



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2020

**THE USDA FOREST SERVICE, CAL FIRE, AND
CALIFORNIA RELEAF HONOR CALIFORNIA ARBOR WEEK
\$72,000 IN GRANTS FOR
TREE PLANTING & TREE CARE EDUCATIONAL EVENTS**

Sacramento, California – The USDA Forest Service, California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, and California ReLeaf welcome the support and sponsorship of Edison International and Northrop Grumman to celebrate the 2020 California Arbor Week, March 7-14, 2020. This year \$72,000 in Arbor Week grants were made possible in partnership with Edison International and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Northrop Grumman sponsors the California Arbor Week Art Contest for schoolchildren.

A press conference will be held on March 12, 2020 at Nuevo Park in Sacramento to honor California Arbor Week and the Arbor Week grantees as well as unveil the winners of the annual art contest.

The Forest Service, CAL FIRE, and California ReLeaf welcome the partnership of Edison International and Northrop Grumman in this important annual recognition of the value of trees. The Forest Service actively supports community tree planting in urban areas of California with support for education and pass-through grants.

This year Edison International increased their support with \$42,000 for urban trees in their region to help combat climate change and increasing extreme heat events in Southern California. Edison and public health officials recognize that extreme heat events greatly impact population health and that trees play a vital role in mitigating urban heat island effect.

CAL FIRE funding provides an additional \$30,000 in Arbor Week grant funding to cover the entire state.

“Arbor week is a celebration of the value of our urban forests and the role communities across California can play in preserving and protecting urban trees,” said Chief Thom Porter, CAL FIRE

Director and California's state forester. "Urban trees play an important role in mitigating the effects of a hotter, dryer climate by storing carbon, cooling cities, cleaning the air, and providing shade and beauty to California's urban landscape."

"Increasingly the public health community recognizes the incredible array of health benefits urban trees bring to Californians, including reducing community ambient air temperatures. It is very encouraging that partners like Edison International are stepping up to increase community tree planting events to build greener, cooler, and healthier communities." said Cindy Blain, Executive Director of California ReLeaf.

Media Notes:

USDA Forest Service: The USDA Forest Service manages 18 national forests in the Pacific Southwest Region, which encompasses over 20 million acres across California, and assists state and private forest landowners in California, Hawaii and the U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands. National forests supply 50 percent of the water in California and form the watershed of most major aqueducts and more than 2,400 reservoirs throughout the state. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection: As part of the department's mission, CAL FIRE is charged with protecting California's forests by maintaining the sustainability of the state's natural resources including both urban and wildland forests. CAL FIRE is encouraging everyone to be a part of California Arbor Week by planting a tree. It's important that you carefully plan before you plant a tree to ensure that your tree is drought tolerant and properly placed to avoid growing into power lines, buildings or other infrastructure. Get more planting tips on the CAL FIRE website at www.fire.ca.gov.

California ReLeaf's mission is to empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests. California Arbor Week runs March 7 - 14 each year. For more on all California ReLeaf's statewide urban forest community development program, please visit <http://californiareleaf.org/>

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