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**Subject:** Farm Bill 2007 Official Comments - 10/04/2005 01:30 PM CDT  
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Question1:

Question2:

Question3:

Question4: The benefits derived from urban trees are too often taken for granted. Urban trees clean air, reduce soil erosion and runoff, provide shade and cooling effects, and add beauty to our environments. National and state level Urban and Community Forestry programs have a strong history of advocating these messages through outreach and education, technical and financial assistance to local partners nationwide. Recent trends, however, indicate funding support is on the decline. This at a time when invasive insects and disease threaten the health and sustainability of our urban forests.

I was recently encouraged to see a report from the USDA Forest Service's Northeastern Research Station summarizing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) policy on emerging and voluntary measures for reducing pollutants in urban areas. The report, titled Pollutant Reduction Strategy: How Urban Trees can Obtain Credit in State Implementation Plans, was authored by one of the Forest Service's leading urban forestry researchers, Dr. Dave Nowak. In summary, it suggests that "strategic tree planting" be incorporated into state Strategic Implementation Plans (SIP's) as a pollutant reduction strategy.

Currently, additional research is underway to better quantify the environmental benefits trees provide. These research projects are critical to identifying, and communicating the importance of maintaining and expanding urban tree cover. However, funding that supports this work, as well as on the ground implementation, is reliant on sustained funding from both federal and state programs.

As an advocate for Urban and Community Forestry in Michigan, I strongly encourage the continued congressional support for the national Urban & Community Forestry program, authorized through the Farm Bill. I believe this program, in combination with state and local level programs, represent a unique mechanism to dramatically impact air, water, conservation and other environmental issues through tree planting.

Sincerely,

Kevin Sayers

Question5:

Question6: