

District Wide

Volunteer Newsletter

Spring 2024



Notices pg 1
 Volunteer Opportunities pg 2
 2024 DVSA Recipients pg 7

The **mission** of Three Rivers Park District is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system.

Thank You 2023 Volunteers!

This past year 2,180 volunteers contributed 41,449 hours of service. Ongoing and short term volunteers make a serious impact! THANK YOU!

- **Ongoing individuals**
826 volunteers, 37,515 hours
- **Ongoing groups**
421 volunteers, 1,011 hours
- **Short-term individuals**
283 volunteers, 1,267 hours
- **Short-term groups**
650 volunteers, 1,656 hours

Contact the Volunteer Office

Phone
(763) 559-6706

Email
Volunteer@ThreeRiversParks.org

Or visit us in person

Three Rivers Administrative Center
3000 Xenium Lane N
Plymouth, MN 55441



Volunteer Satisfaction Survey

Special thanks to those who completed the Volunteer Satisfaction Survey last fall! With guidance from your input in this survey, we will begin implementing some updates to our volunteer benefits and communication methods. Your feedback has inspired us to explore fresh ways to express our gratitude for your ongoing exceptional service. We deeply appreciate your dedication to our mission of promoting environmental stewardship through recreation and education.

Big Year of Bugs

Did you know that 2024 is another 'Big Year'? Dive into the world of bugs with us during our Big Year of Bugs! Attend the speaker series (only two sessions left, both in March), attend a festival, or join a program to explore and appreciate these fascinating creatures! Don't forget that you can enjoy a \$10 program discount if you put in at least one hour of service between Oct 1, 2022 and Sept 30, 2023! For inquiries about your Volunteer Fun Pass benefits or how to use them, contact us at volunteer@threeriversparks.org. For more about the Big Year Of Bugs, visit www.threeriversparks.org/page/big-year-bugs.

Special Park Districts Forum

Three Rivers is incredibly excited to host the Special Park Districts Forum this June! Special Park Districts are a unique level of government, so this annual forum is a great way for *our* Park District to share ideas and learn with like minded folks and similarly structured organizations from all around the US and Canada. We know you share our excitement in what we do, so we'd love your help! Check out details further in this newsletter for volunteer opportunities.

Three Rivers Affinity Clothing

You can purchase additional Three Rivers affinity clothing for use while you are volunteering! Various outerwear, polos, button down shirts, hats, and more can be purchased through the Volunteer Office. To check out clothing options and pricing, contact us at Volunteer@ThreeRiversParks.org.

Volunteer Opportunities

Signature Events

Trail Mix

Date: Saturday, April 20, 6:00 AM to 4:00 PM (in shifts)

Location: Lake Rebecca Park Reserve (Rockford)

Contact: Becca Conser, Rebecca.Conser@ThreeRiversParks.org

This annual race offers a 50k, 25k, 12.5k and 6k race through Lake Rebecca Park Reserve. Volunteers are needed for pre-race, race registration, aid stations, racer food, Park Patrol, and at the finish line.

Trail Spin

Date: Saturday, June 22, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Location: Carver Park Reserve (Victoria)

Contact: Katie Brom, Katherine.Brom@ThreeRiversParks.org

Help spread the love of biking at the second annual biking festival! This is a free event geared toward all ages and skill levels and covers all things bikes - both standard and mountain biking! We're looking for volunteers to help with bike rentals, tie dye and other art stations, welcoming and orienting guests, patrolling on the bike trails, and supporting Recreation Staff on guided bike tours.

Special Park Districts Forum

Dates: Monday, June 10 to Friday, June 14

Locations: District-wide

Contact: Katie Brom, Katherine.Brom@ThreeRiversParks.org

The Forum will be taking place at MANY locations across the Park District, with participants being bussed to multiple locations each day. Each location will have one or more informational sessions for participants to attend (check out more at threeriversparks.2024spdf.org/three-rivers-park-district). Volunteers are needed in the following roles:

- **Session Greeter:** Greet participants as they arrive, oversee water and snacks, and generally chat with the participants about the forum/session/Park District/your experience as a volunteer. Most shifts are outdoors in 3-4 hour time blocks, both AM and PM. Must be 18+. Opportunities to listen to sessions!
- **Welcome Table Greeter:** Provide minor orientation and resources to forum participants as they check in at the hotel. Keep table stocked with resources. Position is fully indoors, has seated options, and will have staff present.
- **Event Setup:** Help staff decorate for the more formal dinners/speaking sessions. One is even winter themed at the Hyland Chalet! Age 16+. Shifts in 3-4 hour time blocks, both AM and PM.

Baker Outdoor Learning Center (cont.)

In Baker Park Reserve.

Volunteer Supervisor: Sara Harcey, Interpretive Naturalist, Sara.Harcey@ThreeRiversParks.org

Maple Syruping - Program Assistants

Looking for adult volunteers to start and maintain campfires and evaporator fire, set up maple taste testing, assist with program set up, clean up, etc.

Contact: Mary Morris, Mary.Morris@ThreeRiversParks.org

Date: Weekends - *highest priority*

Sunday, March 3, 2:15-5:30 PM - Public Program

Sunday, March 10, 2:15-5:30 PM - Public Prog & Scouts

Sunday, March 17, 2:15-5:30 PM - Public Program

Sunday, March 24, 1:15-4 PM - Public Program & Scouts

Sunday, March 24, 5-7:30 PM - Public Program & Scouts

Date: Weekdays - *higher priority in bold*

Wednesday, March 6, 10 AM-2:15 PM - School Group

Thursday, March 7, 9:15 AM-2:15 PM - School Group

Thursday, March 7, 4:15-7 PM - Scout Group

Friday, March 8, 9:15 AM-2:15 PM - School Group

Tuesday, March 12, 8 AM-2:30 PM - School Group

Tuesday, March 12, 4-6:30 PM - Scout Group

Thursday, March 14, 8:45 AM- 3 PM - School Group

Thursday, March 21, 11:15 AM- 4 PM - Homeschools

Maple Syruping - On-Call Boilers

Contact: Mary Morris, Mary.Morris@ThreeRiversParks.org

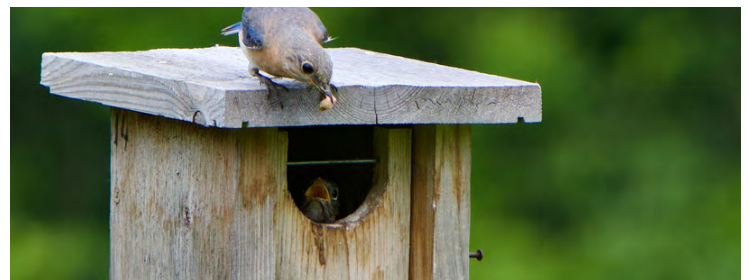
Start and manage the evaporator to boil sap into syrup. This role is "on-call", meaning that once your name is on our list, we will contact you to schedule a date and time when we have high volumes of sap to process.

Cleary Lake Regional Park

Wellness in the Parks

Contact: Allison Adrian, Allison.Adrian@ThreeRiversParks.org

Support staff during mindfulness and wellness programming for adults and families. Individuals interested in fire-tending and welcoming participants as they arrive are especially needed.



Volunteer Opportunities

Community Events

Festivals, markets, and events outside of TRPD Parks.
Volunteer Supervisor: Zaira Munoz,
CommunityEvents@ThreeRiversParks.org

Dates: Occasional, contact for dates
Assist staff at outreach events located outside of Three Rivers Parks. This is a great role for those who like to share their passion for Three Rivers and want to introduce people to the parks, trails, and activities that we offer. Occasional support with booth set-up and take-down, otherwise role may require sitting or standing for the duration of the shift. Events indoors and outdoors.

Eastman Nature Center

In Elm Creek Park Reserve.
Volunteer Supervisor: Vicky Wachtler, Interpretive Naturalist, Vicky.Wachtler@ThreeRiversParks.org

Project: Make Survival Bracelets

Date: at your convenience
Contact: Katy Jacobson, Katy.Jacobson@ThreeRiversParks.org
Come to the Nature Center and make survival-type paracord bracelets for animal ambassador donations - all materials and instructions provided.

Chickadee Landing Training

Date: Sundays in March
Contact: Anne Jaeger, Anne.Jaeger@ThreeRiversParks.org
Learn the tips and tricks to facilitating informal visits to our chickadee landing. We're still determining what this will look like, but we'd love your involvement!

Maple Syrup Festival

Date: Saturday March 23, 12:30 to 4:30 PM
Contact: Brandon Baker, Brandon.Baker@ThreeRiversParks.org
Help us with sap collecting, teaching syrup science and history, as well as providing syrup sundaes, making sugar, and many other activities!

Eastman Nature Center (cont.)

SpringFest

Date: Saturday May 18, 9:15 AM to 2:30 PM
Contact: Vicky Wachtler, Vicky.Wachtler@ThreeRiversParks.org
Come help us celebrate all the excitement of spring firsts and fun. Volunteers needed for hikes, crafts/projects, education stations, and more.

Monarch Larval Monitoring

Contact: Elaine Tucker, Elaine.Tucker@ThreeRiversParks.org
The Monarch Larval Monitoring Project is a summertime citizen science project that requires 1 or 2 two-hour visits per month. Volunteers check every milkweed plant in a designated area for monarchs and record the life stages they find. Learn more: <https://mlmp.org> Training required.

Gale Woods Farm

Volunteer Supervisor: Andi Anderson, Program Coordinator, Andi.Anderson@ThreeRiversParks.org

Contact Andi to learn more about assisting with programs, garden projects, or fiber projects.

Lowry Nature Center

In Carver Park Reserve.
Volunteer Supervisors:
Kirk Mona, Kirk.Mona@ThreeRiversParks.org and
Elise Bushard, Elise.Bushard@ThreeRiversParks.org

Program: Lamplight Maple Syruping

Date: Tuesday, March 5, 5:30 to 8:00 PM
Contact: Lauren Kitrell, Lauren.Kitrell@ThreeRiversParks.org
One volunteer to aid naturalist with program setup, cleanup, light and distribute lanterns, and accompany group for full duration of sugarbush excursion. One volunteer needed to tend fire indoors.



Volunteer Opportunities

Lowry Nature Center (cont.)

Program: Canines of Carver Park

Date: Tuesday, April 2, 5:30 to 8:00 PM

Contact: Lauren Kitrell, Lauren.Kitrell@ThreeRiversParks.org

One volunteer to aid naturalist with program setup and cleanup, including tables and supplies (indoors). One volunteer needed to tend fire indoors.

Lowry's Earth Day Celebration Event

Dates: Saturday, April 20 10 AM to 2 PM

Contact: Elise Bushard, Elise.Bushard@threeriversparks.org

This event is replacing the Spring Eggstravaganza with a bigger focus on the environment. Two volunteers needed as greeters and four as event assistants.

Bluebird Monitoring

Contact: Elise Bushard, Elise.Bushard@ThreeRiversParks.org

Commitment: 1 hour per week from April 1 through July 31.

Walk, drive or ride to monitor bluebird houses along park trails documenting eggs, young, etc.

Required Training: Saturday, March 30, 10-11:00 AM at Lowry Nature Center.



Mississippi Gateway

Volunteer Supervisor: Ashley LeVoir,
Ashley.LeVoir@ThreeRiversParks.org

Bug Photography

It's the Big Year of Bugs and we need good insect photos! These photos would be used on our social media platforms and potentially other things like fliers, educational tools or even future Volunteer Newsletters.

Park Photography

We are looking for volunteers to get out into our park and just take cool, interesting or just plain pretty photos. These photos could be landscapes, animals, plants, rocks - anything related to the nature in our park. Photos would be used on our social media platforms and potentially other things like fliers, educational tools, or future Volunteer Newsletters.

Mississippi Gateway (cont.)

Trail Cameras

We are looking for someone to take our trail cams into the park and set them up in various places to catch some great wildlife shots. We will provide you with the trail cams and train you in on how to use them.

Animal Paintings

We have wooden cut outs of animals that are in need of painting! We are looking for someone to paint them to look like the animal they are cut out to be. These animals range from 6 inches to about 2 feet in length. We will provide supplies unless you have your own that you would prefer to use.

Educational Insect Order Posters

We need a new set of insect order posters created. We are looking for posters that are about 18 x 24 inches with each poster depicting an insect order. Each poster would include the name of the order (e.g. hemiptera), the common name for the order/groups of insects found within the order (e.g. True Bugs), pictures with examples of insects found in that order (could be photos or hand drawn), and then some info on the back about the order and major identifying features. We will provide materials.

Natural Resources Management

Invasive Plant Management (District-wide)

Contact: Meg Duhr, Meg.Duhr@ThreeRiversParks.org

Rapid Response & Early Detection Team (RRED): identify and map new infestations of targeted plants. Some species may require removal. Use of personal GPS unit or smartphone is encouraged.

Wildlife (District-wide)

Contact: Angela Grill, Angela.Grill@ThreeRiversParks.org

Angela coordinates volunteers for Bluebird monitoring, turtle surveys, frog and toad surveys, Prairie Seed Collection and seed cleaning.

Volunteer needs: Purple Martin Monitoring and Frog/Toad Surveying at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve.

Contact: Steven Hogg, Steven.Hogg@ThreeRiversParks.org

No current needs. Steven coordinates volunteers for breeding bird surveys, osprey nest monitoring, wood duck nest monitoring, and wetland control structure monitoring.

Volunteer Opportunities

Outdoor Recreation School (ORS)

Opportunities Park District-wide.

Volunteer Supervisor: Heather Gordon,
Heather.Gordon@ThreeRiversParks.org

Ice Fishing Programs

Teach youth and adults how to fish during the winter months. Must have basic knowledge of fishing equipment, fishing knots, and native fish species. Easy to moderate activity level; best for those who love the cold!

Snowshoeing Programs

Explore off-trail areas while assisting staff with programs and getting participants fitted in their snowshoes. Staff will get you up to speed before each program. Easy to moderate activity level. Staff will assign volunteers to portions of the program.

Training: Paddle Programs

Note: This training is for ORS paddle program volunteers AND for volunteers who support canoe programs at other sites

Date: Saturday, May 11, 9 AM-3 PM

Location: Hyland Lake Park Reserve

We are looking for volunteers to help with our canoe, kayak and stand-up paddleboard programs for families, adults, kids, summer camps, school groups and more. Volunteers are critical to the success of these programs – helping us welcome participants, correcting upside down paddles, managing groups on the water, counseling canoe partners that are struggling, and so much more. This training is required every two years for paddle program volunteers. If you are new to paddle program volunteering OR you attended in 2022 or prior, you must attend training this year.

Canoe Programs

Help us introduce youth, adults, and families to canoeing! Assist with program set-up, fitting PFDs, loading/launching and landing/unloading canoes, and group management on the water. Must attend Paddle Program Volunteer Training every two years and have previous experience canoeing. Ages 18+. Moderate activity level.

Kayak Programs

Help us introduce youth, adults, and families to kayaking! Assist with program set-up, fitting PFDs, loading/launching and landing/unloading kayaks, and group management on the water. Must attend Paddle Program Volunteer Training every two years and have previous experience kayaking. Ages 18+. Moderate activity level.

Outdoor Recreation School (cont.)

Stand Up Paddleboard Programs

Help us introduce youth, adults, and families to stand up paddleboarding (SUP)! Assist with program set-up, fitting PFDs, launching/landing SUPs, and group management on the water. Volunteers paddle in a kayak sometimes, depending on equipment availability. Must attend Paddle Program Volunteer Training every two years and have previous experience with SUP equipment. Ages 18+. Moderate to vigorous activity level depending on the program and/or needs of individual participants.

NEW - Mountain Bike Camps

We have a new volunteer role starting this year! Our mountain bike camps are a 3-day camp of 6-hour days (except Murphy-Hanrehan which is 4 x 3-hour mornings) where we build the foundational skills of mountain biking through a combination of drills and trail riding. We teach wheels-on-the-ground riding. Volunteers should already be mountain bikers who are comfortable riding blue rated trails, be able to provide your own mountain bike & helmet in good condition, and be CPR/first aid certified.



Richardson Nature Center

In Hyland Park Reserve.

Volunteer Supervisor: Kimi Aisawa-Romportl,
Kimi.AisawaRomportl@ThreeRiversParks.org

Weekend Snowshoe, Sled, and Kicksled Programs

Dates: Saturdays, 10:00 AM to Noon

Saturdays, 1:00 to 3:00 PM

This is an "on call" role - we will contact you when there are volunteer needs. Rental assistants needed to welcome guests, assist snowshoe fittings, and give trail guidelines. Pass out and take returned sleds (kicksleds may also be used, so volunteer needed to help visitors with this additional recreation item). On-site training offered.

Volunteer Opportunities

Richardson Nature Center (cont.)

Animal Trail: Spring Scavenger Hunt

Date: Saturday, March 30, 9 AM–1:45 PM

Contact: 763-694-7676; lead staff: Monica Rauchwarter and Adam Barnett (Monica.Rauchwarter@ThreeRiversParks.org and Adam.Barnett@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Main activity is a camouflage/scavenger hunt along with a story stroll, games, crafts, and live animals. Volunteers are needed to help with: trail set up, greeting, registration assistant, explain directions to games and crafts, pass out prizes at various activities, show live animals, provide friendly face at start/end of camouflage trail, keep coffee bar stocked, and clean up at end of event.



Silverwood Park

Volunteer Supervisor:

Seth Eberle, Seth.Eberle@ThreeRiversParks.org

Art and Nature Gallery Docent

Dates: Primarily Saturdays and Sundays from 1:00 to 3:00 PM
Searching for volunteers to be present in the gallery during busy weekend times. Docent are meant to invite park guests to talk about and engage with the art in the gallery, relating it to the outdoors, and environmental themes. Becoming a docent requires a group training with Silverwood staff. Then, docents work independently signing up for shifts in small groups or on their own.

Community Science Projects at Silverwood Park

Project Feeder Watch

Dates: March through April, weekends only

Ongoing project that asks volunteers to collect information on the kinds of birds seen at a feeder for two consecutive days in a row each week. Also help by refilling bird feeders on site during your shift. Best for those who enjoy birds, like to work independently or with a small group, and want to watch something other than Zoom meetings for a while. More information on this project at the Project Feeder Watch website: <https://feederwatch.org/>

Recreation Areas and Trails

Hyland Hosts

Location: Hyland Hills Ski Area

Contact: Bill Kauffman, Bill.Kauffmann@ThreeRiversParks.org

Outgoing and helpful individuals needed for the rest of the ski season. Volunteers will welcome guests and direct them to lessons, rentals, etc. Weekday assistance with school groups and weekend assistance with lessons, school breaks, and events.

Park Patrol and Park Ambassadors

Locations: District wide

Contact: Becca Conser, Rebecca.Conser@ThreeRiversParks.org

If you're an avid parks and trails user and you enjoy helping others, please consider becoming a Park Patroller or Park Ambassador. Required trainings are held in spring and fall. Park Patrol trainings include First Aid, CPR, and simulation training. Park Ambassadors receive customer service and communication trainings. Both positions start with an orientation to learn more about the role and determine if it's a good fit for you.

Alpine Ski Patrol

Locations: Elm Creek Winter Recreation Area and Hyland Hills Ski Area

Contact: Ashley O'Rourke, Ashley.ORourke@ThreeRiversParks.org

Looking for highly motivated, enthusiastic skiers and snow boarders. Demands are high and so are the rewards. Requirements: complete and pass extensive emergency care and on-the-hill training; maintain National Ski Patrol membership and certifications; complete a minimum number of hours each season.



Congratulations to the 2024 DVSA Recipients!

Paul Arneson

Program Assistant at District Events, Outdoor Recreation School, Baker Outdoor Learning Center, and Richardson Nature Center. Park Patrol at District Events, Hyland Park Reserve, and Nine Mile Creek and Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trails.

Mike Davis

Ski Patrol at Hyland Hills Ski Area.

Charity Duran

Program Assistant and Animal Care Assistant at Eastman Nature Center.

Randy Hartnett

Natural Resources Surveyor for Natural Resources. Program Assistant and Natural Resources Monitor at Mississippi Gateway. Park Patrol at Elm Creek, Mississippi Gateway, and Rush Creek, Medicine Lake, and Shingle Creek Regional Trails.

Barclay Kruse

Program Assistant, Natural Resources Monitor, Park Ambassador, and Project Assistant at Mississippi Gateway. Research Project Assistant, District Wide. Project Specialist- Photography for Marketing, District Wide.

Anthony Pini

Project Assistant and Seed Cleaning Project Assistant at District Nursery. Natural Resources Monitor-Bluebirds at Lowry Nature Center. Prairie Seed Collection, Prairie Seed Collection Leader, and Research Project Assistant District Wide. Program Assistant at Lowry Nature Center. Natural Resources Monitor, Natural Resources.

The Distinguished Volunteer Service Award is a district wide award, the highest award bestowed upon Three Rivers volunteers. Recipients are selected based on individual accomplishments and represent the wide diversity of volunteer positions and facilities throughout the Park District. Recipients were chosen by a selection committee made up of five Three Rivers employees and one previous DVSA recipient.

This year's recipients will be honored with a reception and ceremony at the April 18th Board of Commissioners meeting.

If you know and see any of these volunteers, please join us in congratulating them!

Contact us:

Office Phone: (763) 559-6706
Email: Volunteer@ThreeRiversParks.org

Or visit us in person:

Three Rivers Administrative Center
3000 Xenium Lane N
Plymouth, MN 55441