

MADISON BUFFALO JUMP STATE PARK

stateparks.mt.gov

Background

Madison Buffalo Jump State Park includes 638.4 acres of land, with 617.5 of those acres (designated as School Trust lands) owned by the Montana Dept. of Natural Resource Conservation (DNRC) and 20.9 acres owned by FWP. The state park is open year around for day use activities and has averaged 3,786 visitors and \$1,839 in earned revenue annually from 2008 through 2012. The Parks Division is responsible for a full scope of park operations and maintenance, including visitor use management and resource protection. Annual operating costs (personnel and operations) have averaged \$15,192 from fiscal year 2008 through 2012.

Park Quick Facts:

- Established in 1967
- > 638.4 acres
- Open year round (day use)
- > 4 miles of hiking trails
- National Register of Historic Places

Contact:

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It has been proposed that Montana State Parks pay a \$4,272 annual fee (plus 2% annual increase) to DNRC for use of the School Trust property. Since executing the lease in 1967, the Parks Division has not provided this annual compensation. This was an issue identified in a financial-compliance audit conducted on DNRC by the Legislative Audit Division in 2012.

Montana State Parks is challenged to sustain the parks system. In the last three years the department has decommissioned Parker Homestead, and turned back other lands under easement or lease specifically, Fort Maginnis, and Citadel Rock to DNRC as part of reducing the size of the park system holdings. Given the fiscal challenges and fundamental concerns, Montana State Parks is proposing to forego management control of this property.

It should also be noted that while Madison Buffalo Jump State Park contains highly significant cultural resources, the state park system also includes First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park which is considered one of the largest buffalo jump sites in the country and is proposed for National Historic Landmark status.

Public Comment

The Parks Division is conducting a 32-day comment period to solicit public input on the future management of Madison Buffalo Jump State Park, including forgoing management of the state park back to DRNC.

The public is invited to attend one of the following open houses:

Wednesday, January 9 – Three Forks

6:00 – 8:00 pm

United Methodist Church

Tuesday, January 15 – Bozeman

6:00 – 8:00 pm

FWP Region 3

124 2nd Ave East, Three Forks 1400 South 19th Avenue, Bozeman

Public comment will be solicited starting December 31, 2012. Comments must be submitted in writing by 5:00 pm on January 31, 2013. Visit http://www.stateparks.mt.gov, and click on Submit Public Comments at the bottom on the page. Or mail written comments to: *Madison Buffalo Jump Comments, Montana State Parks, P.O. Box* 200701, *Helena, MT* 59620-0701.

