

Spring 2016

California Trees



On-Demand Education

More Resources When & Where You Need Them

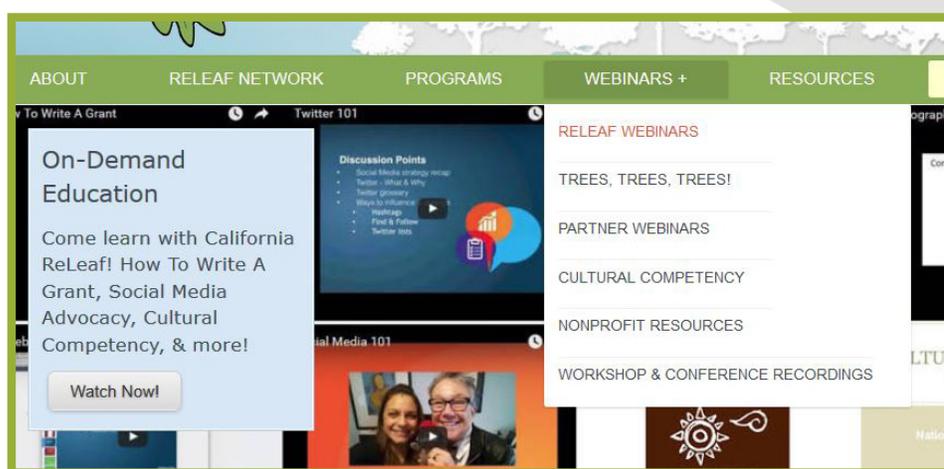
By Melissa Gutierrez

We understand: you're busy. So how can we best use online media to truly engage our community and partners and provide them with effective, helpful information? In order to provide the most benefits to our ReLeaf Network (our network of 90+ urban forest and education groups), California ReLeaf examined our online resources to ensure they were doing just that.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

We already had the core pieces in place: a website, a Facebook page, a Twitter account. With the support of a grant from CAL FIRE, California ReLeaf began exploring the best ways to build capacity for current and new Network members via online resources.

We asked ourselves and several Network members about the kind of information community groups need most to develop successful urban forest programs: *If a community group wanted to plant trees to improve their neighborhood, what information would be most helpful? What's the easiest way for a*



small nonprofit with little time to learn new skills? If you wanted to start a nonprofit, what information or documents would be most helpful?

CURATING THE URBAN FOREST

California ReLeaf has long served as a collector and distributor of research- and evidence-based content. Our goal today is to be an online urban forest curator and clearinghouse for helpful information. With so much information available, our ongoing challenge is to share new information in a timely fashion – via social media and eblasts, but

also to organize critical, compelling information on our website so that it's easy to find and share.

BUILDING A COLLECTION THAT COUNTS

Knowing that time is a precious resource for small nonprofits and that travel for in-person training is difficult to arrange and afford, California ReLeaf concluded that building a library of webinars for on-demand education was essential.

With webinars, nonprofit staff and volunteers can set their own schedule for learning new skills, perhaps incorporating the webinars into staff training sessions. Staff and volunteers

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*California
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can even re-watch a webinar if the subject matter is complex – like calculating carbon sequestration. All nonprofits have turnover, too, so new employees can watch webinars as part of their orientation and job training.

To kick off our revamped online education program, ReLeaf offered a series of live webinars. We hosted several webinars with help from our Network members and partners. We also leveraged work done by experts outside the usual urban forest realm, such as the National Association for Interpretation and Sacramento-based marketing firm Uptown Studios, to deliver even more specialized content.

In very short order we posted a host of new webinars on topics we'd never covered before, such as cultural competency, racial justice, how to start a nonprofit, and social media advocacy.

Now at californiareleaf.org/resources/webinars:

- 14 new on-demand webinars
- Links to other valuable webinar resources like the **Alliance for Community Trees**, the **USFS Urban Forest Connections**, and the **i-Tree Online Workshop Series**
- Educational videos from in-person workshops like last summer's **2015 ReLeaf Network Leadership Conference**

In addition to the new webinars and videos, we also added a brand-new section called “Nonprofit Resources” with sample documents (for example, By-Laws, Employee Handbooks, and Memoranda of Agreement) from established urban forest organizations. Finally, we added a new Google search function that allows users to find anything on the ReLeaf website quickly and easily.

This revamped clearinghouse is just the beginning of a trend towards on-demand learning. There's plenty of room for expansion and improvement: super-short “back to basics” building-block type of videos would enable anyone with a smartphone to pull up a resource in the middle of a planting or tree care event and receive instant information in just 30 seconds – or allow educators to quickly and easily drop videos into classroom presentations or discussions.

ReLeaf has started a new project to highlight videos and media from our Network Members, which cover tree planting and tree care info. One of the key reasons ReLeaf was started in 1989 was to facilitate peer-to-peer learning. We recently made it easier for you to check out what ReLeaf Network members are doing with quick links to their website, Facebook and Twitter accounts – so curating a collection of Network videos to showcase on ReLeaf's website is the next step in ease of access and resource-sharing.

IT'S STILL WHO YOU KNOW

With California ReLeaf collecting so many resources, the question remains: how do we connect people? A significant element of expanding our online outreach efforts has included increasing our network of online relationships by taking part in a diverse array of online communities and actively connecting with our Network Members' online spaces.

Overall, delivering easier access to helpful online resources enables California ReLeaf to better serve the ReLeaf Network, and also connects us with new partners interested in improving their neighborhoods through trees. Online learning and social media provide both California ReLeaf and the ReLeaf Network with expanded opportunities for engagement, education, and collaboration – all of which are absolutely critical to helping our urban forest grow like never before, like carbon dioxide and sunlight are to trees. ■

WEBINARS

California ReLeaf is proud to offer our Network the following new on-demand webinars:

- **Latino Engagement with Nature & the Outdoors**
- **Cultural Competency 101**
- **Building Solidarity for Racial Justice**
- **How To Write A Grant**
- **Social Media 101**
- **Twitter 101**
- **Facebook 101**
- **Photography 101: Tips & Tricks to Make Good Photos Great**
- **Social Media Advocacy**



A weekly Twitter #treechat allows us to connect with tree lovers around California and beyond, collect even more new resources, and share our resources with Network Members and other tree lovers around the nation.



NETWORK SPOTLIGHT: LOS ANGELES

BEAUTIFICATION TEAM

What is LABT's history? The Los Angeles Beautification Team (formerly the Hollywood Beautification Team) was created from the Hollywood Neighborhood Watch Movement in the 1990s. Over the past 24 years, LABT has increasingly grown from its grassroots beginnings to serve entire communities in the County of Los Angeles by planting trees, designing and implementing resource conservation projects, and improving school campuses, neighborhoods and business districts.

What is your mission? To improve the quality of life in Los Angeles by empowering citizens to change their environment for the better.

What is one of the best programs LABT currently offers? LABT is currently partnering with the US Forest Service and UC Davis on the implementation of a local study on Climate-Ready Trees. Fourteen different tree species from desert and low water areas are being analyzed over a 20-year period to evaluate the survival and growth through California's climate change.

What are you most proud of at LABT?

LABT's ability to make a meaningful difference every day. LABT has always kept the community's interest as its main focus through community education and civic empowerment, physical improvements, and job creation. ■



Visit hbteam.org to learn more!

Network Highlights:

- Though the holiday season is long gone, innovative Christmas tree adoption programs from groups like Our City Forest & Friends of the Urban Forest are here to stay for years to come.
- In recognition of 100 Years of Service by the Women's Club of Huntington Beach, the Huntington Beach Tree Society collaborated to replant Central Park Drive.
- Join us in welcoming the newest ReLeaf Network Members: Industrial District Green and Urban Conservation Corps of the Inland Empire!

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: BUDGET, BILLS SIGNAL BANNER YEAR FOR URBAN FORESTRY

By Chuck Mills, Director of Public Policy & Grants

The first quarter of the new year is already showing tremendous promise for urban forestry on the public policy front. The 2016-17 State Budget proposed by Governor Jerry Brown includes \$50 million in urban forestry and related green infrastructure funding for projects that reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) and provide communities with additional co-benefits. This allocation is in addition to other proposed relevant funding, including nearly \$7 million for the Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program.

Additional Administration actions coming from the Natural Resources Agency and the Air Resources Board also bode well for our urban forests. Concept papers released in March for the 2016 Scoping Plan update and the Forest Climate Action Team have dedicated sections detailing goals, objectives and strategies to increase

urban tree canopy by 5% over the next 14 years and protect greenspace and trees in cities and towns throughout the state. Both concept papers will be developed into full reports in 2016.

At the State Legislature, partners such as TreePeople, The Greenlining Institute, and Defenders of Wildlife are sponsoring bills that also advance urban forestry through either funding opportunities or changes to state law.

California ReLeaf is supporting everything outlined above, and working closely with coalition partners and decision-makers to ensure this year's State Budget is a boon, not a bust, for urban forestry and the community groups dedicated to greening our golden state. ■



Additional Legislative Highlights

- **Senate Bill 1386 (Wolk)**, which memorializes the role of natural and working lands as a key strategy in meeting the state's greenhouse gas reduction goals
- **Senate Bill 1294 (Pavley)**, which would give CAL FIRE statutory authority to administer grants for tree care and maintenance under the Urban and Community Forestry Program
- **Assembly Bill 2722 (Burke)**, which would give the Strategic Growth Council \$250M for local Climate Community Plans that incorporate multiple GHG reduction elements, including urban forests.



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Want to Help?

Every dollar donated to California ReLeaf helps us strengthen and secure urban forestry legislative efforts in California by speaking for trees at the Capitol.

Donate online at californiareleaf.org/donate.

California ReLeaf is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and donations are tax-deductible. Our Tax Identification number is 90-0138904.

Thank you for your support!



SAVE THE DATE!



August 9-11, 2016 Save the Date!

The Power of Trees:

Building Resilient Communities

California Urban & Community Forests Conference
Pico House, El Pueblo de Los Angeles,
430 Main Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012




Our 2016 Network Retreat will be Tuesday, August 9 from 9am - 4pm at the California Urban & Community Forests Conference. Join us for peer-to-peer learning and resource sharing from incredible urban forest & community groups all over California.

Registration, agenda, and accommodations will be available soon at

californiareleaf.org/events

Don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or suggestions:
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