

Connecting with Nature on Fiscalini Ranch Preserve: Thanksgiving Weekend Tree Planting



By KITTY CONNOLLY, Executive Director, Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve (fiscaliniranchpreserve.org)

Many things are different this year, but one treasured Cambria tradition that can still go on, even with covid-19 precautions, is Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve's annual family-friendly tree planting on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year it will be held on Nov 28 from 9 AM to Noon (weather permitting).

Fiscalini Ranch Preserve is home to many natural resources, but among the rarest is its native Monterey pine forest. Caring for this forest is one of FFRP's highest priorities. With community help, we have been able to expand the forest by two-thirds over the last 20 years. Great job, everyone!!!

But we are not done. Every year we collect seeds from disease-free trees on the Ranch to preserve the forest's rare genetic diversity and promote healthy reforestation, a goal of the management plan. These seeds are grown into seedlings by local volunteers (I'm looking at you, Brian Morgan!) and by professional native plant horticulturists so we can restore the forest to its historic extent.

This year's crop is looking good. We hope to get 400-650 seedlings into the ground this fall. Planting in fall gives the trees a natural boost from winter rains and cool weather. With healthy roots established before summer, and a few supplemental waterings by FFRP volunteers, we have had good survival rates.

During a time when so much is uncertain, there are few things as satisfying as seeing the seedlings you plant grow into young trees in a few short years. As a multi-generational activity, it cannot be beat!

Meet at the Huntington Road entrance to the Ridge Trail. Social distancing will be observed. Wear a mask, dress in layers, wear sturdy shoes, and, if possible, bring work gloves and a shovel or trowel. Some tools and gloves will be available. No reservations are required. Rain cancels the event.



Give a Gift that Grows

You can support tree planting by dedicating a pair of seedlings in memory of or to honor someone – a favorite relative, beloved friend, or valued neighbor.

For a \$50 donation, we will publish the names of those so honored and send a notice of dedication as directed by you. Dedications help those who may not be able to visit the Ranch themselves to be connected to its protection, restoration, and endurance.

Donate at fiscaliniranchpreserve.org