



## **PLANT FOR OUR FUTURE**

### **HOSTING TREE PLANTINGS TO RESTORE STREAMS, BUILD COMMUNITIES AND SEQUESTER CARBON DIOXIDE TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE**

We depend on trees. Trees clean our air, absorb carbon dioxide, cool our planet, reduce our energy needs, support our economy, and provide wood for building our communities. Along city streets or deep in the woods, trees keep rivers, lakes, and drinking water clean, reduce the risk of flooding, and sustain fish and wildlife populations.

To address the many impacts of the climate crisis, from more frequent and intense rain events to more severe summer drought, we need to identify both proven and emerging solutions and take bold actions. By strategically planting trees, growing new forests, and protecting and managing existing forests, we can harness their ability to capture and store carbon, reduce flooding, absorb pollution, mitigate drought, clean and buffer coldwater, and support more resilient neighborhoods and communities.

While trees alone cannot solve the problem, they can play a critical role in the solution.

### **Plant for Our Future**

Trout Unlimited's Plant for Our Future campaign is a simple and powerful effort to magnify the impact of the thousands of trees our volunteers plant annually, increase the number of trees planted and communities engaged in these efforts and capture critical planting data to measure how much carbon dioxide our combined planting efforts are absorbing from the atmosphere.

From April 17 through May 1, in celebration of National Volunteer Week, Earth Day and Arbor Day, we're inviting TU chapters, councils and the volunteers who make them tick to setup and run a tree planting on their own home waters using this resource and guide. (Tree plantings outside of these two weeks is never a bad thing either!)



## Five Steps to Tree Planting Success

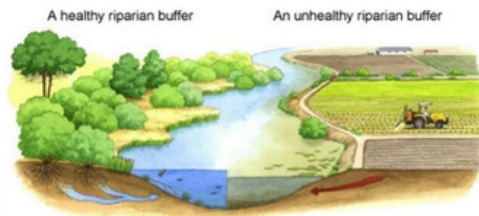
Tree planting events are fun, family-friendly and help you connect to a whole new community of people interested in making a difference. Getting started is easy and fun, and you can make your local event as big (or as small) as you want:

- 1 Pick A Planting Site:** Be sure to have landowner permission, an ideal location might be a streamside park on town or county land or a site where your chapter conducted previous habitat restoration.
- 2 Set up Your Event Online:** All events need to be posted to our national calendar at [www.tu.org/events](http://www.tu.org/events) to take advantage of our marketing might. Contact Doug Agee at [dagee@tu.org](mailto:dagee@tu.org) for help.
- 3 Order Native Plants:** Partner with local organizations who have planted in the past, or we can help you find a native plant nursery and select species for your specific project site.
- 4 Spread the Word:** Use our special marketing toolkit to reach your local volunteers through print, online and social media.
- 5 Enjoy the Day:** Be sure to take plenty of photos of your volunteers!

## STEP ONE

# Pick a planting site

Tree plantings can take place almost anywhere, and while we're often focused on planting riparian buffers along a cold trout stream we've already restored, sometimes it's important to "move the mountain" and plant trees in a more developed area to connect with a local community and build new relationships.



Plant trees to create a buffer to act like a sponge for stormwater runoff, create fish habitat, reduce flooding, and prevent erosion of the banks of our prized rivers and streams. The wider the buffer, the better!

Some of the favorite areas TU chapters find to plant trees include:

- **Public Parks:** Local community parks are often great places to plant trees along small streams running through our towns. These parks usually have grass right up to the water's edge and could benefit from a healthy riparian buffer. On top of that, they are highly visible locations, typically have a strong community constituency, and are attractive places to draw new volunteers out to get their hands dirty with TU!
- **Land Trust Parcels:** Community land trusts are great partners who conserve and protect open spaces across the country. Often these lands host streams and rivers which have been impacted by past development and land use practices. Reaching out to your local land trusts to seek their help finding a good planting site is a great call – not to mention their members and supporters are likely very willing candidates to be tree planting volunteers themselves!
- **Farms & Fields:** Farmers and ranchers may not seem to be immediate partners in conservation, but as small business owners who make their money off the land, these people often deeply understand the benefits of caring for and recovering the resources that sustain us all. On top of that, farm fields – especially planted fields – often have eroded streams flowing through them and are adding sediment and fertilizer nutrients into the water, two conditions which would be improved with a healthy riparian buffer.
- **City Streetscapes:** While urban areas might not immediately come to mind when it comes to TU tree plantings, those small slivers of open grass between streets and parking areas can be perfect places to plant. Trees planted in these locations absorb dirty stormwater that would otherwise runoff into catch basins, keep the air and ground cleaner and cooler to reduce pollution overall and can absorb site-specific carbon dioxide. Sites in cities are also great places to meet a whole host of new community partners and volunteers.

## THE FIVE ESSENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS

When building your planting event, you'll want to have a team of volunteers helping make the event a success.

### 1. Head for Logistics

A detail-oriented person you can task with the nitty-gritty (such as insurance certificates, landowner permission and local permitting, etc...)

### 2. Relationship Builder

The person on your team who's a natural at relationships and can draw in partners, donors and community support.

### 3. Communicator

Planting events require lots of promotion. Choose someone with media and online experience that is ready to work!

### 4. Happy Soldier

Every chapter has them – and every planting event needs them – the volunteer who can be counted on for any task, whether it's delivering shovels and gloves, hanging posters, carrying plants and more... Be sure you have a handful of soldiers to call on.

### 5. Ringmaster

Volunteer management before the planting event and on the day of the planting itself are key to ensure all of the pieces are moving together and in the right direction. A consensus-building leader who can command authority when it's time to make the final call is the best fit for this important task.



## STEP TWO

# Set up your event online

The power of Plant for Our Future is the magnification of dozens of local community tree planting events backed by a national marketing campaign to draw eyeballs, attention and volunteers.

By getting your local planting event setup online using the TU Event Calendar, your event will be part of the digital and social campaigns we run to draw in even more volunteer support!





It's easy to get started, simply gather up all of your event details, then contact Doug Agee to learn how to login and add your event online.

## Events

Home » Events

Connect with the TU community across the country at these local in-person and online events hosted by TU staff, state councils and local chapters. You'll find fun, engaging activities like tree plantings, trash cleanups, fishing trips, community science projects, youth education activities and veteran and first responder programs close to you. Don't see any events in your neighborhood? Reach out to [your local chapter](#) to find out how you can help plan a local TU event!

(If you are a local TU chapter volunteer, learn how to add your local events to the calendar by [contacting your Volunteer Operations staff](#).)

	<b>Eagle Bridge NY - April 23</b> Hudson River Tree Planting Hudson River - Eagle Bridge Parking Access Point	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<b>Canton MA - April 23</b> Seeking Volunteers! Neponset River Spring Cleanup - Sat., April 23 Neponset River Watershed Area	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<b>Stamford CT - April 23</b> Earth Day Cleanup - Mianus River Trash Cleanup Hawman Mills Park, Stamford	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>
	<b>Salem NY - April 23</b> Batterkill River "Morning" Earth Day Tree Planting Batterkill River Rt. 28 South, NY	<a href="#">REGISTER</a>

## YOU'LL NEED THE FOLLOWING

- Planting Location
- Planting Date • Planting Time • Planting Site Description

*Be sure to include any driving/parking directions if the site is harder to find as well as what clothing people will need. Example: boots or waders?*

- Other Information

*Is your event family-friendly? Do people need to bring their own shovels and gloves? Will there be snacks, water or a post-planting barbecue?*

- Planting Image

*If you don't have one, we can help you select a quality shot from our stock photos*



## STEP THREE

# Order native plants

It's critical to use plant species native to your region when running a planting, not only because those plants will thrive best in your climate and soils, but also because of the additional benefits native plants offer as habitat for all sorts of creatures including pollinating insects, birds, small mammals and more.

Some of the most common streamside species TU chapters use across the country include: Maple, Oak, Sycamore, Pine, Willow, Birch and Dogwood.

To narrow down your local planting list, you can use a resource like the National Directory of Native Plant Nurseries, or contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service regional office, but the best bet is to connect with a local organization like a garden club, master gardener program or watershed association who have volunteers like you who not only know what to plant, but where your chapter can buy them.



## STEP FOUR

# Spread the word (before and after)

Tree planting events are a great way to draw out new and younger volunteers from the communities where your events are taking place, but these excited participants will only show up if you get the word out in your community.

While your chapter website and email list are important tools in reaching your current members and supporters, we've developed a range of tools in our Plant for Your Future Communications Toolkit to make it fast and easy to reach a larger audience.

Once your event is planned and the details worked out, getting the word out in a range of ways is key. You'll want to take advantage of some of these easy-to-use templates.



### READY TO USE TREE PLANTING EVENT TEMPLATES

- **Planting Poster:** Round up a handful of volunteers to hang posters about your event around your area towns. Great locations include supermarket community bulletin boards, post offices, town halls, diners and outdoor stores (not just fly shops).
- **Local Press Release:** Be sure to give your local papers a good two weeks or more with advance notice of your planting event. Invite papers and television stations to send out a photographer or crew to capture the planting on film – Earth Day events are great “feel good” community news.
- **Social Media Content:** From Facebook events to Instagram posts, stickers, profile frames and more, we've got copy-and-paste content ready to go for you to reach new audiences in your community.
- **Post-Planting Signs:** Be sure to setup a few community education signs alongside your completed planting to raise awareness of TU, your chapter and your work to restore local rivers. Temporary signage is great for right after the event, but consider also a more permanent display or kiosk alongside major restoration sites.

Also, don't forget to use the networks and relationships you have to invite more people to participate. Sending personal emails to the leaders of your area's scouting troops, civic organizations like Kiwanis and Rotary, land trusts, watershed associations and other partner organizations inviting them to spread the word with their members and supporters is a powerful way to reach people who clearly care about – and volunteer in – the communities in which they live.

These tools, along with a national marketing campaign designed to drive awareness and excitement will help make this the biggest tree planting event in TU history!



## STEP FIVE

# Enjoy the day

Make the day of your tree planting a little less stressful and a lot more fun by ensuring you've left ample time for setup and prep. If possible, have a small team of volunteers meet the evening before, or early in the morning, to deliver the plants to the location and carry each plant to the location where it should be planted.

Have tools organized, gloves and snacks ready to go and be sure you've thought about event signage like where to park, a TU banner hung near the registration area, a sign-in sheet, email signup list, volunteer waivers and more all ready to go.

Don't wait until the end of the event to take pictures, either, be sure to snap "action shots" throughout the planting and take close-up shots of volunteers beaming as they put a new tree in the ground.

Most of all, have fun! Planting trees is a fun activity that demonstrates the power of our TU community thanks to you!



## We're here to help

Your TU team is here to help you plan a great planting event, don't hesitate to reach out.

First and foremost, connect with your state council and any TU staff in your state or region to find out what local resources they may have. Use this event as an opportunity to grow your relationship and increase collaboration.

### READY TO USE TREE PLANTING EVENT TEMPLATES

For help setting up your planting event on the TU Calendar, contact Doug Agee at [dagee@tu.org](mailto:dagee@tu.org)

For help with social media and publicity, contact Riley Whitney at [riley.whitney@tu.org](mailto:riley.whitney@tu.org)

For help with planning a planting, finding a site, partners or other general help, contact Sean Sieler at [sean.sielers@tu.org](mailto:sean.sielers@tu.org)

