

King County Parks **Your**  King County
Big Backyard

King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Parks and Recreation Division



2010
Second Quarter Report
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report
to the King County Council
January – June 2010

we're at work so you can play

Highlights of the Second Quarter

- ❖ Overall, the Division's business revenues for the second quarter of 2010 were up more than 25 percent compared to the same period in 2009, which can largely be attributed to the return of Cirque du Soleil and other activities at Marymoor Park. However, with the exception of revenue generated by the return of Cirque du Soleil, the poor economy and weak recovery have hampered the Division's ability to secure business revenue in both the short and long terms.
- ❖ Marymoor Park's revenues were up significantly during the second quarter of 2010, which is largely due to the return of Cirque du Soleil, as well as to steady revenue from ballfield rentals.
- ❖ The Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center was selected as the site for both the 2012 US Olympic Diving Trials and the 2012 NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships. Both events will be nationally televised and will have an estimated combined economic impact of more than \$4 million for the region.
- ❖ With King County Executive Dow Constantine on hand, the Division and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA) celebrated the grand opening of the Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park on Saturday, May 22. This Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) project had been in the works for many years and now Duthie Hill Park has been transformed into a top mountain biking destination that attracts visitors from around the region and country. EMBA estimates that the value of their contribution to this project was \$140,000, through in-kind and cash donations and volunteer service.
- ❖ On May 23, the Division hosted the first annual "Big Backyard 5k". Organized by Sound Experiential Marketing, the race took place at Marymoor Park and had 500 participants. Group Health sponsored the event at \$7,500, with several other local businesses providing in-kind donations. The Division anticipates making this an annual event, which netted an estimated \$13,000 for the Division in its first year.

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Parks and Recreation Division 2010 Second Quarter Report

Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C.

2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the Division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division’s efforts in:

- A. *Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. *Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. *Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. *Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. *Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. *Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our eighth year reporting on the accomplishments of the Division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter from 2003 through 2009. The year 2010 marks the third year of the renewed Parks Levy, which was approved by voters in August 2007, with collections running from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2013. Past reports are available from the Division’s website on the following Web page:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/recreation/parks/about/businessplan.aspx>.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements; however, the 2010 reports will no longer include information about the King County Fair or about pools other than the Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center. Operation of the Fair and remaining pool facilities has been transferred to other jurisdictions or entities and is no longer the responsibility of the Division.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Katy Terry of the King County Parks and Recreation Division at 206-296-8687 with questions or suggestions.

Revenues - Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Revenues

2010 Adopted Revenues	\$26,551,338
2010 Revised Revenues	\$26,551,338
2010 Estimated Revenues ¹	\$26,486,471
2009 Actual Revenues	\$27,789,082

Second Quarter - Business Revenues Only

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the Division are excluded from this total.

Actual Business Revenues² (includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

January 1 – June 30, 2010	\$2,341,484
January 1 – June 30, 2009	\$1,846,457

Second quarter business revenues significantly increased compared to the same period in 2009. However, they have not reached levels of business revenues in this same period in 2008, before the economy's health began to dramatically affect the Division's ability to successfully pursue business revenues.

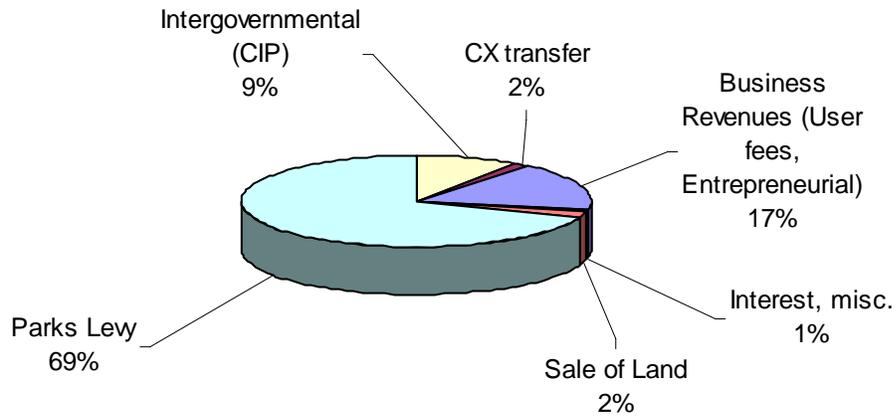
While business revenues appear to have rebounded from a slump in 2009, the Division must pursue business revenues with a decreased number of facilities. The Division has seen transfers of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues in past years. Facilities transferred in the past three years include the Renton, Evergreen Pools, along with other Urban Growth Area (UGA) parks transferred as part of annexations. It is anticipated that the Vashon and Cottage Lake outdoor pools will transfer in the third quarter.

Even with a reduced asset base (due to transfer of facilities), business revenues still comprise about 17 percent of the entire Division's budgeted revenue (2010), which is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the beginning of the Business Plan. The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to more than \$4.4 million in the 2010 adopted budget.

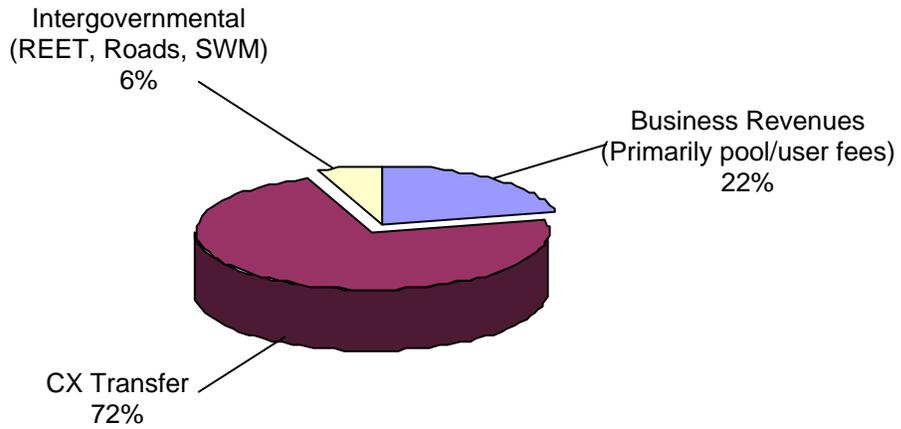
¹ Includes revised revenue estimates.

² Based on ARMS financial reports.

2010 Adopted Revenues - \$26.6M



2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



Expenditures – Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures

2010 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,825,262
2010 Estimated Expenditures ³	\$27,935,644
2009 Actual Expenditures ⁴	\$25,571,404
January 1 – June 30, 2010	\$11,638,346
January 1 – June 30, 2009	\$12,806,310

First and second quarter expenditures equaled 42 percent of the Division's total 2010 annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historic business trends.

As part of the Parks Operating Levy (2008 – 2013), the Division was tasked with increasing maintenance to historic levels prior to 2002. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, utilizing levy funds as the voters intended.

³ 2010 Estimated figure reflects reappropriation.

⁴ 2009 Actuals based on 14th month ARMS reports.

Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan
Key Business Units

Marymoor Park Business Unit



	2010 thru Q2	2009 thru Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$50,847	\$48,903	\$1,944	4%
Rev - fields	\$439,402	\$383,454	\$55,948	15%
Non-Traditional				
Rev – parking	\$293,666	\$221,072	\$72,595	33%
Rev – concerts	\$16,839	\$6,851	\$9,988	146%
Rev - concert ticket sales	\$3,008	\$2,672	\$336	13%
Rev - Subway	\$8,896	\$12,063	-\$3,167	-26%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$2,950	\$1,900	\$1,050	55%
Sponsors/concessions	\$19,682	\$15,389	\$4,293	28%
Cirque	\$515,180		\$515,180	100%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$1,350,000	\$692,000	\$658,000	95%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$1,037,000	\$1,011,000	\$26,000	3%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2010 Second Quarter highlights from Marymoor Park include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park were up significantly in the second quarter of 2010 in comparison with the same period of 2009. This is largely due to the return of the Cirque du Soleil, steady revenue from ballfield rentals, and increased parking revenue.
- ❖ The Cirque du Soleil (Cirque) show, Kooza, returned to Marymoor Park, running from June 3 – July 11. This was the Cirque's third time at Marymoor Park since 2006. Revenues are generated from facility rental and parking, and the full revenue impact from this event will be reported in the third quarter report. Although attendance showed a slight decrease from previous years, Marymoor Park is still one of the most successful West Coast locations for Cirque, and plans are already in the works for their return.
- ❖ Revenue from ballfields was up 15 percent during the second quarter of 2010. Despite extremely rainy spring weather, Marymoor Park's synthetic turf multi-use fields can continue to be played on and are virtually rain-out free. These fields, which command a higher per-hour fee, are also becoming more and more popular for regional tournaments due to their high-quality playing conditions.
- ❖ Parking revenue also experienced an increase this quarter, up 33 percent compared to the same time in 2009. This can be attributed to a higher volume of activity in the park, as well as to increased levels of compliance with the parking fee. Since the third quarter of 2009, Marymoor Park has been issuing parking violation notices, which has improved compliance levels to approximately 90 percent. Prior to the violation notices, compliance was often less than 60 percent.
 - Revenue from parking violations amounted to \$38,000 through the second quarter of 2010. Parking violation revenue is accounted for separately and is not reflected in the table above, in order to facilitate tracking levels of compliance and to not distort regular revenue collected from the parking fee.
 - Key park user groups, such as Serve Our Dog Areas (S.O.D.A.), the Marymoor Velodrome Association (MVA), and Eastside Audubon have expressed their appreciation for parking enforcement, which they believe has brought a higher level of fairness to the system and has made their efforts more effective in encouraging compliance among their respective members.
- ❖ Marymoor Park will benefit from two recently received grants:
 - *Garden Loosestrife Control and Monitoring*: A multi-year grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology is making it possible for Marymoor Park to implement a long-range effort to control and reduce the infestation of the invasive plant, *Garden Loosestrife*, a noxious weed that is present in the

conservation area of the park along the lake shoreline. In partnership with the Friends of Marymoor Park (FOMP), EarthCorps, and the King County Noxious Weed Program, the project will document infestation levels and control method effectiveness for two years and establish a maintenance protocol for addressing the infestation in the park.

- *Tree Inventory:* FOMP was awarded a grant from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to inventory the trees in Marymoor Park and develop a long-term plan for tree replacement. Carried out through an agreement between FOMP and EarthCorps, the plan will provide a clear blueprint for the division to maintain and enhance the natural and ornamental elements of Marymoor Park into future generations. The grant was awarded to FOMP in May and will be implemented through 2011.
- ❖ On May 23, the Division hosted the first annual “Big Backyard 5k”. Organized by Sound Experiential Marketing, the race took place at Marymoor Park and had 500 participants. Group Health sponsored the event at \$7,500, with several other local businesses providing in-kind donations. The Division anticipates making this an annual event, which netted an estimated \$13,000 for the Division in its first year.

**Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC)
Business Unit**



	2010 Q2	2009 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev – facilities	\$373,639	\$386,975	-\$13,336	-3%
Rev – courses	\$74,075	\$84,205	-\$10,130	-12%
Rev – drop in	\$19,617	\$21,507	-\$1,890	-9%
Rev - conference center	\$13,486	\$11,470	\$2,016	18%
Non-Traditional				
Rev – concession stand	\$11,511	\$10,024	\$1,487	15%
Rev – concessions	\$418	\$457	-\$39	-8%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$493,000	\$515,000	-\$22,000	-4%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$1,060,000	\$1,062,000	-\$2,000	0%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2010 Second Quarter highlights from Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) include:

- ❖ Revenues from the second quarter of 2010 were down slightly from the same quarter in 2009. Recreational programs and facility rentals were all down, a trend that began in 2009 and is related to the poor economic climate.
- ❖ Concession stand revenues were up 15 percent from this same period as last year, which can be attributed in part to a new vendor, Johnnie's Dog House.
- ❖ Revenues from the conference center were also up during the second quarter of 2010. It is anticipated that the recent renovations, which made mainly aesthetic improvements, will make the facility more attractive for weddings and other private events.
- ❖ It was announced during the second quarter that WKCAC was selected as the site for both the 2012 US Olympic Diving Trials and the 2012 NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships. Both events will be nationally televised and will have an estimated combined economic impact of more than \$4 million for the region.
- ❖ WKCAC continues to gain energy savings as a result of the on-going lighting replacement project.

Fields and Facilities Business Unit



	2010 Q2	2009 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev – Ballfields	\$188,061	\$217,272	-\$29,211	-13%
Rev – Facilities	\$82,938	\$76,753	\$6,185	8%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - RV Camping	\$22,444	\$13,202	\$9,241	70%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$293,000	\$307,000	-\$14,000	-5%

Note: Expenditure information on facilities and ballfields is tracked annually and will be discussed in the Fourth Quarter Report.

2010 Second Quarter fields and facilities highlights include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues from fields and facilities were down 5 percent from the second quarter of 2009, which is due to a combination of factors affecting rentals of both baseball/softball fields and soccer fields.
- ❖ Ballfield rentals experienced a decline in revenue of 13 percent, which is due to several factors, such as:
 - The transfer of the management and maintenance of Evergreen High School Athletic Complex to the Highline School District;
 - The disbanding of Tahoma Little League, which was a regular field user;
 - The timing of the receipt of payment from Arena Sports, which in 2009 was received during the second quarter. This accounts for approximately \$5,200 of the decrease in second quarter revenue from 2009 to 2010.
 - An unusually rainy spring baseball season, which lead to cancellations and rain-outs;
 - The expanded use of the Preston Athletic Fields by Community Partnership Grant (CPG) program partner, Eastside Football Club (EFC), which the division approved to help in their efforts to pay down debt incurred during the park's construction.
- ❖ Revenue from camping experienced a large increase of 70 percent during the second quarter of 2010 when compared with the same period in 2009, when the campgrounds were closed due to major flood damage that year.
- ❖ There was an 8 percent increase in revenues in the facilities category this quarter as compared to the second quarter of 2009, which is largely due to the growing popularity of the Preston Community Center as a wedding venue.

Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies



Overall, business revenues for the second quarter of 2010 were up more than 25 percent compared to the same period in 2009, which can largely be attributed to the return of Cirque du Soleil and other activities at Marymoor Park. The poor economic climate has affected all types of business revenue, from ballfield rentals to corporate partnerships. However, the Division has been looking forward and laying the groundwork for future partnerships and entrepreneurial activities for when the economy improves and companies start planning for 2011.

2010 second quarter business highlights include:

- ❖ The Division geared up for a busy summer of entrepreneurial activities, including:
 - The return of Cirque du Soleil in June
 - The start of the trail racing season at Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park and Soaring Eagle Park
 - Strong rentals for yurts and camping at Tolt-MacDonald Park
 - The 2010 USGA Senior Open at Sahalee Golf Course in July 2010 (parking was at Marymoor)
 - The Concerts at Marymoor summer outdoor performance series
- ❖ On May 23, the Division hosted the first annual “Big Backyard 5k”. Organized by Sound Experiential Marketing, the race took place at Marymoor Park and had 500 participants. Group Health sponsored the event at \$7,500, with several other local businesses providing in-kind donations. The Division anticipates making this an annual event, which netted an estimated \$13,000 for the Division in its first year.

Pursuing Gifts, Bequests, and Donations



2010 Second Quarter gift, bequest and grant highlights include:

- ❖ The Division is working on grant agreements with funders for grants awarded in 2009, which will be implemented in 2010 – 2012. Grants include:
 - Land and Water Conservation Fund – Tanner Landing Park public access development, \$77,200.
 - Community Development Block Grant – Steve Cox Memorial Park tennis court rehabilitation, \$100,000.
 - Washington State Department of Ecology, Aquatic Weeds Management Grants – Garden Loosestrife Control in Marymoor Park, \$28,750.

- ❖ The Division is working with the Pacific Northwest Research Service of the US Forest Service, Cascade Land Conservancy, and the University of Washington on a unique multi-year project to assess the health of urban forests and residents' interest in forest stewardship. This project was made possible through recovery funds obtained by US Forest Service. The Division, which will receive more than \$320,000 over the course of two years, is providing field staff to carry out on-the-ground forest health assessments, including on approximately 16,000 acres of Division-owned forest lands.

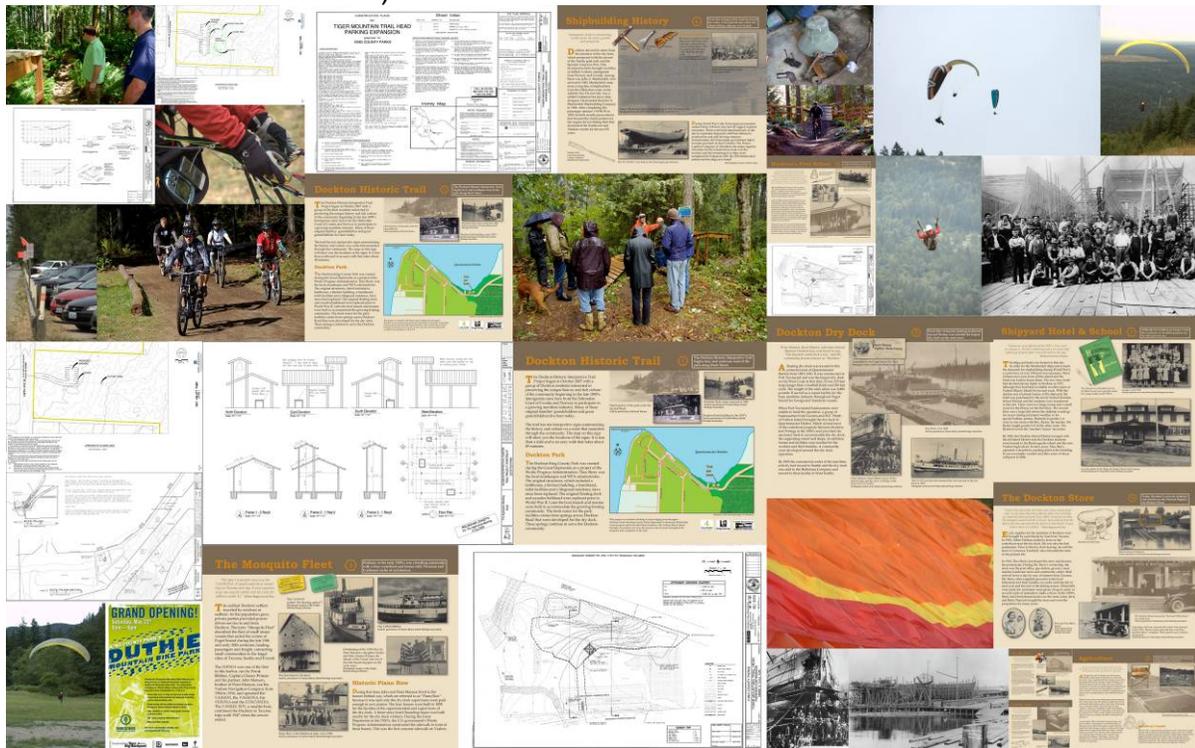
- ❖ Revenues from the Marymoor Pet Garden are up this quarter compared to the same period in 2009 and brought in nearly \$3,000 this quarter, as more people discover this quiet corner of the park and inquire about how the program works.

Agreements with Other Organizations Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program

The Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program continues to develop partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities in King County's parks. There are currently more than 40 projects in various stages of negotiation, planning, design, permitting, or construction that represent \$13 million in CPG grants and/or Capital Improvement Program commitments. By leveraging community investments (cash, grants, in-kind donations, volunteer labor, etc.), these CPG projects, when completed, will add new public recreation facilities valued at an estimated \$64 million.

The Division and its CPG partners continue to work hard on preliminary project vetting, community planning, design development, permitting, and construction efforts for more than 40 projects. Highlights from the second quarter of 2010 include:

- Design development is underway for synthetic turf field conversions at Petrovitsky Park (Kent Youth Soccer Association).
- Permits were received for the Dockton historical project at Dockton Park and construction is underway (Vashon Historical Association, Friends of Dockton Park).
- Design and engineering for the synthetic turf fields at Ravensdale Park are nearing completion and permits are expected to be submitted in early September (Friends of Rock Creek).
- Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park had its official grand opening on May 22 (Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance).



Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

Transferring local recreation amenities to cities and focusing on rural and regional facilities has been a key element of the Parks Business Plan, and many transfers have taken place since 2002. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going effort as part of the broader King County annexation strategy. These efforts have intensified in light of the continuing pressure on the County's general fund, which supports the Division's UGA facilities.

Status on facility transfers includes:

- The transfer of the maintenance agreement for Evergreen Athletic Fields to the Highline School District, which is the property owner, is complete.
- The transfer of the Evergreen Pool to the Highline School District is complete.
- On April 1, 2010, annexation of the North Highline South area to the City of Burien became official and included the following parks:
 - Arbor Lake
 - Hazel Valley
 - Hilltop
 - Puget Sound
 - Salmon Creek
 - Southern Heights
- The City of Kent annexation of the Panther Lake community became effective July 1, and included the following parks:
 - Green Tree (including Green Tree Park Tract A Open Space)
 - North Meridian
 - Park Orchard
- King County has reached agreement with the Vashon Park District and Vashon School District regarding the Vashon Pool, whereby the County will transfer the pool to the school district, which will contract with the Vashon Park District for its operation.
- The City of Kirkland is moving forward with annexation, which is anticipated for 2011 and will affect a number of Division properties, including:
 - 132nd Square
 - Edith Moulton
 - Juanita Heights
 - Kingsgate
 - Windsor Vista
- Discussions have been initiated with the City of Renton regarding Petrovitsky, Skyway and Bryn Mawr Parks in the Fairwood and Skyway annexation areas.

- Discussions are beginning with the Cities of Seattle and Burien on the future of the local urban parks in the North Highline area. This includes the following park sites:
 - Hamm Creek Natural Area
 - Lakewood Park
 - North Shorewood Park
 - Steve Cox Memorial Park
 - White Center Heights Park
 - White Center Pond Natural Area

Facilities under consideration for transfer include:

Park	Potential Jurisdiction
Bingamon Pond	City of Federal Way
Bridle Crest Trail (portion)	City of Bellevue
Bryn Mawr	City of Renton
Boulevard Lane	City of Renton
Camelot	City of Federal Way
Cascade	City of Renton
Cecil Moses	TBD
East Norway Hill	City of Bothell
Hamm Creek	City of Seattle
Juanita Triangle	TBD
Kentlake Athletic Fields	City of Kent
Klahanie \	TBD
Lake Geneva	City of Federal Way
Lakewood \	TBD
Maplewood Heights	City of Renton
Maplewood \	City of Renton
May Creek \	City of Renton
North Green River (portion)	City of Kent
North Shorewood	TBD
Renton	City of Renton
Sierra Heights / Honey Dew	City of Renton
Site #1 Duwamish	City of Tukwila
Skyway	City of Renton
South County Ballfields	City of Federal Way
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac
White Center Pond Natural Area	TBD
White Center Heights	TBD

Community Outreach and Involvement



King County Parks Volunteer Program

Despite a rainy spring, the Division hosted more than 100 volunteer events, including an outpouring of volunteerism around the annual Earth Day celebration in April.

Volunteer events consisted of trail work (39 events), restoration and noxious weed removal (10 events), and park maintenance and improvement (35 events). The King County Greenhouse and Nursery continues to draw hundreds of volunteers and hosted 19 events during the second quarter of 2010. All total, more than 1,600 volunteers provided 11,100 hours of service during the second quarter of 2010, which is similar to 2009 levels from the same period. However, due to factors such as weather, availability and readiness of projects, and volunteer interest, evaluating a volunteer program's success should not be limited to comparing only participation numbers from year to year.

From one-day work parties to continuing commitments, the Division offered a variety of types of projects for volunteers to participate in, such as trail maintenance, invasive species removal, habitat restoration, clearing litter, weeding, supporting the White Center Teen Center Program, potting and transplanting plants at the Greenhouse, caring for community garden plots, and opening and closing entry gates.

Project sites included: Cavanaugh Pond; Cecil Moses Park; Chinook Bend Natural Area; Cougar Mountain Wildland Regional Park; Duthie Hill Park; Edith Moulton Park; Fall City Park; Grand Ridge Park; Greenhouse; Kathryn Taylor Equestrian Park; Lakewood Park; Log Cabin Natural Area; Marymoor Park; Maury Island Marine Park; North Shorewood Park; Petrovitsky Park; Ricardi Reach; Ring Hill Forest; Sammamish River Trail; Soaring Eagle Park; Spring Lake Park; Steve Cox Memorial Park; Taylor Mountain Forest; Tolt-MacDonald Park; and White Center Heights Park.

2010 Second Quarter volunteer involvement highlights include:

- ❖ Earth Day, which is traditionally observed on April 22, lasted a whole week in King County parks, with events taking place April 17 through 24:
 - April 17 was also Boeing Service Day, and more than 230 Boeing employees volunteered at four different parks.
 - On Earth Day, 30 Microsoft employees joined Evergreen Mountain Bike Club for a volunteer work party at Duthie Hill Park.
 - Four more events took place on April 24, including litter collection, ivy removal, and working at the Greenhouse.
 - Friends of Soos Creek hosted their semi-annual clean-up at Soos Creek Park, where 23 volunteers cleared 42 bags of litter and recycling.

- ❖ The White Center Spring Clean took place on May 15, an annual event organized by the White Center Community Development Association. Community members worked throughout the entire neighborhood, including in the following King County Parks: Steve Cox Memorial Park, North Shorewood Park, Lakewood Park, and White Center Heights Park.

- ❖ King County Parks and Recreation was accepted into an Americorps national service program called the National Civilian Conservation Corps, which sent a group of 10 young adults to work in King County’s parks for six weeks. The team camped at Tolt-MacDonald and began their service in late June.

- ❖ Groups that participated in volunteer events during the second quarter of 2010 included:

Community/User Groups	School Groups	Other Entities
Eastside Audubon	Inglemoor Environmental Club	Boeing
Friends of North Shorewood Park	Jewish Day School	Federal Way AmeriCorps members
Friends of the Cedar River Watershed	Renton Christian School	Hitachi Consulting
MarR/C	Seattle Alternative Outdoor School	LDS Church, Lake Doloff
Marymoor Community Gardeners	Tahoma Outdoor Academy	LDS Church, Cougar Mountain
North Highline Unincorporated Area Council		National Civilian Conservation Corps
People For Puget Sound		REI Tukwila
Sammamish Rowing Club		Snoqualmie Tribe
WA Native Plant Society		Target
Washington State Geocaching Association		Windemere Realty
White Center Community Development Association		
YMCA Earth Service Corps		



Community Outreach Initiatives



The King County Parks and Recreation Division has a variety of ways to reach out to and communicate with park user groups, other stakeholders, and the general public.

Electronic outreach

King County Parks and Recreation Division website

The Division continues to innovate through its website, integrating social media and other interactive elements to keep the site up-to-date and dynamic.

King County Parks e-newsletter

The Division sends a regular email newsletter to an opt-in list with some 2,000 subscribers. This newsletter helps direct additional traffic to the Division's website and blog, while also highlighting upcoming events, recent news, and ways to get involved.

King County Parks and Social Media

Since 2009, the Division has been using social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter to interact and engage the public. The Division's Facebook fan base continues to grow and the Division regularly sends news items to be broadcast over the general King County News twitter account, which has more than 4,200 followers including media outlets, local non-profit organizations, and the general public.

www.parksfeedback.com

Through *parksfeedback.com*, the Division receives a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of Division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions and allows users to write in comments and include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the Division. The notifications sent by park users through the *parksfeedback.com* tool also serve as "eyes and ears on the ground" for the Division's 25,000 acres of property.

King County Press Releases

During the second quarter of 2010, the following press releases were issued by the Department of Natural Resources and Park's Public Affairs Section on behalf of the Division:

- King County Parks' summertime activities are heating up – even if the weather won't
- King County seeks volunteers for recycling crew at Marymoor summer concert series
- Backcountry horse group, King County partner to improve trails on public lands
- Culvert replacement project means two-week detour on King County's Sammamish River Trail
- Cougar Mountain trail running series set for second race at scenic King County park
- Soos Creek Trail parking lot paving project leads to brief access disruptions
- King County 'Emphasis Patrols' to watch for doggie scofflaws in parks
- East Lake Sammamish Trail plans take next step
- Executive offers plan to transfer Vashon Pool so facility can remain open, serve residents
- Trail running series returns to King County's Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park
- Marymoor summer concert series features great acts in fantastic outdoor setting
- 2012 U.S. Olympic Team Trials – Diving coming to Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center in Federal Way
- Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center celebrates April Pools Day, 20th anniversary

Earned Media

The Division recorded at least 35 instances of earned media during the second quarter of 2010, meaning that the Division or one of the Division's parks or trails received media coverage. Most coverage was from local print outlets, including the Seattle Times, Renton Reporter, and Vashon Beachcomber.

As part of the Division's new website structure, pages within the website now include links to relevant press releases and media coverage. The list is generated automatically and is refreshed as new articles are published, contributing dynamic, up-to-date content.

Other outreach initiatives from the second quarter of 2010

- ❖ On Saturday, May 22, the Division and Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA) celebrated the grand opening of the Duthie Hill Mountain Bike Park, a CPG project that has been in the works for many years. Duthie Hill is now a unique facility featuring miles of mountain bike trails as well as boardwalks, jumps, and other technical elements.

- Despite rainy conditions, the grand opening event was attended by more than 300 people of all ages, who enjoyed getting to know the park's trails. King County Executive Dow Constantine also attended the grand opening event.
- The park has received considerable local and even national media attention
- We estimate that it is already receiving more than 500 visitors per day
- In addition to project management and trail building expertise, EMBA provided more than 6,000 hours of volunteer service and additional fundraising to the project, which all together, they estimate being valued at \$140,000.



King County Executive Dow Constantine receives a "check" from EMBA representing the group's contribution to Duthie Hill Park

- ❖ The Division participated in a host of outreach events during the second quarter of 2010, including hosting a booth at the annual Women in Trades Fair, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks Earth Day Expo in Westlake Center, the "Get your boots on" fair at REI's flagship store in Seattle, and two Health and Wellness Fairs sponsored by PACCAR for their employees. These fairs provide excellent opportunities for visibility and information dissemination, and allow for Division staff to interact directly the general public.