



# URBAN FORESTRY Research

## Urban forestry in Indigenous communities across Canada Exploring the impact of greening initiatives

Natural Resources Canada’s Canadian Forest Service (CFS) and Tree Canada conducted a research study in 2018 to better understand the needs and interests of Indigenous communities in relation to urban forestry. Results provided insight into how Indigenous communities perceive and engage in urban forestry projects, and how these projects create opportunities for community engagement.

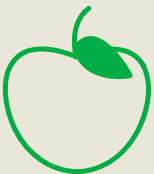
### Benefits

The benefits of urban forest projects in Indigenous communities across Canada include:



#### Education

Knowledge sharing, storytelling, formal technical training, community workshops, youth education, and planting and maintenance instruction/education.



#### Health

Traditional purposes, medicinal plantings, and food provision.



#### Community

Heightened community interest for planting trees and urban gardens, protection and security, job creation and site beautification.



#### Environment

Habitat creation, wind attenuation, and dust barriers.

### Project Types

The types of urban forest projects in Indigenous communities across Canada included:



**Beautification**  
10 projects total  
3 streets  
7 parks



**Urban naturalization and maintenance**

8 projects total  
6 urban naturalization  
2 maintenance



**Habitat creation and/or enhancement**

7 projects



**Land restoration or reclamation**

8 projects



**Schoolyard greening**  
4 projects



**Creation of an orchard**  
2 projects

### Funding

In total, Tree Canada awarded \$178,210 in grants to Indigenous communities across Canada (2010–2017) for urban forest projects.

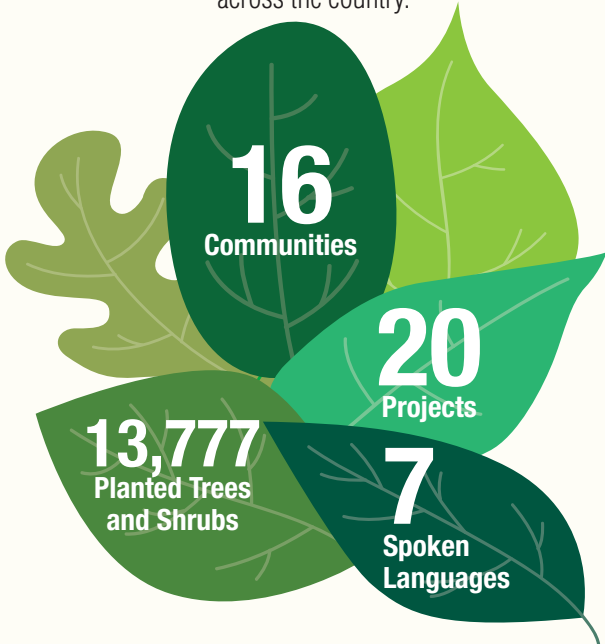


#### Grants

\$3,000 to \$25,000 was the typical funding range for urban forest projects.

### Demographics

The study looked at urban forest projects funded by Tree Canada, taking place in Indigenous communities across the country.



### Projects by Province



Ontario (4)



Nova Scotia (1)



Quebec (2)



Manitoba (2)



British Columbia (10)



Alberta (1)

### Community Impact



**100%** of respondents said their project created opportunities for sharing knowledge and traditional practices.

**60%** of respondents agreed trees provide welcoming spaces for community members to meet.



**100%** of respondents said their project promoted greater community engagement on urban forests and green space.

**80%** of respondents noticed a change in urban forestry interest within the community.



Gosselin-Hebert, A.-E., Bardekjian, A., Quann, S. & Crossman, V. (2019). Urban forestry in Indigenous communities across Canada: Exploring the impact of greening initiatives. Internal report, Canadian Forest Service and Tree Canada.



Natural Resources  
Canada

Ressources naturelles  
Canada







# Exploring recommendations for better engagement and future partnerships

**This urban forest study brought forth many recommendations regarding urban forest-related operations and research, policy implementation and stakeholder engagement for Tree Canada and the Canadian Forest Service. Below are some of the highlighted recommendations:**

## Urban forest-related operations and research

- Improve the framework for supporting and promoting applications, and sustainability of greening projects within Indigenous communities by streamlining program requirements to encourage participation.
- Conduct an in-depth research project to better understand the needs and desires of the broader Indigenous population of Canada with regards to urban forests.

## Policy

- Develop and adopt policies that will help increase greening projects in Indigenous communities across the country.

## Indigenous engagement

- Seek out opportunities to increase more meaningful communication and partnerships with Indigenous communities (e.g. collaborate and foster a partnership with local Indigenous organizations).
- Explore collaborative learning opportunities for staff and volunteers about Indigenous issues (e.g. training).
- Encourage non-Indigenous applicants to include and involve local Indigenous communities in their proposed urban greening projects.

### Land acknowledgement

We pay respect to all Indigenous Peoples from all nations and communities across Canada and acknowledge their longstanding relationships with Turtle Island. We are grateful to the Indigenous project recipients, respondents and Knowledge Keepers, whose experiences shaped this study.

### About Tree Canada

Tree Canada is the non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of Canadians by planting and nurturing trees. Through our programs, research and educational efforts, we have helped restore tree cover in areas hit by natural disasters, guided communities in managing their urban forests, helped green 660 schoolyards and organized annual urban forest conferences. To date, with our community partners and sponsors, we have planted more than 82 million trees.

[treecanada.ca](http://treecanada.ca)

### About Natural Resources Canada

Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) is a federal department that seeks to enhance the responsible development and use of Canada's natural resources and the competitiveness of Canada's natural resources products. We are an established leader in science and technology in the fields of energy, forests, and minerals and metals, and use our expertise in earth sciences to build and maintain an up-to-date knowledge base of our landmass.

The Canadian Forest Service (CFS) of NRCan is the national and international voice for Canada's forest sector, with offices in Ottawa and six research centres across the country. The CFS provides science and policy expertise and advice on national forest sector issues and collaborates closely with Canada's provinces, territories and other stakeholders to ensure our forests are sustainable and healthy for our country and the world to enjoy.

[nrcan.gc.ca](http://nrcan.gc.ca)