



The Council Quarterly

Quarterly Newsletter of the Florida Urban Forestry Council

2008 Issue Two

The Council Quarterly newsletter is published quarterly by the Florida Urban Forestry Council and is intended as an educational benefit to our members. Information may be reprinted if credit is given to the author(s) and this newsletter. All pictures, articles, advertisements, and other data are in no way to be construed as an endorsement of the author, products, services, or techniques. Likewise, the statements and opinions expressed herein are those of the individual authors and do not represent the view of the Florida Urban Forestry Council or its Executive Committee. This newsletter is made possible by the generous support of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, Charles H. Bronson Commissioner.

FLORIDA URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL 2007 Annual Report



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



In order to maintain a successful organization of any type, it is important to continually monitor activities, collect feedback and evaluate programs in regards to objectives and goals. The success of any entity relies on this ongoing process. The Executive Committee continues to refine where the Florida Urban Forestry Council is headed as an organization while ensuring that we continue to meet our goals and objectives. I want to share where we are going!

The Florida Urban Forestry Council is working hard to create new partnerships. We want to actively engage in new alliances, partnerships and collaborations. This will include various grassroots organizations, botanical gardens and even some non-traditional partnerships such as Keep America Beautiful, public works and planning departments, etc. You will hear more on this topic as the year progresses.

*In our last newsletter, I addressed the issue of budgets. There is not one reader who isn't feeling the effect of budget cuts in one way or another. In our budget discussions, we discovered that we were only partially able to fulfill our mission due to limited staffing and resources. This led us to make a very difficult decision. We have decided to withdraw as an active partner of the annual Trees Florida Conference and Trade Show upon the completion of 2008. This conference—which began in 2000--has been a huge success and worthwhile partnership between FUFUC and the Florida Chapter ISA. Since March of 2001, this partnership has made it possible to send \$122,903.87 to the TREE Fund. In addition, \$12,025.06 was sent to the John P. White Endowment Fund (established through the TREE Fund) and \$25,000.00 of the conference proceeds will be used to fund a John P. White Scholarship Fund. The Scholarship Fund will continue to be overseen by representatives of both organizations. In addition to monetary successes, we have educated thousands of our colleagues and have been graced with diverse programs, talented speakers and ever-increasing professionalism in our field. **I want us to celebrate these successes!***

In the past you have told us that you would like to see regional, affordable, educational programs that address basic tree care. There is also a whole new discipline related to Urban and Community Forestry. These types of programs have not been feasible due to our staffing and resource commitment to Trees Florida. We plan to redirect our resources to better meet the needs of our members and provide urban forestry education that is affordable and accessible statewide. We will be offering programs that target those tasked with day-to-day tree maintenance, but who are not necessarily professional arborists. Because the majority of our members are not certified arborists, we see this as a priority. We hope to create a greater quantity of affordable, high quality urban forestry educational opportunities that will be easily accessible to your location in the state and take you away from your work for a shorter period of time.

In closing, I hope you are as excited as I am about the Council's upcoming events and opportunities. We need your comments and suggestions. FUFUC members play a huge role in this process and without your input we will not be able to address your needs. If you know of an organization that we should be talking to, please let us know. Look for our biannual member survey in the next few months. This will give you an opportunity to provide us with feedback on how you think we are doing. You do not have to wait until then to share--you can always send Sandy Temple a message at fufc@aol.com and she will pass it on. Please let us know what we can do to make your organization better for you!


Sheryle Dell
FUFUC President

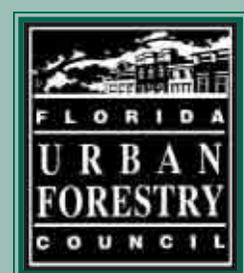
ARTICLES WANTED

The Florida Urban Forestry Council would like to share information on what is going on throughout the state in our newsletters. We would like to receive articles on any aspect of our field. Article ideas may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- New trends in the industry
- News about tree advocacy groups
- Solutions to common problems in your typical workday
- Children's poems, drawings, favorite quotes
- Volunteer projects
- Favorite or new websites
- Ideas on working with the public
- City tree programs

Please share what is going on in your corner of the state so that we can learn from each other. Our newsletter is not only a great way to share information, but also a way to show off our accomplishments and successes. Articles can be sent to [Laura Sanagorski at LSanagorski@gmail.com](mailto:LSanagorski@gmail.com).

Thanks for contributing!



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- Business-card size advertisement . . . \$75
 - Quarter page advertisement \$115
 - Half-page advertisement \$225
 - Full page advertisement \$450
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To place an advertisement in *The Council Quarterly*, please contact Sandy Temple, FUFUC Executive Director (407-872-1738).

2007 – THE YEAR IN REVIEW

By Celeste White, Immediate Past President

"I feel that the greatest reward for doing is the opportunity to do more." – Jonas Salk

The Executive Committee of the Florida Urban Forestry Council has a process in place for submission of projects that the Council will undertake each year. This process identifies goals, budgets and administrative time in addition to how the project fits in with our mission and strategic plan. It also gives us a way to track the completion of a project and the measurement of our success as we complete a project close-out report. In 2007, 16 projects were submitted to the Executive Committee with most of them approved--this number doesn't include projects that were ongoing from 2006 or another past year. This shows you just how busy the Florida Urban Forestry Council was in 2007!

We are very proud of the projects that we are either working on or have completed:

- Sponsorship of the Florida State Envirothon - a contest for high school students with an urban forestry component
- Urban Forestry Funding Fact Sheet – a way to inform or members of what is

going on in the legislature in regards to urban forestry funding (or lack of!)

- The Trail of Trees – our effort to educate youth – the "live" program reached 7,000 students in North, Central and South Florida. We also distributed the Trail of Trees video program to cable, local government and PBS television stations. It has already aired in Orlando and Tampa – let us know if you see it on your local station.
- Sponsorship of the Society of Municipal Arborists' Hurricane Academy at their Annual Conference
- Development of Sponsorship Guidelines
- Revision of the Bylaws
- Executive Committee member ID badges for conferences, trade shows and other activities
- Reprinting of the South Florida Right Tree/Right Place posters with sponsorship to help with publication costs
- I-Tree Training Pilot Program
- FUFUC Policies Development

- A revision and expansion of our website

Our ongoing projects include:

- Annual Report
- Annual Trees Florida Conference and Trade Show – the best in the state (and maybe the Southeast) on the subject of trees
- Trees Florida Awards program
- Possibly our greatest accomplishment - our coordinated effort with the Florida Chapter ISA to produce public service announcements dealing with hurricanes and trees for print, radio and television in English and Spanish – let us know if you see or hear them on any of your local media!

It's been an exciting year with a diverse list of accomplishments. "Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together." Vincent Van Gogh

Stay tuned to see what your Florida Urban Forestry Council is up to next!



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EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

By Janice Rahill, Education Committee Chairperson

The year has seen many exciting educational programs across the state. Many thanks go to the Education Committee Members for making it all possible - Jimette Cook, Jeff Farley, Larry Figart, John Foltz, Ruth Hamberg, Janet Maland, Guy Murtonen, and Laura Sanagorski.

We began 2007 with taking the "Trail of Trees" program to over 7,000 students and teachers at different schools across the state. Tim Womick, the "Johnny Appleseed of the 21st century," brought his interactive program on stage in celebration of Florida Arbor Day in January. As always, Tim not only engaged our youth to learn more about the benefit of trees, he challenged them to make a difference--one student

and one tree at a time. We value bringing such challenges to our youth, as they are the stewards of our future urban forest. This

year our focus to increase our sponsorships to offset FUFC costs was very

successful. Our future goal is to provide this amazing program in even more venues with full sponsorship dollars.

The FUFC sponsored the 2007 State Envirothon on April 14, 2007 at Jonathan Dickinson State Park. This event is offered to high school state finalists from across Florida that excel in problem-solving in a natural resource educational outdoor setting. This field-oriented program had students working in teams to use skills that enhance critical thinking, communication and hands-on investigations about environmental issues. Our sponsorship provided FUFC exposure to a younger audience that will become tomorrow's stewards of our urban forests.

"We value bringing such challenges to our youth, as they are the stewards of our future urban forest."

In June of 2007, the Trees Florida Conference was once again a huge success with over 450 attendees. This cooperative educational conference between FUFC and FCISA brings in professionals

from across the state to keep abreast of the latest research and techniques in the field of urban forestry.

Finally, the FUFC co-sponsored the Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA) conference held in Hollywood Beach, Florida on September 15-19, 2007. There were several great educational speakers including Dr. Kim Coder, University of Georgia, Dr. Ed Gilman, University of Florida and Dr. Michael Raupp, University of Maryland. The speakers brought valuable, useful information to over 185 attendees.

We look forward to even bigger and better educational opportunities across the state in the future. Our challenge in 2008 is to offer educational venues that are fiscally responsible including more income-generating programs. As a member, always remember that your input is invaluable. We welcome suggestions on how we can make your role in the urban forest a better place.

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MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

By Earline Luhrman, Membership Committee Chairperson

I am honored to serve as the incoming chairperson of the Membership Committee. Members of the 2007 Membership Committee included myself, Sheryle Dell, John Holzaepfel (SAF), Mike Insley (FIPP), Howard Jeffries (Advisory), Jennifer Magavero (FRPA), Kimberly Paulson (FCISA), and Rocky Randels (FLOC).

Projects that were accomplished by the Membership Committee in 2007 included the membership drive, revisions to the Bylaws, Executive Committee member ID badges, development of sponsorship guidelines, and completion of the membership survey. We had several opportunities to set up the Council's display—including distributing membership applications and handouts on what the FUFCC is about and our mission and goals—at allied organization's conferences and events that were held at various venues throughout the state. This year the committee will be working on obtaining an outside display so you will be seeing us more and more! In 2007, our overall membership was down by 15% as compared to 2006—from 492 to 418 members.

We have plans for a productive year in 2008 with new goals and projects for the Membership Committee. I challenge our members to get involved and serve on the FUFCC Executive Committee. I started on the committee in 2004, and now I am the President-Elect (2009 President). Mike Robinson, one of the past presidents of the Council, asked me to be an advisory member and now I am currently serving in the City Arborist position. This has been a wonderful experience and I hope other members will follow.

In closing, I thank you for your support and hope to see you at a conference or event. If that isn't possible, please attend a Council meeting to see if this might be your new passion and new path.



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STATE OF URBAN FORESTRY IN FLORIDA 2007

By Charlie Marcus, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Florida Division of Forestry

The Emergency Urban Forestry Hurricane Grant Program concluded at the end of March, 2008, almost three years after the first grant applications were approved. We have not yet finished the final report, but here are some preliminary figures. Over 135,000 trees were planted. Roughly 40% of this total was provided to citizens through local tree giveaways and the rest was planted on public property by the grant recipients. Over 18,000 trees received corrective remedial pruning. A total of 35 communities completed tree inventories and assessments, and seven entities completed educational projects related to trees and storms. Grant recipients received almost \$14 million to carry out these projects, with the largest share (\$10.5 million) going to new trees.

Our agency saw this program as even more than a way to restore the tree canopy in impacted communities. It also presented an opportunity to educate everyone concerned about the importance of selecting quality growing stock, utilizing the “right tree/right place” concept and then planting and caring for the trees according to Best Management Practices. Communities who conducted tree giveaways were required to provide an educational program of some kind to residents before they could receive their trees. Our grant administrators also closely worked with the recipients and their vendors to help ensure that the trees would provide a long-term positive impact.

We feel that the grant program will provide long-term benefits for the communities where these projects were carried out.

However, our experiences with the program indicate that quite a few opportunities remain statewide to educate individual citizens, local officials and tree professionals.

Awareness of the Florida Grades and Standards for nursery stock needs to improve if we want to grow an urban forest that can stand up to tropical storms. Proper tree planting and

care information also needs to fall into more people’s hands if planting projects are to be successful in the long-term.

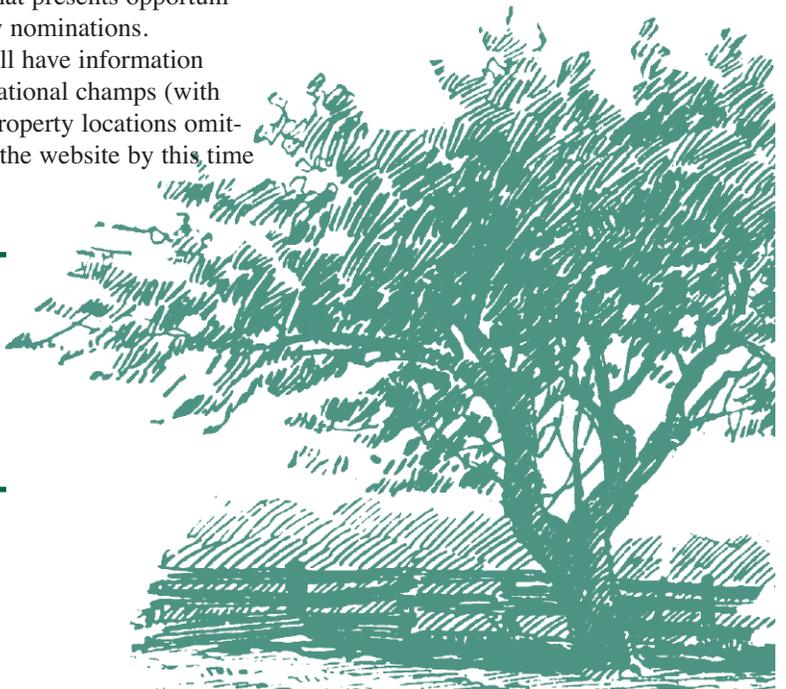
The paranoia among Florida citizens about all trees being hazard trees has subsided somewhat over the past three years. Unfortunately, it still exists. In my travels I have encountered a number of instances where people still question the wisdom of “deliberately creating future hazards to life and property” by planting trees. Lots of trees are planted because a local ordinance mandates that the property owners do so. Positive public perceptions of trees must continue to improve if these ordinances are to remain politically viable.

So much for my soapbox; let’s talk about some good things. American Forests recently released their 2008 version of the National Register of Big Trees. Florida still has the second highest number of national champions of any state in the country (91), with the majority being located south of Lake Okeechobee. Kudos to all Division of Forestry foresters who helped complete a comprehensive update of our records, as well as photograph and record GPS coordinates for all state and national champions during 2007. Several former champions have succumbed to mortality since the last update, but that presents opportunities for more new nominations. Hopefully, we will have information about state and national champs (with specific private property locations omitted) available on the website by this time next year.

In the Fort Myers area, Senior Forester Mike Weston has begun a pilot program called Community Forest Designation (CFD). This program is designed to recognize entities that have been actively managing their urban trees and forest resources, but are not eligible for recognition under Tree City USA or Forest Stewardship. Unincorporated developed areas, homeowners associations, golf course communities, and college campuses are examples of entities who could participate. Requirements are not yet finalized, but will include an active tree care program, resident participation and control of invasive exotic vegetation. Stay tuned for more details.

During the next year, we also intend to expand training opportunities for the i-Tree suite of Urban Forest Inventory software that is available to the public. This software allows urban foresters to not only describe the structure and condition of the urban forest, but it also quantifies in dollars the benefits that trees provide to the sampled community. Given the current austerity that local governments are facing, the information generated from an i-Tree inventory may provide a strong argument for maintaining funding for a local urban forestry program.

“...our experiences with the program indicate that quite a few opportunities remain statewide to educate individual citizens, local officials and tree professionals.”



FLORIDA'S URBAN FORESTRY GRANT PROGRAM

by Charlie Marcus, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Florida Division of Forestry

By the time you read this, the Florida Division of Forestry will have concluded the enrollment period for our 2008 annual Urban and Community Forestry grants. A review committee met in early June to evaluate the grant applications that we received as of May 6. Approved applicants will receive notification of their awards within 30 days of the review meeting. We have approximately \$265,000 in funding available for this grant program, which is roughly \$30,000 less than we had for 2007.

The purpose of these grants is to help provide Florida communities with the resources they need to either initiate or improve their local urban forestry management programs. Eligible entities include local governments (city and county), non-profit groups and educational institutions.

Eligible activities include the following:

- hiring temporary staffing
- purchasing urban forestry equipment
- conducting urban forest inventories and/or master plans
- various educational projects

In addition, a small amount of funds is available for demonstration tree planting projects. However, most of these funds will be awarded to small rural communities or under-served neighborhoods in larger cities.

Additional information about these grants is available on the Division of Forestry website, www.fl-dof.com, or by contacting your local County Forester.

The US Forest Service has indicated that the Congress would prefer their State and Private Forestry programs (which

include this grant program) place more emphasis in the future on projects to solve regional natural resource conservation problems. In order to maintain the political viability of these programs, the Forest Service has begun soliciting what they call Redesign Projects. This concept is modeled after a large ongoing effort in the Chesapeake Bay region to ameliorate a number of environmental problems and consequently improve the human habitat.

Criteria for these projects include the following:

- Impact on a large geographical area and/or population center
- Benefits targeting lower income segments of the population
- Measurable environmental benefits including improved air and water quality, restored indigenous ecosystems, etc.
- Integration of natural resource disciplines

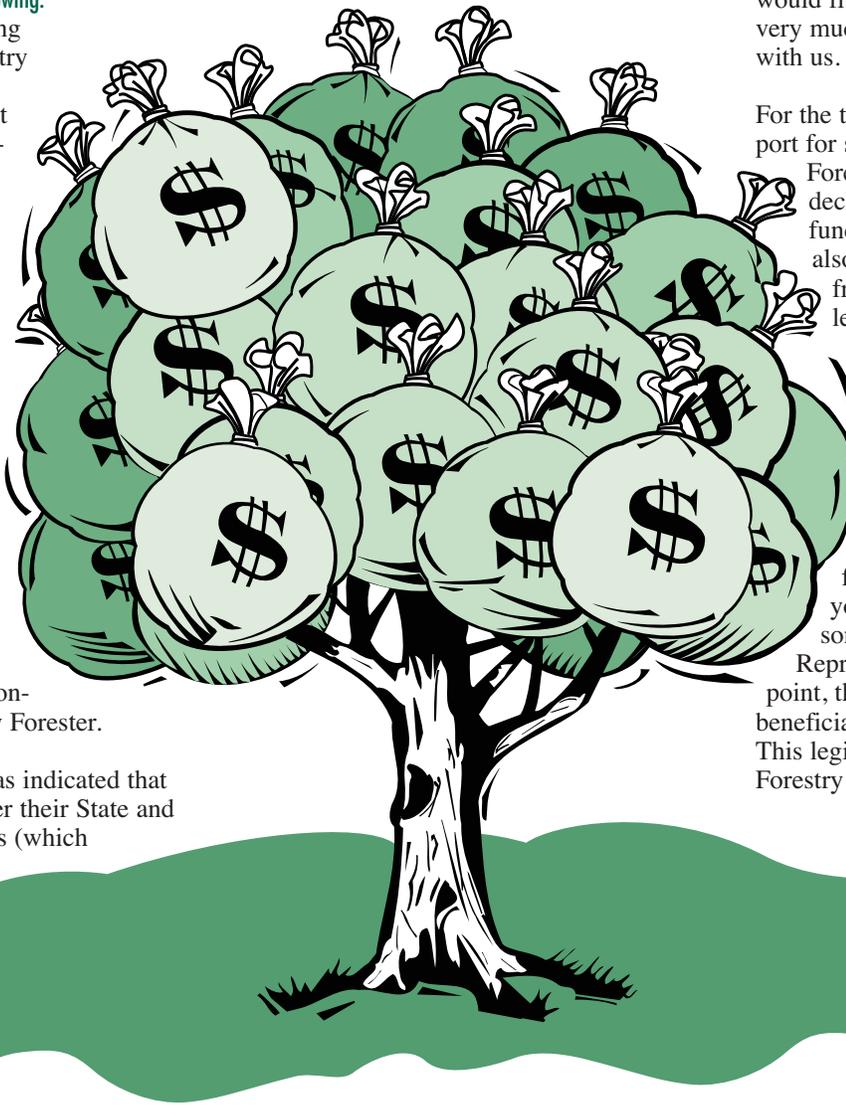
- Involvement of citizen groups in planning and implementation
- Use of technology for resource assessment and evaluation

The Forest Service feels that they can continue to receive funding in the future for programs that have benefited our targeted audiences up to this point (such as the U&CF grants) if we can complete successful projects of this nature. In fact, they feel that program funding could actually increase as these projects receive positive attention from key decision makers at the national level.

At present, we have received an allotment for a project that would benefit the Miami-Dade County area that we intend to complete during the next two years. The project is still in the planning stages and more details will follow. If anyone has ideas for additional projects that would fit the above criteria, we would very much appreciate your sharing them with us.

For the time being, however, Federal support for state Urban and Community Forestry programs continues to decline. Our state received 15% less funding as compared to 2007. This also represents a 50% reduction from the state's 2004 funding level. As of this writing, Congress plans to reduce program funding on a national level by about 84%, which would provide as much funding to the whole nation as the 13 southern states currently receive.

If you would like to see this funding continue, please make your feelings known with a personalized letter to your local U.S. Representative and Senator. Up to this point, they have not heard from enough beneficiaries of these program funds. This legislation will be included in the Forestry Title of the 2009 Farm Bill.



2007 FINANCIAL REPORT

The 2007 Financial Report demonstrates the appreciation of the value of the Florida Urban Forestry Council by the individuals, governmental agencies and corporations who contributed both memberships and sponsorships to support the Council's continuing mission of planning, promoting and protecting the urban forest.

Over the past several years, the Council has been very fortunate to receive a significant percentage of our funding from the US Forest Service through the Florida Division of Forestry. However, the overall allotment of federal funds to Florida has been reduced by about 50% since 2004. The Division of Forestry has recognized the importance of the Council and has not reduced their funding until recently. In anticipation of and preparation for the budget cuts from the State—a 15% reduction in both 2008 and 2009--the Council has already begun seeking other sources of revenue. In 2007, only 44% of the total

revenue was from the State as compared to 50% in 2006. Grants and program sponsorships have been pursued as additional revenue sources which accounted for 8% and 7%, respectively, of the total budget in 2007. Memberships in 2007 totaled 418 which accounted for 7% of the total revenue. A key revenue source (22%) is from the sale of the Right Tree, Right Place posters. As the Council moves toward sustainability, other sources of revenue will continue to be identified.



A key revenue source (22%) is from the sale of the Right Tree, Right Place posters.

One of the major projects undertaken by the Council in 2007—and completed in early 2008-- was the joint partnership with the Florida Chapter ISA to professionally produce a media campaign promoting the importance of trees. This has been accomplished through an Urban and Community Forestry grant with the product being the **Trees 4 Florida** public service announcements. The Council also hosted the live performances of the Trail of Trees Program to approximately 7,000 elementary and middle-school students in North, South and Central Florida in conjunction with the celebration of Florida Arbor Day. To further promote the Council, sponsorship was provided to the Society of Municipal Arborists for a hurricane workshop during their national convention in Fort Lauderdale, the Great Southern Tree Conference in Gainesville, and the Florida Envirothon statewide competition.

JOHN P. WHITE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP



John P. White is remembered for his generous giving spirit as both the Florida Chapter ISA's Tree Fund Liaison and a dedicated member of the Florida Urban Forestry Council's Executive Committee as well as for his contributions to the annual Trees Florida Conference. He had a zeal for life and steadfast passion for arboriculture.

The John P. White Memorial Scholarship has been established to support education in the arboriculture industry or a related field through annual scholarships to qualifying students in the sum of \$500.00 for undergraduate, postgraduate or other advanced education programs. It is hoped that the John P. White Memorial Scholarship will provide deserving students the opportunity to gain expertise and experience, earn post high school

degrees and become active members and leaders in the arboriculture industry.

Applicants may be an incoming freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, or graduate student planning to or currently attending a community college, college or university. The student must be enrolled full-time in an arboriculture program or related field with the intent to graduate in that field. Awards recipients are eligible to reapply for the scholarship annually.

It is the Scholarship Committee's intent to begin awarding scholarships by the end of 2008. For further information or to obtain a scholarship application, please contact the Florida Urban Forestry Council (407-872-1738) or the Florida Chapter ISA (941-342-0153).

ARBOL CAÍDO

Si perdiste un árbol durante los huracanes, en mas que una inconveniencia- es una perdida de la calidad de vida y valor de propiedad.



Florida perdió millones de árboles por todo el estado por los huracanes y la salud de nuestra comunidad al igual el valor de nuestras propiedades a cambiando.

Estudios enseñan que árboles plantados y cuidados apropiada mente sobreviven y causan menos daño, al igual de mejorar el valor de nuestras propiedades y la salud de la comunidad.

Protéjase a usted y sus inversiones manteniendo a sus árboles. Llámale a tu encargado forestal local para tener tus árboles inspeccionados.

Juntos podemos crear árboles sanos para ciudades sanas. Visita treesarecool.com para mas información.



This print PSA has been produced with funding provided by the USDA Forest Service through the Florida Division of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

TREE DOWN.

If You Lost a Tree During the Hurricanes, It's More Than a Nuisance — It's a Loss of Quality of Life and Property Value.



Florida lost millions of trees statewide due to hurricanes and our community health and property values have changed.

Research shows that properly planted and maintained trees survive and cause less damage, increase property value and improve community health.

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Together we can create healthy trees for healthy cities. Visit treesarecool.com for more information.



This print PSA has been produced with funding provided by the USDA Forest Service through the Florida Division of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

TREE CITY USA

by Charlie Marcus, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Florida Division of Forestry

Welcome to Florida's new and revitalized Tree City USA communities for 2007:

- Casselberry, Seminole County
- Deltona, Volusia County
- Fernandina Beach, Nassau County
- High Springs, Alachua County
- Key West, Monroe County
- Miami Beach, Dade County
- Miami Lakes, Dade County
- North Port, Sarasota County
- Orange County
- Punta Gorda, Charlotte County
- Southwest Ranches, Broward County
- Tarpon Springs, Pinellas County

This brings our state total to 135. It would have been even higher if nine existing Tree City USA's had not failed to submit their annual re-certification applications. We're starting to get some stiff competition from Georgia to maintain our #6 national ranking.

Congratulations to the City of Eustis in Lake County, which was awarded the Tree City USA of the Year Award for 2007 for their exceptional program. Also, kudos to Orlando for completing their third decade as a certified Tree City USA, going back to the founding of the program in the mid-1970s. The largest participating city in Florida is Miami, with a population of over 360,000 residents. The smallest participating city is Pomona Park in Putnam County, with a population of less than 1,000 residents. Key West staged the first and the southernmost Arbor Day celebration in the entire United States on January 15.

"...kudos to Orlando for completing their third decade as a certified Tree City USA, going back to the founding of the program in the mid-1970s"

The Division of Forestry administers the Tree City USA program in Florida. Information about the program is available on the National Arbor Day Foundation's website, www.arborday.org, and the Division of Forestry's website,

www.fl-dof.com. City and county governments, as well as federal military bases, are eligible for certification. To qualify, they must have a designated tree board, advocacy group, or department in charge of tree management. They must also have an enforced tree ordinance, work plan with an annual budget of at least \$2.00 per capita and an annual Arbor Day celebration.

For those who go above and beyond the call of duty, there is the Tree City USA Growth Award. Certified communities who spend at least as much as they did the previous year on their urban tree program can qualify. In addition, they must either initiate new tree management activities or expand their current activities over the previous year. In 2007, a total of 33 Florida communities received Growth Awards. The Growth Award also qualifies a community to be considered for the Tree City USA of the Year Award.

The National Arbor Day Foundation (NADF) will soon unveil their new Tree Campus USA program. Colleges (meaning any post-secondary academic institution) who maintain active tree management programs on their campuses, with adequate funding, dedicated staff and resources, and volunteer participation from students and faculty will be eligible to receive this award. As of this writing, the NADF is working with a small group of campuses to develop pilot programs and finalize program details before they begin to accept applications on a nationwide basis. In the meantime, if you are an official from a college in Florida who may qualify, or you know a college that may fit the program criteria, please contact Urban Forestry Coordinator Charlie Marcus at 850-921-0300, or marcusc@doacs.state.fl.us.



TIMBER HARVESTS ON NATIONAL FORESTS - ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

by John Holzaepfel, Society of American Foresters, Representative to FUFCA
Charlie Marcus, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Florida Division of Forestry



As professional foresters with decades of experience between us, we would like to offer an alternative perspective to the viewpoint presented on page 6 of the previous issue of the FUFCA quarterly. We question the validity of the statement that logging and road building, as currently practiced on Florida's national forests, inherently causes anything more than short-term disturbance, and that either activity threatens the continued flow of revenue to the Forest Service or to the local economies of the surrounding communities.

The forest management plans for the three national forests in Florida are public records available to all. These plans show that Florida's national forests contain tens of thousands of acres set aside as wilderness areas. No timber harvesting, road building, or other human caused disturbance, besides prescribed burning, is allowed in these areas. One would be hard pressed to identify where plans exist to reduce the size of these wilderness areas. Other areas of Florida's national forests open to timber harvesting already have established networks of roads, making it unnecessary to construct additional roads to facilitate timber harvesting. Once again, one would be hard pressed to

document where roads have been built or improved sufficiently for vehicle use during the past 20 years for any purpose other than improving public access to recreational areas.

As part of the congressional mandate to practice multiple-use management on national forests, harvests are designed to enhance the quality of habitat for endangered species and improve the overall health of the forests. Leading environmental groups have repeatedly applauded these efforts. The uneven-aged management employed in native longleaf and slash pine communities in Florida's national forests creates a stand structure with trees of all ages and perpetuates a "natural appearance" to the forest with favorable habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker. Sand pine is managed in even-aged stands with shorter harvest cycles, in order to maintain ideal habitat for the Florida scrub jay, sand skink, and gopher tortoise. Best Management Practices are employed to protect riparian habitats, and compatibility with public use areas is considered when selecting and designing harvest sites.

This contrasts with areas where no timber is harvested, creating overstocked stands.

These overstocked stands are unable to provide ideal habitat for listed endangered species which do not establish populations in dense timber stands. Furthermore, the forest floor in overstocked stands receives inadequate sunlight to allow growth of desirable flora, including endangered plants. Overstocked stands are also prone to insect attacks that can spread to nearby healthy stands.

The authors of the referenced report, evidently, are philosophically opposed to all timber harvesting on national forest lands, in spite of scientific evidence that harvesting benefits the forest and species that depend upon it. Timber harvests have been conducted on Florida's national forests for over 60 years, and there is no evidence that recreational use would decline if timber harvesting continues.

Federal funds provided to states to enhance their urban forestry programs have significantly declined since 2004. The increased need for wildfire suppression resources for federal lands in the West is a significant reason for this reduction in urban forestry funds. Reduced timber harvests on federal lands have contributed to increased fuel buildups, making both wildfire suppression and prescribed burning more difficult. As such, a case can be made that timber harvesting can provide a number of peripheral benefits.



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This print PSA has been produced with funding provided by the USDA Forest Service through the Florida Division of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.



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