Certified Arborists – Expanding training opportunities via online collaboration

The Situation
Increasing professionalism in the tree-care industry in North Dakota has been a high priority for several years. The annual conference of the ND Urban and Community Forestry Association (NDUCFA) has been the main avenue to provide professional education to these clients. However, additional training opportunities have been limited because of the large travel distances, both for participants and instructors.

Extension Response
In 2016, Extension partnered with NDUCFA to expand their annual Certified Arborist Exam preparation workshop, offering it through an online format. In previous years, it was offered only in Fargo, thus limiting the number of participants.

Impacts
In 2016, we engaged 32 participants representing 12 agencies/companies in six communities (Wahpeton, Fargo, Cando, Bismarck, Mandan, and Minot). In previous years, there were no more than eight participants. This year, instructors were located in Fargo, Carrington and Bottineau. While only three students took the Certification exam, all of them passed; four additional participants are planning to take the exam in the near future.

Feedback
"Open to anyone, the online format of the ISA Certified Arborist exam preparation workshop allowed an enhanced opportunity for individuals or businesses to participate." -ND City Forester who requires Certification of contractors

“We were excited to be able to offer this important training opportunity to those who we would normally miss.” -NDUCFA officer

Public Value Statement
Increasing the number of tree-care professionals to serve ND will increase the survivability and sustainability of trees which are so important to our environment.

Resource Links
ND Urban and Community Forestry Association (NDUCFA) – http://nducfa.org/


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