

## Special Events in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space

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Open Space Conservancy Trust owns Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space for the purpose of preserving and protecting them as natural ecosystems. Special events in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space may cause long-term or cumulative damage to the ecosystem when heavy trail use or off-trail use occurs, either as part of the event or incidental to the event. The goal of this policy is to prevent damage to the ecological resources contained within these properties.

At the same time, the Trust seeks to encourage the use of its properties by the citizens of Mercer Island. The City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department acts on behalf of the Trust. The purpose of this policy is to provide policy direction to the Parks and Recreation Department when special events in Trust properties are being proposed. This policy provides Parks and Recreation staff guidance to allow the public reasonable access to the Trust properties for special events while regulating special event activities to prevent damage. This policy is supplemental to the Parks and Recreation Special Events Policy for events that occur in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space only. Please note that the off-trail use of Pioneer Park is prohibited except for approved educational, scientific or forest health activities.

1. The following are criteria that are used to determine what conditions or restrictions may be placed on special events in Pioneer Park and Engstrom Open Space.
  - a. If any of the following are expected, then the event requires a Special Event application, review and permit:
    - i. The group size is more than 50 people
    - ii. The event is timed or competitive
    - iii. The event involves trail use other than walking
    - iv. The group will occupy a fixed portion of the park for more than 10 minutes
    - v. The group will block any trail or inhibit the safe passage of park users
2. Special Event applications that are located in Pioneer Park and/or Engstrom Open Space may be subject to the following reviews:
  - a. Review by the Parks Natural Resources Coordinator or designee
  - b. Supplemental information, including maps and details showing environmental protection measures the applicant is proposing. Examples of such submittals can be provided by Parks and Recreation staff.
  - c. A presentation to the Open Space Conservancy Trust at one of its regular bimonthly meetings.
3. The City of Mercer Island Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to deny a special event application if it determines that an event will negatively impact Pioneer Park and/or Engstrom Open Space. This includes poor performance or unpaid damage claims on previous special events. The applicant may request that the Open Space Conservancy Trust review the determination of Parks and Recreation staff.
4. Special events may be subject to the following conditions:

- a. Temporary environmental protection features, such as fencing, plywood, ground covering, erosion control fabric, etc.
- b. Site monitors at areas expected to be impacted to prevent off-trail use. The applicant may propose to provide site monitors, but Parks and Recreation reserve the right to require its own staff or paid independent staff to provide monitoring. Parks and Recreation staff cost \$37/hour with a 3 hour minimum.
- c. Damage deposit proportional to the size of the group and the duration of activity, as follows:
- d.

		Number of participants			
		50-99	100-149	150-199	200-249
Event length	1 hour	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,500	\$2,000
	2 hours	\$600	\$1,200	\$1,800	\$2,400
	3 hours	\$700	\$1,400	\$2,100	\$2,800
	4 hours	\$800	\$1,600	\$2,400	\$3,200

Any numbers or times in excess of what is listed will be calculated proportionally. These are 2013 dollars and the fee schedule will be adjusted to keep pace with inflation.

- e. Any damage that occurs that is not covered by the damage deposit will be charged to the event organizer. Restoration costs typically run three to five dollars per square foot in 2013 dollars.
- f. Restoration plan – a schematic repair plan for anticipated impacts, including trail damage, vegetation damage, soil erosion and soil compaction.

5. Areas of concern

- a. **The ravine in the northeast quadrant.** This terrain is steep and erodible. The trails are single track for the most part. Passing is difficult without going off-trail. Going off trail is likely to cause erosion and plant damage. Large and competitive events are expected to have high impact. Monitoring is typically required for events in this area.
- b. **The southeast quadrant.** These trails are shared by horseback riders. Passing equestrians is difficult without going off trail. Coordination with the Saddle Club is required.
- c. **Secondary trails, all quadrants.** Secondary trails are single track trails for the most part. Passing is difficult without going off-trail. Some trails are poorly drained and users tend to walk on the edges, which causes widening. Best used in the dry season for large group events. Monitoring may be required.
- d. **Picnic area across from shopping center.** This is a popular entry point to the park, and can get consistent traffic from park users throughout the course of an event. Timed or competitive events may need monitoring and/or signage to alert park users to the event. Blocking access to this area is not permitted.