

Name: **Michael J. Morgan**

Email: mboskey@ufl.edu

B.S. Institution and Specialization:
The Pennsylvania State University, Forest Science

M.S. Institution and Specialization:
University of Florida, Masters Student, Forest Ecology



Prior to coming to the University of Florida, I managed the tree nursery and native tree seed collection program for the Fundacion ProBosque in Guayaquil, Ecuador for 11 years. Fundacion ProBosque administrates 6000 hectares of tropical dry forest.

Current Project Description: Increasing Germination of Palo Santo (*Bursera graveolens*) seeds

Objective:

Determine which pregerminative treatment works best.

Brief Description: Palo Santo (*Bursera graveolens*) is a small tree of the tropical dry forests of South West Ecuador and Northwest Peru. Its small red fruits are eaten by birds that then disperse the seeds by way of defecation. In the past, wood chips of Palo Santo (literally holy stick or tree) were burnt in churches as incense. Currently people burn these wood chips as mosquito repellent. Little bags of wood chips are sold in markets and grocery stores alike. More recently, aromatic oil is extracted from the wood for use in the perfume industry.

However, the tree itself is not very common. It is not easy to reproduce in tree nurseries. Its germination level has not surpassed 8%. Demand for reforestation has not kept up with the supply of seedlings available for sale. Here, at the University of Florida, I am trying to increase seed germination by using various pregerminative treatments such as physical scarification, soaking in acid and soaking in hot water.