



## What's Next for SUNP in 2005?

SUNP exists to empower people to improve urban habitats through science-based information and methods. In 2005, SUNP will be focusing on two major program areas:

- Helping public, private, and non-profit groups to improve their urban restoration efforts.
- Setting up and implementing a plan to monitor key variables important for management of Seattle's Public Lands. This will continue the legacy started by the SUNP 1999-2000 survey of public lands.

SUNP service areas are listed on page 2 of this newsletter. If you have an interest in collaborating with us, please contact us at (206) 522-0334.

## How much of Seattle's public land is covered by native plant species?

Have you ever wondered what proportion of Seattle's public land is covered by native plant species? Have you ever wondered which areas of the city have the most, or the least, native plant cover? If you have some familiarity with native plants of the Northwest, you may know of areas of the city with significant native plant populations. In this article, we provide an overview on native cover for the entire city.

Why are native plant communities important? In general, areas with higher cover of native plant species will provide our native wildlife with the forms of food and shelter they need for survival. Areas with higher native plant cover are also likely to serve as important habitat for our native plant species that are more sensitive to disturbance. Native cover can be a useful indicator of relative ecological health for comparing various natural areas in the city.

Some people may be wondering exactly what is meant by the term, 'cover'. Vegetation ecologists often measure certain attributes of plant life in order to describe or evaluate plant communities. Canopy cover is the amount of ground covered by the aerial projection of the plant canopy. Total cover can actually exceed 100% of an area since forests can have many overlapping layers of vegetation (trees, shrubs and herbs). This analysis considers the level of cover of native plant species in natural areas in Seattle, based on the survey of habitats conducted by SUNP in 2000. **(continued, page 3)**



## Deadhorse Canyon Project in Full Gear

SUNP's Deadhorse Canyon project is well underway. Over half of the canyon has been surveyed by SUNP Ecologists Matthew Ramsay and Nelson Salisbury. The information they are gathering will help to update the Deadhorse Canyon Forest Plan first penned in 1995.

In addition to a vegetation survey, Ramsay and Salisbury have been working with Friends of Deadhorse Canyon (FDC) leader Darrell Dobson to document all of the past planting activities that have occurred in the park. One of the goals of the project is to set up a system that will enable FDC to better document and monitor future activity on the ground.

In the process of surveying the park, Ramsay and Salisbury have discovered and documented interesting features in the park, including locally uncommon plants, heritage tree candidates, areas of previously undiscovered invasive species, and of course, the occasional dump site.

**(continued, page 2)**



Darrell Dobson, FDC and Nelson Salisbury, SUNP in the field at Deadhorse Canyon.

## Deadhorse Canyon (continued from pg 1)

On January 12th, SUNP met with Friends of Deadhorse Canyon (FDC) and other interested citizens to discuss the project and set dates for outreach and training for the community. Prior to this meeting, SUNP staff developed an outreach plan to assist FDC in reaching a wider range of people in the local area.

Three major goals of this project are 1) improved knowledge of the natural resources in Deadhorse Canyon; 2) guidance for FDC on conducting future restoration efforts; and 3) improving FDC's ability to utilize community resources to meet their goals. In addition, SUNP hopes to provide the group with the ability to monitor their efforts over time.

**February**—Meeting with FDC to review history of efforts in Deadhorse Canyon, Implementation of Deadhorse Canyon Outreach Plan.

**April**—Tour of Deadhorse Canyon on Saturday, April 16th, sponsored by SUNP and FDC. Time & Meeting Point TBD.

**May**—Training for FDC on restoration site monitoring techniques. Establishment of Monitoring Plots.

**July**—Community meeting, final Deadhorse Canyon project presentation.

*This project was funded by King County, Washington DNR, and the USFS through a grant from the Natural Resource Stewardship Network.*



Above: Matthew Ramsay and Nelson Salisbury of SUNP show EarthCorps trainees how to use the Trimble GPS Unit.

## SUNP trains EarthCorps Staff

On a damp afternoon in Ravenna Park, SUNP staff taught EarthCorps Interns how to measure and map natural resources using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology. EarthCorps requested the training in December. In 2005, EarthCorps staff will be helping SUNP by providing assistance with the Deadhorse Canyon Project. SUNP intends to collaborate with EarthCorps in the future on projects in the Seattle area.

## SUNP Wants You—for the Board

Seattle Urban Nature Project is expanding its board. Some areas of experience that we are looking for include:

- Accounting
- Database Management
- Communications
- Fund Raising
- Graphic Design
- Marketing
- Wildlife Biology

Please contact Jeff Bash, Executive Director at (206) 522-0334 or [jeff@seattleurbannature.org](mailto:jeff@seattleurbannature.org) if you are interested in joining the SUNP Board.

### SUNP Maps

57 Maps cover the entire City of Seattle  
For additional details, contact us at (206) 522-0334 or download form to order individual maps at [www.seattleurbannature.org](http://www.seattleurbannature.org)



## SUNP Services

SUNP offers a number of services to assist public, private, and non-profit organizations.

### Ecological Services

- Habitat Mapping and Assessment
- Vegetation Inventory and Management
- Restoration Planning and Monitoring
- Vegetation Monitoring

### GIS Services

- Custom Mapping of Project Sites
- Mapping for Grant Reporting Purposes
- Spatial Analysis
- GPS Data Collection

### Training and Education

- Habitat Survey and Assessment Methods
- Monitoring Restoration Sites
- GPS and GIS Training
- Plant Identification
- Habitat Restoration Techniques

Please contact us at (206) 522-0334 for more information.

## Native Plant Cover (Continued from page 1)

For the purpose of this analysis, *natural areas* are public lands that are managed for their native character, as opposed to *developed areas* (such as ball fields and parking lots) or *landscaped areas* that are managed for other uses or amenity values.

There are approximately 8,000 acres of public land in the City of Seattle. This analysis ranks all *natural areas* in the 2000 SUNP Habitat data (3,853 of the 8,000 acres) according to four levels of native cover. Table 1 illustrates the range of values used to classify areas into these four levels.

When this information is displayed in a map using GIS, we can locate areas belonging to each category of native cover (Fig. 1). This can be useful for planning restoration activities in order to link together areas of high quality habitat or to help target areas that have lower levels of native plant cover.

**Table 1.** The ranges of values of percent cover of native plant species that was used to classify areas into four broad categories of native cover.

	None	Low	Medium	High
Range of Percent Cover	0%	1%-25%	26%-100%	>100%

Good news; results from this analysis reveal that a large percentage of our natural areas have a high level of native plant cover (Fig. 2). However, a little over 20% of the city's natural areas have low native plant cover or none at all. Given present levels of restoration and management of natural areas on public lands in Seattle, what proportion of the city's natural area acreage do you predict will be in each category of native cover 20 years from now? How about 100 years from now? What proportion would you like to see?

**For more information on SUNP data, contact ecologist Matthew Ramsay at [matthew@seattleurbannature.org](mailto:matthew@seattleurbannature.org).**

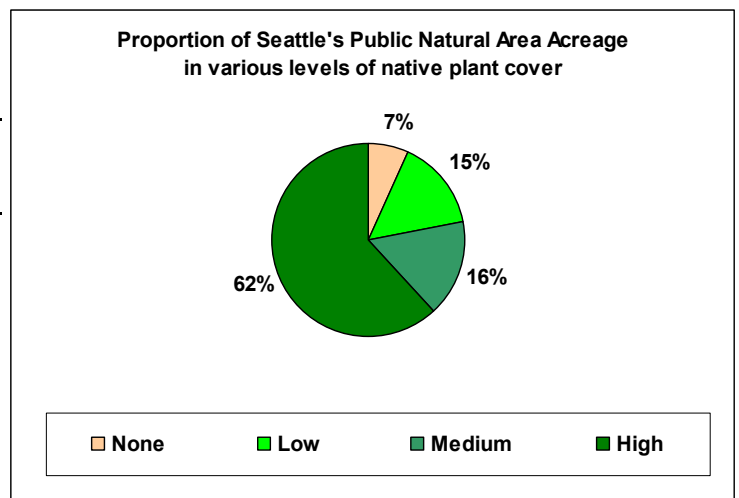
## SUNP Helps The Nature Consortium monitor restoration activities

SUNP has been working with The Nature Consortium, a group operating in the West Duwamish Greenbelt to help them identify the size of their restoration project through GIS and to provide them with working maps of the area. We are currently scheduled to map the extent and locations of invasive species in their project boundary vicinity, enabling them to prioritize their efforts and to track and document their progress over time.

*Right: SUNP map of the Duwamish Greenbelt identifying the extent of The Nature Consortium's project area. Often it can be difficult for groups on the ground to know the exact acreage of their projects.*



**Figure 1**



**Figure 2**



## SUNP Calendar

### February

Complete Deadhorse Canyon field work

### February 9-13

SUNP Maps and Powerpoint Presentation at Urban Habitat Coalition booth, NW Flower and Garden Show.

### March 4 & 19

SUNP Board Meetings

### April 4-8

Poster Presentation, SERNW Conference, Seattle

### April 16

Deadhorse Canyon Tour, Findings from SUNP Assessment  
Time and Meeting Point TBA

## SUNP Working Vision

**Empower people to improve urban habitats through science-based information and methods.**

### Board

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Peggy Gaynor	Vice President
Linda Chalker-Scott	Secretary
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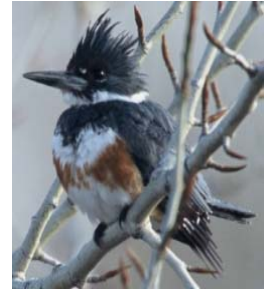
### Staff

Jeff Bash	Executive Director
Matthew Ramsay	Ecologist
Nelson Salisbury	Assistant Ecologist
Vacant	GIS Specialist/Project Mgr.

## Help SUNP Achieve its Mission

Consider a donation to the Seattle Urban Nature Project. It's tax deductible.

A donation to the Seattle Urban Nature Project empowers people to improve urban habitats through science-based information and methods. With your donation, you will receive a quarterly newsletter highlighting SUNP's activities. For a donation of \$100 or greater, you can receive a 2' x 3' SUNP map of your choice from our catalog. We will send you an acknowledgement of the gift for your tax records.



**Yes, I would like to help the Seattle Urban Nature Project to empower people to improve urban habitats through science-based information and methods. Here is my donation.**

\$100     \$75     \$50  
 \$25     Other

**Please make your check out to Seattle Urban Nature Project**

And mail to:

**Seattle Urban Nature Project  
5218 University Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98105**

**THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

Comments, questions, or submissions? Please contact Jeff Bash, Executive Director at via e-mail at [jeff@seattleurbannature.org](mailto:jeff@seattleurbannature.org). If you would like to receive this newsletter in a different format or would like to be removed from the mailing list, please let us know. Learn more about SUNP at: [www.seattleurbannature.org](http://www.seattleurbannature.org).

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