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2 **Washington Community Forestry Council Meeting**
3 **September 15th, 2020**
4 **Conference Call- Zoom**
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6 **Members Attending:** Angel Spell, Ben Thompson, Juli Hartwig, Paula Dinus, Kirsten Lints, David Miller,
7 Semra Riddle, Lisa Ciecko, Dave Bayard, Kathleen Wolf, Cindy Deffe, Ian Gray

8 **Members Absent:** Kathy Sheehan, John Bornsworth, Gray Stamper

9 **Guests:** Daria Gosztyla, Jeremy Porter, Sandy Letzing, Justin Bush, Ray Willard

10 **Meeting Convened:** 1:00 p.m.

11 **Welcome:** Roll was taken. Chair welcomed members and guests. Last minute's meetings were approved.

12 **Minutes Approved:** Motion to approve minutes from June 8th, 2020. Angel Spell moved and Dave Miller
13 seconded motion.

14 **Q&A for UCF Program Updates, Ben Thompson and Daria Gosztyla:** Ben reviewed the program updates
15 he sent out prior to the meeting. Updates were as follows:

- 16 1) New Forest Health and Division Manager was announced, Terra Rentz
- 17 2) Updated Evergreen Communities Act package was resubmitted to the Executive
18 Management Team for potential movement in the upcoming Legislative Session
- 19 3) 2021 UCF grant program will be released in the next few weeks. The program will have
20 \$90,000 to award.
- 21 4) LSR Grant Applications are being worked on by DNR staff across divisions. UCF program is
22 providing supporting role for applications this year on two proposals: One is in the
23 Snoqualmie Valley in King County while the other proposal is in the Roslyn/Cle Elum area of
24 Kittitas County.
- 25 5) Pest Readiness Project is wrapping up this year's seminar series. The last seminar will be
26 held on October 22nd. Department of Agriculture agreement for data consolidation has been
27 executed and will be the next big step in this project.
- 28 6) UCF program is providing support for DNR's Salmon Strategy
- 29 7) Tree City USA, Tree Line USA and Tree Campus USA application portal is open
- 30 8) Virtual Check-ins with constituents are occurring weekly with DNR UCF staff.

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32 Semra Riddle provided additional resources for seminar outreach including reaching out to Sound Cities
33 Association, AWC and Tree Campus USA communities. Semra also inquired about awareness of the
34 Salmon Safe program/strategy and its tie to the DNR Salmon Strategy.
35

36 Kathy Wolf inquired on update to Evergreen Communities Act package which was resubmitted to the
37 Executive Management Team for potential movement in the upcoming Legislative Session. Kathy
38 relayed idea to ask commissioner to claim urban forestry and equity nexus. Kathy will send along the
39 most recent communications from the commissioner re: environmental equity.

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3 **Washington Invasive Species Council – Addressing challenges faced by cities:** Justin Bush and Ray
4 Willard provided background on WISC connection to the Washington Community Forestry Council
5 Meeting. Ray stated that the initial question asked when WISC and DNR UCF first collaborated were the
6 economic impacts of invasive pests.

7 Justin thanked and acknowledged the council for their recent letter of support of WISC
8 Most major land management stakeholders represent the WISC, scaling down from federal, state,
9 regional to county. Justin mentioned that the Urban Forest Pest Readiness project is the first project
10 that allowed WISC to work alongside cities and local communities.

11 WISC developed a strategic plan to address invasive species across the state including elements that
12 address leadership, coordination, prevention, education and outreach, early detection and rapid
13 response, containment, control and eradication. This plan is regularly updated, a new version will be
14 available for feedback within the next month. Justin will send it to the council for review and comment.

15 The work WISC is doing with Urban Forest Pest Readiness project is closest related to early detection
16 and rapid response—the council has found that 1 out of 3 detections is found by citizens/residents. A
17 high number of pathways exists in urban forests: ports, highways, trains, and other corridors. Council
18 will be sending out a survey to help address needs of communities and readiness gaps.

19 Justin opened up the presentation to comments.

20 Lisa stated that WISC and DNR should also consider invasive tree species-- including partnerships and
21 education with the nursery trade. For example, Golden chain, Norway maple, and tree of heaven should
22 be considered.

23 Kathy Wolf addressed another dimension that could be addressed: social pressures. Social perception
24 and acceptance messaging could be created around plants and invasive species. Addressing what is
25 favorable by the public vs. what is desired by natural resources managers. Justin acknowledged that
26 many states have non-regulatory programs to address these concerns. Kathy mentioned that the
27 Environmental psychology of nature should also be considered.

28 Ian Gray provided insight on the Pest Readiness Playbook—stating that for municipal
29 foresters/managers components of the playbook could easily be incorporated into a master and
30 strategic plan. Ray mentioned that applying and incident command system (ICS) is a great example of
31 this use.

32 **Equity Sub-Committee report out and Addressing WCFC Membership and Articles of Association:** Sub-
33 Committee met once outside of the regular council meeting and worked on a couple items behind the
34 scene. Ben chimed in on accomplishments since the last meeting: insight and letter to DNR legislative
35 and assisted with several rounds of revisions to the DNR Equity grants. Juli addressed that there are
36 additional opportunities to implement equity such as diversifying the council.

37
38 Kathy stated that there is opportunity to address nature and health, acknowledging environmental
39 justice and combining the message with COVID could recognize that there is an urgency for greening
40 urban areas. Kathy would like to see action on how to incorporate this more effectively. Council could

1 also address smoke and respiratory illness from wildfires. Kathy states that the council and UCF could be
2 a part of the outreach about nature and health in a more direct way.

3 Ben identified an action item: request to sign up for a subcommittee to diversify articles of association.
4 The council considered how to dedicate energy to this to move on it?

5 Ray mentioned that there is need to develop a land use ethic, to be prepared for additional population
6 that are moving to the PNW. The land is our ultimate public asset- we have to manage it the best we
7 can. GIS is a need to show whole-state land assets.

8 Kathy talked about precision urban forestry—locating particular places of need.

9 Ray—each site is its own case study. The work is critical.

10 Ian - there are a lot of moving pieces that one ends up having to manipulate. Combine canopy analysis
11 with neighborhood layers and you start to create a better picture of areas of need. Having this
12 awareness can however be tricky.

13 **Voluntary Check-in with WCFC Members:**

14 **Juli**— is looking at assets in agency. Roadsides are being addressed as “natural infrastructure” to
15 simply away from “green infrastructure.” Natural infrastructure value increases overtime due to
16 ecosystem services provided by it. What Juli is learning from the council is that—nexus between
17 equity subcommittee is being applied to jobs.
18

19 **Ian**— reflected that there is a lot of variability in how the pandemic is affecting city budgets
20 across the State, it varies from City to City. Ian thinks the real fall out will be felt in fiscal 2021.
21 Renton is looking at about a 20% budget drop. Renton adopted the same budget for next year
22 and Ian feels fortunate for that. Ultimately, it is hard to say how long the pandemic is going to
23 continue and how large the impact will be.
24

25 **David**— Ellensburg is projecting 2021 to have about a 15% budget drop. No one knows how
26 bumpy it will be for how long. Revenue declines from loss of students is showing a ripple in the
27 economy.
28

29 **Semra**—finding extra funding for non-essentials is becoming increasingly difficult. Semra would
30 like to see continued tree maintenance receive acknowledgement and funding. Semra is also
31 looking at about a 15% budget drop for 2021.
32

33 **Ben**— DNR is still going through hiring “frost” and still not hiring non-essential workers. Budget
34 cuts are also coming. Non-essential DNR workers took 4 furlough days in July and additional 4
35 August through November.
36

37 **Angel**— acknowledged that there are many layers of stress we are all dealing with. Semra also
38 mentioned that the PNW-ISA annual training conference is open for registration.
39

40 **Lisa**—shared a couple resources:

41 <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/early/2020/08/12/science.aay4497>

42 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbkIMVBXtw8&feature=youtu.be>

43 <https://www.nrpa.org/globalassets/pathways-to-recovery-01-09-2020.pdf>

1 Lisa also mentioned that cross modeling indicates that these budget and program changes will
2 affect our urban forests for years to come. More people than ever are using parks, however,
3 funding continues to dwindle. Lisa also referenced an article in New York Times looking at
4 surveying impacts of COVID to natural areas, parks and cities.

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6 **Kirsten**— making big steps to promote equity in publications and resources.

7
8 **Ben**— provided updates on upcoming USFS audit. Kathy Sheehan will reach out to the council
9 for added feedback, Ben asked for members to please be on the lookout for communication
10 from her.

11

12 **Adjourn 3PM**, Semra moved and Cindy second the motion to adjourn council meeting.

13 **Next Meeting: November 3rd, 2020 at TIME (virtual meeting).**