## KANSAS

## **Kansas Forest Service**

Funded by a Landscape Scale Restoration grant, a recent urban tree canopy study in the city of Wichita reveals the numerous benefits and value of tree planting to the environment and communities.

The Kansas Forest Service (KFS) Community Forestry Program recently completed an Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) study in partnership with the city of Wichita. It will be utilized as baseline data, encourage canopy increases, and promote the health and environmental benefits that tree canopy cover provides. The KFS portion was funded through the USDA Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration grants program. The results of the UTC study show the City of Wichita has 23% tree canopy cover, 34% possible planting area in vegetation, and 33% unsuitable area for planting. The ecosystem benefits are myriad. Wichita's trees store approximately 2,850,187 tons of carbon, valued at \$100,840,211, and each year the tree canopy absorbs and sequesters approximately 101,428 tons of carbon dioxide, valued at \$3,588,533. The existing tree canopy in Wichita removes 2,997,351 tons of air pollution annually, valued at \$107,384,528. Wichita's existing tree canopy provides \$4,678,271 in stormwater runoff benefits. Dividing the UTC study by council districts found the canopy cover is well distributed throughout the city.

After the 2011-12 drought, the city of Wichita removed over 55,000 street trees and continues to remove two to three thousand per year. This is an unprecedented loss to the canopy cover in Wichita. The study provides the data to encourage canopy increases on the 34% possible planting areas currently in vegetation. It further provides the health and environmental benefits of the existing canopy and will be utilized to promote further canopy increases to improve the health and wellness of both the citizens and the tree canopy in Wichita. KFS also continues to promote the overall social, environmental, economic, and ecological benefits of trees and canopy cover.





**1.** Riverside Park in Downtown Wichita. **2.** Westward Wichita tree canopy. **3.** Delano District, Wichita. Photo Credit: Tim McDonnell.



The tree canopy in Wichita, KS removes 2,997,351 tons of air pollution annually.

