

# Riverside Park Conservancy

## Riverside Park Conservancy Grassroots Volunteer Program



# RPC Overview – by the numbers

- Five parks, six miles, 400 acres
  - Riverside Park South
  - Riverside Park
  - Sakura Park
  - West Harlem Piers Park
  - Fort Washington Park
- 60–70 Full-time Staff (25–30 in field)
- 4,000 volunteers // 30,000 volunteer hours

# Park History

- 1875: Frederick Law Olmsted prepares the conceptual plan for the park and Riverside Drive
- 1930s: Robert Moses expands the park, adding sports fields and playgrounds
- 1980: Riverside Park (72nd-125th St) is designated a scenic landmark by NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
- 1986: RPC is founded in 1986 by a group of community activists
- 1990s: Thomas Balsley & Associates begins expansion of Riverside Park South to 59th Street
- 2009: North Park Initiative expands restoration footprint north
- 2010: Zone Gardener Program created

# Park History: Olmsted vs Moses



# Staff – RPC & DPR

## Volunteer Department

### OUTREACH

- Volunteer Outreach Coordinator
- North Park Outreach Coordinator

### FIELD

- Events Coordinator
- Field Associates

## RPC Park Operations

### FIELD

- Field Supervisors & Zone Gardeners

## NYC Parks & Recreation

### FIELD

- Maintenance & Operations Staff



# RPC & DPR: Division of responsibilities

| What the Conservancy does        | What NYC Parks does        |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Gardening & horticulture         | Trash removal and cleaning |
| Volunteer & community engagement | Mowing & lawn care         |
| Free public programming          | Security & enforcement     |
| Advocacy                         | Concessions                |
| Fundraising                      | Capital & design           |
| Marketing & communications       | Facilities & maintenance   |
|                                  | Arbor care                 |

# Recent budget cuts to DPR

- NYFP has advocated for 1% of NYC Budget for DPR since 2005
- FY25: \$20M reduction
- Hiring Freeze equivalent of 1,000 lost positions



# Current Capital Projects in the Park

- 14 NYC Parks Projects funded or in various stages of development



# Grassroots Volunteer Program

Total volunteer  
hours in 2024

30,000

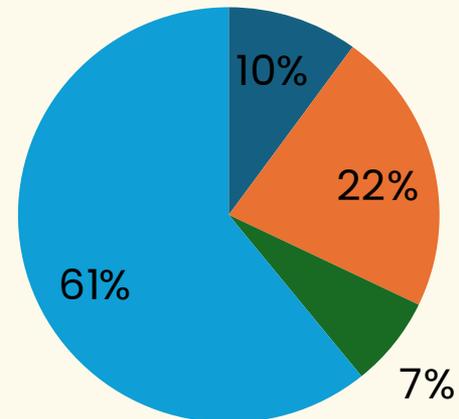
306  
Individuals

100+  
Group  
Visits

12  
Community  
Events

## 2024 Volunteer Hours

- Corporate Groups
- Community Groups
- School Groups
- Individual Volunteers



# Volunteer Groups



# Volunteer Groups: Schools



# Volunteer Groups: Community



# Volunteer Groups: Corporate



# Volunteer Groups: Events





# Grassroots Opportunities

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## Individuals

**ParkTenders**

**PlacePartners**

**User Groups**



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## Individuals

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# Community Volunteer Days

**Painting the Park**  
Saturday, June 21st

**Goatham**  
Saturday, July 12th (rain date July 19th)

**Community Volunteer Day: Invasion**  
Saturday, July 26th

**Restoration Nation**  
Saturday, August 19th

**International Coastal Cleanup Day**  
Saturday, September 20th

**National Public Lands Day**  
Saturday, September 27th



## **NEW: Non-horticultural volunteer opportunities**

- **Goat Herders**
- **Advocacy**
- **More to come!**

# Volunteer Pact + Manual

# VOLUNTEER PACT

Volunteerism is the cornerstone of the Conservancy's historical grassroots efforts to preserve and enhance the natural beauty and ecological integrity of Riverside Park.

We thrive on community involvement, fostering an atmosphere of partnership, belonging, and joy between our dedicated volunteers and staff for the benefit of the flora, fauna, and friends of the Park.

## ● ● ● ● CORE VALUES ● ● ● ●

### RESPECT

We are considerate of others. We recognize that everyone has their own background and experiences that enrich our diverse community.

In our interactions, we extend grace, compassion, and patience while remaining accountable for our impact.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

The landscapes are not just home to us. We strategically create and plan out safe, sustainable, and adaptive habitat for native species to thrive in our changing climate.

### TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION

Our partnership stems from our shared passion for this natural area of New York City, connecting our staff, volunteers, and park patrons.

We strive to navigate challenges together with a transparent, community-first approach.

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

As known community ambassadors of the Conservancy, we bring a sense of fun and humor to our work as we share teachable moments with the public.



# Summer on the Hudson

- Free admission for 300 events
- Programming from May to October
- Full-day festivals, concerts, movies under the stars, dance parties, fitness classes, learning opportunities, and more!



# How you can support the Conservancy:

- **Volunteer**
- **Donate**
- **Sponsor a bench**
- **Purchase merchandise**



# Stay connected with us!

-  [riversideparknyc.org](http://riversideparknyc.org)
-  [riverside.park.conservancy](https://www.facebook.com/riverside.park.conservancy)
-  [riversideparkNY](https://twitter.com/riversideparkNY)
-  [riversideparkNYC](https://www.instagram.com/riversideparkNYC)
-  [riversideparkNYC](https://www.tiktok.com/@riversideparkNYC)

# Contact Information

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