The Commission wrapped up a productive meeting in Anacortes that included presentations, work sessions, guest speakers and more. Here's an overview of topics covered.

**COMMISSION ACTION**

**Item E-1: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)**

The Commission was asked to evaluate and rank proposed grant projects based on Commission priorities. The funding would be provided by the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program in the State Parks Category. The Commissioners submitted their rankings prior to the meeting and were asked to approve the rankings for submission at the meeting. The presentation linked below provides information about the final rankings.

This item was unanimously approved.

[View Presentation]

**Item E-2: 2023-25 State Grant Applications**

The Commission was asked to approve the list of projects to submit to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to receive grant funding. The projects were reviewed the day before at the work session.

This item was unanimously approved.

[View Presentation]
Item E-3: Nisqually Land Classification Revision
The Commission was asked to approve a revision to the land classifications at Nisqually State Park near Eatonville, in Pierce and Thurston Counties. To avoid impacts to identified wetlands and ensure public safety, alternate campground loop sites slightly south of the original proposed location were identified. Additionally, collaborative work with the Nisqually Tribe to determine how to provide managed public access to the Nisqually River found that staff presence near the entrance to that area would be needed. The requested land classifications changes address these issues and bring the classifications in line with the park designs that are currently underway. These changes will result in a net increase in protected areas of the park, primarily due to a shift from Recreation Areas to Resource Recreation Areas and an increase to the Natural Area buffers in the stream corridors.

This item was unanimously approved.

Item E-4: Nisqually Property Transfer - Report
The Commission heard a report on proposed right-of-way transfers to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Pierce County to facilitate the development of Nisqually State Park near Eatonville. The transfer to WSDOT would allow for development of a roundabout at the park entrance near SR-7. The roundabout will improve safety and minimize vehicle congestion at the entrance.

No action was taken on this item.
Item E-5: Riverside State Park Sontag Park-Transfer to Nine Mile Falls School District - Report

The Commission heard a report on a proposed future land transfer of a portion of Sontag Park in the Nine Mile Falls area of Riverside State Park to the Nine Mile Falls School District. Sontag Park has been managed by Spokane County since 1967. However, during Riverside State Park’s Classification and Management Planning (CAMP) update in 2018, the Nine Mile Falls School District expressed interest in owning the portion of the park that includes the playground, ballfield, tennis courts and irrigated turf. This transfer would allow for expanded grounds and programming at Nine Mile Falls Elementary School, while still allowing public use of the facilities. Ending the Spokane County lease on the remaining portions of Sontag Park would allow it to be used as a trailhead for the Spokane River Centennial Trail, and will allow State Parks to earn Discover Pass revenue for that use.

No action was taken on this item.

Item E-6: Agency Request Legislation for the 2023 Session

Policy and Governmental Affairs Director Owen Rowe provided a recap of requested legislation in previous years and proposed requests for the upcoming 105-day 2023 legislative session. Potential proposals include continued engagement with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to offer more opportunities for low-income individuals and families, standardizing lease terms and eliminating the Commission rule that requires unanimous voting for property transfers.

This item was unanimously approved and the Director will continue to finalize the proposals.

Item E-7: 2023-25 Operating Budget

The Commission heard a recap of the 2023-2025 Operating Budget Proposal. The Commission was asked to delegate authority to the Director to approve the final budget for submission to the Office of Financial Management. Staff will continue working with the budget office in the coming months to finalize the proposed budget.

This item was unanimously approved.
Item E-8: 2023-25 Capital Budget Development

The Commission heard about the projects in the 2023-2025 Capital Budget and was asked to approve budgeting assumptions, structure and the overall magnitude of capital funding. This request included three amendments: Commissioner Connelly proposed an amendment to add funding to replace a chairlift at Mt. Spokane to be operated by MS2000. Commissioner Milner proposed an amendment to add funding to create an observation deck at Goldendale Observatory and another amendment for Palouse to Cascades Trail improvements.

The Commission approved the main item unanimously. The Mt. Spokane amendment was approved 5-2. The Goldendale Observatory amendment was approved unanimously. The Palouse to Cascades Trail amendment was approved unanimously.

Pre-Arranged Guest Speaker - Jim van Loben Sels

Jim presented about MS2000, the ski and snowboard park concessionaire at Mt. Spokane. MS2000 served more than 120,000 visitors last winter and predicts this number to continue to grow. Jim shared about challenges related to the concession, including aging ski lifts.
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Update
The Commission was presented with the status and projected next steps for developing the Washington State Parks Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Plan. Additionally, staff provided an update on recruitment efforts to hire a permanent DEI Director, recent DEI accomplishments and an overview of the state Office of Equity's Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan and Playbook.

View Presentation

Branding Update
Brand and Marketing Manager Stephanie McDermott provided the Commission with an update on work to renovate the agency's brand. The presentation included an overview of the agency's brand history, as well as an unveiling of the new brand strategy with examples of how the strategy will translate into an evolved visual identity. Check out the presentation to view where we're at in the branding process.

View Presentation

Discount Pass Program Update
Visitor Services Manager Keri Murphy provided the Commission with an overview of the Discount Pass program, including current challenges and opportunities for future improvements. The presentation focused on the Lifetime Veteran Pass, Senior Limited Income Pass and Off-Season Pass. The Commission brainstormed potential modifications for each pass.

View Presentation
Kukatali Preserve Update:
Members of the Kukatali Preserve Management Board provided background on the history of the site and an update on management of the Preserve. The presentation highlighted the implementation of the Preserve's master plan and reported on the completion of several studies and projects, including an effort to restore salmon habitat.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission co-owns and co-manages the Kukutali Preserve with the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. This management relationship is the first of its kind in the country. Over the past 12 years, a six-person board (comprised of three State Parks representatives and three Tribe representatives) has managed the Preserve using consensus-based decision making.

View Presentation

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) State Parks Category Project Evaluation
Parks Planner Laura Moxham presented about proposed projects to be submitted for grant funding provided by the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program in the State Parks Category. This item was voted on the following day at the Commission Meeting.

View Presentation
2023 Commission Meeting Locations
The Commission discussed logistics surrounding potential dates and locations for commission meetings in 2023. The Commission hosts its meetings in various locations around the State in order to better understand local needs and ongoing or emerging issues, facilitate stakeholder interactions, enable outreach with local officials and community leaders, and provide opportunities for Commission members to tour parks and other properties and to meet with parks staff.

This item will be brought back to the commission as a requested action in September for final approval.

2023-25 State Parks Grant Applications
Parks Planner Laura Moxham presented about a list of proposed projects to submit to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to receive grant funding. This item was voted on the following day at the Commission Meeting.

View Presentation
Volunteer Program Significant Volunteer Achievement

Bill Way - Lake Sammamish State Park

As a board member for the Friends of Lake Sammamish, Bill has spent hundreds of hours working to create a new Comprehensive Trails Plan for the park. This plan is designed to increase accessibility and connectivity for all park visitors while working to protect the park’s habitats. Bill is a tireless advocate for the natural environment and our parks. He is a creative person with a can-do attitude, who has done so much for the parks while making time to mentor others.

Lifetime Achievement

Debbie Berto - Lake Sammamish State Park

As a founding member of the Friends of Lake Sammamish State Park, Debbie has volunteered with Washington State Parks for over 14 years. In that time, she has served on the Board of Directors for the Friends Group and improved her park through multiple projects. Debbie has led the effort to raise $1.1 million dollars for an all-access playground for Lake Sammamish. She has also led multiple annual events for the community. Additionally, Debbie plays a key role in communications for the Friends Group and often writes and edits press releases.
Meet Our Commissioners & Acting Director

Gold Star Awards

**Bryan Anyan - Beacon Rock**
Bryan did tremendous work operating the truck and tractor to remove tree debris. He persevered with a great attitude and kept working through the challenges of unpredictable weather. Thank you!

**Seamus Mulcahy - Bay View**
Thank you for your excellence in all that you do. You have a great eye for making small but needed changes around the park. You are the first to make sure that everyone is following safety rules and regulations. You have a great work ethic, practice excellent customer service and learn systems quickly. Thank you for all that you do!

Service Pins

Park Ranger
Rickey Blank
50 years

Park Ranger
Robert Chalfant
40 years

Area Manager
Jeff Wheeler
35 years