

Community Forestry Management Plan
2010-2015

Hopewell Township, Mercer County
New Jersey



Prepared by:
William F. Brash Jr.
Mercer County Soil Conservation District
New Jersey Approved Consulting Forester
New Jersey Certified Tree Expert (CTE# 375)

May 2010

Rec'd 12/15/09

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
1. Community Information Form	3
2. Introduction	4
o Existing Forestry Management	4
o Mission Statement	5
o Goals and Objectives	5-7
o Tree Hazard and Liability Statement	7
3. Community Overview	8
4. Community Forestry Program Administration.....	9-11
5. Community Map	12
6. Training Plan	13
7. Public Education, Awareness and Outreach	14
8. Statement of Shade Tree Budget	15
9. Statement of Plan Implementation	16
o Tree Inventory/Assessment	16
o Hazard Tree Identification.....	16
o Tree Planting	17
o Tree Maintenance and Care.....	17-18
10. Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP)	19
11. Plan Amendments.....	20
APPENDICES	
12. Appendix A Shade Tree Job Request Form	22
13. Appendix B Shade Tree Ordinance	23-26
14. Appendix C 11 X 17 Township Map	27

Community Forestry Management Plan

MUNICIPAL/COUNTY INFORMATION FORM

Municipality Township of Hopewell

County Mercer

Address 201 Washington Crossing - Pennington Road

Titusville, New Jersey 08560

Contact Name and Title Paul Pogorzelski, Township Administrator / Engineer

Phone # 609-737-0605, Ext. 664

Fax # and E-mail 609-737-6839 paulpogo@hopewelltp.org

Organization Name Hopewell Township Environmental Commission

Mayor/County Freeholder's Signature 

Date of Management Plan Submission May 24, 2010

Time Period Covered in Management Plan 2010 - 2015

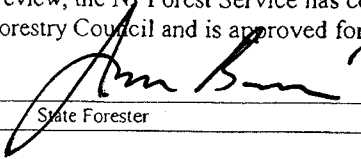
Community Stewardship Incentive Program (CSIP) Practices Identified in Management Plan

- CSIP #1 Plan Preparation
- CSIP #2 Training
- CSIP #3 Public Education and Awareness
- CSIP #4 Arbor Day Activities
- CSIP #5 Assessment/Inventory
- CSIP #6 Tree Hazard Identification Plan
- CSIP #7 Tree Planting
- CSIP #8 Tree Maintenance
- CSIP #9 Tree Recycling
- CSIP #10 Ordinance Establishment
- CSIP #11 Tree Care Disaster Plan
- CSIP #12 Insect and Disease Management
- CSIP #13 Other

Official Use Only Certification

The above named municipality/county has made formal application to the New Jersey Forest Service. I am pleased to advise you that after our review, the NJ Forest Service has concluded that this plan meets the standards set forth by the State and the NJ Community Forestry Council and is approved for the period covered.

Signed


State Forester

6-14-10
Approved date

INTRODUCTION

Healthy trees are an asset to the Community. It is inevitable that as they mature, they will require care, maintenance and eventual replacement. Care and maintenance, in addition to *“planting the right tree in the right place”* can ensure that community trees not only contribute to the environmental and economic vitality of the town, but also reduce the potential hazards to public safety.

The implementation of this plan will stimulate the public's appreciation for trees and the knowledgeable but voluntary protection of trees on private lands for the benefit of the entire community.

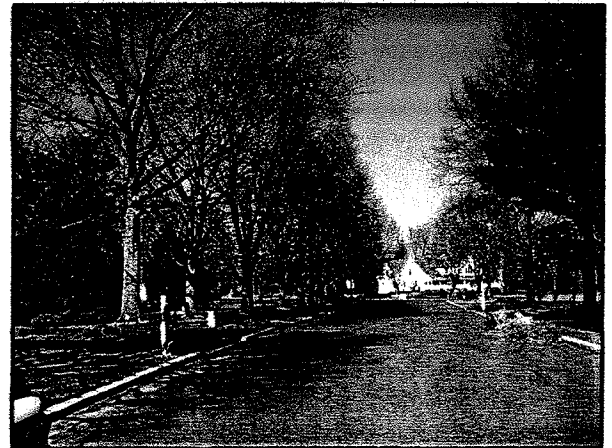
This Community Forestry Management Plan demonstrates that Hopewell Township is devoting reasonable levels of resources in a planned manner to reduce the number of tree related accidents thereby, reducing its exposure to liabilities and increasing public safety.

EXISTING FORESTRY MANAGEMENT

Hopewell Township's forestry management is presently a function of its Public Works Department. Township rights-of-way and open spaces are routinely inspected by staff and required tree maintenance is scheduled on a priority basis with safety being the primary objective. Contractor services are utilized as required based upon the specific conditions. Trees that are cut down or pruned and chipped are recycled through firewood or chips.

Resident complaints/concerns are reviewed by the Director of Public Works or their designee. Inspections are made at the direction of the Director and a work plan developed if deemed necessary. If the inspection reveals the tree is located outside of the area of public responsibility, the complainant is provided information on how to secure the situation.

Replacement plantings or new plantings in public open space and recreation areas are planned as recommended by staff, consultants or the public and considered as part of the operating budget for Public Works or Recreation Departments or as part of capital projects.



Tree lined streets in Hopewell Township close to the Borough of Pennington

Species for all new plantings along Township Roads are selected based upon a preferred species planting list. Existing soil and growing conditions are inspected prior to species selection.

A public works staff of 5 is available to perform basic tree maintenance and new tree installation.

The Township has no formal systematic program for the inventory of street trees but has an interest to explore this option in the next 5-year plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

To identify, increase, enhance, protect and promote the tree and forest resources of Hopewell Township within the context of previous planning documents and municipal land-use ordinances.

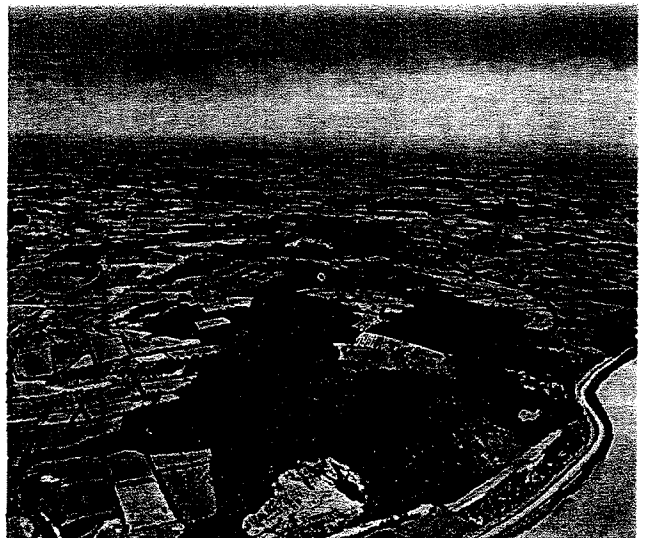
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Preserving and protecting our trees and forests is necessary to preserve and protect the ecosystem. Our woodlands are not only habitat; they also serve to recharge critical groundwater supplies and naturally help to regulate stormwater runoff. Hopewell Township did not always have the mature forests that presently thrive; rather the community was comprised of many acres of rich farmland that was succeeded by woodlands.

The many acres of farmland in the photo of Baldpate Mountain area in 1932 is contrasted by the significant forests in the 2008 photo of the same area that can be seen on the cover of this report.

The goals and objectives by which tree resources within the Township of Hopewell will be managed are detailed in the following sections. Short-term objectives and tasks are provided for the initial five-year management period 2010-2015. Each year accomplishments

of the previous year will be evaluated and tasks for the following year will be adjusted, as necessary, to maintain progress toward the overall goals and objectives. At the end of each five-year management period, new short-term objectives and work tasks will be formulated for subsequent five-year periods.



These goals and objectives focus on trees within Township open spaces, parks and other Township-owned properties including street rights-of-way.

1. INCREASE BIODIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY FOREST.

Blight, diseases and other major factors can potentially destroy forests. Mitigation of such factors should be part of any strategy to protect trees and forests. Biodiversity is one strategy along with management of grazing populations of deer.

These goals can be met by:

- i. Objective 1: Reducing deer browse damage by coordinating deer population management efforts. (2011)
- ii. Objective 2: Encourage planting of tree species that are native and urban tolerant. (2010)
- iii. Objective 3: Develop a recommended native tree list and make accessible to the public using all available means. (2010)
- iv. Objective 4: Discourage planting of invasive species through the published tree planting list. (2011)

2. TREE PLANTING

Hopewell Township is actively involved in planting trees. There is a limited tree replacement program for trees removed along the street rights-of-way and there are a number of available tree planting locations scattered throughout the Township.

The goals of the tree-planting program ensure that for every suitable planting location there will be a suitable tree planted. It is also intended to improve species diversity by emphasizing native species. Minimizing the costs for individual tree replacements is an incentive to help achieve these goals.

- i. Objective 1: Trees meeting the right tree for the right location criteria will be selected for planting within the Township. (2010-2015)
- ii. Objective 2: Identify and prioritize tree planting sites within the Township. (2010-2011)
 - a) Work with a designated Forester to update the list of preferred planting species (2010).
 - b) Develop a list of preferred planting locations. (2011)
- iii. Objective 3: Train Township staff on proper tree planting/removal/field pruning. (2010)
- iv. Objective 4: Initiate Arbor Day tree planting. (2010-2015)

- a) Plant trees as part of planned Arbor Day activities. Coordinate with the Regional Board of Education.
- b) Use this event to connect with area non-profits and distribute proper tree care maintenance information.
- c) Educate residents of the benefits that trees provide. (2012)
- v. Objective 5: Restore the roadside American Elm plantings along Pennington-Washington Crossing Road where and when needed. Encourage the planting of disease resistant American Elms throughout the Township.
 - a) Work to replace elms of historic value in previously planted locations. Write a Community Stewardship Incentive Plan grant. (2010)
 - b) Develop a brochure regarding historic elms in Hopewell Township. (2010)

TREE HAZARD AND LIABILITY STATEMENT

Hopewell Township will initiate corrective action when necessary through the Publics Works Department prior to structural tree failure and other hazardous tree related conditions. Contracted professionals shall be used as required.



Titusville is an older section of Hopewell Township that has trees located within the Municipal ROW

ORDINANCES

Forestry management in Hopewell Township shall be governed by updated ordinances which shall be adopted in 2010.

PRESENT POLICIES

Hopewell Township does not presently have written policies on forestry management. Until such time as formal policies and ordinances are adopted by the Township Committee, the Township shall be guided by the procedures as described in the following sections:

Tree Service Requests

- 1) Any calls regarding trees shall be screened by the Public Works Director or Supervisor in charge.
- 2) Tasks shall be assigned on a priority basis with safety being a primary concern.
- 3) Emergencies services shall be as need dictates.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Hopewell Township is located north of Trenton in Mercer County along the Delaware River. In 2005 the population of this 60.40 square mile municipality was 17,742. Hopewell Township is Mercer County's largest municipality in land area.

Tree resources in Hopewell Township include standard native and other street trees such as Red, and Sugar Maple, Pin Oak, London Plane, Honeylocust, Little-leaf Linden and Green Ash. Trees that impact Township street rights-of-way include Sweet and Black Gum, Red, Black, and White Oaks, Red Maple and other hardwoods. There is evidence of Dutch Elm disease along the Pennington-Washington Crossing Elms, and bacterial leaf scorch among some older planted oaks.

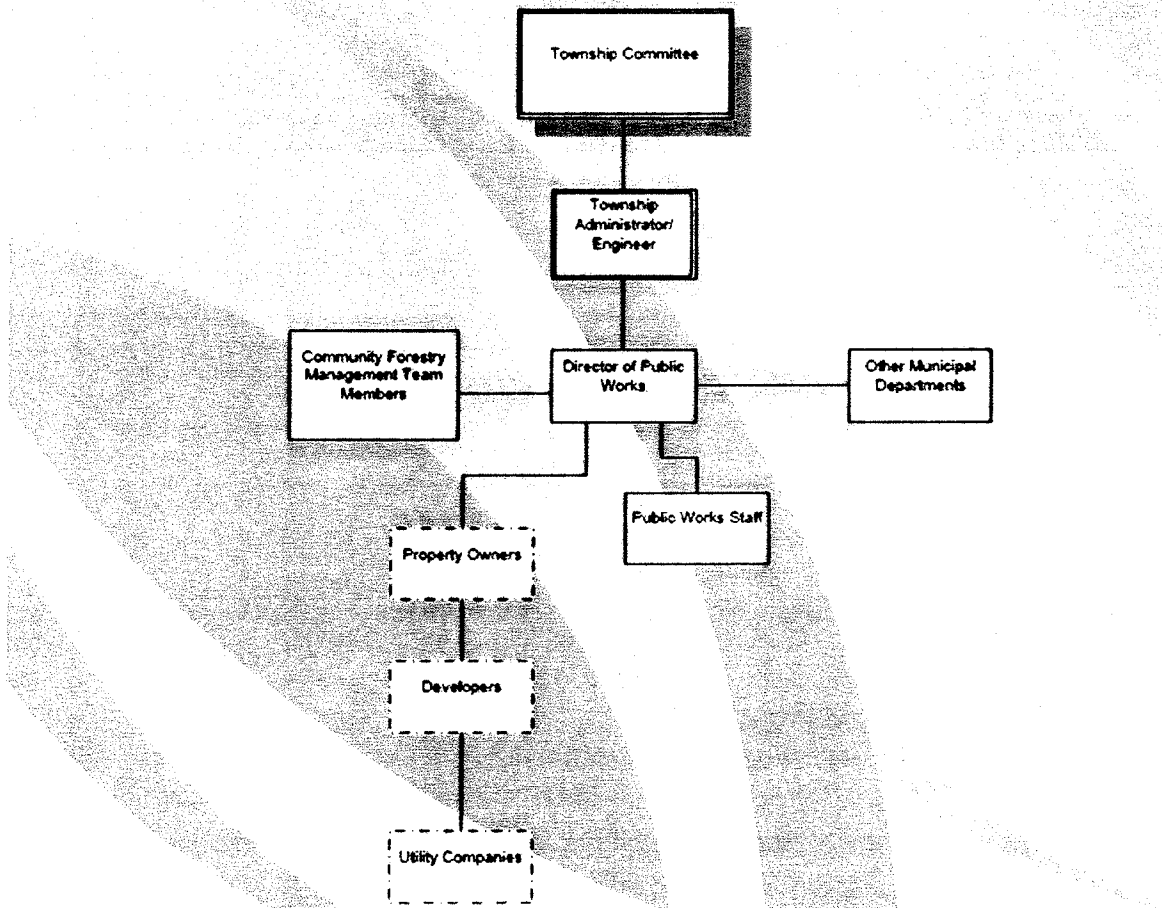
This Community Forestry Management Plan compliments Hopewell Township's Open Space Plan objectives by:

- Assisting with the balance of land uses by reinforcing planning efforts of Local, County and State master plans.
- Maintaining ecologically strong communities for the people of Hopewell Township by encouraging and promoting participation and support from the community, nonprofit conservation organizations, local businesses, and citizens.
- Maintaining and protecting the natural environment.
- Minimizing the impacts of development to the natural environment by using sustainable practices.
- Providing the framework for development standards that will respect environmentally sensitive areas, scenic vistas and plant and animal habitats.

COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The administration of Hopewell Township's Community Forestry Management Program is a cooperative effort of the Township Administrator/Engineer, and the Public Works Department as shown below:

FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN ADMINISTRATION



- 1) Township Committee
 - a) The Township Committee annually appropriates budgets, as it deems necessary, to execute the Forestry Management Program.
 - b) Adopts new or revised regulations.
- 2) Township Administrator/Engineer
 - a) Coordinates Other Departments, Public Works and Management Team.

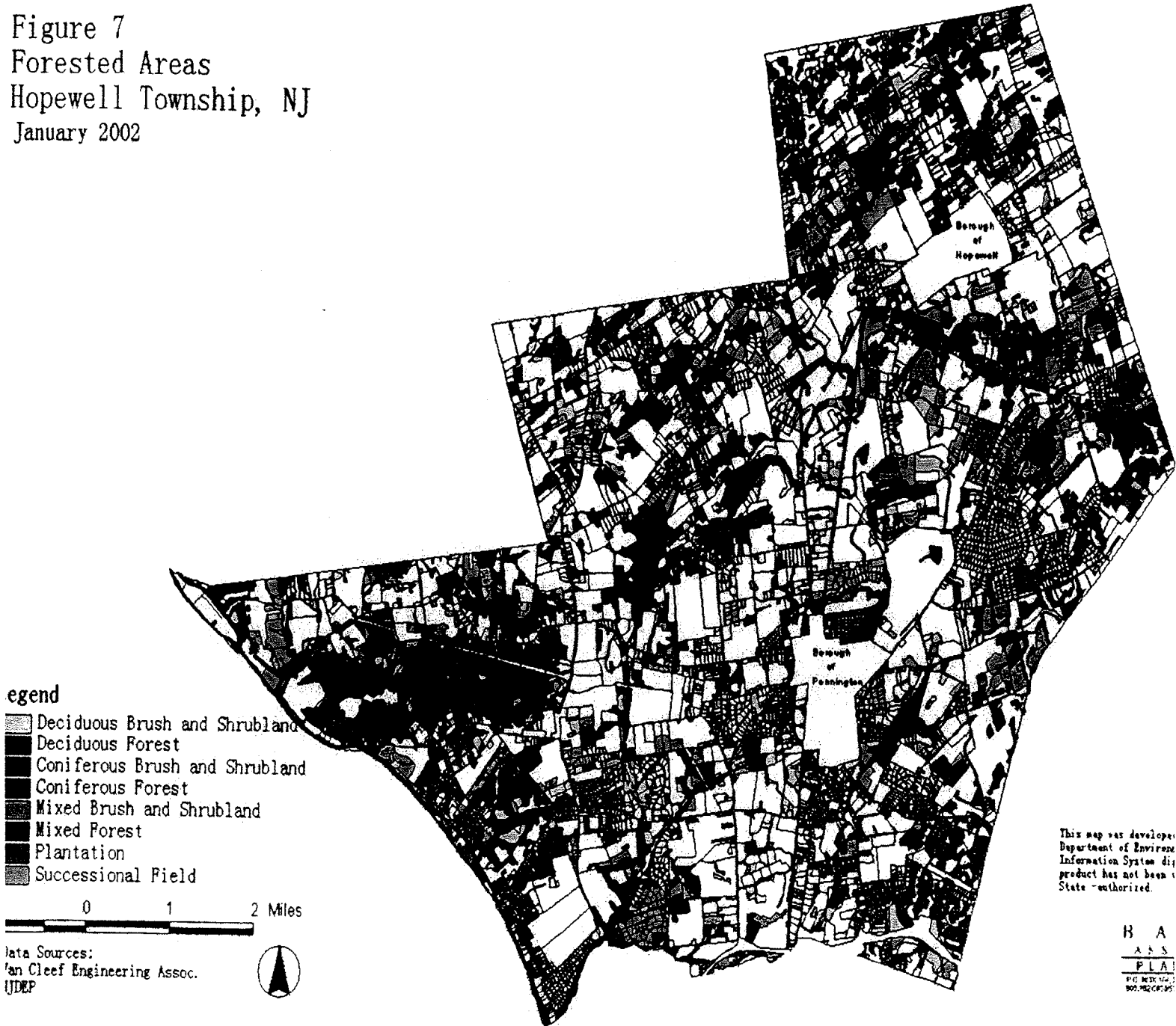
- b) Oversees and Manages' all liaison relationships.
 - c) Coordinates new legislation with Township Committee.
- 3) Community Forestry Management Team
- a) The Environmental Commission shall assist the Team in reviewing existing regulations, develop new regulations, assist in planning for the planting and care of shade trees, ornamental trees and shrubbery located in any public park or parkway except those excluded due to higher public ownership.
 - b) Assist in developing long and short-term goals of the forestry management program.
 - c) Act as Community tree advocates for state/federal support.
 - d) Coordinate the preparation of the annual accomplishment report for review and approval of the Township Committee and the Community Forestry Council.
 - e) Submit grants to promote the goals and objectives contained in this plan.
- 4) Other Township Departments
- a) Assist as may be appropriate in the forestry management program to the extent that such assistance results in the implementation of Township policies, procedures and ordinances that may relate to public or private trees.
- 5) Public Works
- a) Prioritize work.
 - b) Plan and execute all tree pruning and removal work.
 - c) Insure all tree maintenance abides by all applicable Township ordinances. Tree maintenance shall follow all current and accepted arboricultural standards and practices.
- 6) Property Owners
- a) Shall be encouraged to be involved in the forestry management program.
 - b) Are responsible for maintenance of street trees planted on private property.
 - c) Are required to abide by the Township ordinances relating to the preservation and protection of trees.
 - d) Are required to water newly installed trees planted on their properties.
 - e) Shall be encouraged to properly care for trees on private property.

7) Utility Companies

- a) Shall abide by all applicable Township ordinances.
- b) Shall exercise reasonable diligence during the installation and maintenance of its facilities so as to avoid damage to trees.
- c) Shall follow all current and accepted arboricultural standards and practices.

COMMUNITY MAP (see also Appendix C)

Figure 7
Forested Areas
Hopewell Township, NJ
January 2002



TRAINING PLAN
AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Creating a properly trained team to meet the requirements of the Community Forestry Program is a long term goal. The Township has identified that on-going or additional training is needed for tree hazard reduction, planting site analysis and updated preferred tree planting list and proper tree maintenance/ pruning procedures for homeowners.

Team members should be trained with sufficient knowledge in order to make technically sound resource decisions. Team members should stay involved and knowledgeable about standards and programs that will benefit the community forest. Training protocols will assist team members in satisfying Commission CORE training requirements, thereby satisfying the requirements of the NJ Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act, making the Township eligible for Community Stewardship Incentive Program funding and immunity from liability under the Tort Claims provisions of the Act. The Township has met the criteria for CORE training by having an Environmental Commission member and a public works staff member attend the Shade Tree Federation Meeting in 2009.

The Township's budget will provide for continuing education for designated team members (Environmental Commission and a Public Works representative.) The Township will utilize educational opportunities available through the Community Forestry Council, NJ Shade Tree Federation, Rutgers University, Mercer County Soil Conservation District, and others that are deemed appropriate to create continuing education (CEU) opportunities.

Training Objectives (pursuant to available funding) are:

- i. Train 2 or more designees on CORE issues including Tree Hazard evaluation. (2010)
- ii. Provide for 2 more designees to meet criteria for Continuing Education Units (CEU's) (2011)
- iii. Have 2 more designees obtain training on tree maintenance/pruning techniques. (2010)

