

A Night for Nature: A Proposal to Aid the National Parks of Washington



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Executive Summary:

How can we as students create a proposal to encourage inner city youth and underrepresented groups to become invested in the National Parks system of the North Cascade region to preserve the National Parks?

In such a way we consider:

Sense of place

Education/interest

Demographics

Public knowledge

Nationalism (The importance of national parks to our American heritage)

We propose a “night for nature” at a Seattle Mariners game in order to attract the underrepresented youth. This proposal encompasses all of the consideration mentioned above.

Statement of Need:

The national parks have tried and failed to reach out to the underrepresented youth, including minorities, teenagers, and others. Their attendance is necessary to the vitality of the national parks and the preservation and appreciation of our American Heritage. Therefore, new proposals have been developed in an attempt to attract these underrepresented groups.

Project Description:

This night would consist of multiple programs, each appealing to different aspects of the problem. Booths would be located throughout the Safeco field with rangers of the different parks of Washington to provide information about their parks, volunteering opportunities, and a “junior ranger” program to appeal to the children. This junior ranger program would consist of booklets similar to the ones in the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in that kids would have to travel around the stadium trying to find information and solve activities.

In an effort to spread information, the parks would also work with the stadium to put pictures of the various parks and “fun facts” on the big screen that would appeal to all ages. At the booths, rangers would be available to interact with the visitors and provide pamphlets of information to further educate the guests.

An ideal date for this night to occur would be July 25, which was suggested by the representative at Safeco. During this night, there is a firework show, which would draw a large crowd to Safeco and make it more likely that the parks could influence a greater amount of people. The location we have selected is ideal in reaching the target demographic because it is in the heart of the city and a close proximity to the Klondike Park.

Budget Analysis:

As we were given a limited budget for this project we tried to keep the costs to a minimum. The stadium seemed very open to the idea of allowing the parks to come at no cost to them at all. The only aspects of this proposal that would require money would be printing out additional junior ranger programs and bringing more badges. In writing this proposal we made the assumption that at least some of the national parks had a booth that they used for various events; that booth would be used here, rendering costs very low for this entire event.

Steps Involved/Timeline:

1. Contact the Seattle Mariners representative at (206) 346-4533.
2. Set a date for the “night for nature” that works for both the parks and the stadium.
3. Begin preparations: contact staff from different parks and assign them locations around the stadium. Edit the current junior ranger program so that it will be usable in the stadium setting, and make sure there are enough badges to distribute. Email the representative pictures and fun facts to put on the big screen during the game. Print additional pamphlets and volunteer sign-up sheets.
4. Attend the event. Evaluate the success of the event and use the evaluation to decide if this event should be continued.

Benefits:

- A connection between the national parks and a major league baseball game is more likely to produce a positive “sense of place” within the attendees. See graph in appendix regarding how this proposal approaches various aspects of the problem.
- This connection also establishes the importance of the National Parks in American culture, as baseball is considered “the American pastime” (see graph in appendix)
- Safeco stadium provides multiple methods for the distribution of information (big screen, ranger presence, pamphlets, etc.)
- Attendance at all home games is on the rise in 2014 compared to the past two years (“Seattle Mariners Attendance, Stadiums, and Park Factors”). See appendix for graph of attendance over the years. Safeco provides an indispensable medium for reaching large amounts of people (in the tens of thousands) and raising public awareness in a short amount of time.
- Safeco is located in the heart of Seattle, where the target demographic resides.
- Baseball is an ethnically diverse sport. In 2012, “27.3 % of players were Latino and 8.8% of players were African-American” (Lapchick). Therefore, the sport will be more likely to attract minorities in the target demographic.

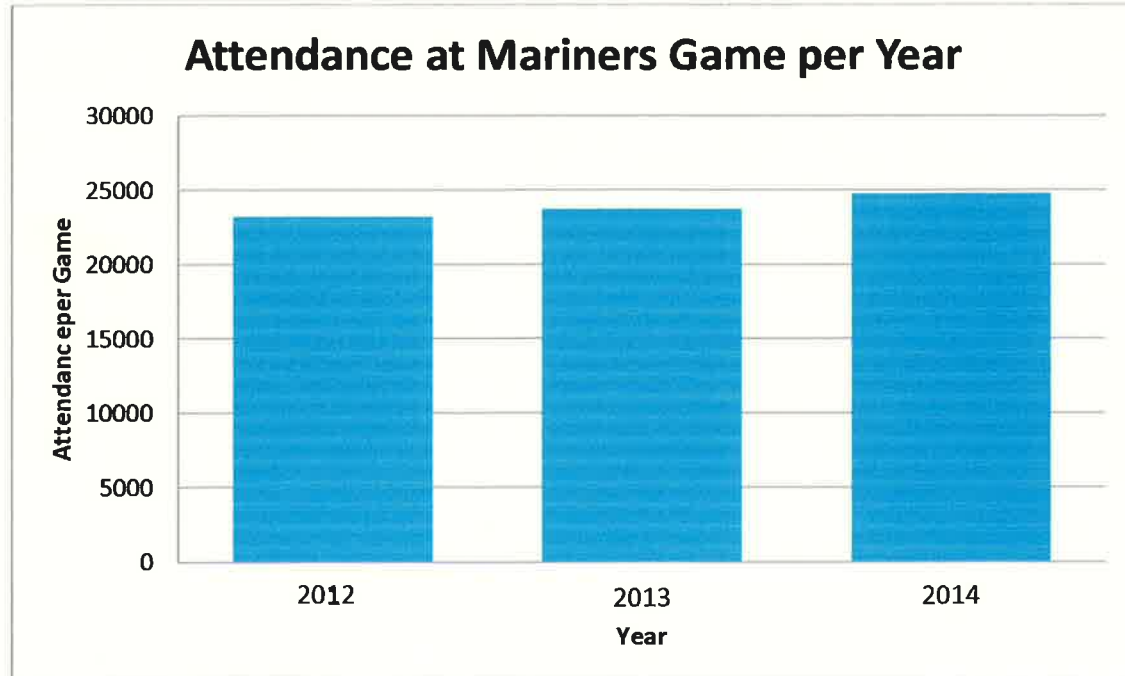
Potential Obstacles/Drawbacks:

- The Parks Service may not have enough materials for the junior ranger program to deal with a crowd of this size
- The proposal does not directly target the intended demographic but instead relies on their participation
- Volunteers that sign up may not be as qualified as desired
- It may be difficult to find a day that works for both the parks and the stadium
- This is an idea that has never been attempted before and its probability of success is unknown

Conclusion:

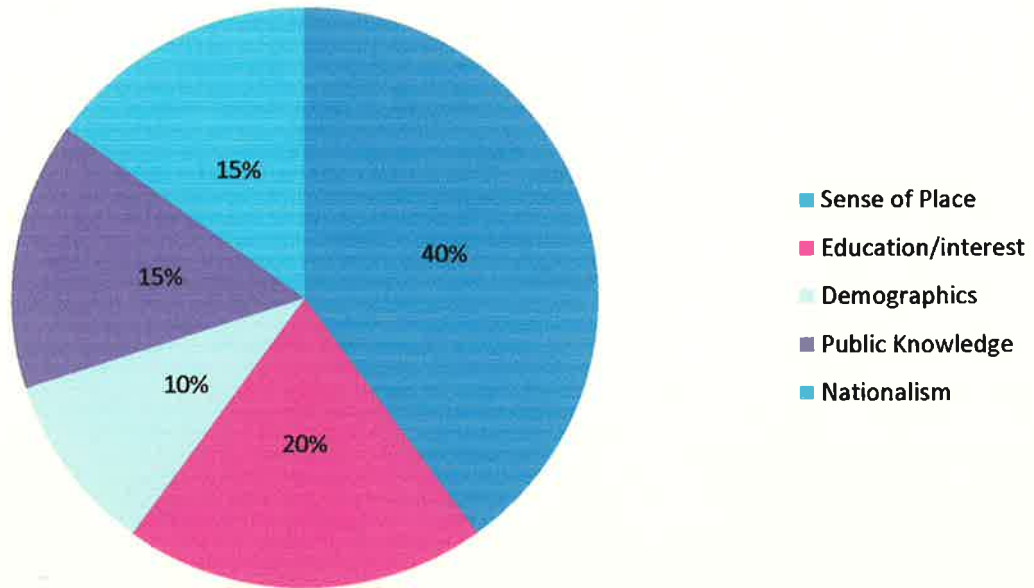
In conclusion, we propose a “night for nature” during a Seattle Mariners game at Safeco field. Even though this is a new type of outreach for the national parks, we feel that this proposal will aid the national parks’ goal of attracting and appealing to the underrepresented youth in a cost and time effective way. It will also provide education and a source of volunteers, as well as making the national parks appear more contemporary. Therefore, this proposal will provide the NPS with both short and long term benefits. Furthermore, the solution addresses all of the considerations listed in the problem statement, meaning it should demonstrate some success.

Appendix:



(“Seattle Mariners Attendance, Stadiums, and Park Factors”).

Prevalance of this Aspect in the Proposal (Estimated)



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