

# Urban and Community Forestry Program 2011 Accomplishment Report – Missouri

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## Introduction

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) community forestry program promotes 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 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 and all 58 field foresters, who 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 48 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
- Starting implementation of the Forest Action Plan

## Key Accomplishments

### Update of the 44-City Street Tree Inventory

In 2010 a third statewide measurement of community-owned street trees in Missouri was conducted by MDC foresters and contractors. The objective of the 2010 inventory was to depict how Missouri's urban forests are changing over time. The MDC collected information about physical tree attributes that can be used to characterize the resource's economic value. The results were compiled and summarized this year. A few key statistics are as follows:

- In 2010 there were 64 trees per mile of street.
- In 2010 over 13 percent of the street trees had trunk diameters greater than 24 inches while in 1999 only 9 percent were of that size.
- The average condition of Missouri's street trees has declined in the past 20 years.
- Missouri street trees provide annual benefits worth \$148 million, averaging \$5,800 per street mile. The highest value was in the Kansas City region at \$9,423 per street mile.

### **i-Tree Eco Project with Mid-America Regional Council in Kansas City**

The MDC and the Kansas Forest Service cooperated on a project with the Mid-America Regional Council in Kansas City. The project calculated the values of metro Kansas City's urban forest and utilized the results to understand the potential effects of emerald ash borer, forest fragmentation due to land use conversion, benefits of trees in a priority watershed, and possible inclusion of trees into the next State Implementation Plan for air quality.

Educational programs through the Mid-America Regional Council's Academy for Sustainable Communities will be structured to build awareness about green infrastructure protection and facilitate new partnerships that strengthen Kansas City's community forestry agenda.

### **Tornado Response and Recovery**

An F5 tornado struck the communities of Joplin and Duquesne on May 22, 2011. It destroyed miles of homes and schools and 162 lives. The MDC was a first responder and will continue to help the cities recover their urban forest. The community forestry program helped with tree assessment, which quickened recovery efforts. The U.S. Forest Service and the MDC received assistance from the States of Arkansas and Oklahoma to conduct Urban Forest Strike Team training for 18 Missouri arborists. The trainees collected data on the tornado damage and are available to assist in the event of another storm event.



An F5 tornado destroyed structures and claimed the lives of 162 people in Joplin and Duquesne, MO, on May 22, 2011.

## **Emerald Ash Borer**

Emerald ash borer (EAB) is rapidly advancing and threatening our State. An EAB Outreach Coordinator position was made possible by a three-way partnership with USDA APHIS PPQ and the Missouri Department of Agriculture. This person focused on education and outreach specific to EAB and has allowed for the development of a strategic communications plan and implementation of many tasks.



## **Statistical Highlights**

Managing and Developing Communities:	121
Population of Participating Communities:	2,922,413
Volunteer Assistance Generated (hours):	30,894

