

Dirty Fun in the Duwamish Greenbelt

By Oliver Huskey

In two separate work parties in March, 2008, more than a dozen SHG families went to the Duwamish Greenbelt in West Seattle to plant trees, berries, and smaller native plants, dig up invasive Himalayan blackberry root balls, create paths out of dead wood, and mulch recent plantings done by some SHG toddlers.

I thought it was really important and exciting to be planting native species and digging up invasive plants. We helped create shelters for native animals. Native birds will someday build their nests in the trees. It was cool to carry big tools and smash the dirt around. It was fun to learn about the plants and see the little trees. It was satisfying to work hard and get tired doing something good. It was fun to be out in nature. I felt like we had a real forest adventure even though we never left the city.



I wasn't the only one who enjoyed it. Iain S. wrote, "I learned so much, and it was great to plant some trees before the event was over. It gave me a fuzzy feeling all over." And Theo A. said, "I had a great time, and I got really muddy."

I wanted to know how much replanting forests helps the environment. My mom helped me look on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization web site to find out. We found that a large tree will absorb 44.7 pounds of carbon per year. Using carboncounter.com, we found out that an average car will emit about 4.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year. So, we would need about 20

trees to make up for driving our car. We also found out that deforestation accounts for up to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming. Plus, forests provide habitats to about two-thirds of all species on earth. We need forests!

