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COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANTS AWARDED

Phoenix, Arizona, 8 February 2012 – The Arizona State Forester Scott Hunt is pleased to announce that the Arizona State Forestry Division (ASFD) will award 12 grants, totaling over \$157,000, to communities in Arizona. Grants awarded by ASFD are funded through USDA Forest Service's Cooperative Forestry Assistance Program and administered by ASFD.

Grant recipients were selected from among a multitude of applications received from across Arizona, and all projects are intended to facilitate and build cooperation across stakeholder groups for the care of Arizona's urban natural resources, assist in forest resource management activities, and to achieve use and protection goals for forest lands in Arizona. Organizations and city governments in 8 Arizona communities will match the funds in completion of their project.

"Forests for the Future", Willow Bend Environmental Education Center, Flagstaff

This project includes a multi-faceted education program that will reach audience members of all ages through free adult, community, and family learning opportunities, and most events include hands-on service projects that make the learning opportunities more meaningful. Each education event will be led by a forestry expert and will feature cutting-edge research on local trees and the natural, cultural and economic impacts of these trees on northern Arizona communities.

Certificate Program in Urban Forestry, Tucson Botanical Gardens, Tucson

The certificate program will be an educational pilot program to train local citizens in urban forestry practices and tree inventory protocols. Once trained, citizens will participate in local hands-on urban forestry management activities (tree inventories, tree

plantings, etc.) within the community and for the City of Tucson. The outcome of this project will be an Urban Forestry Certificate Program offered annually to the public.

SHADE Educational Conference, Arizona Nursery Association, Tempe

Project funding will support the *Trees and Plants* track, one of five presented, at the 8th annual Southwest Horticulture Annual Day of Education (SHADE) one-day conference for arborists, landscape architects and other green industry professionals. Curriculum taught in this conference track includes methodologies for appropriate species selection, proper installation and maintenance procedures, designing effective and water efficient landscapes, urban tree care, plant-regulation updates and southwest-specific horticultural practices.

Developing Tucson Green Infrastructure Policy, Watershed Management Group, Tucson

Watershed Management Group, a non-profit working to develop community-based solutions to ensure the long-term prosperity of people and the health of the environment, will assist the City of Tucson with the development of green infrastructure policy and designs to promote the planting and growth of shade trees irrigated by stormwater in all new and renovated road construction areas within the City limits.

Citizen Forester Volunteers, City of Phoenix, Phoenix

This project will implement goal 1 (educating residents on the importance of trees and proper tree care) and goal 2 (staff training) of the Tree and Shade Master Plan (Shade Phoenix 2030), which was adopted in January 2010. A multitude of tree-related training workshops will be held throughout the year, and training materials will be developed for citizen forester programs. Additionally, internal tree care related training will be provided to City of Phoenix staff.

Cultivating Green Infrastructure Workshops, Arizona State University, Tempe

ASU will host a workshop series focused on green infrastructure that will provide information, resources, and training to municipalities, non profits and businesses involved in the planning, implementation, maintenance and expansion of Arizona's urban forests.

Glendale Park Tree Inventory, City of Glendale, Glendale

The City of Glendale will use the grant funds to update an existing tree inventory, and to develop a maintenance plan with assessment and maintenance needs identified. They will also use information gathered to develop a planting plan for future management.

Town Tree Master Plan, Town of Oro Valley, Oro Valley

The Town of Oro Valley will develop a comprehensive plan for planting and maintaining tree infrastructure on public lands within the town limits. The plan will include mapping, planning, and community outreach to provide a clear picture of current conditions, possible gaps and future needs. The Town will also host events and workshops aimed at educating the community on a range of tree related care and conservation topics.

Trainings for Industry Professionals, Arizona Community Tree Council, Scottsdale

Project funding will support ACTC's development and facilitation of educational workshops across the state for urban forestry professionals. Training events will be

hosted for 350+ arborists in the state as well as certified tree workers and other professionals needing CEU credits to maintain their certifications. ACTC will also host regional meetings to encourage wider ACTC membership participation.

Creating Community-Based Green Infrastructure in Phoenix, Watershed Management Group, Phoenix

This project will be completed through a partnership between the Watershed Management Group and the City of Phoenix. Project funding will support public workshops and education, creation of local demonstration sites, and establishment of green infrastructure designs and policy to facilitate the development of community-based, water-sensitive urban forestry practices.

Ponderosa Pine Seed Bank, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff

Project funding will provide continued support for the Research Greenhouse's seedbank program by expanding their seed collection to new areas of Arizona in 2012. Collection sites will be selected among areas where inadequate or no seed is currently banked. This year's efforts will focus on Flagstaff, Williams, Prescott, the Chiricahua Mountains, and Alpine.

Ramsey Park North Trees, Town of Eagar, Eagar

Town staff and project volunteers will support long-term and sustainable planting and maintenance of trees in a newly created community park. Youth activities will be incorporated into the planning and creation of a community park, and a tree master plan will be developed.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANT PROGRAM

Community Challenge Grants are administered by the Arizona State Forestry Division – Urban and Community Forestry Program in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service. The goal of the program is to encourage citizen involvement in creating and supporting long-term and sustainable urban and community forests at the local level. The Community Challenge Grant program is offered annually to communities and organizations throughout Arizona. For more information, visit: www.azsf.az.gov and www.fs.fed.us/ucf/.

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