

**STATE OF MONTANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 1-2018**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING THE
MONTANA PARKS IN FOCUS COMMISSION**

WHEREAS, Montana's state parks provide family recreational and educational experiences, offer public access to key lands and waters across the state, and are an important part of the state's heritage and growing economy;

WHEREAS, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks seeks a vibrant state parks system that continues to evolve to best serve future needs and visitors, and to protect the parks system's unique cultural, recreational, and historical legacies;

WHEREAS, the Parks Division and the Montana State Parks and Recreation Board developed a five-year strategic plan in 2015 that focused on developing diversified revenue streams, growing strategic partnerships, and building an engaged constituency;

WHEREAS, the implementation of the Montana State Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan has not been fully undertaken or realized;

WHEREAS, the fiscal health of the state parks system remains a chronic problem amid rising costs for staffing, infrastructure repair along with operations and maintenance, and declining budgetary resources;

WHEREAS, state parks can build public-private partnerships and an engaged constituency to develop new funding mechanisms and build the profile of the state parks system; and

WHEREAS, state parks seek creative ways to partner with Montana's new Office of Outdoor Recreation to enhance recreation opportunities and the economic contribution of state parks to local businesses and communities.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVE BULLOCK, Governor of the State of Montana, pursuant to the authority vested in me as Governor under the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, Title 2, Chapter 15, MCA, and other applicable statutes, do hereby create the Montana Park in Focus Commission (hereinafter referred to as "Commission") (advisory council) as provided in this Executive Order.

PURPOSE

The Montana Parks in Focus Commission is established to ensure that the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has the resources, capacity, and expertise to translate core visions from the five-year strategic plan into an actionable agenda. Through the creation of this public-private collaboration, the State of Montana seeks to strengthen its state parks system.

DUTIES

The Commission is tasked with:

1. Developing solutions for the state parks system that address core challenges in a systematic, publicly supported fashion.
2. Leveraging relevant expertise to conduct research, support transparent engagement, and ultimately deliver and support implementation of a set of recommendations that build from the Montana State Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan.
3. Providing expert, high-level, and independent recommendations to the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks on effective ways to implement the Montana State Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan. The main focus will be developing diversified revenue streams, growing strategic partnerships, and building an engaged constituency for state parks.
4. Delivering results and accountability to the Montana State Parks and Recreation vision, while ensuring the financial, operational, and cultural challenges facing state parks are addressed under the management of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.
5. Developing an inclusive process that welcomes engagement from all relevant partners to shape the substance for this new initiative. It will operate in a collaborative, transparent manner.

STRUCTURE AND DUTIES

1. The Parks in Focus Commission shall be comprised of at least 12 members, including a Chairperson. All members will be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Governor, until December 31, 2018.
2. The Commission will hold four public meetings in 2018. At these meetings, the Commission will discuss leading issues, encourage and gather public input and ideas, and develop a framework for making recommendations in a final report.
3. The Commission will convene a set of work groups to develop a deeper understanding of core challenges facing state parks and to explore related solution concepts. These work groups may include members of the Commission, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks staff, and outside experts.
4. The Parks in Focus Commission will be coordinated by two advisors, Deb Love and Ben Alexander of Resources Legacy Fund. They will work closely with the Governor's Office, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks leadership, Parks Division staff, the Montana State Parks and Recreation Board, and the Montana State Parks Foundation. The advisors will report to the Chair of the Commission and will be paid for by Resources Legacy Fund.

5. The advisors will provide day-to-day support for the Commission and its activities. This will include preparing for Commission meetings, conducting or overseeing needed research, facilitating public engagement, managing work groups on delegated topics, and building a supporting coalition. The advisors will also produce a draft and final plan with recommendations for the Commission to review, assess, revise, and adopt.

STRATEGIES

The Commission will focus on the following strategies:

1. **Develop Diversified Revenue Streams**
 - a. Identify chronic fiscal problems, including rising costs for staffing, infrastructure repair, operations and maintenance, and declining budgetary resources; and
 - b. Identify long-term, sustainable funding plans and revenue sources that provide for optimal, cost-effective strategies to address current challenges and meet future needs.
2. **Grow Strategic Public-Private Partnerships**
 - a. Develop an inclusive process that welcomes engagement from all relevant partners to shape this initiative, including activities such as listening sessions, focus groups, open meetings with time dedicated to public comments, online comment opportunities, targeted outreach to opinion leaders and experts, and stakeholder working groups on specific topics; and
 - b. Identify innovative ideas and opportunities for management and collaborative stewardship of park units, with a special emphasis on outdoor recreation and a partnership with the state's new Office of Outdoor Recreation.
3. **Build an Engaged Constituency**
 - a. Build internal support within the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks for state parks and the Commission's recommendations;
 - b. Create a coalition of interests to advocate for state parks, the Commission's recommendations, and implementation of the Montana State Parks and Recreation strategic vision, and to ensure that the financial, operational, and cultural challenges facing state parks are addressed under the management of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks; and
 - c. Build a constituency of state and local community leaders and businesses that recognize and support the growing opportunity to create economic benefits for recreation and tourism in the state.

DELIVERABLES

The Commission will deliver its assessments and reports directly to the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. These materials will be made publicly available.

1. Initial state parks assessment on key challenges and threats.
Due: June 2018
2. Work group reports on issues the Commission identifies as important, such as new sources of funding, outdoor recreation and tourism, and communications and marketing.
Due: August 2018
3. Draft Commission recommendations report.
Due: September 2018
4. Final Commission recommendations report.
Due: December 2018

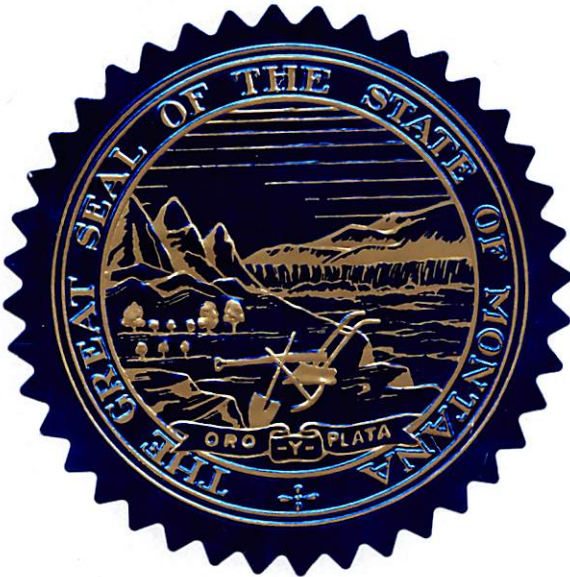
COMPENSATION

Commission members shall be reimbursed by the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks for reasonable travel expenses pursuant to sections 2-15-122(5) and 2-18-501 through 2-15-503, MCA.

DURATION

The Commission shall complete its work and cease to exist by December 31, 2018.

This Order is effective immediately.



GIVEN under my hand and the GREAT SEAL of the State of Montana this 11th day of January, 2018.

[Handwritten signature of Steve Bullock]

STEVE BULLOCK, Governor

ATTEST:

[Handwritten signature of Corey Stapleton]
COREY STAPLETON, Secretary of State *[Handwritten signature of Susan Jones, deputy]*