



## Seattle Public Utilities and WM Announce Winners of 2023 ReThink Waste Grants

**SEATTLE, Wash. (Oct. 26, 2023)** – Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and WM are teaming up for the fifth year in a row to invest \$10,000 in innovative stewardship projects in Seattle. Funds are going to two organizations in Seattle. A selection committee comprised of staff members from SPU's Residential Solid Waste Outreach and WM's public education and outreach teams chose from nine submissions from Seattle community organizations that are within WM service areas.

Grant recipients will develop community-based projects focused on waste reduction.

SPU and WM are pleased to announce the following recipients of the 2023 ReThink Waste Grants:

**Shared Spaces Foundation - The Heron's Nest Outdoor Education Center (\$5,000)** – The grant will be used for the purchase and maintenance of two plastic shredding and extruding machines. The machines will process plastics recycled from households and businesses around the Duwamish River Valley and plastics collected at river cleanup events through the Duwamish River Kayak/Canoe program. The Center will also use some of the funds to construct compost bins to produce compost for local urban gardens.

**El Centro de la Raza (\$5,000)** – The grant will help modernize water bottle filling stations at El Centro de la Raza's historic school building in Beacon Hill. The filling stations are part of the organization's broader youth education centered on water conservation and the impact of plastic pollution.

"The ReThink Waste Grant program gives local organizations an opportunity to produce a creative program that can help its community become more sustainable," said Joey Pellecchia, senior district manager, WM of Seattle.

"We're thrilled to invest in such forward-thinking projects," said Jeff Fowler, deputy director of solid waste at Seattle Public Utilities. "Fostering innovation is a win for everyone – the great minds and organizations behind these projects, the Utility, our customers, and the environment."

Through collaboration with the City of Seattle, WM developed the annual ReThink Waste Grant program to support community-based organizations in their efforts toward waste prevention, waste reduction or increased recycling and composting.

### About WM in Seattle

WM is a leading provider of comprehensive recycling and environmental services in the Pacific Northwest and North America. WM provides innovative sustainability solutions and award-winning public outreach to educate and engage businesses and communities to reduce waste and improve recycling. To reduce emissions, WM uses the [EPA's Renewable Fuel Standard Program](#) to allocate renewable natural gas (RNG) to WM trucks serving communities in Western Washington. For more information, go to [wmnorthwest.com](http://wmnorthwest.com).

**About Seattle Public Utilities:** Every day, Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) delivers essential, life-sustaining services and partners with community to equitably manage water and waste for today and future generations. Learn more at: <https://www.seattle.gov/utilities>

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Cutline: Children gather for story time at El Centro de la Raza's José Martí Child Development Center.



Cutline: Volunteers and Heron's Nest Outdoor team members during a Duwamish River clean-up event.



Cutline: WM Public Education and Outreach Coordinator Phillip Tran presents \$5,000 ReThink Waste Grant to El Centro de la Raza leadership (left to right: Phillip Tran, outreach coordinator at WM; Miguel Maestas, director of El Centro de la Raza; Veronica Gallardo, facilities manager at El Centro de la Raza; Becca Fong, single-family waste diversion program manager at Seattle Public Utilities).





Cutline: WM Public Education and Outreach Coordinators Logan Nelson (L) and Phillip Tran (M) present \$5,000 ReThink Waste Grant to Shared Spaces Foundation and Heron's Nest Outdoor leadership (left to right: Logan Nelson, outreach coordinator at WM; Joselynn Engstrom; Phillip Tran, outreach coordinator at WM; Amanda Lee "Lee", president of Shared Spaces Foundation; Sally Hulsman, contracts manager at Seattle Public Utilities).

