



'Out on a Limb'

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Kansas Forest Service
"Care of Natural Resources and
Service to People through Forestry"

A Colleague and Friend is Gone

Troy Bratton, District Forester, Southwest, suddenly ended his life on July 16th at his home in Ford, Kansas. He had been suffering from depression for several years, but the last year was especially troubling. He leaves two sons, Jeromy (20) and Jacob (18), many family members, friends and Kansas Forest Service employees who loved and cared about him deeply.

Troy began his career with the Kansas Forest Service in March, 1997. A native Kansan and son of Jerry, a former Southeast District Forester with the Kansas Forest Service, he chose to work in Southwest Kansas focusing on conservation forestry because of his love of tree planting. Over the years, he developed a solid reputation in planting living snow fences and field windbreaks. Troy's real strength, however, was working with people. He was soft spoken, always had a smile on his face and was easy to talk with. Once you met him, you didn't easily forget him.

Troy is gone but the trees he planted will live on as a reminder of his love for the land. He will be missed.

Ray Aslin, State Forester, oversees all operations of the Kansas Forest Service.

Greensburg Update

In the aftermath of the May 4th tornado that destroyed lives, homes and a community, the town of Greensburg virtually lost 95% of the lush green umbrella that had just opened to cover the city for another season. The Kansas Forest Service (KFS), Sunflower Resource Conservation & Development (RC&D) Area, Inc. and Kiowa County Extension are working with several local, state and national agencies to see that the rebuilding of Greensburg also includes the replanting of the many trees that were lost in this devastating storm.

While a large majority of tree plantings may be a year out, there is an attempt being made to make a unified effort toward the goal of restoring a community tree canopy in Greensburg. The Kansas Forest Service Community Forestry Program will be involved and has already started the process of acquiring some federal support through the U.S. Forest Service. We have received a USFS Grant totaling \$25,000 to assist Greensburg. The Kansas Department of Transportation has been contacted about the possibility of an Enhancement Grant along 54 Hwy for tree plantings. This will be a multi-agency response to include the above mentioned and the following: K-State Research and Extension and landscape students from K-State, USDA-NRCS

Conservation Partners, KAA, KNLA, KAABG, Tree City USA communities, Green Industry Representatives and Master Gardeners, to name a few.

Several steps have been planned to prepare and carry out this monumental project.

We have divided the replanting of the canopy into 5 project areas:

- Downtown
- Parks and Schools
- Highway 54
- TCUSA Boulevard
- Street Trees in the neighborhoods

Greensburg is still in the planning stages of the community layout and we will start planting as soon as areas are developed. We will work on their time frame. Our main thoughts are to have a master plan and not to inundate them with too much too soon. We are not merely interested in the planting of the trees but providing the proper maintenance and seeing that the trees become reestablished. Therefore, with the USFS Grant we intend to place an intern on site to provide the maintenance for the three summers following the initial plantings.

Another area of concern is the salvage or removals that will need to be accomplished on the public trees. FEMA has agreed to pay for 619 removals

of street and park trees. I estimate that there could be another 1500 removals within their easement. We may need a crew of City Foresters and Certified Arborists to help evaluate the remaining public trees. A few cities have also offered to send personnel and equipment to assist with a removal project.

The Kansas Forest Service will assist with any grants that might be requested to assist with the replanting project. Another way to help is to donate to the Sunflower RC&D Area, Inc., c/o Greensburg Tree Initiative, at 705 East Main, Harper, Kansas 67058. The RC&D is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization comprised of a network of community volunteer leaders from eight south central Kansas counties that includes Kiowa County. The RC&D Council assists local people by helping provide the opportunity to work together for planning and implementation of projects which solve problems and improve the areas of economy, environment and standard of living.

If you are able to assist in any of these areas, have questions or concerns, please contact me at, Community Forestry Coordinator, Kansas Forest Service at 316-788-0492 or tmcdonne@ksu.edu

TCUSA and the State of Community Forestry in Kansas

In 2006 the NADF TCUSA program celebrated its 30 year anniversary. What is even more awesome is the fact that Tree City USA is a community forestry program that has been in existence for 31 years and is sponsored in Kansas by the National Arbor Day Foundation, the US Forest Service and the Kansas Forest Service. KFS has actually been involved in Kansas Community Forestry for more than 31 years. Kansas has been a part of the TCUSA Program since it first started in 1976; nationally there were only 42 TCUSA communities and Kansas had 11 of those. Nationally the program has grown to over 3,000 communities and represents 93 million people living in TCUSA communities. Statewide Kansas has also experienced significant growth. Support for the program has grown from the original 11 communities to 115 communities in 2006. Kansas has four communities that have been involved with the TCUSA Program since its inception, and they are: Clay Center, Dodge City, Junction City and Newton. This places us number one in the nation

for communities that have been awarded TCUSA for 31 years. The state of Ohio is next with three communities. With its 115 TCUSA communities, Kansas is in the top ten states for the number of communities receiving TCUSA Awards. These 115 TCUSA communities represent 70% of the total Kansas population. Kansas TCUSA Communities range from Formoso, KS with 125 people to the City of Wichita with 350,000 people. In Kansas, 78 of the 115 communities have a population of 10,000 or less.

These 115 communities spent 12.1 million dollars on their tree canopies by planting 15,668 trees, pruning 80,879 and removing 10,434 dead and dying trees. The 12.1 million dollars works out to approximately \$7.00 per capita that Kansas TCUSA communities spend on their tree resource. There were 646 volunteer Tree Board members along with 1,427 volunteers that amassed 26,463 hours protecting and educating citizens about their community tree resource. For five consecutive years prior to this year, Kansas TCUSA com-

munities had planted twice as many trees as they had removed; this goes against the national average for every one tree planted there were four removed. This year the number of planted trees is only one and a half times as many due to the fact that a lot of communities are playing 'catch-up' on removals after the ice storms a couple of years ago. Let's take these statistics one step further, with the figures for the last five years of TCUSA in Kansas. TCUSA communities spent 59.5 million dollars planting 105,508 trees, pruning 419,016 trees and removing 49,644 dead and dying trees. The statistics I am quoting are strictly for the 115 TCUSA communities and for the trees that are on public spaces. Kansas has 638 incorporated communities and approximately 1.5 million acres of urban forest. In Urban areas over 26 million trees cover over 1.2 percent of the land. Average tree cover in those urban areas is 20%. Current Kansas population shows over 80% of the people live within the urban and community forest.

I also need to mention that there is a

Schedule of Events

September 25-26: NADF Hazard Trees and Tree Planting & Establishment, Springfield MO, find more info at www.arborday.org

October 8-12: KAA Arborist Training Course, Manhattan, KS: contact Tim McDonnell, 316-788-0492

October 23: KNLA Fall Field Day, John C Pair Horticulture Center, Haysville, KS: contact Patricia McCaffrey, 785-532-3301

November 8-10: TCI Expo, Hartford, CT, find more information at: www.treecareindustry.org/public/meetings_tci_expo.htm

November 2007: KFS Community Forestry Trainings, Storm Recovery; Statewide locations and dates TBA...watch your mail

November 13-15: NADF Partners in Community Forestry, Baltimore, MD, find more information at www.arborday.org

December 18: Urban Trees, El Dorado, KS: contact: Tim McDonnell, 316-788-0492

January 6-8: WNLA - The WEST-ERN, Overland Park, KS, find more information at www.wnla.org

January 9-12: KAA Shade Tree Conference, Topeka, KS: contact Charlie Long, 785-499-6670

February, 2008: KFS Statewide Community Forestry Trainings, locations and dates TBA

March 26, 2008: Tree City USA Recognition Day, Manhattan, KS

The Kansas Urban and Community Forestry Program

is made possible with assistance from the USDA Forest Service. The program's purpose is to educate citizens and decision-makers about the economic, environmental, psychological and aesthetic benefits of trees and to assist local governments, citizen groups and volunteers in planting and sustaining healthy trees and vegetation wherever people live and work in the State of Kansas.

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TCUSA and the State of Community Forestry in Kansas

program called Tree Line USA. It recognizes public and private utilities that demonstrate practices that protect and enhance urban forests. Westar Energy has earned this award for the last 8 years.

Along with the standard benefits of trees, additional benefits have been coming to the forefront. Included are the many watershed benefits. Trees intercept water; thus creating less need for such flood controls measures as detention ponds. I recently saw some figures for the City of Middleton, WI with a population of 17,000 people and a 10 sq. mile city limits. They have a 23% tree canopy cover (both public and private), 36% grass meadow cover and a 30% impervious surface. If they were to lose that 23% tree canopy cover, the city would need to spend 3.2 million dollars on watershed / storm water construction. This was using an estimated cost of two dollars per square foot for drainage systems and retention ponds, etc. Along with the above figures they stated that the 23% canopy cover provided 46,000 tons of stored carbon and filtered 71,000 pounds of air pollution. The City of Middleton also looked forward. If they would increase their canopy cover to 40%, they would see an additional 3.3 million dollar savings in future storm water control measures. Trees are truly the answer to many issues.

PEGSMOR:

I wanted to mention a program called PEGSMOR that the City of Denver uses with their community forestry program. PEGSMOR is an acronym that means the following: P is the planting and pre-planting phase (1 year). E is for the establishment period of root replacement from transplanting (2-4 yrs.). G is for growth phase of a tree, but has not reached its desired height (14 yrs). S is for structure. This is when the tree is tall enough to select the primary and secondary branching that will be the trees main structure throughout the trees life (5-10 yrs). M is for maturity. The tree has developed its full crown and width (20-60 yrs). O is for over-maturity. The tree is simply declining faster than it is growing and may be showing signs of defects (10-20 yrs). R is for replacement. The tree is unsound at this point and needs to be removed and replaced. What I like most about this program is two fold. First, the fact that they understand a tree goes through different phases and through those different phases it will require different care. Second, is they understand that trees become over-mature and need to be replaced. Sometimes we have the tendency to leave urban trees that are in this over-mature state when we should be actively removing and replanting the replacement canopy. After the recent storms that many of us have experienced, we also need to evaluate the damaged trees, look at removal and make sure we take the last step in planting replacements. I know that the small community of Haven, KS, removed 60 trees after the last ice storm and plan to spend the next 4 years replacing 15 trees a year.

Most Kansas Communities are in the same boat in the fact that they have a mature to over mature canopy with lack of diversity. Diversity refers to both the tree species and of age of the trees. Our three dominant species are: Siberian/American/Hybrid elm mix, Silver maple, and Hackberry. Ideally, we would like no more than ten percent of any one species. We should have learned this lesson with the American elm, the Scotch pine and now the Ash in the upper Midwest. I do see improvements in recent inventories of TCUSA communities that are showing a decrease of those top three trees along with an increase of other trees planted. The categories for miscellaneous and other tree species are reaching twenty percent of the total trees. This

means we are actively working toward the goal of a more diverse canopy versus a monoculture.

STREET TREE INVENTORIES:

The Kansas Forest Service does provide Street Tree Inventories to Kansas communities and does place a priority on those communities that have a community forestry program in place. From doing numerous inventories, it always amazes me the dollar value that our inventory program totals. I will site a few examples. The City of Sedgwick with a population of 1,653 was inventoried in 2004. It has 2,408 street and park trees valued at \$5,439,139.00. The City of Sedgwick has been in the TCUSA program for nine years. The City of Belle Plaine with a population of 1,700 has 1,478 street and park trees with a value of \$2,578,296.00. Belle Plaine has been involved with TCUSA for two years. The City of Ft. Scott with a population of 8,162 has 6,481 street trees with a value of \$12,411,275.00. Ft. Scott has been involved with TCUSA for 12 years. In 2006, the City of Ft. Scott planted 76 trees, pruned 785 trees and removed 47 trees spending \$48,400.00 on their tree canopy resource. In looking at 46 Street Tree Inventories of TCUSA communities (two communities with populations of 20,000 and the remaining avg. pop. of 3,000) that KFS staff has done in the last 15 years, it collectively totals 126 million dollars worth of street trees on public grounds. My point is to look at those dollar values of the community forestry canopy. View that as a resource that needs be protected, maintained and improved as is done with the grey infrastructure. We truly need to give the trees the respect they deserve and consider them a resource.

From the Street Tree Inventories we also get a better idea of the overall condition class of the street trees and rate them as good, fair, poor, or dead and dying. We also evaluate the age of the canopy by size. The third process is the diversity of species within the community's canopy. We basically do what is called a 'windshield survey' in which we categorize every street tree by species (type of tree), the condition of the tree, and the size of the tree by DBH, which ultimately results with the age of the tree.

In closing I would like to see Kansas communities place as much importance on the green infrastructure as the grey. After all it is the green that increases in value and benefits year after year, whereas, the grey has the tendency to depreciate with time.

Realize that Kansas has been committed to forestry in general since 1887. It was the 5th state in the nation to establish a forestry agency. The credo for the agency back then was "to encourage the planting and growing of forest trees in the State of Kansas". Our credo today is 'Care of Natural Resources and Service to People through Forestry'. We are committed to protecting and improving this resource, are you.....

Kansas has four communities that celebrated 31 years of being recognized as a TCUSA community. They are: Junction City, Dodge City, Clay Center, and Newton. Kansas, with four communities, is ranked number one in the nation with the number of 31 year communities. Ohio is second with three. Congratulations! We held the TCUSA Recognition Day was celebrated in Manhattan, KS. There were 125 attendees and 43 Kansas communities represented. Thanks to all those that attended and helped make it a successful event. Congratulations to Westar for their 8th year as a Tree Line USA.

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