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## JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANTS OVER 300 TREES FOR ARBOR DAY

RIGBY, ID, April 15, 2016 – Over 300 new poplar and spruce trees will soon provide shade, shelter and wildlife habitat at Jefferson County Lake. The planting project is the effort of four Eagle Scout candidates working in partnership with Jefferson County Parks & Recreation. Trees are to be planted between April 16 and April 23.

In the last few years, many native cottonwood trees at the lake were removed in an effort to preserve public safety and improve the appearance of Jefferson County Lake, which attracts thousands of visitors each summer. The new trees will fill gaps left by the removal, and provide more variety in the forested areas of the park and campground.

Most of the trees were donated by the Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District, and a \$300 Arbor Day grant from the Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association supports the project.

“Much of the charm of Jefferson Lake is because of the wild nature of the walk path and campground,” Rebecca Squires, Parks & Recreation Director said. “It is unfortunate that so many trees had to be removed, but we are looking forward to establishing and enjoying this new generation of plants.”

The one obvious place where trees will not be planted: the Island.

“The Island at Jefferson Lake was stripped bare of its trees, and the public has expressed disappointment and concern,” Squires said. “We are not replacing trees on the island this year because we need a solid plan for how we want the island to look.”

To this end, Jefferson County Parks & Recreation is introducing a contest to encourage the public to submit concepts and plans for the Island. The winning design will be selected by a public vote at the Independence Day Celebration July 2.

“Do we want the Island to have fire pits and camping? More beach and grass? Or, should it be a wilderness area like it was before? We’re going to let the public decide,” Squires said.

The Island will be redeveloped next year, but until then, the focus will be on establishing the 2016 crop of trees.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Rebecca Squires at (208) 745-0868 or email at [rsquires@co.jefferson.id.us](mailto:rsquires@co.jefferson.id.us).