

Urban and Community Forestry Program 2010 Accomplishment Report – Missouri

State Contact

Justine Gartner
Missouri Department of Conservation
Forestry Division
P.O. Box 180
2901 W. Truman Boulevard
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: 573-522-4115 ext. 3116
Fax: 573-526-6670
E-mail: Justine.gartner@mdc.mo.gov
Web site: www.missouriconservation.org

State Forester

Lisa Allen
Missouri Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102
Phone: 573-522-4115
Fax: 573-526-6670
E-mail: lisa.allen@mdc.mo.gov

Introduction

The mission of the Missouri Department of Conservation's (MDC) community forestry program is to promote the development of sustainable community forests throughout Missouri. The MDC assists communities through enabling grants, promotion and coordination of volunteer-driven community forestry programs, local coordination of the various National Arbor Day Foundation programs, and numerous opportunities for training. A State coordinator leads the effort, which includes eight urban foresters whose primary responsibility is the delivery of community forestry assistance. In addition, 58 field foresters also have community forestry responsibilities. Statewide policy development and implementation are managed in partnership with the Missouri Community Forestry Council using a team approach.

The top emerging issues/opportunities include:

- Assisting communities that sustained major damage to their community forest in the past 36 months from ice and wind
- Responding at the State and community level to emerald ash borer
- Addressing urban sprawl and forest fragmentation along transportation corridors

Key Accomplishments

Comprehensive Natural Resource Management

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri Celebrates Donation of 100,000th Tree

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri was joined by hundreds of friends and supporters at a ceremony awarding its 100,000th tree to the Grace Hill Settlement House September 2010. Since 1993, the St. Louis-based organization has worked with corporations, businesses, nonprofit organizations, government partners, and thousands of volunteers to promote the planting of and caring for our State's trees and forests, particularly those in urban areas.

Guests met at CommuniTree Gardens, Forest ReLeaf's nursery in Creve Coeur Park. Many of the partner organizations, which over the years have helped make Forest ReLeaf's efforts such a huge success, were in attendance. The ceremonial tree, a baldcypress (*Taxodium distichum*), will be planted in Peace Park, a new 4-acre community gathering place in the "College Hill" neighborhood of North St. Louis City.

"We are truly honored to have been selected as the recipient of Forest ReLeaf's 100,000th tree," said Johanna Wharton, vice president of Systems Integration and Advancement, Grace Hill Settlement House. "Consistent with Grace Hill's efforts to provide healthy and economically viable neighborhoods, Forest ReLeaf is a great partner as we work to enhance the environmental quality of life for St. Louis residents."



Hundreds of friends and supports attended a ceremony to celebrate the awarding of Forest ReLeaf's 100,000th tree in September 2010.

Forest ReLeaf work has promoted environmental stewardship and beautification of our State's communities by building partnerships throughout Missouri. "Thanks to the thousands of friends and volunteers supporting Forest ReLeaf, we have reached a significant milestone today," said Donna Coble, executive director of Forest ReLeaf. "The awarding of our 100,000th tree is an important step in establishing a region of healthy community trees and forests through volunteer efforts and continued partnerships with the public and private sectors."



Workers help plant trees and spread mulch in Missouri.

Partnerships

Tree Canopy Assessment Completed for the City of St. Louis and Select Parts of St. Louis County
Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation, commissioned a tree canopy assessment to measure the existing urban tree canopy in St. Louis City and approximately 30 square miles of St. Louis County. The GIS (geographic information system) assessment was conducted by AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc., of Denver, CO.

The purpose of this assessment, the first of its kind in St. Louis, was to identify the region's capacity for new tree plantings, especially in underserved communities. The modeling data was then used to quantify the economic contributions these trees make to the area surveyed by factoring in their capacity to remove air pollution, capture and sequester carbon, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve water quality by acting as a natural filtration system. The economic value of the existing tree canopy assessed is estimated at more than \$70 million.

"The St. Louis tree canopy assessment will serve as a benchmark for Forest ReLeaf's efforts in the future," said John Moller, chairman of Forest ReLeaf. "The data collected not only demonstrates the value trees provide our State's communities, it identifies for us those areas in which we can do more."

Emerging Threats

Emerald ash borer (EAB) continues to threaten our State. Response this past 12 months has been given a dramatic boost by the hiring of a full-time Emerald Ash Borer Outreach Coordinator. This position was made possible by a three-way partnership. The USDA APHIS PPQ provided the funding to the Missouri Department of Agriculture, which in turn hired the Coordinator. The Missouri Department of Conservation provides offices space and technical support. Day-to-day supervision is provided by the Community Forestry Coordinator. Having a person focused on education and outreach particular to EAB has allowed for the development a strategic communications plan and implementation of many tasks, including placing billboards, placing radio ads, designing and producing displays, branding of materials, conducting outreach at key conferences, coordinating key messages between agencies, and better leveraging of partner resources.



Statistical Highlights

Managing and Developing Communities:	159
Population of Participating Communities:	2,881,837
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	26,104