DNR celebrates National Arbor Day today

Local News

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OLYMPIA - The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today celebrates National Arbor Day and announced they are the recipient of a grant from the Arbor Day Foundation to assist in reforestation projects. While Washington State officially celebrates Arbor Day on April 8th, the national recognition is today."Arbor Day is a wonderful opportunity to teach the next generation about the importance of having trees in our communities and healthy forests throughout the state," said Commissioner of Public Lands Peter Goldmark. Washington State is home to 74 cities with a designation of Tree City USA. Four communities earned the Tree City USA title for the first time this year; those are Hoquiam, Chehalis, Oroville and Renton.

The Arbor Day Foundation has been coordinating with the National Association of State Foresters to identify reforestation projects that help support healthy state forests. Forests that are recovering from fire, storms, disease and insect damage are candidates for assistance with reforestation costs. The funding seeks to provide high quality seedlings that ensure healthy forests for future generations. "During these challenging budget times, we need to create partnerships to help us best manage our forests for the people of the state," said Commissioner Goldmark. "The Arbor Day Foundation grant will help us replant our state's trust lands and provide streamside shade for healthier salmon habitat." **Proposals to the Arbor Day Foundation** DNR's Northwest Region offered two proposals that would benefit from Arbor Day Foundation reforestation support. The first proposal involves replanting timber stands damaged during windstorms that occurred in the late fall of 2006 and winter of 2007. Help with seedling costs will ensure future trust beneficiaries the highest level of value and ecological function and quickly return these sites to productive forests. The Arbor Day Foundation will provide the funding for 17,640 trees.The second proposal is a supporting role for DNR in partnership with The Upper Skagit Native American Tribe for a stream restoration project. This project is intended to benefit salmonid species by providing streamside shading, introduce large, woody debris and create future large, woody debris recruitment. DNR can directly support this restoration project by purchasing seedlings and keeping them in the cooler until the Upper Skagit restoration team is ready for actual planting. The mix of species introduces diversity in the riparian area. This includes faster growing species that provide needed shade first, and slower, long-lived species provide structure and shade needed for optimal stream health over the long term. The Arbor Day Foundation will provide the funding for 9,300 trees.For more information on the approved funding from The Arbor Day Foundation or more information associated with the projects, please contact Chris Hankey, DNR Northwest Region Silviculturist at 360-854-2811 or e-mail, christopher.hankey@dnr.wa.gov. **State trust lands**DNR manages certain lands, held in trust, for the benefit of the citizens of Washington. These lands generate revenue which is allocated to designated trust beneficiaries such as new school construction or county infrastructure projects. DNR also works closely with citizen groups, stakeholders and area Native American tribes to try and balance the economic, social and environmental concerns that are inherent in land management. Peter Goldmark is Washington's 13th Commissioner of Public Lands since statehood in 1889 and the first commissioner from Eastern Washington.