

munity forestry constitute the main thrusts of Service programs. Through urban and community forestry, the Service carefully plans development and large-scale forestry projects with developers, builders, architects, and city and county planners. Supervision of utility trimming and municipal tree care is an important part of urban and community forestry. The urban forestry concept includes granting individual shade tree consultations to private landowners, as time permits.

FOREST ADVISORY COMMISSION

John E. Brodie, *Chair*

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Formerly the Forest and Park Advisory Commission, the Forest Advisory Commission was created in 1988 (Chapter 178, Acts of 1988).

FOREST CONSERVANCY DISTRICT BOARDS

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Forest Conservancy District Boards function in all twenty-three Maryland counties and Baltimore City. The Boards started as District Forestry Boards in 1943 to assist the then Department of Forests and Parks by promoting forest management on privately owned woodlands. Their original goal was to help assure a continuous supply of wood fiber products through scientific forest management.

Today, Forest Conservancy District Boards work to improve the environment in urban and suburban areas and educate people about the benefits of forests. Board members work closely with foresters throughout the State. The Boards primarily serve as advisory, educational and facilitating bodies. In the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, they approve all forest management plans. The Boards also review proposed laws and represent the interests of forestry with local, State and federal legislatures (Code Natural Resources Article, secs. 5-601 through 5-610).

Board members are appointed by the Assistant Secretary for the Resource Management Service on the recommendation of the local forester in consultation with Board members. The chief requirement for membership is an interest in forestry and a desire to see resources used wisely and renewed. Meeting at least four times a year, each board has five or more members.

FOREST STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

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To improve the management of private forest lands, the Forest Stewardship Program was formed in 1991 by the Forest Service in cooperation with other natural resource conservation agencies, foresters, and forest advocacy groups. Through the Forest Stewardship Program, Re-

source Conservation Plans are prepared for nonindustrial private forest landowners. Cooperating agencies provide technical assistance to private landowners for all their forest resources, including water, recreation, and wildlife. This State program is part of a nationwide effort initiated by the National Association of State Foresters in cooperation with the State and Private Forestry Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The Program also oversees forest fire suppression and the State Nursery at Preston.

URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

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Urban forestry is the planning for, and management of, a community's forest resources to enhance the quality of life. The process integrates the environmental, economic, political, historical and social values of the community with the management plan for the urban forest.

The Urban and Community Forestry Program began in 1984 (Chapter 543, Acts of 1984). It implements ecosystem management strategies to enhance urban forests and associated vegetation. The Program tracks forest loss and gain by county and by subwatershed through the inventory mandated by the Forest Conservation Act of 1991 (Chapter 255, Acts of 1991). The Program also oversees Tree-Mendous Maryland, a cooperative effort by citizens, community groups, and businesses to plant trees on public lands.

WILDLIFE & HERITAGE DIVISION

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In 1996, the Wildlife Program combined with the Natural Heritage Program to form the Wildlife and Heritage Division. The Division applies wildlife management techniques to control and assure continuing wildlife, while affording optimum public recreational opportunities compatible with the welfare of wildlife resources. The Division conducts field surveys and research to evaluate public demands on wildlife resources, populations, harvesting parameters, and relevant environmental factors. It plants food and cover vegetation and constructs ponds (primarily waterfowl habitat). It also manages and protects birds, land-based reptiles and amphibians, and mammals. Under its protection are game and nongame species, and threatened and endangered wildlife.

The Division develops and manages thirty-six State Wildlife Management Areas (public hunting areas). It also manages and administers recreational use of cooperative wildlife areas and some State park areas.

Under the Division are Heritage and Biodiversity Programs, and four programs: Game Management;