



PARK RX: ENCOURAGING THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF PARKS AND NATURE

State Prevention Enhancement Policy Consortium Meeting

July 12, 2021

Washington State Department of Health

Amy Ellings

Program Manager

Healthy Eating Active
Living Program

Chris Zipperer

*Physical Activity
Coordinator*

Healthy Eating Active
Living Program

Today's Agenda

Background

Park Rx: Overview

Past Park Rx projects in Washington State

Washington State Parks Rx Task Force

DOH Healthy Eating Active Living Program



A national initiative led by CDC to help

27 million Americans

become more physically active by 2027. Increased physical activity can improve health, quality of life, and reduce healthcare costs.





Physical Activity Is One of the Best Things You Can Do to Improve Your Health

Benefits for Children

- Improves aerobic fitness, muscular fitness, and bone health
- Promotes favorable body composition
- Improves attention and some measures of academic performance (with school physical activity programs)

Benefits for Adults

- Lowers risk of high blood pressure and stroke
- Improves aerobic fitness, mental health, and cognitive function
- Reduces arthritis symptoms
- Prevents weight gain



Benefits for Healthy Aging

- Reduces risk of falling
- Improves balance and joint mobility
- Extends years of active life
- Helps prevent weak bones and muscle loss
- Delays onset of cognitive decline



ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM



TIME IN NATURE CAN
IMPROVE THESE SYMPTOMS.

ASK YOUR PROVIDER FOR A
NATURE
PRESCRIPTION
— TODAY —

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Park Rx
America 

Park Prescriptions 101

Park Rx is where a health or social service provider encourages patients/clients to spend time in nature, with the goal of improving health and well-being.

Rooted in the health benefits of nature.

<https://www.parkrx.org/>

<https://parkrxamerica.org/about.php>

Park Rx in Washington State

- Projects in local communities
- Parkscriptions - <https://parkscriptions.org/>
- WA State Parks - <https://www.parks.state.wa.us/1137/ParkRx>
- Park Rx Discover Pass Project
- Parks Rx Task Force

Parks Rx Task Force

- Created through ESSB 5092 – budget proviso
- Purpose: To make recommendations on
 - A process to establish the three-region pilot program;
 - Model agreements enabling insurers to offer incentives to employers to create wellness programs offering employees a discount on health insurance through use of outdoor parks and trails for wellness activities; and
 - Ways in which a private-public partnership approach could be used to fund implementation.

Parks Rx Task Force Membership

Defined in proviso:

- Chaired and staffed by DOH
- Called for the following organizations to nominate task force members:
 - American Physical Therapy Association – WA Chapter
 - Association of Washington Healthcare Plans
 - Department of Health Community Health Worker Program
 - Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
 - Washington Recreation and Parks Association
 - Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials
 - Washington State Chiropractic Association
 - Washington State Hospital Association

Parks Rx Task Force

- Additional requirements
 - Meets bimonthly from August 2021 through June 2022
 - Report due to legislature by September 2022
 - Regional advisory committees
- Preparations to date
 - Members nominated and appointed
 - First meeting: August 2, 2021
 - Determining process for other interested organizations

Questions?





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