

Collaboration Spotlight & Action Opportunity:

SEA members and their students partner with Seattle Parks in Ethnic Studies!

Now in its third year, the TREE Project at Cleveland High School is an integrated project focusing on the intersections of environmental education and racial, social, and economic justice for Seattle Students. By involving teachers and students in an engaging project-based learning opportunity with an action component, we can make a difference in the health of the community. Cleveland High School's 11th grade Ethnic Studies students, as well as student on the school's Green Team, participate in a community restoration project at the Maple School Ravine on Beacon Hill. Connecting the history of tree cover inequities and the racial and social injustices the lack of trees in a neighborhood often indicate, participants in this project have seen tangible results from their hard work and dedication, empowering them to become agents of positive change in their own communities.



With support from the Seattle Education Association's CRSJ, this project has facilitated data collection, habitat preparation and restoration, the creation of a pollinator garden and the rehabilitation of a community orchard that had been neglected and used as a trash dump for decades. Students engage in environmental stewardship and have educated their peers on the ways in which they are currently battling the historic impacts of racist policies in Seattle Government. The TREE Project has been presented at the CRSJ Equity Conference, as well as at this year's American Horticultural Society Symposium in Chicago.

ACTION & ADVOCACY Opportunity!

Mayor Harrell's [proposed new budget](#) includes removing the Environmental Education unit of the Seattle Parks and Rec, the department that has facilitated the TREE Project at Cleveland High School, as well as collaborations with the following schools and educators: Alki Elementary, Louisa Boren STEM K-8, Dunlap Elementary, Greenwood Elementary, Hawthorne Elementary, Highland Park Elementary, John Muir Elementary, Magnolia Elementary, McDonald International School, Orca K-8, Roxhill Elementary, Chief Sealth International High School, Seattle World School, West Seattle Elementary, Sydney Arellano, Deborah Baker, Andrew Coughran, Katherine Dodsley, Zach Hofer, Julianne Johnson, Danielle Kay, Megan Lee, Rachel Marks, Ted Martin, Chelsea Maybee, Joe Mingo, Lori Price, David Sorenson, and Lindsay States. We know that environmental justice IS social and racial justice. However, with his proposed budget, Mayor Harrell undercuts the significant work the Environmental Education unit has done with our city's students to foster their knowledge, appreciation, and preservation of the natural resources we are so fortunate to have here in Seattle. In 2023, Seattle was the only city in the United States that was recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme as a "Role Model City" for urban ecosystem restoration. Let's continue to participate in and advocate for environmental education here in Seattle!

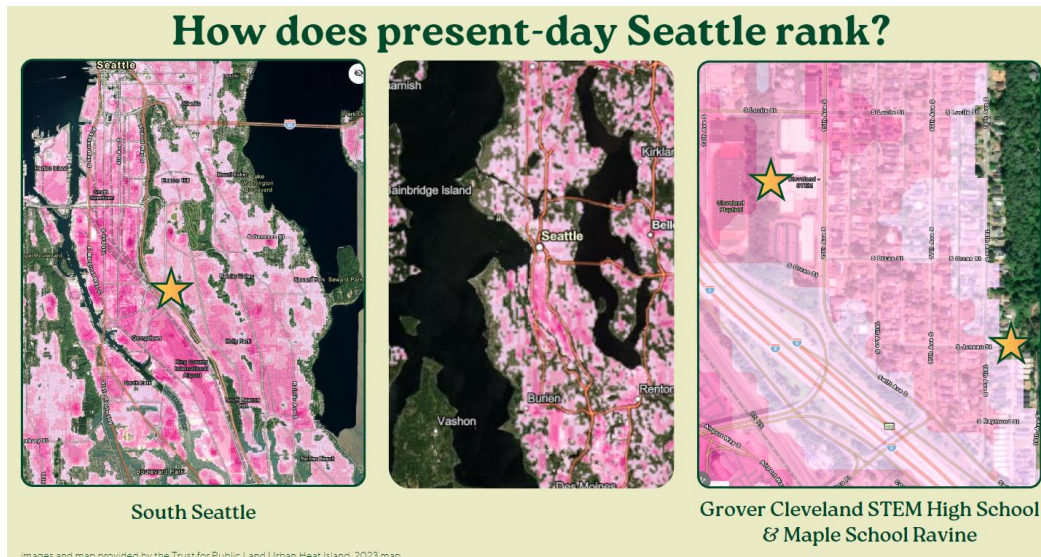
If you are Seattle resident, a SPS employee, or an SPS family member, and are able to attend the City Hall council meetings October 16th, November 12th, or November 21st, please show up and add your voice in support of maintaining the Seattle Parks Environmental Education unit, and maintaining their important partnerships with SEA members and SPS students, like the TREE Project. Our collaborations create opportunities to do transformational work in a world where we often feel helpless, and the opportunity to find hope through making our communities better for us all.

For more information about urban heat islands and redlining in Seattle, see below:

1. Scan the QR code and type in your address to find out where your neighborhood ranks on the Extreme Heat Vulnerability Index (EHVI). Many of Seattle's historically redlined neighborhoods currently experience higher heat severity, which means significant negative effects for our city's most vulnerable people, including children, the elderly, and those with preexisting conditions, conditions that are often exacerbated by historic and continuing inequities in health



and health care for people of the global majority, and other historically marginalized populations.



2. Learn more about Seattle’s history of redlining and its environmental impacts, the effects of access to green spaces on health, and other related topics by checking out the following resources:
 - [Front and Centered- “a diverse and powerful coalition of communities of color-led groups across Washington State, whose missions and work come together at the intersection of equity, environmental and climate justice.”](#)
 - [Green Space and Stress: Evidence from Cortisol Measures in Deprived Urban Communities](#)
 - [Heat and Housing: A Link between Historic Racism and Current Environmental Inequities](#)
 - [Learn About Heat Islands](#)
 - [Minorities more likely to live in ‘urban heat islands,’ study finds](#)
 - [Mapping Community Determinants of Heat Vulnerability](#)
 - [Morbidity is related to a green living environment](#)
 - [Racial Restrictive Covenants-Neighborhood by neighborhood restrictions across King County](#)
 - [Redlining in Seattle](#)
 - [Seattle's Canopy Cover](#)
 - [Seattle’s green gap grows as race affects environmental equity](#)

Seattle's History of Shade Removal & Social Injustice

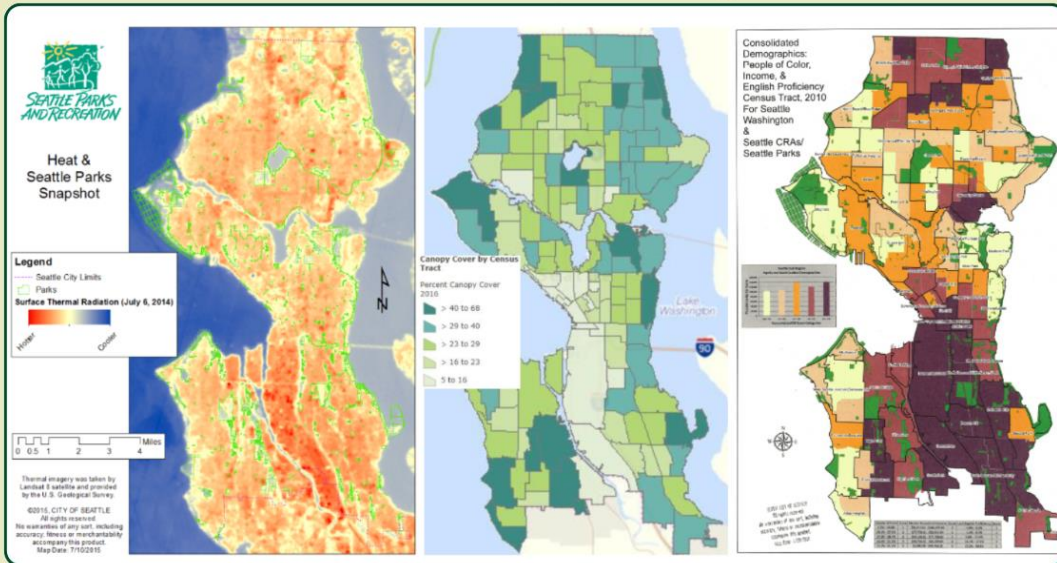


Image from the Seattle Parks & Recreation's Thriving Environment Initiative "2025-2031 Climate Preparation" presentation

"We always have to be evaluating our climate goals against our equity goals to make sure that we further our climate goals and advance equity."

Mayor Jenny A. Durkan



TrEE Project Spring 2023-Spring 2024