

The Tree Project

Integrated Urban Environmental Improvement
Through Tree Selection and Management



**Institute for
Environmental
Solutions**

761 Newport Street,
Denver, CO 80220-5554

Phone: 303-388-5211
Fax: 303-388-3209
www.I4ES.org

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For further information, contact:
Carol E. Lyons, 303-388-5211

IES AND THE CITY OF GOLDEN LAUNCH TREE PROJECT

(Denver, Colorado) – The Institute for Environmental Solutions (IES) has partnered with the City of Golden to conduct the Golden Tree Project, a scientifically-based approach to increasing the environmental benefits from Golden’s urban forest.

“The right tree in the right place can lower energy and water consumption, improve air quality, and reduce the effects of global warming,” said Carol Lyons, IES executive director. “Through this collaboration, Golden will be a leader in demonstrating the potential of trees to reduce the negative effects of urban development on our environment.”

The goal of the Tree Project is to identify how trees can be used to optimize energy and water conservation, air quality, and carbon sequestration, a key element in global warming. IES team members will collect tree and building information at selected sites throughout Golden. This information will be used to develop recommendations to obtain the greatest environmental benefits from the City’s urban forest.

“The goal of the Golden Tree Project is to determine how trees can contribute to enhanced energy and water conservation and improved air quality throughout the City and other urban areas of Colorado’s Front Range,” said Golden City Forester Dave High. “Longer term, the it will enable better decisions by developers, urban planners and homeowners about using trees to deliver the most benefit for the least cost.”

The study will use i-Tree, a software program developed by the U.S. Forest Service’s Center for Urban Forest Research, to quantify the costs and benefits of the City’s trees. I-Tree quantifies carbon dioxide storage in trees, air pollution emissions uptake, stormwater runoff avoided and energy bill savings.

The Tree Project – Integrated Urban Environmental Improvement through Tree Selection and Management – was conceived in 2004 in response to concern about the impacts of burgeoning Front Range communities on the environment and the need for integrated approaches to solving environmental problems. Phase 1 of the project, completed in 2006, involved an inventory of previous urban tree studies and identification of work needed to fill gaps in research about the

costs and benefits of urban forests. IES's Phase 1 work was funded through grants from the Xcel Energy Foundation, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the City of Boulder Department of Water Conservation and the Smartwool Advocacy Fund.

Phase 2 involves evaluation of various urban greenscapes, scientific measurement of environmental improvement, and development of informational materials and outreach strategies that encourage application of optimal tree selection and planting guidelines. The City of Golden is among the first jurisdictions to undertake Phase 2.

IES is a Denver-based non-profit organization dedicated to addressing complex environmental challenges. IES uses sound, independent science to find potential solutions, develop objective evaluation methods, implement strategies, and measure and demonstrate costs and effectiveness. IES's approach emphasizes integration across technical disciplines and inclusion of all potential stakeholders throughout project design and implementation.

More information about the Tree Project and IES is available by visiting www.instituteforenvironmentalsolutions.org.

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