

# Sustainable Urban Foodsheds Western, WA



## Purpose:

It seems that the larger our populations grow and the denser cities become the further away our food sources are pushed out. One statistic I read claims that the average food product in the grocery store travels an average of 1500 miles to get there. This causes multiple health concerns and since it costs about seven to ten calories of fuel to every one calorie that we consume, I do not feel that this practice is at all sustainable for the environment and ultimately it is not sustainable for our growing population.

## Objectives:

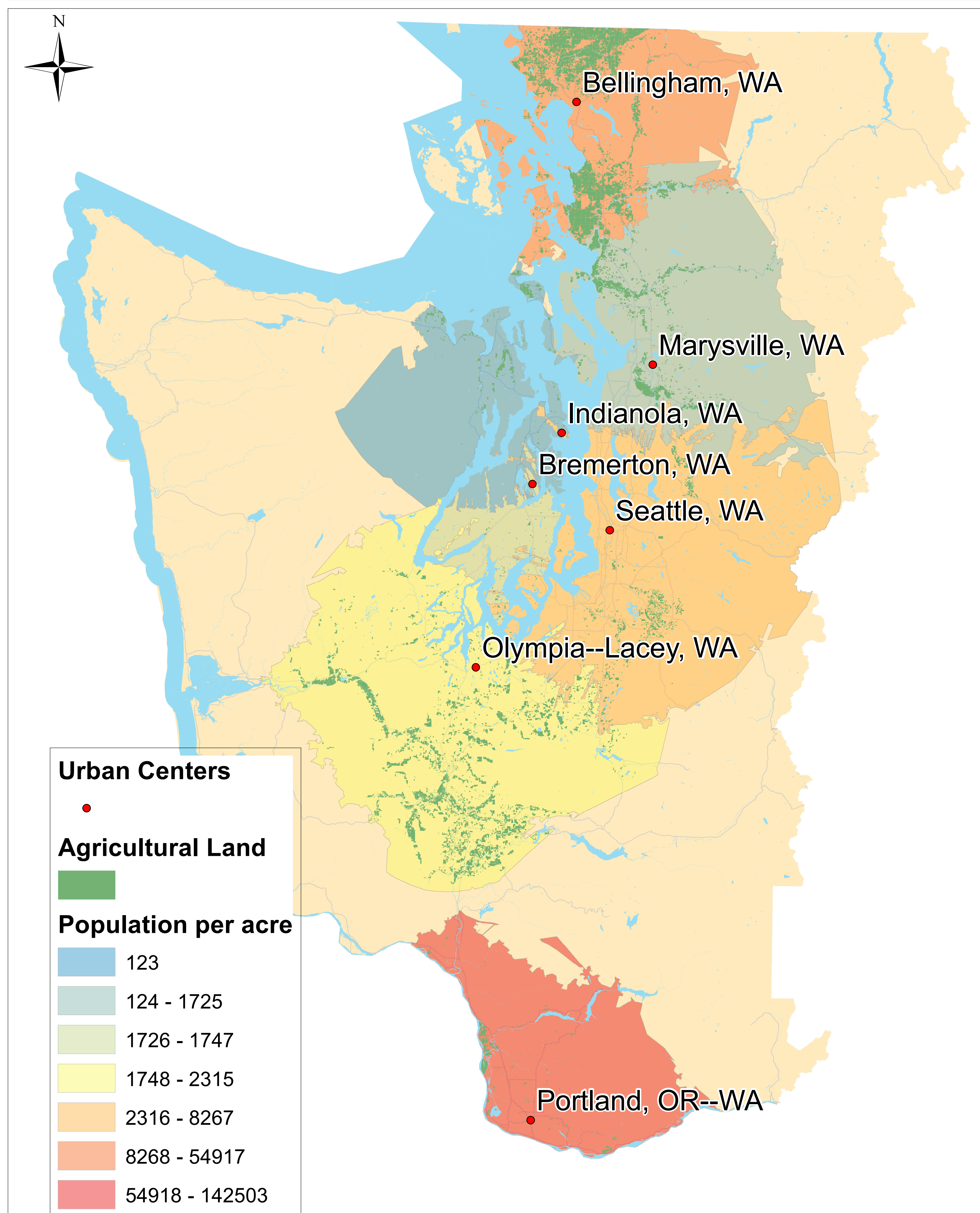
My goal for this project was to create a map that would paint a picture of and bring awareness to this issue of a sustainable foodshed that would serve our local populations as well as to provide a resource to consumers and producers of food products to join in and bring our food production closer to where we consume it and to encourage community supported agriculture. My hypothesis was that the current agricultural land use would not be sufficient to sustain the population.

## Methods:

For this project, I had to determine what it meant to be a sustainable foodshed, where the major centers of urbanization are located along with their populations, and what areas of land are currently being used for agriculture and a road layer for Western Washington. I decided that sustainable foodsheds would be any agricultural land located within fifty miles of a pre-determined urbanized center. I narrowed these centers down to the seven most populated cities in western Washington. With this information I conducted a network analysis of the road layer to determine a fifty mile limit from each major urban area. I then determined which areas of agricultural land were located in each foodshed.

## Results:

What I found, as a result of this analysis, is that the current agricultural land use would not be considered sustainable for any of my determined foodsheds based on a fifty mile radius. Based on my research, it would take one acre of land for every eight persons per year. This analysis suggests that there is more than 1000 people per acre in each of the seven foodsheds.



### Citations and Acknowledgements:

Seamless data warehouse. (n.d.). Retrieved 2012, from USGS Seamless Server: <http://seamless.usgs.gov/>

U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Retrieved from American Factfinder2: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Special thanks to Dr. Kelley and my small group Eric, Aaron,



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Date: 5/29/2012