



ALASKA

Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry

In 2020, the Alaska Community Forestry program collaborated with the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF); the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), Parks and Recreation Department; the Society of American Foresters (SAF), Cook Inlet Chapter; and the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) to give away 100 trees at the 2020 Alaska Virtual Run for Women (<https://www.akrfw.org/>). The trees were provided through a generous gift from International Paper.

Every June, the Alaska Run for Women (AKRFW) is held during the long, long days of early summer in Anchorage. Since 1993, the event has raised more than \$4.8 million to fight breast cancer. The AKRFW is one of the five largest all-women running events in the United States.

In 2019, the Alaska Community Forestry program arranged for a \$1,000 donation of ten crabapple trees from the Society of American Foresters, Cook Inlet Chapter for the AKRFW.

After the success of 2019, there was interest in giving away more trees. The goal: to give away 100 trees that could be picked up at the event and could easily fit into a car.

Last fall, NASF announced that in celebration of their 100th Anniversary in 2020, they would be initiating a Centennial Challenge to encourage 100-themed forestry activities. Giving away 100 trees fit right in!

Coincidentally, at about the same time, the Alaska Community Forestry program was contacted by the ADF's Community Recovery Program, who were then put in touch with the MOA Parks and Recreation Department. The ADF helped the MOA find

a sponsor in International Paper, who donated 100 trees for the 2020 AKRFW.

Then in March 2020, the AKRFW Board of Directors was faced with COVID-19. The choices: cancel the run, postpone, or see if holding a "virtual" event were possible. Virtual seemed like the best and only option, and it worked! From June 20-27, runners and walkers signed up and participated virtually. Not only did over 3,000 people take part, but there were also participants in all 50 states!

It has been quite the collaborative effort, involving AKRFW, Alaska Community Forestry, SAF, ADF, MOA Parks & Recreation, NASF, and International Paper.



1. AKRFW virtual runners posing with some of the famous downtown Anchorage "critters." Photo Credit: AKRFW website / Facebook. **2.** The 100 trees donated by International Paper were socially distanced distributed. Photo Credit: Jim Renkert. **3.** Alaska Women are tough. Some even run in the snow-covered mountains (when they're not skiing or climbing them)! Photo Credit: AKRFW website / Facebook.

