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Snohomish/Skagit Extension Forestry E-Newsletter Supplement Large Print Edition

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Supplemental Issue

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.

Dear Friends,

I hope that you have enjoyed receiving this monthly newsletter and find it useful. I also hope that you have enjoyed and benefitted from the Forest Stewardship Program, whether it be through Coached Planning, various workshops, field days, individual site visits, consultations by phone and email, and the reference publications and other information that we provide.

As you have probably noticed, this is not the regular February newsletter. Not to worry—that will be coming in the next few days. I wanted to send the information below separately so that it would not distract from the other program news and information in the regular newsletter.

Many of you have probably already heard by now that Washington State University has responded to the Legislature's request to lay out a plan for implementing different budget reduction scenarios. **Some of the most significant proposed cuts are to public service and outreach, which largely means Extension.** The cuts proposed are in the neighborhood of 50-75%.

What this would mean specifically for the Forest Stewardship Program is unknown, but with cuts of these magnitudes it is likely that all Extension programs will be significantly impacted—including Master Gardeners, Agriculture, 4-H, Nutrition Programs, Beach Watchers, and the many other programs that Extension provides, including Forestry.

These and other WSU Extension programs have had significant impacts in our state. Some of the reasons that WSU Extension has been so successful include:

- Our working partnerships with local communities that identify issues that the University's research and knowledge bases can address. Application of new knowledge and technologies contributes to the economic and cultural vitality of the state.
- As part of WSU, we provide unbiased, research based information that gives people the knowledge to improve their health and livelihoods.

- We deliver educational programs that are adapted to critical needs in the community. As a result, outcomes are long lasting and have deep impact on the health and well-being of all citizens and the environments in which they live.
- Our presence in every county enables community members to come to WSU directly with their issues. The assistance that they receive helps them improve their lives.

WSU Extension is an economic engine for the state, leveraging every state dollar with dollars from local governments and other agencies as well as competitive grants and contracts. The Forest Stewardship Program is a great example of this, as only a fraction of the program is state-funded. These funds are leveraged to bring in money from other sources, such as federal and private grants that would otherwise be distributed out of state. On the whole, state funding only comprises one-third of the WSU Extension budget; the rest is funding leveraged from these other sources. Thus, for each state dollar cut from Extension, an additional \$2 of non-state funding is also lost (or put another way, a savings of only 30 cents on the dollar for state taxpayers).

Please note that **these cuts have not taken place yet**. WSU and our other state universities have made their reports to the Legislature, and are now working on more formalized budgets, which should be submitted to the Legislature by early April. Throughout this process, policymakers at WSU and in the Legislature will be considering the importance of things like WSU Extension to the State of Washington. **If you have questions or concerns about these issues, please feel free to contact me.**

I understand that some of you have written to your legislators to share your thoughts about Forest Stewardship programs. Several legislators actually responded by contacting us to find out more

information about the Forest Stewardship program. It is encouraging that policymakers are being responsive to constituent questions and concerns.

For those of you who wish to share thoughts with policymakers at WSU or in the Legislature, I hope you will also consider sharing your correspondence with me, as I am also very interested in what you have to say about WSU Extension and its future in Washington.

In the meantime, look for the regular February newsletter in the next few days; I have lots to tell you about regarding upcoming programs and other items of interest.

Best regards,

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WSU Extension forester

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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.