Investment in State’s Cooperative Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY 2019 Final</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Forestry and Open Space</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management</td>
<td>$165,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Legacy</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest Stewardship</td>
<td>$122,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscape Scale Restoration</td>
<td>$0</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Fire Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban and Community Forestry</td>
<td>$209,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer Fire Assistance</td>
<td>$313,043</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,452,514</strong></td>
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NOTE: This funding is for all entities within the state, not just the State Forester’s office.

Program Goals

- Lead a safe, efficient, and effective fire management program.
- Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse, highly effective, and motivated workforce.
- Reduce wildland fire threats to communities’ infrastructure.
- Initiate and maintain strong interdisciplinary and interagency partnerships.
- Coordinate with federal and local land management partners in landscape scale fuels and forest management.
- Focus forestry assistance on areas of need that maximize program effectiveness and delivery.
- Improve the management and function of forests, woodlands, agroforests, and community forests.
- Expand outreach through partnerships with other federal, state, and private organizations.

Key Issues

- Rapid urbanization and subdivision development.
- Age & drought have caused decline in windbreak health throughout the Great Plains.
- Insufficient funding for fire training for the hand crews whose regular duties are to perform hazardous fuels reduction projects.
- Insufficient funding to establish a Fire Prevention Program.
- Underutilization of small diameter wood from forests and trees outside of forests.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments
Program Highlights

Community Forestry and Open Space
There has been no active projects for 2019.

Conservation Education
There has been no active projects for 2019.

Cooperative Fire Protection
The Wildland Fire Division (WF) is committed to providing direct wildland fire protection services on state and private lands within the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District and cooperating with local, state, and federal agencies to support wildland fire management activities on a statewide, regional, and national basis. Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) program was fully functional this past summer with both Nebraska and South Dakota sharing aviation resources in their respective states on fires threatening USFS lands.

We have continued the academy training sessions with East River Fire Departments, the Pennington County Fire Chiefs Association and the Wildland Fire Academy in Fort Pierre. This has proven to be cost effective and gives enough variety and opportunity for local, state, and federal firefighters to attend training and move forward in qualifications. The Academy concept has been supported by local firefighters whom have a set time each year to attend training events. Between the three academies and other courses held to supplement them we hosted 39 classroom sessions, 22 RT-130’s, and trained 847 students (including those in RT-130’s). Plans are to continue the Academy trainings and to start incorporating 300 level classes as needed.

The division has worked with Fire Departments statewide to ensure they have current Cooperative Fire Suppression Agreements, for in and out-of-state mobilization purposes. An Inter-Agency Type II incident Management Team composed of state, local, and federal firefighters provided essential inter-agency cooperation assisting on regional and national incidents.

Economic Action
The South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Resource Conservation and Forestry Division (RCF) maintains a Log Finder website and is continuing to assist networking between people that have trees they want to sell or have removed, and people looking for trees to make value added wood products. RCF participates in the Council of Western State Foresters, Forest Utilization Network. The Forest Utilization Network is looking for opportunities to promote and expand wood utilization throughout the western United States and Pacific Islands. Service foresters continue to promote utilization of all wood products.
with their assistance to landowners.

**Forest Health Protection**

Forest Health management in South Dakota encompasses a wide array of growing conditions, management practices, and host species. Strategies used to address identified threats include educational materials and presentations, pest surveys and trapping, and preventative pest management. The results of diagnoses on current pest problems were communicated to a national audience of approximately 2,000 individuals associated with federal, state, and local governments, and the general public through the weekly Pest Update located on the division's website. 2,000 posters informing the public about the potential threat of insects from firewood transported into the state were prepared and distributed. Efforts to mitigate the mountain pine beetle (MPB) and pine engraver beetle activity in the Black Hills included the use of an anti-aggregation pheromone to protect the relic stand of limber pine, and suppression trapping at three sawmills in the Black Hills. The division completed 1072 technical assists regarding insect and disease diagnoses on trees and woody plants. In FY2019 forest health closed out weed and pest grants totaling over $15,000 to 3 county weed and pest agencies. 36 Emerald ash borer (EAB) traps were set up in eastern South Dakota to detect potential spread of the initial infestation in Sioux Falls, SD. A small satellite population was identified in the southern part of the city, a few miles from the original infestation. The division organized and participated in 16 EAB workshops in Sioux Falls with approximately 650 attendees in total.

**Forest Legacy**

Foresters are working on completing a Forest Stewardship plan for the most recent tract (1.23 acres) added to the Good Earth State Park at Blood Run Forest Legacy Project. Foresters are also working on revising the tree planting plan for the original tract purchased through the Forest Legacy program in Good Earth State Park due to continuous flooding of the current site. Discussions about new reforestation sites have taken place with SD GF&P and a plan to move forward is being developed.

**Forest Stewardship**

In 2019, RCF prepared or approved 18 new forest stewardship plans for private landowners covering 6,238 acres. Nine forest stewardship plans were updated covering 1,970 acres. Each year, a random sample of the current forest stewardship plans are monitored to determine if landowners are implementing practices as recommended in their plans. This activity satisfies the monitoring requirements of the Forest Stewardship Program, and helps accomplish monitoring needs identified in the state's Forest Action Plan. The 2019 monitoring sample showed a 100% plan implementation rate. RCF foresters prepared written prescriptions for 24 non-commercial projects that resulted in the improvement of 333 acres of pine and hardwood stands. EQIP funding supported 16 of the projects covering 231 acres, 5 were funded by State Conservation Commission grants covering 59 acres, and 3 projects covering 43 acres received no cost share assistance.

**Hazardous Fuels - Competitive Projects**

Fuel reduction and thinning within private forest in the Black Hills to reduce dangerous fuel loading has resulted in 57 projects on 834.15 acres of high priority treatment. Projects emphasize responsible forest management and biomass utilization which are identified to directly protect homes. In addition 2,535 burning permits were issued in 2019 for slash pile burning to residents of the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District.

**Landowner Assistance**

Resource Conservation and Forestry provided 1,072 forest health, 245 forest management, and 163 prairie forestry technical assists in 2019 to private landowners, conservation districts, state parks, and cooperative extension personnel. These technical assists are targeted at threats identified in the South Dakota Forest Action Plan.

**Landscape Scale Restoration**

There has been no active Landscape Scale Restoration projects for 2019.

**Urban and Community Forestry**

The division provided 325 technical assists to community governments, volunteer/service groups and organizations, and private citizens in 30 communities. Communities and non-profit organizations were
awarded grant funds totaling $16,800 that were matched by funds totaling $32,315. RCF conducted 43 presentations about Arbor Day, Tree City USA, Smokey Bear and fire prevention, and other community forestry subjects that were attended by schools and civic groups. The division conducted 6 workshops pertaining to proper tree planting, tree care, and forest health.

**Volunteer Fire Assistance**

In 2019, $777,034.60 in VFA grants were awarded to 87 Fire departments for a total project cost of $323,853.90. Through these grants, departments were able to increase their capabilities and interoperability.

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