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## **New Hampshire's 2006 Accomplishment Report**

### **Introduction**

New Hampshire's Urban and Community Forestry Program works through a long-term partnership between the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands and the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. Staff from both organizations work together to provide a cohesive program of public awareness, community networking, volunteerism, and resource professional training for the entire state.

The Division of Forests and Lands provides leadership through its Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth, Shieling Forest in Peterborough, and staff in Concord. Information and educational programs are presented on community forestry issues. The Division of Forests and Lands also assists with the training and implementation of the Community Tree Steward Program and furnishes technical assistance to communities.

A Community Forestry Coordinator assists the Administrator, Community Forestry and Stewardship Bureau with the implementation of New Hampshire's Urban and Community Forestry Program. The responsibilities of the Community Forestry Coordinator include coordinating the programming at the Urban Forestry Center and Shieling Forest, coordinating the Seacoast Community Tree Stewards training and projects, and providing technical assistance and workshops in 25 seacoast New Hampshire communities. A Community Forestry Volunteer Coordinator is employed by the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension in Hillsborough County to implement a major component of the NH Urban and Community Forestry Program. This person works full time in the most populated part of the state overseeing recruitment, training and volunteer opportunities for Community Tree Steward volunteers.

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is an educational network connecting University knowledge and research to people throughout New Hampshire. Extension Specialists based in Durham, and Extension Educators in each county of the state offer both scientific information and technical assistance to communities.

**Urban Forestry Center Outreach and Education Programs** - The Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth, New Hampshire was a gift of 170 acres and buildings to the people of New Hampshire by John Elwyn Stone in 1976. This forested and wetland tract serves as a demonstration urban forest and its facilities are used to extend public knowledge of urban forestry through teaching, education and research. Approximately 40 programs are presented each year by the Division of Forests and Lands in cooperation with UNH Cooperative Extension.

**Day of Caring** - Organized annually, the Day of Caring is a one-day event in September that mobilizes

over 1,600 community volunteers. Individuals and groups, largely from area businesses, participate in service projects at non-profit agencies throughout the region. Each year, approximately 100 participants work on projects at the Urban Forestry Center doing tree pruning, garden maintenance, trail maintenance, and other conservation activities.

**Shieling Forest Outreach and Education Programs** - This forested tract is a demonstration forest and its facilities serve as an example of proper forestland use and as a learning center for the application of rural and urban forestry practices. Approximately 20 programs ( 50% forest stewardship subjects and 50% urban forestry subjects) are presented each year.

**Community Tree Stewards Volunteer Program** - UNH Cooperative Extension and the NH Division of Forests and Lands offer this comprehensive volunteer training program. In return for participating in the training, Community Tree Stewards apply their knowledge in their local communities, promoting the benefits that trees and natural resources provide as part of healthy communities. In 2006, more than 80 NH Community Tree Stewards volunteer over 5,000 hours assisting 93 NH communities by serving on tree committees, working on landscape projects, doing tree evaluations & inventories, & helping fundraising efforts. Mary Tebo, Community Volunteer Coordinator. with UNH Coop. Extension heads up this very successful program in the Manchester / Nashua area, assisted by A.J. Dupere, Community Forester with the Div. of Forests & Lands - Urban Forestry Ctr. in seacoast communities.

Mary Tebo, Community Forestry Educator and Coordinator of the NH Community Tree Steward Program worked with Tree Steward Carolyn Hottle and Tree Steward In Training Paul Searles. Together they helped reclaim a vacant lot in downtown Manchester, where a fire had destroyed a building. They helped local residents develop a landscape plan, provided guidance in selecting and purchasing plant materials, and helped plan and coordinate a planting day.

Tree Steward Deborah Lievens contributed time and energy to the Londonderry Conservation Commission which is active in land acquisition for protection and conservation. Deborah meets with landowners, arranges for site visits and appraisals, and evaluates the conservation features on parcels. Also, CTS Cindy and Garth Rand are members of the Upper Valley Land Trust and serve as land stewards and property monitors for lands that have been acquired by towns or lands that have conservation easements.

Tree Steward Marilyn Wallingford is the chairperson of the Hampton Shade Tree Commission. She works with the Conservation Commission, Parks Dept. and Historical Society to coordinate tree planting, care, and maintenance. CTS Debbie Armstrong assisted by 5 volunteers worked at the Great Bog in Portsmouth to restore meadowlands, cleared around historic farm building foundations, and released fruit trees. CTS Jack Gleason of Amherst, NH volunteers to photograph and develop a pictorial journal of the vegetation in the Ponemah Bog and then uses the photos to create a kiosk presentation.

**Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)** - UNH Cooperative Extension has implemented a Community Conservation Assistance Program to help communities with comprehensive natural resource conservation planning projects. Through the CCAP, Extension provides coordinated assistance to communities to guide them through a process of identifying the natural resources in their community and helps them explore the options available for conserving and protecting these resources. A number of communities have moved ahead with natural resource inventories and conservation planning projects. Currently, a Land and Water Conservation Educator is working with communities in the rapidly developing seacoast area.

**Integrated Landscape Practices Workgroup** - The Integrated Landscape Practices (ILP) Workgroup formed in the spring of 2002 to discuss landscape practices for the model landscape plan in the Manchester Millyard. This workgroup is now working on creating a “how to guide” for selecting plants

to replace invasive species, create landscape plant systems, and provide sustainable planting and maintenance practices for residential, commercial and public spaces.

**Family Home and Garden Center** - The UNH Cooperative Extension Family, Home and Garden assists individuals with Homeowner type@ questions. Equipped with a 1-800 phone number, the Center is able to answer volumes of urban and community forestry calls particularly regarding shade and ornamental trees. Currently, this Center responds to approximately 200 urban forestry related calls each month. The Family, Home and Garden Center is staffed with trained volunteers who can efficiently provide callers with quality, unbiased information about their tree concerns.

**Town Forest Assistance** - The rural character of New Hampshire places the emphasis on “community” in the urban and community forestry program. Towns throughout the state have town forests that are valuable community resources for people to enjoy and to learn more about caring for trees and forests. There are currently over 100,000 acres of town forests in the state. The amount of land in town forest is increasing as communities purchase land to protect their local forests from increasing development pressures.

**Manchester - Nashua** - The Community Volunteer Coordinator, Mary Tebo, works with approximately 20 different agencies and organizations in Manchester and Nashua to implement inner city urban forestry projects with local residents. There are currently a number of ongoing projects including: numerous landscaping projects working with Manchester Neighborhood Housing Services and residents in transitional, and low income housing facilities; restoration activities at the Valley Cemetery; activities with the Manchester Vacant Lot Restoration and Landscape Improvement Committee. A major project is the Manchester Millyard Landscape Revitalization Project. A Green Roof project is being implemented in the Manchester Millyard as part of this revitalization.

**Portsmouth** - In Portsmouth, the Community Forestry Coordinator serves on the Mayor’s Blue Ribbon Committee for Trees and Public Greenery. This Committee serves as a steering group for city planners and provides technical information to the city to incorporate trees and natural resources into their planning efforts. Street tree inventories have been conducted in the Cabot Street, McDonough Street and Court Street Neighborhoods which are census block groups with a majority of low and moderate income residents. The goal is to conduct a city wide inventory.