

California Trees

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Threats to California's Urban Forests:

Protecting Community Green Infrastructure

By Julie Lydick

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Legislative Update

Urban forests are part of our communities' infrastructure just as the streets, water and utility lines are. This infrastructure is biological and that adds another dimension to its management. Besides the regular vulnerabilities that trees in an urban setting face such as compacted soil, poor pruning or irrigation practices and mechanical damage, they are vulnerable to alien-invasive insects and diseases.



An oak tree damaged by gold spotted oak borer at Cuyamaca State Park - note major limbs at base and canopy that have been cut off to remove bores.

For example, emerald ash borer, a phloem-feeding beetle native to Asia is becoming known as the bug that ate America. It was first identified in Michigan in 2002. While not found in California, yet, it is currently in fifteen states from the Midwest, spreading to the south and eastern United States (U.S.) and in two Canadian provinces. The current prediction is that this pest will spread to 25 states and require the treatment, removal and replacement of more than 17 million ash trees over the next ten years. The mean discounted cost for all of that is

estimated to be \$10.7 billion. This same pest was intercepted at the California Topaz Border Protection Station in July 2010 on firewood carried by a recreational vehicle from Michigan. California's green infrastructure is threatened by invasive pests.

HIGH RISK COMMUNITIES

International trade is the most likely source of new invasive pests to the U.S., but certainly human activities and behavior

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Empowering grassroots efforts and building strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.



California ReLeaf is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.

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are contributing to their spread more quickly than the natural biological dispersal behavior of the pests. A study that looked at modeling the potential establishment of alien-invasive forest insect species in the U.S. has identified Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, California and the New York-Newark, New York-New Jersey-Connecticut as the top two urban areas at risk of establishment of new alien forest insect species at the rate of every 4-5 years based on commodity imports from all regions. Considering the growth of Asian imports, California has five urban areas in the top 25 urban areas nationwide where it is likely that Asian forest insect species would become established. Those areas are 1) Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, 2) San Diego, 3) San Francisco-Oakland, 4) Sacramento, and 5) San Jose.

There is evidence that this predictive modeling has a sound basis. In 2005, the Asian Long-horned beetle (ALB) was found at a warehouse in Sacramento on wood packing material used to carry tile from China. An observant warehouse employee called in that threat. The call set off a chain of control measures that included surveys and pesticide applications by the Animal Health Plant Inspection Service (APHIS) and the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA). This pest likes hardwood trees, of which Sacramento has plenty with its street trees and the native trees in the American River Parkway.

On the other side of the country, the city of Worcester, Massachusetts has been fighting ALB since 2008 when a citizen brought it to the attention of authorities. It is now thought that the pest was in the city for several years before the citizen report. An urban forest tree inventory completed shortly before the citizen sighting did not determine its presence. This infestation

now has the distinction of being the largest geographic area where eradication is taking place. This pest is moving from the urban trees to surrounding native forests and threatens Massachusetts's sugar maple industry.

EARLY DETECTION

California is well poised for early detection and rapid response of invasive pests. It is unique in that it operates border stations. These stations have done a good job at finding gypsy moth, which defoliates trees, and keeping out pests moving on firewood. After U.S. Forest Service (USFS) training with border station inspectors over the past two years, the incident of finding wood borers on firewood has jumped significantly.

Another early detection tool is trapping. California is one of the few states where forestry professionals are invited to participate in the Cooperative Agriculture Pest Survey (CAPS). Participation in this survey has raised the awareness about forest pests so that they are now regularly included in the survey.

The Forest Service also operates its Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) survey that is strategically coordinated with CAPS. The close coordination between the regulatory agencies (APHIS and CDFA) and the forestry agencies (USFS and CAL FIRE) means that these agencies already have the relationships in place to be able to work together for a quick response when a new invasive pest is found.

TREE INVENTORIES

While many cities and parks are making an effort to conduct some level of urban tree inventory there is a lack of standardization in the information collected. The USFS, Urban Ecosystems and Process Team are finalizing its California Municipal Forest Health Threat Assessment. The Team worked with thirty communities to develop report cards that rated the overall sustainability of the urban forests in these areas.

Key to that analysis was an adequate tree inventory. The study was constrained by the lack of consistent and reliable inventory data. There was not consistency in recording tree species, measuring tree size (diameter, height and crown), and identifying pest indicators. The assessment demonstrates how tree inventory data can be used to evaluate the stability of urban forests on a number of factors such as species mix, age, and susceptibility to pests.

Most urban tree inventories do not include an invasive pest detection goal. In areas where invasive pests are established and multi-million dollar eradication programs are on-going, there is a trend that these invasive pests were in place for several years before being identified. Typically, identification starts with noticing a decline in certain trees, but if tree data isn't collected and studied, specific pest indicators can be missed for several years.

Communities that are identified as being high risk for getting an invasive insect should use the I-Ped pest protocol of I-Tree or even something simpler as long as it identifies tree species and measurement of trunk diameter at breast height (4.5 feet above ground). Data on forest health symptoms should be collected, even if it is only a subset of the larger inventory. This needs to go beyond identifying nuisance pests such as aphid outbreaks, which may cover cars in insect honeydew. Staffs responsible for urban street trees should be trained in pest identification and have access to pest alerts. The California Pest Council puts out an annual report on Forest Pest Conditions in California and CDFA puts out the annual California Plant and Disease Pest Report.

PREVENTION PLANNING

The Invasive Species Council of California just adopted an invasive strategic plan. That plan is comprehensive



Above: Eradication of Asian Longhorned Beetle (inset) in Worcester, MA

Below: The Goldspotted Oak Borer

and includes all types of invasive species (invertebrates, vertebrates, aquatic, plants, and diseases). It also created a list of pests within the state that threaten California's agriculture, waterways, urban forests and wildlands, along with a list of those that haven't arrived yet. The pathways of pests not yet in the state are now being researched in order to work with state agencies to establish priorities and tactics to prevent entry into the state.

When tree deaths occur or unusual insects or tree cankers are observed, communities and citizens need to know who to call. County Agriculture Commissioners and California Cooperative Extension staff are a good place to start. CDFA sponsors a Pest Hotline (1-800- 491-1899). There are also several online tools available that can be checked to aide in pest identification prior to calling.

When an invasive pest does show up its critical to have a plan or know what resources will be available to dispose of infested wood. Frequently this



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material can be chipped and composted for soil amendments but it does take some investigation to identify available markets. Existing research may need to be reviewed, or field trials set up to establish chip size so that the insects and larvae don't survive the chipping process. Biomass plants that can turn the wood into energy are a good option. Last resorts are air curtain burners, which simply burn wood, or the burial of infested trees in a landfill. It is very typical that people will want to turn trees that have been killed by an invasive pest into firewood.

The USFS has analyzed data from the California border stations and has found that 14 million pounds of firewood came

into the state between 2008 and mid-2010 from 38 states and Canada. The border stations are turning away or confiscating wood that shows insect damage or comes from a state with known invasive insects or diseases.

Prevention campaigns to change people's behavior to keep invasive pests out of the state are important. California has joined with Oregon, Washington and Idaho to implement a **buy it where you burn it** firewood campaign to reduce the likelihood that dead trees still infested with invasive pests aren't moved in firewood.

Emerald Ash borer and the goldspotted oak borer are two species that can commonly be moved on firewood. More about this

campaign is available at www.firewood.ca.gov.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Citizen monitoring is being recognized as an important component of early detection and rapid response. The University of California at Riverside and the USFS are partnering in a pilot citizen monitoring program in San Diego county where the goldspotted oak borer has killed heritage black and live oak trees throughout parks, campgrounds and rural areas. The citizen monitoring program has developed a tree health monitoring survey, goldspotted oak borer field guide and a reference guide for communities to use to organize its response to this pest. A phone application to track infested trees is also under development.

The city of Fresno has a Citizen Forester program established to train citizens in urban forestry and tree planting practices. This type of concept could be expanded to include training and data collection for a robust tree inventory. Frequently, California Arbor Week events focus on tree plantings, but maybe it's time to expand the concept with training in urban forest stewardship and getting citizens out to inventory its green infrastructure.

Regulatory practices, quarantines and eradication are costly and labor intensive responses to invasive pests once they've arrived. While it can be hard to find the time to do prevention planning it's cost effective and pays off. Prevention planning won't keep an invasive pest out of your community, but it will help you implement a rapid response and reduce the environmental and financial impact of eradication.

Julie Lydick is the Assistant Director of State and Private Forestry for the Pacific Southwest Region, US Forest Service. she oversees the Forest Health Protection programs, which includes forest insects and diseases and invasive plants.

California Shines: Tree Gifts to the Nation and Your Community

By Emily Bartnikowski

Every fall since 1923, well before trees are trucked into lots and lights are strung on houses, the U.S. Forest Service selects and ships the tree that will grace the U.S. Capitol. Along with it, 100 "companion trees" are installed around Washington D.C. on what is known as the "Pathway to Peace." This is an American tradition – since 1954, the annual Lighting of the Tree has been part of a month-long celebration known as the "Pageant of Peace."

THE PEOPLE'S TREE

For the fourth time in history, this year's tree is a California Native from Stanislaus National Forest. Now officially known as "The People's Tree," it will crisscross the country before it lands in the District of Columbia. Each stop on the tour will be an event unto itself with music and celebration. The State of California will host a food drive, encouraging local citizens to donate to those of Gallup, New Mexico, one of the poorest communities in our nation. The tree, which will be lit in early December, will be presented as a gift to Congress from the State of California, decorated with donated ornaments reflecting the theme "California Shines."



Forestry Officials spent months debating on the appeal of a selection of giant trees and settled on the one that most signifies the majesty of the forest from whence it came, but the average citizen doesn't have months to choose their tree. They have only a short time to debate symmetry and density, color, width, height, and that certain air that the perfect tree gives off when you stand in front of it. Suddenly, you just know when you've stumbled upon your family's perfect holiday tree.

THE BEST TREE FOR YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR COMMUNITY

This year, Our City Forest (<http://ourcity-forest.org>), a California ReLeaf Network member since 1992, is encouraging people to purchase potted trees to be replanted when the holiday season draws to a close. They have partnered with the Willow Glen Business Association in San Jose to line Lincoln Avenue with potted trees rather than their traditional cut trees. The private citizen can visit the Our City Forest website to select from a variety of evergreen species, which can then be donated to the charity for replanting in the landscape.

Another ReLeaf Network member, Friends of the Urban Forest, (<http://www.fuf.net>) has a similar program in San Francisco, with four species available on their website.

Another option is to buy an artificial tree. These are marketed as investments (pay now, enjoy for years to come) and convenient (they require no watering and are often pre-lit) and a panacea for the environmental guilt of bringing home a cut tree. On the flip side, they often contain toxic chemicals and are neither recyclable nor biodegradable.

When you consider that plastic trees are toxic, and buying a cut tree for your home truncates the

Left: Volunteers help care for the many trees Our City Forest will replant after the holidays are over.

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California ReLeaf Network Member Profile: Community Services & Employment Training

By Ashley Mastin and Chuck Mills

Visalia's Self-Help Training and Employment Center was almost ten years old when it took on its role as Tulare County's community action agency in the 1980s. Shortly thereafter, the Tulare County Conservation Corps was started as a program of the organization to serve young people who wanted to continue their education and acquire important job skills. Forty years later, the retitled Community Services and Employment Training (CSET), and its renamed Sequoia Community Corps (SCC) is ramping up their mission of strengthening youth, families, and the surrounding region through a host of social services that include urban forestry.

The SCC is composed of disadvantaged youth, ages 18-24. Most of these young people cannot compete in the job market. Some have not finished high school. Others have criminal records. CSET and the SCC provide these young

adults with job training and placement, as well as assistance to corps members for earning their high school diplomas. They have provided over 4,000 young adults with job training and educational opportunities over the past 20 years.

Some of the SCC's original projects included trail maintenance and development in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Their work in some of the nation's most impressive forests naturally progressed into opportunities to bring the forest to the urban areas CSET served.

SCC's first urban forestry projects were in partnership with the Urban Tree Foundation. The two organizations still work hand-in-hand to plant trees today. The majority of these projects focus on unused riparian strips where native oaks and understory plants are placed along new hiking trails cut by SCC members. These trails provide a green escape in an area that would otherwise remain unused, and offer residents and visitors alike a glimpse into what the benefits of a strong environmental education program can mean for the region and its at-risk youth.

While many community members enjoy the beauty of these areas, many don't realize the



additional benefits CSET provides the community through its urban forestry program. The green trails capture storm water, increase wildlife habitat, and improve air quality in a region consistently ranked as one of the worst in the nation for smog and ozone pollution. CSET continues its efforts to increase visibility on the tangible benefits of its project through a variety of tools and resources.

One such resource is the federal grant secured by CEST in 2010 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. These funds which are administered by California ReLeaf are supporting a multi-faceted project in which members of the SCC will be working to restore a native Valley Oak riparian forest along a creek that is currently devoid of vegetation while also improving Visalia's urban forestry streetscape. The project brings the added benefit of significant job creation to a county with a 12% unemployment rate as of October, 2011.

Much of the success of this project and CSET's urban forestry program can be attributed Nathan Higgins, CSET's Urban Forestry Program Coordinator. In comparison to the longevity of the SCC, Nathan is relatively new to the job and to urban forestry. Before coming to CSET, Nathan was employed in wildland conservation at the nearby national parks and national forests. It wasn't until he worked in an urban environment that he realized how important community forests were.

"I had a revelation that, even though the people in these communities only live 45 minutes from some of the best national parks in the country, many of them can't afford to make the short trip to see the parks. The urban forest brings nature to people where they are," says Higgins.

He hasn't only witnessed how urban forestry can change communities, but also how it can change individuals. When asked for examples of what SCC

does for Corps members, Nathan is quick to respond with stories of three young men whose lives he's seen transformed.

The three stories all start the same way – a young man who joined the SCC with little opportunity to better his life. One started as a crew member and has been promoted to crew supervisor, leading other young men and women to better their lives just as he has. Another is now working with the City of Visalia Park and Recreation Department as an intern doing park maintenance. His internship will hopefully turn into a paid position as funding becomes available.

The most compelling of the three stories though is that of Jacob Ramos. At 16-years old, he was found guilty of a felony charge. After his conviction and time served, he found it nearly impossible to find a job. At CSET, he earned his high school diploma and proved himself as one of the most dedicated workers in the SCC. This year, CSET opened a for-profit subsidiary that does weatherization work. Because of his extensive training completed with the Corps, Jacob now has a job there.

Each year, CSET plants over 1,000 trees, creates accessible hiking trails, and employs 100-150 young people. More than that, it has gone above and beyond its mission to strengthen youth, families, and communities in Tulare County. CSET and the SCC are a reminder of what can be accomplished for our environment and future generations through partnership and perseverance.



Above: Urban Forestry corpsmembers 'greening' our urban spaces. These young Valley Oaks will live for hundreds of years and provide shade and beauty for generations.

Opposite left: Community riparian parkway at West Mill Creek constructed entirely by Sequoia Community Corps

Opposite right: Corpsmembers relax after a bountiful day cleaning up the Tule River corridor.



California ReLeaf Network Corner

On November 7, the California urban forestry community lost one of its biggest supporters - Scott Wilson. Scott founded Los Angeles' North East Trees in 1989 when he planted 700 trees at Occidental College. Since then, the organization has planted more than 70,000 trees. One of the original members of the California ReLeaf Network, Scott was an enthusiastic leader in the push to green California's urban areas.



Scott lost consciousness while clipping blossoms from a firewheel tree at his home on November 5. He was 89 years old and is survived by his wife - Carli, son - Ron, and daughter - Christine. He will be missed, but his legacy will be appreciated for years to come.

Please welcome our newest Network members

Friends of Balboa Park was founded in 1999 to preserve the San Diego park's legacy for future generations through park-wide projects including annual Arbor Day plantings, education programs, an energy-reduction program, horticulture projects, and special events. For more information, visit www.friendsofbalboapark.org.

The Benicia Tree Foundation strengthens community by promoting and supporting tree planting, maintenance, and education. The foundation is working to provide the community resources to help improve and manage trees on private land and filling the gaps on public lands that the city cannot afford to maintain. For more information, visit www.beniciatrees.org.



California Arbor Week will be here before you know it! This year, California ReLeaf will continue to offer resources like the Planning and Promotion kit, media templates, and the annual poster contest. In addition to the tools we've offered in the past, we're also hosting a photo contest to highlight the amazing trees (both urban and rural) in California. Log on to www.arborweek.org to get your copy of all of these great resources and to register your Arbor Week event.

Give the Gift of Trees to Your Community



California ReLeaf works hand-in-hand with local organizations throughout the state to preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban

and community forests. **Donate before December 31 and receive a copy of *A Californian's Guide to the Trees Among Us* by Matt Ritter as our special thank you.** You can donate by visiting www.californiareleaf.org/donate or by sending in the included remittance envelope. Thank you for your support!

Network Members

Formed in 1991, the California ReLeaf Network is a statewide alliance of community-based organizations that share the common goals of planting and protecting trees, fostering an ethic of environmental stewardship, and promoting volunteer involvement.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Atherton Tree Committee
Benicia Tree Foundation
California Association of Local Conservation Corps
California Community Forests Foundation
California Urban Forests Council
Canopy
CityTrees
Common Vision
Friends of Carmel Forest
Friends of the Urban Forest
Greater Modesto Tree Foundation
Keep Eureka Beautiful
Magic
Marin ReLeaf
Mendocino County ReLeaf
Mountain View Trees
North Hills Landscape Committee
Oak Habitat Restoration Project
Our City Forest
Patricks Point Garden Club
Roseville Urban Forest Foundation
Sacramento Tree Foundation
Solano Advocates Green Environments
South San Francisco Beautification Committee
Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods

Streaminders: Chapter of the Izaak Walton League
TREE Davis
Tree Lodi
Tree Partners Foundation
Urban ReLeaf
West Oakland Green Initiative (WOGI)
Woodland Tree Foundation

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA

Atascadero Native Tree Association
Carpinteria Beautiful
CSET
Goleta Valley Beautiful
Greenspace: The Cambria Land Trust
Ojai Trees
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
Santa Barbara Beautiful
Santa Barbara County ReLeaf
Santa Margarita Community Forestry
Tree Foundation of Kern
Tree Fresno
Tree Lindsay
Tree Guild of Arroyo Grande
Urban Tree Foundation

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Amigos de los Rios
Arroyo Seco Foundation
Coronado Street Tree Committee

Fallbrook Land Conservancy
Friends of Balboa Park
Highland Environmental Education Coalition
Hollywood/Los Angeles Beautification Team
Huntington Beach Tree Society
Koreatown Youth & Community Center
Los Angeles Community Forest Advisory Committee
LA Conservation Corps
Mountains Restoration Trust
North East Trees
Orange for Trees
Professional Tree Care Association of San Diego
Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District
San Bernardino Volunteer Yard Beautification Project
San Diego Community Forest Advisory Board
Shadetree Partnership
Street Tree Seminar, Inc.
Tree Musketeers
TreePeople
Trees for Seal Beach
Urban Corps of San Diego
Victoria Avenue Forever
West Hollywood Tree Preservation Society

If you would like to reach any of the groups listed, or if you are part of a group that would like information on membership in the California ReLeaf Network, visit us online at www.californiareleaf.org, or contact (916) 497-0037, amastin@californiareleaf.org.

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tree's life at about 5-8 years, procuring a potted tree with the intention of donating it to be planted in January is the most environmentally responsible way to go. Your potted tree will be around the same age as a cut tree and once it is planted it will flourish for decades. The benefits to that are monumental. Your family can gather around it and decorate it (while listening to this year's California Tree theme:

"Peace Peace Peace" by Kate Wallace) and enjoy its warmth for the season. Then, it can be delivered out into the state - a gift from you to California, and perhaps one day your family tree can participate in our shared tradition by being chosen as The People's Tree, gracing our nation's Capital for a Pageant of Peace.

More information regarding the Capital Tree can be found at <http://www.capitol-christmastree2011.org>.

Emily Bartnikowski is a freelance writer based in San Jose, California.



BUDGET BILL DELIVERS ON URBAN FORESTRY RESOURCES

Governor Jerry Brown signed a comprehensive 2011-12 State Budget package on June 30th that erased the remaining \$10 billion deficit left over from March through a combination of deep cuts, revenue projections and one-time solutions.

While the rare on-time budget did nothing to improve on reductions to farmland funding and State Parks as reported in the Spring 2011 edition of California Trees, the spending plan included significant resources for urban forestry, including \$4 million in bond funding to CAL FIRE for urban forestry projects, \$21 million to the Strategic Growth Council for urban greening projects, and \$10 million for the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program.

In total, California ReLeaf Network groups and their partners were able to apply for more than \$35 million in state funds directly related to tree-planting, urban greening, and urban forestry during the current fiscal year under the approved state budget.

GOVERNOR BROWN SIGNS VOLUNTEER BILL; OTHER BILLS ON HOLD UNTIL 2012

The State Legislature sent hundreds of bills to the Governor's desk in the last days of the regular legislative session,

but the preeminent priority measure for urban forestry groups had already been signed into law.

Governor Brown signed **Assembly Bill 587** (Gordon and Furutani) on September 6th, 2011, which extends the current prevailing wage exemption for volunteers through 2017. AB 587 was critical to sustaining the success of urban forestry by ensuring Californians can donate their time and spirit to a spectrum of resource conservation activities, including critical tree care and tree planting projects.

"Volunteers are the foundation of successful urban forestry projects in our Golden State. California ReLeaf and its Network members thank Assembly Members Gordon and Furutani for their leadership on this important issue, and Governor Brown for his strong support," said Joe Liszewski, Executive Director for California ReLeaf.

Other important measures that were introduced this year but did not advance will likely resurface in 2012, including **AB 296** (Skinner), relating to cool pavements, and **AB 1285** (Fuentes), which creates a regional greenhouse gas reduction program for California.

STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL TAKES STEPS TOWARDS STRATEGIC PLAN

California's Strategic Growth Council met in Sacramento on November 2nd, 2011 to begin discussion on its draft Strategic Plan developed over the last several months with significant public input from multiple stakeholder sessions.

California ReLeaf participated in two of these meetings that were designed to garner feedback from participants on what the Council is doing right, what needs work, and what should be the overarching vision for this body. Highlights from these sessions included a dynamic breakout discussion on how the SGC should approach the challenging task of community sustainability, and a California ReLeaf one-on-one with SGC staff to discuss how the

existing urban greening grants program could better serve the urban forestry community and underserved California communities.

Though the draft plan is not yet available for review, Council members were presented with a staff report and a draft mission and vision for further consideration. Council members also agreed that at each SGC meeting, Agency Secretaries would each share an example of how or what they are doing at their agency to drive SGC goals.

Other topics discussed in November included the Access to Green Spaces Implementation Plan and the dwindling bond dollars available for urban forestry and urban greening.

For more information on these bills and other pertinent urban forestry legislation, please contact Chuck Mills at (916) 497-0035 or cmills@californiareleaf.org.

Chuck Mills is the Grants Program Manager at California ReLeaf.

Federal Road to Urban and Community Forestry Funding Complicated in 2011

America's chronic economic downturn has done little to streamline the budget process in Washington DC as Congress works to present President Obama with a spending plan for the next fiscal year that reduces the federal deficit by \$1.2 trillion.

Buried within this quagmire is proposed funding for urban and community forestry both through annual allocations to the Federal Transportation Enhancements and to the proposed 2012 Farm Bill (the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee has included more than \$32 million for urban and community forestry in its funding package). And while opportunity exists to make urban forestry stronger in the next reauthorization of the Federal Farm Bill, other resources for tree planting, tree care,

and related activities are already under attack.

Twice this year, amendments to the popular Transportation Enhancements (TE) have been proposed by U.S. Senators that seek to eliminate this program which represents 10% of all highway project spending. TE projects can include creation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, streetscape improvements, refurbishment of historic transportation facilities, and other investments that enhance communities and access (California typically receives \$75 million annually for these purposes, which is distributed through the state's regional transportation agencies down to local governments). Fortunately, both efforts failed but this issue will likely resurface in 2012.

Meanwhile, negotiations on the 2012 Farm Bill are underway in Washington DC, with the possibility of definitive action coming before the year's end. The measure is re-authorized every five years, and provides the framework through which Congress enacts and amends a wide range of agricultural and conservation programs including the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act, which houses the Urban & Community Forestry Program. The added element of the bipartisan Congressional Super Committee this year means greater potential for opportunity to strengthen the urban and community forestry component of the Farm Bill. For this reason, California ReLeaf has joined ACT in supporting a suite of recommendations to Congress developed by the Sustainable Urban Forests Coalition that we believe will support efforts within the Farm Bill to protect urban forest health, promote urban trees and forests as green infrastructure, and provide research, tools and information designed to serve urban forestry needs.

Visit www.actrees.org for more information on these issues.



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ARRA Projects Enter Final Months Boasting Big Results

Federal funding provided to California ReLeaf through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in late 2009 continues to spur significant job growth and retention within California's urban forestry community even as the \$6 million sub-grant program winds down.

In 2011 alone, urban forestry ARRA funds have been used to plant more than 4,000 trees and maintain 17,000 more. Equally important, these projects have contributed more than 50,000 job hours to California's workforce, matched with another 32,000 volunteer hours that have helped groups like Hollywood Beautification Team successfully close and complete their ARRA project earlier

this year.

"The 928 trees planted through this grant, the thousand plus that were cared for and will live on, are certainly a lasting legacy for ARRA," notes Sharyn Romano, Executive Director for Hollywood Beautification Team. "Those employed through this grant will always appreciate how ARRA changed their lives and helped their families."

Similar stories and insights offered by other ARRA grant recipients continue to reinforce the tremendous difference these funds have made throughout all parts of California in creating jobs and protecting the environment. From the Bay Area to the Central Valley to southern California, these projects are delivering on the promise of tomorrow today.

Visit <http://californiareleaf.org/programs/recovery-act-grants> for more information on these individual ARRA projects.