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## **Local Christmas tree farm earns “Salmon-Safe” label for eco-friendly practices**

Carnation, WA - In recognition of their environmental practices, Carnation Tree Farm is the first Christmas tree farm in the Northwest to be certified as Salmon-Safe. The independent regional eco-label certifies agricultural practices that protect water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and native biodiversity.

“The Snoqualmie Valley is changing and I have a responsibility to take care of the land and give back to this community,” said Carnation Tree Farm owner Roger Thorson. “Salmon-Safe is a great way to let people know about our environmental commitment.”

Located on the outskirts of Seattle in the beautiful and ecologically productive Snoqualmie River Valley, the tree farms’ environmental practices include controlling soil erosion by planting grasses between the trees, experimenting with drip irrigation systems to conserve water, and reducing the need for weed control chemicals by using a custom mower that rolls around each tree and applying mulch (chipped from the tree limbs on site). A wetland restoration project, plantings of native trees and shrubs, and vegetated field borders all create wildlife habitat and enhance the experience of visitors. The farm has also established a tree recycling program, in conjunction with the local Boy Scouts.

Thorson is the fourth generation to farm the property, originally settled by his great grandfather in 1901. Formerly a dairy and then a sheep farm, Roger planted the first Christmas trees in 1978, and has stewarded the land ever since.

“Roger is one of the most environmentally conscious Christmas tree growers that you will find”, says Larry Nussbaum, who manages the Salmon-Safe program for Stewardship Partners, a Seattle based conservation organization. “He is finding creative ways to deal with pests and maintain fertility of the tree farm, while also enhancing habitat around the property.

The Salmon-Safe program was founded in Oregon in 1997 and has received recognition as one of the most reliable eco-labels in the country. The certification looks at agricultural practices that protect local waterways, prevent soil erosion, use natural weed and pest control methods, practice water conservation, and encourage a diversity of plant and wildlife habitat. Stewardship Partners has been running the program in Washington since 2004 working with farmers across a variety of sectors including vegetable growers, orchards, diaries, and vineyards. The program stemmed out of their targeted effort to conduct on-the ground habitat restoration projects with agricultural landowners in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Carnation Tree Farm offers a variety of U-cut and pre-cut trees and provides everything customers need to cut the trees and get them on their cars. The farm also sells stands, wreaths, garlands, mistletoe and handmade items from local artisans. Weekend activities during tree-cutting season include visits from Santa; complimentary hot cider, kettle korn, espresso; and fresh bake-sale treats. More information at <http://www.carnationtreefarm.com>.

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About Stewardship Partners:

Stewardship Partners helps private landowners restore and preserve the natural landscapes of Washington State. We do this by promoting incentive-based programs that encourage landowners to participate in fish and wildlife conservation and restoration activities while simultaneously meeting their economic needs through sustainable land management. Stewardship Partners collaborated with Salmon-Safe, Inc. of Portland in 2004 to bring the independent eco-label to the Puget Sound region and has since certified 45 farms and implemented retail promotions and marketing campaigns.

More at [www.stewardshippartners.org](http://www.stewardshippartners.org)