

**NAASF Urban and Community Forestry Committee
State Program Communications**

At our meeting last year in Gettysburg, the Communications Subcommittee was formed to develop strategies that will more effectively market the value and impact of our state work. We are interested in your thoughts and successful approaches, and will use this information to inform committee priorities in this area for 2012 and beyond. Please take a moment to consider and respond to the questions below.

Committee Vision and Mission:

Vision – The work of state urban and community forestry (UCF) programs and partners will be broadly recognized and visible resulting in greater awareness and support for UCF locally and nationally.

Mission - To identify and develop appropriate strategies that effectively promote the value and impact of state UCF efforts.

Total Respondents: 13/21 = 61%

Effective Approaches:

- 1. Does your State Program/Council purposefully develop messages and target audiences for information?
YES (77%) NO (23%)**

If yes, please provide an example of an effective message for your program

- Plant Live Grow Logo, You've got TREEmail newsletter, Growing Works of Art Youth Contest
- Is your community ready? "EAB will hit you like a freight train!" (includes image of EAB & fast moving train)
- Canopy Keepers: We revamped our tree adoption program and have quadrupled membership in one year with a goal of doubling that amount for this year. We aggressively work through various avenues - direct outreach, online, advertising, point-of-contact brochures with plantings - to educate the public on the values of urban forests and to recruit volunteers to help maintain young trees.
- Experts Agree Don't Top Your Tree public service campaign
- Our brochures list "who should attend" messages for each of our workshops done every year.
- we have spent most of our efforts marketing the TreeVitalize program, our premier tree planting and citizen education program
- UF Council newsletter targeting tree boards and U&CF portion of DOF website.
- "Urban forestry is a quality of life issue. If you want to enhance the livability of your community, you need to actively manage your urban forest."
- They just received a grant to do just that. That is their primary focus for this coming year.

- 2. Who has been your principal target audience for marketing the impact of your work?**

- Community UCF Volunteers
- municipalities, non-profit groups and interested volunteers. occasionally, legislators and the media
- This changes with every project
- Community elected officials, state legislature
- Washington, DC is unique in that it is primarily urban forest, with two large forested parks. We target those who are eager to participate (the "low-hanging fruit") with a certain set of tools that simply make it easier for them to be aware of us and adopt trees. We are also working with neighborhood leaders in communities with large underserved populations (immigrants, economically disadvantaged, handicapped...) to find ways to build better participation within populations that do not traditionally participate in this field or who have negative perceptions of trees.
- Homeowners primarily women as they are the primary decision makers in a household
- DPW's for vital educating information and the green professionals to offer continuing ed credits. Planning Boards and Zoning boards are a secondary, but just as important, audience in the urban forestry arena.

Thanks for your input!

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- metropolitan areas of the state
- Municipalities.
- We target city, village, and township officials with the same message,
- We are currently targeting the non audience of engineers and gray infrastructure folks and lawmakers
- General Public

3. What has been your most effective tool/technology for communicating results?

N/A

4. Does your state program engage in social networking forums (eg. Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)?

YES (54%) NO (46%)

5. If yes, indicate check which ones:

Facebook (30%)

LinkedIn (7%)

American Grove (30%)

Twitter (23%)

Ning (0%)

Other (DelawareTrees.com but it is still being developed)

6. Has your State Program/Council done any communications with State/Federal law-makers?

YES (62%) NO (38%)

If yes, what was the principal purpose/goal of that outreach?

- We have presented to the league to local governments on several topics including a tree care law.
- A coalition was formed to increase funding to address forest health issues
- 1. General awareness/relationship building; 2. Restoration of cut state grant program
- We are restricted from doing outreach to federal lawmakers, but our parent agency, the District Department of Transportation, regularly interfaces with the Council of the District of Columbia (which serves as both the municipal and state law-makers in Washington, DC) about services UFA provides and how residents can access them, as well as to address questions and issues.
- Inform state law makers who was selected for funding in their district through the state's CF grant program
- To maintain or increase the program line item for urban forestry projects in the state.
- State law-makers made aware of UF issues in WV.
- Sent the SUSI Tools project with the help of the Indiana Community Tree Stewards to every local, state, and national lawmaker for Indiana

7. Did you achieve your goals in outreach with State/Federal law-makers?

YES (87%) NO (12%)

- ON several smaller issues, yes. On the tree care law, no.
- We did not get full funding, but did get \$100,000
- 1. On-going; 2. Yes (earlier relationship building was critical to success)
- Yes for State (District) law-makers. Our Associate Director recently participated in a hearing before Council and we are currently developing a brochure to deliver to Council members. We have not participated in any outreach to Federal law-makers due to legal restrictions mentioned above.
- Goal was informational only so yes
- Yes. We regularly have "green for green" letter writing sessions but on by volunteers around the state.

Thanks for your input!

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8. Do you work with paid consultants or state communications specialists to develop messages?
YES (38%) NO (62%)

9. If no, who is it that does the communications work to advance your state program?

- Our media relations officer and outreach coordinator
- Council members, urban forestry coordinator, UConn Coop Extension
- Aron Flickinger and Emma Bruemmer
- Yes & no. Program staff including fed-funded half-time UF communication specialist develop message. Also hire graphic designers to create electronic and print materials.
- Volunteers and our council leadership
- Internal
- UCF coordinator and council

NAASF Committee priorities for 2012:

10. Should program communications be a priority for the Committee in 2012?

YES (92%) NO (8%)

11. If yes, what top priority audience would you recommend as a target for the Committee?

- State and Federal Legislators
- Our main focus for 2012 is our local and county governments
- state government - executive and legislative
- Lawmakers and those who could become active advocates of UCF programs
- 1. Elected officials; 2. Infrastructure professionals (planners, engineers, architects, LAs, developers)
- Law-makers at state and national levels, to articulate the transpartisan values of urban forestry (economic, social, environmental).
- Federal law makers as primary audience but tools should be made available to states to tailor for state lawmakers
- To raise money? Congress - To educate? Green professionals and volunteers (who do most of the urban work in NY).
- not sure yet
- Federal & State law-makers.
- National Governors Association
- State and Fed. Legislative Aids

12. Should communications efforts focus on providing information to State lawmakers?

YES (92%) NO (8%)

13. Should communications efforts focus on providing information to Federal lawmakers?

YES (100%) NO (0%)

14. Would you participate if the Committee developed a group on a social networking site?

YES (46%) NO (54%)

Thanks for your input!

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15. What communications gaps exist or what pressing needs do you have to communicate that could be advanced by this NAASF committee?

- Sharing our awesome work!
- How important lawmakers are and the benefits of having them involved in U&CF.
- connecting urban forestry with other green goals, trees as the original way to go green
- The importance of public trees and the funding to support their maintenance
- The collective value of the UF to advance others' goals (political, economic, environmental, social) through individual and collective action.
- The role urban forestry can play in sustaining and improving communities in innovative ways (workforce development, housing values, quality of life, air / water quality, design innovation).
- People don't value their Community Forest. Any tools that could be developed with the key message about benefits of trees would be important
- We need regular leadership in Washington; continued federal funds.
- not certain
- Adequate core and competitive funding for state UF programs.
- Urban Forestry is relevant. The quality of urban life is a serious issue, one that has to be addressed. State Urban Forestry Programs are the right entities to address this issue. Our approach is reasonable, sensible, and responsible.
- None. Our partners along with the state program work together to achieve this.

16. Are you willing/interested in visiting with your congressional delegation? YES (55%) NO (45%)

17. Are you willing to work on this subcommittee? YES (50%) NO (50%)

18. Other comments?

- I would love to be on the committee in the future, not this coming year though.
- Nick is new to his position so he'll need a year to figure out up from down
- I would participate in the social networking site but I'm so squeezed for time, I could not be on the development team.
- we are not allowed to use social networking sites on our state computers - we have to be very careful about how we visit with any lawmakers - I am not sure yet how much time we could devote to sitting on a subcommittee
- Not sure about the social networking site - Would this be different than the scheduled incorporation of NA states into The Grove later this year?
- Narrow your focus. Don't try to accomplish too much and thereby get dispersed, discouraged, and dejected.
- When you discuss speaking with congressional delegates, you must realize that, for many states, if not all...that is an ethics violation, and can only be done by government workers on their own private citizen time, and then, it can be tricky to focus on environmental purposes as a private citizen who works in the field. You need to be careful here. I feel there are other priorities the committee should focus on.

Thanks for your input!