October 9, 2014

Property Manager,

Good day,

I am writing to request access to the grounds of (site) located at (address) for my dissertation research at the University of Washington.

I am a PhD Candidate in the Urban Design and Planning program at the University of Washington. My research explores how the landscaping and maintenance of office developments influences the species of birds and mushrooms living there. My goal is to help developers and land owners better understand how their actions impact their sites’ ecology so that they can make more informed decisions.

Your property is ideal in terms of its vegetation, site context, and size, and its inclusion would greatly contribute to my research. *Further, your property possesses an exceptional number of large, coniferous trees that are especially important to this research.*

My research activities on your property would include surveys for mushrooms and birds, as well as documenting the property's vegetation.

* Mushroom surveys include walking through the site, documenting, and collecting samples for identification. A small knife is used for collection and soil around the mushrooms is not disturbed. Mushroom surveys will take place during the day for a few hours fewer than four times during the Fall months in 2014 and again in 2015.
* Bird surveys include waking through the site and recording birds heard and seen within the property boundaries. These surveys will occur on four mornings during the winter months in 2014-2015 and again in 2015-2016.
* Vegetation surveys include walking through the site, photographing trees and shrubs, and measuring their height with a laser rangefinder. These surveys will occur on one day over a few hours in the spring/summer of 2015.

I understand this is an unusual request, and if given permission to access your property I will respect all rules of the property and the privacy of the occupants. Additionally, I will gladly share the results of my research with you, including the species found on your property and trends observed across my study sites.

Finally, if I need to speak with someone else to be granted access, I would appreciate if you could forward this letter to the appropriate party or let me know who to contact.

Please let me know if you have any questions about my research, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Best regards,

Karen Dyson  
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