

About this Course:

Permaculture is the premier design system for high productivity and ecologically-sound, food systems. In addition to the plant landscape, permaculture also considers transportation, energy, buildings, water supply, community economics, and the social and spiritual fabric of life.

Every permaculture course teaches how to design productive and beautiful yards, farms and properties at the individual property scale. This course will also focus on the larger scale of city-wide and regional food. This course is recommended to community organizers concerned with food issues.

If you are a landowner interested in food production and other useful plantings, this permaculture course will give you information on many species of plants and production techniques. We will cover hundreds of crops which can provide family needs or cash income. Even more important, you will learn a set of principles and a design methodology which will enable you to achieve your goals in a more cost-effective manner. Additional goals are aesthetic beauty, color, fragrance and outdoor living space.

Intensive vegetable gardening techniques can quickly produce large amounts of food in small spaces, but intensive gardening is not for everybody or everywhere. Permaculture emphasizes the creation of low maintenance, self-reproducing ecologies. The proportions of native plants, non-native plants, long-lived perennials, food plants, etc is determined by the client goals and nature's dictates. One of the key premises of permaculture design is to minimize inputs. The inputs of one part of the system are met by the outputs of other parts. More cycling of nutrients, energy, water, etc. Each site is unique and each client is unique, thus each permaculture design will be different.

This course will impart permaculture principles and methodologies which can be applied anywhere in the world. Through lecture, slide shows, discussion, observation, field trips and hands-on activities, permaculture design students will develop the practical skills and knowledge necessary to design and implement sustainable systems that are in harmony with the natural world. Although this course's focus is on the Pacific Northwest, participants from other bioregions are welcome.

Restoration of native habitats and native species is a component of permaculture. We can assist nature to regenerate healthy biospheres. This means soils get richer, forests increase, trees get bigger, biodiversity increases, the web of complexity of relationships increases, more oxygen is produced and more carbon is stored. At the same time, the productivity of the landscape to meet human needs dramatically increases. Human landscapes which have permaculture applied to them will look wilder, be wilder, be more bio-diverse, be more productive, be more beautiful and will run itself to a large extent. All this for less work in the long run.

There are currently around 200,000 plant species in the world. The number is going down rapidly. About 4,000 species are native to the Pacific Northwest. Northwest gardeners have over 10,000 useful plant species to choose from. The course will touch on many food plants and medicinal plants, native and non-native. Every type of habitat can be put to good use whether dry, marshy, rocky, sandy, clay, riparian, seaside, and so forth. One of the goals in permaculture is to increase the number of habitats on site to enable a wider range of plants to thrive.

The word 'Permaculture' was originally coined in Australia in the 1970's by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren. Over the last 30 years, permaculture has grown to become a global grassroots movement involving hundreds of thousands of people. Permaculture offers a huge storehouse of solutions, strategies and practical techniques gathered from around the globe and throughout history. If permaculture designs were implemented on a planetary scale in cities, farms and homes the world would become a garden of Eden.

We will compare many gardening strategies including: organic, bio-intensive, biodynamic, conventional, small-space, rain-fed gardening, paradise gardens and food forests. Each one of these gardening methods has their pros and cons. Permaculture is a wholistic design system which can incorporate elements of any of these and can improve on all of them.

Family and Local Food Security

The global economic crisis has been deepening throughout 2008 and is likely to get much worse in 2009. There are solutions to the noisily-approaching, economic collapse. The proto-type models are already operating. We need large-scale, cooperative efforts to build healthy, local economies based on local people, local resources and local consumption. Local food production is one of the most important components of this. This course is an excellent opportunity to learn about solutions and food production.

Industrial agriculture is not suited to the new millenium. Peak oil, resource depletion and climate change will make this increasingly obvious. The alternatives are being created. Read Michael Pilarski's article "Feeding People in Hard Times" at www.friendsofthetrees.net

Hundreds and thousands of personal gardens and food forests can lead to a combined large, food production at the city-wide and regional level. There are historical precedents. The "Victory Gardens" in the US during World War II. More recently in the Soviet Union collapse, their farm production dropped 80%. The home food gardens rallied to produce over half of total food production and kept the population from starving. At the same time Cuba's agriculture collapsed due to lack of oil, and outside inputs. A huge, organic gardening movement kept Cubans alive. Today Havana produces over 50% of its food needs within its urban and peri-urban area. Permaculturists from Melbourne, Australia had a significant influence on the Cuban garden movement.

Course topics:

- * Permaculture principles & methodology
- * Observation skills
- * Zones and sectors
- * Site analysis
- * Ecosystem restoration
- * Home food production
- * Fruits, berries, nuts
- * Edible landscaping
- * Fertilizers, mulches, inoculants, and sources.
- * Edible and useful native plants.
- * Multi-story, food forests:
- * Grow Bio-Intensive gardening
- * Vegetable and crop selection.
- * Sources for seed and nursery stock.
- * Plant propagation & seed saving.
- * Agroforestry & forestry
- * Windbreaks, hedgerows
- * Medicinal herbs
- * Ethnobotany & ethnoecology
- * Wildcrafting
- * Animals in the system, livestock and wild
- * Urban permaculture
- * Water in the landscape
- * Swales, keyline, ponds & aquaculture
- * Rain water harvesting
- * Grey water & bioremediation
- * Dry land strategies
- * Natural building
- * Alternative energy and fuels
- * Intentional communities & Ecovillages
- * Local economies/barter systems
- * Large-scale design, counties, islands, cities and much, much more!

Instructors:

Michael Pilarski is a farmer, educator and author who has personally worked with over 1,000 species of plants. He is the founder of Friends of the Trees Society (1978) and is the author of books on forestry, agriculture, agroforestry and ethnobotany. Michael has been involved in the permaculture movement since 1981 as a writer, teacher and networker. He has taught 23 full Permaculture Design Courses in the USA and abroad. He is the founder of many events, including the Okanogan Barter Faire, The Northwest Herbal Faire, The Port Townsend Tree Festival, the Fairy & Human Relations Congress and the Washington State Permaculture Convergence. www.friendsofthetrees.net

Laura Sweany is a garden designer, permaculture consultant, and owner and operator of Terra Flora Farm in Seattle. She will contribute her urban and suburban design and implementation skills to the course. Laura is a graduate of the first permaculture course at Sahale in 2004 and has since gone on to become Sahale Learning Center's chief land steward and grounds designer.

Larry Korn is an educator, editor and author in the fields of natural farming and permaculture. Larry spent several years with Masanobu Fukuoka, a farmer and philosopher, on Shikoku Island, Japan. Mr. Fukuoka developed a special no-till way of farming to demonstrate the practical value of his spiritual principles. Larry returned to the United States and helped translate and edit Mr. Fukuoka's book, "One-Straw Revolution". Larry has operated the Mu Landscaping Company in the Bay area for 25 years and has much experience at blending permaculture into urban and suburban situations. www.mulandscaping.com

Marisha Auerbach has been practicing, studying, and teaching permaculture in the Pacific Northwest for the past decade. Her hands-on experience includes developing permaculture systems at Wild Thyme Farm and creating food forests at the family scale. Her other businesses include flower and gem essences, edible flowers and plantable greeting cards. www.herbnwisdom.com

Albert Postema is the owner of Earthwise Excavation, an earth-moving company that specializes in septic system installations in Snohomish and King counties. Albert is one of Washington's, most experienced people on using biodiesel in heavy equipment. Albert hosts permaculture courses and workshops at his Wise Earth Community site outside of Snohomish, Washington. www.fromthegrounddown.com

Jenny Pell is a former tree planter, helicopter pilot, carpenter, and yurt builder. Jenny is a permaculture teacher and manages the Wilder Institute in Port Townsend which organizes permaculture courses in Washington State, Central America, Hawaii, and Europe. www.permaculturenow.com

John Henrikson John is co-owner of Wild Thyme Farm which we will visit on a field trip. Wild Thyme Farm is one of Washington's premier permaculture sites as well as an exemplary, sustainable forestry operation. Permaculture has been applied to this old dairy farm for the past 15 years. The site includes a wide array of gardens, fruits, agroforestry, livestock, ponds, streambank restoration, and forestry projects. www.wildthymefarm.com/permaculture.html

John Hoff is founder of the Goodenough Community which owns Sahale Retreat Center. John will talk about intentional communities and applying permaculture principles to people and social systems. www.goodenough.org

Other guest speakers to be announced. Course participants will also bring a wide range of knowledge and experience to share. We are all students. We are all teachers.

Sahale Learning Center

Sahale Learning Center is a beautiful venue specializing in transformational education and green events. A remote, rural location on the lower Tahuya River with 65 acres of rainforest, big trees, river, floodplain, and gardens. Sahale hosted permaculture design courses in 2004 and 2005 and the 2008 Washington State Permaculture Convergence. They are incorporating permaculture into their land development and are exploring setting up an ecovillage on the site.

Sahale was established in 2001 as the retreat home of the Goodenough Community.

Sahale is a Chinook word meaning "high" or "holy". The land is shared with deer, black bears, mountain lions, beavers, and many kinds of birds. Coyotes sing up and down the valley at night.

Just 20 minutes from Belfair, Washington, Sahale is an easy drive from Seattle, Tacoma, Portland and the Olympic Peninsula. Facilities include a cozy teaching room with a fireplace, dining room, bathrooms, laundry facilities, phone, and internet access. There are nine buildings with sleeping accommodations including seven shared rooms (sleeping 2 to 6 people) and seven private rooms. There is a panoramic deck, lush grounds, spring-fed water for the hot tubs and trails to the Tahuya River and sacred cedar grove. As part of the course, design teams will develop a permaculture plan for the land. To see photos of the site go to www.goodenough.org and then click on Sahale.

2009 Course Registration Form:

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____, Cell: _____

E-mail _____

Amount enclosed. \$ _____

\$250 deposit holds your place (\$100 non-refundable).

The remainder is due February 1st unless other arrangements have been made.

Checks payable to: Sahale Learning Center. Send to: Laura Sweany, 13425 43rd Ave. S., Tukwila, WA 98168.

Please attach a separate letter with your dietary preferences, transportation and carpooling information, questions and other pertinent details. A registration packet with map and further details will be sent.

cannot attend this course but notify me of future courses.