



East Palo Alto Tree Initiative Project Summary

Background

- East Palo Alto Tree Initiative started with \$142,000 grant from Cal Fire
- Wangari Maathai helped kick-off effort in April 2006
- Sustainable planting plan design created by local arborist and Canopy board member
- More than 20 different species selected to satisfy multiple criteria including drought tolerance and suitability for overhead utilities
- Over 1100 trees planted in East Palo Alto between 2/2007 and 2/2008
- Nearly 900 of these planted along Highway 101 soundwalls
- Remainder in street medians, parks, and schools
- Over 300 of these planted from seeds/acorns
- Most are evergreen

Implementation Approach

- Landscape contractor planted all 5- and 15- gallon trees and installed irrigation systems
- Volunteers prepared all 5- and 15- gallon trees before planting
- Volunteers planted all seeds and acorns
- Volunteers spread nearly 5000 yards of mulch along 2.1 miles of soundwall
- Volunteers are monitoring tree condition and maintaining the trees
- Canopy has responsibility to maintain trees for three years
- Exceptional survival rates and vitality as measured by UC Berkeley
- Soundwall project expected to produce close to \$3 million in environmental benefits over 40 years (per UC Davis Center for Urban Forest Research)

Youth Involvement

- Area youth comprise over 2/3 of our more than 500 volunteers
- Canopy started a program to provide part-time jobs to community youth
- Over 20 employed to date
- Tasks have included irrigation assembly and installation, rootball preparation, planting seeds /acorns, spreading mulch, surveying and maintaining trees, and leading volunteer groups