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MEDIA RELEASE: Fort Moore plants trees, knowledge

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FORT MOORE, Ga. – Over 500 trees are being planted across Fort Moore, replacing ones that have reached the end of their life expectancy or been removed for safety reasons. Fort Moore's Directorate of Public Works Environmental Division received the initial 200 trees at the end of January and project managers focused the team's initial planting efforts on main post's historic district where the first tree was planted on Vibbert Avenue Jan. 29.

"We've been able to enjoy the beauty and environmental benefits of the trees originally planted," said Brent Widener, DPW Environmental Management Division chief. "Now it's time to replace those trees with new ones, knowing someone else will enjoy their shade too."

Eight species of trees are being planted on main post - white oak, elm, yellow poplar, American hornbeam, "little bull", autumn brilliance, witch hazel, and Nellie Stevens holly – and all are sourced from local nurseries and native to Georgia. The trees were selected based on height, canopy spread, form/shape, growth rate, soil/sun/shade requirements, and fruiting characteristics.

Prior to government acquisition, main post was primarily treeless as the land was used for agricultural purposes. The Army began its environmental planning efforts in 1918 to enhance

the beauty of this land. Their plan included establishing a curved layout for public buildings, the placement of cuartels, family residences, and a regal arrangement of core buildings like the old post headquarters, now the Soldier Services Building, and the Infantry Chapel.

“Initially, the project included just bushes and shrubberies as part of creating the grand look,” said Edward Howard, DPW historic preservation specialist.

“The public buildings were first, then the housing areas. Nurseries in glass greenhouses were built on post to grow the bushes and shrubs, eventually adding trees, to create an allée effect,” Howard said of the shady tree lined roads Fort Moore enjoys today.

“Those trees were likely planted beginning in 1930,” Howard said.

Present-day efforts are in keeping with the original plan for the historic landscapes, while also being mindful to plant where the trees won’t create safety concerns like lifting sidewalks or encroaching underground infrastructure.

“A lot of trees were planted where they didn’t need to be, we’re mindful of that when choosing where to plant,” said Widener. “Some trees are replacing ones that have been removed, like on York Field. We’re also putting them in new areas, especially where there is foot traffic like along trails and sidewalks.”

Tree Planting and Promise

To share in the success of the program, community partners Trees Columbus and the Fort Moore Girl Scouts gathered on Blue Field, across from Zuckerman Park, March 8, to learn from

each other. Kirk Ticknor, DPW director, introduced the scouts to Dorothy McDaniels, Trees Columbus executive director, and shared that Trees Columbus has partnered with Fort Moore for over twenty years. McDaniels shared Trees Columbus' mission – to plant, preserve, and protect trees – with the scouts as well as her expertise in planting and caring for trees.

Fort Moore Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Sanchez and the Scouts surrounded one of the newly planted trees, promising to plant, protect, and advocate for every tree as part of the Girl Scout tree promise: "They fill our lungs with cleaner air; it's our responsibility to care. That's why I'll advocate for every tree. Because I need them, and they need me!"

Sanchez added, "This event truly embodies the 'this is your post' spirit, and you all get to be a part of it. This will always be your home."

For the link to the article online and accompanying pictures, visit:

https://www.army.mil/article/274577/fort_moore_plants_trees_knowledge or
<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/466340/fort-moore-plants-trees-knowledge>

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