



In the fight for climate resilience and healthy ecosystems, we need all hands on deck. That's why we are working hard at Grassroots Ecology to ensure that everyone has access to outdoor experiences and the opportunity to steward our local ecosystems.



What does this mean? It is factoring equity and inclusivity into everything we do. It is recruiting new board and staff members who are passionate about our mission and connecting with the diversity of our local community. It is offering more events and resources in Spanish, using gender-inclusive language at our programs, and updating our website with more information on accessibility. It is our staff continuing the conversation about income inequality and racial justice in our region, and how this affects our work.

Recognizing that not everyone can afford to volunteer for an unpaid internship, our biggest initiative this year was to create a 10-month, paid internship program for college students and early career environmental professionals. We are so energized by the 10 interns that worked alongside our staff this year and are excited to see where their careers will take them in the future. Meet several of them on pages 6 and 7.

By continuing to build a foundation for inclusivity and equity, we can foster diversity in the environmental community much like we foster biodiversity in our ecosystems. We have more to do, and it will take all of us working together to ensure a resilient future for our planet. Join us!

Alex Von Feldt **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Junko Bryant ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

680 580 880 280 580 680 San Francisco Bay Redwood City East Palo Alto Menlo Park 😵 Palo Alto Alviso 😱 San Mateo County Santa Clara County 680 Los Altos **Portola Valley** Los Altos Hills San Jose Cupertino biodiversity. Saratoga **HABITAT RESTORATION SITES Los Gatos** DEMONSTRATION **GARDENS WATER QUALITY MONITORING SITES** Grassroots Ecology acknowledges that we work on the traditional, ancestral, unceded lands of the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone, Tamien Nation, Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, and Muwekma Ohlone. We continue to build our capacity to develop meaningful partnerships that support the sovereignty of these Indigenous communities.

Where We Work

Since 2015, we have engaged local youth and volunteers to restore habitat along the East Palo Alto shoreline where a landfill once stood. ▶

Together with neighbors and volunteers, we have transformed Bol Park into a haven of urban habitat for birds and pollinators! Our latest addition of a rain garden in 2018 has reduced flooding along the bike path while boosting

BOL PARK

After spreading native seed over ripped roads and building pads and planting thousands of native plants, acorns, and buckeye nuts, our Hendrys Creek restoration project is complete.



HENDRYS CREEK

COOLEY LANDING

Volunteers are Back in Action!

Watch out weeds, our volunteers are coming for you! After an 18-month freeze, our community workdays reopened to the public in September 2021. Over the remainder of the year, more than 4,100 volunteers turned out to plant and protect native species, battle invasive weeds, and clean up our creeks and shoreline.

While we always enjoy getting to know our volunteers as we work side by side in the field, last year we decided to get to know you all in a more systematic way. Our new volunteer survey has helped us better understand who our volunteers are, what drives you to participate, and how we can help you get the most out of your experience. Here are some highlights of what we learned:

said they understood how their actions had a positive impact on the ecosystem.

of respondents were repeat volunteers, and the remaining 62% were first-time volunteers. We hope you keep coming back!

said they learned about our workdays by word of mouth. Thanks for helping us get the word out!

TOP 3
REASONS
PEOPLE
VOLUNTEER
WITH US:

BUILDING COMMUNITY, MEETING NEW PEOPLE

2

TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

BEREST IN OUT

INTEREST IN OUTDOOR WORK/CAREER



77

I really enjoyed the event! Made me feel muscles I haven't felt in a while! Loved getting into the dirt and learning."

The activities were fun and rewarding. I can't wait to come back in the spring and check on the plants I planted as well as the established plants that I weeded around."

This was very educational and fun. Our Grassroots Ecology guides were very friendly and supportive and a wealth of interesting information."



Aspiring environmental professionals who cannot afford to sacrifice pay for a volunteer internship now have the chance to learn and grow with us while earning income and gaining job experience.

Launched in September 2021, our 10-month paid internship program provides ecological education, fieldwork, mentorship, and training in one of two concentration areas: habitat restoration and native plant conservation.

Not only do our interns discover the wonders of nature in open spaces near them, they discover new possibilities for who they can be and the world they wish to create.











I decided park
management was
where I wanted to go
with my career. The
Grassroots Ecology
internship has been a
great way to learn
more about the ecology
in our local parks
while also networking
and further developing
my skills outside."

Alfredo Gonzalez Velez



In a short time, Grassroots Ecology has influenced my life, especially with understanding more about what I am actually passionate about. When it comes to environmentalism, I feel that my role has become critical in showing my community the importance of having a relationship with nature."

Aisha Williams



This internship hit every goal of mine. I'm incredibly passionate about getting out and getting the work done to improve our local habitats as well as interacting with the community to better understand their relationship to environmental issues."

Christian Tensuan

77

Beyond the array of new skills and knowledge I have picked up from this internship, I have also gained a newfound sense of self-belief in my abilities to impact the world around me and to accomplish my goals."

Dylan Randazzo

SROOTS ECOLOGY 2021–22 Annual

Youth Finding Their Power and Place in Nature

During their time outside with us, each student in our Youth Stewards Program discovers new things about the natural world, and about themselves.

This year over 160 committed and curious Youth Stewards joined us for outdoor learning at one of 7 park sites, ranging from preserves in the foothills of Cupertino, Palo Alto, and Redwood City to the baylands of East Palo Alto.

Youth Stewards learned all about the ecology of their site—from its plants and animal species to its soil, watershed, geology, history, and restoration needs. Even more exciting, they applied their knowledge to improve park habitat from the ground up.



I felt great accomplishment after completing the various restoration tasks such as weeding, willow staking, and my personal favorite, planting."

Rohan Redwood Grove Youth Steward

The Youth Stewards Program gave me a greater appreciation of restoration practices and strengthened my resolve to learn more, volunteer more, and do something about the environmental crisis."

Emma

McClellan Ranch Youth Steward

Youth Steward

I loved these past 10 weeks because every Friday, I could be in nature after a long week and just enjoy the fresh air, people, and snacks.

Annabelle Byrne Preserve I will remember the bonding experience with my friends."

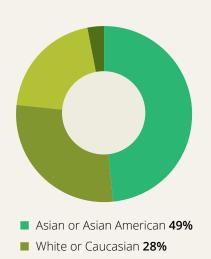
Tomas

Cooley Landing Youth Steward

Even weeding was fun."

Praagya Byrne Preserve Youth Steward

YOUTH DEMOGRAPHICS



Hispanic or Latino 20%

■ Native American 3%

72% People of color

58% Identified as children of immigrants

16% Identified as immigrants

11% Low-income

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.



The Path of a Steward

Grassroots Ecology aspires to help each person we work with move forward along their own personal stewardship path. Natalie Kataoka is one such individual who we have had the privilege to walk with in the early stages of her stewardship journey. See how far she has come in the past five years since we first met her!

2017

Natalie joins our Youth Stewards Program at Redwood Grove and discovers a love of volunteering. By the end of the summer. she contributes over 100 hours of service doing everything from yanking weeds to counting bugs.

"Meeting people who shared my ideals of sustainability encouraged me that we as a team were making a difference on that particular day, regardless if the workday attracted 5 people or 25 people."



Natalie's calling to stewardship takes root.

2019

Natalie's first year of college at the University of Oregon. Without hesitation she declares Environmental Science as her major.



2020

Natalie's plans to study abroad in Ecuador are canceled due to COVID. Instead of doing rainforest research, she focuses on local issues—coauthoring a book on how cities can adapt their streets to be more accessible during COVID, and working part-time for the Sustainable Cities Institute.

Natalie's environmental knowledge and research

2021

skills expand and deepen during college.

2022

Natalie graduates with a B.S. in Environmental Science, and minors in Biology and Public Policy. She is accepted into a U.C. Davis' Master's program in Environmental Policy and Management, which starts in the fall.

While Natalie's stewardship journey has now advanced far beyond Grassroots Ecology, memories of her time with us continue to keep her grounded:

"I think about this moment a lot even now... I was under some coyote brush, pruning it with other volunteers.

I remember the moss beneath me, looking up through the branches at the blue sky and bright clouds. I could hear birds singing. It was so peaceful. I want to be in a future with more moments like that. Remembering it helps me stay connected to why I started this work in the first place. I found my unexpected happy



assessment for the City of Eugene to investigate the impact of climate change on local forests. She begins her senior thesis on nitrogen fixing symbionts in grasslands, and volunteers at a local park to clear invasive ivy—bringing back fond memories of

Grassroots Ecology

As part of her college's

Leadership Program,

Natalie contributes to a

Environmental

forest health

management



By the time Natalie graduates from college, her capacity for stewardship is in full bloom.

2018

Guided by our staff, research project at Redwood Grove exploring the use of invasive plants. She celebrates her 18th with her friends at Redwood Grove.

"I found where I belonged and what I want to environmentalist, a volunteer, and



dedicate my future towards...being an a steward."





Natalie with her fellow Youth Stewards in 2017. A love of stewardship sprouts.

10

All That Grows at Our Nursery

Last year our Native Plant Nursery grew over 25,000 plants for reintroduction onto public lands, including 200+ endemic species. Each of these plants began as a seed or cutting hand-collected by our staff, and each has an important ecological role to play.

But our nursery grew more than plants; we grew environmental stewards—people who value the natural world and take action to protect it. The nursery provided fertile ground for learning about native plant conservation to our interns and Watershed Stewards Program Corpmembers.





A Roxy Layden, Nursery Intern (middle), developing her plant identification skills with fellow Nursery Intern Dylan Randazzo (left) and Nursery Director Deanna Guiliano (right).

What I have gained

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Addressing Urgent Environ mental Needs of Our Time



FIRI

We are supporting cities to implement sustainable fire clearing practices that reduce fire risk while protecting native species.



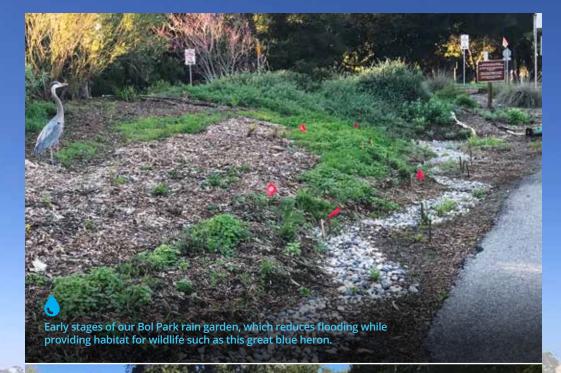
WATER

The rain gardens, catchment systems, and lawn replacements we create with volunteers conserve precious water and show our community how to create water conserving landscapes.



BIODIVERSITY

Thousands of beneficial native plants that our local animal species depend on for survival are putting roots down thanks to the efforts of our Native Plant Nursery and Habitat Restoration team.





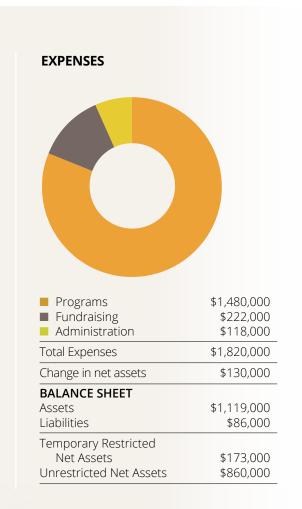


Financials

Revenue and Expenses, July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022 Preliminary and unaudited

\$1,950,000

REVENUE SOURCES City Contracts \$543,000 Individual Donations \$411,000 Government Agencies \$409,000 PPP Grant \$229,000 Foundation Grants \$170,000 Nursery Sales and Services \$95,000 Corporate Contributions \$91,000 Program Fees, Other \$2,000





Total Revenue

Supporters

July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022

* Long-term loyalty donors and funders of 5 years or more

Our mission is only attainable through the participation and support of many different people and partners. Your collective generosity powers our ongoing restoration and education programs across two counties, while also allowing us to adapt and create new programs that meet the evolving needs of local lands and communities. Thank you!

\$100.000+

City of Palo Alto* Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District* Valley Water*

\$50,000-\$99,999

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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.



Our Team

We welcomed two new members to our growing Board of Directors!



I joined the Board at Grassroots Ecology to bring more awareness about my local Latinx community and assist in bringing us closer to serving, enjoying, and learning about the important work Grassroots Ecology undertakes."

Iulio Calderon Board Member



My mother used to



visit Redwood Creek to watch the restoration watch the restoration work going on. She'd report back on how the plants were doing, when people were out watering and weeding, and how ducks would paddle around in the creek. At the beginning, I didn't know this was Grassroots' project, but with my mom gone now, this is a fond memory that I thank Grassroots for making happen."

Tina Hugg Board Member

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