

WACD PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

16564 Bradley Road, Bow WA 98232

(360) 757-1094

Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*)

Distribution

The native range of Sitka Spruce extends in a narrow band along the Pacific Coast from northern California to south-central Alaska, where it is usually found within 50 miles of the coast, or at elevations over 2000 feet.

Growth Habit

Sitka Spruce can reach over 200 feet high and the trunk can grow up to 6 feet in diameter. The reddish-brown bark is thin and broken up into small scales. Long horizontal branches support yellowish green to bluish green needles that are stiff and very sharp.

Adaptability

Sitka Spruce is best suited to grow on deep, moist, aerated soils. It is not very tolerant of soils that are compacted or poorly drained. Growth is poor on swampy sites. Young seedlings and saplings will tolerate some shade, but require ample sunlight to reach maturity.

Comments

- Sitka Spruce is one of the predominant species along the northwest coast of North America.
- It is an important riparian species along streams and alluvial floodplains.
- It is also useful in re-vegetating disturbed sites.
- Young seedlings and saplings are not the most palatable forage for herbivores, but precautions should be taken to protect young plants.
- Often planted in the same hole as cedar to discourage browse.

