

Urban and Community Forest Health Monitoring



Forest Health Monitoring
San Antonio, TX
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- The Urban Forest Health Monitoring Initiative
- Questions and Issues
- Status of Initiative

The Initiative

Consists of four Components

- Urban Forest Health Plots
- Statewide Urban Street Tree Monitoring
- Pest Detection Protocols and Analysis Tools
- Citizen Monitoring of Forest Health and Invasive Species

Urban Forest Health Plots

- Objective: Provide information of overall composition, structure, and health of urban forests, especially in regards to insects, diseases and other damage agents at the state and national level.
- Uses the protocols developed by pilot plots measured in Indiana, Wisconsin, New Jersey, and ongoing in Tennessee and Colorado.
- Compatible with FIA plots and protocols.
 - 5-10 year rotating panel
 - 1 plot every 6,000 acre grid cell
 - Uses same National core variables
 - FIA fully engaged in implementing pilots



Statewide Urban Street Tree Monitoring

- Objective: To inform state and national land managers of the condition of their street trees so they can better respond to threats to the health of the resource.
- Trees in public rights-of-way traditionally managed by local or state government.
- UFORE analysis to determine structure, function and benefits of roadside trees.
- Methods and protocols already established in pilots
- 5 year rotating panel basis.



Pest Detection Protocols and Analysis Tools

- Objective: Utilize standard detection, reporting protocols, and follow-up methods to detect possible insects and diseases
- Using i-Tree MCTI program as prototype
- Protocols and methods intended to be applicable to a variety of inventory and data collection tools now being used
- Flexibility of i-Tree tools allows communities of all sizes and levels of available resources to assess trees and forests



Citizen Monitoring

- Objective: Use citizen volunteers to monitor and detect pests and diseases in urban areas at the local community level. Information will be used to identify general forest health conditions and identify damage agents that might need further investigation on a large landscape scale.
- To facilitate the monitoring and detection the program will provide:
 - Flexibility to meet local needs yet collect data that can be used state-wide and nationally
 - Training
 - Tools and equipment
 - Repository for data collected
 - Quality control mechanisms
 - Feedback to monitors



Major Questions/Issues





Why is the Forest Service proposing this initiative now?

- More and more, urban forests are being seen as having significant economic and environmental value
- Urban forests are major entry points and pathways for invasive species
- Responding to NASF, GAO, and other partners - The NASF has encouraged the Forest Service to address this issue through two resolutions (1997 and 2004)

Why the competitive grant process, especially if one of the primary goals is to have a consistent standard approach across the Nation?



- The Federal Government is moving towards expending funds on a more competitive basis
- For all of the components, except the citizen monitoring, there are standard protocols, which must be followed
- Even if we wanted to initiate a full national program, we do not have adequate funds to implement such a program. This initiative is a way to get started.

We heard that States will be required to match Federal funds on a 1:1 cash basis. Many states can not participate with this requirement.



- We have reconsidered this requirement and are now proposing that the match could include in-kind contributions:
 - “The non-federal share of such support may be in the form of cash, services, or in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions and services must contribute directly to the implementation of the project and should be limited primarily to personnel costs, contracting, and equipment.”

The funding for this initiative is unclear, especially in light of Redesign



- The funding is derived from two sources: Forest Health Protection and Urban and Community Forestry. Currently no funds come from R&D
- Currently, this initiative is not part of the Redesign nor the consolidated grants process
- All the funds allocated will go towards implementing the initiative and none will be taken at the Washington or Regional levels



Why is there a choice in selecting some of the components to implement and not in others?

- We wanted to develop a program that provided forest health information of urban forests at multiple scales, yet allow for flexibility. Some States wanted urban FH plots others wanted street trees
- The local community level scale components are the least developed so we wanted to strengthen these activities
- The recent GAO report stated that more effort was needed to monitor and detect insects and diseases in urban areas

Questions and Discussion

