



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

Texas 2018



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2017 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$1,031,320
Forest Legacy	\$0
Forest Stewardship	\$434,714
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$263,500
State Fire Assistance	\$1,388,285
Urban and Community Forestry	\$747,268
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$744,906
Total	\$4,609,993

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

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.
- 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 2017 Accomplishments	Value
Population	25,145,561	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	5,656
Acres of Forest Land	62,614,955	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	74,702
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	12,996,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	56,942
Number of NIPF Landowners	354,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	378
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0	State Fire Communities Assisted	89
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	156,000,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	6,920
Number of Rural Fire Departments	1,873	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	1,214	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	90
Forest Based Employment	60,900	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	11,886,043
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	8	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	4,282
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	70,425,232		

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS) continued to work with counties, communities, and homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk, conducting 142 Ready Set Go (RSG) workshops for 12,449 Texans and providing 17 RSG train-the-trainer sessions to 25 fire departments. Local, state, and national resources responded to 11,069 wildfires burning 315,619 acres in 2017. 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.

Forest Health Protection

TFS continues to coordinate public outreach concerning the movement of emerald ash borer (EAB) since the original detection in 2016. TFS works closely with USDA-APHIS to implement the EAB Monitoring and Detection Program across the state. Although southern pine beetle (SPB) hasn't been identified in Texas for some time, TFS continues to work with landowners to reduce the threat of SPB infestations in overly dense pine stands. Oak wilt continues to spread throughout Central and North Texas infecting healthy live oak trees impacting both rural and urban landscapes. TFS continues to provide both technical and financial assistance through the Texas Oak Wilt Suppression Project to limit the spread of oak wilt to non-infected areas and trees. During 2017 utilizing Cooperative FHP funding, TFS was able to oversee the installation of over 15 miles of oak wilt trenching and thin almost 7,000 acres of overly dense pine stands. These activities combined with traditional assistance helps maintain the health of Texas forests and woodlands. The threat from invasive pests and plants continues to grow in Texas with increased port activity and urbanization. To help mitigate these threats TFS has begun working with U.S. Customs and Border Patrol to develop collaborative ways for mitigating the threat of invasive species becoming established.

Forest Legacy

Continuing to conserve working forests, TFS completed due diligence and moved towards acquiring a conservation easement over 5438.6 acres of priority longleaf restoration area forestland through FY16 Forest Legacy funds of \$2 million (Phase II of Longleaf Ridge Project).

Forest Stewardship

The TFS continued to focus efforts towards the stated National Program Priorities. As a part of the program, TFS delivered 552 Forest Stewardship Plans during FY17 representing almost 75,000 acres. Of those acres, 76% are located within identified high priority areas as identified in the Texas Forest Action

Plan. Through the TFS seed orchard, 5,339 pounds of improved seed were collected and/or produced and over 66,000 seedlings were produced through the West Texas Nursery. The State Stewardship Coordinating Committee representing 34 different agencies and organizations actively meets to provide direction and guidance for ensuring that a balanced and effective program reaches landowners statewide.

Landowner Assistance

TFS assists landowners across the state through a number of activities through support of USFS State and Private Forestry programs. Through these programs TFS 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. TFS strives to meet the needs of all Texans throughout the diverse state. This includes 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. TFS annually provides more than 100,000 assists across the state. During FY 2017 TFS staff spent over 5,600 man-hours assisting Texans, provided 499 education and training events with over 10,500 Texans receiving formal education on natural resource related topics. These assists included training sessions/workshops, one on one consultations, and web-based trainings and applications.

Outreach and Emerging Markets

TFS continues to monitor economically-viable sources of biomass and promote biomass energy markets, promote existing traditional wood markets, promote the need for and expansion of new markets for both traditional and non-traditional wood products. 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. During FY 2017 the "My Land Management Connector" application was released. This application is designed to facilitate a connection between landowners needing land management services to professionals and vendors who provide those services. The portal also provides landowners, land managers and arborists tools to assist them in the management of forests, woodlands and urban greenspaces and trees.

Through the Forest Stewardship Program, the TFS emphasizes the management and sustainability of resource high-priority areas throughout the state. Using the Texas Forest Action Plan TFS program leaders direct educational and technical resources to identified priority areas. Program delivery is tailored to address the resource concerns identified and assists Texans in those areas to maintain healthy forests, trees and woodlands. One tool utilized to educate Texans about natural resource priorities is the quarterly newsletter "Stewardship Briefings". The newsletter addresses landscape scale concerns within high priority areas and how Texans can maintain the health and vigor of their forests and trees. During FY 2017 TFS staff across the state educated more than 10,500 landowners through a variety of trainings, webinars and workshops focused on current natural resource issues. Outreach efforts also target historically underserved landowners providing them the tools necessary to manage their forests or woodlands. Through the efforts of TFS, the stewardship message is conveyed to thousands of small-scale, diverse, and new landowners and school kids each year.

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 and native grass restoration as part of restoring historical ecosystem types in Texas. During FY 2017 TFS continued efforts to restore ponderosa pine in the Davis Mountain region as well as identifying deteriorated windbreaks in the High Plains for restoration purposes. 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.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Urban and Community Forestry Program provides educational and technical assistance to communities and homeowners across the state. This includes tree ordinances, single tree issues,

inventories and community management plans for green spaces and trees. Staff work with 6 regional urban forestry councils to educate citizens about the benefit and value of trees in the landscape, coordinate the Texas Tree Conference and assist in the development of applications to aid communities in the management of their trees, including the new Trees Count mobile inventory app and companion tools.

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 almost 1,000 users. The web-based Plan My Land Operation application averages 250 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 was formally established, connecting forest landowners with drinking water managers to collaborate on 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.

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