

Seedling news



Cudahy tree care

Roots are Just the Beginning

A Note from Cassie

Planting a tree is a hopeful and visible act—but the quieter work that follows is just as important. Long after planting days end, TreePeople teams continue showing up to care for young trees and landscapes across Southern California so they can survive, grow, and provide benefits for generations to come.

Thank you for being part of this work with us. What we grow together truly thrives through care.

– The Fielding Family CEO, TreePeople

There is a unique magic in planting season—neighbors, students, volunteers, and supporters coming together to root for a greener future. And once each seedling is tucked into the soil, another important chapter begins.

At TreePeople, planting is never the endpoint. It is a promise.

As the Southern California summer arrives, our work shifts into a season of care and protection. Across urban neighborhoods, mountain forests, schools, and wildfire recovery sites, our teams spend the warmer months watering young trees, restoring soil health, clearing invasive vegetation, and ensuring new plantings survive their first “big heat.”

Because healthy trees—and healthy landscapes—only thrive with care.

Our Focus Shifts from Planting to Tree Care



Planting Season

- Preparing sites and restoring soil
- Selecting native and climate-appropriate species
- Planting young trees and native plants



Establishment Care

- Deep watering to help roots survive the heat
- Mulching to retain moisture and protect soil
- Monitoring tree health and early growth

Adding mulch improves soil health over time while helping keep roots cooler during extreme heat.



Lora Hall
Community Forestry Senior Program Manager

Voices from the Field

From a Planting Sprint to the Maintenance Marathon

In our mountain forests and canyon restoration sites, planting season moves fast.

“Planting season feels like a race you’ve been preparing months for,” says Santos Amaya, Mountain Forestry Program Manager. “You hit the ground running because the planting windows are short.”

But as the summer heat sets in, the work becomes what Wildland Restoration Technician Daniel Moran calls the “maintenance marathon.”

The focus shifts from expansion to protection—ensuring every young tree has the water, space, and care it needs to survive through the hottest months of the year.



Castaic tree care


That work also plays an important role in wildfire resilience.

By clearing invasive grasses and overgrowth that can act as “ladder fuels,” TreePeople crews help reduce wildfire risk while protecting young native ecosystems from being overwhelmed.

“It’s about leaving a living legacy that will outlast our own careers,” Santos shares.

For Ian Smith, Mountain Forestry Program Manager, the connection becomes deeply personal over time:

The more time you spend on a site, it’s like watching someone close to you grow up.



Ian Smith
Mountain Forestry Program Manager



San Francisquito Canyon before (2021) and after (2024)





San Fernando tree care

Nurturing the Canopy Where We Live and Work

Urban trees face a very different set of challenges.

“It can be a hard life for a city tree,” explains Lora Hall. “Urban soils are compacted, temperatures are higher, and trees experience constant stress from the built environment.”

That’s why TreePeople returns to newly planted trees again and again during their earliest years—watering, renewing mulch, monitoring growth, and helping trees establish strong roots.

Without that care, many urban trees simply would not survive.

Due to our long-term commitment to establishment care, TreePeople excels beyond the industry’s standard 10% survival rate—creating a space that brings shade, biodiversity, and climate resilience to the local communities.

“Our programs often include a three-year establishment period,” says Francisco Vargas, Community Forestry Manager, “allowing us to provide consistent care during the most critical phase of a tree’s life.”

Behind every planting is a tremendous amount of expertise and coordination—from site assessments and community outreach to ongoing monitoring and maintenance.

But for our staff, the work is ultimately about people as much as trees.

“I love witnessing the life that begins to gather around a newly planted tree,” says Alyza Morales, Community Forestry Coordinator. “Birds, pollinators, and community members all begin interacting with the space in new ways.”

Community Forestry Coordinator Edgar Velazquez recalls one resident who requested trees for her Canoga Park street so her son, who experiences autism, could interact with more nature on their daily walks.

“It was a touching reminder of the lifelong impact trees can have on both individuals and communities,” Edgar shares.

And often, volunteers return months or years later to visit the trees they planted themselves.

For Ojani Casillas, Community Forestry Associate, that connection matters deeply:

You feel responsible for the trees and the community to deliver on the promises we’ve made.



Ojani Casillas
Community Forestry Associate



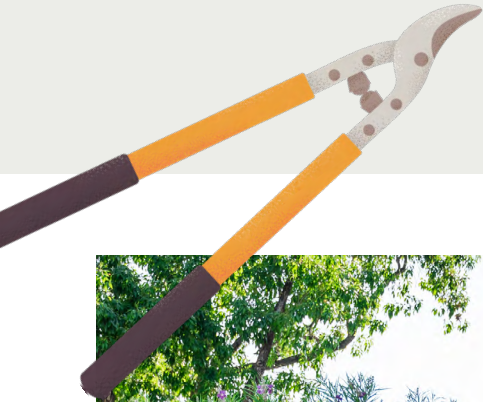
Rudy Ortega Sr. Park Arbor Day tree care



Join Tree Care Summer!

This summer, thousands of young trees across Southern California—from wildfire recovery sites like Tuna Canyon to neighborhoods, schools, and mountain forests throughout the region—will depend on community care to survive and grow.

Our staff teams have laid the groundwork. Now we invite our community to help these landscapes thrive.



San Fernando tree care

Ways to Get Involved

Volunteer With Us

Help water, mulch, weed, and care for young trees across Southern California this summer.

[Sign up to volunteer: treepeople.org/volunteer](https://treepeople.org/volunteer)

Teams for Trees

Bring your workplace together for a hands-on day of community care.

[Book a Teams for Trees: treepeople.org/teams-for-trees](https://treepeople.org/teams-for-trees)

Become a Member of The Canopy

Your support funds the watering crews, tools, expertise, and long-term engagement and care needed to help young trees grow into lasting canopy for generations to come.

Because planting a tree is only the beginning.

What we grow together thrives through care.

[Donate today: treepeople.org/donate](https://treepeople.org/donate)

