

# **WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

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## **Agency Name:**

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Website: <http://www.parks.wa.gov/>

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## **Agency Responsibilities:**

▪**State Parks System:** The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquires, operates, enhances and protects a diverse system of recreational, cultural, historical and natural sites. The agency manages 120 parks and three statewide recreation programs including boating safety, cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. State Parks is governed by a board of commissioners – a policy-making body of seven citizens appointed by the governor to staggered six-year terms.

Responsible for:

- Acquisition, development, and operation of state parks system.
- State recreation trail system.
- State water trail program.
- Conveyances for persons in recreational activities (e.g., ski lifts)
- State scenic river system.
- State ocean beaches.
- State snowmobile program.
- Boating safety program.
- State Cross country ski program.
- Clean vessel program funding.

### Details:

The commission manages over 118 parks, 260,000 acres, 60 miles of ocean beach, and over 900 miles of trails.

Parks system facilities include 7,000 campsites, 5,000 picnic sites, 100 group campsites, 140 boat launch lanes, numerous swim beaches, kitchen and picnic shelters, a golf course, a ski area, playing fields, playground equipment and fishing docks, 12 environmental learning centers, one conference center, 14 interpretive centers and 17 historic areas, including, military forts, homesteads, and numerous historic residences and lighthouses.

In terms of infrastructure, the commission operates sewage systems (25 miles of pipe, 588 septic tanks, 167 lift stations, 20 treatment plants, 50 lagoons, 221 pumps, 76 trailer dump stations and 38 boat pump out/dump stations), drinking water systems (47 miles of pipe, 127 wells, 116 reservoirs and 162 pumps) irrigation systems (13 miles of pipe, 28 wells, 10 reservoirs and 48 pumps), and 894 miles of roads.

Visitors to Washington state parks contribute more than \$1.1 billion to Washington's economy and create more than 15,000 jobs. The agency employs approximately 500 permanent and 415 seasonal and temporary staff. It uses more than 200,000 volunteer hours each year.

**State Parks Centennial:** The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission has implemented a Centennial 2013 Plan. The plan outlines improvements the agency will complete, with the help of partners, volunteers and policy makers, by 2013 when the park system celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Details:

The 2013 Centennial Plan evolves from the Commission's Centennial Vision:

*"In 2013, Washington's state parks will be premier destinations of uncommon quality, including state and regionally significant natural, historic and recreation resources that are outstanding for public experience, health, enjoyment and learning."*

With help from the Governor and Legislature, State Parks commits to:

- Stewardship of all resources under its care.
- Enjoyment and learning for visitors.
- Service, using versatile and valued employees, partners and volunteers.
- Facilities care, including the maintenance backlog and critical renovations.
- Enhanced partnership building.
- Leveraging increased general tax support with earned revenue and donations.

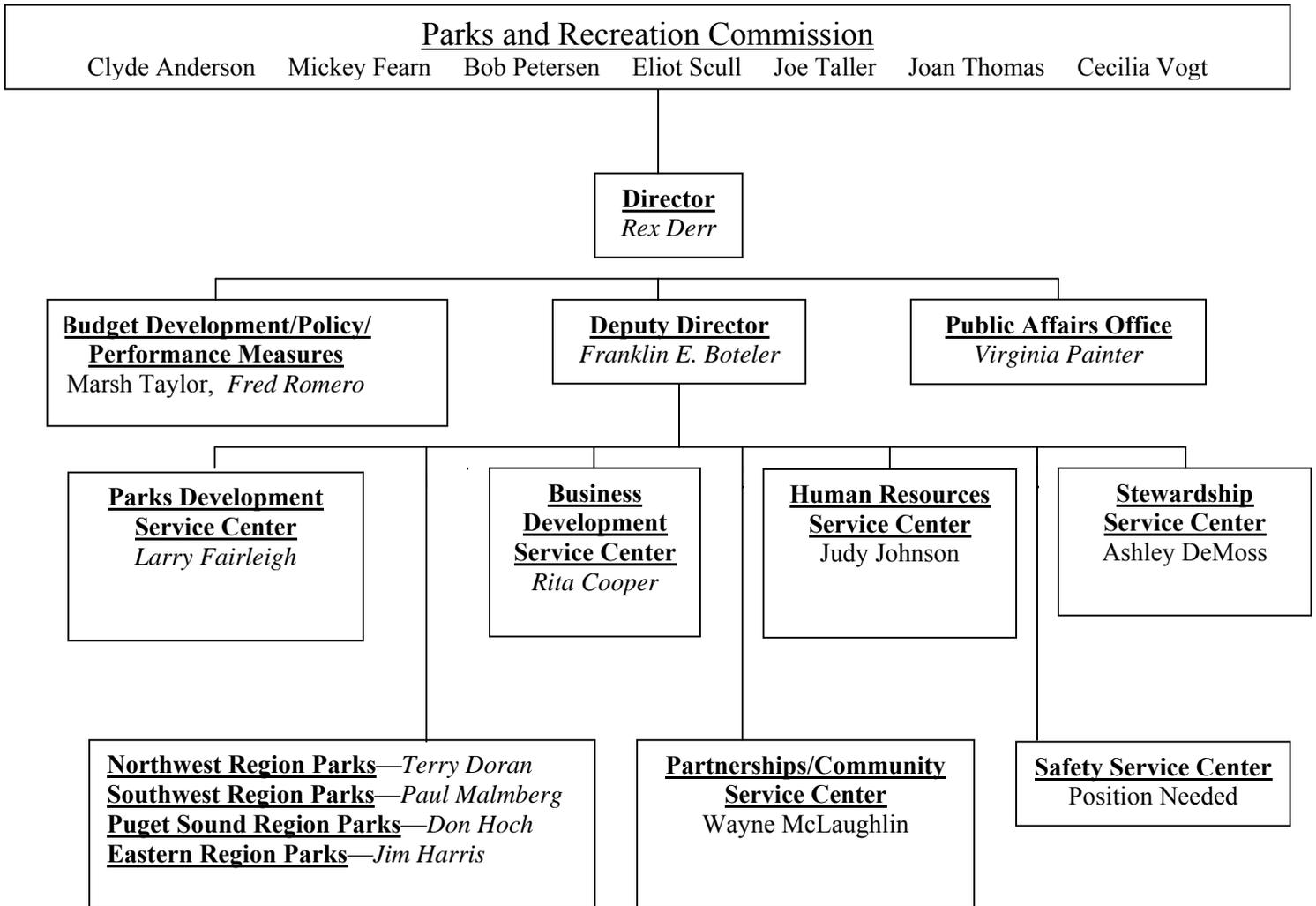
In the plan, *Legacy* projects address the needs of a growing population, and *100 Connections* are specific park projects State Parks is asking groups and visitors to gift to parks.

**Boating Program.**

The program is responsible for coordinating boating safety education, marine law enforcement, vessel registration and accident reporting with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and private and non-profit organizations. The program is also responsible for coordinating efforts to reduce the pollution of Washington's waters related to recreational boating activities. It is supported by federal "pass-through" funds. Approximately 230,000 boats are registered in Washington State.

**Winter Recreation Program.**

The program is responsible for administering facility planning, development, environmental and safety education, law enforcement, and other services for snowmobilers, cross country skiers, dog sledgers, snowshoers and other winter recreationists throughout the state. It is supported by user registration fees. The program contracts for grooming of 3300 miles of snowmobile/cross country ski trails annually.



\**Italics*=exempt positions.

## Budget by Source and Program

### Operating Budget

#### Spending Authority 2003-2005 Operating Budget

\$59,861,000	General Fund – State
\$34,650,000	Parks Renewal & Stewardship Account (PRSA)
\$ 9,262,000	Dedicated Funds*
\$ 2,552,000	Non-appropriated & Allocated Funds**
<b>\$106,325,000</b>	<b>Total Parks Operating Budget</b>

\* Dedicated funds support special recreation programs -- Includes Federal Boating Program, Snowmobile, Winter Recreation, Public Safety and Education, Off Road Vehicle and Aquatic Lands Enhancement.

\*\*Includes -108 Motor Vehicle, health/pension allocations, Saving Incentive, Parks Improvement (non-appropriated) and Unanticipated Receipts

- **General Fund –State (63%) and PRSA (37%) support the Parks**

80%	Park Operations
15%	Administrative & Agency Support
3%	Parks Development
2%	Enterprise Programs

### Revenue 2003-05

PRSA Revenue from fees, leases and concessions is expected to be \$36 million. PRSA revenue is expected to fund park operations and fund deferred maintenance in the Capital Program. Deferred maintenance and master equipment replacement has been reduced this biennium to meet additional obligations of PRSA.

- PRSA appropriation does not mean revenue collected from park fees will be sufficient to support it.
- Increasing fees can have a negative effect on revenue in the short term as customers react negatively to the increase.

### Capital Budget

Funds for the 2003-05 biennium were awarded for preservation, program enhancement, alternate financing (non-budgeted) and grant programs.

**Preservation projects** include renovation of the parks' utility systems, buildings and infrastructure, preservation of our historic resources, continued rehabilitation of Fort Worden and Cama Beach, and the initial renovation of Deception Pass State Park.

Fund	New	Reapprop
057 – St. Bldg. Const. Acct	9,924,500	18,175,000
269 – Parks & Recreation Acct	5,900,000	3,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,824,500</b>	<b>21,675,000</b>

**Program enhancement projects** include the addition and/or improvements of new facilities and campgrounds with an emphasis on revenue-generating capability; continued funding for the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial and the acquisition of new park properties.

Fund	New	Reapprop
057 – St. Bldg. Const. Acct	4,650,000	750,000
269 – Parks & Recreation Acct	412,500	0
02N - Parkland Acquisition Acct	1,000,000	1,940,835
108 - Motor Vehicle Acct	150,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,212,500</b>	<b>2,690,835</b>

**Alternate financing** projects included a family donation for Cama Beach, Chief Joseph property and the Beacon Rock Trust. Funding is as follows:

Fund	New	Reapprop
269 – Parks & Recreation Acct	1,505,000	200,000
151 – Chief Joseph Rec Dev	493,244	0
781 – Cross State Trail	152,151	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,150,395</b>	<b>200,000</b>

**Grants** consist of the Clean Vessel program (funded by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) and other smaller federal and local grants. Funding is as follows:

Fund	New	Reapprop
001 - GFS Federal (incl. unanticipated)	3,369,743	561,328
001 - GFS Local (incl. unanticipated)	244,718	0
Interagency	25,967,598	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,582,059</b>	<b>561,328</b>

**Major Issue: Business Enterprise vs. Social Welfare.**

Although the parks system was originally established to foster societal values (e.g., family togetherness, conservation, recreation, economic development); over the last fifteen years the legislature has encouraged the agency to move further in the direction of operating like a business enterprise—increasing the proportion of agency budget which is supported by revenue generated from park users. The parks system is currently 37% self supporting. The agency’s movement to increase fees and provide pay-for-recreation services creates some negative public reactions.

1. Vehicle Parking Fees: These fees (\$5.00 per visit or \$50 per year) were implemented in 2003. Collection of the fees enabled the agency to reduce the number of parks it had to close (or transfer back to original landowners) to five during 2003 budget cuts. There is still strong public reaction to the vehicle parking fee with some people feeling that they have a basic right to access park lands.

2. Variable Campsite Fees: In October 2004 the Commission implemented variable campsite fees (higher fees for premium campsites). As the public begins to make reservations in Spring 2005 for campsites, there is likely to be some negative reaction to these fees.

3. Campsite Reservation System: In 1994 the agency implemented a campsite reservation system in cooperation with Oregon State Parks. The original hardware/software system was not successful—creating situations in which customers had to wait long times to access operators. In 2001 the agency switched to another vendor (CAMIS) which has operated a very successful campsite reservation system.

4. Uncoordinated Fee Systems: The public (and legislature) remain frustrated with the large number of fee systems in place to access public lands. In 2004 the agency joined with Oregon State Parks, USDA Forest Service, and the National Park Service to pilot a joint fee pass. Twenty Washington State Parks are currently participating with the joint pass.

4. Facilities Expansion: The agency has been renovating historical facilities (to support overnight stays) and constructing 200 cabins/yurts in order to generate revenue and provide expanded visitor services. Some segments of the public object to the construction of new facilities in parks while other segments of the public call for it.

**Urgency/Significance/Controversy:**

Segments of the public feel strong ownership of their state parks. At times complaints can be adamant.

**Timeline for Conclusion/Resolution:**

It is likely that the Legislature will continue pressures for the agency to become more self supporting—thus creating ongoing citizen reaction to fee-for-recreation services.

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**Major Issue: Vision for 2013 Centennial State Parks System.**

The Commission has adopted a Centennial Plan and Vision to prepare for the 2013 Centennial of the State Parks System.

The Vision: *"In 2013, Washington's state parks will be premier destinations of uncommon quality, including state and regionally significant natural, historic and recreation resources that are outstanding for public experience, health, enjoyment and learning."*

To implement the vision, during 2005 staff will be completing review of the existing agency land holdings with recommendations as to which ones should continue to be part of the state parks system and which ones divested to other recreation providers or, perhaps, sold. Savings from this process will be used to support the remaining parks in order to help bring them to levels of service that are acceptable to the commission. Current analyses indicate that 25-35 park holdings will be listed for divestiture over the 2005 to 2013 period. Divestiture of some of these holdings is likely to cause significant concerns from local community leaders (due to the loss of economic development) and park users.

As the agency moves to implement the 2013 Vision, it continues with plans for individual parks (called “CAMPS”—classification and management plans). Four current CAMP projects are likely to create public interest/reaction:

Lake Sammamish State Park: The initial 2003 CAMP plan identified a number of revenue generating, non traditional options for recreational use of the park (e.g., indoor soccer arena, indoor water slide,...). There is strong local interest in potential uses of the park—spanning from more intensive use to more natural preservation. A large, locally based citizen task force has been formed to advise the commission on potential uses of the park.

Fort Worden State Park: The agency has initiated its CAMP process for Fort Worden. This park has ongoing strong local interest and support. Fort Worden has relatively high capital improvement needs and the agency will be exploring new partnership opportunities in administration of the park.

Implementation of the Centennial Plan also calls for development of a new state park in Southeastern Washington. This is somewhat controversial as the commission transferred four southeastern state parks back to the federal government as a result of 2003 budget cuts.

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## Board Member Listing by Board Position

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (NS130)

Agency 465 - State Parks and Recreation Comm	Senate Conf. Y	Positions: Maximum 007
Authority Governor	Public Disc. Y	Minimum 000
Authoriztn. RCW 43.51.020	Term Length 072	Actual 007
Rem. Auth. GC	Meetings/Yr. 12	

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
001	Taller, Joe 6519 Turnberry Lane SE Olympia, WA 98501	A	C	07/20/2000	12/31/2006
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
002	Anderson, Clyde B. (Mr.) E. 7606 Hodin Road Spokane, WA 99212	A	C	01/29/2002	12/31/2006
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
003	Thomas, Joan K. (Ms.) 5040 - 16th Ave NE Seattle, WA 98105	A	C	10/01/2003	12/31/2008
		Terms Served	00		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
004	Fearn, Mickey	A	AA	10/10/2003	12/31/2008
		Terms Served	00		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
004	Fearn, Mickey (Mr.) 19337 Fourth Avenue S.W. Seattle, WA 98166	A	AA	10/09/2003	12/31/2008
		Terms Served	02		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

Pos. #	Name and Address	Status	Race	Appointed	Expires
005	Petersen, Robert	A	C	10/10/2003	12/31/2008
		Terms Served	00		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

## Board Member Listing by Board Position

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION (NS130)

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
006	Scull, Eliot 3770 10th SE East Wenatchee, WA 98802	A	C	02/09/1999	12/31/2004
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
007	Vogt, Cecilia 402 South 37th Avenue Yakima, WA 98902	A	C	02/09/1999	12/31/2004
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	General Public		