



CAMPing in Washington State Parks

CAMP

State Parks prepares land use plans through an agency-wide planning system called Classification and Management Planning or CAMP. CAMP is a multi-staged, public participation-based planning process for individual parks that culminates with adoption of park land classifications, a long-term park boundary, and a park management plan. The combination of these deliverables constitutes a land use plan. The CAMP process typically takes ten to fifteen months to complete.

Land Classification

A central part of CAMP involves zoning, or classification, of park lands. State Parks has developed a system of six land classifications: *Recreation Areas*, *Resource Recreation Areas*, *Natural Areas*, *Heritage Areas*, *Natural Forest Areas* and *Natural Area Preserves*. These classifications are defined in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 352-16 and align along a spectrum, ranging from low to high-intensity land uses. For each land classification, the agency Director has developed detailed management guidelines and a use matrix that identifies specific activities and facilities permitted. By classifying park lands, the agency is able to consciously achieve a balance between protecting park resources and providing a variety of recreational opportunities for park visitors.

Long-Term Park Boundary

A second product of CAMP is adoption of a long-term park boundary. This is a frequently misunderstood aspect of park planning. One of the purposes of delineating a long-term boundary is to take a big picture look at lands surrounding the park that, independent of ownership, may advance the conservation and recreation mission of the park. Additionally, the long-term park boundary is used to identify surrounding lands with which State Parks would like to advance shared management goals. The long-term park boundary also considers whether agency-owned property should be retained or be considered surplus to park needs.

Including privately owned property in a long-term boundary gives Commission direction to staff to work with nearby landowners on cooperative management or potential land transactions. Transactions may range from simple agreements, to recreation and conservation easements, and sometimes even to agency purchase of property.

Park Management Plan

The third product of CAMP is preparation of a park management plan. Park management plans are relatively simple narrative documents that set park-wide management objectives, and outline specific approaches and prescriptions in response to issues identified through the planning process. Management plans approach issues through categories that include cultural resources, natural resources and recreational use.