

2008 Accomplishment Report – New Jersey

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Introduction

The New Jersey Community Forestry Program is a unique partnership between government, business, and volunteers caring for trees where people live, work, and play. Under the authority provided by the State legislature within the Community Forestry Assistance Act (P.L. 1996, Chapter 135), the program encourages, promotes, and assists cities and towns in the establishment, retention, and enhancement of trees and forest resources. The Community Forestry program is dedicated to making communities more livable by providing grants, technical assistance, training, and volunteer opportunities. The program continues to seek leading edge opportunities and innovative initiatives to build a sustainable statewide effort to manage local publicly owned trees and forest. Through the use of Federal urban and community forestry funding, the goal of having a statewide community forestry initiative is ensuing.

Key Accomplishments

The New Jersey State Community Forestry Council celebrated 20 years of progress and success in 2008. The council was established in March 1988 as one of the original 13 State Community Forestry Councils in anticipation of the 1991 Farm Bill and the re-establishment of the nationwide Urban and Community Forestry effort. The council has accomplished much during the last 20 years, notably becoming an official State of New Jersey legislatively recognized council. Their efforts have resulted in the passage of five major tree laws: the Community Forestry Assistance Act in 1996, a commercial tree license plate to go along with the passenger plate in 2000, the Oak Tree Disease Act in 2001, the No-Net Loss Reforestation Act in 2002, and finally getting the Forest Health Advisory Council law passed in 2007. Currently the council is working on getting the existing tree expert certification upgraded to a full State license.

In cooperation with the New Jersey Conference of Mayors and the League of Municipalities, several kickoff meetings were held in southern New Jersey counties to promote the Community Forestry Program and seek greater participation. Well-attended meetings resulted in the highest number of management plan grant applications received by the program. This also resulted in the single largest number of management plan grants awarded in one year, pushing the number of participating towns and cities to a record 47%. The Federal UCF funds are critical in funding these management plan grants, thereby adding towns and cities to the State's very successful ongoing program.

The State Arbor Day Event highlighted the use of trees for greening and educational purposes in a magnificent event held in East Brunswick. With the help of over 300 volunteers, 250 new trees and shrubs were planted in a newly developed cultural and art center. The event emphasized the use of trees to increase

canopy cover and contribute to New Jersey's effort to deal with the global climate change issue. As in years past, Tree City USA awards were handed out along with the Joyce Kilmer Award and the annual Arbor Day student contest awards. Governor Jon Corzine signed a State proclamation noting the effort to address urban heat islands through the planting of trees

This was the 12th consecutive year for “Celebrate Arbor Day New Jersey!” and “Make a Difference with Trees!” projects. Both continue to surpass all expectations. Six hundred groups planted 35,500 trees and over 60,000 tree-tube seedlings.

The city of Camden and the New Jersey Tree Foundation received the national Conference of Mayors and Home Depot Greening Award for small cities. A crystal tree award and a \$75,000 prize were given during the Conference of Mayor's meeting in Miami, FL. An outstanding video was created showing the great work thousands of volunteers have accomplished in planting more than 2,000 trees in the last 4 years.

Statistical Highlights

Number of Participating Communities:	317
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	38,560
Number of Tree City USA Communities:	149
Number of Growth Awards:	17
Number of Managing Communities:	186
Number of Developing Communities:	131
Population of Participating Communities:	6,300,277
Number of Communities with Advocacy/ Advisory Organizations:	385
Number of UCF Grants:	79



iTree training was held at Rutgers University.



Governor Jon Corzine spoke at an Earth Day/Arbor Day celebration in Newark.



Students from Ivy Hill School in Newark mulched newly planted trees.



Volunteers planted over 200 trees during Arbor Day 2008.