

Montana State Parks and Recreation Board Policy



Draft

REVISED 10.15.18

Policy for Accepting and Recognizing Gifts, Donations, Corporate Partnerships and Sponsorships for Montana State Parks.

Chair Approval	Effective Date	Review Date
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Board Policy

All donations and sponsorships presented to Montana State Parks, a division of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, must be reviewed in accordance with specific criteria and conditions prior to acceptance and recognition. This policy shall apply to the review, acceptance, and recognition of all proposed gifts, donations, memorials, corporate partnerships, and corporate sponsorships.

Purpose

This policy identifies the procedures and criteria used by Montana State Parks when reviewing offers of gifts, donations, sponsorships and partnerships, as well as informing appropriate acknowledgement of donor/sponsor generosity. This is to ensure that associated development and promotion of state park and outdoor recreation areas in a responsible, transparent, and accountable manner that is consistent with the strategic goals and mission of Montana State Parks.

Background

The acceptance of donations and gifts to benefit Montana State Parks and the public has occurred over the years with little established direction to inform decisions on acceptance and recognition. To date, park staff have assessed proposals on a case-by-case basis and worked with donors to find mutually agreeable solutions for acceptance and recognition. As new partnership opportunities and donation interests arise, clear direction applicable to parks system-wide will better ensure appropriate, well-informed and consistent decision-making by state park staff.

Donations, partnerships and sponsorships can play a key role in supporting the programs and services of the Montana State Parks. Involving public and private funders in partnership and/or sponsorship not only provides financial resources, but also fosters strengthened relationships, promotes collaborative stewardship, and increases public awareness.

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In appreciation of support, donors, sponsors and partners will have the opportunity to be recognized for their contribution to the state park system. Such recognition shall adhere to the aesthetic values and purpose of the agency's parks, facilities, and services. In addition, such recognition shall not detract from the visitor's experience or expectations, nor shall it impair the visual qualities of the site or be perceived as creating a proprietary interest.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy the following definitions apply:

Corporate Slogan or script – a word or phrase that may be attached to a corporate name or logo.

Donations – the provision of in-kind goods and/or money for which no benefits or exchange of value are sought.

Donor – a single individual, sponsor, or partner.

Interpretive Sign – a sign within a park that interprets natural, historic and/or cultural features.

Facility – any building or structure that is located on property owned or managed by the Parks Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Logo – a symbol or name that is used to brand an organization.

Park – open space owned or managed by the Parks Division of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Park Resources – the natural and/or cultural landscape elements within a park.

Plaque – a flat memorial plate containing information that is either engraved or in bold relief.

Recognition Benefits – opportunities given to the sponsor to have its name/logo appear on park property or materials for a specified time.

Sponsorship – financial or in-kind support from an individual or corporation for a specific service, program, facility, park, or event in return for certain benefits.

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The following shall inform the evaluation of donation and sponsorship proposals presented to Montana State Parks (MSP). These conditions and criteria have been established to ensure all sponsors are treated in an equitable and appropriate manner, and that, in recognizing a sponsoring entity's support, the values and purpose of a particular state park are not diminished.

1.0 Sponsorship Proposals & Acceptances

1.1 MSP and its staff appreciate gifts and memorials that contribute to, and support enhance, the agency's mission. Donations, gifts, and memorials for parks should be directly supportive of the declaration of purpose, intent for which the park was acquired, related park planning documents, and, when appropriate, the interpretive period of the park.

1.2 The proposed donation or sponsorship activity/relationship, as well as the character and mission of the sponsoring entity, should promote the mission and values of MSP in relation to the project/program that the funding supports.

1.3 Acceptance of donations / sponsorships must enhance, and shall not impede, MSP's ability to act in the public interest.

1.4 The proposed relationship between the donor / sponsoring entity and MSP should maintain MSP's reputation for objectivity, independence, integrity, credibility, social responsibility and accountability.

1.5 Sponsorships cannot be made conditional on MSP's performance.

1.6 Individual sponsors shall not limit MSP's ability to seek other sponsors.

1.7 MSP will evaluate potential sponsors on criteria, including but not limited to:

- Products/services offered by sponsoring entity.
- Alignment of the principles of the sponsoring entity and the mission of FWP and the Montana State Parks Division.
- Statutory or policy guidelines.
- Donor/Sponsoring entity's rationale for its interest in Montana State Parks.

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- Donor/Sponsoring entity's expectations regarding the sponsorship activity/relationship.
- Donor/Sponsoring entity's timeliness and/or readiness to enter into an agreement.

2.0 Categories

2.1 Donations / Sponsorships are appropriate for the following types of activities:

- Park/Facility Development – Financial or in-kind support associated with the design and construction of a park or recreational or cultural facility. Projects within this category will typically be of a one-time nature.
- Operational Support – Financial or in-kind contributions which provide operational support of a park.
- Events – Financial or in-kind support for an event organized by MSP on MSP property.
- Program Delivery – Financial or in-kind support that facilitates the ongoing delivery of a statewide or site-specific program.

3.0 Recognition of Donors

3.1 It is preferable to express appreciation for contributions by presenting something to donors or sponsors rather than by forms of recognition to be displayed in the park.

- Recognition for gifts under \$2,500 from a single donor or donor organization may be in the form of letters of appreciation; noted in appropriate printed materials, or where the gift is between \$500 to under \$2,500 - with a recognition plaque which is presented to and given to the donor but not displayed in the park.

3.2 Where a physical form of on-site recognition is deemed appropriate, temporary forms of recognition are preferred.

- Recognition for gifts, sponsorships or donations under \$2,500 which are gifted specifically to support interpretive programs or special events, may be granted *Recognition Benefits* and be displayed in the park for the duration of the program or event and be included in promotional materials related to the program or event.
- Recognition for gifts, sponsorships or donations under \$2,500 which are gifted for the specific purpose of the procurement of site amenities such as benches, bike racks,

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picnic tables etc. may include recognition small plaques affixed to the amenity. Plaques may not to exceed 3" x 5"; must be of a material consistent with other materials on site and approved by the Regional Park Manager. Plaques may not exceed 50 characters, the text of which must be approved by the Regional Park Manager. The procurement of such amenities and placement of plaques must be approved by the Regional Park Manager and conform to already existing site standards. Corporate or organizational script, slogans and / or logos may not be used on any plaque.

- Replacement of damaged plaques or site amenities that have reached the end of their useful life will be at the discretion of the Regional Park Manager.

3.3 Under no circumstances should either temporary or permanent recognition be affixed to historic, cultural or natural resources of the park or located where they would intrude on the historic or natural character of the area. Recognition plaques may not be placed on or near "green" donations such as plantings or trees.

3.4 The duration of sponsor recognition is determined on a case-by-case basis but should be commensurate with the relative value of the sponsorship. Permanent recognition shall be available only for the largest donations/sponsorships.

- Recognition for gifts between \$2,500 to \$10,000 from a single donor or donor organization may be given temporary on-site recognition which will not exceed 24 consecutive months and may not be exclusive to a single donor. (i.e. name placed on a park kiosk bulletin board or "donor recognition board" may include other names). Temporary recognition may be in the form of park printed material, park kiosk, visitor center bulletin board, websites etc. The form of temporary recognition shall be determined by the Regional Park Manager and Park Manager in consultation with the Parks Division Chief of Operations.
- Recognition for gifts exceeding \$10,000 from a single donor or donor organization will be made on a case by case basis and evaluated by a committee comprised of the Division Chief of Operations, the Regional Park Manager and Park Manager of the site to which the donation is being made. The committee will present a recommendation to the Division Administrator of how the donor will be recognized. The Division Administrator will be responsible for making the final decision.

3.5 Recognition of corporate or organizational donations or sponsorships must not in suggest the endorsement of Montana State Parks, nor give the impression to park visitors of advertising, commercialization or solicitation, or of a proprietary interest in the unit.

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State employees may acknowledge contributions but may not endorse products, services, business or organizations.

3.6 Temporary or permanent recognition, except for special events, shall be subordinate in all cases to the character of the surroundings. Recognition shall not detract from the park values or the park's interpretive messages.

- Corporate or organizational script, slogans and / or logos may not be used on any permanent recognition such as interpretive signs or other physical site amenities.

3.7 Recognition shall not interfere with routine park operations or visitor use.

3.8 Recognition shall not be a part of, or displayed on, any employee uniform item.

4.0 Authorization of Recognition

4.1 Montana State Parks vary greatly with respect to their historical, cultural, and recreational amenities. Appropriate forms of recognition will be chosen that do not detract from the visitor experience or expectation. However, caution should be exercised to avoid unnecessary visual clutter to natural, cultural, historic and built environments.

4.2 The Parks Division Administrator shall make the final decisions regarding appropriate form of recognition.

5.0 Terminating Sponsorships

5.1 The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks reserves the right to terminate any sponsorship, should conditions arise during the life of that sponsorship that results in the sponsorship conflicting with these guidelines or the sponsorship is no longer in the best interests of FWP. Decisions to terminate a sponsorship shall be made by the Division Administrator.

6.0 Ethical Considerations

6.1 All sponsorship offers need to receive careful consideration and FWP retains the right to reject a sponsorship offer. Circumstances under which this may occur include but are not limited to:

- The potential sponsoring entity seeks to secure a contract, permit or lease.

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- The potential sponsoring entity seeks to impose conditions that are inconsistent with FWP's mission, values, policies and/or planning documents.
- Acceptance of a potential sponsorship would create a conflict of interest or policy.
- The potential sponsor is in litigation with the State of Montana.

6.2 Montana State Parks will honor the donor's intent for all accepted and approved donations.

7.0 Other Considerations

7.1 Montana State Parks is responsible for maintenance and repair of park facilities and must consider maintenance and replacement costs for physical assets and other forms of acknowledgement subject to damage when developing on-site recognition.

7.2 On-going operating costs associated with the sponsor's proposal should be evaluated.

7.3 Real costs, including staff time, for procuring sponsorship should be considered.

7.4 Sponsorship should meet an actual need of FWP, and not require FWP to assume funding commitments it is unprepared or unable to accept.

8.0 Existing Agreements

8.1 These guidelines are not intended to supersede requirements of general plans or long-standing formalized recognition programs, which will continue in their current form. However, recognition inconsistent with these guidelines should be phased out or altered whenever possible to conform to these guidelines.

Authority

Mont. Code Ann. § 23-1-102

Mont. Code Ann. § 23-1-111

Related Policies and Guidelines

- Site Naming Policy
- State Ethics Policy
- Acceptance of Non-State Funding