



OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

"Connecting people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, native forests"

For immediate release:

Thursday, October 18, 2018

City Park's Oak Grove joins the national Old-Growth Forest Network

What: Dedication Event: City Park's Oak Grove joins the national Old-Growth Forest Network. A "first" for the state of Louisiana.

When: Thursday, Oct 18th, free event open to the public

4:30 PM: Dedication event (presentation/unveiling of OGFN plaque), Dr. Melissa Abdo will officially recognize City Park into the Old-Growth Forest Network

4:45 PM: Paul Soniat & Harvey Stern will lead a guided sundown walk through the Live Oak Grove

5:30 PM - evening: Old-Growth Forest Network celebratory Happy Hour at Second Line Brewing, 433 N. Bernadotte St, New Orleans, LA 70119

Where: **4:30 PM** Dedication ceremony begins at the Anseman Oak Tree inside City Park, just inside the Anseman Ave entrance to City Park (there is no street sign; the intersection opposite the entrance is N. Alexander at City Park Ave). Free & open to the public; press are welcome.

5:30 PM - evening Celebratory Happy Hour at Second Line Brewing, 433 N. Bernadotte St, New Orleans, LA 70119 (live music starts circa 7:00pm)

Summary: City Park is home to the largest grove of live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) registered in the world, including the magnificent Anseman Oak and McDonogh Oak, which are between 750 and 900 years old. The inclusion of the City Park Live Oak Grove in the Old-Growth Forest Network represents a major "first" for the state of Louisiana: the first time that protected, mature Louisiana forests are officially recognized into our nation's only Network of forever-protected old-growth forests. City Park's Oak Grove will now officially be recognized as the Orleans Parish representative forest in the Old-Growth Forest Network. Several additional old-growth forests in other parishes throughout the state are also being dedicated into the Network during "Old-Growth Forest Preservation Week" (October 15-20, 2018) in Louisiana.

Detailed article:

On Thursday, October 18th, 2018 at 4:30pm, the Live Oak Grove located within City Park will be dedicated into the nationwide Old-Growth Forest Network. City Park's Live Oak Grove is home to the largest grove of live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*) registered in the world, including the magnificent Anseman Oak and McDonogh Oak, which are between 750 and 900 years old.



OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

The inclusion of the City Park Live Oak Grove in the Old-Growth Forest Network represents a major “first” for the state of Louisiana: the first time that protected, mature Louisiana forests are officially recognized into our nation’s only Network of forever-protected old-growth forests. The dedication ceremony will take place amidst the iconic old oak trees in City Park, and leaders representing the Old-Growth Forest Network, Louisiana Purchase Cypress Legacy, and City Park will officially dedicate the Oak Grove into the Network together.

The Louisiana Purchase Cypress Legacy (LPCL) is partnering with the Old-Growth Forest Network to dedicate this most recognizable and fabled grove of ancient oaks in Orleans Parish. City Park also has many venerable older cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) trees, in addition to its justly famous Live Oak grove. Remarkably, the LPCL has recently discovered what is likely to be the oldest known cypress tree in Orleans Parish in a grove of old cypress adjacent to the Grow Dat Youth Farm within City Park.

Since 2003, the Louisiana Purchase Cypress Legacy has been landmarking and promoting the stewardship of living cypress trees in Louisiana that were alive at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. The cypress trees and their surrounding habitats that are recognized by the LPCL are at least 215 years old and are recognized as being “Alive in 1803.”

The Old-Growth Forest Network (“OGFN”) focuses upon connecting people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, publicly accessible, native forests while simultaneously strengthening the connection between the people that care about these forests. OGFN’s staff work to identify forests for the Network, ensure their protection from logging, and inform people of the locations of these exceptional forests. OGFN also recognizes exceptional forest advocates, educates about the extraordinary ecological and wellness benefits of old-growth forests, and speaks out regarding immediate threats to specific ancient forests. Founded in 2012 by Joan Maloof, PhD in ecology and professor emeritus, the Network currently has more than 80 forests in 20 states. Learn more about the Network and discover where to find more old-growth forests at www.oldgrowthforest.net.

Dr. Melissa Abdo, OGFN’s managing director & a forest ecologist, worked with the staff of City Park and the Coordinator of the Louisiana Purchase Cypress Legacy, Harvey Stern, to have the live Oak Grove of City Park in New Orleans officially recognized into the nationwide Network of old-growth forests. Dr. Abdo said “I’m a Southerner myself, and I think that everyone that either lives in or gets to visit the southern United States has had many a memorable, tranquil moment beneath our beautiful Live Oak trees. I am honored to recognize this historic, magnificent grove of ancient oaks into the Old-Growth Forest Network. It is humbling to stand beneath trees of such grand old age and consider the forward-thinking of the people that came before us, protected this place, and ensured that we would be able to experience this remarkable grove. I hope that all visitors to this place are reminded of the importance of long-term thinking and help to preserve old-growth forests in their communities. We hope that next year, in 2019, the Old-Growth Forest Network will be able to recognize many more protected old-growth forests in Louisiana, and we welcome anyone interested in supporting this



OLD-GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

effort to reach out to us. Future generations deserve to experience wondrous forests like the Oak Grove at City Park.”

The Old-Growth Forest Network is a 501(c)(3) organization and welcomes volunteers and supporters interested in helping to preserve forests to contact OGFN through our website: www.oldgrowthforest.net. The effort to identify and formally qualify a forest for inclusion in the Old-Growth Forest Network is largely dependent on volunteers, citizen scientists, park managers, and local experts.

Other exceptional forests that are being dedicated into the nationwide Network during the Old-Growth Forest Preservation Week in Louisiana include the Barataria Reserve of Jean Lafitte National Park (Jefferson Parish), Walter B. Jacobs Memorial Nature Preserve (Caddo Parish), and Briarwood Nature Preserve (Natchitoches Parish). The official launch of the Week will occur at an open-to-the-public talk focusing on old-growth forests that will be given at Red River National Wildlife Refuge on Oct. 15th at 6:00pm by Dr. Melissa Abdo, forest ecologist and managing director of the Old-Growth Forest Network.

Contact:

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