



Don Hoch  
Director

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

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January 29, 2015

**Item E-2: Real Estate Management Policy– Requested Action**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:** This item asks the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to consider adopting several policy statements to provide direction for the agency’s real estate management activities. This item aligns with agency core values and advances the Commission Transformation Strategies: “Expand use of land holdings for compatible revenue generating purposes” and “Develop amenities and acquire lands that advance transformation.”

**SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

**State Parks Strategic Plan**

In July 2014, the Commission adopted a new Strategic Plan to guide agency decision making during the next five years. The Commission identified commitments necessary to move the park system forward to sustainability and health. The first is provided below and serves as the broader policy basis for recommendations in this agenda item.

*Commitment 1: Size and scope of the state parks system*

*One of the nation’s largest, most diverse and well-loved parks systems should not be reduced into a significantly smaller system. Public expectations and sentiments have been clear; any large-scale departure from the size and core services of Washington State Parks is not acceptable. If special opportunities arise to secure the protection of singular and special properties of great public value, the agency will pursue those. These decisions will be made based on the strengthening of a system of parks, and a focus on agency mission.*

*This is not to say that every portion of each park represents a critical part of the system. The agency will continue to review its land base, identifying those sites that may not have significant long-term legacy value in terms of natural and cultural heritage, scenic and recreational opportunities. The Commission reserves the right to consider transfer, lease or sale of those assets that do not meet the threshold of long-term legacy value. In order to maintain a viable system of parks, the agency will:*

- *Keep to the stated mission, vision and scale of the system*
- *Remain open to appropriate partnerships with local government, Tribal governments and others*
- *Remain open to opportunities to improve the quality of the system for now and the future.*

## **State Parks Transformation Strategy**

In 2011, in the midst of the largest economic crisis since the Great Depression, Washington's Legislature and Governor made the difficult decision to eliminate most General Fund support for Washington State Parks and to replace it with a system that relies on user fees and earned revenue to pay for most agency operating expenses. Faced with such a profound change, State Parks had no choice but to fundamentally rethink the way it provides public recreation, while ensuring continued protection of some of the state's most significant natural, cultural, and historical assets.

In 2013, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission adopted a Transformation Strategy to guide the agency's efforts to build financial and public support. The Transformation Strategy focused on seven overarching strategies to build that support. They are:

1. Demonstrate that all Washingtonians benefit from their state parks
2. Adopt a business approach to park administration
3. Provide recreation, cultural, and interpretive opportunities people will want
4. Promote meaningful opportunities for volunteers, friends, and donors
5. Form strategic partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and non-profits
6. Expand use of land holdings for compatible revenue-generating purposes and
7. Develop amenities and acquire lands that advance transformation.

Items six and seven focus on real estate management and the initiatives undertaken to advance them led to preparation of this agenda item.

## **Public Participation**

Development of real estate policy recommendations follows numerous Commission work sessions and previous Commission actions regarding park transfers and lease of lands from other government jurisdictions. To solicit public input on policy recommendations included in this requested action, staff prepared a public outreach document and e-mailed it to a list of agency stakeholders. The outreach document was provided to the Commission and is available on request. Recipients included current agency concessionaires, conservation organizations, land trusts, state and local government officials, Native American Tribes located in the state, and other individuals and organizations signed up to receive agency policy information.

## **STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Staff recommends that the Commission set additional policy to guide real estate management activities in the following four areas:

**Recreation Business Activities** – Providing opportunities for privately financed development of recreation facilities in state park areas

**Enterprise Lands** – Leasing surplus lands for revenue-generating purposes

**Land Transfers and Exchanges with other Government Jurisdictions** – Transferring or exchanging surplus lands to other governments

**Land Leases from other Government Jurisdictions** – Setting authority between the Commission and staff for renewing leases from other jurisdictions.

For each of these areas, staff summarizes the policy issues, poses key questions, and outlines its recommendations. Staff also describes procedural considerations anticipated during implementation of the policy. With Commission approval of high-level policy recommendations included in this agenda item, staff recommends that the Commission then delegate authority and direct staff to incorporate and otherwise harmonize recommendations into existing Commission real estate policy. Staff anticipates bringing further refinements to the associated policies with experience gained through any initial transactions and implementation.

### **Recreation Business Activities**

State Parks has a long history of partnering with private concessionaires to provide recreational amenities in parks. In the past, these amenities have usually been outside of the agency’s traditional areas of expertise. Examples have included operation of food and beverage stands, restaurants, kayak rentals, golf courses, and luxury camping (glamping). These types of activities historically have been authorized through concession lease agreements.

Traditionally, most funding for physical improvements in state parks has come from state capital appropriations or grants, but reduced funding for park operations has resulted in more of the agency’s existing facilities needing major maintenance. An outcome has been the need to direct most of the agency’s limited capital funding toward deferred maintenance projects, rather than responding to demands for new and different facilities and opportunities for a growing and changing state population.

To better meet the needs of park visitors and to generate additional revenue in support of park system operation, real estate agreements for privately financed and operated recreational facilities in state parks can be one effective tool. Staff has named these types of arrangements “Recreation Business Activities” (RBAs). Whereas traditional concession agreements typically involve operation of agency-owned structures by private concessionaires, RBAs would be intended as opportunities for the private sector to finance, construct, and operate recreation facilities in appropriate areas in state parks.

#### ***Policy Question 1: Where are Recreation Business Activities appropriate?***

The Commission has adopted land classifications for most of its parks as part of the agency’s Classification and Management Planning (CAMP) Project. Land classifications are essentially management zones that prescribe the kinds of facilities and activities that can occur in various areas of a state park. They range from the most restrictive Natural Area Preserves, which are reserved for scientific or educational purposes, to the least restrictive Recreation Areas that allow for higher-intensity recreation facilities such as campgrounds or indoor accommodations. The State Parks land classifications, generally listed from lowest to highest intensity activities and facilities include:

- Natural Area Preserves
- Natural Forest Areas
- Natural Areas

- Resource Recreation Areas
- Heritage Areas
- Recreation Areas

Determining appropriate sites for RBAs is essentially a question of park land use and facilities planning. As such, the agency's land classification system (Appendix 1) is a well-suited mechanism through which to evaluate and approve appropriate areas within parks for these activities. Land classifications or later modifications to them are approved by the Commission. These are formal actions that undergo the highest degree of staff scrutiny, public review, and environmental analysis under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

Staff Recommendation:

RBAs should generally be limited to areas within parks classified as Recreation, Resource Recreation, and Heritage Areas. Constructed facilities should also be consistent with adopted management guidelines that set the appropriate intensity and types of facilities for each of these land classifications. RBAs involving construction of facilities should not be permitted in Natural Areas, Natural Forest Areas, or Natural Area Preserves.

***Policy Question 2: What types of Recreation Business Activities are appropriate?***

Current state park recreational developments include campgrounds, picnic facilities, trails, cabins, vacation houses, dormitories, hostels, and even small resorts (e.g., Cama Beach State Park). Clearly, not every type of recreational facility is appropriate in every park. While permitted in recreation areas and conditionally permitted in Heritage Areas, the Commission has not to date pursued development of lodges or small hotels. These types of developments would likely be well-suited as RBAs. Privately financed development of day-use facilities might also be considered (e.g., camping supply shops, cafés and restaurants).

Staff Recommendation:

Specific types of RBAs should be consistent with a park's adopted land classifications and the corresponding *Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix* outlined in the agency's land classification system. If a type of facility or activity is not specified in the matrix, a decision to permit, conditionally permit, or not permit a facility or activity should be based on the most similar or closely aligned facility or activity listed in the guidelines.

***Policy Question 3: Where should the proceeds from Recreation Business Activities be directed?***

By statute, proceeds from leases and concessions are deposited in the Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account (PRSA). PRSA is the agency's main operating account used to fund operation and support of the state park system.

Staff Recommendation:

Proceeds from Recreation Business Activities should be deposited in PRSA and generally be available for operation of the state park system. Pursuing changes to the PRSA statute is not recommended at this time.

### ***Procedural Considerations for Designating Recreation Business Areas***

Land classifications adopted by the Commission should serve as the principle mechanism through which staff proposes and the Commission approves RBAs.

Staff is recommending that RBAs be *conditionally* permitted activities in Recreation Areas, Resource Recreation Areas, and Heritage Areas. Facilities associated with RBAs should be *conditionally* permitted in Recreation Areas and Heritage Areas. If the Commission adopts policy recommendations for RBAs in this agenda item, staff will update the *Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix* in the agency's land classification system to add "Recreation Business Activity" to the recreational activities matrix. Anticipated changes to this matrix are included in Appendix 2.

If the Commission adopts policy recommendations for RBAs in this agenda item, staff would next prepare, for Commission adoption, a set of general guidelines for the types of activities that may or may not be permitted in RBAs to guide future private sector solicitations. Staff anticipates RBAs would be limited to those that provide or support recreational, educational, artistic, cultural, community-oriented, or other Commission mission-aligned activities.

Approval of an RBA will typically require two separate Commission actions. First, any RBA would only be permitted if the Commission specifically approves this activity in a particular park within a specific classified area. This could be done as part of initial land classification or later as an amendment to the original classification action.

Second, most RBAs will require a lease or other contractual agreement between the proponent and the agency. By statute, the Commission must unanimously approve any leases with terms exceeding 20 years. Consequently, the Commission would be required to take a second action to approve a long-term lease before an RBA could proceed. For lease terms shorter than twenty years, staff would have the authority to grant an RBA lease without Commission approval. Staff anticipates incorporating specific guidelines and limitations into proposed leases to ensure an RBA is appropriate to a park setting, irrespective of the length of term for a lease.

### **Enterprise Lands**

When classifying park lands as part of the agency's CAMP project, the Commission also typically designates a long-term park boundary. The long-term park boundary is intended to include lands that advance the conservation or recreation missions of a park. In many cases, the long-term park boundaries are larger than the current State Parks ownership; conversely, sometimes agency-owned property is determined to be unnecessary for state park purposes and is declared surplus.

Surplus park properties have traditionally been transferred to other government agencies or sold at auction, with the proceeds going to fund priority land acquisitions. As an alternative to sale or transfer, the Commission could consider retaining suitable surplus lands and making them available for lease to other public or private parties for the primary purpose of generating revenue to support the state park system. Such leased surplus lands can be dubbed Enterprise Lands.

The Commission currently manages 16 properties which meet the working definition of Enterprise Lands and are managed primarily for revenue-generating purposes. These lands are managed through approximately 40 commercial lease agreements with second parties. Leased uses include mountaintop communication sites, grain elevators along cross-state trails, water towers, parking facilities and airport runways. In the majority of cases, the commercial use was already underway when the land was acquired.

***Policy Question 1: Should the Commission set aside lands exclusively for revenue purposes?***

The Commission's adopted Transformation Strategy specifically prescribes expanding the use of the agency's land holdings for compatible revenue-generating purposes. The Parkland Acquisition statute requires that any proceeds from sale of land be dedicated to purchasing new land. Designating Enterprise Lands would instead result in lease agency-owned lands that are not suitable for park purposes to other qualified public or private parties for non-park uses. This could provide an ongoing source of revenue to help support operation of the state park system. If clearly deemed surplus, it would also not negatively impact existing or future state park lands.

Staff Recommendations:

1. The Commission should designate selected lands exclusively for revenue-generating purposes (Enterprise Lands), but only when the Commission unanimously finds these lands cannot advantageously be used for park purposes and declares them surplus to the needs of the agency as included in statute (RCW 79A.05.175). These lands additionally should be expected to possess attributes and characteristics typically sought by the private real estate development industry for development purposes.
2. Enterprise Lands should be made available for lease to private parties or other government jurisdictions, the specific conditions of which should be approved by the Commission if the lease term exceeds 20 years. Unlike RBAs, business activities within Enterprise Lands should not be required to conform or align with the agency's mission. Enterprise Lands would be available for use within the parameters established by the Commission on a site-by-site basis.
3. If after suitable periods of time and reasonable efforts to advertise Enterprise Lands opportunities the agency is unsuccessful in attracting and negotiating leases with qualified public or private parties, subject lands may be sold or otherwise disposed of without further Commission action as provided by statute (RCW 79A.05.175).

***Policy Question 2: Should State Parks purchase new lands specifically for real estate investment?***

The Commission does not currently have statutory authority to acquire lands for purposes other than for development and operation of state parks. Acquiring lands for the purpose of designating them as Enterprise Lands would require an act of the Legislature.

Staff Recommendation:

Acquiring new lands solely for the purpose of leasing them for non-park purposes should not be pursued. However, the Commission may find it necessary to purchase lands that are not suited to park purposes as part of a larger transaction that secures high-quality lands for state park purposes. In these instances the Commission should consider retaining the unsuited lands for an Enterprise Lands designation.

***Policy Question 3: Where should the proceeds from Enterprise Lands be directed?***

By statute, proceeds from leases and concessions are deposited in the Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account (PRSA). The PRSA is the agency's main operating account used to fund operation and support of the state park system. Also, by statute, proceeds from sale of park lands must be deposited in the agency's Parkland Acquisition Account (PAA) and can only be used to purchase new lands.

Staff Recommendations:

1. Proceeds from Enterprise Lands should be deposited in the PRSA and generally be available for operation of the state park system. Pursuing changes to the PRSA or PAA statutes is not recommended at this time.
2. The Commission should direct staff to explore and prepare recommendations for Commission consideration on whether and how to pursue establishment of a trust, endowment, or similar interest-bearing and investment account. If such an account is approved and/or established by the Commission, proceeds from Enterprise Lands or other revenue sources may be deposited there. Income generated by the trust or endowment account if established should be dedicated to operation of the state park system.

***Procedural Considerations for Designating Enterprise Lands***

If the Commission approves staff policy recommendations in this agenda item, additional Commission actions will be necessary to further refine Enterprise Lands policy and ultimately grant land leases for this purpose. Staff would next prepare, for Commission consideration, specific criteria with which to identify and evaluate candidate sites for Commission designation of Enterprise Lands. Staff would then use these criteria to identify candidate agency-owned lands that are suitable for Commission designation for this purpose.

Ultimate approval of an Enterprise Land leases would typically require two separate Commission actions. First, the Commission would need to find one or more candidate properties surplus to its needs and formally designate them as Enterprise Lands. Staff would then solicit interest in these lands from other public or private parties.

Second, most Enterprise Land arrangements would require a long-term lease to be feasible for the private sector. By statute, the Commission must unanimously approve any leases with terms exceeding 20 years. Consequently, the Commission would be required to take a second action to approve a long-term lease before an Enterprise Land arrangement could proceed. For lease terms shorter than twenty years, staff would have the authority to pursue Enterprise Lands leases without additional Commission approval.

## **Land Transfers and Exchanges with other Government Jurisdictions**

Early in the Great Recession, the State Parks and Recreation Commission transferred some state parks to local or Tribal governments to relieve the agency of the operating costs associated with those facilities. A number of state parks were transferred to other jurisdictions. Examples include Fay Bainbridge and Fort Ward State Parks, which were transferred to the Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park and Recreation District, and Fort Okanogan State Park, which was transferred to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation.

After the Discover Pass was implemented, however, the benefits of such transfers became less clear. State Parks would save operating costs if a park were transferred to a local or Tribal government, but it also would lose fee-based revenue from visitors primarily interested in the transferred parks. In addition, shrinking the state park system would provide Discover Pass purchasers less value for their money. State Parks has not transferred a park to another agency since the Discover Pass was implemented; however, some local and Tribal governments have requested that state park lands be transferred to them.

***Policy Question: Under what conditions should the Commission consider originating or consider requests to transfer all or part of state parks or state park properties to other government jurisdictions?***

### Staff Recommendations:

1. By statute, the Commission may transfer lands without financial compensation to another government jurisdiction when it unanimously finds that the lands are *surplus to the needs of the state for development for state park purposes* (RCW 79A.05.170). Further, the Commission may sell or exchange lands when it unanimously finds that lands *cannot be advantageously be used for park purposes* (RCW 79A.05.175). Consistent with these statutes, the Commission should actively and strategically manage its real estate holdings to improve and enhance the quality and extent of state park recreation and conservation opportunities to best meet the needs of this and future generations of Washington residents and visitors. The Commission should under specific circumstances consider transfer, sale, and exchange of agency-owned property to other government jurisdictions, including Native American tribal governments, as an appropriate mechanism through which to redirect resources and, in part, achieve its strategic land management goals.
2. The Commission should consider originating transfer of all or part of state parks or state park properties to other government jurisdictions only when the Commission unanimously finds a park or property is surplus to its needs consistent with RCW 79A.05.170. The Commission may make such a finding when:
  - a. A catastrophic natural disaster or event has either closed or significantly impacted the use of the park or property for state park purposes; or
  - b. Legal or physical access to the park or property has been lost (e.g., court action, title claim, or condemnation proceeding), or when

- c. All or part of a park or property does not sufficiently advance the Commission's strategic goals or direction as expressed in its adopted strategic planning documents or other actions.
3. Notwithstanding section 2 above, the Commission may also consider originating transfer of all or part of a state park or state park property to other government jurisdictions when necessary to address insufficient agency financial resources to continue operation of the site or as directed by the Legislature. The Commission will consider such transfers to be consistent with RCW 79A.05.170 and RCW 79A.05.175.
4. The Commission should only consider requests from other government jurisdictions for transfer or sale of all or part of a state park or state park property to other government jurisdictions when the Commission unanimously finds that a park or property is surplus to its needs consistent with RCW 79A.05.170 or RCW 79A.05.175. The Commission may make such a finding when:
  - a. All or part of a state park or state park property is considered an inholding in another government entity's real estate ownership or other formally established property acquisition boundary (e.g., Tribal reservation, wilderness area, state wildlife area, state natural resource conservation area, local community forest or park); or when
  - b. It can be demonstrated that transferring ownership of all or part of a park or park property to another government jurisdiction will better achieve the property's originally intended purpose or otherwise better advance the Commission's recreation or conservation mission.
5. The Commission should only consider originating or evaluating requests for exchange of all or part of parks or park properties when the Commission finds that a park or park property is surplus to its needs consistent with RCW 79A.05.175. The Commission may make such a finding when an exchange transaction will result in a significant net benefit to the Commission's statewide recreation or conservation mission.
6. When considering any transfer or exchange of state parks or state park properties to other government jurisdictions, the Commission should evaluate efficacy of the proposed transaction(s) using criteria derived from strategic goals or direction as expressed in adopted strategic planning documents. For example, in looking at the Transformation Strategy, these criteria should at minimum include the degree to which a potential real estate transaction advances adopted strategies:
  - a. Demonstrates the benefits from protection of natural and cultural resources
  - b. Advances the business interests of the agency
  - c. Enhances the recreation, cultural and interpretive opportunities that people want
  - d. Promotes meaningful opportunities for volunteers, friends and donors
  - e. Forms strategic partnerships with other agencies, tribes and non-profits
  - f. Expands use of land-holdings for compatible revenue generating purposes
  - g. Develops amenities or acquires lands that advance transformation

## **Land Leases from other Government Jurisdictions**

State Parks manages a number of parks on land leased from other government agencies. Examples include Maryhill State Park, which is leased from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Lincoln Rock State Park, leased from Chelan County PUD. These properties are generally leased for 25 years at a time. A recent example is a lease signed with US Army Corps of Engineers to reopen Lyon's Ferry State Park in southeast Washington.

The agency faces the same issues with leased parks as it does with potential park transfers. When a lease expires, the agency may save operating expenses by terminating the lease but also would lose fee-based revenue from the park. Not renewing leases is also akin to a park transfer or closure in its sensitivity to park stakeholders. Staff is interested in refining Commission policy to guide when staff has the authority to lease lands from other government jurisdictions and when it makes sense for the Commission to authorize such actions.

***Policy Question: What is the appropriate decision-making level at which to renew or cancel leases for all or part of existing state parks leased from other governments?***

Staff believes it currently has authority to lease lands from other government jurisdictions not requiring lease payments without Commission action. Particularly new leases and cancellation of leases for established state parks can however be highly significant and sensitive decisions with considerable financial implications.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

New leases and cancellation of leases for entire state parks or parts of parks with major recreational or resource assets (e.g., campgrounds, developed day use areas, historic properties) with terms of more than 20 years should be approved by the Commission. Renewal of existing leases for all or parts of state parks from other governments should be approved by the Director. Cancellation of leases for parts of state parks without major recreational or resource assets should be approved by the Director.

### **LEGAL AUTHORITY:**

RCW 79A.05.030 Powers and duties – Mandatory

RCW 79A.05.170 Transfer of surplus land – Reversionary clause required – Release – Parkland acquisition account

RCW 79A.05.175 Disposal of land not needed for park purposes

RCW 79A.05.178 Real property disposal – Disputed land – Manner – Notice and hearing – Suit for noncompliance

RCW 79A.05.180 Exchange of state land by commission – Public notice – News release – Hearing – Procedure

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

Appendix 1: State Parks Land Classification System

Appendix 2: Recommended Revisions to the Land Classification System's Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix - Activities

**REQUESTED ACTION FROM COMMISSION:**

*That the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission:*

1. Consider and approve staff policy recommendations outlined in this document and delegate to the Director authority to integrate and otherwise harmonize the approved policy statements with existing Commission real estate policy documents.
2. Direct staff to provide the Commission a report on resulting revisions to existing policy documents.
3. Direct staff to prepare general guidelines for Commission consideration on the types of Recreation Business Activities that will be permitted in state parks.
4. Prepare criteria for Commission consideration for identifying and evaluating candidate sites for Commission designation as Enterprise Lands.
5. Direct staff to proceed with a pilot project to request that the Commission designate the agency-owned “Auburn Property” as Enterprise Land and consider a long-term lease proposal at the Commission’s March 26, 2015 meeting.
6. Explore establishment of a trust, endowment, or similar financial mechanism through which to manage and invest proceeds from Enterprise Lands-related activities.
7. Explore and recommend statute changes that help implement adopted real estate policy provisions and otherwise improve efficacy of the agency’s real estate activities.

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**Reviewer(s):**

**Randy Kline, SEPA REVIEW:** Following review, staff has determined that the action proposed for the Commission by staff is exempt from the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) pursuant to WAC 197-11-800 (19).

**Christeen Leeper, Fiscal Impact Statement:** Adoption of this requested action has an indeterminate fiscal impact. Any work of the program’s efforts is expected to have a positive fiscal impact in the form of revenue or cost saving.

**Michael Young, Assistant Attorney General:** Reviewed January 12, 2015

**Peter Herzog, Assistant Director**

**Approved for Transmittal to Commission**



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**Don Hoch, Director**

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission**  
**Land Classification System**

WAC 352-16-020 Land classification system. State park areas are of statewide natural, cultural, and/or recreational significance and/or outstanding scenic beauty. They provide varied facilities serving low-intensity, medium intensity, and high intensity outdoor recreation activities, areas reserved for preservation, scientific research, education, public assembly, and/or environmental interpretation, and support facilities. They may be classified in whole or part as follows:

- (1) Recreational areas are suited and/or developed for high-intensity outdoor recreational use, conference, cultural and/or educational centers, or other uses serving large numbers of people.
- (2) Resource recreation areas are suited and/or developed for natural and/or cultural resource-based medium-intensity and low-intensity outdoor recreational use.
- (3) Natural areas are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of natural processes and/or features of significant ecological, geological or paleontological value while providing for low-intensity outdoor recreation activities as subordinate uses.
- (4) Heritage areas are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of unique or unusual archaeological, historical, scientific, and/or cultural features, and traditional cultural properties, which are of statewide or national significance.
- (5) Natural forest areas are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of natural forest processes while providing for low-intensity outdoor recreation activities as subordinate uses, and which contain:
  - (a) Old-growth forest communities that have developed for one hundred fifty years or longer and have the following structural characteristics: Large old-growth trees, large snags, large logs on land, and large logs in streams; or
  - (b) Mature forest communities that have developed for ninety years or longer; or
  - (c) Unusual forest communities and/or interrelated vegetative communities of significant ecological value.
- (6) Natural area preserves are designated for preservation of rare or vanishing flora, fauna, geological, natural historical or similar features of scientific or educational value and which are registered and committed as a natural area preserve through a cooperative agreement with an appropriate natural resource agency pursuant to chapter 79.70 RCW and chapter 332-60 WAC.

WAC 352-16-030 Management within land classifications. (1) The director shall develop management guidelines for each land classification listed in WAC 352-16-020. The guidelines shall provide specific direction for each classification, outlining the philosophy of each classification, its appropriate physical features, location, allowed and prohibited activities, and allowed and prohibited developments. (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to allow uses that are otherwise prohibited, nor prohibit uses that are otherwise expressly allowed, by the commission, this code, or by statute.

## Land Classification Management Guidelines Recreation Areas

TITLE	DEFINITION	PHILOSOPHY	PHYSICAL FEATURES	LOCATION	ACTIVITIES	DEVELOPMENTS
Washington State Parks Recreation Areas	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> are suited and/or developed for high-intensity outdoor recreational use, conference, cultural and/or educational centers, or other uses serving large numbers of people.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> are to respond to the human needs for readily available areas for outdoor recreation and facilities to congregate for education, artistic expression and other ennobling pursuits. They are to provide a variety of outdoor recreational, educational, artistic, and cultural opportunities to large numbers of participants. Primary emphasis is on the provision of quality recreational services and facilities with secondary recognition given to protection of the areas natural qualities.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> physiographic features such as topography, soil type, drainage, etc., shall be adaptable to varied types of intensive uses and development. An attractive natural setting is desirable, however, human-made settings are acceptable. There are no specific size criteria.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> generally are made, not found. They shall be located throughout the state with primary emphasis to service major centers of urban populations and/or outstanding recreational tourist attractions. Scenic and inspirational values shall be considered but are secondary to the site adaptability and population criteria. When part of a large diverse park, recreation areas should be sited in proximity to public roads and utilities.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> may allow and provide for a wide variety of indoor and outdoor day, weekend and vacation activities. Provision may be made for high intensity participation in camping, picnicking, trail use, water sports, winter sports, group field games, and other activities for many people Off-trail equestrian and/or bicycle use may be appropriate in selected areas if approved by the commission. Activities requiring high levels of social interaction are encouraged.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Recreation Areas</u> shall provide appropriate facilities and services for the participation and enjoyment of high concentrations of outdoor recreationists and/or participants in indoor educational, cultural and artistic activities. A high degree of development is anticipated. Facilities may include road and parking networks, swimming beaches, full service marinas, trails, bathhouses, artificial lakes and pools, play fields, large sanitary and eating facilities; standard and utility campgrounds, stores, picnic grounds, group shelters, conference centers, environmental learning centers, hostels, and administrative support facilities.</p>

**Land Classification Management Guidelines  
Resource Recreation Areas**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>PHILOSOPHY</b>	<b>PHYSICAL FEATURES</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENTS</b>
<p>Washington State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> are suited and/or developed for natural and/or cultural resource-based medium- and low-intensity recreational use.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> are sites where the high quality of a particular natural or cultural resource or set of such resources is the lure for human recreation. Thus, the rationale for recreation is based on the value of attractive natural or cultural resources. Management of these areas must stress the centrality of preserving the quality of the natural and cultural resources while allowing appropriate and sustainable levels of human use and enjoyment.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> have a variety of physiographic features. While they may contain areas of environmental sensitivity, most portions of each area will be able to withstand low- to medium-intensity recreation use without significant environmental degradation.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> may be located anywhere in the state where natural or cultural factors produce land and water sites particularly suited for recreation in a natural setting. Access to these sites should be reasonably proximate to major urban centers, but some access restriction may be necessary to avoid overuse of resources. Within large diverse parks, these areas should be located at least a moderate distance from public roads and high use intensity areas, while still maintaining reasonable public access for their intended use.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> provide opportunities for low- and medium-intensity recreational experiences including, but not limited to, picnicking, primitive camping, a variety of recreational trail experiences, interpretive facilities, historic/cultural exhibits, nature observation, photography, orienteering, kayaking, canoeing, floating, and fishing. Off-trail equestrian and/or bicycle use may be appropriate in selected areas if approved by the commission. Basketball, tennis, organized group sporting activities requiring formal sports fields, commercial-sized piers and docks, standard and utility camping, indoor accommodations and centers, developed swimming areas, and other similarly intense uses are not appropriate. Scientific research is permitted.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Resource Recreation Areas</u> development shall be permitted to the extent necessary to serve allowed activities. Parking, sanitary facilities, and other ancillary developments and support facilities should be constructed in a manner that is consistent with the site's ability to manage environmental change.</p>

## Land Classification Management Guidelines Natural Areas

TITLE	DEFINITION	PHILOSOPHY	PHYSICAL FEATURES	LOCATION	ACTIVITIES	DEVELOPMENTS
<p>Washington State Parks Natural Areas</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Areas</u> are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of natural processes and/or features of significant ecological, geological or paleontological value while providing for low-intensity outdoor recreation activities as subordinate uses.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Areas</u> are to respond to the human need for readily available "conservatories" of nature and open spaces. Emphasis is directed toward nature and the conservation of native flora and fauna, special geologic or paleontologic resources, and the natural amenities of the area. Human wants for other than naturally existing educational and recreational opportunities are considered secondary to nature's requirement for the sustained maintenance of its natural balances, or the preservation of special geologic or paleontologic features.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Areas</u> have a variety of topography and features to provide a diversified natural environment with interesting but not necessarily unique flora and fauna, or geologic or paleontologic features. Where classification is based on biological considerations, sites should consist of land areas large enough to maintain natural biological processes in a nearly undeveloped state and provide users with a feeling of solitude and tranquility, and an opportunity to view nature in its "uncontrolled" form. They may be partially or wholly on land, subterranean, or part of the marine environment.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Areas</u> are not "made", but rather currently exist due to historical circumstances that have resulted in little or no human interference in the natural environment. Those areas most desirable in terms of physical features and size usually are "found" and "held" against creeping encroachments and raising land values. They often become over used and "lost" as populations spread around them. As a part of the overall system, these areas should be geographically spread throughout the state. When classifying specific park areas, consideration must be given to the ability to adequately manage the areas against undesirable human encroachment.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Areas</u> provide opportunities for outdoor recreation on designated trails. Those trails may be developed and used only to the extent that they do not significantly degrade the system of natural processes in a classified area. Hiking, non-groomed cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, or other trail uses of similar impact to natural systems and providing a compatible recreational opportunity, may be permitted, after consultation with appropriate local, state, federal and Tribal resource management agencies, and upon a finding by the agency that such trails are not likely to significantly degrade natural processes. Relocation of existing equestrian, bicycle, nordic track or other similar trails into a natural area may be permitted upon a finding by the director that such relocation is for the purpose of reducing overall resource impacts. All trails may be moved, redesigned, closed and/or removed upon a finding that their use is causing significant degradation to the system of natural processes. Technical rock climbing requires authorization by the commission. Off-trail use for nature observation, photography, cross-country skiing, harvesting of mushrooms and berries and similar uses are permitted to the degree that they do not significantly degrade natural processes. Scientific research is permitted.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area</u> development shall be limited to facilities required for health, safety and protection of users and features consistent with allowed activities. Facilities to enhance public enjoyment shall be limited to primitive items such as trails, trail structures and minor interpretive exhibits. All improvements shall harmonize with, and not detract from, the natural setting. Parking and other trailhead facilities should be located outside of a classified area.</p>

## Land Classification Management Guidelines Heritage Areas

TITLE	DEFINITION	PHILOSOPHY	PHYSICAL FEATURES	LOCATION	ACTIVITIES	DEVELOPMENTS
Washington State Parks Heritage Areas	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Areas</u> are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of outstanding, unique or unusual archaeological, historical, scientific, and/or cultural features, and traditional cultural properties, which are of statewide or national significance.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Areas</u> are designated to preserve and/or interpret selected areas or features for the education and enjoyment of the public, an area's intrinsic cultural value, and/or for scientific research.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Areas</u> vary in size and physiographic makeup according to their location and reason for existence. Historic landscapes may require relatively large acreage while archaeological sites may be measured in square feet.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Areas</u> usually are located where they are found or the feature exists. However, in some instances relocation or re-creation of artifacts, resources or facilities is possible. In these situations they may be located in appropriate settings and concentrated near major population centers and along primary travel routes.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Area</u> activities shall generally be limited to those directly associated with the interpretation of the area or feature, and the education of the patrons. Picnicking, recreational trails, and other low- to medium-intensity recreation uses may be allowed if they do not detract from the principal purpose of the area, its setting, structures, sites and objects.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Heritage Area</u> development shall generally be limited to that necessary for the protection and interpretation of the area or feature, and the education and safety of the patrons. Sanitary facilities, recreation trails, and picnicking facilities may be provided in a manner which does not detract from the aesthetic, educational or environmental quality of the area, its setting, structures, sites or objects, or, if applicable, its value for scientific research.</p>

## Land Classification Management Guidelines Natural Forest Areas

TITLE	DEFINITION	PHILOSOPHY	PHYSICAL FEATURES	LOCATION	ACTIVITIES	DEVELOPMENTS
<p>Washington State Parks Natural Forest Areas</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> are designated for preservation, restoration, and interpretation of natural forest processes while providing for low-intensity outdoor recreation activities as subordinate uses, and which contain:</p> <p>(a) Old-growth forest communities that have developed for 150 years or longer and have the following structural characteristics: Large old-growth trees, large snags, large logs on land, and large logs in streams; or (b) Mature forest communities that have developed for 90 years or longer; or</p> <p>□ Unusual forest communities and/or interrelated vegetative communities of significant ecological value.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> are places where human access to and interpretation and enjoyment of natural forest processes are limited to those activities and facilities that do not significantly degrade natural forest processes. Public access into these areas emphasizes appreciation of nature through experiencing nature. The principal function of these areas is to assist in maintaining the state's bio-diversity while expanding human understanding and appreciation of natural values.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> have a variety of topographic and vegetative conditions. They are generally large enough (300 or more acres) to contain one or more distinct and relatively intact vegetative communities. Smaller areas may be appropriate if representative of a unique or unusual forest community. Desirably, they are part of a large system of open space, wildlife habitat, and vegetative communities that provide a good opportunity for long-term ecosystem sustainability.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> may be located anywhere in the state where natural factors produce forest vegetative cover. These areas are not "made", but rather currently exist due to historical circumstances that have resulted in little or no human interference in natural forest progression. As a part of an overall system, these areas should be geographically spread throughout the state, recognizing that maintenance of bio-diversity is one of the primary functions of their classification. When classifying specific park areas, consideration must be given to the ability to adequately manage the areas against undesirable human encroachment.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> provide opportunities for outdoor recreation on designated recreation trails. Those trails may be developed and used only to the extent that they do not significantly degrade the system of natural forest processes in a classified area. Careful design of recreation trails should match intended uses, to maintain consistency with the purpose and philosophy of the classification. Hiking, non-groomed cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, or other trail uses of similar impact to natural systems and providing a compatible recreational opportunity, may be permitted, after consultation with appropriate local, state, federal and Tribal resource management agencies, and upon a finding by the agency that such trails are not likely to significantly degrade natural forest processes. Relocation of existing equestrian, bicycle, nordic track or other similar trails into a natural forest area may be permitted upon a finding by the director that such relocation is for the purpose of reducing overall resource impacts. All trails may be moved, redesigned, closed and/or removed upon a finding that they are causing significant degradation to the system of natural forest processes. Technical rock climbing requires authorization by the commission. Off-trail use for nature observation, cross-country skiing, photography, harvesting of mushrooms and berries and similar uses are permitted to the degree that they do not significantly degrade natural forest processes. Scientific research is permitted.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Forest Areas</u> development shall be limited to facilities required for health, safety and protection of users and features consistent with allowed activities. Facilities to enhance public enjoyment shall be limited to trails, trail structures, and minor interpretive exhibits. All improvements shall harmonize with, and not detract from, the natural setting. Parking and other trailhead facilities should be located outside of a classified area.</p>

## Land Classification Management Guidelines Natural Area Preserves

TITLE	DEFINITION	PHILOSOPHY	PHYSICAL FEATURES	LOCATION	ACTIVITIES	DEVELOPMENTS
<p>Washington State Parks Natural Area Preserves</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> are designated for preservation of rare or vanishing flora, fauna, geological, natural historical or similar features of scientific or educational value and which are registered and committed as a natural area preserve through a cooperative agreement with an appropriate natural resource agency pursuant to chapter 79.70 RCW and chapter 332-60 WAC.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> are sites where human access is limited to educational and scientific purposes. The principal function of these areas is to preserve natural ecosystems or geologic features of statewide significance. Public access for recreation must be subordinate to the principal function of the classification.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> have a variety of topographic and vegetative conditions. They are generally large enough (300 or more acres) to contain one or more distinct and intact ecological communities. Smaller areas may be appropriate if representative of a unique or unusual ecological community or geologic feature. They may be partially or wholly on land, subterranean, or part of the marine environment. Desirably, they are part of a large system of open space, wildlife habitat, and vegetative communities that provide a good opportunity for long-term ecosystem sustainability.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> may be located anywhere in the state where natural ecological systems or significant geologic features exist. These areas are not "made", but rather exist due to historical circumstances that have resulted in little or no human interference in the natural system. As a part of an overall system, these areas should be geographically spread throughout the state.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> provide opportunities for scientific research and education about natural systems, geologic features, sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered species or communities. Recreational use of existing or relocated trails may be permitted, provided that it can be clearly demonstrated that such use does not degrade the system of natural processes occurring in the preserve. Otherwise, trails are limited to administrative, scientific and organized educational activities and uses. No other activities are permitted.</p>	<p><u>State Parks Natural Area Preserves</u> development shall be limited to access facilities for permitted activities and structures to inhibit general public access. No other facilities or structures are permitted.</p>

## Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Facilities

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Amphitheater	P	C	C	N	N
Archery/Target Range	C	C	N	N	N
Camping - Std and Util	P	N	N	N	N
Camping - Primitive	P	P	C	N	N
Camping - Adirondack	P	C	N	N	N
Camping - Horse-oriented	C	C	N	N	N
Camping - Water Trail	P	P	C	N	N
Children's Play Area	P	C	C	N	N
Day Use Picnic - Tables	P	P	C	N	N
Day Use Picnic - Group Shelter	P	N	C	N	N
Day Use Lodges/Centers	P	N	C	N	N
Environmental Learning Centers	C	N	C	N	N
Equestrian Facilities	C	C	C	N	N
Fields - Informal Play/Mowed	P	C	C	N	N
Indoor Accommodations	P	N	C	N	N
Interpretive - Centers	P	N	P	N	N
Interpretive - Kiosks	P	P	P	C	N
Interpretive Trail	P	P	P	P	C
Interpretive - Signs	P	P	P	P	C
Parking - Vehicles	P	P	C	N	N
Roads	P	P	C	N	N

## Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Facilities (Continued)

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Sanitary: Comfort Stations	P	N	C	N	N
Sanitary: Composting/Vault	P	P	C	C	N
Sports Fields	C	N	N	N	N
Skiing - Alpine Facilities	C	C	N	N	N
Swimming Facilities	P	N	C	N	N
Trails - Hiking	P	P	P	P	C
Trails - Mountain Biking	P	C	C	N**	N
Trails - Equestrian	C	C	C	N**	N
Trails - Nordic Track Skiing	P	P	C	N**	N
Trails - C-C skiing	P	P	P	P	C
Trails - Snowmobile	P	C	C	N**	N
Trails - Paved non-motor	P	C	C	C	N
Water: Docks/Piers ≥ 10 boats	P	N	C	N	N
Water: Docks/Piers - < 10 boats	P	P	C	C	N
Water: Launch Ramps	P	C	N	N	N
Water: Hand Launch Areas	P	P	C	C	N
Water: Mooring Buoys	P	P	C	C	N

P (Permitted) - Use permitted with normal agency design review

C (Conditional) - Use may be permitted, but conditioned to assure design is compatible w/purpose of land classification and abutting classification objectives.

N (Not Permitted)- Use not permitted.

NA - Not Applicable

\* All uses in a Natural Area Preserve must be specifically approved by the Park and Recreation Commission as part of a management plan.

\*\*Relocation of existing trails into a natural or natural forest area is permitted per WAC 352-32-070(3) and WAC 352-32-075(2)(b).

## Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Activities

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Farming/Orchards	C	C	C	N	N
Filming/Special Events	P	P	P	C	N
Grazing	C	C	C	N	N
Harvesting - Edible Fruiting Bodies	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Mushrooms	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Shellfish	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Fish	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Algae, etc.	P	P	P	P	N
Haying	P	P	P	N	N
Metal Detecting	P	P	C	N	N
Orienteering	P	P	C	N	N
Ocean Beach Driving	P	C	N	N	N
Off-Trail: Equestrian	C	C	C	N	N
Off-Trail: Hiking	P	P	P	P	N
Off-trail biking	C	C	C	N	N
Paragliding	P	P	C	N	N
Technical Rock Climbing	P	P	C	C	N

## Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Activities (Continued)

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Water: Jet Skiing	P	C	N	N	N
Water: Kayak/Canoeing	P	P	P	C	N
Water: Power Boating	P	C	N	C	N
Water: White Water Boating	P	P	C	C	N
Water: Sailing	P	P	P	C	N
Water: Skiing	P	C	N	N	N
Water: Swimming	P	P	P	P	N
Water: Wind Surfing	P	C	C	N	N
Winter: Alpine Skiing	C	C	N	N	N
Winter: C-C Skiing (off-trail)	P	P	P	P	C
Winter: Mushing/Sled Dogs	C	C	C	N	N
Winter: Snowshoeing	P	P	P	P	C
Winter: Snowmobiling (off-trail)	P	P	C	N	N
Wood Debris Collection	P	P	P	N	N

P (Permitted) - Use permitted with normal agency design review

C (Conditional) - Use may be permitted with Commission concurrence, but conditioned to assure compatibility w/purpose of land classification and abutting classifications.

N (Not Permitted)- Use not permitted.

NA - Not Applicable

\* All uses in a Natural Area Preserve must be specifically approved by the Park and Recreation Commission as part of a management plan.

\*\*Relocation of existing trails into a natural or natural forest area is permitted per WAC 352-32-070(3) and WAC 352-32-075(2)(b).

## APPENDIX 2

### Proposed Changes to Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Activities (Shown in Red)

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Farming/Orchards	C	C	C	N	N
Filming/Special Events	P	P	P	C	N
Grazing	C	C	C	N	N
Harvesting - Edible Fruiting Bodies	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Mushrooms	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Shellfish	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Fish	P	P	P	P	N
Harvesting - Algae, etc.	P	P	P	P	N
Haying	P	P	P	N	N
Metal Detecting	P	P	C	N	N
Orienteering	P	P	C	N	N
Ocean Beach Driving	P	C	N	N	N
Off-Trail: Equestrian	C	C	C	N	N
Off-Trail: Hiking	P	P	P	P	N
Off-trail biking	C	C	C	N	N
Paragliding	P	P	C	N	N
<b>Recreation Business Activities</b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>N</u></b>	<b><u>N</u></b>
Technical Rock Climbing	P	P	C	C	N

## Land Use and Land Classification Compatibility Matrix – Activities (Continued)

	Recreation	Resource Recreation	Heritage	Natural/Natural Forest Area	Natural Area Preserve*
Water: Jet Skiing	P	C	N	N	N
Water: Kayak/Canoeing	P	P	P	C	N
Water: Power Boating	P	C	N	C	N
Water: White Water Boating	P	P	C	C	N
Water: Sailing	P	P	P	C	N
Water: Skiing	P	C	N	N	N
Water: Swimming	P	P	P	P	N
Water: Wind Surfing	P	C	C	N	N
Winter: Alpine Skiing	C	C	N	N	N
Winter: C-C Skiing (off-trail)	P	P	P	P	C
Winter: Mushing/Sled Dogs	C	C	C	N	N
Winter: Snowshoeing	P	P	P	P	C
Winter: Snowmobiling (off-trail)	P	P	C	N	N
Wood Debris Collection	P	P	P	N	N

P (Permitted) - Use permitted with normal agency design review

C (Conditional) - Use may be permitted with Commission concurrence, but conditioned to assure compatibility w/purpose of land classification and abutting classifications.

N (Not Permitted)- Use not permitted.

NA - Not Applicable

\* All uses in a Natural Area Preserve must be specifically approved by the Park and Recreation Commission as part of a management plan.

\*\*Relocation of existing trails into a natural or natural forest area is permitted per WAC 352-32-070(3) and WAC 352-32-075(2)(b).