



Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Department

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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 10, 2018

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

Cc: Josh Durand, Parks Superintendent

From: Brad Muir, Natural Resource Manager

Project: **PRC 18-14:** Youth Employment in Parks 2018 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. Since 2007, YEP has hired over 325 Anchorage youth to complete park improvement projects resulting in millions of dollars of improvements to Anchorage Parks and Trails.

YEP aims to engage a new generation of young leaders in the conservation of public lands through meaningful job training, employment and education. A major component of the YEP program is education and civic engagement. Through the course of the ten week program, YEP teens learn about environmental stewardship, natural resource conservation and land management. Each week, the YEP program sponsors an education day and at the end of the program teens participate in a mentorship week that links their new skills to future careers.

Last year, the Youth Employment in Parks teens completed \$247,000 worth of improvements in Anchorage Parks and Trails. This summer, the YEP teens will complete an additional \$206,000 in improvements in Anchorage Parks.

The following projects are proposed for summer 2018:

1. Wolverine Park
2. Campbell Creek Restoration
3. Jewel Lake Trail
4. Far North Bicentennial Park Creek Restoration
5. Russian Jack Single Track Trails
6. Davis Park Disc Golf Course
7. Shibe Park Trail Maintenance

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 (2006) *Anchorage Bowl Park, Natural Resource and Recreation Facility 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.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN PARKS (YEP) CREW PROJECTS

Wolverine Park Trail and Improvements **\$20,000**

Campbell Elementary School students in partnership with Schools on Trails will bring educational improvements and trail upgrades to nearby Wolverine Park. Campbell is the first STEM elementary school in Anchorage, and the park will have an outdoor learning lab for hands-on nature education opportunities. Funding for this project came from a 2017 Challenge Grant from the Anchorage Park Foundation.

Campbell Creek Restoration **\$35,000**

The YEP crew will spend two weeks at the Campbell Creek. The crew will have multiple tasks: (1) Restore areas of shoreline along Campbell Creek, (2) remove invasive weeds along the Campbell Creek greenbelt, (3) plant a variety of native plants and trees. The scope of work is currently being developed in coordination with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The funding will come from a US Forest Service grant through the Alaska State Forestry program awarded in 2016.

Jewel Lake Trail **\$8,500**

The YEP crew will spend one week at Jewel Lake Park constructing a new multi-use trail meandering through the woods on the north side of picnic shelter. YEP crews will construct and gravel a 600 ft. trail that will allow park users to enjoy the natural area of the park. This will be funded from Municipality of Anchorage Parks bond funds.

Far North Bicentennial Park Creek Restoration **\$49,000**

The YEP crew will spend two weeks at the Campbell Creek in FNBP. The crew will have multiple tasks: (1) Restore areas of shoreline along Campbell Creek, (2) remove invasive weeds along the Campbell Creek greenbelt, (3) plant a variety of native plants and trees. The scope of work is currently being developed in coordination with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The funding will come from a NFWF grant awarded in 2017.

Shibe Park Trail Maintenance **\$8,500**

The YEP crews will spend two days at Shibe Park performing trail maintenance. Crews will add gravel to the gravel trails, improve failing boardwalks, and thin vegetation to improve sight lines along trail corridors.

Russian Jack Springs Park Single Track Trails **\$50,000**

The Russian Jack Single Track Trails project seeks to bring beginner-level mountain biking to one of East Anchorage's most centralized parks. The existing social trails, in both the north and south sections of Russian Jack Springs Park (RJSP), would be linked with new trails to formalize a small network of multi-use trails, totaling approximately 2 miles. These trails would be within biking and walking distance for many Anchorage residents. The project will focus on improving and rerouting existing trails. This project is funded by a 2017 RTP grant.

Davis Park Disc Golf Course **\$35,000**

The YEP crews will spend two weeks at Davis Park working on a new 9 hole disk golf course as identified in the Master Plan. The YEP crew will remove vegetation from the fairways, construct tee boxes, build trails to tees, and install baskets. Funding for this project will come from the 2016 park bonds.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposed Youth Employment in Parks projects have been reviewed and are supported by Park and Recreation 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. 2018-08

Youth Employment in Parks - 2018 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 Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is a joint program of the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Municipality of Anchorage's Parks & Recreation Department and is focused on providing Anchorage teens with meaningful job experience, outdoor education and environmental stewardship skill in Anchorage Parks and Trails; and

WHEREAS, the Municipality of Anchorage Parks and Recreation Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation, and various project partners has dedicated or achieved \$206,000 in funding to support the 2018 Youth Employment in Parks; and

WHEREAS the Youth Employment in Parks (YEP) is in its 12th year of operation with a planned scope of work that includes trail work, bank restoration, disc golf course construction, slope stabilization, landscaping and vegetation rehabilitation, and park beautification projects to be completed during the 2018 YEP program season; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the scope of work submitted by the Department for the 2018 Youth Employment in Parks Projects.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 10th day of May, 2018.

Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

John Rodda, Director
Parks & Recreation Department