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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Senator Lugar Lead Plant A Million Trees “Kick Off” Campaign at State Fair Grounds on June 25th



Honorary Plant a Million Co-Chair U.S. Senator Richard Lugar and Hoosier Heartland President Paula Baldwin plant a tree at Celebration Park (Indiana State Fairgrounds) to kick off the Plant a Million Campaign!

Senator Richard Lugar helped plant the first official tree of a million that will dot the central Indiana landscape in the “Plant-A-Million Campaign”. The official first tree was a tulip tree, the Indiana State Tree, and was planted in front of the 4-H Buildings on the Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis, IN. This six to ten year campaign will result in a

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Hoosier Heartland RC&D Council is a not for profit 501(c)3 volunteer organization serving Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Monroe, Morgan, and Shelby Counties

healthier and more beautiful environment throughout ten counties (Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Monroe, Morgan and Shelby). The project has two major goals. The first is to plant more than a million native trees and the second is to help people learn to manage and take proper care of existing trees and those they plant. Senator Lugar and Mrs. Judy O'Bannon are serving as honorary project Co-Chairs and are actively supporting the effort. The Plant-A-Million project is a supportive of both urban and rural tree planting and management.

Senator Lugar pointed out at the kickoff ceremony on the Indiana State Fairgrounds this past Saturday, July 25th, that forestry is an important economic asset for the state. Indiana forests contribute over \$9 billion dollars to our economy each year, supporting 54,000 jobs. He stated, "Trees are a valuable component of our environment and ecosystem. They filter our water and air, provide protection and habitat for wildlife, prevent soil erosion and help regulate the earth's temperature by absorbing carbon and providing shade."

Planting trees in urban areas is important to replace those trees that are aging or that are being lost due to development, storms, pests and disease. Among many benefits, urban

trees can reduce air conditioning costs by up to 30 percent when located so that shade covers most of the home's roof.

The Plant a Million project is sponsored by the ten county level soil and water conservation districts and Hoosier Heartland Resource Conservation and Development Council. Additional information and educational programs for service clubs, community and church groups, homeowners associations can be arranged by calling your local conservation districts or contacting project coordinator Bob Eddleman at 317-271-4413. To learn more about the Plant A Million Campaign or the Hoosier Heartland RC&D visit their respective web sites: www.plantamillion.org or www.hhrcd.org

(Below is an optional photo that may be used in your story.)

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