

Snohomish/Skagit Forest Stewardship Coached Planning Program - 2008 Follow-Up Report



2008 Courses Offered

2008 Summary:

- 53 families/organizations participated
- 4,792 total acres impacted
- 17 new forest stewardship plans (38% of new family forest participants) covering 544 acres
- 4 new ATFS certifications
- 90% have implemented new stewardship practices within 6 months of taking the class
- Most common practices implemented:
 - Wildlife habitat enhancement,
 - Control of invasive species and other brush
 - Tree planting
 - Pruning
- 93% have recommended the course to others
- 93% have shared knowledge gained from the course with others

Two Coached Planning shortcourses were offered in 2008: Silvana (Snohomish County) in winter and Sedro Woolley (Skagit County) in spring. A total of 53¹ families/organizations participated, representing 4,792 acres.² A total of 17 new forest stewardship plans have been completed and approved to date, covering 544 acres and representing 38% of new family forest participants and 42% of new family forest acreage. There have been 4 new American Tree Farm System (ATFS) certifications to date.³

A 6-month follow-up evaluation was conducted for both classes. Responses were received from 29 of the 53 total families/organizations who participated (55%). 90% of the respondents reported that they had implemented new stewardship practices since taking the class, with a total of 89 new stewardship practices implemented. The most common practices implemented were the enhancement of wildlife habitat, control of invasive species and other brush, tree planting, and pruning. Other new stewardship practices implemented include timber harvest, commercial thinning, pre-commercial thinning, pruning, forest road improvements, animal damage control, recreation enhancements, and fire risk reduction.

One of the most impressive results of this class is the extent to which the knowledge gained in the course is actively shared. 93% of respondents indicated

¹ 51 of which were new to the program

² One participant represented an industrial landowner with 3,400 acres; three participants did not own forestland, but work with family forest owners and/or land trusts; the remaining 47 participants (45 new) were family forest owners representing 1,382 acres (1,297 acres new to the program).

³ Representing 13% of the 30 qualifying new family forest owners.

that they had both recommended the course to someone else and that they had shared something they learned in the course with someone else (*Figure 2*). Thus there is a multiplier effect that helps to spread the education and outreach provided by the forest stewardship program well beyond the immediate participants, similar to a “train the trainer” type of approach.

Continued Impact Assessment of Previous Courses

Summary of ongoing impacts:

- 100% of follow-up respondents have implemented at least one new stewardship practice within 1 year of taking the class
- The 55% of participants who responded treated 228 acres treated with new forest stewardship practices, including:
 - Harvest/thinning
 - Wildlife habitat enhancement
 - Control of invasive species and other brush
 - Planting
 - Pruning
 - Fire risk reduction
- The 55% of participants who responded reported 6 total miles of road improvements and 7.5 total miles of new or improved trails
- \$63,500 of income from new stewardship practices was reported
- \$136,132 in cost share payments were reported received or pending from assistance programs learned about in the class

A 1-year follow-up evaluation was conducted for the Fall 2007 class held in Everett (Snohomish County). Responses were received from 11 of the 20 total families/organizations who participated (50%). 100% of respondents reported at least one new stewardship practice since taking the class. A total of 228 acres were reported treated with a stewardship practice, including timber harvest, commercial thinning, pre-commercial thinning, tree planting, pruning, wildlife habitat enhancement, animal damage control, control of invasive species and other brush, and fire risk reduction. Approximately 6 miles of road improvements and 7.5 miles of trail building/improvements were also reported. With only 55% reporting, there are likely to be a greater number of acres and miles that have been treated as a result of this class.

In addition to the new stewardship practices described above, respondents reported \$63,500 of income generated from forest stewardship practices since taking the class, and \$136,132 in federal and state cost share payments received and pending from programs learned about in the class. This represents new contributions to local economies with money that would have gone elsewhere (cost share payments) or not been generated at all (forest practices). Also, one landowner

estimated that their Snohomish County property sequesters 230 tons of carbon each year.

One new forest stewardship plan was approved in 2008 from a participant of this class, for a total number of 8 new completed and approved plans from this class, covering 173 acres. This represents 47% of the 17 total new ownerships that were enrolled in the class.⁴

Example feedback about the class and its impacts from follow-up respondents:

- The class taught me a lot about the forest I did not know
- Great resources of people and information to help us manage our tree farm.
- The class was well worth my time in understanding the value of forest management versus the results of forest neglect.
- Because of the course, regardless of the Plan, we better understand the need for intervention to correct the property toward a healthy, fire, insect and disease-resistant forest.
- A continual reference and resource.
- A much better appreciation of the health of the forest and the need to maintain a healthy forest.

⁴ Three participants were re-taking the class; one already had a completed stewardship plan.