

For more information, contact:  
Sean Barry, 402-473-9563  
sbarry@arborday.org



***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

## **Sacramento Urban Forestry Manager Joe Benassini Receives National Award From the Arbor Day Foundation**

**Nebraska City, Neb. (April 24, 2012)** – City of Sacramento Urban Forestry Manager Joe Benassini is the recipient of a 2012 Arbor Day Award in honor of his outstanding contribution to tree planting, conservation and stewardship, the Arbor Day Foundation announced today.

Benassini is one of 16 individuals and organizations being recognized by the Foundation at the annual Arbor Day Awards. The ceremony will be held at Lied Lodge & Conference Center, located at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City, Nebraska, on Saturday, April 28.

Benassini will receive a Champion of Trees Award in recognition of his leadership in advancing effective forestry public policy.

Under Benassini's leadership, Sacramento developed a complete street tree and park tree inventory for the first time, and Benassini brought in outside experts to help train his staff to log work hours and tree history. Today, the Urban Forestry Division of the City of Sacramento is caring for more than double the number of trees it cared for just a few years ago, despite a challenging budget environment. The inventory determined that the City cares for some 100,000 trees on its streets and in parks and cemeteries. The City was declared the "City of Trees" in 1965, so the City has high expectations of its urban forestry leadership.

"By dedicating his professional life to effective urban forestry and providing vital tree maintenance through strong leadership and strategic policy, Joe Benassini serves as model for tree care professionals," said John Rosenow, founder and chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation.

Before coming to Sacramento in 2005, Benassini was the City of Folsom's first arborist from 2000 to 2005.

Since 1972, the Arbor Day Foundation has recognized the inspiring and life-changing work of leading environmental stewards and tree planters through the annual Arbor Day Awards.

Award winners from previous years include the late Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall, veteran newsman Bill Kurtis, Enterprise Rent-A-Car and Mary Kay, Inc. This year, in

addition to honoring Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley with a Vision Award, A Legacy of Partnership Award will be presented to the United States Forest Service.

###

**About the Arbor Day Foundation:** The Arbor Day Foundation is a nonprofit conservation and education organization of one million members, with the mission to inspire people to plant, nurture and celebrate trees. More information on the Foundation and its programs can be found at [arborday.org](http://arborday.org), or by visiting us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or our [blog](#).