

Accomplishment Report 2007 – Illinois

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Illinois FY07 2007 Urban and Community Forestry and Inner City Program Reports

Based on FFY05-06 USDA Forest Service Funds for the Traditional UCF

Based on FFY03 and part FFY04 USDA Forest Service Funds for INNER CITY

Introduction

The mission of the Illinois Urban and Community Forestry (IL UCF) program is to provide information and technical assistance to units of local government and others that will encourage efforts to plan and implement local community forestry programs to plant, protect, maintain, and utilize the wood from trees in their local jurisdictions. Urban and community forestry management integrates natural, social, and economic systems to create a healthy forest resource and a safe environment for Illinois citizens. This mission is achieved by helping communities, and other units of local government in the development or expansion of local urban and community forestry programs. The IL UCF program is part of a nearly \$5 billion dollar green industry in Illinois that serves 80% of Illinois' population.

Tree City USA Highlights

Illinois celebrated 31 years of participation in the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program this year. The Tree City USA program is the basic foundation of the IL UCF program. There are 186 Illinois Tree City USA communities placing the state for the tenth year since 1990 as #2 in the nation. Illinois ranks #1 in the nation for the number of Tree City USA Growth Award Participants. IL UCF Tree City USA efforts alone serve about 7.4 million or more than 69% of Illinois' urban and community residents. Tree City USA is a highly respected and sought after recognition in Illinois. As an indicator of the importance of this program to communities, many have integrated Tree City USA as an icon on their community websites. Only Ohio, with a full staff of dedicated urban forestry field-based employees, has more municipalities participating.

Emerald Ash Borer in Illinois

Being on the frontier of the national emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation means continued community assistance is needed. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) continues to support the Illinois Department of Agriculture's (IDOA) efforts while focusing on urban forest management within Illinois communities. Additional efforts in education/public relations, information and awareness included the development of a new EAB poster and initial development of EAB door hangers to be distributed in FY'08 at the Illinois Arborist Association Annual Conference and Tree City USA. The Annual Tree City USA Conference focused on informing Tree City USA communities about IDOA regulations and community readiness. The EAB Community Readiness Plan was updated. Assistance was given to the USDA Forest Service for updating a resource matrix on EAB materials.

Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program

Through the Urban and Community Forestry Grant program several communities received funds for tree inventories and/or management plans: Country Club Hills, Frankfort Square Park District (PD), La Grange Lindenhurst, Northfield, Riverside, and Savoy. These local units of government received funds for tree planting projects: Arlington Heights, Country Club Hills, and Hennepin. Other grant projects include Naperville -Tree Preservation and Protection Guide

Inner City Accomplishments

Illinois continues to provide oversight and monitoring for Inner City Initiative projects through IL UCF grant programs and outreach. The Inner City Initiatives fit within the U.S. Forest Service defined eligible cities that are identified by older and more densely populated residential sections of a city in which low income and/or minority groups predominate. Grant projects included: tree planting in Chicago; tree removal and replacement in Decatur; Illinois Arborist Association's Hispanic tree care training; tornado "releaf" in Mount Vernon; OpenLands vacant lot tree planting; hazard tree removal in Peoria; and tree removal and forest health in the Rockford PD.

Southern and Central Illinois Systematic Approach to Serving Communities

Through a partnership with the Southwestern Illinois Resources and Conservation Service, the IDNR in 2006 was able to provide tree inventories and management plans for Carlinville, DuQuoin, Martinsville, Marshall, and Mascoutah.

TREES COUNT! Northern Illinois Technical Service Initiative

A service contract with an urban forestry consultant provides technical assistance related to tree inventory and management plan development. In 2007, Genoa, Henry, Lake Barrington, Palos Park, Tower Lake, and Wayne, IL, received this support. The contractor is responsible for documenting in-kind match provided by the municipality. Only Tree City USA communities with a population of less than 5,000 are eligible for this free service.