Mount Spokane State Park

Master Plan

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Hikers enjoying Trail 140 near CC Heritage Area

Executive Summary

At 12,444 acres, Mount Spokane State Park is Washington State's largest state park with an elevation ranging from 3,100 at the park entrance to 5,887 feet at the mountain's summit. Mount Spokane is a year-round "trails park" with distinct summer and winter seasons and over 100 miles of designated trails. It has the largest Nordic ski area in the Inland Northwest, a major, concession-operated downhill ski and snowboard park, and preserves the second largest area of public land in Spokane County.

There have been numerous planning efforts for Mount Spokane State Park since 1999 including the 2004 Trails Plan, 2010 Master Facilities Plan, and the 2009 Interpretive Plan, to name a few. Completed at different times for different purposes, these plans failed to provide unified direction, proposed conflicting efforts in some cases, and were not successful in delivering clear guidance for considering new projects and making operational decisions. The Mount Spokane Master Plan attempts to unify these disparate plans into a singular master plan that provides a unified strategy for improved project implementation coordination, direction, and detail.

Upon adoption by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, this master plan replaces the following previous plans and planning products: CAMP products (1999, 2003), Master Facilities Plan (2010), Interpretive Plan (2009), and Trail Plan (2014). While this master plan provides specific timing and sequencing of projects, it is not intended to constrain Washington State Parks from taking advantage of funding opportunities that can help expedite implementation.

The master plan establishes a new, 20-year vision for the park, provides high-level goals and policies, and a full slate of project and management actions intended to get the park to that 20-year destination. Though this planning effort is culminating in a master plan – a more detailed document with specificity around projects, timelines and costs, compared to more common "management plan" developed through the agency's Classification and Management Plan (CAMP) process, the master planning effort follows the same four CAMP stages and required outreach and engagement with Tribes, the public and other interested parties.

Tribal Relations

State Parks' relationships with Federally recognized Tribes, whose traditional lands and territories included parts of Washington, are guided by the Centennial Accord, Out of State Accord, Millenium Agreement, and RCW 43.376 Government-to-Government Relationship with Indian Tribes, which codifies the Centennial Accord. Additionally, for cultural resources, other laws and executive orders are followed. This includes RCWs 27.44 and 27.53, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Governor's Executive Order 21-02 may also apply when certain funding sources are used or when other permits are required for a project.

Principle A. State Parks is required to have government-to-government relationships with federally recognized Tribes whose traditional lands and territories included parts of Washington. The agency must make reasonable efforts to collaborate with these Tribes in the development of policies, agreements, and program implementations that directly affect a Tribe. Information sharing will occur with Tribes to ensure a Tribe has a complete understanding of an agency action, is provided an opportunity to identify Tribal concerns, and afforded an opportunity to address any Tribal concern with the agency.

Management Actions

1. State Parks is working with Tribes through the State Tribal Recreation Impacts Initiative to co-develop recreation management tools and an adaptive management framework that effectively coordinates cooperative stewardship of natural and cultural resources and preserves protected Tribal rights on state lands.
2. State Parks' Office of Tribal Relations assists the agency in developing and implementing agency policies that promote effective communication and collaboration between the agency and Tribal governments; serves as the primary contact for Tribal governments and maintains communication between the agency and affected Tribal governments; and coordinates training for agency employees in government-to-government relations.
3. State Parks teams will coordinate internally and with its Office of Tribal Relations for consulting and engaging Tribes prior to new actions or issues that may directly affect a Tribe.
4. State Parks will identify and notify the Tribes prior to starting the process of updating this management plan.
5. State Parks will identify, notify, consult, and/or coordinate with the Tribes on any new actions or issues that may directly affect the Tribes for:
    a. Projects mandated or funded by the legislature, this includes Capital and Operating/Maintenance projects
    b. Projects that are seeking grant funding, including State Parks-initiated projects and projects executed by external partners on State Parks-managed lands
    c. Planning and delivering State Park programs that use Tribal cultural content and guests such as Interpretation, Folk and Traditional Arts
    d. Development and updates to other State Parks plans (Interpretive, Natural Resources, Climate, Cultural Resources Management Plan)
6. State Parks Cultural Resources team engages Tribes when internal teams submit a Job Sheet form, which is required for all activities that may result in ground disturbance. Typically, these forms are submitted after a project receives funding as the agency is applying for permits.
7. State Parks will ensure leadership and appropriate staff receive Tribal Relations training on effective communication and collaboration between state agencies and Tribes, and cultural competency in providing effective services to Tribal government and Tribal members.
8. State Parks will convene Tribal workgroups and/or regular meetings with a Tribe(s) when continuous efforts and initiatives need to support, enhance, and improve communications and the resolution of issues.
9. Memorandums of Understanding or Cooperating Agreements will be considered where mutual respect for the rights, interests, and obligations of State Parks need to be explicitly honored.
10. State Parks will coordinate with Tribes about exercising treaty rights on parks and land managed by the agency.

Need

Beyond a need to develop a clear, community-informed vision, investment strategy, and resource management resolutions for the park, there have also been significant changes since 1999 affecting the park that need to be addressed, including:

1. **Major land acquisitions that have or will have occurred.**
   Bear Creek Lodge along with 110 acres of land was acquired in 2023, creating a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to establish a new park entrance and reshape the visitor experience in a way the current park entrance does not. Most notably, creating an "arrival" experience that matches the significance of the park while also serving numerous critical functions for the park.

2. **Use patterns have changed since significant park planning has occurred.**
   For example, mountain biking has grown significantly nationally and has become a large component of summer trail use at Mount Spokane State Park. The elevation combined with visitor shuttling options makes Mount Spokane unique within Spokane County. The wider adoption of e-bike use has also opened up trails to a wider spectrum of mountain bikers. Winter use has also increased significantly, leading to concerns about winter parking capacity, indoor space availability, and storage for grooming equipment.

3. **Park visitation has increased and is anticipated to continue to do so as regional population and rates of outdoor recreation activity participation increase.**
   Annual park visitation has climbed from 165,000 visitors in 2015 to 551,000 visitors in 2024. Population growth in Spokane and Kootenai counties as well as the planned completion of the new section of US-395 (i.e. "North Spokane Corridor"), has and will likely increase pressure on Mount Spokane and its facilities, as the park is the largest block of publicly accessible land within Spokane County - in a county with an 8 percent public land base.

4. **Previous plans were developed prior to the most current framework for considering and involving Tribes, accessibility, and equity.**
   Washington State Parks is striving to provide and expand opportunities that are welcoming and inclusive to everyone in the community. Agency diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts now provide guidance to inform community engagement and the content within this master plan. In addition, consultation with area Tribes has been a critical component of this master plan, ensuring that Washington State Parks acknowledges and respects Tribes' treaty rights while also seeking their input about stewarding the park's resources, input informed by the Tribes' stewardship of Mount Spokane's natural resources since time immemorial.

5. **Natural resources and climate change data specific to Mount Spokane State Park are now available to inform the master plan.**
   This includes ecological integrity assessments that have evaluated and mapped the multitude of significant and high-quality plant communities within the park, climate change impact assessments and forecasting, an increase in forest management information, and additional biological surveys that have been completed.

Thematic Goals

Guiding the development of the Mount Spokane Master Plan are several over-arching thematic goals. These frame and guide what Washington State Parks is striving to accomplish with this master plan:

1. **Establish a clear, unified future vision for Mount Spokane State Park.**
   Mount Spokane State Park has had numerous planning efforts completed since 1999, including the Classification and Management Planning (CAMP), Master Facilities Plan, Trail Plan, Interpretive Plan, and planning related to the Downhill Ski and Snowboard Park expansion. Collectively, these plans lack a clear, unified vision for the future of Mount Spokane State Park and limited direction about how to achieve that future vision.

2. **Preserve and protect Mount Spokane's unique and high-quality plant communities and natural resources.**
   Mount Spokane's ecology, beauty, and other natural features are a significant attraction to visitors. Some of the plant communities here are the most significant in the state, in both quality and quantity, including several that are globally and critically imperiled. As a steward of Mount Spokane, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission will protect and preserve the park's unique characteristics for future generations. Increased visitation to the park raises questions about capacity issues at the park (facility capacity, user experience, resource protection, etc.) and whether continued growth will negatively impact the very reason people visit Mount Spokane.

3. **Recognize and respect Mount Spokane's cultural significance.**
   By partnering with and listening to the region's Tribes in the planning process, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission can increase understanding of Mount Spokane's cultural importance and stive to respect, preserve, and protect that significance as the current steward of the park.

4. **Establish a clear, prioritized, and strategic investment "road map" for Mount Spokane State Park that takes into account agency constraints, funding opportunities, potential impacts of climate change, and regional recreational assets.**
   Currently, Mount Spokane State Park lacks a unified investment strategy for pursuing funding and implementation of identified needs and projects. Aligned with the park's long-term vision, the master plan provides a clear road map to successfully budget for and develop appropriate projects that are thoughtfully timed and sequenced and thus be more resilient to the realities of regional population growth and potential future impacts of climate change.

5. **Better integrate and coordinate with the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park and concession operator within the park.**
   This plan aligns State Parks improvements with concession area investments, clarifying funding roles, and identifying the type and extent of future concession projects.

6. **Recognize that Mount Spokane State Park is an integral part of the community.**
   Mount Spokane State Park is the largest park in the State Parks system and the largest "community park" in Spokane County. It is a significant community asset that has served generations of Spokane area residents. The plan was developed with the input and involvement of community members and organizations and strives to continue to foster community engagement in the future – through development of future projects and participation in outdoor recreation, including those from traditional recreational groups and beyond.

Chapter 1: Park Profile and Context

Location

Located within Spokane County, Mount Spokane State Park is situated north of Interstate 90 and east of US Highways 2 and 395. The primary access to the park is State Route 206 ("Mount Spokane Park Drive"), with a secondary, limited access point at Day Road. Situated in the northwestern quarter of Spokane County, Mount Spokane is visually dominant in the region as the county's high point at 5,887 feet.

Mount Spokane is one of the most dramatic mountains in Washington State. It rises over 3,500 feet above its base and is situated over 30 miles from the nearest higher land. Geographers quantify the significance of a mountain's presence by its prominence, or its elevation above the surroundings, and its isolation, or the distance from the nearest higher land. Because Mount Spokane has high values for both prominence and isolation, it is visible from a wide region and the views from its summit are far-reaching.

Tribal Significance

As a singular peak, Mount Spokane is a significant landscape feature for area Tribes. Mount Spokane was and is used by Tribal elders and others for gathering traditional plants, including bear grass, huckleberries and service berries. Tribal elders report that some berries taste sweeter on the higher elevations of the mountain. Western red cedar, which grows within the PASEA, is sacred to the Tribes; its bark and bows are used for ceremonies and in medicine. The Spokane Tribe has been intimately connected to Mount Spokane for as long as oral history recounts. For the Spokane Tribe, the significance of Mount Spokane includes: the location of a creation myth; a vision quest and prayer site; an important hunting and gathering location for first foods and medicinal plants; and a territorial marker. Because of these traditional uses, the mountain is a Traditional Cultural Property, underscoring its cultural significance.

Park History

The park is within the traditional territories of Interior Salish Indigenous people whose present-day descendants include members of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation. For thousands of years, the mountain has provided habitat for a diverse community of life that is important to Tribal cultures. In particular, the mountain forests and meadows are filled with beargrass, huckleberries, thimbleberries, Oregon grape, and kinnikinnick that are widely used for subsistence, material goods and artwork.

Members of the tribes occupying this area were not represented at the Walla Walla Treaty Council held by Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens on June 9, 1855. Many engaged in armed conflict with the occupying US Army, culminating in the Battle of Spokane Plains on September 5, 1858. Subsequently, an Executive Order issued by President Rutherford B. Hayes on January 18, 1881, created the Spokane Indian Reservation and relinquished title to more than 3 million acres of land to the US government. Many Spokane-area Tribal members continued to live at their traditional non-reservation homes until 1887, when they were required to move to the Spokane, Coeur d'Alene, Flathead or Colville Reservations.

The land that would become Mount Spokane State Park was initially promoted by Francis H. Cook, a newspaper publisher and real estate developer from Spokane. He was inspired by the views from the

mountain and was able to purchase a portion of the state trust land at the summit. In 1909, he and his son Silas began construction of a road to a site on his land that he called “Paradise Camp.”

Cook succeeded in getting the mountain renamed “Mount Spokane” (it was previously known as Mt. Carlton or Old Baldy) and promoted Paradise Camp as a must-see destination for any visitors to the city of Spokane. On August 23, 1912, a ceremony was held on the summit to celebrate the renaming, attended by the governor and many dignitaries.

In May 1919, Spokane County purchased Cook’s land but did not have legal authority to manage land for park purposes, so the land was placed in a trust managed by Spokane hotelier Louis Davenport.

On March 19, 1921, Governor Louis F. Hart approved House Bill 164, establishing the State Parks Committee with funding and enforcement authority to manage state parks. On July 8, 1927, the State Parks Committee formally accepted the donation of about 1,400 acres of land including the Spokane County trust lands and a donation from the Northern Pacific Railroad to create Mount Spokane State Park. The park was dedicated on August 20, 1927.

Many individuals and companies donated additional lands to enlarge the park, including the Cowles family, Silas Cook and Adolf Linder. Linder reserved timber harvest rights on the lands he donated, prompting a group of Spokane activists to purchase the timber rights on 320 acres of the donated lands in the heart of the park to preserve the uncut forests in 1939.

In 1933, State Parks Superintendent William Weigle sought a design for a vista house on the summit of Mount Spokane and approved a plan by Spokane architect Henry C. Bertlesen for a rustic style stone masonry building. A late request by the Department of Forestry to include a fire lookout tower as part of the building was accommodated with emergency work relief funding provided by the state legislature as a response to unemployment caused by the Great Depression.

Construction was completed on November 21, 1933, just as heavy winter snows began to accumulate on the mountain. The Vista House was one of the first major projects completed by the State Parks Committee to improve conditions in parks across the state and provide additional amenities for park visitors.

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) project work at Mount Spokane began in April 1934, when a tent camp named Camp Francis Cook was constructed near the former location of Cook’s Paradise Camp. The camp was occupied during the summer months of 1934 and 1935 and sporadically after, by enrollees from Camp Seven Mile at Riverside State Park, until it closed in 1940.

The primary goal of the CCC at Mount Spokane was to create a more accessible route to the summit. Building the modern road up Deadman Creek proved to be a difficult, yet worthwhile investment that continues to benefit visitors today. CCC crews also installed telephone lines, built retaining walls, restored logged areas, cleared ski trails and fought forest fires.

By the 1930s, skiing had emerged as a popular sport at the park. Cabins, rope tows and jumps were built by local clubs on the west and south sides of the mountain. Local ski groups including the Spokane Ski Club and the Selkirk Ski Club advocated for the construction of infrastructure and facilities including a grand Rustic-style lodge that was completed in 1940. In the 1950s, State Parks developed the Bald Knob area and the lodge and restaurant all operated on the mountain until an electrical fire caused the lodge with its prominent new addition to burn to the ground in 1952.

In 1946, Mount Spokane became home to the world's first double chair lift. Constructed by the Riblet Tramway Company of Spokane, the lift was actually a converted ore bucket mining tram. It was only in service for three seasons and was eventually replaced by the current Chair #1 in 1956. At the time, Chair #1 had the longest vertical rise of any lift in the northwest. It was at this time, with the 1955 construction of Lodge 1 and 1963 construction of Lodge 2 that the focus of downhill ski development shifted to the east side of the mountain. Nordic and downhill skiing and snowboarding continue to be popular recreational activities in the park.

Proposed development of the north and west-facing slopes of Mount Spokane – commonly referred to as the “back side” of the mountain was identified in a 1992 study commissioned by State Parks to analyze the existing ski area operation and provide recommendations for the future. In 1999, the Commission adopted land classifications and a long-term boundary for the park, which included the 800-acre Potential Area of Ski Area Expansion (“PASEA”) but left the area unclassified until a plan identifying proposed uses and facilities, and appropriate environmental documentation were completed. In 2007 the Commission included analysis of a proposal to expand alpine skiing into the PASEA within the Mount Spokane Master Facilities Plan. In 2010, the concessionaire, Mount Spokane 2000 (“MS2000”) approached the Commission with a conceptual proposal to expand skiing into approximately 279 acres of the 800-acre PASEA, adding a new chairlift and seven new ski trails. In 2014, the Commission ultimately approved the proposal, including the classification of the PASEA and adopted certain conditions prescribed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”) for the proposal. With the completed expansion, Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park continues to grow in popularity as the most visited attraction within the park. In more recent years, climate change has had an increasing impact on the park. The Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, the Nordic Ski Area, and snowmobiling have all been impacted through more condensed seasons, later starts to their seasons, and variable snow cover at lower elevations and south-facing aspects. During summer months, air quality index or “AQI” has become more synonymous with summer activity planning as wildfire smoke has affected visitation, particularly in August and September.

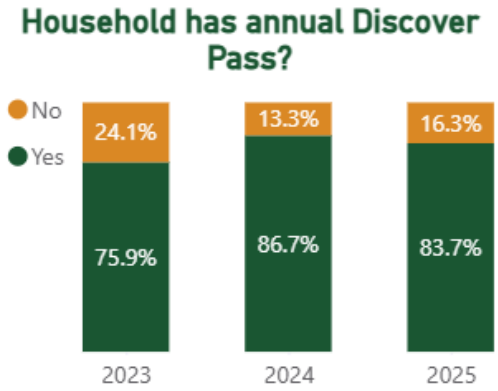
In 2023, Washington State Parks acquired Bear Creek Lodge and an associated 110 acres west of the park’s current entrance. This acquisition is arguably the most critical acquisition for the park over the last 25 years as it secured the opportunity to create a park gateway and visitor arrival experience that can match the historical and community significance of Mount Spokane State Park.

Park Visitation

The park has seen a steady rise in visitation numbers, with visitation increasing from 166,000 in 2015 to 551,000 in 2024. Winter visitation continues to be dominant, representing approximately 75 percent of total visitation at the park, largely driven by the Nordic trail system and the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. With that said, winter visitation numbers are significantly affected by fluctuations in climate – lower park visitation directly correlates with warmer winters and more limited snowfall.

Summer months outside of peak huckleberry picking season are quieter with summer use representing approximately 22 percent of visitation. The remaining balance is taken up by shoulder season use, which includes a pronounced lull late-March through May as the mountain transitions from winter to summer. While park staff have anecdotally described summer becoming busier, the visitation data reflects that the park overall has become busier.

The majority of visitors come to the park for day-use only, given the limited overnight facilities (i.e. Bald Knob Campground, Quartz Mountain Lookout). While there is limited data to discern between local vs. non-local visitation, what is available based on household Discover Pass data and anecdotal evidence suggests that 80-90 percent of visitors are from within Washington state and the Inland Northwest region with approximately 10-20 percent being from outside of the state and region.



Mount Spokane State Park is not served by public transportation. Visitors rely on personal vehicles to access the park.

Regional Demographics

Mount Spokane State Park is situated within Spokane County and bordering Kootenai County, Idaho. As such, these two counties together likely account for a majority of visitors to the state park due to both proximity and significantly larger populations than other adjacent counties. Both counties continue to experience rapid population growth, adding a combined 300,000 residents since 1990. Spokane County's population growth might be characterized as moderate and steady (52% increase since 1990) while Kootenai County's population growth could be described as rapid and accelerating, increasing by 161% since 1990. This population growth has likely contributed to the visitation increases recorded at Mount Spokane State Park.

Due to the limited public land base in Spokane County (8 percent), Mount Spokane's trail system (together with Riverside State Park) plays an outsized role in serving the community with winter and summer trails, nature viewing opportunities, Nordic skiing, and other trail-based recreation.

Related to the region's increasing population is the expansion of infrastructure to accommodate it, including the long-planned North Spokane Corridor – a Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) project and an extension of US 395 north from I-90 along the east side of Spokane. Upon its completion, this new freeway will shorten the drive time to Mount Spokane for many area residents and likely facilitate additional residential development closer to Mount Spokane State Park. While the completion of this project and its associated potential impacts on the park cannot yet be quantified, it is anticipated that providing easier access to and increasing population near it will increase visitation and recreation use.

Built Environment

Mount Spokane State Park has gone through numerous eras of park development and inherited facilities through acquisition within the park's long-term boundary. As such, the built environment includes facilities built in the 1930s (e.g. Vista House) up to present day (most recently, the new maintenance shop in 2024). While a majority of these facilities are operated and maintained by Washington State Parks, other facilities receive significant benefit from volunteer groups or are maintained by a concessionaire (e.g. Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park). As such, facilities vary significantly in condition, accessibility, needs, and functionality.

Services and Utilities

- Electricity – Inland Power & Light
- Water System – Several wells service the park (*see below*). Most of these wells were drilled in the last 30 years and replaced several older wells, which were officially decommissioned and capped. In addition to the wells, the Bear Creek Lodge site has been served by a spring fed system and associated Certificate of Water Right adjudication for 0.02 cubic feet per second (CFS) or approximately nine gallons per minute that is fed into a 257,000-gallon storage tank. A water system assessment completed by JUB Engineers dated January 13, 2025, (*See Appendix X*) provides a list of recommendations, some of which may no longer be relevant as they pertain to the lodge structure and other aspects of the site slated for demolition.

  The park's water system also includes a lift station (located at "Jerry's House" to serve the new maintenance shop), and the Selkirk Water Reservoir.

Well Location	Depth (Feet)	Production (GPM)	Year Drilled
Bald Knob	105	30	1995
Jerry's House	211	18	2003
Park Office	382	5	2004
Linder Ridge	550	2	1995
Selkirk Lodge	162	12	2004
Lodge 2	122	20	2004

Source: Washington State Department of Ecology

- Sewer – Septic systems and vault toilets
- Solid Waste – Waste Management
- Communications
  - Telephone – WATech Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP); landline for credit card transactions
    - Despite numerous communications towers on the summit, Mount Spokane has spotty cell phone coverage, especially at the base or near the park entrance. Generally, the higher you get, the better the service.
  - Internet – Ptera (Ranger Station and Selkirk Lodge) and Starlink (Maintenance Shop).

Facility Inventory

Facility	Parent Facility	Date Constructed	Historic
PUMPHOUSE	Jerry's House	1960	No
RESIDENCE	Jerry's House	1964	No
LIFT STATION (#1)	Water System	1950	No
STORAGE - EQUIPMENT	KXLY Building	2002	No
STORAGE - WINTER VEHICLE	KXLY Building	2014	No
GARAGE (Building 14)	"Steve's House"	1950	No

RESIDENCE (Building 13)	"Steve's House"	1950	No
COMFORT STATION	Bald Knob	1953	No
KITCHEN SHELTER	Bald Knob	1954	No
VAULT TOILET	Bald Knob	2023	No
LODGE	Bear Creek Lodge	1953	No
PUMPHOUSE	Bear Creek Lodge	2005	No
SHOP	Bear Creek Lodge	1953	No
STORAGE	Bear Creek Lodge	1953	No
CABIN (CCC)	CCC Heritage Area	1934; rebuilt 1998	Yes
Unfinished CCC COMFORT STATION	CCC Heritage Area	ca. 1940	No
CCC WOODSHED	CCC Heritage Area	2016	No
VAULT TOILET	CCC Heritage Area	2005	No
COMFORT STATION	Cook's Cabin	1933	Yes
TERMINAL	Cook's Cabin	1950	No
WOODSHED	Cook's Cabin	1934	Yes
VAULT TOILET	Entrance Trailhead	1995	No
RADIO BUILDING	KXLY Tower	1953	No
VAULT TOILET	Lower Kit Carson Trailhead	2023	No
VAULT TOILET	Lower Selkirk Trailhead	1995	No
SAND SHED	Maintenance Shop	2013	No
NEW MAINTENANCE SHOP	Maintenance Shop	2024	No
NOVA WARMING HUT	Nordic Ski Area	1989	No
SELKIRK WATER RESERVOIR	Nordic Ski Area	1996	No
SNO-PARK LOG CABIN (Selkirk Lodge)	Nordic Ski Area	1989	No
STORAGE (Quonset Hut)	Nordic Ski Area	2010	No
VAULT TOILET (# 906)	Nordic Ski Area	2008	No
VAULT TOILET (# 26)	Nordic Ski Area	1995	No
VAULT TOILET (J5)	Nordic Ski Area	2023	No
FUEL SHED	Administrative Office	1950	No
OFFICE	Administrative Office	1954	Yes
SHOP	Administrative Office	1954	No
FIRE TOWER	Quartz Mountain Lookout	1979; relocated and rebuilt 2005	No
VAULT TOILET	Quartz Mountain Lookout	2005	No
VAULT TOILET	Saddle Junction	2023	No
LODGE #1	Ski & Snowboard Park	1955	No
LODGE #2	Ski & Snowboard Park	1963	No
MAINTENANCE BLDG (Lodge 2)	Ski & Snowboard Park	2002	No
SKI CHALET	Ski & Snowboard Park	2008	No
SKI INSTRUCTER BLDG	Ski & Snowboard Park	2017	No
SKI PATROL BUILDING	Ski & Snowboard Park	1992	No
STORAGE (Lodge 1)	Ski & Snowboard Park	1996	No
YURT (Lodge 2)	Ski & Snowboard Park	2005	No
YURT (Lodge 1)	Ski & Snowboard Park	2020	No
SNOWSHOE WARMING HUT	Smith Gap	2014	No
VAULT TOILET	Smith Gap	2018	No
VAULT TOILET	Vista House	2011	No

VISTA HOUSE	Vista House	1933	Yes
CHLORINATOR BUILDING	Water System	1985	No

Bald Knob Campground and Day Use

Bald Knob is a multi-season focal point located between Selkirk Lodge and the summit, providing a day use area, trail access, restrooms, picnic shelter, and an eight-site, seasonal campground. The once expansive view from the shelter has been largely obscured by tree growth, but the shelter serves as a destination – particularly for snowshoers. Popular trails connecting into this area include Trail 131, Trail 130, and Trail 290 (via 130).

The campground originally had additional sites, but those sites were abandoned years ago. The camping season is somewhat limited due to the site's elevation - typically July 1 through September 15 annually.

The campground was added to the reservation system in 2023, with statistics provided below:

Season	Revenue	Occupancy Rate	Number of Occupied Nights
2023	$9,856	73.6%	395
2024	$11,911	73.3%	470
2025	$12,141	69.8%	434

Bear Creek Lodge

The Bear Creek Lodge (previously known as Linder Lodge and Kirk's Lodge) was constructed in 1953. Acquired in fall 2023 by Washington State Parks, the lodge has since been left vacant, awaiting the completion of this master plan. Historically, this was a privately operated lodge, providing overnight accommodations, a full-service restaurant, campground, snowmobile staging area, tubing hill, and an events center. Many of the structures are outdated and have received minimal updates in recent years. Washington State Parks hired JUB Engineers to complete a "Bear Creek Lodge and Outbuildings Structural Observation" report (dated January 10, 2025), which found deflecting floors, cracking, and other early signs of structural failure. The building was constructed with a "lattice work" of tension rods that crisscross within the walls (interior and exterior), limiting the ability to "open up" the building. There are also noticeable code issues and accessibility limitations. Collectively, these factors render the building challenging and expensive to adapt for future park needs.

During the planning process, staff explored several options for utilizing the lodge, including a potential partnership with the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire, MS2000. Through these conversations, both internally and externally, it was determined that there was a low probability for a feasible, successful, and sustainable private-public partnership to "renovate and use" the lodge in the same way it had served the public in the past.

A campground across the road from the lodge operated in the past but has been closed in recent years. There are no plans to reopen the campground at this location, given the proximity to Deadman Creek and modern permitting requirements and restrictions.

There is also a shop on the property with a living unit above, which is in moderate condition. However, it occupies a prime public access area between the road and creek. The buildings' functions can be replaced with other facilities in a more suitable location.

Communications Towers

Due to its prominence, the summit of Mount Spokane is a significant location for regional communications towers. These leases are renewed as five-year terms and generate significant revenue for Washington State Parks. These leases also generate a $500 per tenant "road use fee," that is adjusted upward 3 percent annually during the lease's term. The lessees need access to the summit year-round; using the Summit Road when it is snow-free, and the snowmobile corridor when the road is closed.

CCC Heritage Area

Another focal point is the site of the historical Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp, which is now referred to as the CCC Heritage Area. The site includes stone walkways and foundation remains constructed by the CCC and the CCC Cabin, the former camp headquarters, which is stocked with firewood in winter months by the Spokane Winter Knights, and serves as a primary warming hut for snowmobiling. The area includes some interpretation, a CXT vault toilet, and serves as a picnic area and a popular huckleberry picking locale in summer months. The closest parking area is Upper Kit Carson Trailhead. From the trailhead, the CCC Heritage Area is accessed via the non-motorized Kit Carson Loop Road, which is part of the first automobile access road constructed on the mountain. The former toll road was built by Francis Cook and his son Silas in the early twentieth century and provided vehicle access to his Paradise Camp.

Ski and Snowboard Park

This portion of the park represents approximately 1,700 acres situated between Mount Spokane Park Drive on the south side and Chair 4 and Chair 6 roads on the north side has operated under a concession agreement with Mount Spokane 2000 (MS2000) since 1997 as the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. The current iteration of the concession agreement continues a long-established approach of Washington State Parks contracting out the operations and maintenance of this facility to a third party beginning back in 1951.

As shown in the Facilities Inventory Table above, the operation consists of two lodges ("Lodge 1" and "Lodge 2") built in 1955 and 1963, respectively and six chairlifts dating from 1956 (Chair 1 "Vista Cruiser") to 2019 (Chair 6 "Northwood"). Both lodges have associated parking lots with Lodge 2 being the main and primary parking area. The concessionaire has also operated a tubing hill below the park road adjacent to Lodge 1 and the Vista House as a warming hut.

While MS2000 is primarily responsible for maintenance and operations of this area, Washington State Parks provides law enforcement, road maintenance up to Snowblaze Road, and snow plowing. Washington State Parks also provides review and approval of any vegetation or tree clearing within the concession area outside of routine maintenance of existing ski runs.

The operation of this portion of the park appears to have varied over the years depending on the concessionaire and Washington State Parks staff involved. It has been historically isolated from the park's planning efforts (e.g. PASEA excluded from 1999 Land Classification) and treated almost autonomously from

the park despite the two being inextricably linked. Through conversations with Washington State Parks staff and MS2000, the authors identified a mutual desire to include Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard projects into this master plan to provide for improved coordination, consistently with the overall park vision, and approve the projects in concept.

This component of the park is a significant driver to overall park visitation, with winter visitation outpacing the growth of summer visitation. The ski area has grown from serving 17,000 visitors in the 1996-1997 season to 125,000 in the 2024-2025 season. Outside of the winter operating season, MS2000 also provides limited summer programming in the form of summer camps and weddings.

Nordic Trail System and Selkirk Lodge

For Nordic ski use, Mount Spokane is the provider and hosts the largest groomed trail system in the region. At over double the length of the next largest Nordic ski trail system, Mount Spokane is likely a primary Nordic destination for those living in Spokane and Kootenai counties, in particular for those athletes seeking training opportunities. In the winter months, the Nordic ski area is one of the main drivers of visitation to the park, with Upper Selkirk Trailhead being full and at times pushed beyond capacity on many weekend days during the peak winter season. This portion of the park is supported by Spokane Nordic Ski Association (SNSA), another important partner, that provides programming, including the popular Nordic Kids program.

The focal point and staging area for this portion of the park is Selkirk Lodge. Selkirk Lodge provides restrooms, electrical outlets, Wi-Fi, woodstove, and picnic tables. A CXT toilet is also available outside of the lodge. In addition, the Nordic Hut provides Nordic ski and snowshoe rentals as a concession-operated service to visitors. The lodge is pushed beyond capacity on peak weekend days and provides no dedicated space to support the popular Nordic Kids programming along with events such as the annual Langlauf race. Deficiencies in the electrical system at the Lodge were resolved in the summer of 2025.

The trail system is also served by two warming huts – the NOVA hut and Tim's Hut (previously known as Tripp's Knob Warming Hut).

In the summer, this area is lightly used, providing rare park capacity for additional programming and events. Except for approved events, which require a Special Activity Permit, the lodge is closed to summer use.

Interpretation

See separate *Appendix* document for Interpretive Plan.

Quartz Mountain Lookout

Quartz Mountain Lookout was originally a fire lookout located on the Mount Spokane summit that was reassembled on Quartz Peak in 2005 and made available as a rental. The lookout is popular, operating at close to 90 percent occupancy (2025) during the summer rental season. The site also includes a CXT vault toilet. Despite being a single rental unit, the lookout generates nearly as much revenue as the entire Bald Knob Campground.

Season	Revenue	Occupancy Rate	Number of Nights Occupied

2023	$8,304	83.5%	81
2024	$9,084	79.8%	87
2025	$10,202	89%	97

Roadways

Mount Spokane Park Drive is the primary access point to and within the park, traversing the mountain from the park entrance to Lodge 2. The park's roadways are essential to park visitation, management, and revenue generating activities including the communications tower leases and the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire.

The section between the entrance to the intersection of Linder Road / Summit Road was repaved over a series of years (*See below table*). Past the aforementioned section of road, the surfacing deteriorates with a section ("Stage 3: Linder to Snowblaze") identified for repaving as a high priority capital project for the Inland NW Region. The Summit Road provides access to Bald Knob, CCC Heritage Area, and the summit itself, including the Vista House and several communications towers. The Summit Road is deteriorating, requiring increasing annual maintenance according to park staff.

Road Project	Date of Completion	Description
Road Improvements Stage 1	7/19/2000	Approx 5700 LF overlay, 1300 LF reconstruction starting at the park entrance
Road Improvements Stage 2	8/08/2001	Curve reconstruction, lane widening, concrete curbs, concrete barrier installation
Road Repairs 2006	9/07/2006	Overlay and spot repairs reconstruction (various locations)
Road Improvements Stage 2B	3/04/2008	Approx 5828 LF paving; concrete curb, concrete barriers, slope restoration
Road Improvements Stage 2C	5/29/2009	Approx 1800 LF of road reconstruction and drainage repairs.
Road Improvements Stage 2D	6/14/2016	Approx 800 LF of road reconstruction and drainage repairs
Road Improvements Stage 3	*Planned*	Linder Road to Snowblaze Road

The roadways within the park are entirely funded, supported, maintained, and managed by Washington State Parks despite having a significant number of privately owned parcels served by the road, including the Snowblaze Condominiums and Snowblaze Recreational Tracts. An easement (1971) originally granted by Washington State Parks to benefit the condominiums (and the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park) did not provide for or require annual road maintenance contributions from the grantee(s). The Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concession agreement also has not provided for an annual road maintenance contribution. The primary communications tower leases include a "road use fee," but this fee isn't significant

enough to support large capital investments in the roadway nor support annual road maintenance to the summit.

Within the 20-year planning horizon of this master plan, the Stage 1 and Stage 2 (B & C) sections of the road will likely need to be addressed with, at minimum, an asphalt overlay, as those sections surfacing will be exceeding their anticipated service life.

Signage

Signage throughout the park is relatively consistent despite the park's size. There are three types of trail wayfinding signs in the park: Nordic trail signs (with trail names), Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park trail signs (named runs), and summer trails outside of the Nordic area (most junctions marked with trail numbers). All trailheads have an information board with a printed and laminated map produced by Friends of Mount Spokane. These maps can be difficult to read given their scale (they represent the entire park) and the information boards aren't consistently visible from the trailhead parking area. While the park has significant signage, there are basic wayfinding signs missing (trailhead parking identification signs), numbered trails instead of names, and no trail accessibility information. As such, the park may appear well-signed by regular visitors but may not be easy to navigate for first time visitors or those with mobility considerations.

Summer Trails

Mount Spokane State Park is a major regional attraction for summer, non-motorized trail users, with 100 miles of single-track and double track trails. The park provides a subalpine trail experience – unique within Spokane County, as well as cool, mixed conifer forests that offer shade in the warmer summer months. Throughout the planning process that led to the development of this plan, community members often cited the trail system's wilderness-like characteristics and potential for solitude as an attribute that attracted them to the park.

The park's trail system is largely managed as a multi-use trail system, with few single-use trails. These include Upper and Lower 290 (mountain biking only) and Trail 103 (hiker only). Trail stakeholders engaged in the master plan's development supported the continued multi-use management approach to the trail system, citing limited user conflict and benefits to different trail users engaging with one another.

While the park is a provider of mountain bike trails, only a small percentage of the total trail miles have been designed specifically for mountain bike use (e.g. 290, 140). With that said, Mount Spokane is a popular mountain biking destination. Anecdotally, park staff have noted that this use has been the fastest growing summer use over the past 10+ years. The most significant additions to the trail system since 2014 have been designed and constructed by Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance volunteers for expanded mountain biking opportunities within the park.

In 2023, in partnership with Washington State Parks, volunteer trail builders completed the construction of the Upper 290 (which includes "L'Upper 290" trail) from the summit to Lower Selkirk Trailhead, a downhill directional black diamond (advanced rating) mountain bike only trail. Upon initial completion of the trail, it was determined that, due to challenging build conditions, additional design work and modifications were needed. Washington State Parks is currently working with a consultant team led by SE Group and Gravity Logic to design modifications to enhance the trail's sustainability, rider experience, and safety. Through this project, Washington State Parks has learned that the upper elevations of Mount Spokane may not be well-suited to new trail construction and in particular, heavy use. Gravity Logic has also shared that trails with

marginal soil suitability requires a high level of consistent maintenance, likely outstripping Washington State Parks' resources baseline-level of annual maintenance.

The park's trail system provides extensive opportunities for equestrian use, only second in mileage to Riverside State Park in Spokane County. Despite the supply of equestrian trails, park staff attest to limited use. Most trailers park at the Lower or Upper Selkirk trailheads where parking with trailers is adequate.

The trail system is sustained by and benefits from significant volunteer support, including from Washington Trails Association (WTA), Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (EMBA), Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, Friends of Mount Spokane, Spokane Mountaineers, and other organizations and individuals.

Snowmobile Trail System and Staging

Mount Spokane currently hosts a small snowmobile trail system; the smallest in the region at 21 miles. Historically, Mount Spokane's snowmobile trail system included an additional 38 miles of trail utilizing adjacent private commercial timberlands owned by Inland Empire Paper Co (IEP). In 2010, IEP closed these trails to snowmobiles citing concern over tree damage, significantly shrinking the trail system. The current system is served by Lower Selkirk Trailhead and historically by Bear Creek Lodge. In addition, the trail system provides access to several warming huts, including the CCC Cabin.

Table 1 - Comparable Recreational Facilities: Snowmobile

Park / Trail System	Total Trail Mileage (Groomed Snowmobile)	Managing Agency	Miles from Mount Spokane
Mount Spokane State Park	**21**	**Washington State Parks**	**0**
Mill Creek Sno-Park	138	Colville National Forest	97
Sand Canyon Sno-Park	67	Colville National Forest	71
Flowery Trail Sno-Park	46	Colville National Forest	69
Canfield Mountain	25+	Idaho Panhandle National Forest	43

Despite its size, the snowmobile trail system is a popular and beginner-friendly destination used by families, first timers, and those wanting a tune-up ride prior to exploring one of the region's larger and more remote trail systems. With the staging area at Lower Selkirk Trailhead being the prime location due to its higher elevation and more consistent snow coverage, parking capacity is severely constrained on busy weekends with other winter uses competing for limited parking. The effects of climate change have also limited the viability of portions of the trail system, particularly on south-facing (e.g. Trail 170) trails and at lower elevations, rendering the lower elevation Bear Creek Lodge staging site unusable for snowmobiles in all but peak winter season and heavier snowfall years.

According to snowmobile stakeholders involved in the master plan's development, parking / staging area availability is a significant constraint and concern to this user group. They also noted a loss not just of trail miles over the years, but services such as a restaurant to ride to (with the closure of Bear Creek Lodge in recent years and before that, a restaurant inside the Snowblaze Condominiums).

Snowshoe Trails

Mount Spokane contains approximately 46 miles of trails available for snowshoeing. All the areas identified in the hiking inventory serve as snowshoeing options, excluding those trails within the Nordic area and the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concession, provided there is adequate snow cover. Mount Spokane is a major provider of snowshoe trails in the region due to its high elevation, which allows it to offer a longer and more consistent season. A majority of snowshoers appear to utilize the Lower Selkirk Trailhead due to the high elevation, more consistent snow, and destinations like Bald Knob and the summit. This includes organized outings put on by the Lands Council and other organizations to engage youth in the outdoors. As mentioned above, this use conflicts with snowmobile staging and parking due to placing additional parking demand on Lower Selkirk Trailhead.

Vista House

The Vista House, constructed in 1933 as one of the original park buildings, is situated on the eastern side of the summit. The building, constructed of native granite quarried by builder E.O. Fieldstad, is a memorable visual icon of the park and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The Vista House provides a main room with fireplace and includes restrooms and a fire lookout, which will reopen to public access in 2026. It is operated by the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire in the winter as a warming hut and with some limited summer use for special events.

Natural Environment

Mount Spokane's complex natural environment offers a lot to consider and plan for: from significant elevation and slope aspects leading to different habitat types and winter recreation potential to iconic wildlife species such as elk and moose.

Climate

Climate cannot be understated as an influencing factor of this master plan. Since this plan's horizon is 20 years out, Washington State Parks needs to consider historic climatic trends and projections to ensure that the agency is investing wisely so that projects and management actions earlier in this plan still make sense 15-20 years from now.

Located in northeastern Washington at the southernmost extent of the Selkirk Mountains, Mount Spokane has a dry summer with a subarctic climate influence. This climate-type has four distinct seasons with a hot and dry summer, cooler and wetter fall and spring, and a cold and snowy winter. This results in very distinct winter and summer recreational seasons with low-use shoulder seasons in spring and fall. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a SNOWTEL site on Quartz Mountain (4,700' Elevation) within Mount Spokane State Park, recording long-term snow data within the park. Snowpack (as measured by Snow Water Equivalent) has varied dramatically year to year with significant fluctuations.

The annual total Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) at the Quartz Mountain SNOWTEL site indicates a slight downward trend in precipitation with sharp valleys coinciding during El Niño events in 2004-2005, 2009-2010, and 2014-2016 and sharp peaks coinciding with La Niña events in 2008-2009, and 2010-2011. This data demonstrates that the winter recreation season at Mount Spokane can be subject to a "boom or bust" cycle with the bust seasons being particularly impactful to concessionaires and park operations. For

example, following the 2004-2005 El Niño event, Washington State Parks agreed (at the request of the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire) to modify the concession agreement payment structure to address the sharp reduction in revenue due to the lack of snow. This cycle can also affect Sno-Park Permit revenue received by Washington State Parks, which supports winter trail grooming for Nordic skiing and snowmobiling.

Climatic fluctuations and conditions are arguably the largest factor affecting park visitation at Mount Spokane as winter recreation is snow-dependent and winter visitation constitutes approximately 75% of the annual visitation numbers.

The impacts of climate change over this century will continue to affect Mount Spokane State Park in many ways, from visitor use patterns to species composition, influencing management decisions and fixed investments for the park.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture,

major challenges that recreation professionals currently face given future projections of climate change include:

- Climate-induced stress on roads, trails, facilities, campgrounds, and other infrastructure,
- Ecological damage (e.g. high-velocity run-off, erosion, or landslides) exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure that is unable to accommodate regional increases in precipitation and storm surges,
- Managing the demands of a longer shoulder season and higher numbers of visitors given staffing and budgetary constraints, and
- Addressing an uncertain future for lower-elevation winter recreation destinations.

The Spokane Climate Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment report (2020) produced by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA") uses the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park as a "Data Climate Story." Within this section of the report, it states that:

- Mount Spokane will experience 42-58 fewer days below freezing by 2050;
- Winter precipitation is 25-34% more likely to fall as rain; and
- The ski area may see its winter operating season shrink 29-39 days by 2050.

With these significant changes looming over the park's future, the master plan considers how the park and its facilities can adapt to a changing climate by:

- Shifting winter-dependent recreation uses to high elevations within the park and transitions lower elevations to less winter-dependent uses;
- Ensuring that investments scheduled earlier in the plan will continue to be recreational and operational relevant at the end of the plan's 20 years;
- Working with the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire to ensure it can utilize context and resource-appropriate standard climate adaptation strategies;
- Increasing protection for the park's natural resources; and
- Actively partnering with willing landowners and organizations to preserve adjacent unprotected habitat that could preserve the park's biodiversity and species mobility to and from it.

Plant Communities

Mount Spokane has some of the state's most significant and rare plant communities. Some of these ecosystems are imperiled (i.e. extremely rare) in both the state of Washington and globally. Other, including much of Mount Spokane State Park's forested areas, are more common but the occurrences of them at Mount Spokane are noteworthy because they are of such high quality. 34 different plant communities of rare or high-quality ecosystems have been identified at Mount Spokane, many of these occurring in multiple occurrences in the park. These 'Element Occurrences' are recognized by the Washington Natural Heritage Program and the importance of conservation of Element Occurrences in Washington's state parks is noted in State Parks Natural Resources Policy.

Intact, functioning ecosystems also provide other benefits to humans and animals including erosion prevention, shade and habitat. Ecosystem integrity is used to measure the condition and function of plant communities. Many factors influence the Ecological Integrity Assessment (EIA) score. For example, development of roads and trails, presence of invasive species and fragmented landscapes, all contribute to lower EIA scores. Washington State Parks has a goal to maintain its natural lands in an A or B state, and to restore degraded areas (C, D or F) to an A or B. Intended to be used in combination with other data and considering the existing and/or future use of a particular landscape, the EIA can help inform how State Parks manages existing lands or develops new facilities. For example, a more degraded and common plant community ranking D or E in ecological integrity may be a good candidate for future development versus developing in an area where the ecological integrity is higher. On the other hand, if a degraded common ecosystem provides habitat for a rare plant or animal or is surrounded by other communities that are more important due to rarity or quality, then it might be prioritized for restoration. A majority of Mount Spokane lands are C+ or better. (See *Appendix*)

In general, the master plan considers this data to influence where new facilities are proposed to be sited or in many cases, it informed the removal of conceptual projects from this master plan during its development.

Meadow

In 2021, AECOM Technical Services Inc (AECOM) completed a vegetation survey report for Mount Spokane focused on the park's high elevation meadows. The report assessed encroachment from trees (since 1992), presence of noxious weeds, and species present. The report (p. 72) states that "Noxious weeds are not prevalent in the high-altitude meadows in Mount Spokane State Park and generally only occur in areas with soil disturbance, such as along roads and trails. Significant meadow areas within the park include Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve (*See below for more info*), Horse Mountain, Mount Kit Carson, Day Mountain, and the West Summit Meadow. The Stewardship Program has recommended that trails and other types of development be limited in these high elevation meadows to their high sensitivity to disturbance and the potential for noxious weed introduction.

Forest

In 2022, AECOM completed a vegetation survey report for Mount Spokane focused on five priority areas where high trail-based recreation use was occurring. Thirty-five forest and woodland plant associations were mapped in these priority areas. The ecological integrity assessments (EIA) were completed on 6,437 acres of the park of which, 99 percent had an EIA rank of B- or higher, meaning "good" ecological integrity. Similar to meadows, the Stewardship Program has also recommended limiting new development in forests rated B- or higher to ensure continued plant community health.

In addition, to preserve forest health, Washington State Parks has completed forest health projects to reduce stand density, reduce the risk of catastrophic fire, and increase overall forest health by reducing tree stress due to competition for limited resources such as water.

Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve (RRNAP)

Ragged Ridge was established as a Natural Area Preserve ("NAP") in 1985 to protect the multiple rare plant communities, serve as a gene pool reservoir for native plant species, and serve as an outdoor laboratory for education and scientific research. The 624-acre preserve located in the southeast area of the park ranges in elevation from 3,200 to 4,900 feet and is made up of mature coniferous forest and open meadows. The area was identified by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Natural Heritage Program (WNHP) for designation as an NAP due to the presence of many different rare plant associations located together in one place. At the time, four (4) rare and high-quality plant communities that had been identified as priorities for conservation by the WNHP. More recent vegetation surveys have identified ten (1o) occurrences of rare and high-quality plant communities in the NAP (WNHP 2026) and one rare plant species that is being considered for listing within the state (Walker et al. 2021).

The management goals of the 2001 Ragged Ridge NAP Plan (updated in 2002) state that human access will be limited to "educational, scientific and recreation activity that further advances an appreciation and protection of the site's unique and fragile native communities, particularly the green fescue variant of the Idaho fescue meadow". The NAP land classification in this area limits public access to hiking in the summer and x-country skiing and snowshoeing in the winter.

Washington State Parks has been actively addressing issues identified in the NAP's management plan, including closure of motorized trails from private lands south and east of the NAP boundary. Through a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Commission State Lands Restoration grant (#18-1987), a significant number of logs were dropped by helicopter on numerous access trails from 2022-2024, effectively closing them to motorized use. Trails that had been created from illegal ORV incursions were revegetated. Additional work completed under that grant included girdling and felling encroaching trees to preserve the meadow's unique plant community and rerouting the trail at the northern entrance to minimize continued disturbance.

Wildlife

Mount Spokane State Park hosts the largest block of preserved wildlife habitat in Spokane County outside of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge. The park includes mid-to-high elevation montane forest and high elevation meadow habitats that, according to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Priority Habitats and Species Mapping Tool, provide significant, year-round habitat for designated priority species Moose (*Alces alces*), Rocky Mountain Elk (*Cervus elaphus nelson*), Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*), Wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), and other species.

Below is a summary of the planning implications for such species and how this plan and trail system can be designed to reduce or avoid negative impacts to these key species.

Table 2 - Priority Species Trail Planning Implications

WDFW Priority Species	Planning Implication

Moose	Temporary management actions (e.g. trail closures) when the population is experiencing significant health or environmental stress. Avoid streams and wetlands not already impacted by trails.
Northern Goshawk	Avoid adding trails or other facilities next to active nests.
Wolverine	Monitor.
Pika	Do not disturb talus and maintain a 5' buffer from talus and meadow habitats.
Grey Wolf	Avoid dens and employ temporary management actions (e.g. closures) as needed to limit potential conflict.
Elk	Avoid habitat not already potentially impacted by existing trails using a 276-meter GIS "potential displacement" buffer on existing and planned trails.
Canada Lynx	None.

Hydrology

Being a topographic high point, Mount Spokane contains the headwaters of numerous watersheds, including Deadman Creek (Little Spokane River), Deer Creek (Little Spokane River), Blanchard Creek (Blanchard Lake), Thompson Creek (Newman Lake), Brickel Creek (Spirit Lake), Fish Creek (Twin Lakes), Hauser Creek (Hauser Lake), and other unnamed tributaries. A vast majority of these streams and associated springs appear below 5,000 feet of elevation.

Wetland / Riparian

Riparian and wetland communities in Mount Spokane state Park typically occur in small montane seeps and along steep, narrow drainageways. Nearly all of the wetlands assessed in 2022 have significant conservation value. These occurrences have particularly high hydrologic integrity and to maintain this, any trail development within the park should be routed away from these wetlands. The National Wetland Inventory online map, uses a geospatial approach to identify numerous wetlands associated with riparian corridors. A majority of these mapped wetlands are classified as "Riverine Habitat" while there are smaller pockets and sections along mapped streams classified as "Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland."

Geology

Mount Spokane is a piece of Washington's ancient geologic past, much older than the Cascade Mountains. The mountain is part of a larger regional structure called a metamorphic core complex. The earth's crust was thickened here by the forces of plate tectonics millions of years ago. The lumped material eventually began to sag and stretch apart, revealing metamorphosed granitic rocks in its core. Mount Spokane's rounded summit is similar to other mountains of similar geologic origin in the Selkirk Mountains, of which Mount Spokane is the southernmost peak.

Talus

Talus habitats (incl. talus slopes, talus fields) are vital ecological and geological features. They provide critical habitat for specialized wildlife, offering shelter and stable, cool, or insulated microclimates for species like pikas, marmots, specialized insects, and bats. Talus is considered a Priority Habitat by the Washington

Department of Fish and Wildlife. Several talus fields are located on Mount Spokane, most notably a large talus field/slope on the summit. Two rare species, American pika and ice crawlers, depend on talus habitats on Mount Spokane.

Pika

American pika (*Ochotona princeps*) are identified in the Washington State Wildlife Action Plan as a Species of Greatest Conservation Need. Pika are restricted to rocky talus slopes, with a preference for the talus-meadow interface. This species is sensitive to temperatures above 78 degrees Fahrenheit and relies on winter snowpack to insulate them from extreme cold conditions.

Pika have long been considered an integral component of Mount Spokane's summit. In 2009, volunteer surveyors observed at least six pika west of talus slopes near the Vista House and in 2010, surveyors saw and heard pikas in most of the talus fields near the top of the mountain (Morrison and Wooten 2010). More recently, pika were observed in the talus at the summit by a local community scientist in June 2018 (https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/13562481; C. Mahon *personal communication*) and State Parks Natural Resources Program staff in 2023 (Z. St. Amand *personal communication*). In contrast, surveys that occurred on the talus slopes within 200m of the Vista House on three separate days in 2025 by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife ("WDFW") staff yielded no detections.

Pika are highly sensitive to climate change, loss and degradation of suitable habitat, and recreational impacts. It is possible that the local population has been extirpated. However, several years of negative detections during targeted surveys would be required for confirmation as numerous examples of false negatives occur in the pika literature (Miller and Smith 2022, Smith 2020). For example, Morrison and Wooten (2010) noted that the sightings of pika in 2010 were "of particular interest, in that WDFW surveys for pika at Mt. Spokane in the last several years have been negative."

Monitoring for pika should continue, coordinated by the State Parks' Natural Resources Program. As recommended by WDFW, State Parks should also continue to protect the talus habitat including the "buffer distance [5 ft] from talus that pika typically travel to forage, …it would still be important to consider any impacts to that foraging habitat and pika access to it, not just the talus" (C. Lowe, *personal communication* 12/09/2025).

Ice Crawler

The insect genus Grylloblatta, commonly known as the ice-crawlers, are flightless, long-lived (approximately 10 years), relatively large-bodied insects. Ice crawlers exhibit high levels of habitat specificity and are typically found in select high-elevation habitats. The population of ice crawlers is most dense near the summit of Mount Spokane, using both talus slopes and forested areas near the summit. Ice crawlers prefer cold temperatures around freezing. When the snow disappears in the late spring or summer, they go underground. As they aren't equipped to dig, they retreat under rocks and into crevices – such as the talus fields at Mount Spokane - to escape the heat. In the winter, ice crawlers often hide under the snow, but come out at night or in calm conditions to feed on insects that were swept up by the wind from lower elevations and land dead on the snow. Genetic analyses have suggested that the ice crawlers found on Mount Spokane represent a distinct species, which has tentatively been named *Grylloblatta spokanistan*. Due to the high level of habitat specialization, impacts to these habitats should be minimized in order to protect the species.

Soils and Slopes

Soils can indicate how planned trails might drain, the vegetation one might encounter on the trail, and potentially, the difficulty of trail construction. In general, Mount Spokane can be characterized as having well-draining, ashy silty loam of various depths and granularity. Much of the challenge with siting facilities on Mount Spokane results from the slopes – generally steep with very few areas not already occupied by facilities.

Planning Context

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) has produced numerous plans over the years. While these plans have been reviewed by the authors, many of these plans are planned to be replaced upon the adoption of this master plan. In addition, plans outside the agency that may either reflect local community interests or could apply to the master plan are considered. Further analysis and applicability of these plans to the Mount Spokane Master Plan can be found in the *Appendix.*

Table 3 - Washington State Parks Relevant Planning Documents

Plan	Year	Summary
Mount Spokane Classification and Management Planning Project ("CAMP") and Management Plan	1999, 2003	The CAMP classification map creates a guide that dictates where State Parks should place facilities, develop public access and recreational use facilities, including trails, and prescribes types of trail uses allowed and where.
Potential Alpine Ski Expansion Area (PASEA) study	1992	Commissioned by State Parks to analyze the existing ski area operation and provide recommendations for the future.
Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve Management Plan	2002	Identifies management goals and guidelines for preserving the natural resource elements within the Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve.
Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission Trail Goals and Policies	2004	This adopted goals and policies document establishes general policies and guidance to trail planners and managers of State Parks-managed trail systems with regards to the development and use of non-motorized trails.
Additional PASEA studies	2006-2014	Multiple studies were completed to consider expansion and impacts of the ski area expansion including market and economics analysis, base area lodge design study, biological surveys, wetland study and draft habitat management plan.
Mount Spokane Interpretive Plan	2009	Includes recommendations for the development of interpretive hubs at CCC Heritage Area, Summit, and Bald Knob.
Mount Spokane Master Facilities Plan	2010	Includes the first "Comprehensive Trail Plan"

PASEA Final Environmental Impact Statement	2013	The Commission authorized staff to begin work on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze impacts of classifying lands and allowing additional ski area development in the PASEA.
Mount Spokane Comprehensive Trail Plan	2014	The 2010 Comprehensive Trail Plan was updated during this process to reflect additional public input and needs, specifically related to bicycle use and trail facilities.
Preparing Washington State Parks for Climate Change	2017	An assessment report that anticipates potential effects and impacts of climate change on Washington State Parks. Mount Spokane is identified numerous times as being one of the more potentially impacted parks due to the reliance on winter season and Winter Recreation Program Revenue.
2021-2031 Strategic Plan	2021	Identifies overarching vision and strategies for the agency.

Chapter 2: Park Vision

2046 Vision for Mount Spokane State Park

Mount Spokane State Park is the largest community park in the region. It is well-loved and inextricably connected to the greater Spokane community. The park is historically significant, yet dynamic and actively evolving along with the community. The park protects significant habitat and iconic species and includes high quality and rare plant communities. At its core the park embodies the conflict within Washington State Parks mission: preserving natural resources and providing recreation. As such, the park will continue to serve and further strategically invest in its role as a regional, day-use provider of winter recreation and summer, nature-and-trail-based recreation while paying homage to the original stewards of the park, area Tribes, and the park's place in regional, state, and national history.

Distilled down, the park's 20-year vision includes the following descriptors or ingredients to preserve and achieve through the implementation of this master plan:

Rustic	**Family-oriented**	**Restorative**
Conservation + Preservation	**Historic**	**Approachable**
Education	**Proximity**	**Quality**
Wildlife	**Wilderness**	**Resilient**
Views	**Variety of experiences**	**Low-key**

Vision Description

Mount Spokane State Park is well known as a local destination providing a diversity of beginner and advanced passive and active outdoor recreational experiences. Despite its proximity to the second largest urban population in Washington State and the abundance of recreational opportunities it affords, the park exhibits a remote and wild character that is cherished by the community. The park retains much of its historic character that contributes to a distinct sense of place, but the park is neither historical nor intended to be a relic frozen in time. While the addition of some limited overnight accommodations is identified in the master plan, Mount Spokane is one of two parks serving the region, each of which offers its own unique combination of activities, facilities and experiences, and which complement one another. Riverside State Park, as the complementary "other half" of state parks provided in this area, is more focused on overnight use, offers more *types* of recreation sites within the park and provides a very different experience than what visitors seek at Mount Spokane State Park, which will continue to be a day-use "trails park;" Providing trails with wilderness-like characteristics and offering the potential for solitude, identified by many visitors as key attributes of the park.

Creating the opportunity for positive park experiences starts with the park entrance. The Master Plan directs development of a new park entrance that is more distinct and visible, anchored by a new visitor center. Existing trails and one new ABA/ADA trail will be integrated into a combined and more clearly defined central hub or "master trailhead", providing information about park features, wayfinding and accessibility. The Bear Creek Lodge site will be reconfigured to serve as a park gateway and day use area complete with improvements that support family-friendly activities including a passive snow play area (replacing the current tubing hill and consistent with available snowpack), parking improvements, and other features that support current and future park programming.

Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park's envisioned improvements and operations will complement and be consistent with the park, providing the family-friendly, low-key community-ski-hill-feel that many locals have come to love. The concessionaire operates at a disadvantage compared to other area ski resorts. For example, Schweitzer Mountain Resort is able to sell real estate to fund lift replacements and other improvements. Many of these ski resorts operate on United State Forest Services ("USFS") leased land, which has a different mission and management goals from Washington State Parks. A long-term strategy of improving the ski and snowboard park to the extent and scale of these other area ski resorts is not feasible and more importantly, would not be consistent with the park vision.

Maintaining the park's "remote and wild" character includes retaining much of the park in a primitive state. In doing so, the master plan utilizes a combination of land classifications and long-term boundary project actions. More restrictive land classification adjustments are recommended where ecological values are high and recreational use is limited and not foreseen. Long-term boundary adjustments are focused on positioning Washington State Parks to act on willing seller opportunities to preserve existing recreational uses that occur outside of the current park boundary through private landowner agreements. In additional to these select long-term boundary expansions, the master plan includes a "conservation buffer" around the park versus adding properties to the long-term boundary, that expresses Washington State Parks support for regional conservation efforts that collectively help preserve the park's connection to wildlife corridors to support the park's significant biodiversity.

New trail projects generally fall into two categories: improving functionality of the trail system and addressing accessibility. Complete with signage upgrades and select trailhead parking improvements, the Master Plan envisions a trail system that actively creates the opportunity for positive trail experiences to first time visitors and seasoned park veterans alike.

Lastly, the master plan recognizes that changing climate may mean a shorter winter recreation season with less predictable snow lower on the mountain, longer shoulder seasons, and a summer season that may peak and fade sooner as hot temperatures reduce visitation. As such, project actions generally limit winter-only investments lower on the mountain and create the opportunity for additional shoulder season use.

Chapter 3: Goals and Policies

Goal 1 **Conserve and protect the unique, high quality plant communities and wildlife species that reside within Mount Spokane State Park.**

Policy 1	Identify a conservation buffer around the park that would identify areas for future protection through third party efforts such as Inland Northwest Land Conservancy conservation easements or fee simple acquisition.
Policy 2	Designate and locate land classifications that are consistent with ecological integrity assessment (EIA) and other available natural resource data.
Policy 3	Avoid developing new trails in inventoried meadows and reroute existing trails where feasible to avoid meadow transects.
Policy 4	Avoid bisecting large islands and corridors of undisturbed habitat by locating new facilities and trails where habitat has already been impacted by existing uses and facilities.
Policy 5	Plan for and provide active forest management where needed to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire and improve overall forest health and resiliency.

Goal 2 **Provide high quality outdoor recreation experiences for newcomers and seasoned visitors, consistent with the park's conservation values and stature as a regional attraction.**

Policy 1	Develop a new visitor center and gateway experience that clearly communicates "you have arrived", provides orientation for new visitors, and effectively conveys park information.
Policy 2	Enhance wayfinding signage throughout the park to provide information needed to have a positive experience.
Policy 3	Add and expand outdoor recreation experiences that provide a "low bar" entry into outdoor recreation, including accessible and beginner-friendly trails, expanded beginner downhill ski and snowboard terrain and open space for summer and winter unstructured play areas (e.g. near and around Bear Creek Lodge).

Goal 3 **Effectively tell Mount Spokane's stories to visitors and the community.**

Policy 1	Develop and implement an updated interpretive plan for the park.
Policy 2	Include interpretive elements at the new park visitor center, Selkirk Lodge, Bald Knob, and other major focal points within the park.
Policy 3	Engage with Tribes and subject matter experts to identify, design, and implement interpretive features.

Goal 4 **Maintain a sustainable, community supported, diverse system of trails that offer a variety of experiences and skill levels.**

Policy 1	Continue to manage the trail system generally consistent with current management, including a summer trail system that is predominantly multi-use and a winter trail system that is composed of several single use areas within the park.
Policy 2	Seek and incorporate feedback from trail stakeholders in trail design and layout.
Policy 3	Utilize appropriate, adopted standards for trail maintenance per the Washington State Parks 2004 Trails Goals and Policies.
Policy 4	Focus future trail investments on maintaining and improving existing trails, providing needed trail connections to improve trail system functionality.
Policy 5	Provide entry-level and family-friendly trail experiences where appropriate, including accessible experiences.
Policy 6	Pursue naming of major trails, including current/historic numbering with the goal of creating visitor friendly loops and routes that are easy to follow and remember.

Goal 5 **Maintain the current, rustic character of the park.**

Policy 1	Design and site projects and trails to complement the park's rustic and remote feel, maintaining the park as "Spokane's Backyard Wilderness."
Policy 2	Incorporate exposed timber and native stone material (primarily granite) where practical into new and renovated buildings, signs, and other appropriate applications as may be feasible.
Policy 3	Incorporate dark sky compliant lighting into project design where possible and replace lighting where appropriate with dark sky compliant replacements.
Policy 4	Consider and avoid projects' compounding effects of changing the character of the park from a "community mountain" to a more commercialized "regional recreation destination."

Goal 6 **Ensure an operationally and financially sustainable Mount Spokane State Park.**

Policy 1	Pursue the development of a park-specific dedicated roadway maintenance fund and fund mechanisms from existing and new revenue streams to sustain and finance continued seasonal and long-term maintenance of the park roadways.
Policy 2	Continue to maintain and operate the park as a primarily day-use facility with limited expansion of overnight use.
Policy 3	Limit expansion of new facilities, trails, and other features to ensure capacity to sustain such facilities within historic and future budgetary constraints.

Chapter 4: Implementation “Road Map”

This component of the plan takes into account the vision, goals and policies, which were developed with substantial community and agency feedback, to layout a “road map” for the park’s future. Through a variety of sequenced and coordinated actions, the following projects and timelines describe future management and investment to arrive at the 2046 vision.

The proposed project actions have been preliminarily vetted through the master plan process for suitability with the park vision and identity. Inclusion in the list means that these projects have been approved at a conceptual level. Each project action will undergo evaluation, assessment and design/permitting at the time of implementation consistent with state and federal laws, agency procedures and funding sources.

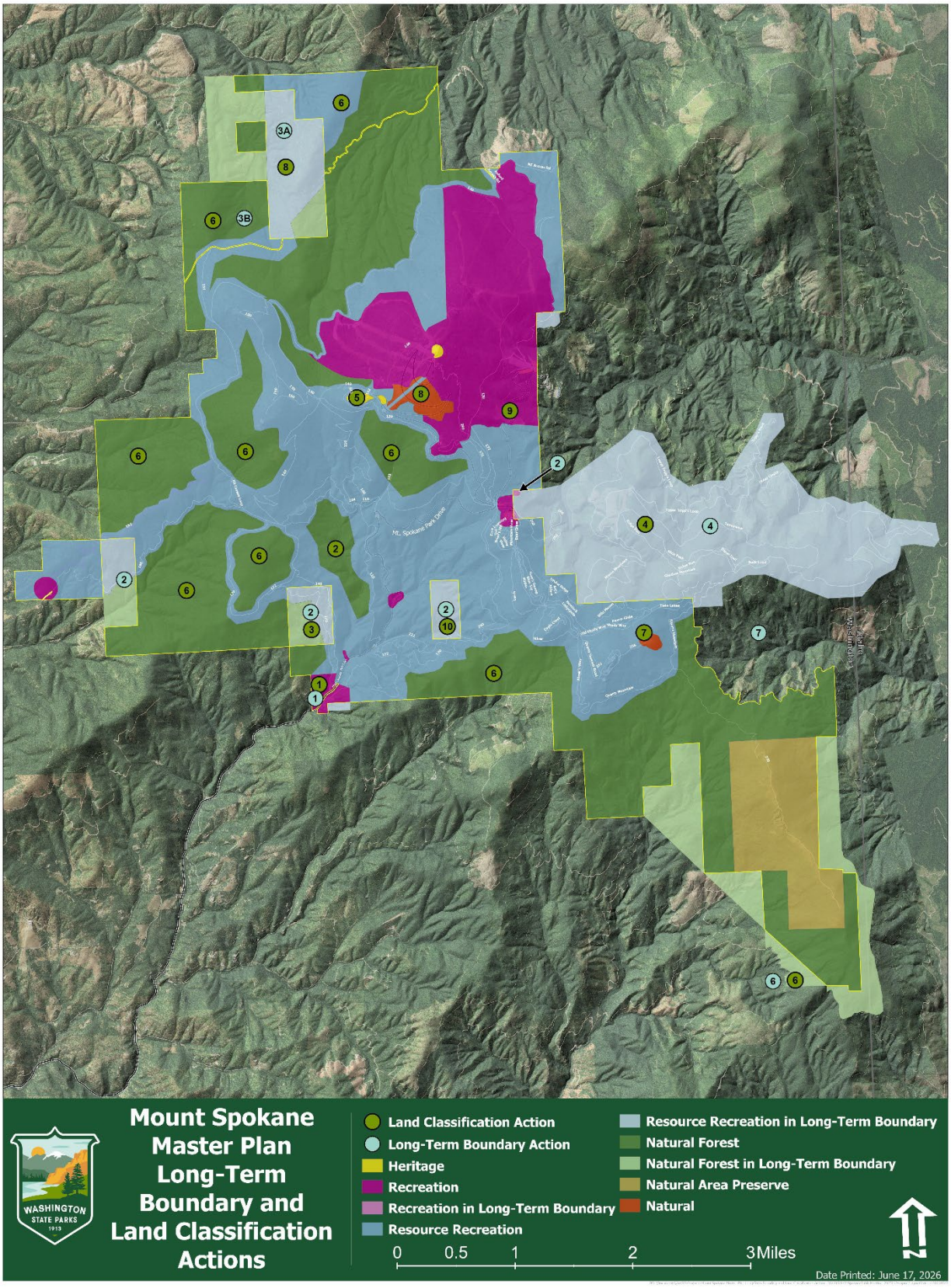
Land Classification and Long-term Boundary

In general, the adjustments provided herein to the 1999-adopted land classifications for the park recognize and consider more recent ecological integrity data that wasn’t available in 1999 and help address issues identified during the planning process.

The long-term boundary (LTB) is generally unchanged with some minor adjustments to address portions of the park now outside of the boundary and eliminate several areas that were identified as “surplus by exchange only” or “acquire by exchange only.”

Mount Spokane Master Plan
Long-term Boundary (LTB) & Land Classification Actions

Action	Map Reference
Expand LTB to include entirety of Bear Creek Lodge property.	LTB 1
Retain current inholdings (Riley Creek, Camp Fosseen, and Mountaineers properties in LTB) and prioritize their acquisition.	LTB 2
Include property within the LTB in the NW corner of the park identified as "Surplus by Exchange Only."	LTB 3A
Affirm and include property within the LTB in the NW corner of the park identified as "Acquire by Exchange Only" but without the "acquire by exchange only" condition.	LTB 3B
Expand LTB to include portion of Nordic Ski Area currently outside of the LTB.	LTB 4
Classify 40-acre Elk parcel as suitable for surplus.	LTB 5
Expand LTB to include Hyssing Spring.	LTB 6
Remove property not included in LTB 4 that was previously in the LTB conditioned as "Resource Recreation Appropriate for Acquisition through Exchange" east of Ragged Ridge.	LTB 7
Expand Recreation Classification around Bear Creek Lodge to recognize future entrance hub.	Land Classification 1
Change Natural Forest Area Classification to Resource Recreation Classification near Trail 140 / Trail 110 to allow realignment flexibility.	Land Classification 2
Change Riley Creek Inholding west of Trail 170 from Resource Recreation Classification to Natural Forest Classification.	Land Classification 3
Classify new Nordic Ski Area lands in the LTB as Resource Recreation.	Land Classification 4
Clearly delineate Heritage Classification around CCC Heritage Area to exclude Trail 130 and connector to Trail 140.	Land Classification 5
Change Resource Recreation Classifications to Natural Forest Area Classifications to better align with ecological integrity assessment data.	Land Classification 6
Change Resource Recreation Classification to Natural Area Classification to match inventoried meadow on Horse Mountain.	Land Classification 7
Change Recreation Classification currently applied on West Summit Meadows to Natural Area where it doesn't conflict with snowmobiling use.	Land Classification 8
Change classification west of Lodge 1 and east of Trail 130 from Recreation to Resource Recreation.	Land Classification 9
Change portions of Camp Fosseen from Recreation to Resource Recreation	Land Classification 10


Mount Spokane Master Plan Long-Term Boundary and Land Classification Actions
Land Classification Action
Long-Term Boundary Action
Heritage
Recreation
Recreation in Long-Term Boundary
Resource Recreation
Resource Recreation in Long-Term Boundary
Natural Forest
Natural Forest in Long-Term Boundary
Natural Area Preserve
Natural
0 0.5 1 2 3Miles
Date Printed: June 17, 2026

Phase 1 Project Actions – Years 1-7+

Project	Description	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Park Gateway Development Phase 1 – Site Redevelopment	Includes: utility upgrades, circulation paths, shelter(s), restrooms, family snow play area, parking, and gateway signage. Demolition of Bear Creek Lodge and other structures onsite. Materials or other aspects of the lodge preserved for future inclusion in the visitor center (e.g. murals). Campground removal and riparian restoration. Interpretive elements (*See attached interpretive plan*). Footprint location / layout determination for future visitor center.	$2,100,000	RCO Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Nordic Center - Selkirk Lodge Modernization and Nordic Center Enhancement	Modernize electrical, renovate restrooms, expand footprint to include classroom space for facilitating lessons and events. Accessibility improvements. Expand and enhance parking. Integrate new interpretive elements in and around lodge. Consider solar and electric charging stations components. Remove vault toilet (and relocated to other location where needed) and keep lodge open year-round for public use. Provide additional storage space in the expansion. ***Note:*** *Cabin pod (See Phase 3) could be included in this scope dependent upon funding availability and staff determination.*	$975,000	Parks Capital Budget
Forest Health Strategy Phase 1 & 2 Implementation	Focus on the SW portion of the park, park boundary lands and areas of high public use. Develop strategy and conduct forest health work to address forest health risks of highest concern, namely wildfire risk, drought-induced mortality, degradation of habitat or ecosystem function, impacts to park users and recreational amenities. Forest health strategies will address natural, cultural, and recreational use considerations. Work may include but is not limited to: non-commercial and commercial forest health thinning, wildfire fuel reduction, shaded fuel breaks, prescribed fire.	$825,000	Parks Operations Budget, decision package, Capital Budget and other external sources (e.g. grants)
Parkwide Emergency Evacuation Plan	Signage should potentially mark each evacuation route; coordination with other emergency responders.	$20,000	Parks Operations Budget
Stage 3 Road Renovation – Linder Road to Snowblaze Road	*Repave this section of road. (See discussion below under "Summit Road Renovation & Roadways" for more detail*).	$4,000,000	Parks Capital Budget
Maintenance Facility Relocation Phase 2	Demolish and remove existing maintenance shop and complete riparian and habitat restoration work.	$1,332,000	Parks Capital Budget
Phase 1 Trail System Enhancement Package	1. Develop a new, multi-use trail designed for bi-directional mountain biking (i.e. International Mountain Bicycling Association ("IMBA") green (easy) edging into "light blue" where topography	$215,000	NOVA, RTP

	and features may not support a 5% or less grade)) generally parallel to the park road from Entrance Trailhead to Lower Selkirk Trailhead (*To be professionally built*). Note: Design of this trail should consider the feasibility of creating an adaptive MTB experience. 2. Develop a new multi-use trail on the northside of park road between Bear Creek Lodge and Entrance Trailhead that connects the lodge, Trail 140, Trail 110, and Entrance Trailhead. 3. Realign Lower Trail 140 to create a more sustainable trail and encourage safe, multi-use while also considering mountain biking needs.		
Phase 1 Wayfinding Enhancement Package	1. Add clear signage at each trailhead identifying the trailhead name and design to be seen clearly from the road. 2. New park gateway signage (*See Park Gateway Development project package*)	$95,000	Parks Operations Budget
Phase 1 Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Projects	1. Replace Vista Cruiser Chairlift with modern chairlift subject to concession agreement update. 2. Develop water storage capacity near Lodge 2. This project could include construction of appurtenant facilities (electrical service, service road) and would be dependent upon water right being obtained from Department of Ecology. 3. Expand parking capacity. 4. New entrance and road signage for Ski and Snowboard Park	$3,500,000	Concessionaire Funded

Phase 2 Project Actions – Years 7-12+

Project	Description	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Park Gateway Development Phase 2 – Visitor Center Development	Construct a new visitor center (~4,000 ft2) to include front desk, lobby, small park store with quick grab and go food options, interpretive space, and park offices (approximately 3), and storage.	$2,500,000	RCO Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Summit Road Renovation – Feasibility and Design Only	Feasibility and 30% design. *See discussion below under "Summit Road Renovation & Roadways."*	$375,000	Parks Capital Budget
Forest Health Strategy Phase 3 Implementation	*See Phase 1 project description for more detail.*	$425,000	Parks Operations Budget, decision package, Capital Budget and other external

			sources (e.g. grants)
Day Road Trailhead Development	This trailhead would provide increased capacity for access for Trail 180/182. Due to topographic constraints, this trailhead may be able to accommodate passenger vehicles only (i.e. no horse trailers).	$575,000	RCO Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, NOVA
Phase 2 Trail System Enhancement Package	1. Develop a new, multi-use trail through / around Linder Ridge (Lower Selkirk Trailhead to Quartz Peak / Horse Mountain). 2. Develop a sustainable trail to Horse Mountain that mitigates impacts to meadow community and potentially connects to Quartz Mountain Trail. 3. Realignment of Trail 100 East (between Trail 103 and Lower Selkirk Trailhead).	$235,000	NOVA, RTP
Phase 2 Wayfinding Enhancement Package	1. Update and upgrade kiosks to include more information about trail experiences and potentially customize zoom extent to include areas together (e.g. Bald Knob and CCC Heritage Area) as one unit. 2. Add enhanced trail information at trailheads, including accessibility info, grades, widths, etc. using HETAP. 3. Create and implement an updated naming convention for trail system. Potentially retain some historic trail numbers or include together with new names.	$115,000 (excluding MS2000 funded projects)	Parks Operations Budget
Phase 2 Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Projects	1. Expand parking capacity for Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. 2. Replace Parkway Express Chairlift subject to concession agreement update. 3. New Vehicle Maintenance Building & Cat Storage 4. Remodel and expand Lodge 2 to include new indoor spaces and facilities.	$5,500,000	Concessionaire Funded

Phase 3 Project Actions – Years 12-18+

Project	Description	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Bald Knob Day Use and Campground Renovation	1. Selectively thin trees at Bald Knob Day Use Area to re-establish historic viewpoint from the picnic shelter. 2. Expand Bald Knob campground to provide additional hike-in/bike-only sites. 3. Develop interpretive components for Bald Knob and CCC heritage area. 4. Slightly expand, renovate parking lot. 5. Develop ABA/Accessible loop trail around Day Use Area. 6. Rehabilitate the Bald Knob Kitchen Shelter to its original 1954 design.	$1,950,000	Parks Capital Budget

Summit Road Renovation (Construction)	1. Placeholder based on A/E project completed in Phase 2. Cost and scope TBD. *See discussion below under "Summit Road Renovation & Roadways."*	TBD	Parks Capital Budget
Develop Rental Cabin "Pod" (Location TBD)	Up to five rental cabins for year-round use. Exact location TBD, but could be near Selkirk Lodge (ski in, ski out). Ideally located where existing services are in place (e.g. well, power, etc.). Should include appurtenant communal features including new comfort station (i.e. not a vault toilet).	$1,100,000	RCO Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Park Road Renovation	This project will address the main park road from park entrance up where needed. This will likely correspond loosely with Stage 1 / Stage 2 road projects that were completed in the early 2000s.	$5,500,000	Parks Capital Budget
Phase 3 Trail System Enhancement Package	1. Upper Trail 140 realignment (*To be professionally built*). 2. Heavy maintenance of Middle Trail 140.	$335,000	NOVA, RTP
Phase 3 Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Projects	1. Expand Learning Area & Terrain 2. Replace Hidden Treasure Chairlift (subject to concession agreement update) 3. Replace Beginner's Luck Chairlift (subject to concession agreement update)	$3,500,000	Concessionaire Funded

Project Detail

Park Gateway Development

With the acquisition of the Bear Creek Lodge property in 2023, it created a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity to reimagine the visitor experience upon entry into the park So much so that this acquisition was a major driver in initiating development of this master plan. The gateway development project's primary focus is on creating a highly functional and positively impactful visitor arrival experience. The current park office is often bypassed by visitors due to its distance from the entrance to the park and its appearance as a house. It lacks the built-in visitor orientation amenities found at other visitor centers as well other services desired by the community (e.g. interpretive information, gift shop, snacks and sundries). The new park gateway at Bear Creek Lodge will clearly communicate that visitors have arrived, provide an attractive design in keeping with the backyard wilderness theme and offer amenities that cater to a high-quality visitor experience.

The Park Gateway Development project is envisioned as two phases:

- **Phase 1** - the first phase involves design of the entire site, including determining the location, footprint, and initial space programming for the future visitor center; demolishing all existing structures including Bear Creek Lodge, salvaging aspects of the lodge (if feasible) to incorporate into the site's redevelopment, including the future visitor center. All site utilities will be updated to support gateway functions, including water system, septic, electrical, and other needs. Parking improvements, circulation pathways (accessible when feasible), group gathering space for programming (e.g. small amphitheater), shelter(s), and heating elements for winter use (e.g. fire pits or stone fireplace incorporated into shelters) are also envisioned. Potential grading and associated improvements to create a snow play area (tow rope and supporting infrastructure will be removed) will be completed. The campground will be decommissioned and possibly replaced with a

day use picnic area. The pedestrian bridge across Deadman Creek will be replaced with an accessible alternative. Clear wayfinding signage and a new, grander gateway sign signifying the park entrance is envisioned to be included. The project could potentially include "daylighting" the stream which is flowing underneath the former snowmobile staging area, restoring riparian habitat and potentially installing associated interpretation. This area should also include site lighting, including parking lot lights and possibly some level of lighted pathways around the future visitor center. *See Interpretive Plan for interpretive features to be included.*

- **Phase 2** – the second phase focuses on design and development of a fully programmed visitor center. The visitor center is envisioned to be energy efficient and visually communicate its function as a visitor center. Within the building, multiple park offices will be included (approximately 3), a front / information desk, lobby, small park store that includes basic "grab and go" food and beverage options, an interpretive space (*See Interpretive Plan for more detail on interpretive features*) and orientation information that communicates park recreation opportunities, facilities and mapping information to guide visitor experiences. It's envisioned that Phase 1 will be constructed around the visitor center footprint, requiring minimal Phase 2 site improvements beyond the immediate area around the visitor center. Inclusion of storage space to support the operation of the gateway and park as part of this project should also be considered.

Nordic Center

As one of the most visited locations of the park, the Nordic Center is more than the lodge itself; it is a central hub for parking and staging of multiple recreation activities in both winter and the less busy summer months. The need for additional space and upgraded amenities (e.g. electrical, restroom, wifi) has been known for some time; some preliminary design exploration has already taken place. The lodge and parking area is typically at or beyond capacity on peak winter weekends. This project envisions expanding the footprint of the building to include a large classroom space to support continued youth programming and events. The project also envisions renovating the existing bathrooms and making them available (along with the lodge) for year-round use, updating the electrical system, and making other functional improvements to the lodge (including septic system).

As with the gateway project, there is a need to include additional storage space and a new woodshed. It is anticipated that the existing CXT restrooms would be removed (replaced by year-round restrooms within the lodge) and the lodge expansion occur on that side of the lodge. Building up and replacing the roof with a shed-style roof (sloping to the south) would also be considered.

Parking continues to be a major constraint on busy winter weekends. This project will also contemplate ways to design and build additional parking capacity together with accessibility improvements to the lodge, accessible parking stalls, and interpretive features (*See Interpretive Plan*). There are two Selkirk parking areas. The upper parking area is used primarily by Nordic skiers, to provide easy access to those using the Center and Nordic ski trails. The future design of the building and adjacent areas will also consider design options for improving parking capacity at the lower Selkirk lot. This area is used by snowmobilers, snowshoers and as overflow for Nordic skiers and those seeking other winter activities.

Design development for the larger Nordic center and parking areas should also consider future development of the Phase 3 identified cabin "pod" project (feasibility, location, utility needs, etc.). and the If the project budget allows, this aspect could proceed beyond design development.

Summit Road Renovation & Roadways

Summit Road provides access to its namesake. The summit is a popular summer attraction for visitors and a necessity for park management, to serve summit infrastructure including communication tower lease sites and the Vista House. The road demonstrates early signs of failure and requires annual maintenance. While closing Summit Road to public vehicle traffic was an option discussed during the master planning process, the feedback received was clear that retaining this access is important for the visitor experience and should be a continued priority for the park. However, there is not enough information at this time to make an informed decision about the preferred design, timing and amount and sources of funding. For example, it's unclear whether reconstruction of the entire road would be feasible if additional safety improvements (e.g. widening, guard rails, etc.) were to be required. As such, the project is envisioned in, at minimum, two phases:

- **Summit Road Renovation (Feasibility & Design Only)** – Feasibility and up to 30% design. This project would allow for an in-depth exploration of the road's deficiencies, needs, and costs to reconstruct it. Once completed, State Parks leadership may need to consider several options, including:
    - Making investments to upgrade the entire roadway, portions thereof, and/or phasing such improvements (essentially maintaining current level of service).
    - Closing the road to public vehicle access permanently and partnering with the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire to operate a summer seasonal lift for pedestrian access only (re: no mountain bike shuttle access). It's unclear at this time as to whether this would adequately address park accessibility needs.
    - Grinding up the asphalt to create a crushed rock surface and closing the road to public vehicle access but operating a shuttle to provide public access to the summit.

  While the goal should be to maintain public vehicle access to the summit, Washington State Parks will also need to recognize and balance other needs within the park and the park system. With 75 percent of recreational use at the park occurring over the winter (when the road is closed), it may not make strategic sense to retain this road for public access over investing in other aspects of the park that support a greater amount of the park's visitation.
- **Summit Road Renovation (Construction)** – This project is a "placeholder" anticipating a future project informed by the feasibility and design only project described above.

Other roadway needs include repaving Mount Spokane Park Drive between Linder Road and the Snowblaze Condominium Road. This is currently on Washington State Parks' Capital Budget list as an unfunded project – potentially to be funded in the 2027-2029 Capital Budget. This project should consider other improvements, including pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection with Summit Road as well as design considerations adjacent to Lodge 1, including future driveway approaches and curb cuts. In addition, Washington State Parks will need to consider addressing the park road lower down the mountain where the road was renovated in the early 2000s and will likely reach useful "end of life" prior to the expiration of this plan.

Funding Discussion: The park's road system serves other private parties including Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, communications tower lessees, and a private development consisting of the Snowblaze Condominiums and Snowblaze Recreational Tracts (several dozen privately owned parcels). However, these users have no responsibility to help fund road maintenance and improvements; this is solely the responsibility of Washington State Parks, as detailed in the table below.

Grantee or Beneficiary	Year	Annual Road Maintenance Funding	Details
Mt. Spokane Chairlift, Inc.	1971	$0.00	Easement granted by Washington State Parks to Mt. Spokane Chairlift, Inc. for ingress and egress on Mount Spokane Park Drive to benefit the downhill ski and snowboard park, Snowblaze Condominiums, and Snowblaze Recreational Tracts. No provision or requirement for road maintenance or road maintenance funding was included at that time or has since been negotiated.
Telecommunications Tower Lessees (Mult)	Various	Starting at $500 per lease, 3% annual increase	Each lease has a similar "Road Use Fee" provision that accounts for this. These funds are deposited and used statewide vs. being dedicated for road maintenance at Mount Spokane.
Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park	1997	$0.00	Concession agreement provides for annual concession payments, but no specific or dedicated road maintenance funding.

Fees collected (e.g. Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park), are not used to benefit seasonal and long-term road maintenance. In addition, Spokane County Public Works reaffirmed (in 2025) the County's position in 1975 that it has no maintenance responsibility with regards to the park's roadways. County taxes paid by private parcel owners served by the park's roadways are not available to Washington State Parks. Therefore, it is the recommendation of this master plan that Washington State Parks explore and consider allocating a portion of park-generated revenue to a dedicated road maintenance fund for Mount Spokane State Park. since the park is uniquely positioned to be supported by said revenue streams versus exclusively dependent on the capital budget process or other extremely competitive funding sources.

Bald Knob Campground and Day Use Area

This project would provide for the renovation of the campground, additional leveling and adjustment of sites, adding modern campground features such as a camp kitchen for washing dishes and a small "nature play" playground, as well as creating more separation between the campground and the day-use area. This is a rustic campground and should continue to be managed in this way – meaning no full-service hook-up sites with the exception of a new campground host site.

On the south side of the day-use parking lot, approximately eight new walk-in- only campsites with access paths will be added. These are intended to be located generally where old sites previously existed with minimal disturbance to the surrounding landscape. An option considered during the planning process was for these sites to be standard, drive-in sites. However, given the amount of site disturbance required and additional cost, the proposed walk-in sites are more aligned with the overall park vision (e.g. rustic, backyard wilderness), the site's constraints, and the limited return-on-investment (ROI) the campground provides given the limited camping season at the site's higher elevation.

Other improvements envisioned include renovating or replacing the existing comfort station, renovating (but not likely expanding), the day-use parking lot adding new circulation pathways (accessible where feasible), meadow restoration / protection work, adding interpretive features (*See Interpretive Plan*), and rehabilitating the Bald Knob Kitchen Shelter to its original 1954 design. This aspect would also include selective thinning of trees to the south of the shelter to re-establish the historic viewpoint.

Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park Projects

Please note: These projects are intended to be fully funded by the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire outside of Washington State Parks budget process and designed and constructed in coordination with Washington State Parks. These projects will also be governed by an updated concession agreement (where applicable). Inclusion of these projects within this master plan represents Washington State Parks' conceptual support for these projects. With the approval of this master plan, these projects are envisioned as part of the park's future just as the other projects within this master plan. As each of these projects is funded, it will be required to be further scoped, planned, designed, permitted, and constructed in accordance with an updated concession agreement and applicable laws and policies.

- **Phase 1 Projects** – This phase includes the replacement of the Chair 1 - Vista Cruiser chair lift that could be operated in summer months contingent upon an update to the concession agreement. This master plan does not recommend allowing mountain bike use of the lift due to concerns over long-term sustainability of the upper mountain trails, including Upper 290 and Upper 140. Recently, consultants working with Washington State Parks on design modifications for Upper 290 cited a general rule of thumb that 10 percent of the original construction cost for a single or double black diamond-rated mountain bike trail should be budgeted annually for maintenance. Washington State Parks is not currently nor has it historically been able to provide this level of financial support for trail maintenance and is not expected to change in the future. In addition, mountain bike lift access may not be consistent with the park vision identified in this master plan – as a rustic, backyard wilderness, not a recreation destination. Hence, the plan is clear that no expansion beyond pedestrian-only summer lift access should be considered without significant parameters in place to protect the park's resources, including its trails. Where possible, the historic Vista Cruiser lift chairs should be preserved and integrated into the design of new facilities and/or interpretive features to celebrate the park's history – the advent of chairlifts by the Spokane-based Riblet Tramway Company.

  The water storage project is an essential element of sustaining the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park. It will provide adequate water pressure to meet current building code requirements for fire suppression systems (e.g. sprinklers). This will be essential for expansion of Lodge 2 as described below. This project is dependent upon obtaining a water right or by modifying an existing water right through working with the Washington State Department of Ecology. Washington State Parks will likely play a key role in this – namely in its ownership of any water rights obtained or modified. Included in this project would be necessary appurtenant facilities (e.g. power, buried water pipes, minimal service road). The water storage tank should be located primarily to limit the impact on natural resources and to limit length/scope of appurtenant facilities. Secondarily, the water storage facility may enhance the concessionaire's ability to make snow (a climate change adaptability strategy).

  The other projects in Phase 1 include expansion of parking, which is anticipated to occur near Lodge 1 and new wayfinding signage for the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park.

- **Phase 2 Projects** – Phase 2 includes additional expansion of parking capacity for the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, likely located closer to Lodge 2. This project could be combined with the new vehicle maintenance / storage building that would replace the current building. Upon completion, the current building would be demolished and replaced with an expanded beginner area.

  The replacement of Parkway Express chair lift is currently envisioned as a non-summer operable lift due to lack of existing trail system to serve it and consistent with the expectation that the master plan's new trail projects will be focused on improving existing trails, not expanding the trail system. However, the future operational parameters for this lift are best governed through an updated concession agreement. If new trail construction is considered, the plan recommends that these trails be limited in scope, professionally designed and constructed, with a clear maintenance plan developed and implemented by the concessionaire. The most significant project in this phase is the remodel and/or expansion of Lodge 2 to include new indoor spaces and facilities to meet current and future needs. The building's design and appurtenant facilities should be consistent with the park's aesthetic as much as possible (modern rustic).

- **Phase 3 Projects** – Phase 3 includes several lift replacements (*See above*) and an expanded learning area and terrain where the current vehicle maintenance / storage building is. This latter project could be implemented sooner depending on building removal and relocation as described above.

Recommended Management Actions

Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling on Mount Spokane has been established for decades, but only recently became constrained by the closure of Inland Empire Paper Company land (2010) and effects of climate change, which has severely limited the season in low snow years for certain low elevation trails. In addition, the reconfiguration of the Bear Creek Lodge site into the park's gateway will eliminate the historic snowmobile staging function at the site, restricting staging to Lower Selkirk Trailhead. In consultation with several snowmobile enthusiasts, the master plan provides for continuation and sustainment of snowmobiling at the park, with an overarching goal over the next 20-years of no net loss in the trail system mileage. As such, the master plan provides several actions that move the trail system on average to a higher elevation, replace some of the lost snowmobile staging capacity, and maintains a trail system that is operationally well-functioning and user friendly.

Project or Management Action	Master Plan Phase	Additional Information
Extend snowmobile trail system past Chair 4 to Lodge 2 in coordination with the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire.	1	In coordination with Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire. Contingent upon resources available to groom trail extension and snow conditions.
Eliminate snowmobile staging for Bear Creek Lodge site	1	This area has and will continue to be closed to snowmobile staging to accommodate plans for future park gateway.

Install public webcam on Lower Selkirk Trailhead and consider other "minimal effort-moderate impact" actions to preserve parking capacity for snowmobile staging.	1	A major pinch point in the system, this parking lot is the main (and currently only) staging area. It's also in high demand on weekends for visitors planning to snowshoe.
Discontinue snowmobiling on Trail 120 (Lower Selkirk Trailhead to Bear Creek Lodge)	1	Trail 120 hasn't been groomed for several years. Snowmobiling can be discontinued immediately.
"Connect the Loop" extending snowmobile trail from Lodge 2 to Lower Selkirk Trailhead parallel to park road	1 & 2	This corridor would be established in coordination with
Develop Day Road Trailhead as additional staging area	2	This secondary staging area will help alleviate some pressure on Lower Selkirk Trailhead and replace capacity lost from Bear Creek Lodge. Design should be coordinated with Spokane County Public Works to ensure that it's designed to meet their snowplows' turning radii and that road plowing will be extended to new trailhead parking lot.
Add Trail 180 / Day Road to Snowmobile Trail System	2	Upon completion of Day Road Trailhead.
Discontinue snowmobiling on Trail 170 (Bear Creek Lodge to Smith Gap Warming Hut)	2	Upon addition of Trail 180 / Day Road or should snow levels stay consistently above Trailhead 170 to prevent grooming for three consecutive years.
Acquire land within long-term boundary along "Blanchard Divide" primarily for snowmobiling	Multiple	This area designated as Resource Recreation would be primarily acquired to expand snowmobiling north to higher elevation areas and replace trail mileage lost through discontinuance of Trail 170 and 120.

Paragliding

A request to allow paragliding at Mount Spokane was made during the master planning process. The proposal appealed to State Parks to evaluate the potential for launching from the summit of the mountain. For the following reasons, paragliding at Mount Spokane State Park is not supported:

- The non-developed area at the summit hosts a rare plant community, which is sensitive to human activity and is to be protected from trampling and other human-caused impacts, consistent with the Commission-approved Natural Resource Policy.
- The developed parking area, which would not be impacted by the rare plant community, is not close enough to the edge of the mountain for launching. In addition, this is a small footprint and already is constraining to accommodate vehicles and pedestrian access. With anticipated population growth and increase in visitation, the already limited summit parking area and access to Vista House will be

further impacted. It is an area that will be redesigned to improve vehicle circulation and pedestrian access.
- The vision for Mount Spokane and the focus of this master plan is to enhance and improve existing recreation activities and limit the development of new uses and facilities.

There are other locations outside of Mount Spokane State Park where paragliders can go and engage in this activity.

Communications Towers

While the authors identified communication towers (and their associated leases) as an issue that may need to be resolved through this planning process, it was determined that the scope of that effort fell outside of the scope and resources of this master plan. Therefore, the master plan includes several high-level recommendations to further explore:

- Further consolidation of leases and no expansion of lease footprints or buildings with a long-term goal of reducing tower infrastructure on the summit.
- Eliminate and/or adjust rodent control measures used by tower lessees to avoid impacts to pika and other native species.
- Direct a meaningful percentage of annual tower lease revenue to a dedicated road fund for Mount Spokane State Park to support roads that facilitate tower access.

Conservation Buffer

Conservation and protection of lands and habitats connected to and outside of the long-term boundary will help sustain long-term species biodiversity and habitat connectivity to the park. As such, Washington State Parks has an interest in seeing lands outside of the long-term boundary protected through third-party led and funded conservation easements and/or fee simple acquisition. Washington State Parks will work closely with third parties like the Inland Northwest Land Conservancy to expand protected lands around the park so they can continue to support biodiversity within the park.

Erosion

Mount Spokane has soils and conditions that make the area highly susceptible to erosion. Sediment loading from erosion increases turbidity in creeks, reducing light penetration and degrading aquatic habitat. Sediment is identified as a major nonpoint pollutant by the Department of Ecology. Hydrologic alteration from increased runoff volumes and higher peak flows that are often associated with impervious surfaces accelerates streambank erosion, causes channel incision, and reduces floodplain function. Elevated sediment levels can also exacerbate flooding, as occurred during the 2008 event at Mount Spokane. It is recommended that existing unvegetated areas, such as parking lots and ski runs, be evaluated for improvements to limit runoff, and that new projects account for Mount Spokane's higher erosion risk during planning and development.

Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve

Action	Detail
Continue to allow compatible, "controlled" low-impact recreational use consistent with the NAP's management goals under an adaptive management model.	• Maintain sustainable, hiker only trail between Quartz Mountain Trail and the high point of Ragged Ridge. • Install a "gating" feature such as two rail fencing with opening at the saddle between Quartz Mountain Trail and Ragged Ridge or closer to junction with Quartz Mountain Trail • Install signs to educate and inform visitors about significance of the NAP, appropriate public use of the NAP (recreation is secondary to resource management and protection) and how to report issues. Highlights to include information about potential recreation impacts (e.g. non-native species, trampling). • Permitted recreational use and other NAP management actions will be reviewed and changed based on observed impacts to natural resources.
Monitor and preserve plant community health.	• Consider and implement recommendations in Natural Area Preserve Management Plan (2002). • Update invasive species section of the plan and include any additional management activities to address invasive species. • Identify baseline for natural resources, to be evaluated annually to determine level of impacts from recreation. • Develop and implement a fuels management plan.
Monitor recreation use and impacts	• Install visitor monitors and tools to understand level of use. • Implement a QR code registration process to track types of recreation and numbers of seasonal visitors. • Establish an annual review and assessment program to evaluate the impacts of recreational use. • Integrate the NAP into interpretive programming and materials. • Explore community science program for data collection and voluntary stewardship.

Ragged Ridge Natural Area Preserve ("NAP") was established in 1985 by the Washington State Parks and Recreation commission to protect the rare plant communities found there. Historically, these plants communities – in particular high elevation meadows - were threatened by illegal, off-road vehicle ("ORV") use, noxious weed introduction, and encroachment from trees. In recent years, Washington State Parks has been successful in reducing the amount of illegal ORV use by placing significant material (logs) onto roads and motorized trails leading into the area from the south and east.

The Ragged Ridge NAP Management Plan (2002) recognizes that appropriate, low-impact public access "…dovetails with the restoration and protection measures outlined [in the plan]" and that such recreation

should be in a "controlled" manner. Staff has interpreted this to mean some form of self-registration, educational signage to support continued stewardship of the NAP, and limited and compatible low impact recreational activities (e.g. hiking). Per the management plan, only one recreational trail running through the northern 40% of the NAP should be allowed, which represents the existing trail between Quartz Mountain Trail and the high point on Ragged Ridge.

Beyond natural resource protection, including continued work to discourage illegal ORV use, hiking, snowshoeing, and Nordic skiing (ungroomed) will continue to be allowed in a "controlled" manner unless an updated NAP Management Plan or other factors forces a modification of Washington State Parks' management of this area. The existing Ragged Ridge Trail described above should continue to be maintained and where unsustainable, modified to create a more sustainable trail. More prominent signage / fencing feature should be added at the saddle between Quartz Mountain Trail and Ragged Ridge to provide education on why Ragged Ridge is important.

Fat Biking

Based on current use and input from the public there is not a lot of demand for fat biking. Given the high demand for other winter sports that compete for parking in particular, fat biking will continue to be allowed on snowmobile trails but is not being expanded.

Trail Type	Fat Biking
Groomed Trails	Snowmobile trail system only*
Ungroomed Trails	Where bikes are allowed

**Fatbiking should not be promoted without parking constraints addressed at Lower Selkirk Trailhead. The capacity constraints could be addressed through limiting this use to weekdays. Regardless, snowmobiling staging should take priority and precedence over parking for fat biking.*

Skijoring

Another question explored by staff was the expansion of skijoring within the Nordic area. Input throughout the master plan's development generally sided against expansion. Given the lack of input supporting expansion, this master plan recommends retaining skijoring in a limited capacity (as currently in place):

Allowed Sunday through Thursday after 12 pm and all day on Wednesday on the following trails:

- Linder Ridge
- Mica Peak
- Lower Tripps
- Upper Tripps (uphill only)

Ski and Snowboard Park

The Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park concessionaire (MS2000) was engaged throughout the master planning process. While the concessionaire submitted project concepts to the project team for consideration, there were also management actions that were discussed. While many of the potential

management actions will be considered through an updated of the concession agreement, the master plan identifies several key aspects that should be addressed:

- Clearly define the boundaries of the concession area.
- Incorporate applicable elements of the PASEA Final Environmental Impact Statement ("FEIS") and associated documents into the concession agreement.
- More clearly describe maintenance responsibilities for the road between Snowblaze Road and Lodge 2.
- Clearly define summer operations.
- Recognize a potential, summer-operable Vista Cruiser chairlift and associated permissions / constraints.
- Consider including architectural / design guidance aligned with the park.
- Recognize snowmobile trail system connectivity through the concession area.
- Retain carpool and trip reduction goals to less impact on park roadways.

Chapter 5: Tribal Engagement

Engagement with Tribes for the master plan was initiated with Dear Tribal Leader Letters ("DTLL") that were sent to the five Tribes. Staff met directly with the Spokane Tribe at the beginning of the process and touched base with Tribal staff periodically when engaged about other projects of Tribal interest. Based on feedback from the Tribes about preferred engagement methods, staff sent information to the Spokane Tribe, Kalispel Tribe, Coeur d'Alene Tribe and Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation at each of the planning steps including:

- Initiating of the master planning effort – June 2024
- Planning Workshop – September 2024
- Alternative Approaches – June 2025
- Preliminary Preferred Alternative – October 2025

Several Tribes responded, indicating interest in being kept informed throughout the process, confirming they would let staff know of any concerns as information was developed. Throughout the process, the Tribes did not provide any comments.

Chapter 6: Public, Stakeholder and Community Engagement

The Mount Spokane Master Plan planning effort kicked off in the spring of 2024 after it was decided to combine it with an update to the Mount Spokane Trails Plan, which was initiated in late 2023. Master planning follows a similar course as the State Parks' Classification and Management Plan (CAMP) process. The products developed from a master plan process differ from traditional CAMP products in providing more detail and specific recommendations for project implementation. This includes timing, cost estimating and sequencing, informed by and aligning with the budget cycle and potential funding sources. Public and community engagement efforts are similar in both approaches, conducting outreach and engagement activities at each of the four CAMP stages:

- Issues Identification
- Explore Alternative Approaches
- Preliminary Preferred Alternative
- Final Preferred Alternative

Each planning process follows similar steps using consistent engagement tools but the outreach strategy is tailored for each park, its location, types of users/visitors and other factors. At the beginning of each process, staff develop a public engagement plan, which can be refined throughout the process as needed. The following summarizes the tools and engagement efforts undertaken for the Mount Spokane Master Plan. Public comment summaries and other materials are included herein (*See Appendix*).

Engagement Methods

Distribution List

A distribution list was developed and used for email contact at each stage in the process. Email was used to alert the public to upcoming meetings and to provide links to the project website and surveys – that were conducted at several times in the process. The distribution list was primarily populated through a "Distribution List Sign-up" form hosted through SurveyMonkey. Throughout the project, more than 130 individuals signed up to received news and notifications regarding the master plan.

Project Webpage

The project webpage was published at the beginning of the project titled "Future Planning for Mount Spokane." The webpage was updated throughout the process, providing a summary of planning and outreach steps, interim products and information about next steps, including upcoming engagement opportunities. As of January 21, 2026, the webpage received 2,413 unique visits and 7,654 total visits (54 percent of visitors visited the page more than once).

Media Relations

News releases were developed for each of the community engagement steps. By request of the local print newspaper (*Spokesman-Review*) and local radio/TV stations (including KHQ and Spokane Public Radio), staff were interviewed at several times throughout the process to provide more details about upcoming public engagement opportunities, what was shared at meetings, and next steps in the process. A main topic of interest throughout the process was the future of Bear Creek Lodge.

Outreach to Underserved Communities

With the agency's emphasis on reaching underserved audiences, staff reached out to a number of organizations, following leads and contacts uncovered through research with other community groups and staff familiar with the community. This led to expansion of the distribution list with several new entities including Peak 7 Adventures, which offers recreation experiences to youth with physical disabilities, Free Rein Therapeutic Riding, and Asians for Collective Liberation. Staff engaged with these groups directly to share information about the planning process, understand their interests and, in addition to keeping them informed throughout the process, put them in touch with other Washington State Parks staff for future partnering opportunities.

Stakeholder Interviews

Prior to the merger of the trail plan project with this master plan, the Trails Program held a number of stakeholder interviews in January 2024. While these interviews were tailored specifically for informing the trail plan, they have also informed the master plan effort. The following organizations and/or recreation interests were interviewed (*See Appendix for more detail*):

Adaptive Recreation Community	Inland Empire Paper Company

Backcountry Horsemen of Washington (Ponderosa Chapter)	The Lands Council
City of Spokane Parks & Recreation	Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park
Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance (Eastern WA Chapter)	Out There Monthly
Spokane Nordic Ski Association	Uphill Ski Community
Spokane Winter Knights Club	Visit Spokane
Fitness Fanatics	Spokane Mountaineers
Washington Trails Association	Inland NW Land Conservancy

Washington State Parks Programs & Park Staff

Throughout the process, the authors engaged with internal staff and programs starting with the initial scoping of the project. In March 2024, the authors met within numerous staff and program representatives to identify the issues that needed to "be solved" by the master plan. These included:

Bear Creek Lodge	Land Classifications	Climate Change
Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park – Physical Environment	Trails – Summer Use	Trails – Winter Use
Trailheads	Snowmobiling	Mountain Biking
Long-term Boundary	Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park – Concession Agreement	Infrastructure Limitations and Capacity
Overnight Accommodations	Nordic Ski Area	Communications Towers

In addition, the authors met throughout the process with a project team of internal subject matter experts ("SME") and Washington State Parks leadership, including briefing the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission's real estate subcommittee on September 19, 2024, and the full commission on November 19th, 2025.

Open Houses, Workshops and Public Meetings

The following section summarizes each of the public engagement opportunities held by staff for the master plan. A complete summary of the input received through these events and online surveys is included in the *Appendix*. The *Appendix* also includes the interim products developed at different stages in the planning process including the Alternatives Report and the Preliminary Preferred Alternative Report to facilitate public engagement.

Each open house, workshop, and public meeting with the exception of the planning workshop had a corresponding online survey for those that couldn't attend in-person. Overall, this "two-pronged" approach for each event was successful, with a significant number of online surveys submitted throughout the process. Overall, the community stayed consistently engaged in the process, as summarized below:

Event	Date / Location	Number of Attendees/ Responses
Project Kick-off & Community Open House	June 1, 2024 / The Wonder Building, Spokane, WA.	75
Community Open House Online Survey	June 2024 / Online	144 responses
Planning Workshop	September / Bear Creek Lodge	34*
Alternatives Open House	June 24th, 2025 / Argonne Public Library	108
Alternatives Online Survey	June 2024 / Online	284 responses
Bear Creek Lodge Alternatives Online Survey	August 2025 / Online	248 responses
Preliminary Preferred Alternative Public Meeting	October 22, 2025 / Shadle Public Library	41

**RVSP required / fixed attendance event.*

Project Kick-off & Community Open House – June 2024

The process kicked off with a community open house in June 1, 2024. This was held in downtown Spokane's Wonder Building, on a Saturday morning (9:00 am – 11:30 am), and was designed with the participation of all Mount Spokane user groups, including: the Mount Spokane Ski and Snowboard Park, Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance, Washington Trails Association, Spokane White Knights, Visit Spokane, Backcountry Horsemen of Washington, Friends of Mount Spokane, Spokane Nordic, and a host of other organizations. Washington State Parks hosted several tables with teams focused on Interpretation, Historic Preservation, Natural Resources, and Community Relations. Each table / station was tasked to pose two questions to visitors:

1. What do you like about "x" aspect (relevant to that table's organization) of the park; and
2. What would you like to see in the future?

In addition to these two questions, attendees were asked to describe Mount Spokane State Park in one word. Together, this input helped to generate a vision statement for the park and to identify high-level aspects of the park to preserve and change.

Beyond scheduling the open house on a weekend morning, which was hoped to be more convenient and thus attract more people than a weekday evening event, staff engaged with Mobius Discovery Center who organized a kids activity table, again with the hope that this would make it more convenient for families to attend.

Planning Workshop – September 2024

With the information gleaned from the open house, staff organized a planning workshop at Bear Creek Lodge with 34 community member volunteers. Participants were selected through an online application process and were organized into groups representing four geographic focus areas of the park (Bald Knob, Quartz, Summit and Basin).

Ahead of the workshop, the authors provided a mandatory project "orientation" to participants to ensure that each participant started with the same baseline understanding of the park, it's constraints, and potential issues to resolve.

The groups were asked to answer questions specific to their area and the overall park, including park vision, long-term boundary, land classification, trails, parking/circulation and other topics. Each group presented their recommendations to the entire group of volunteers and collected additional comments for each focus area. The output from this workshop in the form of projects and action items directly informed the two alternative visions developed in the next step of the process.

Alternatives Open House & Online Survey – June 2025

Based on input from the Planning Workshop and consultation with various project team members, staff developed an Alternatives Report and created two online surveys to solicit feedback. The information was sent to the project distribution list and posted on the project website with links to the surveys. State Parks hosted a public open house at the Argonne Library on June 24, 2025, which was attended by 108 people and collected input about two alternative scenarios: "Community Mountain" and "Recreation Destination."

The results of this stage created a ranked list of projects and project actions that could inform the Preliminary Preferred Alternative.

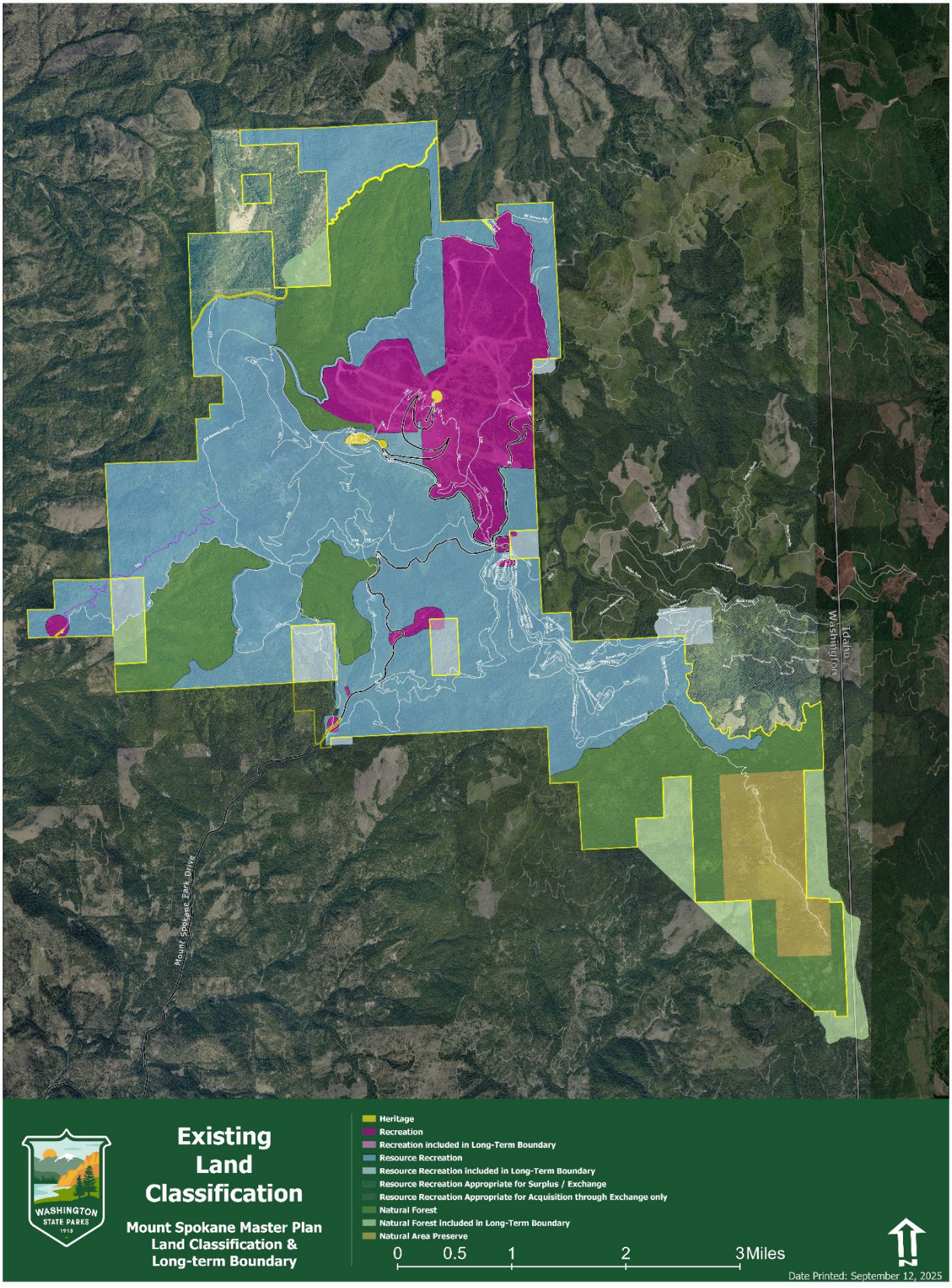
Bear Creek Lodge Alternatives Online Survey – August 2025

Coming out of the Alternatives Open House & Online Survey, results for Bear Creek Lodge were inconclusive. Demolishing Bear Creek Lodge was the lowest-ranked project while renovating the lodge was towards the bottom of the list as well. This led the authors to create a follow-up online survey that provided additional information, including findings from the building assessment completed in January 2025, as well as providing a third option: demolish the lodge and replace with a new visitor center. With 248 responses received, the results of the survey were still inconclusive: approximately an equal number of respondents supported renovation as supported some form of demolition. With that said, there were many written comments provided in the survey that provided additional content for the option they chose, including individuals who had looked into buying the lodge as a business venture and ultimately decided against it because of concern over financial viability.

Preliminary Preferred Alternative Public Meeting – October 2025

Staff presented an overview of the Preliminary Preferred Alternative at a public meeting and collected feedback from email comments, an online survey and through the planning email. There were 41 people who signed in at the meeting at the Shadle Public Library in Spokane. Staff responded to questions and listened to public comments, which included concerns about the future of Bear Creek Lodge and phasing of Selkirk Lodge improvements.

Maps


Mount Spokane Park Drive
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Washington
Existing Land Classification
Mount Spokane Master Plan
Land Classification &
Long-term Boundary
Heritage
Recreation
Recreation included in Long-Term Boundary
Resource Recreation
Resource Recreation included in Long-Term Boundary
Resource Recreation Appropriate for Surplus / Exchange
Resource Recreation Appropriate for Acquisition through Exchange only
Natural Forest
Natural Forest included in Long-Term Boundary
Natural Area Preserve
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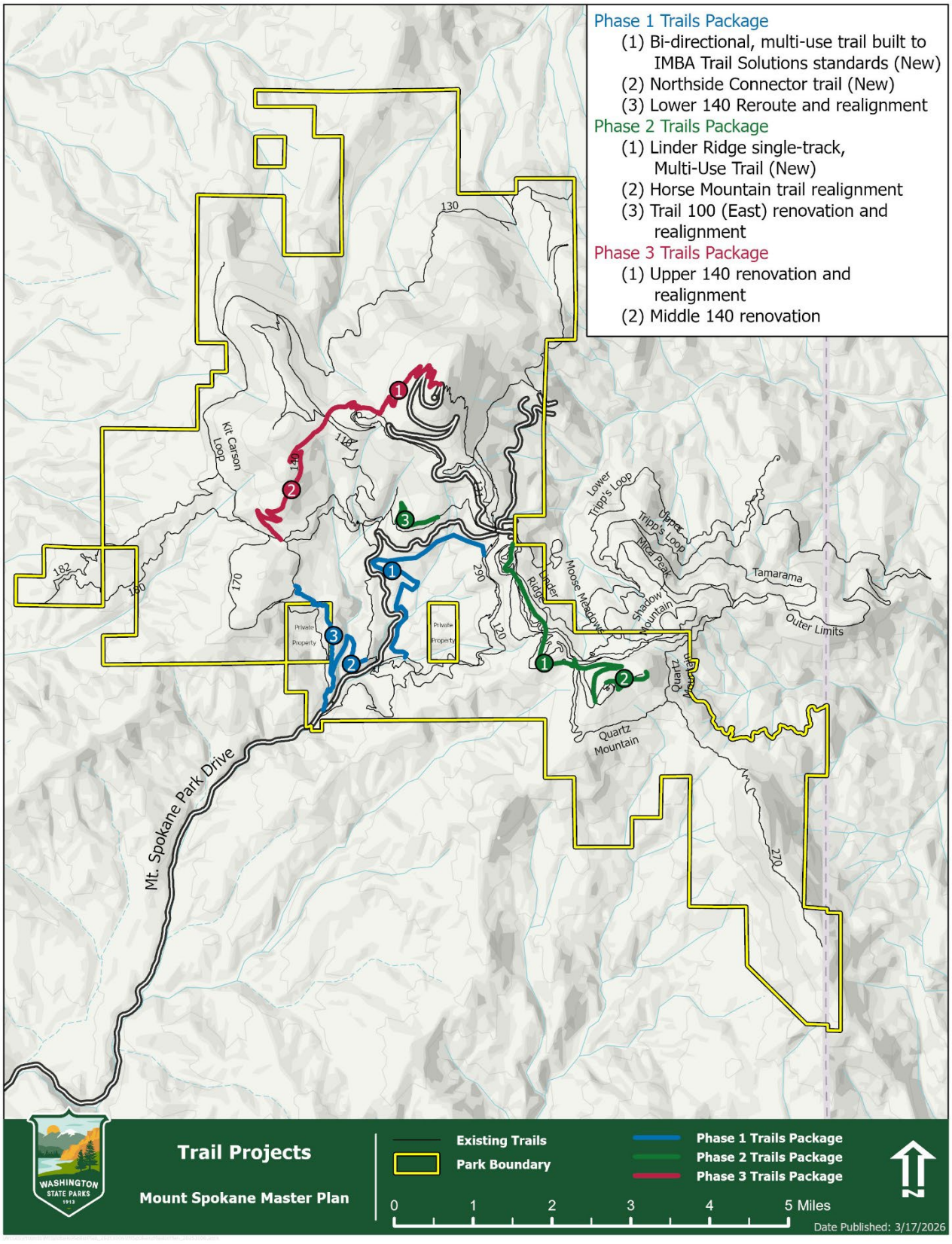
Date Printed: September 12, 2025


Phase 1 Trails Package
(1) Bi-directional, multi-use trail built to IMBA Trail Solutions standards (New)
(2) Northside Connector trail (New)
(3) Lower 140 Reroute and realignment
Phase 2 Trails Package
(1) Linder Ridge single-track, Multi-Use Trail (New)
(2) Horse Mountain trail realignment
(3) Trail 100 (East) renovation and realignment
Phase 3 Trails Package
(1) Upper 140 renovation and realignment
(2) Middle 140 renovation
Kit Carson Loop
Lower Tripp's Loop
Upper Tripp's Loop
Mica Peak
Tamarama
Outer Limits
Shadow Mountain
Moose Meadows
Linder Ridge
Quartz Mountain
Mt. Spokane Park Drive
Private Property
Trail Projects
Mount Spokane Master Plan
Existing Trails
Park Boundary
Phase 1 Trails Package
Phase 2 Trails Package
Phase 3 Trails Package
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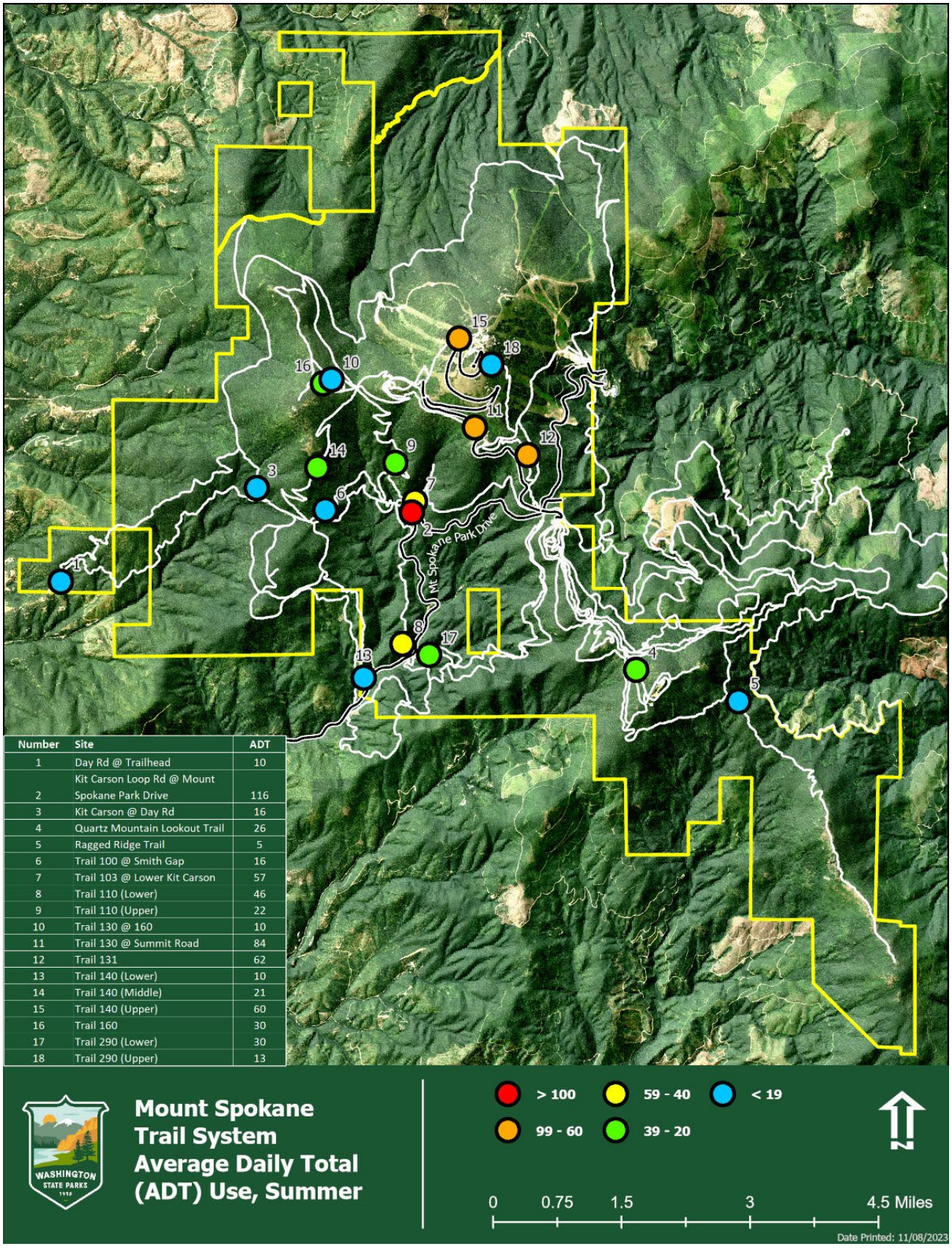
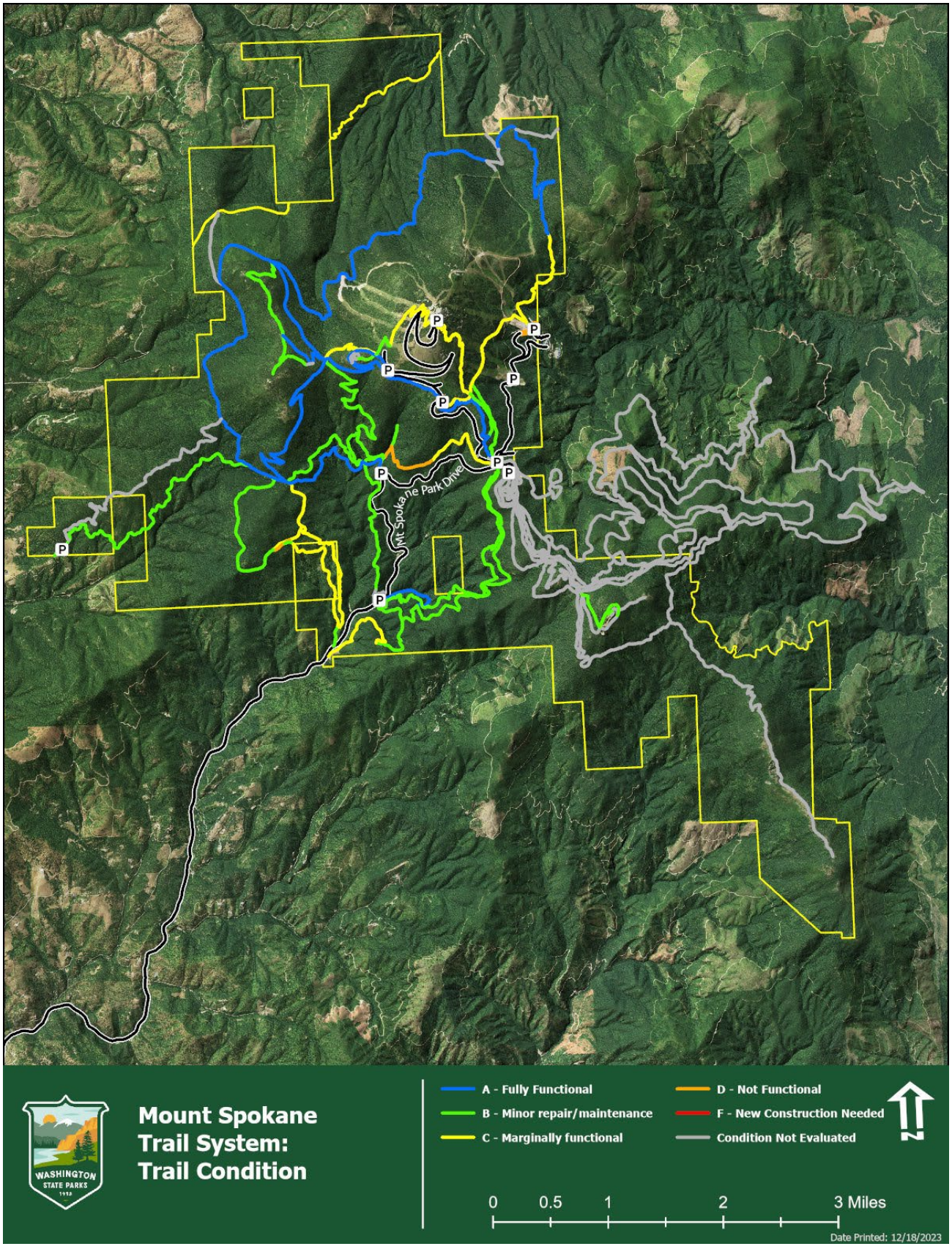
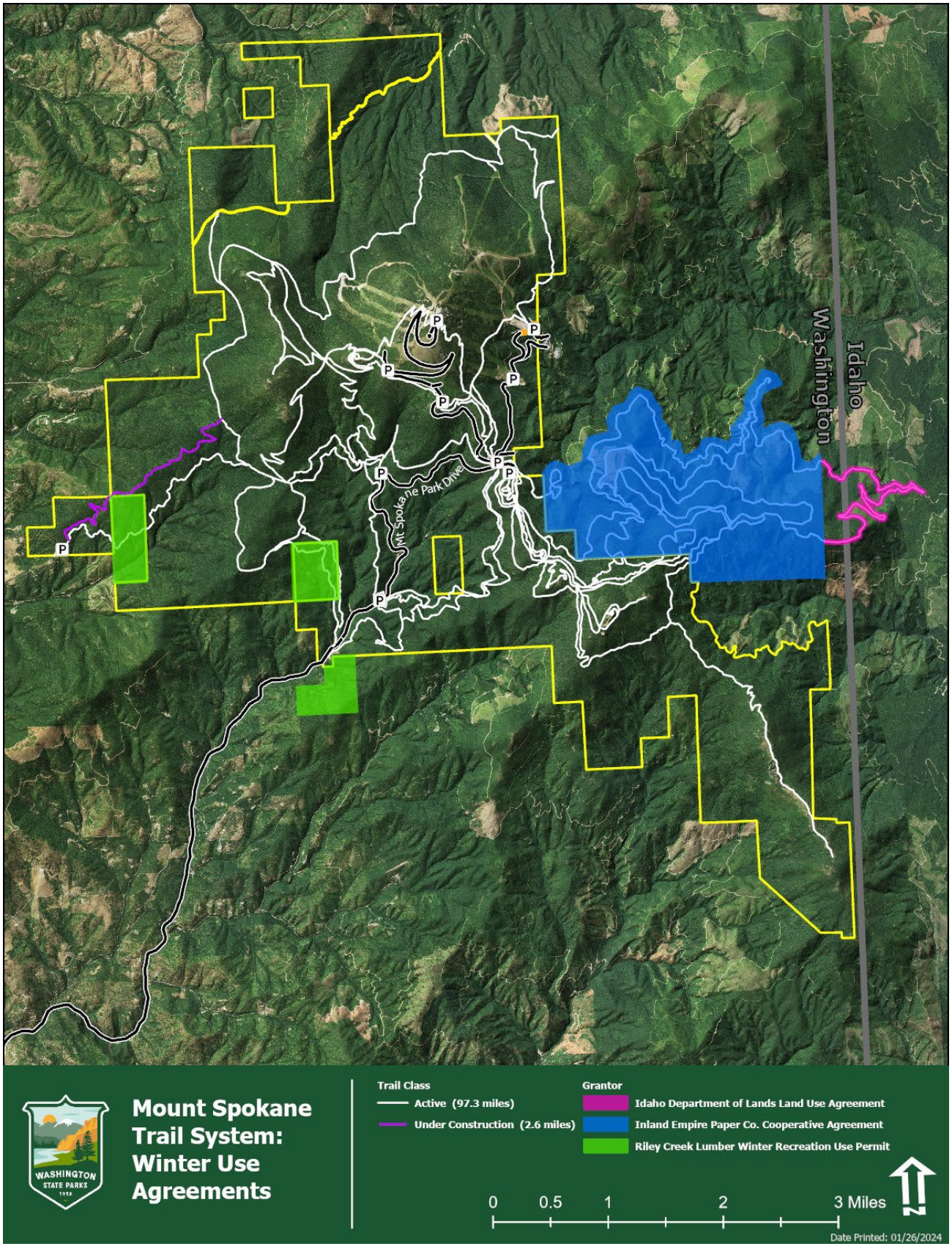
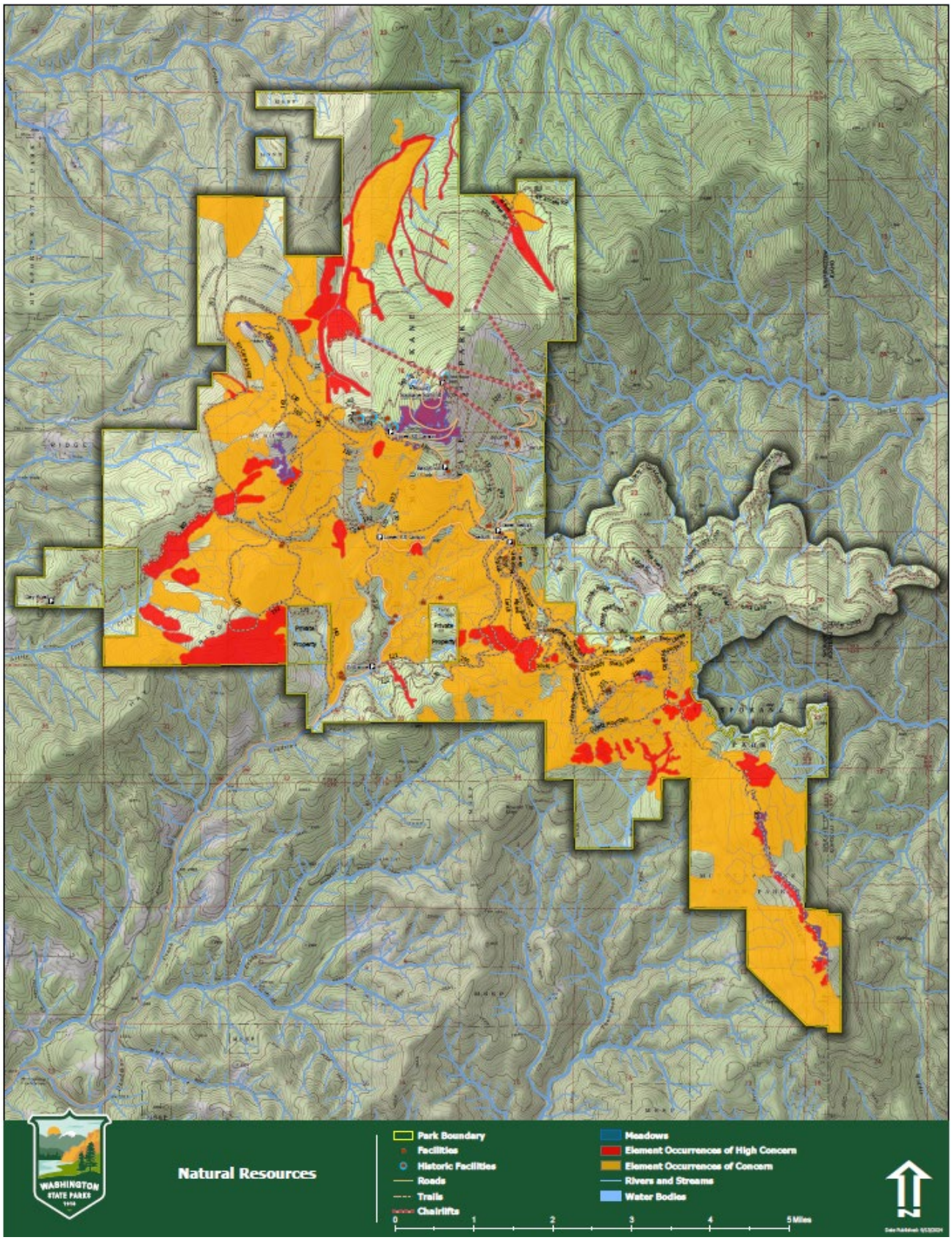
Date Published: 3/17/2026



Number	Site	ADT
1	Day Rd @ Trailhead	10
2	Kit Carson Loop Rd @ Mount Spokane Park Drive	116
3	Kit Carson @ Day Rd	16
4	Quartz Mountain Lookout Trail	26
5	Ragged Ridge Trail	5
6	Trail 100 @ Smith Gap	16
7	Trail 103 @ Lower Kit Carson	57
8	Trail 110 (Lower)	46
9	Trail 110 (Upper)	22
10	Trail 130 @ 160	10
11	Trail 130 @ Summit Road	84
12	Trail 131	62
13	Trail 140 (Lower)	10
14	Trail 140 (Middle)	21
15	Trail 140 (Upper)	60
16	Trail 160	30
17	Trail 290 (Lower)	30
18	Trail 290 (Upper)	13


Mt Spokane Park Drive
P
Mount Spokane
Trail System:
Trail Condition
A - Fully Functional
B - Minor repair/maintenance
C - Marginally functional
D - Not Functional
F - New Construction Needed
Condition Not Evaluated
N
0
0.5
1
2
3 Miles
Date Printed: 12/18/2023


Washington
Idaho
Mt Spokane Park Drive
Mount Spokane Trail System: Winter Use Agreements
Trail Class
Active (97.3 miles)
Under Construction (2.6 miles)
Grantor
Idaho Department of Lands Land Use Agreement
Inland Empire Paper Co. Cooperative Agreement
Riley Creek Lumber Winter Recreation Use Permit
0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles
Date Printed: 01/26/2024


Natural Resources
Park Boundary
Facilities
Historic Facilities
Roads
Trails
Chairlifts
Meadows
Element Occurrences of High Concern
Element Occurrences of Concern
Rivers and Streams
Water Bodies
0
1
2
3
4
5 Miles
N