

# Puyallup Tribal Recognition and Indigenizing Environmental Science Education on the UWT Campus with a Native Plant Garden



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## Introduction

- The University of Washington Tacoma is built on the land of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians
- Awareness and education on UWT campus are still lacking
- A native plant garden could expand relationships with Puyallup Tribe by creating a platform for recognition, study and access to native resources

## Why Should a Native Plant Garden be Implemented?

- A native plant garden would acknowledge the Puyallup Tribe by providing a platform for indigenous science
- It would showcase cultural uses and histories of native plants
- Adds more accessible greenspace to campus for students to relax, socialize, and study
- Revitalizes drab, grassy plots into a usable space for humans and wildlife



Figure 1 - *Dodecatheon hendersonii* (Henderson's shooting star) featured at Kul Kah Han Garden, an example of a Washington state native plant garden

## Benefits of the Native Plant Garden

- > Attract native wildlife and provide biologically appropriate resources<sup>1</sup>
- > Reduce water runoff, increase soil's ability to absorb water, and requires less intensive irrigation than grass contributing to an overall more resilient landscape<sup>2</sup>
- > Positively affect student mental health<sup>3</sup> and study efficacy<sup>4</sup>
- > Bring awareness to indigenous ways of living<sup>5</sup>
- > Academic research opportunities (with environmental or awareness measurables)

## Proposed Site

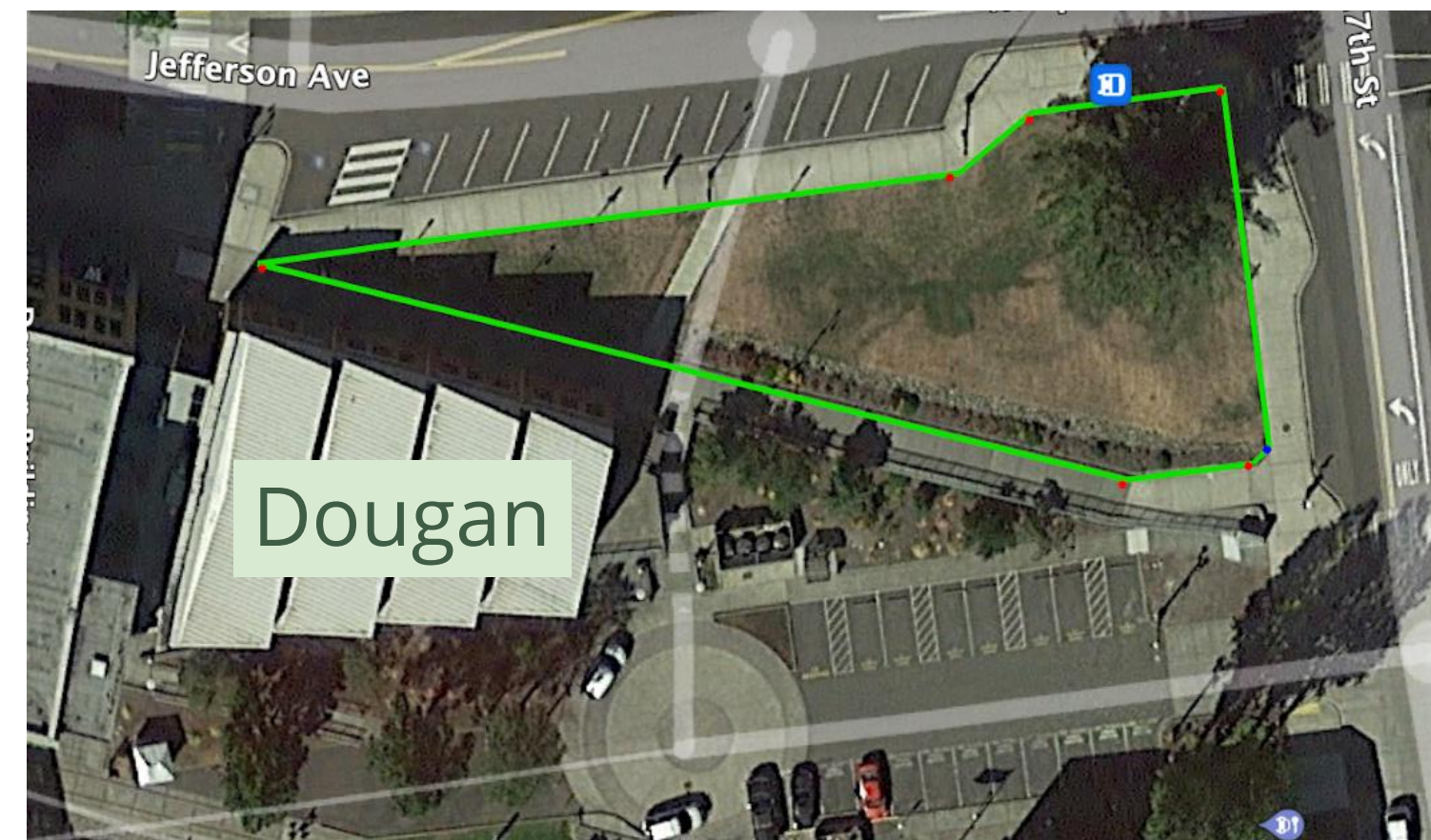


Figure 2 - Our proposed site is ~13,000 sq ft located next to the Dougan building. The garden would use part of this unused grassplot

## Project Planning

- The garden would feature a smaller (~1,000 sq ft) bed within the proposed space with seating surrounding it for students to utilize (Figure 2)
- Native plants will be selected based on their significance to the Puyallup Tribe
- Plaques with the plant's common name, name in Twulshshootseed, and historical usage are planned for each plant
- We met with representative from campus Facilities / Services and Safety and Security to discuss feasibility, limitations, and project concepts



- A budget of necessities for the project to start was created, including landscaping labor costs (Figure 3)

Item Name	Cost (USD)
Two Park Benches	\$2,000
Bench Installation	\$2,000
Topsoil	\$1,295
Mulch	\$450
Plant Seeds and Starts	\$400
Landscaping	\$7,000
Landscaping Rocks	\$200
Plant ID Stakes	\$350
Tribal Honorarium	\$400
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$14,095</b>

Figure 3 – The proposed budget for the native plant garden. Costs were based on the median value for a specific item or service. Some service costs were rounded up to reflect Washington State specifically

## Proposed Implementation

- Meet with the Puyallup Tribe to finalize details about the project
- Acquire materials - setting, materials for an inground bed, custom-made plant identification stake, signage, and plant seeds and/or starts are all required
- Set up the garden – building bed and preparing land for planting, landscaping, installing seating, and planting seeds may take up to a month
- An irrigation system will also be installed; automated or manual by volunteers

## Project Timeline



## Maintenance and Longevity

- Ensuring longevity would involve making a long-term gardening plan
  - Irrigation and plant upkeep are key focuses
- It would also involve keeping the garden a pleasant, usable space
  - Regular trash removal is necessary
- Education/Acknowledgments could be provided at the garden
  - Hosting events or tours for education and awareness
- Decisions on who should manage the garden still need to be decided.
  - Campus gardener, student staff, or student and faculty volunteers have all been considered as options

## Support

- Of 103 people surveyed, with 84 being UWT students specifically, an overwhelming majority supported the addition of more green space (Figure 5)
- There was also expressed interest by Facilities and Services, the UWT Sustainability Committee and the Puyallup Tribe when reaching out about our project

## Survey Results

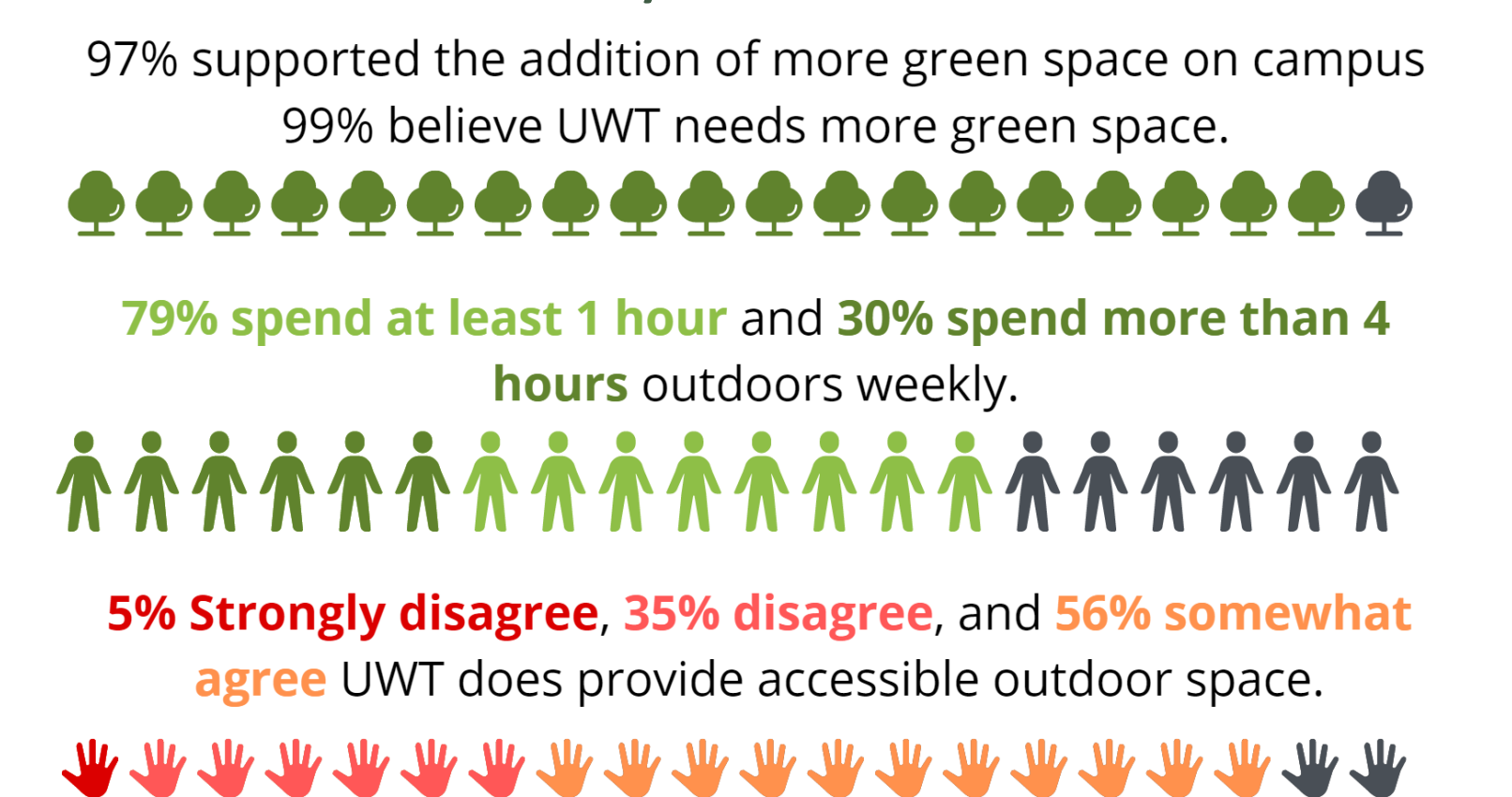


Figure 5 – Our survey results. There was overwhelming support for more green space by campus students and a divide on how many thought campus had ample green space

## Conclusion

- This project is still in the planning phase. Though, there are plans to meet with the UWT Sustainability Committee later in 2023
- Implementing a native plant project would memorialize the traditional stewards of UWT land and promote awareness of indigenous ways of knowing

## Recognition

- Special thanks to Jim Gawel for supervising and aiding in the development of this project concept
- Thanks to Facilities / Services and the Puyallup Tribe for taking time to meet and/or discuss meeting with us

## References

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