



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Texas 2025



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2024 Final
Community Forests and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$1,043,275
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$407,618
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$400,000
State Fire Assistance	\$2,781,576
Urban and Community Forestry	\$1,548,963
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$999,384
Total	\$7,180,816

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

Texas is a large state with a diverse landscape and a diverse set of challenges. Challenges such as forest markets, water quality and quantity, extreme weather, significant wildfires, fragmentation and changing demographics have an effect on the natural resources across the state. Texas A&M Forest Service provides statewide leadership in the management of Texas' vast natural resources and works to protect and restore them from natural disasters, weather extremes, wildfire and invasive pests.

Program Goals

- To maintain and improve the health of rural and urban forests and to protect the forests and citizens of Texas. These programs maximize cost effectiveness through the use of program delivery partnerships and increase forestland sustainability and value in a non-regulatory, voluntary manner.
- The cooperative programs, implemented through partnerships between Texas, USDA Forest Service, and other entities, emphasize forest sustainability and the production of amenity and commodity values.

Key Issues

- Addressing landscape scale issues, such as post-fire recovery, wildfire mitigation and programs that increase water quality and ecosystem health.
- Supporting community forest planning to increase resilience for long-term economic and environmental benefits and improved quality of life.
- Protecting the health and value of trees for wildlife and water where woodlands are not traditionally harvested commercially.
- Addressing invasive plants, insects, diseases, and drought-related impacts for forest health and resiliency.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2024 Accomplishments	Value
Population	29,145,505	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	85,801
Acres of Forest Land	59,938,183	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	76,074
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	53,881,097	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	71,104
Number of NIPF Landowners	285,614	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	422
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	81
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	157,658,560	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	3,250
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,663	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	1,223	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	162
Forest Based Employment	68,917	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	16,505,968
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	7	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	64,465
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	69,089,941		

Program Highlights

Conservation Education

During FY 2024, Texas A&M Forest Service's Conservation Education program expanded its impact, reaching nearly 25,000 people across the state. Highlights include leading 15 forest immersion sessions, one occurring on the National Mall in Washington D.C. for attendees of the 2nd Annual World Forum on Urban Forests, and broadcasting a High Noon Talk about Texas Forest Conservation from the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. The agency reached 7,441 students in a single day during Texas Arbor Day school assembly presentations and engaged thousands more through in-school programs, festivals, conferences, and virtual education. In collaboration with local, state, and federal partners the program trained 589 educators in Project Learning Tree curricula. Additionally, Nature Challenge 2.0, an innovative tracking and engagement platform connecting communities with nature through interactive challenges designed to encourage environmental exploration and stewardship, was launched.

Cooperative Fire Protection

Texas A&M Forest Service continues to work with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk. During FY24, the agency provided 432 community protection programs (CWPP, Firewise and fire prevention workshops/presentations) educating 25,011 Texans on mitigating wildfire risk. VFA funds were allocated to award training tuition grants for 84 firefighters and personal protection equipment grants to 16 communities. State and local firefighters responded to 4,875 wildfires burning 1,299,253 acres in 2024. State Fire Assistance provided funding to support fire protection and training activities across Texas. The federal excess property programs (FEPP and FFP) provided 71 assists in and placing fire equipment in rural communities throughout the state. In addition, the agency administered Volunteer Fire Assistance Program funds to support firefighter safety and the training efforts of rural community fire departments.

Economic Action

Texas A&M Forest Service continues to lead efforts to increase the awareness and adoption of mass timber in new building designs. The agency has partnered with several large-scale projects across Texas which demonstrate firsthand the viability of using mass timber versus steel in large scale construction projects. Along with mass timber, the agency continues to monitor economically viable sources of biomass and promote traditional and forest products, biomass energy, and new emerging markets such as ecosystem service credits. Staff are continually expanding the capabilities of www.texasforestinfo.com, a web-based portal that provides all Texans and others information on Texas' forest resources. The "Timber Supply Analysis" web application allows current and potential wood using industries in Texas and across the south quantify the wood resource available in a given area. This aids in the development of

new wood using markets and the expansion of traditional markets. We continue to support the development of "ecosystem value" markets and routinely updates estimated values contained within the "Forest Ecosystem Values" application on www.texasforestinfo.com. The agency Water Resources Program continues to partner with USFS, SGSF and water utility districts to promote and incentivize sustainable forest management techniques within Texas watersheds. This effort is part of the regional Forest and Drinking Water Campaign funded project from USFS in which Texas along with other southern states are working to develop incentives supported by water utility districts to assist landowners in maintaining and managing forest watersheds.

Forest Health Protection

Texas A&M Forest Service continued to coordinate public outreach and technical assistance to Texans regarding a variety of forest and tree pests in FY24. Forest Health staff provide oversight and comment to policy regarding pest regulation to ensure those policies are pragmatic and have achievable outcome-based results. Continued to monitor for new and existing pests such as emerald ash borer, redbay ambrosia beetle, spongy moth, polyphagous shot-hole borer, spotted lanternfly, Asian longhorned beetle and a variety of native bark beetles, all of which are impacting or have the potential to impact Texas trees and forests. Financial assistance to landowners to assist in minimizing the threat of southern pine beetle establishment in East Texas and slowing the spread of oak wilt in Central and North Texas, continue to be provided services. To date, in cooperation with USFS-FHP, the agency has provided almost \$6.9 million to more than 2,000 landowners in East Texas to thin more than 134,000 acres of overly dense pine stands improving stand health and vigor while minimizing the threat of SPB attacks. Also, to slow the spread of oak wilt in Central and North Texas, over \$2.8 million in funding has been provided to assist landowners installing more than 682 miles of trenching. Additionally, in FY24, staff provided 6,249 forest health technical assists, hosted 35 landowner workshops, provided forest health training to over 1,135 individuals, and deployed more than 1,000 detection traps across Texas for identifying new or existing forest pests, both native and non-native.

Forest Legacy

The agency continues to promote the Forest Legacy program and currently has a total of seven funded projects protecting more than 30,000 acres of forestland within high priority areas from conversion to non-forest use. The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee Forest Legacy Program Subcommittee continues to develop new partners. Two new projects were submitted; one through IRA funds as a large landscape project.

Forest Stewardship

Through the Forest Stewardship Program, Texas A&M Forest Service emphasizes the management and sustainability of resource priority areas throughout the state as identified by the Texas Forest Action Plan. Using this plan as a guide, educational and technical resources are directed to these identified priority areas. Program delivery is tailored to address the known resource concerns and threats as well as assist Texans in maintaining healthy forests, trees and woodlands. A variety of tools are used to help educate Texans on stewardship and how they can become better stewards of their forests and trees. These tools include quarterly newsletters, social media posts, mobile and web applications and most importantly one-on-one assistance from agency staff. During FY24 staff educated more than 25,000 landowners and developed 1,113 forest management plans on over 102,000 acres of which 95% were located within identified priority areas. The Tree Improvement Program and Nursery, a component of the FSP in Texas, produced over 40,000 seedlings for a variety of conservation plantings across Texas. Working in cooperation with Prairie View A&M University, Texas A&M University, US Endowment for Forestry, the and the Center for Heirs' Property, the agency supports the provision of forestry assistance, education and resources to African American landowners in East Texas. Lastly, The Texas A&M Forest Service Leadership Institute graduated 21 participants in its fourth cohort. The institute rallies existing and emerging leaders within the fields of natural resources and increases their capacity and ability to enact meaningful change throughout the state of Texas.

Landowner Assistance

Texas A&M Forest Service assists landowners across the state through a number of activities through support of USFS State and Private Forestry programs. Through these programs, agency staff are able to provide Texans assistance regarding a wide range of natural resource issues. In addition to Forest Stewardship activities, landowners receive help with land, timber and tree management issues and needs. Landowners and homeowners receive expert advice on things such as reforestation, tax valuation,

ecosystem restoration as well as forest and tree health threats. Texas A&M Forest Service strives to meet the needs of all Texans throughout the diverse state. This includes windbreak and riparian wildfire recovery needs in the High Plains, insect and disease issues for rural and urban trees, brush control issues in Central and West Texas, water related issues across the state, forestland habitat fragmentation, and protection and sustainability of the commercial forests of East Texas. The agency annually provides more than 100,000 assists across the state through both on-site and off-site assistance. During FY24, staff made almost 3,369 on the ground assists to landowners on more than 200,000 acres of privately-owned forests and woodlands. The agency provided more than 190 education events with over 6,300 Texans receiving formal education on natural resource related topics. Staff developed more than 1,113 forest management plans on almost 102,000 acres. Lastly, through the Texas Forest Information portal, almost 88,000 additional landowners and natural resource managers were assisted through our online resources such as Map My Property, Plan My Land Operation, TreeMD, Timber Supply Analysis, and others.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Texas A&M Forest Service continues to collaborate with federal, state, and NGO partners to identify and develop landscape initiatives to address forest and woodland health, improve water quality, and identify barriers to landowners in managing forests and woodlands across the state. Agency staff serve integral roles on various restoration teams including the Texas Longleaf Implementation Team, Northeast Texas Conservation Delivery Network, and the State Technical Advisory Committee hosted by NRCS. The agency continues to support the restoration of longleaf pine, shortleaf pine, ponderosa pine and native grass restoration as part of restoring historical ecosystem types in Texas. During FY24 the agency continued ponderosa pine restoration in the Davis Mountain region, broadened the list of species grown for High Plains restoration purposes, and continued to focus on wildfire recovery and resiliency projects. Also, the Texas Forests and Water Partnership matured, meeting quarterly as a conduit between water utilities, stakeholders and forest landowners working towards providing monetary support for managing priority watersheds. Through the Good Neighbor Authority, the agency is available to assist Texas National Forests in addressing forest health issues and mitigating hazards to both the local ecosystem and general public. Through the GNA, \$657,00 in revenue was generated for two Texas counties from administration of a 500-acre forest thinning project.

Post-Fire Recovery

Following the largest fire in Texas history, the Smokehouse Fire, which burned over 1 million acres in the Texas Panhandle in early calendar year 2024, the agency implemented its post-fire recovery program. This program grows species specific to vulnerable ecosystems and regions of the state for riparian restoration following wildfire. Using historical wildfire data, we anticipate need for the coming fire season so that we can have appropriate species ready for timely recovery. We will utilize tree distribution events as touch points to engage landowners in stewardship practices that help promote ecosystem health.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Community Forestry Program made significant strides in embedding community forestry principles into local and regional planning processes, collaborating with city planners, local governments, and community organizations, to ensure tree canopy considerations and sustainable practices are integrated into broader land-use and development plans. In FY24, twenty-one Texas cities, non-profit organizations, and schools received \$15.4 million in funding through Community Forestry Grants. The grants support tree planting, maintenance, and community forestry planning, contributing to forestry solutions that build resilience, improve public health, and enhance economic impact for residents. The supported the creation of six new forestry positions within municipalities through grant funding, trained over 9,800 individuals, and awarded more than \$20,000 in scholarships to professionals statewide. These efforts not only enhance the expertise within the field but also contribute to the broader Texas economy by strengthening the urban forestry workforce. Over 60,000 seat hours of formal education and training were delivered to Texans. Through Green Futures corporate investment program, Texas Arbor Day, and other initiatives, 45,657 trees were given away or planted by the Community Forestry Program; an average of more than 214 trees per day. Additionally, staff expand selection and reach of urban-hardy trees from the Urban Tree Improvement Program; coordinated the Texas Tree Conference, providing scholarships to over 50 municipal employees; and developed innovative applications to aid communities in the management of their trees, including Texas Tree Selector, Trees Count inventory app, and the Tree Risk mobile app.

Water Resources

The Texas A&M Forest Service Water Resources program continues to focus on innovative technology and strategic partnerships to enhance water resources throughout the state. The web-based Plan My Land Operation application averages 300 sessions per month, providing users with site specific BMP recommendations to support operation planning and layout. Computer models are also used to quantify and build support for utilizing urban forests in storm water management programs and watershed protection plans. The Texas Forests and Drinking Water Partnership continues to grow and connect forest managers, owners and water utility districts to advance source water protection initiatives. The agency's Green Futures program engages corporate funding for planting projects within priority watersheds and other areas. During FY 24 we rolled out the delivery of pass-through grants for temporary bridges in logging applications and implementation of forestry-based projects in Watershed Protection Plans. Additionally, the agency initiated Best Management Practice trainings and site inspections for reducing erosion and improving watershed health in emergency response and wildfire suppression, leveraging the extremely successful logger training model.

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