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Director

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

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January 27, 2011

**Item E-4: Steamboat Rock State Park Land Classification Long-Term  
Boundary - Requested Action**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** This item asks the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to schedule adoption of a long-term boundary and land classification plan for Steamboat Rock State Park at the January 2011 Commission meeting. This item complies with our Centennial 2013 Plan element, "Our Commitment – Stewardship" and with our core values.

**SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

***The Classification and Management Planning (CAMP) Project***

In December 1995, the Commission adopted a revised land classification system (WAC Chapter 352-16). At about the same time, staff sought to fulfill an agency Strategic Plan objective to prepare management plans for each park in the system. The agency's Classification and Management Planning Project (CAMP) derived from dual goals: to develop long-term boundaries/classify lands and prepare park management plans.

***The Steamboat Rock CAMP project***

Steamboat Rock State Park covers 3,535 acres and approximately 50,000 feet of shoreline that support a diverse range of recreational opportunities and unique natural and cultural resources. The park is one of the most popular camping parks in Washington. The first stage of campground expansion began in the fall of 2010. The Steamboat Rock CAMP planning process began in July 2008 with selection of a core planning team comprised of the Steamboat Rock Manager, Eastern Region staff, Bureau of Reclamation staff, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Staff, with State Parks Headquarters planning staff mentoring and assisting. The process continued with a staff scoping meeting to gather initial planning information and to identify management issues.

In two public workshops, stakeholders shared their vision of what Steamboat Rock State Park should become. Public participation was also engaged by sending approximately 5,000 e-mails to park neighbors, local businesses, and people who had reserved campsites at the parks in the last two years. User groups and other interested parties were also contacted. The mailing list was later narrowed down to the 500 people who responded to the initial contact. Numerous documents, public comments, and meeting notices were posted on the park planning webpage, and follow-up e-mails were sent each time a new document was posted. Most of the input came via e-mail as public workshops were sparsely attended.

### *Long-Term Park Boundary*

Staff is recommending establishment of a long-term park boundary for Steamboat Rock State Park (Appendix 1) with the following changes from existing park ownership or management:

- Include the area North of Northrup Canyon to enclose the triangle of land between the cliffs and the Castle Rock Natural Area Preserve.
- Include in-holding areas within Northrup Canyon that were previously under a lease from the Bureau of Land Management.
- Include the area east of Northrup Canyon to provide a protection of Northrup Creek headwaters.
- Include the area South of Northrup Canyon that would provide contiguous management of the upper bench including trails and rare plants.
- Dispose of the Crown Point Vista property by transfer, sale or a combination of the two.

### *Land Classification Plan*

Classification is proposed as a mixture of Recreation, Resource Recreation and Natural Area.

Recreation areas include:

- Existing campgrounds and administrative areas
- The boat launch areas at the main part of the park, Northrup Point and Osborn Bay

Recreation Resource areas include:

- Areas adjacent to recreation areas
- Trail corridors in Northrup Canyon

Natural Areas include:

- Most of Steamboat Rock (the basalt butte)
- Parts of Northrup Canyon including Castle Rock Natural Area Preserve
- The SE side canyon where Northrup Creek enters the canyon
- Most areas with talus slopes

### *Park Management*

During the initial stages of planning, staff worked with stakeholders to craft a series of objectives to guide future management of the area. Later, staff developed a draft Park Management Plan.

### *Other issues*

**Clarify the Name of Steamboat Rock State Park:** Over the years, different parts of Steamboat Rock State Park have been referred to by different names, including Steamboat Rock, Banks Lake Recreation Area, Northrup Canyon, Northrup Point, Jones Bay, Osborn Bay and Crown Point State Park. Some of this relates to how the agreements with the Bureau of Reclamation have been developed. Staff recommends that the Commission officially recognize the name Steamboat Rock State Park to include all the above areas of the state park except Crown Point Vista.

### *Trail use*

The trails at Steamboat Rock State Park allow people to explore the many unique natural resources available. During the planning stage many issues relating to trails were brought up by

the users. The range of issues surrounding trails are beyond the scope of CAMP and one recommendation of the management plan is to develop a long-term trail plan.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that Commission adoption of the long-term boundary and land classification for Steamboat Rock State Park as recommended in Appendix 1.

**AUTHORITY:**

- RCW 79A.050.030(1)
- WAC 352-16-010(4); WAC 352-16-020; WAC 352-32-075(3)(a); WAC 352-32-070(2); and WAC 352-04-020.
- Commission policies 50-62-1, 72-99-1, and 65-04-2.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION:**

Appendix 1: Steamboat Rock State Park Proposed Long-Term Boundary and Land Classification

**REQUESTED ACTION OF COMMISSION:**

*That the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission:*

1. Receive staff's findings that the "Determination of Non-Significance" issued on October 15, 2010, sufficiently addressed the environmental impacts associated with this request, and resulted in a finding that the proposed action is minor and the environmental effects are not significant;
2. Consider the data, views, and arguments submitted by any person on the proposed long-term park boundary and land classification for the Steamboat Rock State Park;
3. Adopt the long-term boundary and land classification for Steamboat Rock State Park as recommended in Appendix 1 and including;
  - Approval of the conditional use of non-motorized bicycles and horses on designated trails in Steamboat Rock State Park (other than those within Natural Areas), and the conditional use of horses on designated multi-use trails in Northrup Canyon.
  - Approval of the conditional use of the rocks adjacent to the Highway 155 cut and Gibrator Rock for rock climbing.
  - Determination that Steamboat Rock State Park is consistent with the Centennial 2013 Vision.
  - Affirmation that the name Steamboat Rock State Park includes its commonly known sub-areas but does not include the Crown Point Vista property.
  - Affirmation that long-term boundary and land classification decisions are for Commission policy direction only and should not affect private property values, or be used as an indication of a property owner's willingness to sell, or as a basis for regulatory, permitting, or zoning decisions on private land holdings.
4. Direct that staff work with owners of properties within the park's long-term boundary to voluntarily protect natural resources contiguous to park property to achieve the desired conservation effect and avoid the need for fee acquisition of these properties.

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**Reviewer(s):**

**Randy Kline, SEPA Review:** Pursuant to WAC 197-11-704, staff prepared a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist and issued a "Determination of Non-Significance" on October 15, 2010 for the staff recommendation finding that the action proposed by Commission staff was minor and the environmental effects not significant.

**Ilene Frisch, Fiscal Impact Review:** Approval of this carries no direct fiscal consequences. Future budget decisions will implement the decisions in this document and will have impacts on the capital and operating budget.

**Jim Schwartz, Assistant Attorney General:** October 12, 2010

**Larry Fairleigh, Parks Development Director**

**Judy Johnson, Deputy Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved for Transmittal to Commission:**

  
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**Don Hoch, Director**

# APPENDIX 1

## Steamboat Rock Proposed Long-Term Boundary and Land Classification

Steamboat CAMP - Land Class and Long Term Boundary



