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## Flight 93 National Memorial Nearing Goal of 150,000 Seedlings for “Plant a Tree at Flight 93”

**Shanksville, PA:** Over 400 volunteers are needed on Friday, April 27, and Saturday, April 28, for “Plant a Tree at Flight 93,” a massive reforestation effort that aims to plant 150,000 new trees at Flight 93 National Memorial.

As part of the memorial’s original design, the unique volunteer initiative is a joint effort between the National Park Service (NPS), the National Park Foundation (NPF) and the Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial. The annual event aims to cultivate a living memorial landscape at Flight 93 National Memorial, once a former surface mine and now the final resting place of the passengers and crew of Flight 93.

John Bernstiel, volunteer coordinator at Flight 93 National Memorial says, "this event is mostly conducted by volunteers and highlights what this memorial is all about - people coming together to make a difference, building a living memorial to honor the 40 crew members and passengers of Flight 93, and healing this piece of land as we continue to heal as a country."

This year, volunteers will be paired with forestry professionals to help plant 14,960 native tree seedlings across 22 acres of the memorial. To date, volunteers have assisted with planting 101,358 native tree seedlings over 145 acres at Flight 93 National Memorial over the past six years. These trees will help to re-establish woodland wildlife habitats on the former surface coal mine land. The work places the memorial one step closer to implementing the architect’s design and re-establishing 150,000 new trees on the site.

Local businesses and organizations are encouraged to plant as a team alongside the general public. On both Friday and Saturday, tree-planting will take place from 9 am into the early afternoon. No planting expertise is needed, however no walk-on volunteers are accepted. Those interested must pre-register online at <http://flight93friends.org>. Registration opens March 13 and is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and will close when all volunteer spots are filled. Participants must wear boots and be at least 14 years of age to participate in this rain-or-shine event. Tree planting is physically demanding and this year’s terrain is very challenging with steep slopes and rocky, hard ground.

Many sponsors come together to make this initiative possible, including FedEx Ground, MetLife, S&T Bank, Simpson & McCrady, REI, Roy A. Hunt Foundation, and The UPS Foundation. Many conservation partners donate in-kind services including the American Chestnut Foundation, Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative (ARRI), Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Law Enforcement, and DCNR Bureau of Forestry. Rosebud Mining Company is returning in early March to provide in-kind services of land ripping to break up the heavily compacted soil to help promote tree growth. Sponsorship opportunities are available and should be directed to Henry Scully at [henry\\_scully@partner.nps.gov](mailto:henry_scully@partner.nps.gov).

The memorial will be open to the public during the event, with memorial grounds open sunrise to sunset and the Visitor Center open from 9 am to 5 pm. Additionally, the NPS will host a Children's Discovery Table in the Learning Center on both days for families to learn more about reforestation and the role trees play at the memorial.

#### **ABOUT FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

Flight 93 National Memorial is a National Park Service site that commemorates the passengers and crew members of Flight 93 who, on September 11, 2001, courageously gave their lives thereby thwarting a planned attack on our nation's capital. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 417 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. For more information on Flight 93 National Memorial visit [www.nps.gov/flni](http://www.nps.gov/flni).

#### **ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION**

The National Park Foundation is the official charity of America's national parks and nonprofit partner to the National Park Service. The National Park Foundation raises private funds to help PROTECT more than 84 million acres of national parks through critical conservation and preservation efforts, CONNECT all Americans with their incomparable natural landscapes, vibrant culture and rich history, and INSPIRE the next generation of park stewards. Find out more and become a part of the national park community at [www.nationalparks.org](http://www.nationalparks.org).

#### **ABOUT THE FRIENDS OF FLIGHT 93 NATIONAL MEMORIAL**

Established in 2009, the Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial is the official nonprofit partner of Flight 93 National Memorial. The Friends' aim is to inform, honor and pay tribute to the heroes of Flight 93 by supporting the Memorial with volunteers and resources. The Friends' mission is to focus on awareness, education, volunteer support, preservation and stewardship. To learn more about the Friends, make a donation to support the memorial, or become a member visit [www.Flight93Friends.org](http://www.Flight93Friends.org).

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