



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Project Learning Tree® Awards 36 Grants for Service-Learning Projects

Washington, D.C. – Project Learning Tree® (PLT), the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation, announced today that it awarded 36 *GreenWorks!* grants to schools and youth organizations across the country for community-based environmental projects. *GreenWorks!* is PLT's service-learning program that engages PLT educators and their students with their local community in "learning-by-doing" neighborhood improvement projects.

Since 1992, Project Learning Tree has distributed more than \$500,000 to fund over 780 grant projects in communities across the country. Proposals for the Spring 2008 cycle of grants are due on April 30, 2008. Grants up to \$5,000 are available.

The *GreenWorks!* grants announced this week will fund elementary through high school students in 23 different states and the U.S. Virgin Islands as they design native plant gardens, restore streams and riparian habitat, plan and construct outdoor classrooms, build learning trails, and investigate alternative sources of energy, among other projects.

"When teachers and their students work with their community to investigate and take action to improve an aspect of the environment in the places they live, everyone benefits," said Al Stenstrup, Director of Curriculum Programs for Project Learning Tree. "Student leadership, service-learning, and community participation are at the core of PLT's *GreenWorks!* projects."

The following are six examples of the projects that will take place in communities across the country during 2008:

Steller's Eider Outreach & Education, Alaska SeaLife Center (ASLC), Barrow, AK

The Steller's eider is a small duck listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. Through distance learning and visits to Barrow by avian educators, ASLC will engage Barrow elementary, middle, and high school students in protecting the birds' habitat, culminating in a seabird festival. More broadly, students will learn about the tundra ecosystem in which they live.

Butterfly Garden and Outdoor Classroom, Taylor Road Academy, Montgomery, AL

Students, parents, and community volunteers will turn an asphalt courtyard into a sustainable school garden that will include raised beds for vegetables, gardens to attract butterflies and other insects, ponds, and other features. Elementary, middle, and high school students will design, build, and maintain the area. The vegetables will be given to a local food bank.

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Cont. pg 2. – GreenworksFall2007

Outdoor Learning Center, Poston Road Elementary School, Martinsville, IN

Students will improve and then maintain an outdoor area to provide hands-on environmental learning. Kindergarteners and first graders will plant and tend a Sensory Garden; second and third graders, a Three Sisters Garden (a Native American garden with corn, beans, and squash); and fourth and fifth graders, a Bird and Butterfly Garden.

Outdoor Education Project, Jay School Department, Jay, ME

The Jay Recreation Area (“Jay Rec”) is a 200-acre property owned by the town. The goal of the project is to develop Jay Rec into a sustainable forest and outdoor education and recreation facility with the participation of students, community groups, the Town Recreation Committee, and others.

Native Plant Nursery, Midcoast Watersheds Council, Newport, OR

The Midcoast Watersheds Council will bring together students, the Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District, and Oregon State 4-H extension to meet a high-priority community need—planting local vegetation in the watershed along the Oregon coast. Younger students will gather and start to grow native seeds, while older students will transfer the plants to public and private land.

Community Green Space, City Charter High School and Student Conservation Association, Pittsburgh, PA

A Student Conservation Association intern will work with City Charter tenth-graders to turn a vacant lot in Pittsburgh’s Hill District into community green space. The students will research, plan, and implement changes for the lot near their school. Vacant lots have been identified as a city-wide concern.

For more information about *GreenWorks!*, and a complete list of Project Learning Tree’s *GreenWorks!* grants awards, visit www.plt.org or contact Vanessa Bullwinkle, Director of Operations and Marketing, 202.463.2472, vbullwinkle@plt.org.

Project Learning Tree® (PLT) is the environmental education program of the American Forest Foundation. . PLT provides educators with comprehensive environmental education curriculum resources that can be integrated into lesson plans for all grades and subject areas. PLT teaches students “how to think, not what to think” about complex environmental issues, and helps students learn the skills they need to make sound choices about the environment.

Developed in 1976, PLT has an international network of more than 500,000 trained educators using PLT materials that cover the total environment. The American Forest Foundation, a nonprofit conservation and education organization, works for healthy forests, quality environmental education, and informed decision-making about our communities and our world.

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