

Accomplishment Report 2007 – Minnesota

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State Contact

Ken Holman

Urban & Community Forestry Program Coordinator

Minnesota Dept. of Natural Resources

Box 44 500 Lafayette Rd.

St. Paul, MN 55155

Phone: 651-259-5269

Fax: 651-296-5954

E-mail: ken.holman@dnr.state.mn.us

Web sites: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/forestry/urban/index.html> and <http://www.mntrees.org/>

Introduction

Urban & Community Forestry in Minnesota is a statewide collaboration that unites many agencies, organizations, communities, decision makers, and the citizens throughout the state. The challenges that we have identified are:

- Minnesota communities need quicker and more access to expertise, training and current technology, research, information, and technical assistance.
- Heightened political awareness and support that will result in state funding initiatives
- Increased partnerships among organizations and communities in greater Minnesota
- Loss of forest land to urbanization, disease and insects and improper maintenance
- Lack of vision for sustainable community design, ecosystem approaches in planning and project

Highlights for 2007:

City Trees Sustainability Guidelines and Best Practices: Developed by Tree Trust and Bonestroo and Associates, the focus of these guidelines is to develop the best ways to mitigate global warming by planting trees to sequester and store carbon and integrate trees for storm water management and water quality. The guidelines were developed to support the new and innovative project, Hawthorne Eco-Village, in the City of Minneapolis. The guide is intended for use by a wide ranging audience including local and state governments, consultants, developers, homeowners associations, neighborhood groups, and environmentalists, among others. It will provide the basis for better decisions and long term sustainability of this new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Neighborhood Development project. See details at <http://www.treetrust.org/urban-forestry/index.html>

Rochester, Minneapolis and other communities continue to use the results of **i-Tree software analysis** of the ecological and monetary value of their urban forests to justify increased investments in management. The U.S. Forest Service and its cooperators tested i-Tree software applications and field methods for data collection in Minneapolis, where the legacy of tree planting, management, and desire for improved stewardship make it an ideal community to showcase the results. Teams of U.S. Forest Service and Davey Resource Group professionals worked with the Tree Trust to train volunteers to collect data and test the software.

The i-Tree initiative continues to provide benefits to participating communities in a variety of ways, including increased informational resources related to ecological and monetary value of the urban forest. Additionally, increased public awareness of trees, the development of a cadre of trained volunteers and updated information on individual street trees were achieved. An ecological analysis (UFORE) and benefit analysis (STRATUM) were completed and used to produce the *Midwest Community Tree Guide – Benefits, Costs and Strategic Planting*. The guide is available on line and copies are being distributed to many communities across the state.

The **City of Rochester’s RneighborWoods Program** has successfully used trained volunteers from their well-established “Citizen Forester Program,” and teamed up with Home Depot and others to enlist the help of more than 300 volunteers of all ages to plant more than 1,000 street trees this year. These annual plantings have become much anticipated events and been a great way for City Forester Jacob Ryg to garner citizen support to sustain the entire forestry program.



Rochester’s RneighborWoods Program brought out more than 300 volunteers for a tree-planting event. Here a team plants one of the more than 100 boulevard trees placed that day.

Through the **Minnesota ReLeaf Grant Program**, Tree Trust and DNR Central Region staff tracked 63 planning, forest health and planting grant projects in FY 2007.

Reduced Area Program Forester involvement, new Private Forest Management workload for the Regional UCF Specialist and turnover at Tree Trust made grants administration particularly challenging.

Liason and Networking

DNR U&CF staff developed new and expanded working relations with:

- **League of Minnesota Cities (LMC)** with a “Trees Pay Us Back” presentation at their annual convention and arranging to link the MNTrees.org web portal to LMC member cities.
- **Minnesota Parks & Recreation Association** by providing web-based documents and links to populate the forestry section of their new Best Practices web site for local governments and member businesses, viewable at <http://www.bestpracticesmn.org/main/>.