



## Arbor Day focus: Planting post-fire

April 26, 2013

### Today is Arbor Day!

The last Friday of April every year is Arbor Day, a celebration of the wonders of renewable, sustainable TREES!



Stop by a Home Depot or FedEx Office location today and pick up a **free tree seedling!** The Idaho Forest Products Commission is giving away thousands of seedlings at these locations and at more than 50 Arbor Day events statewide!

The idea for Arbor Day in the United States **originated in Nebraska City, Nebraska.**

Among the pioneers moving into the Nebraska Territory in 1854 was journalist, **Julius Sterling Morton** from Detroit.

In those days Nebraska was a treeless plain. Morton and his fellow pioneers soon **needed trees for windbreaks, fuel, building materials, and shade** from the hot prairie sun.

As the editor of Nebraska's first newspaper, Morton wrote and spoke about environmental stewardship and the interrelatedness of life.

**In 1872, the State Board of Agriculture accepted a resolution by J. Sterling Morton "to set aside one day to plant trees, both forest and fruit."**

The Board declared April 10 as Arbor Day and offered prizes to the counties and individuals that properly planted the largest number of trees on that day.

**More than one million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day, and now Arbor Day is celebrated in all 50 states.**



**A forest that burned in the Sheep Fire during 2012.**



**Planting after a burn.**



Following one of the worst fire years in the state's history, **many Idaho forests are in need of restoration.**

More than 1.7 million acres burned in Idaho in 2012, about 20 percent of the total acres that burned across the entire country. More than \$200 million were spent on fire suppression in Idaho alone.

However, **2012 was a below-average year on lands that receive fire protection from the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL).** We provide fire protection on more than six million acres of mostly State and private lands, and in 2012 only half of the 20-year average acres burned and we spent less than \$15 million on fire suppression.

Wildfire is inevitable. Even though we're proud of the successful outcome of our wildland fire fighting efforts in 2012, **there still were thousands of acres of state endowment forests that did burn and now are in need of replanting** in order to keep them healthy and productive for future generations.

### Planting quickly for long-term benefits

One million acres of state endowment forests are **actively managed** to produce **long-term income for public schools and other public institutions** in Idaho. An additional 1.4 million acres of mostly rangeland are similarly managed to make money for public schools.

To meet our mission to manage for the long-term health and productivity of the lands, **burned areas in state endowment forests must be reforested quickly before brush becomes well established and dominates the area.** Thick brush can prevent young trees from growing into a healthy, productive forest.

For state endowment forest managers, the task of reforestation after a wildfire is not much different than reforestation after timber harvest.

**In choosing the proper tree seedlings to plant post-fire, state foresters take their cue from nature itself.**

Trees in Idaho have regenerated naturally for thousands of years and have become well adapted to the locations where they are growing. Each tree species has a range of elevation and precipitation conditions where it grows best.

Planted seedlings should be grown near the location where the seed was collected. Moving tree seedlings from their native locations and environmental conditions can result in decreased growth and increased insect and disease problems.

For state endowment forests to be fast-growing and healthy, the forester matches these ecological requirements of the species to the conditions of the planting site.

**State endowment forest managers are grateful for the excellent work of our partners - from the local**



***A planted tree thriving.***

nurseries and the University of Idaho to the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management - and our own IDL employees **for their planning and efforts to make tree seedlings available so that endowment forests can continue to serve Idaho students for generations to come.**

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Photo of the Day



***At the Arbor Day Statehouse Event in Boise this morning, a tree was planted to honor former State Controller Donna Jones for her dedication to Idaho's trees and forests as a member of the Idaho Land Board for many years.***

*Among those in the photo are State Controller Brandon Woolf, Smokey Bear, former Controller Donna Jones, Attorney General Lawrence Wasden, Secretary of State Ben Ysursa, and former Secretary of State Pete Cenarrusa.*

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