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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 10/6/2023

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Nine Arkansas Schools Selected to Participate in Annual Shade Trees on Playgrounds Program

LITTLE ROCK, AR – The Arkansas Department of Agriculture’s Forestry Division has selected nine schools to participate in the 2023 Shade Trees on Playgrounds (STOP) Program:

- **Bob Folsom Elementary School**, Farmington
- **Linda Childers Knapp Elementary School**, Springdale
- **Faulk Elementary School**, West Memphis
- **Greene County Tech Primary School**, Paragould
- **Little Martians Learning Center**, Springdale
- **Marion Math, Science, and Technology Magnet School**, Marion
- **Two Rivers Elementary School**, Ola
- **Vera Lloyd Presbyterian Family Services Residential Childcare**, Monticello
- **White County Central Bear Cub Preschool**, Judsonia

The STOP Program was organized to lower adult skin cancer risk by reducing childhood exposure to direct sunlight where children play, like school and daycare playgrounds. Selected schools receive up to five shade trees, mulch, watering supplies, and planting guidelines after participating in program training. Forestry Division personnel assist with the transport and planting of the trees.

“The STOP Program combines hands-on, outdoor experiences with classroom curriculum about the importance of trees and how to care for them,” said Kristine Kimbro, Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator. “We hope this program not only improves the health of Arkansas students but leaves a lasting impression about the value of forests and how to be good stewards of our natural resources.”

To qualify, participating schools must lack shade, participate in a virtual STOP workshop, include curriculum resources that emphasize the importance of trees and forestry in Arkansas, hold a tree-planting ceremony with students, and agree to provide long-term maintenance of the planted shade trees. The trees are native species chosen to fit the unique conditions of each playground.

Learn more about the STOP Program and other Urban and Community Forestry services and programs at [agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/urban-community-forestry](https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/forestry/urban-community-forestry). With program questions, contact Kristine Kimbro at 479-228-7929 or kristine.kimbrow@agriculture.arkansas.gov, or Harold Fisher at 501-580-4054 or harold.fisher@agriculture.arkansas.gov.

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