

Urban and Community Forestry Program 2011 Accomplishment Report – Minnesota

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Introduction

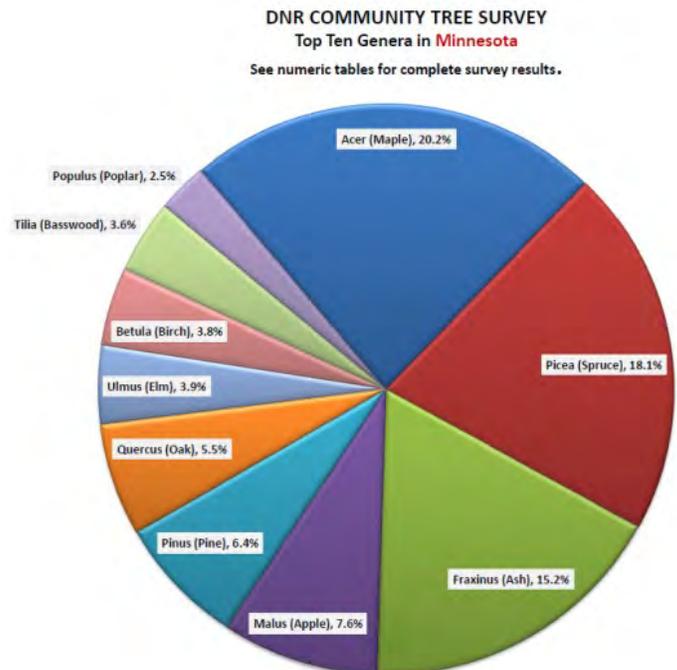
Urban and Community Forestry in Minnesota is a statewide collaboration that unites many agencies, organizations, communities, decisionmakers, and citizens throughout the State. The challenges that we have identified are:

- Minnesota communities need quicker and more access to expertise, training and current technology, research, information, and technical assistance
- Heightened political awareness of and support for State funding initiatives
- Increased partnerships among communities in greater Minnesota
- Loss of forest land to urbanization, disease, and insects
- Lack of vision for sustainable community design, ecosystem approaches

Key Accomplishments

Rapid Assessment Survey and Citizen Monitoring Network

To prepare for invasive tree pests, a comprehensive statewide database of street and yard trees was needed. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) revised procedures for a rapid field tally and assessment of residential tree genera, created in 2006 for ash and elm. The pie chart to the right illustrates the top 10 tree genera in Minnesota. A U.S. Forest Service grant was used to build on this by using a refined methodology to characterize the abundance, size, and health of all genera of neighborhood trees in 700 communities across the State. The project also enlisted and trained a network of Forest Pest First Detectors to provide a front line for the detection of significant invasive pests. First Detectors have been available to complement the efforts of city foresters and tree inspectors. An arborist, trained in the First Detector curriculum, found the first emerald ash borer



infestation (in St. Paul) within 3 years of its introduction, instead the usual 4 or 5 years. This gave local and State officials a significant jump on efforts to contain the emerald ash borer. See http://issuu.com/mnstsc/docs/forest_pest_manual_feb_2011_opt_1.

Emerald Ash Borer Rapid Response Model Communities Project in Greater Minnesota

This project by the University of Minnesota's Department of Forest Resources and the University's Extension Service is designed to help communities in greater Minnesota prepare for the arrival of the emerald ash borer. Initially, six communities were selected for help; in 2011, eight more were added. Each community received stratified inventories of private, public, and commercial tree populations and a cost/benefit analysis of reforestation techniques. At the conclusion of the project, model impact projections will be developed based on these analyses. Read more at <http://www.mntreesource.com/>.

Leveraging State Emerald Ash Borer Grant Funds

In 2010, the State appropriated \$3 million in general obligation bond funds for the DNR Community Forest Bonding Grants Program to plant shade trees on public land, replace trees lost to the emerald ash borer or storms, and establish a more diverse and resilient community forest. Priority is given to grant requests to remove and replace ash trees that are infested with the emerald ash borer. For details, see <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/forestmgmt/commforestbondgrant/index.html>.

Minnesota GreenCorps Pilot Program (an AmeriCorps Program)

The DNR joined the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Sustainability Team to launch GreenCorps. Information about GreenCorps can be found at <http://www.nextstep.state.mn.us/greencorps.cfm>. This program provides opportunities for recent college graduates to improve Minnesota's environment while gaining experience and learning valuable job skills. Minnesota GreenCorps members are working on sustainability and community forestry projects in three jurisdictions: St. Paul, Woodbury, and the Three Rivers Park District.

Corps members completed tree inventories and preparedness plans, conducted emerald ash borer outreach, and organized public Arbor Day celebrations. Communities that will be served by GreenCorps for 2011 to 2012 include the Three Rivers Park District, Duluth, Austin, and Morris.



Council Report to the State

The Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (which serves as the State's Urban Forestry Council) prepared and delivered a *2011 Report to the State of Minnesota* that focused on the threats, efforts to address threats, and needs of communities. The report can be seen at http://www.mnstac.org/documents/Inv_Spp_thrt_report_2011_FINAL.pdf.

Statistical Highlights

Managing and Developing Communities:	166
Population of Participating Communities:	3,348,837
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	38,174

