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LOS ANGELES URBAN °COOLING COLLABORATIVE



NATIONAL URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL AWARDS LOS ANGELES URBAN COOLING COLLABORATIVE \$320,000 FOR CRITICAL RESEARCH

TreePeople, academic and other NGO partners seek solutions to protect people from climate impacts as temperatures rise

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (June 16, 2017)-- This week, the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council of the U.S. Forest Service awarded the Los Angeles Urban Cooling Collaborative, a national partnership lead by TreePeople, \$320,000 to fund life-saving urban heat research.

"Each year, heat kills more people in the U.S. than all other weather-related causes combined -- and under-resourced urban communities are at the highest risk," TreePeople Director of Research, Edith de Guzman said.

This announcement is on the heels of the region's first severe heat wave of the season, with some areas projected to reach more than 100°F. During dangerous weather events like this, Los Angeles sees an increase in deaths of 5 percent compared to cooler days. In urban areas, extreme heat is a social justice issue-- low-income communities and people of color are at highest risk, as they tend to live in neighborhoods with less trees, more heat-retaining surfaces, poorly-insulated housing and limited access to air conditioning.

The LAUCC will bring practical, innovative climate science and community engagement approaches that will be applied through adoption of policies and empowerment of at-risk communities. The project will evaluate the cooling benefits of increasing tree canopy and reflectivity per neighborhood, and then quantify the number of heat-related deaths that would be avoided. When completed, the research will help hold decision makers accountable to accelerate the deployment of cool strategies to save lives while simultaneously realizing economic gains for the region. The Collaborative's goal is to bring a neighborhood-by-neighborhood prescription made up of the most effective dose of trees plus reflective surfaces in order to save lives and make Los Angeles more livable, both today and in tomorrow's changed climate.

The research is critical as some of Los Angeles' most vulnerable communities, like those in the San Fernando Valley, could see twice as many extreme-heat days by 2050, and with no action, could suffer from a full four months of dangerous heat conditions by the end of the century.

The grant will allow the LAUCC to complete the critical climate science modeling portion of the project over two years. **The LAUCC's full \$2 million 4-year project timeline includes the following phases:**

1. Research report on human benefits in cooler neighborhoods for peer-review. (Month 24)
2. Community engagement models and outreach to Los Angeles neighborhoods to maximize cooling programs. (Month 36)
3. Articles and other outreach to quantify the impact of cooling. (Month 24-48)
4. Community demonstration projects and data collection in 1-3 vulnerable communities. (Month 36-48)
5. Convene city officials and community stakeholders to facilitate the creation of Urban Heat Island Mitigation Plan (Month 36-48)

The Collaborative is driven by top experts from: the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine; UCLA Center for Public Health & Disasters; California State University, Northridge; and the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies; Climate Resolve; Global Cool Cities Alliance; and TreePeople to provide heat-health, sociological and bioclimatological research expertise.

Supporters of the project include the U.S. Forest Service, City of Los Angeles Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti, New York Office of the Mayor, Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Chicago City Council Aldermen, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group and more.

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About the Los Angeles Urban Cooling Collaborative:

The Los Angeles Urban Cooling Collaborative (LAUCC) is a unique national partnership between nonprofit groups, universities, government agencies and other experts in urban heat. Our aim is to achieve a more equitable, more prosperous, and healthier Los Angeles by addressing current and future challenges posed by urban heat. The LAUCC brings together policy and implementation experts, world-class research institutions and others to empower communities, city officials, and other stakeholders to act on the urgency and realize the full framework that will be shared nationally with decision makers, stakeholders, community health organizations, NGOs and urban forestry groups. For more information, visit treepeople.org/urbancooling.