



# TREES FOR LIFE

2023 YEAR IN REVIEW





# A NEW LEGACY

2023 was an extraordinary year for Trees for Life, made possible through the collective efforts of our staff and volunteer board and tree planters, public and private donors, corporate supporters, and planting partners. In this Report, I hope you'll be inspired by the success we have had in expanding our mission to support community tree-planting goals and advancing our Hero Tree program through Trees for Health and a 100th anniversary celebration with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Our newly launched 3-year fundraising goal to secure \$6M from the private sector and to plant up to 1 million trees by the end of 2028, demonstrates our passion to continue to fight climate change, increase biodiversity, and make Canada a better place for everyone through tree planting. Due to your support, we made great strides toward this target securing over \$2.4 in donations and future commitments from private funders, unlocking matching from the federal 2 Billion Trees Program, and securing valuable in-kind donations from industry partners-amplifying your impact up to 3x.

Over 137,000 trees were planted including over 18,000 trees in the largest Trees for Health program to date, through our partnership with the City of Edmonton.

An hour's drive east of Toronto, over 35 hectares of private land was reclaimed and reforested with over 60,000 native trees and shrubs, and near Edmonton, 26,000 trees now grace reclaimed land left barren after raw material mining.

Over 2400 volunteers participated in many events throughout the year, confirming that public plantings are back and as popular as ever.

We would be remiss by not mentioning donors who have made transformational gifts to Trees for Life. We call these people Champions, those who helped lay the foundation of our success through their time, relationships, and in many cases significant, ongoing financial support. We launched this program in 2023, and celebrate them and their stories on our website at [TreesforLife.ca](https://TreesforLife.ca).

In this Report, I'm excited to share highlights of collaborations with our ever-expanding partner network and recognize the generous supporters who believe in our mission to help the planet fight climate change and honour heroes through living legacies.

Your belief in our work has helped us build the foundation that 2024 will stand upon as we build this new legacy together. There is much more in store for 2024..... stay tuned!

With thanks for your fabulous support,



Mark Cullen  
Founding Chair, on behalf of the Trees For Life team

## AMPLIFYING DONATIONS

Veritas Foundation's Charity Ratings Review has revealed that Trees for Life earned a 4 out of 5-star rating for our impact and effectiveness and that **for every dollar raised, there is \$4.30 in value created!** Our formula for combining funding from individual donors, in-kind, and NRCAN matching funding amplifies the impact of donors' gifts.



4 Star Review!

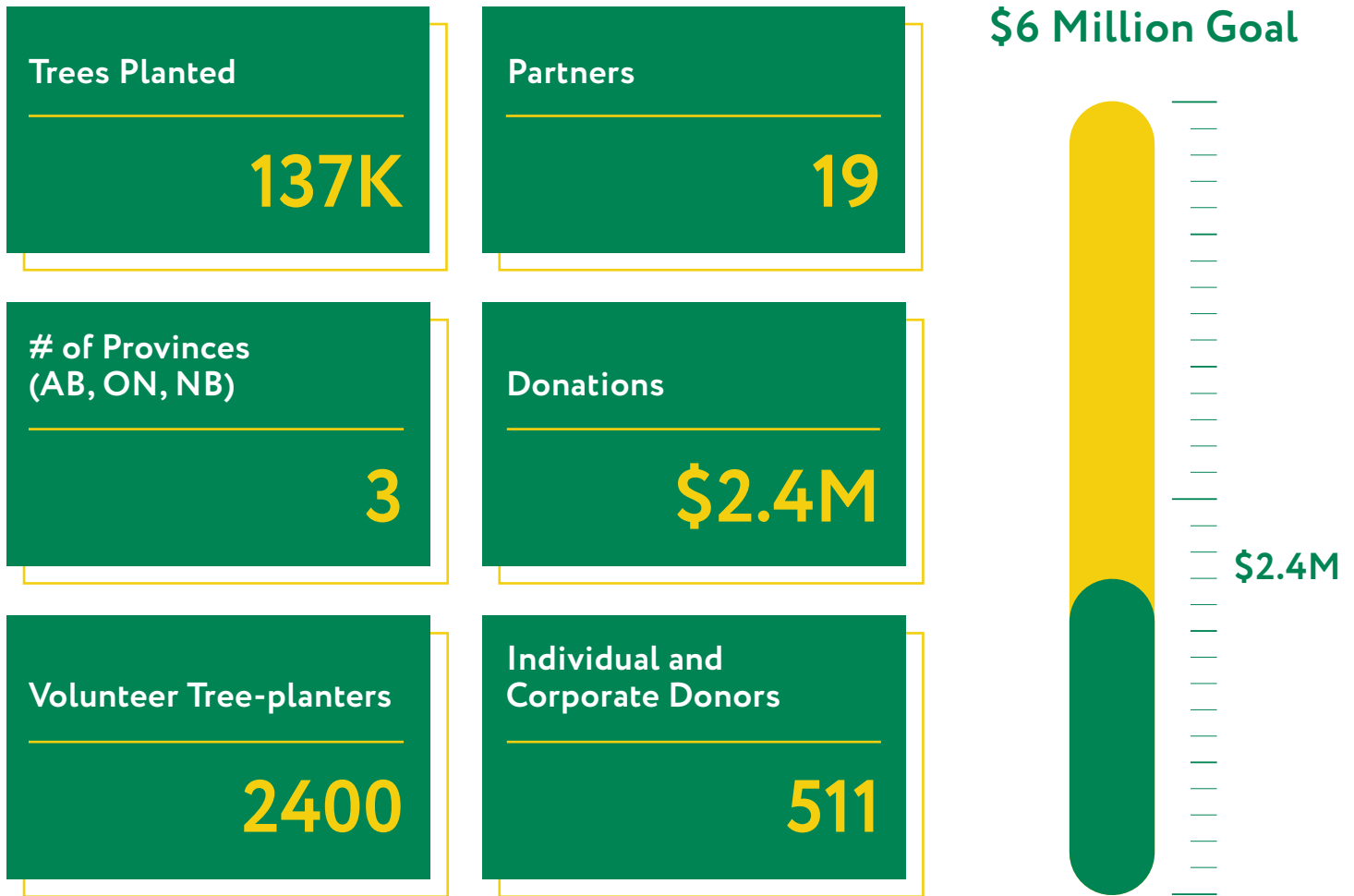
Independently Rated by  
The Veritas Foundation



## OUR MISSION

*Trees for Life* is creating a healthier, happier Canada by planting native trees and shrubs where we live, work, and play. We are inspiring, empowering, and mobilizing community-led tree-planting initiatives nationwide.

## 2023 BY THE NUMBERS



### Once mature these trees will:

**Capture Carbon CO<sub>2</sub>:**  
**12k+ tonnes/year** =  
 270 passenger vehicles off  
 the road/year on average

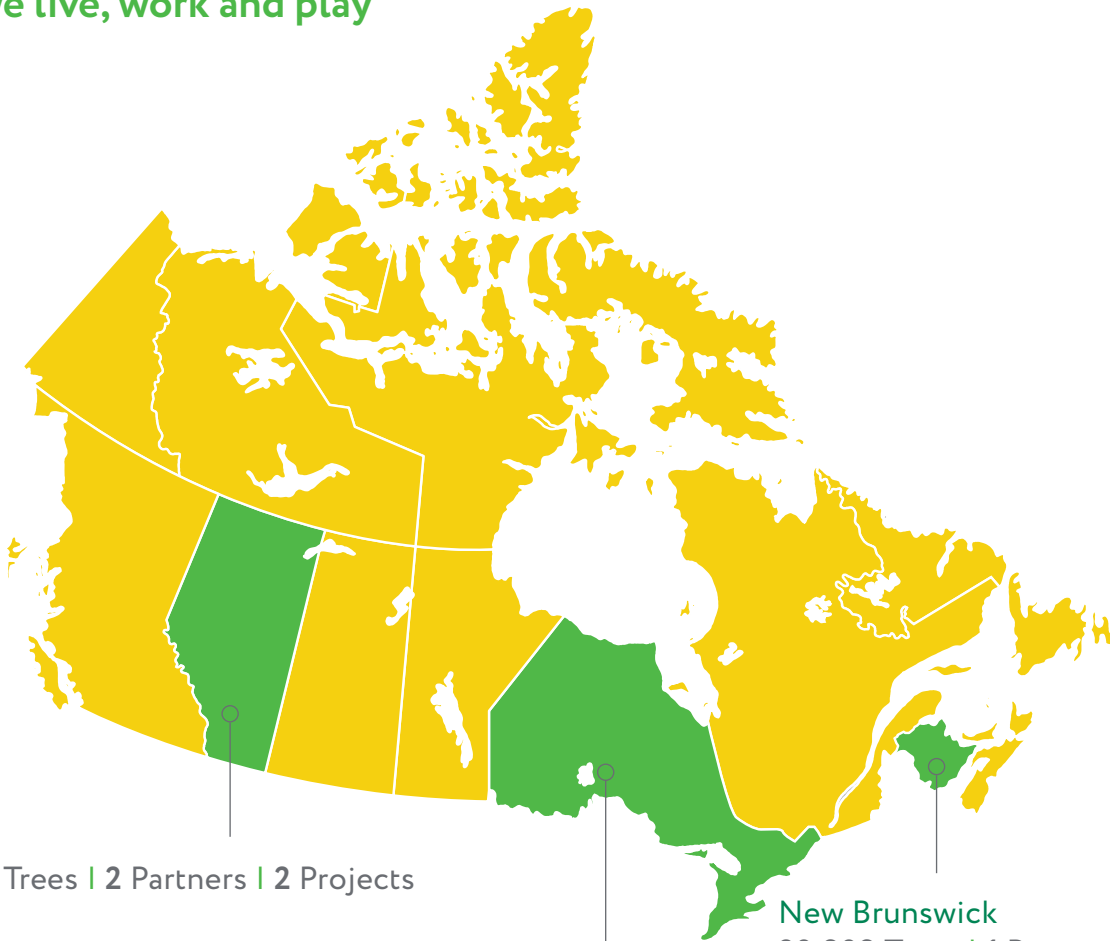
**Intercept Rainfall:**  
**1.2 billion litres/year** =  
 497 Olympic sized  
 swimming pools each year

**Produce O<sub>2</sub>:**  
 Enough to support **550k**  
 people each day

*\*Source: NRCan Carbon Calculator*

# SUMMARY OF 2023 ACTIVITIES

Where we live, work and play

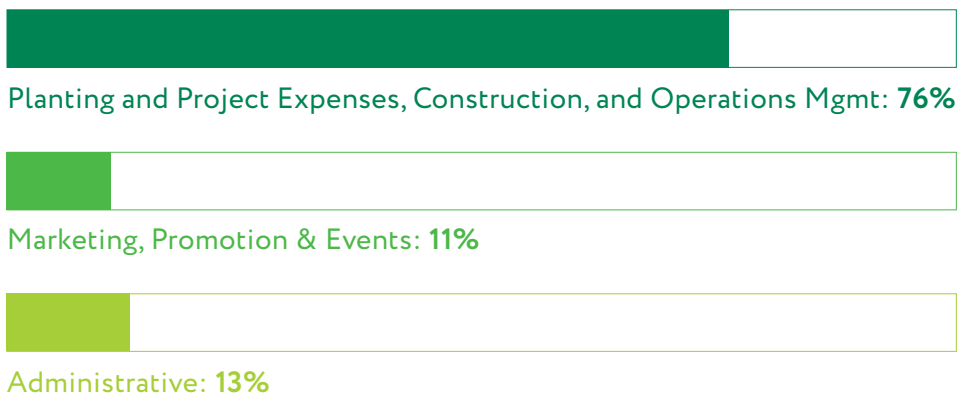


Alberta  
44,850 Trees | 2 Partners | 2 Projects

Ontario  
70,306 Trees | 16 Partners | 21 Projects

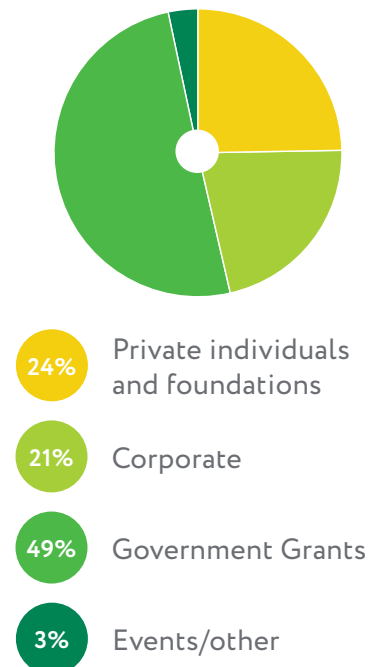
New Brunswick  
20,909 Trees | 1 Partner | 2 Projects

## Where Your TFL Dollar Goes\*



\*Unaudited figures

## Sources of Support and Revenue



# TREES FOR HEROES

## Trees for Health

The need for vibrant public green spaces in our communities and the links between access to them and our physical and mental health is clear. It's one reason Trees for Life is driven to plant trees for the benefits they provide us AND in recognition of heroes.

In 2023, over 20,977 trees were planted in tribute to Canadian healthcare workers. Trees for Life is focused on growing that number in 2024 with our partners the Trees for Health Coalition, One Bench One Tree, Covenant Health, Providence Health and others across Canada.

### City of Edmonton

In partnership with the City of Edmonton's Root for Trees program, TD Friends of the Environment, and Covenant Health, Trees for Life hosted our largest tree planting event to date, honouring health workers. Volunteers from the organizations and the community joined local health workers to plant more than 1,000 trees in Tawa Park at Grey Nuns Community Hospital in Edmonton. This collaboration resulted in more than 19,000 trees planted across Edmonton in 2023.

### Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority partnered with Trees for Life corporate supporters AGF and Harrington and Associates to plant trees for local health heroes at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Stouffville, ON. These 350 native trees and shrubs will help to increase the biodiversity and climate adaptation abilities of this important part of the Lake Ontario watershed and ensure future healthy green recreation sites for the community to enjoy.

### Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF)

Planting partner LEAF, with support from Trees for Life, continued their multi-year urban forest restoration work at Beaver Woodland Park in Richmond Hill. Helped by community volunteers and TFL corporate sponsor Juel Group (Less Mess Environmental), over 600 trees and shrubs were planted within this 3 KM green corridor in honour of community health heroes.



Firefighters' planting lesson, Edmonton, AB



# URBAN GREENING & LAND RECLAMATION

The unique partnerships we develop with local environmental groups both small and large, nursery partners, and conservation authorities reinforce the importance of collaboration to help communities meet their planting goals

## Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority and Nursery Partners

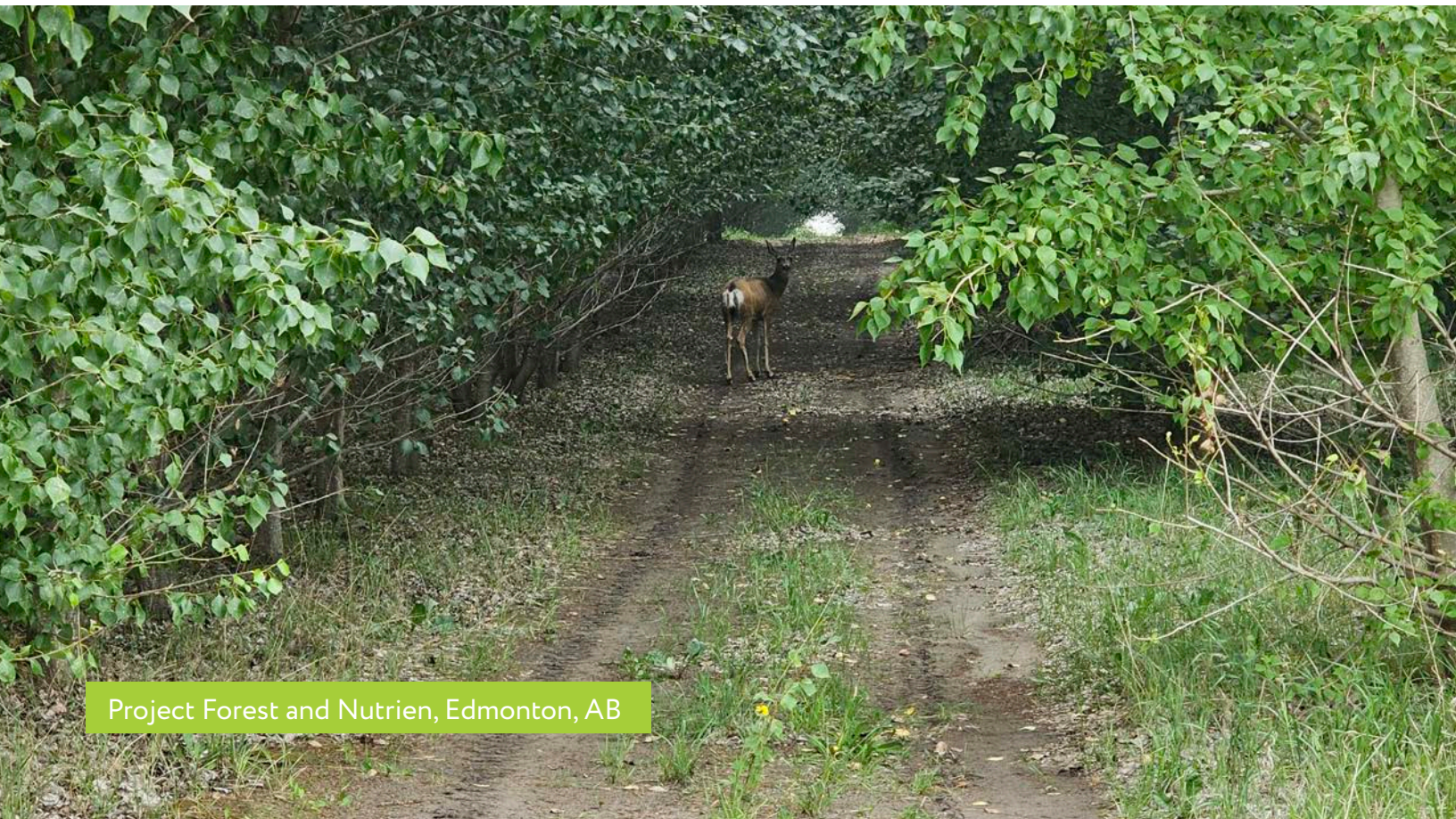
Partnerships between the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority and nurseries such as Pineneedle Farms and St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre allowed us to support the planting of over 60,000 trees on over 35 hectares of private land that were previously used for agricultural purposes or secured for conservation, reclaiming acres of property and over time, returning it to healthy forests.

## Little Forests Kingston

In partnership with Little Forests Kingston, using the Miyawaki style of planting, a tiny forest of 125 trees was planted on the eastern outskirts of Kingston at the Indigenous Food Sovereignty Garden. The site was repatriated from the Faith United Church to the local Indigenous Community and will be stewarded under the umbrella of the newly formed All My Relations Land Trust.

## McMaster University - Carbon Sink Forest Initiative

Completed in 2023, this initiative, spearheaded by McMaster University, is a model forest of native tree species that have been planted to facilitate maximum carbon sink capabilities while promoting and preserving biodiversity, sustainability, and conservation. A team of faculty and students are tracking the growth and health of each tree and sharing this data with other researchers worldwide. TFL provided some of the funding to support the planting of all 900 trees.





### Project Forest

Trees for Life planting partner, Project Forest started a fascinating new project with Nutrien, one of Canada's premier fertilizer producers. They reclaimed industrial lands used previously for mining the raw materials for fertilizer through afforestation.

Over 26,000 trees were added to otherwise barren land. These trees now absorb stormwater before any byproducts of the mining process can contaminate it and before it reenters the local watershed. They will grow at an incredible rate due to the high nutrient content of the soil. As they mature, among other benefits they will release oxygen and filter the air, reducing pollution and the potential for dust particles to drift into nearby neighbourhoods.

### The Children's Sacred Forest

In September 2023, Beechwood Cemetery Foundation alongside their partners, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the Assembly of 7 Generations unveiled a new Sacred Forest. This monument features three large boulders, with a central plaque commemorating the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children who never made it home from Canada's 'Indian Residential Schools.' Behind this feature are 7 dwarf pines. These unique trees will only grow to the height of a child and were contributed by Trees for Life. TFL was honoured to have a role in creating this important and moving memorial. This Children's Sacred Forest will be a focal point for reconciliation and the long journey ahead of us.



Bruce's Mill Conservation Area, Stouffville, ON



# TREES FOR HEROES

## Trees for Military Heroes

### Royal Canadian Air Force Centennial (RCAF)

In addition to health heroes, Trees for Life continues to honour the brave men and women of our Armed Forces. In 2023, Trees for Life announced a special collaboration with the RCAF, that will help them mark their 100th anniversary in 2024.

Part of their celebration plan includes the construction of several "RCAF Centennial Groves," commemorative plantings that will combine trees, shrubs, and other plants into meaningful configurations that will pay tribute to the sacrifices of those who have and are serving our country in an RCAF uniform. Currently, 6 communities are committed to building the Groves and as 2024 unfolds we expect many more will join.

Stayed tuned for special Centennial Grove unveilings in 2024.

“ Being in the military is highly demanding and we are putting our lives on the line...but only when we’re on deployment. By comparison, nurses, firefighters and front-line workers are facing the harshest of life’s realities EVERY DAY. It’s their turn to be recognized for their work and the sacrifices they make for the rest of us.”

- Corporal Nick Kerr



RCAF cadets, Calgary, AB



## EVENTS AND CORPORATE SUPPORT

The fall of 2023 brought the roaring return of volunteer plantings - eight events over two months, including our corporate sponsors' employee engagement outings. It is always extraordinarily inspiring to share the experience of tree planting with enthusiastic supporters, who are advancing our urban planting mandate.

### Kortright Hills Natural Area

The City of Guelph continued to work towards its goal of 40% leafy cover and supporting climate change mitigation by hosting public events at Kortright Hills Natural Area. Trees for Life and corporate supporters Royal Canin and TD Bank planted 550 new native trees including Bur Oak, White Cedar, and Sugar Maple. It marks the second time in as many years that we are working together to improve an important part of the Hanlon Creek watershed.

### Tommy Thompson Park

Along the shoreline of Lake Ontario amid prime recreational trails and parkland, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and volunteers from the Canada Running Series, Trees for Life, and the Trans Canada Trail, joined forces. These plantings are a part of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's efforts to combat the impacts of climate change on this section of Lake Ontario shoreline and also help the Canada Running Series, who organize the TCS Toronto Waterfront Marathon, to offset some of the carbon emissions the race produces.

## OUR COMMUNITY

The generous support of our donors who believe in our mission to help the planet fight climate change and honour heroes through tree-planting enables us to support the ambitious goals of our partners.

### \$100K+

Government of Canada  
Cullen's Foods  
SJC  
Barrett Family Foundation

### \$25K-\$49,999

Government of Ontario  
AGF  
Harrington & Associates

### \$5,000-\$9,999

Gail Weiler  
JUEL Group  
Grey Animal Welfare Foundation  
de Pencier Family  
Dalglish Family Foundation  
Susan Lowbeer-Parsons  
Scott Wetmore  
Frances Price  
Lynn Cullen  
BTN  
Leith Wheeler

### \$50K-\$99,999

TD Bank  
Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario

### \$10K-\$24,999

Canada Running Series  
Sue & Bryan Green  
Royal Canin  
Landscape Ontario  
Dickhout Family Foundation  
Jackman Foundation  
Nan Shuttleworth



# MEDIA PARTNERS AND ADVERTISING AWARENESS

Trees for Life is tremendously fortunate that in 2023, TFL media partners including magazines, newspapers, and out-of-home advertising generously donated media space generating **over 1.2 billion impressions with a media value of over \$85 million.**





# SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS



# PLANTING PARTNERS



Little Forests Kingston, Kingston, ON



## CONTACT US

Please let us know how you'd like to be involved, perhaps by making a donation, suggesting a community planting project, or reaching out for more information. Thank you for your support.

Mike Hurley  
Executive Director  
647.292.7794  
mike@treesforlife.ca

Tony DiGiovanni  
Director of Strategic Partnerships  
416.737.8732  
Digiovanni.tony@gmail.com

Jacqueline Demchuk  
Strategic Marketing & Development Specialist  
416.300.6393  
jacqueline@treesforlife.ca

### Board of Directors

Mark Cullen CM | President  
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John Patterson, P.Eng.

Canadian Trees for Life is a registered charity operating as Trees for Life.

Registered Charity Number: 71228 7895 RR0001

7856 Fifth Line South, Milton, ON, L9T 2X8  
1.844.277.4376 | info@treesforlife.ca

