Stewardship “Footprint” Analysis and Ecosystem Recovery

What Is the Issue?
Environmental stewardship is emerging as an ecosystem recovery strategy. The full scope and scale of stewardship is not known. This research seeks to uncover and aggregate the hundreds, if not thousands, of often disparate stewardship efforts in the Puget Sound region. Goals include constructing a database that has a complete representation of stewardship organizations in the Puget Sound Region, characterizing the efforts carried out by these organizations, and finally working to reveal the full impact of these organizations on people and the land.

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 their 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.

More Information

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Field work locations for Seattle’s stewardship organizations

Study Results
- Initial efforts, focusing in the Seattle area, identified nearly 700 organizations.
- The emphasis of these organizations appears to be frequently urban-based, with nearly half conducting environmental restoration in urban space.
- 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.

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.