

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How did the non-native species get there?

Birds, wind, and people have helped establish healthy populations of non-native trees and these populations have flourished because of the decline of Douglas-fir trees.

What's so bad about non-natives?

Non-native populations compete for space, moisture and sunlight with native species. Since the native trees need sunlight to establish, they are at a disadvantage with the shade-tolerant maples and cherries.

What about the fall color?

Color will still be seen on Tubbs hill through native species such as western larch and a variety of native shrubs.

What if we leave it like it is?

If non-native species continue to grow, there will be a loss of native habitat. The deep shade of these trees will affect not only native trees, but shrubs, herbaceous plants, and wildlife.

What herbicides will be used?

The Urban Forestry Committee does not take use of herbicides lightly. The herbicides which have been selected are environmentally safe as well as effective. Copies of the labels and Manufacturer's Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) can be viewed at the Parks Department office in City Hall.

- Cut stump treatment & basal spray - Garlon 4 Ultra
- Hack & squirt of larger trees – Accord & Arsenal

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PARKS DEPARTMENT



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RESTORING NATIVE HABITATS ON TUBBS HILL

A NON-NATIVE TREE
REMOVAL PLAN



20 YEARS AGO



2010

BACKGROUND

Coeur d'Alene is privileged to have Tubbs Hill, a unique lakeside natural park, in the midst of the city. Tubbs Hill serves as a welcome escape, a play area, a nature adventure, and a scenic backdrop for exercise. The health of native vegetation on Tubbs Hill plays an important role in maintaining the values the Hill offers. Yet in certain areas non-native species have been slowly taking over sites important for indigenous plants.

Some Tree History

Tubbs Hill historically has been composed of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir trees with some larch. With the exclusion of wildfire, shade-tolerant Douglas-fir has become a larger part of the tree population than it would have naturally. The Douglas-fir has developed root rot, a fungal disease that spreads by root contact. The large numbers of Douglas-fir have made it easy for the root rot to quickly spread. The result is the death of many Douglas-fir trees over the past decade.

Meanwhile, wind and birds have carried seeds of Norway maple and cherry trees from adjoining neighborhoods onto Tubbs Hill. Where sufficient moisture was found, the seeds sprouted in the shade of the native forest. This process was aided by the sudden loss of trees to ice storm damage and root rot. The non-natives responded to increased sunlight with quick growth. They are now scattered throughout approximately 30 acres of Tubbs Hill's north and east facing slopes.

THE PROBLEM

The problem is not that we don't like the non-native trees, but that we like the native trees more. The places where the non-natives are gaining a foothold are the most moist sites on the Hill. These sites should be the home of ponderosa pine, western white pine (Idaho's state tree), western larch, and a variety of native shrubs. All of these native tree species need sunlight to become established. They cannot compete with the shade-dense Norway maple and cherry trees.

These sites are, in fact, the only opportunity to grow white pine and larch on Tubbs Hill. If we are to have these native trees on Tubbs Hill, action must be taken to control the non-native trees and preserve the native habitat.



THE SOLUTION

To help restore native habitats on Tubbs Hill, the Parks Department and Urban Forestry Committee have used a pro-active approach to control non-native trees. With fuel-reduction projects in 2010 to reduce the threat of wildfire, there was an opportunity to combine non-native control with these projects.

Small non-native trees were removed in conjunction with fuel reduction efforts. The freshly-cut stumps of targeted non-natives were treated with an herbicide prevents re-sprouting.

The larger trees that were controlled were maples and cherry trees, as well as all non-natives in the area not covered by fuel reduction projects (about 5 acres). The larger trees were treated by the "hack and squirt" method, where a hatchet is used to cut through the cambium layer of the tree, and the herbicide is applied to the cut.

Treated areas were planted with a mixture of over 2000 native trees and shrubs. This planting occurred in the spring of 2011.

The north side of Tubbs Hill at the base of McEuen Park is also dense with non-native trees that have the potential to spread onto the hill. Efforts for this project will take place in August of 2012. Native seedlings will then be planted to restore the native habitat.

Follow-up maintenance in all areas will be continued until the planted native trees reach a height of 15 to 20 feet.