



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

## Oklahoma 2024



### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2023 Estimate
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$190,904
Forest Legacy	\$50,000
Forest Stewardship	\$160,162
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$0
State Fire Assistance	\$880,559
Urban and Community Forestry	\$377,274
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$321,881
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,980,780</b>

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

Oklahoma Forestry Services' mission is to conserve, enhance and protect Oklahoma's forests and natural resources for present and future generations. Oklahoma's cooperative forestry programs are administered by and implemented through a partnership between the State Forester, the USDA Forest Service, and many private, non-profit, and governmental entities. These programs promote the health, resiliency, and productivity of the state's forestlands and other natural resources to improved rural economies.

### Program Goals

- Reduce the risk and impact from wildfire to Oklahoma through prevention, improved detection and suppression, hazard mitigation, and increased capacity.
- Increase Oklahoma lands under active conservation management.
- Improve the overall health and diversity of urban forest resources through improved public education and collaboration with Oklahoma's communities.

### Key Issues

- Wildfire prevention and hazard mitigation is an increased priority for Oklahoma Forestry Services. The last several years have shown large increases in both wildfire occurrence and acres burned. Extreme risk from wildfire is ever present due to the severe droughts over the last decade that increased tree mortality while periodic wet spring seasons have added to the tremendous wildland fuel loading already present.
- Oklahoma landowners utilize active land management to promote long term protection, conservation, and utilization of forest land and resources. Current estimates reveal that Oklahoma has approximately 1.8 million forested acres under active management.
- Prescribed burning is one of the management tools used to increase health and resilience of Oklahoma's landscape. Careful application of prescribed fire where practical is used for hazardous fuels mitigation, increased resource benefits, and reduced wildfire impacts to natural resources and values-at-risk. Oklahoma Forestry Services conducts prescribed burns on public lands and provides technical expertise and training to promote prescribed burning in Oklahoma.
- Tree City USA is a community forest program designed to encourage healthy trees and forests within the boundaries of communities across Oklahoma. Currently, Oklahoma's Tree City USA communities serve 42% of Oklahoma's population. OFS will continue to invest in this program in order to increase the percent of population living in a Tree City USA.
- Eastern redcedar is encroaching on plant communities, degrading forest ecosystems (especially in the Cross Timbers region) and increasing wildfire risk. Reduced land management and increased cost for redcedar removal are primary reasons for this encroachment. Solutions to this problem includes promoting active conservation management and developing markets to increase redcedar utilization.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

<b>Selected Facts</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>FY 2023 Accomplishments</b>	<b>Value</b>
Population	3,959,353	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	26,234
Acres of Forest Land	11,718,309	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	9,081
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	9,000,356	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	6,402
Number of NIPF Landowners	89,558	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	825
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	2,354,634	State Fire Communities Assisted	4
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	40,535,498	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	100
Number of Rural Fire Departments	842	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	595	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	26
Forest Based Employment	19,300	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	1,950,255
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	5	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	10,301
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	33,197,007		

## Program Highlights

### **Conservation Education**

Oklahoma Forestry Services continues to provide Forestry Education to Oklahomans and visitors to Oklahoma. We have a good Project Learning Tree Program and several additional programs to reach our goal of education. We also manage the Forest Heritage Center in Broken Bow, Oklahoma that has a primary purpose to educate visitors about past, present and future trends in forestry.

### **Cooperative Fire Protection**

Oklahoma Forestry Services continues to provide Fire Management programs for protection of lives, values at risk, and natural resources. OFS works with landowners, communities, State and Federal agencies and fire departments to collaborate on suppression, mitigation and prevention efforts needed to protect Oklahoma resources.

### **Economic Action**

Oklahoma Forestry Services has been working with and will continue to assist companies and groups to promote economic growth and benefits of wood products for Oklahoma. Information derived from the Forest Inventory and Analysis program is provided to all interested parties to aid in the economic development of forest industries.

### **Forest Health Protection**

Each year, Oklahoma Forestry Services flies over 800,000 acres of concentrated pine to monitor for damage and mortality caused by insects and diseases including; southern pine beetle, Ips species, black turpentine beetle, and foliar fungal diseases. Working with other state agencies, private businesses, and the general public OFS runs a monitoring program for emerald ash borer. OFS also watches for other diseases and insect problems throughout the State, when a potential problem is identified action is taken in order to control the issue.

### **Forest Legacy**

Oklahoma Forestry Services continues its partnership with The Conservation Fund and the Forest Legacy Program to obtain the state's first forest legacy property. Through these partnerships, OFS is underway to join the Forest Legacy Program in the upcoming years.

### **Forest Stewardship**

Oklahoma Forestry Services is focused on helping private landowners manage their land. All

management decisions are made with the landowners objective in mind, providing the needed prescriptions to achieve the landowners goals while protecting and enhancing the state's natural resources.

### ***Landowner Assistance***

Oklahoma Forestry Services primary task is to offer landowner assistance to help with any forest management needs they may have.

### ***Landscape Scale Restoration***

Oklahoma Forestry Services is involved in working with established and potential partners to improve communication, increase technology, connect private contractors with landowners and to mitigate storm damage in communities. Some of our partners include USFS, NRCS, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma University, and Oklahoma Forestry Association. OFS is continually looking to create new and strengthen existing partnerships.

### ***Urban and Community Forestry***

Oklahoma Forestry Services continues to work with cities, towns and non-profits across the state to promote and improve the active care and management of forests and trees. Workshops and conferences are conducted throughout the year. Grants are offered for tree planning, planting and care. Projects occurring in disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) are prioritized.

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## **Contact Information**



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