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**U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree to Visit (Perry, Kansas) During 2018 Tour
“People’s Tree” will make cross-country journey from Oregon to Washington D.C.**

PERRY, Kansas (Oct. 16, 2018) – Every year, a different National Forest is selected to provide a tree for the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol for the Christmas season. The Willamette National Forest, in partnership with nonprofit partners Choose Outdoors and Travel Oregon, will bring this year’s tree from Oregon to Washington, D.C. for the 2018 season, involving more than 25 communities along the way. The U.S. Capital Christmas tree will make a stop in Perry on Nov. 20, from noon-2 p.m., at Perry-Lecompton Middle School.

Sponsored by Perry Pride, the festivities during the trees’ visit to Perry will include remarks by Gov. Jeff Colyer, M.D., an appearance by Santa, a visit with Smokey Bear, hot cocoa and cookies, live music and more. Activities are open to the public and free for all to enjoy.

“We are honored that the U.S. Capitol Christmas tree will visit Perry on its journey to Washington, D.C.,” said City of Perry Mayor Mike Lang. “Our community looks forward to being a part of this gift to the nation and the joy it will bring to our own community this holiday.”

The theme for the 2018 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree is “Find Your Trail!” in recognition of two 2018 anniversaries: the 50th anniversary of the National Trails System Act and the 175th commemoration of the Oregon Trail. In November, the U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree will travel eastward from Oregon on the reverse path of the Oregon Trail. The 3,000-mile expedition will culminate with the official tree lighting in early December. Smaller companion trees also will be provided to decorate offices inside of the U.S. Capitol building and other sites throughout Washington, D.C., along with 10,000 handmade ornaments created by Oregonians.

In conjunction with the 2018 U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree visit, the Christmas Tree for the Kansas State Capitol will make an appearance in Perry on Nov. 20, along with Christmas trees donated through Trees for Troops. The trees will arrive on a wagon pulled by a team of horses. These trees are being provided through the generosity of the Kansas Christmas Tree Growers Association.

The U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree is made possible with cash and in-kind contributions from companies large and small as well as volunteers locally and across America, who provide vital time and resources.

“We are grateful to the host cities such as Perry who play a vital part of bringing the tree across the country and this annual celebration”, said Bruce Ward, President, Choose Outdoors.”

For more information on the Perry event, visit www.perrypride.org. For related U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree news, events, and to track the tree cross-country, visit www.capitolchristmastree.com, along with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

About the Willamette National Forest

With over 1.5 million acres, the Willamette National Forest is home to eight wilderness areas, including the popular Three Sisters Wilderness and Mt. Jefferson Wilderness, a variety of backpacking and day hiking opportunities, waterfalls, wildflowers, mountain biking trails, boating, swimming and much more! The varied landscape of high mountains, narrow canyons, cascading streams, and wooded slopes offers excellent opportunities for visitors. We hope this yearlong Capitol Christmas Tree event inspires people to explore the Willamette National Forest. The logo captures the beauty of the State of Oregon and the Willamette National Forest, with its snowcapped mountain, fields of green and lush forests. The trail leading to the tree symbolizes the adventurous spirit of Oregonians. The logo encourages modern-day adventurers to #FindYourTrail on the Willamette National Forest.

About the U.S. Forest Service

The mission of the U.S. Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land; provides assistance to state and private landowners; and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. For more information, see <https://www.fs.fed.us/>.

About Choose Outdoors

Choose Outdoors works to increase all American's enjoyment, appreciation and support for outdoor recreation activities that connect them to our public lands. These connections will ensure that our public lands will always be there for future generations to cherish.
www.chooseoutdoors.org.

About Perry Pride

Perry Pride is dedicated to fostering community and pride, making Perry, Kansas a place where people want to live, work and play. Through the Kansas PRIDE program, Perry Pride works to identify what it would like to preserve, create, or improve for the community's future.
www.perrypride.org.

About Kansas Christmas Tree Growers Association

The Kansas Christmas Tree Growers Association is an organization of Christmas tree growers and technical people dedicated to promotion of the interests of the Christmas tree growing industry in Kansas.

About the Kansas Forest Service

The Kansas Forest Service is the nation's fifth oldest state forestry agency. The agency serves rural landowners, communities, rural fire districts, forest and arboriculture industries, and citizens of the state through its Conservation Tree and Shrub Planting, Fire Management, Community Forestry, Rural Forestry, Marketing and Utilization, and Forest Health programs. The Kansas Forest Service state office is located in Manhattan, Kansas, just west of the campus of Kansas State University. The Kansas Forest Service is housed as an independent agency within K-State Research and Extension. The agency receives its direction from a mission statement that reads: "Care of Natural Resources and Service to People through Forestry."

About Trees for Troops

Trees for Troops, a program of the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation, provides free, farm-grown Christmas Trees to United States armed forces members in all branches of the military and their families, through donations, sponsorships, grants and the work of many volunteers. Christmas Tree growers have been providing free trees for military families for years. In 2005, FedEx contacted the Christmas SPIRIT Foundation, the 501(c)(3) charitable branch of the National Christmas Tree Association, and wanted to be involved in the foundation's mission. Together the two organizations expanded the idea of providing Christmas Trees to military families, and Trees for Troops was born. Since 2005, more than 208,720 free, farm-grown Christmas Trees have been provided to troops and military families in the United States and overseas through Trees for Troops. Thousands of trees are donated by American farm families and the public, and FedEx delivers these trees to more than 63 military bases in the U.S. and overseas. FedEx has logged more than 800,000 ground miles for the Trees for Troops program.

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