



DATE: February 10, 2020

TO: Mayor Robinson and City Councilmembers

FROM: Curtis Kukal, Park Ranger, 452-4195
Geoff Bradley, Natural Resource Manager, 452-2740
Parks & Community Services

SUBJECT: Kids Environmental Project Training (Well-KEPT) Program Update

Since 1987 the City of Bellevue has engaged youth and invested in our City's future by providing valuable employment opportunities to Bellevue youth through the Parks & Community Services Department Well-KEPT Program.

Well-KEPT is a summer youth employment opportunity offered through the Parks Natural Resource Division. The program is designed to provide Bellevue youth with education, job skills, and career development training in the field of park resource management. The work focuses on parkland restoration and maintenance. Typical projects include forest enhancements, trail construction, and wetland restoration. Well-KEPT combines on-the-job work experience with environmental education and career development to instill strong self-esteem, good work habits, and sound environmental ethics.

Some of the accomplishments from the 2019 Well-KEPT are highlighted below:

- **Kelsey Creek Park** - removed 4,680 ft² of jewelweed, bindweed, and English ivy.
- **Lake Hills Greenbelt** - removed 2,300 ft² of bindweed, Himalayan blackberry, Evergreen blackberry, jewelweed, and thistle.
- **Wilburton Hill Park** - removed 3,600 ft² of Himalayan blackberry and English ivy and planted 200 native plants.
- **Lewis Creek Park** - removed 7,223 ft² of Himalayan blackberry and bindweed.
- **Coal Creek Natural Area** - renovated 5,649 linear feet of natural area trail.
- **City-Wide Trails** - completed routine maintenance on 34,302 linear feet of trails.

Well-KEPT is an innovative program that provides an exceptional first employment opportunity for Bellevue youth. The program serves youth who may otherwise have limited opportunities for career development. Well-KEPT is an integral component of the Natural Resource Division's community outreach efforts that inspire and engage citizens in the stewardship of Bellevue's parks. By instilling strong environmental values and a positive work ethic in tomorrow's leaders, Well-KEPT provides cost-effective stewardship of our City in a Park.