



**Date:** August 27, 2010

**To:** Parks & Community Services Board  
Patrick Foran, Director, Parks & Community Services  
Shelley McVein, Deputy Director, Parks & Community Services

**From:** Christina Brown, Environmental Programs Coordinator

**Subject:** 2010 Well KEPT Program Brief

The Well KEPT Program has completed another successful summer serving Bellevue's community. For 24 years, the Parks & Community Services Department has engaged youth in providing valuable employment experience. Two crews of Bellevue teens were hired for the summer to implement projects throughout the parks and open space system. The Well KEPT Program's mission is to "provide summer employment opportunities to local area youth with little or no job experience, focusing on job skills and career development training in the field of park and open space management." This mission was achieved through the following goals:

- Provide job skills training to Bellevue youth, ages 14 – 18, through a competitive interview and hiring process.
- Provide a positive work experience that helps develop leadership skills, boost self-esteem and promote teamwork while learning positive work habits.
- Develop a sense of community stewardship and appreciation for the natural world through meaningful hands-on projects and environmental education.
- Obtain valuable job skills and career training, and an understanding of the diversity of career opportunities within the field of Park Resource Management.
- Assist the Natural Resource and Resource Management crews to efficiently maintain the parks facilities and natural resources during the peak summer season.

After completing the Trainee hiring process, projects were divided equally between the two crews. Each crew consisted of two Program Supervisors and ten Trainees. Both crews were given the opportunity to work in a variety of parks throughout the city. A brief summary of the accomplishments of the program are as follows:

- Received training and extensive experience in trail design and construction methods. Broke ground on a .78 mile trail connecting the upper and lower loops of the McTavish Trail in Woodridge Park. Successfully cleared, grubbed, and added drainage culverts to the new trail that provides abundant space for community members to enjoy.

- Acquired agricultural/farm management skills. Spread over 275 cubic yards of environmentally-friendly hog fuel within the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm. The rows and major pathways between the blueberries were filled to increase community access by improving pathway conditions.
- Resurfaced over two miles of trails within Lakemont Community Park, Kelsey Creek Park, Newcastle Beach Park and Sunset Ravine. Dismantled and built a 180' post and rail fence along the edge of Sunset Ravine.
- Gained extensive knowledge of invasive and noxious weed management, including proper identification and problems associated with the spread of non-native plants. Assisted King County in stopping the spread of two Class A noxious weeds, Policeman's Helmet and Purple Loosestrife, from the Kelsey Creek watershed. In addition, removed Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Blackberry, English Ivy, Scotch Broom, and Holly at several park sites.
- Gained knowledge of horticultural propagation techniques and greenhouse operations while working at the Bellevue nursery. The Well KEPT crews transplanted over 10,000 plugs. Teams also assisted the staff at the Bellevue Botanical Garden to remove invasive species, opening up areas for future planting and increasing the viability of existing native plants.
- Developed public speaking skills while interacting with the general public. Provided information on Bellevue parks to the public and interviewed with the Bellevue Reporter and Bellevue TV on the importance of restoration efforts.
- Expanded their habitat-improvement skills by planting native trees and shrubs in an area previously occupied by Himalayan Blackberry.
- Acquired a firm understanding of the opportunities that exist for employment within a parks department, while working with crews from the Natural Resource Division, Resource Management and the Bellevue Botanical Garden.
- Understood how performance and work ethic are assessed during end of summer evaluations. Trainees were encouraged to implement goal-setting strategies towards work and school by utilizing their identified assets.
- Attended educational workshops in cooperation with the following staff and agencies:
  - Personal Financial Management  
Eileen Elamin, Washington State Certified Public Accounting
  - Resume Writing  
Kate K., Lake Washington Technical College Career Center
  - Interviewing Skills  
Esther MacGregor, Well K.E.P.T. Supervisor

- Recycling and Waste Management  
Jennifer Kaufman, COB Resource Conservation Program
- Introduction to Noxious Weeds  
Ben Peterson, King County Noxious Weed Control Program
- Blueberry Farm History  
Geoff Bradley, COB Parks & Community Services
- Soils and Geology  
Chuck Natsuhara, United State Department of Agriculture
- Insects/Stream Ecology  
Chris Gregorson, King County
- Wetland Ecology  
Geoff Eseltine, Pacific Science Center

The Well KEPT Program continues to provide an exceptional employment opportunity to Bellevue youth, and in turn helps to maintain the City of Bellevue's natural resources. The participants develop a strong connection to their environment, a firm understanding of its value, and develop a positive work ethic. We look forward to continually improving the program in the years ahead.

**Cc:** Terry Smith, Assistant Director  
Dan Dewald, Natural Resource Manager  
Geoff Bradley, Environmental Programs Supervisor



Well K.E.P.T. stewards take a break next to large piles of ivy they removed from Meydenbauer Beach Park.

# Well K.E.P.T. Wrap Up 2010



A Well K.E.P.T. steward removes Policeman's Helmet from Kelsey Creek Park.

Well K.E.P.T. stewards help construct a trail in Woodridge park.



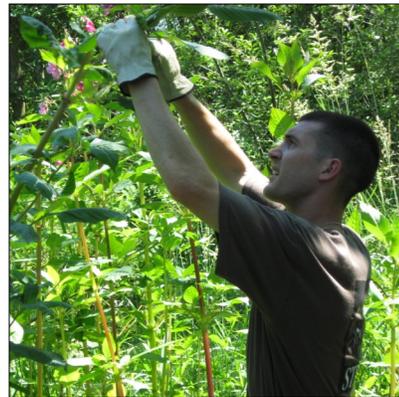
Kate Kouche, from Lake Washington Technical College Career Center, helps prepare Well K.E.P.T. teams for future jobs in the environmental field through resume building.



Well K.E.P.T. stewards resurface pathways for U-Pick Blueberry rows at the Mercer Slough Blueberry Farm.



WA Department of Agriculture soils expert Chuck Natsuhara shows Well K.E.P.T. stewards how to sample and analyze soil.



Well K.E.P.T. supervisor Trevor Bell removes Policeman's Helmet from Kelsey Creek Park.



Well K.E.P.T. teams transplanted more than 10,000 plugs for the Bellevue Nursery.

Well K.E.P.T. stewards trek through the forest in search of invasive plant species.



