

SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota Department of Agriculture, Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry

Urban tree inventories are a critical part of a city's ability to manage and equally spread the benefits of trees throughout a community. The City of Spearfish is currently undergoing a comprehensive inventory that will allow them better target problem trees in lower-income neighborhoods as a part of their effort to prepare for a future emerald ash borer infestation. The city currently offers cost share to all citizens to help them with the financial burden of removing and replacing trees.

The City of Spearfish is currently completing a comprehensive inventory of all publicly owned trees within the city limit. This inventory is being completed to better understand the current diversity of the city's trees and, specifically, how many ash trees are growing in the community.

This inventory has been funded in part with cost-share from South Dakota's Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grant program. The state uses this grant program to provide funding to smaller communities in order to equally spread the benefits of community forestry to all South Dakotans. This project stands out given the use of grant funds to create a complete tree inventory that will help the city prepare for the impact of emerald ash borer (EAB).

"Having an inventory of our urban forest is an incredibly valuable resource. By understanding what species we

currently have and where they are growing, we can make informed decisions on what trees to plant in the future to increase diversity in the urban forest," said Rex McDonald, Parks, Recreation & Forestry Superintendent of Spearfish. "We can track trees that have lower condition ratings and monitor them more frequently to mitigate potential hazard trees within our community. We can track information over time and assess planting sites within our City that may have historical issues with pests, diseases, or complications with the soil."

To date, the inventory has cataloged around 2,500 trees, with 22% percent of those being ash. This information will be incredibly valuable to them as they implement their EAB management plan and strive to build a healthier and diverse community forest.



(Left) Downtown Spearfish street trees. Photo: Joshua Larson, Resource Conservation and Forestry

(Middle) Rex McDonald assessing tree canopy. Photo: Rex McDonald Parks, Recreation & Forestry Superintendent Spearfish SD



(Right) Rex McDonald measuring diameter at breast height (DBH). Photo: Rex McDonald Parks, Recreation & Forestry Superintendent Spearfish SD