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NEWS

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Fund Provides 10,000 Seedlings for 2013 Post-Fire Restoration Plantings

FORT COLLINS, Colo. – This year, more than 10,000 of the seedling trees planted for post-wildfire restoration in Colorado were provided at no cost to landowners through private donations to the Restoring Colorado’s Forests Fund. Every \$2 donation to the fund purchases one seedling.

Administered by the Colorado State Forest Service, the fund uses tax-deductible donations to pay for seedlings to be planted on state and private land in areas severely impacted by wildfires and other natural disasters. Since 2003, program funds have been used to plant more than 120,000 trees. Forty-one properties around the state received trees from the program this year.

“Everyone benefits if we replant trees to help stabilize soils, protect water quality and restore habitat in severely burned watersheds,” said Mike Lester, state forester and director of the Colorado State Forest Service. The CSFS is a service and outreach agency of the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University.

Planting efforts focus primarily in areas that directly impact important watersheds and provide the greatest public benefit. Of significant concern is the forestland burned by the Black Forest, Waldo Canyon and High Park fires. The loss of trees and other vegetation has led to significant runoff and erosion in these areas – resulting in damaged hillsides, polluted waterways, highway closures and road damage.

Seedling trees used in the program are grown at the CSFS Nursery on the CSU Foothills Campus in Fort Collins, ensuring that only high-quality trees adapted to local conditions are used for restoration efforts.

“We are pleased to say that of the 180 trees we planted, only eight trees have not made it. We will forever be grateful for the seedlings we received because of the generosity of people giving to the Restoring Colorado’s Forests Fund,” said Larimer County landowner James Williams, who lost 35 acres of timber to the High Park Fire in June 2012.

State lands and private landowners may be eligible to receive seedlings purchased through donations to the fund. CSFS foresters apply their technical expertise and research from CSU to make decisions about planting operations in coming seasons, based on available funding and reforestation needs within burned areas.

To donate to the fund, go to <https://advancing.colostate.edu/RestoringColoradosForests>.