Activity 5.4: Google Earth

You can use Google Earth on a computer to locate your field study site on an aerial photomap (taken by satellites for Google Earth recently). Using Google Earth you can compare the land use of your field site to the land use in the surrounding area. You will also be able to find the distances between your field site and nearby parks and open spaces where similar tree communities may be found.

**Procedures:**

1. Open Google Earth
2. Under the “Fly To” tab enter the address of your field site.
3. Once you are zoomed in on your site compare the image to the map you made. How are they similar? How are they different?
4. Go to the tool bar at the top of the page and select “View”. Under view click on “Scale Legend”. A scale bar, in ft, should appear at the bottom left corner of the image. Slowly zoom out until you double the number in ft.
5. How do the trees in the surrounding area compare to your field site? Are there more trees? Fewer trees?
6. Slowly zoom in until you again double your number in ft. How does the amount of open space in the surrounding area compare to your field site. Are the spaces larger or smaller? How many open spaces do you see?
7. Go to the tool bar at the top of the page and select “Tools”. Under tools click on “Ruler”. Click on your field site and draw a line to the nearest open green space. How far away is it?
8. Describe how land is used in the area surrounding your field site. Is there development (houses, buildings, roads)? Are there any bodies of water?

**Critical Thinking Questions**

1. How is land used in the area surrounding your field site? Is this similar or different to the way land is used in your field site?

2. What are some advantages to having trees and open spaces? What are some disadvantages?

3. What are some limitations to the way land is used? What should people consider before making land use decisions?