

## DNR UCF Updates

Date: 6/15/2023

### Staff Updates

- The 3-year project specialist position to assist with the LCCMR Protect Community Forests by Managing Ash for EAB has posted and closed.
- DNR was short in hiring three (3) interns to conduct the LCCMR Rapid Assessment Statistical Tree Survey. We are now working to navigate alternative hiring or timelines.

### Grant Updates

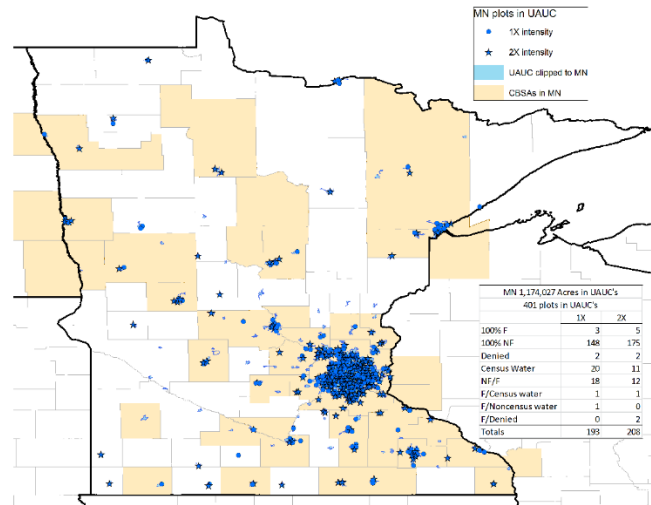
- **Inflation Reduction Act:** \$1.5B available from Forest Service for tree planting and related activities.
  - UCF Team finalized the narrative for the \$5.25M in awarded funding. The narrative has been provided to you as an attachment.
  - UCF Team finalized a proposal for the public facing opportunity totaling approximately \$41.5M. The proposal has been provided to you as an attachment.
- **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
  - Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board contract fully executed
  - Tree Trust contract has been sent out for signature
- 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:](#)**
  - All but two of the contract requests have been sent to finance staff. Holdups on the remaining two are due to necessary project alterations.

### Legislative Updates

- We're sitting at over \$15 million in ReLeaf funds and over \$10 million in Bond funds. The first step for us is adding to our staff capacity! As we continue to move through this process, we'll work to maintain at minimum our monthly updates so that you can stay looped in. If there are other conversations you would like to have about this funding though, don't hesitate to be in touch.

### 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 worked with MSA and MnSTAC, among others, on the Festival of Trees. The Festival of Trees took place May 20, in conjunction with the Minnesota Tree Climbing Championship in Buffalo. The event was a success, with YEA reporting over 80 youth climbers.
- UCF EJ Staff worked with community organizations to coordinate connections to IRA open NOFO partnership proposals. UCF staff assisted Hennepin County Forestry, Harrison Neighborhood Association, Metro Blooms, and the Minneapolis Health Department in submitting a direct partnership proposal. Due to time constraints for the IRA deadline for submission, two place-based nonprofits in Minneapolis were unable to enter this proposal and staff have committed to keeping them updated on the status of this proposal and future funding opportunities through MNR-DNR's state IRA award.
- UCF EJ Staff is also creating equitable processes for the state IRA award, including preferential scoring for communities with community engagement plans or processes described in their application and incorporating community representation for state RFP review. She will also develop the "The Centering Community in Canopy Solutions" program RFP with guidance from UCF staff.
- UCF EJ staff prioritized attendance at community events in May including planting and invasive species removal with community members, climate justice panel discussions, environmental justice presentations, and state/external organizational programming days which will continue throughout June. When she has been unable to attend, Molly has coordinated connections to other professional forestry resources to meet this community need. UCF staff have been asked to develop resources for activities, learning and engagement at a number of these events which are being developed in partnership with UMN UFOR staff and community host organizations.
- 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. The survey had a soft closure date of May 1. 114 responses were received. A few quick results from the survey:
  - 65% of respondents reported that local government staff are responsible for public trees in their community
  - 48% of responding communities do not have an existing public tree inventory

- Of those with an existing public tree inventory, 32% have an inventory that is 11+ years old
  - 67% of responding communities do not have the capacity to use urban wood in any way other than disposing of it
  - The second most common method for communities to dispose of their urban wood is to add it to a burn pile
- 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 have been approved by Arbor Day Foundation. 116 communities received recognition for 2022, and 16 communities received Growth Awards.