

Stewardship of New York City Watersheds

USDA Forest Service
Northeastern Area
State and Private Forestry



Description: A major component of the New York City water supply system is the watershed areas that provide a reliable flow of high quality water to the 9 million residents of the metro-politan region. These agrarian and heavily forested watersheds located in portions of eight counties produce more than a billion gallons of water daily while providing wildlife habitat, forest products, recreation, and scenic beauty.

Key Issues:

- Private Forest Land Management - Assist private landowners with forest stewardship
- Protection of Water Quality - Demonstrate techniques to maintain and improve water quality
- Education and Outreach - Communicate the importance of forest lands to water quality
- Forest Land Profitability - Provide opportunities for a sustainable, forest-based economy

Accomplishments: The following are key outcomes from projects supported by the USDA Forest Service in 2003:

- Completed stewardship plans for 80 landowners on over 13,000 acres of private forest lands
- Funded the demonstration of new Best Management Practices throughout the watersheds
- Provided technical assistance and training to forestry consultants, loggers and landowners
- Supported the Watershed Institute training over 100 Students and Teachers through “Green Connections”
- Fostered connections between watershed communities and urban water consumers.
- Provided 53 grants to assist local businesses in producing and marketing forest products adding \$3.5 million to the local economy.

Budget History: Federal funding provided and projected for the New York City Watersheds.

New York City Watershed (\$ Thousands)				
Program	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
Forest Health	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Forest Stewardship	500	500	497	494
Urban Forestry	0	15	0	0
Forest Legacy	0	500	0	0
Economic Action	800	800	745	0
Totals	\$1,300	\$1,815	\$1,242	\$494

Future Direction: These activities are planned to continue the USDA Forest Service role:

- Improving communication about the value of forested watersheds to landowners and citizens
- Continuing the operation and maintenance of four Model Forests Demonstration Areas
- Increasing the knowledge of watershed science and technology
- Establishing riparian forest buffers to protect water quality
- Developing forest resources for economic growth and job creation



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