

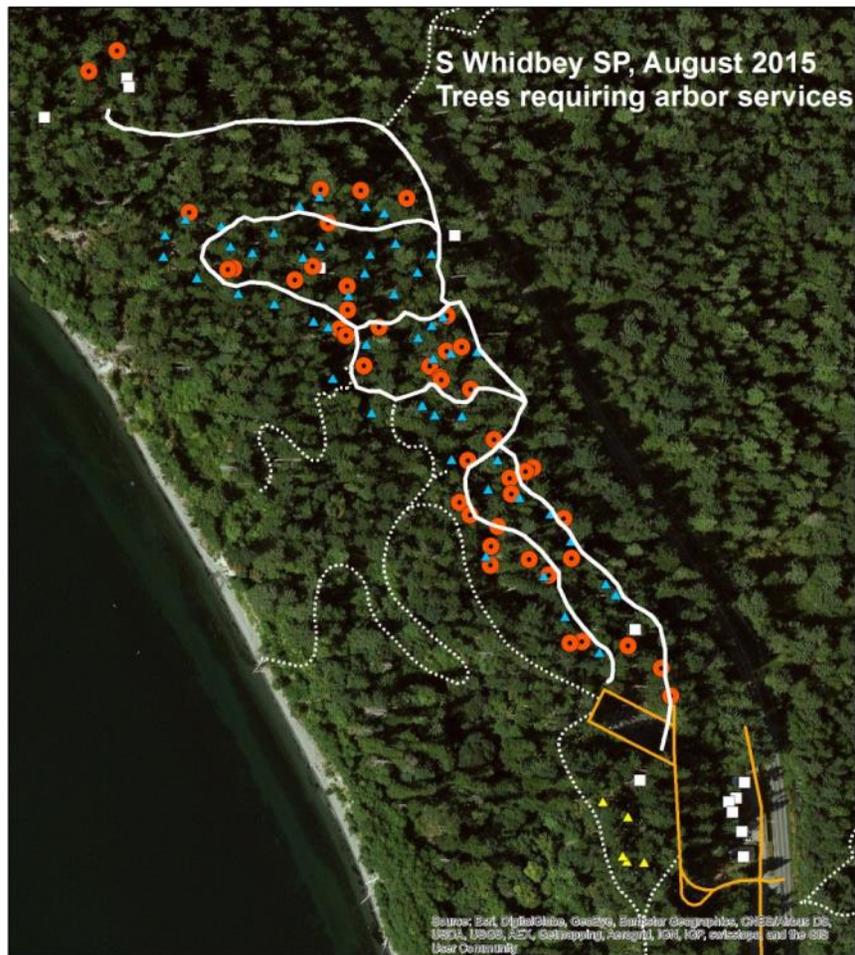
## Stewardship Brief – Forest Health Issues in the CG/GC at South Whidbey State Park

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The purpose of this document is to provide a brief overview of the forest conditions in the campground and group camp areas of South Whidbey State Park, and possible management actions to maintain / enhance the integrity and function of these forest lands.

Location	South Whidbey State Park is located off of S Smugglers Cove Road, approximately 6 miles north of the town of Freeland, Whidbey Island, Washington. The land came to Parks from WADNR through a 1992/3 Trust Land Transfer.
Size	The total area evaluated is ±15 acres: the focus occurring in or immediately adjacent to campsites, roadways, day-use facilities, and associated structures. The total park area is approximately 380 acres.
Issue	The campground (CG) and group areas (GC) are temporarily closed due to elevated risks associated with tree failures resulting from the presence of native tree pathogens (specifically, annosus root and butt rot, Armillaria root disease, brown trunk rot [likely, but not confirmed], brown stringy trunk rot, laminated root rot, pini red ring rot, and Schweinitzii butt rot), and declining old-growth tree health.
Vegetation	<p>General forest characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Douglas-fir dominates the canopy with a number of other native trees forming the balance of the overstory (grand fir, western red cedar, western hemlock, Sitka spruce, bigleaf maple, and red alder).</li> <li>• Trees are of a wide range of sizes and ages, with many of the hardwoods only a few decades old, while the largest Douglas-fir and western red cedars exceed several centuries in age.</li> <li>• Common understory plants include sword fern, salmonberry, holly*, red huckleberry, salal, oceanspray, Oregon grape, and trailing blackberry (*non-native species).</li> <li>• There were no rare plants found in a 1992 WA DNR Natural Heritage vegetation survey. The developed landscape and slopes below it were identified as supporting the largest stand of old growth forest in the park.</li> <li>• Several native tree pathogens (see “Issue” above) occur throughout the CG and GC areas (Figure 1), with most occurring on the larger Douglas-fir, grand fir, and western hemlock trees. <i>NOTE: It is impossible, given current resources and technologies, to identify all individuals infected by tree pathogens and determine the degree to which the fungi have compromised the integrity of their wood.</i></li> <li>• The USFS rates trees exhibiting signs/symptoms of the above pathogens as having medium-high failure potential.**</li> <li>• A number of the old growth and maturing second growth trees exhibit branch failures, dying tops, or are dead standing (Figure 2).</li> <li>• Tree injuries and soil compaction are common in campsites and along roadways.</li> </ul>
Potential Management Options	A wide range of management options exist for the CG and GC areas. These will be explored further this fall, through an agency Classification and Management Planning process for the park. Briefly, they span the range of 1) do nothing, reopen the developed facilities, and assume an elevate level of risk that people and/or property will be injured/impacted from failing trees; to, 2) permanently close the area to camping, restore habitats in these areas, use them for day-use / hiking purposes, and monitor/treat failing trees that could threaten areas where people congregate. The latter scenario likely creates the lowest risk of people and structures being impacted by failing trees.
**Source	Filip, GM et al. 2014. Field guide for hazard-tree identification and mitigation on developed sites in Oregon and Washington Forests. USDA Forest Service R6-NR-TP-021-2013. 120 p.

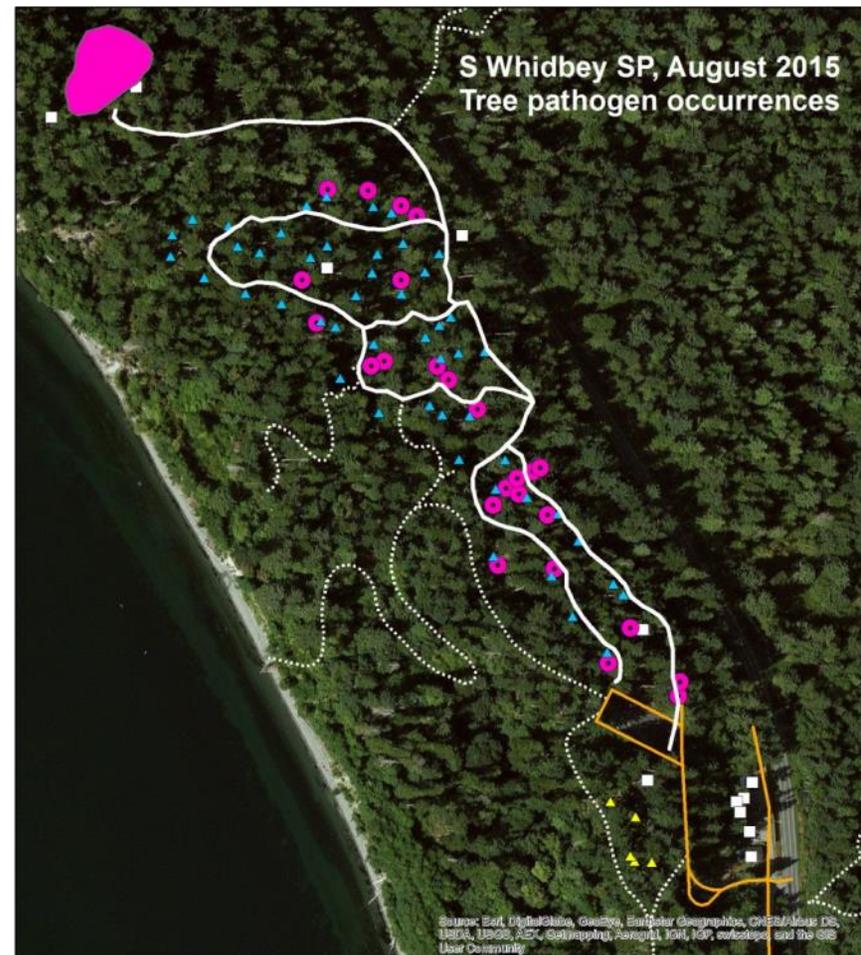


▲ Camp\_Sites\$ Events  
 ▲ P\_campsites  
 ● Arbor\_Work\$ Events  
 □ FacilityInventory  
 — Park Road  
 - - - Trail

0 500 Feet  
 NAD83 HARN Washington State Plane South

Data in these maps were compiled for cartographic purposes. Due to the variability of the source information, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, and, therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.

Figure 2. Trees known to require arbor services to eliminate tree failure issues.



▲ Camp\_Sites\$ Events  
 ● Disease\$ Events  
 ▲ P\_campsites  
 □ FacilityInventory  
 — Park Road  
 - - - Trail

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Figure 1. Locations of known tree pathogens.