



CARE.

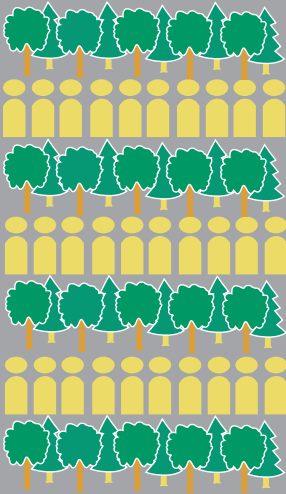


GROW.



PLANT.

Nearly 95% of Californians live in an urban area.



There are approximately 200 million trees in California's urban areas, and space for 50 million more.



A group of concerned citizens petitioned the city of Riverside to replant after the removal of 80 trees from historic Victoria Avenue. A class project became a thriving tree organization in the city of Orange. Two city employees, who saw that their municipal tree programs needed help, formed a citizens' group in Santa Barbara County to maintain trees and educate the community. A troop of Brownie Girl Scouts planted a tree in their local park and started a community environmental revolution in El Segundo.

Over the years, stories like these have happened all over California. A few engaged people have led the way and transformed their communities by planting and caring for trees. Groups like these realized that, to make the most impact within their own cities and towns, they needed to work together.

In 1989, California ReLeaf began as a way for individual groups from around the state to use their collective power to improve their own communities. Since then, California ReLeaf has become a critical ally in advancing California's urban forestry movement through the coordination of the ReLeaf Network, local project support, education and outreach, and advocacy efforts.

PLANT TREES. CARE FOR URBAN
FORESTS. GROW YOUR COMMUNITY.

Our Mission

To empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As President of
the Board for
California ReLeaf,

I am pleased to share some of the highlights of 2012, all which signify the continued growth and expansion of the organization's mission of preserving, protecting, and enhancing California's urban and community forests.

The growth of the California ReLeaf Network from 73 to 88 members shows that the California ReLeaf message is reaching an increasing number of communities, and our mission continues to be embraced and propagated throughout the state. Each Network member plays a unique role in their community, and with the added members we can continue to impact the development and growth of the urban and community forests within California.

Our Board of Directors welcomed two new members this year – Catherine Martineau and Tracy Lesperance. What a dynamic group of people! We come from all different professions and backgrounds, but braid together so nicely. The common thread of service and legacy resonates throughout our work. Together, we acknowledge the work of Executive Director Joe Liszewski and the entire ReLeaf team in reaching out to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The effort to secure EPA funding has allowed us to expand our work in environmental education through the EPA Environmental Education Sub-Grant Program.

2012 also marked the completion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grant – the capstone of the year at ReLeaf. All of us at California ReLeaf are excited to have job creation become part of the conversation. These projects acted as a catalyst for Network members to make even a bigger difference by creating lasting legacies within their communities and by providing job training and educational opportunities throughout the state.

As a board member and officer of the organization, watching the professionalism of the California ReLeaf staff as they tackled this one-of-a-kind project left me in awe. I'm so proud to be a part of this team!

I challenge you to get involved with a ReLeaf Network member, volunteer at a local tree planting, or become an advocate for safe and professional tree care in your own neighborhood. Go out on a limb and share your love for trees and the sense of community they bring to your city or town with someone new. Support California ReLeaf, because the differences we make together will live on for generations. It's as easy as plant – care – grow!

Rose Epperson

*urban or
community
forest* (noun)

**The trees, plants,
and natural
resources within a
city or town.**

**Example: The
trees, parks, trails,
streams, and
green spaces in
your community
– even your
backyard – are
parts of the urban
forest.**





FUF plants a parklet in an SF parking space.

GROW JOBS.

Like many other small businesses and nonprofits at the end of 2008, San Francisco's Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) was going through a tough time. They were cutting back on their programs; staff members were being laid off.

The light at the end of the tunnel came in the form of funding from the American Recovery and

Reinvestment Act (ARRA) administered through California ReLeaf. Fast forward to 2012 and you would see that this funding stabilized FUF's programmatic and administrative operations, ensured the successful management of three major program areas, and not only kept 9 people employed, but expanded the job skills of dozens of under-employed Californians.

FUF's story is not unique.

2012 marked the end of the 17 ARRA grant projects. The care and management of California's urban and community forests through this program resulted in nearly 90,000 trees planted and maintained, the creation and retention of more than 380 local jobs, and the match of over \$5 million locally. The ARRA projects proved that urban and community forests create local jobs and have a positive impact on California's economy.

"California ReLeaf was a true partner in the management of the ARRA grant, passionate and meticulously thoughtful, helping us review progress and advising on areas we could enhance or expand upon. Every discussion was a conversation – there were no directives, just well-informed comments that not only ensured our nonprofit's adherence to uphold the integrity of the grant agreement and its deliverables, but also served to create positive organizational outcomes."

–Doug Wildman, Program Director, FUF



PLANT STEWARDSHIP.

After tackling the challenge of administering the ARRA grants and seeing dramatic results, California ReLeaf began to look even more intently for strategic partnerships that would continue to grow California's urban and community forestry program in meaningful ways. The first of those non-traditional, strategic partnerships came in the form of a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

At the beginning of 2012, there was buzz that the EPA's Environmental Education Sub-grant Program had received an overwhelming number of proposals, including one that California ReLeaf had submitted for a program that would allow groups to not only plant trees, but would also give project participants the skills needed to make informed environmental decisions. In March, California ReLeaf was thrilled to learn that the proposed program was the only EPA Environmental Education Sub-grant Project funded in Region 9 – an area that serves Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, and the Pacific Islands.

Receiving the grant is a testament to the ReLeaf Network and California ReLeaf's ability to think outside the box and proof of the ability of urban and community forestry to serve as a tool for building the environmental stewards of tomorrow.

STEWARDSHIP IN ACTION.

Kids and Creeks, a Chico-based organization that enhances K-12 science education, fosters stewardship, and improves watershed health, has hosted 12 habitat restoration trips that highlighted tree maintenance as a tool to ensure the long-term health of the native forest community, and in effect, the Big and Little Chico Creek watersheds and related ecological communities.

Without enough volunteers or city staff to successfully ensure the long-term health of Chico's urban forest or to educate the community about the importance of its maintenance, the ecosystems that support the area have been threatened. The work that Kids and Creeks has been able to accomplish through the ReLeaf Urban Forestry and Education Grant Program funded by the EPA, has not only removed these challenges, but created citizens who care about their urban forests and take action.



CARE FOR THE FUTURE OF URBAN FORESTRY.

“Call off your Network. I got the message; nonprofits will be included.”

Those were the words a key legislative consultant spoke to ReLeaf staff near the end of the 2012 legislative session. It had been 24 hours since staff members had learned that multiple proposals for the future of cap-and-trade revenues did not include local projects of nonprofits. California ReLeaf and the ReLeaf Network stepped up to the plate for the entire nonprofit community by orchestrating letters, calls, and talking points directed at statewide policy makers and members regarding the critical role of nonprofits in pending legislation.

The strategic efforts of California ReLeaf and the ReLeaf Network earlier in the year saved the day. Groundwork had been laid for urban forestry as an important part of the cap-and-trade discussion in local legislative meetings. These meetings gave Network members a chance to communicate their achievements in district and tie them back to what needed to be accomplished in Sacramento with pending legislation.

California ReLeaf had encouraged Network members to get engaged in the Sacramento discussion as well. With talking points provided by ReLeaf, Network members were able to weave the stories of their local projects into a conversation that wasn't only about urban forestry, but also about nonprofits completing urban forestry projects. These projects demonstrated that local efforts were meeting the needs of AB 32 in ways others couldn't. The ReLeaf Network had been prepared for action.

When all was said and done, what went to the Governor's desk was signed into law containing language that included forestry as an eligible project, directed investment toward the most disadvantaged communities, and provided opportunities for businesses, public agencies, nonprofits, and other community institutions to participate in and benefit from statewide efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Today, California ReLeaf is working side-by-side to further this effort with other statewide organizations like The Nature Conservancy, The Trust for Public Land, Pacific Forest Trust, and Coalition for Clean Air – groups who all understand what urban forestry provides to California.



North East Trees volunteers and members plant a tree.

FROM THE NETWORK

Mark Kenyon, Executive Director
North East Trees

How did California ReLeaf affect North East Trees' legislative efforts in 2012?

While we're active with our local elected officials, North East Trees is always busy doing so many things – planting and caring for trees, educating the public

– that it's not always possible for us to remain up-to-date on statewide issues during the small amount of time we can give to advocacy. California ReLeaf kept us informed about the important ways to act and the best times to take action for the most results. Because of California ReLeaf's deep understanding of legislation and the legislative process, we were able to focus our efforts and resources to get the most benefit.

Additionally, with several other like-minded efforts in the Los Angeles area, ReLeaf had the ability to aggregate our voices to help focus the efforts of urban forestry nonprofits.

What did you accomplish through in-district meetings with your legislators?

We accomplished the mission we're most interested in doing: increasing decision-makers' awareness of the many benefits of urban forests and the need for trees as solutions to our city's problems. Having statewide supporters in attendance at those meetings helped to strengthen our message.

California ReLeaf staff made sure that, even though different groups were in attendance, our talking points united our messages and made the most effective arguments for urban forestry possible.

How have California ReLeaf's legislative advocacy efforts made a difference for urban forestry?

Individual groups don't have the statewide access that ReLeaf has. Because of their ability to see our shared issues and bring together our collective voice, their efforts make a huge difference.

For example, there's no doubt that without the work that ReLeaf did last year that nonprofits wouldn't be a part of the Cap & Trade policy. The last minute change in policy was something local groups wouldn't have even known was an issue until it was too late. ReLeaf battled to make sure that nonprofits were not excluded.

I like to think of California ReLeaf as the 100-pound gorilla in a room full of 500-pound gorillas. They're small but mighty!

GROW THE NETWORK.

Traditionally, California ReLeaf Network member groups have fit within a certain mold. Tree planting and care was their primary goal and, for some, their only activity. As the understanding of urban and community forestry has grown, so have the types of groups that plant and care for the trees in our cities and towns. California ReLeaf realized that the mold should be broken.

That's why in 2012, California ReLeaf expanded the definition of a ReLeaf Network member. Today, our members not only plant and care for trees, they also educate the public, beautify their cities, provide job training for disadvantaged youth, protect their community parks, and ensure food equity.

The ReLeaf Network is a powerful coalition that uses trees as tools to combat air and water pollution, childhood obesity, and environmental injustice. Feel free to think of them as superheroes.



*Tree Davis volunteers
celebrate California Arbor
Week.*



Goleta Valley Beautiful volunteers work to correctly position a tree.



*LA Conservation Corpsmembers
plant a tree on a busy Los Angeles
street.*

CALIFORNIA RELEAF NETWORK

Amigos de los Rios, Altadena*
Arroyo Seco Foundation, Los Angeles
Atascadero Native Tree Association
Atherton Tree Committee
Benicia Tree Foundation*
California Association of Local Conservation Corps,
Sacramento*
California Center for Sustainable Energy, San Diego*
California Community Forests Foundation, Sacramento*
California Urban Forests Council, Novato*
Canopy, Palo Alto*
Carpinteria Beautiful
City of Lompac Appearance & Beautification Committee
CityTrees, Redwood City*
Collective Roots, East Palo Alto
Common Vision, Ukiah*
Community Services & Employment Training, Inc. (CSET),
Visalia*
Coronado Street Tree Committee*
Fallbrook Land Conservancy -Save Our Forest Committee
Forestry Educators, Inc.
Friends of Balboa Park, San Diego
Friends of Carmel Forest*
Friends of the Palo Alto Parks
Friends of the Urban Forest, San Francisco*
Full Circle Farms, Sunnyvale
Goleta Valley Beautiful*
Greenspace - The Cambria Land Trust
Highland Environmental Education Coalition
Hollywood/Los Angeles Beautification Team*
Huntington Beach Tree Society*
Incredible Edible Community Garden, Upland*
Just One Tree, San Francisco
Keep Eureka Beautiful*
Koreatown Youth & Community Center, Los Angeles*
Los Angeles Community Forest Advisory Committee
Los Angeles Community Garden Council
Los Angeles Conservation Corps*
Magic, Palo Alto
Marin ReLeaf
Markham Regional Arboretum Society, Concord
Mendocino County ReLeaf
Mountain View Trees
Mountains Restoration Trust, Calabasas
North East Trees, Los Angeles*
Oakland Landscape Committee*

Oak Habitat Restoration Project - Walnut Creek Open
Space Foundation
Ojai Trees*
Ojai Valley Land Conservancy
Orange County Great Park
Orange for Trees
Our City Forest, San Jose*
Patrick's Point Garden Club, Arcata
Professional Tree Care Association of San Diego
Richmond Trees*
Riverside-Corona Resource Conservation District*
Roseville Urban Forest Foundation*
Sacramento Tree Foundation*
San Bernardino Volunteer Yard Beautification Project
San Diego Community Forest Advisory Board
San Joaquin Regional Conservation Corps, Stockton*
San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden
Santa Barbara Beautiful, Inc.
Santa Barbara County ReLeaf*
Santa Margarita Community Forestry
Sempervirens Fund
Shadetree Partnership, Inc., Irvine
Solano Advocates Green Environments (SAGE)
South San Francisco Beautification Committee
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Forest Ranch
Street Tree Seminar, Inc., Anaheim
Tree Davis
Tree Foundation of Kern*
Tree Fresno*
Tree Guild of Arroyo Grande
Tree Lindsay
Tree Lodi
Tree Musketeers, El Segundo*
Tree Partners Foundation, Atwater*
TreePeople, Beverly Hills*
Trees for Seal Beach
University Arboretum at CSU Sacramento*
Urban Corps of San Diego*
Urban Releaf, Oakland*
Urban Tree Foundation, Visalia*
Victoria Avenue Forever, Riverside*
West Hollywood Tree Preservation Society*
West Oakland Green Initiative
Woodland Tree Foundation*

** The financial support of these ReLeaf Network members helped to sustain our programs in 2012.*

PLANT PARTNERSHIPS.

When you get proactive, ambitious people together, something big is bound to happen. So, it was no surprise when a veteran ReLeaf Network member – Urban Releaf of Oakland – and a new Network

member – The Incredible Edible Community Garden of Upland– developed a partnership in just a few short days at this year’s annual conference.

“We have a North-South California partnership and plan to support each

other’s projects starting in 2013,” says Incredible Edible founder Mary Petit.

Over 400 miles separate the communities these organizations serve, but they were brought together in November for the Arbor Day Foundation “Partners in Community Forestry” conference, Alliance for Community Trees Day, and the California ReLeaf Network Retreat.

Organizations from all over the nation attended this three-day event held in Sacramento. Over and over, California ReLeaf Network members showed that the state’s groups lead the country in the preservation, protection, and enhancement of our urban forests. Partnerships like the one made between Urban Releaf and The Incredible Edible Community Garden will continue to lead the way in making our communities green and sustainable.



Nearly a hundred elementary school children crowded around as an avocado tree was planted in front of Brentwood Academy in East Palo Alto in early October.

CARE FOR OUR FUTURE.

The first of 110 trees to be planted that day, the avocado tree would provide shade and fruit (and guacamole!) – things that excited the kids who attend the public school in a disadvantaged neighborhood. That day, students were joined by parents, teachers, the former mayor of Palo Alto, and employees of Silicon Valley Tech companies to plant shade, food, and hope.



Top: The Brentwood Academy playground before the planting.

Bottom: A rendering of what playground will look like after trees have matured.



These kids suffer from a disproportionately higher asthma rate than children in the same county who live and attend school in areas with more trees. Before the trees were planted, there were days when playground equipment was too hot to touch, much less play on. Teachers noted that, during recess, kids would just sit under the awnings outside their classrooms instead of playing because of how hot their school grounds were.

Because of a partnership between Canopy and California ReLeaf and funding from Odwalla, these children will be happier and healthier. They will breathe easier. They'll get more exercise and fresh fruit to eat. Odwalla would say that now, goodness grows there.

GROW KNOWLEDGE.

A 3rd grader focuses as she draws a picture of a tree growing outside her house. A photographer waits for just the right light to pass through the fog before he snaps a picture of his favorite tree. High school students laugh as they plant a tree outside their school. A family learns how to care for the trees in their neighborhood. Each of these is a snapshot of a California Arbor Week celebration.



2012's 4th grade winner

There is something powerful about a large group of people doing the same thing at the same time, especially when what they're doing is planting and caring for trees in their communities. March 7-14, citizens across the state planted over 1,000 trees and cared for another 1,000 trees at nearly 90 events. That's nearly 300 trees planted or maintained each day of the week!

But California Arbor Week is about more than just planting and caring for trees. It's about teaching Californians about the value of trees in their communities. It's about educating school children so that they will grow up to be the next keepers of the urban forest. It's about teaching communities to appreciate their trees for more than just the aesthetics they add. It's about growing an understanding of the urban forests' potential.



GROW RELEAF.



USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program – In 2012, Urban & Community Forestry (UCF) provided sustaining support to California ReLeaf for strategic planning and organizational development. UCF is a program of the USDA Forest Service that provides technical and financial assistance to cities and communities to improve their urban ecosystems through tree planting, stewardship programs, and natural resource education. (www.fs.fed.us)



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) continued its long-time partnership with California ReLeaf over the course of 2012. CAL FIRE provided support for local projects, research, and educational opportunities for the ReLeaf Network. CAL FIRE's Urban Forestry Program works to expand and improve the management of trees and related vegetation in communities throughout California. (www.calfire.ca.gov)



US Environmental Protection Agency – The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$150,000 to California ReLeaf to enhance environmental education efforts by urban and community forestry groups. The EPA's Environmental Education Sub-grants Program is a competitive program designed to increase public awareness about environmental issues, and give project participants the skills necessary to make informed environmental decisions. (www.epa.gov)



"California ReLeaf is a vital partner to CAL FIRE's Urban Forestry Program and is an important ally in communicating the benefits urban and community forests provide to California's communities and citizens."

CHIEF KEN PIMLOTT, CAL FIRE

THANK YOU

to our donors and supporters!

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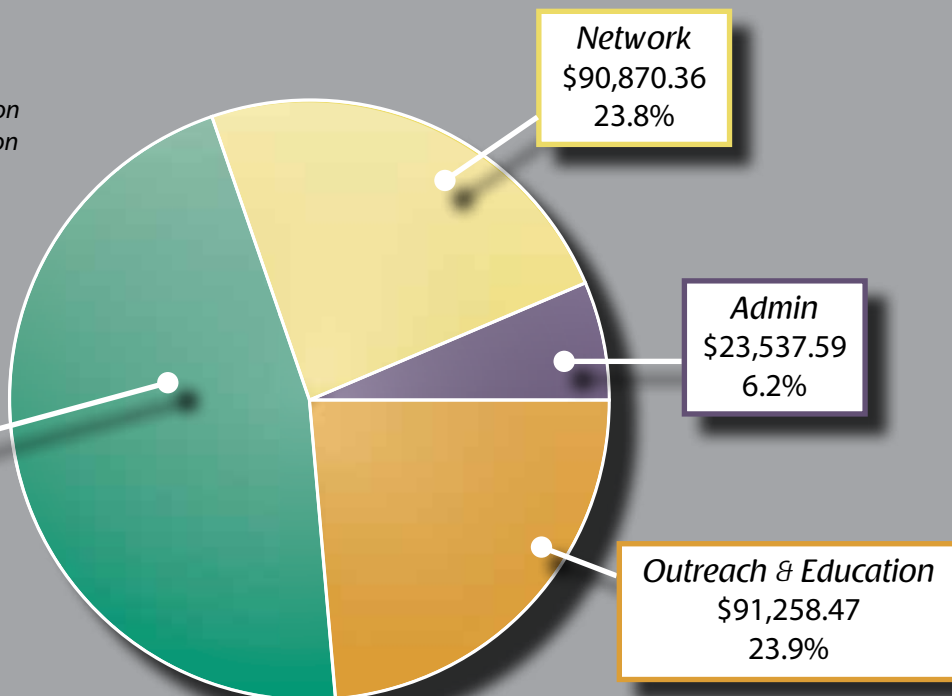
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Arjun & Amanda install a red dyke to help an Our City Forest tree grow upright.



FINANCIALS

California ReLeaf operates on a fiscal year. This information reflects the 2012 calendar year expenses.



Total = \$381,053.15

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2012 AT A GLANCE

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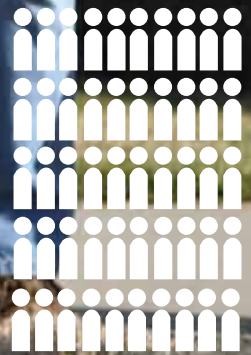
RELEAF
NETWORK
MEMBERS

PLANT. CARE. GROW.

"California ReLeaf allows our organization to focus on local grassroots activities but still play a role in a statewide effort."

– Tree Partners

NEARLY
157,000
VOLUNTEERS
DEDICATED
THEIR TIME



PLANT
A
TREE

130k
TREES

planted & cared
for by the ReLeaf
Network and local
partners

"ReLeaf's leadership role is invaluable and allows our combined voices to be heard as a reliable force." – TreePeople

californiareleaf.org



THE VISION OF CALIFORNIA RELEAF

is of a vital network of grassroots groups working in partnership with each other, businesses and local governments across the state. Through these efforts, an educated public has come to treasure the value of the urban forest as integral to quality of life, economic well being, and a sustainable global environment. Citizens motivated by an appreciation of the beauty and diversity, both natural and human, that characterize the nation's most populous state have filled all communities with trees that live long, healthy lives.

We can see it, but we need your help to achieve it.

PLANT TREES. CARE FOR URBAN FORESTS. GROW YOUR COMMUNITY.



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