



Delaware Forest Resource Fact Sheet 2025

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Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2024 Final
Cooperative Fire Protection	\$0
Cooperative Forestry	\$0
Forest Health Management	\$187,000
Forest Legacy and Community Forestry	\$0
Total	\$187,000

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

Key Issues

- Forest Health and Functionality: An adequate, healthy forestland base ensures the perpetual production of forest outputs.
- Forest Markets: Adequate and diverse forest markets are available to landowners to satisfy their forest management goals.
- Sustainable Forest Management: Delawareans must sustainably manage their rural and forest resources.
- Public Awareness and Appreciation of Forests: Delawareans must understand and appreciate the importance of forests and forest management.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2024 Accomplishments	Value
Population	989,948	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	2,347
Acres of Forest Land	353,435	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	2,066
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	204,954	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	1,002
Number of NIPF Landowners	4,281	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	50
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	85
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	557,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	54	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	57	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	66
Forest Based Employment	1,852	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	605,890
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	7	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	4,885
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	1,629,300		

Program Highlights

Chesapeake Bay Watershed

The Chesapeake Shared Stewardship Agreement is being implemented and will help Delaware meet its mandated water quality improvement goals for the Chesapeake Bay through watershed forestry. The Delaware Forest Service led the State in the restoration of 514 acres of upland tree planting on agricultural lands and 10 acres of urban tree planting in the most recent reporting cycle, which was approved in 2024. Other significant watershed forestry activities in 2024 included tree planting grants to Delaware communities and implementing a new Forest Buffer Incentive Program to support implementation of Delaware's Riparian Forest Buffer Action Strategy.

Cooperative Fire Protection

Delaware utilized Volunteer Fire Capacity funds to provide grants to six volunteer fire departments in preparing for wildland fire suppression responsibilities. Basic wildland firefighter training was delivered to over 140 local firefighters in cooperation with the Delaware State Fire School. The State Fire Capacity funded treatment of 1,600 acres to reduce hazardous fuels.

Economic Action

In 2024, one Delaware project received \$133,800 in the Forest Markets' grant funding for the Temporary Bridge Crossings program.

Forest Health Protection

This year's aerial survey found 186 damage areas totaling 1,564 acres. Agents included emerald ash borer (730 acres), flooding (283 acres) and saltwater flooding (137 acres). Zero acres of spongy moth defoliation were recorded for the first time in four years. Wide-spread discoloration of mature pine needles was seen in the spring, heaviest from the southern edge of Kent and northern

third of Sussex Counties. Tests found mostly saprophytic fungi (but some diplodia tip blight) pointing to physical damage: possibly from late 2022 wind event, an April 2023 tornado, and spring/winter 2024 wet weather. Beech leaf disease was first reported from New Castle County in 2023, and while additional symptomatic trees were reported in 2024 none was found in Kent or Sussex Counties. By October, all of Delaware was in either moderate drought or abnormally dry.

Forest Stewardship

The Delaware Forest Stewardship Program first announced in 2022 a new effort to create forests statewide. Governor Carney's support for natural resources and forests led to the creation of the new Forest Initiative Delaware Fund planting program, which aligns with the Governor's Tree for Every Delawarean program and the Delaware Forest Service's goals and statewide forest strategy. The program offers free afforestation plantings and is unique because it is not a cost-share or reimbursement program – the Delaware Forest Service will use State funds to pay 100% of costs for eligible projects. In the spring of 2024, Delaware Forest Service planted 105,050 seedlings on 14 sites totaling 141 acres. This contributed to the Delaware Forest Service exceeding the 1 million tree pledge Governor Carney made in 2021 by planting 1,013,149 trees in just three years, seven years before the 2030 goal. The Delaware Forest Service celebrated the achievement through presentation of a plaque commemorating the milestone to outgoing Governor John Carney at the State Fair in July.

Delaware does not operate a State nursery, but it does manage at least one seed orchard. Through the Forest Stewardship program and National Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetics Resource program, the State receives financial assistance to support nursery, genetics, and seed programs.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Grantee: National Association of Conservation Districts

Federal Investment: \$585,824 (Multi-State Project)

Project: Northeast Mid-Atlantic Partnership for Forests and Water

Summary: The Northeast-Mid-Atlantic Partnership for Forests and Water is an interagency, multi-partner collaboration that advances restoration of priority forest landscapes and protects water from West Virginia to Maine. This project will facilitate continued collaboration among the diverse array of partners in states across the northeast and mid-Atlantic, will foster shared learning, and support forested watershed restoration activities.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry Program supports non-profit organizations within the State to provide education surrounding trees and organize tree planting events. In fiscal year 24, Delaware Forest Service collaborated with seven Urban and Community Forestry partners. 223 volunteers contributed 1,423 hours valued at \$47,731.53.



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