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AMERICAN FORESTS
People Caring for Trees and Forests Since 1875

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== ANNOUNCEMENTS =====

Val Kilmer Plants 20 Millionth Tree

On September 18, actor Val Kilmer helped AMERICAN FORESTS plant its 20 millionth Global ReLeaf tree in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Under overcast skies and before a crowd that included fans of the 42 year-old star of such films as "The Saint" and "Batman Forever" Kilmer, representatives from the U.S. Forest Service, retailer Eddie Bauer, and AMERICAN FORESTS joined to plant a sawtooth oak at Ashley Pond. Last year, Global ReLeaf donated 5,000 trees to residents of the city ravaged by the Cerro Grande Fire in 2000. Kilmer owns a ranch near Pecos, New Mexico.

Kilmer, a distant relative of Joyce Kilmer, read the New Jersey-born poet's "Trees" at the tree-planting event.

"I think that I shall never see a poem so lovely as a tree," it begins, concluding: "Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree."

Kilmer himself published a volume of poetry in 1987 called "My Edens After Burns." In his poetry, Kilmer encouraged people to plant trees.

Rick Crouse, senior vice president of development for AMERICAN FORESTS

reminded the crowd that Global ReLeaf is a partnership with thousands of people, corporations, and local organizations lending a hand. "It's our partners that have planted 19,999,999 trees," he says.

To learn more about Global ReLeaf, please visit www.americanforests.org or to help us reach our future tree-planting goals, plant trees at <http://www.americanforests.org/planttrees/>
Want to thank Val Kilmer for helping us plant the 20 Millionth Tree? Send us an email at info@amfor.org and we'll forward it on!

Response to the Healthy Forest Initiative

In our last issue we posed a question about President Bush's Healthy Forest Initiative, and asked you to send email responses to us.

To quickly recap, we asked, "What should President Bush do to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfires in our communities?" In response, we received a wide variety of remarks and ideas addressing wildfire concerns in our national forests.
Some of your responses were:

"If we want to reduce wildfires, active management is essential. And we need to act quickly! We should first log/thin areas around homes, and then follow with 'cool' prescribed burns. The next step is to increase the protected areas around homes in the same way." --ForestBytes Reader in Colorado

"I don't agree that logging our forests is the solution. We do need to manage the understory trees and shrubbery first. Some selective handclearing will work. But regular burn management needs to be considered." --Certified Forest Manager in Illinois

"Bush's policy is just a bone tossed to the commercial logging and forestry products industries. Our resources would be better spent making sure that our forests are healthy--by reducing air pollutants, minimizing encroachment by development, and establishing corridors for wildlife to maintain biodiversity." --ForestBytes reader in Virginia.

"Our President has really been doing a bang up job. It is not an easy task to make everyone happy but he is making decisions that will be in the best interest of all the American people. Proper thinning out of underbrush is very important along with removing dead timber for our forest floors. With a lot of the fuel depleted we should see a drastic reduction in the number of catastrophic fires." --ForestBytes reader in Minnesota.

For further fire updates, information, and ways you can help restore wildfire-damaged forests, visit www.wildfirereleaf.org. Tell a friend! Send them a Wildfire ReLeaf postcard at <http://www.americanforests.org/postcards/>
Watch future issues of ForestBytes for opportunities to tell us what you think!

Preparing Your Home for the Fall Fire Season

The nation's long-running, ground-cracking drought should prompt families with homes on woodland lots to consider doing some landscaping this fall.

With October 1 the official start of the fall wildland fire season, crews--particularly in the East--are mobilizing to head off runaway blazes.

This year is shaping up as one of the worst western wildfire seasons in recent history. More than 63,000 wildfires have been reported since January, charring more than 6.3 million acres-- nearly double the 10-year average, according to the National Interagency Fire Center. A major complication for firefighters is the soaring number of people building their homes in the sanctuary of forests.

"It's a cliché that everybody wants to have their own little piece of heaven out in the woods," says Mark Stuble, a fire information officer with the Interagency Fire Center. "We understand that. But it is becoming more and more difficult for the fire crews. We only have a certain amount of control."

The biggest problem comes when buildings are screened by trees and brush, the very reason why many chose those locations. That's where the term "firewise landscaping" comes in. According to www.firewise.org, if you're a homeowner in a forested area, first, inventory your yard to determine what can catch fire and what can carry flames to the house. This visual survey is the first step in breaking the chain of fuel between buildings and vegetation.

Next, establish landscaping zones around the house to help determine ways to remove flammable brush that may be near to or touching buildings. That includes firewood, mulch, and trees with overhanging branches. Maintain a well-kept lawn and avoid evergreens that catch fire easily and burn quickly.

Combine form and function with rock gardens, stone walkways, and raised flower or garden beds that create visual interest yet also make good firebreaks.

Planning some yard work this fall? The Firewise site also recommends removing yard debris and minimizing vegetation out to at least 30 feet from your house. Clean and thin up to 100 feet. Develop a dependable water supply: a pond, a swimming pool, or, most common in rural areas, a well with a high-volume pump. If there's one fixed rule in wildland firefighting, it's that no plant is fireproof. But some are more resistant to flames than others. Look for plants with high leaf moisture and low leaf oil or resin content. Choose plants that are drought-resistant, with minimal litter and foliage and a low overall height. Select trees and shrubs that are easy to maintain and prune. Pruning increases a plant's fire resistance.

Do some serious homework. Determine your area's fire history. Study prevailing winds and seasonable weather, including precipitation amounts. Note the property's elevation and slope and native vegetation.

For more tips on readying your home for wildfires this fall, visit www.wildfirereleaf.org or www.firewise.org. Be on the look out for changes and updates to the Wildfire ReLeaf site. Our new site launches on October 11! Let us know what you think of it! Email us at info@amfor.org

2003 National Urban Forest Conference Call for Papers

October 15 is your last chance to send us your proposals for concurrent sessions and workshops for the 2003 National Urban Forest Conference, to be held in San Antonio, Texas in September of 2003. AMERICAN FORESTS seeks proposals that are related to the conference theme, "Engineering Green." The cost of building and maintaining infrastructure while keeping the air, water and energy needs safe for residents has created a seemingly insurmountable challenge. Can we change this direction? Engineering cities into existing natural systems is not a new idea, but one that is not widely practiced. Trees are the lungs, water filters, and air conditioners of our cities. The conference will showcase ways that cities can build according to nature's laws and rise above the financial, ecological and social tides of urban growth. Visit our website www.americanforests.org and click on 2003 National Urban Forest Conference for more information and to respond to our Call For Papers by October 15, 2002.

== WHAT'S HAPPENING =====

* Natural Touch Plants Trees for Wildfire ReLeaf

On October 11, food manufacturer, Natural Touch will hold a tree-planting event at two schools in Boulder and Denver, Colorado, to formally announce Natural Touch's commitment to plant 60,000 trees for Wildfire ReLeaf. To begin their tree-planting efforts, Natural Touch and coporate sponsor, Wild Oats have sponsored two AMERICAN FORESTS' Living Classrooms for the participating schools. Each Living Classroom will include CITYgreen 5.0--urban ecosystem analysis software-- and historic trees for the schoolyard, including coordinating lesson plans. Children from Carlos M. Cole Middle School in Denver, and the Shepherd Valley Waldorf School in Niwot, Colorado will help plant a Living Classroom of 10 historic trees around each of their schoolyards.

The events will occur as follows:

10AM, at Carlos M. Cole Middle School in Denver;

2 PM at Shepherd Valley Waldorf School in Niwot, CO (outside of Boulder).

The 10AM event at Carlos M. Cole Middle School will feature a wildfire presentation by Colorado State Forester, Jim Hubbard a former member of AMERICAN FORESTS' board.

* Recovering Canada's Underwater Forests

Logging always seems to be a subject of endless debates. It's constantly in the headlines and is a topic of concern at town meetings, government hearings, and community forums. Yet, in the communities along the Ottawa River in Canada, logging has taken on a whole new and environmentally sound meaning.

The Canadian-based company, Logs End Inc., is recovering lost timbers from abandoned mills, factories, homesteads, and lumber camps. With a recovery process that takes place solely underwater! The old-growth logs sank in the Ottawa River in the late 1800s, during a time of heavy logging in Canada. The water's low temperatures, combined with the age and quality of the wood has kept the logs in pristine condition, even after 150 years. Today, Logs End Inc recovers the underwater logs and sells the wood product for building, furniture, and flooring.

Beginning in the 1870s, the forests along the banks of the Ottawa River

were heavily logged for the area's rich and dense old-growth wood. Some of the trees, usually red and white pines, were over 400 years old. The river acted as a means of transportation; logs were floated down the Ottawa River to Quebec City, where they were sawn into lumber and shipped around the world. By the turn of the century, millions of logs had been dumped into the river and floated down to their owner's sawmills. During these log runs, many sank to the bottom of the Ottawa River and were never recovered. Experts estimate that there are at least 11,000 logs preserved in the icy Ottawa River waters.

Several studies conducted by Logs End Inc. indicate that log salvaging is environmentally beneficial. The company has adopted a "zero waste" policy for the underwater lumber it harvests and are committed to the "environmentally sound" retrieval of submerged logs called "deadheads." Michael Robertson, of C.D.C. in British Columbia, states that underwater logging has increased the nutrients in the water, actually providing a benefit to marine life. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources undertook an intense study of the impact of underwater logging, concluding that the practice neither harms fish nor contributes to pollution.

To learn more about the recovery process by Logs End Inc., visit <http://www.logsend.com/> To find out ways you can plant trees to help recover areas that were once heavily logged, visit us at www.americanforests.org and click on Global ReLeaf.

* Southern Appalachians Want Forests Protected

According to a recent survey by the Southern Research Station (SRS) of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), area residents in the Southern Appalachians want their forests managed to protect clean sources of water, preserve natural landscapes for future generations to enjoy, and provide wildlife habitat.

The SRS surveys were designed to address the requirements for public involvement. "Public involvement is not only required, it is the most essential component of successful national forest planning," says Ken Cordell, project leader of the SRS social science unit. "These plans, so important for managing natural resources, are centered around the concerns and needs of the American public."

More than 5,200 people in the region were interviewed for surveys covering 13 national forests. Questions were designed to elicit which values were most important to residents in planning the future management of national forests.

"We found that people in the region value the national forests in many different ways," says Cordell. "People give top value to protecting sources of clean water, followed by retaining natural forests for future generations, providing protection for wildlife and habitat, providing places that are natural in appearance, and protecting rare and endangered species."

Residents gave lower values to managing national forests as sources of raw materials, as grazing ranges for livestock, and for tourism.

"In the Southern Appalachians, people clearly put ecosystems and naturalness above utilitarian objectives in the management of their national forests," says Cordell. "This is consistent with the natural resources agenda developed for the Forest Service over the past few years."

Survey information was gathered in a special application of the SRS National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). All data and electronic copies of the five reports from the survey are available at: <http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/trends/sanfrpt.html>

* Look for EcoISP in Next "American Forests" Magazine
If you are a member of AMERICAN FORESTS, you should receive your fall issue of "American Forests" magazine any day. Inside, you'll find a special CD from EcoISP. By subscribing to EcoISP, you can get great internet service and help AMERICAN FORESTS' mission!

Click here: <http://www.ecoisp.com/amfor/amfor.asp>

Simply by using EcoISP as your email and Internet Service Provider, you can show your commitment to AMERICAN FORESTS mission, save money, and stay connected to an online community with the shared concern about conservation of our tree and forest resources.

EcoISP will provide 50 percent of the profits on your subscription to American Forests! You'll save money on your ISP fees and plant 33 trees each year through Wildfire ReLeaf to restore ecosystems damaged by wildfire.

***** ARE YOU A MEMBER??*****

You can do your part to help the environment today by joining AMERICAN FORESTS. Not only are 25 trees planted for you in a damaged ecosystem or forest restoration project, but you will also receive:

- A free subscription to our quarterly magazine
- A free Big Trees calendar
- A window decal

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== ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS AND FEATURES FROM ENS-NEWS.COM =====

* "Forest Service Restricts Vehicles in Grizzly Habitat"
<http://ens-news.com/ens/sep2001ens/2001-09-27-06.asp>

* "Mexico's Dry Forests May Yield New Medicines"
<http://ens-news.com/ens/sep2002/2002-09-25-03.asp>

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