Meet Our 2004 TREE HEROS

FEATURE
The Urban Heat Island Effect

Do Your Trees NEED WATER?
From the Desk of the Executive Director

Blueprint + Greenprint = A Better Region for the Future

On April 30, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) hosted the “TALL Order Forum: Choices for our Future.” This event marked the highlight of the regional land-use planning effort focused on the “Blueprint Project” led by SACOG.

Mailed as an historic moment in the planning of Sacramento’s future, over 1,400 elected leaders, community groups, business interests, and environmental activists came together at the Forum. Participants overwhelmingly voted for a change to less consumptive patterns of development and increased protection of open space.

SACOG and the Forum participants are pushing for adoption of smart growth principles that will help absorb the surging population of the region into vibrant new communities and thoughtfully redeveloped older areas.

Injecting green into the Blueprint

The Sacramento Tree Foundation is taking advantage of the Blueprint Project excitement to press forward our own “Greenprint” which challenges the region to double the tree canopy by the year 2040. Up until now, the STF Greenprint has been known as the Sacramento Urban Forest Master Plan. Sacramento Tree Foundation mailed out copies of a CD-ROM containing the components of the Greenprint to elected officials. We also signed up an associate sponsor of the Blueprint Project to include information about the Greenprint for all attendees. The Greenprint not only offers resources to help green our communities, but provides evaluation tools to help our local governments see existing conditions and implement growth rings that will improve their urban forest canopy.

Consider transportation options – Alternatives to driving can help decrease traffic and the need for road widening, preserving trees in the process.

Encourage pedestrian-friendly communities – Walking and biking in Sacramento’s heat is uncomfortable without the cooling effect provided by shade trees. What’s more, drivers slow down in the confined space created by tree trunks and canopy.

Attend a Greenprint workshop

The Sacramento Tree Foundation would like your input on the Greenprint and the effort to double the region’s canopy! We will be hosting workshops throughout the six-county regions this summer and fall to refine the plan and solicit feedback. Please look for a workshop in your area. If you would like to sign up for a workshop or order a Greenprint CD-ROM, please contact us at (916) 924-8733 or email streetfolletress@sactree.com. The Urban Forest Master Plan is also available on our website at www.sactree.com.

Smart Growth principles:

Housing diversity – As housing is built more compact for less cost and maintenance, we must make sure that enough room is left to create a canopy of green afforded by large trees.

Build on existing resources – As we redevelop underused commercial corridors and empty infill sites we must create space for large trees and maximize tree canopies. We need to continue to make sure that when planners show simulations of redeveloping these corridors, the trees and infrastructure improvements are the first to show up.

Anticipate mixed-use development – Planning for the right tree in the right place can help avoid conflicts with infrastructure and signage and make use even more attractive.

Protect farmland and natural resources – Up to 35 percent of existing oak woodlands could be affected by current development plans. Protecting these areas is an important part of our heritage.

Meet Our 2004 Tree Heros

On May 20, Sacramento Tree Foundation held its 22nd Anniversary Celebration. Over 350 guests gathered beneath a 200-year-old heritage oak grove on the grounds of the California Farm Bureau to celebrate the 2004 Tree Hero Awards.

C.K. McClatchy Award

Gerry Kuehner, a Center High School independent studies instructor, has helped hundreds of students fulfill their service requirement hours by organizing tree planting projects. Over the years, his students have planted over 200 trees on their campus and more than 400 trees at neighboring elementary schools, parks and nature areas. This last year alone, Gerry organized plantings for 400 students, resulting in over 2,500 volunteer hours. Thank you Gerry for your continued support of our urban forest!

Legacy Award

Price Court in North Sacramento

A couple of years ago, the residents of Price Court in North Sacramento were faced with a difficult decision. The gorgeous 60-year-old London plane trees that lined their streets were beginning to buckle the sidewalks and were beyond conventional means of repair. The city’s standard approach to this type of problem is to remove the trees, but when the Price Court residents adamantly opposed such action, both the city and residents worked together to find a solution. Today, thanks to the city and Price Court residents, the Price Court planes should flourish for another 50 years!

Gerry and Janice Kuehner

The Early Bird Gets the…

Don’t forget to nominate your 2005 Tree Heroes! We accept nomination forms all year. For more information, please call Shannon Sturgess at (916) 924-8733 x126.

Meet Our 2005 Tree Heroes

Sponsors

Please turn to the back page to see all of the generous sponsors who helped make this event possible.
Volunteers Make the Impossible, Possible

The Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, better known as RSVP, has joined our office team. Over a year ago, we began the project of reaching out to RSVP for their support. We soon realized how time-consuming the project would be and decided we needed help. We went to RSVP and begged for their assistance. In no time at all we were getting calls from RSVP volunteers offering their help.

Never a day goes by without seeing RSVP in our office. “Warning…stay out of their way!” Their pace is incredible. Thanks to RSVP we were getting calls from schools in the Sacramento area participating in our program that teaches students about native oaks and gives them the opportunity to watch them grow before their very eyes.

The students enjoyed three visits from STF between January and May. Topics discussed included what it means to be a volunteer, how to grow an oak seedling, the benefits we receive from trees, and wildlife that depend on trees for survival. Spinner board games were used to show the challenges that oaks face from being an acorn, growing into a seedling, and being a young oak. The students also learned that trees need ongoing care throughout their lives.

A drawing contest was held among all the students this year with the subject, “What best represents the Seed to Seedling program?” The staff and board at STF voted Madison Striegel at Caleb Greenwood Elementary School’s picture the winning drawing. Her rendition of an oak growing from an acorn to mature tree with the clouds overhead was outstanding. Michael Thao at Woodbine Elementary was granted first runner-up. We were impressed with his understanding that trees need continual care.

A special thanks goes out to all the teachers who signed up to participate in Seed to Seedling this year. Thank you to our offi ce team. Over a year ago, we began the project of reaching out to RSVP volunteers offering their help.

Seed to Seeding 2003-2004

That’s a wrap!

With seedlings over 12 inches tall and the end of the school year approaching, Seed to Seeding takes its summer vacation. The program reached a record 1,654 students this session and produced almost an equal amount of Interior Live Oak seedlings. Seventy-seven classes at 13 schools in the Sacramento area participated in our program that teaches students about native oaks and gives them the opportunity to watch them grow before their very eyes.

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A special thanks goes out to all the teachers who signed up to participate in Seed to Seedling this year. Thank you to all the students who put their energy into growing seedlings for us. We had lots of fun!

Folsom Trails Day

Prewett East Park reforestation project

On April 17, 2004, the Sacramento Tree Foundation participated in the annual Trails Day sponsored by the city of Folsom. A section of the Humbug-Willow Bike Trail was planted with valley and blue oaks to provide some much needed shade. Additional species were planted adjacent to the creek to help enhance the existing habitat. A total of 115 trees and shrubs were planted.

Volunteer Spotlight » Casey Bigelow

Casey Bigelow – the “monster tree” volunteer

It seems like every time we hear from Casey, he has a different reason for planting trees: first it was to slow the traffic on his street so his kids could play safely, then it was to shade the area so his family could spend more time outside, then it was to increase property values in the neighborhood.

Whatever the reason, Casey only likes to plant “monster trees” that reach gigantic proportions and give humongous benefits to his neighborhood. On his street you will see, planes, and zelkova!

This year he helped form a Neighbor Woods group in his Rosemont neighborhood to plant trees in four parks, promote street trees, and line a freeway over-crossing with oak seedlings, and all a fireway over crossing with oak seedlings, and line a freeway over crossing with oak seedlings.

Tina Wong and Wayne Kirkling also played instrumental roles in getting the plants accomplished. We salute Casey and the Rosemont group. May all your trees grow to be monsters!

Pledge to Plant and Take Care of your Shade Trees

Sacramento Shade

Since 1991, through our partnership with SMUD, over 248,000 trees have been strategically selected, sited and distributed to 121,000 residences in Sacramento County. We have a goal for 2004 to distribute an additional 21,000 energy-savings trees. Homeowners have been making this possible by pledging to plant and care for these trees. By the end of 2004, these trees are expected to save enough energy to power 5,000 residential central air conditioners. They will also bring many other benefits.

Findings from the field

Despite the program’s success, follow up home inspections show some homeowners do not plant their shade trees at advisor suggested locations. Trees are sometimes given away to neighbors or friends and in some cases, trees are still found in their original containers. Trees and supplies are free to Sacramento County residences, however, trees, supplies, delivery, education and follow-up stewardship advice costs more than $70 per tree.

AmeriCorps Still At It!

Usually we measure service by people or hours, but this spring we measured it in miles — 14 miles to be exact. AmeriCorps teamed up with Sacramento Area Bike Advocates, the Boy Scouts, and the City of Sacramento Parks to complete 14 miles of service on the Sacramento Northern Railroad Bike Trail. The Scouts were earning their forestry badges so they focused on planting 41 new valley oaks along the trail while teams of AmeriCorps and other volunteers fanned out to remove trash and maintain the trail’s trees and rose beds.

Alfi e Pereyada – Always Giving

Every day that Alfi e Pereyada has off his job at Encompass, he will find him volunteering in the community. Each year, Alfi e chooses to volunteer at a different non-profit group and really dives in. This year he picked the Sacramento Tree Foundation. We were lucky to have him as a fixture for our spring plantings. He also proved to be an important resource for the native oak grow yard. When Alfi e isn’t helping us he is often with Rebuilding Together or Christmas in April working on houses in need of repair. Thanks Alfi e for your service and enthusiasm. Too bad we never got that auger to work!
Heat Island Effect

What is an urban heat island?

On hot summer days, urban air can be 2-10°F hotter than the surrounding countryside. Not to be confused with global warming, scientists call this phenomenon the “urban heat island effect.”

What causes urban heat islands? Heat islands form as vegetation is replaced by asphalt and concrete for roads, buildings, and other structures necessary to accommodate growing populations. These surfaces absorb — rather than reflect — the sun’s heat, causing surface temperatures and overall ambient temperatures to rise. The displacement of trees and shrubs eliminates the natural cooling effects of shading and evapotranspiration (a natural cooling process in which water transpires from a leaf’s surface and evaporates into the atmosphere, reducing ambient temperature).

Why are we concerned about heat islands?

Heat islands raise urban temperatures in the summer-time, adversely affecting human health and the environment. Additionally, heat islands reduce livability by decreasing urban ventilation, increasing air pollution levels, and increasing the risk of heat-related illness and mortality.

- Heat islands increase ground-level ozone pollution: Ozone (O3) is an odorless, colorless gas that can be “good” or “bad” depending on its location in the atmosphere. “Good” ozone occurs naturally in the stratosphere, approximately 10-50 kilometers above the earth’s surface, where it forms a protective layer that shields us from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Stratospheric ozone forms what is known as the ozone-layer. “Bad” ozone exists in the troposphere, close to the earth’s surface. It is formed by a chemical reaction between nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the presence of heat and sunlight. Ground-level ozone is a harmful pollutant and the main constituent of atmospheric smog.

- Heat islands can adversely affect human health. Because heat and sunlight increase the formation of ground-level ozone and its precursor compounds, the heat island effect can increase ozone pollution to levels that threaten human health, especially that of children, the elderly, asthmatics, and other vulnerable groups.

- Heat islands increase energy use: As noted earlier, higher temperatures resulting from the heat island effect can increase the demand for energy to cool homes, offices, and other buildings. This increased energy demand coupled with increasing energy prices can result in greater costs to consumers.

What are states and localities doing to mitigate heat islands?

California has implemented the Cool Roof Retrofit Program (Assembly Bill 970), providing a rebate of $0.05-$0.15/ft2 for new construction with reflective roofing. The California Energy Commission (CEC) administers the program, initiated to reduce peak summer electricity demand.

- Los Angeles, CA is matching the CEC’s rebate of $0.05-$0.15/ft2 with an additional $0.075-$0.075/ft2, or 50% of the original rebate.

- Los Angeles, CA is replacing nearly 2 million/m2 of paved schoolyards with green space.

- Sacramento, CA, Davis, CA, and Salt Lake City, UT have established parking lot shading regulations, guidelines, and language, respectively.

- Chicago, IL’s City Hall is installing a $2,000/ft2 rooftop garden expected to reduce annual air conditioning costs by $4,000.

- Highland, UT has incorporated design guidelines promoting reflective pavement and strategic tree planting into its Town Center Overlay and Zoning Code.

- Federal, state, and local officials are examining the feasibility of implementing citywide heat island reduction measures for NOx air quality credit under State Implementation Plans.

The International Cities for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) will be working with four to five cities across the country on a heat island policy adoption initiative.

“Plant shade trees near homes and buildings to directly shield them from the sun’s rays and reduce local air temperature and cooling energy demand.”

This thermal image of downtown Sacramento was taken by NASA in 1998. The image uses color to indicate temperature throughout the city. Cooler areas appear in blue and green. You’ll notice that some of the coolest places are along the American River Parkway, and in leafy neighborhoods like Land Park, Southside and Midtown. The hot areas are indicated in red and orange, such as the rooftops of the large warehouses along Richards Boulevard, the R Street Corridor and the Union Pacific Railyards. Planting more trees in hot areas can cool them down and mitigate the urban heat island effect.

This information was extracted and reprinted from the US EPA website.
Do Your Trees Need Water?

The hot, dry summer months can be difficult for young and newly-plant ted trees. Even some mature trees can show signs of stress during this period. Sometimes it’s hard to know if a tree needs water or if it is suffering from too much water.

Wise Watering
Young trees should be watered deeply and slowly, at least 10 gallons at a time, by placing a hose against the trunk and letting it trickle all day or night.

Soil and environmental conditions may vary. Keep the rootball moist, but be careful not to overwater.

1. The leaves of this ornamental pear are wilting. Does it need water? Observing trees is important to caring for them in the summer months. A young or newly planted tree may wilt during really hot weather, because the tree’s root system may not be able to supply enough water yet for the leaves.

2. Always check the soil by digging down at least a foot with a shovel. Is the soil moist like a wrung out sponge (just right), dry or crumbly (needs water), or like mud pies (too much water)? The soil could be soggy wet, yet a young tree may not have an extensive enough root system to supply the leaves with moisture during the heat of the day. Pouring more water on the soil could rot the roots, producing the same wilting symptoms.

3. A tree may develop some yellow or discolored leaves or even lose leaves during the summer months. You can be confident the tree is not dying if it has new buds, is producing new growth, or appears green when the bark is lightly scraped.

4. This tree’s leaves are pale yellow, a contrast to the green leaves of the tree across the street. Although the tree leaves across the street are bright green, the lawn it is growing in isn’t quite as green as the lawn in the foreground. What’s going on here? Lawns can withstand the supersaturated soil conditions created with everyday watering, but trees need to have oxygen in the soil for healthy roots and foliage. The tree in the foreground may be getting too much water!

5. These crape myrtles are growing in the same lawn, but one of them has red leaves, and it’s only April. Notice how the grass is growing up close to the base of the tree trunk because there is no mulch to prevent moisture from being transported to the leaves. The tree is dying. This could have been prevented by keeping the grass trimmed back at least two feet from the trunk and applying four-to-six inches of mulch, keeping the mulch a few inches away from the sensitive base of the tree trunk. See our previous issue for an article about the many benefits of mulch.

6. Don’t forget established or mature trees. Many trees that are native to cool, moist climates or regions that receive summer rainfall need a deep watering every few weeks in our climate. Although the southern magnolia in the background is nearly surrounded by concrete, a tree in an inadequately watered or shallowly watered lawn may exhibit the same symptoms of poor color, sparse foliage and dieback.

sactree.com
For the most current information about how you can get involved with your urban forest.
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Sacramento region.

character of the

enhancing the unique

importance of trees

10

Urban Forest Monitor

Sacramento Tree Foundation

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STF Mission: To promote the importance of trees and community action in improving the quality of life and enhancing the unique character of the Sacramento region.

Urban Forest Monitor | SUMMER 2004

SUMMER 2004

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August 7, Saturday, 9 AM
Arden Park Tree Walk
1000 La Sierra Dr. near Watt and Fair Oaks
Enjoy a cool morning stroll around Arden Park as we see examples of mature and young trees. Contact Steve at (916) 924-8733 x114 for more details.

September 13, Monday & 6 PM
Arden Park Tree Walk
1000 La Sierra Dr. near Watt and Fair Oaks
Enjoy a cool morning stroll around Arden Park as we see examples of mature and young trees. Contact Steve at (916) 924-8733 x114 for more details.

September 26, Sunday 12-5 PM
Sunday Funday Celebration in Citrus Heights
Help talk up trees at the booth in Racch Park, Contact Steve at (916) 924-8733 x114 to sign up.

Yes! I want to become a member of Sacramento Tree Foundation and receive the Urban Forest Monitor. My tax-deductible membership dues are enclosed.

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