

FAUNTLEROY WATERSHED COUNCIL
Meeting #111, Sept. 14, 2023, on Zoom

ATTENDEES

Watershed volunteers: Dennis Hinton, Ryan Lewis, Tracy Randel, Lindsey Conrad, Karen Farnsworth, Rosalie Miller, Pete Draughon, Tom Trulin, and Judy Pickens (scribe)

Fauntleroy Church: Phil Sweetland

1. Introductions

2. May minutes

Approved as distributed

3. Financial reports

Dennis reported \$907.35 in our checking account at Washington Federal. Judy reported a balance of \$17,034.45 in our stewardship fund with EarthCorps. Total donations to date have been \$33,217.10 and expenditures have been \$16,182.65. Given the rate of spending vs. donating, she encouraged all in attendance to consider giving.

4. Fauntleroy Park

Forest steward Karen reported the following:

Cambridge Street entrance: The city put in another load of chips at this problem entrance and added a large tube running beside the trail to a gravel apron to convey street runoff. The stairs now seem very stable. She and fellow steward Charlotte Linton have been weeding ivy in that area.

Fires: She expressed concern about the fire department's use of foam on recent fires; information about what is used is on the department's website and is supposed to be environmentally friendly. The most recent fire was on coir fabric laid to stabilize a slope and appeared to be set. Lindsey reported seeing evidence of someone trying to start a fire near the Barton Street entrance - another reason to keep encouraging responsible people to visit the park.

Summit study: Two classes of high-school students at Summit Atlas (35th and Roxbury) are doing a study of the effects of urbanization, including historic water diversion, on natural habitat in the park. Karen gave the students a tour and offered to post their findings on park kiosks. The students will present their reports on Zoom on Thursday, Oct. 5, between 10 am and noon; any available council members should contact Karen or Judy for the link. Phil responded to Karen's question about creek flow - that between Dec. 2021 and the present, flow has varied very little (.72 cfs) except during heavy rain.

Lindsey reported the following:

Tree walk: She guided four park visitors on the walk and plans to do a better job of publicizing the next opportunity.

Garden tour: She and Rosalie hosted an information table during June's West Seattle Garden Tour and were busy all day talking with people. They learned that many people didn't know about Fauntleroy Park. They used a laptop to show the website, plus had a brochure from EarthCorps, which is administering the \$4,700 grant we received from the tour.

Walk signage: After three of our dozen ID signs on the walk disappeared, Lindsey removed the rest and checked with the supplier about how they might be installed differently to have a better chance of staying in place. She looked into using tubes and Redi Mix and learned that Seattle Parks would need to do the installation, which couldn't happen soon. The loamy soil makes pulling them out relatively easy. Replacing the stolen signs would cost \$158.45. Discussion ensued about various options.

Action item: Lindsey will follow up with Brent Nakamura at Seattle Parks in November (after her honeymoon) and cc Karen and Rosalie on her emails.

Wheel access: Rosalie looked into improving access for park visitors who rely on wheels to get around (strollers, walkers, wheelchairs). Her primary contact with Seattle Parks was Amir Williams, senior trails coordinator, provided the following information:

Alley access: This entrance in the northwest corner of the park has eco blocks spaced wide enough for wheeled access but the problem is it's often muddy from a nearby seep. Various fixes have been tried over the years; he offered to take another look.

Action item: Rosalie will follow up with Amir, preferable before salmon-release season when many students take this route out of the park.

Coarse chips at Barton entrance: They make getting into the park very hard for anyone relying on wheels. Karen said the 97th entrance is okay until visitors come to stairs - and that some stairs in the park are in poor condition.

Action item: Rosalie will contact Chris Nack about putting a notice on our website about areas in the park that could be hazardous for visitors with limited mobility.

Review of surfaces: Rosalie secured a commitment from Amir to review surfacing on the two main trails leading to the release bridge in 2024.

Action item: Rosalie will ask Amir about the feasibility of Parks' doing a full review of all main trails in the park.

Wayfinding: Tracy reported that she received an offer from someone with just the right skills to help with this project. He recently moved from Boston to Seattle, so she's giving him time to settle in before recontacting. She has walked the trails to outline loops but needs to tap others' experience with the park in order to check that outline, starting from main entrances and focusing on the most viable trails. Safety improvements can be discussed with Parks based on the loops identified.

Action item: Rosalie will team with Tracy to help identify trails to emphasize. Lindsey will help and they will engage Karen.

5. Seattle Parks

Brent was again not in attendance.

Action item: Judy will contact Kristy Darcy about our need for a consistent liaison.

6. Project activity

Culverts: Judy reported that the city's replacing the creek culvert under 45th Ave. SW is an active project again; SPU is publicizing a target of 2026 for construction. Ryan expressed interest in this project and will visit the site.

Regarding the culvert under the Fauntleroy Church parking lot, she said the church and city are in negotiations intended to get the church out of the culvert business and stave off a catastrophic financial burden. She expects to have more to report in November.

Overflowing Dumpsters: The continuing concern is that, when the two Dumpsters above the culvert intake at 45th overflow (which is frequently), stuff falls into the ravine/creek below. Efforts to get building management to rectify the problem have been unsuccessful.

Action item: Tracy will take on reporting this problem through the city's Find It Fix It app and, if necessary, reporting it as illegal dumping. Tom will assist with photos.

Smolt wrap, salmon watch, log relocation: Dennis reported a total of 41 smolts to salt in the spring; that report is forthcoming. He has organized a log-relocation work party, with Mark Sears in the lead, for

Sept. 25 and emphasized that the safety of volunteers is uppermost. The watch will start with the annual drumming on Oct. 22; he will watch informally the week prior. He said beach fishers at Lincoln Park saw a lot of pinks and are now catching coho. Tracy added that the coho count through the locks is high.

Pete brought up the difficulty of accessing our two smolt traps as presently located. Discussion clarified the problem and produced a couple of possible responses.

Action item: Those involved with smolt trapping will confer to come up with solutions.

Tagging fish: Dennis reported that he and Judy had met with the head of the Coastal Cutthroat Coalition, which for the first time in many years is now spotlighting this region's cutthroat population. They specifically discussed our being able to piggyback on another project in order to tag a few of our smolts to understand more about where they go when they leave the creek. Dennis will continue to track this possibility.

Update of watershed plan: Judy shared the draft of suggested projects by objective, including recent additions from Ryan. He advised more action regarding nearshore habitat, especially related to indicator species such as eelgrass. Judy noted that Washington State Ferries recently mapped eelgrass in the cove as part of its planning for the ferry-terminal rebuild; the project manager promised that we will get that report. Ryan also added monitoring of tree failures in the park because of new pathogens now on the scene.

Action item: Judy will send the updated draft to all with a request for responses by the last week of October.

7. Outreach

In the media: Dennis reported an article about our stewardship fund, a call for salmon watchers, and a calendar listing about the drumming in the September issue of *Neighbors*.

Salmon releases: Judy noted that we have a volunteer willing to be our "troll docent" for classes that go to Lincoln Park after releasing their fry, emphasizing the troll's environmental message. Phil reported that the school-district's Bridges program for special-needs students is now located at the old Roxhill building. That teacher is a long-time Salmon in the Schools person and should be self-sufficient in getting students to the park and overseeing their release. Dennis mentioned a new science teacher at Guadalupe.

Action item: Dennis will send the teacher's name and contact information to Judy and Phil.

8. Volunteer opportunities

Judy shared the current list of ways people might volunteer on behalf of the creek or park, noting that it's posted on our website. She does receive inquiries through the site and tries to make a match.

Next meeting: Thursday, Nov. 9, 6:30 pm on Zoom

Upcoming events

Free fall Recycle Roundup Saturday, Sept. 23, 9 am - 3 pm @ church parking lot

Log relocation on beach Monday, Sept. 25, 10 am

Summit Atlas student reports Thursday, Oct. 5, 10 am - noon on Zoom

Fauntleroy Fall Festival Sunday, Oct. 15, 2-5 pm @ church/schoolhouse (salmon hats!)

Salmon drumming Sunday, Oct. 22, 4 pm in Pickens/Sweetland parking area