



City of Dallas
Park and Recreation Department

News Release

For Release
March 27, 2007

Katy Trail Landscaping Project Is Under Way This Week

(DALLAS) – With spring’s arrival, the ever-popular Katy Trail is getting a new look when the first of several landscaping projects gets under way with the replacement of ailing trees along the four-mile urban route, according to Dallas Park and Recreation Department officials.

“The trail’s new look begins with replacing non-native, fast-growing and short-lived tree species not sustainable for this location,” said Walter Passmore, City of Dallas forester. “Replacing them will create a more aesthetic backdrop and transform the canopy along the trail into a healthy, safe, high-functioning forest with a variety of hardy species complementary to this location,” he said.

A public-private partnership, the trail beautification brings together the Friends of Katy Trail, Dallas Park and Recreation Department and TXU Electric Delivery to enhance the recreational experience for urban outdoor enthusiasts.

The project begins this week when TXU workers start to remove several hundred trees along two sections of the trail. TXU expects the tree removal phase to take up to two weeks. The trail will remain open, although certain sections could close for several days.

Most of the declining trees are Chinese tree-of-heaven, Chinaberry, sugarberry, hackberry and a few elms and cottonwoods. In addition to the beautification benefits, removing selected trees addresses a public safety concern. Presently, the large-growing trees have begun to interfere with hazardous power lines along the trail.

-more-

Passmore said replanting along the trail with a variety of flowering native Texas trees will begin immediately. The Friends of Katy Trail will place the first of the new trees on the northern trail section from Knox St. to Airline Blvd.

The National Arbor Day Foundation has named Dallas a Tree City USA in recognition of its' commitment to preserving the urban forest, the first time the city has received that honor. The city's annual Arbor Day celebration is April 19 at Reverchon Park.

Although removing trees can be unattractive, the long-term results of replacing them with types that are more appropriate yield enormous benefits in the future.

“Healthy, vigorous trees are capable of producing more environmental and other benefits than declining trees,” said Eric Van Steenburg of the Friends of Katy Trail.” Diversifying the species composition enhances the forest's resistance to pests and diseases, increases the aesthetic texture, color, and form and partners compatible species to fully utilize the space available.”

###