

**TREE REMOVAL:** Hazard trees will be taken out under plan

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Management Plan. They also asked for a review by City Forester Dan Galecki of Spindrift Forestry Consulting regarding proposed tree removals on all three school campuses, and a tour of the campuses by the UFB and Public Works prior to any more work.

The school district management plan is guided by three main goals: 1. Minimize risks to students, faculty, parents, visitors, and the general public through hazard tree and limb identification, and fire fuels mitigation; 2. Improve the health condition of currently established and future trees to promote a healthy, diverse, variable-age forest that will benefit current and future generations; and 3. Improve the safety of the SSD campuses by minimizing on-campus screening from trees, limbs, and foliage, thus creating and maintaining clear lines of sight across campuses to improve vehicle, pedestrian, and foot traffic, and to discourage potential human and animal predators, hostage situations, active shooter, and other law enforcement concerns.

Additionally, in the winter, trees shading parking lots and sidewalks hinder melting of ice and snow, slowing down efforts of district maintenance personnel to clear away the snow and ice.

Trees growing in close proximity to any solid surfaces such as parking lots, driveways, and sidewalks, give rise to heaving and lifting issues creating tripping

hazards and increased costs to repair such areas.

Trees that are spaced further apart, allow larger mowers and fertilizing equipment to get in between the trees, eliminating slower handwork. Trees close to the school buildings create maintenance issues with needles accumulating in the gutters. This past winter, collected needles helped to create ice dams, which caused damage to the buildings. Particularly at the middle school, classrooms on the second floor do not receive much daylight due to the trees near the building. Teachers have complained about the lack of natural daylight in the classrooms.

The Urban Forestry Board is a requirement for recipients of the Tree City USA designation, which the City has received for the past 10 years. The board began meeting on a regular basis after the public outcry following removal of a number of trees in Creekside Campground several years ago.

The five-member UFB provides guidance for the management of the urban forest (those trees located within public rights-of-way, parks, and public places owned or controlled by the City), and provides recommendations to staff regarding City ordinances and codes involving trees. The Community Development Director can ask for their review of and recommendations for proposed tree removals in subdivisions being built in the city. The board works in concert with the contracted City Forester.

Dave Moyer is chairman of the UFB and has 42 years experience as an employee with the U. S. Forest Service. The other four members of

the board all have experience in related fields.

On last week's tour of school grounds, the UFB heard from both Dave Vitelle of Bear Mountain Fire (who is donating the tree removal services) and from Galecki regarding the reasoning behind each of their recommendations for limbing and thinning of trees. Vitelle's initial recommendations for removal were all marked with a blue paint spot at the base of the tree. Galecki had indicated his suggested removals by circling the tree with blue tape so the UFB could easily compare the recommendations.

Generally speaking, Galecki's removal recommendations were far more conservative than Vitelle's, leaving more trees in place, and considering providing thickets and the occasional dead tree for wildlife habitat. Vitelle favored removal of almost all junipers due to their aggressive consumption of water, which he said negatively impacts surrounding ponderosas and other vegetation. Galecki and the UFB favored a more diverse forest, leaving those junipers that had space around them and removing those in close proximity to the ponderosas.



PHOTO BY SUE STAFFORD

Referred to as "snaking", crooked trees like this are marked for removal. "Strongest tree is the straightest tree." - Dave Vitelle

Vitelle recommended removal of any dead tree. Galecki suggested studying the cause of the tree's mortality and its particular placement before deciding to remove it. Vitelle's approach called for thinning to leave single trees with more open space around each tree. Galecki suggested leaving some clumps of trees and then spacing away from the clump, in addition to single

trees. Disagreement surfaced regarding the areas at the east end of the elementary school where the local deer are known to bed down. SSD Operations Director Ryan Stock said that school district personnel have to herd the deer out in the morning because children play in that area and he is concerned that

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