



## Washington's Working Forests Newsletter October 2020

### What are "Working Forests?"

A Working Forest is professionally managed to provide a continuous supply of renewable, sustainable wood products for building materials -- with a focus on protecting fish, water and wildlife. Using scientific practices and adhering to comprehensive state forestry laws, Washington's working forests work to give back to our entire state. Growing working forests absorb carbon, wood products store carbon, and the forest sector taken as a whole currently operates with a negative carbon footprint that supports greenhouse gas reduction goals and rural economies across Washington, a fact that is recognized in state law.

### Bored Kids? Help Has Arrived.



With so many schools around Washington still in some form of distance learning, parents are often left scrambling for ways to keep home-bound kids occupied. The Washington Forest Protection Association has launched a youth activity and learning center to be a fun and quick resource for rainy and sunny days alike.

“[Learn About Forestry](#)” is a doorway for young students to get fair information about forests from the perspective of those who live, work and care for them -- a new five-web page assortment of factoids, videos and quizzes on topics of forest ecology, wildlife, the environment, and wood products.



We encourage you to bookmark our “Learn About Forestry” homepage and pass the link along to your friends and family who could use this remedy for boredom. And because we will continually be looking for ways to add more tools, please reach out to us at [info@wfpa.org](mailto:info@wfpa.org) if you have any thoughts about improving the offering.

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### The Good News from the Woods

## In case you missed it: A meeting of the minds on the topic of wildfire prevention

There can be no doubt that one more season of destructive, terrifying wildfires across the Western United States has amplified persistent calls for a more coherent strategy to prevent this new normal of annual disaster.

Three leaders who share concerns about the future of Washington state’s forests co-authored an op-ed published at Crosscut calling for urgent action to improve the health of almost 3 million acres of forestland presently at serious risk.

**Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz, Washington Forest Protection Association** executive director **Mark Doumit**, and **The Nature Conservancy** director **Mike Stevens** urged lawmakers to provide consistent, dedicated funding to implement the Department of Natural Resource’s [Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan](#) and [20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan](#).

Some excerpts from the piece:

“We face a troubling reality. This fire season isn’t a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence. It is part of a worsening pattern brought on by unhealthy forests — tinder for megafires — and a changing climate that leads to longer fire seasons and drier landscapes. In central and eastern Washington alone, we have more than 2.7 million acres in need of forest restoration treatment. ...”

“We need the resources to get to fires quickly and keep them small. This means more investments at the local and state level, from helicopters and engines to firefighters. We must accelerate forest restoration work, thinning our forests, removing dead and diseased trees and increasing prescribed burns that reduce fuels. And we must help communities throughout Washington take preparedness measures, building defensible space around homes and neighborhoods before fires strike. ...”

“We have a moral obligation to set the state on a better trajectory. Reducing the fuel load in our forests creates resilient landscapes and protects our communities. It also reduces fire severity, as well as the massive amount of carbon released into the atmosphere from large wildfires.”

Franz, Doumit, and Stevens made clear that they see collaboration among state agencies, the forestry sector, tribes and environmental partners as vital to reducing the severity of wildfires and taking meaningful steps toward improving forest health. The alternative, they wrote, is more of what we saw in recent months: “For those of us who have been on fire lines too many times, we know what our future looks like if we don’t.”

We encourage you to [read the entire opinion at Crosscut](#) and to share widely.

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## Have You Signed?

Our drive toward the creation of a special Washington state vehicle license plate to support working forests is still moving forward. Your help is still needed. If you haven’t already, [sign our petition](#) today and then please share with your friends. Thank you for helping to make sure our voices are heard.

**[SIGN THE PETITION TODAY!](#)**

