



## Natural Resource Conservation

The purpose of the resource conservation program is to provide for the conservation of soil and water resources within the state; to prevent or control soil erosion; to prevent or minimize flood damage, and to conserve, develop, utilize, and preserve the natural resources of this state. In addition, the Division provides administrative and technical assistance to the State Conservation Commission and conservation districts to implement the goals within the Coordinated Plan for Natural Resources Conservation (Coordinated Plan).

In FY2019, program staff made 626 grant and loan program assists, 109 non-grant related assists to

conservation districts across the state. Fifty-seven grant applications were received requesting over \$1.1 million. The Conservation Commission awarded funding to 53 projects for a total of \$734,209.

There were 20 projects involving 87 partnerships between conservation districts funded in FY2019. Projects included sharing technicians, grassland, cropland, wetland, and other water quality improvement, multi-district information and education, and shelterbelt establishment. The same year, three producers nominated by three conservation districts received the Soil Conservation Award.

### CCGA Project

RCF received the collaborative conservation grant and agreement (CCGA) in FY2019. The CCGA funds are being used to employ a new service forester for the next three years to work in an eight-county area (Sanborn, Jerauld, Aurora, Davison, Hanson, Hutchinson, Douglas, and Yankton) on windbreak renovations.

A windbreak condition survey completed in 2016 showed that the majority of windbreaks in this eight-county area were in fair to poor condition.

As part of this project, RCF will recruit landowners within the eight-county area to sign up for windbreak renovation. RCF will also provide all necessary technical assistance to the landowners and prepare the windbreak renovation plans.

### Forest Stewardship in South Dakota

Forest Stewardship is often the first contact made with forestland owners. This program often acts as a conduit to other programs such as timber harvesting, thinning, best management practices, etc.

In FY2019, RCF wrote or approved 18 new forest stewardship plans totaling over 6,200 acres. Another 9 plans were updated totaling nearly 2,000 acres. These numbers contribute to the total active forest stewardship program in South Dakota which currently has 152 plans totaling nearly 50,000 acres of private forestland.

South Dakota has 125 private forest tracts certified through the American Tree Farm System, totaling over 21,000 acres. One third of those were inspected in FY2019 for conformance with the standards of sustainability. RCF service forester, Allyssa Gregory, was selected as the 2018 tree farm inspector of the year.



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### Non-Commercial Thinning

RCF Service Foresters on the rural forestry team work as technical experts and liaisons between private forest landowners and the agencies providing grant funds for private lands forest management. In FY2019, RCF foresters worked with landowners on 24 thinning projects totaling 333 acres.

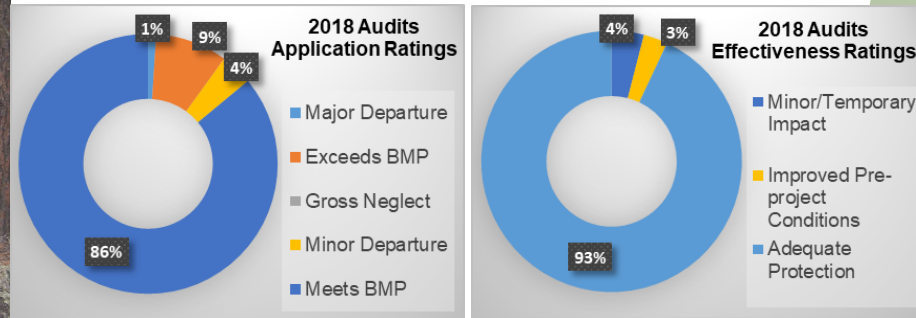
Thinning forests in the Black Hills reduces fuel loads and helps prevent large-scale forest disturbances such as wildfire and insect and disease outbreaks. Thinning also reduces competition of the residual trees and allows for more understory vegetation for wildlife browse and domestic grazing.



Non-Comm. Thinning	Projects/Acres
Total	24/333
Environmental Quality Incentive Program	16/231
State Conservation Commission Grant	5/59
NON/Other	3/43

### Best Management Practices (BMPs) Audit

BMPs for the protection of water and soil resources during forestry operations were established by the State of South Dakota in 1980. BMPs are implemented voluntarily by forestland owners and forestry practitioners who share a commitment to careful stewardship of forest resources. The 2018 BMP audit was the fifth iteration since 2001 and revealed that the BMP standards were met or exceeded on 95% of the total rated items averaged across all timber sales in the Black Hills. BMP field audit results are incorporated into training programs, such as Logger Education workshops, and provide guidance to any necessary modifications of BMP guidelines and manuals.



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Resource Conservation & Forestry Division (RCF)

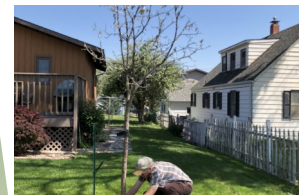
# Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2019 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



### INSECT & DISEASE TRAINING

A goal of RCF is to promote professional development of staff. Training is completed annually to refresh employees on tree insect and disease issues common in South Dakota. Training was held in June 2019, and included a visit to the Governor's residence to look at some trees of concern. The FY19 training session also included a segment on safe chainsaw use and maintenance.



### I & D Technical Assists

Technical assists make up the majority of what service foresters around the state do on a daily basis. Many of the requests for assistance are related to tree health concerns, typically related to insect, disease, weather, or other biological factors. Combined technical assists related to forest health totaled 1,072 in FY2019.

### This Issue

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## Slowing the Spread of Emerald Ash Borer

The presence of emerald ash borer (EAB) was confirmed in South Dakota in May of 2018 in Sioux Falls, the state's largest community. Throughout FY2019, RCF placed traps to monitor adult beetle populations within the effected area. Very few beetles were caught in traps, even though they were placed in trees known to be infested. RCF also worked with City of Sioux Falls urban forestry staff and volunteers to update street tree inventories around the community to determine the economic impact of EAB on Sioux Falls. The Agriculture Services Division implemented a hardwood firewood quarantine to discourage the movement of potentially infested wood.

RCF staff also conducted outreach and education efforts in the form of press releases, media interviews, and workshops for industry, other governmental agencies, and the general public largely focused in the eastern half of the

state. In FY2019, 16 EAB specific workshops were held, attracting approximately 650 people.

In May of 2019, a small satellite infestation was reported and confirmed. The satellite infestation, one that is not connected to the main body of the known infestation, was small and appeared to be very recent as the tree appeared healthy. RCF conducted a delimiting survey of the neighborhood where the new infestation was confirmed and there were no trees showing the typical symptoms of EAB infestation (blonding in the upper canopy associated with woodpecker damage).

The discovery of this new infestation is a reminder to homeowners to contact a tree care company to have their ash trees injected if they want to protect it from this invasive insect. If homeowners choose to remove the trees, they should only be cut between Labor Day and Memorial Day, and the wood can not be moved outside of the quarantine area.

## AGROFORESTRY & CONSERVATION

Two agroforestry workshops were held in FY 2019. One was in Mitchell the other in Aberdeen and the focus of the workshops were Windbreak Renovations, Wildlife Plantings, Commission Grant Plantings, and Livestock Plantings (Windbreaks). Workshop attendees included NRCS employees and Conservation District Managers.

RCF foresters continue to work closely with the National Technical Assistance Agroforester in Nebraska to address issues in South Dakota such as the lack of riparian windbreaks, pollinator plantings, forest farming, and windbreak renovation.

The agroforestry and conservation staff have found great potential for the unmanned areal vehicles (drones) which RCF acquired in May of 2019.

The first staff training with the drones was included as a session of the FY2019 annual Insect and Disease Training, and are now being used to acquire aerial imagery of erosion issues, field windbreak condition, and brush management work associated with removal of eastern redcedar in rangelands to reduce fuels and fire hazard and improve overall range condition.

Allyssa Gregory with SD Family Forest Assn President, Paul Schipke (left), and Parks Brigman (right)





Grants Funded in FY2019

County	Grant Recipient	Program	Project Name	Awarded	Local Match	Other Funding	Total Project Costs
	Beadle Conservation District	CSW	Water Quality for Livestock	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 35,457.00	\$ -	\$ 50,457.00
Beadle	Beadle Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelts	\$ 13,170.00	\$ 7,679.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 21,349.00
	Beadle Conservation District	CSW	Baum Demonstration Farm	\$ 13,500.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 12,680.00	\$ 30,180.00
Bennett	Bennett Conservation District	CSW	Bennett/Badlands Tree Planting	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 11,035.00	\$ 1,070.00	\$ 22,105.00
Bon Homme	City of Avon	UCF	Tree Planting	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Brookings	South Dakota State University	JPA	Forestry Extension Agreement	\$ 80,000.00	\$ -	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 160,000.00
Brown	City of Groton	UCF	Tree Replacement	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
	Brule-Bruffalo Conservation District	CSW	Grazing Management	\$ 52,500.00	\$ 110,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 177,500.00
	Brule-Bruffalo Conservation District	CSW	Renovation	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
	Brule-Bruffalo Conservation District	CSW	American Creek Renovation Project	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 23,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 39,000.00
	Brule-Bruffalo Conservation District	CSW	BBCD Brush Management	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
	Brule-Bruffalo Conservation District	CSW	Burn Deferrals Pilot Program	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00
	Butte Conservation District	CSW	Envirothon	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 68,000.00	\$ 47,000.00	\$ 135,000.00
Butte	Butte Conservation District	CSW	Open Irrigation to Buried Pipe	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 30,000.00
	Butte Conservation District	CSW	Butte Livestock Water	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ -	\$ 70,000.00
Charles Mix	Charles Mix Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 34,000.00
Clark	Clark Conservation District	CSW	Tree Planting/Renovation	\$ 13,786.00	\$ 15,314.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 29,600.00
Custer	Custer Conservation District	SPC	Planting for Riparian Health	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 8,700.00
	Davison Conservation District	CSW	Tree Planting	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ -	\$ 24,000.00
Davison	Davison Conservation District	CSW	Awareness & Outreach	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00
	Davison Conservation District	CSW	Multi-County Brush Management	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
Day	Day Conservation District	CSW	NE Glacial Lakes	\$ 26,290.00	\$ 170,500.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 197,990.00
Edmunds	Edmunds Conservation District	CSW	Northern Coteau Rangelands II	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 92,000.00	\$ -	\$ 112,000.00
	Edmunds Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Practice Grant	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 30,000.00
	Edmunds Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Education	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 3,000.00
	City of Hot Springs	UCF	Library Park Entrance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Fall River	Fall River County Weed and Pest	WPC	Buffalo Gap National Grasslands	\$ 3,639.00	\$ 3,639.00	\$ -	\$ 7,278.00
	Fall River County Weed and Pest	WPC	Black Hills Forest Invasives	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,000.00
Grant	Grant Conservation District	CSW	Cover Crop	\$ 9,784.00	\$ 17,041.00	\$ -	\$ 26,825.00
Gregory	Gregory Conservation District	CSW	County Projects 5	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00
Haakon	Haakon Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 1,366.00	\$ 1,366.00	\$ 1,450.00	\$ 4,182.00
	Hamlin Conservation District	CSW	SDACDE Promotion	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 12,400.00
Hamlin	Hamlin Conservation District	CSW	2020 Tree Planting	\$ 10,800.00	\$ 12,840.00	\$ -	\$ 23,640.00
	Hamlin Conservation District	CSW	Tree Planting	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 21,817.00	\$ 213.00	\$ 37,030.00
Hanson	Hanson Conservation District	CSW	Cover Crop	\$ 10,500.00	\$ 12,100.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 22,800.00
	City of Pierre	UCF	Tree Landscape Planting Brochure	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 4,700.00
Hughes	Hughes Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 13,726.00	\$ 5,211.00	\$ 33,937.00
Jackson	Jackson Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt Establishment	\$ 461.00	\$ 403.00	\$ 58.00	\$ 922.00
Jerauld	Jerauld Conservation District	CSW	Windbreak Tree Planting	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	\$ -	\$ 28,000.00
Jones	Jones Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 12,750.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ 30,000.00
Kingsbury	Kingsbury Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Practice	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ -	\$ 30,000.00
	Kingsbury Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Education	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 5,500.00
Lincoln	City of Harrisburg	UCF	Harrisburg UCF Challenge Grant	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Lyman	Lyman County Weed and Pest	WPC	Grassland Road Spray	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 7,500.00
Marshall	Marshall Conservation District	CSW	Multi-Practice	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 70,747.00	\$ 32,570.00	\$ 138,317.00
McCook	McCook Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 6,809.00	\$ 6,691.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 14,000.00
	McCook Conservation District	CSW	Cover Crop	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,700.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 5,500.00
Meade	City of Summerset	UCF	UCF Comprehensive	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 3,000.00
	Meade County Weed and Pest	WPC	Elk/Bear Butte Creek Watershed	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 11,300.00
Mellette	Mellette Conservation District	CSW	Multi-Practice	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 74,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 114,000.00
	Mellette Conservation District	CSW	Tree Planting	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 30,000.00
	Miner Conservation District	CSW	Soil Health	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 14,982.00	\$ 1,653.00	\$ 31,635.00
Miner	Miner Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Awareness	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,150.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 3,050.00
	Miner Conservation District	CSW	Pollinator Plantings	\$ 12,250.00	\$ 11,850.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 24,850.00
Minnehaha	City of Dell Rapids	UCF	Dell Rapids Campground Project	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 13,200.00
	Pennington Conservation District	JPA	Good Neighbor Authority - Timber Crews	\$ 568,342.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 568,342.00
	Pennington County Conservation	CSW	Thinning for Forest Health	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00
	Pennington County Weed and Pest	WPC	Pennington County Invasives	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
	SD Project Learning Tree	SPC	Every Child Learns Outside	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	\$ -	\$ 24,000.00
	City of Lemmon	UCF	Comprehensive Challenge Grant	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,605.00	\$ -	\$ 4,605.00
Perkins	Perkins Conservation District	CSW	NW Area Tree Planting	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 55,885.64	\$ -	\$ 91,885.64
	Perkins Conservation District	CSW	NW Area Specialist	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 37,100.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 56,100.00
	Roberts Conservation District	CSW	Conservation Education & Public Awareness	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 5,000.00
Roberts	Roberts Conservation District	CSW	2019-2020 Trees & Shrubs	\$ 5,784.00	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 15,784.00
	Roberts Conservation District	CSW	Little Upper Minnesota River	\$ 11,606.15	\$ 16,163.65	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 30,769.80
	City of Woonsocket	UCF	Lake Prior Tree Planting	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,860.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 5,610.00
Sanborn	Sanborn Conservation District	CSW	Shelterbelt	\$ 8,673.00	\$ 7,673.00	\$ -	\$ 16,346.00
Spink	Spink Conservation District	CSW	Regenerative Ag Demo	\$ 22,500.00	\$ 31,756.00	\$ 17,705.00	\$ 71,961.00
Todd	Todd Conservation District	CSW	Tree Grant	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 12,500.00	\$ -	\$ 25,000.00
Union	Todd Conservation District	CSW	2019 Cover Crop	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 9,200.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 20,000.00
	City of Elk Point	UCF	Elk Point Tree Planting	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00
Totals				\$ 1,438,660.15	\$ 1,302,280.29	\$ 249,910.00	\$2,990,850.44
Program Key:				CSW—Coordinated Natural Resources Conservation Grants			
				WPC—Weed and Pest County Grants			
				SPC—Special Project Grants			
				UCF—Urban and Community Forestry Grants			
				JPA—Joint Powers Agreement			

CONSERVATION  
SPEECH CONTEST

The 58th annual State Finals of the Resource Conservation Speech Contest was held at the State Capitol on Saturday, April 27, 2019. The theme of this year's contest was "Ag Technology: Farming & Ranching for a Future." Nine high school students from across South Dakota competed at the state level. Placing first and receiving a \$1,100 scholarship was Elias Grimsley. Grimsley was sponsored by the Lawrence Conservation District and is a freshman at Spearfish High School. He is the son of Ron and Misty Grimsley of Spearfish. Placing second and receiving a \$750 scholarship was Grace Lentz. Lentz was sponsored by the Davison Conservation District and is a junior at Mitchell High School. She is the daughter of John and Heather Lentz of Fulton. Receiving third and a \$450 scholarship was Taylor Storbakken. Storbakken was sponsored by the Marshall Conservation District and is a sophomore at Britton-Hecla. She is the daughter of Lynn and Rodell Storbakken.

Scholarships totaling \$2,300 for the winners were provided by Touchstone Energy Cooperatives of South Dakota. The contest is cosponsored by the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and the South Dakota Association of Conservation Districts.

Contest Winner  
Elias Grimsley  
with Bill Smith  
(left) & Ken  
Gillaspie (right)

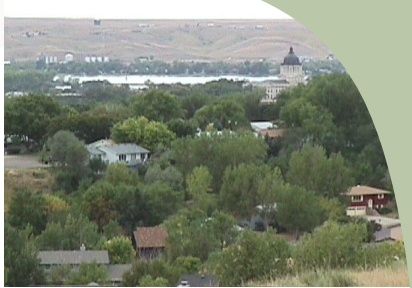
Community Forestry in  
South Dakota

From Arbor Day to Christmas at the Capitol; from big trees to new plantings, community forests impact over 77% of South Dakotans every day.

South Dakota is a rural state, however, over three quarters of the population lives within a community setting. RCF acknowledges this and engages communities across South Dakota through several programs.

In FY2019, 34 communities in South Dakota qualified for Tree City USA designation, and four college campuses for Tree Campus USA. As part of the requirement for this designation, RCF staff presented at a commemoration of Arbor Day at 24 of those communities. A total of 43 presentations were completed by RCF and included Project Learning Tree, Envirothon, tree care workshops, and Smokey Bear and fire prevention.

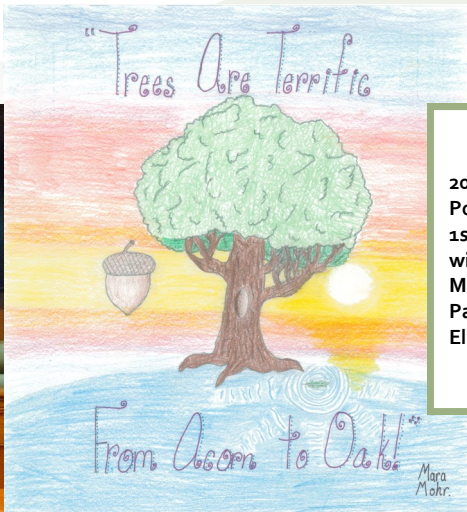
In addition, RCF staff administered the Arbor Day Essay contest and the Arbor Day Poster Contest. The speech contest awards first through third place winners with a cash prize, whereas the top three poster contest winners also receive a cash prize, and the top 12 posters earn their place in a the annual Arbor Day Calendar. Both contests also award the first place winner's teacher with a cash prize for purchasing school supplies.



Dakota State University Arbor Day Event and recognition as a Tree Campus USA

2018 CAPITOL CHRISTMAS TREE

TREE SPECIES:  
Colorado blue spruce  
DONATED BY:  
Kelsey & Aaron Trimble  
FROM:  
Rapid City, SD  
DECORATED BY:  
Special Olympics South Dakota,  
celebrating their 50 year anniversary  
THEME:  
An Enchanted Christmas



2019 Arbor Day Poster Contest 1st place winner: Mara Mohr from Parker Elementary

\*To view all 2019 contest winners visit [sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry](http://sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry)