



**Special Meeting of the
Citizen Advisory Committee to the
Spokane Urban Forestry Tree Committee
and Park Board Urban Forestry Tree
Committee**

**Joint Field Trip/Meeting to
Esmerelda Golf Course Wildland Area /
Minnehaha Park**

3:00 p.m. Tuesday July 30, 2024

UFTC Committee Members:

Kevin Brownlee – Chair (Absent – Excused)
Nick Sumner (Absent - Excused)
Kevin Cash (Absent - Excused)
X Kris Neely
Hannah Kitz – Alternate – (Absent - Excused)

Parks Staff:

Katie Kosanke

UFCAC Committee Members:

X Kris Neely – Chair
Tim Kohlhauff (Absent – Excused)
X Beth LaBar
Guy Gifford (Absent - Excused)
Toni Sharkey (Absent - Excused)
Cindy Deffe (Absent - Excused)
Joe Zubaly (Absent – Excused)
Matt Stewart (Absent – Excused)
Ben Kappen (Absent - Excused)
Justyce Brant (Absent - Excused)
Paul Lower (Absent – Excused)

Guests:

Nick Jeffries
Logan Callen

MINUTES

Field trip meeting started at 3:05 p.m.

Public Comment: None

- **Letter of Interest** – Logan Callen, Consideration of appointment to UFCAC (*action*)
Logan Callen expressed his interest to serve on the UFCAC committee in the seat previously filled by Kaitlin Millender. His appointment to the committee was not voted on by UFCAC members due to a lack of a quorum.

Agenda Items:

- Fuels Reduction Project update and tour with Nick Jeffries from the Spokane Fire Department

Nick Jeffries toured committee members through a natural area trail system east of Esmerelda Golf Course where he recently coordinated a fuels reduction project. He presented the forest health treatment plan for the site which outlines tree spacing, species to favor, diameter of trees to be removed and more. All project sites involve removing small trees, no larger than 8 inches in diameter. Each site can have a slightly different prescription based on current conditions, accessibility, available resources, overall objectives and more. He explained the land was previously incredibly dense with a high number of small diameter trees growing very close to each other and competing for resources - such as sunlight and water. The fuels reduction project's purpose is to reduce the amount of ladder fuels on a site, including spacing trees further apart, pruning lower tree branches up, and removing dense understory shrubs which act as a ladder for fire and can result in intense crown fires. If a fire were to start within a treated area, it will be "lower and slower", and emergency personnel would have time to respond and put the fire out before potentially increasing in density and severely impacting the recreational site and spreading even further – putting firefighters and the public in danger.

While onsite, multiple trail users stopped and thanked Nick for his work which many recognized as fuel reduction efforts and in addition they provided compliments on the aesthetics of a more open and visible site with views and vistas which were previously blocked by very dense vegetation. The open site also benefits public safety with increased visibility and illegal camping is no longer happening on the property. The fuels reduction project not only results in benefits for fire safety, it also provides improved health for retained trees by reducing competition between previously tightly spaced trees. Various small areas throughout the property were purposely left denser with less intensive of a treatment for wildlife habitat. Material that was removed was entirely chipped and left onsite in a thin layer. The wood chips breakdown fairly quickly and add organic matter into the soil which is also a benefit in an area with low soil volume with a good amount of basalt rocks and outcroppings.

Nick provided information about the utilization of DNR resources including work crews, equipment, and use of hard-working correctional center crews. Utilizing the DNR provided resources assists greatly in providing a match for current grant funding rather than a monetary contribution from the city. There are 2,500-3,000 existing acres of city owned unmanaged forest land. 600 acres alone were treated in the past year which was well above anticipated expectations. A Natural Area Management Plan was also briefly discussed. Nick will be working with Angel Spell to develop a management plan with a consultant forester. A plan will be of great benefit to outline objectives for each natural area site, outline challenges to consider, and provide a road map of priority areas to dictate the flow and timing of projects.

Nick also talked about a recent fire that impacted the edge of Palisades Park and primarily impacted other adjacent properties. Nick assisted with the connection of resources for the treatment of the adjacent parcels that are located even closer to the urban areas. Nick was happy to report the fuels reduction treatment worked! Fire personnel were successfully able to put the fire out fairly quickly and it could have been much worse – the fire was more manageable after the treatment and was stopped just short of Palisades Christian Academy. The Public Lands Commissioner, Hilary Franz will be visiting eastern Washington to meet with Nick and recognize local fuel reduction efforts, specially at this site – right along the western edge of town.

Committee members talked with Jeff about increased media and community engagement related to the work he is doing. More citizens are becoming aware of the importance of proactive steps in protecting our community from a possible devastating fire. It is very important to communicate about the work completed, ongoing and planned for the future. Kris Neely invited Nick to attend a Community Assembly meeting to talk with all of the Neighborhood Councils. Kris said the community assembly groups would be great advocates for the work, support of plans, assist with public engagement and even recruit volunteers if needed. Committee members thanked Jeff again for all his hard work in stretching resources, obtaining grants, and leading the tour with urban forestry committee members.

Field trip meeting adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled UFCAC meeting is 3:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 3, 2024.

The next regularly scheduled UFTC meeting is 4:15 p.m. Tuesday, September 3, 2024.



April 3, 2024

Garret Jones
Director of Parks and Recreation
City of Spokane
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

Dear Mr. Jones,

This letter is intended to showcase my interest in being appointed on the Urban Forestry Citizen Advisory Committee (UFCAC) as a representative from City departments.

Currently, I am an Environmental Analyst in the Environmental Programs Department at the City of Spokane. I manage the greenhouse gas reporting efforts for the City, and our City's trees are an important element in ways to reduce emissions. Prior to achieving my B.S. in Environmental Science and M.S. in Environmental Policy and Management, I attended Spokane Community College's Forestry program where I gained experience with our local tree species and forestry best practices.

In 2020, I also assisted Angel Spell in analyzing the iTree canopy coverage data that was later released in partnership with Gonzaga University. I have also attended a wide variety of tree planting events around the region since the early 2000s.

With climate adaptation and resiliency becoming a larger concern for our region, I would like to be part of the Urban Forestry Citizen Advisory Committee to help ensure our City is successful in achieving the PLANT ordinance goals.

Sincerely,

Logan Callen, MSc (he/him) | Environmental Analyst

City of Spokane | Public Works | Environmental Programs

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