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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Historic “Great Trees” returning to New York City

**Naperville, IL, April 24, 2014** – In January 2008, a small group of intrepid high school students from New York City’s John Bowne High School joined a team of a team of arborists from Bartlett Tree Experts high in the canopy of one of Central Park’s oldest trees. Their aspirations were as lofty as their perch: to make sure that this tree, a European Beech planted at the direction of Frederick Law Olmstead during the construction of Central Park, would have a legacy beyond its natural lifespan. They were surrounded that winter morning by organizations united by an ambitious vision: to clone New York City’s aging historic trees and populate the five boroughs with their offspring.

The Central Park project, sponsored by the TREE Fund, Bartlett Tree Experts and the New York Restoration Project (NYRP) exemplifies how advances in tree science have changed the landscape for tree preservation. In addition to protecting the existing tree canopy, urban forestry in the 21<sup>st</sup> century allows for preservation of the genetic material of culturally and environmentally significant trees to ensure that they are not lost forever. Additional support for the project was provided by the Coleman Company, Inc., Marmot Mountain LLC and David Milarch, co-founder of the Champion Tree Project International.

The Central Park Beech was the first of nine different tree species of historical and environmental significance to be cloned as part of an initiative to preserve and protect historic trees which have shaded New York’s public parks and streets for more than 100 years. Cuttings were taken from 25 trees throughout the city and shipped in Coleman® coolers to Schichtels Nursery Oregon, which propagated ten genetically identical clones of each original tree. With the support of the TREE Fund, the students at John Bowne monitored the progress of the clones over time as part of their new agriculture curriculum.

Nearly six years later these clones are four to six feet tall and ready to come home. On May 1, 2014, at 10:00 a.m., NYC Parks, NY Tree Trust and MillionTreesNYC will be joined in Van Cortlandt Park by the TREE Fund, Bartlett Tree Experts, NYRP, John Bowne High School, Coleman®, and Schichtels Nursery Oregon to plant clones from two of the original “mother” trees – American ash (*Fraxinus americana*) and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*). These are the first of many trees that will be planted throughout New York City as part of the MillionTreesNYC campaign. They will serve as preservation ambassadors, representing the need to protect what could so easily be lost to development or pest and disease. NY Tree Trust will manage the care of this next generation, working to ensure that the progeny of New York City’s Great Trees have every chance to grow to greatness themselves.

*Note: an article about this project was published on page 5 of the TREE Fund’s [April 2008 newsletter](#).*

## **About TREE Fund**

The TREE Fund's mission is to support sustainable communities and environmental stewardship by funding research, scholarships and education programs essential to the discovery and dissemination of new knowledge in the fields of arboriculture and urban forestry.

The TREE Fund has supported research that has led to important developments in:

- Improving utility line clearing practices
- Understanding air pollution reduction and carbon sequestration by trees
- Determining the costs and benefits of urban trees
- Improving conditions for tree growth in difficult sites
- Strategies to manage diseases and pests that affect urban trees

For more information, visit [www.treefund.org](http://www.treefund.org).

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