



Forestry

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

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In this issue:

(click links to jump to article)

- [Forester's Notes](#)
- [North Puget Sound Forestry Field Day](#)
- [Women Owning Woodlands](#)
- [Twilight Tour](#)
- [Forest Stewardship Coached Planning](#)
- [Market Update](#)
- [Tidbits](#)
- [Focus On: What is Extension?](#)
- [Subscription and Contact Info](#)

Forester's Notes

Summer is here! Some of our best programs happen over the summer. Case in point, the annual forestry field day is coming up on July 26th near Arlington in Snohomish County. You'll have the opportunity to attend a variety of different workshops. If you missed the mushroom workshop or the Firewise workshop earlier this year, now is your chance to make those up, along with many other topics. We also have some special opportunities for women coming up – read on for details.

Before we delve too deeply into summer, though, I want to reflect a bit on this past spring. Spring rains bring growth and renewal to the woods. This year, though, they also brought tragedy when a hillside above Oso, saturated by an extraordinary amount of rainfall, gave way and in a matter of seconds decimated a community, blocked a major river, and killed 43 people. I drove through the slide area last week on my way to Darrington and saw firsthand the astounding magnitude of the disaster. The collapsed hillside and destruction below reminded me of Mt. St. Helens on a smaller scale.

The mudslide is a sobering reminder of the power of nature to do terrible things that we cannot control. The media coverage I observed suggested that the questions at the forefront of the public consciousness were “why did it happen?” and “who is responsible?” This is an understandable reaction, but I wonder if the line between what we can control and what we really can’t is getting blurred in our minds in this age of technology. I also wonder if we have an exaggerated sense of what we know, understand, and can predict about the natural world in this age of information.

Perhaps it is easier to process tragedies that can be tied to human error or negligence, as it gives a sense that the issue is within the realm of human control and if we were only to *do it right*, we would not be faced with such heartache. But nature is hazardous, untamed, and uncontrolled. On the one hand this creates the beauty, diversity, wildness, and (ironically) restorative properties that we love about nature, but it also brings its share of ugliness, destruction, and anguish.

In forestry we talk a lot about disturbances, even catastrophic ones, being a normal part of the ecosystem. In the case of the Stillaguamish Valley, these events are ultimately driven by the underlying geology of the area. LIDAR images reveal the scars of similar catastrophic slides from centuries past, that have long since been obscured by vegetation and recovery (LIDAR is a remote-sensing tool that uses an aircraft-mounted laser to penetrate the vegetation and create a detailed image of the underlying terrain).

Just because something is “normal” in the natural sense does not mean that we should be callous, casual, or dismissive about it. This disaster, like all disasters, caused a tremendous amount of excruciating human suffering that only the victims and the rescue teams have full awareness of. One of the most troubling aspects for me is the realization that nature has no capacity for mercy or compassion, nor does it have any sense of justice.

How then should we respond? I don’t think the answer is to live in fear or try to purge habitation in all areas of possible natural harm. The Earth is restless beneath our feet, and there is not a single place in western Washington that doesn’t have the potential for a deadly earthquake or other disaster. So what do we do? I think the communities of Oso, Darrington, Arlington, and all the people who came to help from the broader community demonstrated exactly what our response to a natural disaster should be—to come together as communities and neighbors to rescue, recover, restore, rebuild, and help one another grieve and heal. Unlike the natural world, we as people do have the capacity to show mercy and compassion. It is one of the things that sets us apart and makes us uniquely human.

Kevin W. Zobrist
Regional Extension Forestry Specialist
Serving the North Puget Sound Area

[\[return to top\]](#)

North Puget Sound Forestry Field Day

The summer field day is just around the corner! It will be Saturday July 26th from 9:00 a.m. to 4 pm. Gates open at 8 am. The field day site is just outside of Arlington in Snohomish County. It is an hour from Seattle or Bellevue, and just over 30 minutes from Everett or Mount Vernon. This is all outdoors and hands-on, and the weather should be perfect. The great thing about the field day is that it is not just one workshop, but rather you will get to choose five different workshops to attend. Have you missed recent workshops on mushrooms, Firewise, wildlife, or forest health? You can get all of this at the field day. The workshop topics you will get to choose from are:

- insects/diseases/animal damage
- wildlife
- thinning
- pruning
- growing edible mushrooms
- measuring trees
- wildfire prevention
- invasive species control
- tree planting and seedling care
- soils
- property tour with the landowner

There will also be exhibitors, public and private forestry professionals on hand to answer your questions, and special activities for children.

The location is the property of Keith and Sally Graves, located at approximately 13818 184th St NE (Mattson Rd), Arlington. Remember to pack a picnic lunch as we won't be serving food other than coffee, water, and snacks. There will be restrooms on site, though. The cost is \$25.00/person or \$35/couple before July 15th; \$35/\$45 thereafter. Kids attend free. We have a special offer for Darrington residents—call us at 425-357-6023 for details.

The early registration discount (save \$10!) has been extended until July 15th. Pre-registration is not required—if you are the spontaneous, last-minute type, you can simply show up and register at the gate. To save time at the registration station, though, we encourage you to pre-register and you can do so online or by mail. For details and registration info, visit <http://forestry.wsu.edu/nps/events/fieldday/> or call 425-357-6023.

Note: there will be a second field day in Salkum (Lewis County) on August 9th. For details on that field day visit http://forestry.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/FOFD-Salkum_low.pdf or contact Andy Perleberg at 509-667-6540.

[\[return to top\]](#)

Women Owning Woodlands

Are you a woman looking to become more involved in making the land management decisions on your wooded property? Washington State University Extension Forestry is excited to launch the first Washington state chapter of Woman Owning Woodlands. Woman Owning Woodlands is a network of women who learn, educate, and work together to build female literacy and involvement in forestry, land conservation, and natural resources. This is your opportunity to start seeking out resources to care for your land by becoming more connected and learning with and from other women in similar land management roles.

Our goal to establish a North Puget Sound Chapter of the Woman Owning Woodlands Network (WOWnet). WOWnet is a nationwide program that is dynamic, fun, informative, and strives to bring topical, accessible, and current forestry information to woman woodland owners and forest practitioners. We support women in forest leadership, women who manage their own woodlands, and all who facilitate the stewardship of forests. Utilizing tools such as news articles, blogs, events, resources, and personal stories we strive to instill a sense of confidence and empowerment in women's abilities to meet the challenges of forest ownership. For more information on the National Women Owning Woodlands Network visit their website: <http://www.womenowningwoodlands.net/>

We invite women who own, manage, or are interested in forestland to join us for our kick-off event, which will be evening potluck picnic at the Snohomish County Extension facility at McCollum Park (600 128th St SE, Everett, WA 98208) on Tuesday August 12th at 6 pm. The event is free, but please RSVP. To RSVP, please contact Lauren Grand at 425-357-6023 or lauren.grand@wsu.edu.

At our kick-off picnic we will be discussing what your needs and interests are as a female woodland owner in order to develop educational programming and experiences that directly relate to the care, needs, and management of your woodland. As a network, we are seeking interested women to become part of this opportunity to create a community and serve as mentors and friends to other women woodland owners across the North Puget Sound Region.

Whether or not you can attend the kick-off, if you are interested in this group we encourage you to join or WOWnet mailing e-mail list by contacting Lauren Grand at lauren.grand@wsu.edu.

[\[return to top\]](#)

Twilight Tour

We're a little later than usual for our summer tradition this year, but it is happening! Our "twilight tours" don't involve vampires, but rather long summer evenings touring local

family-owned forests. These free, family-friendly, out-in-the-woods events are a chance to share ideas, see what others are doing, and look at real examples of challenges and solutions. Each tour concludes with a potluck dessert.

This year we are doing one tour, and it will be the evening of Wednesday August 13th at Keevie Lake Forest, just west of Black Diamond (King County) off of Auburn-Black Diamond Road. The tour is free, but please RSVP and bring a dessert to share. To RSVP or get additional details, please visit <http://forestry.wsu.edu/nps/events/twilight/> or call Lauren at 425-357-6023.

[\[return to top\]](#)

Forest Stewardship Coached Planning

Coached Planning is our flagship program. This comprehensive, university-based forestry class will help you get the most out of the land you love. Whether you have just a few acres of woods or a large forest tract, if you have trees on your property, this class is for you.

Topics covered include:

- How do you know if your trees are healthy? What should you do if they aren't?
- Are characteristics of your property attracting or repelling the wildlife you enjoy? What can you do if wildlife cause damage?
- Are there certain trees you should always keep or remove? How do you remove trees without damaging your land?
- When selling logs, are you getting a fair deal or getting ripped off?
- How do you find or grow edible berries or mushrooms? How do you cut holiday greens without hurting the tree?
- Are invasive and noxious weeds taking over your underbrush? What are the risks and what can you do about it?
- What kind of soil do you have and how does that affect what grows?

Save money, too!

As part of this class we will "coach" you in the writing of your own simple forestry plan that may qualify you for property tax reductions or conservation cost-share grants.

What's included:

- Eight classroom sessions taught by forestry experts
- A Saturday field trip
- A large notebook full of reference materials and how-to guides
- A one-on-one consultation at your property with a professional forester.

Our third and final class for 2014 will be in Preston (King County) on Tuesday nights starting September 16th. Registration is open. Register before August 23rd and save \$25. For details

and registration information, call 425-357-6017 or visit <http://forestry.wsu.edu/nps/events/cppreston/>

Participants frequently tell me that this is one of the best classes they have ever taken. Not convinced? I'll make you this deal: if you register for and attend this class and by the third week you decide that it isn't for you, you can turn your materials in and drop out of the class for a full refund, no questions asked.

[\[return to top\]](#)

Market Update

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

(http://www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/TimberSaleAuction/Pages/psl_ts_query.aspx)

Log prices dipped in early spring, peaked in May, and then dropped off a bit sharply in June. Log prices typically bottom out in the summer because everyone is logging and it saturates the market, but so far this summer prices are considerably lower than this same time last year.

For an updated price graph, please visit <http://forestry.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/LogPrices.pdf>

[\[return to top\]](#)

Tidbits:

- Remember the bigleaf maple syrup video we posted last fall? You may have noticed that it disappeared, but that is because we replaced it with a new and improved version. If you are curious about making delicious syrup from your maple trees, check this out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z03vapfoiAA&feature=youtu.be>
- *Native Trees of Western Washington – A Photographic Guide* is in production! I just saw the first proof. It's not Ansel Adams, but it's better than a stick in your eye... It will be available at bookstores in October with a list price of \$18.95. Here you can see a scan from the publisher's fall catalog that has the cover shot and all the details: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10152060946486377> Also, if you want to receive an announcement from the publisher when it is available, please email me your name, email, and mailing address and I can add you to that list.

- Join me on a Forestry study tour in Chile this November - Meet with small woodland owners and walk their lands, visit world class wood products facilities, step into stands of trees growing faster than you ever thought possible, and learn about one of the world's most innovative forest sectors, a growing conservation movement, all the while digging into the rich history, culture, art and cuisine of Chile. Hosted by our colleagues at Oregon State University, this study tour is designed for woodland owners, forest managers, students, and anyone else interested in learning about the forests and forestry in Chile. You will visit fast-growing plantations and native temperate rain forests, and gain an appreciation for the country's culture, history and landscapes. You will come away with new ideas, new perspectives, and a better understanding and renewed appreciation for forest management in your home area. There are still a few spaces available, but **the enrollment deadline is July 15th**. All details are available at <http://international-programs.forestry.oregonstate.edu/chile-forestry-study-tour> or call Fred Smith at Anglatin Travel at 800 208-2335.
- A common question I get is what is a fair split with a logger when harvesting timber. I've never been a fan of the concept of a split, and there is a great article in the latest edition of Northwest Woodlands that articulates the problem with a split approach better than I ever could. You can access the PDF at the following link, and flip to page 24. As an added bonus, there's an article by yours truly on page 8. <http://www.oswa.org/images/docs/nwwoodlands/2014-nw-mag-spring.pdf> Also, here is a great resource from Missouri Extension on selling timber, and the concepts are the same here in western Washington: <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/G5051>
- Another common question I get is how to control noxious weeds without chemicals. Here is a great article from our friends over at the WSU Extension Shore Stewards program about why you should control these weeds and how to do it sans chemicals: <http://ext100.wsu.edu/island/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/2014/03/May-2014-Noxious-Weeds.pdf>
- Two new publications posted to the Woodland Fish and Wildlife site: Cavity Nesting Birds and Managing for Deer and Elk. These are available for free download from <http://woodlandfishandwildlife.com/category/publications/>
- The summer edition of Forest Stewardship notes is now available. Learn about our native strawberries, forest canopy habitat, wildfire prevention, and more: <https://foreststewardshipnotes.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/sprsummer-2014-forest-stewardship-notesissue.pdf>
- Looking for a forestry-related job? I have a special email list that I post numerous job announcements to. To get on this list, sending a blank email to join-forestjobs@lyris.cahnrs.wsu.edu
- Got holes in your trees? The sapsuckers have been busy this spring. Check out our fact sheet on sapsucker damage at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=15441>

- As a follow up to our Focus On: Pruning article in the our last newsletter (http://forestry.wsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter_07_01.pdf), here is another great pruning article from my colleague Andy Perleberg: <http://sflonews.wordpress.com/2014/05/01/the-rights-wrongs-and-realities-of-pruning/>
- Can you coexist with Beavers? Check out this article from our friends at WDFW from their Crossing Paths newsletter – scroll down to the April 2014 entry on beavers: http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/crossing_paths/
- Are your trees in conflict with utility lines? Here’s some good information from the PUD: <http://www.snopud.com/?p=1219> on “right tree, right place,” which I am a strong advocate for in all situations, not just power line issue. A good follow-up to this is our fact sheet on tree topping: <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=15446>

[\[return to top\]](#)

Focus On: What is Extension?

This newsletter, and the WSU Extension Forestry program, are part of the services provided by Washington State University Extension. But what is Extension, why does it exist, and how does it work? This month’s Focus On article is actually a re-run from 2011. We have had many new subscribers since then, and since WSU Extension just celebrated its 100th birthday in May, it is a good time to revisit this topic for an explanation of why this newsletter even exists.

Washington State University (WSU) is one of two designated land-grant universities in Washington (the other is Northwest Indian College in Bellingham). The land-grant system was established by Congress in the 1800s to provide better higher education opportunities for working classes. Building on this mission of providing greater public accessibility to university resources, the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 established the nationwide Cooperative Extension Service as part of the land-grant system.

WSU Extension is a three-way partnership between the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Washington State University, and local county governments. WSU Extension has offices in every county in Washington. Each local office offers a different mix of local programs that may include agriculture, gardening, community and economic development, health and wellness, youth and families, and natural resource stewardship. Agriculture, Master Gardeners, Livestock Advisors, Beach Watchers, 4-H, and Forestry are examples of specific programs offered by WSU Extension around the state.

The WSU Extension Forestry program (<http://forestry.wsu.edu/>) provides educational workshops, tours, online training, publications, newsletters, and individual consultation on a

variety of subjects, including forestry, wildlife, and other natural resources. Extension educators and specialists are WSU faculty members who are stationed at local county Extension offices. Many, but not all, counties in Washington are served by a Forestry Extension faculty.

For additional information about WSU Extension resources in your county, please contact your local county Extension office. Information on all WSU County Extension offices, as well as other federal, state, and local forestry agencies and services, is available in a directory of services for woodland owners that we update regularly:

<https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=13527>

Public education through Extension programs is part of the land grant university system nationwide. In addition to all of the resources available on the WSU Extension website, you can also plug into the entire national Extension network through a website called eXtension (<http://www.extension.org/>), which has a vast array of resources for foresters, farmers, communities, and homeowners.

[\[return to top\]](#)

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Kevin W. Zobrist
Regional Extension Forestry Specialist
Washington State University
600 128th St SE
Everett, WA 98208-6353
425-357-6017

kevin.zobrist@wsu.edu

<http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/>

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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. Reasonable accommodations for the events described above will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact us at the address above at least two weeks prior to the event.