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USDA Forest
Service
Pacific Northwest
Research Station



Gathering & Stewardship of Non-Timber Forest Products: Fostering Healthy Ecosystems in King County, WA



Photos courtesy of Melissa R. Poe

What is the issue?

Urban forests and greenspaces are valued for their many ecosystem and community benefits. The purpose of this research is to investigate the roles that non-timber forest products (NTFPs) gathering and stewardship practices play in the development and management of healthy forest ecosystems in Seattle, WA.

Why is this research important?

This study increases our understanding of how urban residents connect with nature and supports efforts by forest managers to re-integrate livelihood uses into urban green spaces. The project has the potential to link professional planners, land managers, and gatherers in ways that could build new bridges for urban green space management that not only supports a diversity of environmental stewardship activities, but also supports broader initiatives of environmental justice.

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Study Goals

- Document the diversity of plants, materials, and fungi being gathered;
- Describe the characteristics of gatherers, and the social, economic and cultural importance of gathering;
- Locate the places where gathering occurs and the attributes of these spaces;
- Examine how gatherers steward NTFPs and interface with urban forest planning and restoration activities;
- Develop recommendations for including gathering considerations into stewardship and ecological restoration programs.

Study Approach

The study will generate qualitative and geospatial information pertaining to NTFP gathering practices, urban forest planning and stewardship activities in Seattle. Data collection procedures will include a combination of interviews, focus groups, geo-narratives, GIS, participant observation.



Research Sponsors



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