

A boost for the planet



In this photo from the fall of 2007, Boeing employees take part in a wetlands cleanup day in Southern California. On April 22—Earth Day—employees will have the chance to take part in company-sponsored environmental events. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BOLSA CHICA CONSERVANCY

Earth Day observations align with Boeing efforts to improve performance in environmental areas

By CHAZ BICKERS AND SUSAN BIRKHOLTZ

Action, education, involvement: Those are the goals of this year's Earth Day, which on April 22 is expected to see the largest-ever participation globally in an event that focuses on improving the environment.

Thousands of Boeing employees took part last year in Earth Day events. This year is expected to be even bigger, with 50 sites joining in with both new events and those that are becoming recurring staples, such as Boeing's 13-year partnership at the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kan., which brings about 9,000 students in to learn about local ecology issues.

"Observing Earth Day each year highlights the importance of making real improvements and checking performance," said Mark Arvizu, the Environmental Health and Safety representative responsible for helping employees learn about and effect environmental change at Boeing. "This day is about making a difference, and it shows how Boeing, its employees and its communities have a common goal to help protect our ecosystem."

This year, site representatives across the world from Global Corporate Citizenship and EH&S are teaming to support employees in Earth Day events and activities.

"The environment is one of GCC's five focus areas for investing in our communities, so it's a natural partnership for EH&S and GCC to

collaborate and focus our resources on Earth Day activities—and a great example of 'One Boeing,'" said Patrice Mingo, GCC director, Strategic Employee Programs. "It's a win-win for Boeing, our employees and our communities when we leverage the excitement and ingenuity of employee volunteers with philanthropic grants to tackle environment-related needs in our communities."

Boeing is action-oriented on the environment and sharpening its focus. Since 1998, the company has cut energy use by more than a third and hazardous waste by more than half. In January, Boeing introduced aggressive new targets for its facilities that will improve energy efficiency, greenhouse-gas-emissions intensity, hazardous-waste generation and recycle rates by 25 percent over the next five years.

And Boeing is seeking more transparency and accountability for its performance. One example is the company's participation in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Leaders program this year. By joining EPA Climate Leaders, Boeing commits to reducing its impact on the environment by completing a corporatewide inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, setting long-term reduction goals and annually reporting its progress to the EPA. "By joining EPA Climate Leaders, Boeing is making it clear we must improve our environmental footprint," said Mary Armstrong, Boeing vice president, Environment, Health and Safety.

Boeing will also be publishing an environmental report this year, outlining its approach and vision and publishing its performance on key environmental metrics, such as greenhouse-gas emissions, recycling rates and energy efficiency.

"Whatever improvement Boeing achieves will rely on the dedication, inspiration and expertise of its employees, and Earth Day is an opportunity to make linkages and uncover ideas for change," Arvizu said.

GCC-initiated Earth Day employee volunteer opportunities include one in Southern California where the Seal Beach site is partnering with both the California High Desert group and TreePeople, a Boeing grantee, for a tree-planting event in areas burned by last year's wildfires. Another example is the Boeing site at the Kennedy Space Center, where employees will be participating in a cleanup event at the "spoil islands" in the Indian River Lagoon with the nonprofit Keep Brevard (County) Beautiful, also a Boeing grantee.

GCC's Mingo noted that employees are encouraged to contact their local GCC and EH&S representatives with suggestions for environment-related volunteer activities they would like their site to consider sponsoring and participating in.

To get involved, check with your local EH&S or GCC focal or your local site or business-unit Web site—and visit Boeing News Now. ■

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