

Urban and Community Forestry Program

2010 Accomplishment Report – Indiana

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Introduction

The Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) program provides statewide leadership to increase public awareness of the value of trees in the urban forest. Over 71 percent of Hoosiers live in urban areas, and, according to recent data, over 65 percent live within communities. Because of this, the assistance the CUF programs provide is steadily increasing due to the demand of our varied customer base. CUF program assistance includes visits to municipalities to encourage and promote the protection and expansion of urban forests. This assistance takes the form of reducing the impacts of land use change by preserving, conserving, and restoring the urban forest; development of urban forestry management segments into related municipal department work; simple and comprehensive tree inventories with management and work plans; and emergency response plans. Tree planting assistance focuses on strategically planting trees for their ecological benefits for the environment and human health. The program strives to help citizens make the connection between rural and urban forests and to incorporate the ideology that the urban forest is part of the community infrastructure. CUF achieves its mission by nurturing and forming a variety of partnerships throughout the State with its innovative grant, education, and outreach programs.

Issues

- The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) is a stumbling block to some Indiana community urban forestry planting efforts. Denying permits, making it cumbersome to get planting permits, and poor customer relations on the part of some of the subdistricts have all but halted a few of our grant projects and frustrated our communities in pursuing planting projects.
- Loss of tax revenue has forced many municipalities to cut back on services. Urban forestry is one of those services that is being threatened in some communities.
- Emerald ash borer and invasive issues continue to spread throughout the State, forcing budgeted tree dollars to be used for removals as opposed to management of the entire urban forest ecosystem.
- Planting and maintenance methods that do not create optimum mature growth.
- Denuding forest canopy and cover along streams and creeks for capital projects in urban and rural landscapes.
- Too many ornamental, non-native small tree species are being planted and will not offer the ecological, functional services trees can provide.

Opportunities

- All of the above issues contribute to the loss of air and water quality, energy conservation, and carbon sequestration, among others. Help our nonprofits and other partners utilize the SUSI tools data and factsheets to address the specific entities contributing to these issues.

Key Accomplishments

Partnerships & Awareness/Outreach

Project: Two projects were implemented to reach out to groups that work with the urban forest but do not really know about urban forestry and the benefits the trees offer.

Municipal Tree Works (MUNI TREES). This project is sponsored by CUF and Purdue University. The scope of the project was to offer hands-on, interactive opportunities for pruning and maintenance to municipal personnel. This has been a dire need in Indiana communities, and the response has been overwhelming. The daylong instruction is taught by the Purdue Extension Urban Forester. It includes a little lecture and a lot of hands-on work. Response has been very positive with over 50 participants. Hosts include Vincennes University at Jasper, Noblesville Street Department, and Franklin Street Department. The project engages municipal workers who are told to “trim the trees” but not given instruction on how to do that, thereby creating friction within the community. The success of MUNI Trees will be replicated next year in other regions of the State.

Project: ArborMaster Course: With the high cost of these courses and economic woes making training prohibitive, we worked with the Indiana Urban Forest Council and the Indiana Arborist Association to present ArborMaster courses at half the cost. We requested that participants give back by offering a day of maintenance service to their local community. The 10 participants have given back to local parks and schools in their communities.

Project: Fortville Arbor Day. This community partnered with the Optimist Club and the FFA as a fundraiser for the FFA. The event brought together pancakes, FFA students and parents, the Optimist Club, and a mix of citizens present for the breakfast. The syrupy treat kept them all sticking together to learn about the community Tree City USA award!

Reaching Out

Project: SUSI Tools Fact Sheets. This project included a committee from the Indiana Urban Forest Council who worked diligently to write, design, and produce factsheets that address the water, air, social benefits, urban woodlands, and economics of the urban forest. The final product was assembled and mailed to all Indiana State and Federal representatives, 567 cities and towns, extension, Soil Water Conservation Districts, resource and conservation districts, and parks within the State. Each factsheet explains the crucial need for the urban forest to specific groups, and lists challenges in “mitigating the issues” and solutions to meet the challenges.

Project: The Indiana Big Tree Register 2010 was completed. This yearlong project was done with Cooperative Forestry, District Foresters, the CUF Program, and the Indiana Urban Forest Council, Inc. Interspersed throughout the booklet are urban forestry facts pertinent to Indiana from the sample urban statewide inventory (SUSI) along with Indiana facts on our rural forests. This partnership brings urban and rural together and demonstrates the importance of both to all of our customers.

Comprehensive Natural Resource Management

Project: Twelve street, park, and woodland inventories were completed and/or updated. Each had an I-Tree Streets component for the functional value of the resource. Each included a news release on the data and analysis or a meeting to discuss it as the education component. A brownfield air and water quality tree planting project was implemented in Kokomo at a reclaimed Superfund site, trees were planted on Pogue’s Run by Keep Indianapolis Beautiful to restore a wildlife corridor that is now an urban wildlife corridor, and a tree demonstration project was implemented in five areas in 10 counties by Hoosier Heartland RC&D to provide interest in planning and planting for stormwater interception and air quality.

Statistical Highlights

Managing and Developing Communities:	117
Population of Participating Communities:	3,497,392
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	73,920
Tree City USA:	66
Tree City Growth Awards:	15



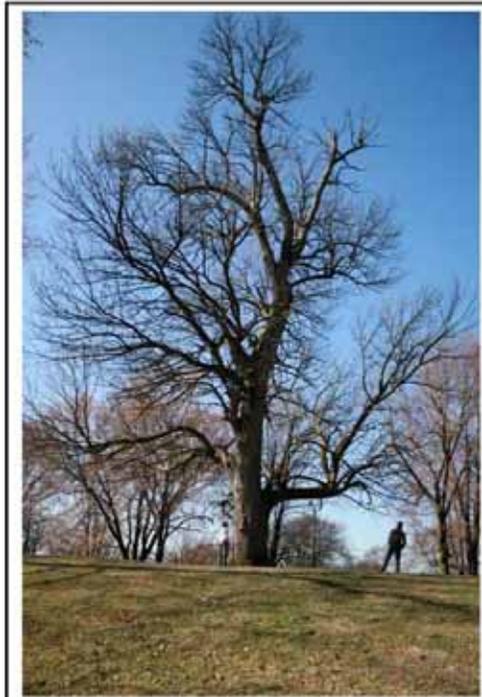
Brownfield preparation work to prepare for the trees, trails, and ponds that are part of this project.



FFA students believe in Tree City USA and planting trees



Indiana arborists have an opportunity to hone their skills and give back to their community urban forest.



The Indiana Big Tree Champion Blue ash (*Fraxinus quadrangulata*) resides in a Terre Haute city park.