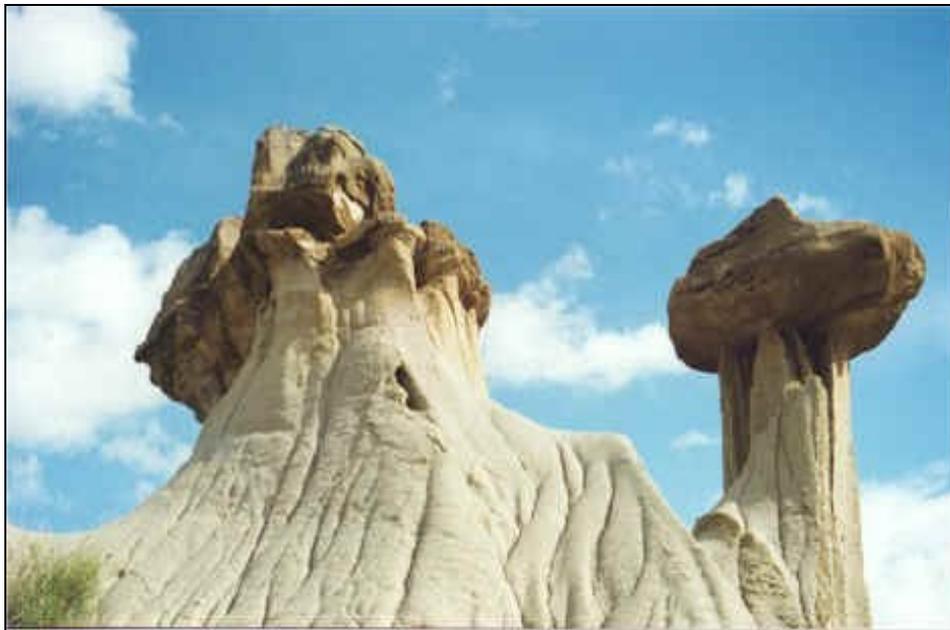


Makoshika State Park Management Plan

FINAL

October 2005



Developed by the
Makoshika Advisory Committee and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

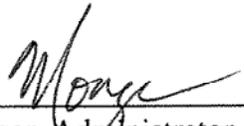
MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Adopted by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, October 2005.



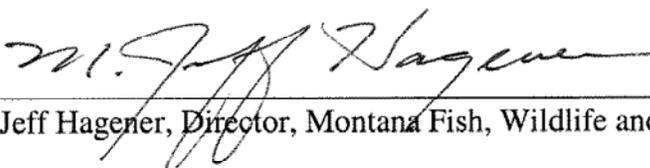
Bryce Christensen, Region Seven Regional Supervisor

10/9/05
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Doug Monger, Administrator, Parks Division

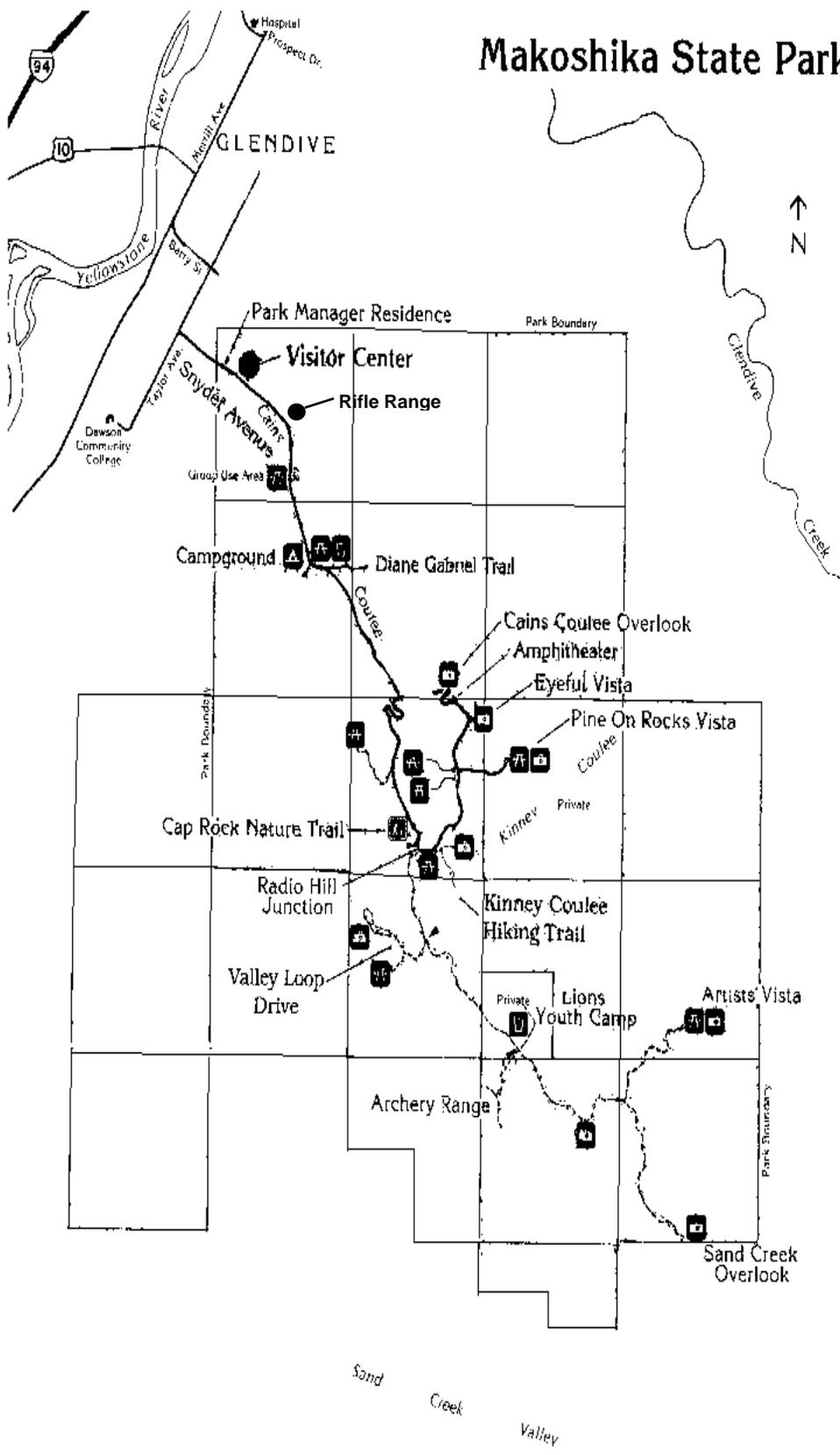
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Jeff Hagener, Director, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

11/7/05
Date

Makoshika State Park



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Makoshika State Park is the largest park in the Montana State Parks System, covering over 11,500 acres of badlands in eastern Montana. The park, near Glendive, Montana, was added to the Montana State Parks system in 1953.

To the Lakota-Sioux Indians, *Ma-ko-shi-ka* meant bad earth or bad land. Today, the park's pine and juniper studded badland formations house the fossil remains of Tyrannosaurus Rex and Triceratops. The park offers diverse amenities for visitors, including roads and hiking trails for park exploration, scenic vistas, campgrounds, a golf course, an amphitheater, a rifle range, and an archery range. A visitor center at the park entrance exhibits the site's geologic, fossil, and prehistoric stories.

The last plan written for Makoshika State Park was completed in 1984. The 2005 Makoshika State Park Management Plan updates previous planning efforts to reflect current issues and opportunities at the park. The plan offers a comprehensive vision and action plan for the park for the next 10 years by identifying issues important to the success of the park and providing actions for addressing them. These actions are scheduled to be implemented during the life of this plan, but may be subject to further research, impacts assessment, costs, available funding, personnel availability, and additional public comment. The proposed implementation timeline is included at the end of this document.

In January 2004, a citizen advisory group was formed to analyze issues and develop management recommendations for the park. This work included public participation through a 2003 summer visitor survey at the park, monthly advisory group sessions from January to May 2004, and another in May 2005 to review the draft. A 30-day public comment period and open house will be held at the park to discuss the plan and hear comments. The final plan, with revisions based on public comment, will be submitted to the FWP Region 7 Supervisor, Parks Division Administrator, and then to the FWP Director for approval. Regional park staff and the advisory committee will review the management plan in 2010 to gauge implementation progress and make necessary revisions.

Plan Summary

The advisory committee formulated the following issues and objectives. Goals and recommended actions to achieve the objectives are detailed in this plan, along with a schedule for completion of each action and further discussion.

Community Relations

Makoshika State Park is a valuable asset to the Glendive community. Partnerships with surrounding organizations and governments can stimulate local use. These partnerships include physical connections between the city and park for educational and recreational opportunities. The park will work with neighbors to address visitor and livestock trespass issues.

Management Objectives:

- Coordinate with the City of Glendive, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson Community College (DCC), Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF), other private businesses, and the public to establish non-motorized trails connecting the park, the river, and the city. The trails will extend to major attractions in the park.
- Collaborate with schools for greater educational opportunities at the park.
- Work with organizations to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park.
- Encourage use of park facilities by outside organizations.
- Document and address neighbor concerns and comments.
- Establish boundary markings around the park property to avoid visitor trespassing onto private property and vice-versa.
- Manage livestock.
- Periodically implement special weapons restricted hunts coordinated with the regional wildlife biologist and local warden to reduce urban deer conflicts.

Visitor Services

Strategic promotion efforts to increase visitation should strike a balance between visitor experience and resource preservation. Park facilities are generally adequate, but some improvements are needed to provide amenities necessary for visitor comfort and to increase the length of time visitors will stay at the park.

Management Objectives:

- Provide clear travel directions to the park from all feeder routes.
- Develop a marketing plan for the park.
- Provide more non-motorized trails.
- Continue educating visitors about legal off highway vehicle (OHV) and snowmobile use in the park.
- Maintain existing rifle range to provide safe user facilities.
- Relocate rifle range outside the park.
- Continue leasing archery range to local club for management.
- Improve facilities in the lower campground.
- Provide water in the park interior.
- Install new latrines.

Infrastructure

Road maintenance is a continuing issue in the park given the unique geology of the area. Maintenance needs to address weather, travel, and visitor safety. There is an opportunity to develop more scenic overlooks and pullouts. Existing park facilities and equipment need consistent maintenance to increase longevity and safety. Communication tower leases in the park need active managing. Lease agreements need updating consistent with park and agency goals. Towers impact the view shed, but are critical to public safety.

Management Objectives:

- Educate visitors on park road conditions.
- Provide ongoing road maintenance and surface improvements.
- Where feasible, provide scenic overlooks with interpretive panels.
- Communicate with radio tower owners to more effectively manage tower leases and reduce view shed impacts
- Assess lease agreements and update rates to meet Fair Market Value. Accurately and efficiently track revised lease agreements.
- Research park road designations and restrictions attached to private communication tower inholdings.
- Bury electric lines in park.
- Devise protocols for regular park maintenance and safety.
- Consistently implement park management practices to maintain staff and visitor safety, and reduce liability.

Interpretation and Education

Park information needs updating and more readily available to visitors. Park brochures and trail guides should be updated to include new park features and information. Interpretive displays are stale and need to be upgraded and diversified to keep visitors coming back. This will include more complete use of the visitor center building. Also, artifacts need adequate security. Educational opportunities for schools, organizations, and individual visitors need to be expanded. The park needs adequate staff and resources for interpretation.

A comprehensive interpretive plan for the visitor center would be completed in the next two years, which would consider the goals and objectives listed below. The goals listed here represent specific ideas for potential interpretive and educational program expansion as expressed by the advisory committee and parks staff.

Management Objectives:

- Improve displays and display areas to engage all the senses, and better communicate Makoshika's educational and interpretive messages.
- Provide more guidance and improve flow through the visitor center.
- Provide a means for visitors to take interpretive messages home.
- Institute hands-on interpretation programs year round.
- Further develop *existing* interpretive trails.
- Develop *additional* interpretive sites and trails.
- Protect, record, and interpret archeological and paleontological resources.
- Provide visitors and staff with accurate, comprehensive information on park wildlife and plant life.

Financial and Human Resources

Additional personnel and financial resources may be needed to increase services as outlined in this management plan, including guided tours, educational programming, and enforcement. Resources are also needed to provide security in the park, especially in the visitor center, and to maintain existing facilities. Park rules need to be more effectively implemented through education and increased staff presence in the park.

Management Objectives:

- Provide tour guide services outside of visitor center, including guided hikes.
- Extend daily visitor center hours during the peak use season, Memorial Day through Labor Day.
- Determine and locate personnel needed to conduct programs as outlined and resources to support them.
- Institute hands-on interpretive programs year round.
- Determine and locate personnel needed to conduct programs as outlined and resources to support them.
- Increase security at the visitor center.
- Balance education about park rules with enforcement.
- Communicate the importance of continuing to support the new fee system.
- Analyze and respond to changes in park visitation that result from the fee structure change.

Natural and Cultural Resource Management

Implementing this plan will protect the park's natural and cultural resources and ensure they are managed for the benefit of park visitors, neighbors, and other stakeholders. Park management fosters stewardship of the land, including but not limited to acquiring inholdings, developing appropriate visitor facilities throughout the park (and on Recreation and Public Purposes Act parcels acquired from the Bureau of Land Management), and reducing wildfire risks to park resources and neighbors. Recreational activities that affect park resources, such as fossil and artifact hunting, need to be addressed. Historical, botanical, paleontological, and geological studies should be pursued to increase knowledge about park resources and identify potential management considerations.

The public suggested introducing bighorn sheep and bison to the park. Local and regional wildlife biologists say such introductions are not feasible at this time. The lack of water in the park, difficulty in containing wild populations, and the relatively close proximity of domestic sheep (which could endanger the viability of wild sheep population) contribute to this decision.

Management Objectives:

- Control litter and other impacts from the neighboring county landfill.
- Manage non-native plant and noxious weed species to maintain native species health.
- Reduce wildfire risks and prepare for fire suppression.
- Guard against fossil and artifact theft and vandalism.
- Protect artifacts and fossils when they are unearthed; ensure agency ownership.
- Educate visitors about Makoshika resources.
- Improve visitor safety and reduce FWP liability at McCarty Cabin.
- Research historical park use to ensure appropriate cultural resource protection.
- Incorporate the Pine on Rocks area into the park through ownership rather than the current recreation easement.
- Discuss with owners FWP possibly purchasing the Lions Camp inholding.
- Acquire mineral rights to private and BLM mineral inholdings.

Management Priorities

This plan will be implemented following the State Park Division financial and human resource allocation priorities. The State Park Futures Committee II recommended these priorities in 2002.

1. Maintain existing park resources and facilities.
2. Protect public health and safety, which may include enforcement.
3. Enhance the experience of visitors.
4. Acquire land and resources (with the acquisition of in-holdings taking priority over purchase of completely new properties).
5. Support new construction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Montana State Parks would like to thank the members of the Makoshika State Park Advisory Committee for their contributions of both time and energy throughout the planning process. Without their dedication to the process, as well as their expertise and vision, this plan would not have been possible.

Makoshika Advisory Committee Members:

Jim Lee – Friends of Makoshika

Christie Bury – Glendive Chamber of Commerce, replaced Linda Koncilya (deceased)

Jim Thompson – Makoshika Bowmen

Dennis Snow – Recreational park user, cyclist

Amy Myran – Friends of Makoshika, Recreational park user, hiker

Tom Temple – Glendive geology teacher

Charles Ferguson – Park neighbor

Max Martel – Glendive resident / member of Assiniboine-Sioux

Lance Phinney – Lion's Youth Camp

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INTRODUCTION

Makoshika State Park is located in Dawson County directly southeast of Glendive, Montana, in Fish, Wildlife and Parks administrative Region 7. The name of the park comes from the Lakota-Sioux word *Ma-ko-shi-ka*, meaning bad earth or bad land.

In May 2003, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) began the process of developing a comprehensive management plan for the park with a summer visitor survey. FWP then collaborated with a citizen advisory committee, with input from the general public, to identify park issues and trends and formulate management goals, objectives, policies, and actions. The results of this effort are incorporated into this management plan in a format intended to guide projects and activities in Makoshika State Park for the next 10 years. This plan describes a vision and strategies that conserve the park's natural and cultural resources, provide recreational opportunities for park users, and develop educational and interpretive opportunities for visitors.

When implementing the plan, FWP will comply with the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and assess impacts to the human and physical environment. The MEPA process provides additional public input opportunities on specific projects after costs and positive and negative impacts have been assessed. Plan actions are scheduled to be implemented during the life of this plan, but may be subject to further research, impacts assessment, costs, available funding, personnel availability, and public comment, any of which may deem a project unfeasible in the end. In short, adoption of the plan by FWP does not guarantee that the plan's proposals will be implemented.

ABOUT THE PARK

History

In 1939, Dawson County donated 160 acres for a park in what is now Makoshika State Park. In 1953, an additional 80 acres was donated by Dawson County to the Montana Department of Highways, State Parks Division. Over the next 50 years, the park acquired additional lands from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the County, and purchases of private land.

In August 1991, a female juvenile triceratops skull weighing 600 pounds and measuring 5.5 feet long was unearthed near Makoshika State Park. This world-class fossil specimen was discovered the previous year, during the final days of a three-year field study of the Hell Creek Formation by the Milwaukee Public Museum. The skull is currently on display in the visitor center at Makoshika State Park.

As of 1997, the largest and most complete skeleton of the dinosaur *Thescelosaurus* was found at an undisclosed site in Makoshika. Because of the scarcity of its remains, *Thescelosaurus* is a much rarer dinosaur than *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Positive identification of the find was made by Dr. Jack Horner, Curator of Paleontology at the Museum of the Rockies, Montana State University in Bozeman. *Thescelosaurus*, meaning “wonderful lizard,” belongs to the hypsilophodont family of small to medium-sized dinosaurs 6 to 16 feet in length, which flourished from the Middle Jurassic to the Late Cretaceous period.

Geography and Natural Resources

Makoshika State Park encompasses an area of 11,531 acres of rugged badland terrain. Known for their unique beauty and topography, these badlands are geologically older than most badlands in this geographical region. At lower elevations, the Late Cretaceous Hell Creek formation is exposed throughout the park. Higher elevations of the park are capped by the Lower Paleocene Tullock formation (lower part of the Fort Union formation). The Cretaceous-Tertiary (K-T) boundary is regionally conformable and is the geologic break between the time of the dinosaurs and that of mammals. The Hell Creek and its equivalent, the Lance, contain the remains of at least 10 different dinosaurs, several species of fish,

numerous turtles, three crocodilian species, birds, and at least six families of Upper Cretaceous mammals.

Cultural Resources

Native Americans followed the herds of buffalo, elk, antelope, and deer, which were once prevalent in eastern Montana. A 1979 Montana State University survey documented the presence of surficial and subsurficial prehistoric cultural remains in the park. Native American use of this area was common due to its proximity to the Yellowstone River. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition passed through the area on their way east in 1806. The McCarty ancestors homesteaded on land within the park; the framed cabin remains on the site, but is no longer used for shelter.

Facilities and Infrastructure

The park entrance and visitor center are southeast of Glendive. From the entrance, visitors access the park on approximately 12 miles of roads and 2.5 miles of designated trails, though many people are attracted to the remaining undeveloped backcountry to hunt or sightsee on foot. Seven miles of the park road system are paved or graveled, while the backcountry roads are primarily unimproved and impassible when wet. The visitor center contains an information desk, interpretive displays, gift shop, restrooms, a meeting room, park offices, an outdoor picnic area, and a paleontology lab and repository.

Developed trails in the park include the 0.5-mile Kinney Coulee trail, the 0.5-mile Cap Rock interpretive trail, and the 1.5-mile Diane Gabriel loop trail.

The park manager lives on site and a seasonal host resides in the campground. The park has 22 formal campsites, including one fully accessible site, and numerous primitive sites throughout the park. A group use area is available and can be reserved. The park offers picnicking opportunities and an amphitheater.

A rifle range continues to be used in the park and is maintained by park staff. An archery range, operated by a private group, is also located further south in the park. A folf (Frisbee™-golf) course is designated near the campground.

Operations

Makoshika is open year-round to visitors. The visitor center is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day. The rest of the year, the visitor center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

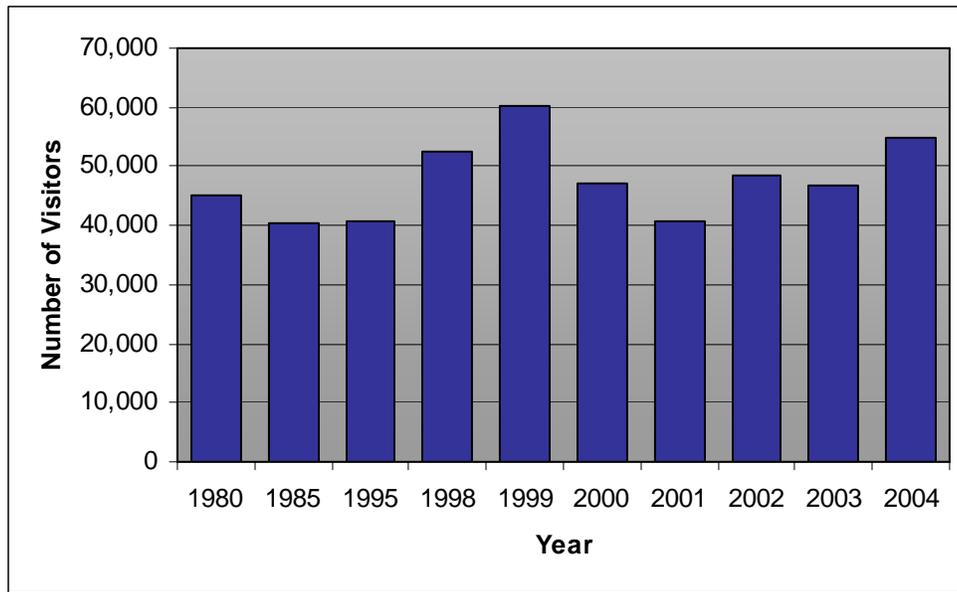
Staffing and Organization

In total, the Montana State Parks Division manages 50 state parks and approximately 320 fishing access sites. The agency is divided into seven regions; Makoshika is located in Region 7, which covers the southeastern portion of the state. Park staff includes: one full-time park manager, a full time administrative assistant, 1.53 FTE in five seasonal positions, campground hosts from May to September, and an average of 3,260 volunteer hours a year. The Friends of Makoshika, a local not-for-profit group, actively supports park operations by sponsoring special events and activities.

Visitation

Makoshika visitation has increased annually since the park's inception into the Montana State Parks System. In 2004, the park tallied 54,891 visits, the highest count over the last five years. Visitation trends are projected to continue increasing as more Montanans take advantage of the change in the residential fee structures enacted January 1, 2004.

Table 1. Makoshika State Park Visitation 1980-2004



NOTE: The totals for each year are not necessarily directly comparable. Data from 1980 came from FWP traffic counter data, from Memorial Day Weekend until September 30. 1985 data were derived from MDT feeder route analysis. Data from 1995-2004 were primarily derived from year-round, on-site vehicle counts.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Makoshika State Park Management Plan offers a comprehensive vision and action plan for the park for the next 10 years. It replaces the previous management plan of 1984. The current plan will be reviewed according to FWP policy after five years. This plan offers guidance for park managers to engage area residents and visitors, and to help the park realize its potential as an educational, recreational, and cultural destination.

This Makoshika Management Plan was developed according to the following goals and guidelines:

1. Develop a vision for the park;
2. Ensure stakeholders have ownership in the planning process and final plan, and that their interests are addressed;
3. Develop a plan with specific attention to the principal concepts of the park:
 - Education elements: outdoor classroom;
 - Recreation elements: natural resources appreciation;
 - Commercial elements: regional tourism.

PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process for the Makoshika Management Plan began in February 2003 with meetings to define the purpose and process, conduct stakeholder analyses, and develop a public participation plan. In May 2003, the park began conducting a summer visitor survey. The survey provided information to help direct and inform the planning process, including visitor demographics, activities, and opinions on park management and services. A volunteer, citizen-based committee was formed to assist in an advisory capacity in the drafting of this plan. The committee represented a diversity of park users and interests and met monthly from November 2003 through May 2004. The committee contributed its expertise while considering funding, staffing, resource needs, and community desires. The committee identified issues pertaining to the park and also developed recommendations for park management.

Based on information from the public process and input from the committee, Parks Division developed a draft management plan in April 2005, delayed due to staff changes in the park and at the planning position. The draft was reviewed and revised by the advisory committee and Parks staff. The public had 30 days to comment on the second draft. After considering public comments and making appropriate modifications to the draft, the final management plan was presented to the Regional Supervisor, Parks Administrator, and then the Director of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks for review and approval in October 2005.

PLANNING TIMELINE

- **February – May 2003**
Background research, process identification, stakeholder analysis, committee member invitations.
- **May-September 2003**
Public scoping conducted to gather data and identify issues through a visitor survey and local community outreach.
- **November 18, 2003**
Advisory committee members convened for first advisory committee meeting.
- **November 2003 – May 2004**
Committee met monthly to evaluate park issues and develops recommendations.
- **May - June 2005**
First draft of management plan issued for committee review.
- **July 2005**
Second draft of plan available for public review.
- **October 2005**
Final draft submitted to FWP director for approval.

MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK FUTURE

Makoshika State Park management is guided by a commitment to the park management goals identified in the 1984 management plan and the Montana State Parks program mission. The Parks program mission is defined in the 2020 Vision document, which provides a broad, long-range direction for the Montana State Park System for the first two decades of the 21st century. The Makoshika Management Plan reflects the mission and applicable goals and objectives of the 2020 Vision plan.

Montana State Parks Mission Statement

The mission of the Montana State Park system is to preserve, enhance, and interpret a diverse representation of Montana's most outstanding natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources, for the personal, social, and economic benefit of present and future generations.

Makoshika State Park Mission Statement

Makoshika State Park will preserve and interpret paleontological and archeological resources. Natural resources will be conserved and interpreted to enhance the native flora and fauna. Compatible recreational activities will be enhanced while maintaining opportunities for solitude inside the park. Partnerships will foster community relations, and educational and marketing opportunities.

Makoshika State Park Vision

The 2005 Makoshika State Park Management Plan is designed to help the park build and grow toward the following vision over the next 10 years.

Over the next 10 years, Makoshika State Park will develop as a destination park with year-round opportunities for all ages. Marketing efforts will increase awareness of the park. Visitation and activities throughout the park will increase. Activities will include diverse, expanded educational and recreational opportunities throughout the week. Educational activities will expand to include a diversity of interpretation throughout the park. Partnerships with community organizations and governments will continue to be nurtured and improved to provide educational, recreational, and marketing opportunities.

Park facilities will be managed to provide a safe and enjoyable experience for park visitors. Improved park roads will allow for more access to park resources and opportunities to enjoy scenic views along the road system. Clearly delineated park boundaries will provide for better visitor management and will nurture neighbor relations. Volunteer and staffing levels will keep pace with rising visitation and activity levels at the park.

Park resources, including the geological, paleontological, aesthetic, ecological, historic, and cultural resources, will continue to be protected and interpreted. Baseline data on all park resources will be collected and monitored to maintain resource integrity. Park practices will be implemented to protect park resources from theft, resource impacts, and natural hazards such as fire and proliferation of noxious weeds. Through a fossil management plan, fossil discoveries of significance will be cataloged and preserved.

MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The planning committee and general public identified the following issues as significant to Makoshika's management: Community Relations, Visitor Services, Infrastructure, Education and Interpretation, Financial and Human Resources, and Cultural and Natural Resource Management. For each issue, the planning committee and FWP developed a set of goals for the next 10 years, along with objectives and recommended actions to reach each goal. The recommendations are described in this plan along with a timeline for completion. The committee emphasized the importance of including measurable actions whenever possible so park management can check timelines and measure progress in implementing this plan.

ISSUE: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Issue Statement: Makoshika State Park is a valuable asset to the Glendive community. Partnerships with surrounding organizations and governments can stimulate local use. These partnerships include physical connections between the city and park for educational and recreational opportunities. The park will work with neighbors to address visitor and livestock trespass issues.

Goal: Develop physical connections between Makoshika State Park, the Yellowstone River, and the City of Glendive.

Objective: Coordinate with the City of Glendive, Chamber of Commerce, Dawson Community College (DCC), Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad (BNSF), other private businesses, and the public to establish non-motorized trails connecting the park, the river, and the city. The trails will extend to major attractions in the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Fully evaluate non-motorized trail opportunities throughout the park with input from an advisory committee, and Friends of Makoshika. At a minimum, consider the following:
 - Connections to the community
 - Access to trails inside and outside of the park (Parkview Drive, Allard Road, Hungry Joe Ridge, Dawson Community College)
 - Connections between the park facilities and major attractions
 - Trailhead locations, kiosks, and parking and associated traffic
 - Routes compatible with other uses throughout the park
 - Use of old roads and widening existing roads
 - Single- and multi-use trails
 - Pedestrian, bicycle (touring and mountain bike), cross-country skiing, and equestrian use, and associated facilities for each
 - Maintenance and improvements of existing trails
 - Variable levels of accessibility, including trail surfaces and grades
 - Maps and interpretive guides for some trails
 - Educational brochures about trail courtesy
 - Funding mechanisms
 - Consider creating a park district to help with maintenance of trails outside of park.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Consider a private operator providing commercial equestrian rides, buggy and wagon rides in the park.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Goal: Develop private and public partnerships to provide education, interpretation, and recreation.

Objective: Collaborate with schools to increase educational opportunities at the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish a hands-on outdoor classroom at the park to host schools in Glendive and the surrounding areas and Elderhostel programs.
 - a. Possible subjects include: paleontology lab, geology, botany, and GPS/GIS.
 - b. Develop a curriculum and lesson plan.
 - c. Advertise at schools, including visits to schools.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Continue to collaborate with area high schools and Dawson Community College to establish credit-granting programs in connection with the park. Programs may include paleontology, geology, botany, and GPS/GIS.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Establish outdoor classroom programs with local museums.
 - a. Consider collaborations with the Makoshika Dinosaur Museum like the Dino Camp occurring in summer 2004.
 - b. Collaborate with Creationism Museum.

Timeline for completion: one year.

4. Work with Dawson Community College to establish a two-year Parks and Recreation program.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. Use paleontology and other research projects as opportunities for staff and visitors to learn, watch, and provide hands-on assistance when appropriate.
 - a. Partner with museums and professionals like the Museum of the Rockies.
 - b. Consider using the experience as a revenue source for the park through a pay-to-work program.
 - c. Provide visitor tours to site.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Work with organizations to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue partnerships with the Lion’s Club, Friends of Makoshika, Kiwanis, Makoshika Bowmen, and expand involvement of other community service organizations.
 - a. Continue existing organization-sponsored events at the park.
 - b. Pursue other project partnerships, such as: brochure distribution, rotating signs in community for park events, etc.
 - c. Develop a list of projects to coordinate with organizations.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Update plant and animal species lists for the park.
 - a. Partner with The Nature Conservancy to update a plant species list.
 - b. Partner with other relevant agencies and organizations to update or establish other pertinent lists.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Collaborate with the Montana Recreation and Park Association and the City of Glendive Park and Recreation Department to develop new special events, including the possibility of folk events.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Encourage use of park facilities by outside organizations.

Recommended Actions

1. Through marketing and networking, encourage use of the amphitheater, group use shelter, hiking trails, and other park amenities for groups such as: daycare businesses, group homes, Boys and Girls Club, camps.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Consider establishing regulated geocaching activities consistent with department policies.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Goal: Develop constructive relationships with park neighbors.
--

Objective: Document and address neighbor concerns and comments.

Recommended Actions

1. Host an annual “How are we doing?” neighborhood meeting to discuss accomplishments and identify problem areas.

Timeline for completion: annually.

Objective: Establish boundary markings around the park property to avoid visitor trespassing onto private property and vice-versa.

Recommended Actions

1. Install line-of-sight posts around the property. At this point, do not consider fencing as a viable option due to terrain and maintenance costs.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Provide educational information in the park brochure. Include:
 - a. Map with private property designations.
 - b. Language asking visitors to stay in the park.
 - c. Landmarks for boundary reference.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Manage livestock.

Recommended Actions

1. Fence where necessary to address livestock trespass issues.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Control weeds in the park using integrated methods consistent with the FWP Region 7 Weed Management Plan and the County Weed District.
 - a. Consider containing leafy spurge through continued periodic sheep grazing.
 - b. If sheep grazing methods are selected, implement additional sheep management controls to avoid overgrazing or other resource damage.
 - c. Consider alternative controls such as a Spurge Roundup or insects.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Conduct range assessment inventory on the composition and condition of plant communities in the park and determine the extent and methods to control noxious weeds and other non-native plant species.

Timeline for completion: one year.

4. After the range assessment is complete, decide on opportunities for responsible livestock use in the park, including grazing leases, to maintain plant health and vigor.

Timeline for completion: two years.

5. Should livestock grazing be allowed, periodic range assessments will be undertaken to ensure livestock use is not negatively impacting the composition or condition of plant communities, cultural, paleontological, or scientific resources.

Timeline for completion: every two years.

Objective: Periodically implement special weapons restricted hunts coordinated with the regional wildlife biologist and local warden to reduce urban deer conflicts.

Discussion

Hunting is currently allowed in much of Makoshika State Park and will continue in these areas. Deer occasionally find harbor in northern Cains Coulee, an area closed to rifle hunting. In an effort to reduce urban deer conflicts, reduce vegetative damage to neighboring property, and to control population numbers, hunting may be allowed with weapon restrictions for limited times in this area. Due to the number of visitor facilities in the area, rifle hunting would not be permitted in the highly visited Cains Coulee. This hunting opportunity would be allowed on an "as needed" basis as determined by the park manager, regional wildlife biologist, and local warden.

Recommended Actions

1. Coordinate with biologist and warden annually to determine if mule deer populations need to be reduced in the park.

Timeline for completion: annually.

2. If the mule deer population needs to be reduced, develop map and guidelines for hunters showing boundaries of special hunting area, weapons restrictions, and length of season.

Timeline for completion: annually.

3. Publicize this special hunting opportunity, monitor hunting activity, and evaluate results.

Timeline for completion: as needed.

ISSUE: VISITOR SERVICES

Issue Statement: Strategic promotion efforts to increase visitation should strike a balance between visitor experience and resource preservation. Park facilities are generally adequate, but some improvements are needed to provide amenities necessary for visitor comfort and to increase the length of time visitors will stay at the park.

Goal: Generate better awareness of Makoshika State Park, including information on how to access the park and opportunities available at the park.

Objective: Provide clear travel directions to the park from all feeder routes.

Recommended Actions

1. Improve directional signing from the Interstate to the park.
 - a. Directional signing to follow up on the new sign located on Hwy 200.
 - b. Provide signing at the intersections of
 - i. Hwy 200 and Towne Street,
 - ii. Hwy 16 and Towne Street,
 - iii. 215 exit pointing towards Merrill, and
 - iv. near the chamber building.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Coordinate with Highway officials to place dinosaur tracks on the roads in downtown Glendive leading to the park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Have the Glendive city grid returned to the state highway map.

Timeline for completion: three years.

4. Provide text on the current “footprint signs” through Glendive to explain that they lead to Makoshika; perhaps add the word “Makoshika” to the signs.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Develop a marketing plan for the park.

Discussion

A marketing plan would target a variety of audiences with specific messages to promote the park and community, as well as to educate people about park features and recreational opportunities. The recommended actions outlined below are ideas that would be included in the marketing plan, but do not represent all potential marketing strategies.

Recommended Actions

1. Disperse park information at multiple new locations, such as Hollecker Lake.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Advertise special events on local television and radio stations.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Partner with local newspaper, *Glendive Ranger Review*, to run weekly features on activities and opportunities, including campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the park.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Coordinate with Glendive Economic Development Council, surrounding Chambers of Commerce, and local businesses to help promote Glendive area tourism, establish familiarization tours, and promote packaged tourism opportunities.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. Produce high quality signs to post throughout Glendive for seasonal events.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

6. Develop and distribute, in a formalized manner, an annual events calendar.
 - a. Include the campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the park such as the Lion's Camp and Makoshika Bowmen.
 - b. Provide take-home sheets.
 - c. Install a large, permanent events sign.

Timeline for completion: annually.

7. Link FWP Makoshika web page with Makoshika Park website and update.

Timeline for completion: one year.

8. Place a window mural to advertise the park on the old Chamber of Commerce building in Glendive.

Timeline for completion: two years.

9. Establish an information kiosk at Gazebo Park. Information provided will include park brochures, a map, and walking trail information.

Timeline for completion: three years.

10. Establish Buzzard Day as a national event.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Goal: Enhance and expand recreation opportunities for a diversity of park users.

Objective: Provide more non-motorized trails (also refer to previous Community Relations Issue).

Recommended Actions

1. Communicate opportunities and hazards of non-motorized off-trail exploration to visitors.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Establish and publicize backcountry trails and overnight opportunities.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Develop a trail parallel to the main entrance road on the ground disrupted by future water line installation to the campground. Consider paving a 10-foot width to allow diverse, non-motorized use. Provide a buffer zone from roadway where feasible.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Continue educating visitors about legal off highway vehicle (OHV) and snowmobile use in the park.

Discussion

The Parks Division statewide policy allows only licensed driver's to operate licensed vehicles on designated roads; no off-road use is allowed. Licensed drivers with properly registered snowmobiles are allowed on roads south of the switchbacks when snow cover allows. Visitor education, signs, and patrols along designated routes will reduce off-road travel and trespass.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate visitors to damage caused by off-road vehicle use.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Educate visitors to OHV license and snowmobile permit requirements.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Allow snowmobile use on unplowed roads when adequate snowfall is received; sign routes as needed.

Timeline for completion: annually.

4. Enforce policy requiring motorized vehicles to stay on roads.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

<p>Goal: Relocate public shooting range outside the park without interrupting current use.</p>

Discussion

Montanans are very proud of their shooting heritage and FWP supports the need for shooting ranges. Adequate numbers of shooting ranges are important for hunter education and other shooting activities, such as sighting in rifles, competitions, and target shooting.

Makoshika has only one entrance, which receives about 54,000 visitors a year. The current rifle range location is incompatible with surrounding park uses. The visitor center, group use shelter, campground and trails are 0.75 mile or less from the range. Many park visitors are insecure hearing shooting while camping, hiking, or sightseeing. FWP cannot ignore the possibility of a misfire into a highly populated area.

FWP is committed to working with the community to find a better range location outside the park. State Parks is willing to purchase land and develop public range facilities. FWP

will manage the new range until another partner organization can be found. Barring a shooting accident, FWP will not close the existing range until a new location is acquired and is operational.

Objective: Maintain existing rifle range to provide safe user facilities.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue operating and maintaining existing range until a new range can be acquired and is operational. The existing range may be closed immediately if a shooting accident occurs.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Sign perimeter of rifle range to alert other recreationists in the area of shooting activity.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Update existing range rules.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

4. Maintain benches and backdrop structures at rifle range until a better range can be established outside the park.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

5. Remove canopy over benches when no longer structurally sound.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Relocate rifle range outside the park.

1. Form an advisory committee comprised of hunting, shooting, and non-shooting interests to assist with the range transition, including: location, design, facilities, operations, and maintenance.

Timeline for completion: begin immediately – ongoing until suitable location secured and new range is operating.

2. When a new range location has been identified, thoroughly address physical and human impacts at the existing and new ranges, and provide opportunity for public input according to the Montana Environmental Policy Act and MCA 76-9-105.

Timeline for completion: Once a new site has been selected.

3. Acquire, develop, and operate a public range outside of the park offering facilities including but not limited to: benches, uprights, backboards, canopy, parking, latrine, and a small storage building.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

4. Look for cooperative means for volunteers, hunters, shooting enthusiasts, local law enforcement, education programs, military, public safety, and non-profit organizations to assist in operating and maintaining the new public range.

Timeline for completion: Once a new site has been selected.

5. After new public rifle range is operating, rifle range location in the park will be reclaimed.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Goal: Continue use of existing archery range.
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Discussion

The archery range is located in a remote area of the park and supports an activity where shooting distance is minimal and quiet. Other public recreation in the area is minimal. In addition, the archery range does not require significant time or funds to maintain its function or area aesthetics. Expansion of the archery range is not planned. The current archery range is considered compatible with other recreational uses currently in this area and backcountry trails proposed in the next ten years.

Objective: Continue leasing archery range to local club for management.

Recommended Actions

1. Periodically review the lease to the Makoshika Bowmen; negotiate a new lease to another legitimate archery club if the Makoshika Bowmen can no longer operate the range.

Timeline for completion: every five years.

Goal: Develop new park amenities to increase visitor comfort, safety, and length of visit.

Objective: Improve facilities in the lower campground.

Recommended Actions

1. Install city water to the campground to provide potable water for campers, flush restrooms, showers, and irrigation for trees.

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Install potable water and sink facilities at the Group Use Shelter.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Provide water in the park interior.

Discussion

Water is available at only three locations in the park: visitor center, campground, and the Lions Youth Camp (private). Providing potable water in the interior of the park would improve public service and safety. Water from wells will need to be tested and may need to be treated prior to public consumption, which would influence cost feasibility.

Recommended Actions

1. Install signs at visitor center and other pertinent locations in park notifying visitors that potable water is not currently available past the campground.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Investigate methods to provide water for interior areas of the park. Consider vending machines where feasible and cooperative use of electricity and/or wells at McCarty Cabin and Lions Camp.

Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Install new latrines.

Discussion

To maintain restroom facilities in the following locations, roads will need to be improved and maintained (see Infrastructure Issue).

Recommended Actions

1. Provide latrines at Sand Creek Overlook and Artist's Vista.

Timeline for completion: five years.

ISSUE: INFRASTRUCTURE

Issue Statement: Road maintenance is a continuing issue in the park given the unique geology of the area. Maintenance needs to address weather, travel, and visitor safety. There is an opportunity to develop more scenic overlooks and pullouts. Existing park facilities and equipment need consistent maintenance to increase longevity and safety. Communication tower leases in the park need active managing. Lease agreements need updating consistent with park and agency goals. Towers impact the view shed, but are critical to public safety.

Goal: Manage and maintain roads to improve travel throughout the park.

Objective: Educate visitors on park road conditions.

Recommended Actions

1. Post signs warning about wet road conditions and recommending high clearance vehicles beyond the posted point.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Provide ongoing road maintenance and surface improvements.

Discussion

Park roads are a physical and financial challenge to maintain and improve due to the unique geology of the area. State Parks would like to pave road surfaces to the amphitheater and provide an all-weather gravel road to the Lions Camp and Pine-On-Rocks. Road widening, grading, and graveling would greatly improve access to Sand Creek Overlook and Artists Vista. Funding and engineering requirements will determine completion sequence and timing of these major road improvements.

Recommended Actions

1. Establish annual budget for road gravel.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Install signs to communicate hazards along the roads, including turns, narrow areas, and potential bicycles on the road.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Continue to use reflectors to mark hazards along the roads.
Timeline for completion: ongoing.
4. Sign steep drop-offs along the road.
Timeline for completion: one year.
5. Provide more gravel from the Saddle to Lion's Camp.
Timeline for completion: two years.
6. Investigate the need for guard rails at the Saddle; the analysis should include maintenance costs.
Timeline for completion: five years.
7. Improve the road grading and drainage from Lions Camp to Sand Creek and add gravel as feasible.
Timeline for completion: five years.
8. Extend paving from top of switchbacks to amphitheater as funding is available.
Timeline for completion: ten years.

Objective: Where feasible, provide scenic overlooks with interpretive panels.

Recommended Actions:

1. Add new overlooks when feasible during road repair and construction.
Timeline for completion: ongoing.
2. Identify, name, map, and sign overlooks and picnic areas within park.
Timeline for completion: two years.

Goal: Where feasible, consolidate or eliminate radio towers and electric lines from park viewshed.

Discussion

In pursuing this goal, FWP will not compromise public safety. Service should not be interrupted for emergency communications, including amateur radio services recognized for public emergency assistance. State Parks wishes to consolidate towers and antennae to the fewest facilities possible while recognizing the importance of homeland security.

A 1984 land transaction transferred nine communication tower leases from the Bureau of Land Management to FWP. Two leases held by public entities (Montana Department of Transportation and City of Glendive Police Department) are free of charge, but have expired. Two additional leases have also expired. Five leases are in effect and will continue until they expire (2011 to 2013). State Parks proposes updating all lease agreements to reflect current FWP management goals, lease terms, and to assess Fair Market Values where appropriate. Expired leases will be reviewed and negotiations will determine future agreements. All tower owners will be notified before any action is taken.

Two communication tower sites totaling nearly 4 acres in the park are privately owned. FWP will research its responsibilities relating to these private inholdings.

Objective: Communicate with radio tower owners to more effectively manage tower leases and reduce view shed impacts.

Recommended Actions:

1. Assign responsibility to a Parks Division staff member for initiating and maintaining a dialogue with radio tower owners.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Assemble a complete inventory of tower owners, users, and subcontractors.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Explore screening and camouflage methods and enact lease stipulations where present.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

4. Coordinate discussions with tower owners to determine whether technical capabilities would allow towers to be combined at one facility. FWP will cooperate with the Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium (ETIC) to benefit all public agencies.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. If towers can be combined or relocated, ensure that communications for homeland security, emergency services, and local law enforcement (including FWP) are not interrupted.

Timeline for completion: ongoing

6. Coordinate with tower owners to clarify and simplify access through facility lands. Limit public entry where necessary, and allow appropriate administrative access.

Timeline for completion: two years.

7. Work with tower owners to research other potential tower sites outside of park boundaries, and assist tower owners in acquisition/lease process. FWP assistance may include research or funding. Relocation of publicly used towers may be contingent upon FCC or FAA approval.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Assess lease agreements and update rates to meet Fair Market Value. Accurately and efficiently track revised lease agreements.

Discussion

Two towers and antennas will continue their free lease status as long as they support public and emergency services. FWP has a statutory responsibility to receive Fair Market Value for private leases. The increased demand for wireless technology has influenced the lease rates for cellular tower sites. FWP will review current rates to determine if they reflect Fair Market Value. Lease billing and accounting methods need refining to increase staff efficiency.

Recommended Actions

1. FWP will continue to honor agreements made with the Lower Yellowstone Amateur Radio System in 1991, recognizing their assistance with emergency communications. No fees will be assessed on antennas (currently on the "Halliburton Tower") serving this group.

Timeline for completion: ongoing

2. Centralize and streamline FWP billing, payment receipt, and recording methods for efficient lease account management.

Timeline for completion: immediately

3. Study lease agreements and identify areas where lease renewals may be discontinued. Ensure that lease renewals include terms that give FWP the first-right-of-refusal should the tower be offered for sale or enter bankruptcy.

Timeline for completion: one year.

4. Revise lease agreements to meet agency standards and re-assess lease fees with an annually escalating price schedule to meet Fair Market Value.

Timeline for completion: one year

5. Evaluate leases more frequently to ensure rates coincide with Fair Market Values.

Timeline for completion: every five years.

Objective: Research park road designations and restrictions attached to private communication tower inholdings.

Recommended Actions

1. Determine all park road designations (county, private, park) and access encumbrances.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Determine if access or use of private inholdings is restricted to specific purposes. If not, propose acquisition, acquire first-right-of-refusal, or a conservation or recreational easement to ensure future land use is consistent with the park mission and resource protection.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Monitor use of private inholdings. Contact Regional Parks Manager if use does not comply with legal restrictions where in effect.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

Objective: Bury electric lines in park.

Recommended Actions

1. Investigate the feasibility and cost of burying electric lines throughout park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

2. Develop implementation priority list and timeline to bury electric lines.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Goal: Proactively maintain park grounds, systems, buildings, and equipment.

Objective: Devise protocols for regular park maintenance and safety.

Discussion

Maintenance of existing facilities and equipment holds a higher priority in State Parks management than developing new features. To fulfill this goal, it is critical that managers regularly assess park facility conditions and actively maintain buildings and equipment. Preventative maintenance will reduce major maintenance costs, reduce risk exposure to visitors and staff, and extend tools, equipment, and infrastructure life span.

Recommended Actions

1. Twice annually, formally tour the site with the regional maintenance supervisor to evaluate park needs and effectiveness of maintenance programming. Document the tour with follow up lists to ensure clear coordination and consistent approach.

Timeline for completion: twice annually.

2. Ensure that shop space is organized and safe.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Formally evaluate maintenance responsibilities as a part of each employee's annual performance review.

Timeline for completion: annually.

4. Develop written schedules and standards to assess, track, and complete park maintenance. Include the following major components.
 - a. Grounds: mowing, drainage, grading, signs, gates, fencing, weed control.
 - b. Building & infrastructure systems: visitor center, group use shelter, amphitheater, manager's residence, shop, septic systems, water systems.
 - c. Equipment: vehicles, mowers, pumps, electronics.

Timeline for completion: one year.

5. Establish record-keeping for maintenance procedures.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Consistently implement park management practices to maintain staff and visitor safety, and reduce liability.

Discussion

Employee and visitor safety is key to proper management of the park. Safety will continue to be a priority that provides numerous benefits.

Recommended Actions

1. Use OSHA recommendations as a standard for hazard communications, personal protective equipment, and workplace safety.
 - a. Continue to hold and document "tail-gate" safety training program for park staff and volunteers.
 - b. Maintain up-to-date Material Safety Data Sheets.
 - c. Present & evaluate training and safe equipment operation procedures.
 - d. Establish & communicate standard park opening and closing procedures.
 - e. Establish and regularly update emergency management procedures.
 - f. Record individual training provided.
 - g. Monitor and investigate worker compensation claims.
 - h. Maintain staff accountability for safe procedures.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

ISSUE: INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION

Issue Statement: Park information needs to be updated and more readily available to visitors. Park brochures and trail guides should be updated to include new park features and information. Interpretive displays are stale and need to be upgraded and diversified to keep visitors coming back. This will include more complete use of the visitor center building. Also, artifacts need adequate security. Educational opportunities for schools, organizations, and individual visitors need to be expanded. The park needs adequate staff and resources for interpretative services.

A comprehensive interpretive plan for the visitor center would be completed in the next two years, which would consider the goals and objectives listed below. The goals listed here represent specific ideas for potential interpretive and educational program expansion as expressed by the advisory committee and parks staff.

Goal: Renovate visitor center interpretation.
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Objective: Improve displays and display areas to engage all the senses, and better communicate Makoshika's educational and interpretive messages.

Recommended Actions

1. Use multimedia and current technologies to interpret displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Design and install interactive displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Visitor center displays should focus on the park's major features: geology, prairies, and badlands.

Timeline for completion: three years.

4. Consider designating one section of the visitor center for rotational or traveling displays.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Provide more guidance and improve flow through the visitor center.

Recommended Actions

1. Place directional signing to guide visitors through displays.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Provide interpretive guides for school groups and individual visitors.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Objective: Provide a means for visitors to take interpretive messages home.

Recommended Actions

1. Provide merchandise in the gift store that is relevant to interpretive themes.

Timeline for completion: two years.

Goal: Develop and promote focused educational and interpretive opportunities.
--

Objective: Institute hands-on interpretative programs year round.

Recommended Actions

1. Increase programming focused on local interests.
 - a. Develop programs for more than one night a week in the summers.
 - b. Expand campfire programming to year-round programs, perhaps on weekends in the winter months.
 - c. Expand programming subjects beyond paleontology and geology to possibly include prairie history, homesteading, astrology, hunter education, and local stories.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Use the visitor center basement for programs in the winter and as an alternate, bad weather location for interpretive programs in the summer months.
 - a. Need to upgrade the basement to accommodate programming.
 - i. Restroom.
 - ii. Classroom setting.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Further develop *existing* interpretive trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop thematic interpretive trails focused on certain interpretive topics such as history, botany, and geology.
 - a. Cap Rock Trail provides access to smaller, more intimate features of the park.
 - b. Diane Gabriel Trail provides access to larger formations, including table tops, slumping, and other erosional features.

Timeline for completion: two years.

2. Provide signage throughout Cap Rock and Kinney Coulee trails.

Timeline for completion: three years.

3. Update trail brochures and trail maps.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Develop *additional* interpretive sites and trails.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop new interpretive trails at these suggested locations:
 - a. Eyeful Vista area, which offers petrified trees and park vegetation.
 - b. Historical area trail from the base of the switchbacks to the amphitheater to the McCarty Cabin (if owner permission is received to stabilize or fence deteriorating cabin).
 - c. Backcountry loop trails in southeastern areas of park.

Timeline for completion: five years.

2. Using a display, interpret the K-T Boundary from the Diane Gabriel Trail and Sand Creek Overlook.

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

3. Provide wayside exhibits and overlooks that are connected with an audiotape auto tour along park roads, including Valley Loop Drive. Potential points of interest may include:
 - a. Artist's Vista
 - b. Sand Creek Overlook
 - c. Scoria Point
 - d. Buzzard's Ridge beyond Saddle
 - e. Below the amphitheater
 - f. Cain's Coulee

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

Objective: Protect, document, and interpret archeological and paleontological resources.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate visitors on the importance of leaving archeological and paleontological artifacts where they are found.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Educate/train park staff to recognize potentially significant finds.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Interpret the fossil-rich portion of the park near Artist's Vista.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Goal: Provide descriptive, clear information about park flora and fauna.

Objective: Provide visitors and staff with accurate, comprehensive information on park wildlife and plant life.

Recommended Actions

1. Educate staff on the park ecosystem.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Identify and document rare and threatened species in the park.

Timeline for completion: two years.

3. Conduct a park species inventory including plants, wildlife, amphibians, reptiles, and fungi.

Timeline for completion: five years.

4. Provide information on plant blossoms and most opportune times to view flowers.

Timeline for completion: five years.

5. Develop a color brochure with pictures of common plants in the park.

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

6. Provide a brochure of what species visitors can find, by season, in the park.

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

ISSUE: FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Issue Statement: Additional personnel and financial resources may be needed to increase services as outlined in this management plan, including guided tours, educational programming, and enforcement. Resources are also needed to provide security in the park, especially in the visitor center, and to maintain existing facilities. Park rules need to be more effectively implemented through education and increased staff presence in the park.

Goal: Expand service at the park with staff or other resources.

Objective: Provide tour guide services outside of visitor center, including guided hikes.

Recommended Actions

1. Provide training for volunteer and staff tour guides.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Establish a volunteer program with local interest groups to lead tours on specific topics, such as birding, plant identification, fossil identification, astrology, and historic use of the area.

Timeline for completion: one year.

3. Consider expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current special use permits.

Timeline for completion: five years.

Objective: Extend daily visitor center hours during the peak use season, Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Recommended Actions

1. Pursue funding to recruit and train volunteers and/or paid staff to extend visitor center daily hours to 9am to 7pm, and keep visitor center open during low staff times.

Timeline for completion: one year.

Also see Objectives listed below and the associated Recommended Actions on referenced pages.

Objective: Work with organizations to complete park projects and increase the number of events at the park (refer to Community Relations Issue and Goal to develop partnerships, page 13).

Objective: Institute hands-on interpretive programs year round (refer to Interpretation and Education Issue and Goal to develop focused educational and interpretive opportunities, page 33.)

Goal: Secure and train personnel and provide an operating budget for development and implementation of interpretation and educational programming.

Objective: Determine and locate personnel needed to conduct programs as outlined and resources to support them.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct an analysis of personnel and resources currently available for park programs, including possibilities for regional and private support for program development.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Develop partnerships with private and public organizations for program leaders and operations costs.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

3. Establish a docent program to lead tours in the visitor center and on park grounds.

Timeline for completion: annually.

4. Provide training for park volunteers relative to their interests and duties in the park.

Timeline for completion: annually.

5. Develop internship opportunities for research, interpretation, and recreation programs in the park.

Timeline for completion: three years.

6. Partner with area universities to provide credit for internships. Include the MSU paleontology program, and the Dawson Community College geology program and recreation program, if instituted.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Goal: Provide a higher level of enforcement and security that protects our facility investments.

Objective: Increase security at the visitor center.

Recommended Actions

1. Install a security system at the visitor center, with video, that rings in to the park manager's residence and Glendive Police/Dawson County Sheriff dispatch.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

2. Evaluate the visitor center to ensure safety procedures and mechanisms are in place for staff. Include consideration of a safe room for staff.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

3. Consider use of motion sensors around valuable artifacts.

Timeline for Completion: three to five years.

4. Install a fire suppression system in visitor center.

Timeline for Completion: three years.

5. Expand the radio system in the park to include a base station at the visitor center.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Balance education about park rules with enforcement.

Recommended Actions

1. Ensure staff are available in or near the camping areas.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Increase the staff presence in the park to a level at which visitors have reasonable opportunities for contact with staff.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Goal: Manage effects of fee structure change.
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Discussion

The 2004 Montana State Parks change in fee structure (from a daily entrance fee to a yearly \$4 fee on vehicle registration) generated a lot of interest. The public still has many questions about the change, including how effective the change has been in generating revenue for the Parks system and how the money is being used.

Objective: Communicate the importance of continuing to support the new fee system.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue to provide information to county treasurers on the importance and value of this system through regular visits to treasurer offices in the Makoshika vicinity.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

2. Provide updates to the local media on the effectiveness of the system, identifying improvements and upcoming projects at Makoshika as a result of the change in fees.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

Objective: Analyze and respond to changes in park visitation that result from the fee structure change.

Recommended Actions

1. Evaluate the amount of staff time freed from checking fee compliance and, if significant, use as a resource for other operations.

Timeline for completion: one year.

2. Analyze demographic changes that occur and provide programming and infrastructure to meet these changing needs.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

ISSUE: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Issue Statement: Implementing this plan will protect the park’s natural and cultural resources and ensure they are managed for the benefit of park visitors, neighbors, and other stakeholders. Park management fosters stewardship of the land, including but not limited to acquiring inholdings, developing appropriate visitor facilities throughout the park (and on Recreation and Public Purposes Act parcels acquired from the Bureau of Land Management), and reducing wildfire risks to park resources and neighbors. Recreational activities that affect park resources, such as fossil and artifact hunting, need to be addressed. Historical, botanical, paleontological, and geological studies should be pursued to increase knowledge about park resources and identify potential management considerations.

The public suggested introducing bighorn sheep and bison to the park. Local and regional wildlife biologists say such introductions are not feasible at this time. The lack of water in the park, difficulty in containing wild populations, and the relatively close proximity of domestic animals (which could endanger the viability of wild populations) contribute to this decision.

Goal: Maintain a clean, natural habitat in the park to the greatest possible extent.

Objective: Control litter and other impacts from the neighboring county landfill.

Discussion

Due to strong winds, garbage from a county landfill located due north of the park is negatively affecting areas in the northern, undeveloped section of the park.

Recommended Actions

1. Work with the County and City of Glendive to shut down the dump during high winds.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

2. Work with the County, City of Glendive, and volunteers to hand pick garbage that is deposited in the park.

Timeline for Completion: annually

3. Monitor and document the amount of garbage deposited in the park from the dump.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

4. Work with the County and City of Glendive to install a chain link fence around the landfill site.

Timeline for Completion: five years.

Objective: Manage non-native plant and noxious weed species to maintain native species health.

Recommended Actions

1. Conduct assessment of non-native plant species in park, including noxious weeds.

Timeline for Completion: one year.

2. Develop multi-faceted plan to manage non-native plant species throughout park; tier off Region 7 Weed Management Plan and coordinate with County Weed Board.

Timeline for Completion: two years.

Goal: Protect and preserve the park's cultural and natural resources.

Objective: Reduce wildfire risks and prepare for fire suppression.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop and implement a fire management plan and procedures coordinated with the County, State, BLM, and neighbors.

Timeline for completion: two years.

Objective: Guard against fossil and artifact theft and vandalism.

Discussion

Fossil and artifact theft are an ongoing problem throughout the park. Artifacts and fossils found in the park include arrowheads, bone pipe, and dinosaur fossils. Due to the size and topography of the park, it is not feasible to patrol the area at all times, nor is it possible to fence the entire park perimeter.

Recommended Actions

1. Update park publications and all visitor orientations with park rules and the importance of leaving fossils, artifacts, and bones in the field.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing

2. Clearly mark park boundaries with line-of-sight posts and on maps.

Timeline for Completion: 5 to 10 years.

Objective: Protect artifacts and fossils when they are unearthed; ensure agency ownership.

Recommended Actions

1. Locate and cover, or re-secure artifacts or fossils unless they are determined to be a significant find by a professional scientist.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

2. If an artifact is at high risk of theft or immediate decomposition if left in the field, the park manager will document location on a topographical map and GPS if available. The manager will photograph artifact in its original location and condition, then remove to visitor center for preservation and further consultation.

Timeline for Completion: ongoing.

3. Use the paleontology lab in the visitor center to prepare and examine appropriate finds.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Work with permittees to provide programs to park visitors about excavations, when appropriate.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. FWP will request paleontologist review of potentially significant public discoveries. Staff will develop protocol to handle fossils submitted, noting personal contact information, date, original location of fossil, and storage location.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

6. Institute a policy that FWP and the Parks Division must approve all antiquities permits requested for the park, and specify that FWP owns all paleontological, archeological, and historical artifacts found in the park.

Timeline for completion: one year.

7. Add conditions in “Permits to Dig” that the permittee provide for the park, at no cost to FWP, a comprehensive photographic record of all finds prior to removal from the park. The permittee would provide casts of paleontological articles. Historical and archeological artifacts would be returned within a year of field work, along with a full report on the research conducted.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

Discussion

Only reputable people or institutions will be granted an antiquities permit administered by the State Historic Preservation Office under MCA 22-3-432, and the Parks Division and FWP must also approve all permits. In an effort to better track and record fossils and artifacts discovered and removed from the park, future discoveries would be owned by FWP, rather than simply by the State of Montana. Park facilities are not designed to store or thoroughly investigate large projects. Some items, therefore, may be loaned out for storage or long-term research to a qualified person or institution, as determined by the Parks Division and FWP historical resource coordinator.

8. Work with the Museum of the Rockies to continue an inventory of exposed bones using paleontology/geology camps.

Timeline for completion: three years.

9. FWP will investigate the possibility of the visitor center becoming a satellite state paleontological repository for the Museum of the Rockies. This would require collaborating with the State Historic Preservation Office, Dawson Community College, and other local museums. Considerations will include: climate control, additional physical improvements needed to properly house fossils, existing park staff loads, additional staff and professional expertise, security, funding, liability, and facility access required by other professionals and public agencies.

Timeline for completion: three years.

Objective: Educate visitors about Makoshika resources.

Recommended Actions

1. Develop a park brochure about the park’s paleontological resources and history.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

2. Inventory flora and fauna and develop a brochure (also see Interpretation and Education Issue and goal, page 35.)

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Objective: Improve visitor safety and reduce FWP liability at McCarty Cabin.

Discussion

The McCarty Cabin is a rich representative of the pioneer spirit in eastern Montana. The cabin is privately owned, uninhabited, and deteriorating. Park staff and Friends of Makoshika members have attempted to contact the cabin's owners, but have not been successful. The public currently accesses the cabin through a perpetual recreation easement, though land ownership is not delineated on the ground. The park has no maintenance authority for the building, and faces increasing liability issues as the cabin deteriorates and threatens public safety.

Recommended Actions

1. Post warnings, private property notifications, and interpretative material outside of the McCarty Cabin to reduce FWP liability.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

2. Request acquisition of land and cabin and any associated mineral rights from McCarty Cabin owners.

Timeline for completion: immediately.

3. Continue attempts to contact the cabin owners and request authority to fence around McCarty Cabin.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

4. Until the cabin is adequately fenced or stabilized, do not provide signs to the McCarty Cabin or advertise the site through written materials, including maps, brochures, or new trails.

Timeline for completion: ongoing.

5. If acquired, evaluate feasibility of restoring cabin for recreational use.

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

Objective: Research historical park use to ensure appropriate cultural resource protection and interpretation.

Recommended Actions

1. Research and document the history of the park, including use of the park for cattle, horses, logging, and the Frontier Army. Obtain oral histories from area residents when possible.

Timeline for completion: three years.

2. Investigate a report of an historic dugout shelter remaining in the park. If significant, consider interpreting and possibly reconstructing the site.

Timeline for completion: 5 to 10 years.

3. Develop a comprehensive library in the visitor center of scientific and popular publications about the park, its fossils, and environment.

Timeline for completion: 10 years.

Goal: Resolve land use and ownership issues.

Objective: Incorporate the Pine on Rocks area into the park through ownership rather than the current recreation easement.

Recommended Actions

1. Continue discussions with the adjacent private landowner to explore the possibility of the State acquiring Section 17, Township 15 North, Range 56 East.

Timeline for completion: ongoing

2. Survey and post park boundaries to prevent trespassing onto private land.

Timeline for completion: three to five years.

Objective: Discuss with owners FWP possibly purchasing the Lions Camp inholding.

Recommended Actions

1. If seller is willing, purchase Lions Camp to reduce inholdings within the park.

Timeline for completion: 10 years.

2. If purchased, collaborate with Lions Camp operators to continue their use of land through lease or other arrangement.

Timeline for completion: 10 years.

Objective: Acquire mineral rights to private and BLM mineral inholdings.

Recommended Actions

1. Actively pursue buying out mineral rights.

Timeline for completion: 10 years.

MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES

This plan will be implemented following the State Parks Division financial and human resource allocation priorities below. These priorities were recommended by the 2002 State Park Futures Committee II. The park will be managed to meet the following five priorities, although scheduling of specific projects and management actions may vary depending on resource threats, funding availability, and visitor needs.

1. Maintain existing park resources and facilities.
2. Protect public health and safety, which may include enforcement.
3. Enhance the experience of visitors.
4. Acquire land and resources (with the acquisition of in-holdings taking priority over purchase of completely new properties).
5. Support new construction.

IMPLEMENTATION

This plan will be implemented in accordance with the following action timeline. While there is no guarantee each action will be completed by its timeline for completion, this schedule provides a guideline for park managers when implementing this plan. Therefore, barring mitigating circumstances, the desired plan for implementation will be completed within the following time periods after plan approval.

IMMEDIATELY	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Establish a hands-on outdoor classroom at the park to host schools in Glendive and the surrounding areas and Elderhostel programs.
	Through marketing and networking, encourage use of the amphitheater, group use shelter, hiking trails, and other park amenities for groups such as: daycare businesses, group homes, Boys and Girls Club, camps.
Visitor Services	Disperse park information at multiple new locations, such as Hollecker Lake.
	Communicate opportunities and hazards of non-motorized off-trail exploration to visitors.
	Sign perimeter of rifle range to alert other recreationists in the area of shooting activity.
	Update existing range rules.
	Maintain benches and backdrop structures at rifle range until a better range can be established outside the park.
	Form an advisory committee comprised of hunting, shooting, and non-shooting interests to assist with the range transition, including: location, design, facilities, operations, and maintenance.
	When a new range location has been identified, thoroughly address physical and human impacts at the existing and new ranges, and provide opportunity for public input according to the Montana Environmental Policy Act and MCA 76-9-105.
	Acquire, develop, and operate a public range outside of the park offering facilities including but not limited to: benches, uprights, backboards, canopy, parking, latrine, and a small storage building.

IMMEDIATELY continued

Issue	Action
Visitor Services	Look for cooperative means for volunteers, hunters, shooting enthusiasts, local law enforcement, education programs, military, public safety, and non-profit organizations to assist in operating and maintaining the new public range.
	Install signs at visitor center and other pertinent locations in park notifying visitors that potable water is not currently available past the campground.
Infrastructure	Establish annual budget for road gravel.
	Install signs to communicate hazards along the roads, including turns, narrow areas, and potential bicycles on the road.
	Assign responsibility to a Parks Division staff member for initiating and maintaining a dialogue with radio tower owners.
	Assemble a complete inventory of tower owners, users, and subcontractors.
	Explore screening and camouflage methods and enact lease stipulations where present.
	Centralize and streamline FWP billing, payment receipt, and recording methods for efficient lease account management.
Financial & Human Resources	Conduct an analysis of personnel and resources currently available for park programs, including possibilities for regional and private support for program development.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Add conditions in "Permits to Dig" that the permittee provide for the park, at no cost to FWP, a comprehensive photographic record of all finds prior to removal from the park. The permittee would provide casts of paleontological articles. Historical and archeological artifacts would be returned within a year of field work, along with a full report on the research conducted.
	Post warnings, private property notifications, and interpretation material outside of the McCarty Cabin to reduce FWP liability.
	Request acquisition of land and cabin and any associated mineral rights from McCarty Cabin owners.

ONGOING / ANNUALLY		
Issue	Action	
Community Relations	Continue to collaborate with area high schools and Dawson Community College to establish credit-granting programs in connection with the park. Programs may include paleontology, geology, botany, and GPS/GIS.	
	Continue partnerships with the Lion’s Club, Friends of Makoshika, Kiwanis, Makoshika Bowmen, and expand involvement of other community service organizations.	
	Host an annual “How are we doing?” neighborhood meeting to discuss accomplishments and identify problem areas.	
	Fence where necessary to address livestock trespass issues.	
	Control weeds in the park using integrated methods consistent with the FWP Region 7 Weed Management Plan and the County Weed District.	
	Coordinate with biologist and warden annually to determine if mule deer populations need to be reduced in the park.	
	If the mule deer population needs to be reduced, develop map and guidelines for hunters showing boundaries of special hunting area, weapons restrictions, and length of season.	
	Publicize this special hunting opportunity, monitor hunting activity, and evaluate results.	
	Visitor Services	Advertise special events on local television and radio stations.
		Partner with local newspaper, <i>Glendive Ranger Review</i> , to run weekly features on activities and opportunities, including campfire series and events by groups affiliated with the park.
Coordinate with Glendive Economic Development Council, surrounding Chambers of Commerce, and local businesses to help promote Glendive area tourism, establish familiarization tours, and promote packaged tourism opportunities.		
Produce high quality signs to post throughout Glendive for seasonal events.		
Develop and distribute, in a formalized manner, an annual events calendar.		
Educate visitors to damage caused by off-road vehicle use.		
Educate visitors to OHV license and snowmobile permit requirements.		
Allow snowmobile use on unplowed roads when adequate snowfall is received; sign routes as needed.		
Enforce policy requiring motorized vehicles to stay on roads.		
Continue operating and maintaining existing range until a new range can be acquired and is operational. The existing range may be closed immediately if a shooting accident occurs.		

ONGOING / ANNUALLY continued	
Issue	Action
Infrastructure	Continue to use reflectors to mark hazards along the roads.
	Add new overlooks when feasible during road repair and construction.
	Coordinate discussions with tower owners to determine whether technical capabilities would allow towers to be combined at one facility. FWP will cooperate with the Eastern Tier Interoperability Consortium (ETIC) to benefit all public agencies.
	If towers can be combined or relocated, ensure that communications for homeland security, emergency services, and local law enforcement (including FWP) are not interrupted.
	FWP will continue to honor agreements made with the Lower Yellowstone Amateur Radio System in 1991, recognizing their assistance with emergency communications. No fees will be assessed on antennas (currently on the "Halliburton Tower") serving this group.
	Monitor use of private inholdings.
	Twice annually, formally tour the site with the regional maintenance supervisor to evaluate park needs and effectiveness of maintenance programming. Document the tour with follow up lists to assure clear coordination and consistent approach.
	Assure that shop space is organized and safe.
	Formally evaluate maintenance responsibilities as a part of each employee's annual performance review.
	Use OSHA recommendations as a standard for hazard communications, personal protective equipment, and workplace safety.
Interpretation & Education	Increase programming focused on local interests.
	Educate visitors on the importance of leaving archeological and paleontological artifacts where they are found.
	Educate/train park staff to recognize potentially significant finds.
	Educate staff on the park ecosystem.
Financial & Human Resources	Provide training for volunteer and staff tour guides.
	Develop partnerships with private and public organizations for program leaders and operations costs.
	Establish a docent program to lead tours in the visitor center and on park grounds.

ONGOING / ANNUALLY continued	
Issue	Action
Financial & Human Resources	Provide training for park volunteers relative to their interests and duties in the park.
	Ensure staff are available in or near the camping areas.
	Continue to provide information to county treasurers on the importance and value of this system through regular visits to treasurer offices in the Makoshika vicinity.
	Provide updates to the local media on the effectiveness of the system, identifying improvements and upcoming projects at Makoshika as a result of the change in fees.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Work with the County and City of Glendive to shut down the dump during high winds.
	Work with the County, City of Glendive, and volunteers to hand pick garbage that is deposited in the park.
	Update park publications and all visitor orientations with park rules and the importance of leaving fossils, artifacts, and bones in the field.
	Locate and cover, or re-secure artifacts or fossils unless they are determined to be a significant find by a professional scientist.
	If an artifact is at high risk of theft or immediate decomposition if left in the field, park manager will document location on map and GPS if available. Manager will photograph artifact in its original location and condition, then remove to visitor center for preservation and further consultation.
	Use the paleontology lab in the visitor center to prepare and examine appropriate finds.
	Work with permittees to provide programs to park visitors about excavations, when appropriate.
	FWP will request paleontologist review of potentially significant public discoveries. Staff will develop protocol to handle fossils submitted, noting personal contact information, date, original location of fossil, and storage location.
	Continue attempts to contact the cabin owners and request authority to fence around McCarty Cabin.
	Until the cabin is adequately fenced or stabilized, do not provide signs to the McCarty Cabin or advertise the site through written materials, including maps, brochures, or new trails.
	Continue discussions with the adjacent private landowner to explore the possibility of the State acquiring Section 17, Township 15 North, Range 56 East.

WITHIN ONE YEAR	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Establish outdoor classroom programs with local museums.
	Conduct range assessment inventory on the composition and condition of plant communities in the park and determine the extent and methods to control noxious weeds and other non-native plant species.
Visitor Services	Improve directional signing from the Interstate to the park.
	Link FWP Makoshika web page with Makoshika Park website and update.
	Remove canopy over benches when no longer structurally sound.
Infrastructure	Post signs warning about wet road conditions and recommending high clearance vehicles beyond the posted point.
	Sign steep drop-offs along the road.
	Study lease agreements and identify areas where lease renewals may be discontinued. Ensure that lease renewals include terms that give FWP the first-right-of-refusal should the tower be offered for sale or enter bankruptcy.
	Reappraise lease agreements and re-assess lease fees with an annually escalating price schedule to meet Fair Market Value.
	Determine all park road designations (county, private, park) and access encumbrances.
	Develop written schedules and standards to assess, track and complete park maintenance. Include grounds, building and infrastructure systems, and equipment.
	Establish record-keeping for maintenance procedures.
Interpretation & Education	Place directional signing to guide visitors through displays.
	Provide interpretive guides for school groups and individual visitors.
Financial & Human Resources	Establish a volunteer program with local interest groups to lead tours on specific topics, such as birding, plant identification, fossil identification, astrology, and historic use of the area.
	Pursue funding to recruit and train volunteers and/or paid staff to extend visitor center daily hours to 9am to 7pm, and keep visitor center open during low staff times.
	Install a security system at the visitor center, with video, that rings in to the park manager's residence and Glendive Police/Dawson County Sheriff dispatch.

WITHIN ONE YEAR continued	
Issue	Action
Financial & Human Resources	Evaluate the visitor center to ensure safety procedures and mechanisms are in place for staff. Include consideration of a safe room for staff.
	Evaluate the amount of staff time freed from checking fee compliance and, if significant, use as a resource for other operations.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Monitor and document the amount of garbage deposited in the park from the dump.
	Conduct assessment of non-native plant species in park, including noxious weeds.
	Institute a policy that FWP and the Parks Division must approve all antiquities permits requested for the park, and specify that FWP owns all paleontological, archeological, and historical artifacts found in the park.

WITHIN TWO YEARS	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	After the range assessment is complete, decide on opportunities for responsible livestock use in the park, including grazing leases, to maintain plant health and vigor.
	Should livestock grazing be allowed, periodic range assessments will be undertaken to ensure livestock use is not negatively impacting the composition or condition of plant communities, cultural, paleontological, or scientific resources. (every two years)
Visitor Services	Coordinate with Highway officials to place dinosaur tracks on the roads in downtown Glendive leading to the park.
	Place a window mural to advertise the park on the old Chamber of Commerce building in Glendive.
Infrastructure	Provide more gravel from the Saddle to Lion's Camp.
	Identify, name, map, and sign overlooks and picnic areas within park.
	Coordinate with tower owners to clarify and simplify access through facility lands. Limit public entry where necessary, and allow appropriate administrative access.
Infrastructure	Determine if access or use of private inholdings is restricted to specific purposes. If not, propose acquisition, acquire first-right-of-refusal, a conservation or recreational easement to ensure future land use is consistent with the park mission and resource protection.
	Investigate the feasibility and cost of burying electric lines throughout park.
Interpretation & Education	Provide merchandise in the gift store that is relevant to interpretive themes.
	Develop thematic interpretive trails focused on certain interpretive topics such as history, botany, and geology.
	Identify and document rare and threatened species in the park.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Develop multi-faceted plan to manage non-native plant species throughout park; tier off Region 7 Weed Management Plan and coordinate with County Weed Board.
	Develop and implement a fire management plan and procedures coordinated with the County, State, BLM, and neighbors.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS	
Issue	Action
Community Relations	Fully evaluate non-motorized trail opportunities throughout the park with input from an advisory committee, and Friends of Makoshika.
	Consider a private operator providing commercial equestrian rides, buggy and wagon rides in the park.
	Work with Dawson Community College to establish a 2-year Parks and Recreation program.
	Use paleontology and other research projects as opportunities for staff and visitors to learn, watch, and provide hands-on assistance when appropriate.
	Update plant and animal species lists for the park.
	Collaborate with the Montana Recreation and Park Association and the City of Glendive Park and Recreation Department to develop new special events, including the possibility of folf events.
	Consider establishing regulated geocaching activities consistent with department policies.
	Install line-of-sight posts around the property. At this point, do not consider fencing as a viable option due to terrain and maintenance costs.
	Provide educational information in the park brochure.
	Have the Glendive city grid returned to the state highway map.
Visitor Services	Provide text on the current “footprint signs” through Glendive to explain that they lead to Makoshika; perhaps add the word “Makoshika” to the signs.
	Establish an information kiosk at Gazebo Park. Information provided will include park brochures, a map, and walking trail information.
	Establish and publicize backcountry trails and overnight opportunities.
	Develop a trail parallel to the main entrance road on the ground disrupted by future water line installation to the campground.
	Periodically review the lease to the Makoshika Bowmen; negotiate a new lease to another legitimate archery club if the Makoshika Bowmen can no longer operate the range.
	Install city water to the campground to provide potable water for campers, flush restrooms, showers, and irrigation for trees.
	Install potable water and sink facilities at the Group Use Shelter.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS continued	
Issue	Action
Visitor Services	Provide latrines at Sand Creek Overlook and Artist's Vista.
Infrastructure	Investigate the need for guard rails at the Saddle; the analysis should include maintenance costs.
	Improve the road grading and drainage from Lions Camp to Sand Creek and add gravel as feasible.
	Work with tower owners to research other potential tower sites outside of park boundaries, and assist tower owners in acquisition/lease process. FWP assistance may include research or funding. Relocation of publicly used towers may be contingent upon FCC or FAA approval.
	Evaluate leases more frequently to ensure rates coincide with Fair Market Values.
	Develop implementation priority list and timeline to bury electric lines.
Interpretation & Education	Use multimedia and current technologies to interpret displays.
	Design and install interactive displays.
	Visitor center displays should focus on the park's major features: geology, prairies, and badlands.
	Consider designating one section of the visitor center for rotational or traveling displays.
	Use the visitor center basement for programs in the winter and as an alternate, bad weather location for interpretive programs in the summer months.
	Provide signage throughout Cap Rock and Kinney Coulee trails.
	Update trail brochures and trail maps.
	Develop new interpretive trails at suggested locations
	Interpret the fossil-rich portion of the park near Artist's Vista.
	Conduct a park species inventory including plants, wildlife, amphibians, reptiles, and fungi.
	Provide information on plant blossoms and most opportune times to view flowers.
Financial & Human Resources	Consider expanding commercial equestrian, buggy, and wagon rides in the park beyond the current special use permits.
	Develop internship opportunities for research, interpretation, and recreation programs in the park.
	Partner with area universities to provide credit for internships. Include the MSU paleontology program, and the Dawson Community College geology program and recreation program, if instituted.
	Consider use of motion sensors around valuable artifacts.

WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS continued	
Issue	Action
Financial & Human Resources	Install a fire suppression system in visitor center.
	Expand the radio system in the park to include a base station at the visitor center.
	Increase the staff presence in the park to a level at which visitors have reasonable opportunities for contact with staff.
	Analyze demographic changes that occur and provide programming and infrastructure to meet these changing needs.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Work with the County and City of Glendive to install a chain link fence around the landfill site.
	Work with the Museum of the Rockies to continue an inventory of exposed bones using paleontology/geology camps.
	FWP will investigate the possibility of the visitor center becoming a satellite state paleontological repository for the Museum of the Rockies.
	Develop a park brochure about the park's paleontological resources and history.
	Inventory flora and fauna and develop a brochure
	Research and document the history of the park, including use of the park for cattle, horses, logging, and the Frontier Army. Obtain oral histories from area residents when possible.
	Survey and post park boundaries to prevent trespassing onto private land.

WITHIN TEN YEARS	
Issue	Action
Visitor Services	Establish Buzzard Day as a national event.
	After new public rifle range is operating, rifle range location in the park will be reclaimed.
	Investigate methods to provide water for interior areas of the park. Consider vending machines where feasible and cooperative use of electricity and/or wells at McCarty Cabin and Lions Camp.
Infrastructure	Extend paving from top of switchbacks to amphitheater as funding is available.
Interpretation & Education	Using a display, interpret the K-T Boundary from the Diane Gabriel Trail and Sand Creek Overlook.
	Provide wayside exhibits and overlooks that are connected with an audiotape auto tour along park roads, including Valley Loop Drive.
	Develop a color brochure with pictures of common plants in the park.
	Provide a brochure of what species visitors can find, by season, in the park.
Natural & Cultural Resources	Clearly mark park boundaries with line-of-sight posts and on maps.
	If acquired, evaluate feasibility of restoring cabin for recreational use.
	Investigate a report of an historic dugout shelter remaining in the park. If significant, consider interpreting and possibly reconstructing the site.
	Develop a comprehensive library in the visitor center of scientific and popular publications about the park, its fossils, and environment.
	If seller is willing, purchase Lions Camp to reduce inholdings within the park.
	If purchased, collaborate with Lions Camp operators to continue their use of land through lease or other arrangement.
	Actively pursue buying out mineral rights.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Makoshika State Park Advisory Committee that worked to develop the management plan feels the park will benefit from ongoing public input and support from a formalized advisory committee. The committee recommends such a group be formed to meet as appropriate to provide guidance and support on park affairs. It is recommended that the committee meet once every two years to consider park proposals and questions that require public scrutiny. The committee would not be a decision-making body and decisions would not require permission from the committee. In addition, the committee would meet to review and update the management plan as scheduled five years after plan approval.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Public Members

Jim Lee – Friends of Makoshika

Christie Bury – Glendive Chamber of Commerce, replaced Linda Koncilya (deceased)

Jim Thompson – Makoshika Bowmen

Dennis Snow – Recreational park user, cyclist

Amy Myran – Friends of Makoshika, Recreational park user, hiker

Tom Temple – Glendive geology teacher

Charles Ferguson – Park neighbor

Max Martel – Glendive resident / member of Assiniboine-Sioux

Lance Phinney – Lion's Youth Camp

FWP Members

John Little, Region 7 Parks Manager

Ryan Sokoloski, replaced Dale Carlson, Makoshika State Park Manager

Sue Dalbey, replaced Kirsten Shelton, State Parks Planner

ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARTER

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has begun the process of developing a long-range, comprehensive management plan for Makoshika State Park. This plan will be written in order to create a framework in which specific management activities will be proposed and implemented over the next ten years. A citizen-based committee will be formed to assist in an advisory capacity in the drafting of this plan. Non-FWP committee members will be selected to represent a diversity of park users and interests. The committee will include FWP members and the process will be facilitated by a member of the Helena Parks Division management team. Additional FWP employees may be consulted for specific information pertaining to park resources.

The mission of the management plan committee will be to identify park issues and trends, and to formulate management recommendations for addressing them. The committee will be asked to identify and develop recommendations from a balanced perspective, considering funding, staff, resource needs, and community desires.

Committee recommendations will be used by FWP management to develop the management plan that will guide future projects and activities at Makoshika. These recommendations will not be binding, as FWP is ultimately responsible for the management of the park, but they will be crucial in helping FWP to meet the needs and desires of Makoshika's constituency.

Committee members will be asked to commit to quarterly meetings from November of 2003 through May of 2004. Meetings will be scheduled to accommodate member schedules as much as possible. Utilizing the input from these meetings, FWP will draft a management plan during this period, with a first draft being completed in June 2004 for the committee's review. A second draft will be available for public comment in July 2004. A final management plan will be delivered to the FWP director for approval by August 2004.

APPENDIX B: 2003 VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

The 2003 Makoshika State Park Visitor Survey was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of visitor activities, preferences, and satisfaction with park amenities and services. The survey results were taken into consideration by the advisory committee during the management planning process.

METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted from May 24 to September 6, weekends and weekdays, to reflect projected visitation trends. Contact information was collected from one individual (the driver in the case of vehicle entrants) in each participating party that exited the park during the sampling periods. Contact information consisted of name, address, number of residents and non-residents, and type of vehicle. A mail survey was then sent to all visitors who agreed to provide contact information. The mail survey included a reminder postcard and a second survey mailing to non-respondents.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Exit Survey

Exit survey results found that person per vehicle ratios for the park average 2.3 persons per vehicle and that 92% of survey participants visited the park in a car or truck. While residency information from the survey may be skewed toward non-resident visitors because of the season and sampling hours of the survey, exit survey results show that non-resident visitors come from a variety of locations in the United States and Canada. The most frequent locations were Minnesota (6% of survey participants), North Dakota (4%), and Washington (3%).

Mail Survey

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of the 281 participants who provided contact information during the exit survey returned the mail survey. More survey respondents were from Montana (67%) than out of state (33%). Approximately half of all survey respondents visited the park with their family, half visited the park once in the past year, and over 80% visited the park for a day trip, averaging 2.8 hours per visit.

Most respondents found out about the park through family and friends and information in Glendive. Twelve percent (12%) found out about the park through normal advertising venues.

While visiting the park, approximately half of respondents visited the Visitor Center. Other frequently visited sites were Eyeful Vista (31%), Pine on Rocks (31%), Cain's Coulee Overlook (29%), and the Trails (25%). Among respondents who visited the Visitor Center, respondents visited the interpretive displays (77%), the restrooms (71%), received park information (67%), and shopped in the gift store (58%). In the rest of the park, respondents enjoyed the views (58%), including scenic driving (46%), hiked (36%) and walked for pleasure (34%), and participated in a large variety of other activities.

A majority of respondents, 94%, were satisfied with their visit to the park and 73% stated they plan to return for another visit. Respondents were satisfied with all park amenities included in the survey. They were most satisfied with park cleanliness, the visitor center, the level of safety at the park, and staff service.

They were least satisfied with tours, roads, the rifle range, and the gift shop. Only 13% of respondents listed other services they desire at the park. These included more hiking and mountain biking trails, expanded interpretation and programming, and improvements to camping facilities and the roads.

Comments in the “other comments” section of the survey provided information on park experiences, including over 50 comments (23% of respondents) about a positive experience and 10 positive comments about the staff. Other comments included requests for more park information within Makoshika and in advertising venues outside of the park, requests for more trails, opposition to the radio towers, and requests to fix the roads and facilities.