

# Work Party Intro & Safety Talk



## BEFORE VOLUNTEERS ARRIVE

- Make sure there's adequate signage posted so volunteers can find your site
- Set out and count tools
- Set out the sign-in sheet
- Have any other materials ready to go (volunteers will arrive early!).

## WELCOME EVERYONE!

- Introduce yourself and other Forest Stewards and/or staff present
- Thank everyone for giving their time
- Explain why it is so important that people are coming out:
  - Healthy forests in our urban areas give us so much: improved water and air quality, reduced stormwater runoff and flooding, wildlife habitat, and improved public health. Forest restoration work parties, like ours today, help bring communities together, promote healthy living in the city and make the park look better.
  - Snoqualmie has over 1,000 acres (750 football fields!) of forested parklands including where we are today.
  - These forests need our help! While the forests in and around Snoqualmie look nice, increased disturbance is threatening their long-term health and sustainability. Invasive species like blackberry and ivy are relatively new to these forests and threaten to cover the forest floor so that new trees and other plants that grow in the understory can't get a chance to grow. This means that the big trees and healthy forest we need in our parks – a forest that is sustainable and long-lived – need our help if we want to keep having places like this.
- Explain the Green Snoqualmie Partnership:
  - The Green Snoqualmie Partnership is a collaboration that brings together the City of Snoqualmie, the non-profit Forterra, Forest Stewards like myself, many non-profit partners, and residents like you, working together to restore all 1,035 acres of Snoqualmie's incredible forested parklands.
  - Other partners include: King Conservation District, King County, The Snoqualmie Tribe, Mountains to Sound Greenway, and the Snoqualmie Watershed Council.
- Introduce your project:
  - Give an introduction to your park
  - Touch on the history of the restoration and your long-term work plan.
  - If your group is small, have volunteers introduce themselves.
- Explain today's activities:
  - Today we are going to: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Our schedule is going to be: \_\_\_\_\_
  - The bathrooms (if you have them!) are located: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Water and snacks (if you have them!) are located: \_\_\_\_\_

## SAFETY TALK

While we are working today, our main goals are: to **be safe, have fun and get some good work done**--in that order. Some safety precautions today are:

- Make sure everyone has signed the sign-in sheet and the youth waiver (if they are under 18).
- Let volunteers know that you have a first-aid kit (tell them where)
- Emergency numbers to call should there be an accident

- Tools:
  - What tools are you using: introduce the tools with CUSS acronym (CARRY, USE, SAFETY, STORAGE)
  - Keep track of tools and return a tool to an identified area before switching to a new tool
  - Everyone should be wearing gloves for the entire event
- Activity concerns:
  - Heavy lifting
  - Working around others with tools (relates to proper tool handling and not working too close)
  - Slopes—No working on steep slopes, or even moderate slopes (point out where those are)
- Environmental concerns:
  - Road/traffic—no one should be working in the road, and wear safety vests if working near traffic
  - Heat/dehydration
  - Bees
  - Garbage
- Litter/Sharps/Glass
  - Always wear gloves!
  - If you find sharps, put them in a hard-sided container or tell a staff person to have them removed right away.

## **DEMONSTRATE BMPs**

Take time to demonstrate the way you want volunteers to perform restoration work. Do not assume that volunteers know how to do the work, or know their plants. After you demonstrate, ask if anyone has questions. Show:

- identification for invasive plants
- proper invasive plant removal techniques
- compost pile building
- planting, etc.

## **GET TO WORK!**

"If you have any questions at all while we are working today please feel free to ask me. I/we will be walking around helping out and am always available to you. If you have any other forest or park related questions let me know- and I will do my best to answer them"

## **EVENT WRAP UP**

- Make sure all the tools have been returned and cleaned
- Gather everyone who stayed until the end and celebrate the day's accomplishments, including listing the work accomplished
- Take a group photo that you'll send out with the follow-up "thank you" email (optional)
- Tell the group how they can stay involved with your project and other Green Snoqualmie Partnership events

## **GENERAL REMINDERS:**

- Be confident in your ability and your role as a Forest Steward—volunteers came out to help for a reason!
- Make sure everyone has signed in
- Be clear and thorough with directions; don't assume the volunteers already know tool safety and understand the project task
- Keep people busy and make them feel useful
- Remember that you are there to facilitate the event, not do all the work yourself!
- Remind volunteers of the bigger picture: a healthier urban forest
- Thank everyone sincerely and often!