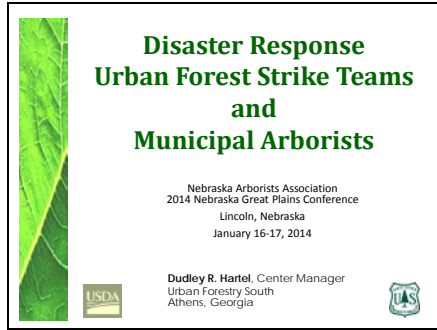


Slide 1



Nebraska Arborists Association 2014 Great Plains Conference

Disaster Response – Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST) and Municipal Arborists

This presentation is designed for arborists, urban foresters, and municipal staff & management.

The presentation will include an overview of the UFST program implemented in USDA FS Region 8 and NA, current status, and opportunities for participation.

Dudley Hartel – Center Manager of Urban Forestry South in Athens, Georgia.

Urban Forestry South is the Southern Region's urban & community forestry Technology Transfer Center which supports U&CF programs through state agencies and municipalities.

This entire presentation with my notes are available for download from www.UrbanForestrySout.h.org.

- [Disaster Response – Urban Forest Strike Teams \(UFST\) and Municipal Arborists \(17Jan14\).pdf](#)

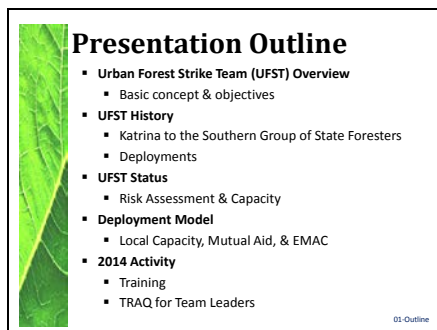
In the 'search site' box (base of page header on the right) type **NAA** or **Great Plains** for a list of downloads related to my presentations at this conference.

The final version of this presentation is:

2014 Disaster Response – UFST and Municipal Arborists (Lincoln 17Jan14 v1.3 Post Presentation).pptx

These slides may be obtained in Powerpoint format (PPTX) by contacting Dudley Hartel at dhartel@fs.fed.us

Slide 2

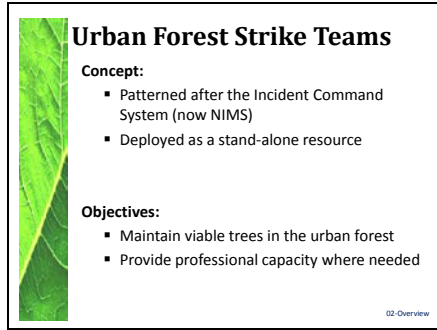


In this presentation we will cover a general introduction to the Urban Forest Strike Team program that started in the Southern US in 2007.

I will cover...

- Basic concept & objectives
- General history of the program
- Current status
- Our current deployment model – it is evolving
- And non-disaster activity planned in 2014 – and opportunities for arborists

Slide 3



Urban Forest Strike Teams

Concept:

- Patterned after the Incident Command System (now NIMS)
- Deployed as a stand-alone resource

Objectives:

- Maintain viable trees in the urban forest
- Provide professional capacity where needed

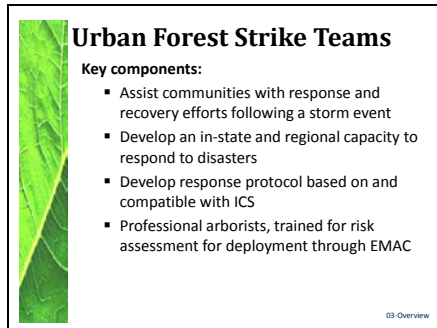
02-Overview

Our operational model was the Incident Command System (ICS), stand-alone resource *i.e. without logistics, and other disaster response support)

Our initial objectives were two-fold:

- provide professional capacity as/where needed – effective & efficient
- maintain viable trees in the community’s urban forest

Slide 4



Urban Forest Strike Teams

Key components:

- Assist communities with response and recovery efforts following a storm event
- Develop an in-state and regional capacity to respond to disasters
- Develop response protocol based on and compatible with ICS
- Professional arborists, trained for risk assessment for deployment through EMAC

03-Overview

Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST) – Overview elements. An evolution since 2007.

Slide 5



Urban Forest Strike Team

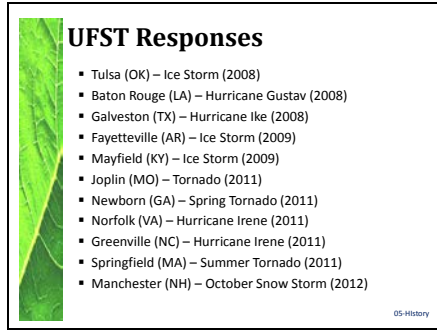
- Hurricane Katrina Response
 - ✓ ISA
 - ✓ USDA Forest Service
 - ✓ Davey Resource Group
 - ✓ Others
- Virginia & North Carolina (2007)
 - ✓ Extension of U&CF program
- Participation
 - ✓ State/Commonwealth Forestry Agencies
 - ✓ Municipal/Consulting Arborists
 - ✓ Northeastern Area – Tree Wardens
 - ✓ Others

04-History

UFST (Urban Forest Strike Team) is a disaster response and recovery project initiated by the U&CF programs in Virginia and North Carolina in 2007 and supported by the Southern Group of State Foresters (USDA FS Region 8). The UFST concept has been implemented by the northeastern and mid-western states (USDA FS Northeastern Area) and the regional programs are operated as a single program with shared resources.

Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST) are composed of state forestry agency certified arborists and urban foresters trained to make urban tree risk and damage assessments following natural disasters. In many states, municipal and consulting arborists have participated. The concept has been adopted by the Northeastern Area (USDA FS) and in that region extension foresters and tree wardens are also trained in UFST techniques. UFST equipment, methodology, and training workshops are now coordinated between the two regions.

Slide 6



UFST Responses

- Tulsa (OK) – Ice Storm (2008)
- Baton Rouge (LA) – Hurricane Gustav (2008)
- Galveston (TX) – Hurricane Ike (2008)
- Fayetteville (AR) – Ice Storm (2009)
- Mayfield (KY) – Ice Storm (2009)
- Joplin (MO) – Tornado (2011)
- Newborn (GA) – Spring Tornado (2011)
- Norfolk (VA) – Hurricane Irene (2011)
- Greenville (NC) – Hurricane Irene (2011)
- Springfield (MA) – Summer Tornado (2011)
- Manchester (NH) – October Snow Storm (2012)

05-History

Where we have helped communities following natural disasters...

Ice, wind, and snow!

Slide 7



UFST Training

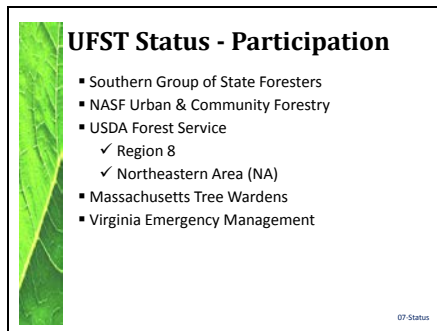
- Kinston, NC (2007)
- Providence, VA (2008)
- Brooksville, FL (2009)
- Leominster, MA (2009)
- Little Rock, AR (2010)
- Tulsa, OK (2011)
- Joplin, MO (2011)
- Lewes, DE (2011)
- Forsyth, GA (2012)
- Detroit, MI (2012)
- Springfield, MA (2013)
- Raleigh NC (2013)
- Chicago, IL (April 2014)
- Washington, DC (June 2014)

06-History

UFST training events (and year) have been held throughout the eastern US.

In addition, a webinar series was developed and used in 2011. I'll mention other training opportunities in the "UFST Future Directions" section.

Slide 8



UFST Status - Participation

- Southern Group of State Foresters
- NASF Urban & Community Forestry
- USDA Forest Service
 - ✓ Region 8
 - ✓ Northeastern Area (NA)
- Massachusetts Tree Wardens
- Virginia Emergency Management

07-Status

Primary participation includes:

- Southern Group of State Foresters (southern UFST Advisory Committee)
- National Association of State Foresters (NASF) Urban & Community Forestry Committee
- USDA Forest Service
 - ✓ Athens, Georgia
 - ✓ Durham, New Hampshire
 - ✓ St. Paul, Minnesota
- Massachusetts Tree Wardens & Foresters Association
- Virginia Emergency Management (VDEM) – Debris Manager and EMAC Coordinator

Slide 9

UFST Capacity

- Region 8 (Southern)
 - ✓ Team Leaders – 29
 - ✓ Task Specialist - 113
- Northeastern Area
 - ✓ Team Leaders – 6
 - ✓ Task Specialists - 107
- Western
 - ✓ Team Leaders – 0
 - ✓ Task Specialists - 1

08-Status

Our current capacity summarized...

In addition, we have at least 12 Team Leaders and U&CF Coordinators that have participated as UFST Training Instructors

Slide 10

**Questions,
Comments &
Discussion**
???

USDA

A brief pause for questions, comments, and discussion!

Slide 11

UFST Organization - ICS

- Hierarchical structure
- Support functions
 - ✓ GIS
 - ✓ communications
- Span of control (Team Leader, Ass't TL)
 - ✓ scalable
- Safety
- Transfer of control
- Code of Ethics

09-Model

ICS Background - Organizationally modeled after the Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System (ICS) provides a functional structure for actively managing any type of incident faced by responders. ICS is a time-tested systematic process of planning, logistics, operations, finance, and command functions. (Ries 2012 – NUCFAC)

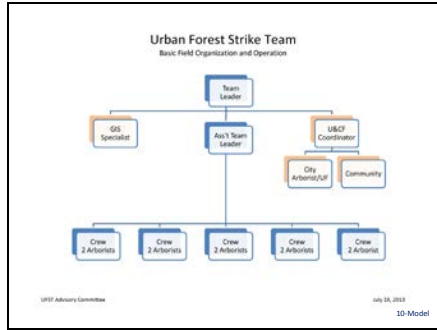
UFST & ICS:

- Original discussion in 2007 was to formally enter the ICS through the National Interagency Fire Center (NWCG position task book)
- Initially developed task books

Adopted:

- Organizational structure (hierarchy)
- Allow for support functions like GSI and communications
- Span of control (TL and Assistant TL)
- Strong safety element
- Transfer of control when responses requires successive teams
- Code of Ethics

Slide 12



ICS-like structure of UFST.

Role of the state U&CF Coordinator is crucial.

Slide 13

UFST – Critical Components

- Organizational modeled after ICS
- Certified Arborists
- Professional response focusing on the tree resource, risk, and public safety
- UFST responses initiated by the state U&CF
- Uses a mix of state, local, and private arborists
- Operating throughout the Eastern US

11-Model

Critical Components and Requirements

- Organizational modeled after the Incident Command System (ICS)
 - ✓ ICS experience & training required
 - ✓ Certified Arborists
- UFST responses initiated by the State Forester and state U&CF Coordinator
- Primarily trains and uses state forestry agency arborists in Region 8; municipal & private in NA
- Operating in eastern US; Texas to Florida and Maine and Missouri

Slide 14

Why Certified Arborists

- Familiar with working with local communities
- Experienced and knowledgeable about professional standards
- Familiar with tree risk evaluation protocol

12-Model

Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST)

Education, experience, specific storm-related risk training...

Some damage MAY be obvious...

Slide 15

Why Certified Arborists

- However... these may not be so obvious



Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST)

But, not ALL storm related damage is as obvious!

Slide 16

Unnecessary Tree Removal

- One of the tragedies of Katrina was removal of trees like these (at great expense & cost to community!) that should have been retained.



Our objectives...

Reduce/eliminate unnecessary tree loss following a disaster, and...

Slide 17

Why be concerned about trees following a Storm?

- Residual trees may pose a threat to public safety



Our objectives...

Identify and mitigate risk to the public, and...

Slide 18



Why be concerned about trees following a Storm?

- There are significant costs in dealing with residual trees after a storm



18-Model

Our objectives...

Reduce costs to the community and FEMA.

Slide 19



Urban Forest Strike Teams

What do they do:


- Risk evaluation of public trees remaining following initial ground debris clean-up



Model

Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST)...


Slide 20



Urban Forest Strike Teams

Community benefit:

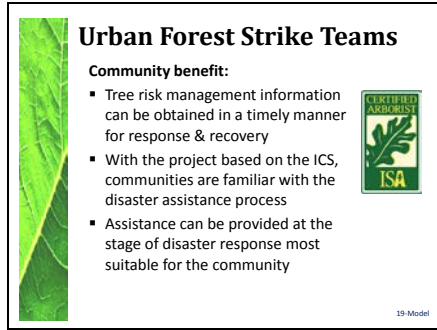
- Communities that lack the capacity or professional expertise will benefit during the immediate response phase of the disaster
- Trained, experienced, Certified Arborists will be assisting communities with decisions that affect their urban forest



18-Model

Community benefits...


Slide 21



Urban Forest Strike Teams

Community benefit:

- Tree risk management information can be obtained in a timely manner for response & recovery
- With the project based on the ICS, communities are familiar with the disaster assistance process
- Assistance can be provided at the stage of disaster response most suitable for the community



19-Model

Community benefits...

Slide 22



Urban Forest Strike Teams

Community benefit:

- Good public relations opportunity
- UFST members viewed positively in communities where dispatched
- UFST members viewed as unbiased experts here to help



20-Model

Community benefits...

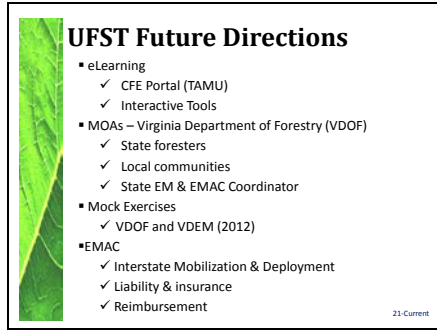
Slide 23



**Questions, Comments,
and Discussion
???**



Slide 24



UFST Future Directions

- eLearning
 - ✓ CFE Portal (TAMU)
 - ✓ Interactive Tools
- MOAs – Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF)
 - ✓ State foresters
 - ✓ Local communities
 - ✓ State EM & EMAC Coordinator
- Mock Exercises
 - ✓ VDOF and VDEM (2012)
- EMAC
 - ✓ Interstate Mobilization & Deployment
 - ✓ Liability & insurance
 - ✓ Reimbursement

21 Current

Currently UFST is pursuing the following:

- Enhancement of training opportunities with eLearning and on-line interactive tools
- Providing “mock disaster” exercises in conjunction with state EM
- Stronger partnership development with state MOAs
- Participation with EMAC through state EMAC Coordinators
- Continued talks with FEMA
 - ✓ UFST role
 - ✓ Debris standards (e.g. root plate disturbance)
- www.UFST.org improvements (2013)

Slide 25



UFST -2014

- MOAs
 - ✓ State foresters
 - ✓ Local communities
 - ✓ State EM & EMAC Coordinator
- Mock Exercises
 - ✓ Two additional States (NC, AR)
- EMAC
 - ✓ Resource Capability Package descriptions
- Workshops
 - ✓ Chicago, IL – Task Specialists (NAA join us!)
 - ✓ Washington DC – Task Specialists (NAA join us!)
 - ✓ TRAQ for Team Leaders – Raleigh in February
 - ✓ Team Leader workshop in Region 8 (TBA)

22 Current

Resource Capability Package descriptions (based on VDOF & VDEM)

Slide 26

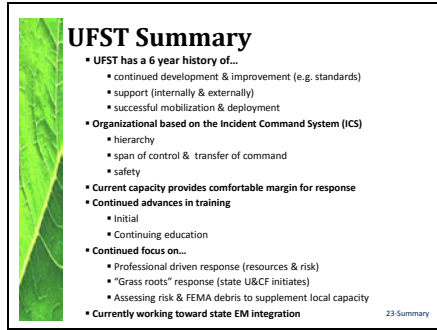


Professional Roles & UFST

- **Municipal Arborists...**
 - ✓ become knowledgeable of UFST program & benefit to your community – contact your state U&CF Coordinator
 - ✓ understand your role in requesting resources through your local & state EM
 - ✓ participate as Task Specialist – build local capacity
- **Consulting & Commercial Arborists**
 - ✓ become knowledgeable of UFST program
 - ✓ participate as Task Specialist as “temp” participant through EMAC
- **State Agency Arborist/Urban Foresters**
 - ✓ participate as Task Specialist & Team Leader
 - ✓ work with communities to develop UFST capacity
 - ✓ engage state EM – debris & EMAC
 - ✓ investigate agency ability to hire “temp” employees to extend your state capacity with commercial & consulting arborist for regional EMAC deployment

What are specific roles for professional arborists in the UFST...

Slide 27



UFST Summary

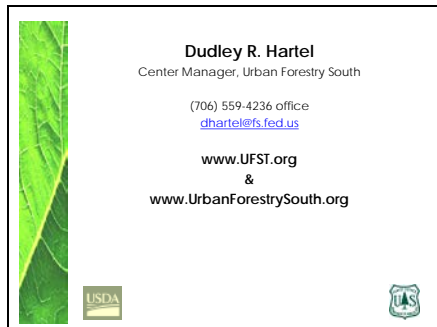
- **UFST has a 6 year history of...**
 - continued development & improvement (e.g. standards)
 - support (internally & externally)
 - successful mobilization & deployment
- **Organizational based on the Incident Command System (ICS)**
 - hierarchy
 - span of control & transfer of command
 - safety
- **Current capacity provides comfortable margin for response**
- **Continued advances in training**
 - Initial
 - Continuing education
- **Continued focus on...**
 - Professional driven response (resources & risk)
 - "Grass roots" response (state U&CF initiates)
 - Assessing risk & FEMA debris to supplement local capacity
- **Currently working toward state EM integration**

23-Summary

A summary:

- UFST has successful six year history: development, support, and deployments
- Solidly based on the ICS that early trainees were familiar with (wildfire)
- Our current capacity gives us some assurance that we can adequately respond to natural disasters to supplement local capacity
- We continue to improve training opportunities
- Our primary focus continues to be:
 - ✓ Responses are driven by arboricultural professionals
 - ✚ Which includes an emphasis on retaining tree canopy
 - ✓ Responses are initiated at the local level through the state/commonwealth U&CF program (i.e. U&CF Coordinator and State Forester)
 - ✓ Task Specialists assess tree risk and FEMA debris classification and make recommendations accordingly
 - ✚ Risk assessment specifications to ANSI A300 standard and ISA BMP are being developed
 - ✚ Public safety is the overriding concern
 - ✓ Community recovery is an important component (functional tree canopy, disaster clean-up to normalcy)

Slide 28



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&
www.UrbanForestrySouth.org

USDA IAS

Please feel free to contact me.

Disaster Response – Urban Forest Strike Teams (UFST) and Municipal Arborists

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