Friends of Trees Receives $10,000 from REI for Local Restoration Project

REI supports three-year project to plant trees along I-205 Multi-Use Path.

PORTLAND, OR – The Oregon-based nonprofit Friends of Trees has received a $10,000 grant from REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.), a national outdoor retail co-op committed to connecting people with nature, to support Friends of Trees’ Green Space Initiative program.

Friends of Trees brings people together in the Portland-Vancouver and Eugene-Springfield areas to plant and care for city trees and green spaces. The nonprofit’s Green Space Initiative guides volunteers in weekend projects to restore natural areas and plant trees along public rights-of-way. The funds from REI will directly support two planting events along the I-205 Multi-Use Path this fall and winter as part of a greening project with Metro, the Oregon Department of Transportation, Portland’s Bureau of Environmental Services, and a dozen nonprofits, businesses, agencies, and community groups.

The 16.5-mile path parallels the freeway from the Columbia River in North Portland south to the city of Gladstone. It is used by cyclists, pedestrians, neighbors, and TriMet travelers. Already community volunteers led by Friends of Trees have planted 4,000 trees along the path. The 2011-12 planting season will wrap up the three-year project.

“Friends of Trees is grateful for our continuing and expanding partnership with REI,” said Friends of Trees Executive Director Scott Fogarty. “Bringing volunteers together to plant trees along the I-205 corridor reduces air pollution, increases neighborhood livability, and encourages healthy styles of transportation and recreation—goals that Friends of Trees shares with REI.”

REI is committed to promoting environmental stewardship and increasing access to outdoor recreation through education, volunteerism, gear donations, and financial contributions. The grant is the result of a nomination made by the Portland store.

About Friends of Trees:
Friends of Trees has planted more than 415,000 trees and native plants during its 22 years of guiding volunteers at planting projects in the Portland-Vancouver metro area. The nonprofit’s Green Space Initiative program brings volunteers in the Portland-Vancouver and Eugene-Springfield metro areas together to restore natural areas and
plant trees along public rights-of-way. During the most recent planting season, the program’s volunteers planted more than 24,000 native trees and plants.

About REI:
REI is a national outdoor retail co-op dedicated to inspiring, educating, and outfitting its members and the community for a lifetime of outdoor adventure and stewardship. Founded in 1938 by a group of Pacific Northwest mountaineers seeking quality equipment, REI is committed to promoting environmental stewardship and increasing access to outdoor recreation through volunteerism, gear donations, and financial contributions.

Photo of volunteers planting along the I-205 Multi-Use Path provided by ODOT Film & Video.

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