



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, March 16, 2025

### *We Need the Trees. And the Trees Need Us.*

**Words can sometimes be misleading.** The **Fix Our Forests Act** sounds like a good thing, but in fact “the Fix Our Forests Act would fast-track reckless logging projects around the country, putting millions of acres of public lands at risk. ([ref](#))

Mature and old-growth trees would be chopped down at an unprecedented rate.

**Endangered species that live in these forests could lose their homes.** The bill would let the logging industry bypass protections under the Endangered Species Act.

**Wildfires could get worse.** Inappropriate logging can increase the risk of wildfires and change the delicate balance of a forest ecosystem. ([ref](#))

Letting logging companies into our forests without environmental review could mean losing some of our oldest trees. Those old trees are often the most resilient in the face of wildfires, and we won't see them grow back in our lifetimes.” (Lisa Frank, *Environment America*, 3/5/25)

**Old-growth forests are also some of our biggest allies in the climate crisis as they are storers of carbon and help to improve air quality.**

[Tell your U.S. Senators to vote “No” on the Fix Our Forests Act.](#)

**You can also consider the small act of planting a tree.** “You may not see the shade right away, but future generations will” (*World Wildlife Magazine*, Spring 2025). For Philadelphia, this may be even more important now given that the funds for a \$12 million federal grant to kick-start its ambitious **Philly Tree Plan** have been frozen. “It remains uncertain whether the money will ever be released or how the lack of funding will ultimately affect the program, which also receives support from the city and nonprofits. The plan ... prioritizes planting and maintaining trees in neighborhoods devoid of shade-providing canopies — areas that can be up to 20 degrees hotter than leafier sections during summer months.” (Frank Kummer, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 3/6/25)

The **Northwest Philadelphia Tree Equity Initiative** partners with residents on both tree planting and maintenance while providing education on the benefits of expanded tree cover.

[Apply by April 15 to get a free tree in fall 2025.](#)

“There’s a direct connection, scientists have long known, between air quality and human health. Polluted air can lead to higher incidences of cancer, heart disease, [and asthma].... Trees have the ability to mitigate air pollution, including by serving as a physical barrier against dirty air, absorbing chemicals into their cells and even collecting particles with their leaves....” (Amy Crawford, *The Healing Power of Trees*, *Nature Conservancy*, 2025 / Issue 1)

**“The trees are talking. It is our job to start listening.”** (Suzanne Simard, professor of forest ecology at the University of British Columbia)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at [socialjustice@holycrossphl.org](mailto:socialjustice@holycrossphl.org).  
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