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Students map trees for Lindon

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LINDON — The city of Lindon needed to count and map its trees, and ninth-grade students in Lindon needed a real-life application in their geography classes.

Voila!

A Lindon tree map was born.

Hundreds of ninth-grade students at Oak Canyon Junior High recently spent two days at the Lindon and Pioneer parks, using GPS technology to record the location of each city-owned tree.

They also measured the trees from the ground with measuring sticks and took digital pictures to document the trees' status.

"The real benefit is that the students see an application for the curriculum and the technology that we're learning," said ninth-grade geography teacher Doug Andersen.

"It provides, I think, a connection to the community. We're providing a service that's valuable to them."

Andersen and fellow teacher Chelsey Collins took their combined 13 classes for two days to the parks, where they mapped close to 500 trees.

The project grew out of a conversation between Andersen and Lindon city Tree Advisory Board chairwoman Jeannine Cartwright.

Cartwright said the advisory board had wanted to map the trees for a while but was looking for a cost-effective way to do it.

"It's a considerable benefit," Cartwright said. "One city had to spend \$7,000 to have their trees mapped."

The only cost for this project was paying for buses to get the students to and from the parks quickly so they wouldn't miss their other classes.

The teachers plan to continue the mapping each year as new geography classes map trees in different areas of the city.

Along with a location, the database map will include pictures of the trees, their leaves and bark, as well as list the types of trees and their conditions.

"We're just really excited about what they're doing," Cartwright said. "It's just some really neat information. (And) this is just the beginning."

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