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**REI AWARDS GRANT TO HILLSBORO PARKS & RECREATION FOR NEW
“TREKS” YOUTH OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CLUBS**

Hillsboro, Oregon – The City of Hillsboro Parks & Recreation Department has been awarded a grant for \$8,735 from REI to launch a new outdoor education and adventure program for middle school students. The grant includes REI equipment (backpacks, tents, and other camping and safety gear), as well as cash for program development, training materials and marketing.

The new TREKS (Teaching Responsibility and Empowering Kids to be Stewards) Middle School Outdoor Adventure Clubs will be available starting in spring 2009 to students at all four of Hillsboro’s middle schools through Hillsboro Parks & Recreation’s Zone after school program. TREKS will focus on promoting environmental awareness and stewardship while introducing the youth to many empowering recreational activities in the great outdoors including rock climbing, biking, hiking, snowshoeing, canoeing, and backpacking. The clubs will meet two days per week during each 6-week Zone session, and will be followed by a Saturday adventure trip to enable the youth to experience the outdoor activity first hand. TREKS will also be a part of the Zone middle school summer camps.

This is the fourth grant that REI has awarded to Hillsboro Parks & Recreation for outdoor education programs. Other grants, amounting to over \$33,000 since 2006, have allowed Hillsboro Parks & Recreation to purchase a small fleet of canoes and kayaks for classes on the Tualatin River, purchase GPS units and compasses for classes in navigating the outdoors and geo-caching, and acquire ten mountain bikes and related equipment to implement a youth bicycle education and skills program. REI also donated \$10,000 in 2006 towards two climbing boulders that were installed in Orchard Park, and REI Hillsboro store employees have been the official adopters of Orchard Park since 2007.

“REI continues to be an enthusiastic advocate for outdoor recreation and the environment in our community, and this grant proves yet again what a great community partner the company is,” says Hillsboro Parks & Recreation’s Community Resources Manager Corinne Bloomfield, “With REI’s help, the TREKS program will allow us to reach out to this particularly at-risk age group and provide valuable outdoor adventure experiences that they would not otherwise have.”

For more information on the upcoming TREKS program or other Hillsboro Parks & Recreation opportunities, call 503-681-6120 or visit our website at www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/parksrec.

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