

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Jessica Kelling

Nebraska Forest Service

402-472-0220

jkelling2@unl.edu

Cities, Colleges, Utilities Recognized for Planting Efforts

LINCOLN, Neb.—Statewide efforts to plant and care for trees are going strong, with the threat of loss from pests, diseases and extreme weather making these efforts even more important.

More than 100 cities, colleges and utilities were recognized at the annual Tree City USA Recognition Day in Lincoln on April 5. Together they invested more than \$6.5 million in their communities. The Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) and the Nebraska Community Forestry Council acknowledged their work through awards for Tree City Growth, Tree City, Tree Campus and Tree Line USA. Nebraska First Lady Susanne Shore was a guest speaker for the event.

“Communities are realizing they have to take a proactive role to protect and plant trees that offer beauty, shade, diversity, energy savings and so many other benefits,” said Jessica Kelling, coordinator of the ReTree Nebraska Initiative.

The eastern Nebraska recipients of the 2015 Tree City USA (TCUSA) award are:

Allen	Crete	Humboldt	Ord	Stella
Ashland	Crofton	Julian	Papillion	Stromsburg
Atkinson	David City	**Kearney	Pender	Sutton
*Auburn	Dodge	La Vista	Pierce	Tekamah
Battle Creek	Doniphan	***Laurel	Pilger	Valley
Beatrice	Fairbury	***Lincoln	Plainview	Waco
***Bellevue	Falls City	Minden	**Ralston	Wahoo
Bennington	Fremont	Nebraska City	Red Cloud	Wakefield
Blair	Friend	Neligh	Schuyler	Wausa
**Boys Town	**Grand Island	Nelson	Scribner	Waverly
Central City	***Gretna	Norfolk	Seward	Wayne
Columbus	Hartington	Odell	Shelton	Wisner
Cook	Hastings	Omaha	***South Sioux	York
Creighton	Hickman	O'Neill	City	

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*Auburn has received a TCUSA award for the last 40 years and is one of only 16 communities nationwide with that long history. E.C. Hartwig has been involved with the tree board for all 40 years and is the current community forestry contact.

**Boys Town, Grand Island, Kearney, and Ralston received Tree City Growth awards for 30 years of TCUSA.

***Bellevue, Gretna, Laurel, Lincoln and South Sioux City received Tree City Growth Awards for practicing higher levels of tree management.

In western Nebraska, recipients of the 2015 Tree City USA award include:

Alliance	Cambridge	Grant	Morrill	*Sidney
Arapahoe	Chadron	Holdrege	North Platte	Sutherland
Bassett	Chappell	Imperial	Ogallala	*Trenton
Bayard	Cozad	Kimball	Paxton	Wallace
Benkelman	Curtis	Lexington	Potter	Wauneta
Brady	**Gering	McCook	Rushville	
Broken Bow	Gothenburg	Mitchell	Scottsbluff	

*Sidney received Tree City Growth awards for 30 years of TCUSA.

**Gering received Tree City Growth Awards for practicing higher levels of tree management.

“Many communities in western Nebraska have begun to see the payoff for landscape efforts in terms of reduced cost, easier management and all the other benefits of having more beautiful and livable neighborhoods,” said Amy Seiler, NFS community forestry specialist for western Nebraska.

Eight college campuses received Tree Campus USA awards. This was the first year the Hastings College received the Tree Campus USA award.

Creighton University	Nebraska Wesleyan University
Hastings College	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Metropolitan Community College in Omaha	University of Nebraska Medical Center
Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture	University of Nebraska at Omaha

Four public utilities were Tree Line USA recipients: Lincoln Electric System, Nebraska City Utilities, Nebraska Public Power District and Omaha Public Power District.

The Nebraska Forest Service, an affiliate of the University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR), works to enrich lives by protecting, restoring and utilizing Nebraska’s tree and forest resources.