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STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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TO: Pat Sullivan, Director
Office of Financial Management

FROM: Diana Dupuis, Director 
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL FOR BUDGET REDUCTIONS FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND 2025-27 BIENNIUM

State Parks has considered the magnitude of the operating budget deficit and the directive from OFM for agencies to propose operating budget reductions. The following are proposed measures to decrease the projected \$10-\$12 billion shortfall.

- Reduce State Parks' 2025 Supplemental Request, \$1,173,000 GF-S
- Reduce State Parks' 2025-27 Biennial Request, \$14,952,000 GF-S
- Immediate Savings, \$500,000 GF-S
- 2025-27 Savings, \$5,500,000 GF-S

a. Considerations for approach

State Parks is funded through earned revenue (65 percent) and General Fund-State (35 percent). Maintaining service levels and positive customer experience is critical to preserving revenue streams. There are limited options for elimination, reduction, delay, or pausing existing services that do not contribute to instability in revenue streams. While we did identify reductions based on implementing hiring restrictions, we primarily focused on decreasing the supplemental and biennial requests.

The budget priorities remaining are critical to the mission of the agency. Without the funding requested, Parks projected revenue will not cover costs and we will be forced to make additional reductions in the 2025-27 biennium. Our decision package to maintain service levels by shifting \$10 million in costs from PRSA to GF-S is needed for rebalancing the Parks' budget. The other decision packages that remain are for costs that Parks does not have control over and cannot be delayed or paused. This includes relocating our headquarters' office at the direction of Department of Enterprise Services (DES), complying with ADA requirements from the US Department of Justice as part of a legal settlement, and taking over the management of the Fort Worden campus. Funding spent on these requests comes from an already burdened account and will result in further service reductions.

Having looked at the agency's budget requests and current services, we also considered what funding could be used lieu of General Fund-State. State Parks is facing a similar shortfall with earned revenue to the Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account (PRSA). The four-year outlook projections reflect a shortfall of \$15-\$17 million that we are working to mitigate through under-expenditures, efficiencies, and increasing camping fees. The current PRSA situation lacks flexibility to cover general fund reductions.

To increase revenue, a fee increase to the Discover Pass could be considered, which has not had an increase since its inception in 2012.

b. Impacts of proposed reductions and savings

Most reductions proposed by Parks are through decreasing the 2025 supplemental and 2025-27 biennial requests. We can plan to address these needs in future budget requests. Reductions will result in the following impacts:

- State Parks has made steady advances in data collection to better connect with and understand park visitor expectations. Resources to analyze user fees and customer experience data to ensure Parks' rates keep up with the costs of doing business will be delayed.
- Park areas will continue to be under-resourced to:
 - handle the numerous and complex water and wastewater systems,
 - reduce the growing backlog of marine projects,
 - increase direct customer contact in some parks,
 - increase cleaning support to manage cabin turnover.
- State Parks include some of the state's rarest species and ecosystems. The ability to control invasive species, implement habitat restoration treatments, and develop and implement prescriptive management would be delayed.
- State Parks is increasingly seeing the effects of climate change with a lack of resources to achieve greenhouse gas emission objectives and to invest in climate adaptation analysis to identify at-risk resources. Cama Beach is a recent example of significant operational course changes brought on by climate change. We are requesting OFM to consider funding this package but shift the source from General Fund-State to the climate accounts.
- Management of recreation growth has outpaced agency resource capacity. The Interagency-Tribal process to address recreation on natural and cultural resources would be paused.
- Delayed improvements to the website for interactive maps and language translation impact serving the needs of a diverse population in Washington State.
- Reduced opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor educational and recreational opportunities for youth through the No Child Left Inside grant program. More than 250 applications were received requesting over \$21 million for 2025-27. The carry forward level is \$4.5 million.

c. Proposal

State Parks proposes the following reduction measures:

1. Reduce the 2025 Supplemental Budget requests by 35 percent to achieve savings of \$1,173,000. State Parks will use PRSA saved to rebalance the 2025-27 budget to cover these expenditures.
 - Retirement Buyout Costs, \$142,000 GF-S
 - Fort Worden Campus Operations, \$631,000 GF-S
 - Buoy Maintenance, \$400,000 GF-S

2. Reduce the 2025-27 Biennial Budget requests by 43 percent to achieve savings of \$14,952,000
 - Equipment Replacement Costs (MEP), \$2,100,000 GF-S
 - Data Driven Business Strategy, \$341,000 GF-S
 - Infrastructure Safety and Compliance, \$885,000 GF-S
 - New and Replacement Pay Stations, \$579,000 GF-S
 - Address Visitor Expectations, \$2,764,000 GF-S
 - Resource Adaptation & Management, \$1,569,000 GF-S
 - Responding to Climate Change (potential shift to climate accounts), \$2,848,000 GF-S
 - Tribal-State Lands Stewardship, \$818,000 GF-S
 - Statewide Bridge and Dam Safety, \$1,500,000 GF-S
 - Enhance Online Customer Experience, \$197,000 GF-S
 - Assess Fort Worden Facilities, \$1,351,000 GF-S

Immediate savings identified for General Fund-State are \$500,000. GF-S

- Management of vacancies for savings, \$500,000 GF-S

Savings identified for the 2025-27 biennium are \$5,500,000. GF-S

- Management of vacancies for savings, \$1,000,000 GF-S
- No Child Left Inside pass-through funding that Parks provides as grants. \$4,500,000 GF-S

Attachment: Proposal for Budget Reductions FY2025 and 2025-27 per Nov 8 memo.xlsx

cc: Laura Holmes, Administrative Services Director, WSPRC
Van Church, Budget Manager, WSPRC
Matt Hunter, Budget Advisor, OFM
Jim Cahill, Senior Budget Advisor, OFM
Nona Snell, Budget Director, OFM