

1998 USDA URBAN FORESTRY

Maryland

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The Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Program (UCF) placed great emphasis on resource protection through legislation, partnerships with private groups and public agencies, outreach to urban and suburban dwellers, and the development of ecosystem-based approaches to urban forestry management.

Program Components

Forest Conservation Program
Licensed Tree Expert Program
Maryland Community Forest Council
Maryland PLANT Communities
Reforestation Program
Roadside Tree Program
Tree City USA
TreeMendous Maryland

Highlights

Participation in the Tree City USA program increased 15% to 37 communities last year. Participating jurisdictions spent an average of \$4.14 per capita for a total of \$9,088,685 to support urban forestry programs for 2,195,399 citizens.

Over 15,000 volunteers offered nearly 60,000 hours of service toward tree planting, care, and maintenance, as well as other projects sponsor by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) - Forest Service. These volunteers received 3,750 seat hours of training to prepare them.

Several pieces of legislation are helping to protect forests in Maryland. Under Maryland's **Reforestation Law** the UCF staff facilitated the restoration of 338 acres of forest. The state legislature approved mitigation banking, under the State's **Forest Conservation Act**, as a way to set aside sensitive land with long-term protection to be used for mitigation projects.

The People Loving and Nurturing Trees (PLANT) Community awards program, sponsored by the Maryland Community Forestry Council and DNR-Forest Service, continued to reward small communities and organizations for their tree projects. This year the award criteria were revised, allowing greater flexibility and recognition to a wider group of potential participants. In 1998, there were 67 PLANT communities, a 250% increase over the previous year.

The **Maryland Community Forestry Council** updated its Memorandum of Understanding with DNR to facilitate their working relationship. The Council achieved sustainability goals through increased membership and the receipt of \$10,000 in funds and gifts. The Council assisted Bartlett Tree Experts and the **City of Westminster** in conducting the 5th Annual Community Forestry Workshop.

STATE ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

The **TreeMendous Maryland** program partnered with other government agencies, businesses, and the public in an effort to "re-green" Maryland. A partnership with the United Way of Central Maryland has helped to introduce the UCF program to businesses that volunteer to plant and maintain trees and often offer financial assistance as well. For example, Northrop Grumman and Bovis Construction helped plant and finance the buffers they installed. The local volunteer fire department helped water 300 trees planted at Bear Creek Park in **Baltimore County**, and the Department of Public Works helped water newly planted trees during the ongoing drought. Many local volunteer agencies and businesses provided mulch and helped deliver the trees.

The article, "A Survey of Licensed Tree Experts in Maryland," published in the *Journal of Arboriculture*, revealed that the tree expert testing process needed revision. The test is currently being rewritten by the DNR-Information and Education Team, DNR-UCF, Maryland Community Forest Council, Maryland Arborist Association, Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, and the University of Maryland Cooperative Extension Service. The UCF staff is working closely with the Maryland Arborist Association on proposed bills to review the Tree Expert law during the 1999 legislative session.

The Town of Mount Rainier is proceeding with the development of their model **Urban Forest Management Plan** by using the ecosystem-based approach. The issuance of a grant using fee-in-lieu funds helped to implement the recommendations of the Street Tree Biodiversity Analysis for urban health protection. The town insisted on incorporating the DNR-Forest Service review and recommendations into major downtown streetscape improvements.

The **Stream ReLeaf Program** calls for 43 linear miles of riparian forest buffer to be planted annually between 1997 and 2010. During the second year of this program, 65 miles of buffer were completed which was an increase of 58% over the first year. UCF funding and volunteer partners helped to complete 129% of the target for the first two years.

UCF staff conducted 15 urban forestry training workshops to 644 participants, a 41% increase in seat hours. Topics covered right-of-way vegetation management, arborist safety, and hazard tree evaluation. In addition, 130 individuals from public agencies and commercial tree firms passed the **Maryland Licensed Tree Expert/Roadside Tree Expert test** administered by the UCF staff.

Federal Program Support

Dollars in thousands

| The State Program | <u>FY 1995</u> | <u>FY 1996</u> | <u>FY 1997</u> | <u>FY 1998</u> |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 394.7 | 320.5 | 281.6 | 302.6 |