



Wood River Valley (208) 788-4441  
Treasure Valley (208) 362-4478

January 2, 2025

Alpine Tree Service has been to assess a large conifer in the Spruce Street Right of Way in front of 13 East Spruce Street in Hailey. The owners of the property would like to remove the tree, but the tree is under the jurisdictional control of the City of Hailey, and that removal is subject to Tree Committee approval. This assessment concerns the health, structural stability, and contribution of the tree.

At issue is a very large Colorado Spruce (*Picea pungens*) on the south side of the residence and within the right of way. The tree has a Diameter at Breast Height of 40 or 42 inches and appears to be about 60 feet tall. Large trees provide well documented contributions to cooling, carbon capture, habitat and livable communities.

The tree, with minor exceptions, is in good health. There is some indication, noted by the white/blue sap oozing from the trunk, that the tree is combatting a systemic fungal infection from *Cytospora*. This infection can be common in older spruce trees, and it appears that the tree is managing the disease well. The tree has good branch health and robust new growth. There does not appear to be any ongoing issue with any insect infestation.



The tree does have some structural issues. Most notably, the tree has developed two large, dominant stems (left). Spruce trees are commonly a single stem, or apically dominant, tree. Multiple stems are a weakness or defect, and spruce trees can be more prone to fail from the point where the stems join. While these unions are a more likely point of failure, this tree is not considered hazardous. The tree has dealt with the structural anomaly its entire life, and has developed buffering wood and other structural compensations.

The most significant issue for this tree is its size and location. The tree is quite large, very dense, and close to and immediately south of the residence. As such, it provides great shade in the summer, but makes the residence dark and cold all winter long. The tree obstructs the parking area in front of the house and sheds snow and ice on to the residence. These issues were not prevalent when the tree was smaller, but have become problematic as the tree has gotten larger. Additionally, insurance companies have become far more reluctant to insure residential properties, especially in urban interface communities, with large conifers close by.



This large spruce provides both an asset to the community and a perceived detriment to the property, and we do not have a recommendation regarding retention or removal. Please contact me should you have any concerns or questions.

Respectfully,

Carl Hjelm, ASCA  
Arborist,  
Alpine Tree Service

Thank you for your time and attention, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Carl Hjelm, ASCA  
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