



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Texas 2017



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2016 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$1,274,110
Forest Legacy	\$2,155,993
Forest Stewardship	\$665,490
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$688,050
State Fire Assistance	\$1,640,672
Urban and Community Forestry	\$883,205
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$705,114
Total	\$8,012,634

NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester's office.

Program Goals

- To maintain and improve the health of rural and urban forests and to protect the forests and citizens of Texas. These programs maximize cost effectiveness through the use of program delivery partnerships and increase forestland sustainability and value in a non-regulatory, voluntary manner.
- The cooperative programs, implemented through partnerships between Texas, USDA Forest Service, and other entities, emphasize forest sustainability and the production of amenity and commodity values.

Key Issues

- Working with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk and enhance community forest sustainability.
- Invasive plants, insects, diseases, and drought-related impacts are key issues within forest health.
- Protecting the health and value of trees for wildlife and water where woodlands are not traditionally harvested commercially.
- Addressing landscape scale issues, and developing incentive-based programs that increase water quality and forest health.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2016 Accomplishments	Value
Population	25,145,561	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	5,398
Acres of Forest Land	62,614,955	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	72,138
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	12,996,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	56,253
Number of NIPF Landowners	354,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	133
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	165
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	156,000,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	2,020
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,873	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	6,912
Cities and Towns	1,214	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	100
Forest Based Employment	60,900		
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	8		

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2016 Accomplishments	Value
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	70,425,232	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	12,981,147
		Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	8,757

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) continued to work with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk, conducting 142 Ready Set Go (RSG) workshops for 12,449 Texans and providing 17 RSG train-the-trainer sessions to 25 fire departments. Local, state, and national resources responded to 11,069 wildfires burning 315,619 acres in 2016. State Fire Assistance provided funding to support fire protection and training activities across Texas. The federal excess property programs (FEPP and FFP) assisted Texas in acquiring and placing fire equipment in rural communities throughout the state. In addition, TFS administered Volunteer Fire Assistance Program funds to support firefighter safety and the training efforts of rural community fire departments.

Forest Health Protection

Emerald ash borer (EAB) was detected in Northeast Texas during 2016. TFS has taken the lead for public outreach concerning the detection and works with USDA-APHIS to implement the EAB Monitoring and Detection Program across the state. No other major forest pests were detected during 2016 which includes southern pine beetle (SPB). Although SPB hasn't been identified in Texas for some time, the SPB Prevention Program continues to assist landowners in thinning overly dense pine stands. Oak wilt continues to spread throughout Central and North Texas infecting healthy live oak trees. TFS continues to provide both technical and financial assistance to affected landowners through the Texas Oak Wilt Suppression Project. Through this effort in 2016 over \$70,000 in financial assistance was provided to install over 65,000 feet of containment trenches. The threat from invasive pests and plants continues to grow in Texas. To help mitigate these threats TFS continues to provide educational outreach and participate in the National "Don't Move Firewood" campaign to raise awareness on the threats these invasive species have to our natural resources.

Forest Legacy

Continuing to conserve working forests, TFS acquired a conservation easement on 6,912 acres along the Neches River through FY14 Forest Legacy funds of \$2,370,000 (Bobcat Ridge Project). TFS received a 2016 acquisition grant for \$2 million for the 5,000 acre Phase II of Longleaf Ridge and began due diligence work.

Forest Stewardship

The TFS continued to focus efforts towards the stated National Program Priorities. As a part of the program, TFS delivered 578 Forest Stewardship Plans during FY16 representing more than 70,000 acres. Of those acres, approximately 75% of them are located within identified high priority areas as identified in the Texas Forest Action Plan. Through the TFS seed orchard, 1,244 pounds of improved seed were collected and/or produced and over 58,000 seedlings were produced through the West Texas Nursery. The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee representing 34 different agencies and organizations actively meets to provide direction and guidance for ensuring that a balanced and effective program reaches landowners statewide.

Landowner Assistance

TFS assists landowners across the state through a number of activities. In addition to Forest Stewardship activities, landowners receive help in the specific areas of land and timber management, reforestation, tax management, forest products, and forest health, among other land issues and landowner interests. TFS strives to meet the needs of all Texas landowners throughout the diverse state. This includes windbreak needs in the High Plains, insect and disease issues for rural and urban trees, brush control issues in Central and West Texas, water related issues across the state, forest and habitat fragmentation, and protection and sustainability of the commercial forests of East Texas. During FY16, TFS provided more than 80,000 assists representing 128,000 acres and over 5,000 man-hours to landowners, homeowners,

government officials, urban communities and the general public. These assists included training sessions/workshops, one on one consultations, and web- based trainings and applications.

Outreach and Emerging Markets

TFS continues to monitor economically-viable sources of biomass and promote biomass energy markets by providing volume, availability, and economic development information throughout Texas as well as promoting new markets for traditional forest products grown in East Texas. TFS continues to expand the capabilities of www.texasforestinfo.com, a web-based portal that provides all Texans and others information on Texas' forest resources. The portal also provides landowners and land managers tools to assist them in the management of their forests and woodlands. During 2016, new applications were added to the portal including Forest Drought, My City's Trees and expansion of mobile applications to include the Texas Forestry BMP Manual.

Through the Forest Stewardship Program, the TFS emphasizes the management and sustainability of resource high-priority areas by producing the quarterly newsletter "Stewardship Briefings". The newsletter addresses landscape scale concerns within these areas and how landowners can maintain the health and vigor of their forestlands. Throughout the year TFS hosts and sponsors a variety of training, webinars and workshops that focus on current natural resource issues. Outreach efforts also target landowners of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to educate them on natural resources and how they can better manage their forests or woodlands. Through the efforts of TFS the stewardship message is conveyed to thousands of small-scale, diverse, and new landowners and thousands of school kids each year.

Restoration

TFS continues to collaborate with federal, state, and NGO partners to identify and develop landscape initiatives to address forest and woodland health, improve water quality, and identify barriers to landowners in managing forests and woodlands across the state. Agency staff serve integral roles on various restoration teams including the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team, Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network, and the State Technical Advisory Committee hosted by NRCS. Several TFS staff continue to coordinate with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to provide a financial assistance program to assist landowners in establishing and managing longleaf pine. Also, TFS continues to work with the USFS and Nature Conservancy to reestablish ponderosa pine, which have been grown from locally collected seeds, in the Davis Mountain region.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry Program works with communities and homeowners across the state to provide educational and technical assistance on a variety of subjects including tree ordinances, single tree issues, urban tree inventories and developing community management plans for urban green spaces and trees. Staff members also work with 6 regional urban forestry councils to educate citizens about the benefits and values of trees in urban and suburban landscapes, coordinate the Texas Tree Conference and assist in the development of online and mobile applications to assist communities in the management of their trees.

Water Resources

The TFS Water Resources program continues to focus on innovative technology and strategic partnerships to enhance water resources throughout the state. Texas Forestry BMPs, a native smartphone application for the Texas Forestry Best Management Practices handbook, was released to provide quick and easy access to the guidelines and interactive tools while in the field. The web-based Plan My Land Operation application was updated, increasing the functionality of this critical BMP planning tool. Computer models (iTree Hydro) are also being used to quantify and build support for utilizing urban forests in stormwater management programs. The Texas Forests and Drinking Water Partnership was formally established, connecting forest landowners with drinking water managers to collaborate on source water protection initiatives. Priority watersheds have been identified and efforts are underway to develop a forest-water demonstration project.

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