



NEBRASKA



State & Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Investment in State's Cooperative Programs:

Programs	FY 2003 Final SPF	FY 2003 Final NFP	FY 2004 Estimate SPF	FY 2004 Estimate NFP
Coop Forest Health Management	45,000	29,000	50,000	29,000
State Fire Assistance	259,686	338,815	306,590	260,162
Volunteer Fire Assistance	128,000	15,000	128,000	15,000
Forest Stewardship Program	246,941		183,000	
Stewardship Incentives				
Forest Legacy Program			3,000	
Urban and Community Forestry	445,000		386,000	
Economic Action Programs		98,000	8,800	
PNW Assistance Program				
Forest Resource Information and Analysis	35,000			
Forest Land Enhancement Program	100,000			
TOTAL	1,259,627	480,815	1,065,390	304,162

The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of Nebraska, the USDA Forest Service, and many other private and government entities. These programs promote the health and productivity of Nebraska's forest lands and rural economies. Emphasis focuses on timber and other forest products, wildlife, water resources, rural economies and conservation practices. The goal is to maintain and improve the health of Nebraska's urban and rural forests and related economies. These programs:

- **Increase cost effectiveness** through the use of partnerships in delivery,
- **Increase values** through sustained productivity of forests, and
- **Are voluntary**, and use non-regulatory approaches.

KEY ISSUES:

Key issues which State and federal programs will address together in the next few years include:

- Wildland/Urban interface programs including landowner education and impacts on fire districts.
- Forest Health problems, both urban and rural.
- Establishment, protection, and enhancement of forested riparian areas.

Nebraska has 948,000 acres of forest land and 1.2 million acres of timbered range land and other non-forest with trees. Nearly all of the state's forests and woodlands are privately owned. The state's population of 1.7 million people includes 340 communities with populations over 100; more than 60% of these communities have initiated some form of community forestry program.

Forest Facts and 2003 Accomplishments

SELECTED FACTS		FY 2003 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	
Population	1,711,263	Stewardship Plans Prepared (current year)	40
Acres of Forest Land	948,000	Acres Under Stewardship Plans (current year)	7419
Acres of NonIndustrial Private Forest Land	790,500	Acres Under Stewardship Plans (all years)	72,848
Number of NIPF Landowners	30,400	Multi-resource practices implemented on NIPF - Acres	242
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	741,247	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted SPF NFP	1084 30
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	48,342,273	State Fire – Communities Assisted SPF NFP	435 10
Number of Rural Fire Departments	476	Coop Forest Health – Acres Protected SPF NFP	
Number of cities and towns	523	Coop Forest Health – Acres Surveyed SPF NFP	1650
Forest Based Employment	400	Forest Legacy Project Acquisition - Acres	
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)		Urban Forestry-Participating communities	286
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	1,174,678	Urban Forestry –Volunteer Assistance Generated-Days	5950
		EAP-Communitites working under broad-based local strategic plans	
		PNW-Communities working under broad-based local strategic	

Program Highlights:

Urban and Community Forestry:

Resource Handbook Completed

The Nebraska Forest Service, in cooperation with the Statewide Arboretum, published the Community Forestry Handbook for use in the municipal offices. It covers a variety of topics revolving around the community tree resource. None of the material is copyrighted so the community can take information from the handbook and use it in a variety of ways. By the end of the year 95 copies had been distributed and copies provided to all of the Region 2 state coordinators.

Sandhills Tree School

The Sandhills Tree School was developed and implemented by Rachel Allison (Community Forester Assistant at North Platte). The main objective of this educational workshop is to help train public and commercial groundskeepers. Often times those who care for public landscapes (schools, hospitals, libraries, etc.) have little training when it comes to arboriculture and horticulture. The Sandhills Tree School fills that void. In spring of 2003 the school was presented in North Platte to an audience of 65 participants. The program focused on tree planting and spading, drought, chlorosis, trees and turf, and street trees. A unique aspect of the program was that most of the speakers were either commercial arborists/nursery professionals, or municipal employees. It was quite successful and a change of pace from our normal training efforts.

Don't Top Trees

The “Don’t Top Trees” campaign rolled into high gear during 2003. The Nebraska Community Forestry Council has adopted this program that was initiated in Missouri. One of the major goals will be to require all Nebraska Tree City USA communities to show that they have developed written policy within their respective communities that forbids the practice of “topping” trees on public lands and also strongly discourages “topping” on private lands. Many of the 112 Tree City communities have already submitted their documentation.

Landscape Grants Continue

The Nebraska Forest Service continued to provide more than \$300,000.00 in landscape grants in cooperation with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and the Nebraska Department of Roads. These funds are part of the federal highway bill, which has been re-authorized for 2004. The NFS works with smaller projects (less than \$50,000 total) and serves the needs of Nebraska’s smaller communities, which are often overlooked with larger federal programs.

Cooperative Fire Protection:

In 2003, 19 vehicles (Federal Excess Personal Property) were placed on Nebraska Fire Districts. These vehicles become key to the fire suppression capability of Nebraska’s Rural Fire Departments. Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) funds were used to cost-share with 78 Rural Fire Districts on the purchase of protective clothing and fire-fighting equipment. VFA money was also used to help train volunteer firefighters all across the state. This included the red carding of firefighters available for interagency use during wildfire emergencies. Five Mutual Aid District plans were prepared for mutual aid Districts serving 63 Nebraska communities. Another 5 communities received Community Fire Protection Master Planning from the Nebraska Forest Service.

There were 4 new community Fire Prevention programs started this year. This brings the total of local level, year-round community fire prevention programs to well over 100. The Partners in Prevention (PIP) program continues to get stronger and allows the NFS to service even more fire prevention requests with the help of these energetic volunteer workers.

As always, the Aerial Fire suppression coordinated by NFS stands ready to assist Rural Fire Departments in the event of a large wildfire anywhere in the state. Finally, National Fire Plan (NFP) money has helped present workshops and do fuel treatment on over 300 acres of land in key wildland urban interface locations in the state

Landowner Assistance:

Service foresters provided technical assistance involving tree planting, forest management, and pest control to 406 rural landowners in 2003. Forest Stewardship Plans were written for 40 cooperators to help guide future forest management and conservation tree plantings on 7419 acres. In addition, NFS staff wrote 133 forestry practice plans for landowners to implement tree planting, forest improvement, or forest protection practices. Budget cuts, reduced service forestry staff, and lack of forestry cost-share funding, e.g. SIP, has reduced landowner forestry activity. When/if FLEP is funded, we anticipate greatly increased landowner interest.

This year the 6th Central Region Woodland Stewardship Conference was held in Nebraska City and was attended by 165 landowners from Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, and Missouri. This meeting is supported by the state forestry agencies and the State Extension Foresters in the four participating states.

Forest Health Protection:

Forest Health Protection: Program staff authored three publications discussing the identification and management of forest pests and presented 25 workshops that provided information directly to more than 1000 Nebraskans. Surveys of central and eastern Nebraska forests, windbreaks, and urban plantings were conducted to determine the extent and severity of the disease pine wilt in Scotch pine, and to identify and determine the extent and severity of diseases and a stress-caused decline of bur oak. In addition, studies were conducted to identify the potential insect vectors of pine wilt across the state, and to evaluate new pesticide treatments for pine wilt in Scotch pine and Cercospora blight in juniper and redcedar.

Economic Action Programs:

A “Primary Processing Economic Analysis” is currently being conducted by a consultant (Colorado State Forest Service, CSU) to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a wood processing facility in the Pine Ridge area of northwest Nebraska to utilize small diameter ponderosa pine. The final report is expected by summer, 2004.

The “Wood Energy Expansion Study” for Chadron State College was completed. The study indicated that it was economically feasible to modify the current wood-fired boiler system, which currently provides steam/heat to campus facilities, to incorporate steam absorption technology for cooling campus buildings. The NFS provided \$100,000 to the College to assist with retrofitting the wood fired boiler system to include cooling capacity. That retrofitting is currently in process. The fuel for the system comes from hazardous fuel reduction thinning projects being conducted in the Pine Ridge.

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