

Hazleton Shade Tree Commission

Phone: (570) 387-4255

Project Manager: Tom Bast

Grant Award: \$15,000

Northeast TreeKeepers II expanded Phase I of the 1995 Northeast TreeKeepers project by employing disadvantaged youths to examine, inventory, evaluate, prioritize, and maintain urban trees within the city of Hazleton. Northeast TreeKeepers Phase II used a graduate of the first program as a team leader to head-up another team of disadvantaged students and train them in environmental problem solving, urban forestry practices, and community involvement. The program was expanded into the neighboring communities of Hazle Township, Freeland and West Hazleton. Neighboring communities were selected because they were starting new tree commissions, boards, or associations and requested assistance in managing their urban natural resources.

Three students and a team leader were hired for summer activities. They received training in arboriculture, life skills, community involvement, surveying, architecture, CPR, and first aid.

With the completion of training, the team was put to work. The students worked five days a week for eight weeks. The students' work helped bring visibility to the benefits of urban forestry to a large portion of Luzerne County and parts of Carbon and Schuylkill Counties. Like many other places in Northeast Pennsylvania, an urgent need exists to bring environmental education to a growing number of disadvantaged youth.

Project Value and Match

Grant Award	\$15,000
In-kind Contributions	\$30,498
Total Project Cost	\$45,498



Project Accomplishments

- Planted 15 trees and 50 shrubs.
- Removed 6 dead trees and planted replacements.
- Pruned 426 young trees, 33 older, moderate to low hazard trees, 252 trees on the city's playgrounds, and 51 trees at intersections.
- Tagged 208 trees in local arboretum.
- Cared for 179 trees on a weekly basis.
- Updated Hazleton's 1995 Street Tree Inventory.
- Compiled a list of 84 hazardous trees in 4 communities.
- Watered downtown district planting beds weekly.
- Designed and marked for planting 9 blocks in Hazle Township and West Hazleton Borough.
- Worked with volunteers who committed 2,667 hours of service.
- Designed and planted a community park in Freeland.
- Saved trees slated for removal by designing a handicap accessible area at the local street hockey rink.
- Assisted in the removal of 2 large hazardous trees.
- Conducted a door-to-door survey of 24 street blocks to determine if citizens wanted street trees.
- Assisted highway department in clearing storm debris.
- Developed and printed a trail guide for the historic arboretum.
- Achieved a 1 to 2.03 cost share ratio for the grant.



Partners' Contributions

Butler and Black Creek Townships – Vehicles and manpower
City of Hazleton – Equipment, labor and accounting
Hazle Township – Engineering drawings
Hazleton Cemetery Association – Vehicle for students' work
Hazleton School District – Printed trail guide
Lower Anthracite Project – Social skills education
NEPA Community Tree Association – Educational materials
Penn State Cooperative Extension Service – Pruning instruction
West Hazleton Borough – Hauled soil and debris