

Get Involved in ReTree Colorado on June 26

Volunteers Needed to Plant Nearly 14,000 Trees Across Routt County During Event

Molly Killien
STEAMBOAT SPRINGS CHAMBER
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It's an incredible goal, a huge community undertaking, and it can be said that nothing truly demonstrates dedication and perseverance like Tristan Frolich's journey to plant thousands of trees in Routt County this summer via his "ReTree Colorado" project. Months of preparation and planning will be showcased during the June 26 community tree planting where his vision will become a reality.

In July 2009, Frolich submitted the idea of a large scale tree planting event to a national competition called "The Green Effect: Small Steps to Create Large Change," sponsored by National Geographic and Frito Lay. Applicants were asked to submit their ideas about how to create large scale change with the ultimate prize of \$20,000. Frolich's "ReTree Colorado" project was chosen by a panel of environmental activists and leaders as one of five winners out of thousands of applicants from all across the country. Frolich was granted \$20,000 to plant trees in Routt County this year.

More than 200 volunteers are needed to plant the nearly 14,000 trees that Frolich has accumulated for the community tree planting. Interested volunteers are encouraged to register online at www.retreecolorado.com as soon as possible.

"Throughout this whole experience, our main objective has been to help bring continued awareness to the new, growing forest. This project aims to assist the forest in its natural process of growth after the mountain pine beetle epidemic," said Frolich, who is also project manager of the ReTree Colorado one-day event. "It is empowering to know that everyone who becomes involved is actively taking ownership of the forest which is an extension of our community.

"Thank you, in advance, to all the community members who will be able

Get involved

Interested in volunteering June 26 for ReTree Colorado? Visit www.retreecolorado.com to sign up. Volunteers should bring a shovel, water bottle, sunscreen and gloves.

to join us on Saturday, June 26, and volunteer to help reach our goals," he said.

Volunteers will meet at the Meadows Parking Lot at Mount Werner and Pine Grove roads at 9 a.m. June 26. Transportation will be provided to the various tree planting sites after a tree planting briefing at 9:15 a.m. The day's activities are scheduled to take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Volunteers should bring their own planting materials including a spade or shovel, water bottle, sunscreen, gloves and snacks. Frito Lay Sun Chips and water will be provided at each planting site. A free lunch from Cugino's Pizzeria and Italian Restaurant will be available in Meadows Parking Lot after the tree planting.

All volunteers are strongly encouraged to utilize event transportation, provided by Go Alpine. Transportation vehicles will bring volunteers back to Meadows Parking Lot at the end of the tree planting day for an After-Planting Celebration for lunch, music, networking and booths with pine beetle information and products until 5 p.m. The event is a zero waste event, and volunteers from the Yampa Valley Sustainability Council will be helping the group to compost and recycle.

The 14,000 trees will be planted in North Routt County at Seedhouse Road Campground and Hinman Campground on U.S. Forest Service land, as well as at Steamboat Lake Campground on Colorado State Parks land. Sites within Steamboat Springs city limits include Spring Creek Trail and at Steamboat Ski Area.

"Choosing the Steamboat Ski Area was essential because winter sports are ingrained in the cultural fabric of this



YAMPA VALLEY SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL/COURTESY

Tristan Frolich, ReTree Colorado event creator, presents details about his project to a group of individuals at a Yampa Valley Sustainability Council Talking Green event in May.

community and the people who live here value the quality of the resort, especially tree skiing," said Laura Blazey Frolich, partner within the ReTree Colorado project.

"Reforestation of our recreation spots, like Spring Creek, is necessary because those trails are commonly used and provide natural beauty right here in the city limits. The entire county has been severely impacted by the mountain pine beetle epidemic, and we are grateful for the public and private entities dedicating significant resources to allow us the opportunity to reforest the lands we cherish."

As the fiscal sponsor for project insurance, the Yampa Valley Sustainability Council is committed to launching and supporting projects and programs, and ReTree Colorado aligns well with the council's guiding principles. YVSC has supported the ReTree Colorado project since its inception.

Angela Ashby, chairwoman of YVSC, said, "The opportunity to educate residents and visitors on the

effects of the bark beetle is tremendous, as is the chance to gain national exposure. Voluntourism, giving back and reforestation are all benefits of this event."

The ReTree Colorado project is incredibly grateful for the support of the following organizations: Yampa Valley Sustainability Council, City of Steamboat Springs, U.S. Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado State Parks, Go Alpine, Bark Beetle Information Task Force, Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association, Rocky Mountain Youth Corps and the Steamboat Springs High School Green Team.

The mountain pine beetle epidemic has affected nearly 3.2 million acres of forest in the Rocky Mountain region. This project creates the opportunity for individuals who may feel helpless to become engaged. ReTree Colorado invites all friends, family, coworkers and community partners to participate in this grass-roots effort and make a difference.

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The Home Builders Association of Steamboat Springs and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation would like to thank the community of Steamboat Springs, and all those who joined us for our June 3rd Building Science and Green Building Seminar. We look forward to seeing you all again at future events.

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