

Diana Dupuis
Director



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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July 18, 2024

Item E-2: Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 352-32-030 Camping Stay Limits and (WAC) 352-32-010 Definitions - Requested Action

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: This item asks the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to adopt revisions of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 352-32-030 Camping stay limits, (WAC) 352-32-010 Definitions. These revisions advance the Commission’s strategic goal: “Obtain and effectively manage resources needed to create and sustain an exceptional park system”.

SIGNIFICANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Washington State Parks Recreation Commission currently allows visitors to occupy a campsite within the following stay limits.

- **April- September 30**

The maximum stay length is set by each state park and can be between 10 and 14 nights consecutively. After that, you must vacate the park for 3 consecutive nights.

- **October 1 through March 31**

The maximum length of stay is twenty nights. Campers may stay twenty consecutive nights in one park, after which the camping party must vacate the park for three consecutive nights, not to exceed forty days in a sixty-day time period.

The current stay limits are unnecessarily complicated and often confusing to visitors. Some parks are experiencing more people using parks for long-term stays, and staff are increasingly seeing behaviors and impacts which reflect residential versus recreational use.

The proposed change states: “The maximum length of stay shall be no more than 10 nights in one park within a thirty-day period. Total nights stayed not to exceed 90 days per calendar year in all state parks.”

Brief explanations of the proposed changes are listed below.

WAC 352-32-030

This proposal would eliminate the extended off-season length of stay, making the camping stay limit the same year-round. It will also set an annual limit for the number of nights an individual may camp in Washington State Parks. It is anticipated that these changes will provide additional recreational camping opportunities and will better align with our mission of caring for Washington’s most treasured lands.

WAC 352-32-010

Within the definition of residence, it references WAC 352-32-030 camping stay limits. This update is to align with the same updates we are proposing to make on WAC 352-32-030.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed amendments to WAC 352-32-030, as included in Appendix 1. Staff recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed amendments to WAC 352-32-010, as included in Appendix 2.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: RCW 79A.05.030, RCW 79A.05.070(6)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

Appendix 1: Full Text of Proposed Changes to Chapter 352-32-030 WAC Camping

Appendix 2: Full Text of Proposed Changes to Chapter 325-32-010 Definitions

Appendix 3: Summary of public involvement process

REQUESTED ACTION FROM COMMISSION:

That the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission:

1. Declare this meeting to be a public hearing for amending WAC 352-32-030 and WAC 352-32-10.
2. Consider the data, views, and arguments submitted by any person on the proposed rules as published in the Washington State Register and as further modified herein.
3. Formally amend WAC 352-32-030 and WAC 352-32-010.

Authorize the Director to file the regulations and to comply with all necessary procedural requirements.

Author(s)/Contact: Emily Weathers, Program Specialist 5
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Reviewer(s):

Kira Swanson, SEPA: 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).

Van Church, Fiscal Impact Statement: Requested action is expected to have a nominal, positive fiscal impact due to reduced staff impacts and possible maintenance activity that will no longer be needed.

Andy Woo, Assistant Attorney General: reviewed June 21, 2024

Approved for Transmittal to Commission



Diana Dupuis, Director

APPENDIX 1 TITLE

WAC 352-32-030 Camping. (1) Camping facilities of the state parks within the Washington state parks and recreation commission system are designed and administered specifically to provide recreational opportunities for park visitors. Use of park facilities for purposes which are of a nonrecreational nature, such as long-term residency at park facilities, obstructs opportunities for recreational use, and is inconsistent with the purposes for which those facilities were designed.

No person or camping party may use any state park facility for residence purposes, as defined (WAC 352-32-010).

(2) No person shall camp in any state park area except in areas specifically designated and/or marked for that purpose or as directed by a ranger.

(3) Occupants shall vacate camping facilities by removing their personal property therefrom: a) no later than 1:00 p.m., b) if the applicable camping fee has not been paid, c) if the time limit for occupancy of the campsite has expired or d) the

site is reserved by another party. Remaining in a campsite beyond the established checkout time shall subject the occupant to the payment of an additional camping fee.

(4) Use of utility campsites by tent campers shall be subject to payment of the utility campsite fee except when otherwise specified by a ranger.

(5) A campsite is considered occupied when it is being used for purposes of camping by a person or persons who have paid the camping fee within the applicable time limits or when it has been reserved through the appropriate procedures of the reservation system. No person shall take or attempt to take possession of a campsite when it is being occupied by another party, or when informed by a ranger that such site is occupied, or when the site is posted with a "reserved" sign or when the campsite has an incoming reservation. In the case of a reserved site, a person holding a valid reservation for that specific site may occupy it according to the rules relating to the reservation system for that park. In order to afford the public the greatest possible use of the state park system on a fair and equal basis, campsites in those parks not on the state park

reservation system will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. No person shall hold or attempt to hold campsite(s), for another camping party for present or future camping dates, except as prescribed for multiple campsites. Any site occupied by a camping party must be actively utilized for camping purposes.

(6) One person may register for one or more sites within a multiple campsite by paying the multiple campsite fee and providing the required information regarding the occupants of the other sites. An individual may register and hold a multiple campsite for occupancy on the same day by other camping parties. Multiple campsites in designated reservation parks may be reserved under the reservation system.

~~(7) In order to afford the general public the greatest possible use of the state park system, on a fair and equal basis, and to prevent residential use, continuous occupancy of facilities by the same camping party shall be limited. April 1 through September 30: The maximum length of stay during this period shall be established annually for each park by the director or designee and shall be no less than ten and no more~~

~~than fourteen nights. Campers may stay the established maximum consecutive nights in one park, after which the camping party must vacate the park for three consecutive nights. October 1 through March 31: The maximum length of stay is twenty nights. Campers may stay twenty consecutive nights in one park, after which the camping party must vacate the park for three consecutive nights, not to exceed forty days in a sixty-day time period. These limitations shall not apply to those individuals who meet the qualifications of WAC 352-32-280 and 352-32-285.~~

(7) In order to afford the general public the greatest possible use of the state park system, on a fair and equal basis, and to prevent residential use, continuous occupancy of facilities by the same camping party shall be limited. The maximum length of stay shall be no more than ten nights in one park within a thirty-day period. Total nights stayed not to exceed 90 days per calendar year in all state parks.

(a) Length of stay limits shall be established by the director or designee.

(b) These limitations shall not apply to those individuals who meet the qualifications of WAC 352-32-280 and 352-32-285.

(8) A maximum of eight people shall be permitted at a campsite overnight, unless otherwise authorized by a ranger. The number of vehicles occupying a campsite shall be limited to one car and one recreational vehicle: Provided, That one additional vehicle without built-in sleeping accommodations may occupy a designated campsite when in the judgment of a ranger the constructed facilities so warrant. The number of tents allowed at each campsite shall be limited to the number that will fit on the developed tent pad or designated area as determined by a ranger.

(9) Persons traveling by bicycles, motor bikes or other similar modes of transportation and utilizing campsites shall be limited to eight persons per site, provided no more than four motorcycles may occupy a campsite.

(10) Water trail camping sites are for the exclusive use of persons traveling by human and wind powered beachable vessels as their primary mode of transportation to the areas. Such camping areas are subject to the campsite capacity limitations as otherwise set forth in this section. Exceptions for emergencies may be approved by the ranger on an individual basis. Water

trail site fees, as published by state parks, must be paid at the time the site is occupied.

(11) Overnight stays (bivouac) on technical rock climbing routes will be allowed as outlined in the park's site specific climbing management plan. All litter and human waste must be contained and disposed of properly.

(12) Emergency camping areas may be used only when all designated campsites are full and at the park ranger's discretion. Persons using emergency areas must pay the applicable campsite fee and must vacate the site when directed by the park ranger.

(13) Designated overflow camping areas may be used only when all designated campsites in a park are full and the demand for camping in the geographic area around the park appears to exceed available facilities. Persons using overflow camping areas must pay the applicable campsite fee.

(14) Overnight camping will be allowed in approved areas within designated sno-parks in Washington state parks, when posted, provided the appropriate required sno-park permit is displayed.

(15) Any violation of this section is an infraction under chapter 7.84 RCW.

APPENDIX 2 TITLE

WAC 352-32-010 Definitions. Whenever used in this chapter the following terms shall be defined as herein indicated:

"Aircraft" shall mean any machine designed to travel through the air, whether heavier or lighter than air; airplane, dirigible, balloon, helicopter, etc. The term aircraft shall not include paraglider or remote controlled aircraft.

"Aquatic facility" shall mean any structure or area within a state park designated by the director or designee for aquatic activities including, but not limited to, swimming pools, wading pools, swimming beaches, floats, docks, ramps, piers or underwater parks.

"Bivouac" shall mean to camp overnight on a vertical rock climbing route on a ledge or in a hammock sling.

"Campfires" shall mean any open flame from a wood source.

"Camping" shall mean erecting a tent or shelter or arranging bedding, or both, or parking a recreation vehicle or other vehicle for the purpose of remaining overnight.

"Camping party" shall mean an individual or a group of people (two or more persons not to exceed eight) that is organized, equipped and capable of sustaining its own camping activity in a single campsite. A "camping party" is a "camping unit" for purposes of RCW 79A.05.065.

"Commercial recreation provider" is any individual or organization that packages and sells a service that meets the definition of a commercial recreation use.

"Commercial recreation use" is a recreational activity in a state park that is packaged and sold as a service by an organization or individual, other than state parks or a state park concessionaire.

"Commercial use (nonrecreation)" is any activity involving commercial or business purpose within a state park that may impact park facilities, park visitors or staff and is compatible with recreational use and stewardship, limited in duration and does not significantly block/alter access or negatively impact recreational users.

"Commission" shall mean the Washington state parks and recreation commission.

"Conference center" shall mean a state park facility designated as such by the director or designee that provides specialized services, day-use and overnight accommodations available by reservation for organized group activities.

"Day area parking space" shall mean any designated parking space within any state park area designated for daytime vehicle parking.

"Director" shall mean the director of the Washington state parks and recreation commission or the director's designee.

"Disrobe" shall mean to undress so as to appear nude.

"Emergency area" is an area in the park separate from the designated overnight camping area, which the park manager decides may be used for camping when no alternative camping facilities are available within reasonable driving distances.

"Environmental interpretation" shall mean the provision of services, materials, publications and/or facilities, including environmental learning centers (ELCs), for other than basic access to parks and individual camping, picnicking, and boating in parks, that enhance public understanding, appreciation and

enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural heritage through agency directed or self-learning activities.

"Environmental learning centers (ELCs)" shall mean those specialized facilities, designated by the director or designee, designed to promote outdoor recreation experiences and environmental education in a range of state park settings.

"Extra vehicle" shall mean each additional unhitched vehicle in excess of the one recreational vehicle that will be parked in a designated campsite or parking area for overnight.

"Fire" shall mean any open flame from any source or device including, but not limited to, campfires, stoves, candles, torches, barbeques and charcoal.

"Fish" shall mean all marine and freshwater fish and shellfish species including all species of aquatic invertebrates.

"Foster family home" means an agency which regularly provides care on a twenty-four-hour basis to one or more children, expectant mothers, or persons with developmental disabilities in the family abode of the person or persons under

whose direct care and supervision the child, expectant mother, or person with a developmental disability is placed.

"Geocache" shall mean geocaches, letterboxes, and related activities. Geocaching is an outdoor treasure hunting game in which participants (called "geocachers") use a Global Positioning System receiver or other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers (called "geocaches" or "caches").

"Group" shall mean twenty or more people engaged together in an activity.

"Group camping areas" are designated areas usually primitive with minimal utilities and site amenities and are for the use of organized groups. Facilities and extent of development vary from park to park.

"Hiker/biker campsite" shall mean a campsite that is to be used solely by visitors arriving at the park on foot or bicycle.

"Intimidate" means to engage in conduct that would make a reasonable person fearful.

"Motorcycle" means every motor vehicle having a saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than

three wheels in contact with the ground, but excluding a farm tractor and a moped.

"Multiple campsite" shall mean a designated and posted camping facility encompassing two or more individual standard, utility or primitive campsites.

"Obstruct pedestrian or vehicular traffic" means to walk, stand, sit, lie, or place an object in such a manner as to block passage by another person or a vehicle, or to require another person or a driver of a vehicle to take evasive action to avoid physical contact. Acts authorized as an exercise of one's constitutional right to picket or to legally protest, and acts authorized by a permit issued pursuant to WAC 352-32-165 shall not constitute obstruction of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

"Out-of-home care" means placement in a foster family home or with a person related to the child under the authority of chapters 13.32A, 13.34, or 74.13 RCW.

"Overflow area" shall mean an area in a park separate from designated overnight and emergency camping areas, designated by the park manager, for camping to accommodate peak camping demands in the geographic region.

"Overnight accommodations" shall mean any facility or site designated for overnight occupancy within a state park area.

"Paraglider" shall mean an unpowered ultralight vehicle capable of flight, consisting of a fabric, rectangular or elliptical canopy or wing connected to the pilot by suspension lines and straps, made entirely of nonrigid materials except for the pilot's harness and fasteners. The term "paraglider" shall not include hang gliders or parachutes.

"Person" shall mean all natural persons, firms, partnerships, corporations, clubs, and all associations or combinations of persons whenever acting for themselves or by an agent, servant, or employee.

"Person related to the child" means those persons referred to in RCW 74.15.020 (2) (a) (i) through (vi).

"Personal watercraft" means a vessel of less than sixteen feet that uses a motor powering a water jet pump, as its primary source of motive power and that is designed to be operated by a person sitting, standing, or kneeling on, or being towed behind the vessel, rather than in the conventional manner of sitting or standing inside the vessel.

"Popular destination park" shall mean any state park designated by the director or designee as a popular destination park because, it is typically occupied to capacity on Friday or Saturday night during the high use season.

"Primitive campsite" shall mean a campsite not provided with flush comfort station nearby and which may not have any of the amenities of a standard campsite.

"Public assembly" shall mean a meeting, rally, gathering, demonstration, vigil, picketing, speechmaking, march, parade, religious service, or other congregation of persons for the purpose of public expression of views of a political or religious nature for which there is a reasonable expectation that a minimum of twenty persons will attend based on information provided by the applicant. Public assemblies must be open to all members of the public, and are generally the subject of attendance solicitations circulated prior to the event, such as media advertising, flyers, brochures, word-of-mouth notification, or other form of prior encouragement to attend.

Alternatively, the agency director or designee may declare an event to be a public assembly in the following cases: Where

evidentiary circumstances and supporting material suggest that more than one hundred persons will attend, even where the applicant does not indicate such an expectation; or where there is reason to expect a need for special preparations by the agency or the applicant, due to the nature or location of the event.

"Ranger" shall mean a duly appointed Washington state parks ranger who is vested with police powers under RCW 79A.05.160, and shall include the park manager in charge of any state park area.

"Recreation vehicle" shall mean a vehicle/trailer unit, van, pickup truck with camper, motor home, converted bus, or any similar type vehicle which contains sleeping and/or housekeeping accommodations.

"Remote controlled aircraft" shall mean nonpeopled model aircraft and other unmanned aircraft systems, including those commonly known as "drones" that are flown by using internal combustion, electric motors, elastic tubing, or gravity/wind for propulsion. The flight is controlled by a person on the ground using a hand held radio control transmitter.

"Residence" shall mean the long-term habitation of facilities at a given state park for purposes whose primary character is not recreational. "Residence" is characterized by one or both of the following patterns:

(1) Camping at a given park shall be no more than ten nights in one park within a thirty-day period. Total nights stayed not to exceed 90 days per calendar year in all state parks. ~~for more than thirty days within a forty-day time period April 1 through September 30; or forty days within a sixty-day time period October 1 through March 31. As provided in WAC 352-32-030(7), continuous occupancy of facilities by the same camping party shall be limited to ten consecutive nights April 1 through September 30. Provided that at the discretion of the park ranger the maximum stay may be extended to fourteen consecutive nights if the campground is not fully occupied. Campers may stay twenty consecutive nights October 1 through March 31 in one park, after which the camping unit must vacate the overnight park facilities for three consecutive nights. The time period shall begin on the date for which the first night's fee is paid.~~

(2) The designation of the park facility as a permanent or temporary address on official documents or applications submitted to public or private agencies or institutions.

"Seaweed" shall mean all species of marine algae and flowering sea grasses.

"Sno-park" shall mean any designated winter recreational parking area.

"Special groomed trail area" shall mean those sno-park areas designated by the director as requiring a special groomed trail permit.

"Special recreation event" shall mean a group recreation activity in a state park sponsored or organized by an individual or organization that requires reserving park areas, planning, facilities, staffing, or other services beyond the level normally provided at the state park to ensure public welfare and safety and facility and/or environmental protection.

"Standard campsite" shall mean a designated camping site which is served by nearby domestic water, sink waste, garbage disposal, and flush comfort station.

"State park area" shall mean any area under the ownership, management, or control of the commission, including trust lands which have been withdrawn from sale or lease by order of the commissioner of public lands and the management of which has been transferred to the commission, and specifically including all those areas defined in WAC 352-16-020. State park areas do not include the seashore conservation area as defined in RCW 79A.05.605 and as regulated under chapter 352-37 WAC.

"Trailer dump station" shall mean any state park sewage disposal facility designated for the disposal of sewage waste from any recreation vehicle, other than as may be provided in a utility campsite.

"Upland" shall mean all lands lying above mean high water.

"Utility campsite" shall mean a standard campsite with the addition of electricity and which may have domestic water and/or sewer.

"Vehicle" shall include every device capable of being moved upon a public highway and in, upon, or by which any persons or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a public highway. For the purposes of this chapter, this definition

excludes bicycles, wheelchairs, motorized foot scooters, electric personal assistive mobility devices (EPAMDs), snowmobiles and other nonlicensed vehicles.

"Vehicle parking permit" means the permit issued on a daily, multiple day or annual basis for parking a vehicle in any state park area designated for daytime vehicle parking, excluding designated sno-park parking areas.

"Vessel" shall mean any watercraft used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on the water.

"Walk-in campsite" shall mean a campsite that is accessed only by walking to the site and which may or may not have vehicle parking available near by.

"Watercraft launch" is any developed launch ramp designated for the purpose of placing or retrieving watercraft into or out of the water.

"Water trail advisory committee" shall mean the twelve-member committee constituted by RCW 79A.05.420.

"Water trail camping sites" shall mean those specially designated group camp areas identified with signs, that are near

water ways, and that have varying facilities and extent of development.

"Wood debris" shall mean down and dead tree material.

APPENDIX 3

TITLE

Public Comment has been solicited on our website from June 1st to July 12th. Attached are their comments regarding the camping stay limit update. *Comments will be provided after the comment period closes.*