

**STATE OF MONTANA STATE PARKS**  
**2019**



**MONTANA FWP**

**THE OUTSIDE IS IN US ALL.**



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*All photos courtesy of Montana State Parks and the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development*

**FLATHEAD LAKE STATE PARK – WAYFARERS** REVIEWED NOVEMBER 1, 2016

**BEAUTIFUL STATE PARK** This park has number of lakeside picnic benches, great camping spots and a boat ramp. Forested and the lake is shallow enough for small children to wade and play in safely.



# INTRODUCTION



## PARKS SYSTEM OVERVIEW

Montana State Parks manages 55 parks across Montana. These parks represent the diversity of Montana's natural, historic and cultural assets enjoyed by millions of people annually. They provide access to world class outdoor recreation opportunity through water-based recreation such as boating and fishing; as well as camping, day use and trails. They also preserve important historic and cultural sites, many of which are recognized on the National Historic Register and as National Historic Landmarks. These sites are important to both Montana and our nation's history.

Montana State Parks balances the protection of these resources while welcoming over 2.5 million in-state and out-of-state visitors annually. We balance public use with resource protection through public involvement in developing management decisions. We encourage stewardship and enjoyment of these places by providing engaging education programs that reveal the value and meaning of a site's natural and cultural heritage. We provide opportunities for people to volunteer and develop connections between parks and nearby communities as well as working with our community neighbors to develop

state parks as strong assets that contribute to the state tourism economy.

The Parks Division is committed to achieving fiscal credibility in the eyes of the legislature, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) and the citizens of Montana. This commitment will be aided by the legislative audit, performed in 2017 as well as the zero-based budgeting exercise, that was mandated by the 2017 legislative session.

As stated on the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Vision & Guide 2016-2026, our agency is committed to public service, resource management and capacity building for effective management of resources. FWP unites people to help protect the integrity of the Montana experience outdoors.

The Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks core values are exemplified in the "brand beliefs" of the Montana FWP 2018 Brand Book. The beliefs are that we perpetuate opportunity outside, we strive for balance, we focus on integrity, and bringing people through inclusion. These beliefs are what unites us as an agency and as Montanans and shows that "The Outside is in Us All".

## MONTANA STATE PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

In 2013, upon recommendation from the 63rd Montana Legislature, Governor Bullock created the Montana State Parks & Recreation Board. The Montana State Parks & Recreation Board sets policies and provides direction for the management, protection, conservation and preservation for Montana's state parks and associated recreational resources. Board members represent five districts across Montana and are appointed by the governor.

## MONTANA STATE PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Parks Division continues to execute the Montana State Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan: Charting a New Tomorrow. Throughout this report are examples of how elements of the strategic plan have been implemented and how those elements have impacted the park system and the public.

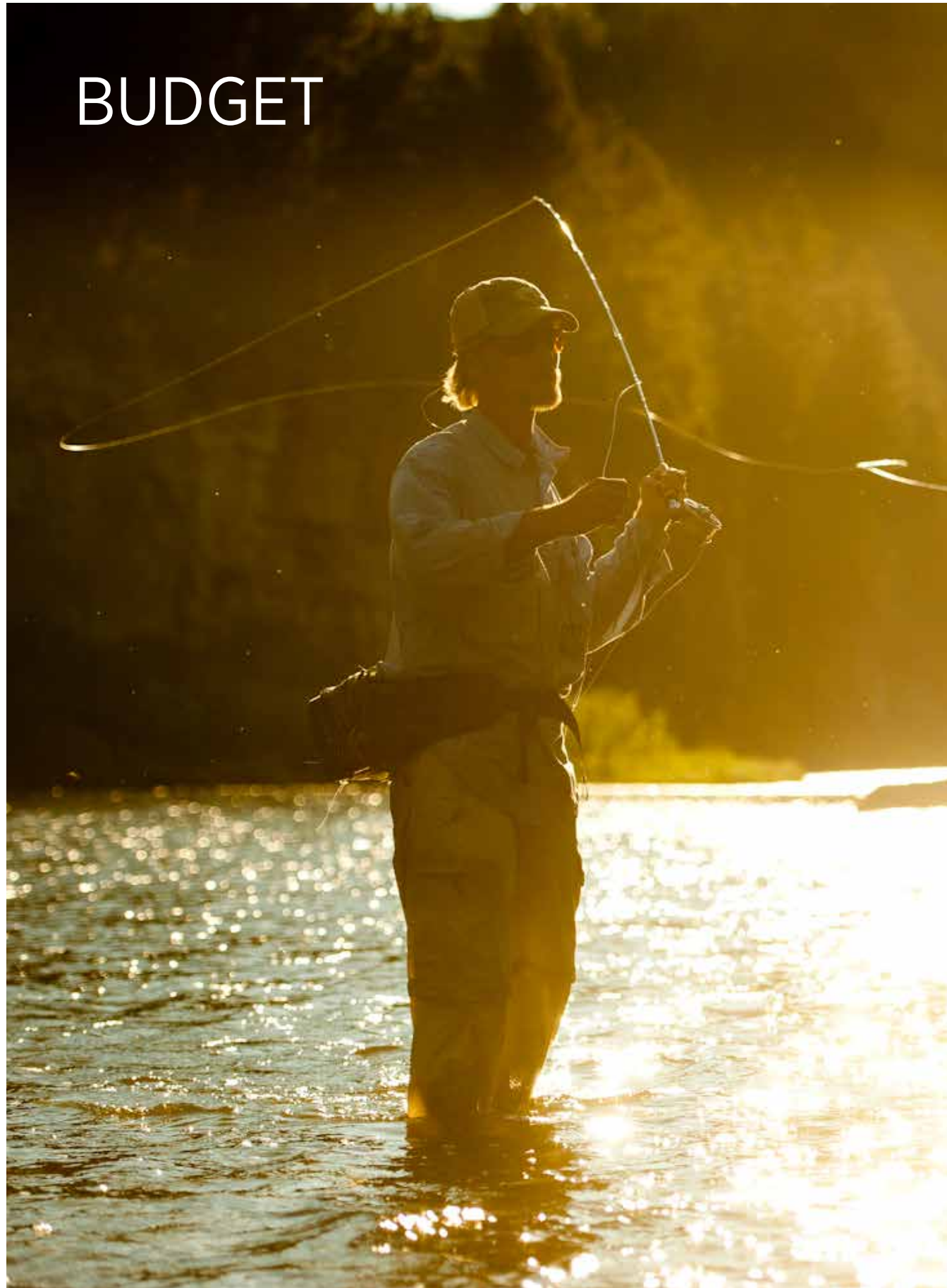
- Manage significant, relevant, and accessible parks and programs in a manner that is consistent with available resources.
- Develop diversified and sustainable funding for Montana State Parks and statewide recreation Programs.
- Enrich the visitor experience for all consistent with the brand promise.
- Foster strategic partnerships and an engaged constituency with visitors and key stakeholders that have a shared interest in the success of the Montana State Park system.
- Heighten awareness and recognition for the Montana State Parks brand through consistent engagement.

## PARKS IN FOCUS

In 2018, Governor Bullock announced the Parks in Focus Commission. This commission consists of twelve representatives with diverse backgrounds, from across Montana, as well as three commission staffers. The commission has convened four public meetings across Montana and is working on recommendations to address systemic needs in the State Parks system, as outlined in the Montana State Parks Strategic Plan Charting a New Tomorrow. The core strategic needs are: develop new and sustainable funding sources, develop robust statewide partnerships and create an engaged state parks constituency. The Parks in Focus Commission held its final meeting on December 14th, 2018 where they presented their final recommendations. The recommendations are:

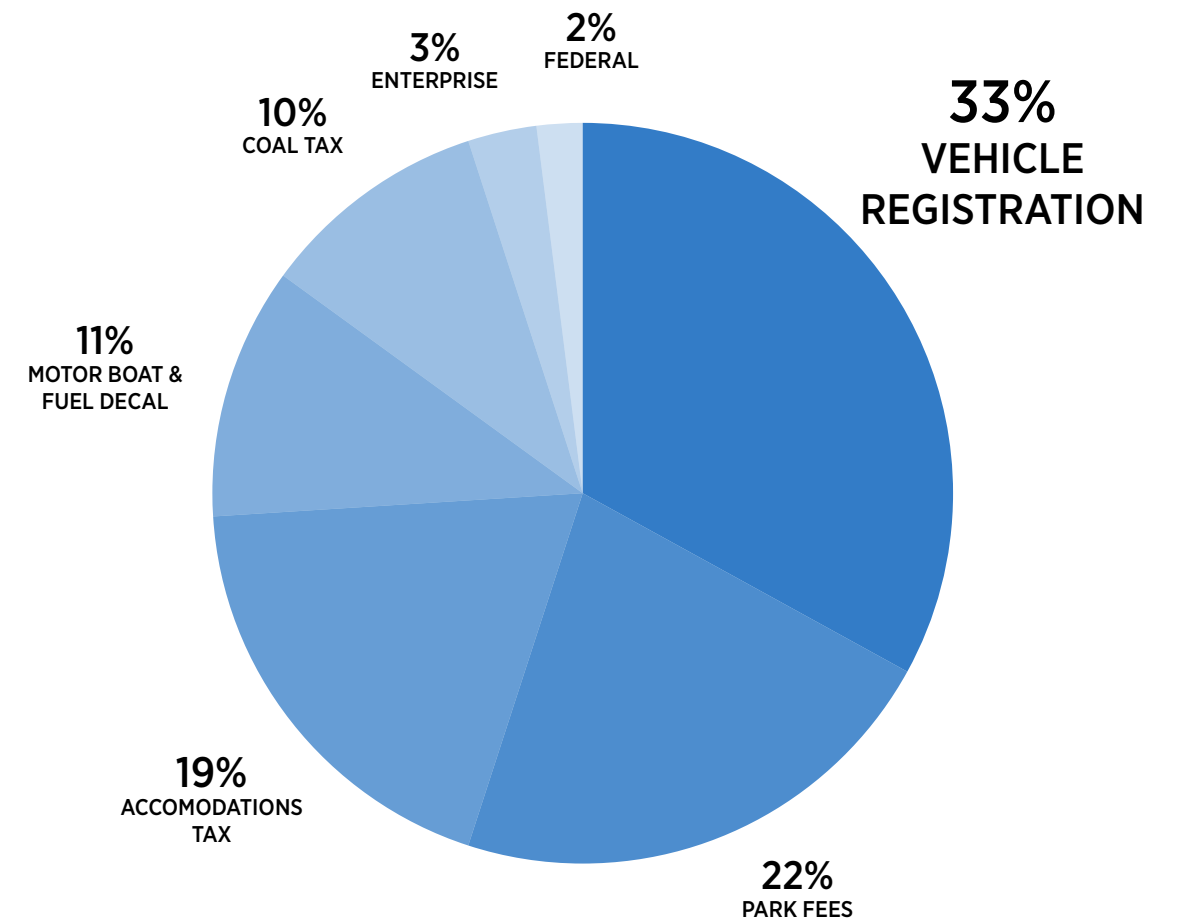
1. The Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks is a unified agency, with aligned vision, mission and programming, and a bench of strong leaders.
2. The Parks Division has clear strategic priorities, efficient management systems, sufficient staffing, and strong internal capability.
3. The Parks Division has a strong partnership culture, with partners significantly leveraging division capacity to improve the state park experience, and a broad set of advocates promoting and championing the benefits of parks and recreation.
4. The Parks Division utilizes short, medium, and long-term funding strategies to stabilize and then build for the future state parks system Montanans deserve.

# BUDGET



Montana's 55 state parks have an annual operating budget of approximately \$9.2 million in FY 2019. 58% of the Montana State Parks budget is earned revenue, which is comprised of Light Vehicle Registration (LVR), park fees, and enterprise revenue. Montana State Parks currently receives no general fund dollars.

**LIGHT VEHICLE REGISTRATION (LVR)**  
 Since 2004, Montanans have the option to support Montana State Parks when they register their vehicles. Light Vehicle Registration is the largest source of funding for Montana's 55 state parks. Currently, 83% of Montanans choose to support state parks when they register their vehicles. This is the highest rate of participation since light vehicle registration funding for parks has been instituted. Light Vehicle Registration funding support means no daily entrance fees for residents when you visit your state parks.



**FLATHEAD LAKE STATE PARK - WILD HORSE ISLAND** REVIEWED AUGUST 6, 2018

***WONDERFUL HISTORY AND WILDLIFE IN A NATURAL SETTING** This is a great kayaking destination, with an established trail, pioneer buildings, and herds of wild animals. It also provides a nice botanical exploration, with some rare wild grasses and many flowers.*

# VISITATION



In 2017, Montana State Parks visitation was down 4% from the previous year. Many economic and environmental factors attribute to the rise or decline of visitation. In recent years, Montana has enjoyed mild spring weather, dry summers, and unseasonably warm falls which has attributed to increases in park visitation, primarily during spring and fall shoulder seasons. However, the past two

years have told a different story with severe winter weather, wet springs and smoky summers. This has decreased day-use visitation, primarily in times that we have seen historical increases.

2018 park visitation has not been completed, but a snapshot of the peak season indicates that visitation will increase in 2018.

## 2017 ANNUAL VISITATION REPORT

### JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2017

The following is a summary of the Montana State Parks 2017 annual visitation, as well as comparisons with 2016 data and visitation trends.

Total statewide visitation is **2,544,138** visits, down 4% from 2016.

### STATEWIDE VISITATION

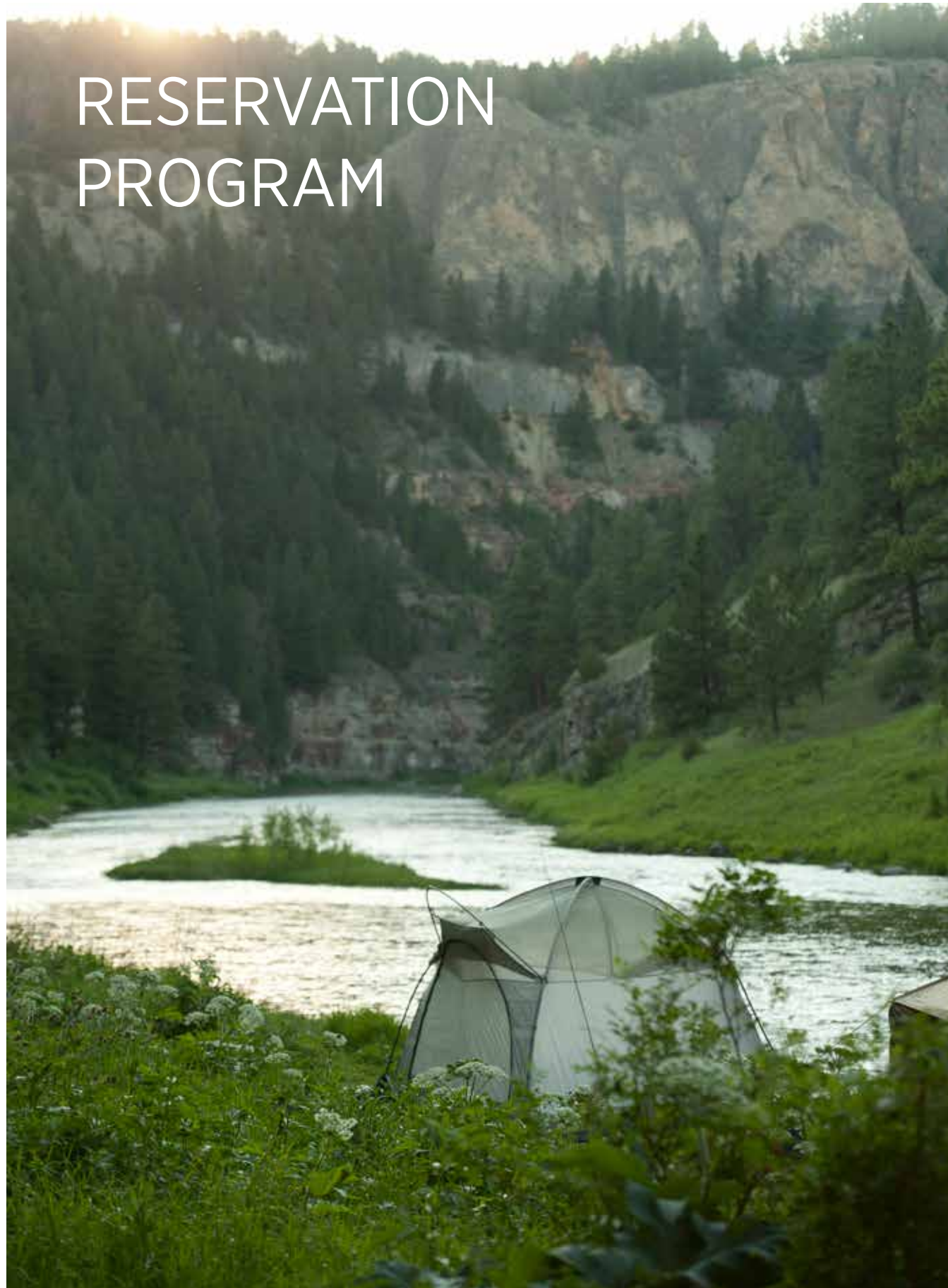
In 2017, Montana State Parks visitation was down 4% from the previous year. There were several factors that contributed to the decline. Most notably the statewide 2017 fire season.



| PEAK SEASON PARK VISITATION 2012-2018 |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 2012                                  | 1,495,424 |
| 2013                                  | 1,633,227 |
| 2014                                  | 1,680,121 |
| 2015                                  | 1,793,556 |
| 2016                                  | 1,887,992 |
| 2017                                  | 1,882,351 |
| 2018                                  | 1,891,506 |

| TOP 5 PARKS FOR ANNUAL VISITATION 2017 |                |
|--|----------------|
| Giant Springs                          | 401,062 visits |
| Flathead Lake                          | 284,713 visit  |
| Cooney                                 | 190,279 visits |
| Lake Elmo                              | 170,770 visits |
| Thompson Chain of Lakes / Logan        | 133,702 visits |

# RESERVATION PROGRAM



The Reservation Program started in 2011 as a partnership with Idaho Department of Parks & Recreation (IDPR) for taking reservations and registering campers at 20 campgrounds into a system to track camping usage. In subsequent years, the Parks Division has added reservable day-use facilities, boat slips, hike/bike campsites, back country campsites, cabins, yurts, and tipis.

Additionally, the Reservation Program provides the point of sale software (POS) for the park system which has allowed us to better collect use and service fees, sell enterprise products and manage our master product and supplier database. Currently, the POS manages over 5,000 products/services with over 300 suppliers.

## FACILITIES MANAGED IN SYSTEM:

- 623 campsites (includes rustic and back country)
- 347 electrical campsites
- 11 unique lodging facilities cabins, yurts, tipi's
- 7 group camping facilities &
- 25 group day-use facilities
- 61 boat slips
- 5 bike camps

## 2018 SEASON AT A GLANCE

Over **97,000** registered campers  
 Over **67,000** nights were booked  
 Over **165,000** POS transactions

| RESERVATION TRANSACTIONS 2012-2018 |           |          |         |               |
|------------------------------------|-----------|----------|---------|---------------|
| Year                               | Jan-April | May-Sept | Oct-Dec | Total         |
| 2012                               | 2,512     | 8,598    | 988     | <b>12,098</b> |
| 2013                               | 3,294     | 10,156   | 1,235   | <b>14,685</b> |
| 2014                               | 3,946     | 11,092   | 1,539   | <b>16,577</b> |
| 2015                               | 4,672     | 13,105   | 1,586   | <b>19,363</b> |
| 2016                               | 5,263     | 13,889   | 1,840   | <b>20,992</b> |
| 2017                               | 6,080     | 14,498   | 2,577   | <b>23,155</b> |
| 2018*                              | 6,659     | 15,219   |         | <b>21,878</b> |

\*Data only through September.

| OCCUPIED NIGHTS 2012-2018 |             |             |               |            |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------|
| Year                      | Peak Season | Off Seasons | Total         | % Change   |
| 2012                      | 45,616      | 1,560       | <b>47,176</b> |            |
| 2013                      | 50,097      | 2,071       | <b>52,168</b> | <b>11%</b> |
| 2014                      | 52,012      | 2,396       | <b>54,408</b> | <b>4%</b>  |
| 2015                      | 53,893      | 3,105       | <b>56,998</b> | <b>5%</b>  |
| 2016                      | 57,746      | 2,850       | <b>60,596</b> | <b>6%</b>  |
| 2017                      | 57,369      | 2,798       | <b>60,167</b> | <b>-1%</b> |
| 2018                      | 61,283      | 2,200       | <b>63,483</b> | <b>6%</b>  |

\*Occupied camping nights have had a 35% increase since 2012.

## SALMON LAKE STATE PARK REVIEWED NOVEMBER 18, 2017

**BEAUTIFUL SETTING** Beautiful mountain lake right off the road on the way to Seeley Lake. The water is crystal clear and the lake is surrounded by treed hills. Great fishing spots all along with lake

# CAPITAL PROGRAM



During the 2017 Legislative Session, three significant capital projects were funded. These projects have been identified as long-term infrastructure needs by the Parks Division and documented in their 2015 Facility Condition Inventory (FCI) Report.

## **LEWIS & CLARK CAVERNS STATE PARK – LIGHTING, ELECTRICAL, AND HANDRAIL UPGRADES-\$2.2 MILLION**

This is phase 2 of a project to upgrade the infrastructure within the caverns. The project will replace the remaining lighting components, electrical system, and handrails within the caverns not completed during Phase 1 which was conducted in 2007.

The upgrade of the interior infrastructure replaces components dating back to the 1940's in some cases. The project will bring the lighting system up to current electrical code compliance and result in a safer system for both visitors and staff. Additionally, the new lighting technology is more efficient which will reduce operating costs and better enhance the cave features. Handrail replacements are modern aluminum components, compliant with current ADA standards to benefit visitors throughout their cave tour experience.

The project was bid in mid-June 2018 and construction began within the Caverns in early October following the end of cave tour season. The project is scheduled to be completed by April 2019. When the public tours commence in May 2019, visitors will enjoy a safer and more vibrant caverns experience.



## **BANNAK STATE PARK – FIRE ALARM SYSTEM REPLACEMENT-\$1.65 MILLION**

The fire alarm (FA) system currently in-place throughout Bannack was installed in the mid-1980s. The existing system has been patched, repaired, and kept operational over the past 30+ years to insure a level of protection for the irreplaceable historic buildings in the townsite. However, it has become difficult to acquire replacement components for repairs due to the age of the system. Additionally, FA technology and reliability has advanced significantly since the system's initial installation.

The FA system replacement project was bid in late Spring 2018 and construction began on-site in late July following the Bannack Days event. As of late November, the project is nearing completion, with all underground work complete and installation/testing of system components underway in individual buildings. The existing FA system will remain operational and functioning until the new system is complete, tested, and operational. At that time the old FA system will be taken off-line.



## **MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK – UPGRADE PRIMARY ACCESS ROAD AND DRAINAGE FEATURES - \$1.85 MILLION**

The primary access road into Montana's largest state park has reached the end of its expected life. The approximately 1.5-mile project involves three primary components; drainage improvements, establishing an adequate road-base, and finally the repaving of the road surface.

The project was bid in mid-July 2018 and the construction efforts began on-site in late August. Due to the early arrival of cold overnight temperature conditions, the final road base prep and asphalt surface placement will occur in Spring 2019 when the appropriate weather conditions are available.

# MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



53% of Montana State Parks' annual revenue is earned revenue. This revenue is critical to keeping the park system running through FTE creation, addressing deferred maintenance and funding general park operations. The integrated marketing and communications program provides a platform for the parks system to raise revenue, increase park visitation, assist in attracting in state and out of state visitors with travel planning and making our state parks relevant in the Montana economy and the tourism industry. State Parks are destinations and key components in economic development, especially in rural communities across Montana. Our efforts highlight our parks, make them more economically viable to communities across Montana and drive earned revenue back to the parks system.

Keeping the public informed and engaged with their state parks is critical for the long-term success of the entire system. This outreach can range from sending out communications about the Montana State Parks & Recreation Board or taking public comments on parks projects and grant programs to communicating the benefits of the AmeriCorps Program and the countless volunteer opportunities that exist in the park system. By engaging park constituents, they become advocates for the ongoing success of the park system.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Online:

Stateparks.mt.gov is our primary marketing tool. Our dynamic site exists to entice new and returning visitors to our State Parks with rich imagery of parks across Montana.

- **450,000 users in 2018**  
(8.6% increase from 2017)
- **1.45 million-page views in 2018**  
(5.5% increase from 2017)

### Online Advertising:

Montana State Parks partners with local, regional and national website to market parks across Montana. These partners include National Geographic, Trip Advisor, MTN News Networks, and National Park Trips Media.

### Social media:

The use of multiple social media channels is critical to engage with the public. Social media content ranges from park photography and video, park events, campsite reservations, volunteer opportunities, unique park features or public notices. Additionally, we work with social media influencers, from around the world, to visit our parks and create quality content. These can include retail partners such as REI, government partners such as the National Park Service or statewide news stations such as MTN Networks.

### Social Media Highlights:

- **22,000** followers on Facebook
- **11,200** followers on Twitter
- **23,100** followers on Instagram
- Facebook Live Events with tourism partners generated over **2,100,000** views of State Park content in 2018

### Content Development:

We work with tourism partners to produce high-quality, engaging video, photo, and editorial content that focuses on our parks and program areas. This can be anything from scenic landscape photography to video on our AmeriCorps Program, Camp Host Program or articles on park events. All our content is shared with our tourism partners to leverage their effectiveness across multiple organizations and platforms.

### Print Advertising:

We purchase print advertising in several in-state and national publications. This includes Parents Magazine, Montana Parent Magazine, Montana Magazine, Outside Bozeman and newspapers across Montana.

### News Releases:

We continue to send out news releases to promote park events and pitch park related stories for radio, TV and newspapers.

### Printed Materials:

We design and produce a variety of printed materials to promote Montana State Parks. This includes park brochures, event flyers, promotional materials and informational cards for County Treasurer offices across Montana to communicate the Light Vehicle Registration fee and their importance to our division.

### TV:

Montana State Parks is a proud advertiser on Backroads Montana on Montana PBS. Video footage of Bannack State Park was featured in the Montana Office of Tourism warm season Visit Montana commercial on NBC. This was aired across the country, primarily during the National Hockey League Playoffs in 2018.

### Billboards:

We work with tourism partners to secure strategic billboard space for our most significant parks along major Montana travel corridors.

### Earned Media:

We work with national and statewide publications to place relevant stories about our most significant parks. This includes CBS, the Travel Channel, National Geographic, USA Today and Alaska Airlines Magazine.

### Radio:

Montana State parks utilizes radio advertising in the spring and summer. Our radio partners include Yellowstone Public Radio, Northern Ag Network and Montana Public Radio.



# AMERICORPS



Montana State Parks AmeriCorps administers a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service in support of Montana State Parks' Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan. The AmeriCorps program places 21 members across the state who provide service to 25 state parks. The goal of this service is to promote healthy, active, and environmentally aware communities by enhancing park land, enriching educational opportunities, increasing volunteerism, and improving community outreach in state parks. AmeriCorps members significantly increase Parks'

capacity to plan and implement land improvement projects which result in state park lands that are accessible, protected, enhanced and restored. Additionally, their contribution to education programs creates a sense of stewardship in youth and adult state park visitors, park volunteers and the members themselves. The combination of these outcomes strengthens Parks' ability to positively contribute to the economy, health, and social well-being of the communities they engage and serve.

## EXAMPLES OF AMERICORPS PROJECTS IN PARKS ACROSS MONTANA:

### Land Improvement:

- Create recreation destinations that in turn increase the economic health of the communities around the parks.
- Promote neighborly behavior by ensuring noxious and invasive weeds do not negatively impact private or other public adjacent lands.
- Contribute to watershed health by completing stream bank stabilization that limits sediments downstream.
- Education and Interpretation Programs:
  - Engage teachers to bring classes into state parks to learn about Montana's natural, historic and cultural history.
  - Enhance existing and create new curricula and products such as interpretive panels.

### Volunteer Management:

- Recruit recurring and episodic volunteers
- Organize volunteer recognition events.

### Community Outreach:

- Heighten awareness of state parks by being a public presence at community events such as farmers markets or festivals.
- Organize and publicize events to engage our communities.
- Identify and engage partner organizations to complete first three goals of the program.

### Program Funding:

The AmeriCorps program accomplishes its goals through \$557,000 in federal and state funds to place 21 members across Montana. These members complete over 26,000 hours of service annually through 11 or 5-month service terms. These members treat 400 or more acres and 15 miles of trails, provide educational programs for 8,000 youth and 2,500 adults, manage 500 volunteers, and conduct 200 community outreach activities.

AmeriCorps members served 26,426 hours in 2018.

- Treated acres of park land - 576.5
- Treated miles of trails & waterways - 41

Members provided educational programming to **19,904** people in 2018; an increase of 24% from 2017.

Members managed **500** volunteers and facilitated **606** community outreach activities that engaged people across Montana.



# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



Volunteering with Montana State Parks is an opportunity to help preserve Montana's natural, historic and cultural heritage for future generations. Volunteers provide a vital resource to assist the Parks Division in providing quality facilities and services to park visitors.

The Volunteer Program provides a vast array of opportunities for the public to help increase the capacity of park staff to better serve the public and connects parks directly to the community, developing a sense of stewardship and ownership of state parks within the public.

Over 40,000 hours of time are contributed annually by volunteers as camp hosts and assisting at visitor centers, special events, interpretive and education programs, and park maintenance. These services

have a direct impact on the public's experience in our parks. Volunteer camp hosts are important to frontline customer serviced and are often the only contact the public will have with a representative of FWP. These volunteers help answer questions, report unsafe situations, keep park managers informed and enhance visitor experience.

Volunteers involved with interpretation and education programming help deliver programs to students who benefit from state parks as outdoor classrooms. Volunteers assist with park improvement projects such as trail improvement and weed pulls which improve park land. Each year the division places over 1,400 volunteers in positions in direct service to the public at parks across Montana.

## MONTANA STATE PARKS 2018 VOLUNTEER SERVICE SUMMARY:

A total of **1,413** volunteers provided **43,074** service hours for state parks in 2018.

The number of volunteers and hours breakdown as follows:

| TOTAL VOLUNTEER FTE EQUIVALENT            |              |
|---|--------------|
| Number of Volunteers 2018 Camp Hosts      | 81           |
| Visitor Center Attendants Park Naturalist | 38           |
| Special Events                            | 648          |
| Special Projects                          | 615          |
| <b>TOTAL VOLUNTEERS</b>                   | <b>1,413</b> |

| TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS 2018                 |               |
|--|---------------|
| Camp Hosts                                 | 25,739        |
| Visitor Center Attendants Park Naturalists | 1,147         |
| Special Events                             | 8,413         |
| Special Projects                           | 5,583         |
| <b>TOTAL HOURS</b>                         | <b>43,074</b> |

| TOP 5 PARKS WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOLUNTEERS |
|---|
| Bannack                                       |
| Lewis and Clark Caverns                       |
| Milltown                                      |
| Lake Elmo                                     |
| Lone Pine                                     |

| TOP 5 PARKS WITH THE HIGHEST VOLUNTEER HOURS |
|--|
| Bannack                                      |
| Flathead Lake                                |
| Smith River                                  |
| Travelers Rest                               |
| Logan  |

| TOP 5 PARKS WITH HIGHEST VOLUNTEER HOURS EXCLUDING CAMP HOST HOURS |
|--|
| Flathead Lake  |
| Bannack  |
| Travelers Rest   |
| Makoshika  |
| Lone Pine  |
| Lewis and Clark Caverns  |

| TOP 5 PARKS WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF VOLUNTEER CAMP HOST HOURS |
|--|
| Flathead Lake  |
| Logan  |
| Smith River  |
| Placid Lake  |
| Whitefish  |

### TRAVELERS' REST STATE PARK REVIEWED JULY 25, 2018

**EVERY AMERICAN SHOULD VISIT THIS SITE** In 2002, two years before the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial I visited Travelers Rest which is the only verified Lewis and Clark Camp there is. It was their favorite and it is one they returned to on their return trip. At that time it was simply a field, some trees and a creek. Now it's a beautiful park with great education, devoted park personnel, and paths that you can walk. Don't miss this part of American History if you are in Missoula area. You'll be glad you stopped in.

# INTERPRETATION & EDUCATION



Interpretation and education program services are an essential component of the Montana State Park system. These services connect visitors to state parks by revealing the meanings and significance of park resources. Making the natural, historic and cultural resources of a park relevant to visitors encourages long-term public stewardship. A healthy park system will have a strong interpretive program woven into its management structure, effectively using interpretation to support all other components of the operation.

The Parks Division developed and adopted an Interpretive and Educational Services Plan in 2013 to help guide how these services would

be delivered. The program provides a range of educational and interpretive services on topics including the natural world, native tribes, Montana history and pre-history, and paleontology. The Parks Division uses training such as the Certified Interpretive Guide program through the National Association for Interpretation to ensure that park staff and volunteers create and deliver engaging programs following appropriate educational standards.

In addition to live presentations, the Interpretation and Education Program provides information to park visitors through wayside signs, brochures, books and video.

## MONTANA STATE PARKS INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION 2018 PARTICIPATION SUMMARY:

In 2018, interpretive and educational programs were offered at **24 of the 55 state parks**. In total, **131,426** people participated in interpretive programs, school programs and special events offered through Montana State Parks.

### School Programs

- 20,879 students participated in educational programs presented in Montana State Parks.

### Public Programs

- 72,127 people participated in other interpretive programs

### Group Tours

- 6,853 people participated in programs offered as part of a group tour

### Special Events

- 25,098 people attended special events
- 90 Special Events were hosted
- Off Site Programs / Presentations
- 6,469 people benefited from programs offered off-site such as in schools or at civic organizations

**MISSOURI HEADWATERS STATE PARK** REVIEWED OCTOBER 18, 2018

**FLY FISHING AND GREAT VIEWS** *Gorgeous day and fly fishing. Great historical spot to learn about Lewis and Clark. Great to see the convergence of three rivers and the start of the Missouri.*



# HERITAGE RESOURCES PROGRAM



The State Parks Heritage Program manages all archaeological, historical, cultural, and paleontological resources, concerns and opportunities which exist in the parks system. State park heritage resources include seven National Historic Landmarks - the cream of the crop in the nation, 10 National Register-listed sites, and 15 National Register-eligible historic and archaeological sites that are of statewide significance. The program provides heritage resource leadership to all regional park managers and park staff and ensures preservation excellence in compliance with state and federal laws, rules, regulations, policies, and agreements.

Over 19% of visitors to Montana come to see historic or archaeological sites, and state parks serves that public demand by providing on-site tours/talks, interpretive signs and trails throughout our 20 heritage parks.

## The heritage program implements programs in parks across Montana which include:

- A state-wide effort to organize artifact collections from significant parks so these collections may be displayed in visitor centers and accessed by researchers. Preservation of these collections will allow future researchers

to use analytical techniques that we can hardly conceive of now.

- Management of significant heritage sites so that visitors, including school children, can experience the past and how it once was by visiting our state parks.
- Preservation of important places like Madison and First Peoples Buffalo Jumps so not only the public, but tribal elders can visit these places and teach younger tribal members about traditional ways of procuring food. Preservation of our heritage parks ensures these irreplaceable sites are available for future generations to visit and learn from.

The Heritage Program plans and implements comprehensive resource evaluations and site investigations; provides advanced technical information including resource management plans and research services; administers contracts and supervises all related heritage contracted services in all regions; establishes, maintains and serves as the representative in heritage partnerships with the University of Montana, Montana State University, Colorado - Mesa University, and the Museum of the Rockies; writes, administers, and manages grants to accomplish work in state parks including surveys, analyses, and research. Maintains heritage site and survey files for all 55 parks and updates resource and GIS data bases.

Additionally, the Heritage Program works with federal, state, tribal and local agencies, as well as advocacy groups, universities, and individuals to study and evaluate heritage resource issues; serves

as the sole division leader in providing knowledge and understanding of complex resource issues to staff, and the cumulative effect of disturbances to these resources; and to develop cost effective and practical solutions and practices to preserve, restore, and enhance heritage resources in association with division projects.

## 2018 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- Partnered with the National Park Service (NPS) and Colorado Mesa University to conduct an archaeological survey of proposed fire break areas within Rosebud Battlefield State Park, which is one of seven National Historic Landmark (NHL) which the Parks Division manages. Rifle and bullet casings were found during the survey that enabled researchers to pin point exact battle locations, movement and army vs. Indian firing points.
- Signed an MOU with the Museum of the Rockies for work and research at Hell Creek and Makoshika State Parks.
- Developing a partnership with Adventures in Preservation (AiG) from Denver, CO to develop a Bannack State Park Institute where volunteers can participate in historic preservation projects that are led by specialists and experts in various preservation fields including masonry, plaster and wood working.
- Engaged in a partnership with Montana State University and the NPS to have the entire artifact collection from First Peoples Buffalo Jump processed and packaged to professional curation standards.

## CHIEF PLENTY COUPS STATE PARK REVIEWED FEBRUARY 3, 2016

**A LITTLE OUT-OF-THE-WAY, BUT WELL WORTH THE TRIP** *This little museum chronicles the life of Chief Plenty Coups. Art work, textiles, books, stories all about Native American life in Montana. Buildings on the grounds include the Chief's home. A very peaceful place. Employees are very knowledgeable and friendly. Signs are posted in English as well as in Crow, a Native American language. A trip to this park will be educational as well as fun for the family.*



# RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM



In the early 1990's, the benefits of public trail systems of all types were recognized by the federal government. The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) was developed to provide states with federal funds to support recreational trail projects via the Federal Highway Administration. Montana's RTP is administered by the Parks Division of FWP. For a rural state such as Montana, the funding is especially important.

Grant applications are solicited each year, by the Parks Division, for trail-related projects statewide. Eligible applicants include local government, private clubs/organizations, and federal agencies. The potential projects involve motorized, non-motorized, urban, back-country, snowmobile trail grooming, and virtually any other variation of trail-related project needs. Annually, approximately 60 individual grants are awarded totaling \$1.3 - \$1.6 million.

The federal requirements are that the program is an 80%/20% proportion where the applying sponsor must provide 20% of the value of their proposed project amount.

RTP is the largest and most flexible funding source for trail-related efforts in Montana. Projects funded since the early 1990's have included the development of trail systems in both large and small communities across Montana. Overall, the development of trails has improved the communities where projects have occurred, through both quality of life and economic benefit. Aside from initial trail development, RTP funds may be used for trail maintenance efforts including resurfacing, backcountry trail clearing, educational programming and similar needs. Additionally, the program requires that 30% of the funds must go to motorized projects, 30% to non-motorized projects, and 40% to diversified trail projects. This requirement helps to insure that the Parks Division funds a wide variety of trail projects annually.

Grant application are reviewed and final awards are given after consideration by the State Trails Advisory Committee, a 10-member citizens advisory group which meets annually with Parks Division staff to make recommendations on individual projects.

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM ANNUAL STATISTICS FOR 2018

| Grant Year | Number of Applications Received | Total Amount of Funding Requested | Total Amount of Funding Available for Award | Number of Grants Awarded |
|------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 2018       | 72                              | \$2,996,404.18                    | \$1,574,201.42                              | 50                       |
| 2017       | 69                              | \$2,605,567.95                    | \$1,663,853.00                              | 54                       |
| 2016       | 78                              | \$2,638,134.19                    | \$1,449,053.20                              | 46                       |
| 2015       | 88                              | \$2,556,923.10                    | \$1,536,203.00                              | 60                       |
| 2014       | 87                              | \$2,875,254.03                    | \$1,646,880.00                              | 58                       |
| 2013       | 69                              | \$2,804,327.99                    | \$1,391,607.00                              | 54                       |

LONE PINE STATE PARK REVIEWED OCTOBER 3, 2018

**GREAT STAFF. VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL** A must visit while in Kalispell. Great trails and super visitor center. Take the time attend one of the many staff presentations to learn about the park and local wildlife.



| 2018 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM AWARD RECIPIENTS |  |              |
|---|--|--------------|
| Organization                                      | Project Title  | Award        |
| Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness Foundation          | Trail Steward Positions  | \$ 17,675.00 |
| Anaconda Community Foundation                     | Washoe Park Trail Renovation   | \$ 22,000.00 |
| Back Country Horsemen of Montana                  | Back Country Horsemen of MT - Trail Maintenance and Packing Support  | \$ 90,000.00 |
| Beartooth Recreational Trails Association         | Winter Operations of the Red Lodge Nordic Center   | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Big Sky Community Organization                    | Improvements to the US Forest Service Upper Beehive Basin and Ousel Falls trailheads, located on Big Sky Community Organization land, to add infrastructure and improve land stewardship at the two most highly used Forest Service Trails in Big Sky. | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Billings TrailNet                                 | The Skyline Trail-Zimmerman Park Connection to provide safe and ADA-compliant access to Zimmerman Park from Highway 3 AND Zimmerman Trail  | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club                 | Trail Maintenance for Year Round Recreation  | \$ 45,000.00 |
| BLM State Office-Billings                         | BLM Billings Critical Route Maintenance on the Trans Pryor Motorized Public Access Trail System  | \$ 20,000.00 |
| Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation                | FWP Recreational Trails Program Grant Cycle 2018   | \$ 35,000.00 |
| Bridger Ski Foundation                            | FWP Recreational Trails Program Grant Cycle 2018 - Bridger Ski Foundation Community Nordic Trails requests funding for grooming, maintenance, and signage updates for over 70 kilometers of nordic trails at 7 venues in the Bozeman area.             | \$ 30,000.00 |
| Cabinet Resource Group                            | Cabinet Mountain Wilderness Trail Work   | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Cabinet Ridge Riders                              | Black Peak Trail and Trailhead Project   | \$ 19,400.00 |
| Flathead Avalanche Center                         | Flathead Avalanche Center Advisories Education and Safety Information Program  | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Flathead Snowmobile Association                   | Maintenance and Grooming of Winter Trail System in Flathead and North Lake Counties  | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Foy's to Blacktail Trails Inc.                    | Foy's to Blacktail Trail System, development and maintenance of USFS segments.   | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Great Falls Trail Bike Riders Association         | Relocation of Trail 338 Phase 2 and Reconstruction Trail 456 Hay Canyon Helena-Lewis & Clark National Forest   | \$ 40,000.00 |
| Kings Hill Grooming Association                   | Snowmobile Trail Grooming and Maintenance/Education/Safety   | \$ 28,150.00 |
| Kootenai Cross-Country Ski Club, Inc              | Infrastructure Improvements for South Flower Creek Trails  | \$ 22,000.00 |
| Last Chance Nordic Ski Club                       | Helena-area Nordic Ski Trail Grooming  | \$ 7,000.00  |
| Milltown State Park                               | Bandmann Flats Trailhead and Trail Construction  | \$ 39,995.70 |
| Missoula Nordic Ski Club                          | Nordic Ski Trail Grooming at Pattee Canyon, Rattlesnake Corridor and Lubrecht Forest   | \$ 15,000.00 |
| Montana Bicycle Guild                             | Kading-Cliff Mountain Crest Connector Trail Realignment  | \$ 45,000.00 |
| Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association          | Motorized Trail Maintenance for Designated Motorized Routes on USFS & BLM Lands.   | \$ 90,000.00 |
| Montana Wilderness Association                    | Trail Maintenance, Structure Construction and Restoration and Trail Safety Education   | \$ 10,000.00 |
| Pondera HealthCare Foundation                     | Conrad Path Project-constructing Phase 1 of a 10 feet wide, aggregate surface multi-use pathway, 1.0 miles long connecting to a heavily used .5 mile existing path. Phase 1 is the first of 22 potential miles to be constructed as funding permits.   | \$ 20,000.00 |
| Prickly Pear Land Trust                           | South Hills Trails Maintenance and Upgrades  | \$ 27,000.00 |

| 2018 RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM AWARD RECIPIENTS                    |  |                 |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Organization   | Project Title  | Award           |
| Seeley Lake Driftriders, Inc.  | Trail Grooming & Maintenance   | \$ 45,000.00    |
| Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation                            | Selway Bitterroot Trails Restoration   | \$ 6,060.00     |
| Shelby, City of  | Roadrunner Recreation Trail Maintenance & Picnic Area Development  | \$ 3,720.00     |
| Silver Crest Trails Association                                      | Grooming and Maintenance of Silver Crest Trails System   | \$ 6,000.00     |
| Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association                          | Copper City Trails, Phase 2  | \$ 89,453.00    |
| Swan Valley Connections  | Mission Mountains Wilderness and Swan Front Trails and Backcountry Services Project, Swan Watershed  | \$ 20,000.00    |
| The Trust for Public Land  | Story Mill Community Park - East Gallatin River Connector Trails   | \$ 10,000.00    |
| Troy Snowmobile Club   | Grooming of Routes/Trails of the Kootenai National Forest  | \$ 10,000.00    |
| University of Montana  | Lubrecht Forest - Nordic Ski Trail Grooming Machine  | \$ 12,000.00    |
| USFS - Custer-Gallatin National Forest - Gardiner Ranger District    | 2018 Gardiner District Winter Recreation Program and Summer Backcountry Trail Maintenance  | \$ 28,300.00    |
| USFS - Custer-Gallatin National Forest - Yellowstone Ranger District | Yellowstone Ranger District 2018: Connecting Healthy Communities Year-Round Through Multi-Use Trails   | \$ 44,125.00    |
| USFS Helena-Lewis Clark National Forest-Lincoln Ranger District      | Providing Expanded Recreational Opportunities in the Upper Blackfoot Valley: Beaver Creek Trail Project proposal to construct an 8 mile OHV trail and an 8 mile non-motorized mountain bike trail within 5 miles of Lincoln, MT.                       | \$ 82,839.00    |
| USFS Kootenai National Forest  | FWP Recreational Trails Program Grant Cycle 2018 Kootenai N.F. Avalanche Forecasting and Education   | \$ 18,490.00    |
| USFS-Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest- Dillon Ranger District    | West Pioneer trail maintenance on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest   | \$ 20,000.00    |
| USFS-Custer Gallatin National Forest- Hebggen Lake Ranger District   | Trail Maintenance/Signage/Education  | \$ 44,550.00    |
| USFS-Custer Gallatin National Forest-Bozeman Ranger District         | Maintenance & Grooming of Trails/Restoration of Areas Damaged by Use/Safety Education & Interpretation   | \$ 44,550.00    |
| USFS-Custer-Gallatin National Forest-Beartooth Ranger District       | Beartooth Ranger District Land Steward Trails Program-2018.  | \$ 44,796.00    |
| USFS-Gallatin National Forest-Avalanche Center                       | Saving Lives through Avalanche Education and Information   | \$ 45,000.00    |
| USFS-Lolo National Forest-Ninemile Ranger District                   | Stateline Trail Project  | \$ 15,000.00    |
| West Central Montana Avalanche Foundation                            | Avalanche Safety Education and Information   | \$ 40,000.00    |
| West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce                                 | Grooming and Maintenance of Trails   | \$ 45,000.00    |
| West Yellowstone Ski Education Foundation                            | Rendezvous Ski Trails Grooming and Maintenance Program   | \$ 45,000.00    |
| Whitefish Legacy Partners  | Expanding Recreation Opportunities on the Whitefish Trail in the Beaver Lakes area   | \$ 45,000.00    |
| Wildhorse Plains Back Country Horsemen                               | Tepee Trail 366W Maintenance: Enhance access to Big Hole Peak Lookout utilizing Back Country Horsemen and youth groups to complete trail improvements and reduce hazards on this popular loop for hikers, bikers, skiers, snowmobile and equine users. | \$ 6,097.72     |
|  |  | \$ 1,574,201.42 |

|                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Available 2018 Program Funding | \$ 1,478,169.00        |
| 2013-2014 Reallocated Funds    | \$ 96,032.42           |
| <b>Total Funding</b>           | <b>\$ 1,574,201.42</b> |

### MADISON BUFFALO JUMP REVIEWED JUNE 21, 2018

**WORTH THE VISIT!!** Recommend taking the hike up to the ledge the views of wild flowers on the way up are beautiful, and the view at the top is so peaceful. On the way back down I visited the area with the history of the land, very informative. Not too far from the highway, worth the visit!! Glad I made the stop!



### MEDICINE ROCKS STATE PARK REVIEWED AUGUST 9, 2018

**BEAUTIFUL BADLANDS** Wow! We spend a fair amount of time off road, in the North Dakota Badlands and the Black Hills. Never have we seen such a wonderfully bewildering place to explore. Wow. The kids would love exploring and climbing. The adults will love the quiet and exceptional accommodations. The campsites are easy to access, yet private and secure. We'll be back.



# STATESIDE LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND



## 2018 AWARDED LWCF PROJECTS

| Sponsor                     | Project Name                                  | Amount                |
|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| 1 Alberton                  | Hank Roat Memorial Park Renovation            | \$100,000.00          |
| 2 Billings                  | Rose Park Playground Replacement              | \$150,000.00          |
| 3 Boulder                   | Parks Project                                 | \$52,065.50           |
| 4 Deer Lodge                | West Side Park Playground Upgrades            | \$21,000.00           |
| 5 Ennis School Distric      | Ball Fields, Track, and Playground Renovation | \$60,300.00           |
| 6 Gallatin County           | Regional Park Phase IV                        | \$150,000.00          |
| 7 Helena                    | Cherry Park ADA Playground                    | \$80,000.00           |
| 8 Lewistown                 | Creekside Restroom & Kiosk                    | \$138,000.00          |
| 9 Milltown State Park       | Bandmann Flats Trailhead & Trails             | \$145,000.00          |
| 10 Shelby                   | Shelby Swimming Pool Gutter Replacement       | \$55,000.00           |
| 11 Thompson Falls           | Pool Improvements                             | \$46,700.00           |
| 12 Townsend School District | Playground replacement                        | \$61,587.85           |
| 13 Wolf Point               | Wolf Point Swimming Pool Renovation           | \$150,000.00          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                |   | <b>\$1,209,653.35</b> |

Stateside Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides funding for projects that benefit outdoor recreation in each state. Funding for LWCF is derived from a portion of the proceeds from offshore oil and gas revenues. Montana FWP has administered Montana's LWCF Program since its inception in 1965.

In order to receive stateside LWCF funds, the Parks Division is mandated to produce the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years. This plan serves as a catalyst to enhance the quality of life of all Montanans, support vibrant communities through the recreation industry while maintaining our high quality natural, cultural, heritage, and recreational resources.

In 2018-19, Montana State Parks, the University of Montana, federal, local and state recreation providers, land managers and recreation partners across Montana will be creating a new SCORP which will set the stage for the future of recreation in Montana. SCORP will describe current supply and trends, growing demands, and challenges that will provide a framework for future recreation management across Montana.

Eligible LWCF projects include virtually any projects which support outdoor recreation and can include land acquisitions and site development or improvement. Montana State Parks outdoor recreation projects are also eligible for these funds. Since LWCF began, over 800 individual

projects have been funded in Montana totaling over \$37 million. Typical projects include: ball fields, playground equipment, swimming pools, and facilities which directly support outdoor recreation such as latrines/parking areas.

A community grant program is made available every two years. Community grant applications are solicited for funding opportunity with the current application cycle closing February 28, 2019. Eligible applicants include all local government units which manage outdoor recreation facilities and school districts. In recent years the federal funding of LWCF has not been consistent or predictable and renewal of LWCF is currently under consideration in the U.S. Congress.

The federal requirements are a 50%/50% proportion. That is, for a given grant amount, the applying sponsor must be able to provide at least half the value of their proposed project. While the relatively high match requirement for local governmental entities desiring to use the funding is a hurdle in some cases, it has been and continues to be an important funding opportunity for communities desiring to develop or upgrade their local outdoor recreational facilities.

LWCF is a traditional funding source available to Montana communities. In the many decades since the program's inception, LWCF funds have had a significant and lasting positive impact in Montana communities.

### WHITEFISH LAKE STATE PARK REVIEWED JULY 24, 2016

**SPECTACULAR PLACE** *What a beautiful place, I was amazed at how spotless the lake, beach, even the parking lots. Separate area for swimming, Jet Skies and power boats, the other end of the beach allows dogs the sand beach does not allow dogs. The water was so clean just a beautiful place well worth the drive.*

### PLACID LAKE STATE PARK REVIEWED AUGUST 31, 2015

**LOVE THIS STATE CAMPGROUND!** *Camped for a week with our 5th wheel trailer. Love this little campground, great campground hosts, very clean bathrooms! Nice place with boat launch & docks, swimming area for kids. Some slots have electricity and you can reserve online.*

# SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM



Montana's Snowmobile Program provides grant funding to support snowmobile trail grooming and education so enthusiast can ride safely in Montana. The Parks Division of FWP administers the program which manages state-owned trail groomers and related equipment, as well as distribution of over \$400,000 annually in grooming grant allocations utilized by Montana's 25 Snowmobile Clubs.

Over 4,000 miles of groomed snowmobile trails exist in Montana. The grooming of these routes is conducted by local snowmobile clubs in their respective areas via agreements with the U.S. Forest Service in most cases. Approximately 20 groomers are owned by the State which are used by individual Clubs for local trail grooming.

Each biennium an allocation of approximately \$420,000 is available to purchase replacement groomers for the fleet and other misc. equipment (trailers, snow tillers, etc.). The groomers are replaced on a rotating cycle, generally with the oldest machines being the priority.

Via the Snowmobile Program, significant efforts have been made to support avalanche education and awareness. An area of concentration has been Cooke City, MT, a popular snowmobiling destination with a national history of high avalanche fatalities. Efforts the past two seasons have resulted in no avalanche-related snowmobile deaths.

The Snowmobile Program supports an important aspect of winter recreation in Montana. The state would not have the great trails and snowmobiling reputation it has without the dedicated efforts of local volunteers who are on-the-ground doing the work.

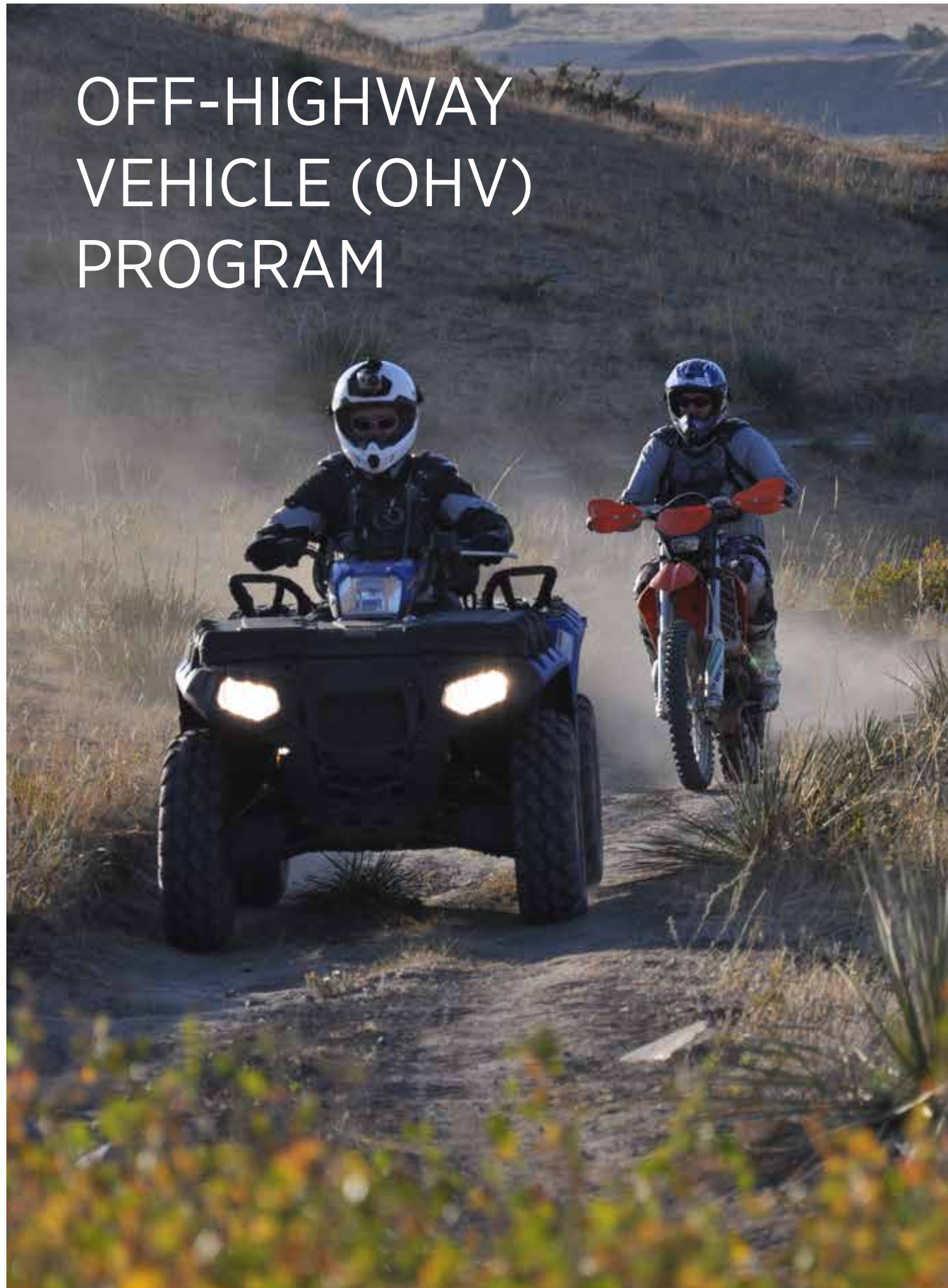
Funding for the program is generated from snowmobile registrations, a portion of the gas tax, the resident trail pass, and the non-resident temporary use permit. The program provides valuable funding for annual grooming costs as well as equipment needs (replacement and repairs). The Snowmobile Program provides much of the specialized equipment and annual operation funding to support the 26 Snowmobile Clubs in their local efforts. Thousands of residents and winter visitors to Montana benefit from the grooming. For communities like Seeley Lake, Cooke City, and West Yellowstone, snowmobile users provide a significant economic benefit for local private businesses.

Decisions on both the annual grooming grant allocations and the biennial equipment purchases involve a citizens advisory committee. There is also close coordination with the Montana Snowmobile Association.

| MONTANA 2018 - 2019 SNOWMOBILE PROGRAM GRANTS       |                     |               |                               |                       |                     |
|---|---------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Club  | Grant Awards 18/19  | % of Budget   | Liability Insurance Deduction | Final Grooming Grants | Grant Awards 16/17  |
| Anaconda Snowmobile Club                            | \$10,731.16         | 0.0263        | \$ 526.60                     | \$10,204.56           | \$11,333.00         |
| Beaverhead Sno-Riders                               | \$14,407.02         | 0.0353        | \$ 706.99                     | \$13,700.03           | \$15,215.00         |
| Big Hole Snowmobile Club ( Wisdom)                  | \$2,506.42          | 0.0061        | \$ 123.00                     | \$2,383.42            | \$2,647.00          |
| Big Sky Snowriders (Livingston)                     | \$6,257.08          | 0.0154        | \$ 307.05                     | \$5,950.03            | \$6,608.00          |
| Bitterroot Ridge Runners Snowmobile Club (Hamilton) | \$10,259.60         | 0.0252        | \$ 503.46                     | \$9,756.14            | \$10,835.00         |
| Cabinet Ridge Riders ( Trout Creek)                 | \$5,069.67          | 0.0124        | \$ 248.78                     | \$4,820.89            | \$5,354.00          |
| Flathead Snowmobile Association (Kalispell)         | \$20,858.20         | 0.0512        | \$ 1,023.56                   | \$19,834.64           | \$22,028.00         |
| Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association (Bozeman)    | \$24,933.64         | 0.0612        | \$ 1,223.55                   | \$23,710.09           | \$26,332.00         |
| Helena Snowdrifters                                 | \$19,625.35         | 0.0482        | \$ 963.06                     | \$18,662.29           | \$20,726.00         |
| Kings Hill Grooming Association (Great Falls, etc.) | \$22,886.45         | 0.0562        | \$ 1,123.09                   | \$21,763.36           | \$24,170.00         |
| Lincoln County Sno-Kats (Libby)                     | \$6,856.46          | 0.0168        | \$ 336.46                     | \$6,520.00            | \$7,241.00          |
| Little Belt Snowmobile Club (Hobson)                | \$12,846.52         | 0.0315        | \$ 630.41                     | \$12,216.11           | \$13,567.00         |
| Mining City Trail Riders (Butte)                    | \$7,016.48          | 0.0172        | \$ 344.31                     | \$6,672.17            | \$3,620.00          |
| Missoula Snowgoers                                  | \$28,879.05         | 0.0709        | \$ 1,417.16                   | \$27,461.89           | \$32,104.00         |
| Montana Nightriders (Haugan)                        | \$14,046.24         | 0.0345        | \$ 689.28                     | \$13,356.96           | \$14,834.00         |
| Ponderosa Snow Warriors (Lincoln)                   | \$17,343.32         | 0.0426        | \$ 851.08                     | \$16,492.24           | \$18,316.00         |
| Seeley Lake Driftriders                             | \$17,343.32         | 0.0426        | \$ 851.08                     | \$16,492.24           | \$18,316.00         |
| Summit Snowgoers (Cut Bank)                         | \$19,640.50         | 0.0482        | \$ 963.80                     | \$18,676.70           | \$20,742.00         |
| Sweet Grass County Recreation Association           | \$1,233.29          | 0.0030        | \$ 60.52                      | \$1,172.77            | \$1,371.00          |
| Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club (Eureka)                  | \$8,169.81          | 0.0200        | \$ 400.91                     | \$7,768.90            | \$8,628.00          |
| Troy Snowmobile Club                                | \$3,054.68          | 0.0075        | \$ 149.90                     | \$2,904.78            | \$3,226.00          |
| Upper Yellowstone Snowmobile Club (Cooke City)      | \$33,554.18         | 0.0823        | \$ 1,646.58                   | \$31,907.60           | \$35,436.00         |
| Vigilante Snowmobilers ( Virginia City)             | \$16,209.91         | 0.0398        | \$ 795.46                     | \$15,414.45           | \$18,020.00         |
| West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce                | \$77,010.20         | 0.1890        | \$ 3,779.07                   | \$73,231.13           | \$81,329.00         |
| Wise River Jackpine Savages                         | \$6,823.32          | 0.0167        | \$ 334.84                     | \$6,488.48            | \$7,206.00          |
| <b>GROOMING GRANTS TOTAL</b>                        | <b>\$407,561.87</b> | <b>1.0000</b> | <b>\$ 20,000.00</b>           | <b>\$387,561.87</b>   | <b>\$429,204.00</b> |



# OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) PROGRAM



## 2018 OHV GRANT AWARDS

| PROJECT SPONSOR                                | PROJECT DESCRIPTION   | AWARDS               |
|--|---|----------------------|
| Bureau of Land Management - Butte Field Office | Trail Steward   | \$ 14,000.00         |
| Capital Trail Vehicle Association (CTVA)       | Single Track Re-Route   | \$ 6,700.00          |
| Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association       | On the Right Trail Ethics & Education Program   | \$ 20,000.00         |
| USFS Bitterroot National Forest                | Darby Ranger District -- Track the Tread Trail Steward  | \$ 14,000.00         |
| USFS Custer Gallatin National Forest           | Bozeman Ranger District Trail Steward Program   | \$ 14,000.00         |
| USFS Custer Gallatin National Forest           | Beartooth Ranger District --Trail Maintenance   | \$ 8,650.00          |
| USFS Custer Gallatin National Forest           | Yellowstone Ranger District -- Trail Maintenance on 28 Miles of Single Track Motorized Trails | \$ 14,000.00         |
| USFS Custer Gallatin National Forest           | Hebgen Ranger District -- Trail Maintenance, Education, Safety & Ethics Instruction           | \$ 14,000.00         |
| USFS Helena National Forest                    | Helena and Townsend Ranger Districts OHV Trail Steward Program                                | \$ 14,000.00         |
| <b>TOTAL AMOUNT AWARDED</b>                    |   | <b>\$ 119,350.00</b> |

Montana's Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program is a state funded program administered by the Parks Division within Montana FWP. The program involves an annual grant cycle which provides funding for projects which support and enhance motorized recreation use statewide. Funding for the program comes from a percentage of the fuel tax, registration fees, and the non-resident temporary use permit.

Grant applications are solicited each year for potential motorized projects and eligible applicants typically include local OHV clubs and the federal entities that manage motorized recreation on federal land. Typical projects funded include trail

stewards, trail maintenance, safety and ethics education, and similar projects which support motorized recreation in Montana. Annually, 10-15 grant applications are received. Annual funding varies from \$100,000 to \$200,000 and individual grants range from \$7,500 to \$20,000.

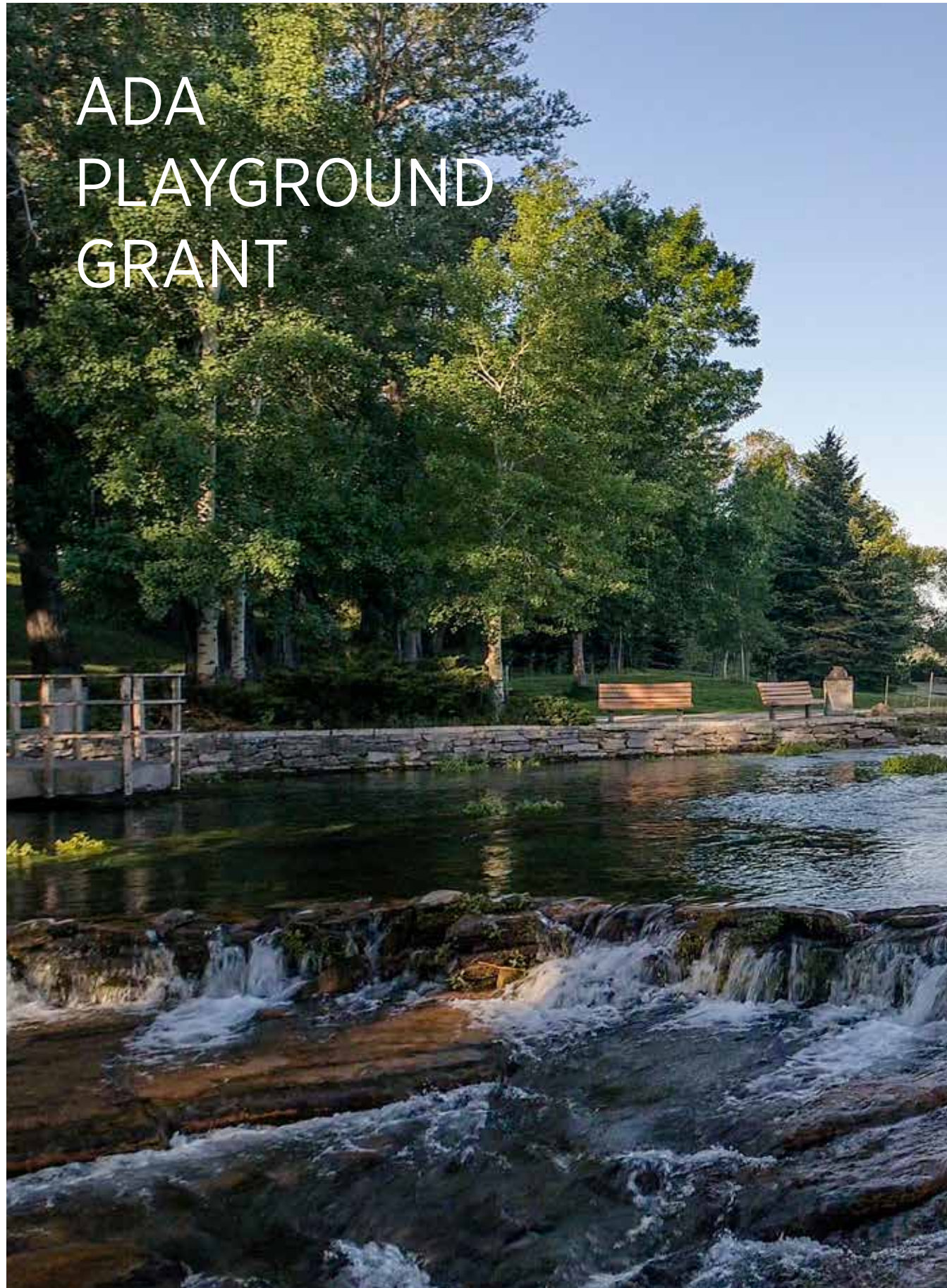
Motorized recreation in Montana is an important and growing recreational activity. Most of the motorized trail riding occurs on federal lands, - primarily lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Additionally, local private clubs utilize the funding for motorized projects such as safety and education efforts.

### BLACK SANDY STATE PARK REVIEWED MARCH 1, 2017

**LOVE THIS CAMPGROUND!!!** We avoided Black Sandy campground for quite a few years because we heard it was 'crowded' but went last summer and will be back many times in the future. It was AWESOME and even with every spot full it didn't seem crowded at all.



# ADA PLAYGROUND GRANT



## ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND GRANT AWARDS

| APPLICANT                                | GRANT REQUEST | DESCRIPTION   |
|--|---------------|---|
| Bench Elementary School & PTA (Billings) | \$10,000      | Playground Accessibility Project - Phase I, K-2 Play Area |
| City of Whitefish                        | \$10,000      | Smith Fields Playground Project                           |
| Butte-Silver Bow Parks & Recreation      | \$10,000      | Stodden Park Central Improvement Plan Project             |
| City of Sidney                           | \$9,533       | Kling Park Playground Renovation Project                  |
| Lolo-Florence Lions Club (Lolo)          | \$9,617       | Lolo Lions - Kester Community Center Park                 |
| City of Helena Parks & Recreation Dept.  | \$10,000      | Cherry Park Playground Replacement & Enhancement Project  |
| City of Shelby                           | \$10,000      | Shelby Splash Park Accessible Playground                  |
| Townsend School District                 | \$10,000      | Playground Replacement                                    |
| City of Fairview                         | \$850         | ADA Swing for Sharbono Park                               |
| Wyola School District #29                | \$10,000      | Playground Replacement                                    |
| Town of Cascade                          | \$10,000      | North Railroad Park Accessible Playground                 |

The Montana Accessible Playgrounds Grant Program was established to help municipalities and school districts throughout the state secure additional grant funding for the development of accessible playgrounds where children of all abilities can learn, play and grow.

Montana State Parks administers the Accessible Playgrounds Grant Program with \$100,000 in funds appropriated by the 2017 Legislative Session. Funds must be matched at a rate of 1 to 1 minimum, with \$1 in state funds to \$1 or more in other grant funds. A grant award cannot exceed \$10,000.

### GIANT SPRINGS STATE PARK REVIEWED 3 WEEKS AGO

**A SPECIAL PLACE.** *I have visited Giant springs State Park many times. It is lovely any time of year.*

*A large spring bubbles up creating a crystal clear pool filled with water cress and large fish. The trout hatchery has comprehensive self guided educational exhibits.*

*The Roe River fed by the spring joins the Missouri River at the edge of the park. There are many birds which enjoy this lovely natural environment.*



# MONTANA STATE PARKS FRIENDS GROUPS



## MONTANA STATE PARKS FRIENDS GROUPS

Citizens' associations, or "friends" groups, and various other organizations are a critical source of support for State Parks across Montana. They work on special projects, develop and promote special events, serve as visitor center attendants, volunteer as park naturalists, photographers, and website developers. Their valuable contributions of time and funding help to:

- Preserve, restore, and enhance natural and cultural resources
- Provide improved services and facilities for visitors
- Increase public awareness and support of the park
- Enhance educational and interpretive activities.



## MONTANA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION

The Montana State Parks Foundation, founded in August 2015, is the official nonprofit fundraising partner of Montana state parks. The Foundation supports Montana's state parks and recreation culture by raising awareness, fundraising and building advocates, to ensure our parks and recreation system is one of the best in the nation.

### Group Highlights:

- Fundraised for the purchase of landscaping, trees, benches, and other visitor amenities at Milltown State Park and new visitor information Kiosks at Lone Pine State Park.
- Publishing a weekly State Parks Showcase in daily newspapers across Montana.
- Partnered with Montana State Parks on the State Parks Adventure Challenge in the summer of 2018. The Adventure Challenge highlighted unique experiences in State Parks across Montana in a four-month marketing and awareness campaign.



## ACKLEY LAKE CLUB

The Ackley Lake Club is a citizen created organization established to sustain and improve recreational facilities and opportunities at Ackley Lake.

### Group Highlights:

- The club hosts two volunteer days each year as well as an ice fishing derby.
- The club coordinated a volunteer effort to improve park camping amenities. This included leveling 5 of the park's RV pads to improve ease of parking as well as purchasing and installing 8 new fire rings for the park.



## BANNACK ASSOCIATION

The Bannack Association is a grass-roots organization that works hand-in-hand with Montana State Parks to promote and preserve this National Historic Landmark. Through fund-raising, promotional efforts, and individual participation, association members are making a real difference in the future of Bannack. In addition, the association works to develop and preserve historical artifacts and records from Bannack and prepares and regularly distributes an informative, historical newsletter.

### Group Highlights:

- The Bannack Association, through a 3-year agreement with Montana State Parks, provides financial support to increase the Bannack Park Ranger position to .75 FTE which assists with interpretive programming at the park.
- Provided financial assistance for the construction of the park shop storage shed. Additionally, the Bannack Association partnered with Mason's Historic Lodge 3-7-77 to provide financial support to run power to the Yankee Flats Group Use Shelter.
- Provided financial assistance to the Hendrick's/Apex Mill Roof Project which was completed in May 2018. The Association has also given financial support to re-roof the Methodist Church, Grave's House and Montana Hotel buildings. The group plans to re-roof additional park structures including the Ovitt's Store and the Fire House.
- Provided financial assistance to trim hazardous trees and treat the Hotel Meade roof with a preservative to ensure protection from inclement weather. Additionally, the Bannack Association bought roofing materials for the Thompson Garage and Hamburger shack, two significant buildings at Bannack.



**MASONS OF  
BANNACK  
HISTORIC  
LODGE 3-7-77**

The Masons of Bannack Historic Lodge 3-7-77 work with Montana State Parks for the continued maintenance and stabilization of the historic lodge building at Bannack. The Bannack Lodge no. 16 was chartered in 1871 and its impressive neoclassical structure housing the lodge and the local school, was built in 1874. Today, Lodge 3-7-77 continues to work for the preservation of the heritage, sights and history of Masonry relating to the Bannack area.

**Group Highlights:**

- The Masons of Bannack Historic Lodge 3-7-77 provided financial support for electrifying the Yankee Flats Group Use Shelter at Bannack. Future plans to provide financial support for the construction of a fireplace at the Yankee Flats Group Use Shelter will take place over the next two years.



**FRIENDS OF THE MADISON BUFFALO JUMP**

Friends of the Madison Buffalo Jump is the principal volunteer organization supporting Madison Buffalo Jump State Park. Their mission is to promote stewardship and preserve, protect, and share the cultural, natural, and archaeological heritage of the Madison Buffalo Jump State Park for the benefit of all people.

**Group Highlights:**

- Friends of the Madison Buffalo Jump assisted with expenses associated with park staff traveling for tribal outreach opportunities. Park staff reached out to the Crow Tribe and traveled to Crow Fair in August.
- Friends of the Madison Buffalo Jump and Park Staff held their 6th annual Flying Buffalo Kite Flying day in September. The friends group paid expenses to allow Crow Tribal Speaker Marvin Dawes Sr. to travel, speak to the attendees and bless our event.



**FRIENDS OF FORT OWEN**

Friends of Fort Owen are a group of people who are dedicated to helping Montana State Parks to save, restore, maintain, develop, enhance, and interpret Fort Owen State Park and its associated sites and artifacts for future generations. The group works to build recognition of the historic significance that Ft. Owen played in the settlement of the Northwest and United States and strive to enhance its visibility as an educational and economic and tourism asset to the community of Stevensville, Ravalli County, and the State of Montana.

**Group Highlights:**

- Friends of Fort Owen provided wagon rides from Stevensville to Fort Owen during Western Heritage Days. Guided park tours were available onsite during the event.
- Hosted a National Public Lands Day event where volunteers applied wood preservative to exposed wood on the historic fort building, cleaned and painted interpretive signs and cleaned the interior of the Fort building.



**FRIENDS OF MAKOSHIKA**

Friends of Makoshika is a citizen support group established in 1992. Its purpose is to promote Makoshika State Park and support park activities. Friends of Makoshika organizes fund-raising activities, annual park events, and community activities.

**Group Highlights:**

- Contributed funding for a Paleo Tech Intern and a short-term Paleo Lab Manager. These critical positions organized the parks paleo and geology collection in the paleo lab, co-led paleo hikes, helped with T-Rex exhibit, and supported paleo education programs. These positions also worked with local paleo partners and helped produce the Glendive Dinosaur Consortium brochure.
- Friends of Makoshika applied for many significant grants that would address critical needs at the park. These include a grant to purchase and install a fire suppression system in the basement of the visitor center, a grant that would fix the elevator in the visitor center to make the basement ADA compliant, and a grant to purchase cabinets to store fossils in the paleo lab.
- Friends of Makoshika supported the annual Buzzard Day event as well as the parks First Day Hike on January 1st. Additionally, the Group purchased telescopes, so the park could facilitate astronomy programming.
- Two Friends of Makoshika members attended the BLM Cultural Site Stewardship Program. These members will assist in monitoring Makoshika State Park's cultural site near Valley View loop as well as the cultural sites at Medicine Rocks State Park. These sites need to be monitored on a monthly basis to support Montana State Parks Heritage Resources Program annual SB 3 report.



**THE TRAVELERS' REST  
PRESERVATION AND HERITAGE  
ASSOCIATION (TRPHA)**

The Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association is dedicated to preserving the rich cultural and natural resources of the Travelers' Rest site; to inspiring stewardship of our collective heritage; and to providing an educational and aesthetic benefit to the community.

**Group Highlights:**

- TRPHA worked with private partners to complete the Crossroads Interpretive Plaza. Coupling philanthropy and community service, this project has added an important interpretive component to Travelers' Rest - without any public dollars.
- TRPHA continued to provide support for the Montana State Parks AmeriCorps program. At Travelers' Rest that means the education program is coordinated in a professional manner, that volunteers are valued and recognized, that the park is represented at outreach events like Missoula Farmers Market, and that events like the Bitterroot Culture Camp happen. TRPHA remains committed to marketing the park through Montana Public Radio and Destination Missoula.
- The TRPHA fundraising auction continues to reach new heights. The 2018 auction set a record for revenue. The event reaches a broad cross-section of the western Montana community.
- TRPHA financially supports the Winter Storytelling Series, the Bitterroot Culture Camp, the Corps of Discovery Campout, Movie in the Park. Additionally, TRPHA regularly conducts outreach at community events like River City Roots Festival, KidsFest, Ravalli Outdoor Expo and Downtown Tonight they help the park reach new audiences as well as increase the relevance of the park to a diverse group of audiences.

# MONTANA STATE PARKS STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS



## FIRST PEOPLE'S BUFFALO JUMP STATE PARK REVIEWED OCTOBER 1, 2018

**FASCINATING INSIGHT INTO HISTORY AND ANOTHER CULTURE** *Excellent museum with sound, description, and diorama, explaining the culture of the native people and what would have happened at the jump. Also includes artefacts found on an archaeological dig below the site. It's important to start here before either walking out to the cliff or driving round to the top to walk out onto the cliff as it puts the site in context.*

*We drove round to the top of the cliff and then it's a short walk out to the top where you can get a buffalo view of the world. You can walk back down the cliffs if you wish. Very atmospheric. There is also a Prairie Dog town in season on the drive into the parking area and they are literally by the road.*



*The Parks division has many longstanding, systemic issues that the strategic plan addresses. A goal of the Montana State Parks Annual Report is to highlight the progress made by the Parks Division in the five key goals (A-E) of the Montana State Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan: Charting a New Tomorrow.*

## GOAL A MANAGE PARKS WITH AVAILABLE RESOURCES

### Successes

Major infrastructure improvement projects provided by the 2017 Legislative Session are being completed at Bannack State Park, Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park and Makoshika State Park and total \$6 million in significant Parks infrastructure maintenance efforts.

Milltown State Park officially opened to the public in June of 2018. Completion of this long-anticipated day-use park near Missoula represents years of hard work with local, county, state, federal and NGO partners. The park will also have a positive impact for the Bonner community.

### Ongoing Issues

The State Park system is continuing to address its \$22.7 Million in infrastructure needs, as outlined in the 2015 Facility Condition Inventory Report. With a lack of dedicated funding for critical infrastructure improvements, this number will continue to increase as aging park systems become inoperable.

It has become increasingly difficult to hire seasonal park employees (park rangers, maintenance staff) at parks located in rural communities or communities that are seasonally impacted by tourists visiting Montana. The rising cost and/or lack of available housing is a key factor. Fixed costs

at parks continue to rise, with no additional funds to offset the annual increases. These costs impact critical operational aspects of parks, such as solid and human waste disposal and utilities. Increased costs can cut into maintenance and operations budgets.

### Looking Ahead

Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park will undergo a significant infrastructure project with the replacement of the failing septic system serving the upper visitor center area, including the private concession operation. This project will address a long-term issue that focuses on health and safety for park visitors and staff.

The division will deploy a new software asset management system which will prioritize and track routine maintenance and capital expenditure needs across all relevant divisions of FWP. This system will allow inventory tracking through document uploads, GPS locations, and map generation using current asset tags, project numbers, and other customizable unique identifiers. Additionally, it will offer real time reporting and metrics to assist with trend analysis, budget forecasting, replacement cycles, labor costs, performance curves and estimates for all assets. This will streamline operations across all divisions of FWP.

## GOAL B DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

### Successes

Parks Light Vehicle Registration participation rate is at all-time high of 83%. The program's success, since enacted by the 2003 Legislative Session, has provided free park access to Montana residents for nearly 15 years now. The success can be directly attributed to on-going coordination with the Montana Department of Justice and check-ins with Montana's County Treasurers' offices. This critical funding represents 33% of the Parks Divisions' budget.

The Campsite Reservation Program continues to gain in popularity as seen by increased campsite reservations annually. This system provides valuable customer service for park visitors as well as generating critical park fees.

Stand Up Paddle Board and Kayak rental concessions have been developed at Flathead Lake State Park, Whitefish Lake State Park and

Les Mason State Parks. These concessions provide critical customer service while providing additional revenue to the park system.

### Ongoing Issues

Parks across Montana continue to have a critical need for seasonal, park operations FTE between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This is the busiest time of year in the parks system and continues to demand additional resources as visitation increases.

### Looking Ahead

Parks in Northwest Montana have begun removing hazard trees from the part that pose a threat to public health and safety. Once removed, the trees are cut and bundled and sold as firewood to park guests. This is a great example of park management using available resources to generate valuable earned revenue for the park system.

## GOAL C ENRICH THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

### Successes

The campground at Flathead Lake State Park-Finley Point has been upgraded to provide a vastly improved camping experience.

New trails at First People's Buffalo Jump State Park have increased and diversified use at the park.

Makoshika State Park has expanded its trail system to include connections to the City of Glendive. This connection makes the park a more accessible and relevant to the community.

Sluice Boxes State Park has developed a trail map for the newly cleared and signed trail which runs through the park. These improvements directly resulted from increased park use and to address visitor safety.

Chief Plenty Coups State Park has developed an orchard and propagated heirloom apples. This project adds to the historic character of the park and enhances the visitor experience.

Makoshika State Park has restored the historic McCarty Cabin and turned it into an interpretive exhibit adding historical impact to the park.

Medicine Rocks State Park and Brush Lake State Parks have expanded their interpretive programming and community connections. This

includes photography workshops and stargazing classes.

### Ongoing Issues

Shoulder season (Jan-April & Sept-Dec) park staffing continues to be an issue. Shoulder season visitation has increased, however funding for additional staff is not available. This creates a situation where many parks that don't have a management presence to ensure public health, safety and customer service concerns as they arise.

Limited resources have forced park managers to prioritize operations funding to the peak season when parks are at their highest visitation. This leaves little to no funding for operations during winter months. The result is reduction or elimination of services which has impacted visitors that have historically used parks in the offseason, specifically ice fisherman in northwest Montana.

### Looking Ahead

Many operational needs, across the parks system, have been addressed through AmeriCorps Program such as providing interpretive programming, conducting community outreach, and creating and implementing park land improvement. This has freed park staff to concentrate on their core operational responsibilities.

### BANNACK STATE PARK REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 28, 2018

***LIVING HISTORY DAY** Bannack State Park holds the remains of a gold mining town and the place has been repaired rather than completely restored. We managed to visit on a living history day, with re-enactors placing themselves right in the middle of the mining boom. We met the schoolteacher, various tradesmen, such as the blacksmith, the lady who ran the boarding house, the merchant and assayer, and the town drunk! The Sheriff and his Winchester rifle had an air of authority, and the Doctor treated my sore foot before he had to perform an amputation of the toe of a townsman who had shot himself in the foot. All highly entertaining!*



### LEWIS & CLARK CAVERNS STATE PARK REVIEWED AUGUST 19, 2018

***THE CAVERNS ROCK!** Our first trip to the Caverns was stupendous! We loved the drive, the location and the State Park crew who handled all the details. Having visited several caves over the years I'd have to say this is #1 in my book. The cave's wonders were on full display as we climbed, descended, waddled and slid through its many features. I will gladly take any and all friends who visit out to experience this Montana gem!*



## GOAL D FOSTER STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND ENGAGED CONSTITUENCY

### Successes

Montana State Parks has worked on creating a more robust partner with the Montana State Parks Foundation. This has included messaging campaigns and public outreach at events across Montana.

Friends of Fort Owen State Park is a new friends group created to find solutions to management challenges at the park. The creation of the friends group has resulted in a new owner of the adjacent ranch and a new range of opportunities for improved park management and public access.

Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association is focused on creative and progressive ideas to solve challenges that exist at Travelers' Rest State Park. This includes a joint study with the University of Montana and collaboration on staffing the visitor center at the Park.

Montana State Parks partners with state, regional and local tourism organizations to leverage limited marketing funds and produce high quality advertising that focus on increasing park visitation, awareness of state parks and park signature events.

Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park has partnered with Bayer Crop-Science to study new cheat grass treatment on a test plot in the park. This could provide long term solutions to noxious weed infestations.

Park staff have developed a successful working relationship with the Ackley Lake Club Friends

Group at Ackley Lake State Park. This new friend group has transitioned from a mission of finding alternative management possibilities at Ackley Lake State Park to a group dedicated to the improvement of the site.

First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park has hosted an annual Elder Feast for local tribal members as well as Little Shell Chippewa Pow wow. Events like these have enabled park staff to engage more with tribal representatives.

Chief Plenty Coups State Park has increased integration and cooperation with the Crow Tribe. This has included staffing at the park.

### Ongoing Issues

Although Montana State Parks continues to experience record breaking visitation, it is still not common for Montana residents to have top of mind awareness of what a state park is. Many people confuse state parks with the vast array of incredible outdoor opportunities that are available in Montana, but are managed by other federal, state or local agencies.

### Looking Ahead

Partnerships are paramount in the park system and are vital to its long-term success. We will continue working with all partners to secure sustainable funding; growing an engaged constituency that understands and values state parks.

## GOAL E HEIGHTEN AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION FOR STATE PARKS

### Successes

Montana State Parks has positioned itself in the conversation about the recreation economy in Montana and its importance to economic development, public health, education, conservation and workforce development. Montana State Parks marketing & communications efforts focus on building the Montana State Parks brand and building customer awareness of offerings at state parks. Much of this is done by developing partnerships in Montana and across the country.

Public relations and media outreach efforts have focused on Heritage Resources Program projects and their importance to the state. Connecting our heritage properties, and their significance to Montana, has resonated with residents and tourists.

### Ongoing Issues

The statewide recreation conversation has many voices. Montana State Parks lacks up to date economic impact data which makes it increasingly difficult to communicate the value of state parks to Montana.

### Looking Ahead

Montana State Parks will continue to heighten awareness of the five recreational grant programs it manages and their importance to the recreation economy across Montana.



### MAKOSHKA STATE PARK REVIEWED JULY 16, 2018

**BEAUTIFUL PARK!** We stopped by the park not sure what to expect. We were very pleasantly surprised. It is absolutely beautiful! Lots of mountains and small canyons. They have camp sites and plenty of walking trails. Price is \$6 per vehicle, very cheap compared to some parks. Our family enjoyed the visit and would recommend it as a great place to visit.





**PICTOGRAPH CAVE STATE PARK** REVIEWED AUGUST 27, 2018

**AMAZING SPOT** *Went here with my kids, great staff and charming volunteers. Nicely laid out park, but I was most struck by realizing that I was standing in a spot that has been inhabited for over 10,000 years. Artifacts from this spot are twice the age of the Great Pyramids of Giza.*







## **MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS**

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