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Contact: John Bright
Trees Forever Marketing and Communications Manager
jbright@treesforever.org
319-640-0757

TREES FOREVER OPENS FUNDING TO DERECHO IMPACTED COMMUNITIES Planting Hope grants up to \$5,000 are now available for tree planting projects

MARION, IA (Feb. 23, 2021) —Trees Forever is announcing that funding is now available to derecho affected communities in Iowa and Illinois through a new grant program called Planting Hope. Funding up to \$5,000 will be awarded for tree planting and distribution projects and will assist in replanting areas that saw major canopy loss as a result of the August 2020 derecho.

Planting projects are open to non-profit organizations, groups conducting planting projects on publicly-owned lands, and for tree and seedling giveaways intended for private properties. Special project applications will also be considered for educational classroom projects, club or church projects, fruit and nut orchards, school memorials and cemetery plantings.

This first grant cycle has been expedited to allow participants to prepare projects for the spring planting season. Applications are due for this special grant round on April 1. Funding will be available through additional grant cycles with application due dates of June 1 and November 1. Applications can be found online at www.treesforever.org/PlantingHopeGrants.

Planting Hope was launched in the immediate aftermath of the August 2020 derecho as a fundraising campaign to replant trees lost to the storm. Trees Forever is ecstatic to release these initial funds that were made available due to the generosity and support of the many individual donors and corporate sponsors.

Trees Forever Founding President & CEO Shannon Ramsay understands the widespread desire to replant. “We are overwhelmed by the community members that have reached out to tell us how much the tree loss has affected them and how eager they are to replant. We are expecting Planting Hope to continue being an important source of relief to communities as work continues over the coming years.”

Community involvement is a major goal for grant awarded projects. “We really hope and expect that people in these communities will rally together to plant and care for these new trees. These will not simply be one-time planting projects. Community engagement will be crucial to find those key people who will continue to water and care for the young trees and ensure they thrive,” Ramsay said.

Trees Forever staff are available to assist with projects and applications. Contact 319-373-0650 with questions. Those looking to support the Planting Hope tree recovery program may make donations at www.treesforever.org/PlantingHope.

Trees Forever is a nonprofit charitable organization headquartered in Marion, Iowa. Its mission – to plant and care for trees and the environment by empowering people, building community, and promoting stewardship – is fulfilled through cutting-edge programs and innovative practices. Trained and experienced staff have assisted community leaders and landowners across Iowa, Illinois and beyond with thousands of planting projects. Each year, on average, Trees Forever works with and engages more than 7,000 volunteers who give generously of their time and talents. To date, they’ve helped plant more than 3 million trees.

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