Hello ReForest London supporters,

I hope you and your families and friends are safe and healthy in these difficult times. Like everyone, we have been hit hard by COVID-19, but I want you to know that we are still here, our staff are safe, and we are still working (apart, but together) to make London greener and healthier. If you need to reach us, email is best, but we are checking messages.

The non-profit sector plays an incredibly important role in delivering social and environmental services. I’m sure you have seen many powerful examples lately. I feel like the pandemic has really revealed many of the weaknesses in our social systems that are not so obvious to everyone at other times. We need to be vigilant when the worst of this crisis passes to ensure we strengthen our community. Building resiliency into our communities, from the ground up, will be key.

Have you noticed that nature has become an essential service? Now, more than ever, we realize how important it is to be outside, how important it is to have some space to walk and enjoy nature, and how nature in the city makes the city entirely more live-able. Whether you are enjoying a local park, a protected natural area, or even just a walk along a well-treed street, I hope you feel a positive effect on your sense of well-being. It’s well-proven by now that even short exposure to nature calms us, reduces stress hormones, and improves our mental health.

Many of you have been asking about our spring programming. We have made the difficult decision to postpone all of our planned spring tree planting events. We expect to be back at it in fall and will look for your help in creating more needed natural areas in the city. For the moment, all spring tree-giveaways are on hold. We know that they are popular and there is a new appreciation of having trees around. When it’s safe, we are ready to go. We hold out hope that by June, we will be able to invite you to adopt a new tree and help your yards and our neighbourhoods be leafier and healthier.

We are running some tree and nature-based activities for you or your family to do at home and outside, and we are building up some interesting workshops and training for current and budding environmentalists. More details on all our current and upcoming activities and programs will be in our newsletter next week.

I sincerely hope that you can find a way to let nature help you through this time. Take the time to notice nature, to appreciate it, let it soak into you.

Best wishes. Stay well. Stay safe.

Dean Sheppard
Executive Director