

Case study:
The Forest Park Conservancy,
Portland, Oregon, USA

5.10.2011

Tuomas Uola,

My year as a volunteer coordinator

Portland, Oregon



Forest Park

- Over 5000 acres / 21 km²
- 112 bird species / 62 mammals
- Various native plants and trees
- 80 miles of trails (128km)



www.wikipedia.com



www.forestparkconservancy.com

The Forest Park Conservancy

- FPC works collaboratively with Portland Parks & Recreation's City Nature Division, which manages this city-owned Park on a limited budget.
- FPC's focus is on trail maintenance and improvement, habitat restoration, environmental education, signage improvements, and public outreach.
- Field crew + office crew

The Forest Park
Conservancy



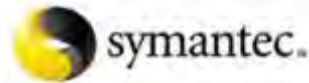
FPC Corporate and Media Partners



Metro



Portland General Electric



NW Natural **patagonia**



TRUE TO THE MUSIC



WILLAMETTE WEEK

borders
perrin
norrande



the
interactive
dept.
CONNECTION • DESIGN • DEVELOPMENT

Volunteer efforts 2010

- Over 1400 volunteers
- 28 business partners
- Trail maintenance
- Habitat restoration



www.conservationalliance.com

Trail maintenance and construction 2010



Trails					
	Miles of Trail Maintained	Feet of Turnpike Constructed	Trees Cleared	Bridges (Constructed or Redecked)	Special Projects
2010 Totals	39.05	394	71	1	19

Habitat restoration 2010



Restoration						
Plantings	Ivy: Trees	Ivy: Acreage	Feet of Split Rail Fence	Garlic Mustard (bags)	Prior sites monitored	
2010 Totals	1175	1587	924	21.5	6	

What makes FPC's work successful?



Enthusiastic, educated and trained staff

- Office crew:

Michelle Bussard (Executive Director)

Stephen Hatfield (Stewardship Director)

Lisa Hillerns (Membership Coordinator)

Pam Meyers (Development & Outreach Associate)

Terry Milner (Development Director)

- Field crew:

Matt, Jeff, Mikala, Tuomas



Great volunteer base

- Over ½ million people in Portland, over 2 million in the metropolitan area
- Strong Environmentalism
- Forest Park enthusiasts
- Unemployed
- University students
- Retired



Partnership with Portland Parks & Recreation

- Yearly action plan
- Monthly meetings
- Sharing fieldhouse
- Sharing tools
- Events together



**PORTLAND
PARKS & RECREATION**

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland



Easy access to trail heads

- Close proximity to city
- Good parking areas
- <http://forestpark.businesscatalyst.com/forest-park/trailhead-map>



Manageable volunteer projects

- Routine trail maintenance
- Removal of non-native invasive species
- Construction of split rail fence
- Repair and construction of bridges
- Planting of native trees and shrubs



Volunteer opportunities

- Thursday work party
- Third Saturday work party
- Day of Stewardship (spring & fall)
- National Trails Day
- Earth Day
- Special work parties for business and community groups
- Crew leader training
- <http://forestparkconservancy.org/>



Business and community volunteers



Adidas	Net Impact
Adventure Group	North Face
Ben Moon Photography	Northwest Trail Alliance
Boston University Alumni	OHSU Foundation
Boy Scouts of America	Portland General Electric
Capital Pacific Bank	Portland Hiking Meetup
Columbia Sportswear	Psychologists for Social Responsibility
Grace Chapel	REI
Horny Toad Activewear	Symantec
Intel	Team Red Lizard Running Club
Keen Footwear	The Standard
Kids Community Learning Center	Under Solen Media
Mt Scott Community Center	University of Portland
Nau	VW Credit

Business benefits

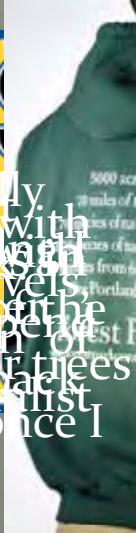
- KEEN Footwear, Chris Enlow
- Brand perspective:
 - If we're encouraging our Fans to enjoy the great outdoors, then we better take care of the outdoors, too.
 - Translated = Walking Our Talk!
- Employee perspective:
 - Each employee is given 32 hour paid time off to volunteer in the community.
 - KEEN employees actively engaged in local efforts (e.g. FPC).
 - In turn, they get first-hand experience in projects that benefit our backyard and Brand values.
 - It makes for a happier, healthier employees.
 - A company that gives back and allows it's employees to do the same has a huge impact on employee morale.

Volunteer benefits

- Breakfast at every volunteer event
- Raffle
- FPC blog: *Tales from the trails*
- Special events



“A huge benefit of FPC is that it allows me to connect with nature in a way that I can't do on my own. It's a place to get to know the forest and all the levels of life that exist there. FPC has allowed me a new dimension of connection beyond my typical naturalist wanderer's way.”



Lessons to be learned

- Volunteer work is possible at a large scale.
- Good partners!
- Safety!
- Liability!
- Commitment!
- Yearly work plan!
- Volunteer work can be expensive: FPC spent over \$200,000 on trails maintenance and habitat restoration in the park in 2010.
- You give, you get.
- Do it well → everybody benefits.

Thank you! Questions?

