



MONTANA STATE PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: December 14, 2016

Agenda Item: Draft Heritage Resources Strategic Plan

Division: Parks

Action Needed: Tentative

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 20 minutes

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

The *Montana State Parks 2015-2020 Strategic Plan* calls for the development of a system-wide heritage resource strategy to address the unique management challenges and opportunities of heritage resource sites across the park system. As part of the process in developing the plan, two consultants were hired to facilitate meetings with state park staff and stakeholders and to gather best practices for heritage parks within other state park systems. Four meetings were held and topics focused on heritage program strengths, challenges and options as well as existing capacity, data collection and management, heritage resource training and staff needs, interpretation, funding, and partnership development. Consultants documented their findings in five reports emphasizing the most critical heritage resource needs, issues, and solutions in state parks consistent with the park classification system. The draft Heritage Resources Plan synthesizes the results of all meetings and consultant reports and sets a direction for heritage resource program priorities outlined in six goals (A-F) that state parks will work to achieve over the next seven years (2017-2024).

Public Involvement Process & Results (Brief description of the type of public involvement and summary of what we heard from the public): Heritage resources touch a diverse group of stakeholders, and stakeholder engagement was a key component of this planning process. Key points of engagement included: Informational email (June); online forum (July); website resources (ongoing); survey on program and processes (July); and stakeholder workshop (September).

Upon board approval, Montana State Parks proposes the release of the draft Heritage Resources Strategic Plan to the public for a 30-day review period.

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

Alternative 1: Do not allow the division to release the Heritage Resources Plan for public comment.

Alternative 2: Allow the Draft Heritage Resources Strategic Plan to be released for public comment.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale (Brief description of our recommendation to the Board and the reasons for it): Approval and implementation of the Draft Heritage Resource Plan is an important element achieving the goals laid out in the Montana State Parks 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. Therefore, Montana State Parks recommends approval of Alternative 2.

Proposed Motion (Draft language the Board could use to adopt the agency recommendation): I move that the Board authorize the Parks Division to seek public comment on the draft Heritage Resources Strategic Plan.