

## Connecticut

### Program Overview

Connecticut is a highly urbanized State that is also heavily forested. According to the latest USDA Forest Service figures, 60 percent of the State is forested. At the same time, approximately 80 percent of Connecticut citizens live in urban or suburban environments. Thus, virtually all citizens of Connecticut live in close proximity to trees. The health and well-being of the urban forest is of concern to everyone in the State.

### Program Accomplishments

During FY 2002, the small grants program, the America the Beautiful Program, offered funding to 33 projects. Among these projects was the inventory of trees on the historic East Haven Green, coupled with the publication of a guidebook that serves to call attention to the maintenance needs of these trees. It also funded the planting of more than 30 trees by various neighborhood groups in Bridgeport, Connecticut's largest city, and the planting of 15 trees in Sterling, along Connecticut's eastern border. Each of these projects addressed specific and different needs, yet were all very successful in promoting the goals and techniques of urban forestry. An America the Beautiful Grant funded the planting of 13 flowering trees on the grounds of the Artist Collective in Hartford, an inner city academy dedicated to the arts. Established programs, such as the Meskwaka Volunteer Training Program and the Tree Wardens Association of Connecticut, continue to make substantial progress toward their goals of outreach and education. The Tree Wardens Academy held a very successful third year of instruction, with some 27 newly certified tree wardens completing the course of study and then passing the exam. While tree warden certification is not required for an individual to be appointed to that position, widespread certification of tree wardens is a goal of both the Urban and Community Forest Council and the Tree Wardens Association.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), Division of Forestry hired Christina Stacey as seasonal research assistant to review the tree planting success of the America the Beautiful Grant Program. Christina researched all grants over the previous 5 years and identified 86 projects from 52 towns as tree planting projects. She then visited each of these towns and inspected the tree planting locations from these grants—1,864 trees total. Of these, 1,614 were still present and 1,370, or 73 percent of the original total, were found to be in good or better condition. Christina also studied the influence of various factors on the success of these planting projects, and had some very specific recommendations to pass on to the CT DEP and the Urban and Community Forest Council. Chief among the factors and recommendations was the importance of committed individuals and clearly defined goals.



Connecticut Lt. Governor Jodi Rell, City Forester John Kehoe, John Brodeur and Brian Cliff plant trees in Hartford, to commemorate the National Tree Trusts planing of 10 million trees.



Chris Donnelly, Connecticut Urban Forestry Coordinator discusses street tree inventory methods at a workshop in Norwalk.

### Statistical Highlights

Number of participating communities: 141  
Number of communities assisted: 83  
Number of Tree City USA communities: 10  
Number of trees planted: 522  
Number of days of volunteer assistance to program: 844  
Number of hours of training provided: 3,775

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