

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri
2025 Annual Report

Team Trees



Highlights



16,918

Trees Planted



403

Planting Projects Supported



16,313

Volunteer Hours



2025 Accolades



Forest ReLeaf's Treesilience program was recognized by FOCUS St. Louis as "What's Right with the Region."



Forest ReLeaf was showcased nationally and awarded \$5,000 from Davey Tree Company on the Kelly Clarkson Show.



Meridith McAvoy Perkins was featured for her work in *St. Louis Magazine's* 2025 A-List of "People Shaping the Region."

Director's Note



Planting trees says this place matters now, and it will matter fifty years from now."

This year I found myself planting trees in Ivory Perry Park, the same park where I planted my first Forest ReLeaf tree in 2019. In both moments, I was surrounded by passionate, caring people looking for hope, though under very different circumstances.

In 2019, Forest ReLeaf partnered with Better Family Life to plant fifteen trees honoring victims of gun violence. Participants spoke about creating a living legacy in the midst of loss and shared memories of growing up in the lush, green park. The act of planting offered peace and a promise of renewal.

On May 16, 2025, the park landscape changed forever. Forest ReLeaf returned, this time alongside industry partners with chainsaws and chippers, clearing storm debris before volunteers arrived with shovels to continue the long road to tornado recovery. The devastation was visible in every direction. Yet children were still playing basketball among the stumps. And standing strong were the trees planted five years earlier.

Forest ReLeaf of Missouri is committed to supporting communities through the simple but powerful act of planting trees.

Whether responding to disaster, replacing invasive species, stabilizing a stream bank, or beautifying a neighborhood, planting a tree is an act of hope and an investment in the future. Planting trees says this place matters now, and it will matter fifty years from now.

Forest ReLeaf takes a three-pronged approach to our work of planting trees and enriching communities. We cultivate a thriving nursery that grows high-quality Missouri native trees. We foster meaningful community engagement to invite more people into the mission. And we provide technical forestry expertise to ensure trees are planted and stewarded for long-term success.

In the pages that follow, you will see how this integrated approach is strengthening neighborhoods, rebuilding canopy, and growing the next generation of tree advocates. Thank you for being part of this work. Together, we are planting more than trees. We are planting resilience.

Meridith McAvoy Perkins
Executive Director

“

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

Helen Keller



Our Dedicated Staff



Meredith McAvoy Perkins
Executive Director



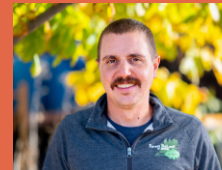
Jess Underwood
Finance & Operations Director



Billy Haag
Forestry Manager



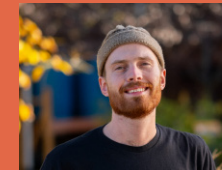
Rebecca Hankins
Partnership Manager



Jake Roeckle
Nursery Manager



Ellen Sulser
Engagement and Volunteer Manager



Elijah Belz
Field Operations Coordinator



Kelly Hicks-Holloway
Environmental Justice Lead



De'Nonna Jones
Stewardship Crew Coordinator



Amy Moscowitz
Outreach Coordinator



Dan Billman
Nursery Specialist



Kate Pichon-Hellmann
Office Administrator

2025 Seasonal Staff

Adara Ameer
Dave Anderson
Patrick Bridges
Jemila Collier
DeZha Smith

Summer Canopy Crew

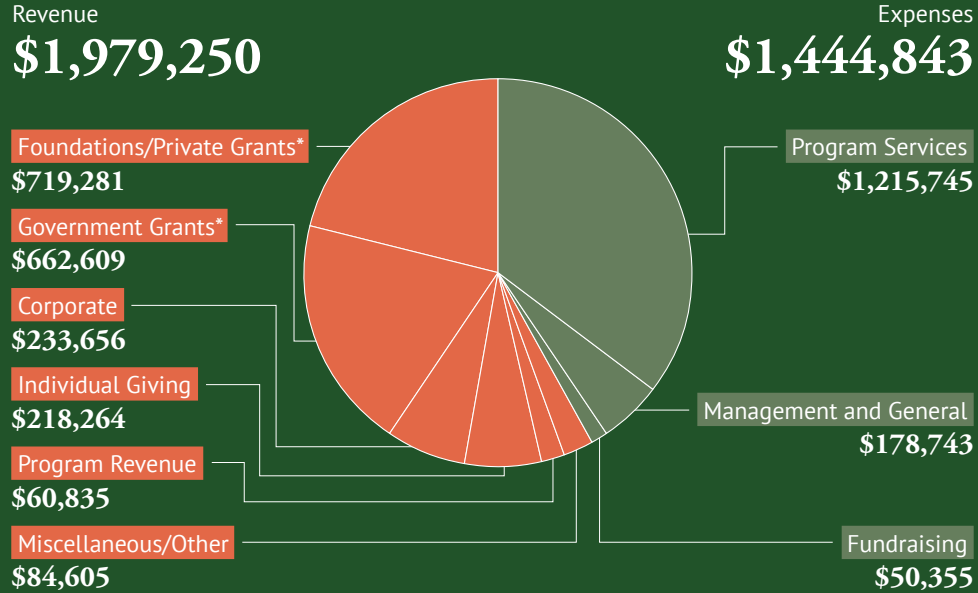
Mikayla Jones
Sam LaPorte
N'dende (Gabriel) Muholeza
Kavi Stevick

Washington University Interns

Bariweremelo Anue
Michael Barash
Colin Doyle
Robinson Etienne
Livi Sourivong
Bailey Willden



Financial Highlights



Based on unaudited financial statements

*Forest ReLeaf received several multi-year grants in 2025 and recognized deferred revenue from a 5-year commitment.

2025 Board of Trustees

Jason Pratte
St. Louis County Parks
President

Jesse Stuart
Lange Companies
Vice President

John Moller
Financial Advisor
(Retired)
Treasurer

Kevin Atkins
Ameren

Goldie Bockstruck
Summit Utilities

Tim Brunsmann
Richmond Heights
Parks and Recreation

Ava Cisse
Square

Alan Jankowski
City of St. Louis
Forestry Division

Almetta Jordan
Missouri State Parks
(Retired)

Danny Moncheski
Site One Landscape

Aisha Muhammad
Missouri Department
of Conservation

Kei Pang
Nature Partners
Foundation

Sean Pluta
Polisinelli

George Satkowski
Enterprise Mobility
(Retired)

Steve Taff
Washington
University

Scott Weitzel
Spire Energy

100+ hour Volunteers

Renee Benage	Matt Fitzgerald	Vaughn Meister	Howard Warth
Lori Brinkman	Wayne Fitzmaurice	Glenn Meyer	John Willmann
Dave Brown	Christine Garhart	Lee Phillion	Gary Winter
Warren Davis	Rick Gregory	Terry Powers	
Larry Doyle	Alison Jenkinson	Cathy Rauch	
Bull Durham	Nan Johnson	Susan Rode-Perkins	
Dave Durham	Robert Keppel	Mike Spiegel	
Frank Dvorak	Steve McCarthy	Mary Tucker	

Community Support



Core Partners

Arbor Day Foundation
City of St. Louis Forestry
Division
Great Rivers Greenway
Missouri Department of
Conservation
Missouri State Parks
St. Louis County Parks

Missouri Conservation
Heritage Foundation
Pang Family Charitable
Fund
RGA
Spire Energy
SSM Health
State Farm
Pat & Jane Tracy
Trio Foundation of St. Louis
UPS

LS Power Development
McDowell Family
Charitable Fund
McPheeters & Rickard
Family Fund

Vaughn Meister
Glenn & Karen Meyer
MLC
John & Corki Moller
Old North St. Louis

Boeing Corp. Matching
Gift Program
Wesley & Carol Boshart
Louise Bradshaw
Tim & Laura Brunsmann

Oak (\$50,000+)

Ameren Corporation
Charitable Trust
Berges Family Foundation
Gateway Regional
Environment Fund
Nestlé Purina
St. Louis Community
Foundation
Robert J. Trulaske, Jr.
Family Foundation

Redbud (\$1,000+)

Lloyd Alinder
Joseph Allen
Ameriprise Financial
Eugene Brunk
Dan & Connie Burkhardt
Brenda Chilman
Compton Heights NBA
Conservation Federation
of Missouri Charitable
Trust

The Matt Padberg &
Rebecca Fehlig Fund
Wayne Pichon
David Pierson
Sean Pluta
Safety National
Seed St. Louis
Michael Spiegel
St. Louis Area Women
Religious Collaborative
Ministries
St. Louis Composting
St. Louis Tree Pros
StraightUp Solar
The F. Dvorak Tellus Fund
Patricia Tusler
Urban Forestry Organization
Sandra Verduin
VGP Holdings, LLC
(Valvoline)
Lisa Wallis
Christi Winter

David V. Butruille
Barb Cerutti
Patricia L. Clarke
Laura Cohen
Sally & Thomas Cohn
Droege Tree Care, Inc.
DTLS Landscape
Architecture
David Durham
Glenn Eckert
Mark Etling
Zach & Janie Foster
Anna Garcia
William Haag
Robert Herleth
Colleen Kelsey
Pauline Kim
Brittany Krewson
Holly Liebig
Jacob McMains
Vickie Ressler
Sally Sandy
Chris Simpson
St. Louis Community
College

Maple (\$10,000+)

Bank of America
Charitable Foundation
The Bellwether
Foundation
Victor & Selene deLinere
Charitable Foundation
Enterprise Mobility
Foundation
Gadell and Weibelhuth
Family Charitable Fund
Edward Chase Garvey
Memorial Foundation
E. Reuben & Gladys Flora
Grant Charitable Trust
Peter Gregory
Jackie Joyner-Kersey
Foundation
Mastercard
John & Cathy Milton

Davey Tree Expert Company
Eliot Unitarian Chapel
Cynthia Gee
Patrick Geraty
Rob Hibbard
The Hoagland Charitable
Fund
ICL Specialty Products
Infinity Enterprise
Solutions LLC
JM Family Enterprises Inc.
William A. Kerr
Foundation
Ward & Carol Klein
Tom Lange Company
Charitable Foundation
Life Time Foundation
Robert & Barbara
Lindecke

Serviceberry (\$500+)

American Society of
Landscape Architects,
St. Louis Chapter
Kevin Atkins
Big River Race
Management LLC
Goldie Bockstruck

Carol Stanton
Mary Tucker
Karen Uhlenhuth
Scott Weitzel
Patricia Willis
John Willmann
Wrenn-Kreder Fund

Volunteer Groups

Ameren	Lifetime Fitness Foundation	Missouri Master Naturalists	St. Louis City SC
Bank of America	Lutheran North High School	MOBOT Outdoor Leadership Corps.	St. Louis Development Corporation
EarthDance Farms Enterprise	Maryville University	MOBOT Outdoor Youth Corps	St. Louis Magazine
ESCO Technologies	Mastercard	Parkway South High School	STL Neighborhood Foresters
Great Rivers Greenway	Missouri Community Forestry Council	Purina	State Farm
Hunter Engineering	Missouri Historical Society	RGA	SSM Health
ICL	Missouri Master Gardeners	Scouting America	UPS
John Burroughs		Spire	UMSL
KPMG			Washington University
Leonardo DRS			WYLD

Nursery Operations

Our nursery operations increase access to high-quality native trees, strengthen locally led planting initiatives, and celebrate the biodiversity of Missouri's landscapes.



Creve Coeur Nursery

All Forest ReLeaf programs rely on trees grown at our flagship nursery and arboretum. With added capacity from the 2024 expansion, Forest ReLeaf is actively growing a record number of trees to meet the increased demand across the state. Larger-caliper trees are reserved for priority planting projects in high-need communities.

25k

Total trees grown

65

Native species offered



Project CommuniTree

Locally led projects generate the strongest community support. When neighbors design the plan, recruit volunteers, plant trees, and provide long-term care, landscapes and relationships grow stronger. Project CommuniTree offers free 3-gallon trees to public and nonprofit planting partners across the state through applications in the spring and fall. Resources and tools are available to ensure partner success.

11.3k

CommuniTree trees

360

Projects supported

City Tree Farm

At our satellite nursery in the City of St. Louis we celebrated the installation of water access and 2 new events: Earth Day Potting and Fall Persimmon Fest. This engagement builds on the momentum of the last 2 years of site activation, anchoring the City Tree Farm as a community resource in St. Louis City's Midtown neighborhood near Delmar Blvd. Three grants provided funding to launch operations in 2026, and our strong partnerships with Missouri State Parks and the Missouri Department of Conservation continued.

"I attended the Earth Day potting event. It attracted a diverse group of people and provided a glimpse of the community centered programming they will be offering." Israel Collier



Priority ReLeaf

We prioritize trees where they are needed most, focusing on 3 pillars: 1) increasing historically low canopy which helps improve public health in disinvested communities; 2) supporting natural disaster recovery because in 2025 Missouri experienced 120 tornadoes and St. Louis City alone lost more than 5,000 trees; and 3) combating invasive species because healthier ecosystems happen through efforts like the Pear Buy Back program with Missouri Prairie Foundation, replacing invasive Callery pears with natives, and paving the way for Missouri's 2025 "Cease the Sale" law.

3,043

Priority ReLeaf trees

43

Projects supported




ReLeaf St. Louis

Our full-service urban forestry initiative, delivering professional tree planting and long-term stewardship in priority areas across the region.



“GRG’s investment in Forest ReLeaf’s model has strengthened our shared capacity to expand tree canopy and engage communities in conservation. It’s fantastic to have them as peers in the region.” Josh Ward

110 Stakeholders  **134** Trees pruned & removed 

1,399 Street trees planted  **768** Residents engaged 

502 Park trees planted  **1,892** Park & greenway trees stewarded 

Treesilience

Dead, dying, and dangerous trees in a community reduce public trust in the value of trees. The Treesilience program works to shift how people see trees—from liabilities to assets—through education, targeted tree care and removal, and replanting. The program also builds stronger support for trees in low-canopy neighborhoods by investing in local tree champions.

Many Treesilience neighborhoods were in the heart of the tornado’s path. Participants from 2024 emotionally thanked us for helping remove a tree that would have fallen on their house. As the community struggled with their complicated relationship with trees, Forest ReLeaf partnered with InPower Institute to host a Go Deeper Workshop for open dialogue and emotional healing.

City Street Partnership

Through a cooperative agreement with St. Louis City Forestry supported by the USDA Forest Service the ReLeaf St. Louis team plants street trees, expanding canopy in residential neighborhoods while supporting the City’s forestry goals. This is year two of a 5-year commitment to plant 3,200 trees, structurally prune 12,500, and engage the public through informational materials and celebratory events.

Funding for this project, and Treesilience, is provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service through the Urban and Community Forestry Program, in partnership with the City of St. Louis and the Missouri Department of Conservation, respectively. These institutions are equal opportunity providers.

Park & Greenway Projects

Through foundation and corporate partnerships, ReLeaf St. Louis plants larger-caliper trees in city parks and commits to a minimum of three years of watering, mulching, structural pruning, and monitoring to ensure long-term establishment. These trees are re-inventoried every year and have a survival rate of over 90%.

Our successful partnership with Great Rivers Greenway continued in 2025. We added new trees to the Christy Greenway and Ruth Porter Mall, while tree care and maintenance continued along the Hodiament, Mississippi, and Brickline Greenways.

This year also marked a milestone: the 60 trees planted along the River des Peres Greenway in 2020 have graduated from our 5-year stewardship program, receiving their final structural prune this fall. They are a living testament to the long-term impact of collaborative investment in regional green infrastructure.



Engagement

Through intentional outreach and hands-on experiences, Forest ReLeaf cultivates a network of passionate tree advocates committed to sustaining trees for future generations.

Throughout the year, volunteers, residents, students, and corporate partners rolled up their sleeves to grow, plant, mulch, prune, and water trees across the region. From first-time volunteers to long-time partners, each interaction strengthened canopy and community.

In parks, along greenways, and at neighborhood events, Forest ReLeaf creates opportunities that reduce barriers, build knowledge, and empower people to be stewards of their local environment.



I'm so grateful to be able to volunteer with Forest ReLeaf. It's rewarding to see the positive impact we're having on the tree canopy in St. Louis and across Missouri."

Nursery Volunteer

15,687

Missourians engaged



144

Nursery volunteer corps

1,150

Community volunteers

Volunteering

Volunteers are the heart of Forest ReLeaf. Nursery operations rely on a dedicated group of "regulars" reporting for weekly sessions of weeding, potting seedlings, loading trailers, and watering trees. Planting projects put community and corporate groups to work digging holes, hauling mulch, and wrestling roots balls. Overall organizational growth relies on board members, skilled partners, and mission-aligned individuals sharing their unique talents and services from legal review to equipment repair.

People who engage with Forest ReLeaf get something in return. Volunteers gain confidence to take back to their communities and take pride in knowing they are part of a lasting investment.

1,432

Private property trees

160

Events supported

Outreach and Events

From tabling events and community festivals to presentations and garden club tours, Forest ReLeaf values connections. The outreach team aims to invite as many people into the mission as possible. A 2025 highlight was the number of trees that residents accessed for their private properties from tree sales and multiple distributions. We know that to truly impact the urban canopy, we must equip people with trees for their yards.



3,162

Forestkeepers in network

392

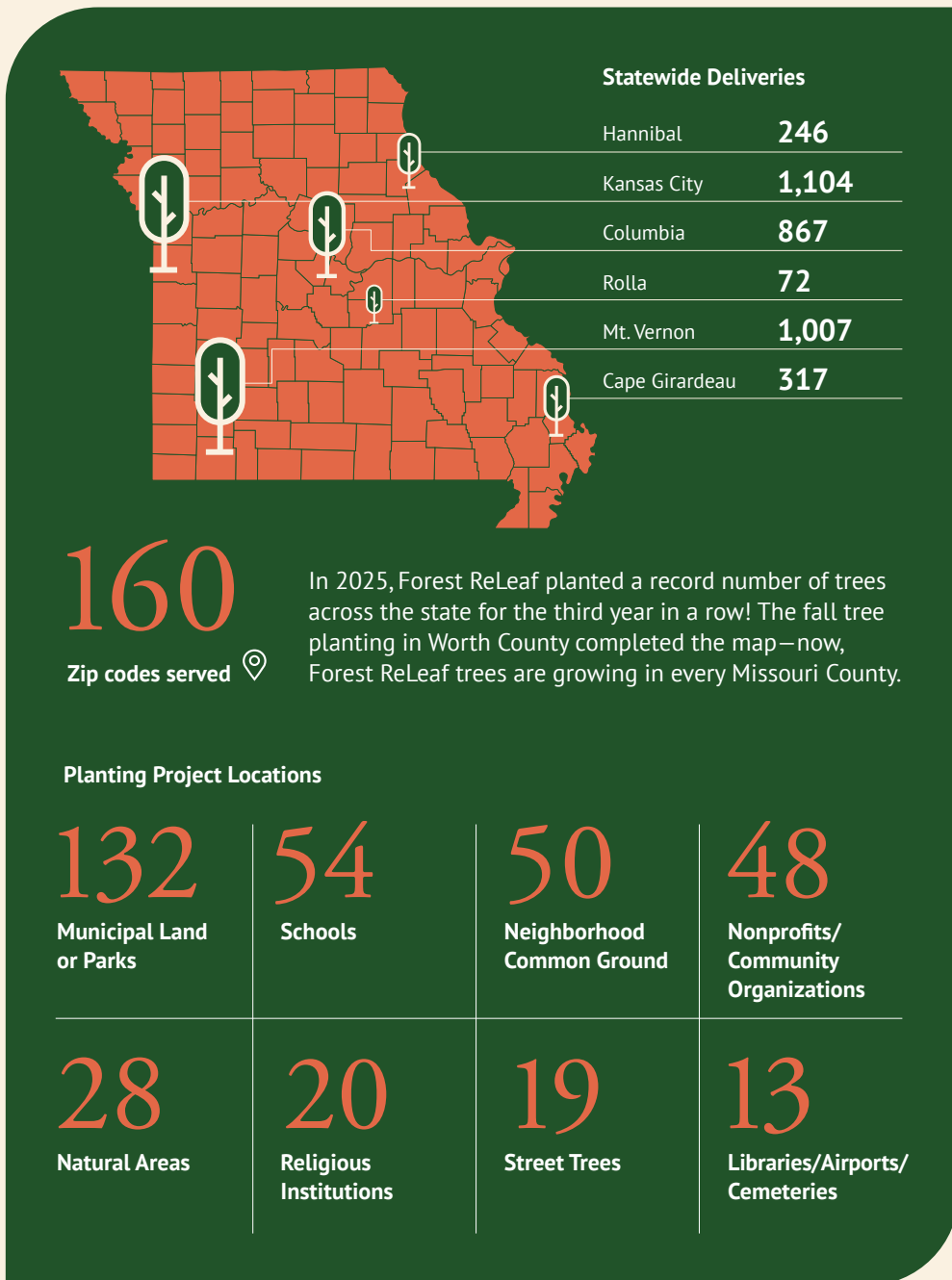
TreeKeepers to date

Advanced Training

Many individuals want to extend their tree journey with Forest ReLeaf and go beyond the basics. Our 6-week TreeKeepers class covers tree biology, soils, and strategic tree planting. Participants in our Forestkeeper network take part in citizen science efforts such as an annual witch hazel phenology project, seed collecting, and tree inventories.

Statewide Impact

Forest ReLeaf has always served the entire state of Missouri. With 32 years of growing quality trees and trust through a network of partners, our trees now reach even the most remote communities.



“Our students, faculty, and staff appreciate that we are planting Missouri native trees and shrubs on our college campus, creating both a more beautiful campus as well as a more sustainable future.”

Hunter Gale, MCC–Longview Campus
Lee’s Summit

“Forest ReLeaf provided trees for our Developmental Trauma Center’s sensory path in North County. The trees are taking root beautifully and we are excited to see them grown as an important part of our outdoor experience.”

Paula Pettibone, FamilyForward
St. Louis



“We are extremely grateful for Forest ReLeaf’s hard work and dedication to our urban forest. Through their partnership, we are able to advance our goals of building a beautiful and resilient urban forest canopy.”

Eric Hollenbeck, City of Florissant
Florissant

“Count me among Forest ReLeaf’s very biggest fans! Every year the trees arrive in great shape and typically flourish where they are planted along our more tree-challenged streets. I often hear from people how much they appreciate these trees.”

Karen Uhlenhuth
Kansas City

“Students from the Introduction to Agriculture class at Central Middle School in Park Hills replaced boxwoods around their flagpole with native black chokeberry. These plants will add to their schoolyard ecosystem by providing shelter and food for wildlife. Thank you Forest ReLeaf!”

Juli Kline, Central R-III Middle School
Park Hills

Get Involved



Whether it's your time or your treasure, your donations help us grow trees that change lives, strengthen neighborhoods, and build greener communities.

Visit moreleaf.org to learn about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and how you can support our work. We look forward to having you on Team Trees!

