



# NEWS RELEASE

USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
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## **\$4.5 million tree restoration grant completes in Worcester** *ALB tree removals increase summer cooling costs 37%*

WORCESTER, Mass— The U.S. Forest Service American Reinvestment and Recovery Act grant for the replanting of Worcester's urban tree canopy has completed. The project thrust the city and neighboring towns forward in their recovery from the Asian longhorned beetle eradication effort, and will lead to reduced energy costs for homeowners.

Significant accomplishments resulted from the two-year, \$4.5 million ARRA project:

- More than 17,400 trees planted,
- Wholesale shift in diversity of tree species across the city,
- 40-50 local adults and teens hired per planting season (4 total seasons), and
- Restoration of street trees, parkland trees, and shade trees at hundreds of private residences.

The planting of so many trees involved dedicated community outreach from the State and City re-foresters who accomplished the grant. In addition to collaborating with hundreds of homeowners on tree selection and planting location, the project introduced significant technology to manage the effort and track results. Every tree planted was cataloged in a tree inventory database, including its size, species, and GPS location.

### **Energy**

Measureable increases in energy use during the dog days of summer resulted from the removal of more than 31,000 ALB infested and host trees between 2008 and the present. Those trees provided shade for homes, business, and schools.

An energy study funded by a non-ARRA Forest Service urban forestry grant showed a 37% increase in cooling costs for homes in the Greendale and Burncoat neighborhoods—the epicenter of the ALB outbreak and tree removals. The State received the grant and the study was done by the UMASS - Amherst Department of Environmental Conservation.

In carbon terms, the increase in energy use for cooling adds 115 metric tons of carbon to the atmosphere per year initially. As shade returns to homes and yards, energy use for home cooling would decrease from comparable, weather-normalized 2009 levels, the year following discovery of ALB in Worcester. The future would see less carbon dioxide emitted by energy production, and increased carbon sequestration—storage—as trees mature.

The Forest Service extends its admiration and appreciation to the primary partners who accomplished our Recovery Act grant: Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Worcester Tree Initiative, and the City of Worcester Forestry Department.

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For more information, technical reports, or tree-planting data:

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