

# SWOSU Trio Wins Grant to Develop Software for Inventory of City Trees

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University faculty Jeff Walker and Lisa Castle (right) and student Rachel Hurt have received a \$4,500 grant to develop portable computer software that will help to create an inventory of trees in the City of Weatherford.

Two faculty and a student at Southwestern Oklahoma State University have received a \$4,500 grant to develop portable computer software that will help to create an inventory of trees in the City of Weatherford.

Dr. Lisa Castle, assistant professor in the Department of Biological Sciences, and Jeff Walker, instructor in the Department of Accounting, Computer Science and Entrepreneurship, will work with computer science student Rachel Hurt this summer on the project.

The grant was provided by the Oklahoma Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). EPSCoR is a program established by the National Science Foundation to strengthen Oklahoma's exploration and growth in science, technology, engineering and technology.

Castle said Weatherford has never had an inventory of the trees that make up its "urban forest." Having a tree inventory would help to document the effects of drought, invasive species and other changes. The monitoring of Weatherford's dead and diseased trees by Castle's students in the summer of 2012 revealed the need for an inventory, especially considering the effect that the 2012 summer's drought had upon Weatherford's trees.

Hurt, with mentoring from both Castle and Walker, will create customizable, portable computer software that will help to create the inventory. This custom, open-source application will allow for instant integration of location, image, tree health, tree size and tree species data and will make the collection of tree data more efficient. Once this technological tool is in place, Castle and her student surveyors plan to expand the inventory to all species and to partner with the City of Weatherford and the Oklahoma Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program.