



Extension Forestry

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

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Forester's Notes

Welcome to 2020

First off, I want to say welcome to all our new newsletter subscribers. Many people signed up upon registering for one of our webinars, so there are a lot of new people on the list. This newsletter is focused on the Puget Sound area but also includes information that to the whole state and the broader Pacific Northwest region.

As for 2020, it has been quite the year. It is hard to know what to say, as we all have strong emotions about the state of things. When I wrote my last newsletter this past fall, I could have never imagined where we'd be now. For many of you, this may seem like the nadir of your lifetime. It is certainly a time to realize all the things we take for granted in life.

For those of you who have suffered personal loss, whether it be the loss of a loved one to the virus, the loss of your livelihood, or other loss, I don't know what to say other than to acknowledge the deep sorrow that many of you have experienced in this season. May peace and provision find you in your loss and grief. While this season shall pass, it will leave deep and lasting scars.

Protecting the vulnerable

This virus is taking a particularly hard toll on the most vulnerable among us, including the poor, the elderly, those who already have difficult health conditions, and those with disabilities. We see this happen in nature, in both trees and wildlife, where predators, parasites, competition for resources, and extreme

conditions pull down the most vulnerable individuals. We could write this off as nature's way and part of the normal dynamic of the natural world.

Part of our humanity, though, is not treating other humans this way. While we are not the only species to protect the vulnerable, with our medical technology and capacity to love one another, we have the greatest capability to do so. As famous animal scientist Temple Grandin said, "Nature is cruel, but we don't have to be."

Laws can help in this endeavor, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, which seeks to provide equal access to more people. At Washington State University Extension Forestry, we take these mandates seriously, with our websites designed to meet web accessibility guidelines, offering special accommodations for people who need them to participate in our events, and our commitment to nondiscrimination. Laws are not enough, though. Equality and protection of the vulnerable require us to have the individual and social will to implement or even exceed the letter and the spirit of such laws.

Throughout this pandemic, as the virus ravages nursing homes, I have been dismayed by our lack of success in protecting the vulnerable and the elderly. More alarming to me is hearing some people indicate a willingness to write off the at-risk people in our communities as acceptable losses. At-risk people are not statistics; they are our coworkers, friends, and loved ones. Sacrificing the vulnerable in our society reflects a disproportionate influence of the base emotions of fear and

panic. When we start writing lives off so easily, we lose a major part of our humanity.

Humanity and injustice

Speaking of losing our humanity and writing lives off, the events of this year have made it more clear than ever the extent to which we, as a society, have compromised our humanity by treating some groups, especially people of color, as somehow less human than others. What happened to George Floyd is not a new phenomenon, but one that has been playing out for hundreds of years in our country. I recently began re-watching Ken Burns' Civil War series. Listening to the events, attitudes, and political rhetoric leading up to the war, I was stunned by how some things don't seem to have changed in the past 160 years. Some laws have changed, but there are attitudes and inequalities that persist and are still embedded within our fundamental social systems.

I don't know why the murder of George Floyd has had such a higher social impact than previous comparable events, even those that also had publicized video. Whatever the reason, this particular blatant injustice seems to have had a greater impact on the white community (me included) than previous events have. Justice is a uniquely human concept. The deep, sick feeling that many of us feel when reading the story or watching the video speaks to the violation of our core sense of justice. Injustice is not just an assault on an individual or group, it is an assault on our shared humanity.

As a scientist and an educator, I would like to be able to say that science, research, and education will solve the problems. However, even science has been used against people of color, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries when scientists professed, based on “research,” that people of color or certain ethnicities were biologically inferior to white people. At other times, scientists used racial minorities as forced or unwitting subjects for experimentation, with horrifying results. We understand now that race is not biological, but rather a social construct. It’s easier to commit injustice, though, when the victim is first dehumanized. As for education, it’s not enough by itself. My German teacher in high school was a Holocaust survivor. One thing he said that has always stuck with me is that the Nazi death camps were designed, built, and run by well-educated people – engineers, doctors, and scientists. Formal education alone will not build a just society. We have to dig deeper, beyond just factual knowledge.

Introspection and listening

For myself, the events of the past few months have led to a lot of introspection. It has been an uncomfortable experience that has forced me to acknowledge things about myself that I would rather not deal with. Pretending that something isn’t there or isn’t happening might make for a more comfortable and digestible narrative, but it does not change reality. I’ve had to confront myself with the reality that doing justice and loving mercy is not a spectator sport. It’s not the absence of one type of activity so much as the presence of another, and it comes at a personal cost. Perhaps the questions facing our society are

whether or not we are willing to take on the cost of justice and how much our humanity is worth to us.

I don't come to this armed with any wisdom or great ideas. I'm trying to start with listening and reading. To get a broader perspective, I have started diversifying my bookshelf. I am finding that the ideas of racial justice and gender equality intersect with forests, natural resources, and the environment more than I realized. This intersection is especially clear in the concept of environmental injustice, such as polluting activities tending to be located in communities that have a high proportion of people of color.

Two books that I am currently reading are Rooted in the Earth – Reclaiming the African American Environmental Heritage by D. Glave and Black Nature – Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry edited by C. Dungy. I'll close with an excerpt from the latter book. It's from a poem called *Deep in the Quiet Wood*, an early 20th century writing by J.W. Johnson:

“Are you bowed down in heart?
Do you but hear the clashing discords and the din of life?
Then come away, come to the peaceful wood.
Here bathe your soul in silence. Listen!”

Kevin W. Zobrist
Professor, Extension Forestry
Washington State University
Serving the Puget Sound Area

Tidbits

New Northeast Washington Extension Forester

Washington State University is pleased to announce the hiring of Sean Alexander as the new Extension Forester for northeast Washington, filling a major service gap. Sean is originally from the Tri-Cities but now is based in Colville. He recently completed a master's degree in forest ecology at Washington State University. You. If you have property in northeast Washington, feel free to [email Sean](#) to introduce yourself and learn about the programs he has coming up. You can also reach Sean at 509-684-2588, [read more about Sean](#), visit his Washington State University [Extension Forestry Northeast Region website](#), and [follow his program on Facebook](#).

Forestry-related jobs

Even in this economic downturn I see a lot of job announcements. These range from entry-level seasonal work to high level career positions. If you would like to keep up on available job opportunities in this field, you can [subscribe to our Forest Jobs email list](#).

Low-cost seedlings opportunity for Washington landowners

The Carbon Capture Foundation, a nonprofit foundation based in Washington State, is helping Washington landowners purchase various species of conifer seedlings to promote tree planting. Depending on the circumstances the Foundation may pay up to 50 percent of the seedling cost. Also, by buying large quantities

the Foundation can pass the savings to landowners, in effect a wholesale price. For example, 2-year-old Douglas-fir bare root seedlings would cost roughly 50 cents each, or 25 cents each if fully subsidized. Timing is critical: the seedlings must be ordered by August 31, 2020, paid for by Sept. 30, and are available for delivery from roughly December 2020 through March 2021. For more information, contact Norm Dick at normdick@comcast.net or 360-751-3142.

Bigleaf maple syrup resources

Visit our new [Bigleaf Maple Syrup Resources webpage](#) to access a variety of resources, including publications, online equipment suppliers, and an email discussion list to connect and share info with other bigleaf maple enthusiasts.

Info on madrones

Are you interested in madrones? The Washington State University Puyallup [Pacific madrone research program](#) has a ton of info on madrone, including cultivating madrone and madrone pests and pathogens. They even have a great [email newsletter](#) just on madrone. The [summer 2020 edition](#) was released recently.

New Woodland Fish and Wildlife Publications

Several new publications are now available in the Woodland Fish and Wildlife series, including [Bats and Small Woodlands](#), [Forest Bee Pollinators](#), [My Forest Burned: Now What?](#), and [Reptiles in Managed Woodlands](#).

Forest Stewardship Notes

The [summer edition](#) of Forest Stewardship Notes is now available

New wildfire risk website

The Forest Service launched a new [national community wildfire website](#). You can enter your city or county to see map of the different types of wildfire risk areas in your community and learn more about them.

Also, check out this unrelated great [article](#) in *Salish Sea Currents* online magazine about the return of fire danger to western Washington.

A source for Pacific yew seedlings

You can increase the diversity of your forest and help restore Pacific yew populations by planting a Pacific yew on your property. Seedlings are hard to find, though. I recently discovered that the [Friendly Native Plants and Design](#) nursery in Sequim carries it. If you know of other sources, please let me know.

Managing stress in a pandemic

University of Florida Extension put together a nice [short video](#) on managing stress during a pandemic.

Prevent the spread of COVID-19

Washington State University Extension offers research-based [resources](#) to help you stay healthy.

New way to identify invasive pests

There is an [interesting article](#) in Science magazine on how scientists are proactively identifying invasive pests like the emerald ash borer that could attack our trees if introduced from overseas.

2020 Forest Stewardship Online Class Series

We have a couple classes left in our series, including one that had to be postponed and one we have newly added. **These classes are free, but pre-registration is required.**

Each webinar is offered twice: one from 12:05-12:55 pm, and again from 7:05-7:55. Most of our webinars are now approved for teacher clock hours and Society of American Foresters Continuing Forestry Education credits! Please see the specific webinar for details.

Due to increased security that prevents “zoombombing,” you must have your own Zoom account to participate. You can easily [create a free Zoom account](#) if you do not already have one. Important: you should have your Zoom account set up and be registered for the webinar **at least two hours** before the webinar start time.

If you are interested in a webinar but will be unable to attend, **please register anyway** so that you can receive a link to the recording.

The Four horseman of the root disease apocalypse

Root disease is one of the most common forest health issues in western Washington. This class will cover identification and treatment options for the four most common root diseases: laminated root rot, annosus root disease, Armillaria root disease, and Schweinitzii root and butt rot. Instructor: Kevin Zobrist, Washington State University.

When

Tuesday, August 11, 2020, 12:05 – 12:55 p.m. and 7:05 – 7:55

Registration

- [Register for the 12:05 p.m. session of “The four horsemen of the root disease apocalypse”](#)
- [Register for the 7:05 p.m. session of “The four horsemen of the root disease apocalypse”](#)

Princes in disguise: Frogs and other amphibians in northwest woodlands

Though they probably won't turn into royalty if you kiss them, amphibians are still some of the coolest creatures in northwest woodlands. This webinar will go over the basics of identifying local frogs and salamanders as adults and by their eggs. We'll also discuss what habitat characteristics are important for sustaining amphibians and seeing them on your property. You'll even leave this webinar with tips on designing a walking trail that attracts amphibians and makes them easy for you to spot. Instructor: Lauren Grand, Oregon State University.

When

Tuesday, August 18, 2020, 12:05 – 12:55 p.m. and 7:05 – 7:55

Registration

- [Register for the 12:05 p.m. session of “Princes in disguise: Frogs and other amphibians in northwest woodlands”](#)
- [Register for the 7:05 p.m. session of “Princes in disguise: Frogs and other amphibians in northwest woodlands”](#)

Scam alert

There are scammers out there that are trying to spoof Washington State University Extension online classes on social media. They will use our same text and images to create their own bogus event sites. They also try to convince you that, although the class is free, you need to enter a credit card number for “security.”

If we advertise a free program, we will never ask for a credit card number. If you see something that looks suspicious or you are unsure about something, please contact us immediately and do not proceed further without clarification.

Acknowledgements and accommodations

This webinar series is made possible in part by funding support from Washington State University, Island County, King County, King Conservation District, San Juan County, Skagit County, and Snohomish Conservation District.

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

will be made for persons with disabilities and special needs who contact us at puget.forestry@wsu.edu at least two weeks prior to the event.

Fall Northwest WA Online Coached Planning courses

[Register now!](#)

We've barely announced these courses, and both are already filling rapidly. Space is limited and both courses will sell out quickly. Please note: These courses are for **northwest** Washington. A southwest Washington course will be offered in early 2021.

A forestry class for property owners

Would you like your property to be a recognized Stewardship Forest and be able to display the Stewardship Forest sign? Do you want to know why people say this is the best course they've ever taken? Would you like to walk your property with a professional forester, see things with new eyes, and learn about everything that is going on in your forest? Join us this fall for one of our two remaining 2020 Forest Stewardship Coached Planning courses, which will both be online.

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

Topics covered

- How do you know if your trees are healthy? What should you do if they aren't?
- What types of trees do you have? Does your forest look like a "mess"?
- Are characteristics of your property attracting or repelling the wildlife you enjoy? What can you do if wildlife cause damage?
- When should you worry about trees being hazards?
- How do you know if your trees need to be thinned, and how do you go about it?
- 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?
- What is the risk of wildfire on your property?

Save money, too

As part of this course 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.

When and Where

Dates and Times

We will be holding two separate Online Coached Planning courses this fall! These courses are for northwest Washington. A southwest Washington course will be offered in early 2021.

The **TUESDAY** course will be held 6:00-9:00 PM Tuesday evenings, September 8th – October 27th, 2020, except for the first night, September 8th, when the class will end at 9:30 PM.

The **THURSDAY** course will be held 6:00-9:00 PM Thursday evenings, September 17th – November 5th, 2020, except for the first night, September 17th, when the class will end at 9:30 PM.

Note: Due to COVID-19 there will be no in-person field trips for 2020 classes, but all participants are invited to join a future class field trip).

Location

Online – These courses will be offered via live, interactive webinars. A high-speed internet connection is needed. Dial-up will not work. You can access the webinars with your computer or mobile device. Access instructions will be provided prior to the course.

Cost and Registration

What's Included:

- Eight live webinars taught by the state's recognized experts
- A digital library of reference materials and how-to guides
- A copy of the book Native Trees of Western Washington
- A consultation site visit to your property from a state service forester (may be delayed until 2021 due to COVID-19)

Cost: \$60

We know this is a difficult time financially for many people. Because of this, we have pulled together some additional

funding to allow us to drop the normal \$200 per household/ownership course fee down to \$60.

Space is limited and is first-come, first-served. **These classes will sell out very early.** No refunds within 30 days of the course start date. For online registrations, Eventbrite processing fees are non-refundable.

Registration

If registering as a family from the same household/ownership, only do one registration for all of you—do not do separate registrations for individual family members.

The registration process includes required short questionnaire. If you have forested property, please make sure you have your property information ready before you start the registration process, including acreage and county parcel number(s).

[Register now](#) via the course website.

Acknowledgements and accommodations

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2020 Forest Owners Field Day

Save the date!

This year's field days will be combined in a single event on Saturday, October 24, 2020. Registration will be open soon.

A different format

This year's field day will be quite different than usual in that it will be held online. Online field day is a bit of an oxymoron, but we are working hard to make it work. It will be a bit of an experiment. We will feature the same great content and instructors as usual, and per usual you will get to pick from a variety of session every hour. The sessions will be done over Zoom.

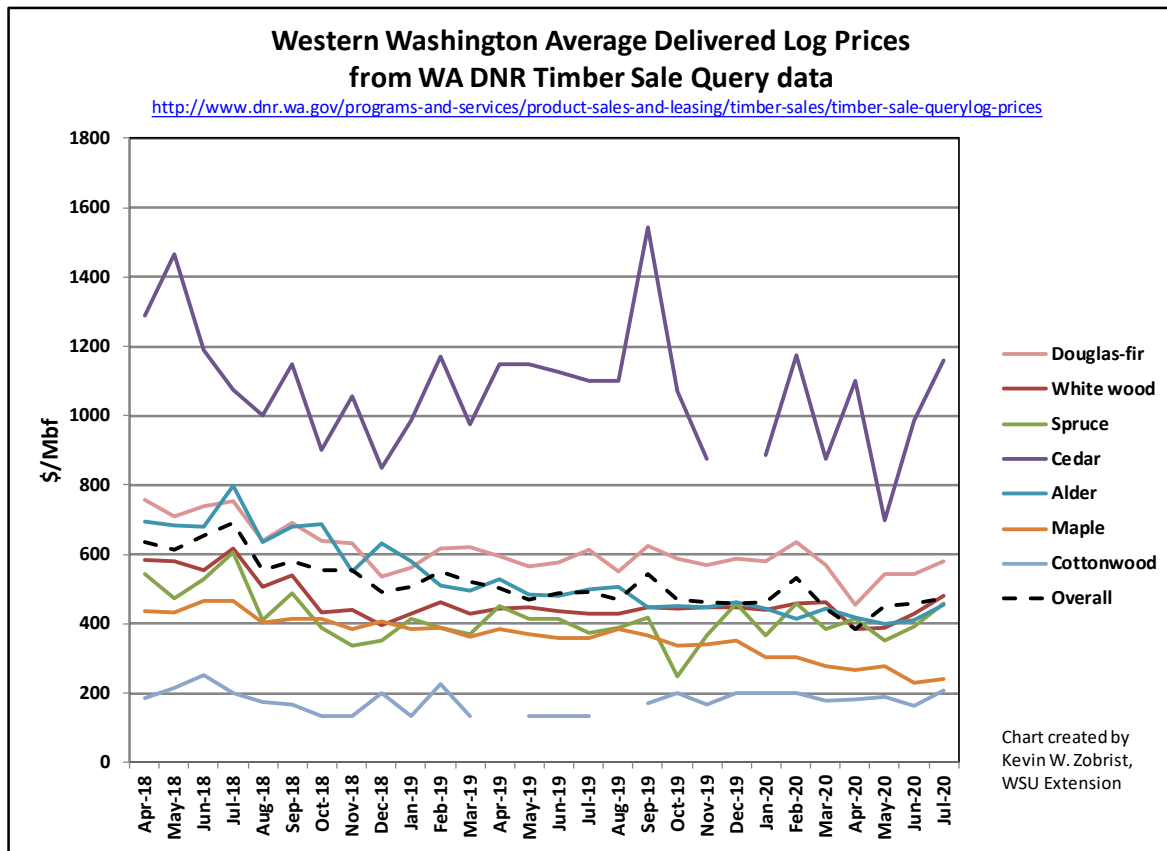
The "field" day will be a hybrid of live and pre-recorded material. Most sessions will have to be pre-recorded in the field, but the instructor will be on Zoom live as the pre-recorded sessions are playing, taking your questions in real time and pausing for discussion.

Thanks to funding support from the Snohomish Conservation District and the Society of American Foresters, there will be no cost to participate (but you have to make your own lunch!).

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](#).

Western Washington log markets have been fairly stable over the past year, with current prices being similar to this time last year.



Other Educational Events

Disclaimer: Any non-Washington State University events are listed for informational purposes with no implied endorsement by Washington State University.

Washington Tree Farm Program forest products webinar series

This year's annual Washington Tree Farm Program Fall Forestry Seminar will be offered online as a webinar series focusing on forest products. Click on the session links below to learn more

and register. All webinars are from 3:30-6:00PM. Sessions qualify as Society of American Foresters and Master Logger continuing education credits. Pre-reregistration is required for each session. All three sessions are free to attend but the Washington Tree Farm Program is accepting donations to offset costs and continue to provide programming to tree farmers in the future.

- [August 26 – Timber Markets](#). Experts from Washington State University Extension and the private forest industry will discuss the timber harvest process, current log market conditions, and what the future may bring.
- [September 2 – Emerging Markets](#). What’s new on the forest products horizon? Hear from the foresters working in new fields on the outlook of forest carbon markets and products like biochar, wood pellets, mass timber, and biofuels.
- [September 9 – Special Forest Products](#). Researchers from Washington State University and the University of Washington will discuss different types of non-timber forest products and current research examining the practical aspects of producing and selling maple syrup and specialty mushrooms in this region.

Oregon State University Tree School Online

Our neighbors to the south are offering their annual Tree School [online](#) as an ongoing forestry education webinar series for property owners.

Focus on: Bigleaf maple

We are pleased to feature this guest column by Al Craney, Certified Forester and Skagit Conservation District Forester, Emeritus: Bigleaf maple – An underappreciated species.

Bigleaf Maple, (*Acer macrophyllum*) is a hardwood tree species in Western Washington. In the past, it has been treated as a “weed” in forest management, but that may be changing. A grant from the United States Department of Agriculture to the University of Washington will take a closer look at big leaf maple and may change opinions about its value in northwest forests.

This species, once consider a “weed,” may be the future for small forest landowners. For wood production, saw log prices can be up to \$500 – \$550 per thousand board feet. With genetic improvement to develop figured wood, prices could reach \$5,000 per thousand board feet. Bigleaf maple Syrup has good potential, with prices up to \$300 per gallon.

An ecological niche is the match of a species to a specific environmental condition. An ecological niche emphasizes that a species not only grows in and responds to an environment, it may also change the environment as it grows. Bigleaf maple has this influence on riparian environments.

Maple epiphytic communities are a rooting medium and food web source. This includes several species of Ferns, 20 species of Mosses, five species of Lichens, and six species of Liverworts. This plant community provides an ideal environment for insects and connects aquatic life to terrestrial life and vice versa. The plant community provides an environment for: food, cover, nesting, insects, and amphibians. Bigleaf Maple has a positive effect on water quality and temperature and is an excellent shade tree. Bigleaf maple is a tree that can reach 100 feet tall and 48 inches in diameter. Maple trees can live to be 300 years old and were a component of low elevation old growth forests. Maple provides ideal nesting platforms in a protected riparian environment.

Nutrient cycling is critical to soils in the Pacific Northwest, which are typically acidic and deficient in nitrogen and phosphorus. A study comparing the soil properties beneath Douglas-fir with those beneath bigleaf maple found that the concentration of essential nutrients was significantly greater beneath big leaf maple than under Douglas-fir at all test sites. Maple will grow on a variety of sites, but prefer moist, but well-drained soils. More than any other N.W. tree species, maple is considered to be a soil building species, with a greater depth of humus formation, associated with higher concentrations of macro and micronutrients and increased soil pH. Study results suggest that bigleaf maple can modestly improve soil fertility within coniferous forests.

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