



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

South Dakota 2021



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$161,000
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$120,324
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$0
State Fire Assistance	\$2,411,654
Urban and Community Forestry	\$228,250
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$358,338
Total	\$3,279,566

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

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry (RCF) uses State and Private Forestry funding to help South Dakotans manage and protect their forests and trees and conserve our natural resources. We work with farmers, ranchers, rural homeowners, urban dwellers, communities, conservation districts, and federal, state, and local agencies. These programs support our mission to conserve, protect, improve, and develop the natural resources of South Dakota for its citizens. These cooperative programs are key components of the State Forest Action Plan.

Program Goals

- Lead a safe, efficient, and effective fire management program.
- Recruit, develop, and retain a diverse, highly effective, and motivated workforce.
- Reduce wildland fire threats to communities' infrastructure.
- Initiate and maintain strong partnerships with other federal, state, and private organizations.
- Coordinate with federal and local land management partners in landscape scale fuels and forest management.
- Conserve and sustainably manage forest ecosystems and landscapes.
- Protect forests from wildfire, insects, and diseases.
- Protect and enhance the economic and environmental benefits of trees and forests.
- Connect people to trees and forests.

Key Issues

- Rapid urbanization and subdivision development.
- Age and drought have caused decline in windbreak health throughout the Great Plains.
- Insufficient funding for fire training for the hand crews, whose regular duties are to perform hazardous fuels reduction projects.
- Insufficient funding to establish a Fire Prevention Program.
- Underutilization of small diameter wood from forests and trees outside of forests.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	814,180	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	370
Acres of Forest Land	1,897,358	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	7,488
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	492,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	6,541
Number of NIPF Landowners	12,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	175
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	314,000	State Fire Communities Assisted	19
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	48,611,840	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	410
Number of Rural Fire Departments	365	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	311	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	59
Forest Based Employment	3,544	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	479,591
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	7,680
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	6,600,000		

Program Highlights

Community Forestry and Open Space

There were no active projects in 2020.

Conservation Education

RCF conducted 35 presentations about Arbor Day, Tree City USA, Smokey Bear and fire prevention, Project Learning Tree, and other community forestry subjects that were attended by schools and civic groups.

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Wildland Fire Division (WF) is committed to providing direct wildland fire protection services on state and private lands within the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District and cooperating with local, state, and federal agencies to support wildland fire management activities on a statewide, regional, and national basis. The Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) program was fully functional this past summer with both Nebraska and South Dakota sharing aviation resources in their respective states on fires threatening US Forest Service lands.

The effects of the global COVID19 pandemic on our training this year was immense. The pandemic hit during academy season, causing the cancellation of two of our three academies (the Eastern SD Wildland Fire Academy and SD Wildland Fire Academy). Thankfully, the Mid-Winter Muster (sponsored by the Pennington County Fire Chiefs Association) was able to proceed as it was scheduled before the pandemic hit. We were also unable to host many trainings due to COVID19 mitigations and restrictions among partnering agencies. This, along with the RT130 requirement being waived for the 2020 fire season, resulted in lower than anticipated numbers this year. Ultimately, we hosted/supported 28 classroom sessions, 3 RT-130's, and trained 324 students (including those in RT-130's). Plans are to attempt the academies and other trainings while mitigating for COVID19.

The division has worked with Fire Departments statewide to ensure they have current Cooperative Fire Suppression Agreements, for in and out-of-state mobilization purposes. An Inter-Agency Type II incident Management Team composed of state, local, and federal firefighters provided essential inter-agency cooperation assisting on regional and national incidents. In addition, 2,538 burning permits were issued in 2020 to residents of the Black Hills Forest Fire Protection District for slash pile burning.

Economic Action

RCF maintains a Log Finder website and is continuing to assist networking between people that have trees they want to sell or have removed, and people looking for trees to make value added wood products. RCF participates in the Council of Western State Foresters, Forest Utilization Network. The Forest Utilization Network is looking for opportunities to promote and expand wood utilization throughout the western United States and Pacific Islands. Service foresters continue to promote utilization of all wood products with their assistance to landowners.

Forest Health Protection

Forest Health management in South Dakota encompasses a wide array of growing conditions, management practices, and host species. Strategies used to address identified threats include educational materials and presentations, pest surveys and trapping, and preventative pest management. The results of diagnoses on current pest problems were communicated to a national audience of approximately 4,000 individuals associated with federal, state, and local governments, and the general public through the weekly Pest Update located on the division's website and the division's Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) website. Two thousand posters informing the public about the potential threat of insects from firewood transported into the state were prepared and distributed. Efforts to mitigate the mountain pine beetle (MPB) and pine engraver beetle activity in the Black Hills included the use of an anti-aggregation pheromone to protect the relic stand of limber pine, and suppression trapping at three sawmills in the Black Hills. The division completed 1,766 technical assists regarding insect and disease diagnoses on trees and woody plants. In FY2020, forest health closed out invasive plant program grants totaling over \$19,900 to four county weed and pest agencies. Forty-eight Emerald ash borer (EAB) traps were set up in eastern South Dakota to detect the potential spread of the known infestations. Two additional populations were identified in Canton and Worthing, SD, both less than 35 miles from the original infestation. The division organized and participated in 12 EAB workshops with approximately 700 attendees in total.

Forest Legacy

The Forest Stewardship plan for the most recent tract (1.23 acres) was added to the Good Earth State Park at Blood Run Forest Legacy Project. Foresters are also working on revising the tree planting plan for the original tract purchased through the Forest Legacy program in Good Earth State Park due to continuous flooding of the current site. Discussions about new reforestation sites have taken place with SD Game Fish and Parks and a plan to move forward is being developed.

Forest Stewardship

In 2020, RCF prepared and approved 19 new forest stewardship plans for private landowners covering 2,751 acres. Each year a random sample of the current forest stewardship plans are monitored to determine if landowners are implementing practices recommended in their plans. This activity satisfies the monitoring requirements of the Forest Stewardship Program and helps accomplish monitoring needs identified in the state's Forest Action Plan. RCF foresters prepared written prescriptions for 50 non-commercial projects that resulted in the improvement of 432 acres of pine and hardwood stands. State Conservation Commission grants approved 5 projects covering 70 acres with the remaining 45 projects and the remaining 362 acres to be covered through Environmental Quality Incentive (EQIP) programs. The state welcomed three new foresters to its ranks and dealt with the difficulties of the nationwide public health concern which limited landowner interaction.

Hazardous Fuels - Competitive Projects

Fuel reduction and thinning to reduce dangerous fuel loading within private forestlands in the Black Hills has resulted in 76 projects on 1,010.28 acres of high priority treatment. Eleven of the 76 projects on 91.51 acres resulted in the use of Community Assistance Funds Adjacent to National Forests and Grasslands Program funds. Projects emphasize responsible forest management and biomass utilization which are identified to directly protect homes.

Landowner Assistance

RCF provided 1,766 forest health, 145 forest management, and 208 prairie forestry technical assists in 2020 to private landowners, conservation districts, state parks, and cooperative extension personnel. These technical assists are targeted at threats identified in the South Dakota Forest Action Plan.

Landscape Scale Restoration

There were no active Landscape Scale Restoration projects in 2020.

Urban and Community Forestry

The division provided 257 technical assists to community governments, volunteer/service groups and organizations, and private citizens in 68 communities. Communities and non-profit organizations were awarded grant funds totaling \$26,000 that were matched by funds totaling \$31,120.22.

Volunteer Fire Assistance

In 2020, \$357,299.03 in Volunteer Fire Assistance grants were awarded to 80 Fire departments for a total project cost of \$836,837.06. Through these grants, departments were able to increase their capabilities and interoperability.

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