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USDA Forest
Service
Pacific Northwest
Research Station



Stewardship 'Footprint' Analysis and Ecosystem Recovery



Diagram of word frequency across mission statements of environmental stewardship organizations in the Seattle area – indicating a major focus on human social themes

What is the issue?

Environmental stewardship is emerging as an ecosystem recovery strategy. The full scope and scale of stewardship is not now known. This research seeks to uncover and aggregate the hundreds, if not thousands, of often disparate stewardship efforts in the Puget Sound region. Initial efforts, focusing in the Seattle area, identified nearly 700 organizations. Moreover, the emphasis of these organizations appears to be frequently urban-based, with nearly half conducting environmental restoration in urban space. Additionally, goals of the organizations, as represented by their mission statements, display a focus on stewardship in pursuit of not only ecological, but human community and social outcomes.

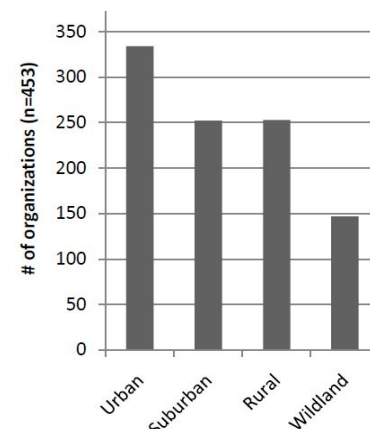
Why is this research important?

Natural systems across the entire landscape gradient face ongoing threats, such as land use sprawl, air and water pollution, and climate change. Yet fiscal shortfalls in local government and environmental resource agencies restrict the capacity to address ecosystem needs and recovery. Environmental stewardship efforts are one possible solution. Better data and knowledge about stewardship can inform comprehensive planning and management.

Contact:

KATHLEEN WOLF, University of Washington: phone: 206-732-7820, email: kwolf@uw.edu

WESTON BRINKLEY, Cascade Land Conservancy: phone: 206-905-6932, email: westonb@cascadeland.org



Field work locations for Seattle's stewardship organizations

Study Goals

- Construct a database resource having a complete representation of stewardship organizations in the Puget Sound Region,
- Characterize the efforts carried out by these organizations,
- Map the efforts of these organizations to display the positive ecological and social footprint across the land, and
- Reveal the full impact of these organizations on people and the land.

Study Approach

Initial census and analysis was done using an iterative internet search. The follow up survey expands the known population, providing data for an organization network analysis. Geospatial representation of the regional footprint of stewardship sites will be the culminating effort. Collaborators: Northern Research Station (New York and Chicago), Baltimore Ecosystems Study.

Research Sponsors



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