

Forestry Update  
for  
Washington Association of Conservation Districts Officers and Directors Meeting  
March 24, 2009

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Starting at the WACD Annual Meeting December 2 - 4, 2008 in Wenatchee, the WACD Forestry Committee is making substantial progress. Thanks are due Laura Schell for her work in sending out the request and gathering the information for the forestry inventory and the survey.

### **Survey**

We had 22 attend the forestry session at WACD, answering the following questions:

1. What are the forestry **issues** they are dealing with or that need addressing,
2. What are their 2 or 3 **highest priority issues** they need to deal with,
3. What is their **implementation** plan for dealing with those 2 or 3 issues.

Using those responses as a starting point, in January all districts were asked the above questions and also to identify their forestry **training needs**. **We are asking for a response by the end of March.**

**The purpose of the survey is to identify what we need to be working on, what the priorities are, and to serve as the basis for a forestry committee strategic plan**

### **Forestry Expertise Inventory and Training**

We also asked for each district to provide a listing of the forestry expertise (types, years, supervisors/staff) by the end of January. To date (early February), about one-third of the districts have responded. We have extended the date for submitting the information and it will be a snapshot at a specific time. We will be updating it every six months or as information is provided. Laura Schell has graciously been sending out the questions and collating the responses.

**The purpose of the expertise inventory is to find out where our expertise is (both geographically and subject-wise) and to make that information available to districts so we can share resources and identify gaps.** I have approached WSU cooperative extension about developing a curriculum and providing training.

Several hours of forestry training are planned for the WADE conference in June (Thanks to Al Craney, Skagit CD, for his leadership on this). The plan is to have the results of the survey, a preliminary plan draft, and the web page ready for the WADE training.

### **Web**

A draft web site is in review. The web site will include:

- Mission statement & purpose
- Washington CD forestry expertise (who on what CD has what experience); forestry committee contacts

- Forestry in Conservation Plans Template (Thanks to Garth Davis, Spokane County CD, for leadership on this.)
- List-Serves for forestry information
- Web site listings for forestry information
- NACD forestry committee information
- WACD Presentation & forms from December, 2008 in Wenatchee
- WADE Presentations from 2009 forestry training (when available)
- Meeting notes and updates
- More

### **Training**

- A. We have over a full day's training scheduled for WACD in June. Thanks to Al Craney at Skagit for making those arrangements. NRCS and CDs will present.
- B. WSU Extension has agreed to work with us to identify and set up needed training. One of the questions we asked in the survey was for the CDs to let us know what training they think they will need.

### **Partners**

I consider NRCS to be part of "us". We already have an MOU with SAF. We have discussed opportunities with the WA Farm Forestry Association and will pursue that more. Additionally, we will look at working with Family Forest Foundation and DNR's Small Landowner's Office.

### **Organization**

We will have a forestry committee comprised of whomever wants to partake (including staff, supervisors, Conservation Commission staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service staff, more). We will have a steering committee comprised of a couple of staff and a couple of supervisors – shooting for participation from both sides of the mountains. The steering committee will do much of the work – we are avoiding having discussions where 43 people want to voice opinions and thus essentially stop progress. We will consistently use the broader committee as a sounding board. We want folks to have the opportunity to have their say, but we must keep moving to have a credible program and to stay up with how fast things are evolving in the forestry parts of the 2008 Farm Bill and in forestry, in general.

### **Issue**

We need to discuss and decide how firewise and general forestry will be related within our WACD framework. Separate efforts? Firewise a part of forestry, or vice versa?

Respectfully submitted,  
 Doug Rushton  
 Forestry chair, WACD