



OUR CITY OUR PARKS OUR ENVIRONMENT

Stewarding a Sustainable Park System for the Next Generation

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION: 2013 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT



ABOUT SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

Many things go into making a city a great place to live, work, and raise a family. But one factor that stands out is its parks and other natural features. Few places can match the beauty of the Puget Sound region and few cities can boast the diversity and abundance of parks, playgrounds and other natural spaces that Seattle can. Born with the donation of the first city park by the Denny family in 1884 and solidified by the vision of John Charles Olmsted more than 100 years ago, the importance we put on parks is a cornerstone of our quality of life here.

Current staff, elected officials, and caring citizens steward the parks legacy built over the past century. We are responsible for maintaining that legacy for people today and for ensuring it continues for generations to come. This report demonstrates our continued commitment to the environment within our community and our promise to protect and foster our natural heritage.

OUR MISSION

Seattle Parks and Recreation provides welcoming and safe opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community, and promotes responsible stewardship of the land.

OUR VALUES

- 1
ACCESS
- 2
OPPORTUNITY
- 3
SUSTAINABILITY

OUR DESIRED OUTCOMES



HEALTHY
ENVIRONMENT



HEALTHY
PEOPLE



STRONG
COMMUNITIES



FINANCIAL
SUSTAINABILITY

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT

An internal committee was formed to address the challenges of measuring and communicating the work Parks and Recreation accomplishes to maintain a healthy environment. To meet the public's standard of accountability and to demonstrate our work clearly to stakeholders, we have developed a new performance tracking system to consistently connect our efforts to our goals. In addition to being a report on our progress, this document is a reiteration of Seattle Parks and Recreation's promise to steward the city's environment.

OUR TEAM

We couldn't do what we do without the hard work of everyone working or volunteering for the Parks department.



ALL HANDS ON DECK: Staff, volunteers & partners
work together to create a healthy environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE

- Leah Tivoli, Committee Chair, Sustainable Operations Mgr.
- Dawn Blanch, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator
- Shanyanika Burton, Food Systems Program Coordinator
- Doug Critchfield, Natural Resources Manager
- Rebecca Karlsen, Recreation Matrix Manager
- Rick Nishi, Parks and Green Spaces Levy Manager
- David Takami, Communications Strategic Advisor

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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Dear Seattle staff, partners and residents:

Supporting a healthy environment is one of Seattle Parks and Recreation's fundamental outcomes as an organization, together with healthy people, strong communities and financial sustainability. These outcomes are at once unique and interconnected. A healthy environment is the product of how we, as a community, connect to nature and reduce our regional and global footprint. Our performance as an environmental steward is an indicator of Seattle Parks and Recreation's role in building strong communities and healthy people.

This report represents Seattle Parks and Recreation's first of many steps to enhance our accountability to Seattle residents. With the passage of the ballot measure establishing the Seattle Park District in August 2014, the department made a commitment to track and report our work through enhanced performance management. We will use the information to recognize our achievements and identify opportunities for improvement.

The title of this publication, *Our City, Our Parks, Our Environment*, reflects the people-based approach of our pledge to sustain a healthy environment. Seattle is a dense and diverse urban space and we at Seattle Parks and Recreation are committed to caring for the whole ecosystem. We take our role of stewardship seriously, protecting spaces that provide services and access to nature, as well as enhancing our health, well-being and enjoyment of Seattle landscapes.

As a department we plan for the future by integrating an environmental ethic into our everyday activities. We know that small steps can have a big impact. This work does not happen on its own; it takes the care and commitment of parks professionals to select each tree that gets planted, develop a fieldtrip curriculum, operate a maintenance building thoughtfully and efficiently, and coordinate volunteers.

Although we have dedicated and inspired staff, Parks does not have the resources to do it alone. In 2013 we had 120,726 hours of committed volunteers working through our various programs to help us achieve our goals, translating into nearly \$3 million of community investment. The hard work and commitment of volunteer trailblazers, forest builders, environmental educators and urban farmers expands the depth and breadth of our programs. These volunteers and the community members they inspire represent the current and future generation of environmental leaders. Unfortunately, we are seeing a downward trend in long-term volunteers. We need to continue to draw environmental stewards to not only replace current volunteers, but to fulfill our promise of a sustainable future.

As we continue to track our goals and progress, we hope that you will join us in taking steps to steward a sustainable park system for the next generation.

Sincerely,

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2013 Environmental Stewardship Report highlights the excellent work of staff, volunteers and partners in stewarding a healthy environment for the next generation. Our work is spread throughout Parks and Recreation and takes many forms from operational choices to programming to developing new parks and buildings. Although the report is focused on environmental goals and objectives, our work also supports people, communities and the financial sustainability of our parks and our city.



HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Parks strives to create healthy built and natural environments locally and globally.



83% OF RESIDENTS live within one-quarter mile of a park



395 PLANT SPECIES and more than [400 animal species](#), can be found within our parks



1000 ACRES of forest are in various phases of restoration



6 LEED certified buildings



1st ELECTRIC CAR piloted



HEALTHY PEOPLE

Spending time in natural areas has physical and mental health benefits.



73,775 HOURS of demanding volunteer work restoring forests



120 MILES of soft-surface trails for walking, jogging and passive use



132 RECREATION PROGRAMS dedicated to helping kids make healthy food choices



STRONG COMMUNITIES

Partnerships help us build community and the next generation of environmental stewards.



238 ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD TRIPS and public programs were taught by volunteer instructors in 2013



\$114,000 OF FOOD DONATED to food banks from the volunteer community garden and orchard program



281 YOUTH developed stewardship leadership skills through environmentally focused employment programs



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We save Seattle millions of dollars through ecosystem services and resource conservation.



\$2,313,341 VALUE due to Stormwater management



\$526,768 VALUE due to Air quality management



\$145,106 VALUE due to Carbon sequestration

In 2013, we consumed 20% less irrigation water and saved 15% energy at 6 facilities that added up to over \$270,000 in savings.



1

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Connecting Seattle residents with their urban ecosystem through learning & action

OUR GOALS

1

FOSTER

CONNECTION
TO NATURE

2

EMPOWER

RESIDENTS TO
TAKE ACTION

3

INCREASE

PROGRAM
ACCESSIBILITY

4

ENGAGE

RESIDENTS IN
EDUCATING OTHERS

5

GALVANIZE

TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS
AS STEWARDS



THE WORK WE DO

We offer a variety of environmentally focused programs at Seattle's parks, community centers, schools and environmental learning centers. Our programs build awareness and knowledge of Seattle's urban ecosystem, help people make connections to their natural and human communities and spark action, inspiring the next generation of stewards.

OUR VALUES



ACCESS

Deliver programs equitably throughout the city in parks, schools and community centers.



OPPORTUNITY

Offer **free** and **reduced-cost programs** as well as employment programs for teens and young adults.



SUSTAINABILITY

Inspire **stewardship** of our urban environment and bring communities together.

41

NEIGHBORHOODS

had at least one environmentally focused program in 2013 (out of 53 neighborhoods)

36,893

PEOPLE

participated in our environmental programs in 2013

3,446

STUDENTS

students took part in our environmental programs as part of a field trip or classroom activity in 2013

2,483

PROGRAMS

were offered across Parks and Recreation covering a wide variety of environmental themes



1

FOSTER CONNECTION WITH NATURE

[Our programs](#) inspire Seattle residents to recognize their personal connections to our urban environment. Programs focus on developing an awareness of the natural world, building life skills, and encouraging a volunteer ethic.

OUR PROGRESS



4,500*
PROGRAM HOURS

focused on environmental messages. *Approximately



132
RECREATION PROGRAMS

highlighted urban food systems.

HIGHLIGHT

[Programs](#) fall on a continuum from simply creating awareness to motivating us to take action. Owl night hikes, forest and trail restoration, tidepool exploration, and swimming in Green Lake help us come in contact with resident flora and fauna. Consider how other types of environmental programs connect to the message types below:

ENVIRONMENTAL MESSAGE TYPE	2013 PROGRAMS	2013 PARTICIPANTS
Awareness	169	3,696
Knowledge	378	8,655
Appreciation	88	2,218
Skills	29	568
Action	1,936	21,376



2

EMPOWER RESIDENTS TO TAKE ACTION

Our environmental community programs seek to inspire a sense of connection and responsibility towards our urban ecosystems. [Friends of parks groups](#), park cleanups, forest restoration events and maintenance work-parties for our gardens, orchards, and trails are just some of the staff supported programs we have that empower residents. These programs create community and ensure the health of our parks for future generations.

OUR PROGRESS



25
ACTIVE "FRIENDS-OF" GROUPS

Goal of 30 groups.



73,775
HOURS

were donated by [volunteers](#) at
1834 forest restoration events
in 2013.

LOOKING AHEAD



Following national trends, long-term volunteerism is on the decline while the demand for long-term, skilled volunteers is increasing. We are addressing this challenge by [refining our recruiting practices](#), [creating better reporting systems](#) and [continuing to support our volunteers](#).

3

INCREASE PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY

Using our 2013 research as a baseline, we are working to expand the reach of environmental learning across Seattle through partnerships with local organizations and by engaging historically under-represented groups in their neighborhood green spaces.

These environmental programs are offered by staff and volunteers from our environmental learning centers, community centers, lifelong recreation, community learning centers, and youth and teen programs in neighborhoods with high populations of historically underrepresented groups.

OUR PROGRESS

31% OF PROGRAMS

related to Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning were in [areas with high equity and social justice scores](#) in 2013.



OUR GOAL

50% OF PROGRAMS

related to Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning will be offered in [these neighborhoods](#) each year.

FEATURED PROGRAM



In 2013, [Camp Long](#) launched an annual [Backyard Campout program](#) to engage residents of Seattle Housing Authority's nearby High Point community. The free overnight nature immersion experience was offered in partnership with the National Wildlife Foundation's Great American Backyard Campout initiative and Neighborhood House. For many participants it was their first time camping.



"Our 9 year old foster son has never done anything like a campout before, and this was a HUGE experience for him. We watched him learn and grow in new ways in front of our eyes in 20 hours."

4

ENGAGE RESIDENTS TO EDUCATE OTHERS

Our [Seattle Volunteer Naturalists](#), [Magnuson Nature Docents](#) and Forest Stewards expand our capacity to offer high quality environmental programming to students and the public. They are our citizen ambassadors, helping residents learn about and experience the nature in their own neighborhoods.

OUR PROGRESS



LOOKING AHEAD



In 2014 the Seattle Volunteer Naturalist program changed its structure in order to better engage diverse communities. As a result, the incoming class of volunteers has seen a **300% increase in people of color**.

5

GALVANIZE TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS AS STEWARDS

We inspire the next generation of stewards through hands-on, real-world experiences. Our volunteering and employment programs help teens and young adults build connections to nature, develop leadership skills and feel empowered to take actions for a healthy urban environment. Check out the Outdoor Opportunities, Youth Green Corps, and Youth Employment and Service Learning programs!

OUR PROGRESS



"I never realized how many people and how much work it takes to build a hiking trail. I have a whole new appreciation now."

- Sida Chun, Outdoor Opportunities program participant

FEATURED PROGRAM



In 2013, the [Parks Compost Squad](#), one of our youth stipend programs, spent a combined **114 hours educating others**. The **19 teens** attended special events to inform the public on composting practices.



2

ECOLOGICAL & AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Protecting and restoring our urban forests, shoreline and food lands



OUR GOALS

1

MAINTAIN

A VIBRANT
URBAN FOREST

2

MAINTAIN

OUR FORESTED
TRAILS

3

STEWARD

URBAN ORCHARDS,
FARMS AND GARDENS

4

CONNECT

PEOPLE TO HEALTHY
FOOD CHOICES



THE WORK WE DO

We are the caretakers of over 4,500 acres of Seattle's urban ecosystem including forests, shoreline, wetlands, and meadows as well as agricultural resources such as community gardens and orchards. By maintaining and restoring these lands we are providing Seattle residents with services like clean air, clean water, carbon sequestration, and donation of locally grown food.

OUR VALUES



ACCESS

Provide **ecological and agricultural spaces** citywide.



OPPORTUNITY

Engage residents in **stewardship** and foster a connection to nature, community and food.



SUSTAINABILITY

Support **healthy urban nature and food choices** for future generations.

120

MILES

of soft
surface trails

18,000

POUNDS

of produce grown
on park lands

140,330

TREES

planted in forested and
developed parks since 2007

395

PLANT SPECIES

and more than 400 animal species,
including 91 species of fish, can be
found within our parks

1

MAINTAIN A VIBRANT URBAN FOREST

Seattle's urban forest is at risk. We have an aging forest that is being overtaken by invasive plants like English Ivy and Himalayan Blackberry. The forest is unable to take care of itself and requires our help to pull out invasive plants and plant new trees to establish the next generation of forest.

OUR PROGRESS



**1000
ACRES**

of Seattle's forested parkland is in various phases of restoration.

**OUR
GOAL**

**2,500
ACRES**

by 2025.

CURRENT PHASES OF RESTORATION:

Not in Active
Restoration

53%



Invasive
Removal

9%



Planting

5%



Weeding
& Watering

31%



Maintenance
& Monitoring

2%



FEATURED PROGRAM

With the [Green Seattle Partnership](#), we've been actively working to return our natural areas to a healthy state. Hundreds of thousands of volunteer work hours have been spent removing invasive plants, planting native species, maintaining restored areas, and educating Seattle's residents.

2

MAINTAIN OUR FORESTED TRAILS

The aim of our [forested trail system](#) is to provide access to Seattle's natural areas. Our 120-mile soft surface trail system provides a national park experience in a city setting.

OUR PROGRESS

Due to limited resources and a maintenance backlog, many miles of our trails are in need of attention.



**12-17
MILES OF TRAIL**
are **lost** each year.



**150
TRAIL MAINTENANCE EVENTS**
hosted by Parks in 2013 helped maintain and improve our trail system.

FEATURED PROGRAM

2013 marked the third year of the [Youth Green Corps](#), a program run in partnership between Parks trail staff and Seattle Goodwill. The 9-month curriculum educates and trains disadvantaged youth by mixing classroom experiences with outdoor forestry restoration. In an effort to provide youth employment and create a pathway to green jobs, Parks staff members teach site management, restoration skills management, tool safety, native and invasive plant identification, and environmental stewardship to the Youth Green Corps team.



3

STEWARD URBAN ORCHARDS, FARMS AND GARDENS

The Good Food Program's mission is to encourage healthy and active lifestyles, steward parkland for long-term sustainability and support the local food system while building community. Thanks to 18 non-profit and governmental partners as well as individual stewards, we have a thriving stewardship program at our community gardens, orchards, and farms.

OUR PROGRESS



1 MILLION
SQUARE FEET OF PARKLAND

was dedicated by Parks in 2013 to growing food for our community. That's nearly **30 acres** of sustainably grown fresh produce.

Our Good Food program includes:



12

community
gardens



3

urban
farms



30

p-patch
gardens



8

park
orchards

FEATURED PROGRAM

Since 2009, we have partnered with City Fruit to support the stewardship of fruit trees in Seattle parks, the harvesting of fruit from residential properties, and the donation of urban fruit to the emergency food system.

55,400 POUNDS
of fruit was harvested
and donated in 2013.

4

CONNECT PEOPLE TO HEALTHY FOOD

Programming in our community gardens and orchards fosters understanding of where our food comes from, sustainable food choices and the joy of cooking produce out of the garden. Through the help of non-profits and volunteers, we provide low-cost educational opportunities to grow, cook, and eat nutritious foods grown in our parks.

OUR PROGRESS



18,000
POUNDS OF PRODUCE
grown in our urban
gardens was donated.

96%
OF PRODUCE GROWN
was donated to food banks
and community kitchens
or used in free food and
nutrition programming.



\$144,000 OF FOOD DONATED* to food banks from
the community garden and orchard programs. The value of
supporting a child to make healthy food choices? Priceless.

* at \$2/pound

FEATURED PROGRAM

In 2013, the 53 crab and true apple trees growing in Dr. Jose Rizal Park, in Beacon Hill, produced 1,500 pounds of produce- all of which was donated to the community. The park has three orchards, which are taken care of by the local community and various Parks programs.





3

SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

Minimizing our
operational impacts

OUR GOALS

1

RESPONSIBLY
MANAGE
ENERGY USE

2

RESPONSIBLY
MANAGE
WATER USE

3

RESPONSIBLY
MANAGE PESTS,
WEEDS & INVASIVE
PLANTS

4

UTILIZE
GREEN
CLEANING
PRODUCTS

5

DIVERT
WASTE FROM
LANDFILLS

6

MITIGATE
HAZARDOUS
WASTE

7

DECREASE
VEHICLE
EMISSIONS

8

ENCOURAGE
SUSTAINABLE
PRACTICES AT
PUBLIC EVENTS



THE WORK WE DO

As the caretakers of 11% of Seattle's land and the third largest department in the city, limiting the environmental impact of our everyday work is a priority. This value is reflected throughout our approach to ongoing operations, from our management of water use and energy to pesticides and chemicals.

OUR VALUES



ACCESS

Ensure citywide availability of **clean and safe land and facilities**.



OPPORTUNITY

Inspire staff and the public to continuously learn and improve through **education, demonstration and feedback**.



SUSTAINABILITY

Continue implementing solutions to **lower our impact** on the environment and human health.

11%

**OF SEATTLE'S
LAND**

is under our care

465

PARKS
and open
areas

26

**COMMUNITY
CENTERS**

12

POOLS

90

**COMFORT
STATIONS**
(outdoor restrooms)

1

RESPONSIBLY MANAGE ENERGY USE

We manage over two million square feet of building space including swimming pools, community centers and office buildings. With such a large portfolio of buildings it is going to take continuous operational and built solutions to move the needle.

OUR PROGRESS

ENERGY
GOAL:



20%
BY 2020

Reduce energy use in facilities >10,000 sq ft by 20% by 2020.

TOP 4 METHODS TO MAKE PROGRESS:

1

Monitor
building performance and provide feedback

2

Maintain
equipment to improve lifecycle and reduce energy consumption

3

Replace
aging equipment with more efficient technology

4

Construct
new buildings using sustainable practices

LOOKING AHEAD



We participate in [Puget Sound Energy's \(PSE\) Resource Conservation programs](#). PSE provides incentives, training and data services to help us achieve utility cost savings through occupant engagement, operational improvements, and attention to utility accounting.

2

RESPONSIBLY MANAGE WATER USE

Parks staff practice smart irrigation by setting water targets for 343 irrigated parks and tracking monthly water use. Irrigation is scheduled based on weather patterns and historic trends.

OUR PROGRESS

20%

LESS IRRIGATION WATER
was used in Parks as compared to our 2007-2010 historic average.



143,300,000 GAL (2013)



180,500,000 GAL
(2007-2010 average)



37,200,000 GALLONS
saved or \$250,000

This is equal to:



744,000 BATHTUBS
filled with water-

FEATURED PROGRAM

Rain sensors prevent unnecessary irrigation while it is raining. In 2013, we installed **18 rain sensors** for a total of 75 year-to-date.



3

RESPONSIBLY MANAGE PESTS, WEEDS AND INVASIVE PLANTS

Staff members are trained to use alternative methods of [pest and plant management](#) before resorting to chemicals. The use of pesticides, fungicides and herbicides are limited and primarily used at golf courses, greenhouses and natural areas where business needs or regulations require control strategies.

OUR PROGRESS



74%
OF PROPERTIES
managed by Parks
and Recreation were
pesticide free in 2013.

We used the
equivalent of



1



TABLESPOON
of pesticide per acre
of parkland.

HIGHLIGHT

Play and eat worry-free – all play areas, picnic shelters, and permanent picnic tables in Seattle parks have at least a 50-foot pesticide-free buffer.

22 parks are dedicated pesticide free.



4

UTILIZE GREEN CLEANING PRODUCTS

We go the extra mile to keep our parks clean and healthy for our visitors and nature by using [green janitorial products](#) at our facilities. Some cleaning chemicals can be hazardous, causing problems ranging from skin rashes and burns to coughing and asthma. We have switched to green cleaning products because they are thought to be less hazardous to workers and the environment.

OUR PROGRESS



74%
OF CLEANING PRODUCTS
used in our community
centers are green.



80%
is our target.

LOOKING AHEAD



We are working with our vendors to reach **80% use of green cleaning products** at our facilities.



5

DIVERT WASTE FROM LANDFILLS

Seattle is one of the fastest growing cities in the nation. With growth comes additional consumption and garbage. It is critical we continue enhancing our recycling, composting and reuse programs to achieve a 70% level of waste diversion.

OUR PROGRESS



The amount of garbage being sent to the landfill is increasing:

2,218
TONS
in 2010



2,591
TONS
in 2013

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WASTE DIVERSION:

2009 audit of park waste by weight:



18%
Organic



9%
Glass



6%
Plastic



5%
Paper



3%
Aluminum

37% Trash

17% Pet Waste

4% Illegal

1% Liquid

HIGHLIGHT

Part of a successful waste diversion is giving the public opportunities to learn and practice sustainable behaviors. In 2008, we expanded our recycling program to add 123 recycling cans to outdoor parks. Cans were located in areas with the greatest generation of recycling such as picnic shelters, boat ramps and playfields. We must continue creating opportunities to recycle in order to meet ambitious City goals.



6

MITIGATE HAZARDOUS WASTE

Hazardous waste is a reality of construction work, maintenance, illegal dumping and remediation of polluted soils from former land uses. We report to the Washington State Department of Ecology to ensure the safety of Seattle's residents and environment.

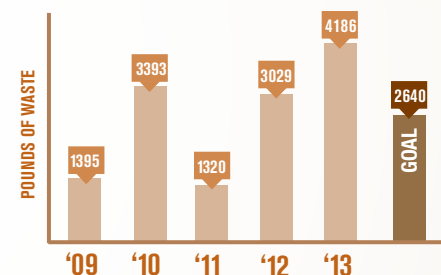
OUR PROGRESS

WASTE
GOAL:



2640 lbs
OR LESS
produced by Parks

This will redefine
Parks as a **Small
Waste Generator**



LOOKING AHEAD



In 2012, we produced 3,029 pounds of hazardous waste. This is significant because when we produce less than 2,640 pounds of hazardous waste, we are redefined by Department of Ecology from a Large to a Small Waste Generator. Parks aspires to be a Small Waste Generator and we are optimistic we will meet this goal by making changes to our purchasing policies for hazardous materials such as paint and wood coatings.

7

DECREASE VEHICLE EMISSIONS

With properties in every corner of Seattle, driving creates a significant greenhouse gas emission impact for Parks employees. In partnership with [Seattle's Green Fleets program](#), we are committed to optimizing our fleet and practices to minimize our emissions.

OUR PROGRESS

EMISSIONS GOAL:

42%

DECREASE

in vehicle greenhouse gas emissions,
from 2013 levels, by 2020.

To achieve this, Parks will work with the City
on fuel reduction initiatives, such as:



use of non-fossil
fuel vehicles



anti-idling
campaigns



route
optimization

FEATURED PROGRAM

In 2013, we were the first department to pilot the
use of an all-electric vehicle with the [Electric Leaf](#)
and charging station at the Westbridge facility.



8

ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES AT PUBLIC EVENTS

Not only are we dedicated to preventing waste from ending up in landfills, but we're showing others how to do the same. In our Compost Squad program, we provide teens extensive training in soil building and food waste recycling techniques. The teens use this new knowledge to give back to their communities by providing the public guidance and advice at our special events.

OUR PROGRESS

16 EVENTS

achieved 90%
waste diversion
in 2013.



FEATURED PROGRAM

The annual [Big Day of Play](#) event was a huge success this year, drawing over [6,000 participants](#). Thanks to our staff and volunteers who helped sort waste and educate participants at the event, we were able to compost and recycle 92% of our waste.



4

LAND & BUILDINGS

Investing in
infrastructure
for the future

OUR GOALS

1

IMPROVE
ENERGY & WATER
EFFICIENCY OF
EXISTING BUILDINGS

2

GENERATE
RENEWABLE
ENERGY

3

PRACTICE
GREEN
CONSTRUCTION

4

DESIGN
FOR WATER
CONSERVATION

5

INTEGRATE
NATURE INTO
LANDSCAPES

6

ACQUIRE
NATURE IN
THE CITY



THE WORK WE DO

We are committed to sustainability as we renovate, add and replace buildings as well as when we acquire property and develop sites. These sustainable investments reduce our consumption of gas, electricity and water, improve our use of renewable energy sources and lower our impact on the environment.

OUR VALUES



ACCESS

Provide low-impact public spaces citywide.



OPPORTUNITY

Reinvent urban public space to inspire a more sustainable future.



SUSTAINABILITY

Use green practices to reduce our impact on the environment and meet community needs.

6

FACILITIES

saved 15% energy through retrofits

4

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

have solar energy production

59%

ENERGY REDUCTION

per square foot at the New Rainier Beach Pool and Community Center

540,000

GALLONS

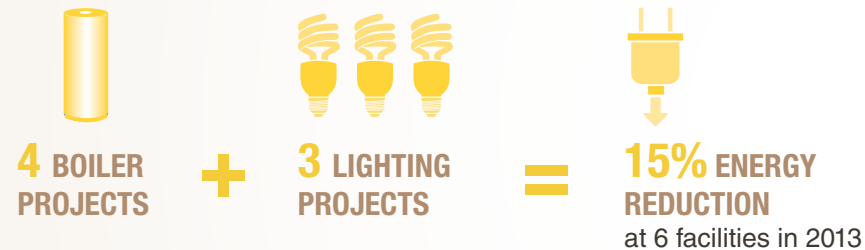
of water can be saved by replacing a wading pool with a spray park

1

IMPROVE ENERGY AND WATER EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

We have the opportunity to save significant energy when we retrofit lighting and aging mechanical systems with more efficient technology. Parks has many of these opportunities with more than 2 million square feet of building stock housing energy-intensive pools, locker rooms, greenhouses, community centers and office buildings.

OUR PROGRESS



FEATURED PROGRAM

The 7 projects completed in 2013 received \$45,714 in grant funding from Seattle City Light and Puget Sound Energy. These projects wouldn't be possible with this support.

Since 2008, we have received a total of \$1,195,691 in utility funding for projects such as lighting, boilers, controls, variable speed drives, recirculating spray features and other energy and water conserving projects.

2

GENERATE RENEWABLE ENERGY

We strive to increase solar energy production in the community as possible through grants and community partnerships. Our solar installations at [Carkeek Park](#), [Montlake Community Center](#) and [Bradner Gardens](#) came on-line in 2002 as part of the Seattle Green Power Program.

OUR PROGRESS



37,925 KWH
produced at our 4
solar installations
in 2013

This is equal to:



8,089
POUNDS OF COAL
that no longer
needs to be burned

FEATURED PROGRAM

In 2012, Seattle City Light completed its first [Community Solar project at Jefferson Park](#) in the Beacon Hill neighborhood. Participating customers helped build three new picnic shelters with roofs made of solar electric panels. In 2013, the site generated approximately 26,862 kWh of clean, renewable electricity each year, while supplying park visitors with much needed shelters.





3

Photo by Chris J. Roberts

PRACTICE GREEN CONSTRUCTION

We are committed to sustainable construction practices on all projects. Since 2003, all 6 large construction and renovation projects have received LEED certification. Gold buildings include: Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center, Yesler Community Center, Northgate Civic Center, Montlake Community Center and Rainier Beach Community Center. Highpoint Community Center is LEED certified.

OUR PROGRESS

6
LEED CERTIFIED
buildings in the
department



FEATURED PROGRAM

In 2013, Parks rebuilt the Rainier Beach Pool and Community Center. The new facility boasts over 50,000 square feet of community space including amenities such as a commercial kitchen, lap pool, and a heated splash pool with water slide. The new facility is **double the size** of the previous one and **uses 59% less energy per square foot**. Innovative technologies such as solar hot water heating, ground source heating, water reuse, and stormwater capture and reuse makes this facility the greenest building in the system.



Photo by Chris J. Roberts



PG. 24

4

DESIGN FOR WATER CONSERVATION

We can achieve significant water savings through infrastructure updates such as changing out a leaky irrigation system and updating flow sensors, converting wading pools to spray features, and installing cisterns.

OUR PROGRESS



540,000
GALLONS

can be saved annually
by replacing 1 wading
pool with a spray feature

This is equal to:



1.22
OLYMPIC
Swimming
Pools full of
water

FEATURED PROGRAM

We now have 10 spray features in our inventory. Four new sprayparks were added in 2013 at Georgetown Playfield, Northacres, Jefferson and Highland parks. Not only do these spray parks save us water, but they save the public water too by providing a free, community alternative to using water at home to cool the kids down.



5

INTEGRATE NATURE INTO LANDSCAPES

Sustainable landscapes are another way we integrate an environmental ethic into our planning and design. Our designs can mimic the way the natural environment cleans our air and water, provides habitat, and selects for resilient plants that flourish in the local conditions. Along these lines, we integrate on-site stormwater management, low-input plants, trees and other natural elements into design as possible to provide some of these natural benefits in an urban setting.

OUR PROGRESS



Awarded
SUSTAINABLE SITES CERTIFICATION
for Kirke Park

FEATURED PROGRAM

Kirke Park in Ballard (0.9 acres) was completed in summer of 2012 and received the Sustainable SITES Certification. Kirke features a community garden space, tree orchard, and native, regionally appropriate plants. The majority of stormwater infiltrates into the ground. The site was designed with reused materials including the structural walls from a historic church previously on the site, concrete and stone slabs, and salvaged boulder and logs.

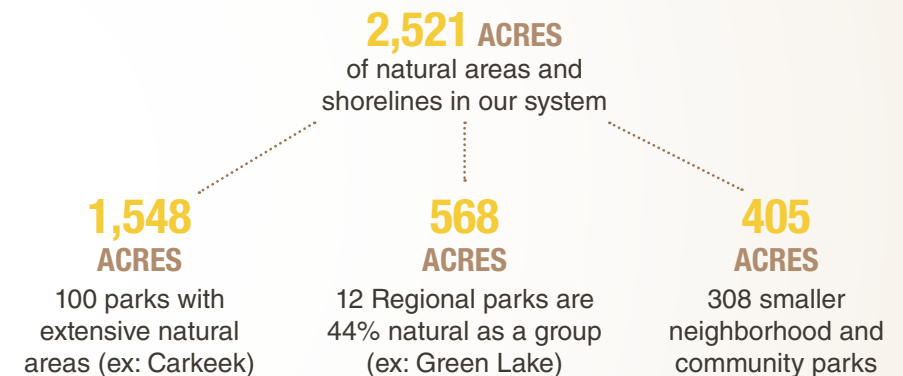


6

ACQUIRE NATURE IN THE CITY

Generally, when the public thinks of a park they think of an actively used recreational site such as a playfield, running trail or grassy passive areas with trees. However, 55% of Seattle's parkland is kept as forest, wetland, tidepools, native meadows and other ecosystems. These areas are managed in different ways and can provide green hillsides, erosion control, clean water, habitat, and opportunities for active and passive recreation.

OUR PROGRESS



HIGHLIGHT

In 2013, we acquired 6.1 acres of land with environmental appeal. We purchased Leschi Natural Area (0.16 acres) which is the final piece of a larger natural area. Puget Creek Edible Park (0.67 acres) is a creek that provides an important source of fresh water to the Duwamish. Arroyos Natural Area (0.67 acres) hosts rare native Madrona Forest. Finally, Smith Cove Park (4.6 acres) is a more developed looking park, but provides an opportunity to restore the waterfront in the Magnolia area.



1 COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

GOAL	MEASURE	2013 PERFORMANCE	GOAL PERFORMANCE	EXPLANATION
Foster Connection with Nature	# of program hours focused on environmental messages annually	~4,500 hours	4,500 hours annually	Based on actual hours spent on environmental themes. Many programs only spent a portion of the program on those themes so their hours were reduced to reflect that.
	% of end users surveyed developed an expanded awareness about the range of choices available to support a healthy natural environment	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015 based on 2014 Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning Benchmarks.
	# of recreation programs highlighting urban food systems	132 programs	100 programs annually	2013 baseline, based on capacity we seek to maintain 100 programs annually.
Empower Residents to Take Action	# of active "Friends Of" groups annually	26 groups	30 groups	"Friends of" groups are citizen groups that help maintain designated parks.
	% of Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning end users that affirmed they will take actions or make choices on behalf of a healthier self, community and natural environment	2015 Measure	75% of users annually	Proposed measure for 2015 based on 2014 Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning Benchmarks.
Increase Program Accessibility	% of Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning end users that come from communities of color, immigrant and refugee populations, and historically underrepresented communities annually	2015 Measure	50% of users annually	Proposed measure for 2015 based on 2014 Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning Benchmarks.
	% change in participation of target audiences (communities of color, immigrant and refugee populations, and historically underrepresented communities) for Good Food programs	2014 Measure	40% increase by 2016	Proposed measure for 2014 based on 2014 Good Food Program Benchmarks.
	% of Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning programs offered in areas with high Equity and Social Justice scores.	31%	50% by 2016	Based on 2014 Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning Benchmarks. Utilized King County's consolidated demographics map with parks overlay and community reporting areas to identify the target areas. High score = 3.1-5.0.
Engage Residents in Educating Others	# of volunteer hours from Seattle volunteer naturalists/nature docents annually	5147 hours	5450 hours annually	We have two specialized programs that engage volunteers in leading environmental education for school groups and the public: the Environmental Learning Center's Seattle Volunteer Naturalists and Magnuson Community Center's Nature Docents.
	# of environmentally focused classes/programs taught by volunteer instructors annually	238 programs	240 programs annually	Based on Seattle Volunteer Naturalists and Magnuson Nature Docent hours.
	% of volunteer naturalists that come from communities of color, immigrant and refugee populations, and historically underrepresented communities annually	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015 based on 2014 Environmental Education and Experiential Outdoor Learning Benchmarks.
Galvanize Teens & Young Adults as Stewards	# of youth participating in environmentally focused service learning annually	628 participants	400 participants annually	These numbers are from the Outdoor Opportunities and Youth Employment and Service Learning programs. The participation goal has been reduced to 400 to reflect a programmatic shift towards youth employment.
	# of young adults participating in environmentally focused employment programs annually	281 participants	435 participants annually	These numbers are based on participation in the following programs which provide environmentally focused employment or stipend opportunities for young adults and teens: Youth Employment and Service Learning, Youth Green Corps, Green Seattle Partnership Youth Employment, Outdoor Opportunities and the Camp Long Challenge Course Collaboration.
	% of surveyed youth participating in environmentally focused programs that feel a connection to the urban environment	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015 based on 2014 Good Food Program Benchmarks.

2 ECOLOGICAL & AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL	MEASURE	2013 PERFORMANCE	GOAL PERFORMANCE	EXPLANATION
Maintain a Vibrant Urban Forest	# of trees planted in parks since 2007	140,330 planted since 2007 (82% of goal)	171,600 trees planted by 2037	Goal set by the 2007 Urban Forestry Management Plan. The full goal is 28,400 trees in developed parks and 143,200 in forested parks by 2037. In 2013 we planted 100 trees in developed & 25,000 in forested parks.
	# of acres brought into restoration since 2005	1,000 acres, (40% of goal)	2,500 acres by 2025	Baseline is from the 2005 Green Seattle Partnership 20 Year Strategic Plan
	# of hours volunteers donated to help maintain urban forests	73,775 hours	100,000 hours annually	Hours reported from Green Seattle Partnership's CEDAR database.
Maintain our Forested trails	# of miles of soft-surface trails maintained annually	3.5 miles	20 miles annually	Current program relies on Seattle Capital Improvement Program funding for major repair of trails. Funding needs to be increased to sufficiently maintain our 120 miles of soft-surface trails.
	# of volunteer trail maintenance projects annually	150 projects	150 projects annually	We rely almost exclusively on skilled volunteers to maintain our forested trails. The number of volunteer projects directly impacts our capacity.
Steward urban orchards, farms and gardens	% of properties overseen by partner community based organizations	52%	62% by 2016	13 of the 25 food producing properties on parks land were managed by non-profit partners in 2013.
	% of properties cared for by volunteer stewards	28%	38% by 2016	7 of the 25 food producing properties on parks land were managed by volunteer stewards in 2013.
	% of parks land dedicated to food system programs cared for to the Seattle Parks and Recreation environmental stewardship standards	2014 measure	95% by 2016	Proposed measure for 2014.
	# of acres of urban farms, gardens, p-patches and orchards annually	29.43 acres	29 acres	We had 1,282,010 square feet of park lands dedicated to food production in 2013. This included: 12 gardens, 3 urban farms, 30 p-patches & 8 orchards.
Connect people to healthy food choices	# of pounds of produce grown annually on parks property	Over 18,000 pounds	2015 Measure	Includes partner data. We are collecting information for 2013-2015 so that a baseline can be established. P-patches are a separate asset.
	% of produce donated annually	96% of produce	2015 Measure	Our policy is if it's grown on park land it has to be used in programs or given to a food bank. We are collecting information for 2013-2015 so that a baseline can be established. P-patches are a separate asset.
Manage Rainwater Runoff from Impervious Surfaces	# of gallons of water collected and reused in cisterns	2015 measure	2015 measure	Proposed measure for 2015.
	# of gallons of onsite stormwater managed	2015 measure	2015 measure	Proposed measure for 2015, which will include information on permeable pavement, bio-retention, green roofs, tree canopy near impermeable surfaces, and rain gardens.

3 SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS

GOAL	MEASURE	2013 PERFORMANCE	GOAL PERFORMANCE	EXPLANATION
Responsibly manage energy use	# of kBtu / Square Feet	88.6 in 2010 90.3 in 2013 Increase of 2%	20% reduction by 2020 from 2010	The 20% goal reduction is based on 2010 levels, goal from the 2013 Climate Action Plan
Responsibly manage water use	% difference from annual water budget	20% under budget	0%, on budget	Water is measured in CCF, or 100 cubic feet; water budget are calculated based on rainfall projections. In 2013 Parks used 20% less water than the 2007-2010 historic average.
	# of gallons of pool water managed	2015 measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015.
Responsibly manage pests, weeds & invasive plants	% of properties managed by Parks and Recreation that are pesticide free annually	74%	75%	Based on pesticide application database. Counted number of parks where pesticides were applied divided by total number of properties that we managed.
	# of pounds of pesticide active ingredients used annually	2014 Measure	2014 Measure	Proposed measure for 2014.
Utilize green cleaning products	% of janitorial chemicals purchased annually that meet toxic reduction guidelines	74%	80% annually	Based on city and federal toxic reduction guidelines. 4,546 gallons purchased, 3,350 of which met green guidelines. Used in offices and community centers.
Divert waste from landfills	# of tons of garbage taken to landfill	2,622 tons	2,500 tons annually	Goal is based on a three year average.
	% change in recycled waste	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015.
Mitigate hazardous waste	# of pounds of operational waste managed annually	4,186 pounds	2015 Measure	Much of the 2013 pounds were due to a masonry clean-out effort. In general the pounds of waste were generated from Department maintenance activities, such as electrical, paint, and others. The 2,640 pounds goal is point at which the Department of Ecology defines an agency as being a "Small Waste Generator." Currently, Parks is designated as a "Large Waste Generator." Previously, the Department's baseline was 5,000 pounds.
	% of chemicals purchased that are covered in Section 3.31 of the Department of Ecology guidelines annually	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015.
Decrease vehicle emissions	% annual reduction of greenhouse gas fuel emission as greenhouse gas/vehicle miles travelled from 2013 baseline	2014 Measure	42% reduction by 2020 2013 baseline	As part of the 2014 Green Fleet Action Plan the City seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emission 42% by 2020, using 2013 as a baseline. For Parks, this requires a 6% annual reduction.
	% annual reduction of greenhouse gas fuel emission as greenhouse gas /labor hours from 2013 baseline	2014 Measure	42% reduction by 2020 2013 baseline	As part of the 2014 Green Fleet Action Plan the City seeks to reduce greenhouse gas emission 42% by 2020, using 2013 as a baseline. For Parks, this requires a 6% annual reduction.
	% of staff who have received anti-idling policy training	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	This measure represents a program to support the Department's goal of decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.
Encourage sustainable practices at public events	# of active compost or worm bins at community gardens annually	5	No net change	The Good Food Program has a goal of at least 5 active compost or worm bins located at community gardens, based on the number of active community garden and associated program activities.
	% change of participants knowledge in waste diversion practices annually	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Utilizing pre and post survey (self-reported). Will be a part of future staff trainings.
	# of events achieving 90% waste diversion annually	16 events	20 events annually	Staff and volunteers at these events helped to sort waste and compost or recycle over 90% of the total amount of waste both produced and thrown away by participants.
Educate staff on sustainable practices	% of survey responses to resource conservation and environmental behavior exercise	2014 Measure	50%	Proposed measure for 2014 to interactively remind staff of the various ways to save energy. This will include recycling, composting, energy, etc..
	# of staff trained on food waste diversion annually	2014 Measure	2014 Measure	Proposed measure for 2014.

4 LAND & BUILDINGS

GOAL	MEASURE	2013 PERFORMANCE	GOAL PERFORMANCE	EXPLANATION
Improve energy & water efficiency of existing buildings	# of KBTus saved annually. % change for facility retrofits	1,642,636 15% change	Increase as opportunities arise	Energy savings from small renovations (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning & lighting).
	# of gallons of water saved annually	2014 Measure	Increase as opportunities arise	Water savings from toilet, urinal, sinks, showerheads and other water saving measures.
	# of building audits conducted annually	2014 Measure	12	Proposed measure for 2014.
Generate renewable energy	# of kWh's produced annually	37,925	Increase as opportunities arise	Based on our commitment to increase solar energy production in the community as possible through grants and community partnerships.
Practice green construction	% of major construction projects that receive LEED Gold rating	100% Gold	100% Gold +	In accordance with City Resolution 31326 new construction and major renovation of a City-occupied, City-owned building over 5,000 square feet must be certified LEED Gold or higher. All of our major construction and renovation projects since 2008 have been certified Gold.
	% of projects that complete the Capital Green Checklist	2015 Measure	100% annually	New construction and major renovation of a City-occupied, City-owned building under 5,000 square feet as well as those projects not eligible for LEED must complete the Capital Green Checklist to assess opportunities for incorporating sustainable building features in the project.
	Project performance using LEED and Capital Green Checklist	2015 Measure	2015 Measure	Proposed measure for 2015.
	% of construction waste recycled annually	2015 Measure	90% (demolition) /75% (non-demolition)	In 2011 Seattle City Council Resolution 31326 set the goal of achieving a 90% waste diversion rate for construction involving demolition and a 75% waste diversion rate for construction not involving demolition (for projects that are 5,000 square feet or larger).
Design for water conservation	# of gallons of water saved . % change for replacements	2015 Measure	Increase as opportunities arise	Based on our commitment to upgrade water systems when possible and ensure the use of water conservation features in new construction and renovations. Projects include converting wading pool to spray features, water reclamation systems, major irrigation upgrades, etc.
Integrate nature into landscapes	# of parks awarded the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) Certification	1	Increase as opportunities arise	Our designs can mimic the way the natural environment cleans our air and water, provides habitat, and selects for resilient plants that flourish in the local conditions. Although it is not necessary to apply for sustainable sites, the criteria provide a good overview of a healthy landscape.
	# of additional gallons of on-site storm water managed	2015 Measure	Increase as opportunities arise	In 2013, the City Council and the Mayor directed city departments to work together to achieve Seattle's goal of managing 700 million gallons of stormwater runoff using green infrastructure. All projects are required to implement Green Stormwater Infrastructure to the maximum extent feasible for flow control.
Acquire nature in the City	# of acres of natural areas	2,521 acres	Increase as opportunities arise	Acquisition is part of our strategy to protect and preserve existing natural areas. 55% of Seattle's parkland is kept as forest, wetland, tidepools, native meadows and other ecosystems. These areas are managed in different ways and can provide green hillsides, erosion control, clean water, habitat, and opportunities for active and passive recreational. www.seattle.gov/parks/docs/Forested%20land%20cross-es%20all%20categories.pdf



SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION: 2013 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

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