



# Montana DNRC Forestry Division

## SERVICE FORESTRY

Forest Pest Management

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Montana Conservation  
Seedling Nursery

Urban and Community  
Forestry

# Urban and Community Forestry

***Promoting Stewardship of  
Montana's Urban and Community  
Forests***



**Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Forestry Division  
Service Forestry Bureau  
Urban and Community Forestry**

**D**NRC’s Urban and Community Forestry Program provides assistance to communities throughout Montana to help establish and sustain urban and community forestry programs. Urban and community forestry programs enable communities to properly manage and care for their street and park trees through approaches such as comprehensive plans for tree planting and maintenance, tree care ordinances, and public education.

**T**he Urban and Community Forestry Program assists communities by providing services including **technical and financial assistance, education, planning assistance, and volunteer coordination** to local governments, community leaders, and volunteer groups. Urban and Community Forestry also promotes the continuing education of tree care professionals by offering outreach and sponsoring workshops. The program works closely with several major partners, including the USDA Forest Service, which provides the majority of the program’s funding.

**T**he program has staff that handles statewide coordination while providing regional forestry assistance to the eastern and western regions of the state.

/// **Goal** ///

Effectively and efficiently administer the urban forestry program to provide valuable services to Montana’s communities.

**DNRC Urban and Community Forestry Helps Montana Communities Reach Their Forestry Goals**

**T**rees provide a wide range of **environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits to communities**. Many Montana communities recognize the value of their community forests, but few have professional staff specifically dedicated to managing these important resources. Most small towns lack the funding base to hire a professional forester. DNRC’s Urban and Community Forestry Program helps bridge the gap between communities’ desire to manage their community forests and their limited resources for doing so by providing technical and financial assistance to build communities’ capacity for forest management. More than half of Montana’s communities receive assistance from the Urban and Community Forestry Program each year and have established or are working to establish an urban and community forestry program.

**Program Accomplishments**

- Montana Communities leverage millions of dollars to help their Urban Forestry Programs.
- Nearly \$150,000 in grant funds help communities each year.
- Technical Assistance is provided to approximately 65% of Montana communities each year with most being Tree City USA® cities and towns.



# Helping Communities Create Sustainable Forestry Programs

## Guidance For Program Development

The Urban and Community Forestry Program encourages eligible communities to participate in the National Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA® Program, and provides assistance to communities to help them attain and retain Tree City USA® designation. To be designated a Tree City USA® community, a community must meet four requirements that DNRC Urban and Community Forestry recognizes as comprising a solid foundation for development of a sustainable urban and community forestry program.

Montana maintains an average of 40 Tree City USA® communities, and 86% of Montana's eligible population (individuals who live in incorporated cities and towns) live in a community with Tree City USA® designation. Several Montana communities have maintained Tree City USA® designation for more than 20 years, and new communities are seeking the designation every year. Montana is among the top 10 states in the nation for percent of cities with Tree City USA® designation.

## Tree City USA® Requirements

- 1) establish a tree board, often a group of citizen volunteers who are responsible for developing and administering a tree management program;
- 2) establish a tree care ordinance;
- 3) commit \$2 per capita annually to a tree care program;
- 4) celebrate Arbor Day

**D**NRC's Urban and Community Forestry Program reaches out to all communities in Montana, with the goal of developing a sustainable urban and community forestry program in every community. The Urban and Community Forestry program provides a wide range of technical assistance to all interested communities, and seeks sources of funding that can help provide financial aid to both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

## Technical Assistance

Urban and Community Forestry staff members provide technical assistance to more than half of Montana's communities for activities such as tree inventories, developing tree care ordinances, and developing community forest management plans. Assistance also includes services such as project and grant planning; workshops on topics related to tree care and maintenance; and community forestry presentations to schools and advisory groups. Urban and Community Forestry staff also provide assistance in volunteer coordination, helping communities organize and sustain the volunteer efforts that often are the heart of community forestry programs.



2008 Valier School Arbor Day Celebration

## Financial Assistance

The Urban and Community Forestry Program offers several cost-share grant programs to communities to help develop and sustain forestry programs and to help support Arbor Day celebrations. Any community in Montana is eligible to apply for a \$300 Arbor Day Grant, and cities that have held the Tree City USA® designation for a year or more are eligible for a \$1000 grant. Tree City USA® Grants of \$500 are available to communities that are **newly** designated. The program offers additional grants as funding allows. In recent years, the program awarded over \$200,000 in Program Development Grants to several Montana communities.



*Participant in a tree climbing and rigging workshop*



*Participants in a large-tree planting workshop*

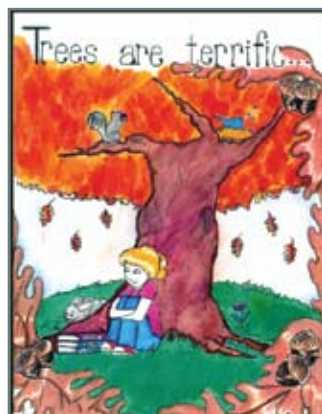
## Providing Continuing Education For Tree Care Professionals

The Urban and Community Forestry Program seeks to provide educational opportunities for tree care professionals, with a goal that all practitioners are educated and knowledgeable in current urban and community forestry principles, practices, and standards. Professional arborists receive certification through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), and must participate in continuing education to maintain credentials. Professional arborists in Montana have limited opportunities for training and continuing education within the state, as many courses are offered out of state. The need to take time away from their businesses to travel long distances for continuing education is a hardship for many Montana arborists. The Urban and Community Forestry Program helps bring additional training opportunities to Montana by securing an agreement with the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the ISA whereby the chapter will hold at least one workshop in Montana each year. The Urban and Community Forestry Program also sponsors training and speakers at the Annual Conference of the Association of Montana Turf and Ornamental Professionals, providing additional training opportunities and continuing education units for Montana arborists.

## Educating the Public About the Importance of Community Forestry

**I**ncreasing public understanding of the importance and value of community forests and of the need for sound community forest management is an important goal of the Urban and Community Forestry Program. In addition to the education that occurs during the development of community forestry programs, Urban and Community Forestry Program staff provide educational outreach through presentations to schools and community groups, a newsletter, and an informative website with links to publications and other educational resources.

**A**rbor Day celebrations held in many Montana communities offer a great opportunity to increase public understanding of the benefits of community forestry. Grants offered by the Urban and Community Forestry Program help fund Arbor Day events.



*Montana Arbor Day poster winner*



*Tree planting as part of Arbor Day events in Townsend with Lieutenant Governor Bohlinger*

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