

2009 Accomplishment Report – District of Columbia

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Introduction

Within the government of the District of Columbia, the Urban Forestry Administration (UFA) is the agency responsible for urban street trees. The UFA's duties include planting, pruning, removing, and maintaining the health of the District of Columbia's street tree canopy. The UFA is one of five administrations in the District Department of Transportation (DDOT). In late 2007, the UFA became responsible for the maintenance of trees and wooded areas located on District park and recreation properties as well as street trees. Staff have assessed these properties, removed hazardous trees in public spaces, and begun the task of inventorying these areas. Other areas of concern are enhancing the city's urban tree canopy, particularly on District properties, and assessing the invasive species and health status of street trees and other trees in the District.

The UFA continues to extend its reach into serving other sectors of the District's government and community members. In late 2007, using U.S. Forest Service funds, the UFA hired a community outreach coordinator. This new staff member gave the UFA the ability to reach out to citizens in all advisory neighborhood commissions to inform them of grant opportunities, programs, and services offered by the UFA. These efforts have increased the UFA's effectiveness and improved its delivery of services. The community outreach coordinator position is now a District-funded position. As of October 2008, the UFA had 18 ISA-certified urban foresters on staff, including three municipal arborists, and one landscape architect.

Key Accomplishments

Land Use Map and GIS/Aerial Satellite Urban Tree Canopy Report

The UFA, working with the University of Vermont's Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Programs, and the Northern Research Station, has completed an analysis of the urban tree canopy of the District of Columbia. The analysis, which used DC OCTO GIS files and high-resolution satellite imagery, has determined the percentage of existing urban tree canopy and located areas for new tree plantings. A land use map was also a product of the analysis. This project was funded with a 2008 Redesign grant from the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Programs of the U.S. Forest Service.

Mayor's Green Summer Job Corps, Tree Section

Working with our municipal partners at the District Department of the Environment, the UFA served as a financial and technical sponsor of the Mayor's Green Summer Tree Section. The Mayor's Green Summer Job Corps provides an opportunity for 800 District youth to get substantive green-collar work experience,

as well as general job readiness training, while having a measurable positive impact on the District's environment. This year's Corps employed students within one of four topics: Energy, Parks, Watersheds, and Trees. Within the Tree teams, 96 youth were engaged in data collection and maintenance (mulching, watering, pruning, and weeding) of public-space trees. The Green Summer Tree teams contributed to the health of the District's street and park tree canopy by: (1) maintaining street and park trees planted during the spring planting season; (2) surveying trees and assessing health in communities throughout the city, and; (3) identifying opportunities for future plantings, so as to capitalize on the climate change and stormwater prevention benefits provided by trees. UFA staff urban foresters and landscape architects held field-based trainings to teach corps members the skills needed to successfully complete these projects and classroom sessions for program managers to provide them with a broad overview of the environmental issues connected with their work.



Team members of the Mayor's Green Summer Corps Tree Section work together setting up an ooze tube around a 2-year-old street tree.

USDA People's Garden Project, USDA Whitten Building

In cooperation with the Community Woodlands Alliance and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the DC Urban Forestry Administration has supplied trees from routine urban forest maintenance for milling into lumber and use in the USDA People's Garden Project. Typically, felled urban trees are destined for the wood chipper or landfill. These black locust and oak logs have found new life by providing over 2,400 board feet of milled lumber for use in constructing planting boxes and walkways for the USDA People's Garden Project.



These planter boxes are under construction on site at the Whitten Building.



UFA staff members harvested black locust for the USDA People's Garden.

Statistical Highlights

Managing and Developing Communities:	1
Population of Participating Communities:	581,530
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	27,500