



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Department

632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
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Tel 907-343-4355

URL www.muni.org/departments/parks



MEMORANDUM

Date: March 5, 2015

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

Cc: Josh Durand, Parks Superintendent

From: Maeve Nevins, Park Planner

Project: **PRC 15-09:** Youth Employment in Parks 2015 Projects

INTRODUCTION

Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation Department. YEP aims to positively engage a new generation of diverse young leaders as conservation stewards of public lands and of the Anchorage community through meaningful job training, employment and education.

Since 2007, YEP has hired over 250 Anchorage youth to complete park improvement projects. The teens learn valuable natural resource management job skills by building trails, bridges and restoring stream banks. In addition, youth engage in relevant educational opportunities to increase their civic engagement, environmental awareness, and recreational activity and leadership skills. At the end of the program, teens participate in a mentorship week that links their new skills to future careers.

PLANNING AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Youth Employment in Parks projects receive input from the community and guidance from Parks and Recreation staff to ensure that park improvements are consistent with the goals of the Anchorage Park Plan. Parks and Recreation staff has also worked closely with government agencies and non-profit partners to identify projects that capitalize on available funding and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Last year, the Youth Employment in Parks teens completed \$320,000 worth of improvements in Anchorage Parks and Trails. This summer, the YEP teens will complete an additional \$234,500 in improvements in Anchorage Parks.

This report presents the five YEP and one Student Conservation Association's (SCA) YEP Alumni crew projects to be completed this summer.

1. Westchester Lagoon Bank Restoration
2. Kincaid Beach Trail
3. Earthquake Park Interpretive Trail Signs
4. Centennial Park Campground
5. Far North Bicentennial Park Sledding Hill and Trail Work
6. Kincaid Park Trails and Restoration

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS (YEP) CREW PROJECTS

Westchester Lagoon Bank Restoration **\$22,500**

Last summer, the Parks Department repaved the Chester Creek trail along the Westchester Lagoon. To help mitigate the impacts of construction, the YEP crew will plant native trees and shrubs to facilitate long term stream bank stabilization. This project is in coordination with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service who will be providing their design services to invest in youth engagement in habitat restoration projects. Funding is made possible by a 2014 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant.

Kincaid Beach Trail **\$50,000**

In 2014, the Anchorage Park Foundation was awarded a \$50,000 state legislative grant to develop a sustainable trail to the beach at Kincaid Park. The YEP crew will spend two weeks developing a formal soft surface trail from the Coastal Trail to the Kincaid Beach. The project will provide safe access, include interpretive information, and rehabilitate and restore areas eroded by social trails. This project is in coordination with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Friends of the Anchorage Coastal Wildlife Refuge.

Earthquake Park Interpretive Trail Signs **\$45,000**

In 2014, the Anchorage Park Foundation was awarded a \$45,000 state legislative grant to improve Earthquake Park. The YEP crew will focus on improving existing social trails and installing interpretive trail signs along the route.

Centennial Park Campground **\$42,000**

Since 2012, this Centennial Park Campground has received significant improvements all funded by a 2012 State Legislative Grant of \$500,000. The YEP crew will complete the final phase of this makeover including landscaping and sledding hill improvements.

Far North Bicentennial Park Sledding Hill and Trail Work **\$45,000**

The YEP crew will spend two weeks at Far North Bicentennial Park. The crew will have two tasks: (1) to develop a sledding hill at Abbott Loop Community Park, and (2) to maintain and improve existing segments of trail. Development of the sledding hill will include grade modifications, slope stabilization and the rehabilitation of vegetation. The crew will also maintain and improve trails within the park. The scope of trail work is currently being developed in coordination with a committee of Far North Bicentennial Park user groups.

STUDENT CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION'S (SCA) YEP ALUMNI CREW PROJECTS

Kincaid Park Trails and Restoration **\$30,000**

The Student Conservation Association's (SCA) YEP Alumni crew will spend two weeks at Kincaid Park restoring existing trails, managing vegetation and assisting with the YEP crew on the Kincaid Beach Trail project, as needed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed improvements of the Youth Employment in Parks projects have been reviewed and are supported by Park Planning staff. The Department recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission pass the proposed resolution in support of the Youth Employment in Parks projects as presented.



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PRC RES NO. 2015-06
2015 Youth Employment in Parks Projects

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department and the Anchorage Park Foundation has dedicated or achieved \$234,500 in funding to support the 2015 Youth Employment in Parks; and

WHEREAS the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is in its 9th year of operation with a planned scope of work that includes trail work, bank restoration, interpretive sign installation, slope stabilization, landscaping and vegetation rehabilitation, and park beautification projects to be completed during the 2015 YEP program season.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the Scope of Work submitted by the Department for the 2015 Youth Employment in Parks Projects.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 12th day of March, 2015.

Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

John Rodda, Director
Parks & Recreation Department