



February 2010

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
URBAN & COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM

Welcome to the February Tree Link



February is the month that many communities are gearing up, preparing for seasonal maintenance, volunteer planting projects, and Arbor Day Celebrations. Representatives from WA Department of Natural Resources are available to help your community celebrate Tree City successes. If you would like a WA DNR representative to present the Tree City award either at a community event, or at a meeting of your City Council, please let us know as soon as possible, and we will put your event on the calendar.

We are also happy to post your event or education opportunities on the Tree Link calendar. Just send a description, date, time and place of the activity.

Read on to find:

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Between every two pines is a doorway to a new world. ~John Muir

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Coordinator's Corner



How is it already the end of January? With my desk cluttered (OK, more cluttered than normal) with 2010 Community Forestry Assistance grant mid-reports to review, a BIG stack of 2011 grant applications to read and score, and other fun items needing my attention, I'm reflecting on the impact of the grant program. From where I sit, I don't see the end results of most of the projects, just the paper work that keeps the system going. The investment of time, community funds, and USDA Forest Service dollars have resulted in millions of dollars of urban and community forestry projects across the state of Washington. Linden Mead, Nicki Eisfeldt, and I have started to review files from projects in the early 1990's and we look forward to visiting with the recipients and learning more about where those projects are now. In the next few weeks, we will be sending out a survey to past grant recipients, Tree City USA communities, and others involved with our program to update our records and gather some information about the past 20 years of our program. I hope you will all take a few minutes to complete the survey and help us plan the next 20. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at sarah.foster@dnr.wa.gov.

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Can topping really invigorate a tree? Experts agree - NO!



Thick regrowth after topping

Don't be fooled that topping can revive or improve the health of a tree. It's just not true. Tree topping should **never** be confused with proper pruning.

Topping is defined as severely and indiscriminately cutting back or removing large branches in a mature tree. Research has taught us that good pruning techniques work with the tree's biology, not against it. Topping a tree removes its ability to feed itself; it does not help a declining tree recover.

Pruning, the cutting and removing of branches or parts of trees, is a preventative or corrective measure to remove dead branches, crowded or rubbing limbs, eliminate hazards, and increase light and air penetration. Since each cut to a tree has the potential to change the way it grows, it is important to educate yourself. No branch should be removed without a good reason.

For example, when a stem of a plant is cut, it alters the physiology of that plant. By removing a stem tip from the plant, it induces branching by releasing apical dominance. (Apical dominance is the phenomenon whereby the main central stem of the plant grows more strongly than other side stems.) So pruning is not about what is removed, but what happens to what is left on the plant. Thus, proper pruning is designed to provide proper branching on the plant...not to control its size or shape.

When large branches are indiscriminately removed from a tree, it disrupts the tree's ability to produce the energy-making leaves that it needs to survive and thrive. Topping leaves behind wounds that open the door to decay organisms.

Often a topped tree will respond to its injuries by putting on a tremendous amount of branch growth to make up for the loss of its food-making branches. As a result, a tree may appear fuller and more dense; however this "flush" of growth forces the tree to tap into its energy reserves and the tree becomes stressed, weakened and susceptible to insect and disease attack. Rather than invigorating a tree, if a tree survives topping, the result is that it remains in a weakened state with a greatly reduced life span.

When trees are properly pruned, their natural shape remains intact along with their health and vigor. The [International Society of Arboriculture](#) has suggested techniques on how to prune trees properly. If you have a large tree that you think needs to be pruned, consult a [certified arborist](#). He or she will be able to plot a course of action that may involve pruning, but never topping.

Remember: Think before you plant. Assess a site to understand the type of soil, amount of space, light and moisture available to a tree. Select a tree that will live and thrive in those conditions by researching tree size and maintenance requirements before you select the perfect one for your yard. To learn the right techniques for planting a tree, see Urban and Community Forestry's publication called [Proper Planting Begins Below Ground](#).

You can test your tree knowledge with Plant Amnesty's [Tree Biology Pop Quiz](#).

For more information on tree care, go to [DNR's Urban and Community Forestry Program](#) website.

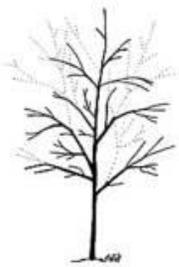
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Fruit Tree Tip of the Month

February is the month to start thinking about winter pruning. This is the time for light, 'clean up' pruning. Heavy restoration cuts should be accomplished after harvesting in the late summer.

Tip from **City Fruit, Seattle** <http://www.cityfruit.org/>

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THE WASHINGTON ARBORICULTURE EXCHANGE PROGRAM



Would you like to learn more about urban forestry programs, tree planting, care and maintenance? Learn from experts in the field. Consider participating in the Washington Arboriculture Exchange Program (WAEP).

The purpose of the WAEP is to exchange urban forestry expertise, management ideas and technology through direct on-site experience working with municipal arborists. The program is designed for individuals interested in or responsible for developing or expanding an urban and community forestry program in their community, including planners, public works and/or parks managers, and tree board members,

To find our more information about WAEP, contact Linden Mead at 360-902-1703.

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POSTER CONTEST? WHY NOT!?



2001 Arbor Day
Patch

The National Arbor Day Poster Contest, initiated and supported by the Arbor Day Foundation (ADF), has been a spring tradition in many Washington fifth grade classrooms. Recently, the organization has seen a significant drop in contest participation and last year made the decision to end the contest in favor of promoting hands-on [Nature Explore classrooms](#).

With limited resources, UCF is unable to organize and promote a state-wide contest. However we are very much in support of, and encourage communities and Tree Boards to consider organizing local contests.

Art projects are a great way to engage students, the business community, and families in Arbor Day and tree care education. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. ADF curriculum materials are still available online at this link, <http://www.arborday.org/kids/postercontest/activities.cfm>, but you can also create something more relevant to your community, (celebrating the grand opening of a new park or recognizing heritage trees, for

example).

Of course you are not limited to a poster contest! Here are some ideas you may want to consider:

- An art contest for middle and high school students designing an Arbor Day button that will be passed out at schools or during community events
- A you-tube video contest based on a theme relevant to your community
- Artwork for "tree-shirts" for volunteers that help during Arbor Day planting and ceremonies
- Involve the business district by holding an Arbor Day window painting contest
- Design and hang banners to spruce up Main Street
- Display photo-contest entries at the library and let citizens vote on a winner.

Contest winners should be recognized, and what better place than an Arbor Day celebration? This year, consider making your Arbor Day creative. Engage your community, and have fun!

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Partnership Success!

City of Olympia & Partners Promote Stewardship of Historic Trees



Legion Way, a beloved canopied streetscape in Olympia, was planted on Armistice Day in 1928 as a living memorial to honor local veterans of World War I and the Spanish-American War. It is now a major corridor for vehicles and pedestrians; a favorite place to walk for many nearby state employees and residents.

Unfortunately, over 30 years ago the more than 120 Red oak, Pin oak, and Sweetgum trees that line the street were topped for overhead utility lines. Also topped were those trees on the opposite side of the street so the two would match. Puget Sound Energy has since relocated the majority of the overhead utility lines to an adjacent alley, but the damage had already been done. Today, every tree on the street has weak structure and questionable long-term viability. Large branch and whole tree failures are becoming increasingly more common, as the vertical growth originating from topping wounds expands in girth; greater than 20" in diameter.

The City Urban Forestry Program, while monitoring the trees, recognized the dangers of continued inaction. To address the issue, a proactive planning and implementation approach to the stewardship of Legion Way was launched last year, developed with input from interested community members.

A planning team of community members and city staff were recruited to guide the first year's implementation. The planning team consisted of two city council members, a local arborist, two representatives from the directly-affected neighborhood association, a Puget Sound Energy representative, and city staff with expertise in housing, urban forestry, and historic preservation.

The team was charged with implementation of phase-one of a plan designed to be a long-term, multi-faceted approach for monitoring, assessing, pruning, removing, and replacing trees. Partnerships with a variety of community organizations were a key part of the effort. The planning team provided direction to the outreach campaign and support for outreach initiatives. With the help of an engaged neighborhood association, they assisted directing the implementation of a culminating planting event and were instrumental in raising funds for replacement trees.



A high-profile planting event highlighting the historical importance of the streetscape, and replacing those trees slated for removal during the first year, was held on Veterans Day 2010 in honor of the original Armistice Day planting. Partners for the event included the American Legion Post, Veteran's of Foreign Wars Post, the local Army National Guard Battalion and community groups. Mr. Dan Cushman of the American Legion, whose father spearheaded the original planting in 1928, was a guest speaker.

Removing mature, historic oak trees was a challenging and sad task. Five dangerous trees were removed, and twelve large, healthy trees were planted in their place. A template for future annual phases has been developed, and with the support of community leaders, the neighborhood, and partner organizations, the path towards a healthy streetscape has been established. With the support of a dedicated team, the stewardship of the Legion Way trees by the community was reignited in a way that is truly sustainable.

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COUNCIL COMMUNIQUÉ by Ara Erickson, representing Non-Profit/Volunteer or Environmental Youth Conservation on the WA Community Forestry Council

A K-12 Urban Forestry Education Program for All



As a Council member, I am often impressed with the wide number of urban forestry education programs that we hear about being developed and implemented throughout Washington. From Arbor Day one-day events to community college courses, urban forestry is being shared wide and far.

To add to Washington's urban forestry educational resources, the Green Seattle Partnership (a public-private partnership among the City of Seattle, Cascade Land Conservancy, and the citizens of Seattle) developed a K-12 curriculum and experiential education program called the "Urban Forestry Project". With a grant from the USDA Forest Service, Urban and Community Forestry Program, the Green Seattle Partnership contracted with Regalis, Inc. and the Pacific Education Institute to design and implement the curriculum and pilot project.

Each set of lessons and field experiences link elementary, middle, and high school. After high school students learn about and experience urban forest restoration, they present their findings and experience with the middle school students and the elementary school students. Each grade level's curriculum builds on the discoveries and experiences of their fellow students.

Field experiences and lessons parallel the work that is being done by Forest Stewards, local volunteer leaders, and staff urban foresters, as well as aligning with the state of Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Environmental and Sustainability Education Standards.

For the pilot project, each restoration site was within a mile of a school and most students were able to walk to the park for their field experience/lesson - a valuable connection in the urban environment. All restoration sites had community support and volunteers from the community were present at the field events to help each grade level.

Although each restoration site is the focus for each student's field experience, the entire curriculum touches on the relevance of similar environmental issues such as invasive species infestation and deforestation that affect communities around the globe, as well as citizens who have made differences in their communities by tackling important environmental problems.

The pilot project succeeded in teaching students in Seattle about their local urban parks, why they are important, and how they can take part in their care. Based on pre- and post-test information on academic learning and stewardship values, students showed an improved understanding of interactions within urban forest ecosystems, problems facing urban forests, and the benefits of urban ecosystems. Student's attitudes about stewardship also improved, and over 58% of the high school students, 68% of the middle school students, and 71% of the elementary school students now feel that they can contribute to the health of local parks and urban forests.

The curriculum and program materials will be available on-line soon for other groups to use and share. It is our hope, and intention, that this program be replicated in other communities throughout Washington and beyond. In the meantime, please feel free to contact Andrea Mojzak (andream@cascadeland.org) for inquiries.

Prepared by Ara Erickson and Andrea Mojzak, Cascade Land Conservancy

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WEB-UCATION LINKS THAT HELP YOU LEARN

[The Tallest of the Tall](#) Big-tree hunters have discovered a tree they claim is the world's tallest Ponderosa pine, 268.35 feet, in the Siskiyou National Forest.

[Tree Space Design](#) A report and graphics illustrating the relationship between tree size and adequate soil volume. By Casey Trees of Washington DC

[A surprising benefit of trees!](#) From the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station in Portland

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CALENDAR, EVENTS, DEADLINES

We are happy to post events and educational opportunities. Just forward information (deadline, 25th of each month) to Linden at linden.mead@dnr.wa.gov

Washington State Arbor Day is the second Wednesday of the month of April, the 13th this year. If your community is receiving a Tree City USA award, a representative from WA DNR is happy to make the presentation at a community event. To schedule a representative, please contact Linden as soon as you know the date and time of your celebration.

[Fruit Tree Pruning Basics](#)

Saturday, February 5, 10 am - noon; Phinney Neighborhood Association: 6532 Phinney Ave. N, Seattle

Regularly pruning fruit trees improves their overall health, appearance, and can even increase fruit production. In this beginner class, learn the biology behind pruning fruit trees, practice basic pruning cuts, learn about pruning tools and get hands-on experience pruning a fruit tree. Visit City Fruit's web site for more information: <http://cityfruit.org/classes.htm> or email info@cityfruit.org

[Where Do Trees Come From?](#)

Friday, February 11, 2011 from 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM (PT), Pasco

Nursery production methods, varied methods of propagating trees, growing and handling nursery stock, what to look for in selecting quality nursery stock.

Sponsored by the [Pacific Northwest Chapter International Society of Arboriculture](#). For more information, contact Tim Werner, Richland Parks and Recreation werner@ci.richland.wa.us

[Pruning Class: How to Prune \(taught in Spanish\)](#)

Thursday, March 10, 2011 at Casa Latina, 317 17th Ave S, Seattle

Pruning Class taught in Spanish by George Ortiz, CLT, at the Casa Latina. Sponsored by Plant Amnesty

For more information: Call Casa Latina at 206-956-0779

Tree Planting, Care and Maintenance

March 10, 2011 at Mount Vernon Northwestern Washington Research and Extension Center, Mt Vernon This is a free workshop for municipal employees that work with trees. Includes information on basic tree biology, tree selection, planting, and structural pruning young trees. The full-day workshop is sponsored by WA DNR UCF. Contact Linden for more information 360-902-1703 or linden.mead@dnr.wa.gov

[Streambank Soil Bioengineering: How to Build & Install Vegetative Structures for Reducing Streambank Erosion](#)

Same Agenda, Two Locations: February 23-24, 2011 Portland, OR and March 9-10, 2011 Spokane, WA

A practical, in-depth and applied workshop on building and installing vegetative structures for reducing stream bank erosion. A wide variety of designs and applications will be covered with an on-the-ground assessment of what works and what doesn't. Sponsored by Western Forestry and Conservation Association

Call 888-722-9416 or 503-226-4562 or email michele@westernforestry.org

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The Washington Urban and Community Forestry Program is made possible with assistance from the [USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program](#). The program's purpose is to educate citizens and decision-makers about the economic, environmental, psychological, and aesthetic benefits of trees and to assist local governments, citizen groups and volunteers in planting and sustaining healthy trees and vegetation wherever people live and work in Washington State.

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