



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Arizona 2021



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$636,657
Forest Legacy	\$639,000
Forest Stewardship	\$175,000
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$40,000
State Fire Assistance	\$1,794,872
Urban and Community Forestry	\$481,789
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$527,883
Total	\$4,295,201

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

The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of Arizona, the USDA Forest Service and many other private, non-profit, and government entities. Program goals promote the health and productivity of Arizona forest lands and rural economies. Emphases includes forest products, wildlife, water resources, fire hazard management, fuels reduction, biomass utilization, rural economies, conservation practices and improving quality of life in the state's cities and towns. These programs increase cost effectiveness by working through partnerships, increase land value through cost-sharing sustained productivity of forests, are voluntary, and use non-regulatory approaches.

Program Goals

- Work collaboratively to implement Arizona's Forest Action Plan - to improve forest restoration, forest management, and community sustainability through integrated program planning and implementation and supporting shared stewardship principles.

Key Issues

- Encouraging fire adapted communities, promoting wildland ecosystems where appropriate fire regimes maintain health and resiliency of natural vegetation, and improving wildland fire management capacity across the state.
- Pursuing economic development potential of sustainable forest products and bioenergy, protecting areas of economic potential, and promoting the recognition of economic impacts of protected healthy natural systems. Developing uses and markets for small diameter trees while increasing utilization capacity for existing businesses - increasing the amount of hazardous fuels that can be treated and removed from the urban interface.
- Improving ecosystem health by promoting resilient and diverse forest ecosystem structures, processes, and functions - and making progress toward landscape scale outcomes, restoration of unhealthy ecosystems, and enhanced sustainability.
- Connecting people with trees and forests to allow maximum benefits, while minimizing negative human impacts. Addressing watershed health, forest health and fire safety issues in populated wildland/urban interface areas.
- Improving communications across a culturally diverse state - with emphasis on improved collaboration with Native American Tribes. Sharing resources and information about varying perspectives and beliefs related to forests, trees, and other natural resources.
- Maintaining or improving water quality and quantity from forested watersheds - and improving health and resiliency of forested aquatic systems.
- Improving air quality through specific management activities and increased public understanding of

the importance and effects of fire on Arizona's air quality.

- Increasing resilience of Arizona ecosystems to climate change - preparing for and mitigating potential impacts- and reducing the potential rate of future climate change through maximized carbon sequestration in Arizona forests and trees.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	6,392,017	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	293
Acres of Forest Land	18,482,978	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	4,707
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	7,381,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	4,005
Number of NIPF Landowners	45,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	15
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	400
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	22,000,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	1,200
Number of Rural Fire Departments	200	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	90	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	78
Forest Based Employment	5,246	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	4,946,634
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	15	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	9,556
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	17,750,938		

Program Highlights

AZ Nonnative Vegetative Invasive Species Treatment

In SFY2019, the State of Arizona appropriated funding towards nonnative vegetative invasive species eradication projects. Each year, through 2029, \$1 million is dedicated to invasive plant projects that will assist in preventing fire and flooding, conserving water, replacing nonnative vegetative species with native vegetative species, and restoring habitat to wildlife.

To date, 18 projects have been funded totaling \$2,940,000 and have generated \$1,732,801 in partner match.

Conservation Education

Arizona's Urban and Community Forestry Program participates in Conservation Education by educating youth and the public about the value and benefits that urban trees and forests provide. A part-time Conservation Education Coordinator manages the Tree City USA programs, coordinates the annual Arizona State Arbor Day Celebration, and participates in numerous outreach events throughout AZ. In addition, Urban and Community Forestry provides urban forest-related lesson plans (e.g. Neighborhood Forests: Southwest Learning Guide) and hosts an annual grantee showcase for Community Challenge Grant recipients.

Cooperative Fire Protection

State and Volunteer Fire Assistance programs are used to enhance the State of Arizona and local fire department firefighting efforts and capacity by providing necessary training and support in areas that are in the greatest need. This is provided through a variety of programs designed and based around the common goals of health and safety. Through these cooperative fire programs, hazardous fuel mitigation practices are pursued on non-federal lands in areas of greatest concern to prevent the loss of life and property, and lessen environmental and economic impacts.

Prevention and educational programs such as FIREWISE USA are administered to teach property owners proper mitigation techniques and land users the role of wildfire in the ecosystem, how to prevent fires

from occurring and how to act when a fire is in their area. State Fire and Volunteer Fire Assistance is also utilized to purchase needed equipment, such as personal protective equipment, for fire departments to better respond to active wildfires, and funds aid in modifying excess federal equipment to support fire response throughout the state.

Community wildfire education is focused on the wildland-urban interface and forest health education issues as well as educational resource development. Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management provides assistance in Firewise and Community Wildfire Protection Planning to increase awareness of the hazards and responsibilities of people who live in and near forest ecosystems.

Economic Action

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management is pursuing multiple public-private partnerships to incentivize private wood products industry expanding into rural economies throughout Arizona. Recently, we have completed our Wildland Fuels Reduction and Operations Management RFP which will bring on additional private contractors to be utilized by our department for hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration.

Forest Health Protection

Arizona's Forest Health program provides technical assistance for forest insect and disease issues, as well as invasive plant prevention, detection, control, and monitoring. The program develops and provides forest health educational tools, workshops and training, and contributes to the development of new forest health technologies. A number of forest health related publications, workshops, and training sessions are developed and provided annually to interested state and private groups and individuals. A Western Bark Beetle Initiative grant program is focused on improving tree health and reducing adverse bark beetle impacts. Forest Health Monitoring funds provide support for ground survey work and an annual Aerial Detection Survey over millions of acres that provides land managers and the public with information about landscape-level insect and disease conditions. An invasive plant program coordinates with Cooperative Weed Management Areas, partnerships, and coalitions and focuses on treatment of invasive plants that are capable of transforming plant communities in forests, woodlands, and rangeland. DFFM is appropriated state funding for invasive plant treatment that will be instrumental in leveraging other local, state, and federal funds and restoring the most amount of acres possible.

Recently, DFFM has implemented a Bark Beetle Treatment Cost Share Program to mitigate bark beetle impacts on private land. Landowners that participate, will receive funding to help offset the cost of removing trees currently infested with bark beetles.

Forest Legacy

Arizona began participation in the Forest Legacy Program in 2003, with its Assessment of Need receiving final approval in May, 2005. In 2020, the Arizona Legacy Assessment of Need was updated and also includes the latest 2017 Legacy Program Guidelines. Conservation partners include Coconino County, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, The Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, and the Arizona Land and Water Trust. Arizona's inaugural project, Cedar Springs, was completed in December, 2008, applying \$680,000 of Forest Legacy funding to acquire a conservation easement on 629 acres near Flagstaff, Arizona. The top-ranked San Pedro Riparian Ecosystem project received funding in FY 2010 to acquire easements on 4 separate parcels totaling 612 acres in southeastern Arizona.

DFFM staff are currently engaging with landowners regarding the Forest Legacy program. Two projects are currently in process and have successfully competed for phase 2 funding: The Elquen Ranch along the San Pedro River in Cochise County; and the Wildlife Corridors along Sonoita Creek in Santa Cruz County. Both projects are within the Joint Chiefs Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape area. Other projects being explored include the Cochise Stronghold Ranch in Cochise County and the Bull Basin Ranch in Coconino County.

Forest Stewardship

Arizona's Forest Stewardship program prioritizes ecological restoration in important forest areas identified in the state's Spatial Analysis Project and Forest Resources Assessment. These areas are primarily comprised of ponderosa pine forests and pinyon-juniper woodlands in areas covered by Cooperative Wildfire Protection Plans. The program works closely with Cooperative Fire, Forest Health, and Urban &

Community Forestry to address multiple program objectives. Current efforts focus on development of, and program alignment with, the 2020 Arizona Forest Action Plan.

The forest stewardship program now has foresters in Flagstaff, Pinetop-Lakeside, Tucson, and Prescott. Plans that will be developed by these foresters will tie directly into NRCS EQIP funding, greatly improve ecosystem health and significantly lower fire risk.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management strongly supports restoration activities on a landscape scale and proactively encourages and participates in collaborative opportunities whenever possible. Partnerships include projects such as the Four Forest Restoration Initiative (4FRI) supporting activities on multiple National Forests, the Verde River Watershed Restoration project which is restoring an important Arizona waterway and watershed, multiple activities within the Fort Huachuca Sentinel Landscape in southern Arizona, and statewide projects supporting diversification of urban forests. And, important collaborative work is occurring with the Diablo Trust, Malpai Borderlands, Altar Valley Conservation Alliance, the Gila Watershed Partnership, and many others.

Landscape Scale Restoration Projects supported with S&PF funding include; 1) the Yuma West Wetlands project, providing resources and tools for sustainably managing a critical urban riparian forest located in the City of Yuma (the Colorado River flows through the heart of the City of Yuma and this project will fully restore nearly 3 miles of continuous riparian forest), and; 2) a Watershed Erosion Mitigation project in Yavapai County that will utilize woody pinion-juniper biomass to build silt dams on a 320 acre site as a demonstration to control erosion and improve watershed conditions; 3) Bark Beetle Treatment and Prioritization Mapping to assist areas hardest hit by bark beetle infestation.

Recently, DFFM and SRP (Salt River Project) have recently signed an MOU that seeks to have both parties work together to invest in and implement forest restoration, including forest thinning treatments and associated activities that are required to accomplish forest restoration on lands within the Verde and Salt River and East Clear Creek watersheds.

Urban and Community Forestry

Arizona's Urban and Community Forestry Program provides information and technical assistance to Arizona cities and towns. The program has Certified Arborists and Urban Foresters on staff to answer tree related questions and help communities maintain, restore and improve urban forest ecosystems. The UCF Program includes oversight and management of the Community Challenge Grant Program; promotion and management of the Arizona Tree City USA, Tree Line USA and Tree Campus USA programs; and planning and implementation of the Arizona Arbor Day celebrations. The UCF Program supports tree inventory and canopy development programs, tree-planting projects, local and state policy development, and local outreach and education programs.

The Arizona Community Tree Council serves as the Advisory Council to the UCF Program and assists with strategic UCF planning, implementation, and community challenge grant selection. The advisory council met every other month while the Executive Committee met in the intervening months. Meeting agenda items focused on strategic state UCF planning goals, grant review, and event coordination (e.g. AZ Tree Festival and Climbing Championship, AZ State Arbor Day Poster Contest, and the Grantee Showcase). The UCF Program Manager provides technical and administrative support to the ACTC Advisory Council to achieve common urban forestry goals.

In May 2020, and with funding provided by the AZ Department of Forestry and Fire Management, multiple stakeholders launched the West Mesa River Community Heat Action Project, a participatory Heat Action Planning process to identify both mitigation and adaptation strategies to reduce heat directly and improve the ability of residents to deal with heat in the Rio Salado footprint. Partners include West Mesa Community Development Corporation, The Nature Conservancy, the City of Mesa, Arizona Sustainability Alliance, and the Arizona State University's Urban Resilience to Extremes Sustainability Research Network.

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