



SAINT PAUL NATURAL RESOURCES

A Section of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

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Fall Tree Planting

Many people may not realize this, but fall is the best time to plant a tree, depending on species. Planting a tree in the right location, however, is essential for tree health and a desired landscape addition to one's home. A few things to consider:

1. Identify the location where you would like the tree.
2. Look up to see if there are any wires overhead so the future growth of the tree doesn't interfere with them. If there are wires, you should consider a smaller stature ornamental tree.
3. Call Gopher State One Call to locate utilities before you dig so that you can identify any



underground, and potentially dangerous, conflicts.

4. Work with your nursery to select a tree suitable for fall planting, only after considering the space that the tree will occupy when it grows to maturity. Think

ahead and space the tree so it has room to grow without conflicts with your home, other structures, or other trees and vegetation.

5. If unfamiliar with how to plant a tree, consult any number of good web sites including the new Minnesota DNR

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Pocket guides located here: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/arbormonth/guides.html>.

6. Don't forget to maintain a blanket of mulch and to water your new tree at least once per week.
7. Hug your tree!

RiverCentre Median Makeover



Arts and Gardens crews planting the RiverCentre median.

Arts and Gardens has been busy this summer planting the public gardens and urns in downtown. A major project was the replanting of the medians in front of RiverCentre. Last year the median was emptied and repaired due to leaking into a parking ramp below. This year, our Median Maintenance Crew and RightTrack Crew planted 1,000 plants in the median to restore it. The RightTrack Crew is a summer team of a dozen teens who help maintain

downtown gardens. The Median Crew helps maintain medians and planted areas in the right-of-way throughout the city—including the 3.2 acres of planted medians along the Green Line. Special thanks go out to Public Works for repairing the RiverCentre medians and helping with the planting and to the RiverCentre staff who came out and thanked the crews with Minnesota Wild keychains.

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Wildlife Surveys are Vital



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Thanks to a generous grant from REI, Saint Paul Natural Resources has had the opportunity to perform ongoing wildlife surveys. Knowing and understanding which animals thrive in the parks provides us with a foundation of how the park should be managed, maintained and restored. We recently completed a second year of wildlife monitoring at Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary, our newly opened park near Maryland Avenue

and Interstate 35E.

With the help of volunteers, we were able to survey the small mammal population in the park. Compared to the data from the previous year, we found the mouse and shrew population to be growing slightly, and we caught a new species this year—a striped skunk! On top of the annual survey, we have utilized trail cameras to monitor wildlife in some of our other parks. Within the

Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom in Como Regional Park, we have discovered a number of animals including a gray fox, an albino squirrel, deer, woodchucks and many more. To see more trail camera photos please visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/saintpaulnaturalresources, and stay tuned as we use the trail cameras to search for river otters living in some of our river parks.

Volunteer for National Public Lands Day 2015

SAVE THE DATE:
National Public Lands Day
Sat, Sept. 26 | 9-11 am

Join over 175,000 volunteers across the country to celebrate National Public Lands Day, the largest single-day volunteer effort for public lands in the United States. On Saturday, September 26, from 9-11 am, we are looking for volunteers to help us haul brush in Hidden Falls Regional Park (1313 Hidden Falls Drive). This activity is recommended for volunteers in grades 5 and up.

In late August, volunteer registration will be available online at



www.stpaul.gov/parks/environment.

After volunteering, stick around for the festival! Saint Paul Natural Resources and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will host the concluding event for Explore Outdoors Saint Paul.

The festival will include fun, family-friendly activities such as geocaching, a climbing wall, photography bird bingo and more.

Registration is not required to attend the festival.

Bees and Pollinator Protection

As reported in April, Saint Paul Natural Resources worked closely with the University of Minnesota Bee Squad to install bee hives on park property for the purpose of exploring the idea of community apiaries. We are now extremely pleased to announce that we successfully installed a fenced hexagon-shaped enclosure in Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, welcoming two bee hives this past May. Thanks to the Bee Squad for securing a grant from the University of Minnesota's Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment & Life Sciences to fund much of the operation and for providing weekly monitoring and care for the bees themselves.

Since installation, the bee colonies have doubled in size and are doing well in their

new home in the Sanctuary. To provide pollinator education, Saint Paul Natural Resources has arranged four in-hive classes for youth in partnership with Pollinate Minnesota.

In regards to the development of a City Council Resolution to protect pollinators/bees, the process has slowed as we consider how such a policy could or should affect all City of Saint Paul departments—or whether there should be alternatives or exemptions. When you consider all the types of work performed throughout the city, the full impact of a resolution needs to be understood and communicated. We are now in the process of expanding this conversation.



Youth from Wilder Recreation Center donned beekeeping suits to learn about honey bee life.

sPARKing Interest in Nature



Youth from West Minnehaha Rec Center study the water cycle at Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

Thanks to a grant from the Capitol Region Watershed District, youth from four recreation centers are engaging with nature at Trout Brook Nature Sanctuary and Como Regional Park in the new sPARK program. In this eight week program, youth study animal and plant life at the park and learn how to be good stewards of water quality and nature.

When one youth was asked why we care if there is garbage in our parks, she responded, "When it rains, the garbage will go into the

lake and pollute the water. Then fish will think it's food and eat the garbage and they could choke and die."

This summer, the youth transplanted 600 wetland plants; discovered caddisflies and water scorpions living in park ponds; donned beekeeping suits for in-hive classes with Pollinate Minnesota to learn about the importance of pollinators; tracked a gray fox through the woods; and allowed their own curiosity to guide them on adventures in nature.

Find Saint Paul Natural Resources Online!

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/saintpaulnaturalresources

Blog:

www.restoresaintpaul.blogspot.com

What's New in Saint Paul Natural Resources?

What's new in Saint Paul Parks and Recreation's Natural Resources Section? We have a logo!

The Natural Resources section has been working with local artist and illustrator James O'Brien to develop a logo that represents what we do within the city park system. This is the result. We hope you enjoy it and please look for this logo to discover what Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is doing to support our natural resources.



Environmental Programs Calendar

Preschool

EXPLORATOTS

Parent-child nature class geared for 2-5 year olds held 2nd & 4th Wednesdays from 10-11:30am at Phalen Lakeside Activity Center. All ages welcome. Free. **Sept 9 & 23, Oct 14 & 28, Nov 11**

Family

GEOCACHING FUN

High tech treasure hunt with all equipment provided at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary from 10-noon.

Ages 7+; youth must be accompanied by an adult. Free. **Nov 7**

GREEN TIME

Child-led nature play meetup group held first Thursdays from 6-7:30pm and third Thursdays from 10-11:30am at Phalen Lakeside Activity Center. All ages. Free. **First Thursdays: Sept 3, Oct 1, Nov 5, Dec 3; Third Thursdays: Sept 17, Oct 15, Nov 19.**

PARKS AFTER DARK: NIGHT HIKE

Check for nocturnal animals at Crosby Farm Regional

Park from 8:30-10:30pm. \$5 per person. Ages 7+; youth must be accompanied by an adult. **Sept 11**

PARKS AFTER DARK: OWL PROWL

Learn about owls, dissect an owl pellet, learn how to call owls, and go outside for fun owl activities at the Como Streetcar Station from 7-8:30pm. \$5 per person. Ages 5+; youth must be accompanied by an adult. **Oct 27**

STORYWALK

Enjoy a picture book posted page by page along this

beautiful river bluff path from 1-3pm at Summit Monument (Summit Ave & Mississippi River Blvd). All ages. Free. **Sept 6**



These programs are funded in full or in part by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment.



EXPLORE OUTDOORS SAINT PAUL

Check out our online calendar of over 100 outdoor activities. The more you participate, the more chances to win prizes. Visit www.bit.ly/exploreSTP. Join us to celebrate the close of this summer initiative at National Public Lands Day!

NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

Cook food over a fire, see live native fish, try geocaching, scale the climbing wall, and more. All ages. **Hidden Falls Regional Park – North Gate** Sat, Sept 26, 11am-2pm

To register for events, visit www.bit.ly/STPenviroed.