

Support the Urban and Community Forestry Program



ABOUT NASF

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) is composed of the directors of state and territorial forestry agencies and the District of Columbia.

NASF represents state and territorial forester interests by influencing forest policy and leading efforts to optimize social, economic, and environmental benefits of trees and forests.

Learn more at www.stateforesters.org

Contact: Gary Schiff at gschiff@stateforesters.org



444 N. Capitol Street NW
Suite 540
Washington, DC 20001
202-624-5415
www.stateforesters.org

The Urban and Community Forestry Program of the USDA Forest Service enables critical assistance to communities in establishing and managing local urban and community forestry resources. **The program helps keep trees and forests in our communities healthy, which benefits more than 220 million people—or 83 percent of the population—who live in urban areas in the United States.** The program directly serves more than 7,000 communities across the United States.

Federal investments efficiently provide public goods that stimulate long-term economic growth, build infrastructure, and promote innovation. **Federal UCF funds are matched with private and public resources that improve local communities.** Over the last 10 years, there has been a demonstrated rise in urban forestry jobs in communities that have received technical, educational, or financial assistance. **Trees and forests are America's green infrastructure—our natural capital.** Actively and sustainably managed urban and community trees and forests bolster local economies, improve human health, and bring communities closer together.

America's **natural capital is being decimated by insects** such as the emerald ash borer, which has killed tens of millions of trees across the nation. This pest alone is a **multi-billion dollar problem to American communities** and the Urban and Community Forestry Program is an important part of the solution to reforest cities and towns across America.

NASF FY17 and FY18 Recommendation: \$31 million

Level enacted in FY12.

Other urban and community forest benefits include:

- Improved human health. Trees improve air quality by absorbing gaseous pollutants through their leaves. Tree-lined streets encourage people to walk in their communities and walk further. **A recent study in New York City found that an increase of just 343 urban trees per square kilometer was associated with 29 percent lower prevalence of early childhood asthma.**
- Carbon storage. **In the United States alone, urban trees store over 708 million tons of carbon, which is equivalent to annually mitigating carbon emissions from about 500 million automobiles.** Urban trees help further reduce emissions by lowering electricity demand for summer air conditioning and winter heating.

Specific examples include:

- In Alaska, urban and community forestry program funding allows the Alaska Division of Forestry to provide technical, educational, and financial assistance to communities to maximize the benefits trees provide such as clean air and water, storm water reduction and treatment, habitat for fish and wildlife, recreation areas close to home, and enhanced property values.
- In California, the urban trees in Los Angeles remove 1,976 tons of air pollution per year, contributing to improved air quality and human health.
- In Kansas, the Kansas Forest Service Community Forestry staff have provided 203 technical assists to over 180 communities.
- In Minnesota, the street trees in Minneapolis save \$9.1 million per year in stormwater treatments.

A healthy tree canopy improves quality of life in many ways. We must invest in the Urban and Community Forestry Program to help support America's most basic infrastructure: trees.