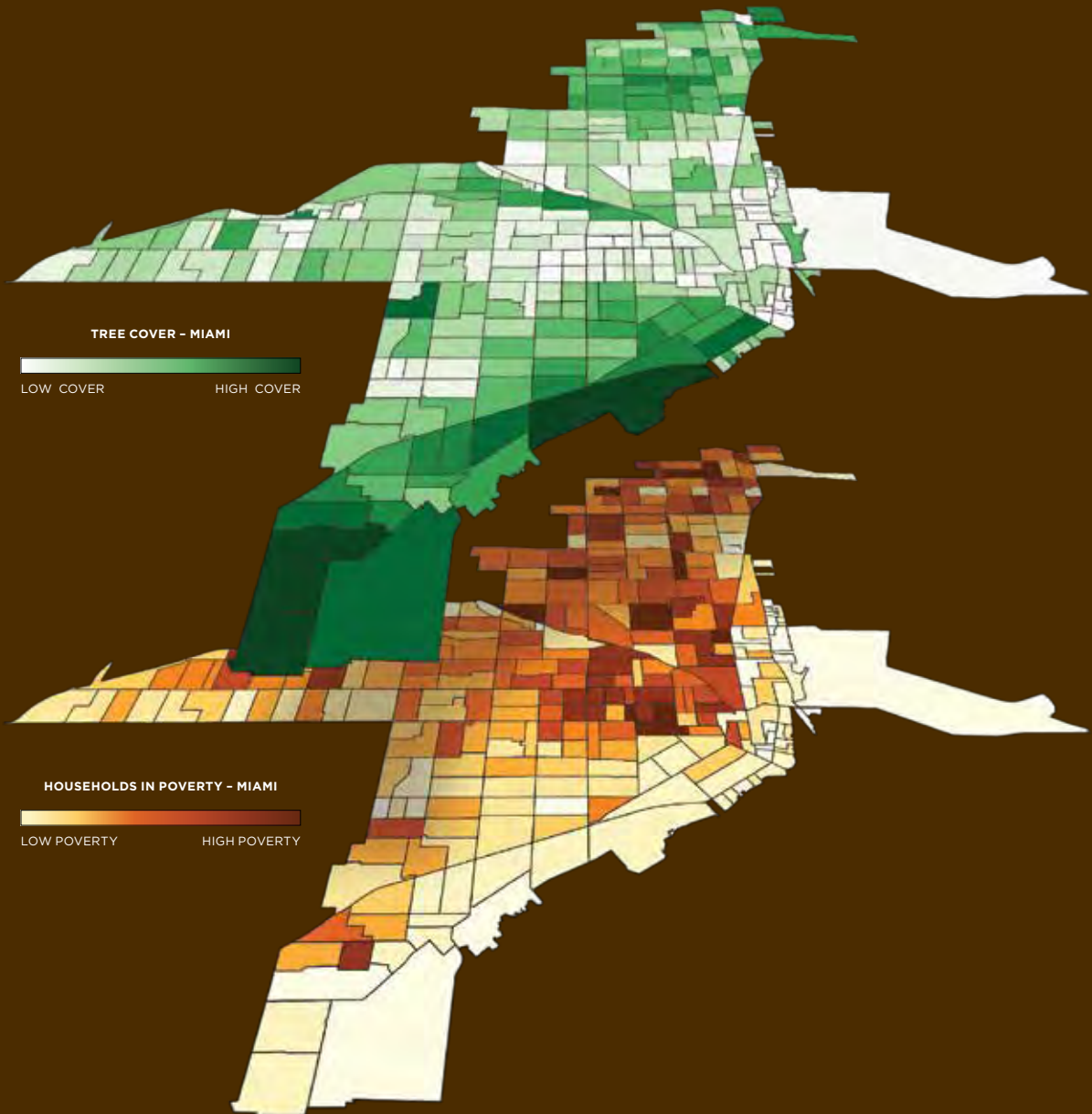


AMERICAN

WINTER/SPRING 2020

FORESTS



Tree Equity

PLANTING LIFE-AND-DEATH INFRASTRUCTURE
IN CITIES NATIONWIDE

PUT STOCK IN FORESTS: A LIVING INVESTMENT

And find a wealth
of benefits for the
short and long term

Your gift of stocks, bonds or mutual funds can plant a living investment of trees to ensure forests thrive far into the future and provide the benefits of clean air and water to future generations.

With an outright gift of appreciated securities to American Forests, you may save on capital gains and income taxes, while protecting and restoring critical forest ecosystems.

In 2018, the IRS declared that charitable donations from your tax-deferred IRA or 401(k) will be exempt from taxation up to \$100,000. Speak to your financial advisor about how you can generously support forest restoration, while minimizing or avoiding tax on distributions from those accounts.

Questions? Contact Jennifer Broome, vice president of philanthropy, jbroom@americanforests.org, 202-370-4513.

American Forests cannot offer legal or tax advice. Please consult your lawyer or tax advisor about the advantages of making a charitable gift of appreciated assets.



AMERICAN FORESTS

A tree you plant today may outlive your grandchildren's grandchildren's grandchildren. This Great Basin bristlecone pine is 5,067 years old, the oldest-known living, non-clonal organism on Earth.



Departments

2 Offshoots

A word from our President & CEO

4 Treelines

PROJECT SHOWCASES: Read about the diverse group of partners working to expand the city's tree cover in Wilmington, Del., and restore thornscrub forest in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

FROM THE FIELD: From Boston to Oakland, Calif., follow what we've been up to in the field.

PROFILES: Learn about our partnership with Travelers and what drives Lex Sant's passion for nature-based solutions to climate change.

WASHINGTON OUTLOOK: Learn how American Forests has worked diligently during this Congress to ensure policymakers understand the important role of forests as a climate solution.

CHAMPION TREE SHOWCASE: The Pitch Pine

40 Investing in People by Investing in Trees

Discover what American Forests does to bridge the gap between urban forestry job shortages and people who need career opportunities the most through our Career Pathways: Tree Equity initiative.

46 Earthkeepers

RESTORING THE ROOTS OF ROCK

How the music industry's future depends on healthy forests and what American Forests, the U.S. Forest Service and Fender Musical Instruments are doing to ensure the stability of both.

48 Last Look

DESIGNING A GREEN FUTURE

A look at how youth are learning to create equitable and sustainable urbanism.



Features

14

Back to the Future

By Jad Daley

Discover how American Forests' extensive history has shaped the future of forestry.

24

Planting Tree Equity

By Sarah Wade

Learn how economic inequity and tree cover in cities are inextricably linked, as well as what American Forests does to create Tree Equity.

32

Changing the Face of the Outdoors

By Sarah Mae Brown

How individuals and organizations create access to nature for everyone.

New Momentum for Tree Equity

BY JAD DALEY



American Forests sees Tree Equity as a moral imperative, offering a litmus test of our nation's commitment to its ideals.

A MAP of tree cover in virtually any city in America is also a map of income and, in many cases, race in ways that transcend income. That means that our cities' tree inequities are worsening other societal inequities, starting with public health.



America urgently needs Tree Equity. Why? Because having trees in your neighborhood is a life-or-death matter.

Neighborhoods with little to no trees can, on average, be 5 to 7 degrees hotter during the day and up to 22 degrees hotter at night than neighborhoods with good tree cover. Treeless neighborhoods also have worse air pollution because trees trap air pollutants and the hotter temperatures in these treeless neighborhoods help cook air pollutants into dangerous smog.

That's one of the reasons why health experts project a ten-fold increase in heat-related deaths across America's cities. In Dallas, for example, a recent American Forests study showed potential to reduce heat-related deaths 22 percent by planting more trees and better protecting existing tree cover, especially in low-income neighborhoods.

Achieving Tree Equity means that all neighborhoods within a city will reach a citywide standard of tree cover that is feasible and appropriate for each city's unique climate and context. Given the immense consequences, American Forests sees Tree Equity as a moral imperative, offering a litmus test of our nation's commitment to its ideals. This work is also an opportunity for greater economic equity because we can link people in marginalized communities into career opportunities, advancing Tree Equity across their neighborhoods and beyond.



AMERICAN FORESTS

EDITORIAL STAFF

Publisher

Jad Daley

Editorial Director

Jill Schwartz

Managing Editor

Ashlan Bonnell

Contributing Editor

Michael Woestehoff

Art Direction and Design

Brad Latham

American Forests (ISSN 0002-8541) is published quarterly by American Forests, 1220 L St. NW, Suite 750 Washington, DC 20005. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to American Forests, 1220 L St. NW, Suite 750 Washington, DC 20005.

American Forests' mission is to restore threatened forest ecosystems and inspire people to value and protect urban and wildland forests.

(202) 737-1944

www.americanforests.org

AMERICAN FORESTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard Kabat, Chair

Kabat Company, Washington, DC

Jeff Elliott, Vice Chair and Treasurer

Iridian Asset Management, Westport, CT

Bruce Lisman, Immediate Past Chair

Private investor, Shelburne, VT

Jad Daley, President & CEO (ex officio)

American Forests, Washington, DC

William H. Bohnett

*President, Whitecap Investments LLC,
Jupiter Island, FL*

E. Zimmermann Boulos

*Office Environments & Services
Jacksonville, FL*

Ara Erickson

Weyerhaeuser, Seattle, WA

William Hazelton

Chubb Group, New York City, NY

Jeffrey Prieto

*Los Angeles Community College District,
Los Angeles, CA*

Elisa Rapaport

*Rapaport Family Charitable Trust,
Rockville Centre, NY*

Mary Wagner

U.S. Forest Service (Retired), Ogden, UT

David M. "Max" Williamson

Williamson Law + Policy, PLLC, Washington, DC



Hopefully, based on American Forests' work over the last year, this call to action feels familiar to you. During that time, we have launched a new national initiative to deliver Tree Equity across American cities. Right now, most cities fall short of this ideal. But we are seeing huge signs of progress and new commitment, including:

New visibility for Tree Equity:

For too long, urban forests have felt virtually invisible in the media, especially when discussing climate change and other big issues. Not anymore. In just the last six months, the concept of Tree Equity, and its role in issues like climate response, have gotten major treatment from National Public Radio, New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Grist, Reuters, The Guardian, The Economist and many other influential outlets. American Forests has helped to feed this increased coverage by working with reporters, placing opinion pieces and driving social media through #TreeEquity. This increased visibility and awareness is translating into real action, such as mayors committing to Tree Equity and state and federal officials looking for ways to help.

Cities and states step up for Tree Equity:

In Detroit, American Forests works with city agencies and local nonprofits to dramatically scale the city's commitment to tree planting and tree care through the Detroit Reforestation Initiative. In Phoenix, we have formed a new long-term partnership with one of America's most heat-vulnerable cities. At the state level, under the leadership of Governor Gina Raimondo, Rhode Island is partnering with American Forests on a push for Tree Equity across every city in the state. This comprehensive effort is demonstrating what city leaders and

their partners can accomplish when fully backed with strong technical tools, funding and coordination.

Federal commitment to Tree

Equity: After an intensive push with Congress, we have secured the first major increase in Urban and Community Forestry Program funding in more than a decade. But, this is just the beginning. We have helped introduce new legislation, the Climate Stewardship Act, that would fund planting 400 million trees in cities through 2050, create a new urban wood grant program, and establish a Stewardship Corps to train underserved youth for careers in urban forestry. We are also helping to introduce the TREES Act, which will invest Department of Energy funding into tree planting as an energy efficiency strategy.

Career pathways in Tree Equity:

For a year, American Forests has been connecting with people and organizations around the country doing soul-stirring work to leverage economic equity through Tree Equity, such as programs that link people coming out of incarceration into urban forest careers. To help feed this important movement, American Forests just launched a Career Pathways Toolkit with new mechanisms and best practices for these kinds of employment programs.

With your continued support of American Forests, we can make Tree Equity a must-have for all cities and provide the resources and partnership to make it happen. In this issue, you will learn much more about Tree Equity and new ways that you can get involved. Let's create Tree Equity together. 🌱

Jad A. Daley III

For more news and updates from Jad, follow him on Twitter @JadDaley



PROJECT SHOWCASE

A Wednesday Morning in Wilmington Tells the Story of Urban Forestry

BY IAN LEAHY

THERE ARE TIMES when, by fortune and fortitude, a single project embodies what American Forests seeks to achieve in cities — which begins with creating partnerships, includes funding to implement science-based plans and policies, and culminates in expanding tree cover within communities that have the fewest trees. Such

was the case one Wednesday morning in Delaware last year.

More than 60 people in the mid-sized city of Wilmington were in an all-hands-on-deck fight to save lives. They were planting trees— fruit trees and other species — in a public park. Their hope was that the trees would cool the city, support career training and more. It was

hard work, but much needed in Wilmington, where trees cover only 20 percent of the city and are decreasing in number as temperatures rise.

One of those leading this charge was Herbert White, urban forest administrator for Wilmington, who understands that trees are beneficial from an economic, environmental and aesthetic



Above: Through the generous funding of JPMorgan Chase, 50 trees were planted in Speakman Park in downtown Wilmington, Del.

standpoint. Through White and his staff, the city is putting money and expertise behind this important acknowledgment.

But they can't do it alone. A successful urban forestry program requires a strong anchor institution that can advocate, engage diverse communities, plant trees across property ownerships, and attract diverse funding, according to the urban forestry toolkit on VibrantCitiesLab.com. In Wilmington and beyond, the Delaware Center for Horticulture fulfills this role.

Participants in the center's Branches to Chances program were at the event in full force, training leaders and offering tips to the volunteer tree planters. The 10-year-old program is one of Delaware's only green jobs training programs for unemployed, underemployed and previously incarcerated men and women. Graduates finish the program with marketable skills in a growing industry, the satisfaction of improving the communities they come from, and essential employer references. The program helps address a need in the city to create jobs, particularly in neighborhoods of color, where unemployment rates tend to be higher.

None of this would have happened without corporate support. Stepping up to the challenge and helping to make the day a success was JPMorgan Chase, whose Card Services division is headquartered in Wilmington. Not only did the company contribute funding to buy the trees, but about 50 of their employees came out into their community to volunteer at the planting.

The bustle also attracted a number of nearby residents who joined the effort to improve their neighborhood.

It's this type of cross-sector collaboration that makes urban forestry unique. Unlike other basic city infrastructure, such as bridges and streetlights, everyone can literally have a hand in expanding tree cover in a city and, in turn, growing a community. 🌱

.....
Ian Leahy writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests' vice president of urban forestry.



Top: Volunteers planted fruit trees and other species in Wilmington, which has a critically low tree canopy of only 20 percent. **Bottom:** Volunteers worked hard to put trees in the ground, with the hope that the trees will cool the city and support careers in urban forestry.



Young volunteers disembark school buses in La Sal del Rey and prepare to begin planting as part of Rio Reforestation 2019.

PROJECT SHOWCASE

Empowering Members of a South Texas Community through Planting

BY JON DALE

ONE BY ONE, hundreds of grade school children stepped out of the school buses that had just rolled down the dirt road to La Sal del Rey. They were ready for — and excited about — a day of planting trees in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas on a sunny day in October.

It was the 26th annual Rio Reforestation, a now four-day event that attracts nearly 1,500 people — all of whom are committed to creating a forest that will serve as a place where the ocelot and other rare and threatened wildlife can find food, shelter and mates.

Through this U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-led event, nearly 292,000 trees and shrubs have been planted on 783 acres of land over the years. Approximately 12,000 additional trees and shrubs went into the ground last fall,

thanks to the hard work of the school children, American Forests staff and others from the community. Baby-bonnet. Torchwood. Snake eyes. These are just some of the colorful names for the subtropical trees and shrubs they planted.

Together, these volunteers are recreating the thornscrub forest that used to dominate the landscape in the Valley, as locals call it, which lies just north of the United States' border with Mexico. The landscape started changing — to large ranches and associated livestock businesses — in the mid-1800s.

In the early 1900s, farm development promoters then singled out the region for intensified production. From then on, the region's future became inextricably linked to irrigated agriculture. This led to the Valley being transformed wholesale



Volunteers helped plant approximately 12,000 trees and shrubs as part of 2019's Rio Reforestation event.

into a network of fields and canals. Similar scenarios were also playing out in the western U.S.

By the 1970s, 90 percent of the Valley's thornscrub forest was gone, replaced with citrus and row crops. Consequently, many populations of wildlife became isolated in forest fragments while others, like the jaguar, were lost.

Fast forward another generation. The 1994 enactment of the North American Free Trade Agreement forever changed the Valley's fortunes once again. The resulting trade increase

with Mexico, the rise of a strong service sector, and continued immigration catalyzed an urbanization trend that has come to dominate the region on every level. Working landscapes themselves are now quickly being displaced in favor of residential development and associated infrastructure.

More recently, additional challenges to wildlife conservation have come in the form of physical barriers erected right along the Rio Grande itself to discourage illegal immigration. These “border wall” segments discourage species dispersal and effectively isolate many protected areas even further in what has become “no-man’s land” — the zone between the wall and river.

American Forests has provided funding and technical assistance to plant 2 million trees in the Valley and, currently, is leading the development of a comprehensive restoration plan there.



Views from one of the larger landscapes in the Valley that American Forests is helping to restore.

Through events like Rio Reforestation, which American Forests sponsors, members of this expanding community are empowered to play their part in restoring the forest. The mosaic of Rio Reforestation plantings and associated biodiversity are an interwoven testament to both the Valley’s people

and American Forests’ commitment to developing a strong partnership with them on this unique *frontera*. 🌱

Jon Dale writes from Elsa, Texas and is American Forests’ senior manager for forest restoration in the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Make a difference for forests and the world. Become a member today!

www.americanforests.org/ways-to-give/membership

AMERICAN FORESTS

FROM THE FIELD

Boston, Mass.

BY ERIC CANDELA

CELL PHONE IN HAND, Jason Sencharles walked through the streets of the Boston suburb of Roxbury on a sunny Wednesday afternoon in July. Not an unusual sight, especially given that Jason is a teenager. But what was

out of the ordinary was that Jason wasn't using his phone to make a call or send a text message. He was using it to record measurements of street trees. He carefully recorded data about the species, age and health of trees in city tree pits and then typed the information into his phone.

Jason was one of nine high school students from across Boston's racial and socio-economic spectrum that was being paid to help Speak for the Trees Boston conduct a tree inventory in Roxbury and Dorchester. Over a period of seven weeks, they collected species and size data for more than 3,800 trees and identified 600 vacant tree pits that are candidates for new trees.

This information will help the City of Boston's ongoing efforts to monitor and maintain the city's tree canopy. That's important, given the critical role of urban trees in purifying the air, cooling neighborhoods and more.

What is even more important, though, is the experience Jason and his peers had that day. They earned some money. But they, too, had an opportunity to learn about trees and get connected to their community, which means they are more likely to become advocates for building a healthy tree canopy in Boston and, perhaps, beyond.

"Prior to having this job, I didn't know how important trees are in the city," Sencharles said. "Now that I've had this experience, I'll always have a lot more appreciation for the trees that are all around us." 🌿

Eric Candela writes from Detroit and is American Forests' senior manager of Community ReLeaf.



Teen Urban Tree Corps member Maya Hall (left) shows Boston City Councilor Anissa George the process for recording tree inventory data.



American Forests worked with partners and conference attendees to plant 20 trees in the city of Oakland, Calif. during the 2019 VERGE Carbon conference.

Oakland, Calif.

BY JENNIFER BROOME

COMPANIES in the United States play an important role in restoring America's forests — and many are already leading by example. That was the main message from American Forests President and CEO Jad Daley when he moderated a discussion at the recent VERGE Carbon conference.

"With the products they are creating and the way they operate their businesses," companies can make a big difference, Daley told the crowd of corporate sustainability leaders from across the country.

He provided examples of how Travelers, Clif Bar, Bank of America and other companies work with American Forests to plant trees, fund the development of data-driven action plans for creating

urban forests, and more. Leaders from Microsoft and United Airlines talked about how their companies are innovating around ways to incorporate forest restoration into broader sustainability goals, including driving down their carbon emissions.

This type of work is critical, given that forests and forest products absorb and sequester approximately 15 percent of our country's CO₂ emissions, making them one of the most effective nature-based solutions to addressing climate change.

This was the first VERGE conference, an annual event, solely focused on unlocking the value of carbon by sequestering it and using it to create innovative products, materials and services. American Forests co-sponsored the conference, as we want to ensure

"With the products they are creating and the way they operate their businesses," companies can make a big difference.

—JAD DALEY, AMERICAN FORESTS PRESIDENT AND CEO

trees and forests are front and center in that conversation.

We walked the talk by hosting a tree planting event during the conference. In partnership with Urban ReLeaf, Clif Bar and several conference attendees, we planted 20 trees in the city of Oakland, Calif. The sycamore, gingkoes and Chinese pistache trees will absorb carbon and help create Tree Equity in the city. 🌱

Jennifer Broome writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests' vice president of philanthropy.



Travelers employees dig in at Colt Park in Hartford, Conn.

PARTNER PROFILE

Travelers

BY LINDSEY PUTZ

NEARLY 100 TRAVELERS employees broke out their boots and jeans on a brisk morning in October, all to bring the company one step closer to reaching its ambitious goal of planting 1 million trees across America by Earth Day 2020.

They dug holes, tamped down the soil to get air pockets out, gently placed young trees in the holes, then mulched — many times over. In a few years, the 40 trees they planted in a public park in Hartford, Conn., will be

mature enough to help purify the air residents breathe, cool the park on hot days, absorb water to avoid flooding, and so much more. And, as a bonus, some of the trees will produce apples that will be there for the picking.

It's with leadership from companies like Travelers that America can continue to be home to healthy and resilient forests. The company's partnership with American Forests began when Travelers executives wanted to offset carbon emissions generated by travel to a conference. In the first three years, the company funded the planting of 30,000 trees. Then, in April 2019, Travelers pledged to fund the planting of a tree for every Travelers customer

who chooses paperless billing — up to 1 million trees in all.

"What we are seeing is that our customers are eager for simple steps, like going paperless, that they can take to help save America's forests," said Michael

Klein, executive vice president and president of personal insurance at Travelers. "Our

employees are also excited about this initiative, and the tree planting event in Hartford was an ideal opportunity to make a direct impact in the community where many of us live and work." 🌱

Lindsey Putz writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests' director of corporate giving.

TRAVELERS 

DONOR PROFILE

Lex Sant

BY JILL SCHWARTZ

LEX SANT cuts to the chase. “Trees are awesome.”

It’s that simple. It’s why he and his family love the forested park near their home in Washington, D.C. And it’s why he believes so strongly that the world’s forests should be abundant and healthy.

Sant is president of the Sant Foundation, created in 2015 as a sister foundation to The Summit Foundation to, among other things, find solutions to mitigating and adapting to climate change. He and his two colleagues there can jump into action quickly — speed he believes is desperately needed to contend with what he refers to as an existential threat to our planet.

“We need high impact, low cost

solutions to climate change, and we need them as soon as possible,” Sant said. “Given the amount of carbon that forests sequester, they are one of the best nature-based solutions we have.”

Sant was an early believer in nature-based solutions. Examples of these solutions in action were right in front of him when he was a teenager in the 1980s. The company his father, Roger, helped to start, The AES Corporation, spent \$2 million in planting 52 million trees in Guatemala — all to offset emissions from the power plant their company operated in Connecticut. Back then, few corporations were putting money behind large scale forest restoration, much less an entire year’s profits.

The Sant Foundation is also at the forefront of innovative approaches to forest conservation. It was one of the first funders of American Forests’ work with the U.S. Climate Alliance — an unprecedented group of 25 governors



committed to addressing climate change. The Alliance, aims to tamp down climate change pollution in these states by at least 26 to 28 percent below 2005 levels by 2025.

“There’s tremendous momentum within this group that cannot and should not stop,” Sant said.

The foundation also supports American Forests’ work to ensure that there are trees in every part of every city.

“It is hard to imagine any plan for cities that does not include a healthy dose of trees.” 🌿

Jill Schwartz writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests’ vice president of marketing and communications.

LET FORESTS BE YOUR LEGACY

WITH A GIFT THAT COSTS YOU NOTHING NOW

We all want to be remembered as someone who made a difference in our world. **YOU CAN!** — by leaving a gift to American Forests in your will, trust or by beneficiary designation. It’s easy to do, and your gift costs you nothing today.

We can help you decide on a gift that’s right for you. To discuss the best gift option for you or to notify us of a gift you have made, please contact Jennifer Broome, vice president of philanthropy, at **202.370.4513** or **jbroome@americanforests.org**.

Use our new FreeWill tool at www.americanforests.org/evergreensociety



AMERICAN FORESTS

WASHINGTON OUTLOOK

Lawmakers Warm Up to Natural Solutions to Address Climate Change

BY KATE MICHAEL

IN THE LAST CONGRESS, lawmakers repeatedly debated whether climate change is real. During this Congress — which started in January 2019 and runs for two years — the mood is a lot different. There is a widespread belief, across party lines, that climate change is happening and solutions to it are needed. One of these important solutions is nature-based: creating healthy and climate-resilient forests. American Forests has worked diligently to ensure policymakers understand the important role of forests as a climate solution.

In 2019, several bills were introduced to establish renewable energy standards, energy saving targets and greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. The Climate Stewardship Act of 2019 included the most ambitious reforestation proposal in our nation's history. These pieces of legislation show an increased commitment to consider forests and other natural resources as a way to address

climate change and invest in resilient infrastructure.

“Obviously, climate change is a complex and global issue,” said Chairman Pat Roberts (R-KS) at a May 2019 hearing of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. Roberts not only held listening sessions, but also a Full Committee Hearing on Climate Change and Agriculture, soliciting suggestions on the appropriate federal response. “We must be thoughtful, informed and deliberate in considering potential responses and consequences.”

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), from the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, praised an approved \$35.8 billion measure to fund the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Indian Health Service and other agencies in September 2019. Among the funds in the appropriations bill, for

example, are some \$747 billion for the U.S. Forest Service's investments for improved health and management of our nation's forests, as well as increased funding to fight wildfire.

According to Murkowski's comments at the Hearing to Examine the Outlook for Wildland Fire and Management Programs for 2019, this will be much needed as climate change exacerbates conditions impacting our forests. “There are a number of reasons why our forests and grasslands are increasingly susceptible to fire,” said Murkowski. “A changing climate means dryer and warmer weather. Much of our nation's forest landscapes are unhealthy and overstocked with excess fuels. And the proliferation of disease and insect outbreaks — certainly like we've seen in Alaska and elsewhere around the country, certainly Colorado — these leave behind large swaths of hazard trees ready to ignite just like matchsticks out there. In Alaska, warmer winters have led to a population boom of spruce beetle across nearly 1 million acres in just a few years now.” Thus, this increased funding will be crucial for the state of our forests.

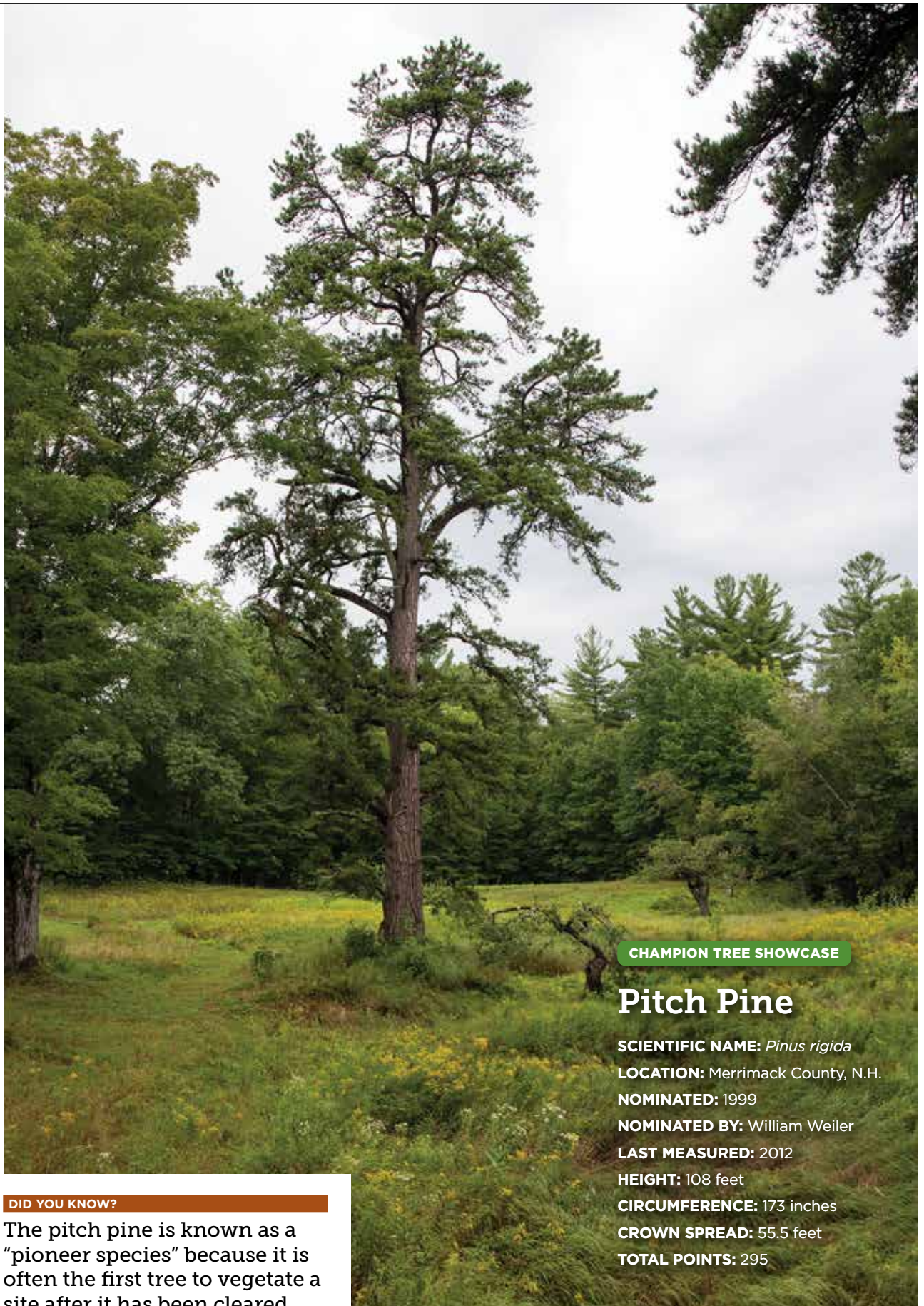
And on the House side, in a bill we watched closely, U.S. Representative Kathy Castor (D-FL) encouraged the passage of H.R. 330 — Solving the Climate Crisis: Natural Solutions to Cutting Pollution and Building Resilience — by saying, “Nature offers us plenty of incredible resources to mitigate climate change, but only if we work to protect it.”

These attitudes give us hope and harden our resolve.

We will continue to provide resources and guidance during the remainder of this Congress, offering policy suggestions on reforestation, land-use and green infrastructure planning, carbon sequestration, wildfire risk, and adequate funding for these priorities and others. With last Congress's progress in mind, American Forests sees that our work is making a difference. 🌱

Kate Michael writes from Washington, D.C. and is a lifestyle editor and publisher.





CHAMPION TREE SHOWCASE

Pitch Pine

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Pinus rigida*

LOCATION: Merrimack County, N.H.

NOMINATED: 1999

NOMINATED BY: William Weiler

LAST MEASURED: 2012

HEIGHT: 108 feet

CIRCUMFERENCE: 173 inches

CROWN SPREAD: 55.5 feet

TOTAL POINTS: 295

DID YOU KNOW?

The pitch pine is known as a "pioneer species" because it is often the first tree to vegetate a site after it has been cleared.

Back to the Future

American Forests' Rich Legacy Shapes the Future of Forestry

BY JAD DALEY

OUR ROOTS RUN DEEP. In the early 1900s, we rallied forest advocates across the country to champion the creation of the U.S Forest Service and the network of national forests that now span nearly 190 million acres. In the 1930s, we helped create jobs for half a million Americans, many of whom helped to plant 3 billion trees. And, in the 1970s, we helped shape the guidelines for managing America's national forests.

These are just some of the moments in our 145-year history that transformed a seed of inspiration into a towering legacy, much like an old-growth tree. The achievements and lessons learned from how we reached them shape our thinking about what we can and should do over the next 145 years. And beyond.

The challenges we face today are different from those we faced when we were founded in 1875 as the American Forestry Association by a small group of concerned citizens in Chicago. In our early days, the challenges were mostly created by people — people who did not know how to manage forests responsibly and others who did not have the skills to properly govern our national forests. As a result, the tragedy of the commons played out in many of our country's forests.

Today, our greatest challenges are driven by natural foes, such as forest pests, tree diseases and wildfires — many of which are intensified by climate change. And we have new challenges that come with a growing population, such as the imperative to plant

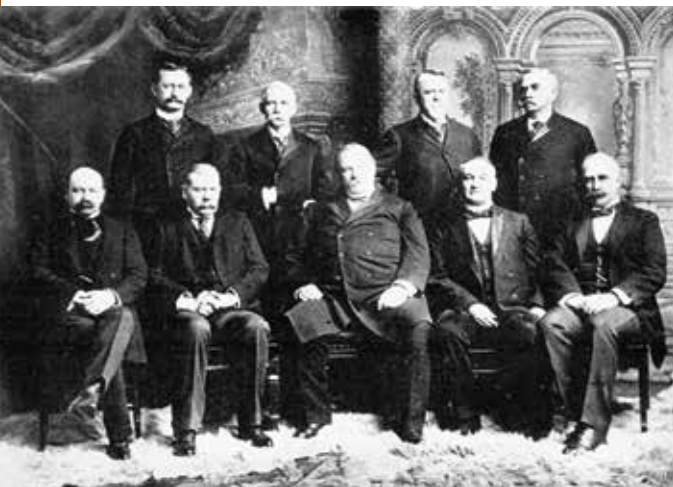
trees in marginalized city neighborhoods and the need to engage the next generation in forestry careers so we have enough people to care for our forests.

Despite the differing challenges, to solve them we need to show the same level of servant leadership today as we did during our early years. And we need to collaborate just as much, if not more, with our allies and people from across the aisle.

We know from our experience that's how movements are built.

America is perhaps hungrier now for a forest conservation movement than ever before. Climate change. Urban sprawl. Agricultural expansion. These things — and more — threaten the forests we all rely on to survive and thrive. If we take care of the forests, they'll take care of us.

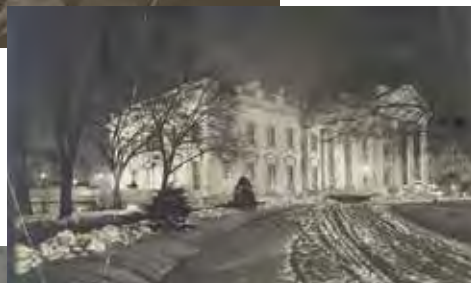
We've selected nine moments from our history that show the kind of solutions that can be achieved by creating movements that are grounded in science, innovation, collaboration and strong leadership. This is the legacy we strive to match today.



J Sterling Morton (upper right), a vice president of American Forests and the founder of Arbor Day, served as agriculture secretary under President Grover Cleveland.

1882

First American Forest Congress and Ohio's First Arbor Day. American Forests was founded in 1875, then known as the American Forestry Association. We were not truly up and running until 1882, but we were out the gate fast. That's the year we helped convene the first American Forest Congress, a gathering of public and private sector leaders that has, since then, been held every few decades to lay the groundwork for our country's forest policies and programs. We also participated in Ohio's first Arbor Day on April 27, 1882, coinciding with the first American Forest Congress. A remarkable 50,000 people gathered for a ceremonial tree planting at Eden Park in Cincinnati. This has become the true birthday of the American forest conservation movement.



Top: Theodore Roosevelt and James Wilson (lower right) each served as both our president and as secretary of agriculture. Middle: The January 1905 Forest Congress was hosted at the White House. Bottom: A painting of President Theodore Roosevelt signing the Forest Reserve Transfer Bill to U.S. Department of Agriculture, commissioned in 1980 by the U.S. Forest Service on its 75th anniversary to commemorate the signing of the land transfer and creation of the agency in 1905.

1905

Second American Forest Congress and Establishment of U.S. Forest Service. The second American Forest Congress was held in 1905, under the leadership of American Forests. President Theodore Roosevelt addressed the need to create a national forest reserve and a federal agency to manage those forests. Other legendary figures who spoke were U.S. Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson, who had just finished a term as American Forests' president, and Gifford Pinchot, who later became the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service. This gathering was pivotal, as grave concerns were raised about the governance of America's national forests. A report to Congress from Secretary Wilson spelled out how America's forests were falling into disrepair, posing serious threats to public water supplies that originated in forests. That triggered support for resolutions that essentially created the foundation for America's forests — establishing the U.S. Forest Service, which occurred through new federal legislation passed just four weeks after the American Forest Congress ended; creating the National Forests in 1907; and creating the eastern National Forests in 1911.



Above and right: In 1921, First Lady Florence Harding, then a vice president of American Forests, helped kick off a memorial tree planting initiative that focused on trees in cities.



1921

Memorial Tree Planting with First Lady Florence Harding. Urban forests. Women's leadership in forestry. American Forests was a pioneer on both fronts. Starting in the 1920s, we advocated for trees in cities and created leadership roles for women in forestry, long before any other national organizations did so. These interests came together in 1921, when First Lady Florence Harding, then a vice president of American Forests, helped kick off a memorial tree planting initiative that focused on trees in cities. This same initiative jumpstarted the urban forest movement. Harding's immense stature and tireless leadership created the momentum this movement needed to become what it is today.



A Civilian Conservation Corps fire crew trains on a California National Forest in 1933.

1933

Passage of Legislation Establishing the Civilian Conservation Corps. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which American Forests helped create, was a powerful yet often overlooked force for forestry in America. While many people know about the bridges, dams and recreational facilities constructed by the CCC, fewer people know that this group planted 3 billion trees over 10 years. At its peak, as many as 500,000 Americans were hired to help with this work. American Forests played a critical role in assuring the CCC's focus on tree planting and other natural resource management. We tapped into our insights related to the power of a forest workforce, which we gained in the wake of World War I by helping to organize garden and tree plantings across Europe and some parts of the U.S. after the war. Those successes convinced policymakers that we could do something on as grand a scale as the CCC. To this day, it excites us to have in our office the pen President Franklin D. Roosevelt used to sign into law the CCC.



1946

Charting the Future of America's Forests after World War II.

One of American Forests' most significant leadership efforts, highly informative for our needs today, came in the wake of World War II. During the war, America's forests were used heavily to support the war machine and, as a result, were in a relatively depleted state. American Forests realized that, when the soldiers returned home, there would be another huge push to use our forests for new housing and other economic activity. To assure the responsible use of our forests, we led a multi-year process to study the state of our forests and convened stakeholder meetings that climaxed with the third American Forest Congress in 1946. The resolutions from this meeting became guideposts for the careful and balanced use of our forests so they could meet our post-war needs while simultaneously continuing long-term recovery.



W.S. Rosecrans presides over the Third American Forest Congress.



Top: A unifying photo, taken in 1977, of organizations coming together and celebrating milestones, (from left): Kenneth Black, USFWS; Voit Filmore, American Forests; Fred Gragg, International Paper Company; William Towell; J. Walter Myers Jr., Forest Farmers Association; R. Keith Arnold; Robert Buckman, USFS; Jane Westenberger, Conservation Education Association; John Gray, University of Florida; Wilfred Woods, President of American Forests. Bottom: In 1978, American Forests helped establish the urban forestry concept, rapidly becoming a catalyst for urban forestry. We were instrumental in establishing the National Urban and Community Forestry Leaders Council in 1981, later to be called the National Urban Forest Council. This is a photo of the proceedings of the second national urban forestry conference in 1982.

1976

Passage of the National Forest Management

Act. By the mid-1970s, America's national forests were once again showing the signs of stress that come from trying to meet the needs of our nation's growing population. In some parts of the country, our forests were over-harvested (and often poorly managed) to meet the demand for forest-based products. In other parts of the country, the forests were left untouched, sometimes to the detriment of the health of the forests. American Forests stepped into this breach to broker compromise legislation, the National Forest Management Act, which lays out the ground rules and criteria for how national forests should be managed. Consistent with American Forests' centrist posture, this legislation provides equal access for all interest groups and individuals to the planning process, and allows citizens to challenge public land management decisions when they see concerns. This legislation has stood the test of time, still serving as the foundational law for national forest management today.



In 1991, American Forests worked with Superman actor Christopher Reeves to produce "treemercials" that launched our Global ReLeaf program.

1990

Launch of Global ReLeaf. American Forests has always been a champion of tree planting. But, we took this work to a new level with a simple innovation — corporate partnerships priced at \$1 per tree. Our Global ReLeaf Program created this model under the realization that companies would embrace the chance to meet their corporate sustainability and social responsibility goals through the simple, yet compelling, action of planting a tree. Whether restoring wildlife habitat and trails, protecting air and water quality, or acting on climate, planting trees provides a perfect platform for cost-effective action that a company's employees and customers can understand and support. The results of this innovation have been staggering. In addition to providing the resources for American Forests to plant more than 60 million trees, this approach has sparked emulation by other nonprofits, who have collectively planted at least 100 million more. These private contributions have also inspired governments to spend money on tree planting, including the U.S. Forest Service, which matches American Forests' tree planting dollar for dollar.



Middle right: American Forests executive vice president at the time stands with the New York state department of environmental conservation commissioner as Governor Mario Cuomo and our (since retired) mascot Spunky hand out seedlings to school children in 1990.



Top and bottom: In 1996, American Forests released CITYgreen, a software planning tool for mapping urban ecosystems and calculating their value. This later was developed into the more known i-Tree GIS program used today.

1996

Mapping Urban Tree Canopy with CITYgreen.

Almost 80 years after launching the urban forest movement with First Lady Harding's memorial tree planting, American Forests again was the catalyst for a change. We developed a program called CITYgreen that provided the first computer mapping of urban tree canopy. The results were impressive. For example, our analysis in Washington, D.C. showed that the city's tree canopy was rapidly decreasing, with great consequences to the environment, economy and well-being of its residents. In response, the D.C. government mobilized resources, and Casey Trees, one of the nation's most effective nonprofit local tree planting groups, was born. The CITYgreen software also was the precursor to the U.S. Forest Service-led effort to develop i-Tree, now the standard for tree canopy mapping and analysis across the urban forest field.



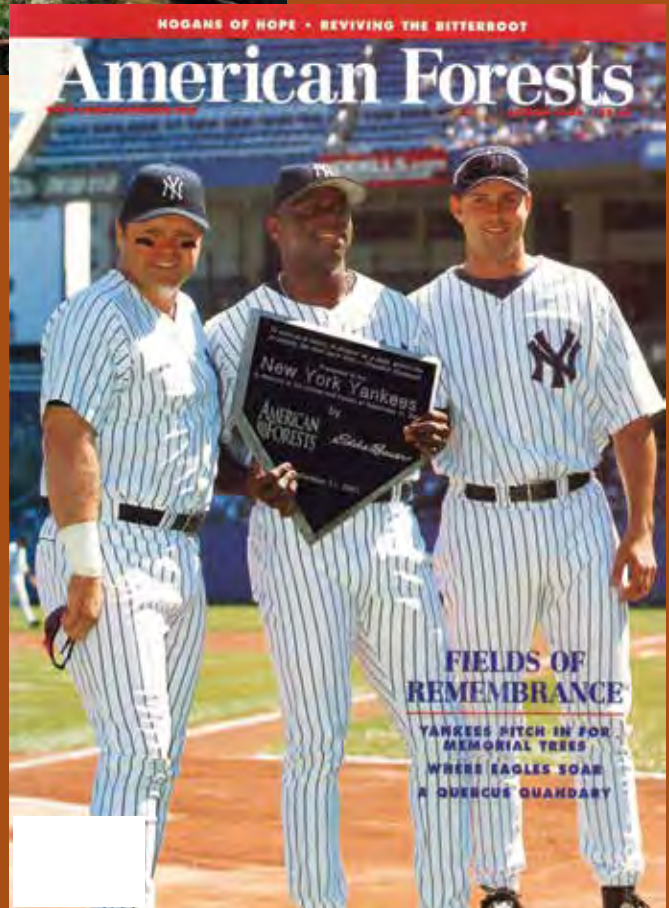
2000s

Planting Hope after Disasters.

American Forests has been planting memorial trees since the early 1900s, planting them to remember lives lost in World Wars I and II, and planting after natural disasters such as Hurricane Andrew in 1992. In 2002, American Forests planted thousands of trees, one for every victim of 9/11 in memorial groves in New York City, Washington, D.C., at the Pentagon in Virginia and in Pennsylvania. We helped communities along the Gulf Coast replant after Hurricane Katrina and helped the city of Asbury Park build resilience in their urban forest after Super Storm Sandy. Planting trees to remember our loved ones and to help communities recover from disasters is to a way to plant hope.



In 2010, American Forests helped plant 150,000 trees to improve water conditions that were degraded due to overuse, urbanization and industrialization in the Union Territory of Pondicherry, India, which was undergoing a water crisis.



Top: Local people in Cameroon work in their community tree nursery, which American Forests helped create in 2010 to increase opportunities for storing carbon.

Bottom: In September 2002, American Forests and the New York Yankees planted the first of thousands of trees in Yankee Stadium's Monument Park to honor victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks.

These highlights of American Forests' history are not just artifacts. They are important lessons and inspiration for our future. They prove that servant leadership and collaboration work best, and that America's forest community can move mountains when it comes together as one. Looking forward to our current challenges, such as mobilizing forests to slow climate change, these stirring moments in our history will provide the inspiration and model that we need to push through to ultimate success. 🌱

Jad Daley writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests' president and CEO.

American Forests + Tree Equity

Across the United States, there are dramatic disparities in tree cover that often track on economic and racial lines. Simply put, there usually are a lot more trees in high-income neighborhoods than low-income neighborhoods. That's a problem, given that trees are not just decoration. They are life-and-death infrastructure that every person in every part of every city should have access to — which American Forests refers to as Tree Equity.

Cities that HAVE an abundance of trees:

- Daytime air temperature can be **10 degrees cooler** in the summer.
- Electric bills can be as much as **\$4.7 billion lower** a year nationwide.
- City trees are responsible for **17% of the nation's carbon sink**.
- More tree trimming and pruning jobs are created — to the tune of an estimated **10% more** over the next decade.

Cities that LACK trees:

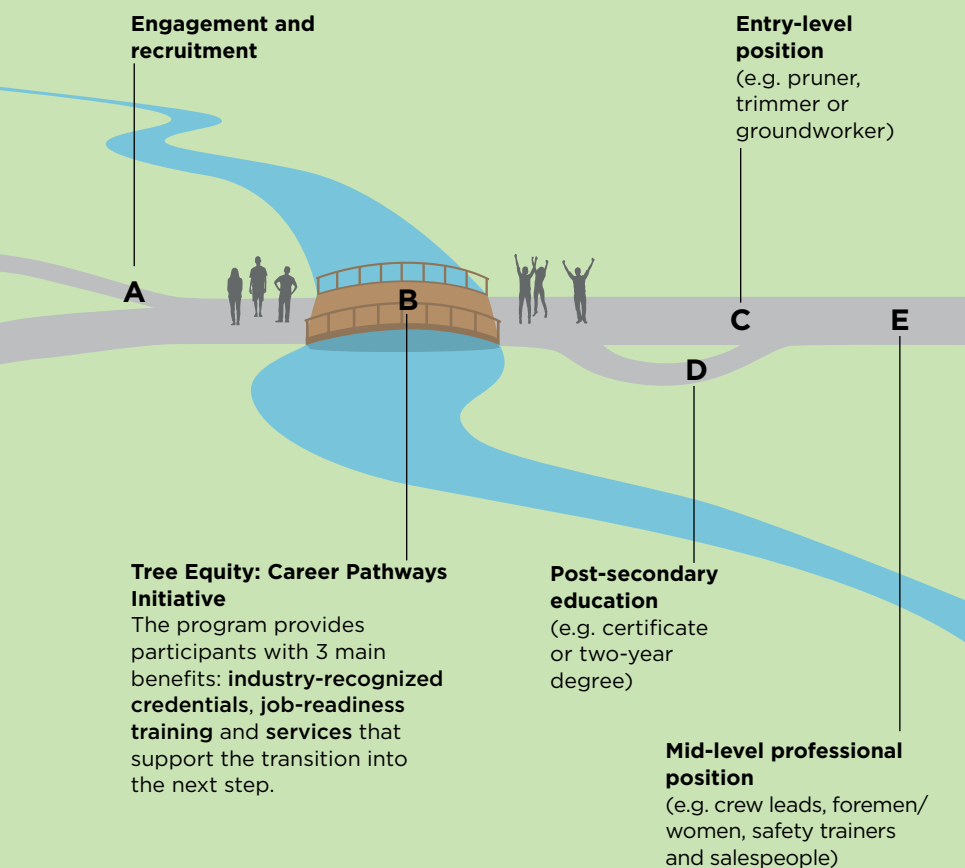
- “Heat islands,” where temperatures can be **5-7 degrees hotter** during the day and **22 degrees hotter** at night, are created. A **10-fold increase in heat-related deaths** is expected by 2050 in the Eastern U.S., which will impact cities with poor tree cover the most.
- **Cardiovascular and lower respiratory tract illnesses**, and death associated with both, can increase.
- The **risk of flooding increases**, particularly in low-lying urban areas.
- **Higher crime rates** are more likely.



Tree Equity and the urban forestry workforce crisis:

Urban forestry is experiencing a substantial labor shortage. Our Tree Equity: Career Pathways Initiative seeks to close the gap by connecting people — particularly unemployed and underemployed people of color — to green careers near where they live. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- **\$40,510**: U.S. annual wage for entry-level tree trimmers and pruners.
- **\$19.47**: Median hourly wage for entry-level tree trimmers and pruners.
- **25%** of all tree trimmers and pruners are self-employed.



GET INVOLVED

Want to advance Tree Equity with us? You can help by asking your Congressional leaders to support the Climate Stewardship Act, a bill recently introduced in the U.S. Senate. If passed, it will result in **4.1 billion new trees by 2030 and 16 billion new trees by 2050**. Millions of those trees will be planted in low-income urban neighborhoods. The program will also **support the creation of more than 200,000 forestry jobs just in the first 10 years** after it is enacted.

For more information and sources, visit vibrantcitieslab.com.





PLANTING TREE EQUITY

In cities across the country, marginalized communities suffer from a lack of trees. American Forests helps people see that disparity — and turn it around.

BY SARAH WADE

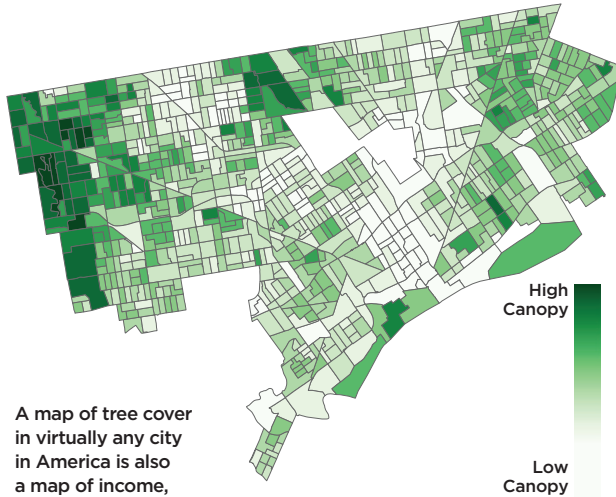
QUINCY JONES knew his neighborhood was going downhill. The 2008 sub-prime mortgage crisis had hit some of Detroit's neighborhoods with the force of a bomb blast. Several years later, Jones' community of Osborn — on the east side of the city — still looked gutted.

"There were blighted areas and open spaces," said Jones, the executive director of the Osborn Neighborhood Alliance. "It didn't look pretty."

Then, in 2012, Jones heard that a nonprofit called The Greening of Detroit was planting trees in parts of the city that no longer had much greenery. He started volunteering with them in Osborn, going door to door and asking folks if they wanted trees on their blocks. Most did: Over the next two years, the group planted more than 170 trees in the community.

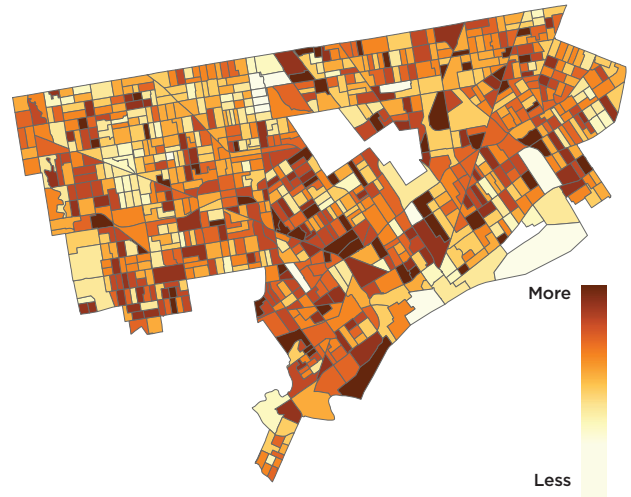


TREE CANOPY COVER



A map of tree cover in virtually any city in America is also a map of income, as shown by this correlation of maps of Detroit.

HOUSEHOLDS IN POVERTY



Below: Before and after of the Osborn Outdoor Educational Center — a new tree-lined park where there once stood four blighted, abandoned homes now boasts a caterpillar made of tires for kids to play on, a trail, sitting areas, and public art.

Those trees led to even more greenery: In 2016, American Forests partnered with the neighborhood, The Greening of Detroit and Bank of America to build the Osborn Outdoor Educational Center — a tree-lined park where there once stood four blighted, abandoned homes. Jones said residents and children go there all the time to enjoy the space, which includes a caterpillar made of tires for kids to play on, a trail, sitting areas, and public art. And he said that all that green has tangibly revitalized Osborn.

“To me, getting trees signals development,” Jones explained. “It’s a way to improve the community.”

TREES FOR ALL

Jones intuited something essential but often overlooked in conversations about urban planning: the human need for trees and other natural green things. That need is present even in the concrete hearts of big cities. But it only tends to be met in wealthier urban precincts, and not just in Detroit.

“In most cities in the U.S., you can take a map of trees and a map of income and overlay them, and you’ll almost always see that more trees are in higher-income neighborhoods,” said Sarah Anderson, senior manager of Tree Equity at American Forests. “Lower-income neighborhoods don’t have as many.”



Above: The need for Tree Equity is clear, given the benefits trees provide to people. **Left:** Turner teaches people in Detroit about the benefits of trees.

This reflects a huge problem, Anderson said, because trees pump benefits into the communities around them. They can lower energy bills and raise property values. They can improve academic performance and air quality. They can protect residents from heat, boost people's moods, lower crime rates, and create jobs.

"Trees are not just decoration," said Anderson. "They're life-and-death infrastructure."

They're infrastructure, in other words, that every human should have access to, regardless of income or race or location. American Forests has coined a term to drive the idea home: Tree Equity.

In cities throughout the U.S., American Forests is partnering with metropolitan and state governments, businesses, nonprofits and neigh-

borhood leaders, like Quincy Jones, to spread awareness of Tree Equity — what it is and the difference it can make for people's health, finances and career prospects. And block by block, these entities are working together to make it a reality.

LIFE-AND-DEATH INFRASTRUCTURE

Last summer, Matthew May interned for Speak for the Trees, a Boston nonprofit dedicated to improving urban tree canopy. He walked large stretches of the city, logging information about hundreds of individual trees for a city-wide inventory. In lower-income neighborhoods, like Roxbury and Dorchester, he was jarred by how few trees there were — and how hot it was.

"You would walk down a street that could have been a mile long that literally had no trees," said May, a student at Merrimack College in Boston. "The sun would be 90 degrees out, and there was no shade. But then you would walk down Beacon Street, in the nice part of Boston, and you would be shaded the entire time."

That shade has health implications. The deadliest extreme weather phenomenon — the one that takes more lives annually than all other natural catastrophes combined — is heat. As the planet continues warming, lower-income areas, whose residents sometimes lack air conditioning, will become even more vulnerable to heat waves. Add enough trees to a block, though, and you can reduce its daytime temperature in the summer by up to 10 degrees.





“I just want my work to translate into more jobs. We could really have one of the most beautiful green cities in the country because we definitely have the workforce. We just need to tap into it and make that connection.”

— ALEX SMITH

Besides their cooling capacity, trees provide a myriad of other health benefits: They remove asthma-inducing pollutants from the air, lower the risk of respiratory diseases and skin cancer, and encourage residents to be more active, which can lower obesity rates. On a deeper level, researchers have linked a well-maintained tree canopy to lower stress levels and better psychological wellbeing.

SAFER NEIGHBORHOODS WITH STRONG COMMUNITY TIES

Trees — if they are well-cared for — can also make cities safer by lowering crime levels. They are a sign that people in the neighborhood care about where they live and are more likely to be in tune with their outdoor space, both which are deterrents to poten-

tial criminals. However, caring about your neighborhood is not always enough. Communities need the means to perform ongoing care and maintenance for their trees. But when achieved, it can create much stronger community ties.

“People in communities [with healthy urban forests] tend to walk more and interact more with people on their street,” said Quentin Turner, a community organizer for the Sierra Club’s Detroit branch. “They get to know their neighbors.”

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Perhaps more surprisingly, having more trees on your street can also be good for your bank account. They can reduce energy bills, for example. In urban and community areas in the continental U.S., trees

Alongside the education, advocacy and career programs American Forests uses to advance Tree Equity, there’s planting trees — to the tune of more than a dozen plantings annually in different U.S. cities.



save \$4.7 billion in electricity use and \$3.1 billion in heating use. And they can help prevent costly floods. This might have been the case in Ellicott City, Md., where after healthy tree canopy upstream was removed for development, the downtown was devastated by catastrophic flooding in both 2016 and 2018.

“Trees are very good at capturing stormwater,” said Turner, who manages a variety of green projects that reduce stormwater runoff in Detroit. “Their leaves and branches alone can catch so much rain, and they help bring that water down into the soil,” preventing it from overwhelming storm drains or pouring into people’s basements.

Since people tend to like living near green spaces, trees can also boost property values. Just ask Quincy Jones. Before Osborn gained its new trees and park, houses in the neighborhood “were selling for \$15,000, \$10,000. People were paying cash,” said Jones. But the greenery has beautified the area, and Jones and several of his friends have started buying and fixing up houses, then creating rent-to-own opportunities that are encouraging people to move back to Osborn. Last August, they sold a renovated house near the park for \$55,000.

“We changed the cost in that area,” said Jones. “We’re in the process of doing five more units. And we always use the Outdoor Educational Center [as a selling point for homebuyers].”

The city neighborhoods that need trees the most also tend to be the neighborhoods with the highest unemployment rates. Ask Alex Smith about how trees have helped him, and he’ll talk about his career. In 2012, Smith, a Baltimore native, was trying to turn his life around after being in prison. But finding employment as an ex-convict was an uphill battle. For a while, Smith worked two jobs to make ends meet, sleeping in his car when he was too exhausted to make it home.

Eventually, Smith landed a position with the Baltimore Tree Trust, which works to restore urban forests and strengthen communities throughout the city. He steadily gained experience with the nonprofit and now directs its operations and community outreach. Smith also helped them launch an apprenticeship program in tree care and landscaping techniques. Now, he’s starting his own urban landscaping business to create more opportunities like the one that made such a difference for him.

“I just want my work to translate into more jobs,” Smith said. “We could really have one of the most beautiful green cities in the country because we definitely have the workforce. We just need to tap into it and make that connection.”



Smith is an ex-convict who now works for Baltimore Tree Trust.

The whole country needs to make that connection. In fact, the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics estimates that urban forestry will see a 10 percent increase in job openings for entry-level positions, such as tree trimmers and pruners, over the next decade. If urban forestry groups can find employees within the neighborhoods they’re serving, they’ll be adding not just trees to those areas, but livelihoods.

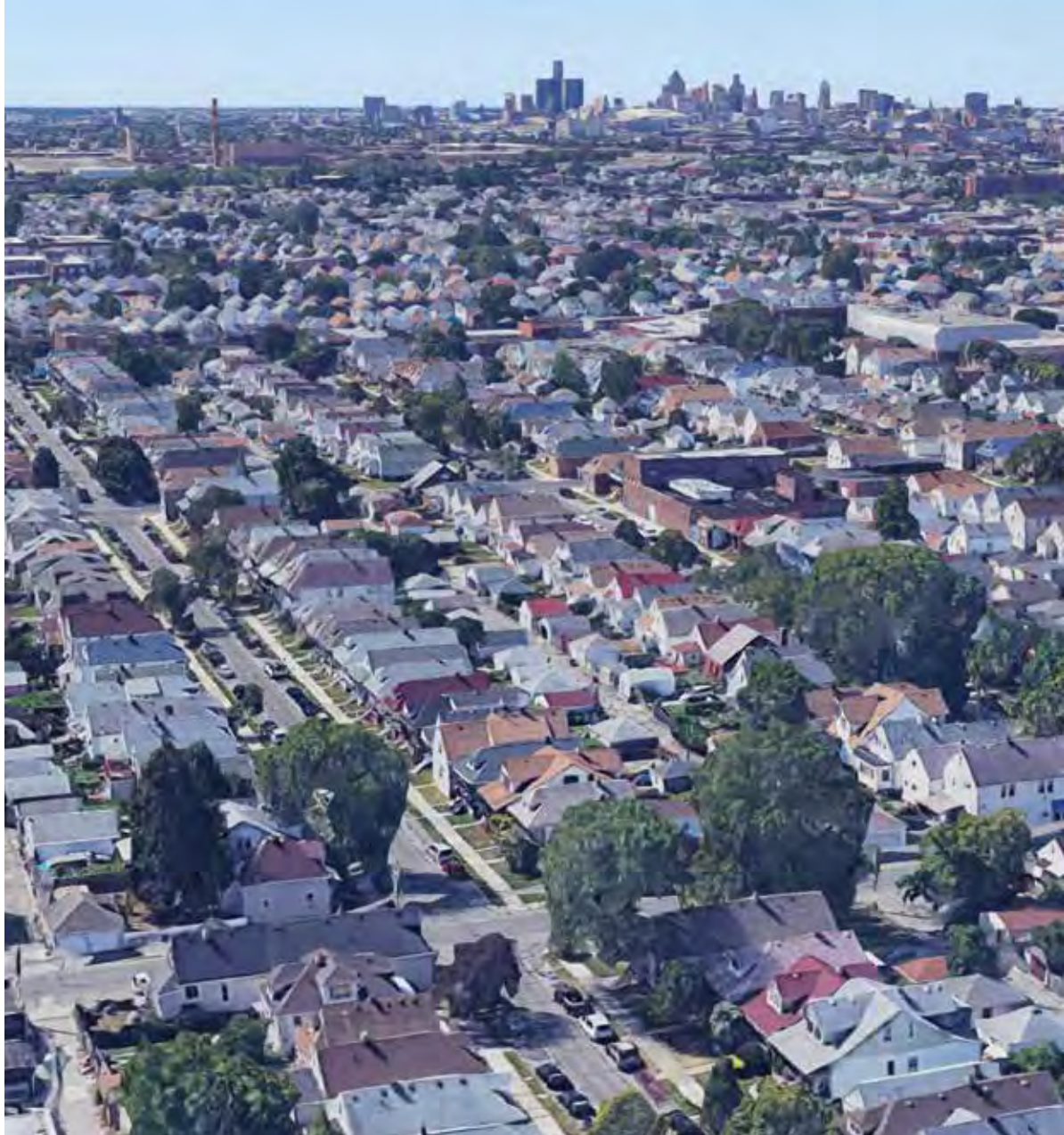
Lastly, urban trees are a climate tool. By reducing air conditioning use and other energy outputs, they lower greenhouse gas emissions. City trees make up 17 percent of the country’s carbon sink — and could capture even more carbon if cities increase their tree canopy cover. And they shield residents from extreme heat, floods and other weather events linked to climate change. For lower-income communities, which are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, added protection is critical.

HELPING TO SPREAD TREE CANOPY

To help cities across the U.S. bring trees and their many benefits to all urban residents, American Forests has adopted a comprehensive, multi-level approach. It’s an approach that aims to transform not only urban forests, but also public perception of them: why they matter and who they’re for.

“We don’t just drop into a community, plant some trees and leave,” said Anderson. “We help with the entire picture.”

That work starts with helping public officials and urban planners simply understand what Tree Equity is and how to achieve it. For example, American Forests has teamed up with the state of Rhode Island to develop a suite of different



“We don’t just drop into a community, plant some trees and leave. We help with the entire picture.”

—SARAH ANDERSON

planning tools and resources that can help all their municipalities work toward Tree Equity. One such tool is the Tree Equity Score, a rubric that combines information about a city’s tree canopy, climate projections and public health data to help focus resources in neighborhoods currently underserved by tree canopy. The methodology for creating a score will be available for use nationwide after it is completed for the Rhode Island project.

In the meantime, city leaders anywhere can use the Vibrant Cities Lab. The platform — which American Forests created with the U.S. Forest Service and National Association of Regional

Councils — features such things as action guides, case studies, research and a self-assessment tool to help city planners and others develop and improve their urban forestry programs.

While trees can ultimately save money for cities and their residents, urban forestry programs need more funding to be effective. American Forests is, therefore, helping develop new finance mechanisms such as City Forest Credits.

“This exciting new voluntary carbon market resembles the traditional carbon credit model, where companies and others can mitigate their emissions by purchasing credits,” said Ian Leahy, vice president of urban forestry at American Forests. “Only this time, they’re purchasing credits that can be put toward planting, maintaining and protecting city trees, which research shows have the most impact.”

To that point, these unique “carbon+” credits quantify not just the trees’ carbon storage capac-



Side-by-side images of two different Detroit neighborhoods illustrates the disparity between tree cover and the need for Tree Equity.

ity, but also their ability to trap rain, reduce air pollution and save energy.

On the job front, American Forests is working to make sure that urban forestry programs create career opportunities in the communities they're serving. American Forests launched a new Career Pathways initiative, for example, with the help of funding from the JPB Foundation and Bank of America. The initiative connects urban forestry job-training programs with tree care employers, facilitating increased matriculation into entry-level jobs like tree trimming and pruning.

And of course, alongside the education, advocacy and career programs American Forests is using to advance Tree Equity, there's planting actual trees — to the tune of more than a dozen plantings annually in different U.S. cities, such as Miami, Boston and Houston.

Quincy Jones says he's seen many results spark in Osborn through the green development there

— particularly through the Outdoor Educational Center, which has become a place to hold parades, parties and other community activities.

"If you're thinking about transforming your neighborhood, green space is a good way to start because you can get a lot of engagement," said Jones. "Because who doesn't want to see a beautiful community? No matter what the income level is, everybody wants to be around something beautiful and clean." 🌱

For more information, research and sources, visit vibrantcitieslab.com.

Sarah Wade is a freelance environmental writer based in central Virginia. She previously spent five years writing for *World Wildlife*, the quarterly magazine of World Wildlife Fund.



CHANGING THE FACE OF THE **OUT**

BY SARAH MAE BROWN



ANALISA FREITAS

José González gets ready to lead a group of children as they raft the Tuolumne River.

AN EXPLOSION OF LEADERS from marginalized communities are using the power of social media to amplify and validate their experiences and narratives in the natural world. *Outdoor Afro*, *Latino Outdoors* and *Blackstar Skydivers* are among the groups they have created to prove that hiking, biking, kayaking, climbing and skydiving are no longer predominantly activities for a subset of people, most of whom are white. They are introducing a new generation of female, minority, disabled, LGBTQIA+, elderly, plus-sized citizens and others to the magic and transformative power of the outside world.

A common theme for these new nature lovers is to play outside however you would like, something they say makes outdoor recreation and its twin sister, conservation, more diverse and relevant to everyone.

That sentiment is particularly important, given that only 12 percent of jobs in environmental nonprofits, government agencies and grant foundations are held by minorities, despite being nearly 40 percent of the overall U.S. population.

I spoke with five of America's leading outdoor influencers whose organizations and actions are blazing a trail of equity and inclusion and changing the look of outside adventure.

DOORS

Daniel White

THE BLACKALACIAN

He calls himself the “Blackalachian.” A fitting name, he says, given that he is known by many long-distance hikers as the African American face of the Appalachian Trail, commonly known as the AT. Daniel White completed the trail in October 2017, and he hasn’t looked back. He describes himself as a self-taught outdoorsman who did not have many role models of color — so he set out to change that for future generations. He’s since completed the Underground Railroad Bike Trail — from Mobile, Ala., to Owen Sound, Ontario — Camino de Santiago del Norte hiking route in Spain and the Scotland Great Outdoors Challenge.

His YouTube and social media channels document each adventure with an eye on advice, inspiration and troubleshooting for beginners, particularly people of color. He provides tips on techniques, trail recommendations, gear advice, connections and more. He works with children in communities of color, sharing stories about his outdoor transformation and leading day hikes. His next project is a homestead in North Carolina to engage children of color in outdoor experiences.

Top right: White is known by many long-distance hikers as the African American face of the Appalachian Trail. Middle: White works with children in communities of color, sharing stories about his outdoor transformation and leading day hikes. Below: White completed the Underground Railroad Bike Trail.



“As a black man in America, I didn’t have a real sense of freedom or confidence. But with each adventure I meet new people, my faith in humanity is restored and I’m empowered to have an impact. The truth is, you don’t often see dark skin, gold teeth and dreadlocks on the trail, but I’m showing kids they belong!”

— DANIEL WHITE

"I lived my whole life near the AT and never saw people like me doing it," says White, who grew up in Ashville, N.C. "I want to change that. My road to outdoor recreation was a lonely one at first, but I found a sense of calm and purpose in nature and exposing others like me to it."

Indeed, the outdoors has changed White.

"Before stepping out on the AT, I was a super angry person; angry at the state of this nation," says White. "As a black man in America, I didn't have a real sense of freedom or confidence. But with each adventure I meet new people, my faith in humanity is restored and I'm empowered to have an impact. The truth is, you don't often see dark skin, gold teeth and dreadlocks on the trail, but I'm showing kids they belong!"

José González

FOUNDER OF LATINO OUTDOORS

José González is from Amatlán de Cañas in southwest Mexico. He migrated to California's Central Valley at age 9. About two decades later, in 2014, he founded Latino Outdoors (LO) after no results

"Acknowledging the experiences and perspectives of all communities has value and matters in terms of how brown people are included in the future."

— JOSÉ GONZÁLEZ



turned up when he searched "Latino outdoors" on Google. LO's purpose is to ensure that Latino outdoor history, heritage and leadership is valued and visible in the American outdoor recreation and conservation narrative.

"What does the Latino outdoor experience look like? This is our focus," explains González, who started the organization for Californians but now works nationally. "Then, identify the barriers around equality and inclusion specific to Latinos and reduce them."

LO's Vamos Outdoors program offers transformative outdoor experiences, such as free hikes that foster outdoor leadership and professional development. LO uses social media and meetups to promote what Gonzales calls "cultura y familia," an active community of Latino outdoor users, mentors and stewards.

Above: González leads a hike with the Latino Community Foundation. **Left:** González teaches a potential future conservationist about the different types of trees in forests.

González believes that, as immigrants, Latinos are made to feel like America's natural environment is not theirs to enjoy. He wants to change that.

"The Latino connection to nature is informed by migration, agriculture and outdoor labor," says González. "We remind Latinos of their strong ancestral connection to the land, the night sky and the smell of the campfire."

He says it's particularly important to remind older generation Latinos about this. "When we tell our parents we want to go camping, they might say, 'Are you kidding me? The whole reason we left our home countries was so you didn't have to sleep on the floor!'"

LO focusses on expanding and amplifying the unique Latino outdoor experience often overlooked by the traditional outdoor movement.

"We literally showcase how conservation roots have been ingrained in Latino culture for generations," says González. "Acknowledging the experiences and perspectives of all communities

has value and matters in terms of how brown people are included in the future."

Danielle Williams

FOUNDER OF MELANIN BASE CAMP AND TEAM BLACKSTAR SKYDIVERS

Danielle Williams founded Melanin Base Camp (MBC) in 2016 to provide a home base for diversity in outdoor adventure. Using weekly firsthand accounts from black, brown, Asian, indigenous and queer people of color who love the outdoors, MBC works to ensure these groups feel welcome in outdoor spaces. Williams feels it's crucial to support those who did not grow up with many outdoor experiences.

"If everything's geared towards someone spending their 1,000th day outdoors versus their first, that's another form of racial discrimination whether it's *intended* or not," says Williams, an African American outdoor leader and disabled

As a disabled veteran, Williams founded Melanin Base Camp in 2016.

GWENDOLYN WILLIAMS





Williams skydives in Orange, Va.

veteran. “Outdoor companies, as well as city, state and national parks, still have a long way to go to demonstrate people of color are welcome. That means, stop calling the police on us for no reason and start funding infrastructure, staffing and education that supports beginners and first-timers.”

MBC’s Trip Reports offer relatable content on how to get started outside. They include interviews with grassroots activists, environmentalists and educators, as well as conversations on complex issues of race, gender and disability outdoors.

“I’m disabled, so I feel excluded in outdoor spaces pretty much all the time,” says Williams. “I’m currently producing a film at Red River Gorge in Kentucky and can’t physically access the shoot area. Most national parks aren’t designed for people like me and that design isn’t arbitrary, it’s intentional; it’s just not intended for me with trail grades often too steep to traverse on my elbow crutches.”

Williams launched Team Blackstar Skydivers in 2014, after she and five other African Americans completed a star formation skydive in Georgia. They promote diversity in skydiving and strengthen ties with communities of color while highlighting charitable giving and community service. The group has grown to nearly 300 skydivers in six countries.

“As a black female skydiver, I’ve always felt marginalized,” says Williams. “I’ve never jumped regularly with other black women. There’s added difficulty in learning a new thing while being the ‘only one.’ If you make a mistake, it’s more likely

“I’m disabled, so I feel excluded in outdoor spaces pretty much all the time... Most national parks aren’t designed for people like me and that design isn’t arbitrary, it’s intentional.”

— DANIELLE WILLIAMS

to be misattributed to your race, gender, sexuality or disability — whatever makes you different. It’s hard for people who’ve always been surrounded by people who look like them to understand. It doesn’t matter whether you’re learning to skydive or climb — being the only one is alienating.”

Williams says her outdoor odyssey has been lonely but that’s what’s motivated her to be so active in building community with other brown people through MBC and Team Blackstar.

Alex Arevalo

EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTOR AT INWOOD CANOE CLUB AND CO-FOUNDER OF UPTOWN PADDLING

Nestled under New York’s Westside Highway and in the shadow of high-rises is a powerful little nonprofit boathouse boasting the city’s only kayaking community. The Inwood Canoe Club (ICC) is where Alex Arevalo and other non-motorized boat enthusiasts introduce hundreds of inner city families from the Bronx, Harlem and beyond to the Hudson River.



“Once they learn how to be on the water, the urban outdoors changes from a hostile place to a safe place of wonder and a place to be protected.”

— ALEX AREVALO

“These kids have lived on the island of Manhattan their whole lives but never seen the water as a playground,” says Arevalo, a Mexican American who grew up in East Los Angeles. “It’s always been off limits. When they get in a kayak, most for the first time, they see their city in a new light.”

Arevalo starts by teaching basic paddling skills and how to overcome the fear of water. Then, it’s on to ecology, which ultimately leads to stewardship.

“Once they learn how to be on the water, the urban outdoors changes from a hostile place to a safe place of wonder and a place to be protected,” says Arevalo, who often takes them floating in the island’s last remaining salt marsh.

Originally founded in 1902, the ICC now provides the most available access point for kids of color who want to get out on the water. The ICC and Arevalo’s latest outdoor recreation creation, Uptown Paddling, partners with local schools and community groups to offer children, young adults and urban families a chance to experience the Hudson River and engage in its ecology and environmental stewardship. They offer free water safety, paddling instruction, kayaking excursions, practices and games, as well as lessons on water quality, tides, currents and reading nautical charts.

“I was born in Mexico, one of 11 children,” explains Arevalo, whose initial connection to



nature was in the form of reading outdoors. “My dad worked all day and my mom all night; there was not much time for outdoor recreation.”

Later, when Arevalo moved east, he became fascinated with the waterways he saw from his commuter train window. “Water-related outdoor recreation was not in my cultural or geographic upbringing. But once I saw this water, surrounding my NYC island home, as mine to explore, I taught myself the ropes and have been sharing that knowledge ever since.”

James Edward Mills

FOUNDER OF THE JOY TRIP PROJECT

As a journalist, equity author and adventurer, James Mills enjoyed a lucrative career in the outdoor industry. Eventually, though, he became disillusioned by its lack of recruitment and representation of people of color.

“Gear catalogs, ad campaigns, films and articles typically presented the outdoors as a place for white people, most of them men,” says Mills, a person of color himself. “I decided to do something about this.”

Above left: Arevalo heads out on New York’s Hudson River to teach people from inner city families about the beauty of nature. Right: Arevalo teaches basic paddling skills and how to overcome fear of water, as well as ecology, which ultimately leads to stewardship.



images, to environmental advocacy, to hiring in the outdoor industry, to outdoor and nature-based science education in urban areas,” says Mills.

The Joy Trip Project is working to change that.



So, in 2009, he created The Joy Trip Project, a news and reporting hub covering outdoor recreation, environmental conservation, charitable giving and sustainable living, all with an eye on equity and inclusion.

The Joy Trip Project explores the history and achievements of a different sort of outdoor hero — such as America’s first park rangers; more than 400 black Buffalo Soldiers; Sophia Danenberg, the first African American to summit Mount Everest; and Shelma Kim, a top Korean American climber who founded Flash Foxy to elevate female climbers.

“The more I looked around, the more obvious it was that the outdoors has always been far more diverse than we’d been led to believe,” says Mills.

In his 2014 book “The Adventure Gap: Changing the Face of the Outdoors,” Mills investigates how non-whites are missing from the heritage and legacy of conservation, outdoor adventure and exploration. He found that it wasn’t that these hidden figures didn’t participate, but rather their narratives had been downplayed.

“People of color have been seriously underserved in the outdoor historical narrative and continue to be underserved today from marketing

So, why is equity and inclusion in outdoor recreation so important? The undeniable link between environmental racism and climate equity provides the answer, he says. It’s no secret that marginalized communities bear the brunt of environmental degradation. When entire groups of people feel left out, underrepresented or unwelcome in outdoor spaces, they are less likely to fight to protect them.

“Are we prepared to do what we need to do to survive on this planet?” posits Mills. “I think we are, but only if everyone truly has an equal stake in the environment. To address climate change, everyone must feel their connection to nature is valued and truly be able to call the outdoors their own.” ↓

Sarah Mae Brown is a journalist who has worked for *CNN New York*, *NBC Moscow*, *APTV Moscow* and *National Geographic* online. In 2009, she founded the Green Alliance, an organization that works with businesses and consumers on sustainability.

Above: As a journalist, equity author and adventurer, Mills has enjoyed a lucrative career in the outdoor industry. **Below:** Mills created The Joy Trip Project, a news and reporting hub covering outdoor recreation, environmental conservation, charitable giving and sustainable living, all with an eye on equity and inclusion.

“Are we prepared to do what we need to do to survive on this planet? I think we are, but only if everyone truly has an equal stake in the environment. To address climate change everyone must feel their connection to nature is valued and truly be able to call the outdoors their own.”

— JAMES EDWARD MILLS



A close-up photograph of a person's legs and arms as they dig in the soil with a shovel. The person is wearing a blue t-shirt and dark shorts. The shovel is turned over, showing a clump of dark soil and some roots. The background is a blurred green field. The title text is overlaid on the image.

Investing in People by Investing in Trees

BY SARAH L. ANDERSON



WHEN I WAS 8 YEARS OLD,

I had the formative experience familiar to so many in this country — a summer at camp. My version of camp was rich with songs, sports and, best of all, exploring the pine barren forests of southern New Jersey.

Camp was drastically different from the environment at my school, where racist taunts followed me from the classroom to the playground to the bus ride home. The woods at camp were a safe haven, where I felt a freedom that didn't exist at school. I learned about prescribed burns, fires set on purpose to regulate the forest ecosystem. Camp counselors taught me how to practice the principles of Leave No Trace. I observed how tree roots helped to stabilize sandy New Jersey soils that filtered drinking water for millions.

The forests made me feel at peace. From then on, I was determined to make sure everybody could experience the benefits of trees.

The need to do so was driven home for me again in college, when I worked for an urban summer recreation program designed to deliver lunches to children who may otherwise not have access to a healthy meal. Located in a city park, the program was free and easy for kids to walk to, but the park itself felt neglected. Drug vials,



Above: Every person deserves to feel that who they are, where they live and what they contribute to society is valued.

Left: The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that urban forestry will see a 10 percent increase in job openings for entry-level positions over the next decade.



Above right: Anderson found her passion for urban forestry and equity working summers at a recreation camp in New Jersey.

Above left: The recreation program Anderson worked at had a leadership program for the 12- through 14-year-olds to model park stewardship. **Below right:** Openlands Forestry Trainees learn arboriculture basics in the classroom, that they later apply to the field.

needles and used condoms littered the ground, making it unsafe for play.

Millions of people in cities across the country face a similar challenge — limited access to clean and healthy natural green spaces. That's because, in most cities, there's far more tree cover in high-income neighborhoods than low-

income neighborhoods. This inequity originates from decades of disinvestment and discriminatory planning practices, both of which result in an inequitable distribution of green spaces.

I was determined to address this inequity during my summer job in college. But my unbridled enthusiasm for better quality nature earned me scoffs and eye-rolls from colleagues. My optimism did not match the reality of the community, which was that residents were jaded by outsiders coming in with shiny new ideas of how to improve *their* community, only to have those plans and investments be short-lived and unsustainable. It became clear throughout the summer that the only things I could do were to consistently show up, be present and be willing to do what was needed to improve the conditions in the park at a pace welcome by locals.

A seed of hope and optimism was planted that winter, when I was asked

to be the summer recreation program supervisor. The next few summers, we regularly held park clean-ups, followed Leave No Trace principles and even named the geese that swam in the park's pond. We had a leadership program for the 12- through 14-year-olds to model park stewardship. I am hopeful those summers helped prepare the kids to become nature advocates.

My big take-away from that experience is that every person deserves to feel that who they are, where they live and what they contribute to society is valued. When we meaningfully invest resources to create healthy and resilient green spaces, especially where they are needed most, we show our dedication to achieving Tree Equity.

And, that's why my career is centered around planting more trees in cities.

LORAXES NEEDED

Unfortunately, across the country, there are not enough people to plant and care for city trees. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that urban forestry will see a 10 percent increase in job openings for entry-level positions over the next decade. Many of those jobs will be planting, trimming and pruning trees — where the median annual wage is \$40,510. Nearly 25 percent of tree trimmers and pruners are self-employed, so this type of opportunity can set the stage for improved economic mobility, resulting in a better quality of life for those who need it most.

American Forests launched the Tree Equity: Career Pathways Initiative in 2018 to address this shortage and, simultaneously, ensure that all people benefit from trees. The focus of the initiative is training people in low-income urban neighborhoods (where there are fewer jobs and trees) and placing them in urban forestry jobs.





Ioane Etuale (left), a graduate of the Onondaga Earth Corps and tree care entrepreneur, and Rubin Harrison (right), Advanced Young Adult Crew member, catch up at a fall tree planting in Syracuse, N.Y.'s Kirk Park.

Climate change-related threats to urban trees — such as floods and other extreme weather events, pests, invasive species and development — are set to exacerbate this inequity. So, providing jobseekers the skills and guidance needed to get urban forestry positions can help marginalized communities adapt to climate change.

More trees in these communities, especially if they are well-cared for trees, also means lower utility bills, given that trees keep houses 10 degrees cooler in the summer. In the winter, they keep buildings warm by blocking strong winds.

“The forests made me feel at peace. From then on, I was determined to make sure everybody could experience the benefits of trees.”

— SARAH L. ANDERSON

And more trees means fewer heat-related illnesses. That’s significant, given that, under the status quo, a 10-fold increase in heat-related deaths is expected by 2050.

A TRIPLE-BOTTOM-LINE SOLUTION

At the heart of the American Forests initiative is a new guide that spells out 12 best practices for creating entry-level urban forestry career pathways programs that meet regional urban forestry needs. Created with input from the International Society of Arboriculture and the Tree Care Industry Association, the Career Pathways Action Guide will continually be updated with the latest research, case studies and resources to support local action. This one-stop shop for helping build the urban forestry workforce of tomorrow includes such things as guidance for building partnerships to insights on advocating for inclusivity. It can be downloaded at VibrantCitiesLab.com.



Millions of people in cities across the country face a challenge — limited access to clean and healthy natural green spaces.



Our Tree Equity: Career Pathways Initiative helps bring to light that the solution we've been looking for has been here all along: investing in our people and our urban green space. That's the key to creating truly resilient forests and communities and ensuring all people receive the benefits that trees provide.

Below: Onondaga Earth Corps crew and staff with City Forester Stephen Harris and American Forests Senior Manager of Tree Equity Sarah Anderson.
Right: Allison Preble, Openlands' assistant forestry crew leader, with forestry trainees Glenn Stovall and Shayne Hale, viewing a demonstration on maintaining tree health in Chicago through Openlands' Forestry Trainee Program, which is funded by American Forests as part of our Career Pathways Initiative.

Examples of the guide in action can be found in some of the cities where American Forests works. In Chicago, we support the Forestry Trainee Program, run by a regional land trust called Openlands, led by certified arborists and connected to a network of industry professionals in the city.

Through the eight-month program, people who have little to no experience in arboriculture or forestry become adept in basic urban forestry techniques, develop leadership skills and make connections to various partners in the region. Trainees' confidence builds over the longer-than-average length of the program through their evolution into volunteer leaders.

For the trainees, the program has helped them focus not only on current employment goals, but also future career goals.

"From the beginning, I have felt that my future is being

kept in mind with all of the exposure to training [and] industry professionals," trainee Shayne Hale says. "Apart from working for [Openlands], I would hope to get a job with a tree care company, preferably in Chicago, and eventually learn how to become a climbing arborist or certified arborist."

Hale is now employed full-time in the tree industry, thanks to the program.

Katie Fleming, Openlands' forestry program manager who helped develop and now implements the program, says the program is structured to allow trainees a safe environment in which to learn and grow.

"Our trainees complete classroom and field-based lessons in urban forestry, building skills in watering, weeding, mulching, pruning and inventorying thousands of trees a year," Fleming says. "It's important that trainees get to work in an environment that is inclusive and safe, where mistakes are allowed, and reflection is encouraged. Trainees who complete the program earn their certification as volunteer TreeKeepers and are given the confidence and experience to enter an urban forestry career."

Approximately two dozen other nonprofit organizations across the country also run programs that equip participants with the knowledge and skillsets to thrive in entry-level urban forestry jobs. The Greening Youth Foundation in Atlanta and the Delaware Center for Horticulture in Wilmington, Del., for example, have prioritized serving those who wouldn't necessarily consider urban forestry careers,

given their backgrounds and barriers to employment.

Our Tree Equity: Career Pathways Initiative helps bring to light that the solution we've been looking for has been here all along: investing in our people and our urban green space. That's the key to creating truly resilient forests and communities and ensuring all people receive the benefits that trees provide. 🌱

Sarah L. Anderson writes from Washington, D.C. and is American Forests' senior manager of Tree Equity.



AMOUR VERT

EFFORTLESSLY sustainable

15% OFF

USE CODE:
FORESTS



For every tee you buy, we plant a tree in collaboration with American Forests®.

So far, we planted over 290,000 trees.

*Enjoy 15% off your first order with code FORESTS. Offer valid through 11:59PM PT February 28, 2020. This offer is non-transferable and cannot be combined with any other promo codes or applied to prior purchases.



Restoring the Roots of Rock

BY IAN LEAHY

SHREDDING A SWEAT-DRENCHED guitar solo before thousands of ecstatic fans. Inspecting tree bark for signs of resistance to an invasive insect.

It's hard to imagine two things that, at first glance, have less in common.

But, in fact, they have much in common. Insects that damage or kill trees ruin the wood that musicians depend on — the wood from species that are used to make guitars and other instruments.

That's why American Forests began working with researchers at the U.S. Forest Service and Fender Musical Instruments to begin building resilient and thriving forests in the eastern United States. According to Mike Born, director of wood technology at Fender Musical Instruments, it's work that is important for securing the future of their product.

"We see several challenges for the future of ash guitars, due to the destruction caused by the emerald ash borer (EAB)," says Born. "Ash has been a staple for Fender guitars for 70 years and has been the genesis of a lot of great music

over the years. Through this project, we are taking steps to cultivate EAB-resistant ash varieties, so we can still build ash guitars 60 to 70 years in the future!"

GROWING GENETIC GOLD

The fittingly named Roots of Rock initiative begins with boots on the ground in national, state and private forests to find trees that faced the full brunt of an infestation or disease — in this case, emerald ash borer — but, yet, survived. The genetics of these particular specimens allow them to persevere despite the same brutal attacks that have killed hundreds of millions of other ash trees.

Once these trees are identified, scientists at the U.S. Forest Service conduct testing to confirm their resistance. For those that pass, shoots of new growth and seeds are collected to capture that genetic fortitude.

It can be a complicated process, given that populations of trees adapt specifically to their local bioregion. The genetics that thrive in one area

might be inert just a couple of hundred miles away. So, the process needs to be replicated over and over again across the landscape. One exception to this situation is in urban forests, including street and landscape trees, where genetic diversity is not as critical because the trees are typically planted and not expected to be a self-sustaining population over many generations.

Once the seeds and shoots are gathered, the Roots of Rock team begins breeding and testing new pest-resistant trees. This can occur through seed orchards, nurseries, clone propagation or progeny testing, whereby the genetic information of the resistant candidate comes from its offspring, as opposed to the tree itself.

Then, it's time to propagate those trees at scale. Cue American Forests and its track record of working with the U.S. Forest Service, local nonprofits and hundreds of corporate partners to plant 60 million trees over the last 30 years. We will build off of that experience to plant



Fender Musical Instruments knows the importance of protecting the species that produce the wood that is transformed into their stunning guitars, including this 2014 American Standard.

thousands upon thousands of improved seedlings that will restore the health of impacted natural and urban forest lands.

“THEY SAY THE HEART OF ROCK AND ROLL IS IN CLEVELAND”

We have kicked off this work by embedding an American Forests forest health expert in The Holden Arboretum outside Cleveland through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. There’s a certain poetic lyricism to the fact that the partners have chosen this as the starting place. This region is home to the pulsing industrial heart of the nation that has generated so many musicians over the decades, from the likes of rock and roll in Cleveland to Motown, garage rock and techno in Detroit.

“Ash has been a staple for Fender guitars for 70 years and has been the genesis of a lot of great music over the years. Through this project, we are taking steps to cultivate EAB-resistant ash varieties, so we can still build ash guitars 60 to 70 years in the future!”

— MIKE BORN

In fact, minutes from the Third Man Records store created by native Detroit rock legend Jack White (perhaps best known for his work in The White Stripes, The Raconteurs and sports stadium loudspeakers around the world), Roots of Rock is installing the project’s first 20 emerald ash borer resistant ash trees. They will grow in a new vacant lands nursery American Forests has spearheaded development of as part of a broader redevelopment of the abandoned Herman Kiefer Medical Center and surrounding neighborhood.

This “ground zero” for ash species restoration is particularly fitting because it was through the Port of Detroit that emerald ash borer first entered the United States in 2002 from Asia.

Jennifer Koch, Ph.D. research biologist at the U.S. Forest Service’s Northern Research Station in Delaware, Ohio, sees this multi-sector collaboration as a critical step in advancing forest health solutions not only in the Great Lakes but also nationwide.

“It is my hope that using ash as a model, we will demonstrate the value of breeding programs to harness naturally occurring resistance to combat the invasive insects and diseases that threaten our native tree species,” says Koch. “In addition, the

networks, collaborations and infrastructure we will build through this partnership will position us to more efficiently respond to other pests currently threatening our forests and prepare us to respond quickly to new threats that may arise in the future.”

As Roots of Rock grows, it will expand beyond the afflictions of ash into propagating resistance to beech bark disease and hemlock woolly adelgid. The result will not only be healthier, more resilient forests, but American companies, such as Fender Musical Instruments, that rely on specific North American species will also be able to continue serving future generations of shredders and pickers.

Ian Leahy writes from Washington, D.C., and is American Forests’ vice president of urban forestry. 🌱



U.S. Forest Service ash nursery where the seedlings in the breeding program grow.

last look



THE STUDIO DC

Designing a Green Future

This past summer, 12 high school students from Washington, D.C. created designs of landscapes that use trees and other green infrastructure to capture storm water.

They were part of a 10-week pilot program, The Studio DC, supported by the city's Department of Energy and Environment and run in partnership with Urban Studio, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit that strives to advance design thinking that can be applied to creating equitable and sustainable urbanism.

Other partners included Howard University College of Engineering and Architecture, Landscape Architecture Foundation, National Building Museum, Academy of Construction and Design and Idea Public Charter School.

High school senior Quentin, a participant in The Studio DC, draws a plan of trees in bioretention in a Washington, D.C. landscape.



BE A GIANT

JOIN THE SEQUOIA CIRCLE

Your annual leadership gift of \$1,000 or more makes you a giant for American Forests.

Forests rely on keystone tree species — such as the giant sequoia — to stay healthy and resilient. In the same way, American Forests relies on our keystone supporters — Sequoia Circle members — to advance our mission with leadership-level gifts.

Become a Sequoia Circle member today at americanforests.org/sequoiacircle

Questions? Contact Emily Russell, director of major gifts,
at erussell@americanforests.org or 202-370-4522.



AMERICAN FORESTS



3,000 Acres, Over 250,000 Tons Less Carbon Dioxide

LightStream is proud to partner with American Forests to plant a tree with every loan we fund.



REFORESTED ACRES

3,000 acres
(and counting!)



CLEANER AIR

267,833 tons of carbon dioxide
removed from the atmosphere¹



EQUIVALENT OUTCOME

Removing 58,225 cars
off the road annually


We have the financing you need for practically anything. And as a supporter of American Forests, you'll get a special discount on our already-low rates.²



Visit [LightStream.com/AmericanForests](https://www.LightStream.com/AmericanForests)

¹ Calculation assumes trees are fully grown

² LightStream provides good-credit customers with unsecured loans up to \$100,000, with no fees. A discount of .10 percentage point is for a LightStream loan referred by www.LightStream.com/AmericanForests. Borrower must apply directly through this website and with cookies activated on their browser, in order for this offer to be tracked and valid.

 SunTrust Bank is an Equal Housing Lender. ©2019 SunTrust Banks, Inc. All rights reserved. SUNTRUST, LIGHTSTREAM and the LightStream logo are trademarks of SunTrust Banks, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Lending services provided by SunTrust Bank.