

DNR UCF Updates

Date: 4/11/2023

Staff Updates

- We are currently waiting for DNR's Human Resources review for a 3-year project specialist position to assist with the LCCMR Protect Community Forests by Managing Ash for EAB.
- DNR will be hiring six (6) interns, two (2) in the Twin-Cities Metro and four (4) out of Grand Rapids to conduct tree surveys in communities throughout the state. The positions have been applied for and offers are in process.

Grant Updates

- **Inflation Reduction Act:** \$1.5B available from Forest Service for tree planting and related activities.
 - UCF Team developed a proposal, requesting a total of \$31,401,854. DNR has not yet heard about award notification.
 - The Forest Service hosted a webinar on March 29, 2023, about their public facing request for proposals which is anticipated to open April 2023. We are recommending that all interested parties apply directly to the Forest Service for funds.
- **Reforestation Underserved Urban Communities (Sustainable Urban Forest & Resilience 2022):** A competitive grant from the Forest Service was awarded for \$489,000 to assist in public and private tree planting with a focus on underserved communities.
 - City of Maplewood contract fully executed
 - Tree Trust contract held up due to request to MDHR for Equal Pay compliance issue (navigating best route to take with finance)
 - Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board contract in progress, finance has requested additional information from them and is following up
- The UCF team is being awarded funds from the Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act for: Environmental Justice, Urban Wood Utilization, and EAB Assistance to the new finds in NE Minnesota.
 - Funding has not yet been received from Forest Service.
- **[2023 Preparing for EAB grants program:](#)**
 - Contracts are being developed for the 13 grant recipients. Half of the awardees have been sent their exhibits for review; several awardees still need to provide revised documents to the UCF Team.

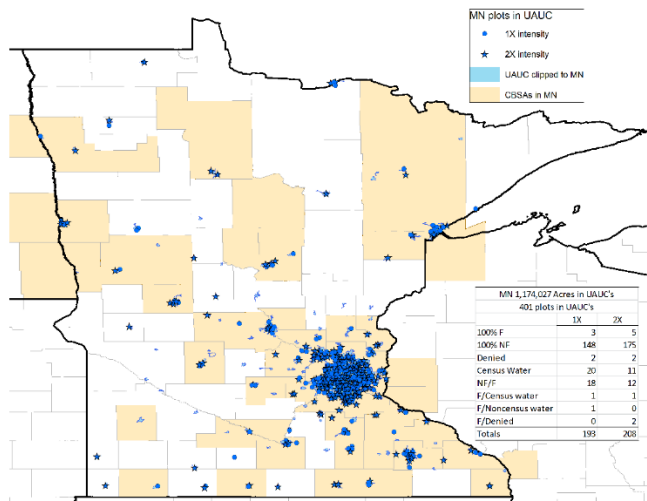
Legislative Updates

- The Governor's budget has been proposed as legislation in environment omnibus ([HF 2310 / SF 2438](#))
- House File 2310 currently includes:

- 30.12 (j) \$10,400,000 the first year and \$10,400,000
- 30.13 the second year are for grants to local and
- 30.14 Tribal governments and nonprofit
- 30.15 organizations to enhance community forest
- 30.16 ecosystem health and sustainability under
- 30.17 Minnesota Statutes, section 88.82, the
- 30.18 Minnesota ReLeaf program. This
- 30.19 appropriation is available until June 30, 2027.
- 30.20 Money appropriated for grants under this
- 30.21 paragraph may be used to pay reasonable costs
- 30.22 incurred by the commissioner of natural
- 30.23 resources to administer the grants. The base
- 30.24 is \$400,000 beginning in fiscal year 2026.
- Senate File 2438 currently includes:
 - 28.4 (j) \$8,900,000 the first year and \$8,900,000
 - 28.5 the second year are for grants to local and
 - 28.6 Tribal governments and nonprofit
 - 28.7 organizations to enhance community forest
 - 28.8 ecosystem health and sustainability under
 - 28.9 Minnesota Statutes, section 88.82, the
 - 28.10 Minnesota ReLeaf program. This
 - 28.11 appropriation is available until June 30, 2027.
 - 28.12 Money appropriated for grants under this
 - 28.13 paragraph may be used to pay reasonable costs
 - 28.14 incurred by the commissioner of natural
 - 28.15 resources to administer the grants. The base
 - 28.16 is \$400,000 beginning in fiscal year 2026.

Program Updates

- The first round of Urban Forest Inventory Analysis has been completed and data is currently being analyzed prior to being made available publicly.



- The UCF Team, led by Emma Schultz, is working with MSA and MnSTAC on the Festival of Trees. The Festival of Trees will take place May 20, in conjunction with the Minnesota Tree Climbing Championship which will be May 19-21. The event is shaping up to be a fun family event, with a variety of entities tabling, providing activities, and creating an inviting atmosphere to help build on the climbing championship.
- Molly Coddling attended the National Environmental Justice Conference in Washington D.C. which provided valuable takeaway lessons that will benefit Departmental community engagement practices, as well as programmatic alignment with decolonized environmental justice frameworks. She also attended the Shade Tree Short Course in Roseville to network with arborists, researchers and professional presenters. She continues to support planting projects in partnership with Urban Farm and Garden Alliance and Renewing the Countryside, met with community groups who requested information and technical resources for environmental justice priorities, attended community events including park planning and a North Minneapolis tree planting project. In April, UCF staff will be tabling at the Environmental Justice Expo event at the University of Minnesota about the importance of urban forestry and career opportunities, and planning Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers (IDEC) summer Forestry orientation week and internship in Forestry with other UCF and interdivisional Forestry staff.
- The "Urban and Community Forestry in Your Minnesota Community" survey went live on March 30 and was sent out to as many local units of government as possible through the League of Minnesota Cities listserv. As of 4/11 101 responses have been submitted, with a requested deadline to respond to the survey by May 1.
- In partnership with Habitat for Humanity - Twin Cities, a small amount of funding (approximately \$60,000) has been procured to assist low-income residents with tree care on private property. The application for this is open now! A contract with Habitat for Humanity Northwoods has been executed and will begin assisting low-income residents with tree care in Beltrami County and beyond.
- Scholarships for ISA Certified Arborist for under-represented arborists is open in partnership with MSA. Under-represented arborists include: Black, Indigenous, People of Color; LGBTQI; Disability status; Veteran; Low-income; Woman; Living outside of 7-county metro. Scholarships will fund: exam fee; computer testing fee; and Arborists' Certification Study Guide. <http://msa-live.org/isa-certified-arborist-scholarship>
- The Tree City USA application portal has "closed" for 2022 and applications are currently in review. The first round of recognition materials has been sent out to Minnesota communities, although many communities have yet to receive their materials due to delays in application approval. At this point 106 communities have received recognition for 2022, with a few applications outstanding.