



2014

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## Beacon Food Forest: Annual Report

This 2014 annual report comes with absolute gratitude to the volunteers, administrators' and donors who have been the positive community energy for our second growing season. Big-hearted thank you! Long live your good will!

This report is split into three categories labeled according to our three main ethics; Care for the Earth, Care for the People and Fair Share for All. The Beacon Food Forest's policies and principles are guided by these ethics and we are proud to share how we are succeeding in these areas.

In 2014 over two thousand of you gave your time and hands to build a public edible forest habitat accessible to a citywide community. Not an easy task, but your persistent efforts have succeeded in completing phase one and demonstrated to a worldwide audience the power of community and collective good will. We can go on and do more if you want to.

We are succeeding in these areas in many ways. Sharing food comes with great rewards as it builds community integrity, trust and resiliency and demonstrates equality and food justice by providing equal opportunity for public land stewardship. Building community is more important: How much yield we produce is almost as important as how much community we build and educate. The Beacon Food Forest is only one green dot as we hope the education will spread across the planet.

- Glenn Herlihy



**Earth Care:**  
Our first guiding principle is to help life flourish by creating a healthy environment.

## Earth Care

During 2014 the Site Development team put a lot of the community requests for Beacon Food Forest into effect:

- Mushroom Hut
- Compost
- Herb Spiral
- Pollinators
- Common Thread

High fives to all of the volunteers who made this happen – and a special shout out to the watering team that kept all of the new plants alive through the summer.

**FOOD FOREST PLANTS**  
Phase One fruit trees and shrubs have been planted in the lower bench food forest and the upper bench arboretum. Hedges of berries line pathways on both upper and lower benches, and herb beds encircle the gathering plaza, the pollinator patch and the beds adjacent to the beehives.



Some herbaceous perennials and root crops have been added, and strawberry ground cover is spreading throughout the site.

Soil was enhanced by 45+ loads of compost in addition to approximately 80 + yards of wood chip in 2014. Compost tea and mushroom inoculation further enhanced soil life.

**Next steps:**

- Add herbaceous, root and vine plants
- Reduce populations of strawberry and replace with other bearing ground covers
- Signage will be key to protect trees from rough harvesters
- Monitor for health
- Fill in gaps with more plants



## Beacon Food Forest Committees

### Steering Committee

**(SteerCo)** – Team members meet every month to review grants, develop policy, provide governance, coordinate events, create partnerships and plan for the long-term maintenance of the Beacon Food Forest.

**Site Development** – Team members meet each week to develop site plan details, lead work parties, select plants, harvest fruits and vegetables, and bring hands-on expertise to making the Beacon Food Forest grow.

**Community Engagement** – Team members reach out to organizations and schools within the community and share information at community events and through fliers and mailings.

If you are interested in working on a BFF committee please get in touch with Jim Irby at [j.irby@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.irby@beaconfoodforest.org)

## Pollinators

In 2014, WSU conducted a study of the pollinators at the food forest. The chart below is from their work and shows the proportions of bee pollinators observed at the Food Forest over the year. Also pictured is some honey harvested at the site. (Thanks to Bob Redmond and The Urban Bee Co!)

This site has a collection of links and documents that are useful for bee identification and other more general bee information:

<http://www.discoverlife.org/mp/20q> and there are also good resources here: at the Xerces society:

<http://www.xerces.org/pollinators-pacific-northwest-region/>



### Genera of the Beacon Food Forest, 2014



## P-Patch News

2014 was our first growing season for the 29 P-Patches on site. BFF Gardeners in the Department of Neighborhoods P-Patch program were chosen from a waiting list and assigned a plot according to how many volunteer hours they had accumulated. Their yearly dues of \$40 sustain the P-Patch program and the many benefits associated with the program including liability insurance for volunteers and the water bill.

By late July it was a beautiful and long awaited sight to see all the plots full of vegetables, herbs and flowers. The individual styles of gardening and experiments were a delight to wonder through. Knowledge was shared with plot neighbors and new friends were made.

Being the first year annual vegetables were grown on this land we saw very few garden pests. All Seattle P-Patches including the Beacon Food Forest are maintained by law in accordance to organic gardening methods. Signage identifying the different harvest rules between our P-Patch plots and our “Community Harvest” areas are in the works.

Thank you Sandy Pernitz and the P-Patch administration for all your excellent advice and management help.

<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/patch/gardening.htm>



## Care for the People- a guiding principle for giving people access to the resources they need and building community

It's all about the people!

The Beacon Food Forest had 3,754 hours recorded on sign in sheets at work parties and other community events. Plus! 6,931 volunteer hours recorded by core group of 'regular' volunteers. Total = 10,685!!

This December we completed the Department of Neighborhood Large Matching Fund Grant for our gathering plaza and the infrastructure surrounding it. Including:

- First year P Patch plots
- Gathering Plaza
- Common Thread Garden
- Kitchen building
- Emergency Hub
- Trellis
- Benches



## Sawhorse Revolution



In 2014, Sawhorse Revolution helped the Beacon Food Forest out by constructing a Trellis and Benches. More information about their work is documented on their website – check them out:  
[www.sawhorserevolution.org/](http://www.sawhorserevolution.org/)

## Want to help out?

If you're interested in volunteering, sign up for our newsletter at  
<http://www.beaconfoodforest.org/#> Under "Get Involved"

Or get in touch with our volunteer coordinator: Jim Irby. His email is:

[j.irby@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.irby@beaconfoodforest.org)

# Education

## Tours on Site:

Base Landscapes Architecture  
BC Geography Students  
Bear GRUB High school Students  
SeaTAc Bow Lake Elementary  
Kwantlen Sustainable Agriculture,  
Polytechnic University  
Bellevue College  
New Futures – Arbor Heights  
Tap Root  
Woodland Park Zoo  
Sustainable Community Stewards  
Sound Transit  
Wutong Foundation  
Biodynamic Farm, Camino Verde Mexico  
Navy Strategic Planning Group  
Seattle Weekly

Jackie Cramer also hosted a workshop and is planning on hosting a permaculture practices summer camp in 2015!



# Watering

Over the summer, we effectively kept our plants well-watered and healthy due to a tremendous volunteer effort. In all, 34 people were trained (by 5 other volunteers) on how to check the soil, water common areas, and conserve water as much as possible. Our watering system engaged 28 volunteers each week for about 45-60 minutes. It lasted from June to September. Many of the volunteers were getting involved with the food forest for the first time. 6 additional volunteers were trained as subs, to fill in as people needed to miss their shifts. Most volunteers stuck with it all summer, and feedback received on the watering process was largely positive.

Volunteers also contributed significantly to our September 13th Opening Celebration. In addition to the months of planning, preparation, and programming, 27 volunteers signed on to cover various day-of posts to help with set-up, logistics, and engaging participants in activities. Feedback about the volunteer experience at this event was also largely positive, and many volunteers chose to continue helping out with the event long after their "shift" was over.

- Jim Irby

## Community Engagement

The Beacon Food Forest strives to represent diversity in all of its forms within our community. If you are interested in being a part of this project, please join us!

## Opening Celebration

The 2014 Beacon Food Forest Opening Celebration: Phase I was an event that became memorable for a myriad of people. Many volunteers came together to mold this celebration into one that we all felt represented both the Food Forest and those of us who had toiled and sweated and bled into this beautiful land. Michael and our team of volunteers brought vitality and freshness to the planning process and the results were worth it. The opening celebration brought together many people, including a blessing from the Duwamish, an aerial performance, piano playing, painting, stilt walking, and of course joy in celebrating this land and food.



-Melissa Ligttenberg

## *Thank you to our Partners in 2013!*

These groups have donated time, materials or spent time getting to know about our project.

**Central Co-Op**

<http://www.centralcoop.coop/home.php>

**NPARC**

<http://www.nparcseattle.org/>

**Chinook Compost Tea**

<http://www.chinookcomposttea.com/>

**Vita Coffee**

**Jefferson Park Horticulture Center**

**Beacon Merchant Association**

**Urban Bee Company**

**Tall Grass Bakery**

**Essential Baking Company**

**El Centro de la Raza**

**City Fruit**

**Flying J Foundation**

Sustainable Path Foundation

Asian Counseling and Referral Service

MDML signs

Seattle University

Asa Mercer Middle School

Cleveland High School

Lawton Elementary School

University of Washington

Washington State University

South & Central Seattle Community College

Evergreen State College

Bainbridge Island Institute

Seattle Pacific University

Western Washington University

Seattle Waldorf School

North Beacon Hill Council

Spokane Permaculture Guild

Slow Foods Northwest

Sightline Institute

Veterans Hospital

Board of Indian Health

Seattle Conservation Corp.

Sustainable Capital Hill

Jefferson Park Community Center

Costco

# Fair Share –a principal of recognizing everyone's needs and reinvesting the surpluses back into the system.

Sharing is an act of compassion and in a human settlement we need that as much as we need the food to be healthy.

Each week, neighbors met with BFF volunteers to harvest food from The Common Thread garden. Together they harvested approximately 445 pounds of food. The varieties of vegetables, herbs and fruit included: Acorn Squash, Delicata Squash, Collard Greens, Shiso, Parsley, Basil, Beets, Chard, Peppers, Wheatgrass, Summer Savory, Green Beans, Watercress, Sorrel, Basil (4 varieties), Oregano, Zucchini, Stir Fry Blend , Kale, Cucumber, Onion, Rosemary, Mint, Tomatoes (3 varieties), Asian Cabbage, Epazote, Figs, Asian Pear, Italian Plum (fruit gathered off site).

Volunteers worked with neighbors as they harvested their own vegetables. 407 pounds of food harvested from the Common Thread and other community areas of the Beacon Food Forest were donated to the Food Bank at El Centro de la Raza. Neighbors also harvested approximately 300 pounds of vegetables from the site when BFF volunteers were not present.

Volunteers also made 84 Gallons of soup for work parties!

-Judi Johnson

*Judi with Food Foresters from the Chen family.*

## Harvest Ethics:

- Use two hands
- Respect the plant, the ground around it, and the community that has taken care of it
- Take only what you need.



# Beacon Food Forest: Status and Conditions

- Wind is a strong element at the food forest. Tree growth was affected by it, particularly the pears on the west side slope.
- Pear orange rust was extremely prominent on all the pear trees; leaves affected by spores were removed in September.
- Our two Paw Paw trees died. These spent two years in pots and are not reimbursable. New Paw Paw seeds were planted in fall 2014.
- A Shinsui Asian pear from Raintree planted in May in the arboretum died by July. Seek replacement at no cost for plant in spring 2015 (shipping costs will apply);
- Afghan mulberry (*Morus nigra*) tree from Burnt Ridge Nursery in the children's area died in the spring. The rootstock has re-sprout (grafting opportunity). Replace at no charge for the plant in spring 2015 (shipping charges will apply or pick up from Burnt ridge at a farmers market nearby.)
- Some plants still need to be monitored for water -logged soils. The soil is still showing anaerobic conditions when a hole is dug.
- Current wood chip layer is thick - to the point that when adding plants we had to make soil pockets. In summer plants showed yellowing in the leaves - the roots had hit the wood chip zone, and we added compost.



- Pruning - Some fruit trees were pruned in winter with a City Fruit class instruction. In this class we were taught that removing new fruit from young trees allows the tree to establish vigor in its trunk and limbs. A minimal pruning approach was taken to allow the trees to develop. Almost all fruit was removed from trees. Apples were left to develop on the dwarf Tsuga Apple tree. Many of them were picked before maturity and some branches were broken from picking. This is our first indication of picking practices.
- Nut trees put a lot of growth on, particularly in late summer, except for the East most butternut, which shows signs of decline.
- Gooseberries were afflicted with gooseberry maggots- some plants entirely denuded.
- Pollinator plantings were strong: diverse and positioned throughout. Forage was available through November.
- The nursery still has some sea berry, autumn olive, white comfrey and a few random trees (apple, American walnut)
- Trees were labeled but tags have gone missing

-Jacqueline Cramer

# Media and Interviews for 2014

## **ParentMap**

Upcoming - [www.parentmap.com](http://www.parentmap.com)

## **GreenLandServices**

Upcoming Book by Tomas Remiarz

## **Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group**

No publication

## **The Neighborhood Matching Fund**

Photography-not online

## **The Need to Grow**

<http://vimeo.com/109299341>

## **Sawhorse Revolution Newsletter**

<http://us4.campaign-archive2.com/?u=ba9dba9a6e6b08c9d5bd8c071&id=4ee72d9f30&e=96d5bec0c2>

## **ARD German National Public Radio**

Unavailable

## **Horecatrends.com**

<https://www.horecatrends.com/?s=Beacon+Food+Forest&x=0&y=0>

## **Rebelle Santé**

<http://www.rebelle-sante.com/node/5336>

## **Seattle Channel**

<http://www.seattlechannel.org/CityStream/segments?videoid=x29838>

## **Architizer**

<http://architizer.com/blog/america-grows-its-first-food-forest-in-seattle/>

## **Drive the District**

<http://www.drivethedistrict.com/2014/07/01/this-food-forest-lets-community-grow-edibles-in-the-city/>

## **Zoning Practice, American Planning Association**

Not online.

## **The Good Men Project**

<http://goodmenproject.com/tag/beacon-food-forest/>

## **ParentMap**

<https://www.parentmap.com/article/summer-in-the-cities-cool-communities-to-explore?page=2>

## **Spirituality and Health Magazine**

<http://spiritualityhealth.com/articles/growing-urban-eden>

## **WAVE exhibition**

<http://www.wave-innovation.com/en/project.html>

## **Urban Times**

<https://urbantimes.co/2014/02/seattle-urban-agriculture-design/>

## **Vegetarian Times**

<http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-3272513661.html>

## **High Country News**

<http://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk/launch.aspx?eid=f0835b41-7faa-48b3-9055-ac8d9b32b15b>

## **Austin Chronicle**

<http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2014-02-14/the-way-of-the-food-forest/>

## **Arcade**

<http://arcadenw.org/article/food-forest-in-the-city>

## **Blog Talk Radio: Envision This**

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/envision-this/2014/03/26/urban-forest-gardens-in-seattle-melanie-coerver>



Report compiled by Melanie Coerver. Photographs in this report by Jonathan H. Lee, Melody Wainscott, Judi Johnson and Lucas Stewart. More available on our Facebook page at

[www.facebook.com/beaconfoodforest](http://www.facebook.com/beaconfoodforest)

Thanks for reading!

# Thank you



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