

# COMMUNITY FORESTRY INITIATIVES

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**Abstract.** Thirty-seven municipal governments of the northern Illinois Little Calumet Watershed (LCW) consortium have joined to promote a unified urban forestry program. A combination of business and bedroom communities, LCW includes 132,975 acres and is populated by 541,200 urbanites. In concert with the urban forestry components of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, the State of Illinois Department of Conservation, and the University of Illinois, the municipalities have, in 1987, started a number of community forestry educational and outreach programs. Led by the provisional LCW Urban Forestry Council, the consortium, headquartered in Chicago Heights, is now computerizing initial, municipal tree inventories. Ordinances which shall enhance the conservation and planting of community owned trees are also in preparation. In addition the Council is promoting Tree City USA initiatives and formulating urban forest management plans.

**Résumé.** Trente-sept municipalités du nord de l'Illinois (Illinois Little Calumet Watershed) ont formé un consortium pour promouvoir un programme unifié de foresterie urbaine. Ce consortium de villes industrielles et de villes-dortoirs couvre une superficie de 132,975 acres et rassemble une population de 541,200 habitants. De concert avec les services de foresterie urbaine du Service forestier fédéral, de la Direction de la Conservation de l'état de l'Illinois et de l'Université de Illinois, les municipalités ont initié en 1987 un certain nombre de programmes municipaux d'éducation et de sensibilisation à la gestion de la forêt urbaine. Dirigé par un Conseil de foresterie urbaine provisoire établi à Chicago Heights, le consortium réalise l'informatisation des données d'inventaire recueillies par les municipalités. Des règlements qui permettront d'accroître la protection et la plantation d'arbres en terrain municipal sont aussi en préparation. De plus, le Conseil fait de la promotion pour le programme "Tree City USA" et rédige des plans de gestion de la forêt urbaine.

## Little Calumet Watershed's Village Forestry

New community and urban forestry ventures inaugurated by the Illinois Department of Conservation and the University of Illinois are bearing fruit. One major cooperative project having educational and outreach dimensions has been mounted within the Little Calumet Watershed (LCW) which lies just south of Chicago.

Chicago Heights, adjacent to Interstate 57, serves as the geographic and administrative headquarters for the LCW project which is supported by the USDA Forest Service, the Illinois Depart-

ment of Conservation and the University of Illinois. The federal Forest Service's State and Private Forestry Branch in Broomall, Pennsylvania provides a major advisory and funding role for LCW. The Illinois Department of Conservation and the University of Illinois offer the technology transfer dimension. LCW cooperators include 37 cities and villages which include 30 park districts or park commissions. With cost share funding, the municipalities with their citizens further expand resources to green LCW.

Communities of the 132,975 acre LCW include a population of 541,200 persons. Demographic growth for 1980-87 averaged two percent per annum. Populations and conditions of trees are being determined now, but an aerial overview reveals a verdant panorama.

Education and outreach programs supporting actual LCW urban forest management offer a broad scenario of projects. At the educational level, volunteer greenspace advocates and urban forestry professionals are alerting communities to the need for and the potential scope of urban vegetation management. This awareness is crucial to assure support for ongoing, expanded and new projects. Seven ways of creating community awareness are:

- personal contact
- audiovisual presentations
- training workshops
- periodic seminars for municipal administrators
- monthly newspaper articles
- formation of a LCW Forestry Council
- college and career days at area high schools

Within the outreach program, the strongest support that the Illinois Department of Conservation and the University of Illinois can give to the LCW municipalities is through urban forest management. Ultimately, the goal would be to develop a comprehensive urban forest management plan for each municipality. To gain the goal, we advocate

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five endeavors:

- promote Tree City USA programs
- implement comprehensive tree ordinances
- achieve standard planting specifications
- apply for and gain Federal Land and Water Conservation and Department of Commerce and Community Affairs grants
- develop and coordinate forestry intern programs

Following is an expansion of both educational and outreach schedules, contemplated and in action.

### Education

Greenspace participants in LCW are diverse. They range from private individuals and community groups, such as garden clubs and beautification committees, to municipal administrators and regional planning associations. Levels of enthusiasm range from high to nonexistent. Success of community forestry endeavors demands that all ranges of audiences and levels of enthusiasm be addressed.

To enhance awareness and acceptance, the seven educational measures, listed earlier and detailed below, include as many municipal administrative personnel and members of the general public as possible. The following seven measures may also encourage active participation of interested and designated federal, state, and local agencies.

1. *Personal Contacts and Coordination.* Urban forestry information is provided over the phone. When a telephone call does not suffice, personal visits are made. These contacts are made exclusively with home residents and primarily involve shade tree problems. Currently, about 25% of the work week is devoted to domestic contacts. Similar referral work is also carried out by the County Extension Service, the Illinois Department of Conservation and the USDA Soil Conservation Service. The two senior authors meet with the two local County Extension Horticulturists serving LCW and the Soil Conservation Service Resource Conservationist on a regular basis to confer about shade tree problems, to plan cooperative seminars, and to draft joint newspaper articles (Duntemann 1987). The foregoing group meetings will ensure that consistent information is given to the public, and should clarify job responsibilities of cooperating agencies.

2. *Audiovisual Presentations.* Our Chicago Heights office presents a series of six slide shows concerning urban tree management subjects. Topics range from pruning and safety to tree inventories as well as the planting of trees in confined areas. The series was developed by Cornell University (Hudler et al. 1976).

Additionally, a number of video cassettes are available for community groups and municipal communities in LCW to promote urban forestry and the Tree City USA program. The Chicago based Open Lands Project plans to work with the University of Illinois to develop a series of short video presentations concerning tree care. Currently, the authors are working on a script explaining lawnmower and weed whip damage to trees. These videos shall be available to the public as well as local educational cable stations. To improve our information exchange network, a list of foregoing visual materials shall be distributed to LCW municipal departments and schools.

3. *Training Workshops.* Responses to a 1987 survey sent to over 100 municipal administrators showed a strong concern for training tree maintenance crews. Three workshops have been structured: tree climbing and pruning, proper planting techniques, and CODIT analyses. Any of the workshops will be presented upon request. Presentations are reinforced by on-hand distribution of contemporary publications provided by The Morton Arboretum, the National Arboricultural Association (for safety standards) and the USDA Forest Service for Dr. A. Shigo's CODIT material.

4. *Monthly Seminars.* Monthly urban forestry seminars shall be geared toward a specialized group of municipal administrators, such as city planners, engineers, mayors and public works directors. Five seminars planned for 1988 are: Dutch elm disease control, Tree City USA establishment, tree ordinance familiarization, composition of grant proposals, and natural resource education. These seminars shall be used as springboards for more specific local and regional projects.

Additional seminars are to be given to the general public at Park District offices throughout LCW. Informational flyers for each seminar shall be delivered to each Park District Headquarters for local distribution. If planned far enough in ad-

vance (3-5 months), the seminars can be announced in Park District seasonal brochures and newsletters.

5. *Monthly Newspaper Articles.* Newspaper articles shall be written each month to correspond with the monthly seminar topic. Articles shall range from 500-800 words and will be distributed to the fourteen local newspapers in and around LCW. Every effort shall be made to encourage the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times to print articles or revised editorials.

6. *Formation of a South Chicago Area Urban Forestry Council.* Representatives of Commonwealth Edison and the Illinois Department of Conservation have met to discuss the formation of an area professional urban forestry council. Currently, we have a list of 40 foresters who may show interest in participating on the council. Solicitation is underway.

7. *College and Career Days at Chicago Area High Schools.* Arrangements have been made with 19 LCW high schools to participate in their College and Career Days fall 1987 and spring 1988. At these events we will promote woodland forestry, as well as urban forestry education offered by Illinois universities.

### **Outreach Programs**

Vegetation management programs are urgently needed within the LCW. Before 1987, the absence of forestry or environmentally-aware municipal personnel precluded many urban forestry programs found in other areas of the United States. As indicated earlier, the strongest support to be given by the federal, state and university team is to aid program implementation. In most of the 36 LCW municipalities civil desire for action has been demonstrated. But without technical training and assistance guidance, the municipalities continue to be frustrated. The following measures or programs are designed to create new opportunities.

1. *Initiation and Expansion of Tree City USA Programs.* Several existing Tree City USA programs shall be expanded in 1987-88 to include eight communities in and adjacent to LCW. These communities are: Country Club Hills, Hazelcrest, Hickory Hills, Homewood, Lockport, Olympia Fields, Orland Hills and Richton Park.

Tree City options provide excellent media for initiating urban forestry awareness within municipal administrations. Two major results which occur in gaining Tree City USA status are new or improved tree ordinances and increased community forestry budgets.

2. *Implementation of Comprehensive Tree Ordinances.* Foundation for long-term urban forestry programs is found in a comprehensive tree ordinance. With this principle in mind, one of the first monthly meetings allowed communities to initiate a new tree ordinance. Contact for advice was made with Gene Grey, Society of American Foresters, and six state foresters from Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas and New Hampshire. All provided information on current ordinances, tree inventory techniques and urban forest management guides.

3. *Preparation of Standard Planting Specifications.* State-wide uniform planting specifications offer municipalities a standard planting operations schedule to be carried out by trained, in-house crews. Uniform planting specifications also allow landscape and planting contractors more control to accomplish their tasks. Current specifications are being codified to include tagging of trees at the nursery by the municipal forester concerned, transportation standards of stock from the nursery to the job site, and guaranteed tree care responsibilities after planting.

4. *Coordination of Urban Forestry Interns.* Eight of the 37 LCW municipalities have expressed an interest to hire an urban forestry intern for a period of 2 to 4 months in 1988. Five urban forestry interns (recent graduates or experienced undergraduates) are expected to be hired during the summer of 1988. In December 1987 a conference will be held with municipal officials to define needs and specific projects.

5. *Application for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund and Department of Commerce and Community Affairs Grants.* Very few LCW municipalities know of or have applied for Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund or Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA) Grants. Land and Water Conservation Funding is primarily used by Illinois Park Districts as a funding source for land purchases and building "alternative" recreation facilities. Although the grant

programs have never been used strictly as a funding source for the tree planting programs, we believe they can be used by designating a park for passive recreation. A methodology orientation to describe Land and Water Conservation Funding is scheduled for November 1987. Applications are due 1 September, 1988.

Department of Commerce and Community Affairs Grants are primarily used for downtown redevelopment projects. Funds can be used to plant trees along streets and in parking lots. Our major objective is to introduce LCW municipalities to these two funding programs and to urge annual application for such grants.

### **Launching of Urban Forest Management Plans**

In conclusion, the eventual green goal in each community is to draft a long-term urban forest management plan. Ordinance and planting specifications not only essential, but are primary tools to implement short-term projects. What's more, the plan directly leads the community to its goal to develop a perpetually vegetated municipality.

Numerous issues should be included within the urban forest management plan. But traditionally many complicated topics are consistently avoided as part of municipal vegetation management. Challenges which should be addressed are to modify zoning ordinances to preserve natural

areas, prevent flooding disasters, vegetate hospital and senior citizen retirement communities, and attenuate aircraft and highway traffic noise.

Initially, the LCW must encourage the creation of municipal tree boards through the enactment of tree ordinances and development of the Tree City USA philosophy and program. Once established, the tree board, cooperating and coordinating with all other municipal departments in the community, will develop the optimal forest management plan. The main focus of any long-term goals, especially in LCW, must tie urban vegetation benefits to community economic stabilization and improvement of quality of life for all citizens.

### **Literature Cited**

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### **Abstract**

FEUCHT, J.R. 1987. **Misleading mimics: some injuries are not due to herbicides.** Am. Nurseryman 165(6): 148-150.

Frequently, herbicides are incorrectly blamed for damage to landscape plants. Perhaps the most easily confused injuries are those that cause foliage distortion. The herbicide 2,4-D is well-known for this symptom. However, eriophyid mites, tiny four-legged creatures, can cause similar symptoms. Leafhoppers and plant bugs on honeylocust can also distort leaflets and even twist petioles. Frost injury, overwintering and some mildew fungi can also produce leaf cupping. Sorting out the real cause of a symptom requires careful investigation—even the careful scrutiny of a detective.