



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

New Mexico 2021



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$381,500
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$235,600
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$101,000
State Fire Assistance	\$2,694,872
Urban and Community Forestry	\$368,600
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$527,883
Total	\$4,309,455

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

The Forestry Division provides statewide leadership to sustain healthy and productive forests on approximately 8.7 million acres of the state's private forests and woodlands. The Division is the lead state agency for forest and watershed health facilitating diverse partners to interconnect forest land management with management of woodlands, rangeland and other vegetative landscapes, of watersheds and waterways, of evolving best practices, and of the many entities, state and others partners with responsibility for land stewardship. The Division's work is collaborative, interdisciplinary, and focused on long-term sustainability. The Division also empowers New Mexico communities to protect, enhance, and utilize their forest resources and has the lead responsibility for wildland fire management on approximately 43 million acres of non-federal, non-municipal, and non-tribal lands. The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of New Mexico, the USDA Forest Service and many other private, non-profit, and government entities.

Program Goals

- Provide for protection and safety of the public and firefighters.
- Develop qualified, equipped fire fighters to safely suppress & manage fire.
- Continue to increase pace of planning and restoration efforts at a watershed and landscape scale through multiple agency/partner agreements and collaborative strategies.
- Assist communities vulnerable to damage from wildland fires, insects, & invasive species.
- Enhance the economic viability of NM communities while protecting their natural resources.
- Provide technical assistance & promote current forest, watershed and urban/community forest management science.

Key Issues

- Forest and watershed health.
- Threat of climate change and destructive wildfires in critical watersheds and the wildland-urban interface.
- Increased occurrence and extent of insect and disease outbreaks.
- Forest resiliency and adaptability.
- Urban forest canopy loss without adequate replacement plans.
- Fragmentation of forest landscapes.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	2,059,179	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	463
Acres of Forest Land	24,643,064	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	83,942
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	6,331,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	74,304
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	232
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	5,202,479	State Fire Communities Assisted	265
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	34,157,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	1,400
Number of Rural Fire Departments	368	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	102	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	22
Forest Based Employment	308	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	952,953
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	1,342
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	12,638,000		

Program Highlights

Community Forestry and Open Space

New Mexico State Forestry Division has not yet participated in a Community Forestry and Open Space Project.

Conservation Education

New Mexico Forestry Division has a long legacy of providing a wealth of conservation education knowledge to residents and visitors to New Mexico. The Division continued a tradition of more than three decades of helping lead the state's Project Learning Tree program. Project Learning Tree trained dozens of education professionals statewide in how to use forest and watershed health issues as part of their daily curriculum. The Division played an active role in conducting the New Mexico Envirothon, which gets teams of high school students together annually to complete in areas such as forestry, aquatics, wildlife, soils, and other special environmental issues. The Division reached out to New Mexicans with conservation education at large annual events such as the New Mexico State Fair, distributing conservation tree seedlings and talking with residents and visitors about the role forests and fire play in our daily lives.

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Cooperative Fire Five Year Plan, plus the Forest action plan, prioritizes the Division's objectives and needs in cooperative fire funding to sustain the Division's ability to achieve its mission of preventing and suppressing unwanted fires within 43 million acres of protected state and private land. This also includes the treatment of fuels to protect communities and improve forest health. In FY20, we have 62 CWPP's identifying 840 communities at risk from wildland fire. Of the 840 communities, 401 are listed as high risk, 287 are listed as moderate risk, and 152 are listed as low risk.

Economic Action

New Mexico provides access to technology transfer and specialized business and marketing technical assistance with the intent to advance the science of healthy forest and woodland ecosystems and acceptable practices for reducing hazardous fuels. New Mexico State Forestry continues to provide technical assistance and administer forest harvest practice standards on commercial timber sales on private forest lands in New Mexico. In New Mexico, there remains a steady harvest of wood for lumber, mine timbers, utility poles, vigas/latillas, and mill residues. New Mexico State Forestry is a participant in several forest industry related organizations state wide, such as local wood clusters, the New Mexico Forest Industry Association, local biomass facility initiatives, and the San Juan-Rio Chama Watershed

Partnership.

Forest Health Protection

The Cooperative Forest Health Program (CFHP) works within the State Forestry Division (SFD) to deliver technical and monetary assistance to landowners and managers of forested lands throughout New Mexico. Technical assistance is provided by direct response to phone/email requests, education programs, training, and site visits. In 2020, the SFD Forest Health Specialist; assisted 39 land management agencies, partners, and private landowners with forest health diagnoses and technical assistance; identified 9 insect/pathogen samples; and taught 15 students Forest Pest Management (FOR4240) at New Mexico Highlands University. Monetary assistance is provided to private landowners through the Forest Health Initiative (FHI) cost-share program. The goal of FHI is to administer federal dollars to reduce the risk of bark beetle and pathogen infestations on private land. The Division batched 13 new FHI projects in 2020; 10 thinning treatments (192.5 acres) and 3 management plans (14,473 acres). DFHP collaborates with the US Forest Service to conduct annual insect and pathogen surveys of New Mexico's forests and woodlands. Most data are collected by aerial detection surveys. During the 2020 aerial survey season, 509,000 acres of statewide forestland and woodlands had some degree of detectable insect and/or pathogen activity. Despite worsening drought conditions, this was a 37,000 acre decrease from 2019 and was due to a decline in defoliator and bark beetle activity. However, bark beetle-induced mortality of pinyon and ponderosa in lower elevations soon may increase to 2013 levels (100,000+ acres) unless drought conditions improve across the state. Of note, the SFD Forest Health Specialist observed increased bark beetle-induced pinyon mortality around Santa Fe and throughout the East Mountains.

Forest Legacy

Phase I of the Forest Legacy Brazos Cliffs project was funded for \$3,480,000.00 through the USDA Forest Service. It will protect 3,620 acres in Rio Arriba Country from development. Phase II was funded in FY2019 for \$2,055,000.00 and will protect an additional 2,740 acres. The conservation easement for both phases should be completed by the June of 2021.

Forest Stewardship

The Stewardship program saw 7 new or revised Forest Stewardship Management plans prepared in FY20 for a total of 83,942 acres on private forested land in New Mexico. 238 landowners have received technical assistance relating to their private forest lands, with an additional 225 landowners participating in educational programs relating to forest stewardship, fire prevention and forest management. •The New Mexico FSP continues to provide leadership in support of the New Mexico Tree Farm Program and other landowner education events related to fire, forest ecology and other NIPF landowner related topics.

Landowner Assistance

The New Mexico Forestry Division provides technical and financial assistance to NM landowners through 6 district offices, 1 satellite office, the Forest and Watershed Health Office and the Conservation Seedling Program. In FY20 the Conservation and Reforestation Seedling Program distributed 61,283 trees and shrubs for conservation purposes to New Mexico residents with at least one acre of land.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Reintroducing Fire to the Turkey Mountains Landscape:

The Turkey Mountains rise from NM's rolling high plains in a distinct sky island at the western edge of the great prairiegrasslands, adjacent to the Rio Mora National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Ponderosa pine and mixed conifer forests comprise 41,500 of the 65,000 acre footprint. The NM FAP identifies the Turkey Mountains as a high priority landscape for water supply and biodiversity. The forests provide an important water source to the Mora River watershed; support migration and wintering area habitat for waterfowl in the Central Flyway; anchor a wildlife corridor connecting the Rio Mora NWR to the Sangre de Cristo Conservation Area in CO; and house major power transmission lines and five emergency communications towers. Risk of uncharacteristic wildfire threatens these values. TML have long embraced active landscape management and collaboration by forming the High Plains Grassland Alliance with diverse collection of agencies, councils and non-governmental organizations, resulting in a large, contiguous expanse of cross-boundary managed land. This provides a rare opportunity for forest restoration in that the entire mountain range can realistically be treated and restored. NMSF and TML

developed a 10-year Turkey Mountain Wildland Fire Management Plan (WFMP) that calls for mechanically treating 4,500 priority acres that connect to previously treated areas, beneficially burned areas of the 2018 Emily Fire, and natural fire breaks. This mechanical treatment will allow for future expansion of fire use, providing low-cost maintenance to restoration investments. This project will thin and restore the next 560 priority forest acres identified in the plan. GOALS:- Reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire to Turkey Mountain landowners, water supplies, wildlife habitat, and infrastructure- Improve important forest ecosystems by restoring fire-adapted forests that provide critical water supply and wildlife habitat.

New Mexico Shared Stewardship Portal

In partnership with partners and The Timmons Group, New Mexico State Forestry is creating the NM Shared Stewardship Portal that will enable improved cross-boundary planning and strategic placement of restoration treatments, fuels reduction and wildfire mitigation and spatial tracking of a range of activities with geospatial exploration of neighbors' and partners' planned and completed work . This will improve facilitation and tracking of collaborative partnerships and leverage, as well as visual accomplishment summaries of mitigation work and collaborative efforts, with the ability to assess and analyze outcomes. The Shared Stewardship portal will support better investments by improving:

- Decision making, by providing a platform to consider potential project areas before spending money on the ground.
- Shared Stewardship, by using the platform to look for overlapping priorities areas and overlapping investment priorities.
- Outcomes, by providing information needed to make better decisions and inform continuous planning:
 - o More work done on the ground through leveraging investments.
 - o Greater impact of the work done by leveraging investments.
 - o Improved alignment with priority areas across agencies.
 - o Improved accountability to taxpayers, stakeholders, and others to demonstrate money is being well spent.
- Executive reporting, by capturing consistent data for reporting accomplishments against shared priorities.

Urban and Community Forestry

The New Mexico UCF Program continues to work to empower communities to develop and sustain healthy community forests for the benefit of our citizens and the environment. 68% of the state's population lives in a community either fully managing an urban/community forest program or developing one, and nine communities were recognized for the Tree City USA program. New Mexico State Forestry continues to maintain an on-going Services Agreement with the 501(c)(3) organization Tree New Mexico to conduct urban and community forestry related volunteer management and coordination statewide, The actions from the 2020 FAP that are identified as top priorities for 2021 and forward:

- Action Item: For each of the priority communities identified in the New Mexico Forest Action Plan Urban Forests and Communities Resource Assessment, identify key partners and stakeholders, and set up meetings to introduce them to the Urban and Community Forestry Program and New Mexico Statewide Community Forest Analysis and Planning: Management Plan.
- Action Item: Improve the Urban and Community Forestry Program's webpage on the EMNRD Forestry Division website to include available resources for management of the urban forest.
- Action Item: Explore the feasibility of an urban tree care career training program with the EMNRD Forestry Division Inmate Work Camp Program.
- Action Item: Develop a statewide pest and pathogen monitoring and response plan, including communication, responsibility, monitoring, and public awareness.
- Action Item: Perform aerial tree canopy and heat island analysis on 10 priority communities identified in the FAP Urban Forests and Communities Resource Assessment to identify tree canopy deficits and strategic tree planting areas, and to provide project-level information to communities for planning.

•Action Item: Re-align the New Mexico Forest Re-Leaf tree planting program to address climate change mitigation goals and pursue state legislature funds.

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