



Alaska Community Forestry Program 2026 Grant Opportunities Community Forest Management Plan, Tree Inventory, and Tree Canopy Assessment Grants Round III



Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry & Fire Protection
550 W. Seventh Ave., Suite 1450, Anchorage, AK 99501 / 907-269-8466 / <http://forestry.alaska.gov/community/>

1. Introduction

The USDA Forest Service (USFS) and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Fire Protection, Community Forestry Program (CFP), have Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) grant monies available to local governments, state agencies, tribal organizations, non-profits, and other non-federal entities for projects in Alaska communities.

Monies are available for community forest management plans (also known as urban forest management plans), community tree inventories and tree canopy assessments. Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis for up to 2 years. No match funding is required. Formal Requests for Interest must be received by May 29, 2026.

1.1 Background

Community forest management plans are valuable tools for effective management of trees and forestlands in both large and small communities. A healthy community forest is the result of proper planning, management, and community investment.

Successful applicants will have knowledge of and commitment to urban and community forest management. Project goals will include development of community forest management plans, community tree inventories, and tree canopy assessments in Alaska.

2. Eligibility Requirements

- Eligible groups include all non-federal organizations, state agencies, local governments, cooperative weed management areas, soil and water conservation districts, registered non-profits, local communities, public and state-controlled institutions of higher education Alaska Native organizations, federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations and villages, and Tribal organizations as defined in 25 USC 5304 (I).
- Eligible applicants may apply for funding for projects conducted on non-federal public lands, including state lands, borough lands, local government and municipal lands, Tribal/Alaska Native Corporation lands (includes Trust lands).
- Awardees will be required to report accomplishments for the periods ending June 30 and December 31 to the public facing Trees at Work reporting dashboard.

3. How can the grant be used?

Grant funds must be used to develop community forest management plans, community tree inventories, and tree canopy assessments in Alaska.

3.1 Eligible Cost Examples

The following outlines eligible activities and costs for grant expenditures.

- **GIS based inventory of public trees** that includes tree location; identification; size; condition; conflicts with infrastructure, vehicles, pedestrians, or sight lines; maintenance needs and priority; site conditions; potential planting spaces; and appraised value. The contractor will recommend inventory priorities based on the local tree population and management goals. A database will be created that allows for queries based on all attributes collected and can be used to generate charts, tables, graphs, and work orders for use in management.
- **Tree canopy assessment** using LiDAR, high resolution satellite imagery, or other remote sensing techniques to evaluate the condition, extent, and distribution of trees in a community. Assessments will quantify a variety of land cover classifications including tree canopy, grass, low lying vegetation, impervious surfaces, bare soil, and water. Information generated from the assessment will be used to identify landscape-scale management priorities and will serve as a framework to meet community forest management goals.
- **Comprehensive management plan** based on assessment and/or inventory. The plan will include an analysis of public trees, potential problems, maintenance priorities, and 5-year and 20-year program goals. It will make recommendations for: expanding and improving the health, safety, and appearance of municipal trees; effective management and maintenance of trees; guidance on recommended personnel and equipment; coordinating with other municipal and state agencies and entities that impact public trees and forests; and staff training.

3.2 Ineligible Costs

- Activities not approved in the grant agreement (exceptions can be granted during the field season with approval from the CFP).
- Construction and capital improvements. Examples of ineligible construction costs include facilities, roads, new buildings, culverts, and boardwalks.
- Educational and research organizations proposing projects that do not show tangible, on-the ground benefit.
- Organizations seeking funding for litigation or advocacy.
- Organizations seeking general operating or programmatic support.
- Activities federal agencies are required to perform.
- Other items as determined by the grant review committee.
- Equipment purchase.

4. Application Process

The application process for these grants will be different from other grant programs. Communities that are interested in a community forest management plan, GIS-based inventory of public trees or tree canopy assessment will first submit a **Request for Interest** indicating that they would like to develop a plan. Grant monies will not be awarded directly to the communities. Instead, DOF will solicit competitive proposals and enter into a direct contract with a qualified provider of services. This will allow the state to issue one or two contracts for multiple communities and allow better coordination of travel, schedules, and activities to lower costs and more efficiently meet needs for a number of communities.

Upon contractor selection, CFP staff and the contractor will meet with local community staff and others as appropriate to discuss the current community forest situation, management practices, and desired outcomes. Services will be tailored to the needs and goals of your community and may include some or all of the following: development of a comprehensive community forest management plan, GIS-based inventory of public trees, or tree canopy assessment.

As a first step DOF will need to know if your community is interested in participating. Please send a formal Request for Interest to our office no later than May 29, 2026.

Management of the grants will be conducted by the CFP. All completed proposals will be reviewed by a grant committee.

Grants that take place in communities or areas considered “disadvantaged” or “distressed” as shown in the AK Disadvantaged Communities webmap or Denali Commission 2025 Distressed Communities Report will receive priority consideration.

[AK Disadvantaged Communities \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)

[Denali Commission 2025 Distressed Communities Report](#)

Virtually all Alaska communities off the road system are classified as disadvantaged. All federally recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native villages, are designated as disadvantaged although they may not be within census tracts that are designated as such.

If you are unsure if a project in your community falls within a disadvantaged or distressed area, please contact our office.

5. Target Dates

Following receipt of Requests for Interest, CFP and contractor(s) will work with communities to establish project timelines.

6. Resources

- Urban Forest Management Plan Toolkit
<https://ufmptoolkit.net/>
- Alaska Community Forestry Program
<http://forestry.alaska.gov/community/index>
- Forest Management in Alaska Communities
<http://forestry.alaska.gov/community/organizations>

7. Contact

Mail or deliver proposal to: Alaska Community Forestry Program
550 W. 7th Ave. Ste 1450
Anchorage, AK 99501

Email proposal to: CommunityForestry@alaska.gov

For additional information contact:
Josh Hightower, Community Forestry Program
Coordinator
Josh.hightower@alaska.gov
907-269-8466

Mission of the Alaska Community Forestry Program:

Help communities build effective, self-sustaining community forestry programs with strong local support.

Grant funds provided to the State of Alaska Division of Forestry and Fire Protection from the USDA Forest Service.

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information is also available in languages other than English.”