



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet Marshall Islands 2021



## Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$0
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$0
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$0
State Fire Assistance	\$0
Urban and Community Forestry	\$50,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>

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

The new 2020-2030 Forest Action Plan identifies the Marshalls' highest priorities for forest resource management and needs for assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service (FS). State assessments and resource strategies are integral to the Forest Service's State and Private Forestry (S&PF) Redesign and required as an amendment to the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act (CFAA), as enacted in the 2008 Farm Bill. The 2008 Farm Bill also made the Republic of the Marshall Islands eligible for CFAA programs that are available to states, territories and commonwealths of the USA.

The Marshalls Forest Action Plan thus includes two components to the assessment and planning required by the S&PF Redesign approach to identify priority forest landscape areas and highlight work needed to address national, regional, and state forest management priorities: (1) it provides an analysis of forest conditions and trends in the state and delineates priority rural and urban forest landscape areas; and (2) it provides long-term strategies for investing state, federal, and other resources to manage priority landscapes identified in the assessment, focusing where federal investment can most effectively stimulate or leverage desired action and engage multiple partners.

## Program Goals

- Conserve Working Forest Landscapes: Identify and conserve high priority forest ecosystems and landscapes and actively and sustainably manage forests.
- Protect Forest from Harm: Identify, manage, and reduce threats to forest and ecosystem health
- Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests: Protect and enhance water quality and quantity, assist communities in planning for and reducing forest health risks, maintain and enhance the economic benefits and values of trees and forest, protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife, connect people to trees and forests, and engage them in environmental stewardship activities, manage and restore trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to global climate change

## Key Issues

- Biodiversity: Conservation of biodiversity in the Marshalls concerns terrestrial native species, especially endemic species and including migratory birds; traditional cultivars; and sustainable land management to protect the biodiversity and productivity of the species-rich marine environment. Concern from this issue is rooted in efforts to reconnect with traditional culture; interest of external scientists; and international commitments including the Micronesia Challenge.
- Food Security and sustainable livelihood: Agro-forests are a source of subsistence goods and commercial products. Many Marshallese suffer from malnutrition and diabetes that could partially be addressed with increased agro-forest production. Marshallese family incomes are low; agro-forest

production can reduce the need for purchases and bring in cash income.

- Coastal reinforcement: Coastal forests are those on the beach crest above high tide mark. Their root systems reinforce the beach "berm" or crest. To an extent, they can resist coastal erosion, maintain berm height, and therefore minimize the occurrence of "overtopping" (surge of high seawater into depressed interior areas). However, extreme events can always wash away forest, berms and even entire sections of sandy islands.
- Coastal forests have been thinned and removed in many urban and rural areas, so their restoration and maintenance in their natural state is a "no-regrets strategy" and a first line of defense against the effects of sea level rise.
- Urbanization: Urbanization is a result of migration and the adoption of Western patterns of living. A large proportion of the Marshalls' population is now concentrated on a few urban islands, with resulting reductions in forest cover and separation of people from the tangible and cultural benefits of forests.
- The following cross cutting considerations are recognized as threats constraints and limitations that affect more than one of the key issues listed above: climate change, freshwater resources, data collection, management, and analysis, invasive plant species, insects and diseases.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	67,182	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	30
Acres of Forest Land	44,460	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	0
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	0	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	0
Number of NIPF Landowners	0	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	0
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	0
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	0	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	0
Number of Rural Fire Departments	0	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	33	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	0
Forest Based Employment	0	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	0
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	3
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	0		

## Program Highlights

### Forest Health Protection

University of Guam staff provided training to Majuro forest health workers for detection and control of little fire ants and coconut rhinoceros beetles using Moodle's Big Blue Button software.

### Forest Stewardship

Forest Stewardship Project (FY19 grant) continues essential activities with a great success. Good working relationship with land owners and community partners made this year's effort fruitful and rewarding. There were a total of 610 tree seedlings produced: 140 Gliricidia, 105 soursop, 200 sweet lime, 50 cacao, 10 breadfruit, 50 pomelo, 50 tangerine, 5 bell apple. More than 60% of those plants were already distributed in the three major atoll communities of Majuro, Jaluit and Ebeye. Tree planting of traditional and exotic fruit trees and coastal management breakthrough have been started with six partner schools. There were a total of 4 major trainings conducted with more than 200 adults and young people in attendance, not including several technical assistance delivered to more than 20 individuals.

### Landscape Scale Restoration

The FIA program collects many kinds of forest measurement data from randomly selected forested locations in each Micronesian jurisdiction (Palau, Guam, CNMI, FSM, RMI). The data is organized and stored in a database, and public versions are available to download online in Microsoft Access or SQLite format. There is a database user guide, and a Pacific Island abbreviated version of the database user guide, both of which, but especially the Pacific Island version, have useful information like common tables and codes and table connections. The SQLite version of the database is more difficult to navigate, since it is primarily command based, but the program is free to download, and it is relatively easy to sort tables to do some data exploration. During data analysis workshops conducted by the MC data analyst and the Micronesia Challenge Terrestrial Champion in Majuro and Pohnpei, it became apparent that a more simplified, step by step manual was required to support Foresters and other terrestrial conservation managers to access and query the data. In response, funding from the LSR 2018 grant with the Micronesia Conservation Trust (MCT) contracted the Micronesia Challenge data analyst to develop Forest Inventory Analysis/Micronesia Challenge User Guide to OK Tabling Tool Script: Creating Queries and Generating Summary Statistics for MC Terrestrial Measures.

### **Urban and Community Forestry**

The purpose of the program are to increase community awareness of the importance of trees in sustaining healthy and viable communities; to improve the social, natural and economic environment of urban and community areas; and to enable the development of self- sufficient local urban and community forestry programs.

The implementation of this project will focus on education and outreach, coastal tree planting, and nursery development to support communities of landowners, as well as agroforestry and conservation education in the RMI. Further, this program have started working with communities of "Ajeltake" to establish a new nursery station to start propagate more of our indigenous trees that we depend on for daily life.

As such, one of the important goal of this project is to continue collaborate with landowners, local government, and communities to strengthen partnerships and enhance traditional forestry knowledge. All activities are still on-going.

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### **Contact Information**



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