



# Community Tree Connections

*Connecting people with resources to help improve their Community Forests*

**The Newsletter of the Oregon Department of Forestry  
Urban and Community Forestry Program**



**Number 55**

**[www.odf.state.or.us](http://www.odf.state.or.us)**

**January 2011**

## **CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY FORESTRY EVENTS**

**January 24, 2011**

**9th Annual Urban Ecology and Conservation Symposium, Portland State University, Portland**

Visit [www.uercportland.org](http://www.uercportland.org) for more information or to register.

**January 27, 2011**

**2011 Straub Environmental Lecture Series - Making More Livable Communities: A Green Infrastructure Approach, Salem**

7 - 8 pm, Salem Public Library Loucks Auditorium, free admission.

**February 9-10, 2011**

**19th Annual High Desert Green Industry Conference, Redmond**

For details or to register, Visit <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes/hdgi/home>

**February 18-20, 2011**

**OAN Yard, Garden & Patio Show, Portland**

The Oregon Association of Nurseries presents this annual event with educational seminars and exhibit booths. Visit [www.ygppshow.com](http://www.ygppshow.com) for details.

**March 1, 2011**

**Urban Forestry Awards Deadline**

Nominate someone you know for one of nine Oregon Urban Forestry Awards. Nomination forms are at: [www.oregoncommunitytrees.org](http://www.oregoncommunitytrees.org)

**June 2, 2011**

**Annual Oregon Urban Forestry Conference: Community Trees and Healthy Streams, Portland**

Save the date! Look for registration details later this winter.

## **Trees and Transportation: Balancing Safety and Community Values**

Of the many benefits that trees provide in cities, the role of trees along roadways is perhaps the least understood. Trees in road rights-of-way are highly valued by people in communities, however because trees are fixed objects, and drivers who run off the road can collide with them, potentially resulting in injury or death, safety is a prime concern. Communities must weigh the pros and cons of having trees in the right-of-way, and make decisions with accurate information about safety and crash risks. University of Washington researcher Dr. Kathleen Wolf has evaluated the safety risk of urban roadside trees, using national crash data. While road and traffic conditions vary from state to state, this research provides preliminary information to inform discussions between transportation planners and community forestry stakeholders.

Trees are sometimes considered expendable in the face of safety concerns, yet scientific studies prove that trees provide many benefits in the roadway, including stormwater reduction, reduced urban heat island effects, lower levels of air pollution, and noise abatement. Drivers highly prefer seeing trees in the roadside, and views of nature while driving contribute to lower stress response, and typically lower and safer speeds. Tree canopy cover even increases the longevity of the asphalt.

But what about the safety factor? While U.S. drivers do most of their driving in urban areas, many more accidents occur in rural areas (63%) than urban areas (37%). There is also an inverse relationship between driving volume and accident trends. About 62% of the miles traveled are in urban areas, but most of the crashes with trees (61%) occur in rural areas. Of the approximately 233 billion vehicle trips taken in the United States in 2002, trees were involved in 1.9% of all crashes. The risk of an urban tree accident is about 1 in 100,000 - the same risk level as injury in an airplane accident. Wolf is not alone in her assessment. Texas A&M transportation engineer Dr. Eric Dumbaugh conducted a study that examined crash statistics and found that tree-lined streets experience fewer accidents than do "forgiving roadsides" — that have been kept free of large inflexible objects. He points to a growing body of evidence suggesting that the inclusion of trees and other streetscape features in the roadside may actually reduce crashes and injuries on urban roadways.

Unfortunately, this evidence is not yet widely acknowledged within the transportation industry. Tree crash statistics are often weighed against anecdotal reports of tree benefits in transportation decision making. Discussions of roadside trees are often framed in terms of aesthetics, which are not viewed as justification for tree retention or planting when weighed against long-held safety standards. For these reasons, it is important for urban forestry advocates and transportation engineers to engage in careful dialogue about balancing the community values provided by trees and the need for public safety.

Visit <http://www.naturewithin.info/transportation.html> for more information on Trees and Transportation research.



Photo by Nancy Buley

## COMMUNITY FORESTRY AROUND OREGON

**Friends of Trees** celebrated a huge milestone when it planted its 400,000th tree on Jan. 8 as part of a massive I-205 tree planting project in conjunction with the Oregon Department of Transportation. Congratulations Friends of Trees!

The 19th Annual **High Desert Green Industry Conference** will be held in Redmond in February. This is a must-attend event for all green industry professionals who supply, design, maintain or manage landscapes in the Intermountain West. The event includes a trade show, a comprehensive schedule of educational sessions and an opportunity to earn continuing education credits for arborists, pesticide applicators and landscapers. See link on page 1 to register.

The **Willamette Valley Green Industry Seminar** series went on hiatus for 2010, but is back for another run in the fall of 2011. If you have a suggestion for a topic for a half-day seminar, contact Kristin Ramstad at [kramstad@odf.state.or.us](mailto:kramstad@odf.state.or.us)

## COMMUNITY TREE CONNECTIONS

Published bimonthly by the Oregon Department of Forestry Urban & Community Forestry Assistance Program. Our mission is to help Oregonians improve their quality of life by promoting community investment in our urban forests. Subscriptions are free and available by contacting ODF. Published in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



### ODF U&CF Program Staff:

Paul D. Ries - [pries@odf.state.or.us](mailto:pries@odf.state.or.us)  
 Katie Lompa - [klompa@odf.state.or.us](mailto:klompa@odf.state.or.us)  
 Kristin Ramstad - [kramstad@odf.state.or.us](mailto:kramstad@odf.state.or.us)  
 Cynthia Orlando - [caorlando@odf.state.or.us](mailto:caorlando@odf.state.or.us)  
 Oregon Department of Forestry  
 2600 State St., Salem, OR 97310  
 Phone: 503/945-7391, Fax: 503/945-7416  
 webpage: [www.oregon.gov/ODF](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF)

## Resources You Can Use

Here are some urban forestry items of interest on the subject of trees and development that are available to help balance natural resources and development in your community:

- **ODF** has a 14 minute DVD for builders, developers, and land-use planners called "**Developing With Trees in Mind: Enhancing Your Investment**". This video chronicles an in-fill development in Bend that resulted in many awards and accolades. Contact your Community Assistance Forester for a copy.
- **METRO** has a **Nature-Friendly Development** webpage full of useful resources. Using nature-friendly development practices protects our natural assets as we grow by reducing the impact of development on natural resources. Also called green or low impact development, nature-friendly development practices look beyond the building envelope and focus on land development and site design that mimic nature's processes. Visit the page at: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=24592>
- **ODF** still has copies of the new **Tree Protection on Construction and Development Sites** best management practices guidebook, produced by ODF, Washington DNR, OSU Extension, and other partners. If you do not have a copy yet and would like one (or more), contact Peg Davis at [pdavis@odf.state.or.us](mailto:pdavis@odf.state.or.us).

## Need Tree Board Training?

Attend Tree Board University! Enroll now for this valuable online learning experience. To sign-up, visit:

[www.treeboardu.org](http://www.treeboardu.org)



## Tree Selection - Finding the Right Tree for the Right Place

Here are some tree selection references that can help you diversify your tree population:

- The **Oregon State University Horticulture Department and Master Gardeners** have teamed up to produce a fantastic image database of **landscape plants**. Each species contains as many as a dozen images of that tree in winter profile, spring flower or fall color if applicable, and even close-ups of buds, leaves, twigs, fruit. Visit the page at <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/ldplants/>
- Need some quick information about a tree species, and don't know where to look? The **University of Florida** has printable **Fact Sheets** for 680 trees listed A to Z. Common and scientific names, description of tree, foliage, fruits, flowers, diseases, insects, uses and management are all included on the handouts. Check it out at [http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/database/trees/trees\\_scientific.shtml](http://hort.ifas.ufl.edu/database/trees/trees_scientific.shtml)

Contact your Community Assistance Forester for more tree selection ideas.

## Nominations Open for Urban and Community Forestry Awards

Join Oregon Community Trees and the Oregon Department of Forestry in recognizing the accomplishments of individuals, groups and businesses that have been leaders in the efforts to enhance and maintain Oregon's community forests.

Nominate individuals or groups in your community that have been instrumental in local tree issues during 2010. All nominations must be received no later than March 1, 2011. Visit [www.oregoncommunitytrees.org](http://www.oregoncommunitytrees.org) after January 15th to download a nomination form. Award recipients will be announced during the Oregon Urban Forestry Conference, being held at the World Forestry Center in Portland on June 2, 2011.