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NEW STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES—ENCOURAGES CALIFORNIANS TO “INVEST FROM THE GROUND UP”

Campaign to Raise Awareness, Show How Investing in Trees and Green Spaces Is a Cost-Effective Way to Increase Value of Homes and Businesses

November 27, 2012 (San Rafael, California) – Today, the California Urban Forests Council formally launched its new “Invest From the Ground Up” campaign and [website](#). The campaign is designed to help California homeowners and business owners see the true value of one of the most basic and cost-efficient investments Californians can make in their communities: caring for their trees, parks and green spaces. The initiative is funded by the US Forest Service and CAL FIRE, and includes partnerships with the Western Chapter International Society of Arboriculture and California ReLeaf.

“When people stop and think about what makes a neighborhood great, their attention generally goes to the nice houses and good schools. They don’t often see that it’s the trees and parks that help make those places special—and valuable,” said California Urban Forests Council executive director Nancy Hughes. “As the nation’s oldest urban forest council, we have long known that investing in these resources produces significant, measurable returns for communities, but most Californians do not. That’s why we—and our partners—feel this campaign is so important and so beneficial.”

The “Invest From the Ground Up” campaign will initially roll out in five pilot communities, which are in the process of being selected. In each city, the campaign will seek to partner with existing city, community and professional organizations, along with business owners and homeowners, to help show that when Californians invest from the ground up, they not only create and nurture great neighborhoods—they get back much more than they put in.

As part of the campaign’s education efforts, its website will collect news and resources about urban forestry and present them in a consumer-friendly way, aimed at building support for the care of California’s trees, parks and green spaces.

“In all my years working on urban forestry, I’ve never seen an effort to raise awareness and support for our trees quite like this one. It’s injecting a fresh perspective and a compelling argument into the public conversation about how to spend our resources,”

said State Urban Forester for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) John Melvin.

Some little-known facts to consider when deciding whether California's trees and green spaces are a resource worth investing in:

- Treelined streets have fewer run-off-the-road crashes and slower average car speeds.
- Businesses on treescaped streets have been found to earn 20 percent higher income streams.
- Trees produce numerous public health benefits, including reducing the heat island effect, absorbing air pollution and reducing the incidence of violent crime.
- Trees save cities hundreds of thousands of dollars in maintenance costs each year by absorbing storm water, prolonging the life of pavement and more.
- Proper landscaping can reduce both noise levels and air conditioning costs by up to 50 percent.
- Healthy landscaping that includes mature trees adds 10-20 percent to a property's value.

To learn about how and why Californians should "Invest From the Ground Up," visit www.InvestFromtheGroundUp.org. Follow the campaign on Twitter [@InvestInTrees](https://twitter.com/InvestInTrees) or on Facebook at Facebook.com/InvestInTrees.

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California Urban Forests Council (CaUFC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting urban forestry and urban greening to make California's communities cleaner, healthier and more prosperous. Through collaborative action CaUFC is growing federal, state and local investment in urban forestry, changing policy to positively affect the health of urban forests, and growing public awareness and support for urban forestry. www.caufc.org



California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is dedicated to the fire protection and stewardship of over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands. In addition, the Department provides varied emergency services in 36 of the State's 58 counties via contracts with local governments. CAL FIRE foresters can be found doing anything from working to increase the number of trees planted in our cities to preventing the spread of disease by identifying and removing infected trees. www.fire.ca.gov



Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (WCISA),

formed in 1934, is a member-driven organization dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation for trees by promoting research and education to advance the professional practice of arboriculture. WCISA seeks to promote and improve the practice of arboriculture, increase public interest in and support for trees, support scientific research and uphold the highest possible level of practice for those engaged the arboriculture profession. www.wcisa.net/



Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) is a cooperative forestry program

of the US Forest Service that focuses on the stewardship of urban natural resources. UCF responds to the needs of urban areas by maintaining, restoring, and improving urban forest ecosystems on more than 70 million acres. Through these efforts the program encourages and promotes the creation of healthier, more livable urban environments across the nation. www.fs.fed.us/ucf/



California ReLeaf is a non-profit organization working to empower grassroots efforts and build strategic partnerships to preserve, protect, and enhance California's urban and community forests. California

ReLeaf serves as the State's volunteer coordinator for urban forestry in partnership with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and works statewide to promote alliances among community-based groups, individuals, industry, and government agencies, encouraging each to contribute to the livability of our cities and the protection of our environment by planting, caring, and advocating for trees.

<http://californiareleaf.org/>