

Date: September 21, 2021
To: Parks & Community Services Board
From: Laura Harper, Park Ranger
Jammie Kingham, Environmental Programs Supervisor
Subject: 2021 Summer Ranger Program

BACKGROUND

The Parks & Community Services Department established the Park Ranger Program in 1987 with the development of the Lake Hills Greenbelt and Phantom Lake Management Plan. Park Rangers play an integral role in public communication, outreach, customer service, and safety. Park Rangers are stationed at visitor centers located in the Lake Hills Greenbelt, Lewis Creek Park and Mercer Slough Nature Park. With increased park visitation during the busy summer months, the Park Ranger Program expands with additional seasonal staff from Memorial Day – Labor Day.

RANGER DUTIES

Summer Park Rangers are Seasonal Assistant Park Rangers who are uniformed, front line ambassadors providing a daily presence in the parks from 8am – 12am. Rangers work cooperatively with Bellevue Police and other agencies to help increase user safety, prevent resource degradation, and improve park user satisfaction. Rangers perform daily park patrols to provide education of park rules, reduce user conflicts, and decrease undesirable behavior. In addition, rangers lead environmental programs designed to increase knowledge and understanding of Bellevue's natural and cultural resources. Rangers collect park use data, assist with maintenance activities including placement/replacement of social distancing signage, litter pick up and graffiti removal. Other duties include the following:

- Coordinate with state and local agencies on wildlife issues
- Assist with 4th of July Fireworks Display Viewing
- Staff visitor centers
- Maintain updated information in the park kiosk system
- Perform park visitation studies, monitor use, and solicit user feedback
- Document and report code violations to appropriate enforcement agencies
- Maintain accurate records, reports, and statistics on park use
- Hike trail system and report trail conditions, vandalism, user counts, etc.
- Work with Police and outreach services to address unlawful camping on parks property
- Patrol Phantom Lake per the LHGB Management Plan

2021 SUMMER RANGER ACTIVITY REPORT

The table below summarizes data collection and outreach efforts during the 2021 Summer Park Ranger Program.

Park Ranger Collected Data	May	Jun*	Jul*	Aug*	Sep	YTD
Activity Highlights						
Parks Patrolled	207	849	748	1005	389	3198
Parks Locked	16	210	200	210	59	695
Parking Notice Issued	6	16	15	68	45	150
Illegal Camping	2	1	6	34	15	58
Vandalism	6	15	19	4	5	49
Immediate Response Requested	16	11	13	28	4	72
Other	65	75	72	79	22	313
User Contacts						
Patrons contacted	2856	5185	9959	10083	3451	31534
Provided Assistance	120	43	43	39	13	258
Dogs Off-Leash and/or in Beach Parks	71	98	258	528	156	1111
In Park After Hours	35	401	602	483	178	1699

** = Demonstrates full month of Summer Park Ranger program data collection.*

Illegal Camping = ranger response to issues related to unlawful encampments.

Other = all contacts made that are not otherwise captured such as Parking Notices, dumping, and unusual calls.

Dogs Off-Leash and/or in Beach Park = All dogs seen without a leash. In most occurrences rangers speak with the patron(s).

Immediate Response Requested = Direct responses to patron or city employee phone calls requesting immediate ranger support to address issue(s). Issues may include but are not limited to dogs off-leash or in beach parks causing problems, launching or landing watercraft from inappropriate area, picnic rental conflict, other park rules violations that would benefit from education.

MEYDENBAUER PUBLIC DOCK STAFFING

The City has provided summer ranger staffing from Memorial Day – Labor Day at the Meydenbauer Marina since 2014. This season the ranger was onsite Wednesday- Sunday from 1:30pm-10:00pm. Marina rules allow free day-use moorage at the guest dock for up to 4-hours from dawn to 9:00pm. Drop-in overnight moorage is not permitted. Summer Rangers interacted with visitors from 920 boats this season and provided the following services:

- Greeted and assisted marina visitors
- Addressed noise complaints
- Managed Marina parking lot
- Provided education on Marina and park rules
- Coordination with on-site security contractors

2021 MARINA SUMMARY DATA

The table below summarizes data collected by the Marina Ranger at Meydenbauer Bay during the 2021 season.

Marina Ranger Collected Data	May	June	July	August	September	Total
Number of boats	220	183	281	158	78	920
Number of Pick-ups/ Drop-offs	87	66	114	48	26	341
Boats After 5pm	136	123	171	90	49	569
Boats After Hours	9	7	24	11	3	54

Most of the visitation was during evening hours.

CONCLUSION

The Summer Park Ranger Program serves as a valuable link between the City of Bellevue and its park patrons. Rangers provide a friendly, approachable face that helps ensure safe and enjoyable park patron experiences. The Summer Park Ranger Program is just one example of how Bellevue Parks provides an elevated level of customer service making Bellevue a world class city.

RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT:

- Addressed community needs including park use data collection, park maintenance, park conflicts, and park rules education/outreach.
- Reached **33374 patrons**, assisted **1232 patrons**, and provided **72** immediate responses.

HEALTHY & SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

- Educated park users about Bellevue's natural environment and fostered environmental awareness in Bellevue park patrons

SAFE COMMUNITY

- Increased safety throughout Bellevue parks with regular ranger presence, evening sweeps and gate locking, and providing timely quality assistance
- Coordinated with Bellevue emergency services when needed

QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS/INNOVATIVE, VIBRANT AND CARING COMMUNITY

- Educated park patrons and neighbors while offering a friendly face to the City.
- Assisted park patrons with understanding COVID-19 related park and facility use guidelines and facility closure/opening updates
- Updated park and facility signage and regularly answered questions related to COVID-19 changes, connected patrons to needed services and shared alternative park locations that best fit user needs when popular park sites were crowded

CC: Michael Shiosaki, Parks & Community Services, Director
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