Forest Park Ivy Removal

Holman Meadow and Lower Macleay Park (stream mile 1 on Balch Creek) are in Forest Park in Northwest Portland

AFTER

Removal of invasive ivy frees many useful species

BEFORE

Non-native, invasive plants such as clematis, English ivy, Himalayan blackberry and holly had taken over several sections of Forest Park. The two sites targeted for restoration and preservation efforts were portions of Lower Macleay Park and Holman Meadow. Both were located near residential areas and among the most heavily used portions of the larger park system that comprises Forest Park. The visibility of the sites created an excellent opportunity for educating the public about invasive species.

Like many introduced species, they had spread so thoroughly that in some areas they formed the entire groundcover, choking out native plants. Among these non-native plants, English ivy posed the most severe threat because, in addition to spreading by runners, it also climbs tree trunks, eventually killing the tree. Furthermore, when ivy reaches the treetop, it flowers and disperses seeds more widely throughout the woods. In many areas where ivy has become well established in the Pacific Northwest forests, it is the only thing growing. Once native vegetation has been eliminated, only a "desert of ivy" remains.

Solving the ivy problem in such a heavily damaged area was a two-step process. First, the existing ivy was uprooted from the ground and cut from trees. Second, native plant species were replanted. Tree seedlings of Western red cedar and Douglas fir, along with shrubs and native perennials replaced the non-native plants. Native species also planted were snowberry, ocean spray, huckleberry, Indian plum, mock orange, elderberry, vine maple, sword

ferns, salmonberry, mountain Oregon grape and salal. Much of the removal of invasive plants was completed by the youth work crew funded by Metro's Central Station Rehabiliation and Enhancement Funds. Replanting was done by volunteer labor through Friends of Forest Park, Friends of Trees and local neighbors.

Benefits

The most immediate and direct benefit of the project was the preservation of portions of Lower Macleay and Holman Meadow sites. Restoring the two areas to their natural state, prevented a significant loss in the quality of park land at the two heavily used sites. In addition, removing invasive vegetation protected the native plants in adjacent areas. When the ground received natural light again, many of the native species that were thought to be gone started to regrow from a native seed bed. The trillium are the most prominent among these natives to quickly re-establish.

Budget

Proposed – $16,115
Actual – $16,115
Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – $3,450

Helpful hints – what worked, what didn't

- When initiating a restoration activity for a natural area that has had a long-term "monoculture" of invasive plants established, assume the plant removal will take much longer than anticipated.
- It is better to establish a well-defined, size-limited demonstration area for restoration than a larger, only partially regenerated area.
- Plan to return to the restoration site on a semi-annual basis to monitor for regrowth of evergreen invasive plants. Monitoring in the late fall and winter is ideal because the regrowth is more obvious and the ground is softer.
- Plant only the hardier natives where watering can be a problem during drier times. These have a higher survival rate. The less hardy will seed in naturally, which allows for a greater survival rate.
- Carefully record reference points for follow-up documentation. If slides and photos are used for documentation, make two prints and two slides at the time of film development. Date and organize immediately in relationship to reference points.

Partners

Friends of Forest Park

Friends of Trees

Portland Parks and Recreation

Northwest District Association

Forest Park Neighborhood Association

Portland Audubon Society

Contact

Sandy Diedrich, Portland Parks and Recreation, 223-2708 or 823-3681

Timeline and tasks

July - August 1993	Prepare sites
October - December 1993	Set acquisition list for native plants; final "sweep" to clean sites
November 1993 - January 1994	Acquire native plant materials
December 1993 - January 1994	Revegetation
February - September 1994	Site monitoring
July - August 1994	Site grooming
September 1994	Final site evaluation