



Working on control of a spurge laurel population along I-5 in Everett

TYPE OF WORK

I help figure out the best ways to take care of the roadsides along state highways in Washington.

Ray Willard

Roadside Landscape Architect

Washington State Department of Transportation



Roadside Landscape Architect



TYPICAL DAY: I spend about ¾ of my time around the office in Olympia either in meetings, working on the computer at my desk, or on the phone. The rest of the time I get to spend traveling around the state to meet with other stakeholders, conduct training, and work with the local crews to help them figure out the best ways to take care of their roadsides.

CAREER PATHWAY:

I've always loved trees and natural systems, and spent most of my time outside as a child. For me, a career in Landscape Architecture has provided a way to combine a love of nature with creativity in design, and a deep desire to help reduce the impact of humans on our planet. There are about 100,000 acres of state highway roadside in Washington which serve as a front yard to anyone travelling down the road - Figuring out the best, most natural ways to manage and preserve native species in this area is one way to help our planet.



Local area management are evaluated and updated annually to guide roadside maintenance actions along the 7,000 miles of Washington State highway

IMPORTANT SKILLS

Restoration ecology, horticulture/plant biology, soil science, herbicide chemistry, slope stabilization and erosion control, stormwater management

EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree

SALARY RANGE

\$75,000-\$100,000

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Computer applications for writing, data analysis, developing presentations, research, and communication through social media and the Internet. iPads with GPS tracking and custom designed

"My job is never boring, there is so much variety in what I get to work on. I have spent the last 25 years in pretty much the same job, and it is very satisfying to look back and realize how much I've been able to improve the way we manage our roadsides." - Ray Willard