

# Sandy Creek Environmental Park

## Keep Durham Beautiful Non-Profit Seeks Matching Funds for Park Enhancement Grant

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Sandy Creek Park is a 103 acre natural park off Pickett Rd. in southwest Durham. It currently contains a half mile of 10 foot wide paved trail that will eventually connect to a much longer regional trail, as well as over a mile of unpaved trail. The park has unusual habitat diversity, including pine uplands, a clear flowing creek, two lakes and large wetland areas. It is popular with birders (it is now a North Carolina “birding hot spot”) as well as walkers and runners of all ages. The park is intended to provide, among other things, outdoor recreation for people with severe physical disabilities through its wheelchair accessible trail and the butterfly garden.

The park is only 10 minutes by car from the Duke ALS Clinic, the rehabilitation facilities of Duke Hospital and the Veterans Administration Hospital. Immediately adjoining the park is a large senior housing apartment complex and a nationally renowned residential weight loss clinic. As new facilities (e.g. ADA compliant picnic tables, completion of the butterfly garden) are added to the park, we intend to actively promote its use for the mobility impaired, including the elderly and wounded veterans.

Over the past two years the New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee (NHCCAC) and the Friends of Sandy Creek Park have made significant improvements to the Sandy Creek Park. These include re-decking the bridge over Sandy Creek, planting hundreds of trees and mulching them, installing benches along the trails, upgrading the trails, building a garden swing, installing a water-collection system for irrigation, and routinely cleaning the park. We have also started a butterfly garden in the park. We have done all of this with a \$5000 State Adopt-A-Trail Grant and donations by members of the NHCCAC, friends and park users.

We now have the opportunity to apply for a matching grant from the Durham Open Space and Trails Commission (DOST) to make even more significant improvements to the park. Plans for a wildlife observation deck are well underway. Thanks to Leon Meyers of Meyers Builders and Dan Jewell of Coulter Jewell Thames, P.A., we have a building permit and site plan for this project. In addition to the deck, we would like to put a fence around the grassy areas of the park to prevent vehicles from driving onto the grass, add to the park’s landscaping, design and build additional trails in the park, install bike racks and charcoal grills, install ADA compliant picnic tables, and remove some of the invasive plants from within the park.

If we can raise \$5000, we can combine this sum with at least \$5000 in volunteer labor and in-kind contributions to ask DOST for \$10,000. We should be able to accomplish most, if not all, of the above projects with a grant of this size. We are asking you, as a friend, neighbor or user of Sandy Creek Park, to pledge a contribution to the Park. If you would like, you can make the contribution contingent on our getting the grant.

The deadline to apply for this grant is January 7, 2013. We will need your contribution or pledge by this date so that we can ask DOST to match the total we have raised. We are partnering with Keep Durham Beautiful and the Durham Parks and Recreation Department for this grant. Please make tax-deductible donations payable to Keep Durham Beautiful and with a memo for Sandy Creek Park. Keep Durham Beautiful is a tax-exempt organization. You may contribute online at <http://keepdurhambeautiful.org/do-something/donate/> or, to make a pledge, contact Tania Dautlick, Executive Director, Keep Durham Beautiful, Inc. 2011 Fay Street, Durham, NC 27704. For more information on Sandy Creek Park or the New Hope Creek Corridor Advisory Committee, contact Bob Healy at [healy@duke.edu](mailto:healy@duke.edu)

*Thank you for your consideration and generosity!*