

# MnSTAC'S REPORT TO THE 1996 LEGISLATURE

Note: This copy of the report contains text only. For a printed copy of the report that includes both text and graphics, contact Jon Stiegler at (612) 832-6168.

The mission of the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (MnSTAC) is: to advance Minnesota's commitment to the health, care and future of all community forests.

An Update: Minnesota's Community and Urban Forests

Look at this map! Does your district contain one or more "dots"? If so, then the people who voted for you live in one of the 132 Minnesota communities that have been nationally recognized as a TREE CITY USA. If not, your district and constituents may not be taking advantage of the opportunity to participate in strengthening their communities through the national movement of urban and community forestry.

TREE CITY USA Locations

Recognition Standards:

- (1) Legal tree board or department;
- (2) Municipal tree ordinance;
- (3) Minimum of \$2 per capita spent annually on community tree care;
- (4) Arbor Day Proclamation and Observance.

Minnesota's achievements in urban and community forestry are a tribute to the support and leadership of our State Legislature. Cooperative community forestry efforts have been achieved through partnerships between local communities, and state, federal and private programs. In the current economic atmosphere, continued strong state leadership to support and fund urban and community forestry efforts is essential.

MnSTAC's Report to the 1996 Legislature presents to you an overview of the current issues and threats to our urban forests, recent accomplishments, and opportunities for future legislative action.

**ISSUE: TREES AS COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE THREAT:** The proper care and maintenance needed for healthy community trees is threatened due to declining budgets at all levels of government (federal, state, and local).

#### FACTS:

\*\*Community forest products include: (1) increased property values; (2) safer, healthier communities with enhanced neighborhood livability; (3) cleaner air and water; and, (4) a reinforced and improved ecosystem sustainability.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

\*\*Created the first MNSTAC Strategic Plan to guide Minnesota's urban and community forestry efforts into the next century.

\*\*Completed the ecosystem-based "Metro Region Forest Resources Management Plan" identifying issues, needs, and desired future conditions.

\*\*Initiated an ecosystem-based management project in the Cities of Eagan, Watertown and Robbinsdale.

#### OPPORTUNITIES:

\*\*Provide state funding for the current urban forestry positions within the DNR, MDA, University, and MNDOT to insure stability and continuity for the on-going grant and technical assistance programs.

\*\*Provide state funding for an urban and community forestry grant program to provide the necessary financial assistance to cities in need of improving the management of their community forest resource.

ISSUE: TREES AND ENERGY CONSERVATION THREAT: Minnesota communities waste a considerable amount of precious energy resources by failing to use appropriate windbreaks and strategically planted shade trees.

#### FACTS:

\*\*Homes in a tree canopy covered neighborhood will use 10-20% less heating and cooling fuel than homes in neighborhoods with fewer trees.

\*\*Properly placed shade trees can reduce a home's energy cost by 25%.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

\*\*Renewed (through LCMR funding) the "Minnesota ReLeaf" program providing \$375,000 in energy conservation tree planting grants to some 70 cities (including Osakis and Proctor), and non-profit groups.

\*\*Planted over 20,000 trees in some 30 cities from Luverne to Wadena (thereby increasing community tree cover) through MNDOT's Community Roadside Landscaping Partnership Program.

#### OPPORTUNITIES:

\*\*Provide continuing State funding for the "Minnesota ReLeaf" Program to increase energy conservation tree planting, and expand Program efforts to include the preservation of strategically located mature trees.

\*\*Provide continuing State funding for MNDOT's Community Roadside Landscaping Partnership Program to assist mainly rural communities in enhancing their aesthetic image as well as increasing their tree cover.

## MnSTAC Member Affiliations

The Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (MnSTAC) is recognized throughout Minnesota for its expertise, advice, coordination, and support in matters related to community forestry. It is an advocate for public and private community forestry interests statewide and serves as a forum for the exchange and dissemination of ideas and information.

MnSTAC is an organization of diverse individuals who represent a broad spectrum of tree related interests. It fosters and supports local community tree programs across the state so that healthy community forests are fully integrated into community development, infrastructure, education and management.

Over 170 people are now members of MnSTAC which holds its monthly meetings throughout the State. The following list recognizes communities, organizations, businesses, and agencies represented on MnSTAC:

Accent Company; American Forests; Anoka County Conservation District; Anoka County Tree Board; Association of Metropolitan Municipalities; Bachman's Nurseries; Bachman's Wholesale Center; Bailey Nurseries, Inc.; Builder's Association of Minnesota; Bullock Tree; Cities of: Apple Valley, Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Burnsville, Coon Rapids, Crystal, Duluth, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Edina, Golden Valley, Ham Lake, Hutchinson, Lino Lakes, Mankato, Mounds View, New Brighton, New Hope, Owatonna, Plymouth, Ramsey, Robbinsdale, Roseville, Savage, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Sunfish Lake; Cook Company; Crown Jewel Foundation; Dakota County Parks Department; Dahlgren, Shardlow, and Uban, Inc.; Dain Bosworth, Inc.; Evergreen Energy Scapes; General Mills, Inc.; Heartwood Forestry; Hennepin County, Department of Environment and Energy; Hennepin Parks; Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, Mineland Reclamation Division; Kunde Company Inc.; Merriam Park Environmental Committee; Midwest Tree Technology; Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board; Minneapolis Star and Tribune; Minnesota Association of SWCD's; Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Protection; Minnesota Department of Education; Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry; Minnesota Department of Public Service; Minnesota Department of Transportation; Minnesota Forestry Association; Minnesota House of Representatives; Minnesota Office of Tourism; Minnesota Office of Waste Management; Minnesota Pollution Control Agency; Minnesota Power; Minnesota Senate; Minnesota State Horticultural Society; Minnesota State Planning Agency; Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge; National Urban Forest Council; Northern States Power; Plant Health Associates, Inc.; Rainbow Treecare; Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department; River Front Corporation; Rochester Parks and Recreation; Seward Neighborhood Group Board; Sherburne County Tree Board; Treescapes; Source Technology Biologicals, Inc.; St. John's University; St. Paul Public Schools; Tree Trust; University of Minnesota, Departments of: Entomology, Forest Resources, Plant

Pathology; Minnesota Extension Service; Minnesota Landscape Arboretum; United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and North Central Forest Experiment Station; V.A. Medical Center; Washington County Health Department; Wilkinson Hardwoods.

MnSTAC is committed to bring the best information and resources to the public, professionals and decision-makers of Minnesota.

For more information contact:  
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