

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THE WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Policy Statement

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities under Executive Order 02-03 and will strive to model the principles of sustainability in stewardship of its natural, cultural and recreational resources, in construction and renovation of its new and existing facilities, in fleet management, and in the day-to-day operations of carrying out its mission.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, management and staff are dedicated to providing recreation resources to Washington's citizens while preserving the resources of today for the generations of tomorrow. The plan will institutionalize sustainability as an agency value, thus enabling a continuation of service to citizens and preservation of resources into the distant future.

Background

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission manages a diverse system of more than 120 parks and several recreation programs, including boating, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. The 90-year old park system, which receives nearly 48 million visits a year, nationally ranks fourth in day-use attendance, 10th in overnight attendance and 47th in state budget expenditure per visitor.

To research and develop ideas around creation of an agency sustainability plan, a cross-agency, multi-disciplined charter team, with expertise in the various fields, was established. This long term plan extending to the year 2013 has been prepared for submittal to the Governor's Statewide Sustainability Coordinator.

Long-Range Goals

1. Institutionalize sustainability,
2. Raise employee awareness of sustainable practices in the work place,
3. Minimize energy and water use,
4. Shift to clean energy for both facilities and vehicles,
5. Shift to non-toxic recycled and remanufactured materials in purchasing, construction, renovation and regular maintenance procedures, where possible and available,
6. Expand markets for environmentally preferable products and services, through purchasing practices, recycling programs and other means,
7. Reduce or eliminate waste through recycling programs and other means,
8. Preservation and protection of natural, cultural and recreational resources

Goal #1 – Institutionalize Sustainability:

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Build sustainability components into its strategic destinations, balanced scorecards, and MDPP and EDPPs;
- ◆ Achieve LEED Silver standards for all new construction and renovation;
- ◆ Ensure that over time Land Classification and Management Plans will be written for every park in its system;
- ◆ Promote the prevention of pollution and promote public awareness of pollution prevention programs;
- ◆ Have State Parks employees and facilities model sustainability to park visitors;
- ◆ Build sustainability components into its public information, education and marketing programs;
- ◆ Conduct 10 to 12 Energy Audits annually and implement recommended measures;
- ◆ Conduct Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economic(CERES) Green Accommodations surveys and implement green practices;
- ◆ Conduct waste audits for existing visitor accommodations and administrative locations;
- ◆ Establish a Waste Reduction Policy and set goals;
- ◆ The Water and Energy Manager will develop and implement a written sustainability policy.

Goal #2 – Raise Employee Awareness in the Workplace:

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Distribute the Sustainability Plan to every employee in the Parks system;
- ◆ Incorporate sustainability components into its strategic destinations and balanced scorecards;
- ◆ The Water and Energy Manager will monitor progress and report biennially.
- ◆ Develop and publicize a written sustainability policy;

Goal #3 – Minimize energy and water use:

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Designate an Energy and Water Manager to develop and manage overall energy and water use plans. It is suggested that this position be housed within the Administrative Services Division.

Energy

- ◆ Working forward from a 2003 baseline, yet to be established; where practical, each park and every office will reduce its energy use by 15 percent by 2013 through adoption of the following measures:
 - ◆ Purchasing and maintaining high efficiency HVAC systems;
 - ◆ Convert current park facility lighting to high efficiency lighting;
 - ◆ Where feasible, solar domestic water heating and other solar uses will be implemented - all water heaters will be wrapped;
 - ◆ Where feasible, develop renewable/distributed electricity generation;
 - ◆ Model programs after existing Green programs;
 - ◆ Implement heating and cooling thermostat programs and policies; utilize photo voltaics, solar equipment, energy efficient motors, etc.;
 - ◆ Work closely with utility companies to implement emerging technologies;
 - ◆ All park facilities set hot water temperature controls at efficient level;
 - ◆ New construction and renovation to meet LEED Silver standards.

Water

- ◆ Manage use of water efficiently and effectively;
- ◆ Record water usage;
- ◆ Identify and eliminate waste;
- ◆ Landscape with native vegetation and reduce or eliminate lawns;
- ◆ Identify and eliminate leaking pipelines, valves, etc.;
- ◆ Over time, replace existing wasteful equipment;
- ◆ Protect waterways, shorelines and wetlands – maintain native plant buffers around wetlands;
- ◆ Pervious paving will be installed to prevent erosion and sedimentation from storm water runoff;
- ◆ Whenever possible paving will be avoided and low-impact paving alternatives will be utilized;
- ◆ Create bio-swales and vegetation strips in heavy traffic use and parking areas to catch and filter runoff;
- ◆ Use WSU master gardener irrigation standards;
- ◆ Reuse storm water for irrigation;
- ◆ Wherever possible use reclaimed water for irrigation, toilets and laundry;

Items for further consideration include:

- ◆ Banning RV dumping with formaldehyde treatments and other hazardous chemicals;
- ◆ On-site use and treatment of gray water;
- ◆ On-site sewage treatment – connect to city and sanitary districts where possible;
- ◆ Turf should not be less than 100 feet from riparian or wetland areas;
- ◆ Wherever possible irrigate with non-potable water;

- ◆ Allow browning of turf areas during dry season;
- ◆ Maintain trails with mulch or water bars;

Goal #4 – Shift to Clean Energy for Both Facilities and Vehicles:

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Shift to Clean Energy for Facilities

See Goal # 3 – Energy

Vehicles and Motorized Equipment

- ◆ By 2013, State Parks fleet (road legal vehicles and motorized equipment) will be using 35 percent alternative fuels; 100 percent of the fleet sedans at headquarters and regions will be alternative fuel vehicles;
- ◆ Alternative fuel signs/decals will be placed on vehicles and equipment to increase public awareness;
- ◆ Develop sustainable fleet management policy and procedures,
- ◆ Develop sustainable purchasing standards for vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, mowers and other motorized equipment;
- ◆ Strong emphasis will be placed on commute trip reduction, telecommuting and videoconferencing.

In addition to the above goals, fleet management will insure that all vehicles are EPA certified low emission, insist that vehicle service companies used by State Parks recycle oil, tires, oil filters, batteries, steel parts and solvents used for cleaning.

Goal # 5 – Shift to Non-Toxic, Recycled and Remanufactured Materials in Purchasing, Construction, Renovation and Regular Maintenance Where Possible and Available

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Assess the environmental impact of products, services, and activities and incorporate appropriate controls and changes where practical;
- ◆ Facility managers will identify and reduce or eliminate the persistent, bioaccumulative toxins in parks and facilities;
- ◆ Employees will purchase paper-stock, paper towels and toilet paper that is partially recycled and made from the “elemental chlorine free” pulping process;
- ◆ Promote and encouraging car and van pooling, telecommuting, and other alternative methods for commuting;
- ◆ Reduce mercury and other toxic substances through refurbishing and recycling old computers and other such equipment or sending to hazardous materials disposal;
- ◆ Install low-mercury fluorescent lighting;
- ◆ Increase recycling and eliminate illegal dump sites on park property;

- ◆ Institutionalize LEED Silver standards;
- ◆ Meet or exceed LEED Silver standards for construction and renovation;
- ◆ Develop “green” housekeeping standards for day-to-day operations and maintenance;
- ◆ Construction, maintenance and operations at State Parks will feature innovative and imaginative programs for conserving natural resources, reducing waste and minimizing pollution, while maintaining maximum visitor satisfaction;
- ◆ Establish environmental objectives and targets commensurate with the nature and scale of our operations, and take into consideration the expectations of interested parties.

Goal #6 – Expand Markets for Environmentally Preferable Products and Services

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will, where practical and available:

- ◆ Purchase recycled floor covering, furniture, paper products, etc., from companies that recycle;
- ◆ Buy in bulk, in collaboration with other state agencies where appropriate;
- ◆ Buy non-toxic/less toxic cleaners, pool supplies, lawn care chemicals
- ◆ Purchase or replace with energy efficient appliances;
- ◆ First in First Out, Just in Time Purchasing;
- ◆ From a sustainability point, always consider leasing equipment versus buying.

Goal # 7 – Reduce or Eliminate Waste through Recycling Programs and Other Means

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Where practical, each park and facility will establish a recycling program for newspaper, cardboard, office paper, aluminum cans, glass and plastic;
- ◆ Where practical, each park will establish programs for chemical substitution, reduced packaging and leasing vs. buying options;
- ◆ Where practical, each park will establish programs for on-site reuse, donation programs;
- ◆ Food waste, grass clippings, and other organic debris will be managed on site and used as compost for turf grass and other planted areas;
- ◆ Training and equipment required to accomplish the re-use of organic materials will be acquired;
- ◆ Each park will follow best management practices in addressing the use of fallen leaves, bio-waste, downed trees, hazard trees, slash, ice storm damaged material to reduce the burning of or need to send organic materials to landfills.
- ◆ By 2013 State Parks will establish organic materials management plans in 25 parks

Goal # 8 – Preserve and Protect Natural, Cultural and Recreational Resources

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will:

- ◆ Provide Resource Stewardship Certification training – with a goal of graduating 12 new stewards per year;
- ◆ Add a sustainability component to every Land Classification and Management Plan
- ◆ By 2013, develop two sustainable practices demonstration parks – these parks will be used as a means to educate the public and to serve as test cases for future sustainable projects;
- ◆ By 2013, two Environmental Learning Centers will be renovated, in phases, to meet the LEED Silver certification standards;
- ◆ Principles of sustainability will be built into interpretive programs;
- ◆ Sustainable practices programs, to be used in schools, will be developed to demonstrate efficient product use and waste reduction;
- ◆ Prescriptive management plans will be developed and implemented to protect and insure the sustainability of natural resources;
- ◆ After 2004, a draft comprehensive natural resources policy – related existing WACs, policies, procedures and directives will be reviewed and updated as appropriate;
- ◆ Integrated Pest Management (IPM) will be practiced for natural resource protection;
- ◆ Individual park IPM plans will be prepared when treatment of invasive plant and animal pests is determined necessary;
- ◆ Every park will have an IPM in place by 2007;
- ◆ Make knowledge of sustainable practices an element of Park Ranger qualifications;

Current Practices

- ◆ An established core value of, “a commitment to stewardship that transmits high quality park assets to future generations”;
- ◆ Adoption of a 10-year Cultural Resources Action Plan;
- ◆ Adoption of a Strategic Plan to Conserve and Protect the Natural Resources of Washington State Parks;
- ◆ An agency vision that focuses on coordinating the acquisition and/or management of lands supporting statewide and regionally significant natural resources with stake holders;
- ◆ Resource Stewardship Certification training;
- ◆ Volunteer Resource Stewardship Program;
- ◆ Conducting energy audits and pursuing energy grants;
- ◆ Litter reduction and recycling programs;
- ◆ Dump site clean-up program
- ◆ Purchase of alternative fuel vehicles.

Future Opportunities

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will strive to increase/enhance its efforts to reduce solid waste, energy and water consumption. In addition, the Sustainability Plan will establish an awareness of emerging practices of sustainability in operations, purchasing, and in the design, construction and maintenance of facilities. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will work in collaboration with other agencies seeking opportunities to educate and provide information on sustainable practices to its employees, park visitors and to the general public.

Full implementation of the Sustainability Plan will require funding. Critical to the success of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission achieving all of its goals will be for the legislature and OFM to act in concert as partners.

Targets for Biennial Plan

- ◆ Graduate at least 24 new stewards from the Resource Stewardship Certification Program;
- ◆ Preparation of Integrated Pest Management Plan for 12 parks;
- ◆ Two waste reduction stations in parks will be developed during 2004;
- ◆ Energy audits will be conducted in 12 parks annually;
- ◆ A fleet use survey will be conducted;
- ◆ An Energy and Water Manager will be appointed;
- ◆ Develop Organic Waste Management plans for some parks;
- ◆ In each park/region/HQ, identify/adopt one additional feasible sustainable practice;
- ◆ Reduce irrigation schedule by not less than five percent;
- ◆ Set up recycling centers;
- ◆ Buy recycled products, such as paper and other office supplies, where applicable;
- ◆ Seek opportunities with other state agencies to buy fuel and other items in bulk;;
- ◆ Buy non-toxic/less toxic supplies for cleaning chores and sanitation;
- ◆ Begin to purchase and replace old appliances with energy efficient appliances;
- ◆ Promulgate regulations, where/if applicable;

Roles and Responsibilities

Each Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission employee will be held responsible to educate themselves on and implement sustainable practices at their work site and to comply with agency sustainability policies and procedures. All staff will increase their effort and actions to make the world a cleaner, safer place for present and future generations.

Park visitors will be asked to help maintain a clean environment by adhering to the agency's environmental practices. Information will be provided at contact stations to promote working together.

Park managers and other management staff will be responsible for the provision of current sustainable practices information and budget oversight to ensure equipment and material purchases support the sustainability plan.

Management will be responsible for the implementation of sustainable practices, monitoring progress and reporting to the Office of Financial Management, as required.

Communication and Education

A variety of communication tools will be used to communicate the sustainability message to employees, park visitors and stakeholders. To name a few:

- ◆ Electronic communications will be used to distribute the plan to agency staff;
- ◆ A copy will be posted on the web site for stakeholders and other interested parties;
- ◆ Signs will be prepared and installed in parks;
- ◆ Information will be posted in parks;
- ◆ Internal newsletters will carry sustainable practices information and messages on emerging technologies;
- ◆ Interpretive programs including information on sustainability will be presented by park rangers at parks and other locations such as schools;
- ◆ Institute employee incentives for innovative ideas and accomplishments;

Performance Measures and Continuous Improvement

Baselines will be established using 2003 data. All Managers with facility management responsibilities will record energy, water, and fuel use for 2003. Managers will then measure progress in sustainability for future years through the net reduction in use. Usage will be established through utility company and fuel supplier billings. Additional tools will be developed and made available to improve tracking.

Sustainability will become a more prominent element in the planning, designing and engineering of future State Park projects.

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission has prepared this sustainability plan as a living document and will be working on development of specific strategies with projected outcomes in its 2004 and future submittals.