GRASSROOTS ECOLOGY 2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT



hen it comes to advancing our mission of engaging communities to restore local ecosystems, we are grateful for the support of our community at every step.

OUR MISSION

TO ENGAGE AND EDUCATE THE PUBLIC TO RESTORE LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS.

OUR VISION

VIBRANT, HEALTHY LANDS AND HUMAN COMMUNITIES THAT SUSTAIN ONE ANOTHER AND ARE RESILIENT IN A CHANGING WORLD. Our generous community of financial supporters is the backbone of our organization. Your support makes it possible for us to improve and expand our volunteer programs, Youth Stewards, and career development work with our Interns and AmeriCorps members. Working and learning together, we put thousands of beneficial native plants in the ground that are now feeding the ecosystem. Each yellow starthistle or French broom plant we removed made that much more space for biodiversity to thrive again on local lands.

We also doubled down on partnership-building in order to bring the benefits of land and watershed stewardship to more people and places. To name just a few examples, this year kicked off a partnership with Climate Resilient Communities at our new Ravenswood Preserve restoration site to create opportunities for East Palo Alto residents to experience and steward their shoreline open space. And, partnerships with Woodside High School and Siena Youth Center have brought hundreds of local students to explore Stulsaft Park and the Redwood Creek watershed. You may notice something different about how we organized our donor list this year. Instead of sorting it the traditional way—by gift size—we reoriented it based on longevity. We did this to recognize and celebrate not only those who donated this year, but those who have been steadfast supporters through the years—coming through for our local lands and communities even during uncertain economic times.

Regardless of when you joined us, we thank you for being a part of our community—and our ongoing journey!

In partnership,

Junko Bryant and Alex Von Feldt Co-Executive Directors

P.S. In case you missed it, we became Co-Executive Directors as of 2023! This change allows us to more deeply embody our organizational values of cooperation and shared leadership, while expanding our capacity to fulfill the many demands of the ED role. We are glad to be in this together!

FROM OUR CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

WHERE WE WORK

580



580

238

880

280

Grassroots Ecology works on the unceded lands of the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, Tamien Nation, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, and Muwekma Ohlone. We are committed to leveraging our access to their ancestral lands to support the sovereignty of our Indigenous neighbors and friends. STULSAFT PARK Redwood City ► Hundreds of Redwood City students joined us at this 42-acre urban park to learn about and steward its unique ecosystems, from its creek to its serpentine grasslands.

ADOBE CREEK AT MANRESA TRAIL Los Altos

After five years of enhancing this neighborhood creek site connecting to Redwood Grove Nature Preserve, our Manresa Trail Restoration Project is complete! Like our other restoration sites, we will continue to steward the area with students and volunteers.

BEAR CREEK REDWOODS

Los Gatos ► This seasonally wet meadow and its surrounding habitat is rebounding following four years of removing French broom and planting thousands of native grass plugs.



CREATING S FOR FOR FOR IN EAST PALO ALTO

hriving partnerships make for thriving habitat! Local residents, schools, communitybased organizations, and governments came together with Grassroots Ecology to improve and appreciate the East Palo Alto Baylands—from Cooley Landing Park to Ravenswood Open Space Preserve.

We had our first planting season at Ravenswood Preserve! Despite workday cancellations due to extreme rain, volunteers prevailed in planting 400 native plants to enhance critical salt marsh habitat. This was the first phase of a multi-year project in partnership with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, funded by Measure AA through the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority.

Eastside Prep Academy students and other local youth improve their shoreline on Coastal Cleanup Day.

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Over 100 community members joined us to experience the highest tides of the year and learn about local sea level rise impacts as part of our King Tides Walks, offered in partnership with the Exploratorium, KQED, Climate Resilient Communities, and San Mateo County.

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Given the history of Cooley Landing, a former landfill site, and Ravenswood, a former salt pond, it's been magical to observe the many wildlife visitors that our planting has made way for including pollinators, lizards, birds, jackrabbits, and snakes!

It's so impactful to see this appreciation of nature carry on to the next generation with the youth in our programs. From the sheer excitement of kindergarten students who get to explore their local park to the passion of high school students ready to take climate action, it's been a joy to be a part of it!"

BARBARA CAMACHO GARCIA, Grassroots Ecology Project Lead for East Palo Alto



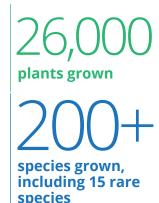
ALL GROWN UP: OUR NATIVE PLANT NURSERY CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

This year marked the 20th anniversary of Grassroots Ecology's Native Plant Nursery, and wow have we come a long way! A unique regional asset, at no other nursery can you find such a wide variety of plants that are locally native to Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.



In the last year, our nursery grew plants for Grassroots Ecology's restoration projects across 9 cities, as well as those of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Valley Water, and Santa Clara County Parks. We also sold plants directly to community members, and donated plants to groups like the Siena Youth Center.

Beyond producing plants, our nursery continued to serve as a vibrant educational hub where staff, interns, and students grew their knowledge and skills in native plant conservation. NURSERY NUMBERS 2022-23



Sourced from 25+ local watersheds

2 restoration projects supplied

and the promise of rain and

cool weather have returned.

our restoration staff install the plants at public parks, open

spaces, and along creeks with

the help of volunteers.

25+ young people educated in plant conservation



Countless pollinators supported



The first year and beyond:

The nurturing isn't done once these plants meet solid ground. We continue to maintain and monitor plants to promote healthy establishment—especially for the first 2-3 years.



FOLLOW A PLANT'S JOURNEY THROUGH OUR NURSERY, FROM WILD SEED TO SOLID GROUND



Hand collection: Seeds and cuttings are handcollected by nursery staff from wild stands in each plant's watershed of origin, following strict guidelines to avoid overharvesting.



Propagation: Seeds and cuttings are propagated according to their specific ecological and reproductive requirements. Rare plants often involve the most complex propagation techniques to ensure successful germination and growth. **Growing strong:** Plants are grown using best management practices to ensure clean nursery stock, including regular testing for plant pathogens. Some plants are ready for planting as soon as three months. Others, like trees, may take years.



Reintroduction: When plants are strong enough to survive

UPWARDS AND OUTWARDS: LAUNCHING ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS

G rassroots Ecology continues to fill an important niche by offering a variety of career development programs for aspiring environmental professionals.

Over the past year, these amazing young people—our Habitat Restoration Interns, Summer Naturalist Interns, and AmeriCorps Watershed Stewards Program (WSP) members—have poured so much of their time, effort, intellects, and hearts into improving our local lands and communities.

We look forward to watching them fully fledge as ecologists, educators, naturalists, researchers, and more. And lucky for us, several of them will continue their career growth with Grassroots Ecology next year in various other AmeriCorps programs!



Though our Summer Naturalist Interns were with us for only one season, they accomplished a ton—from helping free our parks from invasive weed encroachment to earning their certifications as California Naturalists.



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I see the need for people to feel connected with each other and the land they live on. Developing an appreciation and attentiveness for plants and people at the same time feels so natural and I am so grateful I had the chance to begin this journey with Grassroots Ecology." DMI RODRIGUEZ, WSP Corpsmember

Expanding my knowledge on native plants and strengthening my public speaking skills were valuable takeaways from this internship... and learning about others' career paths and struggles/ triumphs has aided me in my own career path." ELISA RECLUSADO, Habitat Restoration Intern at Cooley Landing

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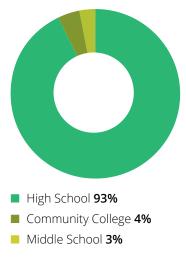
This internship helped me to hone my skills in environmental education and working with students." BRIAN TATSUTA, Habitat Restoration Intern at Byrne Preserve and Redwood Grove (pictured here with fellow intern Jess Lillywhite at a Community Watershed Day)

WHY OUR YOUTH STEWARDS PERSIST: FROM PROGRAM PIVOT TO PERMANENCE

e were delighted to welcome many new and familiar faces to our Youth Stewards Program this year. Across the 8 preserves and creek sites where we operate the program, 215 students from more than 30 schools came out to connect, observe, journal, explore, plant, weed, and make a difference for their lands and community.

With each session they completed, Youth Stewards added to their trove of botanical knowledge and environmental science skills—while creating some lasting friendships along the way.

YOUTH STEWARDS BY AGE GROUP







PARTNERING TO REACH MORE YOUTH

We relied on many partnerships—old and new—to recruit students from the communities of our program sites located in Cupertino, Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Redwood City.

As part of our commitment to equity, we prioritize outreach and enrollment of youth from low-income and immigrant communities; and work closely with schools in these communities to tailor our programs to their students' needs and school schedules. Key recruitment partners included:

- Eastside College Preparatory School
- Mountain View-Los Altos High School District AVID program
- Woodside High School Green Academy
- De Anza College
- Foothill College

At the start of the pandemic we expanded the Youth Stewards program from 4 to 8 sites to meet the increased need for outdoor opportunities, and we have sustained this expanded scale since. As a result, hundreds of additional students have connected to nature and each other, many of them over multiple sessions and sites.

Special thanks to these students who have been Youth Stewards for five or more sessions since 2020!



The program made me feel like

change to save Earth."

FARIDA ABD EL HAK

Los Altos High School

Started: Spring 2021



Planting, mulching and there is still hope that people can was super fun." SOPHIE MORRILL Mountain View High School Started: Fall 2020



I've gained a new understanding of conservation and how we can help the environment through relatively simple acts." I AURA ROBI FTO Homestead High School Started: Summer 2020





The program illustrated to me what impact just a small group of volunteers can have on their local community, and that anything can be fun if you're doing it with the right people." DANIEL SHIH

Fremont High School/De Anza College Started: Fall 2020

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS

People of color

Identified as immigrants or

children of immigrants

Low-income

MAKING SPACE OUTDOORS FOR EVERYONE



Grassroots Ecology teamed up with Peninsula Open Space Trust to offer unique community-building workdays for women and nonbinary individuals.

eeding calls from our staff and community, Grassroots Ecology piloted an array of new events this year that carved out space for people with specific identities to come together in nature—from workdays geared to LGBTQ+ and women and nonbinary individuals, to culturally themed events for Día de los Muertos and the Lunar New Year.

We also continued to offer volunteer and educational events almost daily for the public at sites spanning 10 cities and two counties—engaging over 6,000 people from across the Bay Area!



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Grassroots Ecology is good at making volunteer days accessible to a range of abilities, creating inviting, friendly space, making space for participants to share their knowledge, and normalizing sharing pronouns." VOLUNTEER

77

Grassroots Ecology is good at connecting and forming a community of interesting and kind people." VOLUNTEER

It was wonderful to work as a team to help maintain the open spaces we all love. The work was tiring but so rewarding!" VOLUNTEER

77

When we host queer events, the group of volunteers already starts with a sense of community and comfort that is unlike other events. With that starting point, we get to go deeper in conversation, make more friends, and have more fun!" TYLER FELD.

Grassroots Ecology Project Lead (pictured in foreground, above)



OUR TEAM

Board Members

Kit Gordon, *President* Andy Fenselau, *Vice President* Casey Mullins, *Secretary* Michael Wu, *Treasurer* Julio Calderon Barb Erny Lucille Glassman Jerry Hearn Tina Hugg David Smernoff Japjit Tulsi Bart Westcott

Staff 2022-23

Alex Von Feldt Junko Bryant Paola Bueno Fran Callan Barbara Camacho Garcia Hannah Cunningham Kate Dolkas Claire Elliott Tyler Feld Deanna Giuliano Claire Grist Stanley Gu Valerie Lee Shelley Pneh Emily Repech Stephanie Saffouri Emily Sharp Siena Watson Laurel Wee Kristen Williams

Watershed Stewards Program Corpsmembers

Isabel Magaña Serena Myjer Dmi Rodriguez Sawyer Porter

Habitat

Restoration Interns Jaquelin Angeles Martha Bédier Cabot Megan Elmore Isabella Muñoz Garcia Destiny Lara Jessica Lillywhite Nitza Marquez Daniela Mendoza Ruiz Elisa Reclusado Sophie Sedano Brian Tatsuta A fter 17 years of service to Grassroots Ecology, our much beloved Senior Ecologist Claire Elliott is retiring. Her contributions are significant and too varied to count—from launching the first volunteer monitoring program for Stevens Creek to supporting thousands of youth and adults to step up as stewards, community scientists, and naturalists.

Though her professional career is coming to a close, Claire plans to continue her lifelong commitment to stewardship. "My first volunteer gig post-retirement will be at a UC reserve teaching California Naturalist students. Then I plan to travel to Alaska (on my bucket list for 50 years!) In the fall, I promise you will find me helping out Grassroots Ecology again!"

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Claire never fails to make me feel welcomed, whether she's patiently explaining rain barrel maintenance, leading a nature walk, or just chatting during a potluck. Her knowledge and experience are immense, yet she stays so curious and humble." STANLEY GU, Ecologist



FINANCIALS

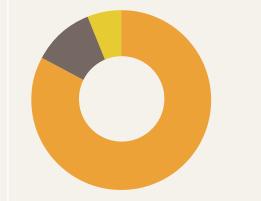
REVENUE AND EXPENSES, JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023 PRELIMINARY AND UNAUDITED

REVENUE SOURCES



EXPENSES

Programs



City Contracts	\$555,000
Government Agencies	\$480,000
Foundation Grants	\$385,000
Individual Donations	\$345,000
Nursery Sales and Service	\$120,000
Corporate Contributions	\$110,000
Total Revenue	\$1,995,000

Fundraising	\$224,000		
Administration	\$104,000		
Total Expenses	\$1,936,000		
Change in net assets	\$59,000		
BALANCE SHEET			
Assets	\$1,183,900		
Liabilities	\$91,900		
Temporary Restricted			
Net Assets	\$160,000		
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$873,000		

\$1,608,000

Plant

Summer interns prepare for invasive plant demolition, making way for biodiversity at Palo Alto's Pearson-Arastradero Preserve.

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SUPPORTERS

JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2023

I n recognition of the incredible impact of your loyalty and support over time, this year we have re-organized our donor list by longevity instead of gift amount. Many thanks to donors new and old! It takes a diverse ecosystem of supporters to ensure our restoration and education programs continue to bloom across two counties!



✓ Donors of \$1,000 or more

Perennial Friends

7 YEARS

David Beaver and Renee Courington Kathleen Bennett and Thomas Malloy 🗡 lane Bourne Scott Brenneman 🔦 Junko and Kevin Bryant City of Cupertino 🗡 City of Los Altos ✓ City of Menlo Park 🔨 City of Palo Alto * City of Redwood City 🜱 Michael Closson Melanie and Peter Cross 🗡 Tammy and Bill Crown 🗡 Susan Dunn 🜱 Linda and Jerry Elkind Joan Ferguson and Craig Uhrich 🗡 Linda Gass Lucille Glassman 🗡 Google Kit Gordon and Tony Alvarez 🗡 Stephen Haas 🔦 Jerry Hearn and Rebecca Reynolds 🔨 Paul Heiple J. Vance Huckins Fund of the Tides Foundation 🗡 Mary Hufty and Daniel Alegria Franklin and Catherine Johnson Foundation Tabitha Jordan and Adam Weissman 🌱 LaureL Foundation 🗡 Nicole Loomis Tor and Nancy Lund 🜱 Valerie Matonis John and Valerie Metcalfe Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District 🗡 Maryann Moise 🜱 Peter Neal 🌱 Claudia Newbold Fred and Kris Nichols 🗡

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation Penny L. Pollock 🔦 Redwood Serenity Fund 🗡 San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authoritv * Jimmy Schmidt and Kristen Williams 🌱 Elizabeth Schwerer and Kingston Duffie 🗡 leff Segall and Jun He David Smernoff and Cindy Russell 🔦 Stanford Real Estate 🜱 Madeleine Stovel 🔦 Colleen and Geoff Tate 🗡 Tammy and Mike Taylor Town of Los Altos Hills 🗡 Japjit and Rebecca Tulsi 🌱 Tim and Evita Twerdahl 🜱 Vallev Water 🗡 Alex and Randy Von Feldt 🗡 Dieter and Susan Walz 🔨 Don Weden Sue Welch 🌱 Sarah and Dan Wernikoff 🗡 Bart and Nancy Westcott * Woodside Atherton Garden Club Linda and Harvey Ziff

6 YEARS

Chantal Akerib Apple Laura Banks Mary Bernstein Steve and Shelley Brown Sue Brown and Bill Hamburgen Thomas Carlino Marge De Staebler Jerry Dischler Peter and Amy Drekmeier Joan Dudney Marsha Duro Barbara Erny and John Huang Marilynn Gallaway



Paul Hammes Lorraine Hancock 🜱 Sheryl Heckmann Gary and Patricia Hedden 🗡 Freda Hofland Charlie Krenz * Karen and John Lemes Annamarie and Alan Louie Vicki Martell and John Crowell Judith and Robert Murphy Anne and Samuel Ng Paypal Giving Fund Ruth and Edwin Satterthwaite Patricia Showalter Timothy and Sally Tomlinson Laurie and Jay Witt Barbara Zotz

5 YEARS

Adobe Employee Community Fund Ann Akey Richard Baumgartner California State Coastal Conservancy 🜱 Marilyn Chow City of East Palo Alto 🗡 Trisha and George Clifford Dennis DeBroeck and Nancy Heinen Andy Fenselau and Suzanne Koch 🗡 Kate Godfrey Jeff Greenfield & Marilyn Keller lerre Hitz 🌱 Savanna Hung 🌱 🔦 Richard Izmirian 🗡 Doug Kent and Claire Elliott 🌱 🔦 Ingrid Keseler Yoriko Kishimoto and Leland Collins Michelle Mann Wendy and Tim McAdam 🜱 Kyler Murlas 🜱 Linda and John Nightingale Oracle 🗡

Jane Packard Dave Ramsey Tracy Sherman Lisa Smernoff Stanford University Jennifer Tsai <

4 YEARS

Amazon Smile AppLovin 🜱 Keith and Atsuko Bennett Phil and Mary Bobel Erin Craig and Richard Dvorak Betsy and David Cregger Sharon Winslow Erickson Anne Feldhusen 🌱 Robin Geiman William and Nancy Grove 🔨 Loretta Guarino Reid Katherine Haffner-Zoccatelli Ross Heitkamp Roger Hine 🗡 Ken and Lindsay Joye lill and Jace Kohlmeier 🗡 Bill and Kathy Korbholz loel Lachter Peter and Sue LaTourrette Nancy Leech Bev and Peter Lipman 🗡 Perry and Mary McCarty Nancy McClenny Bob and Myung Sook McIntyre 🗡 Steve and Linda Monosson * One Tree Planted 🌱 Everett and Rebecca Palmer Marguerite Pelose Deborah Rose, M.D. Lisa and Dennis Schofield Rich Schwerin and Julie Weiss John and Carolyn Seyfarth Arnold Thompson VMware 🌱 Merav and Itai Vonshak

3 YEARS

Mary Ashby Christine Baker Faye Boom Tess and Eric Byler Joyce Chung and René Lacerte 🗡 Anne Cribbs Matt and Kate Dolkas 🔦 lean Eastman Linda and Richard Elder Judy and Robert Fenerty Anil Gangolli Girls Middle School Gina and Brian Greenen Connie Habash Susan Hine Catherine Howard Devon Jackson Stephen Jaeger Larry Klein Nerissa Ko William Lean Menlo School 🌱 Microsoft 🜱 Mike Morrill and Kim Wernicke 🗡 NetApp 🌱 Peninsula Conservation Center 🔨 Lance Powell Diane Talbert Town of Portola Valley 🗡 Jane Wilson Janet and David Wilson 🗡 Woodside High School 🗡

2 YEARS

Vishakha Atre Barbara Banfield Peter Brende Mark Bult Fran and Neal Callan Cisco Rachel Clemons Kathleen Early Teri and Joe Eyre Jan Fenwick *Continued*

Brian Forney Craig and Teresa Gleason Margot Harrigan James Higbie Caroline Horn Amv Hsiao Nancy Hubbart Tina and Josh Hugg 🜱 Iustice Outside 🗡 JungEun Kim Elisa Kung Benjamin Lai Donna and Matt Leacock Elaine Lee John and Elizabeth Lucas Terri Moore Annette Mullins Casev Mullins 🗡 Patricia Mulvey Sanket Naik Dawn Neisser Jill Nelson Khanh Nguyen Odyssey School 🗡 lim and Patti Plummer Blair Porteous Bassam Saffouri Manoj Sahu San Mateo County Office of Education 🌱 Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency 🜱 Cathy Schultz Fabienne Semeria Sequoia High School Ben and Eileen Shih 🌱 Matthew Spadoni Ulrike Sujansky John Triska Rory Van Tuyl Nico White Randall Wilburn Michael and Lauren Wu 🗡 Yellow Chair Foundation * Sally Yencken

We have made every effort to ensure that our donor list is complete and accurate. Please notify us of any errors or omissions at kate@grassrootsecology.org.

✓ Donors of \$1,000 or more

Perennial Friends

WE WELCOME DONORS WHO GAVE FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS YEAR!

Advent International 🜱 Pooja Agarwal Evelyn Aguon Joel Bartlett Curtis Bezault Anne-Marie Bonneau **Boston Scientific** Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula Elizabeth Brimhall Pamela Brotherton-Sedano David Brunner Julio Calderon Shirley Calderon California Youth Leadership Corps 🜱 Kimberly Carahasen Ashley Castaneda Perez Tingyee Chang Louise Christy Zoe Colloredo-Mansfeld 🔨 Kelly Cooper Bob Culley Dell Timothy Dobbins Karen and Dave Dolkas Sarah Dorahy Ellie El-Fishawy Marc Fasnacht The Friedeberg Family Diane Guerin David Hallagan Melissa Henderson Maika Horjus Kristi Iverson Dirk Jensen Audrey Joy Carol Kafin Linda Kamas Rachel Kanowsky Kjell Karlsson Iohn Kehoe Stephen and Ivy Kerr **KLA** Corporation Mindy Kozlowski Karen Kronick Caroline Kvitka Helena L Richard Lanman 🗡 Aivy Le Andrew LeDawson Alexandra Lee Debbie Lee Emily Lee Jongmo Lee

Jack Li Teng Liang Oscar Mace Derek Maclean Holly Materman David Moore Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation lames Mravca Kanthi Nagaraj Deborah Neff Niantic Inc. 🌱 John Nuttle Michael and Gail O'Connor lacob Oakman Old Orchard School 🔨 Yukiko Orii Val Otazu Suzette and Barry Pangrle Peninsula Open Space Trust 🔨 Pure Storage Meghana Rao Lennie Roberts Roche Molecular Systems Dave Rodgers San Francisco Bay Restoration Authoritv 🔨 Molly Sandomire Javier Santos Karen Sawislak Anna-Brit Schlaepfer Lisa Schmidt Steven Schneider Cristina and Ray Schryver 🗡 Leslie Shaffer Allison Shaw 🗡 Lara Sox-Harris Lilian Svec Ajay Tallam Joanna Tang **Gregory Tomlin** Adelheid Fogl Tupper Valley Health Foundation, through the County of Santa Clara Federal Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan Act 🔨 Valo Ventures 🗡 Varian Medical Keith Wandry David Wang Hemmie Wang Iulia Wilkowski Beverly Witham William Yang Nazhin Zarghamee Dachuan Zhang * Angela Zhu 🌱



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