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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE: Officials, volunteers plant more than 50 trees at Harrison Township park

To improve the environment and the “greening” of Macomb County, a group of more than two dozen officials and community volunteers planted 54 trees on Friday at a Harrison Township park where the Clinton River Spillway meets Lake St. Clair.

The group endured rain and a chilly wind to plant dozens of trees of various species at Jefferson Spillway Park, a passive park on Jefferson Avenue that is also a popular fishing spot overlooking the outlet of the Clinton River Spillway at Lake St. Clair. The trees will act as green infrastructure by improving storm water management and water quality, reducing carbon dioxide and increasing the shade canopy.

The event was a partnership between the Macomb County Public Works Office and The Detroit Zoological Society, in collaboration with Harrison Township, ReLeaf Michigan and Green Macomb.

“This is a wonderful team effort that improves the environment immediately and for decades to come through green infrastructure, contributing to quality of life by also making the park more enjoyable to area residents and visitors for generations,” Macomb County Public Works Commissioner Candice S. Miller said.

“The Detroit Zoological Society has pledged to plant 2,000 trees on its campuses and – in collaboration with ReLeaf Michigan – in communities across metro Detroit,” said Gerry

VanAcker, DZS chief operating officer. “We’ve already made wonderful progress toward this goal. It’s been so rewarding to see people give back what deforestation has taken away.”

Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel said: “Plantings like today’s and others hosted through our Green Macomb initiative make a big impact for our residents. We are aiming to double the tree canopy in Macomb County and are well on our way to that goal.”

The variety of trees planted at Jefferson Spillway Park include: swamp white oak, triumph elm, prairie fire crabapple, skyline honeylocust, Japanese lilac, American hophornbeam, London planetree, Princeton sentry ginkgo, Redmond linden and emerald arborvitae.

All of the new trees will be maintained for the first three years by Harrison Township.

“We are happy to partner with DZS and Macomb County Public Works in order to improve Spillway Park. These trees will provide benefits for decades to come,” Harrison Township Supervisor Ken Verkest said. “The park itself is the result of partnerships; it is federal land, overseen by the intercounty drain board and leased to Harrison Township for recreational purposes.”

The average tree absorbs 48 pounds of carbon dioxide and 1,673 gallons of storm water every year. Some native species provide food and shelter for birds, insects and small mammals.

ReLeaf Michigan is a statewide tree planting and education non-profit organization. In its mission to assist Michigan communities with increasing overall tree canopy cover and in maintaining their existing urban forest by providing access to tree-related resources and education, ReLeaf Michigan has planted over 30,000 trees with volunteers in more than 400 communities around the state since 1988.

“ReLeaf Michigan is pleased to partner with Macomb County, Green Macomb, Harrison Township, and the Detroit Zoological Society to plant 54 trees at Jefferson Spillway Park,” said ReLeaf Michigan project forester Ashley Laux. “Trees provide extensive environmental, economic, social and human health benefits, so a tree planting event is a great way for neighbors to connect and create a healthier community together.”

PHOTOS:

Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel, left, Macomb County Public Works Commissioner Candice Miller and Detroit Zoological Society Deputy Chief Development Officer Sabarras George chat before the tree planting at Jefferson Spillway Park in Harrison Township on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.

Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel and County Public Works Commissioner Candice Miller with one of the 54 trees planted at Jefferson Spillway Park in Harrison Township on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.

From left, Detroit Zoological Society Deputy Chief Development Officer Sabarras George, Macomb County Public Works Commissioner Candice Miller and County Executive Mark Hackel plant a tree at Jefferson Spillway Park in Harrison Township on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.

From left, Macomb County Commissioner Barbara Zinner, Detroit Zoological Society Deputy Chief Development Officer Sabarras George, Macomb County Public Works Commissioner Candice Miller, County Executive Mark Hackel and Harrison Township Supervisor Ken Verkest plant a tree at Jefferson Spillway Park on Friday, Oct. 29, 2021.







