

## **Media Advisory – July 29, 2008**

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### **YARD grants head to Council for final approval**

About \$1 million in park amenity projects, funded in part with Snohomish County grants, were forwarded Tuesday by the County Executive to the County Council for final approval.

Ten projects were selected earlier this year as part of the inaugural Youth Amenities and Recreation Development (YARD) grant program. They are being funded with \$450,000 in county seed money, matched by more than \$500,000 in community funds and volunteer labor.

The YARD grant program gives nonprofits, school districts and local municipalities a funding source to complete much-needed parks projects throughout Snohomish County.

“We’re building up this community by investing county money in partnerships that will improve the quality of recreational opportunities available in Snohomish County,” Reardon said. “This small amount of seed money is a considerable investment without a tax increase to Snohomish County residents.”

The program is part of the Community Enhancement Initiative proposed by Reardon as part of the 2008 county budget. Reardon has announced plans to include additional YARD grant money in the 2009-2010 biennial budget.

Applications for this year’s awards were solicited in February and March by the county’s Parks and Recreation Department. A total of 13 applications were received and 10 met the grant requirements. Grant winners gathered in May for the award announcements, together with the County Executive and members of the County Council.

“The YARD grants provide much needed support for shared county open spaces,” said County Councilman Brian Sullivan. “I look forward to final council approval of these funds.”

Council members have been supportive of the program from the beginning and now must finalize grant awards.

The Mukilteo North Little League, located in Sullivan’s council district, will use \$50,000 in YARD grant money to improve existing baseball and softball fields at Paine Field Community Park. The Little League has secured \$45,671 in matching funds and labor.

In total, matching funds and volunteer labor for this year's projects come from four school districts, two cities and 10 nonprofits, including various parent-teacher associations and the YMCA.

“The biggest benefit of this grant is that we don't have to ask our children to go sell candy bars and raise money to purchase playground equipment,” said Brenda Fuglevand, principal of Forest View Elementary, during the award announcements in May. “And to have this kind of equipment available for them to climb, play and swing benefits their education.”

The Forest View PTA is combining \$24,100 in YARD grant money with another \$41,252 to complete a playground climbing structure at the school.

Other grant-funded projects can be found throughout Snohomish County, including Arlington, Everett, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace and Sultan. Grants vary from a little more than \$6,000 to the maximum of \$75,000. Projects include sports field improvements, playground equipment and a ropes challenge course.

For a complete list of this year's grant winners, go to: [www.snocoparks.com](http://www.snocoparks.com).

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