



Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor
Erin Taylor, Acting Cabinet Secretary
Benjamin Shelton, Deputy Cabinet Secretary
Laura McCarthy, State Forester

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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March is Arbor Month in New Mexico

Urban tree-planting efforts branch southward to T or C, Silver City

SANTA FE – Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has [proclaimed](#) March 2026 as Arbor Month and the second Friday – this year, March 13 – as Arbor Day, occasions that highlight the vital role trees play in our lives.

The New Mexico [Forestry Division](#) is celebrating Arbor Month 2026 by spotlighting its partner [Tree New Mexico](#), which builds and cares for urban forests, focusing on heat-burdened neighborhoods.

Since 2017, Tree New Mexico has planted more than 10,000 trees around Albuquerque. These efforts, supported by Forestry Division project foresters and local volunteers, have invigorated existing green spaces and introduced new ones to urban areas.

“Every year, our work grows more urgent as the Southwest becomes hotter,” said **Beth Forman, Tree New Mexico’s statewide program director**. “Each tree we plant brings more shade, which helps successive trees have higher likelihood of success, helping both generations of urban forests and generations of New Mexicans lead healthy lives.”

Tree New Mexico recently [expanded its reach](#) to Silver City and Truth or Consequences, planting more than 1,000 trees in less than two years and restoring urban forests in southern New Mexico towns where tree canopy is as low as 3%. Another program in [Las Cruces](#) plans to plant more than 2,100 trees before 2030.

Greening urban landscapes has many benefits. Urban trees reduce air and noise pollution, improve mental and physical health and prevent soil erosion. Shade from trees can also save energy and boost a community’s economy by drawing more visitors to businesses. The presence of trees themselves in urban areas has been [shown](#) to lower risk of [property and violent crimes](#).

“We’re excited to expand this program’s reach to our neighbors in southern New Mexico,” said **Kristen Sanders, Las Vegas project urban and community forester.** “Planting trees is one of the oldest methods we have for conserving landscapes and helping communities thrive. Expanding these efforts statewide is a critical step in building resilience to heat waves, drought and intense storms across New Mexico.”

Tree plantings are joint projects with the Forestry Division’s [Urban and Community Forestry Program](#), which helps communities develop and sustain healthy urban forests.

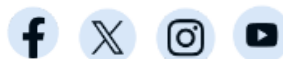
The Governor’s Arbor Month proclamation is available online [here](#).



Forestry Division and Tree New Mexico partner for a tree planting in Socorro. Photo by the Forestry Division.



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