

Community Forestry Assistant



Newsletter March 2010

Let's Celebrate Arbor Day!



Arbor Day is the holiday Nebraska gave to the world. The first celebration of Arbor Day took place on April 10, 1872. The idea for Arbor Day originally came from J. Sterling Morton, a pioneer moving to Nebraska from Detroit, Michigan. He organized a contest in which

the prize, "a farm library of twenty five dollars worth of books to the person who, on that day, shall plant properly, in Nebraska, the greatest number of trees." Nearly one million trees were planted that first Arbor Day. The winner of the prize was J. D. Smith, who, with his employees, planted an unbelievable 35,500 trees in one day. In 1885, the Nebraska State Legislature declared Arbor Day a legal holiday and selected April 22, Morton's birthday, as the date for its permanent observance.

Today, all states memorialize Arbor Day by legislation, official proclamation, or public acclaim. Arbor Day has now spread beyond the United States and is observed in many countries. The State of Idaho celebrates Arbor Day on the last Friday in April, the nationally accepted date. However, many communities in Idaho choose to celebrate the holiday on different dates due to weather considerations or other factors.

Arbor Day in Idaho is on April 30, 2010

Planting trees has been an American tradition since the first settlers brought seeds and cuttings from European fruit trees. Each of us can improve our surroundings and contribute to the welfare of our community by performing the simple act of planting a tree. The benefits are magnified when citizens throughout the community recognize the importance of planting and caring for the trees on their property. Can you imagine living in a place with no trees? Be sure to get involved in your city's Arbor Day celebration. Encourage your city council to recognize the importance of caring for the resource that your community forest provides. The benefits of trees such as energy savings, flood control, crime prevention, and quality of the community will far outweigh the costs of planting and maintaining them.

The celebration of Arbor Day represents a priceless opportunity. Planting trees is an act of kindness and optimism. Trees purify our water, remove pollutants from our air, and prevent soil erosion. Additionally, they provide beauty for both the natural and constructed landscapes, wind breaks that aid in energy conservation, and shelter and food for wildlife. J. Sterling Morton was proud of the success of Arbor Day and noted,

"Arbor Day is not like other holidays. Each of those repose on the past, while Arbor Day proposes for the future."

The information in this newsletter was excerpted from an article written by Gerry Bates, South Idaho Community Forestry Assistant.

If you have questions about this Newsletter or the Community Forestry Assistance Program, please contact Tera King with Northwest Management, Inc. at 208-883-4488-ext. 133.

For ideas on ways for your community to celebrate Arbor Day, check out these websites:

Arbor Day Foundation - <http://www.arborday.org/>

Idaho Department of Lands -
http://www.idl.idaho.gov/bureau/community_forestry/arborday/index.htm

Idaho Forest Products Commission -
<http://www.idahoforests.org/arborday.htm>

Kaboose - <http://holidays.kaboose.com/arborday/>

Apples 4 the Teacher - <http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/arborday/>

Enchanted Learning - <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/arborday/>

