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**City of Duluth - Parks and Recreation Division**

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**SUBJECT: Hartley Park Invasive Removal and Ecological Restoration Ongoing (updated)**

**BY: Pakou Ly, Communications Office**

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**Hartley Park Invasive Removal and Ecological Restoration Ongoing (updated)**

[Duluth, MN] - The Hartley Park forest management and ecological restoration plan is an ongoing process as part of the Hartley Park mini-master Plan approved in 2014. Last year, the City and community partners celebrated the completion of parking lot improvements, improved trail accessibility and sustainability, new interpretive signage, forest restoration, wind storm tree removal, planting over 3500 new tree seedlings, Nature Center playscape, and extensive buckthorn removal covering 100 acres. Community Action Duluth Stream Corps team has been working on buckthorn removal in the northeast area of the park closest to Woodland Ave. Buckthorn poses many challenges, easily propagates and edges out native plants. Curbing the spread requires diligent attention and ongoing management to enable native vegetation to reestablish and thrive.

The crew has been wood chipping cut buckthorn in areas accessible to machinery which is then spread out on the forest floor. For areas not accessible to machinery, the crew has been tackling the invasive plant by hand and stacking small piles of unchipped buckthorn for controlled burning. These piles are located away and out of view, where possible, from trails, the Nature Center and other public areas. About 4-5 Stream Corps staff will be on site and will closely monitor the operation aimed at eliminating the cut material. The public will see plumes of smoke which should dissipate quickly. The Stream Corps team plans on conducting this process through March to take advantage of the snow cover on the ground. Weather conditions and high winds may slightly alter the operations.

This project is funded with a grant from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. Additional invasive removal and maintenance will take place next year. To learn more about the Hartley Park Mini-master Plan, visit the Duluth Parks website at <http://duluthmn.gov/media/542007/hartley-master-plan-07-21-2014.pdf>

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