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Delaware's 2006 Accomplishment Report

Introduction

The Delaware Forest Service's Urban & Community Forestry (U&CF) Program provides technical, educational and financial assistance to cities, towns, homeowners and non-profit organizations in order to maximize the benefits of our natural resources. In addition to their scenic beauty, these forest resources help to moderate our climate, improve air and water quality, conserve energy and reduce storm water run-off.

As a component of the U&CF Program, the Delaware Forest Service offers grants to municipalities, educators, non-profit organizations and government agencies for tree planting and tree management projects on public lands. Since the program's inception in 1991, the Delaware Forest Service has awarded over \$1.5 million in grants to over 100 organizations to improve their urban forest resources.

Southbridge's Healthy Trees

The U&CF Program continued its cooperative partnership with the Delaware Center for Horticulture and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (DNREC) Coastal Program to develop a comprehensive community forestry program for the Southbridge neighborhood in Wilmington. Funded in 2005 through DNREC's 21st Century fund (\$50,000) and in 2006 from the U&CF Program (\$32,500), Southbridge has been able to make strides in community revitalization through tree care and maintenance, tree planting and comprehensive natural resource planning.

Keeping Development in Check

In 2006, the Delaware U&CF Program reviewed subdivision plans for 34 proposed development projects in New Castle County, 93 proposed developments in Kent County and 71 forest buffer ordinances in Sussex County. The U&CF Program participates in the subdivision review process in order to provide technical recommendations to developers to preserve and mitigate our natural resources.

In FY06 the U&CF Program continued to partner with the State Office of Planning and other state agencies to implement the Preliminary Land Use Service (PLUS) Process. This process has streamlined the review of new development projects and allowed for improved the working relations between state, county, and local governments and private development and engineering firms. For FY06 the U&CF Program provided over 800 hours of technical service and reviewed 178 projects to support the PLUS Process.



Delaware's coastal and inland areas, alike, are being developed at increasing rates

Raising Professional Standards --Certified Arborist Short Course and Certification Exam

In a continuing effort to ensure and promote proper tree care techniques within Delaware's forestry, horticultural and tree care professions, the U&CF Program again offered a series of certified arborist short courses, workshops and exams to prepare individuals for the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborist Exam. Over the past year, over 50 persons have attended these courses and there are now over 140 Certified Arborists within the state.

Certified arborists are vital to the community forest health since they are properly trained in the management and care of trees. The Delaware Community Forestry Council encourages homeowners and communities to only use a certified arborist for any tree care projects to ensure that work is properly conducted.

Urban Forest Functions and Values – The Metro Corridor

The U&CF Program in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station (Syracuse, NY) and the Delaware Center for Horticulture continued to work on a regional Urban Forest Effects (UFORE) Analysis for the Newark-Wilmington metro corridor. The goal of the UFORE Assessment is to evaluate the health and vigor of the forest resources and encourage state, county, and local officials to develop and improve future spending strategies to enhance the resource within this area. To support the efforts of this study, the U&CF Program continued to provide technical support and educational assistance to this project. The study's results are scheduled for release in the fall of 2006.

Tree-Friendly Community Program

The U&CF Program in cooperation with the Delaware Urban and Community Forestry Council, continued to promote the Delaware Tree-Friendly Program – a recognition program designed to honor Delaware's cities, towns and neighborhoods for their efforts to enhance their forest resources. The Tree-Friendly Program recognizes those communities that are committed to Delaware's trees but have not yet to qualify for Tree City USA status. For Y06, the U&CF Program recognized 59 communities as Tree-Friendly communities.

Expanding partnerships to enhance opportunities for Delaware communities

FY06, the U&CF Program continued its partnership with DNREC Division of Soil and Water Non-Point Source Pollution Program. This partnership continues to provide additional grant monies to plant trees to address the state's water quality issues. This partnership provided an additional \$50,000 to plant trees along streams, storm-water detention ponds, and within public open space areas.

In addition, the U&CF Program expanded its efforts to improve the state's water quality by partnering with DNREC Division of Soil and Water Watershed Section to provide monies for watershed with Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) values. For FY06, the U&CF Program provided \$55,000 to plant trees along streams, storm-water detention ponds and within public open space areas within the Appoquinimink, Nanticoke, and Inland Bays Watersheds.

The U&CF Program in cooperation with the Delaware Center for Horticulture (DCH), a member of The Delaware Community Forestry Council, is pleased to continue their long-term partnership to provided expanded services to the major urbanized areas of the state. DCH administers Arbor Day activities, tree care projects, and volunteer activities for the Newark-Wilmington metro corridor. To support these activities the U&CF Program provided \$10,000 to support staff efforts in these and other activities.