



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Texas 2021



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$980,575
Forest Legacy	\$1,095,000
Forest Stewardship	\$425,620
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$722,300
State Fire Assistance	\$2,996,299
Urban and Community Forestry	\$1,517,581
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$875,999
Total	\$8,613,374

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

Texas is a large state that has a diverse landscape with with a diverse set of challenges. Challenges such as forest markets, water quality and quantity, fragmentation and changing demographics have an affect on the natural resources across the state. Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) 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

- Working with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk and enhance community forest sustainability.
- Increasing awareness for the Healthy Trees Healthy Lives campaign through which the role that urban trees and forests play in human health.
- Invasive plants, insects, diseases, and drought-related impacts are key issues within forest health.
- Protecting the health and value of trees for wildlife and water where woodlands are not traditionally harvested commercially.
- Addressing landscape scale issues, and developing incentive-based programs that increase water quality and forest health.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	25,145,561	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	37,773
Acres of Forest Land	62,089,676	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	84,490
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	12,996,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	63,292
Number of NIPF Landowners	354,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	350
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	1,100
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	157,658,560	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	4,450
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,663	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	1,214	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	125
Forest Based Employment	67,000	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	13,997,769
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	6	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	15,342
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	67,101,544		

Program Highlights

Conservation Education

During FY 2020, TFS continued to lead the way for new innovative methods for delivering conservation education programs. Through a variety of web based applications through TexasForestInfo and traditional hands on events such as PLT and the Texas Teachers Conservation Institute TFS continues to provide science based curriculum to advance the conservation of the state's vast natural resources. More than 57,000 Texans participated in 150 conservation education programs hosted by TFS during 2020. Also TFS continues to lead the way nationally in the development of the "Forest Literacy Plan" which provides a mechanism for incorporating science based natural resource management curriculum into everyday lesson plans for school aged children across the country.

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) continued to work with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk using programs such as Communities Wildfire Protection Plans, Ready Set Go, Firewise Communities and fire prevention campaigns. TFS also focus on educating the public about safe debris burning practices, campfire safety and other human causes of wildfire. During FY 20 TFS provided 205 community protection programs (RSG, Firewise and fire prevention workshops/presentations) educating 15,946 Texans on mitigating wildfire risk. TFS staff provided training to 3,454 firefighters and provided 3,037 VFD assists. State and local firefighters responded to 7,889 wildfires burning 273,589 acres in FY 20. State Fire Assistance provided funding to support fire protection and training activities across Texas. The federal excess property programs (FEPP and FFP) assisted Texas in acquiring and placing fire equipment in rural communities throughout the state. In addition, TFS administered Volunteer Fire Assistance Program funds to support firefighter safety and the training efforts of rural community fire departments.

Economic Action

TFS continues to monitor economically-viable sources of biomass and promote traditional forest products, biomass energy, as well as emerging markets including mass timber, and forest carbon. TFS continues to expand 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. TFS continues to support the development of "ecosystem value" markets and routinely updates estimated values contained within the "Forest Ecosystem Values" application on www.texasforestinfo.com. TFS Water Resources Coordinator 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 "Forest to Faucet" funded project from USFS in which Texas and South Carolina are working to develop incentives supported by water utility districts to assist landowners in maintaining and managing forest watersheds.

Forest Health Protection

TFS continues to coordinate public outreach and technical assistance to Texans regarding a variety of forest and tree pests. Forest Health staff provide oversight and comment to policy regarding pest regulation to ensure those policies are pragmatic and have achievable outcome-based results. During FY 2020 TFS continued to monitor for new and existing pests such as emerald ash borer, redbay ambrosia beetle, gypsy moth, 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. TFS continues providing 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. To date, in cooperation with USFS-FHP, TFS has provided over \$6.6 million to more than 1,800 landowners in East Texas to thin more than 124,000 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, TFS to date has provided over \$2.8 million in funding to assist landowners install more than 670 miles of trenching. TFS staff spent more than 220 hours diagnosing pest issues, hosted 125 workshops with over 2,500 landowners attending and provided forest health/pest technical expertise to almost 4,000 Texans. During FY 2020 TFS deployed a new mobile and web application to assist homeowners, landowners and land managers diagnose a variety of common native and invasive pests affecting trees across the state. TreeMD averages 332 sessions monthly and as the application grows so will its use. Lastly, TFS continues to expand its relationship with USDA-APHIS, US Customs and Border Control, Texas Department of Agriculture and USFS-FHP in an effort to better coordinate efforts for identifying and mitigating forest health issues.

Forest Legacy

TFS continues to promote the Forest Legacy Program (FLP) and the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP). A total of six projects protect more than 30,000 acres of working forestland in high-priority areas, an additional project, Fox Hunters Hill, was awarded in FY20 and is currently in the final stages of acquisition. This high-value project, currently being restored to the native longleaf pine ecosystem, is adjacent to Toledo Bend Reservoir, protecting drinking water for many residents of Texas and Louisiana. One CFP project on the edge of the Edwards Plateau ecoregion at San Marcos was completed in 2020 and there are discussions for two that will preserve and provide access to the ancient Cross Timbers Forest near the DFW metro area.

Forest Stewardship

Through the Forest Stewardship Program, TFS 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, TFS directs educational and technical resources 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 TFS staff. During FY 2020 TFS staff aided almost 25,000 landowners, educated more than 13,000 landowners and developed 688 Forest Stewardship Plans on over 84,000 acres of which 75% were located within identified priority areas. The TFS Tree Improvement Program and Idalou Nursery, a component of the FSP in Texas, produced over 24,000 pounds of improved seed and almost 74,000 seedlings respectively. Working in cooperation with Prairie View A&M University, Texas A&M University and US Endowment for Forestry, TFS is helping to deliver the Sustainable Forestry & African American Land Retention Program. Through this effort TFS and partners will provide forestry assistance, education and resources to African American landowners in East Texas. Lastly, The Texas A&M Forest Service Leadership Institute was launched during FY 2020 with 24 participating in the inaugural cohort. The institute will rally existing and emerging leaders within the fields of natural resources and increase their capacity and ability to enact meaningful change throughout the state of Texas.

Landowner Assistance

Landowner assistance is the foundation on which TFS was founded and continues to operate on today.

TFS provides statewide, regional and national leadership on natural resource policy and programs that can be used to assist forest landowners. Also, TFS leads the way in developing a litany of online tools that landowners can use to better manage their forestland, detect forest health issues and connect with available service providers to implement management practices. During FY 2020 TFS staff aided almost 25,000 landowners, educated more than 13,000 landowners and developed 688 Forest Stewardship Plans on over 84,000 acres of which 75% were located within identified priority areas. TFS staff were able to provide Texans assistance regarding a wide range of natural resource issues including windbreak 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, forest and habitat fragmentation, and protection and sustainability of the commercial forests of East Texas.

Landscape Scale Restoration

TFS 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. TFS 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 FY 2020 TFS continued efforts to restore ponderosa pine in the Davis Mountain region, identify deteriorated windbreaks in the High Plains for restoration purposes, and continue grow native grass for restoration projects. Also, TFS continued to grow the Texas Forests and Drinking Water campaign which works to develop a connection between water utilities and forest landowners in hopes of providing monetary support for managing priority watersheds. Through the Good Neighbor Authority TFS is assisting Texas National Forests in addressing forest health issues and mitigating hazards to both the local ecosystem and general public. Lastly, during FY 2020 TFS expanded its role with National Forest System in Texas through the Good Neighbor Authority. TFS took the lead on the management of timber sales (mostly thinning operations to improve forest health conditions) on the Sabine, Sam Houston and Davey Crockett National Forests.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry Program provides education and technical assistance to communities and residents across the state. Annually, the program reaches nearly 14 million people through direct and indirect assistance. This includes tree issues, ordinances, inventories and community management plans for greenspaces and trees. Staff work with 6 regional urban forestry councils to educate citizens about the benefit and value of trees in the landscape, engage stakeholders in the Healthy Trees, Healthy Lives initiative, coordinate the Texas Tree Conference, train Certified Arborists, including a Spanish option and the Wildfire Risk Reduction Qualification, and assist in the development of applications to aid residents and communities in the management of their trees. FY20 saw the release of the My Tree ID mobile app which provides directed and self-guided paths to identify tree species based on physical characteristics or location and to estimate age of individual trees.

Water Resources

The TFS Water Resources program continues to focus on innovative technology and strategic partnerships to enhance water resources throughout the state. Texas Forestry BMPs, a native smartphone application for the Texas Forestry Best Management Practices handbook, has been downloaded by more than 1,500 users. The web-based Plan My Land Operation application averages 200 sessions per month, providing users with site specific BMP recommendations to support operation planning and layout. Computer models (iTree Hydro) are also being used to quantify and build support for utilizing urban forests in stormwater management programs and watershed protection plans. The Texas Forests and Drinking Water Partnership continues to grow and connecting forest managers, owners and water utility districts to advance source water protection initiatives. Priority watersheds have been identified, conservation funding has been directed to these areas, and efforts are underway to develop a forest-water demonstration project. TFS is also delivering land stewardship training to farm and ranch contractors in Central and West Texas, building on the extremely successful logger training model in East Texas.

Contact Information



Texas A & M Forest Service

Thomas G Boggus
State Forester & Director
200 Technology Way, Suite 1281
College Station, TX 77845-3424
979-458-6608
tboggus@tfs.tamu.edu

US Forest Service Southern Region

Jan Davis
*Deputy Regional Forester - State and Private
Forestry*
USDA Forest Service
1720 Peachtree Street, Suite 760S
Atlanta, GA 30309
202-860-6275
janette.davis@usda.gov
