



Friends' Focus

Published by Friends of Pierce County

May - June 2007

Volume 3 Issue 3

Upcoming Events

*FPC and FutureWise
Preparation for County
Comprehensive Plan
Meeting*

June 6, 2007 from 6 to 8pm
Tacoma Nature Center
1919 S. Tyler Street

Clarks Creek Streamside Living Workshop

Washington On-Site
Sewage Association
Training Center @ WSU-
Puyallup Campus

7612 Pioneer Way E, Bld
1045 Puyallup, WA

Saturday, May 19, 2007

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

For more info: call
(253)798-4686

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**Thank you for your
support!**

Alternative uses for fallen trees by Greg Rabourn, Native Plant Expert

Winter windstorms left many of us with major cleanup. It is saddening to see our favorite trees toppled over and the clean up work can seem overwhelming. The good news is that unless a downed tree is posing an immediate threat to safety, you have time to consider the best option for your next steps.

Make mulch - Many of us spend lots of money on bark, compost or woodchips for our landscapes. Stumps, logs and branches can be ground or chipped and left onsite as mulch. The resulting material can be spread in a 2-4 inch layer around woody trees and shrubs. You can hire a professional to do this or rent a machine from an equipment rental store. You can even use some woody mulches and downed logs to grow edible mushrooms.

Create brush piles - Many different birds including hummingbirds, towhees, thrushes, sparrows and chickadees use brush piles for food and shelter. Simply crisscross brush in a manner that creates different sized openings throughout the pile. Locate away a minimum of 30 feet away from your

home where it will not be a fire hazard.

Leave root wads - In forested and natural settings exposed root wads provide excellent habitat for a variety of small animals.

Snag it - If your tree snapped off above the ground and does not pose a safety hazard, consider leaving it as a wildlife snag. Snags provide homes for owls, woodpeckers, and other birds can add an interesting vertical landscape feature. If you have a professional arborist out removing a hazard tree, ask if they can leave at least an 8-foot tall section standing.

Avoid topping trees - Topping trees creates an unhealthy tree that is more likely to fall. Deal only with certified arborists or foresters.

Using timbers as edging. Evergreen logs can make excellent natural edging between lawns and garden beds. Or use this newly available wood to create some new raised garden beds. To avoid introducing insect problems such as carpenter ants, keep rotting wood away from your home.

If you have any question about the safety or condi-

tion of a tree, consult with a certified forester or arborist. Many trees have been lost to the windstorm, lets not lose many more to bad advice or hysteria.

Replant new trees Not only will your new trees get growing, planting can be quite therapeutic as well.

Make lumber - A list of small scale sawmills can be found at <http://ext.nrs.wsu.edu/forestryext/sawmill/index.htm>.

About the Author - Greg is FPC President and co-manager of the King County [Naturescaping](#) and [Native Plant Salvage Program](#) and the author of the award-winning: [Going Native: A Guide to Creating Your Own Native Plant Landscape](#). He has made numerous TV and radio appearances, including "Gardening with Ciscoe." Tune into KUOW (94.9) Tuesdays at 10 am to catch his Gardening Panel radio show!



Photo: Greg Rabourn



Vision

Communities will strive to utilize all planning strategies that balance the elements of environment, equity, and economics.

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Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Spotlight on Executive Director

Marian Berejikian grew up in Arkansas and found her way to California where she settled into the forever sunny lifestyle and graduated with a degree in Environmental Biology from Cal Poly Tech. University. She worked for the US Forest Service assessing fish habitat and moved to Washington to work for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife conducting angler interviews for sport and commercial fisherman in Ilwaco. Her passion for the environment and living creatures was evident when we should would give unrestrained lectures to fisherman who disregarded nature and failed to respect it.

Marian worked for the Point No Point Treaty Council for several

years and went back to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife assessing commercial catch of rockfish and conducting genetic sampling on salmon. She also worked for private consulting firms and non-profits before founding Friends of Pierce County in 2002 with the help of several long-time community activists. Marian loves to go on nature hikes and be around water. She likes to “work” in the yard and tend her garden. She also loves animals.



Rain-Garden Installation Manual for Homeowners

By Jennifer Harte, Washington State Univeristy

On Monday Night, June 11th, from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm learn the cutting-edge about installing your own system or being able to monitor a hired contractor.

Rain gardens are not just a landscape element. Curtis Hinman, WSU Faculty and Watershed Scientist, researches and installs rain gardens as one protection for water resources. Part of WSU Pierce County Extension’s Land Stewardship Education Program, this session will be held at Pierce County’s Environmental Center in University Place just outside of Tacoma. Refreshments will be provided by Stewardship Partners: www.stewardshippartners.org/.

Pre-register for this event by calling 253-798-7180. \$10 per participant includes materials and light refreshments.

More information is available at:

www.pierce.wsu.edu/.

Map to the Environmental Center:

www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/abtus/ourorg/ccp/2drivingdirections.htm



Rain garden in foreground.

Pierce County decides the future of farm land by April Putney, FutureWise

Pierce County is losing farmland at the alarming rate of 4.3 acres every day. The County is making important decisions about development on rural and agricultural lands through the Alderton-McMillin Community Plan. This area between Sumner and Orting is set within the Puyallup Valley, home to some of the best farmland in the state.

Farming is a crucial part of the quality of life and economy of Pierce County. Farming has been the backbone of our rural economy for generations; today it remains a vital part of Pierce County's character. The Valley's farmers are Washington's top producers of lettuce, cabbage, radishes and green onions and we grow more rhubarb than any other county in the country. While the market value of farm production declined nationally between 1997 and 2002, Pierce County saw an increase of 23%. Statewide agricultural production value increased by just 8% during the same period.

Recent steps to create the position of the Farmbudsman and the new designation of agricultural resource lands show that the County is trying to help farmers stay in business - but more needs to be done. The Alderton-McMillin Community Plan offers the chance to do more.

The Alderton-McMillin Community Plan

The draft Alderton-McMillin Community Plan makes an admirable attempt to address this problem but it leaves room for improvement. Pierce County needs to enhance the plan to include a meaningful farmland preservation program.

One way to better preserve farmland is through a Transfer of Development Rights, or TDR. This is a voluntary tool used to protect farmland, provide farmers an incentive to keep their land in production, and encourage development in urban areas. Moving development rights from resource lands (like farms and forests) to urban centers like Tacoma works to protect farms and manage growth. The draft plan calls for a TDR program but it actually encourages development on farmland.

The Planning Commission's revised draft of the Alderton-McMillin Community Plan sets the TDR program straight by removing the receiving areas on farmland. This new plan

will help to carryout the County's goal of conserving farmland by redirecting growth to our urban areas. Moving development rights from resource lands (like farms and forests)

Pierce County is growing fast. We expect to welcome more than 200,000 new residents in the next twenty years. It's precisely for that reason that growth should be focused in urban centers. Sacrificing some of the most productive agricultural areas in America to accommodate this growth means we all lose. Without the rural landscape and neighborhood farms, our quality of life will diminish. Sprawl chews up working farms and soaks taxpayers to build roads, extend sewers and provide police protection for these new sprawling developments.

When growth isn't centered in urban areas, we spend more time in traffic. Our taxes go up or our services decrease as we're forced to urbanize our rural infrastructure. Concentrating future expansion in our cities helps all of us, not just farmers.

The next step

After the planning staff puts the finishing touches on the proposal for the Alderton-McMillin Community Plan, it will be sent to the County Council's Community Development Committee, which will prepare to hold another round of public hearings. The County has tentatively set these hearings as June 4th, 11th & 18th.

We've seen already that our work is paying off, now it's time to make sure the Council follows the Planning Commission's lead by protecting farmland from further development.

Please contact the Pierce County Council and urge them to:

Keep farmland in production

We support the Planning Commission's proposal to remove the TDR-receiving area designation on the Valley's farmland. This will significantly reduce the loss of working farms and adverse impacts on farmers. A meaningful TDR program will provide farmers with incentives to keep their land in production. We can't let some of best soils in the County be included in nearby urban growth areas. When our farmland is paved over we are forced to fly in our food. That's why right now it takes 10 calories of fossil fuel energy to produce 1 calorie of food. Pierce County must

to urban centers like Tacoma works to protect farms and manage growth. **That's why Futurewise and Friends of Pierce County have been urging our members to ask the Planning Commission to improve the Community Plan before sending it to the County Council. And it worked!**

The Planning Commission's revised draft of the Alderton-McMillin Community Plan sets the TDR program straight by removing the receiving areas on farmland. This new plan will help to carryout the County's goal of conserving farmland by redirecting growth to our urban areas.

Stopping sprawling development

The Pierce County and Orting urban growth areas are 36% and 70% larger than needed to accommodate the current residential growth targets, respectively. Oversized urban growth areas lead to more sprawl, more traffic congestion, and higher taxes for the community to pay for extensions of urban infrastructure. Future development should be contained within the existing urban growth areas of each of our communities.

April is the Pierce County field organizer for Futurewise, a statewide public interest group that works to protect our farms and forests while making our cities and rural communities great places to live. Futurewise works hand in hand with the Friends of Pierce County to promote smart growth policy within the county. April can be reached at april@futurewise.org or 206-343-0681.

Wine Tasting Event fun for all

Our Cinco de Mayo event at Vino Aquino was another winner. We were filled to capacity with good food, good friends, wonderful wine and an quaint and cozy atmosphere. Thanks to Vino Aquino for allowing to hold our event and donating 0% of the night's proceeds to Friends of Pierce County.



Daring ideas are like chessmen moved forward; they may be beaten , but they may start a winning game. - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe