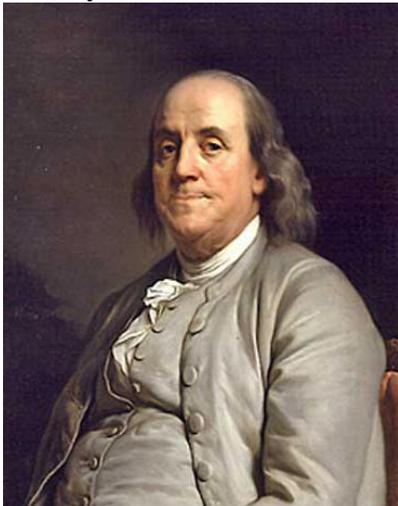




## Quote of the Month — January

January 9, 2015



Benjamin Franklin. Photo from: dickinson.edu

**“How few there are who have courage enough to own their faults, or resolution enough to mend them.”**

## Coordinator’s Corner — 2015 barely underway; already exciting

January 9, 2015

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since taking the helm as Urban and Community Forestry (UC&F) program manager. I have pulled out the ‘newbie’ card more than once but have managed to get my feet under me—now we are off and running in 2015.

The end of one year and the beginning of the next means the U&CF program is collecting and approving Tree City USA applications. We are hoping that a record number of communities will be recognized as Tree City USA’s this year. If you have not yet sent in an application, there may still be time. Check in with [Ben Thompson](#) at 360-902-1382.

Our program staff and I will also be reviewing and scoring proposals we've received for our Community Forestry Assistance, Tree Inventory, and Tree Planting grants. Those of you who have submitted applications should be hearing from us on the status of your proposals within the next six weeks. We are all eager to see what kinds of exciting grant projects will shape urban forestry in Washington throughout this new year.

I'm thrilled to report that our partners [Garth Davis](#), Spokane Conservation District Forester and [Leif Fixen](#), Snohomish Conservation District Resource Planner, are again joining us as part of the technical assistance team. Garth covers Pend Oreille, Stevens, Lincoln, Adams, Whitman and Spokane counties, while Leif works up in Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish and Island counties. If you have tree questions, need staff training, or would like planning and management assistance, Garth, Leif, and Ben are available to help your community.

This year, we will be offering regional workshops to teach about performing tree inventories and what to do with the data once you have it. An inventory is an excellent first step toward sustainable tree management. Knowing more about your existing trees helps you plan and budget for the planning, planting, care, and maintenance of your community forest into the future. Watch for dates for the Inventory Workshop in upcoming editions of *Tree Link* or for an email announcing a workshop in your region.

Finally, it is not too early to start planning for Arbor Day, which is only a few months away. We will once again offer Arbor Day tree planting grants to our Tree City USA communities. Watch for the formal announcement in next month's *Tree Link*. And please let us know if you'd like us to attend your event to present a Tree City award, one of our favorite spring-time activities.

Happy New Year to all.

*By Linden J. Lampman, program manager, DNR Urban and Community Forestry Program*

## [New Year's Resolutions for Community Tree Advocates](#)

January 9, 2015

The dawning of a new year compels many of us to take a hard look our habits and behaviors, and then to set new goals to pursue what we believe will make us better people in the year ahead. Resolutions are most often personal: lose weight, eat healthy, stay in better contact with friends and loved ones, or try a new hobby. These are all worthy pursuits, but how about investing energy into New Year's resolutions that make a difference to trees in your community—and which might help you too.

Suggested resolutions for 2015:

- **Take a child to a local park, forest or natural area** and explore the environment with him or her. Unsure where to start? Search for a nearby nature center, natural area, or state, county, or city park that offers interpretive signage or guided activities.

- **Attend at least one public meeting** to better understand how your community operates. It's a good way to learn what others believe are issues of local importance, and it can help you strategize how trees might be included in community projects and activities.
- **Arrange a friendly chat, perhaps over coffee or lunch**, with a local developer, business owner, home-owner association president, or other stakeholder in community forestry. Learn which issues, struggles, opinions, or feelings about trees are important to them. Ask how you can help them to incorporate trees successfully in their work in 2015 and beyond.
- **Write articles, blogs, or letters** that champion the importance of trees in your community, and encourage others to become active tree stewards where you live.
- **Donate to, become a member of, or volunteer for an organization** that supports healthy community trees and forests. To get you started in Washington state, consider organizations such as:
  - Conservation Districts (statewide), Friends of Trees (Vancouver), Earthcorps (Seattle), Forterra's Green Cities Partnerships (Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, Kirkland, Redmond, Kent, and Puyallup), The Lands Council (Spokane), the Mid-Columbia Forestry Council (Tri-Cities), Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust (I-90 corridor), Plant Amnesty (Seattle), Washington State Extension Master Gardeners (statewide), or the Yakima Area Arboretum (Yakima).

Or simply...

- **Plant a new tree every month!** Or the equivalent, twelve trees sometime during 2015. By volunteering at community planting events, you'll not only meet, but likely exceed that goal.

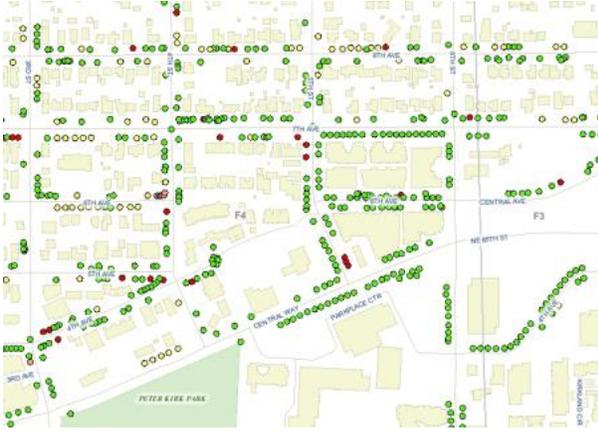
Together, let's resolve to make 2015 a banner year for community trees.

Happy New Year to all of our readers.

## [Tree Inventory "Brown Bag" Series in 2015](#)

January 9, 2015

In 2012, DNR's Urban and Community Forestry Program created a separate grant program specific to performing inventories of public trees. Since that time, nearly 20 inventories have been conducted and more will be awarded to successful grantees next month. Many other cities have established tree inventories on their own.



Good planning starts with an inventory.

We know that a tree inventory is a powerful tool in urban forest management; however, harnessing the power of data can be challenging for those with limited tree inventory experience. As stewards and managers of urban forests, it is imperative that we teach ourselves how to make the best use of tree inventory data.

DNR's Urban and Community Forestry Program has plans to offer regional "brown-bag" style seminars on Tree Inventory in 2015. The specific topics and presentations have yet to be developed, but the seminars will include an overview of different types of tree inventories, cover the basics of how an inventory can be used, and offer tips on how to use your inventory effectively.

Seminar locations have yet to be determined, however, they will take place on a weekday from approximately 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. and, ideally, will include an outdoor component. There is no charge to attend, however, participants must provide their own lunch. Seminars will be regionally advertised in advance with assistance from our program partners throughout the state.

More details on the 2015 Tree Inventory Seminars will be provided in the February edition of *Tree Link*.

## **[Poll: What type of training is needed in your community?](#)**

January 9, 2015

Our last *Tree Link* poll asked how you get your tree questions answered, on the assumption that our readers are actively trying to learn more about trees and urban forestry. As we all recognize however, every community has staff, residents, private companies, and others that lack important knowledge about trees.

This month, we're wondering what type of training you think is most needed by others in your community.

Please take a moment to participate. It takes just a few seconds, your response is completely anonymous, and results will help DNR staff continue to provide meaningful services to the people of Washington state.

When selecting your answer, choose the response that best characterizes what you believe is the greatest training need for stakeholders of urban forestry, generally, in your community.

Which of the following topics is most needed for education and training in your community?

- Proper pruning (including anti-tree topping messages)
- Tree or plant identification (including i.d. of invasive species)
- Tree protection on development sites
- Proper tree selection and planting
- The benefits of trees
- Tree risk assessment/management

Vote

[Polldaddy.com](http://Polldaddy.com)

## **From the Field: “Sweater Weather: Fashion for the Urban Forest”**

January 9, 2015

This past fall, the [City of Richland’s Parks and Recreation Department](#) launched a community-level competition aimed at strengthening the fabric of their community by connecting together area residents with art, local parks, trees, and fun activities.



A vibrant ‘yarn-bombed’ pin oak in Richland, Washington. Photo: City of Richland.

“*Sweater Weather: Fashion for the Urban Forest*” challenged Richland’s fittest knitters, the avante guard and other creative crafters to design and fit sweaters on trees in two prominent city parks.

The winners of the contest can be seen on Richland Parks and Recreation’s official [Sweater Weather webpage](#). This public art installation garnered so much attention that it was also covered by the local media:

- Tri-City Herald: [“Some Richland park trees to be adorned with sweaters as part of October art event”](#)
- KNDU 25 (NBC): [“Sweaters Take Over Trees in Howard Amon Park”](#)

The idea is a bit different but isn’t exactly a new one. In 2011, [trees in Seattle’s Occidental Park were “yarn bombed”](#) in a similar fashion (pun intended).

Call it what you will, but any community-driven event that gets people outside in parks and brings positive attention to urban trees is one worth celebrating.

## [Canopy Cat Rescuers Purrr-form Public Service](#)

January 9, 2015



If your kitty cat has ever found itself stranded high in a tree, then you know firsthand just how nerve-wracking the experience can be for you, and for your cat.

Any attempt to rescue the cat yourself is either impossible or too dangerous, so you decide to wait and see if Mittens will figure out a way down. Then one day turns into two, then three. The nights are chilly and it's pouring rain. Mittens is still stuck up there, and now she hasn't eaten in days. Poor Mittens is cold, wet, tired, weak, hungry, and scared.

Meanwhile, you're frantically calling veterinarians, animal shelters, fire departments and tree care firms only to find out that there is no one who can help.

Fortunately, cats and their owners in Western Washington will never have to endure this awful experience for more than a matter of hours thanks to the cat-loving, tree-hugging heroes at [Canopy Cat Rescue](#) (CCR) and [other cat-stuck-in-a-tree rescue professionals](#) in Washington.

CCR founders Tom Otto of Olympia, WA, and Shaun Sears of North Bend, WA, are animal lovers and ISA Certified Arborists who are available to rescue frightened kitties, day or night, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. In 2014, CCR was responsible for rescuing nearly 250 cats!

CCR does right for the cats, the trees they get stuck in, and the owners who care for them. According to their website:



*“The most important part to us is rescuing the cat safely. We ditched our flat rate charge and work now on donation only to ensure that all cats have an opportunity to be rescued.*”

*We are professional tree climbers who love to help rescue cats from trees, keeping the safety of the cat as our top priority. We also try our best to comfort the cat during the rescue as being stuck up in a tree can be very traumatic for the cat. Additionally, we climb the tree using ropes and years of technical experience taking care to also not damage the tree.”*

Whether you’re a cat lover, a tree lover, or both, follow the guys at Canopy Cat Rescue on [Facebook](#) or [Youtube](#), and check out some of these other articles that have been written about their noble deeds for kitties in trees:

- [KING 5 TV \(Seattle\)](#)
- [The Valley Record](#)
- [Today.com](#)
- [MyNorthwest.com](#)

*Photos in this article provided by Canopy Cat Rescue*

## **Timely Tree Tips – Suggestions for Bare-Tree Season**

January 9, 2015

Winter is often regarded as a slow time for working with trees; even the hardiest of Northwesterners don’t exactly enjoy working outside in freezing cold, pouring rain, or blowing snow. Any volunteer coordinator will tell you that it’s much harder to coax would-be volunteers out of their cozy abodes for a mid-morning ivy yank on a gray day in January.

Nonetheless, this season of leafless trees sets the stage for work that might be easier—yes, *easier*, to do now than in the warm days of summer.

Here are some activities particularly suitable to our leafless deciduous trees in winter:

- **Tree Inspections.** Leaves send us important signals about tree health; however a dense summer canopy may obscure other signs of tree distress such as dead wood, broken limbs, cracks, cavities, included bark, and decay fungi. Binoculars are a great tool for performing ground-based inspections of tree canopies in the leaf-off season.
- **Cable Inspections.** Many tree owners make the mistake of installing structural support cables and never following up with regular inspections. Cable inspections are easier in the winter as there are no leaves to interfere with visual inspections. Cabling systems should be periodically inspected by an ISA Certified Arborist to ensure they are still performing as intended and not causing harm to the tree(s).
- **Invasive Species Control.** Remove perennial invasive plants in the winter to reduce the abundance of seeds come spring. Where English ivy is flourishing out-of-reach in tree canopies, winter is a great time to cut a [“lifesaver”](#) ring in the ivy around trees. Doing so means you’ll witness the dieback of treated ivy before tree leaves re-emerge, and you will be assured your hard work was effective.
- **Tree Removal.** No leaves means less mess. Frozen ground also means less damage to turf from heavy equipment and other impacts of large tree removal.
- **Structural Pruning.** If January brings a lull in your maintenance schedule, fill it with [structural pruning](#) to “pay it forward” and you won’t regret it. Structural pruning is easier in winter when you can clearly see the structure of the tree. Pruning to encourage good tree structure in young trees can significantly reduce the need for costly tree maintenance in the future. This work is best done by those with the experience and skill to recognize the difference between dead limbs and live ones in the absence of leaves.

If tree work entices you outside this winter, stay warm, stay dry, stay hydrated, and stay positive. Remember that you’re doing important work for a good cause. The busy days of spring will be here before you know it, and you’ll be grateful to have made the most of your time and maintenance opportunities this winter.

## [Restoring our Urban Forests, One at a Time](#)

January 9, 2015



The City of Lacey works toward improving the health and functionality of their trees in urban settings. Photo: City of Lacey

It starts in Lacey, Washington. This city is enhancing their urban forests by managing stormwater and improving air and water quality. They are doing this by improving the health and functionality of their trees and forested sites in urban settings.

Recently, the Lake Lois Habitat Reserve received a facelift. With the help of a Puget SoundCorps team and other volunteers, English ivy, Himalayan blackberry, spurge laurel, Scotch broom and Robert's geranium were removed. These invasive non-native plants prevent forested areas from providing our community the full benefits and services of healthy forests by competing for water and nutrients, and in some cases even killing trees. Many undesirable plants that grow in dense thickets also harbor rats and other vermin, creating a public safety hazard as well. Now that the unwelcomed plants are gone, native vegetation will be planted in its place.

The Lacey Board of Park Commissioners approved the Forest Management Plan for Lake Lois Park and Lake Lois Habitat Reserve in September of 2012. Volunteers have been removing invasive plants and replanting those areas with native trees to implement the recommendations in the plan. Paul Royer, Chair of the Park Board states, "Many people are not aware of Lake Lois Habitat Reserve, but once they have been out to volunteer, they realize the importance of what they are doing and the difference it makes in the health of the forest."

This project is an Urban Forestry Restoration Project, administered by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) Urban and Community Forestry Program. For more information about the Urban Forestry Restoration Project, visit the project online or contact Micki McNaughton at (360) 902-1637 or [micki.mcnaughton@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:micki.mcnaughton@dnr.wa.gov).

DNR's Urban and Community Forestry Program is made possible through a partnership with the USDA Forest Service. Puget SoundCorps is part of the broader Washington Conservation Corps program, administered by Washington Dept. of Ecology. Puget SoundCorps crews work on projects that help restore and protect water quality in Puget Sound. The Washington

Conservation Corps is supported through grant funding and education awards provided by AmeriCorps.

*This article reprinted as originally appeared in DNR's blog, [Ear to the Ground](#).*

## **Genetic Diversity vs. Cloned Trees and Disease Resistance**

January 9, 2015

By Amy Schaarsmith, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Pittsburgh, PA (January 4, 2015) — Newly planted urban forests can easily succumb to disease. A rich genetic composition, however, is key to giving trees the resources to withstand a variety of environmental challenges. A *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* feature talked to horticulturalists on what their research says about how to cultivate hardy urban trees.

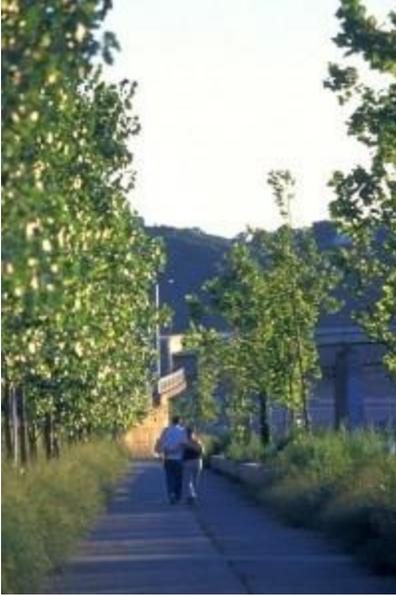


In Pittsburgh, London planetrees are survivors, braving diseases, pests, air pollution and other hardships. According to horticulturists, that success is thanks, in part, to a rich genetic composition that gives them the resources to overcome a variety of environmental challenges. They are cultivars — plants produced in cultivation through selective breeding.

New trees usually planted in cities, however, are clones of a smaller number of “parent trees,” placing them at greater risk of death from insects, infection or other stressors because they have such a limited range of genes with which to respond, according to Cynthia Morton, associate curator of botany at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

“Trees are great for the environment, but you have to plant something that will resist the next disease that comes through,” said Morton, who discovered the genetic disparity while researching the Schenley Plaza planetrees for a study published in 2008. “If we plant something genetically diverse, it will naturally have more defense mechanisms.”

Even genetically diverse trees with an ample arsenal of defenses can succumb to an especially tough enemy. The nation’s American chestnuts, Dutch elms, many hemlocks and most recently, ash trees, have fallen victim to diseases and pests, even though they were genetically wealthy.



That means the shallow gene pool of most nursery-grown hardwoods commonly planted in parks and along streets — planetrees, maples, lindens and ornamental pear trees are the most popular — makes them even more vulnerable, Morton said. In the case of planetrees, she said, nurseries breed cultivars that are resistant to anthracnose, a fungal disease that withers leaves and causes them to drop off early, but does little more damage.

Approximately 90 percent of nursery-grown trees are cloned. “Disease is spreading, but it is spreading like wildfire through cities with all these cloned trees,” she said.

Losing trees and having to replant can quickly become expensive, with the average cost of a single hardwood sapling \$350 to \$450, not counting the cost of the labor to cut down and remove the dead tree and replant the new one, Morton said. Conversely, a healthy, mature planetree in a Pittsburgh business district can save the city and local businesses \$240 a year in reduced need for heating and cooling, reduced storm water runoff, improved air quality and increased property value, according to the National Tree Benefit Calculator, available at [treebenefits.org](http://treebenefits.org).

The discovery of reduced genetic diversity in the nation’s urban tree population is “alarming,” said Phil Gruszka, an urban arborist at ACTrees Member Organization [Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy](#) and a co-author of the Schenley Plaza planetree study. The number of invasive species and diseases is increasing, even as the trees’ ability to resist them weakens.

Some local groups, such as ACTrees Member Organization [Tree Pittsburgh](#), have begun growing genetically diverse trees from seed, but a much larger effort will be required to change the availability of such trees on a scale needed to supply the entire country, he said.

Morton has sought funding from the U.S. Forest Service for a project that would share cuttings and seeds from genetically diverse hardwoods with nurseries for the development of new and hardier cultivars. Several large nursery owners have written letters of support to the Forest Service, but so far no funding has emerged.



Although at least some nursery managers understand the importance of creating more genetically diverse cultivars, the practical points of their development can be daunting, according to Debbie Lonnee, who manages the acquisition of new genetic material and development of new plant and tree cultivars for Bailey Nurseries Inc. in St. Paul, Minn.

Developing new trees requires a huge investment including land, labor, chemicals and water, among other needs.

Bare root trees typically are pulled out and sold within three years, so they don't get very large and can be planted close together, Lonnee said. But developing a new cultivar requires growing it for 10 years or more to allow the company to observe its characteristics, which means such "test" trees must be allotted much more space to accommodate their larger canopies and root systems.

And that ties up land that otherwise could be used to raise trees that could be sold. "In a nursery setting, it's a huge commitment of space and resources," Lonnee said.

Until approximately 25 years ago, land grant universities' horticultural programs developed new cultivars because they had the space to grow them and available students to take care of them.

But Lonnee said pressures including eroding public funding, higher costs, greater interest in profitable patents on medical inventions and pharmaceuticals, and reduced interest in agriculture among college students mean horticulture departments and their development of new cultivars are shrinking.

To Morton and Gruszka, the unmet need for new and hardier cultivars presents a business opportunity of growing trees from cuttings or seeds — a process that includes genetics from two trees for the greatest possible diversity — that Pittsburgh should find a way to fill.

Such a project, which potentially could make use of what are now abandoned properties around the city, also could reduce storm water runoff as part of meeting a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency mandate to reduce combined sewer discharges into area rivers, Gruszka said.

In one day, a single tree can lift up to 100 gallons of water out of the ground and discharge it into the air, according to studies conducted by North Carolina State University. And for every 5 percent of tree cover added to a community, storm water runoff is reduced by approximately 2 percent, researchers have found.

“Those lots could represent far more to us environmentally than just a place to grow trees,” said Gruszka.

Read the full article: Amy Schaarsmith, “[Newly planted urban forests can easily succumb to disease](#),” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

*This article reprinted in Tree Link as [it originally appeared the Treebune News](#), the official newsletter for the Alliance for Community Trees.*

## **[Web-ucation: Links to Help You Learn](#)**

January 9, 2015

### **Managing tree related hazards and post-disaster tree recovery**

The American Planning Association teams up with the US Forest Service and other partners to tackle this important topic. [Find out more about their preliminary findings.](#)

### **Minnesota unveils first-of-its-kind storm water crediting system for urban trees**

We all know trees benefit storm water management, but Minnesota is taking the leap to [quantify the contributions of trees to municipal storm water management.](#)

### **Plan for your urban forest for the future**

Two great new resources are available. First, the [urban forest management plan toolkit](#) takes a step-by-step approach to helping you develop a management plan for your community’s trees. In addition, the American Planning Association, in partnership with the US Forest Service, has released “[Planning the Urban Forest.](#)” a tool to help communities develop urban forestry programs to capture the social and environmental benefits of trees.

### **Can plants see, feel, hear, smell, communicate and think?**

Check out [this interview with Dr. Daniel Chamovitz](#), director of the Manna Center for Plant Biosciences at Tel Aviv University and author of the 2012 publication, “What a Plant Knows.”

### **Urban forests provide human health benefits; Does this mean that city trees save lives?**

Research conducted by the US Forest Service on the connections between tree mortality and human mortality has been summarized in [this video at Slate.com.](#)

### **Is your community Rain Ready?**

[This water conservation initiative](#) from the Chicago area has great ideas for people and communities to resolve common storm water issues in cities and towns.

### **Online graduate certificate in urban forestry**

Oregon State University offers the first online graduate certificate in urban forestry for professionals interested in continuing education. If you've ever been interested in graduate-level education but felt you didn't have the time, now there's a new option. [Check out this online certificate program.](#)

## **January Calendar of Events, Activities and Opportunities**

January 9, 2015

### **January 22-24: Northwest Green Industry Conference**

When: Thursday, January 22 – Saturday, January 24

Where: Hotel Murano, Tacoma, WA

Cost: See the [conference brochure](#) for registration and cost details

For more information: Contact WSNLA at (800) 672-7711 or [breanne@wsnla.org](mailto:breanne@wsnla.org)

### **February 4: Defensible Tree Appraisal**

When: Wednesday, February 4, 2015 — 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where: Shoreline Conference Center, 18560 1st Avenue NE, Shoreline, WA 98155-2148

Cost: \$160 for non-ISA members; \$144 for allied professionals; \$128 for ISA members; and \$80 for students

For more information: Contact The PNW-ISA at [info@pnwisa.org](mailto:info@pnwisa.org) or visit the [www.pnwisa.org](http://www.pnwisa.org) website to register.

### **February 11, 2015: Washington Community Forestry Council Meeting**

When: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 — 9:00 am – 3:30 pm

Where: WSDOT Headquarters Building, Large Commission Board Room, 310 Maple Park Ave. SE, Olympia, WA

Cost: No cost to attend.

For more information: Contact Linden Lampman at 360-902-1703 or [linden.lampman@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:linden.lampman@dnr.wa.gov)

### **February 11-15: Northwest Flower and Garden Show**

When: Wednesday, February 11 – Sunday, February 15

Where: Washington State Convention Center, Seattle, WA

Cost: [Purchase tickets on-line](#)

For more information: Visit <http://www.gardenshow.com>

**February 19: North Idaho Turf, Tree And Landscape Conference**

When: Thursday, February 19, 2015 — 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Where: Templin's Resort, Post Falls, ID

Cost: Not yet announced

For more information: Call 208-681-4769 or visit the [Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association](#) for more information.