



Embassy of the United States of America
Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S. Embassy Green Council Plants More Than 2,500 Trees

As part of a continuing effort to raise environmental awareness and promote reforestation in Sierra Leone, members of the U.S. Embassy Green Council have planted more than 2,500 native hardwood and fruit trees in the six-acre lot adjoining the Embassy compound in Hill Station, Freetown. The Green Council -- composed of environmentally-conscious Embassy employees who volunteer their time and effort -- began the tree-planting project in March of this year to commemorate Earth Day. Ambassador Michael Owen planted the first tree on March 19, and the last tree was planted on July 6. Embassy staff organized fundraising events to purchase 70 fruit trees, while the former Deputy Chief of Mission personally donated a further 300. The remaining trees were directly purchased by the Embassy to ensure the project's success.

Green Council Chairman Tom Poeschl emphasized that "Trees are important for Sierra Leone." He acknowledged that deforestation is a persistent problem associated with land use, but encouraged the public to "plant at least one or two trees for each tree that you cut down."

Across the globe, U.S. diplomatic missions are working to increase environmental awareness, promote biodiversity, and support wise stewardship of natural resources. For more information on the U.S. Department of State's "Greening Diplomacy Initiative," please see <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/plrmo/156053.htm>.