



URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

COMMUNITY | FOREST | URBAN

The Iowa Urban and Community Forestry (IUCF) program provides technical, educational and financial assistance to communities, individuals and organizations. Program activities result in improved awareness of urban forestry and the benefits of managing for a sustainable and healthy natural resource. With 80 percent of the nation's population in urban areas, there are strong environmental, social, and economic cases to be made for the conservation of green spaces to guide growth and revitalize city centers and older suburbs. IUCF responds to the needs of urban areas by maintaining, restoring, and improving urban forest ecosystems.

The IUCF program combines federal, state, investor-owned utility and other funds to provide support and technical assistance to over 400 Iowa communities annually. Grants are offered to communities throughout the state to increase tree canopy and improve urban forest

resources. Partnerships with cities, counties and non-profit organizations enhance and broaden the impact of the IUCF program. Last year the program was able to use three full-time employees and partial time commitments from 15 district foresters for a total investment of eight FTEs from state, federal and utility funds.

Program Highlights

- Last year 439 communities received technical assistance developing, managing and sustaining local community forestry programs from the IUCF program. This assistance included training, tree planting, ordinance review and more.
- In the last seven years, 356 communities under 5,000 in population received tree inventories, forestry management plans and emerald ash borer (EAB) preparation.

• A statewide canopy cover assessment provides data on where and how much tree cover we have in Iowa. There are 253,056 acres of community forest in Iowa. Incorporated communities have 18.5 percent tree cover, while rural Iowa has approximately eight percent tree cover.

• Annually 6,000 reduced-price trees are planted on private property with a partnership and financial support from Alliant Energy and MidAmerican Energy. The programs promote energy efficiency,





urban forest tree diversity and preparation for future tree health problems.

- Last year, 27 schools or communities received grants for tree planting and youth education implemented by the IUCF program and supported by utility donations.
- The average street tree in Iowa provides over \$150 worth of benefits every year. This means that for every dollar spent, trees provide 2 to 3 dollars' worth of benefits to Iowans.

Threats to Urban and Community Forests

- The economic loss caused by the top five key pests (Gypsy moth, bur oak blight, EAB, Asian long-horned beetle and thousand cankers disease) is an estimated \$1.4 billion over 20 years for forest landowners and wood products businesses and over \$20 billion in urban tree removal.

- Iowa communities have three million ash trees threatened or being lost from EAB. Estimated costs to communities and urban landowners is \$4 billion to remove and replace, and/or treat trees threatened by the pest.
- 4.5 million trees were lost due to development in Iowa from 2010 to 2015.
- Nonnative invasive plants were found in 94 percent of the USFS inventory plots.



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES