

# ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

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## **URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM**

**Contact:**

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The Northeastern Area's Urban and Community Forestry Program utilizes the talents of a diverse team of professionals including urban foresters, plant pathologists, entomologists, foresters, technology transfer specialists, and others, to support the needs of the 20 northeastern states and the District of Columbia. The Federal Program accomplishments reflect support for traditional efforts such as tree planting and maintenance, insect and disease management, and supporting volunteer efforts, as well as the increasing emphasis on issues relating to urban natural resources management that incorporate social, economic, and environmental needs.

### **Community Future Forum**

**Contact:**

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The Northeastern Area, in partnership with Region 8 and the Washington Office, the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, the Pinchot Institute for Conservation, the National Association of State Foresters, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Services implemented a two-year project entitled the *Community Future Forum: Building a Natural Resources Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. The project will enable diverse groups of interested parties to identify the opportunities and threats associated with our growing communities, consider future implications, and develop strategies to address them. A kick-off event was held in Washington, DC with over 120 participants. An interactive website was established to encourage dialogue between participants and advertise future opportunities to help develop a natural resources agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

# 1998 USDA URBAN FORESTRY

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## Media Outreach Activities

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The Northeastern Area supports communications and media outreach by hosting training sessions, presentations, and workshops to assist partners and clients with their media activities. In addition, the Northeastern Area is assisting the National Urban and Community Forestry Team in developing a nationwide communications plan to include marketing, media relations, internal communications, and conservation education.

The Asian long-horned beetle infestation in Chicago is one example of how effective media relations can help inform the public and increase awareness and understanding of urban environmental issues. Reports on the ecology of the beetle and the scientists working on the effort dominated the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* for three straight weeks and catapulted topics such as invasive exotics, global trade, and forest health to features on Good Morning America, McNeil/Lehrer, and Nightline. The media have been so helpful in disseminating information on the beetle that two additional infestations were reported and acted on in record time.

## Urban Wildlife

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In 1994, a Northeastern Area Wildlife Program was created to provide technical assistance to the 20 northeast and midwest states and the District of Columbia. The program has been coordinated by a wildlife biologist located in the Durham, NH field office. In 1998, additional program contacts at the Morgantown, WV and St. Paul, MN field offices and at the Northeastern Area's headquarters in Radnor, PA, including the wildlife program coordinator, formed a Northeastern Area Wildlife Team to help facilitate geographic expansion of the program and enhance efforts in urban wildlife. Urban wildlife was formally incorporated into the Northeastern Area Urban Forestry Program in 1995 in the *Urban Forestry Five-Year Plan, 1995-1999*.

In 1998, seven urban wildlife technical assistance workshops were funded and delivered to audiences in Maryland and New Hampshire. Topics covered included backyard wildlife enhancement techniques, nuisance species, species inhabiting backyards, and the incorporation of wildlife objectives into landowner management plans. In addition, 190 state partners from the Northeastern Area were surveyed to determine urban wildlife technical assistance needs.

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## Natural Disaster Assistance

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A disaster can dramatically alter the natural and urban landscape in an extraordinarily short period of time. Disasters in the Northeastern Area take many forms and include blizzards, hurricanes, tornadoes, windstorms, ice storms, and flooding. Federal, state, local, private, and public organizations and agencies must always be prepared to react quickly to such devastating events. Over the past year the Northeastern Area worked with a number of groups and states on the following projects to prepare for and recover from natural disasters.

Responded, in partnership with state forestry and state and federal emergency management agencies, to the destructive January 1998 ice storm that damaged forests in northern New York, New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine. Congress provided an Emergency Supplemental appropriation of \$48 Million to the region for disaster recovery and natural resource replenishment. The Durham Field Office created and now maintains an **Ice Storm Recovery Team** that provides networking for critical information among partners.

Worked with the “**Minnesota Recovers from Tornadoes**” **Task Force** on various urban and rural tree planting efforts, accelerated technical assistance for landowners, and training for technical assistance providers.

Coordinated, as a member of the Minnesota Interagency Living Snow Fence Task Force, a “**Living Snow Fence Symposium**,” to educate members of federal, state and local agencies on the causes of snow drift and how living snow fences can control the movement of snow. The Task Force has established several living snow fences and has funded 50 future sites.

Supported the **Minnesota/North Dakota Greenspace Recovery Initiative**, along with the Washington Office and Region I, to address damage from the 1997 Red River Flood. After the flood existing open space preservation efforts in Grand Forks, ND and East Grand Forks, MN were strengthened because a large tract of land was acquired and protected from development. Federal funds were used to inventory and assess the natural resources in this open space.

Supported, with the International Society of Arboriculture, the production of “**Storm Recovery – Trees**,” a newspaper package by the National Arbor Day Foundation for print media and urban forestry cooperators across the nation. The package includes information on tree care, professional arboriculture, and urban forestry and will address the demand for assistance by homeowners that typically follows a storm event.