

Snohomish/Skagit Extension Forestry E-Newsletter

January, 2008

Volume 1, No. 1

In this issue:

- Forest Stewardship classes start soon
- Extension forestry website update
- Forest landowner survey update
- EQIP funding
- Storm damage issues
- Forestry in the news
- Other upcoming events

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the Snohomish/Skagit Extension Forestry E-Newsletter. This newsletter will be sent out periodically (monthly or every other month) as news and announcements become available. Please feel free to forward and share this information with others who may be interested.

Forest Stewardship classes start soon!

There are still spaces available in the 2008 Forest Stewardship “Coached” planning shortcourses. This popular class will only be offered twice in the North Sound area in 2008. A winter class will be held in Silvana on Monday nights starting January 28th. A spring class will be held in Burlington on Thursday nights starting March 13th. **With the Silvana class less than two weeks away, make sure to get your registration form in immediately if you are planning to attend.** You can also contact me (425-357-6017 or kzobrist@wsu.edu) and let me know if you are planning to register and I can hold a spot for you.

This shortcourse continues to be the flagship forest stewardship program offered by Washington State University (WSU) Extension and the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The class is designed to help forest landowners “help themselves” by equipping them with tools and resources to manage for a broad variety of objectives, from timber production to wildlife habitat, to aesthetics and conservation.. Each class includes nine evening presentations, a Saturday field day, a comprehensive Forest Stewardship Notebook and other educational reference materials, maps and aerial photos of your property, and an individual on-site consultation from a professional forester or wildlife biologist.

The class is called “Coached Planning” because a major part of this training involves “coaching” participants as they develop personalized stewardship plans for their forests. Many participants use their plans for consideration for significantly reduced “current use” property taxes. With an approved stewardship plan also comes recognition as a Stewardship Forest, eligibility for state cost-share assistance, and qualification to become a Certified Forest under the American Tree Farm System.

For more details and a link to a registration brochure, visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/forestryevents.htm> or contact me directly at 425-357-6017 or kzobrist@wsu.edu.

Website Update

If you have not yet had a chance to visit our new website, check it out at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/>. The site is continually under construction, so check back often as new features, resources, and information are added.

Forest Landowner Survey Update

This past fall, a formal survey was done of forest landowner ownership values, education needs/interests, and delivery preferences. This survey was unique in the breadth of forest ownership sizes and types that were surveyed. Over 3,000 landowners were surveyed across both Snohomish and Skagit counties. There have been over 1,000 responses, with a total response rate to date of 35%, which is very high for this type of survey. Respondents represent a random sample of forest landowners with ownership sizes ranging from less than 1 acre to over 1,000 acres and representing a wide variety of interests and objectives. Some clear trends are emerging from the response data, and this is providing valuable information that will be used to set program priorities for the next few years to better serve you through the Forest Stewardship Program. As the data are compiled over the next few weeks, a summary of the results (and how the results are being used to improve our programming) will be posted on our website. Stay tuned for more details!

EQIP Funding for Forest Landowners

It's a program traditionally associated with farming and ranching. But an official who manages USDA's most popular conservation program says Washington's forest land owners shouldn't think they're barking up the wrong tree if they apply for assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The voluntary program, administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land. That includes private forests.

According to NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Programs Dave Brown, "EQIP may be a perfect fit for forest land owners seeking technical and financial assistance for a wide range of conservation activities. From pre-commercial thinning, tree pruning, and slash treatment to post-plant weed control, and forest road maintenance, EQIP can provide significant assistance to landowners on a broad range of practices." To be eligible, program applicants must provide a forest management or stewardship plan; have a prior record of timber harvest or revenue from timber sales, or proof of past capital investment for forestry practices. A forest stewardship plan, such as the ones developed through the Coached Planning class, is very helpful towards applying for EQIP funds.

Potential applicants are encouraged to inquire at their local NRCS office for more information to locate your closest NRCS office please call (509) 323-2900 or visit <http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov>. NRCS has also developed several informative fact sheets with additional information. Copies of these fact sheets can be downloaded from our website through the following links:

- EQIP Forest Guide
(<http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/EQIPForestGuide.pdf>)
- EQIP Forest Cost List
(<http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/EQIPForestCostList.pdf>)

Storm Damage Issues

A number of western Washington forest landowners, especially those with land in SW Washington, were significantly impacted by our recent December storms. Many tree farms suffered moderate to severe timber damage. To respond to timber owner needs, the Department of Revenue has placed a "FEATURE" on the DOR webpage <http://www.dor.wa.gov> with a direct link to the Damaged Timber Adjustment Application. Private landowners with damaged timber from the recent storms can download this fill-in PDF file and send it in or they can contact DOR Forest Tax at 1-800-548-8829 to receive copies.

The Damaged Timber Adjustment Application requires the harvester (large or small) to use the Stumpage Tables and the Large Harvester Return. The Damaged

Timber Adjustment Application must be sent to DOR for approval prior to beginning salvage logging. DOR foresters have been and will continue to prioritize Damaged Timber Adjustment Applications. Questions about this can be directed to John Walkowiak, Forest Tax and Audit Manager, Special Programs, WA DOR, 360-570-3206.

Also if your forestland was impacted by the storm(s), you can contact me (425-357-6017 or kzobrist@wsu.edu) for information about resources available to help with damage assessment, clean-up, and recovery.

Forestry in the News

Below are a few recent examples of some of the forestry issues being talked about in the media:

- **Save Northwest forests for conifers, not condos** – and editorial by former state lands commissioner Brian Boyle:
<http://archives.seattletimes.nwsource.com/cgi-bin/texis.cgi/web/vortex/display?slug=brianboyle07&date=20080107&query=brian+boyle>
- **Wyden calls for thinning:**
http://www.gazettetimes.com/articles/2008/01/10/news/community/4aaa02_wyden.txt
- **Weyerhaeuser, environmentalists argue logging's effect on floods:**
http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/localnews/2004119378_logging11m.html
- **As Timber Value Rises, so Does Illegal Logging** – this is a series problem both nationally and locally here in NW Washington:
http://www.foxbusiness.com/article/timber-value-rises-does-illegal-logging_420427_44.html

Other Upcoming Events

- **Forest Stewardship Classes:** In addition to the Snohomish/Skagit forest stewardship classes, this same class is also being offered at other locations throughout the state. To find the class nearest you, visit <http://ext.nrs.wsu.edu/newsevents/forststewardship.htm>

- **Long Term Application Landowner Meetings:** The Small Forest Landowner Office at Washington DNR has scheduled several landowner meetings to talk about the new Long-Term Forest Practices Application. This new program will allow small forest landowners to apply for a Long-Term Forest Practices Application that is valid for up to 15 years. This new opportunity is expected to ease the paperwork burden and allow more flexibility in timing harvests, but the process of filing a long-term permit will be much different than the standard 2-year permit (which will still be available). The Small Forest Landowner Office will hold several outreach events to provide forest landowners with additional information. For more information about the LTA program and meeting schedule, visit <http://www.dnr.wa.gov/sflo/lta/> or contact Michael Ahr at 360-902-1849 or michael.ahr@dnr.wa.gov. Note: an additional meeting is being planned at the Everett Extension office on February 20th—more details will be available soon.
- **Focus the Nation:** WSU Extension in Snohomish County will be a participating host in a nation-wide screening of the film “2% Solution” to promote awareness and dialogue about Climate Change. The public is invited to learn more about what they can do to create hope despite climate change challenges. WSU Extension Staff and Snohomish County representatives will be on hand to dialogue with community members and answer questions. This free community event will be held from 5-8 PM on Wednesday evening, January 30th, at the Cougar Auditorium, McCollum Park, WSU Extension, 600 128th Street, Everett, WA 98208. For more information contact Gabrielle Roesch at 425-357-6011 or gabrielle90@wsu.edu.
- **Diversifying Income Opportunities on Small Woodlands:** A workshop will be held on Saturday, January 26th at the Ohop Grange near Eatonville, WA. The workshop will introduce a series of new strategies and tools for maximizing the economic potential of conservation-based forest management. Speakers from companies and organizations in the Northwest that specialize in small woodland management, conservation driven markets, and other incentive programs will provide thorough overviews of each strategy. Registration is required as space is limited. There is a cost of \$15 per person that includes lunch and refreshments. For more details and registration information, please visit <http://www.nnrg.org/news-events/events/1-19-diversifying-income-opportunities-on-small-woodlands-eatonville/> or contact Kirk Hanson at 360-316-9317.
- **Snohomish Conservation District Plant Sale:** This 23rd annual sale will be held March 7th and 8th at the Monroe Fairgrounds, from 10 am – 4:30 pm on Friday, and 10 am – 3 pm on Saturday. The last day to order is February 6th, with payment due by February 20th. This popular sale includes conifers of all types, 2 year old transplants, deciduous trees, shrubs and small trees,

evergreen shrubs, “whips” & erosion control, groundcovers, perennials and wildflowers. Erosion Control tips are given, as well as suggested plants for Hummingbirds, Shady Areas, Wet Areas, Sunny Dry Sites, Sunny Wet Sites, and Deer Resistant Plants. For more information visit <http://www.snohomishcd.org/plant-sale> or call 425-335-5634, ext. 4.

- **Sound Waters 2008 - A One Day University:** This one-day public education event on Saturday, February 2nd, will focus on the natural world of Puget Sound, presented by WSU Beach Watchers of Island County with help from the Marine Resources Committee, Island County Public Works, Sea Grant, and the Puget Sound Partnership. This year you can choose from over 50 presentations. A variety of educational displays are also offered, as are opportunities to sign up for volunteer activities consistent with your interests. **Registration deadline is January 18th.** For details visit <http://beachwatchers.wsu.edu/island/soundwaters/>
- **Country Living Expo & Cattlemen’s Winterschool:** In conjunction with the Cattlemen’s Winterschool, the WSU Livestock Advisor Foundation presents a day-long series of over 50 classes on topics ranging from Raising Beef & other livestock to Cider Making, Landscape Drip Irrigation, Chicks in the Garden, Cisternology, Heritage Breeds, Fruit Tree Maintenance, Basic Kitchen Cheese Making, Dressing Poultry, and more. This event will be held Saturday, January 19th at Stanwood High School. For more information, contact Joan DeVries at joanrd@co.skagit.wa.us or call 360.428.4270, Ext. 240. A registration brochure is available online at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/ag/workshops/clexporeg08.pdf>