (Just trees from grants)
Number of Tree City USA communities: 28

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Texas

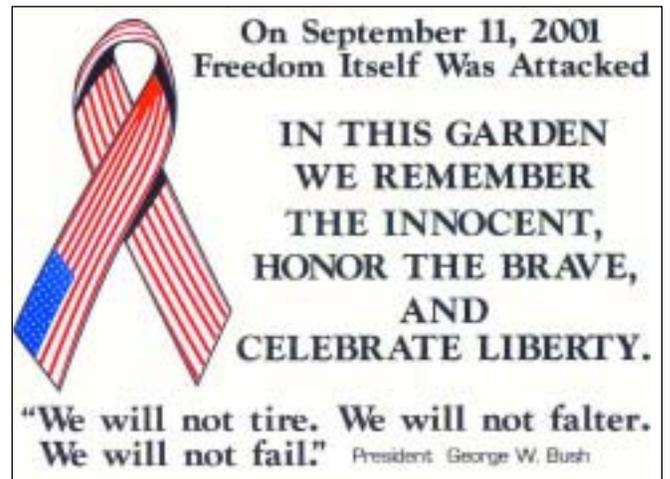
Program Overview

Texas is one of the most rapidly urbanizing States in America. Currently, more than 8 out of 20 Texans live in urban areas and the State's population is expected to reach 35 million within 25 years, with most of this growth occurring in and around large urban centers. The Texas Forest Service (TFS) has placed staff urban foresters in most of these cities to serve as the catalysts that will move communities along the continuum from nonparticipatory to self-sustaining community forestry programs.

Many of the resource and tree problems at the local level have cumulative effects that cross community boundaries. Air pollution, flooding, and the loss of open space are major landscape-scale themes that resource managers at the community level struggle to deal with effectively. The scale of urban forestry expertise, tools, and solutions must also grow to address these issues across the traditional community boundaries. The TFS strives to solve these complex problems by providing leadership in the management of natural resources in and around urban centers.

Program Accomplishments

Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful, in partnership with the Texas Forest Service, decided to expand on the Keep America Beautiful idea of a "Liberty Garden." The original idea was to plant a garden in each community to honor the firefighters and police officers who lost their lives on September 11, 2001. In Nacogdoches County, the 2 organizations decided to plant a garden at all 5 fire stations in the city and at all 19 volunteer fire departments in the county, plus 1 large tree garden in a city park near the police department. Dozens of volunteers planted hundreds of trees and thousands of flowering bulbs at these various locations. A dedication ceremony was held at the main garden with local officials, firefighters, police officers, and citizens attending. This project received the 2002 Community



Forestry Award for Civic Organizations, and Keep America Beautiful has also recognized this project and is publicizing it nationwide.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 458
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 103
Number of training hours provided: 218.5
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 11,543
Number of Tree City USA communities: 46

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Virginia

Program Overview

In Virginia, the U&CF Program operates with minimal staffing and State budget support. Therefore, the program is delivered with an approach that relies on delivering U&CF grants, providing educational opportunities, and developing strategic partnerships. Virginia is a very diverse State with widely varying needs depending on geographic region and population density. The key issues and level of urban forestry program sophistication are markedly different in western and southern Virginia compared to the population centers in Tidewater, Richmond, and Northern Virginia. In the more highly populated regions, urban forestry programs are at the local level. The key issues relating to urban forestry in Virginia are protecting and enhancing open space in rapidly urbanizing areas, improving tree care and maintenance in all communities, providing for increased tree cover in urban centers, developing and/or strengthening local U&CF programs (especially in the west and south of the State), providing urban forestry training at the community college and university levels, and generating more financial support for U&CF programs at the State and local levels.

To address those issues, the Department of Forestry uses the U&CF Grant Program as its primary tool in delivering related assistance. The program is aggressively promoted and the funding used to support small, very focused grants that meet local needs. The grants are also used to develop strategic partnerships that will help the agency enhance its program delivery. Examples of such partnerships include Trees Virginia (Virginia Urban Forest Council), Virginia Tech Community Design Assistance Center, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, the Virginia Professional Horticulture Conference, selected community colleges, and various land trusts. Through these partnerships, the Department of Forestry is able to provide additional community outreach, public education, and professional training. The agency has also developed a good internal training program for U&CF.

Program Accomplishments

The Virginia Tech Community Design Assistance Center worked with the local project partners to develop a comprehensive greenway master plan. The center's efforts involved significant input from local citizenry coordinated by FOLAR (Friends of the Lower Appomattox River). In addition, the project generated media materials that showcased the natural, scenic, recreational, and historic assets of the Appomattox River corridor. A media tour of the area involved local government officials, State agency representatives, local interest groups, and a representative from the local congressman's office. The project generated a video that was aired twice on State public television accompanied by interviews of the project participants. It also generated an electronic media presentation that is being used by the Crater Planning District Commission to continue to develop project support.

Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 90
Number of communities receiving technical assistance: 42
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 8,952
Number of Tree City USA communities: 38

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