

Greg Davis Park Natural Areas: Past Efforts, Vegetation Survey and Recommendations for Future Stewardship



Woodland Edge/South Meadow

Executive Summary

Greg Davis Park, located in the Delridge district of West Seattle, is an important site for passive recreation and wildlife, providing lawns, picnic tables and benches, and a two-acre natural area with a wide variety of habitats. The site is adjacent to Longfellow Creek. A portion of the land was part of a larger parcel that the City of Seattle purchased from the Puget Mill Company in 1935 to build the West Seattle Golf Course. In 1995 community members organized to develop a plan to create a passive park and natural area on the site. Several dedicated community members formed a steering committee and solicited support for the project from various public and private entities. Starflower Foundation committed to providing in-kind support for design, plants and seeds, restoration and education expertise, planting and maintenance, with 13 other organizations also contributing to the project. The Greg Davis Park Steering Committee supervised the process and held work parties to remove invasive species, plant native species and maintain the plantings.

Construction and initial planting was completed in 1997. Starflower Foundation's involvement began in 1999. From 2000 through 2006, more than 66,000 native plants were planted in five different management zones at Greg Davis Park. In addition, a large amount and variety of native plant seed was sown. An average of 1000 person-hours a year were spent doing maintenance on the project, primarily consisting of hand-removal of non-native plants. Maintenance hours decreased towards the end of Starflower's involvement with the project, with 750 person-hours scheduled for maintenance in 2007.

In the spring of 2007, Starflower Foundation partnered with Seattle Urban Nature to assess the composition of the plant communities at the park. Data was collected using the line-intercept

method on 25 transects that spanned each of the five management zones. In addition, Starflower Foundation assembled comprehensive planting and seeding lists for each management zone.

A total of 197 native species were planted and/or seeded in Greg Davis Park by Starflower Foundation from 2000 to 2007. During the 2007 survey, a total of 174 species were recorded: 125 native, 47 non-native (of which 17 are considered potentially invasive) and two that were not identified to species. Potentially invasive species found were mostly seedlings. Fourteen of the 17 potentially invasive species found showed an average percent cover in zones where they were found of less than 1%, two an average percent cover of 1%, and one an average percent cover of 2%. A total of 100 species that were planted and/or seeded were not located during the survey.

Based on the survey's findings, Section VI of this report includes recommendations for managing invasive species, improving structural diversity and increasing conifer regeneration developed for future stewards of the area. Of note is the importance of encouraging the development of a structurally diverse, species-rich conifer forest on the site. Care should be taken that invasive species do not regain a foothold. Also, young conifers should be encouraged by periodically clearing competing plants around them and mulching with woodchips.