

Front Range Urban Forestry Council

January 21, 2010

Introductions – David Flaig, City of Littleton

Westminster Tree Growth Rate Study

Keith Wood, CSFS

Keith collected the initial inventory of a relatively young urban forest on paper while working for City of Westminster in the early 90's. He frequently got questions from homeowners asking what trees to plant in their yards (besides cottonwood and silver maple) that had faster growth rates. Keith would suggest oak or linden but most nurseries put growth rates as slow to moderate at best for these species, and most homeowners wanted something that would grow faster. Others had no concept of how quickly fast-growing trees such as blue spruce could grow into the side of their house or low utility lines.

So in 2000, the initial inventory developed into a formalized growth rate study. Diameter growth data was collected for 18 different tree types in a variety of locations including maintained parks, city facilities, streetscapes and medians. The study focused on trees in fair to good condition with size classes in the growth stage of development. Now, the Westminster Growth Rate Study updates the 2000 study to obtain 16 years of growth data on the same 18 tree types. Along the way, some trees were removed from the study due to construction damage and other severe stresses.

No surprise, cottonwoods and silver maples were the fastest growing trees on the list. However, there were some unexpected results: catalpas grow decently fast and white oaks and lindens do well too. Red maples did not fare so well; fluctuating winter temps and dry spells, and heavy clay soils seem to make these trees struggle. For evergreens, blue spruce showed the fastest growth. Austrian pine and ponderosa do well too, but Austrian pine shows better adaptation to urban conditions and resists MPB. For ornamentals, the noxious weed Russian-olive is the sad winner while hawthorn is slowest growing.

Keith cautioned against choosing trees solely based on their ability to grow fast as some of the slower growing trees are highly adapted to the harsh growing conditions of the Front Range and will do quite well here. Use this information as one tool of many to choose a variety of trees best suited for a site; species diversity is very important.

A few things missing that might improve the next study? Sample sizes were a bit low on several species (catalpa, red maple, white fir.) Height growth information could be useful. Include more species that are becoming more commonly planted: Autumn Blaze maple, tree lilac, etc.

Boulder County Parks & Open Space Tree Program

Cathy Thiltgen, Boulder County Parks & Open Space

Cathy gave a quick update on the latest details of the old Cherry Creek Tree Farm property Boulder County Parks & Open Space purchased in 2008. They are continuing development of the 2010 tree donation program to give the remaining 15,000 trees on site good homes elsewhere with the ultimate goal of returning the land to traditional agricultural use and preserving the agricultural heritage of the Highway 287 corridor. This year they have extended the program to Front Range municipalities that have lost funding for tree planting while minimizing impact to local growers. Cathy has a fairly accurate inventory of trees ranging from 1" caliper to large evergreens; species are fairly limited. They are also exploring educational opportunities such as workshops, staff trainings, research, etc. at the tree farm. If you would like more information on the program, email Cathy at cthiltgen@bouldercounty.org.

Break

Introducing Sky Stephens

Sky Stephens, CSFS Entomologist

Sky recently accepted the position as CSFS entomologist. Prior to coming to Colorado, she spent considerable time in Flagstaff, AZ completing her Masters and Doctorate work in the arid ponderosa pine, forests. She escaped to Africa for a much-needed change of scenery, conducting biodiversity assessments and working with the exotic high-value timber producers to encourage mixed native species plantations. Then she returned to the pine forests of Flagstaff to count little bitty insects on little bitty trees. Sky is glad to be in Colorado now, especially the urban environments with more species of trees and bugs!

Committee Reports

Insect and Disease: Emerging Pests Subcommittee – Ralph Zentz, City of Fort Collins

This subcommittee formed mostly in response to Thousand Cankers Disease. What they figure out as far as a response to this disease will prepare for EAB if and when it comes to Colorado. So far, this project is proving to be quite nebulous and they are finding out how almost impossible it is to get a federal quarantine on walnut wood. A state level quarantine is not even possible until another state makes a quarantine against us. On the local and state level, the committee is looking at options for model ordinances and figuring out if they will even be enforceable. They are always open to good ideas/suggestions. The biggest goal is to keep Thousand Cankers Disease from moving east to native stands of walnut. CSU is working on best management practices focusing specifically on the disease and hope to post to the website soon. Email Ralph Zentz if you have ideas/suggestions.

Select Tree – Tim Buchanan, City of Fort Collins

The Select Tree Evaluation Program (STEP) is back up and running! This year's selection is the Pacific Sunset maple. Each city or community involved in the program purchases 3 trees at \$95 each and will pick them up in Fort Collins this spring (late April or early May). The Pacific Sunset maple is a hybrid product of Oregon's Schmidt nursery. A hybrid between Shantung maple and Norway maple, Pacific Sunset matures at 25-30' and will have some late fall color. Email Tim for more info if interested.

Hazard Tree – Bill Cassel, City & County of Denver

The tree risk identification form has been remodeled and resized to 1 page. Bill needs some practitioners to take the new form out in the field and try it out. Contact him if you are interested. Next month's ProGreen Expo is bringing in two great speakers on hazard tree topics: Christopher Luley and Julian Dunster, go listen and learn.

Now an off-topic question: Anybody have experience "washing the soil" off containerized or B&B trees with a power washer and planting them bareroot? He has heard of this becoming quite a common practice in California. Bill is working to procure specs on procedures. Possible advantages: fix girdling roots, cut down on transplant shock. Anybody interested in trialing this technique on a few plantings locally? Bonnie Appleton of Virginia Tech has done research on it. Keith Wood saw a tree planted this way at the Arbor Day Farm in warmer temperatures and it wilted badly. This was a demo only to show how much soil can be over the root flare in typical B&B operations. He suggests this technique is best done during tree dormancy and can be labor intensive.

Program/Membership – Keith Wood, CSFS

Thanks to Jonathan Dees and the Denver Zoo for setting up this meeting spot and tour. The next meeting date is March 11, 2010 at the Colorado Department of Agriculture. Donna Davis may conduct poster contest judging after this meeting.

C.T.C – Mike McGill, Town of Erie

New CTC officers were announced. They will have signup sheets to recruit CTC committee volunteers at the next FRUFC meeting, so start thinking about what committees you would like to help. Calendars are still available. They are actively seeking sponsors for the 2011 calendar, so talk to Becky Wegner if you have contacts for an individual or business that might be interested in sponsoring a month at \$1000.

I.S.A – Rob Davis, City of Westminster

Like everyone else, they are trying to figure out the best ways to utilize a tight budget. Planning continues for the Annual Conference this fall with *tentative dates* set for September 23-25 and Kim Coder as a possible keynote speaker. Location will be north Denver area with the Tree Climbing Championship held in City Park. One interesting topic: Arboritexture: correcting pruning mistakes from the last 5 years. North American Training Solutions may be there to teach mechanical advantage and rigging. Other possible topics: tree law. The Rocky Mountain chapter is trying to boost membership with money available to current members who refer new members. Many great CEU credit opportunities, 24 classes total, are available at the upcoming ProGreen Expo with ISA Certified Arborist training track and ISA Arborist certification exam on evening of February 11. The National ISA Conference will be held in Chicago July 23-28. There will be an upcoming Certified Tree Worker training in Denver and Tree Climbing workshop in Loveland. Refer to the ISA website at www.isarmc.org for event listings and CEU opportunities.

Community Reports

Susan Ford, USFS

June 12, 2010 is National Get Outdoors Day and will be celebrated in Denver at City Park. The theme this year is focusing on youth health. This is a good event for anybody involved with youth education or environmental education. She also continues to work on programs involving urban wood waste for energy generation.

Sara Davis, Million Tree Initiative

They are partnering with CTC to provide several substantial grants to Front Range communities and organizations. Start thinking about good projects for the following grants: (3) \$5000 grants, (1) \$10,000 grant, (1) \$20,000 grant. 80% of grant amount must be used to purchase trees while the remaining 20% can be used for other expenses such as marketing or food. Also discussed suggestions for spring event volunteer giveaway items with positive feedback on water bottles. Get suggestions to Sara. The new website is up and running at www.milehighmillion.org. See website for grant application details.

Sky Stephens, CSFS Entomologist

Three positive catches for male gypsy moth in Colorado this year. Sky will be working with the Colorado Department of Agriculture for further monitoring and trapping in these locations.

Tour of Zoo Exhibits and Tree Management at the Zoo

Jonathan Dees, Denver Zoo Arborist

Jonathan had quite a good turnout for his tour around the zoo, touching on tree care topics including trials and tribulations with exhibit trees, good pruning vs. browse collection pruning, success and failure of large spaded trees, and use of Cambistat for trees in enclosures.

Attendance

Jennifer Hrobar	South Suburban Parks & Recreation
Ben Rickenbacker	South Suburban Parks & Recreation
John Wesolowski	City of Aurora
Sara Davis	City and County of Denver
Matt Moritz	City of Arvada
Kelly Henry	
Sky Stephens	CSFS
Robert Bond	Student
DeNae Cameron	City of Fort Collins
David Wallace	City of Fort Collins
Ralph Zentz	City of Fort Collins
Tim Buchanan	City of Fort Collins
Del Bernhardt	City of Fort Collins
Russ Pineda	School District 27J
Joe Trujillo	City of Brighton
Dave Sexton	City of Fort Collins
Kyle Sylvester	City of Brighton
Tom Wells	City and County of Broomfield
Chuck Gehringer	City and County of Broomfield
Collin Wassink	CSFS-Golden
Steven Traylor	City and County of Denver
Andy Schlosberg	CSFS
Matt Matwijec	CSFS-Woodland Park
Paul Smith	City of Colorado Springs
Michael Allen	Mile High Youth Corps
Jonathan Dees	Denver Zoo
Joel Szymanski	City of Northglenn
Allan Duckworth	City of Northglenn
Alfred Ledesma	City of Westminster
Rob Burdine	City of Westminster
Robert Davis	City of Westminster
Bruce King	BK Fine
Devon Bowers	City of Westminster
Shawn Sprenger	City of Golden
Dave High	City of Golden
Daniel Lee	City of Lakewood
Bill Clark	City of Lakewood

Chris Archuleta
Cathy Thiltgen
Zachary Hall
Diana Selby
Martin Quigley
Jeff Russell
Dave Kinser
Ted Tompkins
Bill Cassel
John Vanko
Rob MacDonald
Mike McGill
Scott Rehfeld
Michelle Cadena
Keith Wood

City of Lakewood
Boulder County Parks & Open Space
City of Fort Collins
CSFS-Fort Collins
University of Denver
Lawn Doctor of Fort Collins
City of Wheat Ridge
City and County of Denver
City and County of Denver
City of Westminster
City of Loveland
Town of Erie
Town of Erie
Fort Collins Wholesale Nursery
CSFS

See you in March!