



## ANCHORAGE PARK FOUNDATION MEDIA RELEASE

June 4, 2010

Contact: Beth Nordlund, 350-9482

### **VOLUNTEERS TO CLEAN UP WILLAWAW PARK THIS SATURDAY**

#### ***Volunteers to Remove Graffiti, Improve Trails & Clear Dead Trees in Willawaw Park***

The Anchorage Park Foundation (APF) and the Anchorage Parks & Recreation Department (APRD) will continue their summer **Neighborhood Park Fix-Its** with a volunteer park clean-up on Saturday, July 24. Volunteers in the Russian Jack neighborhood will remove graffiti; build a new flowerbed, repair the walking trail and remove dead trees in Willawaw Park ([1300 Bliss Street](#)) from 9 am – 12 pm, followed by a celebration for volunteers from 12 – 2 pm.

"We are glad to collaborate with the Park Foundation and the Parks & Recreation Department to clean up our neighborhood park," said Russian Jack Community Council VIP Committee Member and volunteer Sam O'Connor. "Willawaw Park is a community fixture, with great play equipment and a grassy area for families to enjoy. We look forward to the installation of the basketball court by the contractor after our work day."

With funding from the Parks & Recreation Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation and the Alaska State Legislature, volunteers at Willawaw Park will create new pathways, improve safety and clean up the park. In addition, project partners will complete other improvements, including relocating the backstop, irrigating the playfield and building a new basketball court.

Since this winter, park neighbors and Russian Jack Community Council volunteers have partnered with staff from the Parks & Recreation Department to identify priority repairs and recruit volunteers to accomplish park improvements. These improvements are made possible by funding from the Alaska Legislature and Anchorage Park Foundation's Clean & Green funding from the Rasmuson Foundation.

In late June, teen crews from the Youth Employment in Parks program created a new soft-surface trail linking the east and west sides of the park. "The Park Foundation is proud to link the Youth Employment in Parks crews with on-the-job learning opportunities like this trail construction project," said Anchorage Park Foundation board member Eleanor Andrews. "YEP crews are developing marketable job skills while partnering with volunteers to improve this neighborhood park."

The APF and APRD partner to accomplish neighborhood park fix-its using volunteer and professional labor to accomplish park projects that are immediate, doable, supported, needed, and produced visible results. "Partnership with community volunteers like the Russian Jack Community Council enables us to stretch private and public dollars to make significant improvements to parks," said Parks Superintendent Holly Spoth-Torres. "We look forward to seeing the community enjoying the new trail and basketball court in Willawaw Park."

The APF Clean & Green campaign is made possible by generous funding from the Rasmuson Foundation. For more information on summer park improvements, please visit [www.AnchorageParkFoundation.org](http://www.AnchorageParkFoundation.org). For more information about Willawaw Park, please visit the Anchorage Park Foundation park directory: <http://www.anchorageparkfoundation.org/directory/willawaw.htm>

#####