



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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**WTC MEMORIAL FOUNDATION SELECTS NY CAPITAL REGION TREES  
TO BE PART OF WTC MEMORIAL  
18 Rensselaer County Oak Trees for Memorial Grove at WTC Site  
Memorial Will Hold Trees from New York, Pennsylvania, Washington DC Area  
Memorial Design Adds to Greening of New York City with Six Acres of Sustainable,  
Green Space to Lower Manhattan**

The World Trade Center Memorial Foundation today selected and began moving 18 oak trees from the New York Capital region so that they may become part of the Memorial honoring those who died in the attacks of September 11, 2001 and February 26, 1993. The Swamp White Oak trees come from El Hannon Nursery, Inc. in Petersburg, NY and will be moved by the tree transplanting company, Environmental Design, to a holding yard in New Jersey where they will be maintained until their installation at the WTC site. Trees are being selected from nurseries representing the following regions: New York, Pennsylvania, and the Washington, DC area in order to symbolize the areas impacted on 9/11.

“The selection and movement of these trees marks another step forward in realizing a lasting tribute at the World Trade Center site,” Chairman Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg said. “The Capital region trees will join the hundreds of other trees coming from areas in Pennsylvania and Washington, DC, in creating a sense of hope and renewal at the Memorial. Over the next couple years, the trees will be carefully nurtured until they are planted on the Memorial Plaza. Once the Memorial opens, the grove of trees will create new green space for visitors, residents, and workers to enjoy, while also providing a special place of remembrance.”

Memorial Foundation President & CEO Joe Daniels said, “The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> impacted people in every part of this country and that is why building a national Memorial is so important. The trees we are transporting from upstate New York today will serve as beautiful life-affirming symbols at the World Trade Center site. These trees will create a canopy over the millions of visitors expected to come to the site each year.”

Last fall the Foundation identified a total of 386 trees, including overstock for the Memorial. The selected trees were fertilized and pruned and are now being dug and transported to a 20-acre holding site at Halka Nurseries in New Jersey where they will be boxed. At the holding yard, the trees will be continuously monitored, irrigated, and fertilized, and are expected to grow to 25 feet by the time they are transported and installed on the Plaza.

The trees must be moved to a holding site within 50 miles of Lower Manhattan in order to acclimatize the trees in a climate that resembles the WTC site. The trees will grow accustomed to the micro-climate conditions of the area. During this holding time, weak trees will be culled from the group and the trees will be pruned, fertilized, watered, and protected against pests.

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Environmental Design, which is working with the Foundation on the tree transplanting, was founded in 1977 by Tom Cox and is a world premier large tree transplanting company. The company has led the drive to apply technology to tree transplanting, including designing and patenting the world's largest on-site hydraulic tree spade.

Environmental Design Owner and Founder Tom Cox said, "I consider this project the highlight of decades of work in this industry. As difficult as the logistics may be, everyone involved in the project, from the nurseries to the vendors, goes out of their way to work together. It's an honor to be a small part of building the World Trade Center Memorial."

El Hannon Nursery Owner Jim Sutton said, "El Hannon's trees have been a part of many large and high profile projects in our thirty years of operations, but having these oaks become a part of the World Trade Center Memorial is a true honor. We are proud that our New York trees will serve as a living tribute to all the New Yorkers and other individuals from across the country and around the world who lost their lives on 9/11."

Nearly 350 Swamp White Oak and Sweet Gum Trees will create a canopy of leaves over the Memorial Plaza which will provide a green rebirth in spring, welcome shade through the heat of the summer, and seasonal color in the fall. In the winter, the sun will shine through a light tracery of bare branches.

Memorial Landscape Architect Peter Walker said, "We took the utmost care in selecting healthy individual trees as the Memorial Grove will be a living component to the Memorial and will give life to the role of the Memorial within Lower Manhattan. Swamp White Oaks and Sweet Gums have been chosen for their health and durability, but more importantly, selected as graceful and hopeful symbols of life and longevity."

The surface of the Memorial Plaza is made of large pieces of granite and low plantings of grasses, mosses, and flowering ground covers. The design provides numerous benches for visitors to the Memorial as well as residents and workers of Lower Manhattan. A small clearing in the grove, the Memorial Glade, creates a space for remembrance ceremonies, which will be lined in circle of Sweet Gum trees which has leaves that begin to turn brilliant colors of red and gold around the time of the September 11<sup>th</sup> anniversary. By reminding the visitor of the natural cycle of life, the Memorial Plaza will convey a spirit of hope and renewal.

In September 2005, the first trees for the Memorial Plaza were tagged in Eastport, New York and paid for through a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture Living Memorials Project. In April 2007, 31 Sweet Gum trees from Maryland were dug and transferred to the holding facility. These trees were supplied by the Maryland State Highway Administration.

## **SWAMP WHITE OAK AND SWEET GUM TREES**

Memorial Landscape Architects Peter Walker and Partners chose to use Swamp White Oak and Sweet Gum trees at the Plaza because of the trees physical resemblance, durability, and color. The trees are similar in many regards, which allows for a uniform feel on the Memorial Plaza.

Both grow to some eighty feet in conditions similar to those on the Plaza. Each of the species has a strong, sturdy appearance and coarse-textured foliage, and they increasingly resemble each other as they age. Although young Sweet Gums have a distinctive conical form, at maturity they have the same cathedral branching as the Swamp White Oaks. Both have oval canopies that can be trimmed to create the flat plane demanded by the design. Both have bark with vertical furrows that catch the snow and attract a variety of mosses.

Swamp White Oaks and Sweet Gums are extremely hardy trees, used to growing in swamps as well as in relatively dry conditions. Swamp White Oaks are able to withstand urban conditions and are among the easiest trees to transplant. In 1998, the Swamp White Oak was named Urban Tree of the Year by the Society of Municipal Arborists.

One of the most important design aspects of the Swamp White Oaks and the Sweet Gums is their color. In the fall, the leaves of the Swamp White Oak change to colors ranging from amber to golden brown, and sometimes pink. By contrast, in the fall, Sweet Gums range from yellow to reddish orange, with shades of red, gold, pink, and purple. These colors will darken over the course of the season. Each fall, before the Sweet Gums are installed at Ground Zero but while they are growing in the boxed soil that will accompany them to the site, they will be photographed so that trees of compatible color can be used at the site. The trees will never be identical, neither to each other nor from year to year, a clear reminder that they are living individuals.

## **SUSTAINABLE DESIGN**

The Memorial Plaza will be one of the most sustainable, green plazas ever built. The Memorial project is pursuing the Gold certification under the LEED for New Construction (LEED-NC) program of the U.S Green Building Council and is designed to satisfy the requirements of New York State Executive Order 111 and the WTC Sustainable Design Guidelines.

The Plaza consists of a six-acre green roof on top of a 7-story below-grade building and train station. Unlike other green roofs, the Memorial has been designed to support more than 300 large indigenous trees. The irrigation, storm water harvesting and integrated pest management systems will ensure sustainable treatment of the site and conserve energy, water and material resources. This large urban forest will link to adjacent green spaces at Battery Park City, City Hall Park, the churchyards at Liberty Church and St. Paul's Chapel, Liberty Plaza, and the new Liberty Park just to the south of the Memorial, providing habitat and green space within Lower Manhattan.

## **ABOUT THE WORLD TRADE CENTER MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**

The World Trade Center Memorial Foundation, Inc. is the not-for-profit corporation founded in 2005 to realize the Memorial quadrant at the World Trade Center site. The Foundation will raise the funds, oversee the design, and operate the Memorial and Museum located on 8 of the 16 acres of the site.

The Memorial will remember and honor the thousands of people who died in the horrific attacks of February 26th, 1993 and September 11th, 2001. The design, "Reflecting Absence," created by Michael Arad and Peter Walker consists of two pools that reside in the footprints of the original Twin Towers surrounded by a plaza of oak trees. The Arad/Walker design was selected from a design competition which included more than 5,000 entrants from 63 nations.

The Museum will communicate key messages that embrace both the specificity and the universal implications of the events of 9/11; document the impact of those events on individual lives as well as on local, national, and international communities, and explore the legacy of 9/11 for a world increasingly defined by global interdependency.

In April 2007, the Foundation announced raising over \$300 million. To date, the Foundation has more than 32,762 contributions, representing all fifty states and 23 foreign nations. Donations can be made through the Foundation's website, and more information on the Foundation can be found at [www.buildthememorial.org](http://www.buildthememorial.org) or by calling 1-877-WTC-GIVE.

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