

Community Forestry Assistant



Newsletter August 2009

Little Town, Big Results!!

When the little town of Peck received a transportation grant to replace their deteriorated sidewalks, several of the big shade trees on Main Street had to be removed. Citizens of the community expressed their concern and tried to save the trees . . . to no avail. Once the sidewalk project was completed, it was clear that Main Street looked naked without the trees; thus, the city council appointed a five member tree committee to establish an urban forestry program and begin the task of replacing the lost trees as well as adding more to the downtown area.

The tree committee's first task was to establish a tree ordinance that would protect the new as well as existing plantings. Their next step was to become a Tree City USA, which required a \$2 per capita contribution from the city of Peck annually. They were awarded this recognition in 2005 and have remained a Tree City USA every since. In 2005, the tree committee also decided to apply for a Community Transportation Enhancement (CTE) grant sponsored by the Idaho Department of Lands and the Idaho Transportation Department to plant trees along Main Street.



"We were ecstatic when we were awarded the CTE grant for over \$12,000!" said then Mayor, Sarah Walz who was also a member of the tree committee. Peck had also secured donated boulders, equipment, and labor in the amount of almost \$5,000. The tree committee chose trees based on drought tolerance, disease and insect resistance, longevity, and aesthetic appeal. In April of

2006, ground was broke on the planting project. Because the planting sites were in existing parking areas, the ground was severely compacted and full of river rock. Alan Fowler, a long time resident of Peck and owner of A&K Construction, donated excavation work for 23 large planting holes. Top

soil was hauled in to provide adequate growing and rooting space. Boulders and concrete landscaping rings were placed around each of the trees for protection against vehicles.

In order to help fund the CTE project and provide for future maintenance, the tree committee implemented a "Plant A Memory" program that turned out to be a huge success. This effort allowed community members to dedicate a tree with engraved stone markers in memory of or recognition to a person or group. Of the 27 trees planted as part of the CTE grant project, 25 of them were dedicated with a pledge of \$100 per tree.

The tree planting project has been more than successful...the trees have added beauty, shade, and lasting memories for community members. "It



was a lot of work, but truly worth it when you drive by or walk alongside them, admiring their beauty. The personal touch of the stone markers ensures their existence for many years to come, replacing any tree as needed."

All Idaho cities, counties, and tribal governments interested in developing or improving a sustainable community forestry program are eligible CTE grant applicants. Successful applicants must have or agree to form a tree committee and develop a program work plan to be implemented during the grant project period. Applicants are required to contribute a minimum 10% cash match of the total grant funds received. If you are interested in applying for a 2009-2010 CTE grant (deadline is September 4th); contact your local community forestry assistant immediately. Additional information and application forms are available at http://www.idl.idaho.gov/bureau/community_forestry/grants/index.htm.