

**Your Opinions Sought - State Parks Draft Report to the Office Of Financial Management: The Quest for a Strong and Healthy Parks System – Public Comments**

<b>Comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 7:31 AM To: Washington State Parks Planning</p> <p>As a frequent user of the state parks year round, one thing that I've noticed is that there are periods where the parks are hardly used. I believe the overhead costs for maintaining the parks are the same (or almost the same) if anyone is in them or not, I would suggest lowering the prices on off day and off season use to encourage people to come to the parks on these times.</p> <p>Please keep up the good work. We have one of the best parks systems that I've seen, and I would like to continue to see this great service being offered.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Dee</p>	<p>It's great to hear from a frequent visitor and friend of Washington State Parks. You've noted that there are times when state parks seem to have excess capacity, and you suggest that adjusting pricing during those times might produce an incentive to get people to visit.</p> <p>We agree. In fact, Washington State Parks has had an incentive program for many years to allow senior citizens to camp for free or very little cost from October through March.</p> <p>We are now developing new, targeted discounts on camping during the summer to generate additional business. These discounts would be available to anyone, and allow more people to enjoy parks while raising revenue from sites that might otherwise go empty. This concept will be presented to the State Parks Commission in the next several months.</p> <p>The loss of tax funding requires increased creativity from all of us. Thank you for sharing your suggestion for helping our wonderful park system.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 01, 2012 8:05 AM</p> <p>Here are my comments on the Report.</p> <p>The report demonstrates a total lack of creativity and poor financial management. The drafters are seeking no change when change is necessary. The State Legislature has decided that State funding will decrease so sources of supplemental funding must be explored.</p> <p>I had previously suggested that the Parks explore long term leases of small blocks of park property to private citizens and corporations. Many people would be willing to pay thousands of dollars to lease a small plot of land to build a vacation home in a beautiful area. This would result in millions of dollars of revenue for the Park system. This would also increase public utilization of the parks since more people would be staying overnight at the parks.</p> <p>There are many possible solutions to the problem of no funding for parks; this report fails to look at any of them.</p> <p>Larry</p>	<p>We're sorry that you are so disappointed in the OFM report. We believe that it does indeed describe many agency changes that have already been enacted with more proposed for the future. The report outlines as one option to explore exactly what you propose; redirecting 5 to 10 percent of State Parks lands to long-term, income-generating real estate that could offset some agency non-market costs. However, people have advocated against such a use of parks land. If we end up doing that, we will need to make sure that the public is aware of the financial trade-offs and has their say before we decide to carry out any of such development.</p> <p>We also note that the sale of State Parks lands to cover short-term operating costs is bad public policy; it converts a permanent public asset to a one-time use with little or no return, and is currently not permitted under law.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 01, 2012 10:22 AM</p> <p>Washington's state parks are essential to the lives and welfare of the people of this state. State parks encourage visitors and new residents to come to our state. State parks are essential to our economy and quality of life. My first</p>	<p>State Parks Commission echoes your sentiments that state parks are "essential to our economy and quality of life." Full self-support is not proposed in the OFM Report.</p> <p>For many years State Parks has recognized the</p>

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<p>reaction therefore is to reject the notion that state parks should be financially self supporting. State parks are as essential to the life of Washington State as schools - oh yeah, the legislature is underfunding them, too.</p> <p>The state legislature has failed our state parks system and our schools by not raising taxes and closing corporate loopholes. We must never give up the fight to get the legislature overthrow the Tim Eyman restrictions on its ability to fund necessary state services, including state parks.</p> <p>That said, I do think the parks planning department should compile data on park usage vs park costs on a park by park basis. Ft. Flagler is an example. I go there every year for our Spring Mysteries Festival. Other groups use it for their retreats as well. Ft. Flagler has a healthy group of local volunteers who help maintain it. All in all, Ft. Flagler is a profit center for the state parks system.</p> <p>Mt. Si on the other hand does not have that kind of revenue generating capability, yet it is very heavily used. I hike at least once a week, often on state park property. I also volunteer with Washington Trails Association to help build and maintain trails. There are many other volunteer groups like Student Conservation Corps, Pacific Crest Trails, Mountain to Sound Greenway, Issaquah Alps, Alpine Wilderness, Backcountry Horseman, etc. who willing give their time and labor to our natural landscape, including state parks. Question: Is the Washington State Parks Department effectively reaching out to coordinate and encourage volunteers?</p> <p>Some smaller parks may have to be closed because of budget, but I don't see the parks system ever becoming financially self sufficient. And if anybody ever suggests selling corporate naming rights to parks in exchange for money, please throw them into Puget Sound.</p> <p>Thank you, Janice</p>	<p>importance of tracking its park usage through collecting attendance reports. We also realize our method of collecting this data leaves room for improvement as the majority of our parks are not designed with one point of access into the parks. There are multiple entrances into some Washington state parks. There is also a need to capture the types of usage in the parks as well as what it costs to do business.</p> <p>The Commission is now enhancing its data collection and analyses capacity to do what you suggest.</p> <p>State Parks values and appreciates its volunteers. Without volunteer services, especially during these hard economic times, our services would further decline. State Parks and the Parks Foundation are actively working on establishing new groups, and several that you mention have been involved with State Parks for numerous of years.</p> <p>I hope you've been able to review the final report submitted to OFM. The Commission thanks you for your support and involvement.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 01, 2012 10:43 AM It seems the State is trying to have campers fund a disproportional amount of the budget. At a meeting I attended we were told that campers (overnighters in RV's, Yurts, cabins, etc) comprised 8% of the users but contributed 25-30% of the total revenue. Now, you propose to increase camping fees yet again. It was mentioned at the meeting that maybe the State should increase the number of campsites per acre. If you have ever been in a campground you would know that they are usually only full on weekends except in July and August so what good would more campsites do? The cost of construction would take too long to be recovered.</p>	<p>As you will notice in the final report to OFM, the Commission strongly thinks to operate state parks we need some general funds. The majority of other park systems: local, county, state and federal all receive a modest amount to assist with operating their park systems. The Commission thinks Washington state parks should also be provided support to manage its lands and facilities. You will notice in the final report to OFM, the Commission is going to request money to help cover some of its costs.</p> <p>Regarding campers paying a disproportional amount, the figures you cite do not provide the full picture. While campers represent less than 10% of users and</p>

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<p>State government needs to understand that all parks; city, county and state need government support. We have seen that some users have decided to go down the street in Wenatchee to the city/county parks instead of paying for a Discover Pass. In Port Townsend people park on adjacent streets and walk in.</p> <p>I also think you need to increase fines for not having Discover Passes if they are kept as a source of funding. I would rather see a fee charged to everyone when they renew either vehicle or drivers licenses.</p> <p>Lee</p>	<p>contribute 25 – 30% of revenues, it is also true that camping likely represents more than 30% of the costs to run the system. What we need to get a better handle on are exactly what are the costs and revenues from running each campground, and how can we best match costs to revenues.</p> <p>Thus, we believe that camping is not now subsidizing the rest of our mission. With little or no general fund taxes, camping along with the rest of our programs, need to be analyzed to determine level of service we can afford to provide.</p>
<p>Thanks for asking for input.</p> <p>We are snow birds who go to AZ in winter.</p> <p>* We pay \$65 each year for a pass to visit any of the Maricopa County Regional Parks system spots. For a drive in day pass the cost is \$6.00 per car. Horse back riders pay \$3.00 but park free in a huge designated truck trailer area. The fees pay the salaries of 2 park rangers and maintenance on the park building including rest rooms and trails. A snow bird couple from the Midwest collects money in exchange for free camping during the months they are there. Free movies are shown on Saturdays, along with ranger escorted hikes in the huge parks (we stay near one that is 10,000 acres). We feel the \$65 is a bargain, and is issued as a plastic card that can be swiped or scanned. (Have you looked at the hard to manage piece of paper WA parks issues? What a joke.)</p> <p>* There are hundreds of healthy over-65 well educated or highly experienced retirees in WA state who would probably volunteer many days if given status as actual park rangers. We know of many people who volunteer to work in park book stores and visitor centers, and they are wonderful. What is needed is a roster of actual volunteer park rangers who work for no pay, but have status.</p> <p>* The time has come for the WA legislature to stop giving large timber companies tax breaks. A bill needs to pass both houses of the legislature that mandates a change in timber lands that border paved roads that are maintained by county, state or federal laws. We suggest that every 200 feet of timberland along paved highways be taxed at a beginning rate of \$500.00 per year, with the 200 feet having a depth into the forest or meadow of 300 feet (giving a parcel of 60,000 square feet).</p> <p>Timber corporations would have the option of selling the 200-foot parcels to private persons who could build houses, raise a horse, cow, goat, etc. but pay the county taxes equivalent to other little "gentleman" farms assessed similarly. The bill</p>	<p>State Parks realizes the current Discover Pass program is not ideal. The legislature sets the fee level, and the mechanisms for sales and marketing are constantly binge reviewed with an eye for improvement. With two months to implement the pass program, from the bill's signing date, we chose to go with a sales platform – the Fish and Wildlife agency's WILD system that was already in place. All three Discover Pass agencies are in the process of reviewing alternative materials that will improve the Discover Pass.</p> <p>Thanks for offering to volunteer! As you may know, State Parks has a volunteer program that we value and have used for decades. Without our volunteers, we couldn't deliver the level of services that we provide now. However the agency is limited in how volunteer services can be used and we are very sensitive to the high level of training and responsibilities borne by our rangers and construction and maintenance specialists in the field. Most of this work simply cannot be done by the average volunteer.</p> <p>Regarding your tax break ideas, we are not in a position to effect state tax policy, and you'll need to talk with your elected officials regarding that.</p> <p>Regarding timing for new vehicles, State Parks has been in a mode of holding on to its existing fleet as we have grown smaller. Our purchasing and surplus procedures are dictated by state law, and we are shepherding our resources during this difficult budget time.</p> <p>We are pursuing alternative on-site power and will continue to do so, including wind and solar.</p> <p>As for Sasquatch sightings, generally our parks are much smaller than the federal holdings you reference or even state natural resource lands. But in general, we do charge for commercial or other group activities,</p>

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<p>would give the land owner the water rights to the land, so that a well could be drilled. Septic approval would be according to perk tests. At least half the revenues generated by the yearly \$500 initial tax fee on each 200 feet bordering paved highways would be <u>dedicated to WA state parks</u>. Some other portion could be set aside for road repair on the highway lands being taxed. As it is, logging trucks pound the aging bridges as they go over them many times a day. The truck tax does not begin to meet the expensive damage done by the trucks, such as along US Hwy 101.</p> <p>* An arrangement should be made with local truck repair businesses to keep WA state parks trucks running until the vehicles are at least 20 years old. This process of declaring a ten year old pickup surplus is not economically sound. A ten year old modern vehicle has many miles left on it if it is kept in good repair by a recognized auto repair business. I am not familiar with WA State parks policy regarding surplus vehicles, but I have seen a number of very new rigs that probably should not have been sold at a reasonable price and purchased by someone.</p> <p>* Let's face it. Alternative power must be obtained on site in WA State Parks. Solar and wind power could provide some of the electricity needed to keep a portion of the individual park's needs going. Solar panels that fold for portability are now available online, generating 10, 15, 30 watts. Solar lights for outdoor placement are \$3.00 at WalMart. Wind turbines can be installed anywhere there is a breeze, with a simple alternator that generates power. Companies such as WinGenKits.com could be asked to put on demonstrations in many of WA State Parks where wind is present, such as along the coast and near the Columbia Gorge, and along the Columbia River.</p> <p>* Okay, something far out. WA state is well known for many things, but the one that is the best known in many outdoor groups is Sasquatch Bigfoot. WA State has had hundreds of daylight and night time sightings of what ever the thing is. Many WA scientists have seen the sasquatch from only a few feet or yards, but they might say, "Bigfoot does not exist." Why? Because "tenure" tells them so. What does this have to do with generating revenue for WA State Parks? Currently new comers to some research groups that search for Bigfoot often pay \$300 per person for a 4-day guided tour of some timberland known for a recent sasquatch sighting. Participants pay for their own food and shelter and transportation. On a recent event near Mt. Rainier the organizer had upwards of 60 or 70 applicants, and eliminated any that indicated any interest in hunting the creature with a firearm. These expeditions are ongoing, with private groups looking for safe places to search around in the dark at night. Members are usually scientists these days (engineers and</p>	<p>so if people or looking for Sasquatch, or merely mushrooms, if they are part of a big group that wants to reserve facilities, they can do so... and a reasonable charge.</p> <p>Lastly, the notion of combining natural resource agencies has been explored by the Governor and Legislature off and on for several years. It was recently turned down because, in part, there weren't clear long-term cost savings and there were clear short-term costs. Our Commission voted against the idea in 2011, but that isn't to say that the issue is dead or not without merit.</p> <p>We appreciate your creative thinking and will pass on your other ideas to the appropriate staff.</p>

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<p>biologists), plus retired military, and a smattering of expert animal trackers. Some participants are even going public, using their names in media stories. <u>Question: Why can't Parks offer remote locations inside various parks for such a group, on an ongoing basis?</u> They are clean campers, leaving no trace of their presence. They provide excellent training and generate reports of data gathered. They do their own paper work with applications, and an instruction manual, and require participants to sign a document of non liability, which could be adapted to WA Parks needs. If Parks ran an ad asking for some of the qualified organizers to contact it about such an experiment, I'd be interested in learning who responded. I realize that many state parks are small and would not be appropriate, but there must be some that would do. Currently most events take place on federal lands, with a smattering of WA state trust land involved, also.</p> <p>* Probably the most urgent need is to combine several departments into one streamlined agency. This would include WA State Parks, the Department of Natural Resources (state forestry), Recreation and Conservation Office, Dept. of Ecology, WA State Community, Trade and Economic Development, and even the Hardwoods Commission (alder).....well, you get the point. See your legislators to get this done. You write the bill, they will pass it.</p> <p>Al</p>	
<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 11:23 AM</p> <p>Dear Parks – the draft appears to be missing a bullet under “Options for Revenue Enhancement and Cost Containment”. While you speak to ‘Expand programming to attract visitors’ – there is not mention of improving or expanding recreational opportunities within the Parks, such as ‘enhanced bike trails’, Zip lines, Frisbee golf courses and such. If we create excellent recreational opportunities – people will come. But if you just expect bikes hikers and horses to use the same trail systems created many years ago that are not build for sustainability – people will choose to recreate elsewhere.</p> <p>Please add a bullet for “Expand and Improve the quality of recreational opportunities with parks”.</p> <p>Thank you Jonathan</p>	<p>Thanks for your good suggestions.</p> <p>As you know, it cost money to “expand and improve” any system’s services. The Commission is looking at ways through establishing partnerships to help enhance recreational experiences. In the final OFM report it speaks of “expanding programs, picnic areas, trails and trailheads and play areas.” One of the Centennial goals that State Parks is working toward is improving and connecting trails.</p> <p>The Commission thinks this goal is still vital to our mission. The agency will continue trying to reach this goal as it has been expressed to OFM as one of the transformation strategies – “options for revenue enhancement and cost containment.”</p>
<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 11:34 AM</p> <p>It is truly pathetic that funding for the parks has been cut. (1) The legislature should significantly increase funding by eliminating or at least reducing waste/inefficiency and reducing bureaucratic redundancy. (2) Designate a period of time when 50% of lottery proceeds will go state parks. (3)</p>	<p>Thank you for your creative ideas. Some of them we are using, some we may use, and some are beyond our agency’s authority to accomplish.</p> <p>You may know that Oregon State Parks system receives a portion of their state’s lottery funds to operate its parks. Washington State Parks is also</p>

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<p>Assign a percentage of liquor revenue for the parks. (4) Run newspaper and TV ads to solicit contributions of any amount from the general public. (5) Solicit the areas many millionaires for donations. (6) Charge a \$3.00 parking fee for those with a Discovery Pass and \$10.00 for those without. (7) A percentage of real estate taxes (1 %) could be designated for all state parks and recreation areas. (8) Request the affluent politicians for financial support. (9) Ask the governor and legislature to give TV messages requesting support. (10) Reduce welfare programs by requiring able-bodied men/women to work maintaining and restoring facilities in the parks.</p> <p>R.A</p>	<p>reviewing and proposing statutory amendments to allow Parks more flexibility for more entrepreneurial financing; in addition to request some general fund support. Here's a quick summary response for each of your ideas:            (1), (2), (3), (6), (7), (8), (10): Up to legislature            (4): Expensive, but we are upping our marketing efforts, and asking the Foundation to take on direct solicitations.            (5): Foundation is working in this area.            (9): We are working with the governor on this now.</p>
<p>Please accept these remarks as i go through your good communication:</p> <p>(1) page 6, bullet 6---page 19 the 2002 Runyan study: economic benefits of Parks accrue only to those who are studying the economic benefits, which are inherently unmeasurable. our parks exist for the benefit of the visiting public, not for any economic reason----ie. Some Enchanted Evening, to wit: fools give you reasons, wise men never try.</p> <p>(2) estimates and projections for funding based upon untenable principles will get you exactly where the "opt-in" donation program got you. A business approach to revenue creation at Parks conducted by fledgling business people is fraught with peril and completely unrealistic. The Parks are a benefit to the public which ought to be taxed. Additionally, avoid ALL stupid, injurious, and debilitating scams like the lottery concept to raise money. A specifically "dedicated" lottery fund is one dedicated specifically to stupidity. Neither treat the Parks as a charity.</p> <p>(3) page 21---the failure of Parks to differentiate our recreation sites from Federal or other sites is a glaring example of "marketing" failure. whoever is in charge of "marketing" for Parks ought to be replaced by someone who understands the traditional appeal of ourdoor recreation to the masses. "Mark Trail" conceptual ideas which traditionally favored the lure of the outdoors are measurably more favorable than whiz bang modern technological begging. the marketing ideas in your report, with specific, yet off-handed, reference to on-line, radio, other were particularly galling to the initiated in such matters.</p> <p>(4) eliminate ALL exemptions to the fee system, except for the blind. When the blind are escorted, charge the escort.</p> <p>(5) page 29---i strongly disagree with the fantasy that people have come to expect communications/electronic technology in natural settings. making the setting unnatural logically follows. Parks should be a no-cell-phone experience, or charge exorbitantly to carry electronic devices on Parks lands. Photons ruin serenity and people know this.</p> <p>(6) all things should not be permitted in the park because all things can not be sustained when money is scarce. Go Roman away from the Greeks and prohibit all things except</p>	<p>Thank you for the communication compliment.</p> <p>(1)The Commission does believe the park system is a vital component for economic benefits. This study captures the generated revenue in communities where state parks are located during the winter and summer seasons. The study showed a significant revenue increase in the local businesses during the summer. Of course your statement "parks exist for the benefit of the visitors" is also the outcome the Commission values.</p> <p>(2) In the final report the Commission is requesting general fund support. The Commission realize to become self-supporting system it would require drastic changes to our system that the "public would simply not accept nor could the agency accomplish the task. The Commission concludes that State Parks' mission, its statutory and fiduciary responsibilities, and the very nature of its public purpose call for some substantial level of broad public funding that is shared by all Washingtonians."</p> <p>(3) We'll forward your marketing ideas to our marketing staff. No doubt, we can capture different types of people with different marketing mechanisms.</p> <p>(4) Up to the legislature.</p> <p>(5) This is not the direction we are seeing around the country. The Commission is evaluating its competition's services and amenities. Park users are requesting WiFi services so they are able to stay connected. There are park users who also see your point-a-view, but our goal is to offer what the market desires as well as provide a healthy and safe recreational experience for Washingtonians and visitors.</p> <p>(6) Understood. Our aim is not to construct complex communication infrastructure which costs more to</p>

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<p>for the real and valuable purities which are permitted. Concentrate on preserving the natural setting and murder those who dissect it. stay away from that which is unsustainable.</p> <p>(7) page 33, the 6 proposals            1. No exemptions 2. Cap all leases of Parks land at present levels and make no more leases. 3. Keep advertising off Parks lands. Have you driven up to Mt. Rushmore lately? the approach to the national monument is trashed with advertising. 4. agree, but no lottery, absolutely, ever, due to immorality. do not commit to the unsustainable.</p> <p>(8) a remark about the renewal of the passes with licenses may be in order, although I do not know exactly how this happens. however, i am in favor of a period of time (say year) which commences on the day bought and ends on the same day the following year, rather than a set period for the license which commences on an arbitrary date and ends on that date (eg. tabs on car registration)---i think the latter method is inferior.</p> <p>(9) in your definition of success conclusion, i wish to dear god you would strike the "...the replenishing spirits &amp; providing hope, inspiration &amp; respite for citizens." part. the state of washington can not afford to fulfill such a dreamy promise of social contract. let the citizens visit the Parks for enjoyment potential, period. And, let them save up to afford the visit.</p> <p>Thanks for your conserted efforts &amp; the survival of your intellect in this extremely constrained job you have clung to for the betterment of the citizenry of our beautiful state. No reply necessary this circuit.</p> <p>Aaron</p>	<p>maintain than the revenues it brings in.</p> <p>(7) 1 and 4 our legislative issues. 2 can be a major income source with relatively little resource impact. Some donor recognition can be possible, which remains tasteful in appearance and appropriate to the site. That isn't new. We have done this since the beginning of the agency (e.g., Moran State Park, Rasar State Park.</p> <p>(8)That would take legislative change. Seems that it could be a problem and disincentive to purchase initially. It wouldn't work well with car licenses, but perhaps that platform is not the best over the long run. We'll have to see.</p> <p>(9) Others commented on their appreciation for the inspirational aspect of the ending. As Lincoln stated, and we paraphrase, "can't please all the people all the time."</p>
<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 12:33 PM</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the State Parks Draft Report to the Office Of Financial Management: The Quest for a Strong and Healthy Parks System.</p> <p>I just did a quick read-through of the draft document and my initial comments are that it appears well-researched, well-reasoned, and offers a realistic assessment, comprehensive analysis of the overall situation and varied solutions to best achieve the vision and carry out the mission of Washington State Parks for the future. In essence, it appears to be an excellent report.</p> <p>As one of the many partners of your agency, if I can ever be of any assistance in my capacity as director of the non-profit organization I serve then please contact me.</p> <p>Thank you for your efforts on behalf of Washington State Parks.</p> <p>Al</p>	<p>Thank you for reviewing the draft report. We appreciate your offer to assist with moving our State's park system forward to "ensure a healthy second century of parks."</p> <p>The Commission submitted the final report to the Office Of Financial Management (OFM), which we hope you've had time to review as well.</p> <p>Again, thank you for your support.</p>

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<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 01, 2012 8:33 PM <b>To:</b> Washington State Parks Planning</p> <p>Daniel,</p> <p>Thank you for having the fortitude to acknowledge that state parks are not sustainable without legislative financial support. Despite the budget problems, it is the responsibility of the legislature to Fully Fund state parks. Just as they need to fully fund education. The problem is that they refuse to acknowledge that they have insufficient revenue to cover the services that citizens warrant. Thanks to Tim Eyman, we no longer have the tax base to provide the services that we demand. The legislature needs to come together and develop the tax base to provide for state parks and other priority services. The "discover pass" is not the answer as results to date have shown. If the legislature will not fund state parks, close them all and let the legislature answer to the citizens! Your executive summary is well done. You should not have had to take 34 pages to support your position. Gordon</p>	<p>Thank you for your input. It is indeed a challenge to match public desires for services with the costs involved in those services.</p> <p>We appreciate your support and use of your park system.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Thursday, August 02, 2012 5:42 AM</p> <p>Daniel,</p> <p>I don't see a budget, where is it? That was the goal of the meetings wasn't it? To develop a budget for the next two years...</p> <p>What is the plan of action when the Parks Department state funding is reduced to zero next year?</p> <p>Your report is a nice read but fails to resolve the issue of funding (or lack there of). Simply asking the state for revenue is not a viable solution to Parks Department operations.</p> <p>Please include the <b>actual</b> 2013-2015 Washington State Parks budget in the report and the repercussions of the budget which must presumably include park closures and staff reductions.</p> <p>Regards, Derrick</p>	<p>The agency is proposing a \$123 million operating budget, not including federal, grant and dedicated funds.</p> <p>At the public meetings we explained the agency was required to submit this report, requested legislation and the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan. We also expressed that we do not have in place a method to show our actual operating costs for some amenities and services. We do have some data about generated revenue for specific amenities and services, but it will take time to develop methods to analyze operating costs.</p> <p>You can see our actual 2013-15 budget request by going to: <a href="http://www.parks.wa.gov/agency/commissionmeetings/">http://www.parks.wa.gov/agency/commissionmeetings/</a> and review the budget request agenda item that should be posted on or about October 20, 2012.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Thursday, August 02, 2012 10:20 AM</p> <p>Daniel</p> <p>Congratulations for getting this report pulled together and out for review and discussion. Hopefully the public and the Commission will focus on many of the points in the report.</p> <p>Pls make a correction to page 28. <u>I would ask you to correct</u></p>	<p>Correction has been made relating to official name of the Bridle Trails Park Foundation. Thank you.</p> <p>The Commission thinks developing more friends groups to volunteer and assist with ongoing financial support is essential, too.</p> <p>The Commission highlights the need for more friends groups in the final report. State Parks are working with</p>

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<p><u>the name of the Bridle Trails Park Foundation</u> to include the word "<b>Park</b>". I know this is a minor point in the larger context - but it may help readers find this organization if they wish to contact them.</p> <p>I suspect there wont be much change to the financial challenges Parks faces until the legislature meets next year and considers reinstating some level of general funding. I also suspect there will continue to be a severe shortfall which will ultimately lead to more park closures - then we'll see how much the public will tolerate and whether they are prepared to step forward with funding.</p> <p>I continue to believe Friends groups should be established for all the major parks - <u>and be required to raise a targeted amount of funds for their park's operational needs.</u> Currently I don't have much support for this approach - but when Parks face closure, people will look for ways to contribute. The Bridle Trails Park Foundation model will work anywhere - even though others (including Joe Taller) don't seem to believe it.</p> <p>Best wishes for success to you and the parks organization!</p> <p>Don</p>	<p>the State Parks Foundation to recruit new groups and expand the role for the Foundation in soliciting donors and sponsors to develop agency's statewide interpretive network efforts.</p> <p>The Foundation is also supporting existing friends groups, bringing them together to understand needs, provide technical assistance, facilities exchange of experience among groups and explore ways for groups to work together in support of their individual parks.</p>
<p>Sent: Thursday, August 02, 2012 11:04 AM</p> <p>I have read the entire document. Some comments:</p> <p>I believe that this is an excellent summary of what has been said for several years. More people need to know this to better understand the position that State Parks finds itself in.</p> <p>As I read it I made notes then discovered that you covered the areas adequately later in the document, such as general funding for historical, cultural and natural features as well as the Discover Pass waivers.</p> <p>On page 31 number 2 check for one of the bullets being repeated</p> <p>On page 33 where it identifies what general funding should provide for I think it does not clearly state that these funds should also provide for natural, cultural and historical preservation. It says this in other locations but should also be stated here.</p> <p>I see Daniel's fingerprints all over this document. I assume you did much of the drafting. As always you express yourself very well.</p> <p>THANKS</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to review the OFM Report and provide your input. Corrections have been made to the final report.</p> <p>And to give credit where credit is due, the report was a team effort, with many versions of the draft reviewed and commented upon by staff and all Commissioners. Virginia Painter, the Public Affairs Director was the principal writer.</p>

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<p>Ken</p> <p><b>Sent:</b> Thursday, August 02, 2012 12:34 PM</p> <p>Mr. Farber- please include my opinion that the premise of making the state parks system self supporting is not the right starting point. One of the main points emphasized during my graduate studies in public administration is that government provides services where "market forces" will not be effective in serving the public good. In this case, the value of the state parks system is increased in many instances by NOT developing the parks. Rather than putting user fees on every government service and making our natural places into revenue producers, it makes much more sense to reform our tax system to provide for a more stable source of revenue (e.g. state income tax rather than sales tax based system).</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Lise</p>	<p>Thank you for your input. The overarching state financing system is not dealt with in the report, which, after all, involves the financing of a parks system which costs considerably less than 1% of the state budget and .1% of the General Fund. The Commission appreciates your comments and support.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Thursday, August 02, 2012 9:59 PM</p> <p>I appreciate the cost cutting approach you've made to meet budget constraints. I think people are staying away from day use of parks due to high \$10 cost and punitive fines. Suggest treating users as valued customers to encourage them to be repeat customers 1) \$5 day use. 2) And if fine is needed, a \$30 fine and you send them a discovery pass!</p> <p>Licia</p>	<p>Thank you for your input. The Discover Pass and citation fee levels are established by our legislature. The Commission realizes this new business practice for the State Parks system will take time for the park users to except and support.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Friday, August 03, 2012 2:22 PM</p> <p>The last time we went over to the coast (from Spokane) we had the choice of a yurt in Washington at around \$70 a night or one in Oregon at about \$35 per night. Guess where we went.</p> <p>I'm concerned that the self-supporting plan will almost certainly make the WA costs even higher and probably lower the level of service.</p> <p>I can't believe that the difference in state revenues are that different. We're paying for state parks just like the folks in OR are.</p> <p>Why can't we get the same level of state support?</p> <p>Larry</p>	<p>We understand and respect your choice for visiting Oregon state parks. It's not easy to compete with systems that are funded like Oregon.</p> <p>Washington State Parks system has gone through drastic budget reductions; leaving the Commission with the choice to either close parks or generate revenue to keep parks open. State Parks transition from \$94 million general fund support in 2007-09 to \$17 million this biennium. The Commission is hopeful that the legislature will recognize the significant funding gap Parks is requested to close is unreachable without general support, fees, dedicated funds, grants, etc., like other park systems.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Thursday, August 02, 2012 8:12 PM</p> <p>I just saw the report on the <i>State of the State Parks</i>. I found out about this because I was staying on Orcas Island with some friends and I am a big support and user of Moran State Park.</p> <p>So firstly, let me say, that yeah, the public is able to provide</p>	<p>Thank you for your creative ideas and we appreciate your support for our State Parks system.</p> <p>The Commission has for many years engaged into partnerships with local, state, federal and non-profit organizations. We will continue to explore these efforts with the help of the State Parks Foundation and whoever else wishes to support Washington state</p>

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<p>input. Secondly, I am very confused why this report has not broadcasted over the local stations? Maybe it was and I missed it.</p> <p>But here is my perspective. I believe that the State Parks need to be supported through the general tax dollars . I have no problem in working toward self-sufficiency but as noted in the report it is a long journey. The parks are an incredible and precious resource and if more of the public understood that as well as public officials then a better management plan can occur.</p> <p>From the discussion at Moran State Park and the material I have, here are a couple of ideas. I am not sure if these items are already part of the discussion but when I looked through the material I did not see them.</p> <p>The first one continues along the line of partnering. Again, I was not sure if it was implied but does the partnering include the Conservation Corp? I have been a past member of this organization and what a great way to mentor while providing support at the parks.</p> <p>Other idea is what about offering public service credits? The concept is that anyone from scout organizations to welfare recipients to seniors. They are assigned tasks that support the parks; maintenance, trail work, educators, guides etc. and in return they win badges, get credit for moving off welfare dollars or use the talents of this senior population.</p> <p>I do not favor any privatization of Washington's State Parks. Parks are a privilege and this state needs to continue to support this special areas. I would rather my taxes go to Parks than any more social programs.</p> <p>I know my information is late and I will work to get more informed for any future activity. I also know this is a tough time and many people do not understand the value of parks. I have hope for a change in this area. Darcy</p>	<p>parks.</p> <p>We encourage you to work with your local friend's group as well as our Foundation on how you can best support state parks in the future. Your notion of "public service credits" is something that has implication far beyond just state parks, so we encourage you to explore that option with other leaders to see if there is a potential for such an innovated public policy approach.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Friday, August 03, 2012 8:18 PM Daniel: For the most part I would say this is an excellent report. It's obvious that a lot of careful thought and work went into it. With regard to remedies, the word "advertising" makes me pretty nervous and I'm not sure that RCW 79A.05.345 should be amended with regard to it. Publicly recognizing corporate contributions on discreet signs is OK, but advertising implies the promotion of a product irrespective of the producers connection to state parks. I would assume that the reason</p>	<p>Thank you for providing your input. Here are some direct responses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regarding "advertising:" The Commission is thoroughly reviewing the pros and cons of the requested legislation. They, too, do not want the parks to become a neon light, billboard. They are clearly looking at ways to engage community businesses and corporations into</li> </ol>

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<p>why there is a prohibition on the use of contributions to increase staffing must have stemmed from conflict of interest problems in hiring. So I'm not sure we should eliminate that one either.</p> <p>I would hope that the request for additional staff to help with data and analysis will be paid for out of the general fund request. If these positions are necessary, they would only be so because the legislature needs more data and analysis, not because the public is requesting it. So I think that item should be included in the general fund request.</p> <p>I don't understand "inability to capture the market" in the general fund request. State parks capture certain markets quite well. The problem may have to do more with fully understanding the market.</p> <p>I would also hope that the mobile app and technology "advances" remain a relatively low priority due to their exorbitant costs and constant upgrades and changes. We need to let some dust settle first before we commit to them. Yes we should fully utilize the internet, since that is an established technology, but smart phone and mobile app technology is way too volatile to invest in right now or the near future. I guess I'm with Aaron on this one. I don't think we need to enable people to "stay connected" while in a park. Let the cell phone companies deal with that.</p> <p>I would like to see a little more detail on the stewardship obligations and intangible benefits of state parks. This idea that parks benefit those who never set foot in them is really important and needs more emphasis.</p> <p>Unfortunately, marketing the Discover Pass is probably essential for now. Just yesterday I was in the office and somebody was ranting about paying taxes and he should not need to buy a pass to go to a park.</p> <p>Do you have any examples of devoting state park lands to income generation? It sounds awful, but if state parks owns any such land that could be sacrificed in such a way, it would be helpful to consider an example.</p> <p>Keep up the good work keeping the gates open! I'll hug a redwood on your behalf!</p> <p>Cris</p>	<p>their park system and recognize their support. It's important to note that when it comes to donor recognition, the history of the agency is replete with examples that have come to be accepted. Moran State Park, Rasar State Park and Millersylvania have all been named after donors.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. The need for data to make business decisions is an ongoing and essential part of our operations. For example, we must develop a comprehensive facility condition data base in order to define and prioritize our needs.</li> <li>3. We believe that the mobile app and other technology measures can and should be no less than net-revenue neutral. As technology moves outdoors more and more with all our recreation "competitors," it becomes an experience that users simply expect.</li> <li>4. Devoting lands to income generation is new for state parks. But there are plenty of examples in Washington State where state government turns over part of its land based for income generation – the University of Washington generates land leases from downtown Seattle skyscrapers. DNR generates income for the public schools, counties and others.</li> </ol> <p>Every effort the Commission engaged in will take internal experts and external support, like yourself, to keep state parks open. We will use the data as well to tell State Parks' story to the legislature and the public.</p> <p>State Parks appreciates your support and input.</p>
<p>Sent: Sat 8/4/2012 4:43 PM</p> <p>Hello.</p> <p>My only thought is that a \$35 pass is essentially prohibiting poor people from visiting parks. Personally, I am living below the poverty level, and it is not that I do not have \$30 to spend on a Discover Pass. It is that I see spending that \$35 as a luxury that I cannot afford. Therefore, I forgo a trip to the national park in favor of not spending the money. It would be nice to have a provision for those who are living below the poverty levels.</p> <p>I was horrified to discover that I could be ticketed for simply</p>	<p>The Commission and the legislature, by no means, wish to discourage anyone from experiencing this state's natural and cultural resources including recreational activities. Given the budget restraints, the legislature devised the Discover Pass to help offset costs to operate the parks.</p> <p>The legislature also took into consideration parks is a public asset that should be enjoyed by all. State Parks offers twelve free days a year; all volunteers free access after 24 hours of volunteering, provide free access to foster parents, limited income seniors, disabled and disabled veterans to all of our state parks.</p>

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<p>driving through the park. This has completely prevented me from doing one of the few things that gives me great pleasure in life, which is exploring the beauty of nature. Please consider a subsidy.</p> <p>Thank you, Daniel</p>	<p>I encourage you to find out more about State Parks' pass programs at <a href="http://www.parks.wa.gov/permits">www.parks.wa.gov/permits</a> that may meet your needs.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Sunday, August 05, 2012 9:41 AM            First your report is to long and a history lesson is wastes space.</p> <p>Second giving 99 year leases is no good, stay with 40 yr.</p> <p>Third take Calif's approach to spend your income on the most important costs and close the least profitable parks to build more public support.</p> <p>Gregg</p>	<p>Closing parks at this time would defeat the purpose of generating revenue to offset operation cost. The Commission does minimize park services during the winter months and has gone to a seasonal base workforce. This is the avenue that will be explored before closing parks.</p> <p>Regarding 99 year leases, we are holding off on proposing that until we get data to support the need.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Sun 8/5/2012 11:38 AM</p> <p>Hi. I understand you are looking for input regarding your state parks. I am from BC and enjoy your parks. I look forward to continuing to enjoy them. Joanne</p>	<p>If you haven't read Washington State Parks' "State of State Parks' Report, we encourage you to review this report to gain an understanding of what is occurring to the system. You can locate the report at <a href="http://www.parks.wa.gov/beyond2013">www.parks.wa.gov/beyond2013</a>.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Friday, August 03, 2012 2:06 PM</p> <p>Good afternoon.</p> <p>I'd like to comment on the proposed funding mechanism for parks. As a long term resident of Washington, since 1970, I've come to realize as I've gotten older that our opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of nature need to be one of our top priorities. Without a fair paying job, safe and affordable housing, and someplace to refresh and revitalize through nature, we are incomplete as a society. The Washington state parks system provides the third peg of this 3 legged stool and without it, we will fall over, figuratively speaking.</p> <p>You the commission are being dealt a foul hand by the Washington state legislature who continue to prop up our state's manufacturing companies, small ones like Boeing and Microsoft, with tax breaks etc. Roll back a tiny percentage of those tax breaks and you can fund parks at a sustainable level. That level I think is what you the commission need to come up with and then the public, if they care need to lobby the legislature to fix the funding. I commend the commission on taking a whack at a task that you shouldn't have to in a mature and responsible manner, a manner in which our legislature needs to operate on a bipartisan basis. Let's not pretend we can think we can apply free market economy thinking to something that is solely intended for public use, figure out the sustainable operating level, then find tax based revenues to fund say 75% of it.</p> <p>Keep up the good work Commission and State Parks Staff, there are people out here who support you!</p>	<p>Thank you for your support and comments. General state tax policy is beyond our ability to tackle in this agency effort. But your passion and understanding of the importance of state parks is shared by many Washingtonians and visitors.</p>

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<p>Daniel V.</p> <p><b>Sent:</b> Friday, August 03, 2012 5:01 PM</p> <p>Daniel,</p> <p>How often do you talk to individual legislators about park funding? Who among them, besides Senator Seaquist, supports funding parks from the general fund? How many lobbyists does the commission have on payroll?</p> <p>All the little nickel and dime revenue options listed in the draft won't amount to a hill of beans. You must know that.</p> <p>The commission needs to mount a huge public relations campaign so that the public will lobby their legislators to save parks. That's the ONLY viable option I see at this point.</p> <p>I told the Commission last spring that the "Adventure Awaits" web site is a waste of time and money. They assured me that the web site was only part of a larger media campaign and only a small portion of the \$157,000.00 was being spent on internet advertising. Now, we're in the last month of summer and I'm still waiting to see anything resembling a promotional campaign.</p> <p>Surveys, meetings and hand-wringing are not going to get the job done! Parks needs to put a face on the campaign. Hire someone the people recognize and admire – be it a sports figure or entertainer (NOT A POLITICIAN) and pay for radio and TV spots promoting the Discover Pass. Let the public know that the future of parks is in THEIR HANDS!</p> <p>I believe the people are willing to support parks but the Commission has totally failed to promote the Discover Pass in a positive way. All I see are threats to close parks, threats to lay off more employees or threats to reduce services. No wonder people aren't willing to buy passes!</p> <p>Clearly, a two-pronged approach is needed. One is to lobby the legislature like Costco lobbied for liquor sales and two is to run a promotion campaign for the Discover Pass that will give the public a feeling that they are involved and they can save the parks.</p> <p>John Y.</p>	<p>We will try to respond to each of your points:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Regarding the number of lobbyists state parks has on its payroll, the answer is we have one person designated as a legislative liaison, in the position of Director of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs. That person also has many other functions within the agency.</li> <li>2. The variety of revenue approaches proposed in the OFM Report do not, the Commission concludes, eliminate the need for General Fund support. But they are not without importance. The provided increased potentials to not only earn money, but save money and build parks partners and constituencies.</li> <li>3. Your critique of our marketing efforts are noted. State Parks realizes and agrees with you the need to market the Discover Pass and how essential the Park system to the public. The agency hired a marketing coordinator five months ago, who has been engaged in establishing promotional marketing methods. The Commission also believes the public will support the system, but it will take time for folks to fully accept the change.</li> <li>4. We do not concur with your statement that we have been doing nothing but threatening park closures and more layoffs. In fact, we have been diligent in saying continuously that the Discover Pass, while not bringing in all the revenues originally projected, is not a failure. In fact, the OFM Report notes that we are raising far more money with the Discover Pass than other agencies are making with their access fees.</li> <li>5. If you wish to get involved with support for state parks, we suggest you contact your local friends groups, the Parks Foundation, or other support groups and individuals.</li> </ol> <p>Thank you so much for taking the time to share your thoughts.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Saturday, August 04, 2012 5:39 PM</p>	<p>Thank you for taking the time to review the draft report. The Commission reviewed all comments and</p>

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<p>Thank you for providing the opportunity to read the draft proposal. I fully support the idea to request \$18 million from the General Fund for the next biennium. I believe it is necessary, &amp; I want my taxes to help fund state parks. I don't find anything in the proposals that I disagree with, though I'm sad that parks must shift into money-making mode, especially in certain parks. I hope the projected partnerships with friends groups and non-profits work out. There are so many places competing for one's volunteer time.</p> <p>I do hope the legislature listens to your request and plans for sustaining the system.</p> <p>Julia</p>	<p>incorporated doable changes. The final report is available for your review at <a href="http://www.parks.wa.gov/beyond2013">www.parks.wa.gov/beyond2013</a> "State of State Parks' final report.</p> <p>The concern you express about shifting to "money-making mode" is shared by many, and it will be a challenge for state parks to both generate additional revenues and maintain the quality of the experience people seek when they go to a park.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Sunday, August 05, 2012 1:39 PM</p> <p>I spent the early part of the morning in Riverside and pondered your report. The State of Washington park system is surely having a financial crisis because there is no guaranteed funding source unlike Oregon state parks which receives part of the Oregon lottery.</p> <p>The draft plan, as written wants the Washington state park system self sufficient and it appears you plan on making Riverside a test case. Sadly, there is very little potential for income sources at state parks but some things really stick out. First, the camping fees will have to increased and any large groups which use the park; i.e. scouts, national guard, historic groups which reenact Civil war etc should pay a fee to use the park.</p> <p>There is one funding source at Riverside which stands out like no other. Riverside State Park should receive all funds from any large term lease of state park land and I am specifically talking about the lease costs of the Spokane Rifle Club which uses state park land. This money should not go to the state general fund but be returned to the park.</p> <p>Does Riverside receive the money for the lease of the horse rental company located entirely within the park. The park should receive the money for any use of the any park land.</p> <p>The same type of funding at Mount Spokane stands out and that park should receive the all lease money from the lease of Mount Spokane land for skiing and any other winter activities.</p> <p>Besides the increase of camping fees, is there a long term plan to rent out any of the log cabins and houses or buildings, (which can be converted for occupancy) on a short</p>	<p>The Commission appreciates you taking the time to review the draft OFM Report. You provide many concrete suggestions that we either have been pursuing or can in the future. Thank you very much.</p> <p>In regards to your statement relating to Riverside and Mt. Spokane State Parks, State Parks receives compensation for non-recreational uses of park land. All the examples you've identified, but one, pay parks for the use of public lands. As far as the "recreational" examples you've referenced, they also pay parks to operate recreational concessions. Rentals of cabins is happening throughout our system, and we will do so at Riverside, in balance with other uses for those cabins, including ranger housing.</p> <p>The only use you've talked about that does not compensate parks for their activities is the Spokane Rifle Club. This club holds a perpetual lease for the lands they occupy and this lease was executed decades ago prior to parks taking ownership of the property. The lease legally allows this group to occupy the property with no compensation to parks.</p>

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<p>term basis. There is the potential for income similar to the renting of state owned light houses.</p> <p>Did Riverside State Park receive any money for the sanitary sewer system which crosses the park land. The sewer system serves the new Plese realty housing development. If not, there should have been some financial compensation and actually there should always be an ongoing fee for any type of utility corridor. How is Riverside Park compensated for the Chevron oil pipeline and the Bonneville large electric power lines which cross state park land?</p> <p>I like the idea of operating the land for DNR and Avista for a fee. This idea is very sound and I see the same potential on the other end.</p> <p>Riverside State Park is unique in the fact a good portion of the park land is on both sides of the Spokane River which should be managed for fishing between the Park and Department of Fish and Wildlife and between The Spokane City Park system. The city has a boat launch system in Hangman Valley close to downtown and below Monroe Street Falls; however is not managed very well. Two of the takeout points are actually located in Riverside State Park; one of which is called Plese flats. Why not offer to manage the river corridor for the city park system similar to your managing DNR and Avista land on the other end of the river and charge fees for the boat launch and retrieval?</p> <p>I hope my comments were helpful in some fashion.</p> <p>Thomas</p>	
<p><b>Sent:</b> Sunday, August 05, 2012 3:10 PM</p> <p>I am a supporter and user of the parks system. WE have the most beautiful parks in the nation, in my opinion... I have been to many state parks as I travel around the nation. These along with Oregon are great. But this comes with a price. I hope that the budget call for this period will be approved. If there is someone I can write also regarding this issue, please let me know.</p> <p>Thank you for including me in your mailings. David K.</p>	<p>The Commission reviewed everyone's comments and appreciates you taking the time to read the report.</p> <p>In terms of advocacy, you can certainly contact your legislators, the governor, the Parks Foundation, Friends Groups, or other parks, recreation, conservation supporters to see how you can best help.</p> <p>Thank you for your support in helping keep state parks open.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Sunday, August 05, 2012 3:58 PM</p> <p>Plans to fully or partly privatize Fort Warden State Park must be scrapped. The Park is a common resource and must not be exploited by for-profit investors.</p> <p>Funding shortfalls are not unique to our State Parks. We're</p>	<p>The Commission is exploring co-management at Fort Worden with a local public development authority (PDA), but no final decisions have been made.</p> <p>Regarding prioritizing parks funding in comparison to other needed public services, we understand that the legislature and governor have very difficult choices to make. The Commission has stated that some public</p>

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<p>seeing them in education, social services, and other essential programs. The problem is not our State Parks. The problem is a legislature, a Congress, and a business community all geared to corporatism. When it comes to war Congress always finds the funds. And how about those Bush tax cuts? Then, of course, there are the bank bailouts. Our legislature must demand that Congress stop throwing our money at war profiteers. It must demand an end to the tax cuts. It must proclaim that “too big to fail” is a public relations gimmick that lacks credibility. We must have an activist legislature that works for the 99%, not the 1%. Ditto for every agency, department, or service in the state [and nation].</p> <p>There are reasonable solutions. All it takes are lawmakers willing to do what is just. The savings I have outlined would allow the federal treasury to return hundreds of billions of discretionary dollars to states. Alas, we’ve become a warring, corporatist nation. The needs of everyday people are sacrificed to the gods of profit.</p> <p>Here in our little corner of the world we must reject privatization and exploitation of our common resources, period! Rich</p>	<p>funding is needed on an ongoing basis for the agency to meet its obligations. The Commission does not believe that complete privatization of the parks system is either feasible or desirable, but that visitors receiving some park services - such as camping – can and should pay much of their own costs, and other services – such as protection of significant and sensitive cultural heritage assets – are the responsibility of all Washingtonians.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Monday, August 06, 2012 8:04 AM</p> <p>I have read the report and find that the entire state park system is a travesty. The state seizes land from the public, uses tax money to support the system and then charges a user fee for people who wish to utilize the parks. We’re already paying taxes, and then paying a tax on top of that. My suggestion is that the state divest itself of public lands that it cannot support on the given subsidy. If it cannot get funds from that subsidy then it should divest itself of ALL public lands. Bruce P.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your thoughts. We will try to respond to some of your specific complaints about the state park system and agency.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. While State Parks technically has condemnation authority, virtually none of the system was acquired through eminent domain. The system was developed mostly through private donations and intergovernmental transfers, and to a lesser, though significant extent through purchase.</li> <li>2. Revenues from the Discover Pass are not used to pay off land purchases, but are exclusively used to keep parks open and facilities maintained. This is not a historic bill, but an ongoing cost.</li> <li>3. We would expect that divesting of public lands, while possible in many cases, would be met with extraordinary opposition by those enjoying the benefits of state parks.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Monday, August 06, 2012 8:49 AM</p> <p>Hi Daniel,</p> <p>I did get the report but it’s been tough to find the time to read it all. I finally got through it all last night.</p> <p>I guess my first thought or rather feeling is that this is still not an optimistic or realistic approach. Our park feels so fractured</p>	<p>Thank you for reading the draft report and providing input. We will attempt to respond to the key points/questions you raise.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Your description of the “fractured” capacity to support our parks is something that many within State Parks feel as well.</li> <li>2. The purpose of the OFM Report was not to “fight”</li> </ol>

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<b>Comments</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>and understaffed. Our volunteer capacity is past the maximum and not sustainable. We are doing more than what is typically required because we love our park and support our rangers.</p> <p>The report doesn't seem to be fighting for funds, but rather explaining softly all the things that we already know.</p> <p>Here are some snapshot notes from reading this report: Increase fees or add special services to parks, like the ability to partner with "glamping" outfitters.</p> <p>As for 40 million not 18 million- I thought the figure was 40 million. Can't we ask and fight for the sky because we already know they'll provide less, if anything? Pursue the mandatory fee on tab renewals. Why not put money into educating the public about the state of state parks and the need to support them, instead of spending money on consultants and web designers? The web- a lot to compete with-if you educated people about the future and important of parks it seems like a wiser way to spend funds. Why not use the Friends sites to add to the visitor experience. Why not make the parks.wa.gov page more friendly and interesting instead of "stuffy" reservations. I just don't agree with money spent to "sell" parks. I'd rather see education!</p> <p>Why does the Commission believe that state parks does not need and should not go back to previous levels? Are parks not important to them? The public believes taxes should support parks for everyone. Why are big business that are making good money getting tax breaks and park funding is getting cut?</p> <p>Make the Discover Pass mandatory on license renewals and out of state visitors pay a \$10 fee or \$30 annual pass if they choose-but don't penalize out of state visitors like Idaho. We want visitors. If the pass was mandatory, taken care of when one renews their tabs then it would cut down on the costs of administering the pass.</p> <p>The Michigan Parks example should be worded such that it isn't glamorized but more directly set forth as unattainable for Washington. Sure it's great they can brag, but they are unique not an example.</p> <p>It's pretty sad that only 150 people provided comments in a state with a population of more than 6 million people. People do care, but they are busy and you have to get in their face-person to person.</p> <p>Volunteers and Friends groups are a great way to add to the park but not a manner in which to maintain our parks. There are creative partnerships, but it's not just to sell the Discover</p>	<p>for parks, but to respond to the legislature's and governor's request for a status report on how we are making progress on moving toward self-sufficiency and what help we need from the legislature to be successful in that direction. The Commission concluded that full self-sufficiency is not feasible or desirable.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. It is important to note that the Commission did not just ask for \$18 million in General Fund. Rather, it said that \$18 million is what we need based on revenue assumptions laid out in the report and that it intends to revise the request as new data about revenue emerges.</li> <li>4. Regarding your suggestion for increased mandatory fees: In order to establish such a new fee, a two-thirds vote in both houses of the legislature would be necessary. This is because the public has voted for this requirement by initiative in 2010. If we request that a \$30 tab renewal donation be mandatory, this will be considered a "tax" and subject to the two-thirds majority vote.</li> <li>5. Decisions on where and how to spend money on public education and marketing are complex, with many different opinions on what is most effective. State Parks has hired a marketing coordinator to help the agency work through these issues.</li> <li>6. You desire the agency to ask for more general fund support. The Commission believes that State Parks need not – and should not – go back to previous levels of tax financing, and a right mixture of funding sources to sustain the Park System. But at this time, we don't know exactly what that right mix is. Whether it is \$18 million or \$40 million or another amount in the general fund, will be based on the more accurate forecasts of revenue generation, which can only be achieved through the power of experience.</li> </ol> <p>We appreciate your support and ideas. Thank you.</p>

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<p>Pass. We need to invest in our parks and nurture relationships that will support parks.</p> <p>I know you really want to sell the Discover Pass and do everything you can to have parks and volunteers boost sales, but that can't be the only solution.</p> <p>Finally, I wish the [sic] ask was 40 million not a mere 18.</p> <p>Thanks for your time Daniel and all that you are struggling to do. I really hope there will be a difference, but my fear is that you won't hear from the number of people you need to make an impact and parks will slip silently away. When the crisis hits home people will wonder why because they missed it in the media.</p> <p>Thanks,</p> <p>Michel</p>	
<p>Sent: Tuesday, August 07, 2012 9:54 AM</p> <p>It is a brutal reality that when people come to visit the parks they must pay. As pointed out in the plan, myself and so many others look at state parks as being free or should be as it is the last enjoyment often a struggling family can have. Movie prices are out, forget going to the mall and amusement parks and sporting events are out of reach for many families such as mine. I browsed thru the report and cannot really grasp the depth of the problem. I do know that when people ask me where to buy passes, I just don't know. I say the sign up at the Vehicle licensing department saying they didn't sell the passes. Here are some ideas that may be addressed already but I am doing my part to share.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Why not have the park passes sold where the clamming licenses and fishing licenses are sold or make a way to combine them in a "family" package</li> <li>2) Maybe Visitors Bureaus would be a good place to sell them.</li> </ol> <p>Seems like once you get to the park there should be a place to buy them, maybe a ticket machine? Being a local I wanted to take a client to the lighthouse but had to have the pass and couldn't figure out how to easily get one. I was very put off by this.</p> <p>After reading the shortfall doom, I am a Realtor, and I think I'll start including a park pass in my Welcome Home package so people can enjoy without all the hassle. Maybe small grass roots efforts such as this could help...if I can figure out where to buy them.</p> <p>Very truly yours, Char</p>	<p>Your tax dollars have in the past helped support State Parks. State Parks is faced with finding new ways to generate revenue to keep parks open. The legislature devised the Discover Pass to help replace the general fund tax dollars. This is no surprise to us, as most state parks systems across the country are operated by a mix of funding sources. Washington State Parks now needs to look at other funding resources, too.</p> <p>In regards to being uncertain where to purchase a Discover Pass, there are approximately 600 vendors assisting with the sale of the Discover Pass, including WILD vendors who also sell clamming and fishing licenses. Please visit State Parks' web site at <a href="http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov/">http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov/</a> for more details about the point-of-sale locations and other valuable pass information.</p> <p>We have passed on your suggestions, along with all other suggestions, to our marketing coordinator.</p> <p>Again, thank you for supporting your State Parks system and especially planting grass roots in your community.</p>
<p>Date: August 7, 2012 1:52:30 PM PDT</p>	<p>These comments were all shared with our</p>

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<p>Hello Pat,</p> <p>As promised, attached are my comments and sticky notes on the draft document which will go to OFM.</p> <p>The report is thorough and insightful. The message is clear that it is unrealistic to try and implement a user fee only system in 2 years. It is also clear that the Discover Pass will not reach the needed levels to fund the parks at the present time, and may never be enough to fund them.</p> <p>At some point, the Commission, Legislature and the Governor is going to have to decide what value they place on the Washington State Park system. This cannot be just a good show for the state park centennial, but a true commitment to a vital asset that is a tangible resource of health, education, conservation and general welfare to the citizenry and our visitors.</p> <p>The public should not have to <i>demonstrate</i> or <i>call to action</i> or <i>cry out</i> for something that rightfully and historically belongs to them. We have our representatives to do that for us. We should and will support our local parks when needed with community based events that should be viewed an expression of appreciation and commitment - not as a requirement to keep a park open.</p> <p>I hope you will share these comments with your fellow Commissioners along with our thanks for chance to review the draft. We look forward to the final document, and to hear how Kopachuck will be restored in the coming months.</p> <p>Linda</p>	<p>Commission. Thank you for your support and opinions.</p>
<p>Sent: Wednesday, August 08, 2012 10:11 AM</p> <p>Daniel,</p> <p>As a longtime camping enthusiast, I must tell you that recently I've been making more and more reservations for my trips with for-profit (non-state park) camping facilities for several reasons. The first and biggest reason is accessibility. I have been increasingly frustrated with the reservation process and the "first-come, first-serve" approach. Specifically we have been visiting the Lake Chelan State Park for 7-10 days every summer for over 30 years. In the last 2-3 years it's become impossible to get a camp site that accommodates my RV, which is only a small camp trailer. A majority of the sites are geared towards tenting campers and the regulations on the use of the RV sites is non-existent. It's so disappointing to arrive for our scheduled vacation having to take a site on the back side of the RV loop in the dirt and see the prime RV spots occupied by tenters. This year, we opted to stay at the city park and were pleasantly surprised. We enjoyed the lush grass, the</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding the RV accessibility and the upkeep amenities at state parks. State Parks has been going through significant budget reductions for the past five years, which have resulted in staff reductions, deferring facility renovations and some routine preventative maintenance.</p> <p>I am unable to determine whether you are requesting a camp site in a sufficient time frame and the park where the upkeep amenities were unsatisfactory. Nonetheless, State Parks reservations can be made nine months prior to your camping trip date. Lake Chelan is one of the state's most popular camping parks. It is unlikely anyone making a reservation close to their camping trip date there would be a site available. With the recent budget reductions, park staff are doing their best to keep up with cleaning the bathrooms, mowing the lawns, checking-in campers, etc. State Parks shifted 66 of the 186 full time field positions to seasonal five and eight month positions this year before the use season. What you are</p>

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<p>cable TV hook-up and loved that having an RV was required before a check-in could be made to one of their hook-up sites. Because of our history with the State Park we went to play in the sand one afternoon during our stay and were saddened to see the grass turning to weeds, the RV sites used inappropriately, the beach filled with people that didn't support boating, and a truck parked right along the beach obstructing the swimming area's use.</p> <p>Some of the other reasons for using non-State parks is the upkeep and amenities. As I mentioned before, the State facilities such as showers/bathrooms are not being cleaned and stocked routinely, the grass is turning to weeds, the ranger program is on its last leg, the docks aren't being monitored for proper use, and the swimming areas are being abused. We love visiting parks like Wanapum, Lake Chelan, Lincoln Rock, Lake Wenatchee, and Sun Lakes but sadly may have to broaden our search.</p> <p>Please let me know if there is anything I can do to assist in fixing these frustrations and thank you for listening.</p> <p><i>Amber</i></p>	<p>witnessing is the affects the Commission is trying to resolve.</p> <p>State Parks campsites with utility hook-ups are available for tent and RV units. A tent camper pays the full hook-up costs as well as an RV user for these sites.</p> <p>We appreciate you offering to help elevate some of the frustration we are also experiencing. You may be interested in volunteering as a host at a park, work with the State Parks Foundation or become a member of an established park friends group. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Cindy Jorgensen at 360-902-8612.</p>
<p><b>Sent:</b> Wednesday, August 08, 2012 10:19 AM</p> <p>I just want to let you folks know how much my family and I have always enjoyed camping at Washington State Parks - especially Deception Pass State park. My parents took my siblings and I as kids, we took our kids, and now we're taking our grandkids, so we've enjoyed them for at least 3 generations. Our whole family looks forward to an annual camp out with 21 of us - my 80+ year old parents, my husband and I, my brother and his family, our grown kids, and their children.</p> <p>My parents and my brother and I were raised in dry desert country in Nevada and Idaho. We had to travel for hours to reach any kind of treed area. We are so blessed to live in Western Washington where we're surrounded by water, beaches, and beautiful lush forests. Washington State Parks are about the prettiest places on earth. It concerns us that parks even here in our state, are being sold to private organizations like what happened to Lake Kachese (Sp?) just over Snoqualmie Pass. We truly don't want that to happen to our parks. They were set aside many, many years ago for the enjoyment of all families, not just ones that belong to certain organizations. Charge what you need to charge at the gates, but keep them open to the public please. The boys in our family have done many boy scout projects at county parks like Kayak Point. Perhaps the call could go out to scout troops to take more of a hand in the upkeep of our state parks, as well. Thanks for hearing my plea.</p> <p>Mary</p>	<p>It is stories like yours that keeps us excited and inspired about the work we do at State Parks. The Commission appreciates your support and will continue to foster State Parks mission so more families like yours, generation after generation, can enjoy state parks .</p>