NELSON ROAD TREE FARM, LLC TOUR
2022 (WTFP) Tree Farmer of the Year

Bob Barker

Bob & Kaz Barker with daughter Robin Barker

Fears of downpours were quickly forgotten as people arrived on a beautiful sunny May 21st afternoon with puffy white clouds for a Tree Farm Tour. The Whatcom County Farm Forestry Association and the Washington Tree Farm Program jointly held an awards ceremony and tree farm tour at the Nelson Road Tree Farm, LLC, owned by the Bob Barker family. Bob, wife Kaz and daughter Robin Barker (pictured at left) and Robin's husband Dave Tempero were presented the 2022 Washington Tree Farm Program Tree Farmers of the Year award.

Just over 40 people were in attendance including tree farmers, master gardeners, members of the press, representatives from both Whatcom and Skagit Conservation Districts and elected officials.

When Bob bought the property in the late 1990s as a retirement project, it was 70 acres of marginal pasture. His first attempts at planting trees were failures. This just presented a challenge to the Master Gardener.

Dave New congratulating Bob Barker

Dave New congratulating Tom Westergreen

Also receiving an award, Whatcom County Chapter WFFA member ***Tom Westergreen*** was presented with the 2022 WTFP Leadership Award. An award well deserved as anyone who has had "tree related" dealings with Tom knows. He is a fount of information and happily shares what he knows to help others become more knowledgeable. His efforts are many and his commitment to tree farms is commendable and so appreciated.

Bob Barker and John Gillies, of the Whatcom Conservation District, came up with some innovative ways to plant trees in a wet, reed canary grass environment. With a lot of hard work and persistence, Bob was able to establish a forest with a wide variety of tree species.

Tom Westergreen leading a tour group

Dave Tempero leading a tour group

With 40 of the Nelson Road Tree Farm 70 acres set aside as stream buffers, the family relies on payments from a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) easement to defray the costs of maintaining the property. And maintain they have. They provide improved habitat for salmon in the two streams that run the length of their property. They have also provided habitat for the endangered Oregon spotted frog, whose numbers are increasing at the Nelson Road Tree Farm.

The tour covered varied stands of trees, the result of deleveling of the land to give higher ground on which to plant trees and keep them out of the water. They also thin the canopy to help with growth. It is truly amazing what the family has accomplished.

Tom Westergreen leading a tour group

Congratulations and many thanks to the Bob Barker family for sharing your wonderful slice of paradise with us.