

Community Input

Dynamo Soccer said that Pittsburgh has a shortage of fields for active recreation. The city needs more soccer fields. Have we analyzed the available flat lands for recreational fields?

VI. Cultural Resources

VI-a. Recreation Use

NMR extends for less than 1.8 mi from the mouth of the culvert in Frick Park to the Monongahela River. Over much of its length, NMR falls within the boundaries of Frick Park. In addition, its major tributary, Fern Hollow, runs north to south through Frick Park. Due to the location of NMR and its major tributary, a majority of the recreation uses in the watershed are confined to the 476 acres of Frick Park. The park is one of four regional parks in Pittsburgh and as such contains many recreational amenities. The recreation uses and facilities in the NMR watershed are broken down into two major categories: (1) physical recreation facilities used for organized sports leagues, and (2) individual/neighborhood recreation and organized nature programming and individual nature activities.

VI-a1. Recreation

The recreation facilities in the NMR watershed are extensively used for organized sports programming and individual nature activities (**Table VI-a**). CitiParks, the City of Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation, sponsors a tennis league for youth at the Braddock Avenue tennis courts. Similarly, little league football, soccer, and baseball leagues use other facilities located within Frick Park. In addition, adult recreation leagues utilize facilities such as the Braddock Avenue tennis courts, the softball fields, and the lawn bowling center.

Apart from the organized recreation activities occurring in the NMR watershed, the area's physical recreation facilities also support recreation uses that are not part of organized leagues. Parents and children extensively use the two playgrounds in Frick Park and neighborhood residents take advantage of the fields and tennis courts for casual recreation.

Frick Park Facilities Usage	
Facility/Activity	1997 Attendance
KinderCamp	425
Great Race	15,000
Picnic Shelters	9,500
Run Around the Square 5k/10k	1,260
Space Camp	770
Sports Leagues	410,300
tennis Courts	31,500
Source: City of Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation	

Table VI -a

VI-a2. Nature Programming and Nature Activities

The NMR watershed and Frick Park are also home to a substantial amount of environmental programming run through the Frick Environmental Center (FEC), which organizes education, outreach,

and training programs. Some of the education programs offered during 1997 were: Winter Bridge, a school program for kindergarten and first grade classes; Maple Festival, a two-day community festival focusing on the historical growth of maple sugaring and nature education; Nature School, a hands-on program teaching preschoolers and kindergartners about the environment; and Kids NatureCamp, a three-week-long day camp to teach children an appreciation of the natural world.

In addition to education programming, the FEC also organizes outreach programs. One such program, Nature in Your Neighborhood, is a hands-on investigation of nature in 10 Pittsburgh communities. The program is organized for children in grades 1 through 6. During 1997 the program had 110 participants who attended twice a week for a 20-week period. Finally, the FEC organized several training programs. One program, the Green Team, trained six individuals in landscaping and gardening. Another training program, the Junior Naturalist Program, trains students in grades 9 through 12 to assist and implement family, youth, and community programming throughout the year.

Along with the organized programming, the NMR watershed in Frick Park is extensively used by individuals for nature walks, bird watching, mountain biking, and jogging. The Frick Park Nature Reserve (150 acres in the northwest corner of the park) had 12,000 users from May through August 1997. The FEC estimates the number of visitors at approximately 6,000 for the remaining eight months of the year.

Frick Park Nature Center Usage	
Program	1997 Participation
Community Festivals	3,500
Community Meetings	450
Environmental Education	15,000
Evening Programs and Lectures	485
Harvest Fair	3,150
Nature In Your Neighborhood	2,100
Nature Reserve (walkers,	(May-August) 12,000
joggers, bird watching, etc.	(September-April) 6,000
Source: City of Pittsburgh Department of Parks and Recreation	

Table VI-b.

VI-b. Recreation Facilities

The Department of Parks and Recreation manages six clay tennis courts, two softball fields, one little league field, one football field, one soccer field, one basketball court, one lawn bowling green, and two playgrounds. The Frick Park Lawn Bowling Club oversees the lawn bowling center. In addition to these facilities, Frick Park contains miles of hiking trails, numerous picnic shelters, and passive recreation areas.

Community Input

Jack Solomon: My two cents worth about Frick Park is that of all the city parks I've seen, in Pittsburgh and elsewhere in comparably sized urban areas, Frick comes the closest to providing a sense of "wildness." I don't mean wilderness: that's a word more appropriate to describe something like Yellowstone, and Frick is not that, and could not be. Still, there are sections of the (approximately) 450 acre park containing a few hundred acres of woodland, unbroken by highways or large clearings, where native plants and animals abound.

My current prime interest is in birds. Sixty-seven species of birds were seen in Frick yesterday, and the spring migration hasn't even peaked yet. This number compares nicely with what birders find this time of year at suburban and rural locations around here.

My interest as a boy, when the mile or two walk to Frick bothered me not at all, was reptiles and amphibians. The park had garter and brown snakes, and also milk, smooth green and black rat snakes, as well as a number of frog, toad, and salamander species.

Frick has grown over 50 years older in my memory, and some of the old oaks, sycamores, and other trees have grown so big that pileated woodpeckers are seen there frequently. The pileated is a big woodpecker the size of a crow and is an indicator of a somewhat mature forest. The beauty of the big trees and other flora in the park compares favorably with parks several times its size.

The miracle of Frick is that even the valley along the slag heaps just outside and south of the park's boundary (and soon, I hope to be added to it) are a haven for wild life, because they are next to Frick. I've seen more mockingbirds in the stream valley next to the slag than anywhere else in this end of the state. It was wonderful for this city boy to be able to play and wander in Frick. This aging city man still enjoys it.