

Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry



Community & Urban Forestry (CUF)

Strategic Direction
2010-2015

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December 2010

COMMUNITY & URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM (CUF) STRATEGIC DIRECTION

INTRODUCTION

The Division of Forestry's (DoF) Community and Urban Forestry is comprised of the CUF Program Leader, Volunteer Coordinator, and a part-time Grant Administrator.

STRATEGIC PLANNING, OUR PROCESS

The Division has been involved in urban forestry since the late 1970's. In 1990, the USDA Farm Bill provided dollars for urban forestry to the USDA Forest Service. Since that time, the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area has granted over five million dollars to the state for urban forestry. Urban forestry in Indiana would not be the program it is today without the federal dollar support generated by the 1990 Farm Bill.

In order to spend these tax generated federal dollars effectively, long range planning is necessary. It is essential that we plan for the most critical urban forestry needs in Indiana's cities and towns, and, at the same time assess the effectiveness of the CUF program.

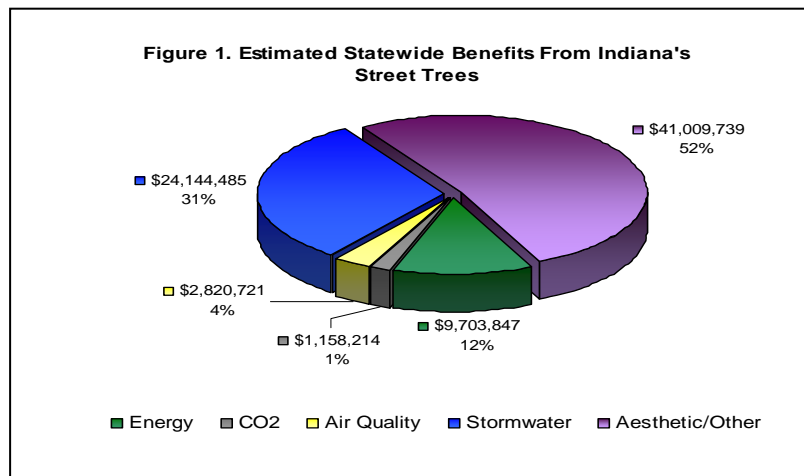
In 2010, the CUF Program Leader invited a group of urban forestry professionals and volunteers (Green Team III) to participate in a day long facilitated planning session. The goal of the session was to determine the CUF course for the next five years and to place urban forestry firmly in the strategies put forth by the DoF State Resource Assessment.

There are not specific actions in this document. This document was created in order to guide the CUF staff in developing annual work plans with specific tasks that relate back to this document.

COMMUNITY & URBAN FORESTRY OVERVIEW

The majority of Indiana's population lives in cities and towns (Latest Growth Trends; *IN Context*; 1009; IU Kelley School of Business). Census research indicates that this trend will continue which means that the population lives, works, recreates, and spends money in our cities and towns. This puts the urban forest in an even more important role since it is the urban forest that helps keep our cities and towns green, healthy, and prospering.

In 2008, the CUF program hired Davey Resource Group to do a sample urban street tree inventory called SUSI. The analysis of the data from 23 cities and towns revealed that the trees along Indiana city streets sequester and store large amounts of carbon, intercept and store massive amounts of storm water, clean the air, conserve energy, and generate economic value for cities and towns. The services that urban trees provide is measured in dollars NOT spent on storm water issues and higher energy costs. The chart below includes annual estimated dollar benefits provided by street trees.



A 2004 study implemented by CUF and carried out by the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment found that the practice of urban forestry generates economic benefits for the state. Residents are willing to pay to pay more to live in areas with a dense, healthy urban forest. The other part of the study found that there is \$2.05 billion in total spending associated with the horticulture industry. In addition, non - horticulture related industries receive millions of dollars in spending associated with the horticulture industry (IU Center for Urban Policy and the Environment *the Urban Forest Provides Measurable Economic Benefits for Hoosiers*).

The urban forests of Indiana provide ecological functional benefits which translate into dollars *not spent* and provide measurable economic benefits for Hoosiers. It is an important part of the environmental health and the economy of Indiana.

Although the benefits of maintaining a healthy urban forest are clear, many communities in Indiana do not have the capacity to maintain and enhance their urban forest resource. The intent of the IDNR Division of Forestry CUF Program is to assist cities, towns, and non profits with implementing or improving their urban forest to enhance and protect this urban natural resource, and to provide methods and solutions to sustain programs for the long term.

OUR MISSION

The Division's Community & Urban Forestry (CUF) Program provides statewide leadership to increase public awareness of the value of trees and associated natural resources in urban areas. We assist Indiana cities, towns, and non profits, and encourage resident involvement in protecting, expanding, and improving our community forests.

OUR VISION

The CUF program promotes healthy urban forest ecosystems that are managed to provide benefits for current and future generations. The program is staffed with dedicated professionals and is adequately funded. The program partners with communities, organizations and businesses throughout the state to create a knowledgeable and supportive public. We assist local governments and resident volunteers to protect, maintain, and plant the urban forests as part of the community infrastructure, and to follow best management practices for emerging urban forest issues.

OUR GOALS

- GOAL 1: PROMOTE AWARENESS OF URBAN FORESTRY ISSUES.**
- GOAL 2: PROTECT, ENHANCE AND EXPAND URBAN FORESTS AND RELATED NATURAL RESOURCES.**
- GOAL 3: IMPROVE COMMUNICATION OF URBAN FORESTRY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.**
- GOAL 4: CUF AND ITS PARTNERS WILL SEEK ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF URBAN FORESTRY FUNDING.**
- GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAN SELF-SUSTAINING URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS.**
- GOAL 6; PROMOTE NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AMONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES.**
- GOAL 7: SUPPORT THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY MISSION STATEMENT AND THE CURRENT INDIANA STATEWIDE FOREST STRATEGIC PLAN.**

GOAL 1: PROMOTE AWARENESS OF URBAN FORESTRY ISSUES

Issue Statement

Only 11.6 percent of Indiana's 567 cities and towns participate in the Tree City USA program. Tree City and Tree Campus participation is a tremendous opportunity to raise awareness and increase broad based support. This increased awareness and support from Indiana communities will encourage policy makers and planners to recognize and include the urban forest ecosystem in planning for present and future generations.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Promote the Tree City USA program utilizing new technologies.
- B.** Empower and utilize partners to promote the Tree Campus program.
- C.** Connect Tree City and Tree Campus in municipalities who have the capability of dual participation.
- D.** Advance the participation of Tree City and Tree Campus to the establishment of sustainable urban natural resource programs utilizing urban forestry.

GOAL 2: PROTECT, ENHANCE, AND EXPAND URBAN FORESTS AND RELATED NATURAL RESOURCES

Issue Statement

Indiana communities are expanding at a significant rate. Over 70% of Indiana's population now lives in urban areas. This urbanization impacts the amount and health of the urban forest. Urban trees benefit communities in many ways, including reducing energy consumption, reducing pollution and soil erosion, and increasing economic prosperity of all communities. For these reasons, the Indiana CUF Program promotes the management and increase of the urban forests in Indiana.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Encourage and assist Indiana communities in developing comprehensive urban forestry programs.
- B.** Increase the availability of all types of urban forestry technical assistance.
- C.** Increase tree canopy cover in urban, suburban, and ex urban areas to complement strategies identified from the State Resource Assessment.
- D.** Develop Best Management Practices for Urban Forestry.
- E.** Assess the current condition of Indiana's urban forests on a periodic basis.
- F.** Develop new and provide existing appropriate tools to empower the development and adoption of comprehensive urban forest ordinances at the municipal and county levels.
- G.** Integrate urban forests into the State Strategic Plan to reestablish forest environments in urban landscapes.
- H.** Support and cooperate within the parameters of the State Strategic Plan to encourage native plantings, reduce the use of exotics, and control of invasive plants in urban woodlands and edges.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE THE COMMUNICATION OF URBAN FORESTRY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs).

Issue Statement

Urban forestry is a field with rapidly changing technologies and new information. By providing education and opportunities to share information, and new research technologies, urban forestry practitioners and advocates will be able to increase their effectiveness.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Communicate Indiana urban forestry best management practices.
- B.** Promote public knowledge of and use of qualified/certified tree care professionals and ANSI standards when using professionals in the arboriculture or nursery trades.
- C.** Connect to and provide technical training and other assistance using BMP guidelines for urban forest management for all interested customers.
- D.** Provide training, access to training, and current educational materials for urban forestry and arboricultural practices.
- E.** Support research efforts and communicate with researchers to learn about innovations and new practices.
- F.** Disseminate current research information in an understandable manner to appropriate audiences.

GOAL 4: CUF AND ITS PARTNERS WILL SEEK ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF URBAN FORESTRY FUNDING.

Issue Statement

CUF and its partners can no longer rely solely on funding from the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area. By seeking and securing other sources of monetary and material funding, CUF and its partners will raise awareness of the importance of the urban forest and be able to expand programs statewide.

Strategies to achieve goal

- A.** Seek pro bono counsel and advice regarding revenue generating systems, internal and external to DNR and through tax districts (CEDIT/COIT).
- B.** Seek non-traditional funding for specific initiatives.
- C.** Increase funding stream for the state program and its partners.

GOAL 5: ENCOURAGE AND FACILITATE COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAN SELF-SUSTAINING URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAMS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN FORESTS.

Issue Statement

Grant programs are important in providing seed money to help communities initiate and develop urban forestry programs. Communities must be able to develop reliable local support to fund a successful long-term effort. Communities and organizations should work to cultivate a variety of funding sources.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Encourage communities and organizations to develop self-sustaining urban forestry program defined by Best Management Practices for Urban Forestry.
- B.** Promote and encourage local governments to place the urban forest alongside other community infrastructure and include urban forestry in the budget.
- C.** Empower and encourage partners to inform and educate state, local, and county law maker on the importance of urban forests and the role of public funding.
- D.** Investigate and promote the use of funding from other "local" sources for funding' urban forestry projects.

GOAL 6: PROMOTE NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AMONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ENTITIES.

Issue Statement

Government agencies, businesses, utilities, non-profit organizations and citizen groups are involved in urban forestry issues. Working to establish links will generate interest and support for urban forestry. This will enable those involved in the partnerships to exchange expertise, ideas, and support.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Develop shared mission between CUF and current and potential partners.
- B.** Identify and develop CUF and partner shared needs and shareable partner list to fill need.
- C.** Expand CUF communication base to move conservation groups and land trust non – profits toward at least one common urban forestry natural resource goal.
- D.** Improve IDNR interagency communication regarding goals, grants, projects, and shared staff expertise.

GOAL 7: SUPPORT THE DIVISION OF FORESTRY MISSION STATEMENT AND THE CURRENT INDIANA STATEWIDE FOREST STRATEGIC PLAN.

Issue Statement

[The Division of Forestry promotes and practices good stewardship of natural, recreational, and cultural resources on Indiana's public and private forestlands. This stewardship produces continuing benefits, both tangible and intangible, for present and future generations] (DoF mission).

The CUF Program strives to complement this mission by developing strong working relationships with other forestry programs.

Strategies to achieve goal:

- A.** Create a comprehensive data set that will be utilized to support urban forestry initiatives within the next strategic plan.
- B.** Improve cooperation between DoF, CUF, and DNR.
- C.** Create learning opportunities for DoF staff relative to urban forestry.
- D.** Identify new urban forestry partners who support urban and rural forestry and understand the difference and the connection between the two.

2010 Green Team III Participants

The CUF Program gratefully acknowledges the persons who took the time to help CUF plan for the next five years.

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