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WSU Extension Puget Sound Forest Stewardship E-Newsletter

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The WSU Extension Puget Sound Forest Stewardship E-Newsletter is sent out periodically as news and announcements become available. Please feel free to forward and share this information with others who may be interested.

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Forester's Notes

This is a great time of year to be a forest owner. Hardwoods and conifers alike are flush with new growth, the understory is in bloom, and there is a symphony of frogs and birds. My goal is to help you get the most out of being a forest owner. To that end, we've got some great events coming up, including our spring social in just a few days and our big summer field day at the end of the July. I hope to see many of you at these events.

Spring is a special time for me, too, as it is a time that I get to work a lot with school kids. Teaching kids about the woods is a joy, a privilege, and I believe also a duty. I have very much enjoyed my time working with kids this spring. I had two experiences, though, that have gotten me thinking.

The first experience was administering a forestry challenge activity to high school students at regional competition. One of the questions was: “What happens to the carbon sequestered in the stem of a tree when the tree is harvested to create wood products?” Out of 20 teams, only one correctly answered that carbon from the tree stem remains sequestered in the resulting wood products. The other answers were 1) The carbon is immediately released back in to the atmosphere when the tree is cut, 2) The carbon is slowly extracted and released back into the atmosphere during the manufacturing process, and 3) Carbon is not sequestered in the tree stem – only in leaves and roots.

The responses to this part of the challenge surprised me because I had assumed that these bright, energetic high school science students had studied the carbon cycle and understood the basic mechanics of forestry and carbon sequestration. I should not have just assumed that. It also raises the further question of whether our students are equipped to make informed decisions about the issues they will be faced with in the future. Climate change, forest management, and carbon sequestration are hotly debated from the academic halls to legislative halls. I won’t unpack those debates right now. Rather, my point is that as a society we will be faced with critical policy decisions about these issues, and I don’t see these issues going away anytime soon.

The other experience was a story that was related to me from one of our local elementary schools about a schoolyard conflict involving a young student who was very upset about what was happening in a wooded area on school grounds. His classmates, with the guidance of their teacher, had undertaken a project to remove invasive Himalayan blackberries in an attempt to restore native vegetation. This young man, who is very passionate about the forest, had been taught outside of school about the importance of understory vegetation (which is correct). However, he did not understand the difference between natives and invasives. He became convinced that pulling out the blackberries – these green, vigorous, understory plants – will destroy the health of the forest. Despite the efforts of his teacher to educate and correct, the misunderstanding remains. Ideas about forests and the environment can be imprinted very deeply on young children, and incorrect (or incomplete) ideas may be hard to overcome.

I see these two experiences as related. In both cases, the basic forest stewardship concepts that I take for granted every day are not well understood by our youth (nor, I suspect, by much of the public who do not have the same intimate relationship with the forest as those who live and work in the woods). Our youth today are smart, enthusiastic, and passionate about caring for the forest. But we cannot assume that they understand the basic workings of the forest or can discern between good and poor stewardship. We cannot expect anyone, children or adults, to know what no one has taught them. To me, these experiences are important reminders of the knowledge I take for granted and the challenge before us when it comes to stewardship, education, and communication. We cannot assume that others know what we know, and we ourselves must continue to seek opportunities for our own learning and continuing education.

With this in mind, I will keep looking for ways to engage local youth to build up a stewardship ethic combined with stewardship knowledge. I want to challenge all of you to do the same. As forest owners, you have the unique opportunity to share your passion, your knowledge, and your forestland with young people. Whether it is a science class at your local school, a scout troop, or a young friend, neighbor, or family member whom you are mentoring, be on the lookout for opportunities to share even the simplest “ways of the woods” with young people – *don't assume they know!*

Kevin W. Zobrist
WSU Area Extension Educator
Serving King, Snohomish, and Skagit Counties

Forest Stewardship Survey

I am currently working on putting together a short online survey for you, the readers of this newsletter. The feedback from this survey will be used to help set the direction and content of the Forest Stewardship Program for the next couple years, with the goal of providing you the best, most relevant, and most accessible programs possible. You will be asked questions about program topics of interest, location preferences, delivery preferences, and program time preferences. There will also be a few questions about the format of this newsletter.

In a few days, you will receive an email with an invitation and link to this survey. As with any survey, the data is only meaningful if we get a good response rate. In other words, ***your participation is essential***. The survey will be short, will not collect any personal information, can be done right from your computer, and will directly impact the programs and services offered over the next few years.

Forest Stewardship Spring Social

The spring social is just a few days away – it will be Wednesday evening, May 5th, from 6:30 – 9:00 PM at the Snohomish County Extension auditorium in south Everett. Get to know your fellow landowners, eat great food, and learn about what others are doing. There will be a short educational program, including:

- A presentation by the Deterings about their Lewis County tree farm, their battles with nutria, interesting things they are working on, and some fascinating logging history.
- A presentation by the Bosco Aburto and Betsy Binnian about their tree nursery in Nicaragua.
- A presentation by WSU Extension Specialist Jim Freed about special forest products such as medicinals.

This will be potluck, so please bring a dish and/or a beverage to share. We will provide plates, cups, etc., as well as coffee and tea. We've got lots of folks signed up already, and

there's plenty of room for more. **If you are planning on coming, please RSVP at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/social2010May.htm>** or by calling 425-357-6017.

2010 Forest Owners Field Day

It's time to mark the summer field day on your calendar! The annual Western Washington Forest Owners Field Day will be in the Puget Sound area for the second year in a row. The 2010 Field Day will be held **Saturday July 31st** in the Ravensdale area just east of Maple Valley in King County. This will be the first year the field day has been held in King County. The field day site is an hour or less from Seattle, Bellevue, Everett, Tacoma, or Olympia, and under two hours from Mount Vernon.

The Forest Stewardship Program's biggest annual event will feature hands-on sessions on a variety of forestry topics, including wildlife, forest health, silviculture, trail building, special forest products, and much more. Learn how to properly thin and prune trees, how to plant and care for young trees, how to attract more wildlife to your property, and how to enhance your personal enjoyment of your property. There is something for all ages and all skill levels at the field day. Whether you own a couple wooded acres or a couple hundred, there is something for you at the summer field day!

Registration will be opening soon – for details visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/2010FieldDay.htm>.

Other upcoming WSU Forestry Events

- **Eastside Forest Owners Field Day** – For those of you with forestland in Eastern Washington, there will also be an Eastside field day. This year it will be June 12th in Athol, ID (in cooperation with U of I Extension). For details and registration, visit http://ext.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/Forest_AquiferLo.pdf.
- **Natural Resources Youth Field Day** – Got kids? Then mark your calendars for Tuesday July 6th to bring them to the summer natural resources field day at the WSU Snohomish County Extension center at McCollum Park in South. Kids of all ages will enjoy hands-on learning about trees, wetlands, streams, bugs, and more. Details and registration information will be available soon.
- **Coached Planning** – Our next Forest Stewardship Coached Planning series will be on Tuesday evenings this fall from September 21st – November 16th in the Issaquah/Preston area. Details and registration information will be available soon.
- **Online Coached Planning** – We also expect to offer the first ever online Coached Planning this fall. Development of this online course is underway. More details will be released as they become available.

Forestry in the News

Some WSU Extension newsletters provide links to external sites for the convenience of users. These external sites are not managed by the WSU Extension. Furthermore, WSU Extension does not review, control or take responsibility for the content of these sites, nor do these sites implicitly or explicitly represent official positions and policies of WSU Extension.

- The Oregonian reports on the growing problem with Swiss Needle Cast in coastal Douglas-fir forests: http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/04/douglas-fir_disease_spreading.html
- *The Seattle Times* ran a guest editorial on forest conversion coauthored by Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark and Gene Duvernoy from Cascade Land Conservancy: http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2011060263_guest16goldmark.html
- *The Seattle PI* reports on fire danger in Eastern Washington forests: http://www.seattlepi.com/connelly/418456_joel15.html
- *The Wall Street Journal* reports on the economic troubles facing an experimental “green wood” lumberyard in Portland: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304703104575174541891049132.html>
- *The Daily Herald* in Everett reports on a settlement in a lawsuit against DNR regarding forest practices and mudslides: <http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20100423/NEWS03/704239766>
- *The Daily Herald* in Everett also reports on the local conservation efforts of Laura Spehar in Edmonds. Laura is involved with a number of WSU Extension programs, including forest stewardship. Congratulations on a great article, Laura, and thanks for all you do! <http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20100419/NEWS01/704199929>
- The *Skagit Valley Herald* reports that Mount Vernon and Anacortes continue to be recognized as by the “Tree City USA” Program: http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/anacortes_mv_are_tree_city_usa_communities/
- Finally, a fun article from the *Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber* a about kids installing wood duck boxes: <http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/vashon/vib/lifestyle/92241144.html>

Tidbits

Here are some other items of interest:

- The DNR is accepting applications until June 7th for the **Riparian Open Space Program**, which purchases conservation easements along the meandering lower reaches of streams and rivers called Channel Migration Zones in order to protect these ecologically important areas. The application form and instructions, along with additional general information about the program may be found http://www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/OtherIndustryLandownerResources/Pages/riparian_open_space_program.aspx Questions may be addressed to Dan Pomerenk at DNR: 360-902-1427 or dan.pomerenk@dnr.wa.gov.
- The next UW Denman Forestry Issues Series program will be titled “**Forests and the Health of Puget Sound**” and will be recorded from 1 – 5 PM on May 18th at the UW Botanical Gardens at the Seattle Campus. This recording is open to the public, but seating is limited and reservations are required. For more information visit <http://www.cfr.washington.edu/outreach/denman/index.shtml> or call 206-685-0953.
- Forest health pest alert – From Glenn Kohler at DNR: “Please be on the look-out for the **green alder sawfly**, a new invasive defoliator of alder. It has been found at several locations in Alaska and one adult was identified from a photo taken in Clark County, Washington. See attached pest alert. We would like to have better records of where it occurs in Washington. So if you see any distinctly green sawfly larvae feeding this spring, please collect specimens and take photos. Live larvae would be preferred (keep in a sealed ziplock bag inflated with air). Adults can be put in vials with alcohol. Please contact me for information on where and how to send specimens.” - Glenn Kohler, Forest Entomologist, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, (360) 902-1342, glenn.kohler@dnr.wa.gov
- Another forest health note – this one from Karen Ripley at DNR: “This is the high time of the year for seeing **silver spotted tiger moth** (*Lophocampa argentata* – used to be called *Halisidota argentata*) (brown/orange/gold/black hairy caterpillars with black skin) in dense congregations on conifer tree branches. The nests are kind of messy with webbing, droppings, lots of caterpillars and partially eaten foliage. By mid May, the caterpillars will be wandering about, making felt-like cocoons on walls and firewood. They are not damaging to the trees (they’ve finished feeding before the current year foliage will flush) and are chock-full of beneficial (to humans) parasitoids and parasites that will be available for all sorts of insect control later this summer. Although SSTM doesn’t damage trees, this was one of the most significant chronic defoliators of conifers that was observed by the canopy crane installation down near Carson, WA. Lots of homeowners worry about it, but don’t let them destroy SSTM – these larvae are so full of good parasitoids.”

- There is a great video available online of DNR Forest Pathologist Dan Omdal discussing **Armillaria root rot**, which affects trees in both eastern and western Washington: http://www.chronlinemedia.com/video/100407_fungus.php
- Here is another great video of Dr. Dave Peterson (UW/USFS) talking about **fire ecology and climate change**:
<http://www.uwTV.org/programs/displayevent.aspx?rID=31295&fID=6781>

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