



Volunteer Services Program Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2023
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA



**Raleigh
Parks**

Letter from Volunteer Services Staff

This year marked another exceptional year of volunteerism with the Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department. The Volunteer Services Program saw growth from our community donating their time, talents, and resources as operations started getting back to normal post-pandemic.

The Volunteer Services Staff is proud to present the FY23 Volunteer Services Program Annual Report. This year we celebrated some great successes. Here are a few key highlights:

- Volunteer participation started to recover to pre-pandemic levels with over 10,000 volunteers assisting with park enhancement projects, youth athletic leagues, special events, and much more. Approximately 60,000 volunteer hours were contributed with the volunteer service being valued at \$1.8 million.
- As part of our department's Conservation Career Pipeline Initiative, the Volunteer Services Program in partnership with Conservation Corps North Carolina (CCNC) and the Dix Park Conservancy hosted our fourth CCNC Youth Conservation Corps crew and specifically our third CCNC Dix Park Youth Conservation Corps crew. This program offers teens from the Raleigh area the opportunity to gain work experience, as well as career development opportunities in the conservation field. This program won two awards this year.
- The Volunteer Services team started the transition of our volunteer database into a new volunteer management software. CERVIS will allow for easier recruiting, tracking of paperwork, and logging of volunteer hours. This will help standardize the reporting process across the Department and allow us to track brand new metrics which will help to showcase volunteer impact more effectively.
- Along with help from our city partners in GIS, we updated our Adopt-A-Trail GIS map to include real-time data on trail closures and to automatically update as the trails grow. This map will also show recently cleaned sections of trail as well as allow Adopt-A-Trail volunteers to report hours and inspection findings more quickly.

We want to thank you for your passion, dedication, and support to enhance and beautify the City of Raleigh. Because of YOU, the Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department continues to expand its resources, develop positive community relationships, and provide a great place for Raleigh Citizens to live and play.

Thanks for all you do,

Volunteer Services Team: Mary Owens, Rachel Van Noordt, Olinda Oliveira, and Abby Salle



Overall Volunteer Impacts



Overall Volunteer Impact for Raleigh Parks

- 10,290* **Volunteers**
- 5,9914.47 **Hours Served**
- \$1,794438.38 **Value of Service**

* This number does not distinguish between individual volunteers and those who volunteered multiple times.

Testimonial

"The Volunteer experience was great! The staff was knowledgeable and excited. The weather took a turn but that didn't dampen anyone's spirit even among the guests coming to visit the sunflowers. It was great seeing so many people alone and in groups coming to experience nature. You really see the community impact that having open green spaces can have."

- **Jessica, Red Hat Volunteer**

Volunteer Experience Survey Data

- **331** - Responses
- **4.8 out of 5** - Exceptional Experience Rating
- **99%** - Would volunteer with Raleigh Parks again
- **51%** - First-time volunteers
- **65%** Visited the park/ greenway location before volunteering

Favorite Aspects of Volunteering

- **235** - Positive Community Impact
- **227** - Being Outdoors
- **178** - Staff/Organization of Projects

Least Favorite Aspects of Volunteering

- **272** - Nothing
- **29** - Other (# of volunteers, shift length, physical work)
- **22** Weather



Volunteer Impacts by Division



Parks Maintenance & Natural Resources

- **5,584** Volunteers
- **12,718** Hours of Service
- **\$380,904** Value of Service

These numbers reflect volunteers working in a park maintenance and conservation capacity. Examples are Adopt-A-Park and Adopt-A-Trail, Invasive Removals, Litter Cleanups, Citizen Science, Planting projects and more.



Recreation

- **2,144** Volunteers
- **35,203** Hours of Service
- **\$1,054,330** Value of Service

These numbers reflect the volunteers supporting our recreational program offerings and special events. Examples include Athletic Coaches, Instructors, Teen Program, Active Adults, Aquatics, Wellness and more.



Resources

- **2460** Volunteers
- **9678** Hours of Service
- **\$289,856** Value of Service

These numbers reflect the volunteers supporting both Historic and Cultural Resources. Examples are Museum Guides, Raleigh Arts, ESL Instructors, Holiday Express and more.



Business Process Management

- **39** Volunteers
- **2,158** Hours of Service
- **\$64,632** Value of Service

These numbers reflect NCSU Work Study students and an IT Volunteer.



Additional Partner Impacts



Thank You to Our City of Raleigh Partners

Did you know in addition to coordinating our own volunteers, Raleigh Parks benefits from partnering with other City of Raleigh Department volunteers? Stormwater and Raleigh Police Department manage programs that directly impact our greenways and expand capacity to manage all 120 miles of trail.



Raleigh Stormwater

- **818** Volunteers
- **1487** Hours of Service
- **\$44,536** Value of Service
- **23,000** lbs. of litter removed



Raleigh Police Department

- **50** Volunteers
- **3,500** Hours of Service
- **\$104,825** Value of Service
- **14,00** people assisted on Greenway

Raleigh Police Department coordinates multiple volunteer programs, but their Greenway Volunteer Program focuses on trail safety and education.



Combined Impact with Raleigh Parks Volunteers

- **2,424** Volunteers
- **8,230** Hours of Service
- **\$246,478** Value of Service

These numbers combine Raleigh Parks volunteers with the efforts of our partners, including Adopt-A-Trail, single-time clean-ups, Nest Watch, and other single-time events.



CCNC Dix Park Youth Conservation Corps Impacts



Raleigh Parks' Volunteer Services Program coordinates the CCNC Dix Park Youth Conservation Corps which is geared towards local teens. This program carries on the legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s and provides hands-on work experience and career development/education opportunities related to the fields of conservation and park maintenance.

For five weeks, six teens and two crew leaders learned and worked alongside experts in the field. They completed 10 projects for Dorothea Dix Park, ranging from invasive plant removals all the way to special event support.

This could not have been possible without the support of our partners:

- Conservation Corps North Carolina (CCNC)
- The Dix Park Conservancy
- The Woodson Family Foundation
- Dorothea Dix Park Staff
- Raleigh Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources staff
- Raleigh Stormwater
- North Carolina State University Humanities and Social Sciences

Project Metrics

- **1,600 hours** of parkland maintenance
- **6.8 Acres** of invasive plant removals
- **4.8 Acres** of turf maintained
- **0.35 miles** of trail maintained
- **1,300 ft.** of fence installed/removed for events
- **1,200 ft.** of accessible matting installed
- **20 cemetery markers** raised

Educational Sessions

- Past, Present and Future of Dix Park
- The Dix Park Conservancy and a Park for All
- Park Maintenance, Event Preparation, and Program Planning
- Legacy in Stone: The Dorothea Dix Cemetery
- Marketing Parks
- Park Planning
- Raleigh's Watershed
- Federal and Local Government Career Journey
- Political Science and Soil
- Entering the Job Market