

# Alaska Community Forestry Program

## TreeVitalize Your School!

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

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### Introduction

Thanks to the USDA Forest Service, the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Community Forestry Program has grants for up to \$10,000.00 for tree planting as schoolwide or classroom projects, including the purchase, shipping, and planting of trees, supplies, and materials. Trees can be planted on school grounds, or even indoors if the school has a suitable space or a greenhouse. Trees may also be planted on an approved non-federal public property.

Forests are vital infrastructure, conveying many benefits to the humans and wildlife that occupy Alaska's communities. Forests clean the air and water, contribute to the livability of our cities, and promote the health of those that live within. Planting a native tree or grove of native trees can improve the soil; attract pollinators; and provide habitat to our native wildlife.

Community forests also provide valuable spaces for students to learn about nature and explore environmental issues. Trees and green spaces around schools have positive effects on student productivity, mental health, and quality of life. The purpose of these grants is to supplement local resources and facilitate education about the environmental, social, and psychological benefits provided by trees.

Projects should raise awareness about the benefits of trees and the many ecosystems services that they provide. Ideal proposals will involve students in the research and design process and will demonstrate proper tree planting and care techniques. Instructors should consider using the grant application as part of a school project. Educational resources and pre-made lesson plans about the benefits of trees are available through the Alaska Community Forestry Program and Project Learning Tree: <https://www.plt.org/>

This is also an excellent opportunity for schools to become recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation as a Tree Campus K-12. The goal of this program is to "inspire the next generation of tree stewards through experiences that bring the benefits of trees to life both outside and in the classroom". For more information about becoming a Tree Campus K-12 and the many benefits associated with recognition, visit the Arbor Day Foundation Website: <https://www.arborday.org/programs/tree-campus-k-12/>

### How can the Grant be used?

Grant funds must be used to promote educational tree planting events in Alaskan communities through one or more of the following activities:

- Providing grants for schools, soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs), local governments, tribes or other non-profit organizations to purchase native trees, seedlings, or orchard trees for planting as a schoolwide or classroom project.
- Supplies such as mulch, stakes, and gloves for planting activities.

- Educational materials.
- School, SWCDs, local park foundation or other local non-profit organization sponsored fall, spring or summer tree plantings events on school grounds or on nearby public lands. Alaska Community Forestry staff can assist and coordinate with schools and other interested parties, such as the Society of American Foresters (SAF).
- Creation of outdoor learning environments. Includes planting trees for outdoor classrooms, nurseries, or food forests. Applicants are encouraged to make use of existing resources such as invasive or beetle-killed trees to construct classroom furnishings.
- Equipment rental or lease (leases must be specified in the grant proposal and agreement).
- Conducting classroom or field presentations on the importance of trees, how to plant trees and how to care for trees. A variety of instructional techniques may be used including actual plantings, PowerPoint and video.
- Giving educational presentations on the threat and impact of invasive species in Alaska.

Title I designated schools are encouraged to apply.

### Requirements

- Applicant must be an **Alaska school, soil and water conservation district, local government, tribe, or other non-profit organization** with a current IRS 501(C)3 status.
- Trees must be planted on non-federal **public land** and have a three-year **maintenance plan**.
- Applicants may apply for up to **\$10,000.00**. Approximately \$40,000.00 is available to fund projects.
- Grant funds **may not** be used to pay wages.
- Projects selected in 2022 must be completed, and completion reports submitted by **November 11, 2022**.

### Grant Selection Criteria

- Increases public awareness of the benefits of community trees and forests;
- Demonstrates to students how to select, plant, and care for trees;
- Demonstrates a well-organized plan and budget;
- If planting fruit trees, develops harvest guidelines so that the fruit is shared or donated for a specific purpose, fruit is harvested only when ripe, and plants are not damaged during harvest.

### Application Process

Complete the six-page application. Proposals are due no later than **5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 4, 2022**. Alaska Community Forestry staff will review proposals and announce the grant awards no later than **Tuesday April 4, 2022**. The state and grantee will sign a grant agreement and funds will be paid to the grantee upon receipt of the final report.

### Resources

- Plant high quality trees that are appropriate for the site and meet the *American Standard for Nursery Stock 2014*.  
<https://www.americanhort.org/education/american-nursery-stock-standards/>
- Use *Plant a Tree: Alaska's Guide to Tree Selection, Planting, & Care* to plan and carry out your project. Request copies from the Community Forestry Program or see online at:  
<http://forestry.alaska.gov/Assets/pdfs/community/publications/plant%20a%20tree%20web.pdf>
- Division of Forestry Community Forestry Program: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/community/>

- Landscape Plants for Alaska: <http://www.alaskaplants.org/>
- UAF Cooperative Extension Service: <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/>
- Cooperative Extension Service publication: Growing Tree and Bush Fruits in Alaska  
<http://www.alaska4h.org/uploads/1/4/0/2/14026701/hga-00038.pdf>
- Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association: <http://www.apfga.org/>
- An internet search for “food forest” will lead you to information and examples from around North America. Several interesting and entertaining videos are available featuring Bill Mollison, a found of Permaculture: *The Permaculture Orchard* and the *Global Gardener*
- Project Learning Tree: <https://www.plt.org/>
- Arbor Day Foundation Tree Campus K-12: <https://www.arborday.org/programs/tree-campus-k-12/about.cfm>

Please contact us if you need help with your proposal. We can help you write specifications to ensure that the trees you buy are of high quality, in excellent condition, and appropriate for your site. If you need help from an experienced fruit tree grower in your community, contact your nearest UAF Cooperative Extension Service office, the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association, a Master Gardener, or a local garden center.

**Email proposal to:**

Alaska Community Forestry Program  
communityforestry@alaska.gov

**OR**

**Mail or deliver proposal to:**

Alaska Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Forestry  
Community Forestry Program  
550 W. Seventh Avenue, Suite 1450  
Anchorage, Alaska 9950

**For additional information contact:**

Josh Hightower  
Community Assistance Forester  
[josh.hightower@alaska.gov](mailto:josh.hightower@alaska.gov)  
907-269-8466

**OR**

Jim Renkert  
Community Forestry Coordinator  
[jim.renkert@alaska.gov](mailto:jim.renkert@alaska.gov)  
907-269-8465

**Mission of the Alaska Community Forestry Program:**

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

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