

2020 Mini College Session Descriptions and Schedule

Note: Individuals will receive their own schedule of classes based on registration.

Morning Sessions (9:30 to 10:30 and 10:50 to 11:50)

Tree Seedlings, Production and Planting Tips

Brian Quilter, DNRC Nursery Supervisor

The Montana DNRC Conservation Nursery produces thousands of seedlings on an annual basis for reforestation and conservation planting. Learn about the different species available, their genetic selection process, how they are grown, how to purchase them and the right size seedling for your planting application, and how to plant them. Brian will have the different seedling samples for you to examine and order forms available if you are looking to plant trees or shrubs this spring. An optional tour of the DNRC nursery may be available after the mini-college.

Burning versus Thinning

Justin Crotteau, Research Scientist Forest Service Rocky Mountain Laboratory

Almost 20 years ago a fire surrogate study was initiated on Lubrecht Experimental Forest to examine the impacts of thinning a forest, burning it, using a combination of fire and thinning, or doing nothing. Several years after the experiment a bark beetle outbreak hit the study area. Justin will provide you an overview of his award winning research that compared the effects of these treatments on tree growth, bark beetle susceptibility and potential fire behavior.

Contemporary Forest Management Effects on Flow, Water Quality, and Riparian Health at the Mica Creek Long Term Ecohydrological Study

Tim Link, University of Idaho Hydrology Professor

30 years ago an experiment was started in northern Idaho where paired watersheds owned by the Potlatch Deltic timber company were used to compare the effects of a variety of forest management treatments on watershed processes including streamflow, water quality, and riparian ecology. Tim will share the results of this long term study including how forest management practices have affected snow accumulation, snowmelt, soil water, streamflow, water quality, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and fish populations and the interior Pacific Northwest working forest watershed.

Montana Forest Insect and Disease Update

August Kramer, Montana DNRC Pest Management

The Montana DNRC monitors and trouble shoots tree pests across the state. August will provide an update about what different pests are on the increase or decrease, how to identify their damage, and management strategies of dealing with them. Feel free to bring samples along for him to diagnose if you have something impacting your trees.

Managing for Plant and Ungulate Communities: Effects of Fire and Logging in Montana's Northern Forests

Teagan Hayes, University of Montana MSc Student, Wildlife Biology

Wildfire, prescribed fire, and timber harvest have unique effects on understory plant communities. The differences between natural and human-caused disturbances are also important to wildlife species that use vegetation for forage and cover. Changes in forage and habitat resources in northwest Montana have been linked to recent declines in mule deer population estimates and hunter harvests. However, the relationship between disturbances and mule deer habitat selection is not well understood, especially for lesser-studied

mule deer populations in Montana's northern forests. We conducted a 3-year study in the southern Rocky Mountain Front, Cabinet-Salish Mountains, and Whitefish Mountains. We monitored the movements of 131 GPS radio-collared adult female mule deer and documented plant communities in disturbed and undisturbed forests in all three study areas. The amount of wildfire and harvest varied between study areas, and deer selection was influenced by the age and type of disturbance. Connecting plant and deer responses to disturbances can help identify treatments that benefit the greatest number of species.

Lunch Break 12:00 to 1:10

Lunch Speaker

Bob Keane, Forest Research Ecologist USDA Forest Service Fire Lab will present
"An inside look at Australia Burning"

Bob is one of the worlds most recognized fire ecologists and will share his expertise and knowledge with us regarding the Australian wildfire situation that is still actively developing. He spent 8 months studying and practicing the use of fire in Australia in 2004 and his experience and thoughts on the topic are very enlightening and informative to those of living in a landscape where wildfires are an annual phenomenon and threat.

Afternoon Sessions (1:30 to 2:30 and 2:50 to 3:50)

Estate Planning

Marsha Goetting, MSU Extension Agricultural Family Economics

Marsha is the leading expert for Montana estate planning and will give you an overview of how to manage and protect your assets and plan for your future so you can maximize the value you can keep for your retirement and pass on to your kids or others. There is much to learn about this topic.

Bed Bugs – a Montana Epidemic?

Laurie Kerzicnik, MSU Insect and Arachnid Specialist

Not the usual topic for forest landowners, but if you travel you will want to know all about the bed bug epidemic across the United States and what you can do to avoid getting bitten, or worse, bring these nasty's back to your house. Something everyone should know about!

Animal Wonders

Taylor Craig, Animal Keep/Wildlife Educator

This is a non-profit program that provides homes to misplaced or injured wildlife and educational programs about wildlife and their needs. Meet our North American beaver, fox and whatever other wild animal friends they bring along and learn about their needs and behavioral quirks. This program will help you develop strategies for providing better habitat or avoiding attracting unwanted wildlife. Plus it just plain fun to interact or observe close up the creatures we usually only can see from a distance.

The University of Montana Arboretum Tour

Peter Kolb, MSU Extension Forestry Specialist

Did you know that the University of Montana campus is the official state arboretum? Peter will lead a brisk tour around campus and show off the variety if tree species growing here including the state record red oak. If you are thinking about planting a shade tree it might be good to see what the mature tree looks like and its likes and dislikes before spending the time and money.

Taxes, Contracts, and Forest Management

Rick Moore, DNRC Service Forester in Kalispell

Managing your forest can and should be rewarding. Many landowners grasp the science and technique of cutting and planting trees, but miss the tax management techniques that can save them money.

Unfortunately, I also observe many landowners entering into agreements with loggers without a contract or an understanding of the process of selling timber. We will briefly discuss the reforestation tax credit, the advantages of establishing your timber basis, how to claim timber sale income, and timber sale contracts.