



# Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands



## State's Forest Resource Fact Sheet 2004

The CNMI has maintained its growing population of mixed ethnical groups. This growing population continues to put pressure on available land for homestead and for other developmental purposes. Although its economic situation could be in its worst condition, the CNMI maintained its priorities towards natural resources. These priorities included protection, preservation and conservation of its unique limestone forests throughout the CNMI. In-line with these priorities, the Forestry program was given an additional leverage to improve and effectively reach the diverse ethnical groups to participate in planting for beautification and for various benefits.

In addition, the growing population challenges various Forestry programs in providing educational issues on tree care, conservation practices, protection and preservation of natural resources because of its fragile ecosystem. These programs are most needed in three (out of 14) islands due to its population growth. These islands are Saipan, Rota and Tinian. With its 39 communities and 74,612+ in population, the Program continues to find means to reach these clientele.

### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs (Projected budget figures are estimates):

	FY 2003	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2004
	Federal	State	Federal Estimate	State Estimate
Forest Health Protection	20,000	20,000	60,000	60,000
FHP Pest Prevention/Suppression	0	0	50,000	50,000
Cooperative Fire Protection - State Assistance	250,000	250,000	228,000	228,000
Forest Stewardship Program	85,704	85,704	65,000	65,000
Urban and Community Forestry	157,448	157,448	140,000	140,000
Conservation Education	8,800	8,800	10,000	10,000
Forest Land Enhancement Program	68,666	68,666	0	0
Forest Inventory Analysis	30,000	30,000	0	0
TOTAL	620,618	620,618	553,000	553,000

The cooperative programs were administered and implemented through a partnership between the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)**, and the **USDA Forest Service**. These programs promote the health and efficiency of CNMI's forestlands and the islands economies. Emphasis focuses on forest products (for medicinal value), wildlife enhancement, water management, and conservation practices of natural resources. The goal is to maintain and improve the health of CNMI's urban settings, limestone forests, and natural resources.

These program goals will:

- ▣ Reduce **costs** by partnerships,
- ▣ **Increase values** through sustained productivity of forests, and
- ▣ Ensure benefits be distributed **equally** throughout the funding year.

Key issues, which the CNMI will address with the 2003/04 budgets, include:

- ◆ Educate and train Forest Staff in managing natural resources.
- ◆ Increase involvement between Government and Private Agencies.
- ◆ Replace/Replant damaged trees within the core and periphery of urban setting.
- ◆ Increase island wide planting emphasizing economical and environmental values.
- ◆ Suppress known invasive species from altering the limestone forest ecosystem.
- ◆ Expand forestry programs through the guidance of forestry managers and implementers.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

SELECTED FACTS		SELECTED RESULTS	
Population	74,612	Stewardship Plans Prepared (current year)	2
Acres of Forest Land	20,000	Area Under Stewardship Plans (current year)	5
Acres of Non-Industrial Private Forest Land	4,000	Area Under Stewardship Plans (all years)	-
Number of NIPF Landowners	680	Rural Acres Planted	-
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	-	Technical Assistance to Private Landowners	680
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	-	Rural Fire Departments Assisted	-
Number Rural Fire Departments	7	Rural Fire Department Volunteers Trained	-
Number of Cities and Towns	39	Acres Surveyed for Forest Health	-
Forest Based Employment	-	Forest Health Assistance visits	-
Forest Based Earnings	-	Cities and Urban Areas Assisted	39
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	-	Economic Action Grants to Rural Areas	-
State Forestry Budget	-	Technology transfer and Workshops	5,600

### Program Highlights:

Cooperative Fire Protection: This program was able to create and implement a "Strike Force Team" throughout the CNMI.

Forest Stewardship: This program is on its fourth year of implementation and is in its continuing phase. Private landowners showed interest by participating in this program's incentive of free plant assistance from the forestry plant nursery. The intent of these incentives is to encourage farmers and private landowners to continue diversifying their tree species within their private land. Six hundred and eighty private landowners were assisted with technical and plant materials. Five of these continue to extract various goals and objective from the prepared a 5-year forest stewardship plan and is now in its fourth year.

Urban and Community Forestry: Under the direction of the Departments of Lands and Natural Resources, Division of Agriculture-Forestry, Forestry Advisory Councils and the USDA Forest Service, the program is able to continue to reach various communities through projects, such as Arbor Month, Neighborhood Greening, Beach Planting and Beautification Projects. These activities increase awareness's in the care of natural resources, island beautification, and partnership between private and government agencies.

Conservation Education: With its limited funding, this program focuses its outreach thru posters, stickers and brochures giveaway to school during presentation, one to one consultation and various planting projects. The forestry office continues to seek ways to disseminate educational effectiveness thru the use of posters and other educational materials.

Forest Health Protection: A invasive species known as Ivy Gourd (*Coccinia grandis*) has been identified to be the most aggressive weed in the CNMI. This particular species of weed was addressed thru the use of biological control since its spread continues uncontrollably in the CNMI. The beneficial known as *Acythopus cocciniae* has been released and has become established, which is now taking effect on the Ivy gourd where they were released.

Forest Land Enhancement Program: With this program being newly implemented, landowners saw and praised the additional assistance being offered/provided towards managing their forested and non forested land parcels. But with the additional obligation subjected on the USDA Forest Service and on the program managers, the purpose and direction of this program was shortened by lack of funding. However, with FY'03 funding, the CNMI Forestry Coordinators and Managers sought avenues to stretch the program benefits to non-industrial landowners, by providing live plant and plant material to assist in diversing their land parcel. Additional purchase of educational materials were initiated to reach the less fortunate individuals whom seek assistance in land management.

Forest Inventory Analysis: With the assistance of the USDA Forest Service – Pacific Northwest Research Station Staff, the CNMI Forestry Staff were able to be trained in the proper use of forestry-inventory instruments during the CNMI Forest inventory. These data collected will be compiled and shared with the collaborators and the contributing state. In addition, the data collected will assist forest managers and planners in making sound judgment prior to any development or mitigation projects. It also provides an accurate data on types of vegetation present on each islands.

### For more information contact:



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