2004 Environmental Management System Final Narrative Report May 1, 2005

2004 was the second year the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department prepared a Department-wide EMS work plan to track progress for improving our environmental performance in internal operations and public programming. Although developing and working with the EMS continues to be a learning process, great progress was made in 2004 in system development and in Parks environmental performance through the accomplishment of planned work.

Of the more than 100 work plan items in the 2004 Department-wide EMS work plan, 77% of the items were completed at or beyond expectations.

Specifically,

- 53% of targets were scored with a 5 (Outstanding/beyond expectations)
- 24% were scored with a 4 (100% complete)
- 11% were scored with a 3 (75% complete)
- 6% were scored with a 2 (50% complete)
- 6% were scored with a 1 (0% - 25% complete)

Following are some of the highlight accomplishments in 2004.

Pesticides/Harmful Materials

We are particularly pleased that our Golf program met its pesticide reduction goal for 2004. The goal was a 20% reduction from the baseline and the actual reduction was 21%. The reduction for park maintenance and horticulture exceeded 60% from the baseline. Through the department's Green Cleaning program all facility custodians made the transition to using cleaning products that substantially reduce their and visitors exposure to more harmful products. Sometimes a harmful material is a product of nature, such as the algae blooms in Green Lake. In 2004 the algae problem was successfully controlled through treatment with alum.

Custodian Debi Belt shows off Parks' new Green Cleaning products

Resource Conservation
Resource conservation continues to be a high priority for the Department. Public access to recycling greatly expanded at our 4 golf courses and Magnuson Park. We also rescued 90 Seattle Center planters from Seattle Center to help decorate Magnuson Park. Significant energy savings was achieved by 1) upgrading lighting and heating systems in four facilities, 2) setting standard temperature set points for all pools, saunas, showers and spas, and 3) installing digital timers on parking lots at Magnuson Park.

Design, Construction and Major Maintenance
High Point Community Center addition was completed and awarded LEED Certified. The design of Northgate Community Center and Park was completed to include an 148,000 gallon vault that will improve stormwater management and allow irrigation of the new park with captured rainwater. Yesler Community Center was constructed (expected LEED Silver) and 14 ProParks and several Major Maintenance projects were completed with significant sustainable features. We carried out a stakeholder process to update our sustainable development scorecard and PDD and the Environmental Stewardship Unit collaborated to create a traveling exhibit on sustainable practices.

Yesler Community Center expected to receive Silver Leeds designation

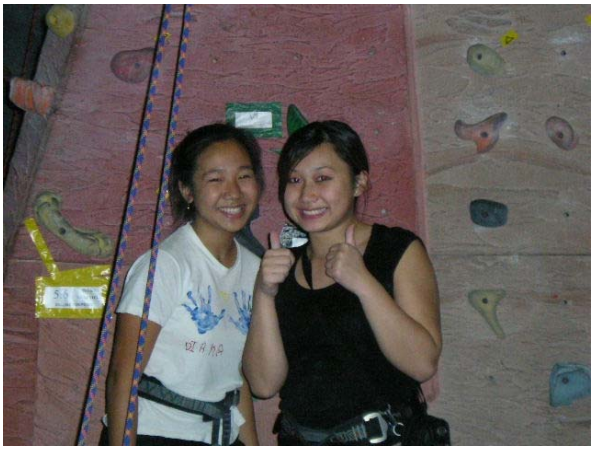
Aquarium
The Aquarium staff have taken a comprehensive approach to improving their environmental performance. In 2004 they successfully tackled specimen collection strategies, "Best Choices" seafood for animal food, tracking water usage and conservation methods, and improving office paper usage.

Fleets
As part of our green fleet program two totally electric dump trucks and one totally electric car were purchased for Magnuson Park. Two of the vehicles arrived in 2004 with the third scheduled to arrive in 2005. In addition, our Aquatics program replaced three 2-cycle outboard motors with 4-cycle models resulting in less gas consumption and less air pollution.

Say Hello to the "IT" car

Youth/Public Programming

We continued to expand and strengthen our environmental stewardship programming for Seattle's inner city teens and youth. Naturalists, who are based at our ELC's, worked with Community Center staff to develop and deliver the summer Buggin' Out program to more than 3,500 community centers youth. The teen employment program STEPS served 62 teens at 4 different park locations. And the popular year-around teen outdoor adventure and conservation program Outdoor Opportunities (formerly TREC) began operating a second site based at Golden Gardens which doubled the number of inner city teens served to more than 200.



First time climbers Shaina and Diana give a "thumbs up" to the O2 program

Major Initiatives

As of the end of 2004, all of the essential elements of the Parks EMS were in place including linkages to department annual work plans and the Mayor's Environmental Action Agenda, the process for developing future annual EMS plans, processes for 6 and 12 month progress reports and the required management review process. In the area of resource restoration, the Green Seattle Partnership (GSP) was formed in 2004. The GSP is a partnership with the City and the Cascade Land Conservancy. The goal of the GSP is to restore 2,500 acres of park forest lands by the year 2024. The Department's Horticulture, Landscape and Forestry BMPs were also revised in 2004 and a staff training/certification program developed for implementation in 2005. In 2004, parks also purchased properties in the Pinehurst, Northgate, Fremont and Uptown neighborhoods. In addition the Wolf Creek Ravine was preserved via donation, the Mee-Kwa-Mooks Natural area was preserved via conservation easement and the Marra farm site was transferred from King County.

Volunteers work on Park's trails

Challenges

Due to increasing time and budget constraints it continues to be challenging to tackle some of the larger interdivisional projects. One example is the department's Maxicom irrigation control system. Although great progress has been made to date with the system, it is not yet living up to its full potential. In 2005, efforts will be redoubled to get the 42 park locations currently on the system fully on-line. In the same area of conservation, the tracking of real and accurate charges and consumption numbers for energy and water remain a challenge. Ultimately this data will be critical in determining the cost/benefit of the energy saving measures we are putting into place as well as the water savings success of the Maxicom system.