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## Snohomish/Skagit Extension Forestry E-Newsletter

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*The Snohomish/Skagit Extension Forestry 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**

I think this is the longest monthly newsletter I have put out – there is a lot to tell you about! With spring almost upon us, many programs are in full swing, including a sold-out Coached Planning class that we started this past week – it is the largest class I have ever had. Spring also means planting time. The annual Conservation District plant sales will be going on over the next couple of weeks – read below for dates and locations. There are also lots of opportunities to get tree seedlings right now, and there may be some good bargains available.

There are a number of forestry-related workshops and events coming up to be aware of, and it is time to save a couple of summer dates on your calendar, such as June 13th for a chainsaw maintenance and safety workshop and July 31 – August 1st for the annual Family Forest Field day, which this year is coming to Skagit County. We haven't had the field day in the northwestern part of the state for several years, so I am excited to have it here in our area and I am pleased to be helping out with the planning committee for this event. If you have been to the field day before, you know what a big deal this event is. If you have not had a chance to attend one of these, I hope you will save these dates on your calendar—you will be in for a treat.

In the meantime, it seems that I can't shake the issue of the economy. There was a lot of news this month about the effect of the economy on the forestry sector. However, there was also news about how forestland remains an attractive, stable investment, which I hope is at least a small bright spot for many of you.

Meanwhile, there is continued discussion and concern regarding the proposed budget cuts to WSU Extension. I sent out a special supplemental issue of this newsletter earlier this month ([http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/Newsletter\\_02\\_supp.pdf](http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/Newsletter_02_supp.pdf)) to address this, and I had hoped to avoid bringing it up again in this newsletter. However, with the continued widespread media coverage and resulting confusion about what's going on, I decided I should try to clarify some things. I left this part until the very end, though, so we could get to the good stuff first!

Kevin Zobrist  
WSU Extension forester

## **Advanced Forest Stewardship Series**

**There are still spaces left in the spring Advanced Forest Stewardship class.** The Advanced Series is for all of you who have already taken Coached Planning and are looking to further expand your forestry knowledge. The goal of the class is to build on the knowledge you gained in Coached Planning and help you prepare to successfully implement on-the-ground operations as you carry-out your forest stewardship plan. We will be talking about things like equipment use, working with contractors, financial considerations, advanced silviculture techniques, log markets, taxes, road building and maintenance, and so forth.

This will be the second offering of this class (a pilot was offered this past fall). The series includes 9 evening sessions and 2 field days. The class will be held Monday evenings April 13th – June 8th at the Snohomish County Extension building in Everett. Cost is \$100 per family/ownership. For more information contact me at 425-357-6017 or visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/advancedCP09.htm>.

## Upcoming Conservation District Plant Sales

It's that time of year – time to start thinking about planting. A great place to get the native trees and shrubs you are looking for is the native annual plant sale hosted by your local conservation district. This is also a great opportunity to get to know some of the folks at your local conservation district and see what conservation districts are all about. Here are some upcoming plant sale dates in this area:

- **King County** – February 27th – 28th in Renton. For information contact Jacobus Saperstein at 425-277-5581 ext 126 or visit [http://www.kingcd.org/new\\_cal\\_bar\\_2-13-09.htm](http://www.kingcd.org/new_cal_bar_2-13-09.htm).
- **Skagit County** – March 20th – 21st and April 18th in Bow. For information call 360-428-4313 or visit [http://www.skagitcd.org/plant\\_sale\\_info.htm](http://www.skagitcd.org/plant_sale_info.htm).
- **Snohomish County** – March 6th – 7th in Monroe. For information call 425-335-5634, ext. 4 or visit <http://www.snohomishcd.org/plant-sale>.
- **Whatcom County** – March 21st in Bellingham. For information call 360-354-2035 ext. 3 or visit <http://www.whatcomcd.org/PlantSale/PlantSale.html>.

## Seedling Opportunities

In addition to the Conservation District plants sales, another opportunity to get tree seedlings is through the **Weyerhaeuser Seedling Sales Program**. They will be having their 2nd and final Washington sale for 2009 on March 21st in Rochester. For more information contact Janet Wendt at 800-732-4769 ext. 0 or visit <http://www.myseedlings.com>.

Also, rumor has it that the DNR's Webster Nursery (1-877-890-2626) and other local nurseries may have a surplus of tree seedlings this year because of the troubled economy, so there may be opportunities for some deals if you are in the market for seedlings. For example, Hood Canal Nurseries is downsizing operations, and needs to sell a lot of seedlings. You can read about it in the Kitsap Sun (<http://www.kitsapsun.com/news/2009/feb/12/contract-tree-business-downsizes-operations/>) or call the nursery for information at 360-297-7555.

## Other Upcoming Events

- **Amphibians of Mystery** – March 4th at the Northwest Stream Center in south Everett (behind the Snohomish County Extension Building). Cost is \$7; pre-registration is required. Call 425-316-8592 for details.

- **Carbon Markets and Forestry Offsets Workshop – March 5th in Portland, OR.** Family forest owners can attend at a **reduced rate of \$75** – a \$100 savings. To arrange for the reduced rate, Contact Bob Deal at the US Forest Service PNW Research Station at (503) 808-2015. For more information about the workshop visit [http://www.westernforestry.org/carbon\\_offsets/carbon\\_offsets.htm](http://www.westernforestry.org/carbon_offsets/carbon_offsets.htm).
- **2009 Christmas Trees Short Course – March 6th in Vancouver, WA.** Sponsored by the Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association. For more information call 503-364-2942.
- **Beaver Management Workshop – March 12th (1:00 – 4:30 PM) at the Adopt-A-Stream Foundation in south Everett** (just behind the WSU Extension building). Join Stillaguamish Watershed Steward Jake Jacobson for a technical training event on Beaver Management. Jake will recommend methods to mitigate beaver impact and types of vegetation to plant near beaver activity. Cost is \$50. For more information call 425-316-8592 or visit <http://www.streamkeeper.org/opportun/calendar.htm>. There will also be a **free movie night** that evening featuring a beaver documentary.
- **King County Native Plant Salvage: Saturday March 7th in Maple Valley.** For information visit [http://www.kingcounty.gov/%7E/media/environment/stewardship/volunteer/documents/022009\\_SalvageFlyer.ashx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/%7E/media/environment/stewardship/volunteer/documents/022009_SalvageFlyer.ashx) or call 206-296-8065.
- **Crystal Lake Tree Farm Day** – The folks at Crystal Lake Tree Farm (just north of Woodinville) have extended an invitation to join their annual work party on **Saturday March 14th** at 9 AM. Many of you may be familiar with Crystal Lake, as we have hosted a number of Coached Planning field days there. This year's work day will focus on pruning. If you are interested in pruning, here is an opportunity to get some practice. For information contact Ron Munro at 425-483-0553.
- **How to Manage a Timber Sale on Small Woodlands: Saturday April 4th in Yelm.** Northwest Certified Forestry is hosting a day long workshop, taught by a diverse range of experts, will introduce landowners to each of the steps of setting up and managing a timber sale. At the completion of this seminar, woodland owners should know everything they need to manage a timber sale and who to turn to for assistance. Information will be relevant to all types of landowners, including family forest owners, conservation organizations, small businesses, government agencies, and others. For information visit [http://www.nnrg.org/files/timber\\_sale\\_workshop2.pdf](http://www.nnrg.org/files/timber_sale_workshop2.pdf) or contact Kirk Hanson at 360-316-9317.
- **King County Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Class – April 7 – May 26, 2009 in Renton.** For those of you in the south King County vicinity, here's an opportunity to take Coached Planning. For more information visit

<http://king.wsu.edu/forestry/stewardship.htm> or contact Ginny Ballard at 206-205-3171.

- **Skagit Conservation District Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short-Course: Wednesdays March 18th – April 22nd at the Padilla Bay Research Reserve.** “Whether you have acres in the country, an average-sized suburban yard, or a tiny plot in the city, learn how you can conserve our natural resources, provide shelter and habitat for wildlife, and add beauty and interest to your backyard.” For more information contact Kristi Carpenter at 360-428-4313 or visit <http://www.skagitcd.org/Backyard%20Conservation%20Promotion%20Jan09%20pdf.pdf>. **Registration Deadline March 6th.**
- **Snohomish County Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale – May 2nd** at the Snohomish County Extension building in south Everett. Includes a free gardening clinic to answer your questions. For more information call the Master Gardener hotline at 425-357-6010 or visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/MG/plantsale09.pdf>.
- **Save the date: Chainsaw Safety and Maintenance Workshop scheduled for Saturday June 13th in Everett.** Join WSU Extension, the Washington Farm Forestry Association, and Stihl for this fun, practical, hands-on event. Watch for details and registration information in the next month or so.
- **Save the date: The 2009 Family Forest Owner Field Day has been scheduled for July 31st - August 1st.** After several years in Southwest Washington, the field day is returning to the North Sound area in 2009. It will be held in Skagit County, just west of Concrete. This annual event features dozens of hands-on sessions on a variety of forestry topics from beginner to advanced. There is something for all ages and all skill levels at the field day. Watch this newsletter for more details as they become available.

## Forestry in the News

- *The Seattle Times* ran an editorial on family forest conservation plans: [http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008782080\\_opinb25fox.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/opinion/2008782080_opinb25fox.html)
- *The Daily Herald* (Everett) reports on the impacts of the housing slump on our state’s wood products sector: <http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20090212/BIZ/702129952>
- In a similar vein, the *Skagit Valley Herald* reports on the impact on local governments of reduced timber revenues: [http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/slashes\\_in\\_state\\_timber\\_revenue\\_are\\_hurting\\_local\\_government\\_budgets/](http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/slashes_in_state_timber_revenue_are_hurting_local_government_budgets/)
- And *The Oregonian* reports on the impact of reduced timber harvests on environmentalists:

[http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/12/fall\\_in\\_wood\\_products\\_market\\_r.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2008/12/fall_in_wood_products_market_r.html)

- Also from the *Skagit Valley Herald*, here's an article reporting on an Alger woman's dispute with a pipeline company over trees cut on her property:  
[http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/land\\_owner\\_taking\\_olympic\\_pipe\\_line\\_to\\_court/](http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/land_owner_taking_olympic_pipe_line_to_court/)
- *The Daily Herald* (Everett) reports that protection of the matsutake mushroom is another possible incentive for thinning forests in Oregon:  
<http://www.heraldnet.com/article/20090209/BIZ/702099968/-1/RSS03>
- Here's an interesting article in *The Seattle Times* on a potential "herbal remedy" for bark beetles:  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008703893\\_aporbarkbeetlesherbaltea2ndldwritethru.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008703893_aporbarkbeetlesherbaltea2ndldwritethru.html)
- *The Wall Street Journal* reports on the strength of timberland as an investment even in a tough economy:  
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123292802063613879.html>
- *The Seattle Times* reports on the impact of urban sprawl on amphibians:  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008651729\\_frogs21m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008651729_frogs21m.html)
- MSNBC reports on accelerated mortality of trees in the west and how that may relate to climate change: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28773860/>
- Here's something you don't see in the news very often – *The Seattle Times* did a feature on Mountain Beaver:  
[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/pacificnw/2008706268\\_pacificbeaver08.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/pacificnw/2008706268_pacificbeaver08.html)
- The *Skagit Valley Herald* reports on the reaction of local foresters to the new Public Lands Commissioner:  
[http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/foresters\\_optimistic\\_about\\_goldmark/](http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/foresters_optimistic_about_goldmark/)

## Policy Update

Here are a few policy-related items:

- Skagit County landowners may be affected by new critical areas rules. You can read more about this in the *Skagit Valley Herald*:  
[http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/landowners\\_face\\_new\\_rules\\_protecting\\_critical\\_areas/](http://www.goskagit.com/home/article/landowners_face_new_rules_protecting_critical_areas/)

- King County residents can make public comments on the county’s Stormwater Management Program. You can send comments by mail, email, or by attending meetings which will be held in Issaquah (March 3rd), Covington (March 5th), and Redmond (March 9th). For details visit <http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/wlr/stormwaterprogram/meeting-announcement.aspx>. The phone number for Stormwater Services is 206-296-1900.
- There are two bills in the legislature regarding small forest landowners and riparian areas:
  - HB 1725 would establish a simplified, “single-tier” riparian buffer option for small forest landowners. The proposed buffer would be a 75-foot no-touch buffer for smaller streams, increasing to 100 feet for larger streams. More info: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1725>
  - HB 1637 would allow landowners with less than 20 acres who choose to implement the Forests and Fish Rules (ownerships of this size are typically exempt) to be eligible for cost-share assistance through the Forestry Riparian Easement Program (FREPE). More info: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=1637>

To comment on either of these bills (or any other legislative matters), you can find contact information for your legislative district at <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx> or you can call the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-562-6000.

## Are you EQIPped?

It’s that time of year again—time to think about applying for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This program provides landowners with funding to carry out stewardship activities. Some examples of activities that you could get funds for include:

- Tree planting
- Protecting seedlings from animal damage
- Vegetation control
- Pre-commercial thinning
- Pruning
- Road maintenance
- Habitat improvement
- Other stewardship activities

Funding for these activities can be especially useful in a depressed economy with poor log markets, when it is difficult to generate income from your property to fund

stewardship activities. If you have been wanting to undertake some projects to keep your forest healthy and vigorous but have not been able to cover the costs, please consider this program! We would love to see some of these funds utilized locally.

The application deadline for 2010 funds is July 15, 2009. For more information visit <http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/forestry/index.html> or contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office. Below are some phone numbers for local NRCS offices; if you don't find your area listed you can contact me and I will help you find the right contact.

- King (Renton) – 425-277-5580
- Skagit (Mount Vernon) – 360-428-7758 ext. 132
- Snohomish (Lake Stevens) – 425-335-5634 ext. 105
- Whatcom (Lynden) – 360-354-5658

## New Online Resources for Forest Landowners

There are a lot of online resources for forest landowners. I encourage you to spend some time familiarizing yourself with what's available. If you don't have a computer and/or internet access at home, you can access these resources at your local library. Here are a few new resources to be aware of:

- **Forest Stewardship Quick Reference Guide** – I put together a 2-page guide to services for forest landowners in this area. Key names, phone numbers, and websites, along with guidance on whom to call for what, are included. <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/FS-QuickRef.pdf>
- **Forest Stewardship Resources webpage** – this was first unveiled at the end of December, but it has grown considerably since then. Check it out if you haven't already – with 46 topics, there is sure to be something of interest to just about everyone. <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/resources.htm>
- **New statewide Extension Forestry website is unveiled** - check out the new look of the statewide forestry site. We have lots of new resources there as well. Be sure to update your bookmarks and links if you are used to using the old site. <http://ext.wsu.edu/forestry/>
- **eXtension** – this site is not actually new, but you may not be aware of it. eXtension allows you to connect to Extension resources from all the land grant universities nationwide. Some highlights:
  - eXtension home page: <http://www.extension.org/>
  - eXtension search page – search all Extension resources nationwide for a topic or keyword: <http://search.extension.org/>



- eXtension financial crisis page – see what practical resources Extension has to offer to help you through tough economic times:  
[http://www.extension.org/financial\\_crisis](http://www.extension.org/financial_crisis)

## WSU Budget Update

There has been a lot of news coverage lately about the proposed cuts to WSU Extension, such as the article that was in *The Seattle Times* this week ([http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008778252\\_budgetfears24m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2008778252_budgetfears24m.html)). I wrote about this in a special supplemental issue of this newsletter a couple weeks ago ([http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/Newsletter\\_02\\_supp.pdf](http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/Newsletter_02_supp.pdf)). Given the continued coverage and broad concern about this issue, I would like to further clarify what is going on.

Because of the state budget deficit, all state institutions need to significantly trim their budgets, WSU included. However, what has caused such concern among the public is that a scenario presented to the Legislature by the WSU administration involved a disproportionate cut to public service (of which Extension is perhaps the most significant element) in order to protect other aspects of the university (research and academics). The cuts to public service in the scenario presented were of the magnitude of 50-75%. This scenario put the future of local county extension offices in question, along with all of the associated programs, including forestry, 4-H, master gardeners, family living, and agriculture.

Let me emphasize that these are scenarios, and things are still in the decision process. The decisions will ultimately be made at several levels. The Legislature will determine what level of overall cuts that WSU will receive and also could stipulate to what extent those cuts could or could not be applied to public service (i.e. Extension). Barring specific stipulations by the Legislature, it will be the university itself that decides how the cuts are to be applied.

I hope that helps to clarify the issues that you've been reading and hearing about. If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, and I will answer them as best I can.

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