

Elza
2nd Place (tie)
4th Grade, Ventana School

We Still Have Hope

There are places where I feel hope. Hope for the planet, and for the future. Yet, some places have the opposite effect on me, they discourage me. I can see what we need to protect and what we need to change.

Littered beaches drain my spirit. All the trash that ends up in the ocean has a negative effect on wildlife. Many animals can get hurt, sick or die. Instead of beautiful sand, there is trash on the beach. The water is gross and littered rather than clear.

Chicago makes me unhappy. There are many factories and smokestacks that pollute the air. This takes away my passion and shows me that some places need help. In San Francisco, cars pollute the air that people breathe, and there are fewer trees compared to Los Altos. In these places I feel as if the world might not survive.

Fortunately, there are many places that people care about. At Joshua Tree, I feel alive and feel as though I can change something. Joshua Tree sustains lots of wildlife. Uvas Canyon gives me joy. There are trees and a creek. Water is essential for life. So, the creek is a place for animals to drink. In a tree or in a forest also gives me hope. The fact that trees take carbon and make it oxygen is amazing. They are climate change fighters.

All these places show me that there is still a chance to fix the world. We can also start by changing the places that need the most help, and protecting the places that need it. As Jay Inslee says, "We are the first generation to feel the sting of climate change, and we are the last generation that can do something about it."