

Make Seattle Green Again : Attempts to Restore Forest Health in Magnolia's Thorndyke Park.



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Background

- Anthropogenic activity is causing ecological disturbances to the resilience of our forests and if not mitigated in 20 years the earth will lose 70% of its forests
- But luckily, the key factor to mitigation is all-year forest restoration
- Aim of my study was to understand how to develop more community engagement in forest restoration efforts.



Figure 1. A work group from my first hosted restoration work event using GSP's website. We had **6 volunteers** worked on phase 2 and volunteers were taught how to identify plants in phase one.
 Photo by: Walter Hughson

Question

- ❖ What are the best approaches for engaging local communities in forest restoration efforts?

Internship + Methods



GSP 3 Phase Plan: (Daily responsibilities)

- **Phase 1**, identify problem in selected area/section.
- **Phase 2**, removing invasive species (ivy and blackberries).
- **Phase 3**, planting new native plants.



Independent Observation:

Conducted 4 methods/approaches to engage the local community. See results section*

- To find best approaches for community engagement.

Achievement (result)



Ivy Plants

Figure 2a. A before picture taking of Phase one. Most areas are covered with Ivy and blackberries, and have taken over where native plants once thrived in. **Area covers around 0.005 acres of land (1.5 acres of parkland).**



Figure 2b. An after picture of figure 2a taken from Phase 2. Removing aggressive plants (Ivy and blackberries) for native plants to be planted in phase 3. With enough area (0.005 acres) cleared, we can now plant new native plants.

Results

Unsuccessful approaches:

- **Door-to-door:**
 - 30 Neighbors visited
 - 66% had no interest in helping. (20 neighbors)
 - 23% were interested but weather issues (7 neighbors)
 - 1% would help but only on weekends (3 neighbors)

- **Elementary School:**

Magnolia Elementary & Coe Elementary School

Principals: "It would be awesome to get the kids out and helping" they said, "but with the weather so severe, it wouldn't be the best for the kids"



Results (Continued)

Successful approaches:

- **Social Media:**

- Facebook community to share our work with the world and get more people involved. **See figure 4**
- Over **40%** growth in the last month
- **Work-party Events:**
 - Nothing brings people together like a party. It is the best way to meet people and engage in community activities.

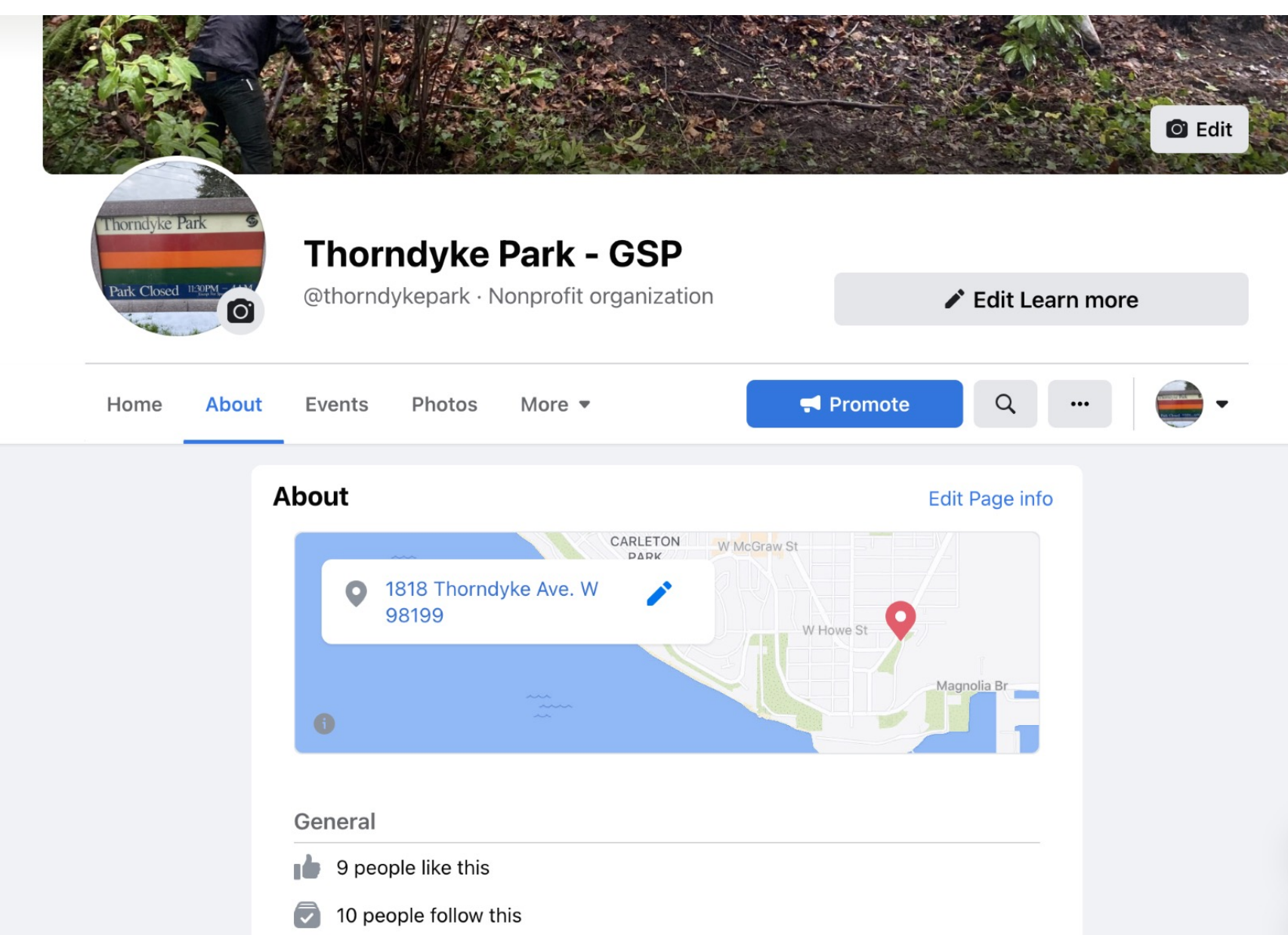


Figure 4.. A screenshot of our Facebook page community. Started out with 10 members and currently has 30+ volunteers all active

Implications

GSP should create more social media accounts. It is difficult to get people to volunteer when only using a website only previous volunteers are aware of.

- By ensuring community engagement using social media, we can increase the likelihood of saving our forest before the deadline is due
- ✓ Instead of human activities hurting the world we live in, we can make a positive impact by turning those activities into a restoration effort.

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