

IDOT celebrates Earth Day by distributing trees to schools

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SPRINGFIELD — In observance of Earth Day, the Illinois Department of Transportation distributed almost 5,000 oak seedlings to schools throughout the state in cooperation with Living Lands & Waters. The trees were provided free of charge to IDOT as part of Living Lands & Waters Million Trees Project.

The “Trees to Schools” initiative helps offset the loss of trees that are removed or otherwise affected by IDOT’s construction and maintenance activities. It is IDOT policy that for every tree or plant removed for construction, another must be planted in its place when feasible.

Each of the nine IDOT highway districts received 550 trees to distribute to local schools, many of which use as an opportunity to teach students about the importance of trees to the environment.

One tree can produce as much oxygen in a single season as 10 humans consume in one year. Besides producing oxygen, trees absorb carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide, and reduce erosion. Trees also filter chemicals and produce shade to lower temperatures.

Since 2009, IDOT has distributed approximately 45,000 oak seedlings through Living Lands & Waters, a nonprofit environmental organization headquartered in East Moline.