Public Scoping

Cooney State Park Management Plan

August 2010

fwp.mt.gov/parks/management/cooney.html

MONTANA STATE PARKS

Welcome

FWP Planning Team:

Doug Habermann

- Region 5 Parks Manager, Billings

Jenny Alexander

- Cooney State Park Manager, Roberts

Sue Dalbey

- State Parks Planner, Helena

Who is here today?

- Name
- Where is home?
- Your interest in Cooney State Park? (1 sentence)

Meeting Purpose

Solicit public
comments and suggestions

to develop a
Management Plan for
Cooney State Park.

Additional Meeting Outcomes

- Inform:
  - Planning process
  - Park background
  - What's next

House Keeping

- Cell Phones
- Bathrooms
- Refreshments
- No breaks scheduled in meeting

Tonight's Agenda

- Planning Process
- Park Background
- Public Input – your action here!
- Next Steps
- Evaluate this meeting

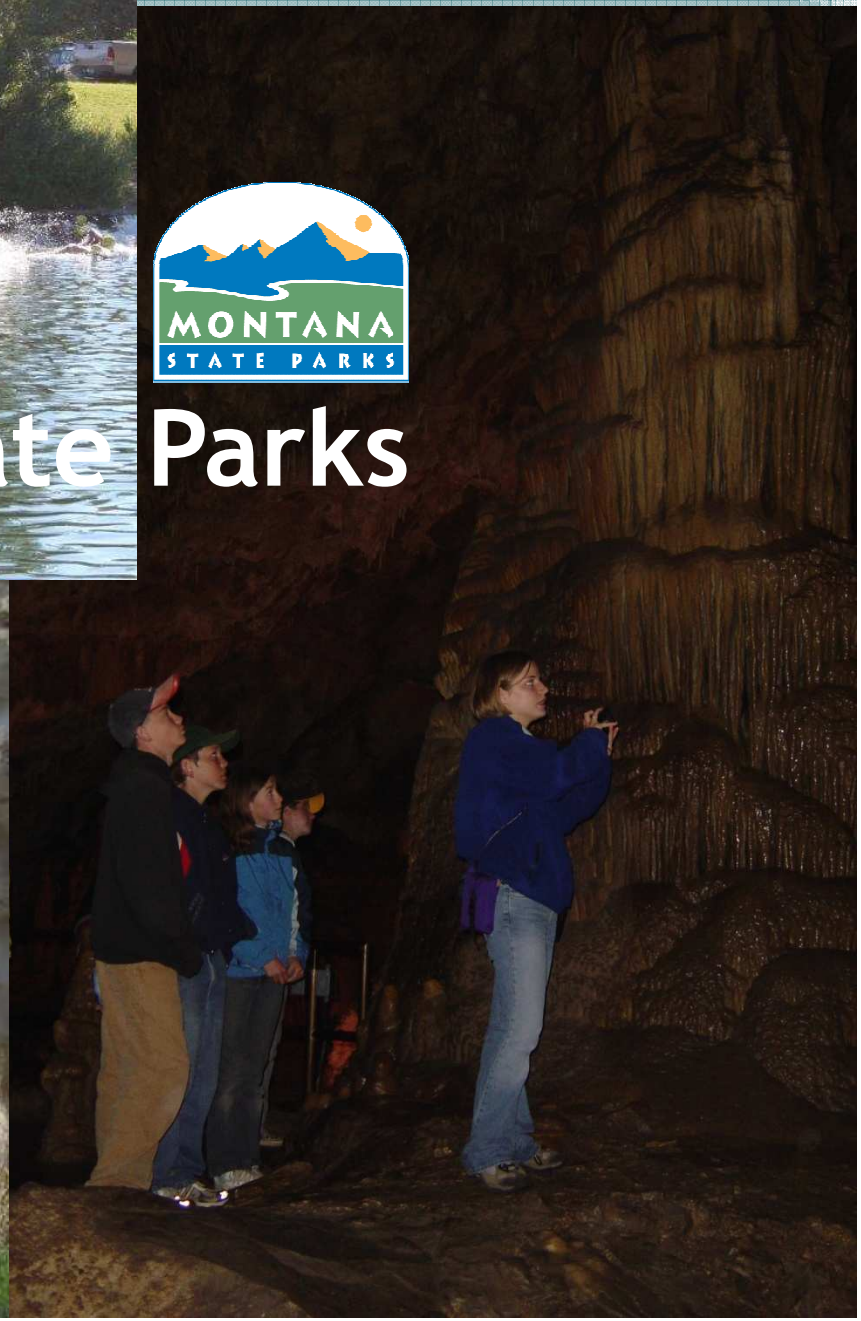
Purpose of Management Plan

- Consider all the options
  - Public insight & opinion
- Give State Parks direction for next 10+ years
  - Goals
    - Objectives
      - Actions
- Prioritize efforts & funding
- Provide continuity over time
- Improves communication with the public

Planning Process & Timeline

- Summer 2010 — Public Scoping
- Winter 2010 — Management Plan drafted by State Parks Division
- Winter/Spring 2011 — Draft Management Plan out for Public Comment
- Spring 2011 — Final Decision and public notified

Montana State Parks



Montana State Parks

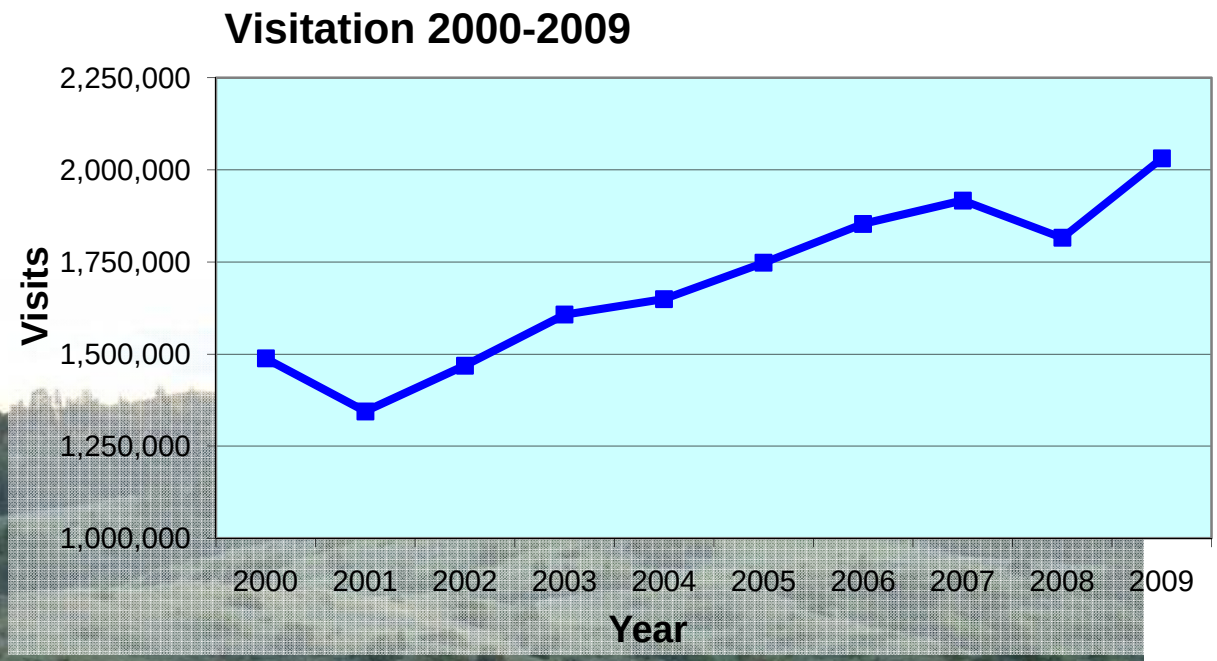
Mission Statement

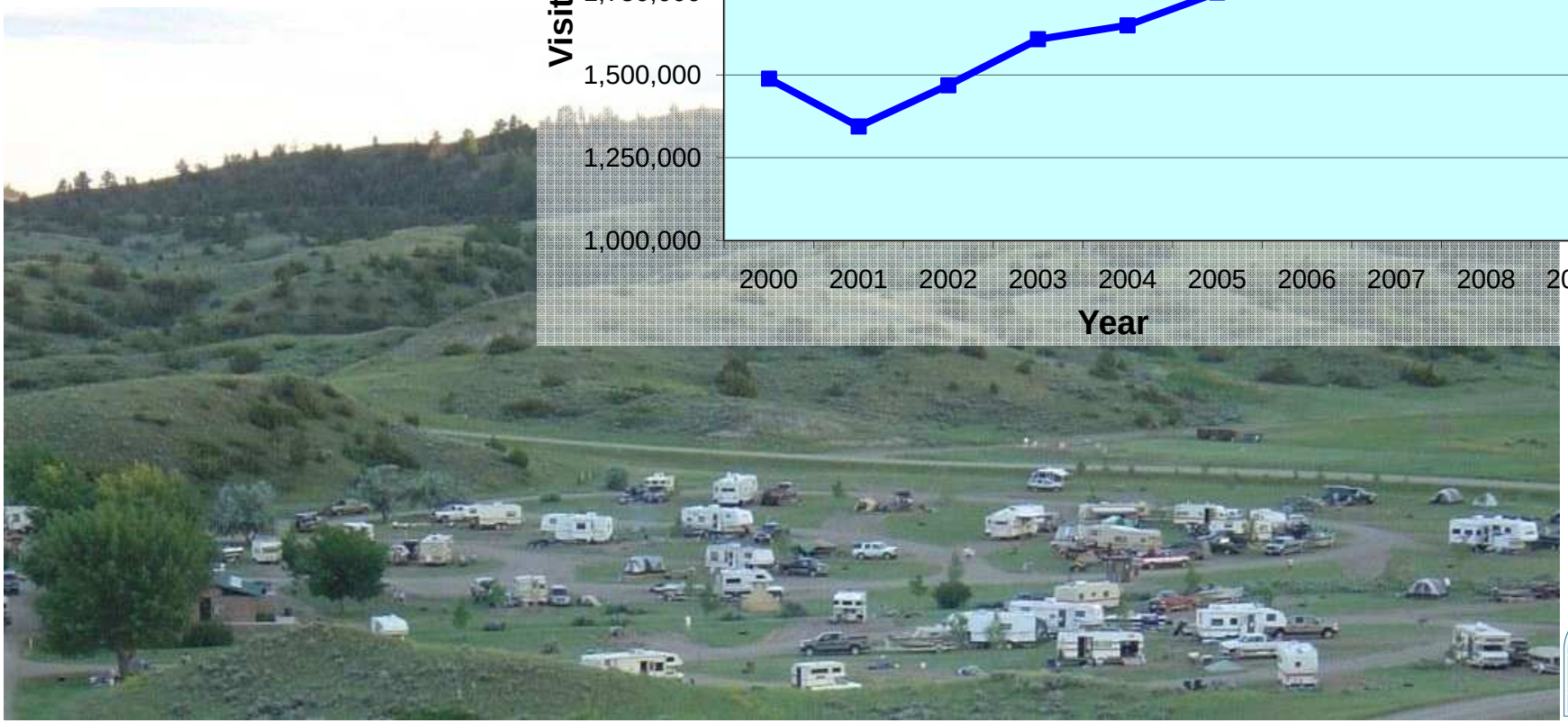
Preserve, enhance and interpret
a diverse representation of
Montana's most outstanding
natural, cultural/historic, and recreational
resources
for the personal, social, and economic benefit
of present and future generations.

Montana State Parks

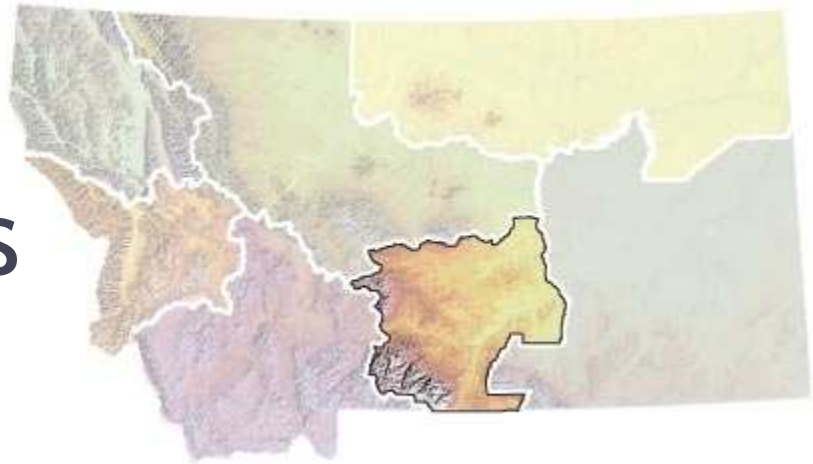
- Dedicated to:
  - Serving Visitors
  - Visitor and Staff Safety
  - Caring for Resources
  - Educating & Interpreting our surroundings
  - Working with communities to build economy

Montana State Parks





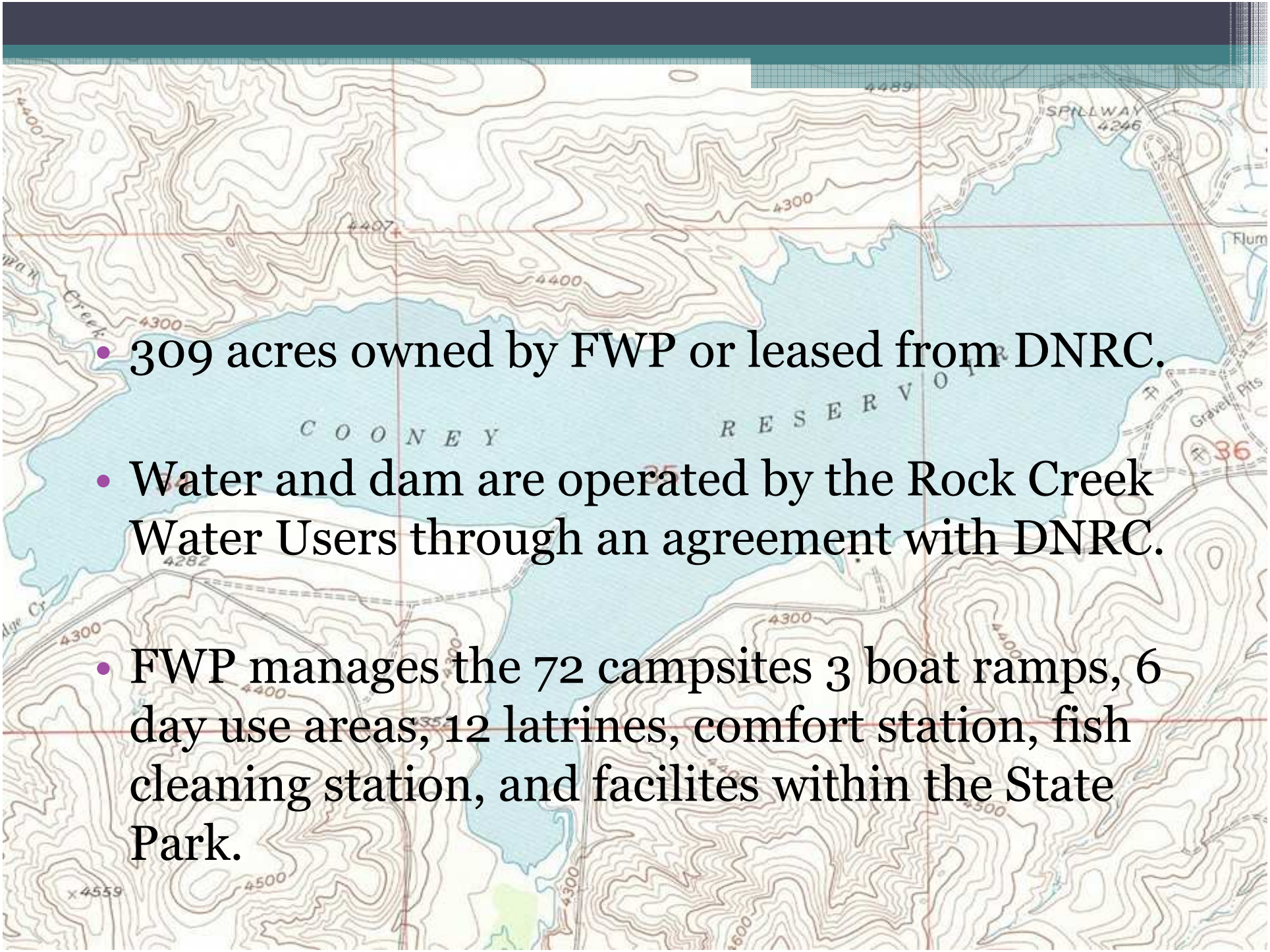
Montana State Parks



- **REGION 5** – Billings Area
- 6 Parks
  - Cooney, Lake Elmo
  - Yellowstone River, Prairie Dog Town
  - Chief Plenty Coups, Pictograph Cave
- 46 Fishing Access Sites

Cooney State Park

- Created in 1936 for irrigation
  - Water: 28,230 acre-feet at full pool or 1078 surface acres at normal pool
- Designated State Park in 1969



- 309 acres owned by FWP or leased from DNRC.
- Water and dam are operated by the Rock Creek Water Users through an agreement with DNRC.
- FWP manages the 72 campsites 3 boat ramps, 6 day use areas, 12 latrines, comfort station, fish cleaning station, and facilites within the State Park.

- FWP contracts weed control out to Carbon County Weed District
- Park Staff follows up and takes care of spot problems after County has sprayed.

Operations

- Annual Operations Budget $47,622
- Annual Personal Services
  - 2.86 Full Time Employees ($133,673)
    - 2 full time positions and
    - 4 seasonal summer positions.
- Revenue for 2009 $54,102

Recreational Opportunities

- Fishing - rainbow trout, walleye, cutthroats, crappie, and a few rouge perch.
- The Fisheries Bureau stocks the lake with rainbow trout and will be stocking it with cutthroat this fall.

Recreational Opportunities

- Fishing: shore, boat, and ice
- Water skiing, jet skiing, tubing
- Bird Watching
- Cross country skiing
- Parasailing
- Wind kite surfing
- Camping

Services Offered

- Restrooms; vault and flush, shower building with coin machine.
- Garbage Service
- Fresh water
- Electrical hook-ups added in 2008 to Red lodge campground
- 72 campsites, 5 ADA sites, group use area, fish cleaning station
- Concessions on North Shore
- Boat ramps
- Interpretive programs

Improvements Made

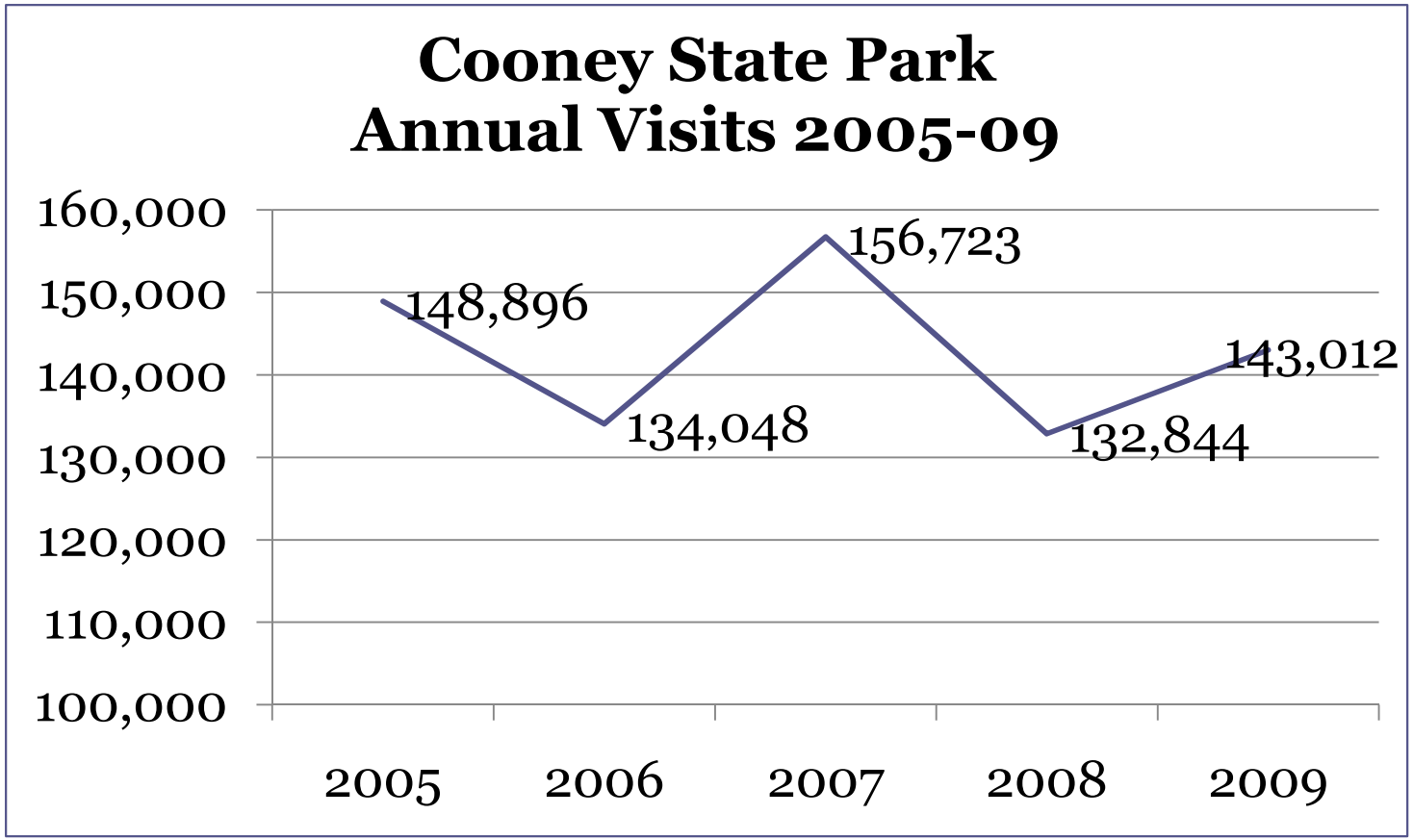
- Elevation of Marshall Cove Road, improved parking lot
- Additional campsites
- Playground
- Electrical hook ups
- Marshall Cove Boat Ramp extension
- Paving of North Shore Parking Lot
- Group Use Area
- Vendor

Law Enforcement

- Cooperation of Parks Staff, Game Wardens, and Carbon County Sheriff
- Ex-Officio Park Staff: deal with day to day "smaller issues"
- Game Wardens: parks, fish, and water safety.
- County Sheriff: noise issues after quiet hours, DUI's, domestic disturbances, etc.

Visitation

Year	Group Use
2009	3
2008	4
2007	5
2006	5
2005	3



Visitor Demographics

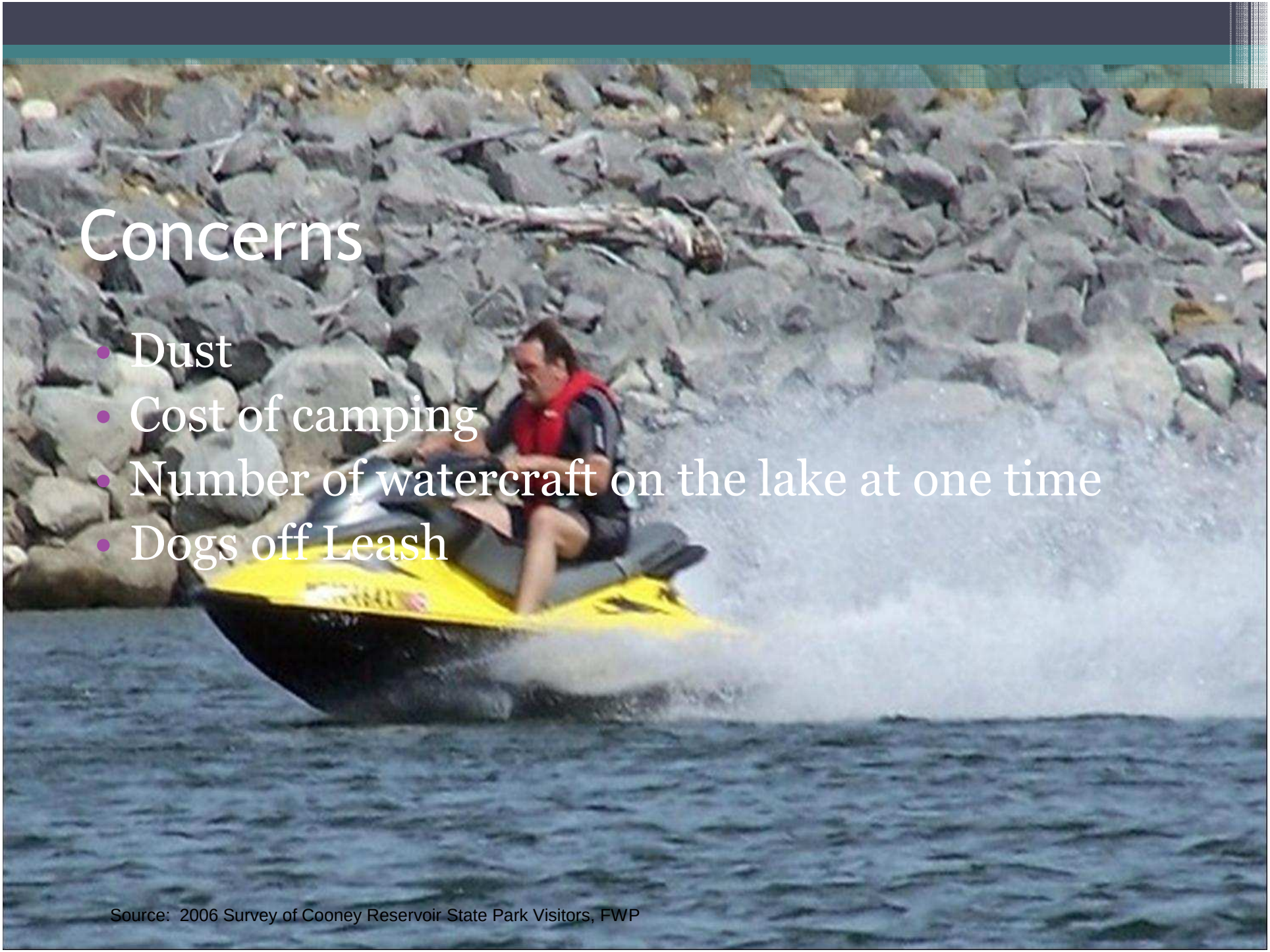
Trips Per Year	6
Average age	45
%MT Residents	95%
Main Activity	75% come to boat
Second Activity	50% come to camp
* Fishing is a large reason visitors come to Cooney as well.	

Source: 2006 Survey of Cooney Reservoir State Park Visitors, FWP

Desired Improvements

- Additional Camping sites
- Sites with electricity
- Group Use Area
- Better accessibility
- Concessions

Source: 2006 Survey of Cooney Reservoir State Park Visitors, FWP



Concerns

- Dust
- Cost of camping
- Number of watercraft on the lake at one time
- Dogs off Leash

Source: 2006 Survey of Cooney Reservoir State Park Visitors, FWP

Public Role in Planning Process

- Open public involvement
  - Public input before pen hits paper
  - Scoping meetings
  - Web page – documents, meeting dates
  - E-mails
  - Open houses – discuss draft plan
  - Written comments solicited on draft plan

Participant Expectations

- Individual comments are welcome
- Respect each other's perspectives
- Be timely
- No expectation to agree, resolve or reach consensus

Public Input in Small Groups

- Create self-managed groups.
- Discuss and respond to three questions
- Record responses directly on flipcharts.
- No need for consensus in your groups. All individual comments are welcome and desired.
- After all ideas are recorded, you will chose ideas most important to you.

Public Input in Small Groups

- Facilitator
  - All members get to speak
  - Watch the time
- Recorder
  - Record all individual responses
  - Write large
  - Don’t worry about spelling

Respond to these Questions

Write directly on Flip Charts

1. What would you most like to see happen with the Park—what's your vision?

2. What is most important to you about the Park? What do you want to make sure continues into the future?

3. What are your concerns about the Park?

Final Input

- Choose five (5) ideas or thoughts you feel are most important for the future of Cooney State Park.

Next Steps

- All information recorded on flipcharts will be transcribed and put into a report format that will be available to all participants – web site.
- Meeting evaluation
- Write draft plan this winter
- Open Houses to discuss draft – early 2011
- Written comments solicited on draft plan
- Modify plan
- Final adopted

Thank you for coming!

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WEB SITE
fwp.mt.gov/parks/management/cooney.html

Thank You for coming!