

# 1998 USDA URBAN FORESTRY

## Iowa

**State Forester: William Farris**

**Contact: John Walkowiak**  
**Urban Forester**  
**Iowa Department of Natural Resources**  
**Wallace State Office Building**  
**Des Moines, IA 50319-0034**  
**tel: (515) 242-5966**  
**fax: (515) 281-6794**  
**e-mail: jwalkow@max.state.ia.us**  
**<http://www.state.ia.us/forestry>**

61% of the 2.7 million Iowans live in over 950 urban and community areas. Trees, whether growing on communities' streets, parks, riparian areas, or private properties, provide a wide range of benefits related to energy conservation, increased property values, improved environmental protection, and beauty. The Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council (IUCFC) was formed in 1990 to gather information concerning urban forest ecosystems, identify urban and community forestry issues, help develop policies, and implement recommendations.

### Program Components

State and Local Partnerships  
Technical Assistance  
Education and Training  
Volunteer Coordination  
Seed Funds  
Recognition

### Highlights

During Earth Week students participated in the **Reading Rangers** program by reading as many books and pages as possible about the environment. For every 20 pages read, the Iowa DNR planted a tree. Iowa students read 81,642 pages resulting in **the planting of 4,083 new trees** at Loess Hills State Forest.

**Trees For Kids** is a cooperative tree education and planting program for elementary and secondary schools across Iowa. In 1998, **4,650 teachers and youth leaders received specially designed educational materials** and worked with over 344,000 Iowa elementary and secondary students. The students then worked with local nurseries and banks to plant over 55,500 trees on public areas with a wholesale value of over \$2.7 million. Utility and industrial organizations provided over \$44,000 in private donations to run the program.

In the **Des Moines and Council Bluffs metro areas**, efforts to encourage neighborhood revitalization have involved **Adopt-A-Tree** residential programs to make landscape trees available for residential planting at reduced costs. With approximately \$30,000 in seed funds, a total of 950 trees were adopted in the Des Moines area and 600 trees in the Council Bluffs area. **MidAmerican Energy provided \$48,500** in matching grants to 52 Iowa communities to assist in community wide reforestation efforts.

A total of **27 community tree workshops**, coordinated by Iowa State University (ISU) Extension Forestry and Horticulture, attracted 790 people. ISU Extension also coordinated two additional training sessions for the highly regarded **Community Tree Steward program** where volunteers receive 24 hours of intensive training in exchange for at least 24 hours of community service. The program has increased its total of graduates to 261 who have provided a total of over **7,000 hours in community service** to date. **Youth Tree Steward training** was also provided to 431 5th and 6th graders who subsequently worked on school tree care efforts.

# STATE ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

In partnership with the statewide nonprofit, **Trees Forever**, 315 Iowa communities received volunteer coordination and training. Trees Forever, in cooperation with **IES Utilities and Peoples Natural Gas**, provided over **\$261,000** in matching funds for community tree planting. Utilizing Iowa Department of Transportation ISTEAs Enhancement funds, Trees Forever coordinated **16 roadside enhancement projects** totaling over \$92,000. In addition, 20 communities received landscape architecture development and visioning in cooperation with Iowa State University College of Landscape and Design.

The Iowa Urban and Community Forestry Council published 2 issues of its **Community Trees newsletter** to a mailing list of over 8,000 community leaders. In addition, 310 people attended the Council's **8th Community**

**Forestry Awards Luncheon**, in cooperation with MidAmerican Energy, for outstanding volunteers, professionals, communities, and Arbor Day Poster Contest winners.

The Iowa DNR and **ISU Extension Forestry** cooperatively led a campaign concerning storm repairs to trees because of numerous severe weather events in Iowa; a total of **81 Iowa counties were declared federal disaster areas**. Workshops, publications, tree surveys, and one on one assistance was offered in the hardest hit communities of Oskaloosa, Pella, Washington, Amana Colonies, Marengo, Des Moines, Council Bluffs, and Williamsburg. A total of 282 property owners attended **"Is my Tree Ok" days** in several communities, and 753 trees were evaluated as a result.



**Trees for Kids Projects at the Lovejoy School in Des Moines gave kids hands-on opportunities to learn about trees.**