State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet
Minnesota 2024

Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2023 Estimate
Community Forestry and Open Space	$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	$525,939
Forest Legacy	$38,000
Forest Stewardship	$386,433
Landscape Scale Restoration	$545,000
State Fire Assistance	$1,858,492
Urban and Community Forestry	$0
Volunteer Fire Assistance	$462,832
Total	**$3,816,696**

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

State, private, and other non-Federal forests make up 92 percent of the 176 million acres of forests across the 20 states of the Northeast and Midwest. The U.S. Forest Service and state forestry agencies collaborate with other partners on shared stewardship goals, which also support each State Forest Action Plan. The State, Private, and Tribal Forestry programs promote the health, resilience, and productivity of trees and forests across all ownerships for the benefit of people and wildlife; establish and manage urban and community forests; empower private landowners with information and technical assistance to sustainably manage their forests; and protect critically important rural forests and watersheds.

Program Goals

- Conserve and manage working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses.
- Protect forests from threats.
- Enhance public benefits from trees and forests.

Key Issues

- Identify and conserve high priority forest ecosystems and landscapes.
- Actively and sustainably manage forests.
- Restore fire-adapted lands and reduce risk of wildfire impacts.
- Identify, manage, and reduce threats to forest and ecosystem health.
- Protect and enhance water quality and quantity.
- Improve air quality and conserve energy.
- Increase environmental services by creating and maintaining healthy urban and community forests.
- Maintain and enhance the economic benefits and values of trees and forests.
- Protect, conserve, and enhance wildlife and fish habitat.
- Connect people to trees and forests, and engage in environmental stewardship activities.
- Manage trees and forests to mitigate and adapt to global climate change.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value
Population	5,706,494
Acres of Forest Land	17,675,446
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	6,725,066
Number of NIPF Landowners	102,780
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	0
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	45,037,000
Number of Rural Fire Departments	748
Cities and Towns	853
Forest Based Employment	39,867
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	4
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	39,000,000

FY 2023 Accomplishments	Value
Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	11,336
Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	66,018
Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	45,552
Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	140
State Fire Communities Assisted	264
Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	26,944
Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	216
Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	4,114,012
Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	32,957

Program Highlights

Cooperative Fire Protection

State Fire Assistance grants allowed Minnesota to conduct training courses for over 2,005 firefighters in rural fire departments and supported a successful prevention program. A $295,000 Cross-Boundary hazardous fuels reduction grant supported by the State was awarded to St. Louis County for hazardous fuels reduction on private lands. Two Wildfire Risk Reduction grants, for a total of $400,000, were used for prescribed fire training and light detection and ranging analysis of hazardous fuel loading. The State acquired $1,402,713 in property from the Department of Defense Firefighter Property program and $48,187 in property from the Federal Excess Personal Property program. The Volunteer Fire Assistance program awarded 140 grants to rural fire departments throughout the State. Minnesota is partnering with St. Louis County to implement a $890,925 Community Wildfire Defense Grant.

Economic Action

In 2023, four projects in Minnesota totaling approximately $1.5 million were selected for Forest Markets grant funding. One Wood Innovations project will invest in a closed cycle biochar project system and the second in a mass timber extension for a public contemporary art library. A Community Wood project will support a wood energy processing and dehydration system. Finally, a Temporary Bridge Crossing grant was awarded to the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe.

Forest Health Protection

Spruce budworm affected more acres in 2023 in Minnesota than it has in any single year since 1961. Damage from several years of intensive budworm defoliation has created concerning levels of wildfire fuels and forest regeneration challenges in northeast Minnesota. Eastern larch beetle activity continued for the 23rd straight year in 2023, and the total acres impacted since the outbreak started in 2001 surpassed 1 million acres. Emerald ash borer (EAB) was confirmed for the first time in north-central and northwest Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Program offered $16 million in grants to local units of government for a wide variety of community forest management activities, prioritizing applications aimed at reducing the impact of EAB. A record number of spongy moth males were trapped, the great majority in northeast Minnesota, but no serious spongy moth outbreaks have occurred yet in the State. The most widespread tree problem across Minnesota in 2023 was declining oaks, primarily caused from combinations of older age, consecutive years of significant drought, and twolined chestnut borer outbreaks. The growing season in 2023 was Minnesota's ninth driest on record. Professionals expect considerable oak, aspen, and birch mortality from recent droughts in 2024.

Forest Stewardship

The number of Woodland Stewardship Plans written in FY 2023 decreased by about 15 percent from the previous year. Minnesota continues to receive stable funding to implement a private lands forestry cost-share program and remains fully staffed to implement Cooperative Forest Management programs. Targeted landscape efforts and funding are increasing to plant more trees for carbon sequestration. The Call Before You Cut program received a significant State funding increase over the next two years to expand the program's services and create a model to increase timber harvesting on private lands as the markets allow. There are ongoing partnerships with the Board of Soil and Water Resources to build on the connection between forests and water quality through the implementation of Landscape Stewardship Plans.

Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

In 2023, four projects from local government and nongovernmental organizations in Minnesota received Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding through the USDA Forest Service's competitive grant programs. Over $300,000 in new funding went to protecting and restoring coastal and riparian habitats and to managing invasive plant species. The combined projects propose planting 1,200 trees to restore coastal and riparian forests impacted by spruce budworm outbreaks and invasive plant treatments across more than 1,200 acres. Trees planted will include climate-resilient native species.

Landscape Scale Restoration

Grantee: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Division
Federal investment: $260,000
Project: Expanding Woodland Stewardship and Technical Assistance: Connecting Landowners to Modern Information
Summary: Breaking the barrier of obtaining forest inventory information on private lands using web-based solutions is key to collaborative management of forested landscapes, especially in the face of climate change. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will work with professional foresters collaborating with private landowners to collect forest inventory data, including carbon storage potential. This project will build a robust forest inventory and streamline woodland stewardship plan mapping and monitoring, resulting in improved forest management. They will work to reach everyone including underserved communities, including outreach to areas identified by the Minnesota Pollution Control Environmental Justice web map.

Grantee: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Division
Federal investment: $285,000
Project: Protecting Priority Lakes in the Upper Mississippi Basin: Managing Forests for Water Quality Protection
Summary: This project is focused on managing forests for protecting water quality in the 26 lakes in the Upper Mississippi River Basin of Minnesota. People love these pine-studded shores for the juxtaposition of diverse forests, clean waters, and world-class fisheries. Forests protect water by intercepting rainfall, reducing runoff, and improving infiltration. This project includes working with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and White Earth Nation and partners to identify barriers to equal participation and creation of employment opportunities for disadvantaged communities identified by the Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Urban and Community Forestry

The Minnesota Urban and Community Forestry program through its partnership with the University of Minnesota helped communities and residents in a variety of ways including professional and para-professional education and programming, outreach, technical, and financial assistance. This assistance was provided to 241 communities, bringing the number of people living in a community participating in the urban and community forestry program to over 4.11 million.

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