

Gov. Evers: Celebrates Arbor Day, announces Wisconsin has planted more than 9.3 million trees since signing trillion tree pledge

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MENASHA — Gov. Tony Evers today, in celebration of Arbor Day and Forest Appreciation Week, announced more than 9.3 million trees have been planted in Wisconsin since the governor committed to the [Trillion Tree Pledge](#) just one year ago.

In 2021, Gov. Evers signed [Executive Order #112](#), pledging to plant 75 million new trees in rural and urban areas and conserve 125,000 acres of forest in Wisconsin by 2030 in collaboration with public, private, and non-governmental partners. When fully realized, Wisconsin's tree pledge will result in nearly 29 million metric tons of carbon dioxide stored over the next 50 years.

"Planting and conserving trees and forests is a simple and powerful tool for storing carbon and tackling climate change, and I'm excited about the progress we've made on Wisconsin's pledge to plant 75 million trees by 2030," said Gov. Evers. "Wisconsin's pledge builds on the good work being done by the forestry community to help safeguard water resources, provide wildlife habitat, and support rural economies by sustainably managing Wisconsin's 17 million acres of vast and valuable forests. This announcement also gets us closer to reaching our goals of a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient environment that will support the sustainable future Wisconsinites are ready for." Today, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided an [annual report](#) which details the progress made on the governor's pledge. According to the report, of the 9.3 million trees planted in 2021, the DNR supplied more than half of the seedlings, including 2.7 million that were planted on private lands, 1.1 million that were planted on DNR lands, more than 500,000 that were planted in county forests, more than 42,000 that were planted in school forests, and over 45,000 that were given to elementary school students last Arbor Day. In addition, the DNR distributed 31.4 million seeds, which will likely grow into approximately 3.5 million future trees.

In addition to planting trees and distributing seeds, the DNR acquired conservation easements on nearly 12,500 acres in Oneida County, while its partners conserved an additional 1,600 acres elsewhere, preventing the conversion of working forestland to other land uses.

"The goal is to use trees and forests as a critical nature-based solution to climate change," said DNR Secretary Preston Cole. "When fully realized, the Governor's pledge is estimated to store nearly 29 million metric tons of carbon dioxide over the next 50 years in our forests and trees. That's about the same amount of carbon dioxide produced by 6 million cars in a year. DNR staff are producing seedlings in concert with private nurseries, not only meeting the needs of the growing public, but doing so in a manner in which we are fostering genetic diversity and looking for species that will thrive in our warming climate."

The DNR is coordinating the implementation of the pledge on behalf of the state of Wisconsin. The DNR's forestry program began in 1904 with the hiring of Wisconsin's first chief state forester, and the program is committed to working with partners to manage Wisconsin forests to provide ecological, economic, social, and cultural benefits for Wisconsin residents today and in the future.

This announcement comes as the governor last week celebrated Earth Day by [signing](#) Executive Order #161 creating the Office of Environmental Justice, which will work to facilitate collaboration across state agencies to provide strategies to promote environmentally just policies and prevent disparate outcomes in communities across the state. Earlier in the week, the governor also [announced](#) the state's first-ever Clean Energy Plan, which identifies paths and strategies that aim to lower energy bills and prices at the pump for Wisconsin families, promote energy independence by reducing reliance on out-of-state energy sources, create an estimated more than 40,000 jobs by 2030, and invest in job training and apprenticeship programs in innovative industries and technologies.

For additional information about the Trillion Tree Pledge and the DNR's Trillion Tree Pledge 2021 Annual Report, visit the DNR's website [here](#).

The governor's 2022 Arbor Day and Forest Appreciation Week proclamation is available [here](#).



An online version of this release is available [here](#).