



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

## Texas 2020



### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2019 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$423,500
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$987,637
Forest Legacy	\$27,000
Forest Stewardship	\$392,439
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$559,695
State Fire Assistance	\$2,340,948
Urban and Community Forestry	\$940,984
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$792,356
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,464,559</b>

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

### Program Goals

- To maintain and improve the health of rural and urban forests and to protect the forests and citizens of Texas. These programs maximize cost effectiveness through the use of program delivery partnerships and increase forestland sustainability and value in a non-regulatory, voluntary manner.
- The cooperative programs, implemented through partnerships between Texas, USDA Forest Service, and other entities, emphasize forest sustainability and the production of amenity and commodity values.

### Key Issues

- Working with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk and enhance community forest sustainability.
- Increasing awareness for the Healthy Trees Healthy Lives campaign through which the role that urban trees and forests play in human health.
- Invasive plants, insects, diseases, and drought-related impacts are key issues within forest health.
- Protecting the health and value of trees for wildlife and water where woodlands are not traditionally harvested commercially.
- Addressing landscape scale issues, and developing incentive-based programs that increase water quality and forest health.

### Forest Facts and Accomplishments

<b>Selected Facts</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>FY 2019 Accomplishments</b>	<b>Value</b>
Population	25,145,561	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	6,943
Acres of Forest Land	61,986,691	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	83,502
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	12,996,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	63,894
Number of NIPF Landowners	354,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	350
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	1,416
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	157,658,560	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	5,000
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,663	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	1,214	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	123
Forest Based Employment	67,000	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	13,750,079
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	6	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	5,452
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	120,412,228		

## Program Highlights

### Conservation Education

During FY 2019, TFS continued to lead the way for new innovative methods for delivering conservation education programs. Through a variety of web based applications through TexasForestInfo and traditional hands on events such as PLT and the Texas Teachers Conservation Institute TFS continues to provide science based curriculum to advance the conservation of the state's vast natural resources. More than 25,000 Texans participated in a 181 conservation education programs hosted by TFS during 2019. Also TFS continues to lead the way nationally in the development of the "Forest Literacy Plan" which provides a mechanism for incorporating science based natural resource management curriculum into everyday lesson plans for school aged children across the country.

### Cooperative Fire Protection

The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) continued to work with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk using the Ready Set Go program. During FY 19 TFS provided 407 community protection programs (RSG, Firewise and fire prevention workshops/presentations) educating 31,265 Texans on mitigating wildfire risk. TFS staff provided training to over 3,000 firefighters and provided 4,048 VFD assists. State and local firefighters responded to 4,768 wildfires burning 163,091 acres in FY 19. State Fire Assistance provided funding to support fire protection and training activities across Texas. The federal excess property programs (FEPP and FFP) assisted Texas in acquiring and placing fire equipment in rural communities throughout the state. In addition, TFS administered Volunteer Fire Assistance Program funds to support firefighter safety and the training efforts of rural community fire departments.

### Economic Action

TFS continues to monitor economically-viable sources of biomass and promote biomass energy markets, promote existing traditional wood markets, promote the need for and expansion of new markets for both traditional and non-traditional wood products. TFS continues to expand the capabilities of [www.texasforestinfo.com](http://www.texasforestinfo.com), a web-based portal that provides all Texans and others information on Texas' forest resources. During FY 19 the "Timber Supply Analysis" web application was expanded southwide. This application allows current and potential wood using industries quantify the wood resource available in a given area better aiding in the development of new wood using markets and the expansion of traditional markets. TFS continues to promote other applications such "Got Land" which provides information on a variety of land management topics for both new and existing landowners across the state. Lastly the "My Land Management Connector" continues to connect landowners with service providers.

### Forest Health Protection

TFS continues to coordinate public outreach concerning the movement of emerald ash borer (EAB) since the original detection in 2016. During 2019 EAB continued to establish itself in not only rural East Texas but the Fort Worth metroplex as well. TFS works closely with USDA-APHIS and USFS Forest Health Protection to implement the EAB Monitoring and Detection Program across the state. Although southern pine beetle (SPB) hasn't been identified in Texas for some time, TFS continues to work with landowners to reduce the threat of SPB infestations in overly dense pine stands. Oak wilt continues to spread throughout Central and North Texas infecting healthy live oak trees impacting both rural and urban landscapes. TFS continues to provide both technical and financial assistance through the Texas Oak Wilt Suppression Project to limit the spread of oak wilt to non- infected areas and trees. During 2019 utilizing Cooperative FHP funding, TFS was able to oversee the installation of over 3 miles of oak wilt trenching and thin almost over 2,200 acres of overly dense pine stands. Since the inception of these two assistance programs TFS has leveraged over \$2.7 million to install almost 700 miles of oak wilt containment lines and \$6.4 million to reduce the SPB hazard on over 120,000 acres through thinning efforts. These activities combined with traditional assistance helps maintain the health of Texas forests and woodlands. The threat from invasive pests and plants continues to grow in Texas with increased port activity and urbanization. TFS continued to expand its relationship with US Customs and Border Patrol in monitoring for exotic pests that pose a threat to the state's natural resources.

### **Forest Legacy**

TFS continues to promote the Forest Legacy program and currently has a total of 6 funded projects protecting more than 30,000 acres of forestland within high priority areas. TFS has a Forest Legacy project submitted and listed for 2020 funding but notification of award has not yet been received. Staff will continue to promote forest conservation projects in East Texas.

### **Forest Stewardship**

Through the Forest Stewardship Program, the TFS emphasizes the management and sustainability of resource high-priority areas throughout the state. Using the Texas Forest Action Plan TFS program leaders direct educational and technical resources to identified priority areas. Program delivery is tailored to address the resource concerns identified and assists Texans in those areas to maintain healthy forests, trees and woodlands. One tool utilized to educate Texans about natural resource priorities is the quarterly newsletter "Stewardship Briefings". The newsletter addresses landscape scale concerns within high priority areas and how Texans can maintain the health and vigor of their forests and trees. During FY 19 TFS staff across the state educated more than 25,000 landowners, facilitated 81 workshops focused on natural resource management and provided landowner assistance through the Forest Stewardship Program on more than 120,000 acres of privately-owned forests and woodlands of which 63,000 acres were identified by the Texas State Forest Action Plan as being a priority landscape. TFS staff also developed 639 Forest Stewardship Plans on more than 80,000 acres of which 77% were located within priority areas as identified in the State Forest Action Plan. Through the TFS seed orchard, 21,000 pounds of improved seed were collected and/or produced and over 40,000 seedlings were produced through the West Texas Nursery. Also during FY 2019 TFS began working with the US Endowment for Forestry and Communities to begin developing an outreach strategy for reaching undeserved landowners in Texas. Working with an array of partners including the Endowment, Center for Heirs Property, USFS, Texas A&M University and Prairie View A&M University a proposal was developed to establish a Southern Forest Land Retention project in East Texas. Through the efforts of TFS, the stewardship message is conveyed to thousands of small- scale, diverse, and new landowners and school kids each year.

### **Landowner Assistance**

TFS assists landowners across the state through a number of activities through support of USFS State and Private Forestry programs. Through these programs TFS staff are able to provide Texans assistance regarding a wide range of natural resource issues. In addition to Forest Stewardship activities, landowners receive help with land, timber and tree management issues and needs. Landowners and homeowners receive expert advice on things such as reforestation, tax valuation, ecosystem restoration as well as forest and tree health threats. TFS strives to meet the needs of all Texans throughout the diverse state. This includes windbreak needs in the High Plains, insect and disease issues for rural and urban trees, brush control issues in Central and West Texas, water related issues across the state, forest and habitat fragmentation, and protection and sustainability of the commercial forests of East Texas. TFS annually provides more than 100,000 assists across the state. During FY 19 TFS staff made over 5,000 on the ground assists to landowners, provided over 500 education and training events with over 20,000 Texans receiving formal education on natural resource related topics and developed more than 1,300

forest management plans on almost 131,000 acres.

### **Landscape Scale Restoration**

TFS continues to collaborate with federal, state, and NGO partners to identify and develop landscape initiatives to address forest and woodland health, improve water quality, and identify barriers to landowners in managing forests and woodlands across the state. Agency staff serve integral roles on various restoration teams including the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team, Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network, and the State Technical Advisory Committee hosted by NRCS. TFS continues to support the restoration of longleaf pine, shortleaf pine, ponderosa pine and native grass restoration as part of restoring historical ecosystem types in Texas. During FY 19 TFS continued efforts to restore ponderosa pine in the Davis Mountain region, identify deteriorated windbreaks in the High Plains for restoration purposes, and continue grow native grass for restoration projects. Through the Good Neighbor Authority TFS is assisting Texas National Forests in addressing forest health issues and mitigating hazards to both the local ecosystem and general public.

### **Urban and Community Forestry**

The Urban and Community Forestry Program provides educational and technical assistance to communities and residents across the state. This includes tree issues, ordinances, inventories and community management plans for greenspaces and trees. Staff work with 6 regional urban forestry councils to educate citizens about the benefit and value of trees in the landscape, promote the Healthy Trees, Healthy Lives initiative, coordinate the Texas Tree Conference and assist in the development of applications to aid communities in the management of their trees, including the Tree Risk mobile app and companion tools.

### **Water Resources**

The TFS Water Resources program continues to focus on innovative technology and strategic partnerships to enhance water resources throughout the state. Texas Forestry BMPs, a native smartphone application for the Texas Forestry Best Management Practices handbook, has been downloaded by more than 1,500 users. The web-based Plan My Land Operation application averages 200 sessions per month, providing users with site specific BMP recommendations to support operation planning and layout. Computer models (iTree Hydro) are also being used to quantify and build support for utilizing urban forests in stormwater management programs and watershed protection plans. The Texas Forests and Drinking Water Partnership continues to grow and connecting forest managers, owners and water utility districts to advance source water protection initiatives. Priority watersheds have been identified, conservation funding has been directed to these areas, and efforts are underway to develop a forest-water demonstration project. TFS is also delivering land stewardship training to farm and ranch contractors in Central and West Texas, building on the extremely successful logger training model in East Texas.

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## **Contact Information**



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