



# OREGON

## Oregon Department of Forestry

Sometimes, there is a sacred or memorial aspect to trees that can contribute to community health, especially during a worldwide pandemic. To mark the 75th anniversary of the close of World War II, people in 30 communities around Oregon planted approximately 45 special Peace Trees in 2019 and 2020. The young trees were grown from the seeds of trees that miraculously survived the atom bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Today, Oregon has one of the largest collections of Hiroshima Peace Trees of any state or nation outside Japan.

In addition to the environmental benefits tree canopy provides in cities, trees also play an important role in bringing a community together to reflect on the more meaningful aspects of life.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the close of World War II, and the bombing of Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, 30 Oregon communities have planted special Peace Trees across the state. The seedling ginkgo and Asian persimmon trees were grown from seed collected from trees that survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima (called “Hibakujumoku” in Japanese).

One of those deeply touched by the war is Hideko Tamura-Snider. As a 10-year-old, she lost her mother in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Tamura-Snider is a founder of the One Sunny Day Initiative (OSDI), based in Medford, Oregon, where she now lives. Tamura-Snider secured from Green

Legacy Hiroshima seeds the group had collected from trees that had survived the atom bomb.

In the spring of 2017, Tamura-Snider gave the seeds to Oregon Community Trees (OCT) board member Michael Oxendine in Ashland to germinate. Oxendine successfully sprouted the seeds but with no facilities to care for the seedlings, he appealed to OCT and the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) Urban and Community Forestry Assistance program to find homes for them.

ODF arranged for the seedling trees to be cared for by Corvallis Parks and Recreation staff under the watchful eye of the department’s Jennifer Killian. ODF then offered the seedlings to the public at no cost, with priority given to Trees Cities USA and Tree Campuses USA in Oregon. The interest in these trees

has been affirming. This spring, despite the pandemic restrictions, most of the seedlings have been planted in parks, arboretums, and schools in 30 cities and towns across 16 Oregon counties, from the coast to northeast Oregon and from the Columbia Gorge to near the California border. Most communities will be waiting until the pandemic abates to hold the commemorative ceremonies these trees have inspired.

#### Resources:

- <https://www.oregon.gov/odf/ForestBenefits/Pages/Hiroshima-peace-trees.aspx>
- <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/0825d4cb4d804adfaf426efac9246c4>



**1.** Hideko Tamura-Snider with Oregon Community Trees board member, Mike Oxendine (left), and ODF’s Jim Gersbach (right). Photo Credit: Southern Oregon University landscape staff. **2.** Hiroshima peace tree planting La Grande planting day May 2, 2020. Photo Credit: Teresa Gustafson, La Grande City Forester.