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WSU Extension Puget Sound Forest Stewardship E-Newsletter

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Forester's Notes

Not being a forest owner myself means that I will never fully understand the challenges that you face in stewarding your land. It is true that I have expertise and experience in forest management, and I can give you sound advice. However, while I may understand the technical aspect of things, there's a more human aspect that also needs to be considered.

I've been pondering this while working in my garden this spring. I have been trying to cultivate more of a green thumb. I tried last year to grow various vegetables, but with poor success. Why? Because I tried to produce more than my small plot of dirt could support, and I left plants crammed too close together. You can probably already see where I'm going with this.

This year I am determined to be successful, and I've gone all-out. I had the soil tested and amended accordingly. I have carefully selected seeds and starts, used proper amounts of fertilizer, been watering diligently when needed (but not too much), and even inoculated my young plants with mycorrhizae to naturally improve success and soil flora. But still my success ultimately comes down to spacing.

When it came time to thin my tender sprouts and shoots, it was very difficult for me to take a bunch of these plants that I had nurtured and labored over and rip them up and discard them. Even though I *knew* it was the right thing to do and that it was not really wasteful at all, I still had trouble. And then there were the decisions of which ones to take, and which to leave. I tried to leave the best ones, but that often meant leaving certain individual plants spaced too close together, forcing me to balance even spacing with selection of the best specimens.

I bit the bullet and completed my thinning. Then some of the ones I had left to grow died, leaving gaps in my rows. "If only I had left a different one," I would think to myself. In other areas I would finally get things growing well and correctly spaced, only to have some of my best specimens wiped out by marauding slugs.

Does all of this sound familiar? I thought it might. Here I felt a little bit of anguish trying to thin onion starts and carrot sprouts, which really only involved minimal effort and expense to establish (and if they do not succeed, it really is not big deal). So I can only imagine what it is like for you with your trees, which take so much time and effort to establish for a long-term and fairly high-stakes endeavor.

So I am imagining that when I have encouraged you to do things like thin your forest, or to tolerate sporadic mortality for the sake of wildlife, or given similar management advice, your internal response may have been something along the lines of "Easy for him to say." While my advice will not change in this regard (these are still the right things to do!), I am trying to have a better understanding of the human factors and emotions that go along with these decisions.

Kevin W. Zobrist
WSU Regional Extension Specialist, Forest Stewardship
Serving Snohomish, Skagit, King, and Island Counties

New Online Classes

The response from participants who have taken our new online classes at Forest Stewardship University has been overwhelmingly positive. We've now added three key new classes to the lineup:

1. Forest Stand Dynamics in Western Washington
2. Eastern Washington Forest Diseases
3. Western Washington Forest Diseases

These three new classes have also allowed us to create three new packages:

- [Introduction to Forest Management in Western Washington](#) (includes Forest Stand Dynamics in Western Washington and Forest Management and Silviculture Primer)
- [Forest Health in Western Washington](#) (includes Forest Health Concepts, Western Washington Forest Diseases, Forest Insects in Western Washington, and Abiotic Forest Diseases).
- [Forest Health in Eastern Washington](#) (includes Forest Health Concepts, Eastern Washington Forest Diseases, Forest Insects in Eastern Washington, and Abiotic Forest Diseases).

Also, we've increased access time to each class from 30 days to a guaranteed minimum of one year. To sign up for these and other online workshops (there are 24 to choose from right now, with more still in the works), visit

<http://extension.wsu.edu/forestry/FSU/Pages/default.aspx>.

Special offer for readers of this newsletter: From now until May 31st, any and all modules and packages are 30% off with discount code MAYNEWS (no limit). This is a great time to give one of our online classes a try, and with at least a year to access the classes at your leisure, you may even want to stock up on several

New Publication

I am pleased to announce another new Extension Forestry Publication:

PNW630 – Basic Forest Inventory Techniques for Family Forest Owners.

This is a publication that I have been working on with several colleagues for five years. It fills a big gap in our written curriculum by providing a comprehensive guide to measuring trees. It includes diagrams, photos, links to online videos, and step-by-step instructions and applications for a variety of forest measurement tools. It also includes site index curves, Tarif tables, and volume tables—everything you need to do a good inventory of your forest.

Because of the large size of the publication, it is only available in hard copy. We were able to get a good deal on printing though, so the price is a reasonable \$12 per copy (about a third of what I was expecting). Order your copy hot off the press online at <https://pubs.wsu.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=15488> or by calling WSU Extension Publications at 1-800-723-1763.

Forest Stewardship Coached Planning

Our flagship course teaches forest landowners how to prepare their own forest stewardship plan with guidance and "coaching" from natural resource professionals. A written stewardship plan may qualify you for property tax reductions and cost share assistance. You will also learn how to keep your forest healthy and productive, attract more wildlife, and achieve your specific ownership objectives.

Usually we offer this series once or twice a year, but for 2012 we have a total of four classes on tap. The Whidbey Island class is complete, we're midway through the online class (which has been a huge success), and we've got two classes coming up in the fall in Bellevue and also on Vashon (rescheduled from this spring). **Registration is open** for both the Bellevue and Vashon classes

- **Vashon: October 3rd – November 28th.** After a several-year absence, we are happy to be returning to Vashon Island this fall. Classes will be on Wednesday evenings at the Vashon Land Trust Building, and there will be two Saturday field trips. Details and registration information are available at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/CP12Vashon.htm> or by calling 425-357-6017.
- **Bellevue: October 4th – December 6th.** Our fall class will be on Thursday evenings in southeast Bellevue this year at the Lewis Creek Park Visitor Center. This is a smaller facility, so space is more limited this year than usual. Since we've always sold out in the past (with more space), be sure to reserve your spot early for this class. Also, special discounted rates are available for City of Bellevue residents. Details and registration information are available at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/CP12Bellevue.htm> or by calling 425-357-6017.

And save the dates for 2013 Coached Planning classes:

- **Online** (for Western WA properties) – Wednesdays January 16 – February 27
- **Everett** – Thursdays February 28 – April 25

Summer Twilight Tours

Back by popular demand—we're doing twilight forest tours again this summer. Join us as we take advantage of our long summer evenings to enjoy "twilight tours" of local, family-owned forests. These free 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 (yum!).

We've got two tours lined up so far:

- July 10th in the Mount Vernon area
- July 11th in the Maple Valley area

Sign up for either or both tours at <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/twilight2012.htm> or by calling 425-357-6017.

Forestry and Wildlife Workshop

Join highly-regarded speaker Jim Bottorff, WA Department of Natural Resources Forest Stewardship Wildlife Biologist, for an in-depth workshop on forestry and wildlife. Topics covered will include understanding forest wildlife habitat, protecting and enhancing habitat during forest management activities, providing supplemental habitat (e.g. nest boxes), and controlling wildlife damage to trees. This will be similar to the session he offers in Coached Planning, but a little longer to allow some more detail and depth. This is a great opportunity to learn about this popular topic for the first time, or take a refresher ("sharpen the saw") from past classes.

The workshop will be Saturday September 15th in Carnation. Space is limited and there is an early registration discount before August 25th. For details and registration information, please visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/wildlife12.htm> or call 425-357-6017.

Forestry Health Workshop

The insect and disease experts from the WA Department of Natural Resources Forest Health Section will be presenting an in-depth workshop on forest health. Topics covered will include forest health concepts and issues, Western Washington forest insects, Western Washington forest diseases, and abiotic impacts (e.g. drought, pollution, storm damage). Just like the wildlife workshop, this will be similar to the session offered in Coached Planning, but a little longer to allow some more detail and depth. This is another great opportunity to learn about a popular topic for the first time, or "sharpen the saw" from past classes.

The workshop will be Saturday October 6th in Everett. Space is limited and there is an early registration discount before September 15th. For details and registration information, please visit <http://snohomish.wsu.edu/forestry/foresthealth12.htm> or call 425-357-6017.

Tidbits

- Help me reach 200! Our Facebook page has 183 likes (far more than I ever anticipated). I'll be giving some presentations to other Extension professionals this summer on using social media in Extension programming. In anticipation of that, I'm trying to see if we cross the threshold of 200 likes. So if you're on Facebook, come check us out at <http://www.facebook.com/wsuforestry>.

- Save the date—the annual Western Washington Forest Owners Field Day will be Saturday August 18th near Olympia.
- Registration is open for the Eastern Washington Forest Owners Field Day on Saturday June 16th near Newport. Details are available at <http://ext.wsu.edu/forestry/documents/ForestFD12Alo.pdf> or by calling Andy Perleberg at 509-667-6658.
- Check out this great article on forest lichens by DNR's Karen Ripley. This article was featured in this month's DNR Urban Forestry newsletter: <http://dnrtreelink.wordpress.com/2012/05/04/forest-health-likin-lichens/>
- Forest Management Plan Writing Competency Trainings will be held around the state this spring for NRCS Technical Service Providers (or those who wish to become a TSP). For details and registration, visit <http://ext.wsu.edu/forestry/> or contact Andy Perleberg at 509-667-6658.
- New cost share funds are available from NRCS through the EQIP program for Puget Sound forest owners who wish to address fish passage, and water quality and habitat improvement within fish-bearing areas. **Application deadline is May 25th.** Contact your local NRCS office for application information.
- The spring 2012 edition of Forest Stewardship Notes is now available at <http://foreststewardshipnotes.wordpress.com/>

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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. Persons with a disability requiring special accommodations while participating in any of the programs described above should call WSU Extension at 425-357-6017 to request accommodation at least 21 days in advance.