



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Utah 2021



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2020 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$354,334
Forest Legacy	\$1,530,000
Forest Stewardship	\$156,396
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$300,000
State Fire Assistance	\$1,561,559
Urban and Community Forestry	\$254,873
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$308,288
Total	\$4,465,450

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

Cooperative Forestry and Fire Programs are administered and implemented through partnerships between Utah Division of Forestry, Fire & State Lands (FFSL), USDA Forest Service (USFS), private organizations, and local governments. These programs promote the protection, health and productivity of Utah's forests, communities, watersheds, and related economies. We emphasize wildfire risk reduction, forest restoration, forest products, wildlife habitat, water resources, rural economies, and conservation practices.

Program Goals

- Increase active, outcome-based management on all forests through strong partnerships;
- Enhance public benefits through focused efforts to protect and sustain healthy forests, watersheds, and landscapes; and
- Promote voluntary and non-regulatory approaches.

Key Issues

- Growing risk of catastrophic wildfire, especially in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas;
- Increased age and density of forests and decreased diversity of forest age-classes on federal lands;
- Protection and rehabilitation of water quality and riparian areas;
- Threat of invasive, exotic species to native biodiversity;
- Economic and social well-being of forest dependent communities; and
- Rapid development and demand for urban forestry support.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2020 Accomplishments	Value
Population	2,763,885	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	586
Acres of Forest Land	17,878,209	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	42,296
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	3,013,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	36,209
Number of NIPF Landowners	66,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	27
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	11
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	15,593,893	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	2,114
Number of Rural Fire Departments	254	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	880
Cities and Towns	245	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	106
Forest Based Employment	150	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	2,031,741
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	2	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	16,526
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	26,919,500		

Program Highlights

Conservation Education

FFSL contracts with the Utah Society for Environmental Education (USEE) to deliver Conservation Education. USEE uses the American Forest Foundation's Project Learning Tree (PLT) to provide workshops for teachers to learn the PLT model and implement the curricula in their classrooms. These workshops cover outreach activities to encourage participation of teachers, natural resources professionals, and others interested in environmental education. In 2020, FFSL worked with Riverton Elementary to improve its outdoor classroom. USEE was also involved in this project, including the provision of materials for students to better utilize this outdoor space. A tree planting project is planned at this site in 2021. This project will focus on installing native tree species in the outdoor classroom to assist students in learning more about the forests and vegetation in their state.

Cooperative Fire Protection

FFSL granted approximately \$436,150 to 51 fire departments for training and to purchase firefighting and personal protective equipment. FFSL also certified approximately 2,439 Utah structural firefighters to fight wildland fire as well as placed 6 firefighting apparatuses with fire departments. Fuel was reduced on more than 2,646 acres to protect communities in the wildland urban interface.

Forest Health Protection

Bark beetle infestations and other forest health issues continue to affect large areas within Utah. Over the past 30 years, spruce beetle has infested and killed millions of Engelmann spruce and is still presently active.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has not been detected in Utah. However, Utah is monitoring with detection traps in areas where ash is a considerable percentage of the live tree component. FFSL is coordinating with Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, to increase the number of traps in areas where EAB may be introduced and in recreational areas, such as campgrounds, where ash is present.

Balsam Woolly Adelgid (BWA), an exotic and invasive insect has been established in the United States for over 100 years and documented in Idaho since 1983. BWA was confirmed in Utah on September 6th, 2017, and as of 2020 has been confirmed in Box Elder, Cache, Rich, Weber, Davis, Morgan, Salt Lake, and Summit counties. Utah FFSL, USFS Forest Health Protection, USDA APHIS PPQ, Utah State University, and Utah Department of Agriculture and Food are collaborating to address the impacts of the current infestation. We are looking at potential concerns in regards to snow pack retention, watershed health, fuel loading, aesthetics, and economic impacts. Two public fact sheets are available on the FFSL

website: one with general information, and one with general and current managerial information.

Forest Legacy

In 2020, the Utah Forest Legacy Program completed the 1,800-acre Orderville Gulch Conservation Easement located in Kane County, securing permanent public access leading to the Zion Narrows Trail in Zion National Park. This project contributes to a total of 78,581 acres of private forest land that is protected throughout Utah with Forest Legacy conservation easements. Due diligence work continues on the following funded conservation easements: 4,886-acre Soldier Summit (Wasatch County) and 644-acre Coldwater (Cache County). Three new projects were submitted to the national US Forest Service ranking committee for funding consideration in late 2020: Goring Forest (2,725 acres, Rich/Cache Counties), Coldwater Phase 2 (15,679 acres, Cache County), and the Mathis Conservation Project (1,600 acres, Carbon County). Division guidelines for annual Legacy monitoring were developed and implemented across the state in order to ensure consistency in conservation easement property monitoring procedures.

Forest Stewardship

The Utah Forest Stewardship Program enables private forest landowners to better manage their lands to provide valuable social, economic, and environmental benefits. Across Utah's landscape, approximately 3 million acres or 16% of Utah's forests are held in private ownership. FFSL completed 12 Forest Stewardship Management plans covering 42,296 acres. These plans enable landowners to manage their forest resources to meet their objectives and to provide improved landscape-scale benefits. Utah currently has 95 active plans covering 300,044 acres. FFSL's foresters secured funding through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Improvement Program and Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative to assist landowners with implementation of recommended forest practices. Forest Water Quality Guidelines monitoring of active timber harvests continued with only minor departures being recorded. Utah's Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee continues to engage a variety of state, federal, and local natural resource agencies, industry professionals and private forest landowners.

Landowner Assistance

FFSL's foresters provide expertise and guidance to improve forest health conditions and encourage active forest management. FFSL's forestry staff provided forestry related technical assistance through 561 recorded contacts with private landowners, along with providing education to 25 Utah citizens. FFSL made 41 contacts with cooperators and contractors working on forestry projects on private properties. Also, FFSL made 75 contacts with federal agencies, 97 contacts with other state agencies, and 13 contacts with counties and cities to discuss and coordinate on forestry related subjects and projects.

Landscape Scale Restoration

FFSL has five active Landscape Scale Restoration projects through which it is working with partners to achieve landscape level solutions.

1. Forest Restoration Through Biomass Utilization in Southeastern Utah: FFSL is working with public land managers and private forest landowners to remove dead and dying trees and use mobile biomass processing units to restore healthy forests. In 2020, FFSL collaborated with Utah State University-Forestry Extension to demonstrate alternative methods to dispose of woody un-merchantable material. A total of 66 acres was treated to reduce wildfire risks.
2. Hamlin Valley Pinyon/Juniper Encroachment: Utah and Nevada are partnering with landowners, organizations, and federal agencies to address pinyon/juniper encroachment through the rehabilitation of 820 acres of high priority sagebrush shrubland. In 2020, the total 622 acres was treated to improve sage grouse habitat and reduce wildfires risk.
3. Virgin River Watershed Restoration: FFSL is working through public-private partnerships to restore riparian forests and habitat in one of Utah's priority landscapes. In 2020, the total of 14 acres was treated on private lands to remove invasive species--tamarisk and Russian Olive--and restore native trees for long-term water quality and habitat protection.
4. Monroe Mountain Aspen Restoration: FFSL is working with partners to restore aspen forests on private lands on Utah's high-priority Monroe Mountain landscape. In 2020, wildfire risks was reduced, while encouraging aspen restoration on 333 acres by cutting the conifers in aspen stands that complement efforts on adjacent federal lands.
5. Aspen Resilience in Priority Watersheds of Southeastern Utah: FFSL is working with partners and landowners to restore aspen forests, prevent wildfire, and improve habitat in southeast Utah. This grant

was awarded in 2020 and projects are being planned to remove decadent aspen and encroaching conifer on state and privately owned lands.

Urban and Community Forestry

Urban forests provide essential benefits to Utah's quality of life and economy. In 2020, communities planted 704 new trees and 8,249 new seedlings, generating several million dollars in net community benefits. These benefits include reductions in energy use, storm water runoff, and air pollutants. In addition, FFSL is supporting the installation of an urban forest trail in South Jordan City.

FFSL promotes healthy urban forests by encouraging communities to participate in Tree City USA, and 83 communities have achieved this designation. Additionally, 6 universities were designated with TreeCampus Higher Education credentials. FFSL also promotes volunteer support for urban forestry efforts, and in 2020, volunteers worked more than 16,526 hours to keep their cities green and vibrant. In 2020, FFSL provided technical or financial support to 149 communities (over 71% of Utah's population) in managing their urban forests and maximizing community value.

FFSL is supporting a large planting effort, conducted by TreeUtah, which will focus on installing alternative species to ash, in wake of the possibility of Emerald Ash Borer entering the state. These plantings will take place in parks throughout the state. Urban and Community Forestry coordinated with Forest Health Protection and Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF) to strategically place more Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) traps. The purpose of additional traps was to increase the probability of early detection of EAB. To date, no EAB has been detected.

FFSL also assisted more than a dozen communities in cleanup efforts from the hurricane-force wind event that took place in early September. This event destroyed many thousands of trees in the northern portion of the state. With emergency funds generated by the state and the USDA Forest Service, FFSL was able to provide approximately 409 hours of meaningful assistance to many of the affected communities.

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