

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2016 Accomplishment Report – Pennsylvania

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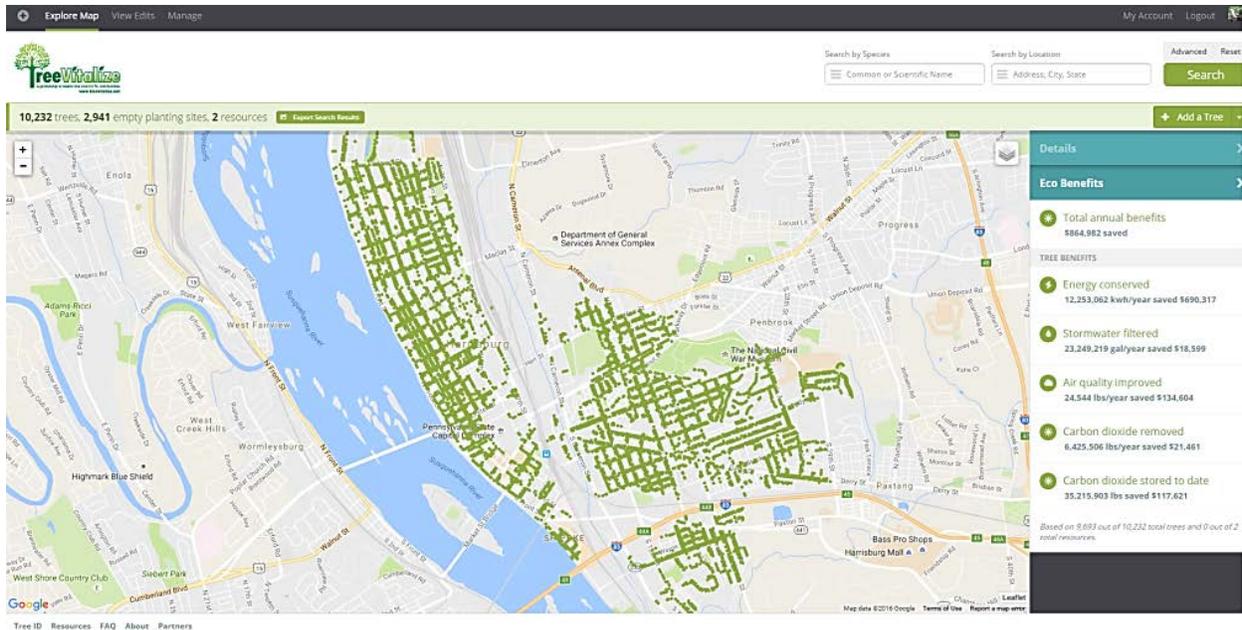
Introduction

The Pennsylvania Urban & Community Forestry Program is a partnership among the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Forestry, Penn State Extension Program, and Pennsylvania Community Forests (a.k.a. Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council), with financial and technical support from the U.S. Forest Service. The mission of the program is to help communities develop comprehensive and sustainable urban forestry programs that enhance quality of life.

Key Accomplishments

Pennsylvania Community Tree Map

Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry partnered with Azavea (founders of OpenTreeMap) to provide communities statewide with a free, open-sourced, interactive, cloud-based community tree mapping tool to help them better manage and grow their urban forests. Completed and launched publicly in the summer of 2016, Pennsylvania Community Tree Map is a statewide mapping platform that is a “one-stop shop” that incorporates remotely-sensed tree canopy, tree inventory, and green infrastructure data. The tool helps communities educate citizens on trees’ ecosystem benefits, increase awareness of canopy coverage, and make more informed land planning decisions. The tool gives communities, volunteers, and urban tree managers the ability to conduct tree inventories, monitor activities, analyze urban tree canopy, and track tree maintenance and stewardship activities. New users can subscribe to the map and create an account through the [OpenTreeMap Web site](#). The map currently includes street tree inventories from five municipalities totaling 10,232 trees, Urban Tree Canopy projects from five municipalities, and one young tree monitoring project in Harrisburg.



Pennsylvania Community Tree Map image of a street tree inventory.

Citizen Tree Monitoring Training Toolkit and Pilot Project

This young-tree monitoring project was completed in collaboration with the U.S. Forest Service, Pennsylvania Urban and Community Forestry Council, Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry, Penn State Extension, city of Harrisburg, and the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society. The project complements Pennsylvania’s development of new tracking and reporting methods to capture the progress of local tree planting efforts towards meeting the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load. A key component for crediting tree plantings in this framework is bolstering post-planting monitoring to ensure high survival and replanting where needed, as part of the Chesapeake Bay Program’s Best Management Practices Verification Guidance. Project partners developed a half-day training program and [training toolkit materials](#), which were piloted in the city of Harrisburg in August 2016. A local business in Harrisburg recruited 15 volunteers for the training, and the Pennsylvania Community Tree Map was used as the platform to track tree planting and monitoring data. Plans are underway to expand the training to more communities in 2017.



Volunteers monitoring the condition of young trees.

Tree of the Year Contest

This year in southeastern Pennsylvania and neighboring counties in New Jersey and Delaware, the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society initiated a “Tree of the Year Contest.” Rather than a contest for the biggest or most beautiful tree, this contest was for the tree that most touched lives and supported people in important ways. It provided a forum for expressing the less quantifiable benefits of trees, the emotional and psychological gifts they give in lifting spirits and playing meaningful roles in people’s lives. Entries included a description of the tree and its importance to the individual, family, or community and a high-resolution image of the tree. Rankings were based on factors

such as how strong a relationship or love for the tree was expressed, how great an impact the tree had on lives, and how well the message inspired future action. Eighteen trees were submitted for consideration, but people from 16 different countries participated in voting for the winner.

Urban Wood Utilization

The Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry initiated a pilot project working in the greater Harrisburg area to establish an urban wood network, linking suppliers, processors, and end users of urban wood. In September, a workshop was held entitled “Understanding Urban Wood Utilization Options.” Instruction was provided by staff from the U.S. Forest Service’s Forest Products Lab in Princeton, WV, and by the Bureau of Forestry. Sixty people representing a variety of interests attended. They included municipal employees, tree care companies, foresters, sawmill owners, woodworkers, educators, and State solid waste management staff. The workshop included classroom instruction, a portable sawmill demonstration, and a charcoal making demonstration. As an immediate result, a new partnership emerged between the city of Harrisburg, which was seeking an outlet for disposing of urban logs, and a regional Vo-tech school interested in manufacturing lumber and charcoal for use in its educational programs.



Valuable lumber was produced from low-grade logs provided by the city of Harrisburg.

Statistical Highlights

Managing Communities:	245
Developing Communities:	179
Population of Participating Communities:	7,023,541
Volunteer Assistance Generated (Hours):	47,546

