

PROJECT CANOPY TREE PLANTING AND MAINTENANCE GRANTS 2011 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

THE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION'S MAINE FOREST SERVICE AND THE
GROWSMART MAINE
USDA FOREST SERVICE – URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY CFDA 10:675



Mandatory Grant Workshop
TBA

Application Deadline
October 17, 2011

Project Canopy
Maine Forest Service
22 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333
1-800-367-0223

PROJECT CANOPY

INTRODUCTION:

Project Canopy is seeking proposals from municipal governments, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions that support community forestry planting and maintenance projects in Maine communities.

The amount of grant dollars available to the Department of Conservation's Maine Forest Service (MFS) for this grant program is approximately **\$100,000**. This amount is contingent on federal and state funding levels. Applicants are eligible to submit proposals for up to **\$8,000**. The grant period is from November 1, 2011 to October 30, 2012.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

The Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program is a national initiative designed to strengthen the connections between people and their environment. The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program was authorized by the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (PL95-313) and revised by the 1990 Farm Bill (PL101-624) to promote natural resource management in populated areas and improve quality of life. Urban and Community Forestry Program goals of awareness, outreach and environmental equity, partnerships, and comprehensive natural resource management focus on achieving healthy sustainable forests, sustainable economic development, and information management.

Additional funding is provided through State and Federal sources for focused funding, specifically for implementation of restorative tree planting where identified and needed for geographic locations falling within the Presumpscot/Casco Bay watershed.

Project Canopy has a vision that *every community will actively and wisely manage its community forestry resources in a sustainable manner, and that all Maine citizens become well informed as to the proper management of these resources and the benefits derived from them*. Project Canopy has identified four goals to support this vision. Projects proposed under this grant program must effectively contribute toward the following Project Canopy goals and USDA Forest Service national goals:

Project Canopy Goals:

1. Increase the number of managing community forestry programs.
2. Stimulate and heighten public awareness of what the community forest is, its role and benefits.
3. Create and maintain partnerships.
4. Promote comprehensive resource management of community forests and related natural resources.

USFS National Goals:

1. Restore, sustain, and enhance the Nation's Forests and grasslands.
2. Provide and sustain benefits to the American people.
3. Conserve open space.
4. Sustain and enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.
5. Maintain basic management capabilities of the Forest Service.
6. Engage urban America with Forest Service programs.
7. Provide science-based applications and tools for sustainable natural resource management.

The goal of this grant program is to support community efforts to develop and maintain long-term community forestry programs. Planting trees and caring for existing trees is an integral part of sustainable community forestry management. These grants provide an excellent opportunity for communities to increase tree cover, tree health, engage citizen volunteers, and build support for their community forestry program. Applicants are encouraged to contact Project Canopy staff to discuss project ideas. Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ **Improved community health and quality of life** – Plant trees in visible, contiguous locations where they make a direct, positive impact on the community. Tree planting projects improve air and water quality, reduce noise pollution, and beautify neighborhoods and travel corridors.
- ◆ **Buffer plantings** – Trees naturally filter air and water, limit storm runoff, and stabilize soil. Proper tree planting in urban areas can have a positive impact on water quality, aesthetics, and wildlife habitat.
- ◆ **Business district enhancement** – Trees planted in business districts can have a positive impact on the economy. Consumers are more willing to patronize business districts that have tree lined streets, shaded parking, and green spaces.

ELIGIBLE GRANTEES:

Local municipal units of government, educational institutions, and non-profit entities, may be awarded grants for proposals that meet program guidelines.

COST-SHARING REQUIREMENT:

This is a 50/50 (Project Canopy/local) match program based on reimbursable costs. The maximum amount of federal funds awarded may not exceed 50% of the project cost and shall be no more than **\$8,000** per community application. Applicants must match federal funds, dollar for dollar, in the form of cash, services or in-kind contributions that meet program standards and guidelines. Applicants must match federal cost-share funds with nonfederal funds and/or contributions. The applicant may use current reasonable rates, i.e. the value of a professional consultant's time based upon his/her standard hourly rate of pay, when estimating the value of non-cash donations and in-kind services, e.g. volunteer time.

ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE COSTS:

Eligible Reimbursable Costs:

The only costs eligible for reimbursement are those associated with one or more of the following:

- Fees charged by private contractors and/or consultants.
- Purchase of essential supplies and materials.
- Purchase and planting of trees, along with maintenance during the grant period. Three-year maintenance with a 90% survival rate is expected on all plantings, however, maintenance costs outside of the grant period are ineligible.
- Costs associated with site preparation and soil amendments.

Eligible Non-reimbursable Costs (Applicant's Share or Match):

The following costs are not reimbursable, **BUT** are allowed to meet the community's **minimum cost-sharing requirements of 50%** of the total project cost.

- Cash or in-kind donations and services.
- Salaries, fringe, and overhead costs.
- Volunteer labor, machinery and equipment.

Ineligible Costs (And **NOT** allowed as part of the community's cost-share):

This cost-share program is for projects and/or activities not currently funded. It is not intended to be a substitute for existing funding levels. The focus of the program is to support new initiatives that would not otherwise occur during the funding cycle.

- Purchase of machinery or equipment.
- Construction of any kind, e.g. sidewalks or roads.
- Purchase of land or land charges.
- Purchase of plant material classified as invasive species by Project Canopy.
- Purchase and planting of Norway maples (including cultivars).
- Purchase and planting of ash species (*Fraxinus* sp.)— due to likelihood of eventual spread of the Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*).
- Normal, community wide periodic maintenance of utility (telephone, electric, and cable) lines unless it is site specific and necessary to the project.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

To be considered for funding, applicants must meet the following requirements:

Training:

Attend the grant information workshop held via web conference.

Attendance is required. Grant workshops will cover topics including grant writing, project development, sustainable community forestry management, and grant administration. Please register with Jan Ames Santerre (207-287-4987) to let us know you will be attending. All grant workshops are conditional on registration.

* Please note: The workshop is a distance learning workshop offered both in person in Augusta, and at satellite locations throughout the state, as well as on the web.

Application Form:

- Complete the application form, including budget information. Project Canopy recommends that applicants obtain quotes for the cost of trees from nurseries and include the quotes with the application.
- The application must be signed by the designated and official representative.

Narrative: (1-3 pages)

Applicants are required to submit a narrative with their application containing the following information:

- A brief history of your community program, school or nonprofit organization, including mission and goals for the next several years.
- A description of the project, including what you expect to be developed, produced, performed and/or implemented; a clear and measurable work plan for the project; and a timeline for completion of the process.
- A description of how your project will effectively contribute to Project Canopy and USDA Forest Service goals.

- A description of how this project will enhance your community's capacity for long-term and sustainable urban and community forestry management.
- **For geographic locations within the Presumpscot/Casco Bay Watershed** – a description of how your project will effectively protect and manage urban and community forests as a strategy for providing clean, safe and affordable drinking water.

Three-Year Maintenance Plan:

A three-year maintenance plan must be included in your application. The plan should identify individuals and resources responsible for tree maintenance over a three-year period. Only tree maintenance costs during the grant period are eligible for reimbursement or may be used as match.

Project Map/Planting Locations:

Include a map of the project area, clearly delineating planting locations. Trees must be planted on public property or on property with free public access that is visible from, or contiguous to, transportation corridors.

Letters of Support:

Applications that include a broad range of participants will be favored. Applicants are required to include letters of support from partners that include specific commitments and contributions to the project, e.g. amount of volunteer labor committed, estimated services provided, donated equipment or labor, and not just a general statement of support.

Community Capacity Checklist:

Please complete the community capacity checklist and submit it with your application.

FUNDING REVIEW AND CRITERIA:

Proposals will be evaluated on a competitive basis. Project proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation team made up of individuals from the Department of Conservation's Maine Forest Service, GrowSmart Maine, and Project Canopy partners. The evaluation team will make recommendations on applications to the State Forester, who will make final determinations. The grant review criteria are:

Project contributes to the goals of Project Canopy and the USFS	10 Points
Project helps support and build a sustainable community forestry program	10 Points
Project need and value to the community are evident	10 Points
New community (has not received funding from MFS/Project Canopy)	10 Points
Project has a realistic budget and timeline	5 Points
Community partnerships are evident and described in letters of support	5 Points
Community has a comprehensive plan that includes forestry	5 Points
Application is complete, legible, and clearly presented	5 Points

IF AWARDED A GRANT:

Each grantee is required to sign an agreement for performance containing the required Federal General Assurances. The grant period is from November 1, 2011 to October 30, 2012.

Successful applicants cannot commence work or incur any expenses against the grant until an agreement between Project Canopy and the authorized agency/organization has been signed. Expenses incurred outside the agreement period shall be deemed ineligible for reimbursement.

TIME TABLE:

- 8/8/11:** Grant announcement
- 9/11:** Grant workshops – statewide (specific dates, times, and locations TBA)
- 10/17/2011:** Applications are due to MFS no later than 5 p.m.
- 10/28/2011:** Successful applicants will be notified by the MFS of conditional project approval

Successful applicants must spend allocated federal funds between **November 1, 2011 and October 30, 2012**. Applicants must complete final project reporting procedures, furnish documentation of project completion, and submit expenses to the MFS within 30 days following completion. Unless prior approval has been granted, grantees will be ineligible for reimbursement if completed grant documentation is not furnished to MFS by **November 30, 2012**.

PAYMENT PROCESS:

Funds will be awarded on a reimbursement basis only. This means that all expenses have been paid in full and the project is complete before filing for grant payment. Funds awarded under the grant are available once satisfactory work has been completed, within the contract period as described in the original scope of work, and after verification of expenditures and match. Grantees must file a request for reimbursement, and send records of expenditures and match to the MFS, within 30 days following completion of the project, but in no case later than November 30, 2012. Payment shall be made to the authorized local government unit, educational institution, or non-profit organization. Grantees can normally expect payment within 60 days of receipt of expenditure documentation.

All records and receipts associated with the project must be maintained and available for inspection by the Maine Forest Service and State and Federal auditors for three (3) years after the grant period.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Technical assistance is available to all grant applicants from the Maine Forest Service, and GrowSmart Maine. Applicants are strongly encouraged to seek assistance from MFS personnel. Questions concerning the application process and/or project development, should be directed to Jan Ames Santerre, Project Canopy Coordinator at (207) 287-4987, Kimberly Ballard, Community Outreach Director at (207) 699-4330 x3; or your local District Forester (listed below).

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION MAINE FOREST SERVICE DISTRICT FORESTERS

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Dennis Brennan, MFS, 2281 Alfred Road, Lyman, Maine 04002 | (207) 592-1251 |
| Morten Moesswilde, MFS, 536 Waldoboro Road, Jefferson, Maine 04348 | (207) 441-2895 |
| Jim Ecker, MFS, P.O. Box 415, Old Town, ME, 04468 | (207) 441-4308 |
| Dan Jacobs, MFS, 2 Forestry Road, Island Falls, ME, 04747 | (207) 441-4128 |
| Steve MacDonald, MFS, P.O. Box 130, Jonesboro, Maine 04648 | (207) 441-4924 |
| Ken Canfield, MFS, 356 Shaker Rd., Gray, ME, 04039 | (207) 441-3712 |
| Patty Cormier, MFS, PO Box 416, Norridgewock, Maine 04976 | (207) 592-2238 |
| Gordon Moore, MFS, PO Box 1107, Greenville, Maine 04441 | (207) 441-4139 |
| Merle Ring, MFS, 131 Bethel Road, West Paris, Maine 04289 | (207) 441-3276 |
| David Rochester, MFS, 45 Radar Road, Ashland, Maine 04732 | (207) 441-3817 |

