



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Massachusetts 2024



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2023 Estimate
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$143,407
Forest Legacy	\$145,000
Forest Stewardship	\$324,119
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$297,992
State Fire Assistance	\$869,857
Urban and Community Forestry	\$632,998
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$129,671
Total	\$2,543,044

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

State, private, and other non-Federal forests make up 92 percent of the 176 million acres of forests across the 20 states of the Northeast and Midwest. The U.S. Forest Service and state forestry agencies collaborate with other partners on shared stewardship goals, which also support each State Forest Action Plan. The State, Private, and Tribal Forestry programs promote the health, resilience, and productivity of trees and forests across all ownerships for the benefit of people and wildlife; establish and manage urban and community forests; empower private landowners with information and technical assistance to sustainably manage their forests; and protect critically important rural forests and watersheds.

Program Goals

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses.
- Protect forests from threats.
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

Key Issues

- Increase resistance and resilience of trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Manage forest ecosystem health and biodiversity.
- Support and enhance forest economy.
- Maintain and increase urban tree canopy.
- Enhance the connection between forests and people.
- Increase land base of conserved forests (keep forests as forests).
- Advocate for a legal and institutional framework pertinent to the conservation and management of trees and forests.
- Maintain and enhance soil, water, and air resources.
- Support the role and use of prescribed fire in the landscape.
- Cultivate and support partnerships with forestry and conservation stakeholders.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2023 Accomplishments	Value
Population	7,029,917	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	2,452
Acres of Forest Land	2,984,347	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	26,584
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	1,316,407	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	5,778
Number of NIPF Landowners	23,046	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	50
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	247
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	3,200,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	220	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	34
Cities and Towns	351	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	190
Forest Based Employment	20,647	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	5,417,499
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	6	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	21,558
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	3,750,000		

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

Volunteer Fire Assistance funding was provided to 50 volunteer fire departments. The State has a very active prescribed fire program, treating 2,431 acres from 43 separate projects. Funding contributed to training 654 firefighters. A Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant for \$300,000 allowed the State to expand their prescribed fire program through training and hazardous fuels treatments. A total of \$50,000 in Community Wildfire Defense Funding is being used to outreach and assist communities in developing Community Wildfire Defense Grant applications.

Economic Action

In 2023, four projects in Massachusetts totaling more than \$1 million were funded. Three of these projects were Wood Innovations projects with goals that include mass timber housing development and wood drying. Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation was awarded funding for temporary bridge crossings.

Forest Health Protection

The Department of Conservation and Recreation Forest Health Program continues to be the lead State agency for Asian longhorned beetle eradication efforts in Worcester County. Once again, no infested trees or beetles were discovered in 2023. Major southern pine beetle infestations were detected for the first time in Massachusetts in Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Elm zigzag sawfly was detected in Massachusetts for the first time in August 2023, causing severe defoliation of elms along a riparian corridor. Beech leaf disease has rapidly spread across Massachusetts and is now in all counties. Emerald ash borer is present in nearly all ash resources in Massachusetts, causing 11,362 acres of mortality. Strategic insecticide treatments to protect old-growth ash trees were initiated. Spongy moth declined in 2023 but was still notable in Berkshire and Franklin Counties.

Forest Legacy

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation completed the multi-tract West Quabbin Woodlands Forest Legacy Program (FLP) project in Franklin County, Massachusetts. Using \$211,274 of FLP funds, the town of Shutesbury purchased the fourth and final tract of this project, permanently conserving an additional 34 acres of forestland in central Massachusetts.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Grantee: Forest Stewards Guild

Federal investment: \$236,025 (multistate project)

Project: Sustaining Ash of the Northeast Through Training, Treatment and Outreach

Summary: The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a non-native insect that threatens to functionally eliminate ash from our forests. The loss of ash is ecologically, economically, and culturally devastating, particularly for indigenous peoples for whom ash holds a key role in basketry and other traditions. This project will create a regional response to EAB through educating and engaging land managers in science-based, thoughtful treatment of ash, sharing stories of hope, and encouraging actions that will sustain ash across the landscape. The project will also elevate indigenous voices and priorities to the forestry community.

Grantee: National Association of Conservation Districts

Federal investment: \$600,000 (13-State project)

Project: Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Partnership for Forests and Water

Summary: This interagency, multi-partner collaboration advances science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes and protects water in 13 States across the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The project is also supported by the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians and includes focus on protecting water supplies for underserved communities and a climate markets work group. Regional collaboration will drive alignment between the forest and water sectors and facilitate greater information sharing. Projects will result in measurable on-the-ground outcomes.

Grantee: Massachusetts Audubon Society

Federal investment: \$297,992

Project: Accelerating Implementation of Climate Resilient Forest Management Practices in Massachusetts

Summary: Mass Audubon and partners will create a more resilient and productive forest in Massachusetts by driving private landowner adoption of climate-smart forestry, including for underserved populations.

Urban and Community Forestry

This year, the review committee for the Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) challenge grants recommended that all 14 applicants receive funding for their grant proposals for a total of more than \$282,000 in USDA Forest Service funding. This funding is used to support these grants building local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry management. The Greening the Gateway Cities Tree Planting Program expanded into four new cities: Barnstable, Malden, Taunton, and Worcester. The program is now planting trees in 23 of 26 gateway cities and to date have planted over 39,000 trees. In partnership with the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the Department of Conservation & Recreation UCF program staff are supporting the work of a graduate student who is helping to promote the Legacy Tree Program through projects including a new story map and webpage updates.

Contact Information



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