



News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Groundbreaking New Zealand Forest Opens September 15 ***Three-Year, \$2 Million Project is Most Significant Addition to Arboretum in Decades***

Seattle, WA—The Arboretum Foundation, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and the University of Washington Botanic Gardens invite the public to join us to celebrate the official opening of the [New Zealand Forest](#) in Washington Park Arboretum (2300 Arboretum Drive East, Seattle) on Sunday, September 15, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The dramatic new two-acre forest—located on a boulder-strewn hillside with breathtaking views—is the first of five eco-geographic forests to be fully completed in the Arboretum's [Pacific Connections Garden](#), which will eventually cover 14 acres and be the largest exhibit of its kind in North America. The forest was planted this summer—under the supervision of Seattle Parks and Recreation and University of Washington Botanic Gardens—and features 10,000 trees, shrubs, and grasses propagated from seeds collected in the wilds of New Zealand.

Construction of the New Zealand Forest cost roughly \$2 million. Funding came from the Arboretum Foundation and the 2008 Parks and Green Space Levy. Propagation of the plant material for the new exhibit was carried out during the past two years. Site preparation—grading of the soil, trail construction, installation of irrigation lines, and soil amendment—began in summer 2012 and was completed in time for planting in June.

As the New Zealand Forest establishes and matures, it will be a unique and spectacular new garden to enjoy at the Arboretum. Visitors will be able to

immerse themselves in unfamiliar landscapes—modeled on actual plant communities from the South Island of New Zealand—and discover beautiful plants they've never seen before.

The [Opening Celebration](#)—organized in partnership with the [Seattle-Christchurch Sister City Association](#) and the [Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture](#)—will pay homage to New Zealand's culture and ethnobotanical history. It will feature a traditional Maori “haka,” or war dance, and a dedication ceremony with special guest Caine Tauwhare, a Maori wood carver from New Zealand who carved the slats for a park bench in the new forest. There will also be speeches by Seattle Mayor Mike McGinn, UW Vice Provost for Global Affairs Jeffrey Riedinger, New Zealand Honorary Consul Rachel Jacobson, and senior officials from Seattle Parks and Recreation, the University of Washington Botanic Gardens, and the Arboretum Foundation.

In addition, visitors will enjoy live music, guided tours of the new forest, educational activities hosted by University of Washington Botanic Gardens, a ribbon cutting, and refreshments. The event will take place at the Pacific Connections meadow at the south end of the Arboretum, and is *free and open to the public*.

Event Schedule:

- **11:00–11:15 AM:** Welcome by Warren KingGeorge, oral historian of the Muckleshoot Tribe.
- **11:15–11:20 AM:** Haka dance performance by [Te Tini A Maui](#).
- **11:20–11:40 AM:** Speeches by Mike McGinn (Mayor of Seattle), Jeffrey M. Riedinger, J.D., Ph.D., (Vice Provost for Global Affairs, University of Washington), Craig Trueblood (Arboretum Foundation Board President), and Rachel Jacobson (New Zealand Honorary Consul).
- **11:40–11:45 AM:** Procession from the Pacific Connections meadow to the New Zealand Forest.
- **11:45 AM–12:00 PM:** Ribbon-cutting ceremony, led by Jack Collins, chair of the Arboretum and Botanical Garden Committee chair.
- **12:05–12:20 PM:** Performance by Te Tini A Maui.
- **12:25–12:50 PM:** Poi and haka workshops by Te Tini A Maui.
- **1:00–1:15 PM:** Bench dedication with Maori carver, Caine Tauwhare.
- **12:35–2:00 PM:** Tours, family activities, and refreshments.

For more information, visit www.arboretumfoundation.org or call the Arboretum Foundation at 206-325-4510.

Parking and Transportation: Arboretum Drive will be open to one-way traffic, going south, for the duration of the event. Parking will be permitted along the right-hand side of the drive, as well as in designated Arboretum parking lots. To help reduce traffic, please consider using public transportation, or coming by bike or on foot.

Event sponsor: [Port Blakely Companies](#)

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The New Zealand Forest design: The Arboretum's newest exhibit is more than just forest. It is composed of seven distinct vegetation zones—two southern beech (*Nothofagus*) forests, three shrublands, and two alpine grasslands—all of them modeled on actual plant communities found in mid- to high-elevation zones on the South Island of New Zealand. For detailed information about the design of the new exhibit, see "[Planting the New Zealand Forest](#)," in the summer 2013 issue of the *Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin*.

Photos: High-resolution photos of the New Zealand Forest are available upon request from the Arboretum Foundation. Images of the project construction and completed forest can be viewed on the Arboretum Foundation's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Arboretum.Found>.

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