



Walk in the Forest

**A GUIDE FOR
PROMOTING
FORESTS &
FOREST
MANAGEMENT**

Share and print out this manual of ideas and make notes as you plan your walk in the forest!



American Forest Foundation



Society of American Foresters
Growing better all the time

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Introduction

The Walk in the Forest program is a wonderful opportunity for the public to experience forests and forestry hands-on.

▶ **APRIL 22
EARTH DAY**

▶ **LAST FRIDAY IN APRIL
ARBOR DAY**

▶ **3RD SATURDAY IN MAY
NATIONAL WALK IN
THE WOODS DAY**

▶ **3RD FRIDAY IN OCTOBER
NATIONAL WALK IN
THE FOREST DAY**



This guide will help you plan an event—for adults, families, students or teachers. A Walk in the Forest helps audiences of all ages unplug from their busy lives and witness the wonder of nature. It provides a great opportunity for people to appreciate forests, and to teach others about the benefits forests provide and how forest management can enhance those benefits.

This guide was developed and produced by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and the American Forest Foundation (AFF). SAF is the scientific and educational association representing nearly 17,000 professional foresters and natural resource professionals in the United States. The Society's primary objective is to advance the science, technology, education, and practice of professional forestry for the benefit of all society. AFF works on-the-ground with families, teachers and elected officials to promote stewardship and protect our nation's forest heritage. A commitment to the next generation unites our nationwide network of forest owners and teachers working to keep our forests healthy and our children well-prepared for the future they will inherit.

There are many opportunities throughout the year to plan a Walk in the Forest. Each season brings with it something new to show and tell about trees and the forest. The **third Saturday in May is National Walk in the Woods Day™**, and

on that day the American Forest Foundation invites its network of family forest owners and American Tree Farm System® Certified Tree Farmers to offer tours of their properties, or simply take their own families and friends for a walk in the woods. **On the third Friday in October, SAF local units and state chapters join with local educators and landowners to hold a Walk in the Forest Day.** If you can't participate in, or plan an event for National Walk in the Woods Day™ or National Walk in the Forest Day, consider another spring date to tie in with Arbor Day or Earth Day, or another fall date to take advantage of colorful foliage. **National Arbor Day is the last Friday in April**, but many states observe it on different dates according to their best tree-planting times.

The guidelines in this kit will help you plan your event. A planned project is a successful project! The length and detail of the walk will depend on your audience. If your walk involves teachers and their students, or families and their children, AFF's Project Learning Tree program can provide some engaging and fun activities for youth. Use this guide to plan your walk, and for more guidance, contact Louise Murgia, Director of Field Services at the Society of American Foresters or Vanessa Bullwinkle, Director of Communications at the American Forest Foundation.

GOALS OF WALK IN THE FOREST

- > Inform the public of the many benefits of trees and forests.
- > Increase public awareness of the dynamic nature of the forest.
- > Help the public to understand that foresters are uniquely qualified to help maintain the integrity of forest environments while providing many benefits for society.
- > Inform the public that private family forestland owners have multiple and diverse objectives and that their investment in forest management results in benefits that we all enjoy.

KEY FOREST AND FOREST MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS

Trees and forests have many benefits.

- Environmental benefits include soil stability, air and water quality and carbon storage.
- Ecological benefits include landscape diversity and habitat for plants and animals.
- Economic benefits include the forest products industry, outdoor recreation equipment, etc.
- Recreation includes activities in the forest such as hiking, camping and hunting.
- Aesthetics is the pleasure derived from the visual beauty of the forest.

Forests are dynamic and change composition over time.

- Biotic influences on forests include animals, insects, diseases, and non-native invasive species.
- Abiotic influences include flooding, drought, fire and wind events such as hurricanes and tornadoes.
- Competition for resources (sun, water, nutrients) occurs between organisms of the same species and different species.
- Succession is the replacement of one community of plants by another.

Foresters maintain the integrity of the forest while providing benefits for society.

- There is demand for forest products including paper, solid wood and energy.
- Supplying these products through management does not necessarily compromise a forest's integrity.
- Foresters complete a multi-disciplinary curriculum including ecology, silviculture, forest health, economics, and policy that prepares them for their profession.
- Many states require licensing or registration criteria that may include a code of ethics.
- Foresters use equipment such as diameter tape, clinometer and increment borer to gather data in order to make prescriptions.
- Forest management techniques such as herbicide application, prescribed fire, thinning, or final harvests are used to deliver a desired outcome.
- Often these techniques mimic natural events, and may appear harmful in the short-term but have long term benefits.

Private family forestland owners have multiple and diverse objectives and their investment benefits the public.

- Individuals and families own forests for a variety of reasons, including quality of life, environmental values, investment income, and/or recreation.
- A landowner invests his or her time and money in forest management activities to accomplish his/her objective(s).
- A landowner's investment in forest management also provides benefits to society for example; a prescribed fire lowers the risk of uncontrolled wildfire.
- Other societal benefits from private forestland management include clean air and clean water, soil creation and stabilization, and protection of biological diversity.
- A landowner's participation in forest certification programs like the American Tree Farm System is verification of sustainable forest management.

□ Discuss the importance of **private forest owners** to protecting America's forest legacy and point out the value of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS)—the largest and oldest sustainable woodland system in America. ATFS is a network of family forest owners protecting 26 million acres of forest land.

□ Discuss the importance of **environmental education** and how it is vital that the next generation have an understanding and appreciation for the natural world. Describe how Project Learning Tree (PLT), uses forests as a window on the world to engage students of all ages in outdoor learning. PLT has a 50-state network and trains more than 30,000 educators a year.

□ Gather local and national **forest facts** to share.



- 56% of America's forests are privately owned and of this private forest land, most (62%) is owned by families and individuals. The remaining private forest land is owned by corporations, conservation organizations, clubs, Native American tribes, and others.

- 25% percent of America's fresh water comes from private forests
- 60% of at-risk wildlife depends on private forests for habitat.
- More than 90% of our wood products in America come from private forests.



FOCUS OBSERVE EXPLAIN SHOW GATHER DISCUSS

Invite Guests

- For school groups, make contact at the beginning of the school year before field trip plans are set.
- For specific guest lists, request an RSVP and make reminder phone calls.
- For landowners or the general public, designate someone to handle registration.
- Send press releases about your event to local media. Include the date, time, location, length, why your audience should participate, dress requirements, etc.
- For landowners only, promote it in state Tree Farm committee newsletters, state forestry agency publications, and trade association publications.
- For the general public, list the event in community calendars, hang signs in libraries and stores.

Prepare Information Packet to Give to Walk Participants

Consider including these items:

- Walk schedule and map of walk area
- Briefing paper with key forestry terms, issues to be discussed, etc.
- Photographs (for example harvesting methods)
- Names and contact information of the walk's facilitators for follow-up
- State forest facts (available from state agencies or associations)
- SAF, PLT and Tree Farm brochures
- Seedlings or seed packets with planting instructions for participants
- Sample activities for families to lead with children while out for a walk in the woods. Download these one-pagers from PLT's "Connecting Kids to Nature" series from www.forestfoundation.org/family-activities.
- Make nametags. Consider tree cookie name tags. With a dab of hot glue and a pin, they make excellent name tags. Use color-coded name tags to distinguish leaders from guests.
- Collect giveaways from donors.

Walk through Planned Itinerary

- Rehearse!
- Calculate travel time needed between stops.
- On remote forest roads, flagging turns and stops can be helpful.
- Be comfortable with your location and material; do trail maintenance if necessary.
- Watch for potential obstacles, distractions, safety hazards, or illegal activities.
- Observe: will the walk be interesting? Does it meet your objectives?
- Revise itinerary as needed.
- Collect helpful items: air horn to rotate stations, sunscreen, bug spray, toilet paper, hand wipes, first aid kit, and camera.

Extras

Rehearse

DAY OF WALK

Pre-Walk

Ready,
Set...

- Arrive early.
- Review the site for any potential hazards and flag the boundaries.
- Welcome guests and have them sign in with name, address, and emergency contact information.
- Distribute nametags and walk information packet.
- Give brief introduction with information about the walk sponsors and an explanation of the site.
- Give an overview of the day's activities.
- Review a map that shows the project boundaries and facilities.
- Describe the plan for bad weather. In hot weather, tell guests to make sure they drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Allow time for a brief question and answer session.

Proceed with Walk in Accordance with Schedule

Go!

- Stick to the schedule while respecting individual needs.
- Avoid technical jargon; answer all questions candidly.
- Be sure to listen carefully and avoid doing all the talking.
- Remember safety precautions.
- Involve the audience, for example ask open-ended questions about the topic rather than a question that could be answered with a yes or no.
- Be animated. Have good eye contact with your audience.
- Most importantly, remember to make the walk fun!

Conclusion

Q & A

- Give a summary or a fun quiz covering the tour, highlights, etc.
- Allow time for a final question and answer session.
- Distribute and collect evaluation forms.
- Encourage additional contact with SAF, Tree Farm or PLT volunteers.
Offer to schedule a Project Learning Tree workshop for educators, Tree Farm certification for landowners or follow-up visit by an SAF member.
- Thank guests for attending and make sure all guests have transportation.
- Collect trash and dispose of it properly.
- Notify the landowner that the event has concluded and the site is in order.

AFTER THE WALK

Thank you

- Clean up the site—leave no trace.
- Send thank you letters to all participants, volunteers, sponsors and the landowner.
- Answer unresolved questions immediately.
- Summarize the participant evaluations and distribute to partners.
- Evaluate guests' attitudes: did the tour have a positive effect? What worked and what didn't?
- Distribute a post-event press release (include a quote if you can from a student, teacher, or other guest about the event and what they learned or experienced), and photographs, to the local media, Society of American Foresters' communications department and the American Forest Foundation's communications department.
- Begin preparations for the next Walk in the Forest!

Gear Up

- Provide teachers with sample activities that differ from activities that will be conducted on the day of the walk. See attached **Connecting Kids to Nature** activities. You can download these and others from www.forestfoundation.org/family-activities. These are more simple versions of activities from Project Learning Tree's curriculum guides.
- Read a forestry-related book or show a video or slide show.
- Have children brainstorm on how many items come from trees and then show samples and discuss some of the products.
- Briefly explain what a forester does and demonstrate some tools.
- Have each student write answers to the following on an index card along with his or her name: "What do I want to know about forests or foresters?"
- Conduct a pre- and post-walk test of knowledge/attitudes about forests.

Define the Responsibility of the School

- Provide at least two adults per group (for example one teacher and one parent).
- Encourage students to dress properly (long pants and closed-toe shoes).
- Have lunches divided into groups.
- Bring a school nurse or someone else to distribute medication and first aid if this becomes necessary.

Helpers

DAY OF THE WALK

Focus the Children's Attention without Delay:

- Set the tone of the walk immediately.
- Consider giving instructions about the walk and other logistics while children are still seated on the bus.
- Set clear and simple rules. Sample rules include the following:
 - Stay on paths whenever possible.
 - Watch where you are walking so you avoid crushing plants and animals.
 - Do not pick flowers and leaves unless directed.
 - Walk quietly to focus on observation.
 - Do not litter.

Possible Topics and Associated PLT Activities during the Walk:

- Count tree age using growth rings and/or an increment borer.
- Show how to measure trees, determine board feet, etc.; relate this to how many trees it takes to build a house.
- Show how dead trees are home to a lot of living creatures.
- Explain how seeds are carried (by wind, water, squirrels, etc.).
- Explain the types of food that come from trees (maple syrup, etc.).
- Show a recently planted area with seedlings sprouting and explain the life cycle of trees.
- Identify the living creatures in the woods.
- Do leaf rubbings with crayons and explain the parts of a leaf.
- Show the parts of a tree and compare them to vital human functions. Explain that trees essentially use their leaves for breathing and then ask what else a tree needs to live. Someone will probably mention eating and you can explain how trees "eat" through their roots.

Serious Fun

Topics

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR STUDENTS



Society of American Foresters and Project Learning Tree
 WALK IN THE FOREST
 Alabama Nature Center, Lanark
 Tuesday, April 19, 2011



- Station 1 – Mammals, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Station 2 – Reptiles, Alabama Wildlife Federation
- Station 3 – Soils & Water, Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Station 4 – Raptors, Southeastern Raptor Rehabilitation Center
- Station 5 – Project Learning Tree—“How Big is Your Tree,” Registered Forester
- Station 6 – Freshwater Fishing, Alabama Wildlife Federation
- Station 7 – Project Learning Tree—“Looking at Leaves,” Carignan Forestry Consultants
- Station 8 – Project Learning Tree—“Birds and Worms,” Alabama Department of Ag and Industries

Agenda

Time	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E	Class F	Class G	Class H
9:00	PLEASE WAIT ON BUS FOR YOUR GUIDE. SNACK AT YOUR FIRST STATION.							
9:30	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:50	ROTATE							
9:55	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1
10:15	ROTATE							
10:20	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2
10:40	ROTATE							
10:45	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3
11:05	ROTATE							
11:10	LUNCH AT YOUR FIFTH STATION. WE WILL PLACE YOUR COOLER THERE.							
12:00	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4
12:20	ROTATE							
12:25	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5
12:45	ROTATE							
12:50	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6
1:10	ROTATE							
1:15	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1:35	HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME!							

Connecting Kids to Nature

Try this activity in a forest—a natural place to learn!

For over 35 years, Project Learning Tree® has used the forest as a “window” to help young people gain an awareness of the world around them and their place within it. Blending a walk in the forest with a fun and engaging PLT activity creates a powerful learning experience for children of all ages. Here’s one idea in a series from PLT that introduces the concepts of structure and scale.



Activity 70: Soil Stories

In this activity, students explore differences in soil types and composition.

Doing the Activity

Who doesn’t like getting their hands a little dirty? The next time a child in your care decides to dig a hole in the ground, turn it into an educational opportunity. Describe to children that you will conduct an experiment to analyze the soil sample they have just collected. As you dig and collect soil samples, ask:

- What do trees and other plants get from soil? If so, why?
- Do different plants have different soil needs?
- Describe the soil: What color is it? How does it smell? How does it feel?

Have children make a “soil shake” by placing one half cup of soil into a jar with a lid and adding two cups of water. Ask them to predict what will happen if they shake the closed jar and let it settle for a few hours. Then, try it. Over time, soil layers will become visible. Gravel will fall first; then sand, silt, and clay; organic matter (leaves, twigs, stems) will remain floating in the water. Have children draw a picture of the layers formed by their soil shake, or collect and test soil samples from other areas (forest, field, yard) for comparison.

Safety! Get permission before taking soil samples. Use plastic jars, if possible.

Challenge students to complete the “Soil Composition” diagram, reminding them that the largest particles fall to the bottom first.

Soil Composition

Fill in the missing vowels to label the soil layers.
Match up the measurements with the appropriate soil layer. All measurements are in millimeters (mm).

— CL_Y a) 2.0 - 0.06 mm
— S_LT b) greater than 2.0 mm
— S_ND c) less than 0.002 mm
— GR_V_L d) 0.06 - 0.002 mm

Adapted from Activity 70: Soil Stories from Project Learning Tree’s PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide.

Discover how PLT can help you teach... from nature!

- Attend a workshop near you to receive PLT activity guides, ideas, and materials.
- To contact your local PLT State Coordinator, visit www.plt.org or call 202-463-2475.

Answers: c) clay, d) silt, a) sand, b) gravel, water, organic matter



Project Learning Tree® (PLT)
is a program of the American
Forest Foundation.

Connecting Kids to Nature

Try this activity in a forest—a natural place to learn!

For over 30 years, Project Learning Tree® has used the forest as a “window” to help young people gain an awareness of the world around them and their place within it. Blending a walk in the forest with a fun and engaging PLT activity creates a powerful learning experience for children of all ages. Here’s one idea from PLT that introduces the concept of forest cycles.



Activity 78: Signs of Fall

In this activity, children look for signs of autumn. They observe the annual change of seasons, and investigate why leaves of deciduous trees change color in the fall.

Doing the Activity

As autumn approaches, take children on a walk through a wooded area, schoolyard, local park, or neighborhood sidewalk to look for signs of fall. Point out the differences between *deciduous* and *evergreen* trees. Have children find at least five of each and collect sample leaves. Create leaf rubbings by covering a leaf with a piece of paper and rubbing a crayon over it. The leaf’s margin and veins will appear. Use crayons to match the fall colors found in the leaves. Encourage critical thinking by asking:

- What signs of fall can you see in the trees and on the ground?
- How many different leaf colors can you find?
- What will happen to the leaves?

Deciduous



Deciduous trees lose their leaves annually. Example: Oak



Evergreen

Evergreen trees keep their leaves (needles) year-round. Example: Pine

Have children use the colorful fall leaves to create a picture. For ideas, see *Leaf Man* by Lois Ehlert, published by Harcourt Children’s Books, 2005, ISBN: 0152053042.

Adapted from Activity 78: Signs of Fall from Project Learning Tree’s *PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide*.

WHY DO LEAVES CHANGE COLOR?

With fall’s colder temperatures and shorter days, the cells of deciduous tree leaves begin to die. The dead cells block water and nutrients from the leaf. *Chlorophyll*, the green pigment in the leaves, breaks down and the yellow and red pigments begin to show through.

Native Americans had legends to explain the fall colors. Invite children to create their own imaginative stories.

Discover how PLT can help you teach... from nature!

- Attend, host, or sponsor a local PLT workshop where participants receive PLT activity guides, ideas, and materials.
- Contact your PLT State Coordinator. Visit www.plt.org or call 202-463-2475 for their contact information.

www.plt.org



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Connecting Kids to Nature

Try this activity in a forest—a natural place to learn!

For over 30 years, Project Learning Tree® has used the forest as a “window” to help young people gain an awareness of the world around them and their place within it. Blending a walk in the forest with a fun and engaging PLT activity creates a powerful learning experience for children of all ages. Here’s one idea from PLT that introduces the concept of measurement.

Activity 67: How Big Is Your Tree?

Trees come in various shapes and sizes. In this activity, children will measure trees in different ways and become familiar with tree scale and structure. They will also learn the importance of standard units of measure and measuring techniques.

Doing the Activity

Any time you are outside, select a tree for children to measure. Begin by asking youth how they might measure something without the proper tools. Then challenge children to measure small outdoor objects (leaves, branches, rocks) using their own body parts: a foot, hand, arm, or finger. Guide children to your selected tree and ask them to estimate the following:

- Height
- Circumference
- Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
- Width of Canopy (or Crown Spread)

Depending on the age and ability of the children, you may want to provide a six inch ruler or five foot piece of string for assistance. You can request that calculations be estimated in body measurements (hand spans, arm lengths, etc.) or accepted units of measure (feet, meters, etc.) Ask: why might it be useful to measure trees?



On a sunny day, show students how to measure shadows and use a ratio comparison to determine tree height. The mathematical proportions are outlined in the box below. Invite children to practice using the illustrated example.

Tree's Height = x
Tree's Shadow = 63 feet
Child's Height = 4 feet
Child's Shadow = 6 feet



$$\frac{\text{Tree's Height}}{\text{Tree's Shadow}} = \frac{\text{Child's Height}}{\text{Child's Shadow}}$$

OR

$$\text{Tree's Height} = \frac{\text{Child's Height} \times \text{Tree's Shadow}}{\text{Child's Shadow}}$$

Adapted from Activity 67: How Big Is Your Tree? from Project Learning Tree's PreK-8 Environmental Education Activity Guide.

Discover how PLT can help you teach... from nature!

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www.plt.org



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Example #2: WALK IN THE FOREST FOR **TEACHERS**

This outline supplements the Planning a Walk in the Forest guidelines on page 8. This example combines a Walk in the Forest with a Project Learning Tree educator workshop.

Benefits for a Walk in the Forest for Educators:

In addition to the goals of a Project Learning Tree workshop, the walk will:

- > Teach educators about forests, forestry, and foresters.
- > Provide educators with a positive outdoor, hands-on learning experience about forests, natural resources, forestry, and foresters.
- > Increase educator's awareness, appreciation of, and respect for, nature, forests, and foresters.
- > Expose educators to the many benefits of forests—biological, aesthetic, recreational, educational, environmental, and economic.
- > Expose educators to the many aspects of forestry, e.g., forest management, fire prevention, forest health, forest products, forest ecology, and wildlife management.
- > Encourage educators to share their knowledge and understanding with students in the classroom and out-of-doors.
- > Encourage educators to take their students outside to learn.

The Goals of a PLT Workshop:

- > To encourage educators to approach learning and teaching from an ecological and multi-disciplinary perspective.
- > To prepare educators to use PLT materials by modeling a sample of PLT activities and teaching strategies.
- > To show educators how they can incorporate PLT into their current and future lesson plans and curriculum.
- > To increase educators' confidence in teaching environmental education concepts.
- > To enrich educators' knowledge of content included in PLT lessons.
- > To create a setting in which educators can meet other professionals in their region interested in environmental education.
- > To provide a fun and motivating forum that encourages educators to enjoy their own learning process.

Please note a PLT workshop must be coordinated by a trained Project Learning Tree facilitator. Costs for PLT workshops and PLT curriculum materials vary from state to state. For help identifying PLT facilitators, or to become a PLT facilitator, contact your state PLT coordinator. Visit www.plt.org for contact information.

Project Learning Tree provides tens of thousands educators every year with environmental education curriculum materials and resources to help them incorporate teaching about the environment into their everyday lesson plans—and take their students outdoors to learn. More than 500,000 educators have been trained to use PLT curriculum, reaching more than 75 million students.

BEFORE THE WALK

Develop a Plan for a PLT Workshop in Conjunction with a PLT Facilitator

- Determine target audience (for example, preK through 12th grade educators in public or private schools, home schools parents or tutors, camp staffs, Girl Scouts and Boy Scout leaders, state Parks and Recreation Department staffs, university professors of pre-service teachers, forestry or environmental science majors).
- Contact the school's science coordinator several months in advance to select a teacher in-service day for the PLT workshop and another date for the walk, or one date for a combined workshop and field day. Similarly, contact your targeted nature center, university department, regional youth group or education center, etc.
- Submit a Project Learning Tree workshop proposal to your state's PLT Coordinator as soon as date is established with an estimated number of participants. Post the workshop on your state's and National PLT's website.
- Apply for grant money from either National SAF, or through local sponsorship to offset costs of the workshop and the PLT curriculum guides.
- Create a registration form, including payment information (if applicable), and confirmation letters for participants to be sent upon receipt of the registration form—include list of participants, directions, what to expect/wear, etc.

Establish Objectives for the Walk

- Determine if the PLT activities meet the objectives of a Walk in the Forest. Determine if the PLT activities meet the needs of the registered participants (i.e. grade level, subject, etc.)
- Plan for giveaways for the teachers. Your state forestry department, a forest products company, or a local nursery might be willing to donate seedlings or seed packets with planting instructions for participants or additional giveaways. PLT and SAF also have promotional items.
- Set your objectives, taking into consideration the goals of the walk.
- What topics do you want to cover? What PLT activities will you use to address these topics?
- What two or three major points do you want participants to know or understand? (See pages 4-6 for some **Talking Point** ideas, and consider local, national, or international issues.)
- Joining with foresters in local, state, and federal agencies, forest industry, consulting firms, conservation organizations and your state's PLT program will help develop valuable partnerships.

Establish Itinerary for a Walk in the Forest Combined with a PLT Workshop

- Allow one(?) hour to welcome all participants, conduct a PLT activity "icebreaker," and introduction to PLT.
- Divide participants into groups based on their school, or grade level they teach, or for rotating a large group through several stations.
- Layout the location of each station, decide which PLT activity will be conducted at each station, and assess material needs. Use a hands-on PLT activity at each station—you're in the woods, take advantage of it!

Who?

When?

\$\$

- At the end, plan to gather all participants in one place to distribute the PLT curriculum guide books, hike through the guide, lesson planning worksheets, an evaluation form, and to wrap up.

Prepare Information Packet to Give to Walk Participants

Consider including these items:

- Walk schedule and map of walk area
- PLT workshop objectives and history
- Participant list
- Website resource list
- Briefing paper with key forestry terms, issues to be discussed, etc.
- Photographs (i.e. harvesting methods)
- Names of SAF/PLT members involved and their affiliation
- Names/phone numbers of SAF/PLT contacts for further information
- State forest facts (available from state agencies or associations)
- SAF and PLT brochures and information
- State and national correlations to academic standards for the PLT guides that will be distributed
- Information about trails in the area to bring students back to, or tips on how to start their own trail on their school campus. Provide information about PLT's *GreenWorks!* grants for funding to develop a trail, or another for environmental service-learning projects.
- Blank classroom planning sheets

Finalize Plans

- Place an order through the PLT workshop facilitator for the appropriate number of PLT curriculum guides based on the number of registered participants.
- Send invitations to media to cover the event. Have a designated spokesperson.
- Gather PLT supplies and props for the facilitators of each station.
- Coordinate lunch details
- Send reminders to presenters on times, what is expected, final schedules, etc.
- Collect giveaways from donors.
- Prepare PLT certificates

Registration Information

- Make nametags. Consider using tree cookies, a cross cut section of tree stem, for the tags.
- Develop a sign-in sheet (including payment information if applicable)

Extras

"The visits into the woods and mills was a wonderful experience that gave a whole new perspective on forestry, and the dedication to stewardship by those working in and managing the forests."

Martha Borden, Maine middle school teacher

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL FLYER FOR TEACHERS



PLT[®]

The Cornerstone for
Environmental Education



Project Learning Tree's "Walk in the Forest"

Project Learning Tree is an award-winning environmental education program designed for educators and other resource professionals working with youth from preschool through grade 12.

PLT uses the forest as a "window" on the world to increase students' understanding of our environment; stimulate students' critical and creative thinking; develop students' ability to make informed decisions on environmental issues; and instill in students the commitment to take responsible action on behalf of the environment.

You are invited to "Walk in the Forest" with Project Learning Tree and the Society of American Foresters!

On the walk, learn about trees, the forest ecosystem, and how professional foresters care for the forest. We will follow a trail through Tuskegee National Forest. Please dress for cold weather and wear hiking boots.

To sign up, please complete the attached application and mail it to the address indicated on the form, or email your information to wifinfo@gmail.com. To learn more about Project Learning Tree go to www.plt.org.

When: 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. January 6, 2012

Where: Visitor parking at Tuskegee National Forest, Tuskegee, Ala.

Cost: Free

Questions: Joe Smith
555 Alabama Street
Tuskegee, AL 36104
(334) 555-1212
wifinfo@gmail.com





Example #3:
WALK IN THE FOREST FOR
LOCAL LEADERS

This example supplements the Planning a Walk in the Forest guidelines on page 8.

Benefits for Local Leaders’ Walk in the Forest

- > Educate your elected officials and local opinion leaders about forests and forest management.
- > Help policymakers understand the important role forests play in the community, providing clean air, clean water, and jobs.
- > Demonstrate the commitment in time and resources it takes to responsibly manage forests.
- > Become a resource for an elected official and their staff for information about forestry in your state or local area.

BEFORE THE WALK

Establish Your Objectives

- Do you want to explain a local forestry-related issue?
- Teach elected officials about forestry or foresters in their district?
- Sway opinion on a particular bill or proposed piece of legislation?
- Increase awareness of the forestry profession?
- For assistance with this type of program consider contacting your state forestry association, or the governmental affairs directors with SAF and AFF.

Decide Where You Will Hold the Walk and What You Will Cover

- Consider addressing a current “hot” issue.
- Attract attendance by inviting a well-known resident such as a landowner or executive of a forest products company to be a walk speaker.
- Look for an opportunity to combine your walk with a local mill tour.
- If appropriate, invite media to the event and be sure to let them know which legislators or other VIPs have confirmed they will attend, and who the speakers are.

Invite Elected Officials, Opinion Leaders

- Contact up to six weeks in advance.
- Welcome participation from elected official’s staff members as well.
- Send personal invitations with background information on forestry, what will be seen on the walk, and who the speakers are; request RSVP.
- Follow-up with a phone call, to confirm receipt of the invitation and answer any questions.
- Invite the elected official to deliver remarks at the event and work the legislator's staff to provide talking points.
- A few days before the event, confirm attendance and agenda.

Where?

What?

Who?

Develop List of Media to Invite

- Check with the legislators or other VIPs to determine if media presence is desired.
- Consider inviting:
 - TV, radio, newspaper, and magazine reporters
 - environmental/forestry reporters, outdoor freelance reporters
 - nature/science reporters
 - business/economic reporters
 - feature/local news reporter
 - newsletter editors of local outdoor groups, community associations, etc.
 - bloggers
- Send a press release or media advisory one week before the event, and be sure to follow up with another email or phone call two days before the event.
- Prepare press kits. Include a press release, with approved quotes from a legislator or other VIP, and other background information such as forest fact sheets, and SAF and AFF briefings on forest issues.
- For assistance, contact the communications staff of your state forestry association, SAF or AFF.

DAY OF THE WALK

Introduction

- Welcome guests as they arrive. Have guests sign in with emergency contact information.
- Distribute nametags.
- Explain what type of forest you are in and why.
- Distribute materials such as SAF and AFF program brochures, SAF and AFF briefings on forest issues, forest fact sheets.
- Introduce all speakers.
- Review the walk agenda and answer preliminary questions.

Proceed with Walk

- Allow time for questions, discussion, and photographs.

Conclusion

- Question and answer session.
- Distribute and collect evaluation forms.

AFTER THE WALK

Send Thank You to All Participants and Volunteers

- Offer SAF and AFF as a source of information.
- Provide any pertinent follow-up materials from the walk.

Monitor Press Coverage

- Send copies of articles, photos, or a description of radio and TV broadcasts, etc., to the SAF and AFF communications staff.

Hello!

Q & A

Thank you

Extras

PROMOTION

SHARE YOUR PLANS WITH SAF AND AFF!

Let us know what you plan to do by answering these project questions. This information will help us keep track of projects around the country, and enable us to help publicize your walk.

RETURN TO:

Society of American Foresters
5400 Grosvenor Lane
Bethesda, MD 20814
Fax: 301-897-3690
safweb@safnet.org

Vanessa Bullwinkle
Director of Communications
American Forest Foundation
1111 19th Street NW, Suite 780
Washington DC 20036
Phone: 202-463-2472
Fax: 202-463-2461
vbullwinkle@forestfoundation.org

Organizing unit and partners:

Contact name(s), email, and telephone number(s):

What type of walk are you planning:

Who is your walk audience:

Date of your walk:

Additional materials or assistance required:

Other comments:

Attach copies of plan outlines, materials and promotion/advertising

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Date]

Contact:

[Name, email address, and cell phone number]

Local Foresters Take Fourth Graders on a “Walk in the Forest”

Hands-on activities teach students the many benefits forest provide for people

[CITY, STATE]—The White Mountain Chapter of the Allegheny Society of American Foresters in partnership with Pennsylvania Project Learning Tree will take fourth graders and teachers from Newtown Elementary School on a Walk in the Forest on Friday, October 21 from 9 am-noon at Will and Edna Hamilton’s Tree Farm. SAF members will lead the children on a Walk in the Forest and teach them about forests and trees and how foresters work to keep the forests healthy and thriving. Teachers will receive an introduction to the award-winning Project Learning Tree curriculum while the children participate in several hands-on PLT activities.

The Walk in the Forest program is part of a national campaign coordinated by the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and the American Forest Foundation (AFF), including AFF’s national environmental education program Project Learning Tree® (PLT), a network of 500,000 trained educators using PLT materials with 75 million students, and the American Tree Farm System®, a network of more than 95,000 woodland owners sustainably managing 26 million acres of forest land. SAF members, PLT participants, and Tree Farmers across the country will take school children, media, lawmakers, neighbors, and others on a Walk in the Forest on October 21.

Through the Walk in the Forest program, children and teachers will learn about forests and their importance to people, our health, the environment, and the economy. The walk will get children outside and active, learning about and developing an appreciation for nature.

About the Society of American Foresters

The Society of American Foresters is the scientific and educational association representing nearly 17,000 professional foresters and natural resource professionals in the United States. The society’s primary objective is to advance the science, technology, education, and practice of professional forestry for the benefit of all society. The White Mountain chapter has about 120 members. The majority of members are employed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, Bureau of Forestry; others work for the forestry industry or are professors or researchers at Pennsylvania State University. www.safnet.org

About the American Forest Foundation

The American Forest Foundation (AFF) works to keep forests healthy and our children well-prepared for the future. AFF’s sustainable woodland system, the American Tree Farm System®, helps family forest owners manage more than 26 million acres of forest land. AFF’s Project Learning Tree® program works with tens of thousands of teachers each year, giving them a peer-reviewed, award-winning environmental education curriculum that opens a door to America’s outdoor heritage and has reached more than 75 million students. AFF works with international, national, state, and local partners. In [state], PLT is sponsored by [name of organization(s)]. www.forestfoundation.org.

Note to editors: You are invited to cover this event. We expect very interesting comments and photo opportunities from the children.

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Revise the example below, or develop your own. Visit the media outlet's website and follow instructions for submitting a letter to the editor. Typically letters to the editor should not be more than 150 words.

October 22, 2011

Sue Jones (get name if possible)
Editor, *Daily News*
220 Jones Bridge Road
Simpson, PA 17806

Dear Ms. Jones:

As a member of the White Mountain Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, in partnership with Pennsylvania Project Learning Tree, I had the pleasure yesterday of taking fourth grade students and teachers from Newtown Elementary School to Will and Edna Hamilton's Tree Farm for a Walk in the Forest. It was a joy to see the children get excited when they saw a woodpecker pecking a tree, or when they explored under a log.

Some of these students and teachers had never been in the woods before, so this was not only a wonderful learning opportunity, but also a personally enriching experience for the children. American children ages 3-12 are spending 27 percent of their time with electronic media, and only 1 percent outdoors. If we wish for today's youth to become tomorrow's stewards, we must engage them with the outside world. On the Walk in the Forest, children learned about forests and their importance to people and the environment, while their teachers learned some new ways of incorporating nature into the classroom.

The Walk in the Forest program is part of a national campaign coordinated by the Society of American Foresters and the American Forest Foundation (AFF), including AFF's national environmental education program Project Learning Tree®, and the American Tree Farm System®, a network of more than 88,000 woodland owners sustainably managing nearly 26 million acres of forest land.

Sincerely,
Susan Green
Chair, White Mountain SAF Chapter

IDEAS FOR USING WALK IN THE FOREST LOGOS

The Walk in the Forest digital logo can be used in many ways. Use the suggestions outlined below or let your imagination run wild and promote the Walk in the Forest program.

For SAF logo:
Louise Murgia
Society of American Foresters
Director of Field Services
Phone: 202-463-2472

For AFF, PLT, or Tree Farm logos:
contact John Otte at
jotte@forestfoundation.org.



- ✓ Use the logo on letters, invitations, brochures, and flyers.
- ✓ Use the logo on small, inexpensive items to give away to children who participate in your walk. Examples: stickers, rulers, erasers, folders, etc.
- ✓ Print t-shirts or hats with the logo for walk volunteers to wear to identify themselves. For T-shirts, place partner organizations' logos, including the SAF, PLT, and Tree Farm logos as appropriate, on the back.
- ✓ Make a large walk banner to hang at your walk site, and include organizational logos as appropriate.

Come Explore With Us!
Saturday April 23

Sign up with Ms Brown, Rm 102



WALK IN THE FOREST EVALUATION

Thank you for joining us on our Walk in the Forest today. We hope you enjoyed the experience. To help us evaluate the success of our walk, please answer the following questions. A walk leader will collect this before you leave.

1. Were the goals of the Walk in the Forest clear to you?

2. Did the Walk in the Forest meet the stated goals?

3. Did the topics help meet the stated goals? Any topics omitted?

TOPICS	Not Appropriate			Appropriate	
A. _____	1	2	3	4	5
B. _____	1	2	3	4	5
C. _____	1	2	3	4	5
D. _____	1	2	3	4	5

4. Did the speakers cover their topics in an interesting and informative way?

SPEAKERS	Needs Improvement			Excellent	
A. _____	1	2	3	4	5
B. _____	1	2	3	4	5
C. _____	1	2	3	4	5
D. _____	1	2	3	4	5

5. Was the venue appropriate for meeting the goals?

6. How have your impressions of forests and foresters changed?

7. Please note any questions that were left unanswered.

8. Please share any recommendations for ways to improve the walk.

Thank you!

Name and address (optional):

RESOURCES

Web Sites

Connecting Kids to Nature activities www.forestfoundation.org/family-activities

Project Learning Tree Coordinators www.plt.org

Tree Farm Committees www.treefarmssystem.org

Society of American Foresters State Societies and Chapters www.safnet.org

Books

For Adults:

Last Child in the Woods by Richard Louv

Sharing Nature with Children, Parents/Teachers/Nature Awareness Guidebook by Joseph B. Cornell

For Children:

Dawn Publications

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

The Man Who Planted Trees by Jean Giono

Insurance

SAF Finance and Administration Department

301-897-8720, ext. 103

American Forest Foundation

Phone: 301-897-8720

Promotion

Society of American Foresters

5400 Grosvenor Lane

Bethesda, MD 20814

Fax: 301-897-3690

safweb@safnet.org

Vanessa Bullwinkle

Director of Communications

American Forest Foundation

1111 19th Street NW, Suite 780

Washington DC 20036

Phone: 202-463-2472

Fax: 202-463-2461

vbullwinkle@forestfoundation.org

Logos

For AFF, PLT, or Tree Farm logos:

John Otte at jotte@forestfoundation.org

For SAF logos:

Louise Murgia,

Director of Field Services

Society of American Foresters

Phone: 202-463-2472