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Friday April 29, 2005

WASHINGTON, DC - "Today is Arbor Day, a time to reaffirm our promises to make the greatest positive impact on the environment by investing in our communities. Trees and forests offer healthy, sustainable environments that are treasured by all people. As they say, the best time to plant a tree was twenty years ago. With this idea in mind, I want to increase the number of people who celebrate Arbor Day and make people more aware of the need for planting trees."

"It is in the federal interest to provide critical funding to help enhance our communities and neighborhoods. I have pledged my full support in funding Land & Water Conservation Programs, State Wildlife Grants and our National Park systems. With such programs, we can develop partnerships with private investors, educate the public, and conserve our natural surroundings."

"Conservation funds are used to purchase and manage national wildlife refuges, parks, forests, and public lands. More importantly, Conservation funds offer matching grant programs to assist states and local communities in acquiring recreational lands and developing facilities. State Wildlife Grants support strategic conservation and investments in every state. These programs fund local recreation projects, enabling millions of Americans to hike through breath-taking scenery, bike along lakeside and river trails, and enjoy our local parks."

"Outdoor sites, such as recreational parks and forests are the heart of many of our local neighborhoods, which is why federal funding for our natural resource programs is absolutely essential for the proper management and sustainability of our nation's natural heritage. Arbor Day is a great reminder of the commitments we make as a community to enhance our natural surroundings."