



## Mount Vernon Parks and Enrichment Services

# Pitch In for Parks and Trails

## PARK STEWARDSHIP FAQ

**Q: How do I become a Park Steward?**

A: Complete the Park Steward application found [HERE](#) and return it to the Parks and Enrichment Services office by email ([mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov)), postal mail (1717 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street Mount Vernon, WA 98274), or drop it off in person. Our staff will then review your application and contact you for an interview and site visit.

**Q: Why do I need an agreement? How long is it good for?**

A: Our formal agreements allow citizens to volunteer on City property. Agreements also ensure that both volunteers and the City of Mount Vernon understand their duties and city policies. We ask for a commitment of at least six (6) months when adopting a park or trail. Agreements can be renewed each year in January.

**Q: I just want to pull weeds on the local trail near my home, but I'm not interested in signing up for a "program". Do I have to go through this application process?**

A: We have many different ways to volunteer, but ask that any community member who would like to help improve our parks, even by pulling weeds, fills out a volunteer interest form (different from a Park Steward form), prior to starting their project. This allows us to ensure that all park improvements are documented and that our volunteers and park participants are safe. This also helps us recognize local citizens who have volunteered to beautify their community!

**Q: Can I adopt a trail or park by my house?**

A: Yes! Any City of Mount Vernon trail, park, or portion of any trail or park may be adopted. Just fill out the application form and let us know which location and projects interest you.

**Q: Do I have to set up a schedule or volunteer for a certain amount of time each day/week/month? Is there a minimum number of hours per month required?**

A: We our Park Stewards for a minimum 6-month commitment and to allow enough time each month to complete the project included in your Park Steward Agreement. The exact amount of hours required each week/month will depend on the site location and specific projects.

**Q: Can I apply as a group?**

A: Yes! Groups are considered anything larger than two (2) people and can include businesses, classrooms, families, sports teams, civic groups, etc. Just indicate the name of your group and the lead contact on your Park Steward Application.

**Q: My stewardship group consists of adults and youth (under 18 years old). Is this allowed?**

A: Yes! We encourage volunteers of all ages to participate in our projects. Park Stewards, however, must be 18 years or older. Any youth who volunteers for any project must have a parent/guardian sign off on their waiver form. In addition, if a youth (individual or group) would like to become a steward of a park or trail, they must have an adult register as their Park Steward and the adult would have to be present at all times during volunteer work hours.

**Q: Does Mount Vernon Parks and Enrichment Services loan out equipment or provide supplies? Do I have to bring these items myself?**

A: Typically, Park Stewards are expected to provide their own equipment or tools. Parks and Enrichment Services staff can provide bags to gather trash and other debris. If you have questions about equipment needs, please contact our office at 360-336-6215.

**Q: What do I do with the weeds/litter I collect from my site?**

A: Call or email the Parks and Enrichment Services office (at 360-336-6215 or [mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov)) to arrange to drop off the weeds/litter collected. If you are unable to transport these items, please call to arrange for pick up at the park/trail location.

**Q: How and when do I need to report my hours?**

A: Please report your hours on the Volunteer Work Record form. This form needs to be turned into the Parks office on the last day of each month. This form can be faxed, emailed, postal mailed, or dropped off at the Parks and Enrichment Services office (1717 S 13<sup>th</sup> Street; 360-336-6214; [mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov)).

**Q: What if I signed up to be a Park Steward but no longer have the time?**

A: Please let our office know as soon as possible if you are no longer able to be a Park Steward. If you are still interested in helping, we welcome volunteers for work parties, which often only ask for a one-day commitment.

**Q: I signed up to be a park steward by myself. Now my family members and friends want to help me. What do I do?**

A: If you would like to expand your stewardship group, please contact the Parks and Enrichment Services office at 360-336-6215 as soon as possible. All volunteers must sign a waiver and volunteers under 18 years old must have a parent or guardian signature as well.

**Q: What if I see something dangerous while out in the park or on the trail?**

A: If you observe something dangerous, life threatening, hazardous, or have an emergency on the trail, please contact emergency services right away (9-1-1). If you encounter any other issue, please contact the Parks and Enrichment Services office at 360-336-6215 or [mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov), to report the situation so that it can be addressed by Parks staff as soon as possible.

**Q: How do I report items that need to be repaired?**

A: Please report all items needing repair to the Parks and Enrichment Services Office at 360-336-6215 or [mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov](mailto:mvparks@mountvernonwa.gov). There is space on your monthly hours report form to list items needing attention, but we prefer to learn about those situations as soon as possible in order to make necessary repairs.