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Taproot

April 2023

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the *Taproot* newsletter! This roughly quarterly newsletter is where I'll share environmental horticulture science and program updates for the Capitol Corridor region, which includes Sacramento, Solano, and Yolo counties. The content will be aimed at professionals connected with urban landscaping and urban forestry.

It's been great to meet and talk with many of you, and I'd love your input about what you'd like to see here. Please get in touch any time! Feel free to pass this message along to anyone you think would be interested; for now, folks can just email me to get on the list.

Best regards,

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Benefits of Plants to Humans and Urban Ecosystems

I wanted to share a new UC ANR publication, ***Benefits of Plants to Humans and Urban Ecosystems***, by Janet Hartin and Rob Bennaton. This short publication summarizes current science-based knowledge on the links between horticulture and well-being. It also includes an extensive reference list of scientific literature, which could be particularly helpful if you need to find citations to support the importance of your work for a funding proposal (see below!), website, presentation, etc. Here are some highlights of the benefits covered:

- Trees and other plants in urban environments are associated with cooler temperatures, reducing the risks of heat-related health problems.
- Viewing or interacting with plants can aid in recovery from physical, emotional, and psychological conditions.
- Active gardening and landscaping have been linked to numerous exercise-related and cognitive functioning benefits.
- Urban plants have important mental health benefits, particularly as impacts of climate change increase.
- Urban greening projects can bring communities together and make them safer.
- Urban plants and landscaping provide ecosystem services including habitat provision, water runoff and water quality management, noise buffering, and soil

retention.

New Federal Grant Funds for Urban Forestry – Due June 1

I hope you've heard that the USDA Forest Service has announced the availability of $1 billion in grants to support equitable access to trees and green spaces. The Forest Service **overview** of the funding opportunity includes lots of information about applying, and there are more resources available on the Pacific Southwest Region's Urban and Community Forestry **homepage** – scroll down to the resources section. In addition, the California Urban Forests Council hosted a very informative webinar by Miranda Hutten, Urban and Community Forestry Program Manager for the Pacific Southwest Region; if you missed it, you can access the recording **here**. If you don't have capacity to complete a full application, stay tuned for the possibility of competitive sub-awards coming out of this initial round of funding.

Are you applying? I'd be grateful if you could let me know so I have a sense of what projects are on the table in our area. Best of luck to you!

From the Journals

A few recently published studies that might be of interest:

Green to gold mile: An environmental justice analysis of drought and mitigation policy impacts on home landscapes in Sacramento, California

During drought restrictions, green lawns were still the norm in a wealthy neighborhood, while residential landscapes in a lower income neighborhood were strained.

Designing and managing biodiverse streetscapes: Key lessons from the City of Melbourne

A city-university partnership to test streetscape plantings. If you're interested in a similar type of collaboration, please get in touch!

Right tree, right place for whom? Environmental justice and practices of urban forest assessment

A call for urban forest assessments to enhance procedural justice by considering resident preferences and perceptions of ecosystem (dis)services.

Short-term impacts of urban landscape conversion on surface runoff quality

Different landscaping types—lawn, xeriscaping, artificial turf, and mulch—have different nutrient export profiles. Artificial turf showed elevated levels of nitrate runoff.

Built environment factors moderate pandemic fatigue in social distance during the COVID-19 pandemic: A nationwide longitudinal study in the United States

More urbanized areas and areas with more greenness experienced lower pandemic fatigue.

Visit the UCCE Capitol Corridor website