

## Cost-Efficient Technology Transfer

### The Challenge

The USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area is continually challenged to find effective methods of transferring new technology to forestry professionals. The field of urban forestry, for example, challenges our ability to get new information into the hands of a widely dispersed cadre of forestry professionals. How can we efficiently share new information regarding a spectrum of urban forestry issues, such as: approaches to prepare for and mitigate storm damage in urban forests, or how to best utilize urban trees that have to cut down, or how to recognize a new exotic invasive insect or disease that threaten urban forests? With limited staff and an audience that spans huge metropolitan areas to small rural communities, the Northeastern Area needs to find cost effective approaches to redeem our technology transfer responsibilities.

### The Solution

Many States offer Shade Tree Short Courses through their land grant university extension offices. An effective partnership between university extension specialists and Northeastern Area specialists has truly been a "win-win" experience with numerous mutual benefits. Extension specialists have tapped Forest Service experts to teach sections of the courses, and Forest Service specialists have used the University extension service system and its extensive statewide networks to deliver cross-program forestry information to a dispersed audience of urban foresters and other natural resource managers.

### Resulting Benefits

At a recent Iowa shade tree short course, St. Paul field office program specialists taught modules on exotic invasive pests and urban forestry. Over 600 forestry professionals attended the two-day session - far more than could have been reached by Northeastern Area staff through other

*If you gave the same presentation at three different Shade Tree Short Courses in the Midwest, you could potentially reach over 2,000 forest practitioners!*



*Annual conferences, such as the Shade Tree Short Courses, can be a cost-effective way to transfer information to large audiences.*

means, such as field trips, meetings, or personal consultations. This venue also allows Northeastern Area specialists to show case "How to" publications, "Pest Alerts," web site information, and other materials of interest.

### Sharing Success

Northeastern Area staff has also been involved in similar courses in other states in the Midwest and also as far as California and Virginia.

Originally, Shade Tree Short Courses showcased urban forestry expertise. In light of the recent and highly publicized non-native insect and disease problems in urban areas such as Asian longhorned beetle, emerald ash borer, gypsy moth and oak wilt, our forest health expertise is in great demand. This forum helps our specialists target information to a highly interested audience ready to put the information to use.

Given the efficiency and effectiveness of Shade Tree short courses, it is to our benefit to help ensure this forum remains robust. Upon learning that some small communities lack the funds to send their foresters to Shade Tree Short Courses, the Midwest Urban Forestry Center is considering offering scholarships to communities in future years to send their forestry professionals. In this way, we can continue an effective means of technology transfer.



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