



Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee Emerald Ash Borer Outreach and Education Proposal

Purpose:

The Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (MNSTAC) is offering a series of meetings with community leaders and elected officials in an effort to increase awareness of the damage that will be caused by the emerald ash borer (EAB) and the opportunity the State of Minnesota has to reduce public EAB costs while increasing public benefit.

Background:

EAB has been confirmed in Minnesota since 2009 and it continues to spread throughout the state. While the initial flurry of governmental management actions has waned, the threat of widespread tree damage still exists. For the past two years MNSTAC has been offering an alternative to the current city-by-city EAB management approach with a proposal to create a matching grant program from the state general fund to assist communities. This program aligns to legislative priorities outlined by the [League of Minnesota Cities for 2017](#). MNSTAC is offering to meet with elected officials from interested cities along with their state representation in an effort to discuss the details of the proposed program and garner support at the state capitol.

Proposed Meeting Agenda:

1. EAB is a problem
 - a. Current known infestations and impacts
2. What the current science says about management
3. Present comparative management scenarios
 - a. Projection of local (city) impacts
 - i. Including costs and benefit analysis
4. Example EAB programs currently implemented in Minnesota communities
5. MNSTAC proposal for a statewide program
6. Next steps for legislative support

Proposed Meeting Outcomes

1. Meetings must include key city decision makers (i.e. Public Works Directors, City Managers, Council Members, Mayor) and State Senator and/or Representative
2. MNSTAC shall present a city-specific budget projection and example implementation scenario

Proposed Timeline:

Meetings shall be scheduled to maximize the participation of city and state elected officials (Outcome 1) while still allowing time for MNSTAC to collect the necessary municipal tree and budget information (5 questions) from the hosting city prior to the meeting (Outcome 2). MNSTAC anticipates scheduling a meeting within two weeks after the initial invitation.

Additional Supportive Organizations:

Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, Minnesota Forestry Association, Minnesota Society of Arboriculture