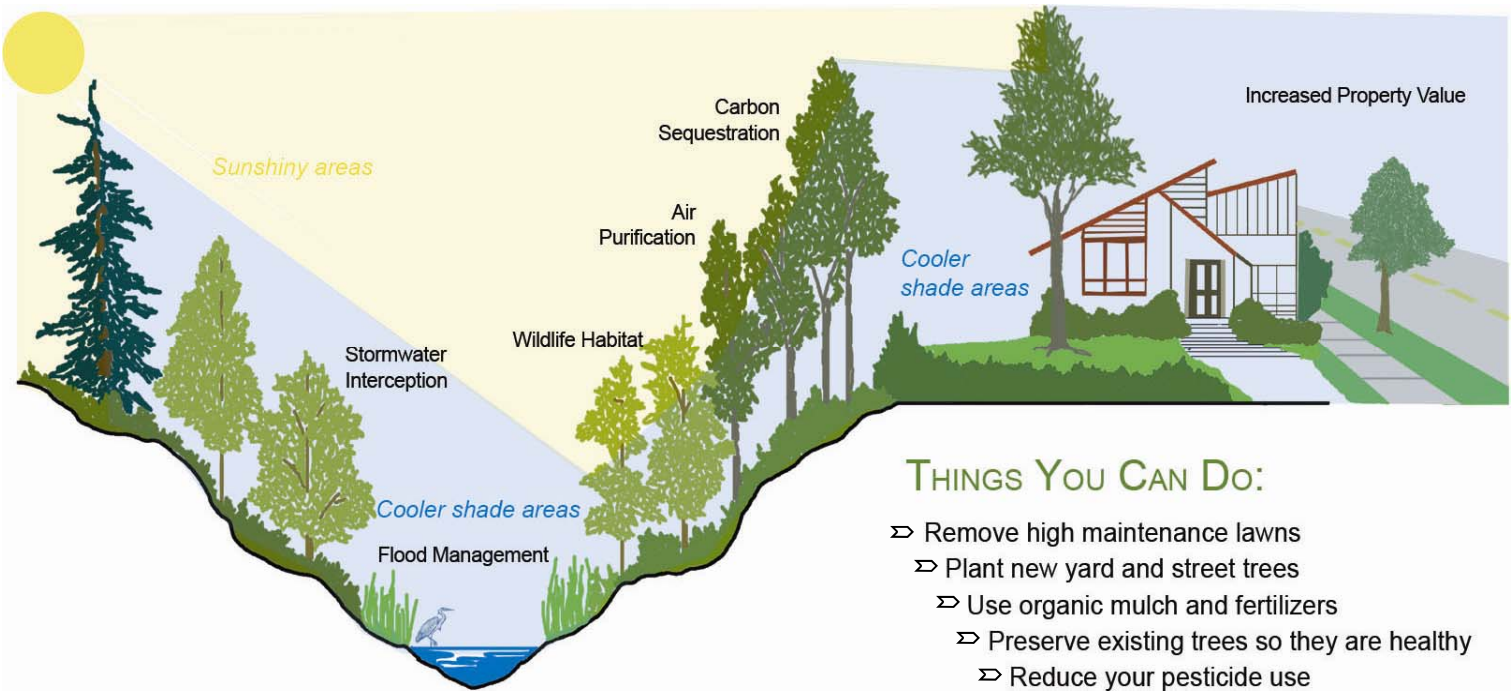
Benefits of Trees

Did you know that the way we landscape directly impacts the quality of our water? Planting, properly maintaining and preserving trees is a cost effective and easy way to assist in managing stormwater. As homeowners, landscapers and property managers there are a few simple steps you can take to protect water quality where you live: remove high maintenance turf, plant new yard and street trees, use organic mulch, reduce your pesticide use, preserve existing trees and properly maintain your trees so they remain healthy.

Urban forests help to reduce the amount of polluted runoff that moves through urban areas and into lakes, rivers and other water bodies. Planting, properly maintaining and preserving trees creates a “green infrastructure” which is a great way to protect and restore the quality of our water resources.

- Trees clean dust and other pollutants from the air
- Trees help cool air in the summer and warm air in the winter
- Properly placed trees increase property value
- Birds, bugs and other wildlife find food and shelter in trees
- Trees provide a shady place to rest on a hot day!
- Tree canopy acts as a sponge, protecting soil from rain splash damage while slowing runoff
- Roots hold soil in place and reduce erosion
- Urban forests are essential to the replenishment of groundwater for a steady supply of clean drinking water
- Decomposed leaves, roots and branches enrich the soil
- Trees make our neighborhoods green and beautiful
- Trees act as windbreaks
- Logs and snags provide habitat and food for wildlife
- Foliage shades and cools streams so fish and other wildlife can survive



Things You Can Do:

- Remove high maintenance lawns
- Plant new yard and street trees
- Use organic mulch and fertilizers
- Preserve existing trees so they are healthy
- Reduce your pesticide use

References and additional information:
The Center for Urban Forest Research: *Pacific Southwest Research Station, USDA Forest Service, Davis, California. July 2002, Factsheet*
The Center for Urban Forest Research: *Western WA and OR Community Tree Guide: Benefits, Costs and Strategic Planting*
Day, S.D. and S.B. Dickson: *Managing Stormwater for Urban Sustainability Using Trees and Structural*
Environmental Protection Agency: *Using Smart Growth Techniques as Stormwater Best Management Practices*
Washington State University Pierce County Extension: *Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound*