

District of Columbia State Forest Action Plan: National Priorities Update on Accomplishments

1. Conserve and Manage Working Forest Landscapes for Multiple Values and Uses

FAP Priority Issue 1: Increase Urban Tree Canopy across all Ownerships

Strategy 1: Protect and enhance urban tree canopy

Strategy 2: Manage and protect urban forests in urban growth and development areas

- UFA has worked to plant over 8,000 street trees each year for the last three years. This has directly enhanced the tree canopy of the District. We have been able to move three wards of the District into a 97% stocking level for street trees.
- UFA worked with partners to update the District's Urban Tree Canopy Assessment in 2011, using a methodology that allows for change analysis over time. The analysis revealed that from 2006 to 2011 the District increased the tree canopy cover by 1.7% to 37.2%. The data suggests that we have seen an increase from both planting and improved maintenance services.
- UFA continues to manage the Urban Forest Preservation Act of 2003 which requires land owners to pay into a Tree Fund when healthy trees are removed. UFA has been able to use that money to expand the tree planting program to ensure a timely replacement schedule.
- Having a staff of over twenty certified arborists has helped us create a culture of compliance with forest preservation regulations. We are always available to help process a request to ensure a timely response. Also, we are never too far to respond to non-permitted activity.

2. Protect Forests from Threats

Priority Issue 1: Increase Urban Tree Canopy across all Ownerships

Strategy 3: Identify and manage threats to the DC urban forest - exotic invasive pest species

- UFA worked with partners to develop a Pest Vulnerability Matrix that will help the District track the risks associated with our tree species. The matrix allows us to see how our risk relates to our tree population so we can better inform species selection in future planting programs.
- UFA worked on a study of our Bacterial Leaf Scorch problem and how we can understand the impact. This study by the University of Maryland resulted in discovery of a new species that is affecting the District's trees.
- UFA collaborated with Earth Conservation Corps and USFS to install an innovative insect rearing station to educate and engage youth in early detection of potential forest pests. This project has been supported by the UFA staff who have had oversight of the project since it began.

Strategy 4: Detect, monitor and evaluate forest pests and forest health conditions

- UFA staff conducted ongoing forest health initiatives/studies such as our work with Dutch Elm Disease, Lecanium Scale and Hypoxcilin, which have helped us adjust our services to incorporate this knowledge to lower the infection rates due to Dutch Elm Disease.
- Coordination with the USFS Forest Health staff has helped us to further understand our detection process and identify better ways to monitor the health of our forest.

3. Enhance Public Benefits from Trees and Forests

Priority Issue 2: Protect and improve air and water quality

Strategy 7: Protect and enhance impaired watersheds in Washington, DC

- UFA's street tree planting program has dramatically improved the canopy in the District, reducing the amount of polluted runoff entering our rivers and helping the District meet its MS4 stormwater and Chesapeake Bay TMDL requirements.
- Focused tree service efforts, such as the impaired Anacostia Watershed, that are directly linked to storm water overflows has also helped improve the tree canopy in these areas. Specifically, Bloomingdale neighborhood and efforts near the University of Washington D.C. have engaged residents and focused our tree services.

Strategy 10: Encourage the use of LID and other green techniques to mitigate water quality issues

- UFA over the last five years has deployed new pavement surfaces that allow for water to percolate and enter into the ground water. The use of Flexipave to repair broken sidewalks around healthy mature trees saves both the tree and allows storm water to be absorbed.
- DDOT as an agency launched green infrastructure standards that have been recognized nationally. Within the standards UFA has soil volume standards for when a street scape is developed. These soil volume standards increase the tree size, the life cycle of the tree and create a sustainable asset.

Priority Issue 3: Build UCF Program Capacity in Washington, DC

Strategy 12: Educate citizens on the importance of urban forestry and its multiple benefits

- UFA has maintained Tree City USA status year after year, holding Arbor Day events to engage with the community.
- UFA manages a tree population of over 150,000 trees and over 13,000 service requests for a population of over 650,000 residents. UFA does this with a staff of over 20 certified arborists who are out in the field everyday interacting with the residents and educating them on the practices of urban forestry.
- UFA has funded and worked closely with local nongovernmental organizations that are working in the communities within the District. The relationship with these partners has helped UFA reach specific sections of our community through tree plantings, green space clean ups and general tree educational activities.

Strategy 13: Support and enhance green jobs

- Partner grants with Washington Parks and People, Earth Conservation Corps and Casey Trees have helped bring at-risk youth and adults looking for new skills through a job training process focused on tree planting and community greening.