

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2016 Accomplishment Report – New Jersey

State Contact

Carrie Sargeant
New Jersey State Forestry Services
Mail Code 501-4
P.O. Box 420
501 East State Street
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420
Phone: 609-292-2532
Fax: 609-984-0378
E-mail: carrie.sargeant@dep.nj.gov
Web sites: www.communityforestry.nj.gov
www.treasureourtrees.nj.gov

State Forester

John Sacco
New Jersey State Forestry Services
P.O. Box 420
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420
Phone: 609-292-2520
Fax: 609-984-0378
E-mail: john.sacco@dep.nj.gov
Web site: www.forestry.nj.gov

Introduction

The New Jersey Urban & Community Forestry Program (NJUCF) is a unique program established by the New Jersey Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act (N.J.A.C. 13: 1L-17.1 et. seq.). NJUCF works to encourage, promote, and support the local stewardship and effective management of trees and forests in New Jersey's communities. NJUCF is dedicated to making communities more livable by providing grants, technical assistance, training, and volunteer opportunities. The program continues to seek cutting edge opportunities and innovative initiatives to build a sustainable statewide effort to manage local, publicly owned trees and forests. Partnerships are key to accomplishing this work. With U.S. Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program assistance, the goal of having a statewide urban and community forestry initiative continues. This year marked 20 years since the establishment of NJUCF in 1996. In an effort to build upon the foundation that was laid, NJUCF worked to set the stage for the next 20 years of urban and community forestry in New Jersey. The program is forging new and exciting partnerships in order to introduce fresh initiatives and ideas to strengthen local programs.

Key Accomplishments

First Urban Forest Strike Team Training Held

In September 2016, NJUCF hosted the State's first Urban Forest Strike Team training in partnership with the Rutgers Urban Forestry Program, U.S. Forest Service, and Massachusetts Tree Wardens and Foresters Association. Almost 30 people attended the 2-day training session, including consultants from around the State and urban and community forestry professionals from Pennsylvania and Minnesota. Among the presenters were representatives from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste (SWRM). NJUCF, OEM, and SWRM are excited to be working together for the first time to integrate storm preparedness and response into local community forestry management plans by educating and encouraging debris management planning and liaising with local and county emergency management offices.

Collaboration with NJ Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Water Quality

NJUCF and the NJDEP Division of Water Quality came together this year thanks to the key convener role played by UCF. Both programs are happy to begin collaboration and connecting green infrastructure funding through the State clean water revolving fund to local urban and community forestry programs backed by UCF.

Glen Ridge, New Jersey

In 2000, Glen Ridge Borough, an 18-year Tree City USA, was the 34th community in the State to get a Community Forestry Management Plan (CFMP) approved by NJUCF. They are currently implementing their third 5-year CFMP developed with support from the NJUCF Green Communities Grant made possible through support from UCF.

The Glen Ridge Shade Tree Commission (GRSTC) is committed to healthy trees. This commitment “represents a long-term investment in the beauty, biodiversity, and historic character of Glen Ridge” and is demonstrated through programs dedicated to enhancing the beauty and grandeur of the Borough’s trees.



Winning streetscape entry in the 2014 Glen Ridge Shade Tree Commission photography contest. (Photo: Dina DeShan)

To quote their staff forester, the GRSTC “has taken the bull by the horns and proactively pushed for steps to re-green Glen Ridge” following the devastating impacts of Hurricane Irene, an October snowstorm, and Superstorm Sandy. The GRSTC representatives on the Borough Council pushed to capitalize tree planting and committed the Borough to plant 1,000 trees in 5 years. Many of those trees were planted with NJUCF’s volunteer partner, the New Jersey Tree Foundation, through the Green Streets program, which provides green skills training and transitional jobs for individuals under parole.



Residential storm damage from Hurricane Sandy. (Photo: Michael Zichelli)

In addition to tree planting, the GRSTC continues to implement its CFMP with an eye to engaging and educating its community. They developed the Glen Ridge Street Tree Resource Booklet and an online Shade Tree Index, which include pictures of appropriate species that can be planted in town and highlight locations where different trees can be found throughout the Borough. The data for this book came from the complete inventory that was completed with the assistance of their municipal forester.

The GRSTC set up a program for tree tours. It also creatively involves the public through outreach at the Borough's annual Eco-Fair. Most recently, it organized a tree scavenger hunt. Visitors to the GRSTC booth were provided with clues to identify marked trees, and the scavengers had to measure each tree's diameter at breast height and answer questions about the trees.

The GRSTC also spearheaded the "What Tree is This?" ID tag program for newly planted trees. Folks can scan QR Codes with their smartphones and get information about the tree species and tree care.

This year at the New Jersey Shade Tree Federation Conference, NJUCF recognized Glen Ridge, NJ, with a Green Communities Achievement Award for exemplary achievement in the development of a self-sustaining urban and community forestry program.

Statistical Highlights

Managing Communities:	274
Developing Communities:	124
Population of Participating Communities:	7,576,847
Volunteer Assistance Generated (Hours):	15,665



New Jersey Tree Foundation's Green Streets crew plants new trees in Glen Ridge to replace trees lost from storms. (Photo: Michael Zichelli)



A tree tag from the Glen Ridge Shade Tree Commission's "What Tree is This?" ID tag program for newly planted trees. (Photo: Michael Zichelli)