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WSU Extension Puget Sound Forest Stewardship E-Newsletter

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Forester's Notes

Happy New Year! We wrapped up our busiest and most productive year ever, and 2012 is already off to a fast start with our first Forest Stewardship Coached Planning series of the year underway on Whidbey Island. We're getting ready to launch a whole bunch of online workshops and are planning for a variety of in-person workshops throughout the four-county area.

The most pressing issues for many of you as we start the new year, though, are the impacts from our January storms. Between snow loads, freezing rain, and wind, area forests got beat up pretty good. Chances are that most of you were impacted by this and are dealing with downed or damaged trees.

As you begin to assess damage, my first word of advice is to not panic. With so much damage, lengthy power outages, etc., people tend to react to storms like this based on frustration, fear, and other emotions, and end up doing more damage to their property (and enjoyment thereof) than needed to reasonably address risks and hazards.

Please be safe and do not ever approach downed lines of any kind (don't ever assume it's just a communication or otherwise non-energized line...) or the "target zone" of any suspended tree or limb that appears in imminent danger of falling. Meanwhile, take a deep breath and do a careful clean-up and assessment. If you need to hire someone to assess, apply first aid, or remove a storm-damaged tree, please choose an ISA-certified arborist (but keep in mind that those folks are stretched thin for the immediate future). There are plenty of "services" running around with chainsaws out there that may not meet your needs.

Here is some info on tree first aid from ODF via WA DNR:

http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/rp_urban_tree_first_aid.pdf

Here is another link on assessing damaged trees:

http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/rp_urban_can_trees_be_saved.pdf

Here is the ISA website with a directory of certified arborists:

<http://www.treesaregood.org/>

Storm damage like this is natural and is part of the ecology of our forests. This doesn't make the damage less difficult to deal with, though, and the damage almost always conflicts with management objectives. Keeping these objectives at the forefront of your mind (aesthetics, enjoyment, habitat, etc.) will help you make proactive (rather than reactive) decisions about your woodland as you steward its recovery. The good news is that nature is resilient (and you are, too!). It is OK to grieve a little in the meantime, though.

Kevin W. Zobrist

WSU Area Extension Educator, Forest Stewardship

Serving Snohomish, Skagit, King, and Island Counties

New Publications

New WSU Extension Forestry publications don't come out very often, so it is particularly exciting to be able to announce five more new offerings, in addition to the four that were announced in the last edition of this newsletter.. These are all written for forest owners and those who work with forest owners, and they are based on some of the most frequently asked questions that come up in the Extension Forestry program. I think you will find these useful and timely.

FS060E: Your Forest Stewardship Plan

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/FS060E/FS060E.pdf>

FS061E: Tree Topping: A Practice to Avoid

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/FS061E/FS061E.pdf>

EM026E: Backyard Forest Stewardship in Western Washington

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/EM026E/EM026E.pdf>

EM028E: Backyard Forest Stewardship in Eastern Washington

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/EM028E/EM028E.pdf>

EM038E: Simple Homemade Forestry Tools for Resource Inventories

<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/EM038E/EM038E.pdf>

Forest Stewardship Winter Social

After several postponements, we've finally got the next Forest Stewardship Social scheduled! Mark your calendars for Friday March 16th. In addition to a great potluck dinner, WSU Extension Forester Emeritus Don Hanley will be there to give some demonstrations out of his new homemade forestry tools manual (see above), and I'll be talking about the big new biofuels project. Please RSVP. Details and RSVP info available at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/social2012Mar.htm> or by calling 425-357-6017.

2012 Native Plant Sales

The 2012 native tree and plant sales offered by local conservation districts are coming up fast. This is one of the best sources of native trees and understory plants. Pre-order deadlines are pending or past for some counties at this point, but there are still walk-up sale opportunities.

Snohomish/Camano:

March 2 & 3, 2012

Pre-Order 12/5/2011 – 2/8/2012

<http://snohomishcd.org/plant-sale>

425-335-5634, ext 110

Skagit:

March 23 & 34 and April 14, 2012

Pre-Order by 3/2/2012

<http://www.skagitcd.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Brochure%20in%20MS%20Word.pdf>

360-428-4313

King:
March 2 & 3, 2012
Pre-Order deadline was 1/27/2012
http://www.kingcd.org/pro_native.htm
425-282-1912

Whidbey Island:
March 2 and 3, 2012
Pre-Order deadline is 1/30/2012
<http://whidbeycd.org/plantsale.aspx>
360-678-4708

Market Update

Here is the latest news on log prices in the Puget Sound area based on data provided by our friends at DNR in their monthly Timber Sale Query reports.

Log prices declined the last two months of 2011 for most species. Douglas-fir is the exception, with a price increase in December (part of that is due to a strong demand for pole-grade Douglas-fir). Douglas-fir and alder are both significantly higher than they were a year ago.

For an updated price graph, please visit
<http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/LogPrices.pdf>

Summer Youth Program Report

This past summer, we partnered with the US Forest Service to provide a unique experiential summer job opportunity for Snohomish County teens called the Summer Youth Forestry Institute. Due to the declining enrollments in forestry and other natural resource careers it is imperative that high school students are provided more exposure to early job experiences in these fields. Many youth do not have a good sense of what natural resource management is and what career options exist. We received a grant to work with the Darrington Ranger District to connect Snohomish County youth directly with forestry and natural resource projects and professionals.

Six students from Granite Falls and Darrington High Schools were hired and put to work in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie Forest, receiving a stipend for their service. The teens completed a total of 120 hours of work and training, impressing forest service staff and WSU educators with their passion and eagerness to learn about forestry and the natural world as well as their dedication to accomplishing challenging tasks.

The biggest hurdle was to prepare the teens for field projects that included trail maintenance and construction, post-thinning data collection, invasive plant and white

pine blister rust removal. In short order these teens learned how to work as a team, clearly communicate, and set and reach specific goals in a physically demanding environment. The program kicked off with two days of 4-H challenge activities that helped students develop group norms, build cohesive teams and acquire the communication skills necessary to complete the physically and mentally challenging work.

The students were immersed in lessons both in-class and in the field that included; forest ecology and health, native plant and tree identification, forest measurements, field navigation, and silviculture. The students quickly gained the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their job and attributed their success to the experiential aspect of their learning environment. Complex concepts and technical skills would be required for the post-thinning data collection project and the students felt prepared and eager to accomplish their tasks.

The students completed 13 post-thinning data collection plots in very steep terrain, construction and maintenance on national forest trails, removal of invasive weeds on public lands, and branch pruning to improve the health of national forest stands infected with a damaging exotic disease. Forest Service staff were very impressed with what the teens accomplished on public lands in a limited amount of time. The students were consistently described as “prepared and hard-working.”

Another important aspect of this program was to teach the youth about forestry and natural resource careers. A career planning day included visits from various natural resource and forestry professionals, résumé writing, and self-assessments. The students met and talked with a Forest Service fire crew leader, a law enforcement officer, foresters from various agencies, a wildlife biologist, and a Tribal fisheries technician. The guests shared their passion for their field of work and the path that led them to their career choice. The students also learned what educational requirements would be necessary for jobs in the natural resource and forestry fields.

Here is a quote from one of the parents that sums up the experience:

“We want to thank you for the opportunity that you provided our son this summer. He has not stopped talking about it. We have driven up to Darrington since and he showed us some of the things he learned. During conversations over the past few months he was abound with information, I would ask how he knew this information and he said, ‘I learned it through the WSU Forestry Field job this summer.’ Thank you so much for what you do. You make a difference at an impressionable age.”

Forestry in the News

- The Daily Herald reports on the pending closure of the Seattle-Snohomish sawmill: <http://heraldnet.com/article/20120124/NEWS01/701249898>

- The Peninsula Daily News reports on a ruling by the state pollution control board in support of a biomass plant in Port Angeles:
<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20120115/news/301159983/state-pollution-board-ruling-sides-with-nippon-paper-industries-usa>
- *The Oregonian* reports on a temporary reprieve from Congress on the issue with logging roads and the Clean Water Act:
http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2011/12/congress_delays_regulation_of.html
- *The Seattle Times* reports on the conservation of North Creek forestland in Bothell:
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2017026406_bothellwoods16m.html
- *The Seattle Times* reports on a land swap deal with the state near Ellensburg:
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2017034739_cascades17.html
- *The Seattle Times* reports on new efforts by the Forest Service to control invasive species:
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2016950080_apornationalfores tsinvasivespecies.html
- *The Seattle Times* reports on more disputes over lumber imports:
http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2017049620_aporcheaplumber 1stdwritethru.html
- *The Washington Post* reports on bark beetle activity throughout the Inland West:
http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/bark-beetles-aided-by-climate-change-are-devastating-us-pine-forests/2011/11/08/gIQA0B0CWO_story.html

Tidbits

- A new edition of Forest Stewardship Notes is available at
<http://foreststewardshipnotes.wordpress.com/>
- DNR is gathering public input on ways to permanently fund the Forestry Riparian Easement Program (FREP) at a public meeting on February 8, 2012 4:00-6:00 p.m., Natural Resources Building, room 172, 1111 Washington Street, Olympia, Washington (follow signs from visitors parking level, P-1, to the meeting room).
- Snohomish County residents should report to the county's Department of Emergency Management (DEM) storm damages related to the recent bad weather.

Damage assessments determine the county's eligibility for state, federal, and grant assistance. Call SnoCo DEM at 425-388-5088 or fill out damage assessment online at <http://www.snoco.org>.

- King County is offering free wood debris recycling on February 4th and 5th for King County residents who need to dispose of storm debris. Location and times are available at <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/garbage-recycling/storm-debris.asp> or by calling 206-296-4466.
- The US Forest Service has a great new field guide to invasive plants in the Pacific Northwest: http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr817.pdf. You can also order a free print copy by calling 503-261-1211.
- Got firewood? Here's another fairly new Forest Service publication on fuelwood characteristics of Pacific Northwest trees: http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr810.pdf

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Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence of noncompliance may be reported through your local Extension office.

Persons with a disability requiring special accommodations while participating in any of the programs described above should call WSU Extension at 425-357-6017 to request accommodation at least two weeks in advance.