

## Urban Forestry Research

### ***SUFC Exploration of urban research issues and advocacy opportunities<sup>1</sup>***

Current challenges with urban forestry research (from SUFC perspective) include:

- SUFC has struggled to find solid figure to advocate for urban forestry research with annual appropriations efforts. SUFC has endorsed the \$18 million which is an “aspirational” figure in the NUCFAC report but is looking for more dialogue/data for future advocacy efforts.
- Difficulty tracking exact dollar figures spent on urban forest research by the Forest Service - each research station allocates its own budget based on station directors’ assessment of regional needs; consequently each station determines how much of their budget goes to urban. Each research station has varying emphasis on urban issues ranging from loss of open space; suburbia; growth/sprawl; use of (national) forests as recreational space for those forests in/near urban areas and more.
- How to best showcase and leverage urban research to be effective advocates for urban forests and green infrastructure.

Signs of positive progress with urban research include:

- Proposed \$2 million increase in R & D budget of the Forest Service (from \$7 to \$9 million – out of \$300 million); shows commitment to urban research by Jimmy Reaves, Deputy Chief.
- Recent committed Forest Service staff, Beth Larry, National Coordinator for Urban Research. The Forest Service is developing a *national* vision for urban forestry (vs. regional).
- Increasing interest and knowledge among diverse SUFC membership; increasing interest among congressional staff.
- High level of urban forestry research (FS origination) use/reference by multiple sectors/agencies.

SUFC interests include:

- Clarifying urban research funding spent in recent years; proposing a dollar figure that the majority of SUFC members feel comfortable supporting in future appropriations efforts.
- Encouraging transparency in research funding/spending.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on rough notes from initial meeting conversation on 4/12/12.

- Encouraging the best investment in urban forestry research and tools through multiple approaches – not just congressional advocacy – but through regulatory (process) opportunities and other advocacy efforts.

**SUFC Goals (2010-2011) related to urban research:**

**Goal:** Ensure urban trees and forests are included in legislation and regulations as a practical and necessary solution or “answer” to multiple issues.

**Goal:** Position SUFC as a resource of experts for urban and community forestry, green infrastructure and vibrant cities for Congress and federal agencies.

**Goal:** Clarify urban forestry research needs (end-user information, research and funding requirements)

**SUFC Policy Working Group Members proposed the following concurrent approaches to invest and advocate for urban forestry research:**

