

Historical-Ecological Perspectives on Land-Use in the Pacific Northwest: Ts'msyen and Coast Salish Forest Gardens

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ABSTRACT:

Land-use scientists increasingly recognize that ecological and anthropogenic forces have long interacted in complex ways, forming many of the landscapes we observe today. In the Pacific Northwest, historical Indigenous land-use and management has resulted in forest gardens: ecosystems dominated by edible fruit, nut, and berry producing trees and shrubs, managed by Indigenous peoples in the past and which continue to grow adjacent to archaeological village sites today. This presentation will provide an overview of forest garden ethnoecology, archaeology, paleoethnobotany, and functional ecology at two village sites in Gitselasu (Ts'msyen) and Sts'ailes (Coast Salish) communities (in so-called British Columbia). This relatively new research contributes to a growing body of evidence which reveals the ways in which humans can have positive effects on their lived landscapes and supports descendant communities seeking to re-integrate land-based foodways and livelihoods in an age of climate change.