

1998 USDA URBAN FORESTRY

Connecticut

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Although approximately 80% of Connecticut's citizens live in urban or suburban areas, the state's urban forest was in decline until the advent of the Urban Forestry Assistance Program. In the past ten years the number of towns with tree inventories has increased from 5 to 35, and almost half of the state's municipalities have witnessed tree planting projects.

Program Components

Grant Aid
Technical Assistance
Partnerships
Education

Highlights

A **statewide grants program** has resulted in the planting of an average of 1,000 balled and burlapped trees over the past 7 years. In FY 1998, 16 communities planted 312 trees.

Two **self-guided tree walks** were developed in the **Town of Bloomfield** to increase the community's awareness of the importance and beauty of the town's tree resources. A description of the walks is available at the public library and the Department of Parks and Recreation.

A **pocket parks program** initiated in 1996 has resulted in the cleaning and greening of 6 vacant lots in underserved neighborhoods in **Hartford, Bridgeport, New Haven, and Waterbury**. This year the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) awarded four additional grants of \$10,000 to Hartford, Bridgeport, **Willamantic**, and **Meriden** for the creation of pocket parks or schoolyard habitats.

Bob Ricard of the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension coauthored a book, ***The Value of Trees in Connecticut's Urban Forest***, which has won widespread acclaim for its description of Connecticut's trees. This publication has deepened the understanding of the state's leaders and policy makers about the importance of the state's trees. It was distributed to the state legislators, state foresters, every library in the state, and urban forestry coordinators across the country.

The DEP and the Center for Urban Forestry at the University of Massachusetts conducted two **training programs for volunteer tree inventories**. Students at the Yale School of Forestry, volunteers for the Urban Resources Initiative at Yale, City Parks officials, and local residents conducted a tree inventory in the Newhallville section of New Haven. In the Springdale section of **Stamford**, trees were inventoried with the cooperation of the City of Stamford, Stamford Tree Foundation, and local residents. The inventories will be digitized and added to the existing GIS database in each town. This data will be used to provide base information for each tree for annual maintenance needs.

STATE ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT

The DEP and the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension continued to develop new partnerships. Representatives of 16 towns attended the **Meskwaka Training** at Connecticut College in New London. Meskwaka has now trained over 125 volunteers in the past six years.

The newly formed tree committee in Clinton, **Our Town Trees**, conducted a comprehensive inventory of the town's forest resources. The committee published the results in a binder which was made available to community members.



The winner of the Arbor Day Poster Contest, Nicole Scigagnano, helps to plant a tree on the grounds of her school.

Federal Program Support		<i>Dollars in thousands</i>		
The State Program	<u>FY 1995</u>	<u>FY 1996</u>	<u>FY 1997</u>	<u>FY 1998</u>
	194.5	229.7	213.2	208.3