

KANSAS

Kansas Forest Service

The Kansas Community Forestry Program provides technical assistance to both the large metropolitan areas with full time staff as well as the small rural communities which do not typically have dedicated full time staff. Programs predominantly utilize the USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) grants for the larger metro areas and utilize Kansas Forest Service (KFS) base Forest Service funding to offer support and educational services to the smaller rural communities. Kansas currently has 25 first class cities, 98 second class cities, and 503 third class cities with a total population of 2.9 million people. Kansas is currently home to 96 Tree City USA communities, with populations ranging from Wichita with 365,000 to Formoso with 110.

While most of the larger communities in Kansas do possess full time professional forestry staff and do not typically require direct technical support from the state, KFS does provide large scale projects to assist in management decisions of urban tree resources. Through the LSR grant system, the KFS Community Forestry Program has provided large scale assessment projects in Kansas metro areas and priority landscapes. These major assessments include: 1) Assessing Urban Forest Effects and Values of the Greater Kansas City Region, 2) Assessing Urban Forest Effects and Values for Douglas County, Kansas, 3) An Urban Canopy Study of Wichita, Kansas (the largest city in KS). All the assessments provided both baseline data and the economic values of the current tree canopy resources.



A look from City Hall, Wichita, KS. Photo Credit: Tim McDonnell

For the smaller Kansas communities with no full-time forestry staff, KFS provides the professional technical and educational services which they may not otherwise have access to. In 2018, a bulk of 219 technical assists were to smaller communities. These assists included: tree inventories, management plans, hazard tree assessments, storm recovery assessments, current and future pest assessments, and assisting developing communities to become managing communities.

KFS also provided 50 workshops, trainings, and public speaking events to both metro and small communities. A popular education/training event is the KFS Statewide Trainings, which are going to be re-implemented in 2019. The KFS Statewide Trainings have been on hiatus since the discovery of emerald ash borer (EAB) in Kansas, as many trainings have been around this topic. The Statewide Trainings are popular due to the timely subject matter. KFS typically hosts these across the state's six Community Forestry districts in six to eight sites to allow for easy access and be cognizant of declining travel budgets. The trainings are taught by KFS staff and utilize the expertise and locations of the K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) county agents and specialists. KFS hosts both spring and fall trainings, and the 2019 training will highlight tree defects and risk management.



Downtown Wichita, KS. Photo Credit: Tim McDonnell



Riverside park, Wichita, KS. Photo Credit: Tim McDonnell

Every fall KFS partners with the Kansas Arborists Association in the Arborist Training Course, which is required in order to become a Kansas Certified Arborist. This course is a weeklong training with both classroom, outdoor demonstrations, and climbing activities. 40 individuals are trained per year, usually a 50/50 mix of private commercial and municipal arborists. The municipal portion allows the expansion of the professional staff in many Kansas communities, both large and small.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Kansas Forest Service
Community Forestry Program
http://www.kansasforests.org/community_forestry