



State and Private Forestry Fact Sheet

New Mexico 2018



Investment in State's Cooperative Programs

Program	FY 2017 Final
Community Forestry and Open Space	\$0
Cooperative Lands - Forest Health Management	\$560,500
Forest Legacy	\$3,480,000
Forest Stewardship	\$200,000
Landscape Scale Restoration	\$293,210
State Fire Assistance	\$4,183,028
Urban and Community Forestry	\$285,000
Volunteer Fire Assistance	\$408,302
Total	\$9,410,040

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

The Forestry Division provides leadership in New Mexico's approach to managing its complex ecological needs. Although the Division's primary responsibility is to sustain healthy and productive forests on approximately 8.7 million acres of the state's private forests and woodlands, the Division recognizes the interconnectedness of forest lands and other vegetative landscapes, of watersheds and waterways, of land management practices, and of the many entities, state and others, which are responsible for stewardship of the land. This understanding provides the foundation for the Division's efforts, which are collaborative, interdisciplinary, and focused on long-term sustainability. The Forestry Division also empowers New Mexico communities to protect, enhance, and utilize their forest resources as well as having the lead responsibility for wildland fire management on approximately 43 million acres of non-federal, non-municipal, and non-tribal lands.

The cooperative programs are administered and implemented through a partnership between the State of New Mexico, the USDA Forest Service and many other private, non-profit, and government entities.

Program Goals

- Provide protection & safety of the public and firefighters.
- Develop qualified, equipped fire fighters to safely suppress & manage fire.
- Conduct planning and restoration efforts at a watershed and landscape scale through multiple agency/partner agreements and collaborative strategies.
- Assist communities vulnerable to damage from wildland fires, insects, & invasive species.
- Enhance the economic viability of NM communities while protecting their natural resources.
- Provide technical assistance & promote current forest & watershed management science.

Key Issues

- Declining forest and watershed health.
- Threat of destructive wildfires in critical watersheds and the wildland-urban interface.
- Increased occurrence and extent of insect and disease outbreaks.
- Forest resiliency and adaptability.
- Urban forest canopy loss without adequate replacement plans.
- Fragmentation of forest landscapes.

Forest Facts and Accomplishments

Selected Facts	Value	FY 2017 Accomplishments	Value
Population	2,059,179	Landowners Receiving Educational or Technical Assistance	1,249
Acres of Forest Land	24,600,818	Acres Covered by New or Revised Forest Stewardship Plans	11,983
Acres of Nonindustrial Private Forest Land	6,331,000	Acres in Important Forest Resource Areas Covered by New or Revised Stewardship Plans	11,743
Number of NIPF Landowners	81,000	Volunteer Fire Departments Assisted	50
Acres of Federal Land Under State Fire Protection	5,202,479	State Fire Communities Assisted	704
Acres of Private Land Under State Fire Protection	34,157,000	Coop Forest Health Acres Protected	1,100
Number of Rural Fire Departments	368	Forest Legacy Project Acquisitions	0
Cities and Towns	102	Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	29
Forest Based Employment	308	Population Living in Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance	1,112,980
Economic Impact of Forestry (by rank)	0	Urban Forestry Volunteer Assistance	2,847
State Forestry Budget (All Sources)	12,638,000		

Program Highlights

Community Forestry and Open Space

New Mexico State Forestry Division does not have a Community Forestry and Open Space Program.

Conservation Education

New Mexico Forestry Division has a long legacy of providing a wealth of conservation education knowledge to residents and visitors to New Mexico. The Division continued a tradition of more than three decades of helping lead the state's Project Learning Tree program. Project Learning Tree trained dozens of education professionals statewide in how to use forest and watershed health issues as part of their daily curriculum. The Division played an active role in conducting the New Mexico Envirothon, which gets teams of high school students together annually to complete in areas such as forestry, aquatics, wildlife, soils, and other special environmental issues. The Division reached out to New Mexicans with conservation education at large annual events such as the New Mexico State Fair, distributing conservation tree seedlings and talking with residents and visitors about the role trees play in our daily lives.

Cooperative Fire Protection

The Cooperative Fire five Year Plan, plus the Forest action plan, prioritizes the Division's objectives and needs in cooperative fire funding to sustain the Division's ability to achieve its mission of preventing and suppressing unwanted fires within 43 million acres of protected state and private land. This also includes the treatment of fuels to protect communities and improve forest health. In 2017, we have 58 CWPP's identifying 746 communities at risk from wildland fire. Of the 746 communities, 326 are listed as high risk, 289 are listed as moderate risk, and 131 are listed as low risk from wildfire.

Economic Action

New Mexico provides access to technology transfer and specialized business and marketing technical assistance that promise to advance the science of healthy forest and woodland ecosystems and acceptable practices for reducing hazardous fuels.

New Mexico State Forestry continues to provide technical assistance and administer forest harvest practice standards on commercial timber sales on private forest lands in New Mexico. While overall, the timber industry is still down in New Mexico, there remains a steady harvest of wood for lumber, mine timbers, utility poles, vigas/latillas, and mill residues.

New Mexico State Forestry is a participant in several forest industry related organizations state wide, such as local wood clusters, the New Mexico Forest Industry Association, local biomass facility initiatives,

and the San Juan-Rio Chama Watershed Partnership.

Forest Health Protection

The Cooperative Forest Health Program works within the State Forestry Division to deliver technical and monetary assistance to landowners and managers of forested lands throughout New Mexico. Technical assistance is provided by direct response to phone/email requests, education programs, training, and site visits. In 2017, the program manager responded to 74 requests for technical assistance, identified 14 insect/pathogen samples, and conducted 10 site visits. Monetary assistance is provided to private landowners through a cost-share program called The Forest Health Initiative. The goal of FHI is to administer federal dollars to reduce the risk of bark beetle infestations and pathogen infections on private land. No new projects were batched in 2017. CFHP collaborates with the U.S. Forest Service to conduct annual insect and pathogen surveys of New Mexico's forests and woodlands. Most data are collected by aerial survey. During the 2017 aerial survey season, 310,000 acres of statewide forestlands had some degree of detectable insect and/or pathogen activity. This follows a decreasing trend in damage since 2013. This trend is largely due to a sharp reduction in overall bark beetle activity because of favorable moisture conditions in the form of timely spring precipitation and reliable moderate-to-strong summer monsoons. Despite improved drought conditions, spruce in high-elevation landscapes continue to suffer from a widespread and severe spruce beetle outbreak. Just over 45,000 acres of spruce mortality were observed in 2017. This represents an explosion in spruce beetle activity since the previous decade, when annual observations were consistently <1,000 acres. Other locations across the state, especially in the mixed-conifer zone, experienced outbreak levels of defoliating insects in 2017. The risk of damage to our state's mixed conifer will continue until historically imbalanced tree species distributions and overly dense forest conditions abate.

Forest Legacy

In 2017, the Forest Legacy Brazos Cliffs project - which will protect approximately 3,620 acres in Rio Arriba County from development - was funded for \$3,480,000.00 through the USDA Forest Service. The Conservation Easement should be finalized by the end of the current fiscal year. An additional application for Phase II was submitted for 2019 funding.

Forest Stewardship

Assisting non-industrial private forest (NIPF) landowners develop long-term forest stewardship plans for the management of their forests and natural resources.

- Development, improvement, and implementation of a State Forest Stewardship strategic Plan, guided by NASF's "Principles and Guides for a Well Managed Forest", including incorporation of management timeframes to assist in monitoring progress toward objectives and revision of plans, as needed.
- Outreach to assure accessibility of the FSP program to all NIPF landowners. Continuing education and recognition programs.
- The Stewardship program saw 22 new or revised Forest Stewardship Management plans prepared in this reporting period for a total of 11,754 acres defined as Important Forest Resource Areas on private forested land in New Mexico. In addition to this 419 landowners have received technical assistance relating to their private forest lands, with an additional 830 landowners participating in educational programs relating to forest stewardship, fire prevention and forest management.
- Stewardship continues to provide leadership in support of the Back Yard Tree Farm Program. Fire, forest ecology and other forestry related topics have been presented seasonally. This is an interagency effort targeting the high-risk, urban/wildland interface areas.
- The provenance/progeny and drought tolerance tests on ponderosa pine and quaking aspen continue under the tree improvement grant.

Activities Related to the Tree Improvement Grant:

- a. Seed source identification and collection for *Populus tremuloides*.
- b. Establishment of a new provenance/progeny project in conjunction with other funding sources (McIntire- Stennis, USDA).

Landowner Assistance

The New Mexico Forestry Division provides technical and financial assistance to NM landowners through 7 field offices, the Forest and Watershed Health Office, and the Conservation Seedling Program. In FY17 the Seedling Program distributed 75,000 trees and shrubs for conservation purposes.

Landscape Scale Restoration

The Ortiz Canyon Watershed Restoration Project

-Partners three state agencies to manage natural resource objectives across jurisdictional boundaries. The project will treat 1,926 acres in NM, within the largest contiguous tract of state-owned forest, enhancing wildlife habitat and corridors in one of the prime hunting regions in the state, improving watershed function, and enabling an additional treatment of 3,800 acres with prescribed burns and/or natural fires.

National Themes and Outcomes**-Conserving and Managing Working Forest Landscapes**

-High priority forest ecosystems and landscapes are identified and conserved.

-Forests are actively and sustainably managed.

-Protect Forests from Threats

-Fire-adapted lands are restored and risk of wildfire impacts is reduced.

-Threats to forest and ecosystem health are identified, managed and reduced.

-Enhance Public Benefits from Private Forests

-Water quality and quantity is protected and enhanced.

-Trees and forests are managed and restored to help mitigate and adapt to changing conditions.

Building Resiliency in New Mexico's Historic District Urban Forest

-The urban forest in NM's historic districts is dominated by a single generation of elm trees that are now over-mature and rapidly declining. To transition these forests into a healthier, more resilient condition, this project will: conduct a statewide inventory of historic district trees; develop management plans that address forest health and composition, risk management, and historic context; and, document and promote the valuable contributions of the urban forest to NM historic districts.

National Themes and Outcomes**-Enhance Public Benefits from Private Forests**

-The economic benefits and values of trees and forests are maintained and enhanced.

-People are connected to trees and forests and are engaged in environmental stewardship activities.

-Trees and forests are managed and restored to help mitigate and adapt to changing conditions.

The Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition - A NM State Forestry Partnership

The Greater Santa Fe Fireshed Coalition uses a pro-active, collaborative approach to improve the health and long-term resilience of forested watersheds and communities by addressing wildfire. The Coalition works to build support, understanding, and shared knowledge of the role of fire in an adaptive framework to realize our goals. Our primary goal is to identify and implement high priority on-the-ground projects that make the Fireshed and its communities more resilient to wildfire while maintaining and restoring resilient landscapes. This goal will be realized when fire is used as a tool for management throughout our fire adapted forests, and communities in and adjacent to these forests become fire adapted - they understand the role of fire and are prepared for its occurrence.

Urban and Community Forestry

The New Mexico UCF Program continues to work to empower communities to develop and sustain healthy community forests for the benefit of our citizens and the environment. 66% of the state's population lives in a community either fully managing an urban/community forest program or developing one, and eleven communities were recognized for the Tree City USA program. Tree New Mexico continues to maintain an on-going Professional Services Agreement with Tree New Mexico to conduct urban and community forestry related volunteer management and coordination statewide, and through these efforts launched the Albuquerque NeighborWoods Tree Planting Program, serving the neediest communities in our largest metropolitan area. The UCF program started work on the Landscape Scale Restoration Grant funding received to address inventorying of historic district urban forests, and to conduct community training and management planning. Training with certified arborists on tree risk assessment and inventorying of historic districts happened in 18 communities statewide in FY17.

Communities Provided Urban Forestry Program Assistance: 23

Population Living in Communities Provided Assistance: 1,112,980

Urban Volunteer Assistance: 2,847 hours

Watershed Restoration Initiative

At the convening of the 2014 legislature, Governor Susana Martinez declared 2014 the Year of Water and signed legislation that provided \$6.2 million for a new Watershed Restoration Initiative.

The effort was expanded in 2015 with approval of \$3.5 million to fund watershed restoration

treatments as well as communities at risk projects, with another 2.5 million approved in 2016. The commitment of the state dollars mentioned above, leveraged \$9.5 million more in Pittman-Robertson federal funds through the NM Department of Game and Fish and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. To date, the State and its partners have undertaken 54 separate projects covering 25,653.4 acres in 19 watersheds identified as high priority in the NM Forest Action Plan and many being conducted on federal lands.

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