

# SUSTAINABILITY

## The world is abuzz with Sustainability

*Biodegradable coffee cups embedded with seeds grow into trees.*

Americans throw away more than 146 billion coffee cups every year... a waste.

A creative company in California called **Reduce. Reuse. Grow.** has designed a coffee cup that is not only biodegradable, but has seeds in its walls so that it can be planted and grown!

The cups, which are currently part of a Kickstarter campaign, made with fibers from local recycling centers, are embedded with an assortment of California native seeds based on their locations.



The cups could be soaked in water for five minutes and planted in the ground; they could be collected in a special container for use at nearby reforestation sites; or they could

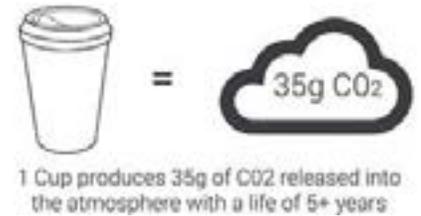
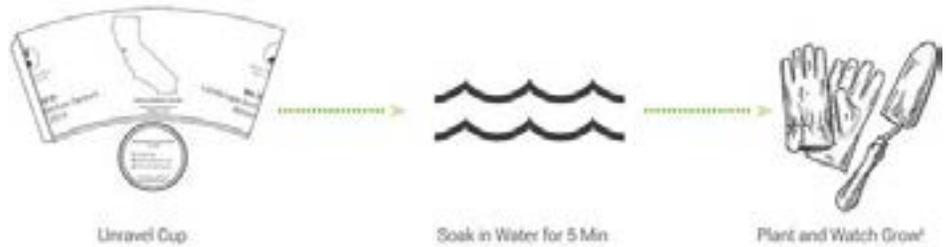
be thrown away and would biodegrade within six months.

Participating stores will encourage people to plant the cups themselves or to return them to be planted by the company.

According to the company "We do know that there are a handful of seeds that will make it no problem, due to the nature in which they are meant for in the wild, very hardy and durable.

However with a majority of the seeds, it will take time to really lock in the temperatures and times exposed to these temps in order to all operate and germinate properly."

At this point, the Kickstarter prototype is for the California region, and there are still many tests to complete, such as putting the seeds through the manufacturing process to see whether they can germinate afterward. If they can, they will put the cups in consumers' hands and monitor usage patterns.



### Where do the seeds come from?



### Whale Rock Reservoir Project

With California's recent drought and struggles with habitat destruction, there are over 200 acres at Whale Rock which need to be restored with native fauna.

Much of the habitat contributes to species of bear, mountain lion, monarch butterflies all the way to Steelhead Salmon.

The Whale Rock Reservoir is a 38,967 acre-foot reservoir created by the construction an earthen dam on Old Creek near the town of Cayucos.

Visit [www.planttrash.com/](http://www.planttrash.com/).

### Alex Henige

**Alex Henige**, founder of **Reduce. Reuse. Grow.**, is a senior in the landscape architecture program at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. For his senior project he developed this "The World's First Plantable Coffee Cup" and founded this company. ■



*Sustainable Slopes, adopted by the ski industry in 2000, provides an overarching framework for enhanced environmental performance.*