



## **Pendleton, IN Recovery Tree Planting Event (3:30 PM, October 27, 2021)**

On Memorial Day of 2019, the Town of Pendleton was struck by an F2 tornado that decimated a large portion of the mature trees across the community and in its primary community park, Falls Park. This young Tree City USA community had just completed its first community-wide inventory and management plan and was gearing up for next steps when everything turned to tornado response and recovery. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Community and Urban Forestry (CUF) program was contacted the day after the storm and visited the community two days after once primary response activities were completed. After the site visit, CUF requested assistance from the USFS STRIKE Teams, but other communities were impacted more significantly by the same storm event and took priority. The local town planner and county GIS staff established a localized strike assessment. The CUF program also contacted the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF) about eligibility for Community Recovery Grants. By fall/winter 2019, the project was submitted and ADF was hunting for project support. International Paper committed \$15,800 for an early spring recovery event, but event plans were stifled due to the onset of COVID-19. ADF and International Paper were willing to extend funding access to project for a fall 2020 planting which gave CUF and local partners a full summer season to thoughtfully plan out options based on changing COVID guidelines, community need, and capacity for a meaningful and impactful recovery project. Project partners, including IDNR-CUF, ADF, the Town of Pendleton, and the South Madison Community Foundation, met every Friday up until the planting event via a Zoom meeting to give status updates and make decisions that led to the most community-specific and tree survival-focused mass planting project to date in the community.

The event, named the Pendleton Recovery Tree Planting Event, was held on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020. On that day, over 100 trees were planted in Falls Park and 200 trees were planted on private property by over 150 volunteers from in and around Pendleton. Every tree as part of the program (public or private) was planted by volunteer teams formed by family members or individuals representing a variety of organizations. Each team picked up their planting assignment sheets, trees, and planting supplies in an open parking lot and completed each planting in a contactless/low contact manner. Tree selection was done by four local certified arborists in pre-site visits with each individual homeowner to consider the right native tree for the site focusing on restoring as much canopy as possible. Utility locates were contacted for each planting location by DNR CUF Staff and all trees for the project are held in a GIS data layer in the town tree inventory. The project helped the community heal from the devastating event through people and trees and will impact future generations as the trees grow and mature. This project was recognized as one of seven Legacy Projects as part of the Pendleton Bicentennial Celebration on September 12, 2021.

Here is a link to the video that was produced for the project:

<https://www.facebook.com/135379873178301/videos/210384227233882>