Volunteers and Lessons Learned

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Friends of the Urban Forest 2015-2016

- Planted 1,255 trees – (#15 & 24” box at over 60 planting events)
- Pruned/cared for 4,000 trees
- Enjoyed 1,200 unique volunteers (200 repeaters)
- Trained-up 20 Community Foresters, 6 Arborist Apprentices and 14 Interns
- Utilize 7 field staff, 9 support staff (4 of which are part time)
- $2.3 million budget
Why do we even use volunteers?

_Besides saving grant and donation dollars, volunteers . . ._

- **Build Community**
  - strong resilient neighborhoods (for emergencies)
- **Build Grassroot Advocates for your Cause**
  - lobbying elected officials
- **Increase Capacity to Care for the Urban Forest**
  - storm damage awareness and contact
  - data collection
- **Gateway Drug into participation in even larger environmental causes or other volunteer opportunities in your community**
Volunteers are important to our cause
Lessons Learned

1. Your field staff being people persons is essential for the Volunteer Coordinator to retain volunteers.

2. Efficient work day start up - reduce chaos.

3. Educate volunteers about your organization to create advocates for your cause.

4. Have a variety of clear, consistent volunteer opportunities.
Volunteer Coordinator + Amazing Staff . . .

Can Lead to . . .

Amazing Volunteers

Beer and food may help the volunteer experience at evening trainings!

Greening San Francisco
Efficient check-ins
Educating volunteers about your organization is key to creating advocates for your cause.
Have a **variety** of **clear**, **consistent** volunteer opportunities.
FUF Volunteer Opportunities
Neighborhood tree planting
Sidewalk landscaping: the understory
Tree care

– No Frown Friday pruning
– Saturday morning pruning
– Treeage
Community engagement

– Corporate workdays
– Neighborhood coordinator
– **Green Christmas**
– Tree tours
– Urban Forest Map
– Bio-blitz
Training

– Pruning Workshops
– Community Forester
– Arborist Apprentice Program
  (S.F. General Hospital)
– Internship Program
– **Inclusivity** whenever and where ever possible
Office assistance, board member and board committees

– Filing and helping with the phones
– Board support
Advocacy

– The “Lorax” of San Francisco
– “FUF Advocates”
– Grassroots support for Urban Forest Plan
Have a **variety** of **clear, consistent volunteer opportunities**
How do people know about all of your events?

Your events page on your website

And your electronic newsletter
Three additional thoughts on volunteers

1. Volunteers are proud of their affiliation with you.
2. Volunteers appreciate simple thank you events
3. Celebrate achievements and talk about the work that was done!
Any Questions?

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