



**SEATTLE PARKS
AND RECREATION**

Mike McGinn, Mayor
Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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SEATTLE PARKS NAMES ONE PARK IN THE 12th AVE. NEIGHBORHOOD AND FOUR PARKS ALONG THORNTON CREEK

Seattle Parks and Recreation Acting Superintendent Christopher Williams announced today the naming of five parks: Woonerf Park, Licorice Fern Natural Area on Thornton Creek, Kingfisher Natural Area on Thornton Creek, Beaver Pond Natural Area on Thornton Creek, and LaVilla Meadows Natural Area on Thornton Creek.

Woonerf Park is a 7,332 square-foot property at the southeast corner of 12th Ave. and E James Court that was transferred to Parks from the Department of Neighborhoods in January 2008. For more information on the park, please see http://seattle.gov/parks/ProParks/projects/12thAve_aquisition.htm and <http://www.seattle.gov/parks/ProParks/projects/12thAve.htm>

Parks removed the existing building from the site and has funding from the 2000 Pro Parks Levy for development. The schematic design includes an urban plaza, native plantings, rain gardens, a performance area, seating, and an art installation. The park will open in summer 2012 and will serve as a new neighborhood gathering space for the Squire Park/12th Ave. communities.

The name highlights this unique shared space with the E James Court Woonerf project, funded by the Parks and Green Spaces Levy Opportunity Fund, which is currently in the design phase. The proposal envisions the development of a woonerf along James Court spanning the 12th Ave. Park to the south and the new Seattle University and Seneca group development to the north. "A woonerf (Dutch plural: woonerven) in the Netherlands and Flanders is a street where pedestrians and cyclists have priority over motorists. The techniques of shared spaces, traffic calming, and low speed limits are intended to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety."

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Parks has acquired a number of parcels along Thornton Creek in northeast Seattle, and four of them are being named now to recognize their unique characteristics and let the public know that they are access points to Thornton Creek. The naming took into consideration the natural features and history of the park sites.

Licorice Fern Natural Area on Thornton Creek is adjacent to the Jackson Park Golf course to the west. It is bordered by NE 130th St. to the south and 10th Ave. NE to the west. It follows the creek northeasterly toward NE Brockman Pl. It is a predominately wooded ravine providing rich wildlife habitat on the North Branch of Thornton Creek. Licorice Ferns are abundant and unique to this area.

Kingfisher Natural Area on Thornton Creek is a large assemblage of properties that follows the South Branch of Thornton Creek southeasterly from approximately 15th Ave. NE and NE 105th St. to NE 98th St. west of 20th Ave. NE. There are formal access points at NE 102nd St. and 17th Ave. NE and at NE 104th St. and 17th Ave. NE, as well as two areas along NE 100th St. The park features viewpoints, wetlands, and an abundant wildlife habitat. Kingfishers used to be spotted nesting in this area and are now passing through. This name helps to highlight the importance that preserving and protecting these areas has on wildlife habitat.

Beaver Pond Natural Area on Thornton Creek consists of several contiguous parcels located near the Northgate Community Center and continues northeasterly into the Maple Leaf neighborhood. It is bordered by NE 103rd St. and NE 107th St. to the south and north and by 5th Ave. NE to the west and Roosevelt Way NE to the east. The park includes the South Branch of Thornton Creek, wooded areas, wetlands, and several trails. Visitors will see a wide variety of wildlife including an active beaver pond. There are several major access points located at the south end of the park, on NE 105th St. and at the corner of NE 106th St. and 9th Ave. NE. The Beaver Pond is a unique feature that brings many visitors to this site. The beavers have completely changed the configuration and vegetation of the site in a way that will be there for years to come. This is a very distinct and unique feature for this part of Thornton Creek.

LaVilla Meadows Natural Area on Thornton Creek is just east of Lake City Way between Fischer Pl. NE and Ravenna Ave. NE, north of NE 100th St. to approximately NE 103rd St. Access to the park is from Fischer Pl. NE, at the north side of the Shutter Shop parking lot, along the fence. This site was once a dairy operated by the Blindheim family and is now a natural area that includes the confluence of Willow Creek and the South Branch of Thornton Creek. There has been a focus on restoration and stewardship of the creek and the native vegetation in this area. This name reflects the history of the site and is a familiar reference for those who live and work near and visit this neighborhood jewel.

The Park Naming Committee is comprised of one representative of the Board of Park Commissioners, one representative of the Seattle City Councilmember who chairs the committee dealing with parks issues, and one representative of the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. For more information about the park naming process, please contact Paula Hoff, Seattle Parks and Recreation, at 206-615-0368 or paula.hoff@seattle.gov.

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