# *Thank you for your commitment to green initiatives at the University of Illinois. One of the ongoing requirements listed in the terms of the funding agreement for your project is the submission of semesterly reports with key information about your project. In addition to this form, please provide additional financial documentation and/or progress photos if available.*

# *Please be as accurate as possible in describing the project (including possible setbacks or challenges in meeting the initial goals of the project). Not fully meeting your project's goals will not disqualify you from making future funding requests as long as your reports are as complete and accurate as possible. If you have any questions, please contact the Student Sustainability Committee, at* *sustainability-committee@illinois.edu**.*

**Project Name:** Census of Trelease Woods – phase 2

**Date of Report Submission:** 10/8/2020

**Project Purpose:**

We are funded to complete the first full inventory mapping and measuring every tree >1 cm diameter in the 24 ha university property of Trelease Woods, 5 miles E of Urbana. The purposes of this inventory are to:

• Train a large number of undergraduates from across colleges on campus in forest mensuration and carbon budgeting/monitoring. To date we have trained 70 students, primarily from LAS, ACES and AHS.

• On completion of the census add Trelease Woods to ForestGeo – a network of 72 forests around the world that have been surveyed with identical methods. This provides PIs and students with access to forest data and internship opportunities across the global network and will allow us to add the university’s forest to a global forest monitoring network.

• Develop lab activities for undergrad classes that use the Trelease Woods dataset to teach methods for analyses of forest carbon storage and forest community change

• Educate students on the critical importance of forests in mitigating and reducing carbon emissions

• Add a new soil carbon inventory and map of Trelease Woods

• Develop a student-led environmental monitoring program at Trelease Woods aimed at correlating forest productivity and soil respiration responses to short-term climate fluctuations

**Detailed Accounting of Expenditures to Date:**

Please detail your expenses to date. Feel free to attach an additional spreadsheet as needed.

**Project Progress to Date:**

Field activities at Trelease because of weather and deciduousness are limited to the second half of the Spring semester, summer and Fall semester (up until Thanksgiving). For phase 2 funding of this project, which began in early 2020, we were unable to start fieldwork as planned in March. We were also unable to recruit a large team of students that could travel together in shared transport to the Trelease site. We did however, have 3-4 students working throughout the summer to help complete the census. This Fall, we have similarly been restricted in our ability to recruit students to work together in close contact and travel together to the site. Instead we have been very cautious in recruiting workers. Rather than have a large group of students cycle through the project (working different days, handling the same equipment and travelling together in the project vehicle) we instead decided to retain one current and one recently graduated student that have been trained in the protocol to work full time (6:45AM – 2:45PM) and part time on the census as hourly workers. This has allowed us to continue to advance the census – currently 85% completed. Rapid completion of the census is critical to the acceptance of our data into the ForestGeo network as the duration of the census impacts the quality of the data generated when the plot is recensused in 2023.

Because we have not been able to recruit a new group of undergraduates to the project this Fall we have also not yet completed the soil carbon budget for Trelease and measures of soil respiration. We are hoping to complete these measurements in the late Spring 2021. We have however, completed soil nutrient mapping at Trelease with the assistance of 8 undergraduates in summer/Fall 2019.

We will continue the census with two students working 25 hrs per week until Thanksgiving. This will allow us to complete ~90% of the plot. The remaining 10% will be completed in the second half of Spring semester and summer 2021. Note: we have not recruited a graduate Research Assistant/project coordinator as planned in our budget because of the greatly reduced number of undergraduates participating in the census. We will instead use these funds in summer 2021 to complete the census and field data checks/validation.

**Student Involvement and Outreach to Date:**

In phase 1 (pre-covid) we involved 69 undergrad students in the census – mapping, measuring and identifying trees. An additional 10 students conducted independent research in Trelease woods that used the census data – this included recording the die-off of ash trees, measurements of the contribution of dead standing and fallen trees to the forest carbon budget, and assessment of deer use of Trelease.

**Marketing and Promotion Efforts to Date:**

We have a Trelease Woods website that highlights the contributions of students to the census:

<https://publish.illinois.edu/treleasewoods/>

We are currently making videos of the census that will be incorporated into SSC’s social media

For example:

<https://mediaspace.illinois.edu/media/1_2rw1gaiv>

Our first phase of the census was highlighted in the LAS newsletter with an accompanying video:

https://sib.illinois.edu/plantbio/news/130

**Additional Comments:**

Thanks for your continuing support! We are really looking forward to bringing students back into the census and having the opportunity to use these data to organize class projects and research opportunities for undergraduates on the theme of carbon cycling.