

California Trees

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Shade Trees: A Powerful Strategy for Energy Efficiency

By Stan Thompson

Think about a favorite public building in your community - maybe it's a community center, town hall, or a school.

Now, imagine that you've just received an email telling you about the upgrades being made to improve the building's energy efficiency, including solar panels, an upgraded air conditioning and heating system, and improved lighting.

Would you be excited to know that your favorite place was operating in an environmentally conscious way all while saving money that could be used to fund other important projects?

Now, imagine that you've gone to visit

that place to see the upgrades for yourself. As you approach, you can see the solar panels on the roof. You notice the nice, new HVAC system to the side of the building. Employees tell you about how the money that is being saved is supporting previously underfunded projects throughout your community.

What could make a project like that better? Trees.

TREES FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Urban trees can be an effective part of creating energy efficient communities. The cooling power of California's 200

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Empowering grassroots efforts and building strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.



California ReLeaf is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.

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million existing urban trees lowers energy consumption by about 7,300 giga-Watt hours each year – the equivalent to more than seven 100 megawatt power plants.

Research done by the US Forest Service's Pacific Southwest Research Station shows that trees conserve energy in three ways:

1. Through shading, which reduces the amount of radiant energy absorbed and stored by built surfaces.
2. Evapotranspiration, which converts liquid water in leaves to vapor, thereby cooling the air.
3. Reducing wind speeds, which slows the infiltration of outside air into inside spaces.

After doing research to compare communities with large tree canopy and



On a hot summer day, you can feel the difference the trees make.

those without, researchers found that temperatures 5-10 degrees cooler, and as much as 20 degrees cooler, in the shade than in nearby areas without shade.

In one study of the benefits and costs for small, medium, and large trees in the Northern California Coast region, average annual net benefits (benefits minus costs) increase with mature tree size. A small tree in a public place nets \$29 in savings per year, while a large tree in a public space nets \$142. In a residential yard, the benefits are even greater. A small tree can save \$41 per year in energy costs and a large tree can save \$146.

Tree location is just as important as tree size. Modeling performed in Sacramento and field data compiled by the Pacific Southwest Research Station determined that trees with a western exposure from afternoon sun had the greatest impact on cooling and associated savings for all climate zones and insulation levels studied.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

The role of urban forests in energy efficiency is enhanced by the many other benefits that trees provide.

California's existing urban forests reduce greenhouse gas emissions by about 6.3 million metric tons per year, with 1.8 million metric tons of that coming from emissions avoidance via energy conservation.

Trees also play an important role in effective water efficiency measures, including stormwater management, groundwater recharge, and flood control.

Homes, goods, and services sell for 12% more in



communities with trees than without them. Additionally, California's urban forests support more than 60,000 jobs annually.

By increasing community attractiveness and livability and fostering civic pride, trees take on even greater significance as communities strive to balance growth with environmental quality and social well-being.

These are benefits that no other energy efficiency upgrade can offer, especially at such a relatively low cost.

"Shade trees are an easy, cost-effective strategy to create energy efficient homes, schools, and businesses," says Sacramento Shade Director Colleen Cadwallader.

SHADE TREE PROGRAMS

One of the most recognized shade tree programs in the country, Sacramento Shade, is a partnership between the Sacramento Tree Foundation and the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD).

Sacramento County residents are eligible for up to 10 free trees through the program. Businesses in SMUD's service area, including places of worship, non-profits, and government institutions, are also eligible for free shade trees.

Other utilities in California are getting involved, too. Riverside Public Utilities has a Tree Power Rebate Program. Residents can receive up to \$25 per tree after purchasing qualifying shade trees. Rebates are credited to the customer's utility bill.

Recently, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-6) introduced The Residential Energy and Economic Savings (TREES) Act - inspired by Sacramento Shade and aimed at reducing residential energy consumption and costs through strategically planting shade trees



nationwide. A nationwide shade program could reduce air-conditioning use by at least 10%.

Above: Sacramento's skyline practically floats on the surrounding urban forest.

As utility shade tree programs begin around the country, Sacramento Shade is maturing. The process of mapping and monitoring the trees planted has begun and is an important step in proving the return on investment companies are making.

"Over the last few decades, trees have added an incredible boost to energy conservation efforts," says Cadwallader. "The next step is to figure out how our industry can capitalize on the carbon that trees store."

These forward-thinking projects shouldn't be limited to residential areas though. Schools and businesses can benefit as well.

THE CALIFORNIA CLEAN ENERGY JOBS ACT

Last year, a majority of Californians (over 60% of voters) passed Proposition 39, or the California Clean Energy Jobs Act. The act closes a tax loophole that benefited out-of-state companies.

Besides raising money for the state's General Fund, it allocates revenue to local educational agencies to support energy efficiency and alternative energy projects, along with related improvements and repairs that contribute to reduced operating costs and improved health and safety conditions in public schools.

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Proposition 39 will direct about \$2.5 billion in new revenue over five years to pay for projects at California's kindergarten to 12th grade public schools, charter schools, county offices of education and community colleges.

"Energy efficiency projects in our schools will help create jobs, protect our environment, save money and create teachable moments for students all at the same time," says State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. Many school districts plan to use the funds to help pay for solar installations or upgrades to air-conditioning and heating systems. However, tree plantings are also included as an eligible energy efficiency upgrade under Prop 39.

TREES & SCHOOLS – A PERFECT PARTNERSHIP

Planting and caring for trees on school grounds offer unique benefits in addition to energy savings. There are also unique challenges to planting and maintaining trees on school grounds.

Physical environments around schools can affect students dramatically. Trees and other green infrastructure can increase students' abilities to concentrate, reduce their stress levels, and even lessen schoolyard aggression and violence levels.

A recent study, funded by the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, of more than 400 children diagnosed with ADHD, identified a link between outdoor time and an increase in mild behavior patterns. The study determined that when exposed to green spaces, the children were able to focus on a

task for much longer periods of time.

Trees not only increase children's social and cognitive well-being, but can also increase their safety.

Trees along streets, like those approaching schools, provide a buffer between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. Trees also give the impression of narrowing the street and encourage slower driving. By providing increased pedestrian safety around schools, the opportunities for children to walk or bike to school also increase.

Trees planted in schoolyards to increase the site's energy efficiency have one other key benefit – green classrooms.

Trees on school campuses provide opportunities for lessons to occur outside of the typical classroom setting. In *Closing the Achievement Gap*, a study undertaken for California's State Education and Environment Roundtable, researchers found that high-quality environmental education can result in:

- Better performance on standardized measures of academic achievement in reading, writing, math, science and social studies,
- Reduced discipline and classroom management problems,
- Increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning, and
- Greater pride and ownership in accomplishments.

REACHING OUT TO SCHOOLS

Canopy, a California ReLeaf Network member located in Palo Alto, has long recognized the importance of shade trees on school campuses. Their *Healthy Tree, Healthy Kids!* Program is a multi-year initiative to plant 1,000 shade trees and fruit trees by targeting school campuses



Above: The two school campuses pictured above are within five miles of each other. It's easy to see the disparity created by the lack of trees on campus.

Celebrating 25 Years of Collaboration

By Olivia Darzell

1989 was a year of great historical significance. The Berlin Wall fell. Students stood in protest in China's Tiananmen Square. The 7.1 Loma Prieta earthquake shook the San Francisco Bay Area. The Exxon Valdez spilled 240,000 barrels of crude oil along the Alaskan shoreline. The world was abuzz with change and concern.

That year, a long-time urban forestry and parks advocate Isabel Wade saw an opportunity for change within California's communities. She brought the idea for a statewide urban forestry program called California ReLeaf to the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national land-conservation organization. While small in comparison to most memorable events of 1989, Wade's idea has gone on to make a big difference for urban forestry efforts in California.

What originally began as a loosely-organized coalition of 10 community-based "tree groups" has become a successful alliance of 88 urban forestry groups known as the ReLeaf Network. Last year alone, these groups worked with nearly 157,000 volunteers to plant over 130,000 trees in California's communities.

In the early days of the ReLeaf Network, member groups were faced with the issue of how to deal with newly available federal funding. In the spirit of cooperation and in hopes of creating a level playing field for small, newly formed groups seeking the same funding as large, well-established groups, the Network decided funds should be used to pay for California ReLeaf's core programs. These programs were designed to benefit groups of all sizes and to administer a competitive grant program through which all groups would have an

equal chance for funding. It was at this point in the organization's history that California ReLeaf went from being a program of TPL to an incorporated nonprofit organization with a mission to empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships that preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests.

In the past 25 years, California ReLeaf has partnered with nonprofits, local agencies and community-based groups throughout the state to leverage more than \$9 million for the planting and care of trees on public property, education and outreach projects, green jobs training, and volunteer development. Nearly 200,000 trees have been planted or cared for because of the support organizations have received through California ReLeaf's grant program.



The same spirit that drove the early members of the ReLeaf Network to share the wealth still exists today and is best seen in the organization's advocacy efforts. Together, California ReLeaf and its Network members have brought the Urban Forestry Act of 1978 into the 21st Century with new language and objectives, helped preserve the rights of all Californians to volunteer their time, and led the charge in securing sufficient funding for tree care and planting projects by protecting existing state funding programs.

Today, California ReLeaf still seeks to create the change and impact that Isabel Wade imagined in 1989. Recently, California ReLeaf created a program around long-standing, but often-ignored California Arbor Week to educate

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Californians about how trees build successful, healthy cities and neighborhoods. The program unites member organizations, cities, businesses, and individuals to share a united message about the importance of California's urban forests.

and there is still space for over a million trees in those areas, necessity still exists.

The concern for our world and people's desire for change is really no different today than it was in 1989, but California ReLeaf is. The organization has grown into an important collaborator in California's environmental efforts. With the support of concerned, thoughtful citizens, California ReLeaf will continue to grow and, in turn, so will California's urban forests.

Olivia Karp is a freelance writer based in Sacramento, California

"The Trees in My Community



Above: California Arbor Week has created a unified message for urban forestry work throughout the state. This poster was the 2013 winning entry from 5th grader Cady Ngo.

Bottom right: The seven-member California ReLeaf Network Council would meet twice yearly.

In 2014, California ReLeaf will celebrate its 25th Anniversary. While the organization and its member groups have made great strides for urban forestry in California there is still work to be done. Researchers in the US Forest Service's Urban Ecosystems and Social Dynamics Program have identified 242 million empty tree planting sites in California cities.

For 25 years, California ReLeaf has used the power of its collective voice to make a real impact on urban forestry in the state. Its current work of identifying future funding sources and supporting new grassroots efforts in under-represented areas ensures that the organization will continue creating positive changes for California's communities.

John Melvin, State Urban Forester at the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection believes that "as long as there exist places in the state that need an urban forest nonprofit presence, the work of California ReLeaf is still necessary." Considering over 94% of Californians live in urban areas

**ANNIVERSARY
SNAPSHOT**

CALIFORNIA RELEAF

Year Founded: 1989

Network Members: 88

Board Members: 10

Staff: 4

Programs include:

- Administering urban forestry grants
- Coordinating the ReLeaf Network
- Monitoring state & federal legislation
- Coordinating California Arbor Week
- Providing educational opportunities and support for existing and developing urban forestry nonprofit and community groups



Energy con't from page 4

throughout Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and neighboring communities.

This program pinpoints areas with a need for increased “canopy equity.” In addition to shading campuses and lowering energy costs for schools, children are also engaged in hands-on learning. Canopy even employs students from a neighboring high school as Urban Forestry Technicians.

TreePeople, based in Los Angeles, has been working with schools for the past 30 years to plant and maintain trees while educating students about the importance of both activities. The organization has learned some valuable lessons that may be insightful for organizations looking to partner with schools to plant trees.

Five years ago, TreePeople signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Los Angeles Unified School District. TreePeople had found that working on a school-by-school basis was problematic and that district buy-in to projects would open doors that may otherwise be closed.

The MOU doesn't just cover tree plantings, but also tree maintenance. The district commits to five years of tree care for each planting done with TreePeople.

“We've found that by working through the district, we can include maintenance staff from the beginning of the project,” explains Dede Devlin of TreePeople.

This has come in handy more than once. In the example that stands out in Devlin's mind, maintenance staff rejected a project completely and said that they would not care for the planned trees. Because of the MOU, TreePeople staff members were able to sit down with school district staff to discuss the plan. They discovered that the maintenance staff didn't like the placement of the trees because it made mowing difficult.

Because the project was still in the planning stages, TreePeople was able to move the trees and gain the support of the maintenance staff all while continuing to maintain the energy efficiency upgrades the trees provided to the campus.

As schools enter the planning phase of Prop 39 implementation, expanding the urban forests around their campuses will not just be another energy efficiency solution, but an investment in their students.

CONTINUE THE INVESTMENT

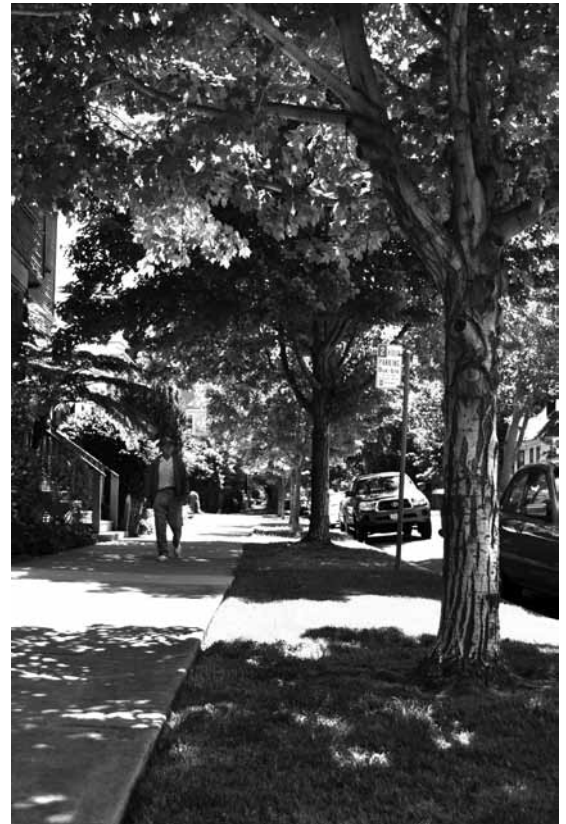
While planting trees can be a wise energy-saving investment for homeowners, business owners, cities, and schools, it can only be optimized with thoughtful planning in mind.

“Planting trees will help a community's energy conservation efforts,” says Dr. Greg McPherson of the Urban Ecosystems and Social Dynamics Program. “However, to be effective, trees must be properly selected, located, planted, and maintained.”

By recognizing the role trees can play for energy efficiency and investing in the care of those trees, communities that seek to lessen their environmental impact will have a powerful tool to use alongside larger, more costly projects.

Think again about your favorite building in your community. It would be better with energy upgrades like solar panels and updated HVAC systems, but it could be great with trees.

Stan Thompson is a freelance writer based in San Francisco, California.





Sandy Macias, the Program Manager for the US Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program Pacific Southwest Region will be retiring in January 2014.

Sandy has been a great asset to urban and community forestry in California over the years. From all of us at California ReLeaf, we send a hearty thanks and warm wishes for a relaxing and exciting retirement!

Above: US Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, Program Manager Sandy Macias, and California ReLeaf Executive Director Joe Liszewski celebrate the success of Urban ReLeaf, a member of the California ReLeaf Network, in Oakland.

California Arbor Week Is Just Around the Corner

As in years past, California ReLeaf will offer resources to make your Arbor Week events a success. Resources include:

- A calendar of events on which your organization, city, or community group can list your Arbor Week activities or request volunteers,
- A Planning and Promotion kit,
- Media templates,
- The annual poster contest for 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students in California, and
- The photo contest open to all Californians.

Log on to www.arborweek.org to get your copy of all of these great resources and to register your Arbor Week event.



CAL FIRE Urban & Community Forestry Program Adopts New Strategic Plan

The CAL FIRE Urban and Community Forestry Program recently completed and adopted a new Strategic Plan for 2013-2018. The strategic plan establishes direction and focus for efforts over the next five years and is the culmination of a two-year long effort by the 17 members of the California Urban Forestry Advisory Committee (CUFAC).

The strategic plan seeks to build on program success and is meant to assist CAL FIRE in continuing to improve, expand, and support its Urban and Community Forestry Program. The plan will be available on their website in the coming weeks. For more information, please visit http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_urbanforestry.php

From the Executive Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As California ReLeaf enters its 25th year of operations, I can't help but reflect on where the organization has come from and with your continued support where we're headed. Our Roots – In 1989 a program of the Trust for Public Land, a Network of 10 that has grown by leaps and bounds into the Network we know today; professional organizations, dedicated volunteers, arborists, city and state leaders that are committed to action and advocacy, to planting and caring for trees in hundreds of communities throughout the state. This success is all about you, you're the Network, you've made it happen.

Growth – Over the last few years, I've seen tremendous growth in the recognition of urban and community forests and the spotlight that is being shined upon our industry. From the economic jobs report commissioned by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, that puts our collective impact at supporting 60,000 California jobs annually and adding \$3.6 billion to the state's economy, to the prominent inclusion of urban forests in the Cap-and-Trade Auction Proceeds Investment Plan, and the recognition in the State's Obesity Prevention Plan that trees and greenspace play a critical role in increasing activity levels and combating one of the major health issues facing our state and nation.

Branching out – As we look forward, I'm optimistic that the ground work we've laid for new public funding sources will materialize in the coming years, that state and local leaders will invest resources and understand the important role trees play in relation to our air and water quality, to our energy independence, to the public health of our communities and in creating local jobs. You are instrumental in educating our decision makers about our urban forests, communicating the value we see and the work we do. It will take your continued support, your voice, the Network is needed now more than ever.

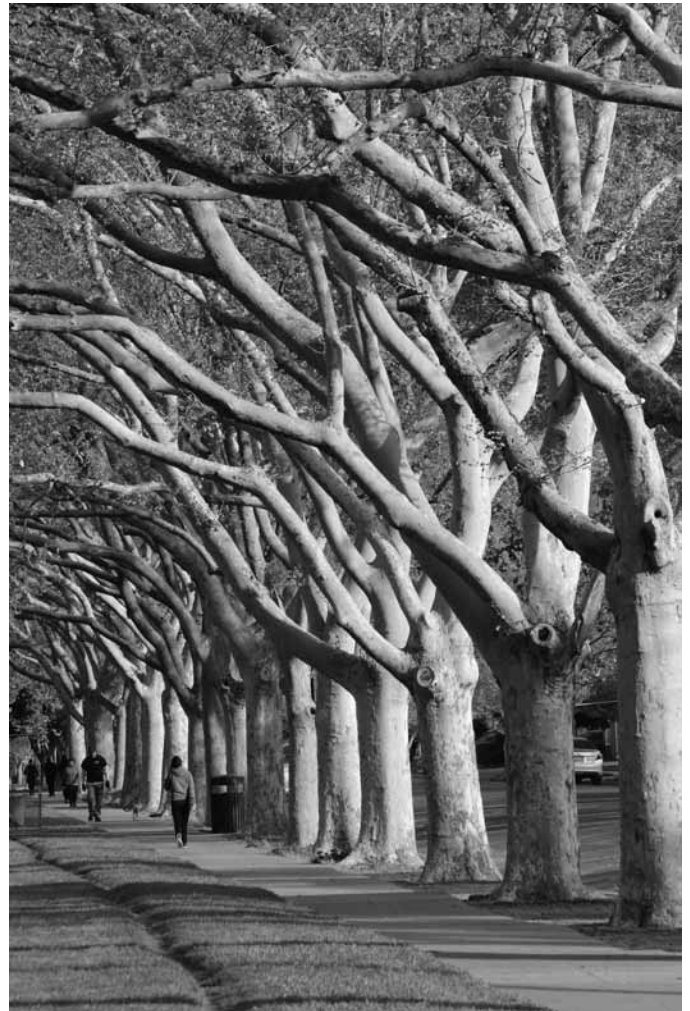
Please consider adding your voice in support of California ReLeaf and California's Trees by making a gift this year at any level and be sure to visit our website to learn additional ways to get involved.

Best wishes this holiday and planting season!



Joe Liszewski

P.S. - You can find many ways to support California ReLeaf on our website at californiareleaf.org/donate, including matching gifts or workplace giving programs like the Combined Federal Campaign (#41082) or the California State Employees Charitable Campaign (#27456).



Above: "Awake" by Josh DeWare - the winning entry in the California Arbor Week Photo Contest's Trees in Our Cities and Towns category.



TO BE CONTINUED...

The first year of the 2013-14 Legislative Session ended on September 12th with a victory for urban forestry, and a stark reminder of setbacks incurred from a 2013 State Budget that contains no local assistance funding through CAL FIRE's Urban Forestry Program.

Overall, this was the year of "to be continued" for urban forestry funding and public policy efforts, as critical issues such as timber tax and cap and trade revenue expenditures were pushed into the this year. Similarly, guidelines regarding Proposition 39 implementation, and the potential for re-tooling the 2014 water bond, continued with the California Energy Commission and Legislature through autumn, respectively.

AB 32 IMPLEMENTATION BACK ON TRACK

Though the State Legislature ultimately supported Governor Brown's proposal to loan \$500 million of cap and trade revenue to the general fund for this fiscal year, many positive steps have been taken by the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the Legislature to ensure cap and trade revenues will be expended on sound, strategic projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide myriad co-benefits as mandated by AB 32 (Núñez), AB 1532 (Pérez), and SB 535 (de León). This includes the crafting and distribution of the three-year investment plan (in which urban forestry is prominently featured) and updates to the 2008 Scoping Plan drafted by the California Air Resources Board five years ago.

The 2013 Scoping Plan will be designed to inform continued AB 32 implementation across multiple sectors, and frame a vision of how state agencies and stakeholders can work to achieve 80% GHG emission reductions by 2050. California ReLeaf and its partners crafted a comprehensive 28-page public comment document for CARB that recommends a suite of public policies that can be implemented in the coming years to maximize the sequestration and ecosystem benefits of urban forestry, wetlands, forestry, and rangelands.

RELEAF AND PARTNERS SAVE EEMP

California ReLeaf lead a coalition of conservation partners this year in a successful effort to ensure the popular Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) was not absorbed into an Administration proposal to consolidate several funding sources into one Active Transportation Program (ATP).

Negotiations with stakeholders and the Administration heated up in August with dual objectives to maintain critical elements of the EEMP while simultaneously contributing to the laudable objective of creating an appropriate Active Transportation Program. The outcome was Senate Bill 99, which was signed into law by Governor Brown in late September. Senate Bill 99 achieves both aforementioned objectives as follows:

The EEMP was saved. The program will now focus primarily on funding resource lands and urban forestry. Since its creation, the EEMP has also funded "roadside recreation" projects (i.e. parks and trails). These projects are removed from the EEMP and will be funded under the Active Transportation Program. Consequently, the annual appropriation to the EEMP will be reduced from \$10 million to \$7 million (a slight gain for the remaining two categories given that roadside recreation grants typically accounted for 35% of all funded projects over the last five years). The administration of the EEMP moves

from the Department of Transportation to the Natural Resources Agency. As a permanent program of the Agency, funding to support a full-time position within the Agency for these purposes is included.

The Active Transportation Program was created, and will give a 35% boost in dedicated state funding for projects that increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking in California, increase safety and mobility for nonmotorized users, and advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas reduction goals. Projects eligible for funding include development of new bikeways, walkways, recreational trails, and parks. The Active Transportation Program will be funded with \$130 million in state and federal dollars, and contain both a regional competitive and statewide competitive program. Twenty-five percent of the funds must be used for projects that benefit disadvantaged communities.

This effort was one of the major conservation victories of the 2013 legislative session, and California ReLeaf was proud to partner with an amazing non-profit coalition that helped make this happen (see sidebar).

PROPOSITION 39 IMPLEMENTATION NOW UNDERWAY

California voters passed Proposition 39 in 2012 by a 60% margin in order to eliminate a corporate tax loophole and provide \$550 million each year over the next five years for energy efficiency projects throughout the state. Most of the policy and fiscal elements of Proposition 39 implementation were reconciled in the 2013-14 State Budget, with \$459 million appropriated in this fiscal year (primarily to schools) for grants that support energy efficiency projects. The budget trailer bill outlining public policy for expenditures (Senate Bill 73) of Proposition 39 revenues included a directive to the California Energy Commission (CEC) to

develop granting guidelines for these funds.

A discussion draft of these guidelines was released in late September, and includes tree planting as an eligible energy efficiency upgrade project. California ReLeaf submitted written comments on the draft guidelines to the CEC encouraging additional elements that could be included in the final grant guidelines, which were published in November.

URBAN FORESTRY INTEGRATION STARTS WITH THE RIGHT PARTNERS

For years, perhaps decades, the urban forestry community has talked about how trees are an integral component to improving California's air, water, health, transportation infrastructure, and disadvantaged communities. We often plant for one or more of these purposes, and seek to create non-traditional partnerships in the process that bring more stewards and supporters to these efforts.

Big-ticket measures moving through the Legislature this year focused on all of these areas, and ReLeaf focused on bringing urban forestry into each one of them. Proposition 39 granting guidelines recognize trees for their energy conservation value. The EEMP was saved largely due to the recognition that trees and resource lands are critical environmental mitigation components. And urban forestry is at the forefront of cap and trade discussions when it comes to natural resources and GHG reductions.

This kind of success and support only happens with strong partnerships with both our resource conservation colleagues, and allies in other non-profit issues. California ReLeaf sincerely thanks the following groups that helped highlight the value of urban forestry in multiple sectors this year:

Asian Pacific Environmental Network, California Climate and Agriculture Network, California Council of Land Trusts, Californians Against Waste, Coalition for Clean Air, Greenlining Institute, Housing California, The Nature Conservancy, Pacific Forest Trust, Planning and Conservation League, Public Advocates, Inc., Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, Safe Routes to Schools National Partnership, TransForm, and the Trust for Public Land.



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California Trees

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Trees in All Policies

**Coming to both Northern & Southern California in February 2014!
Visit californiareleaf.org for details.**

Having strong partnerships with the decision makers in your community is a key component of planting and growing a healthy urban forest. During this workshop, participants will learn how to deliver a message that drives home the importance of healthy urban forests, identify how strategic partnerships can strengthen that message, and hone the skills learned throughout the day.

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify key public policy issues and how they connect to urban forestry
- Schedule meetings with local & statewide decision makers to discuss those issues and how to integrate urban forestry as part of a sustainable solution
- Identify ways to build partnerships with other key players in the community, i.e. schools, businesses, and civic groups
- Empower your membership or volunteer base to be effective urban forestry advocates

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