



News Release

Public Affairs Department

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Palm Beach County Extension Celebrates Successful Year of Urban Forestry

In April 2012, an educational urban and community forestry initiative titled Strengthening Our Community Tree Canopy through Education commenced in Palm Beach County. Funding for this project was provided by the USDA Forest Service through the Florida Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program.

This program allowed Palm Beach County to hire a new urban forestry program assistant and supported the development of 11 research-based urban forestry presentations and supporting materials. Twenty-seven presentations were conducted, reaching a total of nearly 800 professionals, residents, and master gardeners. Eleven reusable learning objects (RLOs) for professional and residential audiences were developed, narrated, and made available online. These videos and slide shows are accessible at online at pbcgov.com/coextension/horticulture/urbanforestry.htm, along with assessment questions that are available for teachers and self-study.

The program is considered a huge success as it has allowed for better care of existing trees, selection of the right tree for the right place, and the new planting of high quality, structurally sound trees. We are beginning to see environmental benefits of this project which includes better management of our urban canopy by professionals and residents, increased species diversity, greater use of the "right tree, right place" principle, and more structurally sound urban trees through proper pruning and better canopy management decisions. The educational opportunities provided have raised awareness, within and beyond the county, on species diversity, importance of tree canopy, proper pruning, planting, establishment, design, hazard tree assessment, remediation, and other important topics.

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners wishes to express sincere gratitude to the USDA Forest Service, state political leaders, and the Florida Forest Service for providing the technical and financial support to implement an urban forestry program in Palm Beach County.

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