

# 2023 Spring and Summer

## Outdoor Recreation School Volunteer Newsletter



### Happy almost Spring!

Here we are, early March, snow still on the ground, maybe more to come, some of us sad to see winter go, others ready for warm weather, ah the joys of spring in MN! To make things even a little stranger at ORS, we move into March for the first time without maple syruping as part of our programming 😞. We had an awesome winter and introduced so many park guests to snowshoeing, cross country skiing, kicksledding and ice fishing. Even with the strange ice conditions and some programs in the rain, we were so grateful to have so much snow to play in! Thanks to all of you that helped us out this winter, your welcoming smiles and encouraging words are always such an important part of our programs. Not to mention your help baiting hooks, putting on snowshoes, moving equipment, and all the other things you do to help our programs be the best they can be. We appreciate you all so much! As the weather starts to warm up, we hope you all will consider joining us on the water, the archery ranges, the fishing piers and more for lots of fun spring and summer adventures!

Heather 😊

Volunteer Liaison for the Outdoor Recreation School

### National Pie Day Hike

**Tuesday, March 14, 5-6PM at Hyland Park Reserve**

Join ORS staff and other volunteers for a casual gathering at Hyland Park Reserve. We will chat, take a short hike, and enjoy some tasty pie! Exact location TBD depending on weather and trail conditions that day. Hope you can join the fun!

RSVP to [Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org)

### Cross-Country Ski Season Recap

**By Grant Armor**

Wow, what a ski season we have had and thank you to our cross-country ski volunteers for helping us make it happen! This winter we hosted a deep plethora of skiers in our parks from the Nordic opener to public lessons and serving some of our larger private groups, we couldn't have had the reach we did without you. We have yet to run the final numbers on the season with private lessons continuing at least into early March, but we hosted over 70 public lessons and clubs with your help. Your support allowed our instructors to serve another ~300 private lessons. Your friendly faces, tips and tricks, and passion for helping connect people with the joy of skiing is so deeply appreciated by staff and participants alike! Thank you again to those of you who volunteered with the ski program this winter. If you are a cross-country skier and are interested in joining us for lessons next year - keep an eye out late fall for the date for our cross-country ski volunteer training and/or chat with Grant, Deb, or Heather when you see us some time!

## Outdoor Recreation School featured in media

CCX Media featured a fall program ORS was part of with Community Engagement and one of their partners, Innovative SOULutions. [Check out the video at this link](#) and keep an eye/ear out for our amazing volunteer, Linda Seaton!



## Kayak Spa Day

**Friday, April 28th, 9am-5pm at French Maintenance Yard**

Help ORS get our kayaks ready for the season with our annual spa day! There will be lots of boats moving, washing, and treating with sunscreen to get them happy and ready for a summer of paddling. Contact Grant Armour at [Grant.Armour@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Grant.Armour@threeriversparks.org) if you wish to help out. Likely will not take all the way until 5pm.

## Paddle Programs Volunteer Training

**Saturday, May 13 from 9AM-2PM at Hyland Lake Park Reserve**

Even with all of the recent snow, ice and freezing rain we can “see” the lakes opening up and our boats in the water! 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. Our 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.

Starting this year, paddle programs volunteer training will be required for all volunteers every two years. If you attended training in 2022, you are set for this upcoming season. If you are new to paddle program volunteering OR you attended in 2021 or prior, you must attend training this year. Please send an email to [Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org) if you plan to on attending. If you are not able to attend due to a prior engagement, please be in touch and we will see what we can work out.

## Volunteer with Canoe Programs at Baker Outdoor Learning Center

**Saturdays throughout the summer, mornings from 9-1130AM at Baker Outdoor Learning Center**

Volunteers are needed to assist staff with providing canoe experiences for families that are cabin camping on weekends. Volunteers must have current Paddle Programs Volunteer Training. Please contact Sara Harcey for more information and to sign up at [Sara.Harcey@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Sara.Harcey@threeriversparks.org)

## NEW – Watercraft Ambassadors

This is a new volunteer opportunity the park district is hoping to pilot this summer. Location is TBD – but the top contender right now is Baker Park Reserve on busy camping weekends. Watercraft Ambassadors will assist boat rental customers to ensure safe operation of rental equipment. Position will primarily work outdoors in beach areas. Volunteers will assist park guests as they are getting ready to go on the lake with rental watercraft – this may include advising on life jacket fit, basic paddle strokes, launching tips, etc. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity please contact Becca Conser at [Rebecca.Conser@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Rebecca.Conser@threeriversparks.org).

# Outdoor Recreation School Staff and Contact Information

Main ORS Phone Line: 763-694-7717

Ann Schinas, Recreation Supervisor  
[Ann.Schinas@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Ann.Schinas@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Sarah Jacobs, Office Support Assistant  
[Sarah.Jacobs@ThreeRiverSparks.org](mailto:Sarah.Jacobs@ThreeRiverSparks.org)

Heather Gordon, Recreation Program Specialist  
and ORS Volunteer Coordinator  
[Heather.Gordon@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Heather.Gordon@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Nick Sacco, Recreation Program Specialist  
[Nick.Sacco@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Nick.Sacco@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Grant Armour, Recreation Program Specialist  
[Grant.Armour@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Grant.Armour@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Allie Dart, Recreation Program Specialist  
[Allie.Dart@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Allie.Dart@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Deb Malmon, Recreation Program Specialist  
[Deb.Malmon@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Deb.Malmon@ThreeRiversParks.org)

Sam Tabaka, ORS Instructor and ORS Adaptive  
Coordinator  
[Sam.Tabaka@ThreeRiversParks.org](mailto:Sam.Tabaka@ThreeRiversParks.org)

OPEN, Recreation Program Specialist  
*Brent Hennen has moved to Gale Woods as a Farm  
Educator, we will miss him at ORS!*

## Spring and Summer Volunteering Positions with ORS

A spring program schedule is now available for volunteers to sign up. If you have not received this schedule, please send an email to [Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org](mailto:Heather.Gordon@threeriversparks.org) for a copy. The summer programs list will be available in May. Here are descriptions for the spring and summer volunteer opportunities.

### [Adapted Program Volunteers \(non-paddle sports\)](#)

Volunteers will assist program staff with adapted equipment and variety of outdoor activities at these fun and rewarding programs.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: A desire to assist participants with a variety of cognitive and physical disabilities. No advanced training needed, volunteers will be given a brief orientation on their role when they arrive for the program.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate

### [Adapted Paddle Program Volunteers](#)

Volunteers will assist program staff with adapted paddling equipment. There will also be time paddling on the water with staff and participants.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: A desire to assist participants with a variety of cognitive and physical disabilities. Volunteers must be current paddle volunteers OR attend our paddle volunteer training on May 2nd. All potential new adapted paddle program volunteers will meet with one of our staff to review the role and make sure it is a good fit. Ages 18+

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate to Vigorous depending on the program and/or needs of individual participants.

### [Archery Volunteers](#)

Help us introduce the sport of archery to kids, adults and families. Assist with range set up, range monitoring, and coaching individuals on shooting techniques.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: No advanced training needed, volunteers will be given a brief orientation on their role when they arrive for the program. Be able to learn archery range rules and the role of range master

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy to Moderate, some lifting of equipment is involved for those up for a moderate level of activity.

### [Canoeing Volunteers](#)

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.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: Current Paddle Programs Volunteer Training and have previous experience canoeing. Ages 18+

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate, including optional moving of equipment (up to 70 lbs with assistance).

### [Fire building Volunteers](#)

Assist ORS staff in monitoring participants as they learn the camping skill of building a fire. Participants will be collecting firewood and building fires in small metal pans on the ground.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: No advanced training needed. Volunteers will be given a brief orientation on their role when they arrive for the program.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy, note - bending and kneeling to monitor and troubleshoot with the small fires may be helpful but is not required

### [Fishing Volunteers](#)

Get involved with teaching youth and adults how to fish.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: No advanced training needed. A basic knowledge of fishing equipment, fishing knots and/or native fish species are helpful. Volunteers will be given a brief orientation on their role when they arrive for the program.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy, plus a queasy free stomach when it comes to touching worms and/or taking fish off hooks!

### [Fly Fishing Volunteers](#)

Get involved with teaching youth and adults how to fish.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: Volunteers must have a basic knowledge of fly fishing equipment, fishing knots and/or native fish species are helpful. Volunteers will be given a brief orientation on their role when they arrive for the program.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy, plus a queasy free stomach when it comes to touching worms and/or taking fish off hooks!



### [Kayaking Volunteers](#)

Volunteers will assist program staff with paddling equipment. There will also be time paddling on the water with staff and participants where you will assist with group management. You may be asked to help manage group while staff conduct rescues if needed.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: Current Paddle Programs Volunteer Training and have previous experience kayaking. Ages 18+

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate

### [Nordic Walking/Hiking Volunteers](#)

Volunteers will be in a sweep or rover role, helping keep the group together while also chatting with participants and sharing knowledge about the parks.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: No experience or advanced training needed, just a desire to socialize with participants and help them enjoy the beauty of the parks.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy to Moderate, depending on group fitness levels and program goals.

### [Regional Trails Bike Volunteer](#)

Volunteers will be in a sweep, rover, or point role, helping keep the group together and riding safely while also chatting with participants and sharing knowledge about the parks. Possibly assist with first aid (if a park patroller).

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: No advanced training needed, must be comfortable riding your bike up to 20 miles. Must provide own bike and helmet.

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Easy to Moderate (5-20 miles at easy to moderate pace), depending on group fitness levels and program goals.

### [Stand Up Paddleboarding Volunteers](#)

Volunteers will help set up for programs including unloading and loading SUP boards. Help participants get in touch with the water while on a SUP or Kayak, depending on watercraft availability. Paddle with participants, and assist staff with on the water group management.

REQUIREMENTS and TRAINING: Current Paddle Programs Volunteer Training and have previous experience kayaking and/or stand up paddleboarding. Ages 18+

ACTIVITY LEVEL: Moderate to Vigorous depending on the program and/or needs of individual participants.