

City of Stillwater

The use of EAB and other infected woods should be expanded, not just promoted. Thousands of ash trees are being removed in every corner of the metro. Waste disposal options are limited and we most frequently see people either bring their ash wood to the Hugo yard waste site, or just burn it.

State supported milling operations in each county would be a huge asset in the battle against EAB. Salvaged wood could be utilized in various county and municipal parks and rec projects such as: bridges, ADA ramps, staircases, retaining walls, railings, benches, picnic tables, playgrounds, birdhouses, gazebos, docks and any other wood product you may see in a park. High quality lumber could be utilized in construction of other facilities, or merchandised as needed.

Composting and mulching options in Washington county need to be expanded. The only publicly available dump site in the county is in Hugo - a far drive for most residents. A few cities have municipal sites, but those are only available to residents of their respective cities. People would potentially be less likely to burn their dead trees if closer disposal sites were available.

We are getting close to the point where it may no longer make sense to incentivize ash treatment, at least in the metro. By the time these policies are implemented, the pest will have spread to even further reaches of the metro. Currently, we are finding more infested trees in Stillwater than there are treatable ones. We still strongly encourage treatment to anyone who has a healthy ash tree, but opportunities for treatment are dwindling. We do have discounted rates for residents thru Rainbow Tree.

Tax assessments on private trees is a great strategy to make tree removal a more feasible option for homeowners. I've spoken to many residents who want to get their hazardous ash trees removed, but simply cannot afford it. Quotes for private removal can range from \$1000 (without disposal) to upwards of \$4000 per tree where cranes or specialty work is needed. Homeowners who have 10 dead ash trees on their property are financially overwhelmed, rendered helpless.

Strongly support the expansion and usage of Biochar.