

Green Seattle Partnership Update

Michael Yadrick, Plant Ecologist | February 15, 2023



Seattle
Parks & Recreation

Healthy People, **Thriving Environment**, **Vibrant Community**



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GSP is a multi-year effort to restore and maintain the forested parks in Seattle



GSP staffing update

- **Lisa Papineau**, OOC GSP, Wildlife, IPM Manager
- **Lisa Ciecko, Eric Sterner & Michael Yadrick**, Plant Ecologists
- **Bridget Kelsh**, IPM/Wildlife Coordinator
- **TaShon Washington**, OOC Natural Area Crew Lead
- **Matthew Hilliard**, OOC NAC Sr. Gardener
- **Kimmy Ertel and Jay Nelson**, NAC Gardeners
- **Teo Martinez, Daljit Singh, Todd Gauthun and Ynhi Phan**,
NAC Maintenance Laborers





The Origins of the Green Seattle Partnership

Today, Seattle's forested parks and greenways are remnants of a once-vast forest that covered the entire Puget Sound region. After 150 years of logging, view-clearing, and passive management, these remnant forests became sick. Seattle's trees are aging and inundated with weeds that threaten the health of the entire forest. Most of our trees are now near the end of their natural lifespans.

Drive on Westlake Avenue along Lake Union, on Lakeview Boulevard below St. Mark's, on Cheasty Boulevard South in the Rainier Valley, or along parts of Lincoln Park in West Seattle and you may see what looks like a very picturesque scene: trees and ivy growing together to make a green landscape. But looks can be deceiving, and this pleasant green view hides a potentially devastating problem.



“Seattle’s trees are aging and inundated with weeds that threaten the health of the entire forest....”

This man has saved more than 2,000 Seattle trees from the clutches of ivy

Nov. 2, 2022 at 6:00 am | Updated Nov. 2, 2022 at 5:21 pm

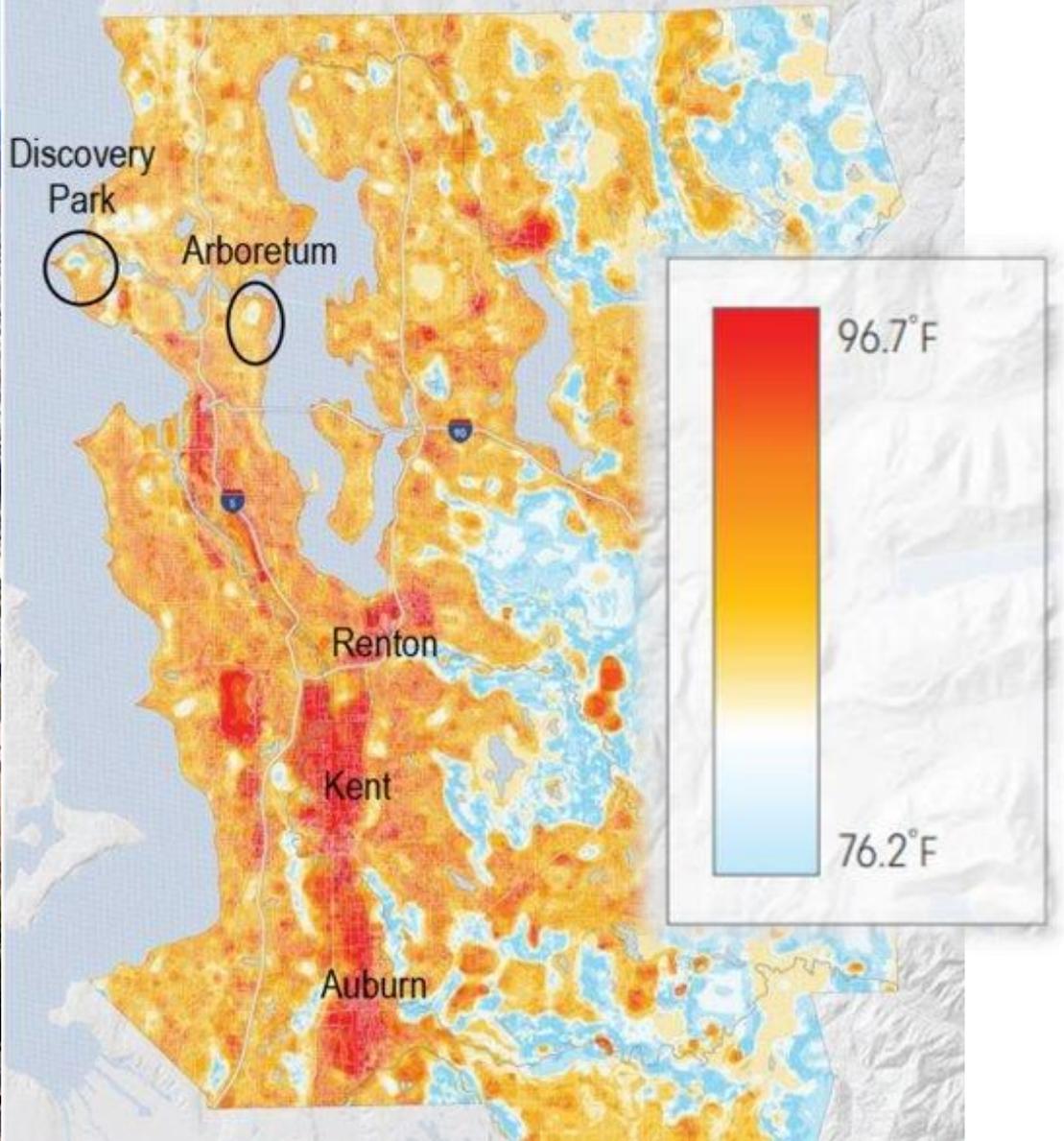


Doug Adams breaks out his big saw to cut off the last bit of ivy hanging off a tree inside the Duwamish Head Greenbelt in West Seattle. Adams calls these giant pieces of ivy “logs.” (Jennifer Buchanan / The Seattle Times)



CREDIT: LUCA MICHELI / UNSPLASH

Seattle needs more trees: Report finds city has work to do to meet its leafy goals



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2022 *at a glance*

**GREEN
SEATTLE**
PARTNERSHIP

1,889 Acres Enrolled in Restoration
in total over 17 years of the partnership

30.9 New acres enrolled

22,531 Professional Crew Hours

70,013 Native plants installed
including 8,595 trees

32,959 Volunteer hours
13% completed by youth

155 Acres of establishment

123 Paid job training roles

14.3 Restored acres maintained

187 Active Forest Stewards

119 Parks saw action, including
2.2 miles of shoreline

8 Webinars and workshops
hosted online and in-person



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where we have been

- **20-Year Plan** set stage for 2,500 acres by 2025
- **2019 budget reduction** spurred **thorough evaluation of GSP** (2020 SLI response to City Council)
- **Level-setting:** original goal of 2,500 acres by 2025 not achievable based on environmental, financial, and social conditions, such as:
 - *Increase in total acres > 2754 acres*
 - *Climate impacts require adaptation (e.g. increasing establishment period)*
 - *Increasing labor costs/inflation*
 - *Longer timescale of transitioning restoration to long-term stewardship*



where we are going - revisioning

- redefining GSP's measures of success
- developing Indigenous leadership
- reimaging the Forest Steward Program
- expanding green job pathways in youth and adult programming
- committing to Just Language and action across projects and programs
- refining where we work
- cultivating new partners
- relationships for long-term stewardship
- changing GSP governance



forest stewards

- leadership role – designs and implements site restoration and community engagement
- currently: **187 active**
99 interested in the next orientation
- 39 Forest Stewards have provided 10+ years of service



community partners



SPR-funded partner organizations:

1. Seward Park Audubon Center
2. Tilt Alliance @ RBUFW
3. Dirt Corps
4. EarthCorps
5. DNDA Nature Consortium
6. Student Conservation Association
7. Forterra
8. Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
9. Na'ah Illahee Fund @ Daybreak Star
10. ECOSSE
11. Partner in Employment
12. Shared Spaces @ Heron's Nest
13. Sea Potential LLC
14. Cascadia Consulting, Inc.



project highlight: job training



The Green Seattle Partnership supported **123 paid positions** in 2022. Participants worked with partners to get on-the-ground restoration and community building experience.



- 2022 paid roles with Na'ah Illahee Fund, Partners in Employment, Dirt Corps, Student Conservation Association
- field experience to learn about ecological restoration, urban forestry, trails and park management
- complements traditional volunteer program



Natural Area Crew

- Added Sr. Gardener (1) & Gardener (2) Positions
-

- technical skills
- program & volunteer support
- deliver 45K plants citywide



Wildlife/IPM

- beaver management
- coordinates research on carnivores, amphibians and birds
- supports pesticide licensing & IPM training
- updates best management practices



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project highlight: riparian | wetland | shoreline



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2023 SPD Ramp Up & Approach

- **Cycle 2 Park District Commitments - GSP Restoration (\$970,000)**

[Mayor's Office add] Funding will be used for tree-planting and care, and related restoration activities in natural areas, especially on steep slopes, wetlands, and other areas that are not amenable to community-based restoration work.

- professional crew services to 2018 levels; return to past sites, citywide footprint reflects District priorities, climate response and intersections with trails & food systems
- expand contracts with community-based organization that reflects Revisioning priorities, including
 - building new partnerships with BIPOC-led organizations, paid roles, job connections; potential connection with Seattle Parks Foundation

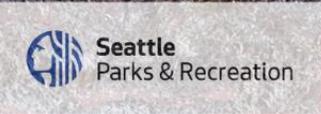




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EARTH WEEK IVY EXPO

Revisoning Restoration



Discovery Park Proposed Ecological Thinning

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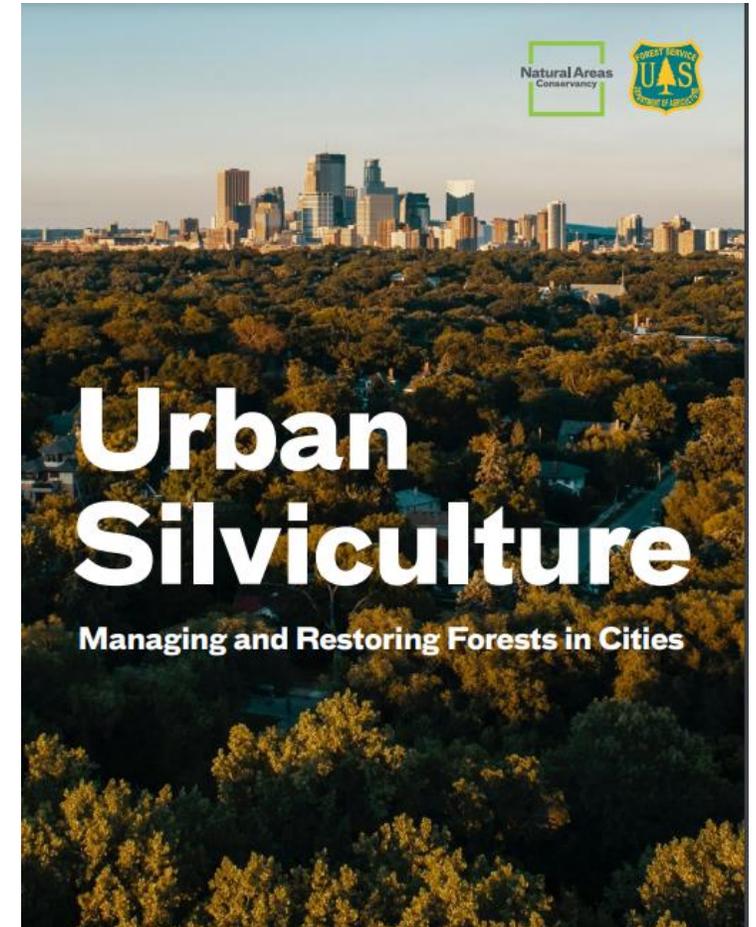
Seattle's forested parks & watersheds

Thursday, 30 August 2012

Seattle Parks earns FSC certification



The City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation became the first urban forest manager in the US to earn FSC certification for 2,500 acres of forested parkland.



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ecological thinning

- managing urban natural areas is similar to managing rural forests
- selective removal of trees to promote partial light, canopy diversity, "release" smaller trees
- create openings (gaps) of <math><1/2</math> acre
- remove danger trees and/or create snags
- to date focus on forest health in deciduous dominated stands & no material left the parks



Discovery: Kennedy 500

- former military barracks reforested in 1990
- 2016 alder thinning
- 1 gap = conifer release
- understory treatment
- "skip" for control

West Duwamish Greenbelt: Puget Park

- vicinity of Puget Creek & mill
- "Maduzia Gap"
- 27-acre thinning & gaps
- replanting & ongoing establishment
- community connections

West Duwamish Greenbelt

THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL TRAIL
Area unsafe: current project work includes tree felling

As part of the Green Seattle Partnership, Seattle Parks and Recreation is conducting urban forest restoration to ensure the long-term health, sustainability and resilience of the West Duwamish Greenbelt forest.

Work will begin August 2017 and include removing invasive plants, thinning and felling of native species trees, replanting with native species, and ongoing maintenance and monitoring.

Please help protect this area by staying off this stewardship trail. During restoration there are potential hazards for human safety, including downed trees and steep slopes.

Please use only the trails that are part of the official Seattle Parks trails system: enter the West Duwamish Greenbelt at 14th Ave. SW & SW Holly St. or at Highland Park Way SW.



PROJECT TIMELINE

August–October 2017

Thinning and gap enhancement operations

November 2017–March 2018

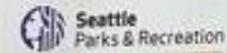
Replanting

Spring 2018

Conduct ongoing, long-term monitoring

For additional information about this project, please contact:

Michael Yadrick, Plant Ecologist
206-615-1046 michael.yadrick@seattle.gov



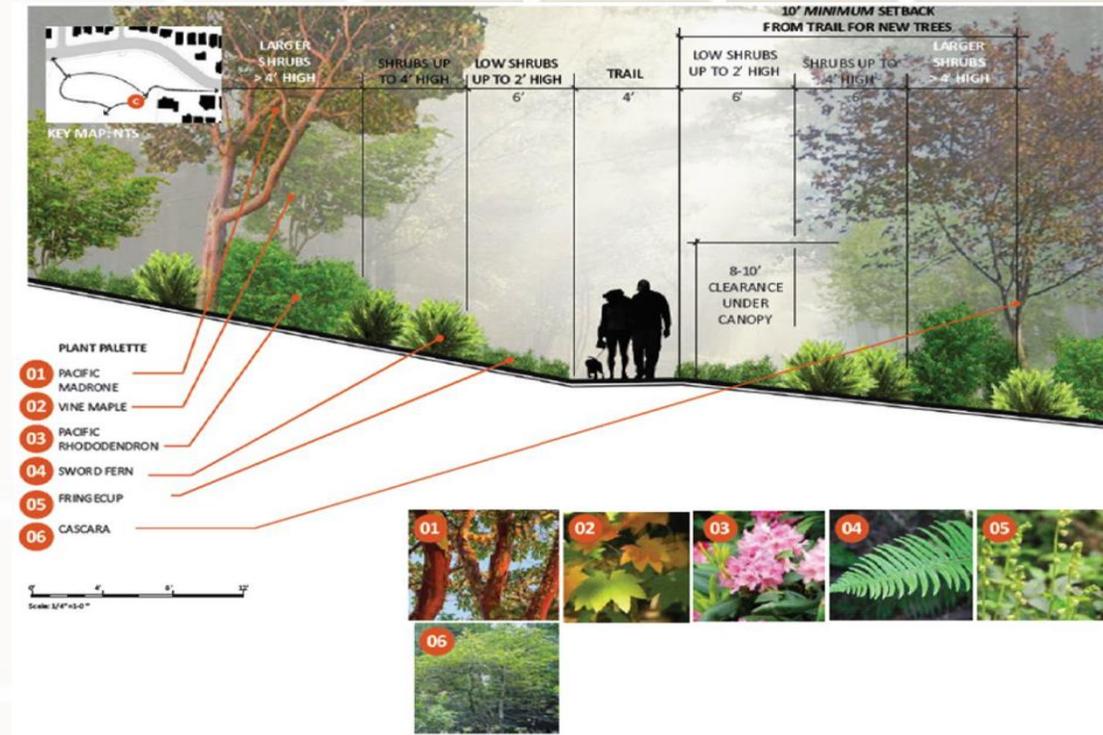
Llandover Woods

- development, cutting before park preservation
- trail safety
- 2016 BLM coppice reduction
- replanting



Colman Park

- 3-acre 31st Ave "West Slope"
- Vegetation Management Plan
- 2018 thinning
- replanting
- "territorial views"



Duwamish Gap Creation

- 5 acres in Duwamish Greenspaces
- 2020 selective injection of small diameter hardwoods
- gaps = openings (<1/2 ac)
- create small "snags"
- conifer release & planting

proposed Discovery Park thinning sites





initial project goals

- reducing the risk of wildfire by removing excess fuels
- improving the health of the "leave" trees
- providing habitat for wildlife (e.g. birds, pollinators)
- improving the aesthetic appeal of the park by creating more open and interesting spaces for viewing wildlife
- educating the public about the importance of managing forests, capture carbon, shade, and homes for flora and fauna



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consultation/project design

- Friends of Discovery Park (ongoing)
- The Last 6000 (1/9)
- Urban Forest Commission (2/15)
- Duwamish Tribe, United Indians of All Tribes, Windz of Change Alliance, Magnolia community
- to consider: timing, wildlife, volume of material, consistency with Park purposes, stormwater, significant tree sizes, cultural resources





Thank you!



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