

Restoring North Alabama's Storm-Battered Urban Forest

By Matthew McCollough
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In the wake of devastating tornados that battered North Alabama communities, the Alabama Forestry Commission, in collaboration with the Arbor Day Foundation, recently unveiled a new campaign to restore the region's urban forest. The "Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign" was launched in response to proactive efforts of the Alabama Forestry Commission to spearhead a reforestation initiative. This campaign allows anyone to make an online donation at www.arbor-day.org/alabama. For every dollar donated, the Arbor Day Foundation will deliver a tree seedling for distribution to Alabama citizens affected by the April tornados.

The planting of new trees brings beauty, healing, and hope. While the cleanup and rebuilding will continue for years to come, people can help the healing process now. With the support of citizens, the Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign makes possible the restoration of tree-lined streets, shaded parks, and beautiful neighborhoods that have always been part of Alabama.

"The Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign is an important effort to distribute trees to Alabamians who had homes destroyed in the April tornado outbreak," said Governor Robert Bentley. "This campaign will help restore our communities and I am appreciative to the Alabama Forestry Commission and Arbor Day Foundation for coming together on this project."

The Arbor Day Foundation will deliver an assortment of five native trees to each community. Species include willow oak, Shumard oak, northern red oak, black gum, and flowering dogwood. Each tree species was selected because of its suitability to

the region. Communities that were directly impacted by a tornado will be given priority to participate in the program. The community must also agree to organize the local distribution of their tree seedlings. The Alabama Forestry Commission will arrange the delivery of the tree seedlings to each community for planting during February 2012.

"The trees lost in the recent tornado outbreak provided millions of dollars in environmental, economic, and social benefits," said Linda Casey, the Alabama State Forester. "This campaign can go a long way toward putting our communities and surrounding areas on the path to recovery."

The Alabama Tree Recovery Campaign is the newest joint initiative in the Arbor Day Foundation's Trees for America program. Other initiatives include delivering more than 120,000 trees to Gulf Coast families who were victims of Hurricane Katrina, and replanting more than 20 million trees in national forests devastated by disease and fire.

The Alabama Forestry Commission is a state agency committed to protecting, conserving, and increasing Alabama's forest resource. In addition to the Alabama Tree

Recovery Campaign, the Alabama Forestry Commission is working with other organizations to donate trees to restore North Alabama's urban forest. For more information, visit www.forestry.alabama.gov.

The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization with more than one million members nationwide. More information about the Foundation and its conservation programs can be found at www.arborday.org.



Help Restore North Alabama's Urban Forest
through the

ALABAMA TREE RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

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