



# State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

## Montana 2018



### Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2017 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$969,482
Forest Legacy	\$7,000,000
Forest Stewardship	\$178,300
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$256,828
State Fire Assistance	\$3,368,462
Urban and Community Forestry	\$278,100
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$303,606
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,354,778</b>

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

The mission of the Forestry Division of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is to ensure sustainability of Montana forests, rural lands and communities through cooperative wildland fire protection, sound forest management practices and by promoting a viable forest-based economy.

Cooperative Forestry and Wildland Fire programs are integral to fulfilling this mission. The programs provide critical assistance to Montana landowners, communities, forest-based industries and others. These programs are administered and implemented through partnerships between DNRC, USDA Forest Service (USFS) and other private, non-profit and government entities. They promote the health and productivity of Montana's forests and rural economies.

### Program Goals

- Retain and bolster Montana's forest industry so that forests can be managed in an ecologically and economically practical manner.
- Guide forest owners, managers and communities in stewardship objectives and promote the benefits of engaged forest stewardship.
- Promote responsible, active forest management that ensures ecological conditions meet the needs of future generations for clean water, wildlife habitat, sustainable timber supply and recreation opportunities.
- Increase the amount of forest restoration on federal lands through partnerships with government agencies and Montana communities.
- Increase the ability of landowners, natural resource managers and communities to meet management objectives by providing financial, technical and logistical support.
- Protect lives, property and natural resources from wildfire by providing safe and effective services to Montana's citizens as well as leadership, coordination and resources to the State's wildfire services.

### Key Issues

- Use Forest Action Plan focus areas as screening criteria for project prioritization.
- Manage for safe and effective wildland fire suppression.
- Support and implement the National Cohesive Wildfire Management Strategy.
- Recommend appropriate management based on credible science and practices tailored to site-specific needs and landowner/community objectives.
- Serve as a central source for professional, objective guidance in forestry issues.
- Allocate resources to projects that maximize a practical return on investments.

- Assess and address current forestry issues facing landowners, communities and forest products industry.
- Support capacity and networking environments for community, agency and stakeholder engagement and cultivate relationships with potential new partners to expand capacity in the state.
- Provide access to educational, training and participatory opportunities for resource managers, landowners and the public.
- Promote certification of private forest lands and industry lands, aid in certification of forest lands and provide positive business environment for forest landowners and wood products industry.
- Enforce forest practices laws and rules and promote use of forestry best management practices.
- Implement Farm Bill Authorities (such as Good Neighbor Authority) along with other executive and legislative authorities with BLM and USFS.
- Solicit funding and provide financial incentives for projects that encourage active forest stewardship.
- Advocate for treatments that generate wood products and renewable energy.
- Assist local government and collaborative groups in effective communication with landowners and managers.
- Promote and deliver high quality seedlings for conservation plantings on a statewide basis.
- Actively solicit project ideas from the field staff and partners.
- Available knowledge points to a future of more fires, more severe fires and a much more protracted fire season.
- Develop our fire program workforce of the future today in order to assure that we have a motivated, productive and engaged workforce, guided by well-prepared leaders.
- Acquire adequate data capture systems to reliably inform both strategic and programmatic decision making.
- Devise a legislative strategy adequately adapted to a changed and changing legislative landscape.
- Over time, repeated budget reductions and rising operating costs have eroded the purchasing power of the Fire and Aviation Management Program budget, and a continuation of these trends will challenge the fiscal sustainability of our current approach to program delivery.

## Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2017 Accomplishments	Value
Population	989,415	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	5,622
Acres of Forest Land	25,883,606	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	15,271
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	5,430,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	6,749
Number of NIPF Landowners	40,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	365
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	1,698,462	State Fire Communities Assisted	128
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	2,658,952	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	46,000
Number of Rural Fire Departments	385	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	7,150
Cities and Towns	127	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	49
Forest Based Employment	6,530	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	472,962
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	3	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	8,395
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	14,756,704		

## Program Highlights

### **Community Forestry and Open Space**

Montana had no Community Forestry and Open Space applications in FY 2018. Restoration work is underway on Alvord Lake Community Forest (a FY2016 CFOS project), commencing with 40 acres of pre-commercial thinning completed in May of 2017, funded by a 2013 Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grant. Alvord Lake was also selected as a recipient of more funding to support restoration work under the 2018 LSR grant program, pending funding availability.

### **Conservation Education**

Conservation Education funds supported the following activities in Montana in FY2017:

- Delivered 10 workshops to train 117 educators in use of the Project Learning Tree Program.
- Conservation educators put skills to practice at the Montana Natural Resources Youth Camp, attended by 15 youth ages in July 2017.

### **Cooperative Fire Protection**

Cooperative Fire Protection Funds were used in 2017 in Montana in the following ways:

- Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) provided local government fire entities with \$367,200 in grant funds. These will be used to organize, train and equip firefighters to prevent and suppress wildfires. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) administers these funds annually.
- State Fire Assistance (SFA) funding supported Keep Montana Green's wildfire prevention art contest, in which over 3,000 students participated. This annual event educates K-12 youth in ways they can prevent human-caused wildfires. SFA funding was also used in radio advertising, print media and four community events titled Era of Megafires that reached landowners across the state. Finally, hazardous fuel reduction grants were awarded to 9 communities to mitigate risk in the wildland urban interface on more than 1,800 acres.
- Two unique opportunities were afforded the DNRC to expand resources available to Montana's communities and citizens. First, to reduce hazardous fuel conditions, \$350,000 in Special SFA funding was awarded to a project protecting the municipal water supply for the City of Bozeman (400 acres), as well the Pines Recreation Area private inholdings, a small community on Fort Peck Lake (20 acres). Additionally, \$150,000 in funding was awarded for the advancement of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy for three community areas: Greater Missoula Area, Whitefish and Helena.

### **Forest Health Protection**

The Forest Health Management Program continued to provide surveillance of forest pests on State and private lands throughout the state along with identification and management recommendations. An intensive assessment of limber pine health was conducted along the Rocky Mountain Front with a primary focus on the impacts of white pine blister rust, bark beetles and altered fire cycles. Other surveys included heterobasidion root disease, balsam woolly adelgid and black pineleaf needle scale.

### **Forest Legacy**

Montana's Forest Legacy program is administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in consultation with the Montana Forest Stewardship Coordinating Committee (Stewardship Advisory Committee). In 2017, the Trumbull Creek Conservation Easement was completed on 7,069 acres northwest of Columbia Falls, adjacent to Flathead National Forest lands. This conservation easement secures important habitat for the federally listed grizzly bear and Canada lynx and many game and furbearer species, public access for recreational opportunities and sustainable timber for F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber Company, Montana's oldest family-owned wood products company.

### **Forest Stewardship**

In 2017, Montana's Stewardship Program provided 4 Forest Stewardship workshops resulting in 74 Stewardship plans, developed 9 plans with NRCS EQIP, furnished technical assistance to 1,734 landowners and provided education to 3,888 individuals. Currently the State has 87,830 acres of private

land under new and revised Forest Management plans. This work was accomplished by DNRC service foresters, a stewardship program manager and a stewardship specialist, and through partnerships with Montana State University Extension Forestry, the Montana Tree Farm Program, the Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation and numerous other federal, state and non-profit partners.

The DNRC also launched a targeted marketing strategy in partnership with the American Forest Foundation. This program is using social marketing to increase active management on private forest lands in Cascade and northern Lewis and Clark counties by offering services such as free forester consultations, management planning and cost-share assistance. In its first year, this program resulted in a ten-fold increase in landowner interest in these programs. A similar initiative is planned for Lincoln County (northwest corner of the state) beginning January 2018.

### **Landowner Assistance**

Montana's Stewardship Program reached more than 5,500 landowners with technical and educational assistance programs in 2017. Programs included workshops, field days, one-on-one consultations and property assessments.

### **Landscape Scale Restoration**

Select highlights under the LSR program in 2017 include:

- Completion of 40 acres of forest restoration on Alvord Lake Community Forest with un-obligated funds from the 2013 Tobacco-Yaak LSR grant.
- Ten payments for ecosystem services contracts are in progress on the Big Hole River under the 2015 Big Hole Conservation Cooperative LSR Grant. Contracts include work on riparian fencing, streambank stabilization, vegetation enhancements and floodplain enhancement.
- For the first time since the 2010 Redesign, all of Montana's LSR proposals were recommended for funding under the 2018 program.

### **Urban and Community Forestry**

The Montana Urban and Community Forestry Program completed a public tree inventory analysis covering 61 communities across the state. The data were analyzed to determine tree composition, condition and overall benefits provided. This project was funded largely through a Western States LSR grant. Deliverables include individualized fact sheets for each of the 61 communities, a 60-page detailed report, a 16-page executive summary, landcover analysis and a tree inventory software program to maintain the statewide database. The DNRC now has baseline information to quantify the values and benefits of public trees in Montana communities; assist managers and residents in making informed decisions about public trees; inform communities that would be most affected by species-specific insect or disease outbreaks; and help set future management goals, such as prioritizing planting areas and writing maintenance and management plans.

The executive summary and all fact sheets are available for public viewing at <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry/forestry-assistance/urban-and-community-forestry/statewide-urban-forest-inventory>.

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