

California

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

The Los Angeles Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability (LA Urban Center) is a unique partnership that leverages work from public and private entities as well as community and academic-based groups to serve as a “Research & Information Destination Hub.” The center conducts research on urban natural resource stewardship and prioritizes targeted outreach to ensure these findings inform decisions and actions to enhance our urban forests, waterways, wildlife, green infrastructure, and quality of life for all Californians.

The LA Urban Center seeks out partnerships with public and private entities, the community, and academic-based groups to identify research and technology needs. The center also coordinates events to target communications about quantifiable benefits of green infrastructure in the Los Angeles metropolitan area. By connecting urban and wildland-urban interface inhabitants – including urban under-served youth – of Los Angeles with stewardship, ecological restoration, and research-focused opportunities, the center can engage with the community while expanding knowledge about the city’s sustainability.

The LA Urban Center operates through a partnership with the USDA Forest Service, the City of Los Angeles (City Plants), California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), and a list of academic, industry, private, and nonprofit organizations. Physically located in the heart of Los Angeles in historic El Pueblo Historic District, the LA Urban Center is strategically positioned to offer programming to a variety of urban audiences where they live, work, and play.

Last year, the LA Urban Center provided technical, financial, and educational assistance to a number of projects including: the development of a network analysis of capacity (Stew Map), turnkey models for tree stewardship in environmental justice areas, an online clearinghouse database for relevant research, and the translation of research work into interactive conservation education modules for “pack and play” programs.



Cindy Blain (California ReLeaf), Natalie van Doorn (PSWRS), and John Melvin (CAL FIRE) pitch in to prepare a tree site during the LA Center for Urban Natural Resources Sustainability Partner’s Meeting.
Photo: Patricia Winter, PSWRS

In addition, the LA Urban Center has pooled resources across the partnership to address long term critical research gaps. For example, it provided technical and financial assistance on a long-term study to better understand urban forest management in a changing climate. The research will look at a variety of different indicators (e.g. drought tolerance, invasive species resistance, and sunlight exposure) and will translate findings into a toolkit for urban forest planning in California.

LA Center fellows complement these larger research endeavors by offering yearly fellowships to research high priority/real world topics. Past topic areas include research on drought tolerance, shot hole borer impacts on Los Angeles urban forest, and tree selection criteria for maximizing ecosystem services.

The LA Urban Center is a hub where researchers can engage with the community, fill critical research gaps, and collaborate with other scientific entities to innovate for a more sustainable Los Angeles.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Urban & Community Forestry
http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry