



House Bill 24:

An Act Creating the State Parks and Recreation Board

House Bill 24 passed in the 63rd Session of the Montana Legislature in 2013, and creates the quasi-judicial State Parks and Recreation Board. The bill provides powers, duties, and rulemaking authority to the Board to oversee state parks, primitive parks, state recreational areas, public camping grounds, state historic sites, state monuments, and other heritage and recreational resources.¹

State Parks and Recreation Board (per MCA 23-1-101)

It is the purpose of the Department, the Parks Division, and the State Parks and Recreation Board to conserve the scenic, historic, archaeological, scientific, and recreational resources of Montana, provide for their use and enjoyment, and contribute to the cultural, recreational, and economic life of Montanans and their health. The Board's duties include:

Policies & Directions

- Management, protection, conservation, and preservation of these properties, lands, and waters and their appropriate role relative to tourism and the economic health of Montana
- Coordinate, integrate, promote, and further opportunities for education and recreation, including but not limited to camping, hiking, snowmobiling, off-highway vehicle use, horseback riding, mountain biking, boating, and swimming

Rulemaking

- Establish rules for use of these properties and lands in the interest of public health, public safety, public welfare, and protection of property and public resources in regulating recreation

Coordination & Engagement

- Work with local, state, and federal agencies to evaluate, integrate, coordinate, and promote recreational opportunities statewide
- Encourage citizen involvement in management planning for state parks and other properties, lands, and waters
- Work with the Fish & Wildlife Commission to maintain hunting and angling opportunities on these lands and waters

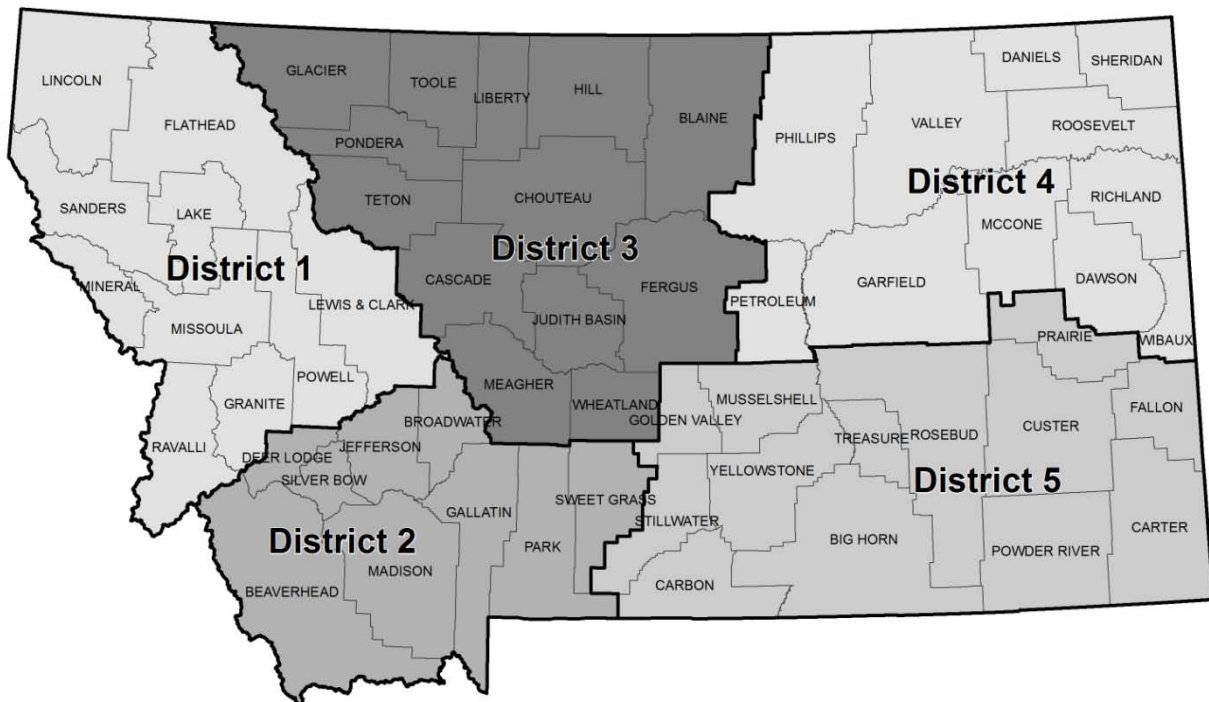
Review & Approval Authority

- All acquisitions and transfers of properties, lands, and waters by the Parks Division
- Parks Division budget prior to transmittal to the office of budget and program planning
- Construction projects with estimated cost of more than \$5000

¹ Pursuant to Title 23, chapter 1, and Title 23, chapter 2, parts 1, 4, and 9.

Board Composition

The State Parks and Recreation Board is a citizen-led board appointed by the governor that consists of five members, one member from each of the following districts:



The appointments will be made solely for the wise management of state parks and outdoor recreational resources, and each board member must be informed or experienced in the conservation and protection of state parks, heritage resources, natural resources, tourism promotion and development, or outdoor recreation. In seeking members, the Department will advocate for a diversity of perspectives, expertise, backgrounds, and ages in order to best represent the diverse needs and desires of recreationists in Montana.

Board meetings will be held quarterly, or as needed for business, at times and places considered appropriate. The Director of FWP acts as the Secretary to the Board, and a record will be kept of all businesses transacted.

Scope & Priorities

The Board will set policies, direction, and rulemaking for state parks, heritage and recreational resources in Montana as provided under the authority of the Department. The Board will also address issues of statewide importance, and coordinate with local, state, and federal agencies to integrate and promote recreational opportunities across the state.

The Board is expected to deal with a diversity of issues, and will be providing guidance and policy-making that enhances and furthers recreation for both residents and visitors. Once established, the Department will embark on a strategic planning process with the Board to assess and evaluate the health of the state parks system, and provide an updated vision that works towards a more sustainable and stronger recreation landscape.