

NEWS RELEASE

Pacific Northwest Region - Willamette NF

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Oregon to Provide the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree in 2018

– The 2018 Capitol Christmas Tree—also known as the People’s Tree—will come from the Willamette National Forest –

Sweet Home, Ore., January 19, 2018 – The Willamette National Forest announced today that Oregon has been selected to provide the 2018 United States Capitol Christmas Tree. A gift from the Willamette National Forest and the State of Oregon to the people of the United States, the tree will be displayed on the West Lawn of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C., with a public tree-lighting ceremony in early December 2018.

Every year since 1970, the U.S. Forest Service has provided the Capitol Christmas Tree. This year, the Capitol Christmas Tree will be cut from the Sweet Home Ranger District. Seventy smaller companion trees will also be sent to Washington, D.C., to decorate government buildings and public spaces this December. Additionally, Oregonians will contribute 10,000 handmade ornaments, to be created throughout 2018. These ornaments will celebrate the state’s cultural history and people, landscapes, natural resources, and fish and wildlife.

The theme for the 2018 Capitol Christmas Tree is “Find Your Trail!” in recognition of two 2018 anniversaries: the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act, and the 175th commemoration of the Oregon Trail.

“We are thrilled to be delivering the 2018 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree, and we invite all Oregonians to be a part of this special experience throughout 2018—from making an ornament to exploring the Willamette National Forest with family and friends—in search of the perfect tree to send to Washington, D.C.,” said Nikki Swanson, Sweet Home District Ranger, Willamette National Forest.

“There is a rich history of Oregon’s forests providing for the needs of Oregonians. The Willamette National Forest provides recreational opportunities, fishing, hunting, mushroom harvesting, firewood, minerals, wood products and, of course, Christmas trees. We hope this yearlong Capitol Christmas Tree event inspires people to explore the National Forests across Oregon, and to ‘Find Your Trail,’” she continued.

The last time Oregon was chosen to provide the Capitol Christmas Tree was in 2002, when a tree was selected from the Umpqua National Forest.

“We are very honored to have been chosen to provide the 2018 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree, and to share some of our state’s incredible beauty with the rest of America,” said Oregon Governor Kate Brown. “Majestic, towering conifers have long stood as an icon of Oregon’s

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magnificent forests. This tree will symbolize our rich natural resources, our deep Native American heritage, and the people of Oregon, who are known for their independent spirit, innovation and love for our state's diverse landscapes."

The U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree's Journey to Washington, D.C.

In November 2018, a modern-day wagon train carrying the Christmas tree and ornaments will begin its eastward journey from Sweet Home, following the path of the Oregon Trail in reverse. The wagon train will make stops in a variety of communities across Oregon and the country before arriving in Washington, D.C. The travel route, schedule and special events will be available at www.capitolchristmastree.com.

The Willamette National Forest has partnered with [Choose Outdoors](#) and [Travel Oregon](#) for the Capitol Christmas Tree project, and a host of partners, sponsors, and volunteers will contribute funding and thousands of hours to help make ornaments and transport the tree from Oregon to Washington, D.C.

Opportunities for Public Participation Throughout 2018

Oregonians and Oregon visitors are invited to participate in U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree activities around the state during 2018, including helping to find the perfect tree to go to Washington, D.C.

- **Find the tree!** The public is invited to hike and drive the Willamette National Forest—outside of the City of Sweet Home—to look for the perfect Capitol Christmas Tree. To submit a potential candidate tree, GPS the location, snap a photo, and send the submission to capitolchristmastree2018@gmail.com, or drop your information off at the Sweet Home Ranger District Office. **Guidelines:** The perfect tree is 65 to 85 feet in height with a conical shape that is visually pleasing from all angles. The tree must reside on U.S. Forest Service land in the Sweet Home Ranger District, preferably close to a road that will allow for access for a semi-truck and cranes to harvest the tree. **Submission deadline:** May 2018. Don't forget to share your adventures on social media (Facebook and Twitter) with the #USCapitolChristmasTree, #FindYourTrail and #ItsAllYours hashtags.
- **Join an ornament-making event or host your own.** Ten thousand handmade ornaments will adorn the Capitol Christmas Tree and the 70 smaller companion trees. There will be ornament-making events throughout Oregon in 2018. The first event will take place on January 20 at the Boys & Girls Club in Sweet Home (1 p.m.; 890 18th Ave.). The Willamette National Forest also invites schools, churches and community groups to contribute ornaments. There will be templates and instructions posted on the website and social media. For a schedule of events and further details, visit www.capitolchristmastree.com.
- **See the Capitol Christmas Tree as it travels along the Oregon Trail in November 2018.** The travel route, schedule and special events will be available at www.capitolchristmastree.com.

For more information: Capitol Christmas Tree website, www.capitolchristmastree.com



To get involved: Capitol Christmas Tree email, capitolchristmastree2018@gmail.com

Willamette National Forest Unveils Symbol Representative of Oregon for the 2018 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree



Oregon's Willamette National Forest was selected to choose and supply the People's Tree for 2018 for the grounds of the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The Willamette National Forest, together with Travel Oregon, has designed a logo that captures the beauty of the State of Oregon and the Willamette National Forest, with its snowcapped mountain, fields of green and lush forests. The trail leading to the tree symbolizes the adventurous spirit of Oregonians since early settlers first traversed the Oregon Trail. The logo encourages modern-day adventurers to #FindYourTrail in the Willamette National Forest.

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Capitol Christmas Tree on the Capitol Mall, December 2017. This tree was provided by the Kootenai National Forest in Montana.

