

Region 10 Alaska Region

Program Overview

Alaska, with a population of 635,000, covers 571,951 square miles, making it the largest State geographically in the United States. Many residents of Alaska live in remote villages, inaccessible by road. The most significant challenge community forestry faces in Alaska is the sheer size of the State. Travel distances and time between destinations can be overwhelming. The cost of face-to-face visits with local government agencies can consume budgeted travel costs rapidly. Another challenge is the rapid growth rate in Alaska's largest population center. More than one-third of the State's residents live within the Municipality of Anchorage. The Anchorage area, surrounded by water and mountains on all sides, has limited growth opportunities. As population and development within the area expand, the competition for land use increases, and the need to manage urban forests and open spaces for the many benefits afforded to residents is more apparent than ever.

Program Accomplishments

In May 2002, for the first time, the Alaska Community Tree Steward Course was held in Wasilla. The 30-hour course was held 1 day a week for 5 weeks with a series of speakers covering the following topics: tree biology; soils and fertilization; selecting, planting, and caring for trees and shrubs; pruning; problem diagnosis; landscape design; and other urban forestry topics. Twelve people completed the course and agreed to donate 30 hours to community forestry projects in the Matanuska Susitna Valley area during the next year.

Alaska Community Forest Council

The 15-member Alaska Community Forest Council met regularly throughout the year, advising the division on program priorities and activities. Members reviewed

grant applications and made recommendations on funding projects. The council also placed displays and publications on tree planting and care at five nurseries in three towns. In addition to supporting the State program, members are valuable partners in local community forestry programs.

Volunteer Program

Volunteers continue to provide a significant amount of the program outputs for community forestry in Alaska. Several large projects commanded most of the volunteer time, which included maintaining the two millennium grove projects and Midtown Park in Anchorage. Numerous hours of time were also generated by the tree steward program.

Statistical Highlights

Number of communities assisted: 16
Number of training hours provided: 897
Number of days of volunteer assistance: 129
Number of trees planted: 49

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