



MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: April 17, 2015

Agenda Item: Amend Administrative Rule

Division: Parks

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background (Brief description of the issue, decision to be made, history, etc.):

Montana State Parks administrative rules both articulate the authority of and provide guidance to parks' staff in day-to-day park operations. In addition, they also inform the public what conduct and activities are appropriate in state parks. As part of State Parks' broader strategic planning process, the Division is beginning a review of its existing administrative rules, specifically in two areas: state park designations and state park public use rules.

The state park designations were adopted in the 1970s and currently include three classifications: state parks, state recreation areas, and state monuments. These definitions set forth the purpose, the type of resources, as well as the type of development and management for each designation. However, depending on the Classification Team's recommendations, these various designations or their definitions may need to be changed or expanded. Further, the Division may need to consider whether the visitor expectations created by these 1970s era definitions are still relevant for visitors 40 years later.

Many of these rules are out of date. For instance, a number of public use rules were last updated in 1988. Several still refer to Montana State Parks as "fish and game commission." One rule specifies that campground checkout is 4pm the following day, significantly later than most federal or private campgrounds. Others need to be strengthened or otherwise updated to address modern challenges or reflect more current approaches to resource management.

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public):

In the next few months, the Division will work closely with its regional staff to put together a draft of new public use rules for the Board's review and approval. Public comment will be provided for throughout the process and at the Board meetings.

Alternatives and Analysis (Brief description of alternative solutions with analysis of the pros and cons of each):

This is informational and no alternatives are provided at this point in time.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale (Brief description of our recommendation to the Board and the reasons for it):

This is informational and no recommendations are provided at this point in time.

Proposed Motion (Draft language the Board could use to adopt the agency recommendation):

This is informational and no proposed motion is provided at this point in time.