Forest Ecosystem Values

The issue
Few jurisdictions in King County have had adequate forest inventories or assessments. The first need for a long-term management effort that conserves and enhances forest health is to know baseline conditions.

Study Approach
The Forest Ecosystem Values Project began in 2010 using USDA Forest Service’s i-Tree Eco to measure the extent and condition of the forests in three project areas—City of Seattle, King County Parklands, and an urban-wildland gradient along the Green-Duwamish River. Tree and shrub size and species information was used to quantify associated ecosystem system functions and their public benefits and economic values.

Importance of This Research
Assessment helps demonstrate the public value of the urban forest. In the current economy, limited resources are available for parks and environmental management. This project provided a comprehensive understanding of the forest benefits within Seattle and King County Washington, and helped illustrate the use of the i-Tree Eco tool in the Pacific Northwest.

Study Goals
- Understand the function and structure of regional forests, as well as estimate monetary values for ecosystem services provided by regional trees
- Apply the i-Tree Eco tool on three scales in King County: a large municipality, a diverse county park system, and an urban-wildland gradient
- Improve forest assessment tools for use in King County and other Pacific Northwest communities

For more information, contact:
DR. KATHLEEN WOLF
University of Washington
kwolf@u.washington.edu

LISA CIECKO
Seattle Parks and Recreation
lisa.ciecko@seattle.gov

Research Sponsors:

Funding for this work was provided by the United States American Reinvestment and Recovery Act coordinated by the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (in education and training programs and activities), age, disability, or retaliation.