

IDAHO COMMUNITY TREES

No. 92
Fall
2020

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS - COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM AND IDAHO LANDS RESOURCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Thinking about planting something different?

Find ideas in this issue.

Coordinator's Column

Idaho Community Trees Newsletter Moving to Electronic Format

Serving as the Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program manager for Idaho Department of Lands is some of the most fulfilling work I have done in my career. However, management of the program also comes with hard choices. The COVID-19 pandemic has had lasting impacts on our community forestry programs. The pandemic has required us to reduce program expenses and evaluate how we can offer our program in a more cost-effective manner. In order to be more efficient stewards of the tax dollars that fund our program we have decided to discontinue the printed version of our quarterly newsletter and move the newsletter online.

Starting with the winter 2021 edition, Idaho Community Trees will be published quarterly online only. Although this format is not our first choice, publishing the newsletter electronically will provide us more flexibility with providing community tree information to readers. It will also allow us to share webinars we produce with municipal arborists and homeowners that are in need of arboriculture training opportunities.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Jim Fazio for his contributions to the Idaho Community Trees newsletter. Dr. Fazio has served as the editor for the newsletter since its inception in the fall of 1996. Dr. Fazio worked closely with Craig Foss, Idaho's current state forester and former UCF program manager, to start the newsletter. Dr. Fazio worked with several other program managers, including David Stephenson and Del Jaquish, to provide technical arboriculture and community tree outreach to countless Idaho communities. His numerous contributions to Idaho's UCF program also include service on the Idaho Community Forestry Advisory Council. If you would like to contribute a note of thanks for Dr. Fazio please email me at MBeaudoin@IDL.Forestry.gov so we can collect them and forward them on.

As we move into the winter months the UCF program staff will be finalizing our online newsletter template and developing a mailing list. If you are interested in being placed on the distribution list for the electronic newsletter please email me with your current email address, name, and company affiliation at MBeaudoin@IDL.Forestry.gov.

-- Michael S. Beaudoin

Community Forestry Program Manager

Be a Bee City!



Photo by Ann Bates

Volunteers in Garden City transformed an unsightly lot into a beautiful garden that will also help bees and other imperiled pollinators survive.

According to Peter Kageyama, author of the top-selling book, *For the Love of Cities*, people know that on a deeper level, flowers, trees, parks, gardens, and greenspaces represent necessary elements to making

places actually livable. A city without trees and gardens is not a city that anyone would want to live in. These green elements are part of the essential INFRASTRUCTURE of our places. Yet unlike the obvious infrastructure such as roads, bridges and power grids, these green elements evoke a deeper physiological and emotional response. Think of the calm we feel in a park or the sense of wellness from a walk along a trail. This is called "biophilia" – the innate tendency of human beings to seek out and connect with nature and it is hardwired into us.

There are many ways to make Idaho's cities more livable places. In Garden City, a dedicated cadre of volunteers had an idea for the project but with no backing. Judy Snow and her husband are members of the Chinden Gardener's Club and just started talking to people about the possibility of developing a demonstration garden and becoming members of a larger organization and promoting healthy living through beautiful gardens. The club found grants and support from charitable organizations, won the support of Mayor Evans and the city council, and brought their idea to fruition. The idea was born to become a Bee City USA.

One in every three bites of food we eat is courtesy of insect pollination. Equally important, 90% of all wild plants and trees rely on pollinators for the survival of their species. Not surprisingly, in 2007 when honey bee colonies started disappearing, beekeepers and non-beekeepers alike became very concerned. While less is known about native wild bees and other

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pollinators, we do know that entire species are disappearing at alarming rates due to the same enemies as honey bees—loss of habitat essential for food and shelter, diseases and parasites, and inappropriate pesticide use.

There are requirements to be a Bee City USA, just as there are in the Tree City USA program that is supported by the Idaho Community Forestry Program. Both programs have an end goal of making communities better places in which to live, work and recreate. And, neither program would be successful without the spirit of volunteerism that seems prevalent in Idaho cities. For more information about either program, please contact the community forestry assistant listed in the masthead.

Demand Diversity

by Gerry Bates, South Idaho Community Forestry Assistant

As I travel around the southern end of our great state, I get the chance to work with a lot of good people who are trying to establish long lasting legacies called trees within their cities. These legacies not only provide shade and beauty, but myriad other benefits that make them essential elements of the infrastructure in our cities. And, unlike most infrastructure that offers the most benefit directly after installation, tree benefits increase over time. They don't (or should not!) be engineered to have a 30-year life span and then require replacement.

However, there's a problem. All too often, we accept that the local nursery, or the regional plant wholesaler, has only a limited pallet of plant material to offer. A visit to the local tree farm allows us to see Colorado spruce planted from fencepost to fencepost, or quaking aspen and green ash offered as the best and most viable options for our planting projects. Folks, please don't put all your eggs in one basket and continue planting a monoculture of trees that, when the right insect or disease comes along, devastates a significant percentage of the trees in your town.

We won't get change in the marketplace unless we demand it. Start small, be consistent and request trees that aren't overused in your city. Serbian spruce or concolor fir are great replacements for Colorado spruce. Black Hills spruce also deserves more attention. Instead of ponderosa or Austri-

an pine, use something else. Anything is better than aspen. If we ask for plant material that isn't as common, eventually our plant providers are going to work to fill the need. Besides being fantastic tree huggers, they are business people; they will work to make their customers happy. If not, expand your sources for plant material. The Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association has a list of vendors on their website that offer a wide variety of trees and shrubs.

Finally, there are new cultivars becoming available all the time. There are new varieties of elm that are disease resistant and will still provide the benefits that the old American elm did years ago. There are a bunch of oaks that are underutilized. In southeastern Idaho, where I live, we didn't used to plant many oaks. That is changing fast. When planning a project, plan for longevity and diversity. Rely on your Community Forestry Assistants for help and advice. Most importantly, plant the right tree in the right place. That's an often overused euphemism, but from what I see, it is still often overlooked.

Fall Tree Planting for Arbor Day

This has been a challenging year in many respects. Due to the coronavirus pandemic many communities were unable to carry out Arbor Day events they had planned for spring. The good news is fall is a great time to plant trees. You can plant a tree in fall as part of an Arbor Day celebration, in fact some communities prefer having a fall Arbor Day event.

Planting in the fall gives the tree an extra growing season before facing its first hot summer. September and October are great months to plant. Root growth is encouraged when the air temperature is lower than the soil temperature, so with transpiration low and root growth potential high, fall can be a better time than spring for trees to get their roots established. With a well-established root system trees can avoid stress and more quickly become an asset in the landscape.

According to The Morton Arboretum you do not want to plant too late into the fall; planting in November and December can result in poor root growth and increased failure. They also recommend that you should plant conifers in late summer instead of fall as they prefer a warmer soil temperature to establish. Slow to establish trees such as ginkgo, sweetgum, tulip tree and willow are also better choices for a spring planting. In general, plants with shallow fibrous root systems can be planted easier in the fall than those with fewer, larger roots. You can see a more complete list of species and fall planting recommendations at The Morton Arboretum website: www.mortonarb.org/tree-and-plant-advice.

The Arbor Day Foundation has some great ideas on their website for alternative Arbor Day celebrations that can be utilized if a public gathering is out of the question. Some of these ideas include holding a virtual Arbor Day planting, a virtual tour of trees of note in the community, and rolling out an Instagram or Facebook page for your tree program. You can find more ideas at the Arbor Day website: www.arborday.org/celebrate/alternative-celebration-ideas.cfm.



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Who Needs to Know More About Tree Care?

The answer to this question was given by the legendary arborist/scientist Dr. Alex Shigo. He was fond of saying, "Anyone who touches trees." The need for on-going education about trees and tree care ranges from home owners and grounds keepers to professional arborists and urban foresters. Truly, anyone who has a tree or works with trees in any way needs to improve his or her technical knowledge in order to do a good job keeping trees healthy and safe.

In Idaho, there are many ways to learn and grow in tree knowledge. This newsletter has been one attempt at doing this. With the new online version of the newsletter, the first step toward keeping in touch will be to provide your email address as mentioned by Michael Beaudoin on page 1. Please do this today before you forget! Another way is to get acquainted with the community forestry assistant in your area. See the masthead on page 2 for contact information. There is no charge for their services and they have a wealth of practical information. Finally, review the calendar and take advantage of the many continuing education opportunities. And, if you are a professional in any aspect of tree care, be sure you are a member of the Pacific Northwest Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture – and earn and maintain pertinent certifications. Learning should never end.

Idaho and Growth Awards

The Tree City USA Growth Award was created to challenge current Tree Cities to go beyond the four basic standards. A list of activities are provided by the Arbor Day Foundation, each with accompanying 'points.' When activities totaling ten or more points are achieved during a year, the community qualifies for this additional award. Beginning in 2021, a new list of activities will take effect. This are being developed and will soon be available at www.arborday.org.

Idaho's current Growth Award winners are: Boise, Coeur d'Alene, McCall, Meridian and Moscow. Many more of our communities should be striving for this honor and the benefits derived from the activities. Please contact your community forestry assistant for assistance if needed and let's grow the list of Growth Awards!



Fall/Winter 2020/21 Events Calendar

Urban Forest Connections Webinar Series

Webinars are 1-1/4 hours starting at 10:00 a.m. Pacific Time, 11 a.m. Mountain Time. (You can view previous webinars at this same website.). Visit: www.fs.fed.us/research/urban-webinars.

Check link for future topics on these dates:

- October 14, 2020
- December 9, 2020

September 29

Protecting Pollinators While Maintaining a Tidy Landscape, Online Webinar. Sierra Laverty, IBG Assistant Horticulture Director. For information, contact: <https://47709.blackbaudhosting.com/47709/CE-Online---Protecting-Pollinators>.

September 29

Veteran Tree Preservation in the Urban Forest, Pacific Northwest International Society of Arboriculture Webinar. To register, visit: www.pnwisa.org.

October 1-31

Pacific Northwest ISA Annual Training Conference, VIRTUAL. More information is available at: <https://pnwisa.org/classes-events/annual-training-conference>.

October 19-20

Arborist Certification Training Workshop, Nampa. This free workshop will help assure that eligible candidates for testing can successfully pass the ISA Certified Arborist exam. For more information and to register please contact Gerry Bates at plantingidaho@gmail.com.

October 21

ISA Certified Arborist Exam, Nampa Recreation Center. 131 Constitution Way, Nampa, ID 83686.

November 4

Pruning, Planting, and Selecting for Street Tree Diversity, Mt. Vernon, WA. Register at: www.pnwisa.org.

November 16-18

Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) Workshop, Post Falls. Register at: www.pnwisa.org.

Upcoming Certified Arborist (CA), Certified Tree Worker (CTC), Municipal Specialist (MS), Utility Specialist(UA), Tree Risk Assessment (TRAQ) Exams:

October 21 – Nampa (CA, UA, MS)

November 11 – Seattle, WA (TRAQ)

November 14 – Eugene, OR (TRAQ Renewal)

November 18 - Post Falls (TRAQ)

November 19 – Post Falls (TRAQ Renewal)

November 19 – Eugene, OR (TRAQ Renewal)



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Do You Know Where Your Roots Are?

The myth still exists that a tree's roots are a mirror image of its crown. This is not only far from the truth, it is also dangerous to tree health. In reality, the life-giving roots are usually:

- spread to a distance of 1- to 2-times the height of the tree.
- growing within about 2 feet of the surface.

So, give 'em room! Remember where they're at when you dig a trench, pave, or change the soil grade. Also, when planting street trees, use a search engine to find out how Silva Cells or C-U Structural Soil can give tree roots a place to safely grow.



Knowing where roots typically grow is a first step toward assuring longer and healthier life for your trees.