

NEWS RELEASE
For immediate release
921 words

Movement grows to renew giant trees in the Northwest

University Place, WA -

Folks in the Pacific Northwest are catching tree fever, and it's contagious.

People in Washington and beyond are joining a movement to plant giant trees, redwoods and sequoias, in our region in order to let the trees do what they do best: sequester carbon and renew the health of our environment.

The movement to plant giant trees is being catalyzed by emerging Washington nonprofit, PropagationNation.

In 2016, Philip Stielstra became inspired by the power of these trees to renew land, water, and air quality, so he delivered 350 coast redwoods to thirty Puget Sound communities. In 2019, he gathered two of his long-time friends and founded PropagationNation in order to make a greater impact. Today, their simple idea—to plant redwoods and sequoias in the Pacific Northwest—has become an intergenerational movement to renew the environment.

Now they are getting a lot of attention and scaling their mission to an ambitious goal: plant one million giant trees on private and public lands all over Washington.

“Imagine turning the map of Washington ‘redwood,’” Stielstra explains.

Local Luanne Brown, a writer, became aware of PropagationNation two or three years ago when she was doing research for a book.

“I was writing a fantasy set against the backdrop of climate change,” Brown explains. “So I wanted to have sequoia trees in it, but I wasn’t sure if it was possible to grow them in the Pacific Northwest.”

Brown was excited to learn about PropagationNation. Brown and Stielstra started having conversations about trees.

“They are just really doing a great job of boots-on-the-ground work and really making it possible to realize the dream of the organization,” Brown says.

As PropagationNation gains momentum, a unique aspect has emerged: this movement is about generations.

Brown calls the work of PropagationNation “future-casting.”

“We need hope these days, and I felt hopeful knowing that my grandchildren would have trees,” Brown says.

Team lead and GIS analyst Caroline Slagle observes the generational impacts of PropagationNation because these are trees that can live up to 1500 years or longer.

“These are trees that live for hundreds of years. It is inherently forward thinking to think centuries into the future and to leave behind a legacy that will last for many lifetimes. They are passing the torch to a new generation,” Slagle says.

Slagle’s work involves not only the logistical impacts of planting ancient trees but also the historical aspects.

“There’s forward thinking and there is historical thinking,” she points out. “We are planting clones of some of the oldest and largest redwoods in California. They are threatened due to rising temperatures within their limited range currently. We can help move these elders to a new home where they can continue to provide for the coming generations. We are *also* looking backward to previous climates in the Pacific Northwest where redwoods have grown well in this region.”

Slagle sees the layered impacts of the work of PropagationNation.

“It is expansive in both directions,” she says. “A lot of elders have organized this nonprofit, hiring young people in their twenties and thirties, so they are building a framework with the resources that they have in their retirement, using their decades of life and work and passing it on to us who will experience the impacts of climate change.”

One of the ways Olympian Bob Barnes partners with PropagationNation is to find public and private lands where people want to reforest. Barnes thinks generationally too.

“My philosophy is that we’re the keepers of the seven generations,” he says. “We need to think long-term about what’s happening for multiple lifetimes. The decisions we’re making need to last for a generation or longer.”

Barnes has been planting trees with elementary through high school students for over thirty years, including many youth-oriented volunteer projects in the Tacoma and Olympia areas. The

students, who are involved in planting projects in their own community, and sometimes at their own school, see first-hand how quickly trees in the right conditions can flourish in only one year.

PropagationNation provided the trees to restore a clear-cut logging site, just blocks away from one of the schools that Barnes works with.

“They got to see the horror of a clear cut and the beauty of restoration right there on their campus,” Barnes says.

Like many other community leaders, Barnes sees the work of PropagationNation as the right thing to do.

“We need to step up our efforts. There are not enough stewards, and we need to show youth the way. One of the ways is with PropagationNation and providing trees. Providing a resource that is valuable, meaningful, and impactful, and one that will last for literally centuries. This legacy is exciting. It’s the right thing to do,” he says.

For Barnes, planting a tree is not just planting a tree. It is future-casting.

He explains, “That’s my calling: helping the planet for my grandchildren, and their children, to thrive. And hopefully, nature will thrive as well.”

One of the young people the founders brought on board is Communications Specialist Liv Haltermon. To them, the work of PropagationNation is simple.

“I just want to love on the earth,” they say.

More stories of people and trees are featured on the [PropagationNation blog](#).

To further their ambitious goal of planting one million giant trees, PropagationNation is seeking donations, grant funding, volunteers, private landowners, community partners, and anyone who would like to learn how to plant and care for redwoods and sequoias.

For more information, contact Stielstra and staff at info@propagationnation.us and visit www.propagationnation.us.

#