



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

## New Mexico 2020



### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2019 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$366,500
Forest Legacy	\$2,095,000
Forest Stewardship	\$190,000
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$474,969
State Fire Assistance	\$1,879,660
Urban and Community Forestry	\$263,200
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$490,395
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,759,724</b>

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

The Forestry Division provides statewide leadership to sustain healthy and productive forests on approximately 8.7 million acres of the state's private forests and woodlands. The Division is the lead state agency for forest and watershed health facilitating diverse partners to interconnect forest land management with management of woodlands, rangeland and other vegetative landscapes, of watersheds and waterways, of evolving best practices, and of the many entities, state and others partners with responsibility for land stewardship. The Division's work is collaborative, interdisciplinary, and focused on long-term sustainability. The Division also empowers New Mexico communities to protect, enhance, and utilize their forest resources and has the lead responsibility for wildland fire management on approximately 43 million acres of non-federal, non-municipal, and non-tribal lands. The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of New Mexico, the USDA Forest Service and many other private, non-profit, and government entities.

### Program Goals

- Provide for protection and safety of the public and firefighters.
- Develop qualified, equipped fire fighters to safely suppress & manage fire.
- Continue to increase pace of planning and restoration efforts at a watershed and landscape scale through multiple agency/partner agreements and collaborative strategies.
- Assist communities vulnerable to damage from wildland fires, insects, & invasive species.
- Enhance the economic viability of NM communities while protecting their natural resources.
- Provide technical assistance & promote current forest, watershed and urban/community forest management science.

### Key Issues

- Forest and watershed health.
- Threat of climate change and destructive wildfires in critical watersheds and the wildland-urban interface.
- Increased occurrence and extent of insect and disease outbreaks.
- Forest resiliency and adaptability.
- Urban forest canopy loss without adequate replacement plans.
- Fragmentation of forest landscapes.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

<b>Selected Facts</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>FY 2019 Accomplishments</b>	<b>Value</b>
Population	2,059,179	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	841
Acres of Forest Land	24,684,595	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	17,465
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	6,331,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	202
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	60
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	5,202,479	State Fire Communities Assisted	245
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	34,157,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	1,100
Number of Rural Fire Departments	368	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	102	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	54
Forest Based Employment	308	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	1,266,977
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	3,037
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	12,638,000		

## Program Highlights

### **Community Forestry and Open Space**

New Mexico State Forestry Division has not yet participated in a Community Forestry and Open Space Project.

### **Conservation Education**

New Mexico Forestry Division has a long legacy of providing a wealth of conservation education knowledge to residents and visitors to New Mexico. The Division continued a tradition of more than three decades of helping lead the state's Project Learning Tree program. Project Learning Tree trained dozens of education professionals statewide in how to use forest and watershed health issues as part of their daily curriculum. The Division played an active role in conducting the New Mexico Envirothon, which gets teams of high school students together annually to complete in areas such as forestry, aquatics, wildlife, soils, and other special environmental issues. The Division reached out to New Mexicans with conservation education at large annual events such as the New Mexico State Fair, distributing conservation tree seedlings and talking with residents and visitors about the role forests and fire play in our daily lives.

### **Cooperative Fire Protection**

The Cooperative Fire Five Year Plan, plus the Forest action plan, prioritizes the Division's objectives and needs in cooperative fire funding to sustain the Division's ability to achieve its mission of preventing and suppressing unwanted fires within 43 million acres of protected state and private land. This also includes the treatment of fuels to protect communities and improve forest health. In FY19, we have 62 CWPP's identifying 814 communities at risk from wildland fire. Of the 814 communities, 362 are listed as high risk, 307 are listed as moderate risk, and 145 are listed as low risk.

### **Economic Action**

New Mexico provides access to technology transfer and specialized business and marketing technical assistance with the intent to advance the science of healthy forest and woodland ecosystems and acceptable practices for reducing hazardous fuels. New Mexico State Forestry continues to provide technical assistance and administer forest harvest practice standards on commercial timber sales on private forest lands in New Mexico. In New Mexico, there remains a steady harvest of wood for lumber, mine timbers, utility poles, vigas/latillas, and mill residues. New Mexico State Forestry is a participant in several forest industry related organizations state wide, such as local wood clusters, the New Mexico Forest Industry Association, local biomass facility initiatives, and the San Juan-Rio Chama Watershed

Partnership.

### **Forest Health Protection**

The Cooperative Forest Health Program (CFHP) works within the State Forestry Division to deliver technical and monetary assistance to landowners and managers of forested lands throughout New Mexico. Technical assistance is provided by direct response to phone/email requests, education programs, training, and site visits. In 2019, the program manager responded to 49 requests for technical assistance, identified 3 insect/pathogen samples, and conducted 44 site visits. Monetary assistance is provided to private landowners through a cost-share program called the Forest Health Initiative (FHI). The goal of FHI is to administer federal dollars to reduce the risk of bark beetle and pathogen infections on private land. The Division batched 11 new FHI projects in 2019; 9 thinning treatments (147 acres) and 2 management plans (3,201 acres). CFHP collaborates with the USFS to conduct annual insect and pathogen surveys of New Mexico's forests and woodlands. Most data are collected by aerial detection surveys. During the 2019 aerial survey season, 546,000 acres of statewide forestland and woodlands had some degree of detectable insect and/or pathogen activity. This was a 250,000 acre increase in activity from the previous year. This jump in acreage was largely due to an increase in defoliator activity, mostly across the northern half of the state. Despite improved drought conditions, ponderosa pine continues to suffer from chronic bark beetle issues, especially in and around the Gila National Forest. Just over 113,000 acres of ponderosa mortality were observed in 2019. This represents an increase of over 50,000 acres from 2018 levels. Likewise, pinyon pine mortality was higher in 2019 with 46,000 areas impacted, most of which occurred in a droughty part of the state between Gallup and Farmington. This was an increase of 43,000 acres from the 2018 levels. The risk of damage to our state's forests will continue unless precipitation levels increase across the state.

### **Forest Legacy**

Phase I of the Forest Legacy Brazos Cliffs project was funded for \$3,480,000.00 through the USDA Forest Service. It will protect 3,620 acres in Rio Arriba Country from development. Phase II was funded in FY2019 for \$2,055,000.00 and will protect an additional 2,740 acres. The conservation easement for both phases should be completed by the end of 2020.

### **Forest Stewardship**

The Stewardship program saw 11 new or revised Forest Stewardship Management plans prepared in FY19 for a total of 17,465 acres on private forested land in New Mexico. 330 landowners have received technical assistance relating to their private forest lands, with an additional 511 landowners participating in educational programs relating to forest stewardship, fire prevention and forest management. •The New Mexico FSP continues to provide leadership in support of the New Mexico Tree Farm Program and other landowner education events related to fire, forest ecology and other NIPF landowner related topics.

### **Landowner Assistance**

The New Mexico Forestry Division provides technical and financial assistance to NM landowners through 6 district offices, 1 satellite office, the Forest and Watershed Health Office and the Conservation Seedling Program. In FY19 the Conservation and Reforestation Seedling Program distributed 69,499 trees and shrubs for conservation purposes to New Mexico residents with at least one acre of land.

### **Landscape Scale Restoration**

Restoring and Reconnecting the Navajo Nation's San Juan River:

The San Juan River runs over 60 miles through the Navajo Nation in northwest NM. The river is an important cultural touchstone for the Navajo people and provides critical drinking and agriculture water supplies. Invasive trees threaten the river's riparian area, degrading habitat and hydrologic function and increasing wildfire risk to the community. This project will treat invasives, restore native plants and habitat, and promote re-connection of the Navajo community to the river and its Bosque.

The San Juan Basin Community Wildfire Protection Team is a multi-agency partnership working to identify comprehensive solutions for the increasing number and cost of fires in the bosque, and associated issues caused by non-native vegetation. This partnership identified the areas at the greatest risk, and under the leadership of the Navajo Nation President accomplished the necessary environmental assessments to allow riparian restoration to occur in high priority areas. This project significantly

advances this restoration work.

The San Juan Basin Community Wildfire Protection Team now includes the Navajo Nation, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, San Juan County Fire, New Mexico Game and Fish, and New Mexico State Forestry. These agencies have overlapped their respective agency's goals into a priority landscape treatment and restoration list that addresses wildfire risk, wildlife habitat, river bank erosion and channeling, water supply to drinking water and agricultural uses, and cultural and recreational use of the river and bosque.

### ***The New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Act***

The Forest and Watershed Restoration Act (FAWRA) was created by House Bill 266 and signed into law by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham on March 15, 2019. FAWRA allocates funding annually to the New Mexico State Forestry Division with the purpose of restoring forests and watersheds feeding the Rio Grande river and its tributaries. It also establishes a Forest and Watershed Advisory Board to evaluate and recommend projects. The Forestry Division is charged with administering, implementing, and reporting on the projects.

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham named the public members to the FAWRA Advisory Board in early July 2019. To date, \$2,000,000 has been directed towards high priority projects across the state, including \$1,000,000 to National Forest System Lands in New Mexico.

### ***Urban and Community Forestry***

The New Mexico UCF Program continues to work to empower communities to develop and sustain healthy community forests for the benefit of our citizens and the environment. 68% of the state's population lives in a community either fully managing an urban/community forest program or developing one, and nine communities were recognized for the Tree City USA program. New Mexico State Forestry continues to maintain an on-going Services Agreement with the 501(c)(3) organization Tree New Mexico to conduct urban and community forestry related volunteer management and coordination statewide, and a key effort in FY19 was the launch of the statewide Tree Stewards program, with 25 stewards trained in the Albuquerque pilot. In FY19, the UCF program strengthened its partnership with Green Stormwater Infrastructure partners, and provided funding for a workshop on arid low impact design that brought together landscape designers, stormwater engineers, and policy makers to address barriers to implementing green stormwater infrastructure. The UCF program continued efforts under the Historic District Urban Forest Landscape Scale Restoration Grant in FY19, completing training on tree risk assessment and inventorying historic district trees in the NM county seat communities, and producing a statewide urban tree inventory summary and a brief history of NM urban trees. Results of the project can be found on the GIS storymap for the project ([tinyurl.com/urbantreesnm](https://tinyurl.com/urbantreesnm)), and were shared at two major conferences. Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance: 40. Population Living in Communities Provided Assistance: 1,266,977. Urban Volunteer Assistance: 3,037 hours.

### ***Zuni Mountains Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program***

New Mexico State Forestry is a partner in the CFLRP initiative and was able to redirect critical state funds to private lands in the area to allow the forest thinning contractor and local sawmill to continue harvesting logs, as the USFS lands that make up a majority of the project area have been impacted since November 2019 by a court ordered injunction due to Mexican Spotted Owl habitat. Without these collaborative efforts, workers and jobs would have been lost in the surrounding rural communities already impacted by job loss and economic hardship.

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## Contact Information



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