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**Forest Aid:  
TreePeople and Boeing Launch  
A New Campaign for Healthy Forests, Fire Resilience**

*Initiative will bring diverse communities together to break California's  
endless cycle of forest fires, restoring native forests*

LOS ANGELES, CA, September 7, 2018 – “Trees need people and people need trees,” chanted 50 elementary students, making branch shapes with their arms. The students, on field trips to Coldwater Canyon Park, had stopped by to cheer at the announcement of Forest Aid – a new initiative in mountain forest restoration that will mobilize community, businesses, schools, and others. Forests across California, including the hills behind the students, have been decimated in recent years.

“At TreePeople we say ‘trees need people and people need trees,’” TreePeople CEO Cindy Montañez explained to the gathered crowd. “Unfortunately, the trees in these beautiful mountains...and in forests throughout the world...are more at risk today than they have ever been. The lungs of the earth are threatened due to fires, droughts, disease and extreme heat. And in California we’re ground zero for each of these threats.

“The trees need us now...and we, as a caring society with our national identity of loving our national forests, our mountains and our public lands, need to respond in record time because people also need trees.

“Thanks to a legacy gift of \$1 million from our partners at Boeing, I am thrilled to announce the launch of **Forest Aid** — an ambitious campaign to bring people from all ages and walks of life to restore and heal our forests.”

**Forest Aid** is [a new campaign](#) that will restore forests in fire-ravaged areas to minimize future fire risks and other environmental threats, while fostering healthy ecosystems.

Boeing and TreePeople were joined by Cal Fire, LA Conservation Corps, Junior Rangers, Spectrolabs, Sen. Bob Hertzberg, and students from Sylmar, Van Nuys, and Inglewood.

“At Boeing, we are in the business of building the future,” shared Tamika Lang, a Senior Manager with Boeing Global Engagement. “That includes tackling real-world problems and leading in the communities where our employees live and work. For decades, our employees have been planting trees and engaging with TreePeople – we have had employees who have become citizen foresters, and employees who have helped grow seedlings from the very beginning with TreePeople’s founder Andy. And in the wake of the horrors of wildfires, we recognize that the time to partner is now.”

Friday morning’s ceremony featured the first tree planting of the Forest Aid campaign. The sapling will grow next to a popular hiking trail in Coldwater Canyon Park. TreePeople founder and president Andy Lipkis christened the baby “Spec” in honor of Spectrolab. The Sylmar tech business, a Boeing subsidiary that whose products include solar arrays for spacecraft, helped with the Forest Aid launch. Spectrolab President Tony Mueller spoke about evacuating their business – and 18 employees’ homes – during December’s Creek Fire, which came within a few hundred feet of their facility.

“We are committed to this community. We have been here 62 years, and we’re here for the long haul. And we’re proud to partner with TreePeople for this important campaign,” said Mueller.

### **Bringing Everyone Together, with Boeing’s Lead**

The assembled crowd represented one of the key approaches of Forest Aid: bringing everyone in the community together across nontraditional lines. TreePeople and Boeing are working to convince all facets of society – private, public, political, and corporate – to get their hands in the soil, restoring forests and protecting public safety.

Boeing’s \$1 million investment will allow Forest Aid to launch with an initial four-year commitment targeting forested areas in Southern California. The project is carried out in coordination with CalFIRE, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and others.

### **The Forest Aid Model**

Forest Aid is based on TreePeople’s model of restoration—transforming the landscape and environment the right way by combining volunteer efforts with the best management practices and a science-driven approach.

The campaign will work to replace invasive species – those most prone to catching fire and burning out of control – with native trees and other species. The native plants will be raised from seeds collected as close as possible to project sites. They will sprout and begin growth in TreePeople’s new “clean room” nursery, a state-of-the-art facility in development thanks to Boeing’s support. Saplings and other juvenile natives will then be planted and protected, as Forest Aid volunteers return monthly to water and care for them until mature enough to survive on their own

The benefits of healthy forests are many – for the environment *and* people—including lowering wildfire threats, reducing the risk of floods and mudslides, creating habitat for local animals, reducing greenhouse gasses, improving groundwater recharge, and cooling the region.

There are ways for everyone to get involved, individually or with their company, religious organization, or other group. For more, visit [treepeople.org/forest-aid](https://treepeople.org/forest-aid), then follow treepeople\_org on social media and look for #forestaid.

*Interviews and forestry event visits can be arranged upon request.*

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