



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Illinois 2025



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2024 Final
Community Forests and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$263,000
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$0
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$0
State Fire Assistance	\$618,584
Urban and Community Forestry	\$1,882,953
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$637,840
Total	\$3,402,377

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

- Oak-hickory forests are threatened.
- Large forest blocks are disappearing.
- Forest health threats are increasing.
- Forestry professionals are too few.
- Forest industries and mills are shrinking.
- Urban and community forests face extreme pressures and challenges.
- Forest funding and other significant threats exist.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2024 Accomplishments	Value
Population	12,812,508	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	11,596
Acres of Forest Land	4,873,487	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	44,785
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	3,838,009	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	30,454
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,946	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	64
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	10,670,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	6,221
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,280	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	1,298	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	536
Forest Based Employment	44,145	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	10,511,148
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	8	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	19,739
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	6,100,000		

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

A Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant was awarded for \$299,994 to a cooperator to treat hazardous fuels and train firefighters. The Volunteer Fire Capacity program funded 58 grants to volunteer fire departments for wildland fire suppression training and equipment. State Fire Capacity funds trained 190 firefighters and paid for 11,000 acres of hazardous fuels treatment. The state acquired \$11,656 in property from the Federal Excess Personal Property program to support fire suppression programs.

Forest Health Protection

Ongoing statewide forest health issues include herbicide injury to oaks and other hardwood tree species, decline of spruces and pines, and rapid mortality of oaks. Emerald ash borer (EAB) populations are still present in areas of central and southern Illinois but have mostly crashed in northern Illinois. Post EAB invasion monitoring efforts are planned to determine if EAB populations will remain at low levels or begin to build once again. Field monitoring and sampling for sudden oak death, thousand cankers disease-walnut twig beetle, and laurel wilt were conducted, but fortunately there were no confirmed cases. A unique biological event, the co-emergence of the 13 and 17-year periodical cicadas, occurred in 2024 for the first time in over 200 years. Minor ovipositional damage and flagging was observed on mature trees, while young trees showed small twig and branch breakage. Overall, there were no reports of catastrophic damage to woody plants. For invasive exotic insects, a new, additional spotted lanternfly population, and first occurrence of an elm zigzag sawfly infestation were confirmed in southern and northern Cook County, respectively. A statewide invasive plant survey was expanded to include and document the presence of, and environmental conditions favoring the establishment and spread of a selected herbaceous and woody invasive plants.

Forest Stewardship

State Department of Natural Resource foresters and private forest landowners alike benefitted from investment in service delivery tools and materials that promoted landowner education and understanding of the value of forests and focused management activities. New collaborative efforts with the University of Illinois will help the state positively impact even more acres of private forest land by identifying and focusing on targeted landowner groups who might otherwise be missed by traditional outreach efforts. This effort in parts will help to identify, reach out, and provide learning opportunities to new forest landowners.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources operates one State nursery, Mason State Nursery, located in Topeka. Through the Forest Stewardship program and National Reforestation, Nurseries, and Genetics

Resource programs, the State receives financial assistance to support nursery, genetics, and seed programs. Funding will help Illinois increase production of seedlings and seed at their State nursery with new equipment and an updated irrigation system.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

In 2024, three projects from local nongovernmental organizations in Illinois received \$700,000 in Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding through the USDA Forest Service's Forest Restoration competitive grant program. Projects addressed canopy loss due to invasive insects such as emerald ash borer and planted trees in urban communities to combat stormwater runoff that causes flooding and erosion and impacts water quality. In total, the projects propose to plant more than 1,000 trees and shrubs and treat at least 0.5 acres. Added community benefits include job and skills training. Projects are largely focused in areas and/or communities with increased needs in some capacity, and at least one is planning to take changing weather into account when choosing which species to plant.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Grantee: The Morton Arboretum

Federal Investment: \$410,000

Project: Increasing Public and Private Action to Implement the Oak Ecosystem Recovery Plan in Underserved Communities

Summary: Through this project, the Morton Arboretum will work in partnership with five public and private landowners and managers to implement the Oak Ecosystem Recovery Plan to increase conservation of important oak ecosystems in five counties in northeastern Illinois. It will expand on-the-ground conservation and increase awareness and action to improve age diversity, connectivity, biodiversity, and overall health of oak ecosystem habitats.

Contact Information



Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Kenneth Jolly
State Forester
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702
217-785-8762
kenneth.jolly@illinois.gov

US Forest Service Eastern Region

Steven R Miller
Acting Deputy Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service
626 E Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53202-4616
414-297-3600
steven.miller@usda.gov
