

MICHIGAN

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LANSING, Mich. - The Michigan Department of Natural Resources says 21 cities, conservation districts and other recipients will be awarded federal grants for urban forestry projects.

A total of \$90,132 will be divided among the winners. The competitive grant program is sponsored by the DNR and the U.S. Forest Service.

It promotes activities such as tree planting, community tree inventories, management plans and education projects that promote urban forestry.

DNR program coordinator Kevin Sayers says healthy trees boost quality of life in urban areas and benefit the environment.

The biggest grant of \$20,000 goes to the city of Monroe for a street tree inventory. The Genesee Conservation District gets \$10,000 for urban forest management planning.

The grants require one-to-one matching funds. The projects will be completed by Sept. 1, 2015.

MISSOURI

Yes, Kansas City, that's one big tree — the largest in Missouri, the state says

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/local/article3763646.html>



Kevin Lapointe, a city forester with Kansas City, looks up at the largest known living tree in Missouri, an eastern cottonwood in Kessler Park. It stands 125 feet tall, with a trunk more than 28 feet around and a canopy spreading 120 feet. The Missouri Department of Conservation this month named the tree a state champion — the largest of its species.

BY LYNN HORSLEY THE KANSAS CITY STAR (MO), 11/11/2014 1:30 PM 11/11/2014 10:06 PM

Kansas City is certainly home to some gorgeous big trees, but most of the true state champions — the biggest of each species — are in eastern and southern Missouri. Until now.

Word is in from the Missouri Department of Conservation, and the largest known living tree in Missouri stands in historic Kessler Park in the Old Northeast neighborhood.

It's an eastern cottonwood near the middle of the park's disc golf course, just west of the old hilltop reservoir and below scenic Lookout Point. Although anyone can drive by and see the tree from Reservoir Drive, it's even more dramatic when you walk up close — but beware the poison ivy on the trunk. The tree towers 125 feet, with a magnificent crown spread of 120 feet. The trunk is more than 9 feet across and almost 29 feet around.

“I think that is really awesome,” Kansas City forester Kevin Lapointe said of the certification. “It’s wonderful that we have it here in a park that the public can come up here and see this tree.” A disc golfer from Grandview noticed the tree and took the time to nominate it for the Missouri State Champion Tree program. Chuck Connor, an urban forester with the Conservation Department, measured it using a formula to gauge record tree size and determined that it’s the largest known living tree of any kind in Missouri, with a score of 499. That topped the previous biggest tree, also a cottonwood, in the St. Louis area.

Connor guesses the Kansas City tree is at least 70 years old. Cottonwoods are fast growers, so they can reach humongous size without being hundreds of years old.

The tree is in an exposed grassy area that’s frequently mowed, so that has helped it grow without competition from other trees. Plus, it’s likely in very good soil, and its location in a swale helps with moisture.

But the open land just below Lookout Point also leaves the tree vulnerable to wind and ice storms, so it’s amazing it has survived and done so well, Connor said.

“It’s seen a lot in its day, and it’s come through it pretty well,” he said.

The champion tree program is run nationally by the nonprofit American Forests to celebrate trees and the importance of planting and caring for them as vital for a healthy environment. Of course, Missouri and Kansas trees don’t come close to competing with such trees as the giant sequoias in California, which can reach heights of 300 feet with a trunk diameter of 30 feet or more.

Other states like Florida, Texas, Arizona and Virginia have many more national champion trees in all sorts of species. But Missouri and Kansas boast magnificent native varieties, and the Missouri Conservation Department and the Kansas Forest Service encourage volunteers to be on the lookout for unreported giants.

The champion tree list is always in flux because trees die or fall victim to tornadoes, floods and other threats. Or previously unrecorded trees are nominated and certified.

Each native species has its own champion tree, and in his 12 years on the job in the Kansas City area, Connor has certified six, although some of those have since lost their designation. Currently three trees in Jackson County, including this eastern cottonwood, are state champions.

Kansas, despite its harsh prairie climate, actually has an even bigger eastern cottonwood in the northwestern part of the state, with a score of 553 points.

And in Johnson, Wyandotte and Leavenworth counties, the Kansas Forest Service has identified 63 state champions of different species, including two national champions in Johnson County. Those are a Western soapberry on commercial property in Olathe and a Washington hawthorn on private property in Overland Park.

WISCONSIN

Menomonie employee seeks advanced urban forestry skills

http://chippewa.com/dunnconnect/news/local/menomonie-employee-seeks-advanced-urban-forestry-skills/article_267f1a98-9672-5577-8c8e-739f2c16c5ad.html

Chippewa.com (WI), November 10, 2014 11:28 pm

GREEN LAKE – John Johnson has been selected to participate in Wisconsin’s Community Tree Management Institute. This innovative program offers municipal employees the opportunity to develop high-level leadership and management skills in urban forestry.

Well-maintained trees increase property values, conserve energy, improve air quality, reduce storm water run-off and improve public health. They improve the quality of life.

Participants from 30 Wisconsin communities will undergo six days of intensive CTMI training at the institute, acquiring knowledge and skills, learning to apply resourceful solutions as they manage municipal trees and green space for the benefit of everyone.

CTMI is sponsored by the state Department of Natural Resources with assistance from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and the City of Stevens Point.

U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree passes through Milwaukee, connecting kids with nature

<http://fox6now.com/2014/11/11/u-s-capitol-christmas-tree-passes-through-milwaukee-connecting-kids-with-nature/>



BY LAURA LANGEMO WITI (WI), 03:46PM, NOVEMBER 11, 2014

MILWAUKEE (WITI) — Crowds of children transformed Milwaukee’s Cathedral Square Park into a holiday wonderland for a special guest on Tuesday, November 11th.

“I expected it to be a little bit smaller so when the truck arrived I was pretty excited that it was that big,” said 5th grader Izabela Encino. That truck is carrying the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree. Milwaukee is one of 30 cities the tree is visiting after being harvested from the Chippewa National Forest in Minnesota.

“The fact that they’re able to see that tree that will be outside the capitol in Washington D.C. is something that is a once in a generation opportunity,” said Chippewa National Forest Public Affairs Officer Mike Theune.

The public was welcome to sign a banner on the truck carrying the 88 foot tall tree with well wishes and seasons greetings. More than 600 students from 16 metro Milwaukee schools took turns looking at the traveling tree, while decorating their own tree.

“To connect them with nature in the middle of the city and to position them hopefully for positive leadership within the city of Milwaukee someday,” said Milwaukee Downtown CEO Beth Weirick. Cathedral Square Park is re-named Community Spirit Park for the holiday season as each school’s tree has a theme that fits into the children’s curriculum.

“Shine bright this holiday season and we have a bunch of shiny and gold ornaments that we made to put on the tree,” said Encino. Although the Capitol Tree has to continue its journey to D.C, all of the children’s trees will stand tall and proud throughout the holiday season.

The Capitol Christmas Tree will arrive in Washington D.C. on November 21st and will be lit on December 2nd. You have the opportunity to track the tree on its journey to the nation’s capitol.