

IDAHO COMMUNITY TREES

A NEWS BULLETIN FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO AND THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS—COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

News You Can Use

No. 29 Winter 2004

Will Idaho get short shrift in community forestry funds? Read the Coordinator's Column.

Coordinator's Column

Update on Federal Funding for State Community Forestry Programs

In my last column, I discussed language contained in the US House of Representatives Appropriations Bill that would have had a serious detrimental impact on Idaho's Community Forestry Program. The proposed wording directed the Forest Service to change the formula used to allocate community forestry funds to states because it "...discriminates against States with large urban areas and directs funds to States with many tiny communities..." In fact, the opposite appears to be true. The current formula allocates nearly half the state funding to the 10 most populous ones. The 25 states with the smallest populations plus the US Islands/Territories and the District of Columbia share just a quarter of the money.

IDL Director Winston Wiggins, Idaho Community Forestry Advisory Council Chair Jack McGee and many of you communicated your concerns about this language to Idaho's Congressional Delegation. Senators Larry Craig and Mike Crapo, and Representatives Mike Simpson and Butch Otter shared your concerns with the Appropriations Committee leadership. I believe that because of these efforts and others, the language in the bill was changed. It now directs the Forest Service to evaluate the impact the proposed change would have on the program and to consider alternatives, one of which would direct more funds to states with large urban areas and another which would measure performance. The evaluation is to be done in partnership with state and non-governmental organizations and with public input. My understanding is that these formula alternatives are currently being worked on and will be available for public comment in the next month or so.

The Surveys and Investigations arm of the House Appropriations Committee is also doing a study of the National Urban and Community Forestry Program. Investigations such as this are done at the request of Congress or federal staff and must have bipartisan support. Once underway,

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James R. Fazio

Tree Committee chair David Rauk works an auger while committee member Margaret Littlejohn fills the holes with pea gravel to improve aeration and water penetration within the root zone of stressed street trees on public property.

Moscow Struggles to Save its Tree-Lined Streets

The Moscow Tree Committee, with the encouragement of city council, has taken steps to save mature maples in the city right-of-way next to the county office buildings. Years of drought, use of de-icing salt, and root cutting have taken their toll. In addition, the already poor soil is compacted.

Although little can be done about some of the factors affecting the trees, an attempt was made last fall to break up the compacted soil and supply water and air to the roots. This was done by drilling 2-inch diameter holes with an auger loaned by the University of Idaho's Facilities Management Department and a smaller auger from the university's soils specialists. Committee members then filled the holes with pea gravel and used garden hoses to add water. Recommendations were also made to use more environmentally-friendly alternatives such as calcium magnesium acetate for de-icing during the winter.

The Committee will monitor the effects of their efforts and are looking into doing a more extensive soil analysis and experimenting with a growth regulating compound called Cambistat™. This product has been effective in tests on stressed trees at the Morton Arboretum in Illinois. The committee is also waging an education campaign for better tree care in the right-of-way adjoining private residences, including the use of techniques that combine water conservation and tree health maintenance.

RC&D's Do Great Things

by Sue IZard, North Idaho Community Forestry Assistant

Resource Conservation & Development Councils are often little-known entities. Yet you will find them active in many communities as non-profit, grass root organizations. Their mission is to work on local projects that support community development and increase the conservation and sustainability of natural resources.

One example is the Clearwater RC&D. With citizen representatives from Latah, Nez Perce, Clearwater, Idaho, and Lewis Counties, the RC&D Council is involved with natural resource

issues such as private forest management practices, weed management, community forestry, and fire mitigation. Every year the Council hosts a forestry education conference for landowners. It also helps coordinate and guide two regional weed management groups, the goal being to control invasive species. Working together across jurisdictional boundaries in multi-county areas, the weed management groups share research information, plan better methods for control, and implement educational activities.

All nine of Idaho's RC&D's have cooperative agreements with IDL to help provide communities with technical and programmatic urban forestry services. The Councils have also taken leadership roles in the coordination of local resources to develop wildland fire assessment and mitigation plans.

By taking advantage of its non-profit status, a RC&D Council can apply for grants and implement, administer and/or coordinate a wide range of projects. Work is normally accomplished using a paid coordinator (a USDA/NRCS employee) and part-time assistants as staff. There are 9 RC&D's in Idaho, and 375 nationwide. Please contact us for more information.



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Two Pillars of Community Forestry Honored



Lewiston City Forester Mike Bowman was honored with a special award from the USDA Forest Service and the Idaho Dept. of Lands November 27. Friends and city officials gathered to surprise Mike and present him with a plaque that reads: "We truly value your exemplary leadership, vision, commitment and dedication as city forester, Lewiston, Idaho.

Your innovative approach in planning and implementing the city forestry program, including outstanding partnerships, has definitely improved the quality of life for Lewiston's citizens."



One of the staunchest supporters of community forestry in the western United States retired from the USDA Forest Service in December. Glenn Roloff (with wife, Susan) devoted 45 years to his outstanding career in the Forest Service, retiring as the agency's Cooperative Forestry Program Specialist for both the Northern Rocky and Intermountain Regions. Glenn was honored in a ceremony in Missoula and will be remembered for his pioneering role as liaison between the Forest Service and Idaho's community forestry program.

(Comments continued from pg. 1)

members of congress and their staff cannot communicate with the investigators. The intent is to produce a non-biased report representing the facts. This report (due in mid-February) is submitted to the Appropriations Committee to use at its discretion. At the invitation of Montana's state forester, I had the opportunity to meet with two of the investigators in Missoula, along with the state foresters of Montana and North Dakota, my counterpart in Montana, and the city forester for Great Falls. The meeting went well and we were able to present facts about our programs, the positive impact federal funding for community forestry has had on our communities, that community trees are vital to cities of all sizes – not just the largest – and our concerns about the future direction of the national program.

It's too early to tell what effect the investigation will have, or what the funding formula alternatives might bring. As information surfaces—especially with regard to the public comment period on the funding formulas—I will get this out quickly. Together we can continue to make a difference.

As we watch this situation, I'm confident that Idaho will continue to have a strong and effective community forestry program. Your great work, dedication and passion continue to make Idaho communities healthier and better places to live.

— David Stephenson, *Community Forestry Coordinator*

Grant Award Summary

Interest in Idaho was again high for receiving financial assistance with local community forestry programs. In the 2003-04 grant cycle made possible by the USDA Forest Service and the Idaho Dept. of Lands Community Forestry Program, 37 applications were received with requests for \$226,107. A total of \$140,000 was available. Here are the successful applicants:

Tree Planting & Care

- Bellevue, \$1,500 Remove unsafe park trees and replace with appropriate species
- Hayden, \$1,400 Training in pruning & tree care for city employees, and hazard pruning
- Iona, \$1,500 Hazard tree removal and replanting
- Kellogg, \$1,500 Remove unsafe street trees and replace
- McCall, \$1,410 Tree planting at Legacy Park
- Menan, \$1,500 Hazard tree removal
- Nampa, \$1,500 Beatification of parking lot
- New Plymouth, \$545 Planting trees in Kiwanis Park
- Pocatello, \$1,500 Prune or remove hazard trees in city zoo
- Shelly, \$1,500 Plant trees along nature trail
- Wendell, \$1,500 Planting of 'Unity Circle' by city hall

Program Development

- Ashton, \$1,981 Employee education and public tree care clinic
- Blaine/Hailey, \$4,000 Improve arboretum interpretation
- CDA/Hayden & Post Falls, \$4,000 Joint tree care education program
- Eagle, \$3,933 Summer intern for inventory, hazard tree i.d. and planning
- Kellogg, \$4,000 Summer intern for inventory update and tree care
- Moscow, \$4,000 Regional seminar on trees as infrastructure
- Nampa, \$3,000 Finish inventory in parks and along pathways
- Nez Perce Co., \$3,000 Model landscape design and education campaign

Community Transportation Enhancement

- Ammon, \$14,905 Improve park area and create parking lot buffer
- Driggs, \$15,000 Plant trees along avenue and five intersections
- Hayden, \$15,000 381 trees and shrubs at edge of Croffoot Park
- Iona, \$14,881 Downtown beautification
- Nampa, \$13,444 Trees and interpretation along rail to trail area
- Shelley, \$6,700 Trees and flowers in new park by Hwy. 91
- Smelterville, \$5,070 Landscape rest area along 'Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes'
- Victor, \$15,000 204 trees in a mostly barren city park with trails

Calendar

March 29-31

Trees & Utilities National Conference, Embassy Suites-Downtown/Old Market, Omaha, NE. (Contact: National Arbor Day Foundation, (402) 474-5655, or visit www.arborday.org/programs/conferencelist)

April 8

Trees and the Infrastructure - Art and Science of the Possible featuring Steve Clark of Bethpage, TN, Hampton Inn, Moscow, ID. (Contact: James R. Fazio, (208) 885-7209 or jfazio@uidaho.edu).

May 4

Hazard Trees Workshop, Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA (Contact: National Arbor Day Foundation; See above).

May 5

Trees, People, and the Law Seminar, Spokane Community College, Spokane, WA (Contact National Arbor Day Foundation; See above).

June 28-30

Community Forestry At Its Best National Conference, Arbor Day Farm, Lied Conference Center, Nebraska City, NE. (Contact: National Arbor Day Foundation; See above).

Arborist Certification Exams

April 17, Spokane, WA (afternoon)

June 5, Twin Falls (morning)

Sept. 26, Coeur d'Alene (afternoon)

TBA, Pocatello (morning)

For information or to register, contact:

Pacific Northwest Chapter, International Society of Arboriculture at 503/874-8263 or 217-355-9411 or email: info@pnwisa.org.

Fire Wise Planting Promoted

Lewiston is doing an exemplary job of promoting landscaping that will help reduce danger from destructive wild-fires. The program is multi-faceted and was publicized in a letter to the editor (one of the most read sections of any newspaper) by Cynthia Freyer, public relations director for the campaign. The project is supported by a grant from the USDA Forest Service and includes:

- Colorful Fire Wise tags on the more fire-resistant trees and shrubs sold in cooperating nurseries
- A one-mile long, fire-resistant demonstration planting along Bryden Canyon Road
- An email address where more information and a list of cooperating nurseries can be obtained
- Publicity in local media

For more information, contact the Idaho Department of Lands (See masthead) or Lewiston's city forester at 208/746-6857 or [nhcemetary@ci.lewiston.id.us](mailto:nhcemetery@ci.lewiston.id.us).



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Tree tip



Michael Bowman

Bradford pear trees, such as this large specimen, are notorious for their narrow branch angles and the trouble caused by their V-shaped branching habit.

Tight Branch Angles Lead to Trouble

This photo, taken in an Idaho community this winter, illustrates the problem with tight branch angles, or crotches. At the bottom of a V-shaped junction, bark often is “included” in the wood as the tree grows. This creates a soft place that is vulnerable to decay. It can also act as a wedge. In the photo, you can see where a large limb with a narrow angle broke off under wind or a snow load. At the far left is another tight crotch headed for trouble. In the center is a stronger, U-shaped junction. Eliminate trouble before it starts:

- For street trees, select species that normally have wide branch angles
- When a tree is young, prune one half of double tops
- When pruning, favor branches with wider branch angles