

Diana Dupuis
Director



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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April 11, 2024

Item E-4: Legislative Update and Planning for 2025 Legislative Session

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This item is a report to update the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission on post-session legislative work and to provide an overview of the development of agency request legislation. A requested action during the July Commission meeting will request direction on policy legislation and delegation of authority to the Legislative Committee and the Director to submit request legislation to the Governor's office by the deadline in September 2024. This item advances the Commission's strategic goal: "Obtain and effectively manage resources needed to create and sustain an exceptional parks system".

SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Prior to each legislative session, state agencies have an opportunity to propose statutory changes for consideration by the Governor's Office and the legislature. These proposals, known as "agency request legislation", are bills that are evaluated and approved by the Governor's Office and like all proposed legislation, are required to be sponsored by a member of the legislature.

In addition, the bill title will include, "By request of the State Parks and Recreation Commission". Each year during the July meeting the Commission provides formal direction and the delegation of authority to the Legislative Committee and the Director to finalize Commission request legislation for submittal to the Governor's office.

Request legislation options for discussion:

The following two bills were approved by the Governor's office for the 2024 session, and both were voted on and passed by the House and Senate floors but they each failed to be approved by the opposite chamber. These concepts could be brought forward for consideration during the 2025 session.

SSB 1997- (Rep. Ryu) Concerning gubernatorial appointments for the State Park and Recreation Commission: This bill provided direction to the Governor when making appointments to the Parks Commission that appointees should be from different areas of the state and represent a diversity of lived experiences. The bill passed the House 95-2, and the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks Committee voted it for consideration by the Rules Committee. The bill was not elevated for floor action.

SSB 5902- (Sen. Van De Wege) Reinvesting Account Revenue for the purpose of supporting the state park system: This bill allows the Parks Renewal and Stewardship Account, the Winter Recreation Program Account, the Snowmobile Account and the Parkland Acquisition Account to retain their proportionate share of interest in the State Treasury. Additionally, the bill made the Parkland Acquisition Account non-appropriated. The legislation passed the Senate unanimously but was not scheduled in the House Appropriations Committee.

Other ideas for consideration:

HB 2445- (Rep. Ryu) Concerning the leasing authority of the State Parks and Recreation Commission: Bill removes the leasing limit of 62-years for the Lodge at St. Edward State Park. The legislation would allow the Lodge to renegotiate their long-term lease up to the current 80-year limit in statute, treating the concession at St. Edward State Park like other long-term lessees and cleans up statutory references to the 62-year lease.

Snowmobile Program revenue adjustment: The motorized Winter Recreation Program budget is facing a significant structural deficit due to increased costs and declining levels of snowmobile registrations. Conversations with the Snowmobile Advisory Committee and stakeholders will take place over the next several months to determine whether snowmobile registration fees or other sources of revenue should be developed to support the program.

July Commission meeting requested action:

The next step in the development of agency request legislation will be a requested action during the July 2024 Commission meeting, for final approval, and further delegation of work to the Legislative Committee and the Director's Office to finalize agency request legislation and to submit proposals to the Governor's Office and the legislature for their consideration.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: RCW 79A.05.030(1)

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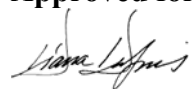
Reviewer(s):

Sarah Thirtyacre, 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 (14)(h).

Laura Holmes, Fiscal Review: Report only, no impact at this time.

Andy Woo, Assistant Attorney General: Reviewed 3/25/2024

Approved for Transmittal to Commission



Diana Dupuis, Director