



**Meeting Minutes**  
Region 4 Headquarters – 4600 Giant Springs Road; Great Falls, MT  
**September 18, 2019**

**Parks & Recreation Board Members Present:**

Angie Grove, Chair; Mary Moe, Vice-Chair; Scott Brown; Erica Lighthiser; Betty Stone (via video).

**Staff Present:**

Director Williams, Gary Bertellotti, Kyan Bishop, Chris Dantic, Pat Doyle, Coleen Furthmyre, Colin Maas, Tom Reilly, Alex Sholes, Beth Shumate, Ken Soderberg, John Taillie and Zach Zipfel.

**Guests:** Robin Baker, Clancy Sivertsen, James Gustafson, Chris Gallus and Michele Fromdahl (via Region 6 video).

**Topics:**

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Approval of Board Minutes**
3. **Approval of Board Expenses**
4. **Board Member Reports**
5. **Administrator Report**
6. **Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Update - Informational**
7. **Warm Season Highlights - Informational**
8. **Parks Capital Projects – Final**
9. **Public Comment ~ For Issues Not On This Agenda**
10. **Adjournment**

**1. Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Grove called the meeting to order at 10:47 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Grove stated she is really looking forward to this meeting because it really feels like we're looking forward now. We're in the exciting part of the rebuilding phase. She thinks we were really stabilizing things the last two years now comes the fun, exciting things. She'd just like to acknowledge that it's because of the direction of Director Williams. She really has laid the foundation for all of this to happen. It was so fun to have such an exciting work session this morning that really builds on the direction that Director Williams is providing. Thanks for making this happen.

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Director Williams stated she can't take credit; everyone, including the Board, helped to make the accomplishments we made this last year.

**2. Approval of the Board Minutes**

Chair Grove stated we several minutes to look at today, we have May 10, May 28, and June 20. We will work through each one of them individually. Is there any comments or questions on the May 10?

Chair Grove stated she does have one question; she is wondering if we need a note that explains why the date was moved. Because in the minutes, we had set a meeting date, a specific meeting date, and then we actually met a

week later at the request of the petitioner. She is wondering if there needs to be some kind of note in the minutes that notes why it was moved. She was thinking maybe the May 28 meeting.

Director Williams stated it is a good idea. For anyone in the future looking at it and wondering why, because there was nothing noted in there about that.

Chair Grove/Vice-Chair Moe stated on page two, right towards the bottom where Becky Dockter is talking in the last sentence it states, "this plan has not been repealed by the Board." She was wondering if that needed to be policy or procedure. It's actually not a plan, it is a policy. On page eight, about halfway down, the word *present* is supposed to be prevent. On the same page, it states "Department of the Army Corps of Engineers lease", she thinks we should still use the initials ACOE. On the bottom of page 24, very last line, should be "your prior decision", not "you prior decision." On the next page, page 25, it should say "week", not "weak" and it should be hyphenated. On page 27, about halfway down the page, its states "Member Stone stated her indication at this point" or should it be "her inclination", I think it should just be at her inclination. On page 28, where she is speaking in the first paragraph, about halfway down, there's the word assume. It states, "the Board will have to reconvene and assume do the same", just get rid of the word assume. At the bottom of page 29, the second line from the bottom where Becky Dockter is talking in her zeal, the word "too" should be added in there.

***Motion: Vice-Chair Moe moved, and Member Brown seconded to approve the May 10, 2019 Board meeting minutes as amended.***

***Action on Motion: Motion Carried. 5-0***

Chair Grove stated in the May 28, 2019 minutes, she would like to add into her comments on page 2 where she thanked the Board, she thinks it should say "and the Regions for setting up the video/call-in system".

Chair Grove asked if there were any other comments from the Board?

***Motion: Vice-Chair Moe moved, and Member Lighthiser seconded to approve the May 28, 2019 Board meeting minutes as amended.***

***Action on Motion: Motion Carried. 5-0***

Chair Grove stated in the June 20, 2019 minutes this is where she would like to have her comment added why there was a two-week window instead of a one-week window as prescribed in the previous minutes. On page 4, she doesn't think Historic Preservation was in SB 24; need to remove that section. The date on the minutes should be corrected to say "2019" not "2010".

Chair Grove asked if there were any other comments or changes from the Board.

***Motion: Member Brown moved, and Vice-Chair Moe seconded to approve the June 20, 2019 Board meeting minutes as amended.***

***Action on Motion: Motion Carried. 5-0***

### **3. Approval of Board Expenses**

Chair Grove asked if there were any questions from the Board.

***Motion: Member Stone moved, and Member Brown seconded to approve the Parks & Recreation Board Fiscal Year 2020 budget and expenditures as presented.***

Chair Grove asked if there was any discussion on the motion.

**Action on Motion: Motion Carries. 5-0**

#### **4. Board Member Reports**

Member Stone stated the reason she attended the meeting in Billings is because her husband had back surgery yesterday here in Billings and he's doing fine. She really hasn't had a lot of activities with state parks mostly because of her husband's back issue. Attended the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) State Park recognition VIP train tour in Whitefish; it was very enjoyable; her husband went with her and it was a very enjoyable time; glad she got to participate in that. Other than that, she has been working with the Valley County Economic Development Group and Fort Peck; trying to get a grant to develop a plan for the west side of Fort Peck Dam, which would include the dock criteria. We do have a dock fishing access site there and so we've talked to Mark Sullivan and Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) will also be involved in that whole process. We just need to develop some trails not only for recreation, but for safety purposes, and some roadway issues also for safety purposes.

Member Lighthiser stated she had a sad couple months not doing much outside; our family moved out of our home in the last few months, so her park's involvement has not been as much as she'd like it to be. She did have the opportunity to participate in a conference call with Chair Grove, park staff as well as Regional Supervisors about the Citizen Advisory Councils (CAC) in different regions and learned a lot about the makeup, schedules, how those groups are facilitated and to try to identify opportunities for the Parks Board and other members of the community to get involved in those discussions and to see how we might be able to learn a lot from what is happening on the ground in those areas; really engaging discussion; we learned a lot, and she think members of the Board are going to participate in those discussions as we move forward. She looks forward to participating in those CAC meetings when possible.

Member Brown stated in late July, he toured Whitefish Lake State Park, it was a weekday and it was totally packed with people; the kiosk was neat, orderly and it looked great. Then later on the trip we stopped at Wayfarers State Park and got to talk with the camp host. His name was Smitty, he was a really nice fellow. It's always fun to stop and talk to the people there. And again, as I've mentioned this in the past, the host treated the park like he owned the park; such a great thing; it was his and his wife's first year as volunteers and they were from Ohio and Kentucky. In that Park, there are 30 campsites including hike and bike campsites that are specifically set up for bikers.

Smitty introduced him to this woman who was 66 years old from France, and she and her husband had biked from the Canadian border, up to Wayfarers, and we're going up to the Canadian border; they had biked starting in the early spring. She raved about Montana, about state parks and about the camps that we had there. Then, a couple days ago, he called Wayfarer's headquarters to get Smitty's title and talked to a lady named Morgan Parks who was an AmeriCorps volunteer; after talking with her "I thought, I want to hire her". She was the sweetest person and what a great voice for state parks. I met with Terri Walter's, the new Region 5 Parks Manager. She's been with FWP under Doug Haberman, since 2000. Terri oversees Chief Plenty Coups, Lake Elmo, Cooney Reservoir, Pictograph Caves, and his favorite State Park, Greycliff Prairie Dog Town. We talked about the vandalism and they are going to try to add lights. They have been vandalized a couple times; this last time the maintenance workers hadn't put away the chain saws and they were stolen, but more than that, they tore the wall out off the maintenance shed. They may look at maybe putting in a security system, or at least signs that say there is a security system, we had a good chat. We also talked about law enforcement and the issues at Cooney Reservoir, and the fact that people are drinking and boating and how it's really hard to coordinate law enforcement. I think that we should address at some point, about more law enforcement in state parks. Met Emily Tyler who is the Park Ranger at Chief Plenty Coups State Park and attended Chief Plenty Coups Day of Honor event the end of August; it was the 25th Anniversary of the event; they had about 450 attendees, 300 people ate lunch; it was a very successful day.

Finally, he got to paddle the Smith River in mid-August and talked with Nate, the Ranger there, and he asked Nate about the fee. The fee is \$25 for residents 13 years and older and \$60 for nonresident. He asked Nate what do people say about the fee? Nate replied, is that a daily fee or is that all the fee is. Even though the money that is raised from the Smith River State Park stays in the State Park, he thinks we ought to look at increasing that fee, it's just under market. The last two or three miles of the Smith have a couple of log jams and there's a dead tree with roots that have been eroded from underneath. In low and high water for the log jams, he thinks it is very dangerous and now is the time to go and mitigate those hazards.

Vice-Chair Moe stated she also went on the train ride, which was fun and a nice celebration of a successful legislative session. Last week, her and her husband went on a 1,200-mile trip around eastern Montana and featuring state parks and other items of local interests. Unfortunately, it was raining cats and dogs the first two days of the trip so we stopped at Ackley Lake and I was very impressed with the campsites there; it would be helpful to have signs in both Hobson and in Winnett that says there is a park somewhere around there because by the time you finally do see the sign, you are pretty much at the park. Spent a very short time there and then headed out to Hell Creek. It had been raining for days, and it was still raining once we got there. Although someone told us in the course of our meetings that the road had been improved lately, it was not passable that day. We went about five miles and decided it is not going to get any better and so we turned around. She is disappointed not to have seen Hell Creek. We then moved on to Glendive and went to Makoshika the next day, and again it was pouring down rain. There were people in the visitor center; the visitor center is just so nice and so well done. It was nice to see Makoshika through the eyes of a child who was there and asking about this and that. Ever since she came up with this podcast thing, she's always thinking about that and a podcast about the geology in that area would be so interesting because as you go down to Baker and then to Medicine Rock, you see these, and the red strawberry tint to the landscape there. I was wishing I brought my roadside geology book so that I could understand it better. We also went to Medicine Rock State Park and it was still pouring down rain. There was one camper there with his dog waiting outside his camper for the rain to stop. Again, beautiful! She thinks the park that impressed her the most and possibly it was because the sun shining just right was Tongue River Reservoir. It is well done in terms of visitor amenities. The brown and gray water exchange station, the place where you can park your campers and/or boat trailers and that sort of thing; she imagines they leave them there and come back the next week and start again. But the thing that she liked the most about that park is that they have this station and a big sign on it that says kids don't float which of course attracted my attention, and underneath the sign was a bunch of free children's life vests; you can use them for the day and put them back when you are done. That is great idea. Every aspect of the park is so well maintained. That was my impression of every park that we visited in spite of the rain. Kudos to the people that do the maintenance and just provide all the help to people because in every instance they were just so well done. Even the park that I mentioned earlier, Rosebud Battlefield, there isn't anyone there to take you around, but the site itself has different signs that provoke your interest in it even if you didn't know anything about it, you are able to walk all of it. We were there for about two hours and in the time that we were there, there were five other vehicles there, so it is pretty well visited. One of the people she was surprised to see doing the trail were a couple that seemed to her to be in their 70's or 80's, and he was on a cane trying to get across that cattle grate; there was a struggle for him; she doesn't know if that defeats the purpose to have a little something that would allow people to be steadier on it. The other thing that really impressed me about that park was that it had a sign that was devoted to how it came to be and it mentioned a local rancher there whose first name was Slim and last name escapes her but it was a testimonial to the foresight of people to recognize that, because he recognized in the 70s, that this really was a historic thing that should be preserved; he not only got it on the National Register, but also eventually sold that land to the State of Montana. It was done in a way that didn't make the park about him but was an important reminder about the importance of our heritage in the State Parks. It was a wonderful tour and it felt so good about our state parks when she was finished with it.

Chair Grove stated she has done a couple of things since the last meeting. We had a legislative thank you party at Spring Meadow State Park to thank all the people that helped support Senate Bill 24. The park was very, very accommodating and helped us set up and use the pavilion; it was really fun and a good evening was had by all;



She thinks the legislators particularly really enjoyed it; gave out a couple of awards to a couple of people there, which was really fun. She has sent thank you cards to over 20 legislators, she decided to just take care of it because she was more involved; she will probably continue to do that as we get involved with other people. She has a big stack of thank you cards if anybody needs any. She also visited several state parks. On Memorial Day weekend, she camped at Lost Creek campground, which is super cool; great camp hosts who are actually big birders which she is also. They showed her where some nests were; it's a nice campground; she thinks there was one other camper there that weekend; it was pretty quiet. There is a nice trail behind it that you can walk up past the falls or ride your mountain bike; there were a couple of mountain bikers that came in. They then camped at Wayfarer's State Park; Member Brown pointed out that there are great folks there. Visited Yellow Bay, Finley Point and Tower Rock. She spent five days at Placid Lake hiking and biking around. She is not a lake person per se, but it was fun to spend a lot of time at state parks on lakes because it really educated her on those parks. Flathead Lake parks are so busy and so many infrastructures needs there, it's amazing. What is even more amazing that Amy Grout was recognized by Sunset Magazine as the State Park Ranger of the Year. That woman manages Flathead Lake Park, in addition to making everyone love her. Just want to give kudos to Amy; she doesn't know if Amy is listening today but tell her that's super cool and a really nice thing. As Member Stone pointed out, we did have a BNSF thank you train ride. She has a pamphlet from that if anybody wants to look at it; it gives the description of all the cars, it's really quite cool. BNSF offered the train ride as a thank you for our legislative efforts during the last legislative session. It was coordinated through the State Parks Foundation. She is hoping we can do that on an annual basis, hopefully we'll have a little more notice so that other people can join us. She attended the Missoula CAC meeting and she's had quite a few meetings with other groups that are interested in supporting and helping us with various state parks things, and as those move forward, she will keep the Board posted. She also attended a State Parks Foundation fundraiser; we actually had a dinner at the Flathead Lake Lodge and then we took a floating boat that took us out on the lake, down to Yellow Bay and backup. It was lovely, but it was extremely windy that night. In fact, they had trouble getting the boat across the lake to us, we had spent quite a bit of the boat ride hanging on to the rails on the side. Regional Park Manager Dave Landstrom was on the boat. It was a good opportunity to talk to park staff, some Parks Foundation staff, and it just gave you a better appreciation of those parks over there. It was just a fun, fun, summer. Is there anything Director Williams wanted to add?

Director Williams stated she didn't get out as much as she'd like to have this summer. It was just a busy summer, in Helena with FWP issues. However, the few places she did go was on a tour of the Big Hole, went to an event at Placid Lake State Park with Thrive who are helping to build trails there. She is struck by whether it's fish, wildlife, or parks, where we've made such long-standing gains, are those places that we've worked with communities, landowners, and actually other agencies and counties where we just have gotten so much done. Where we have our biggest challenges is where we're not able to break through those issues, it is as simple as that. She is so heartened by the hard work our staff does to build those relationships, whether it's enforcement, fish, wildlife, parks or administration, that's where we've seen the biggest gains and she think the challenges we have ahead are where we've not been able to crack that nut and, and get through some of those divisive issues, and she think it hurts us all. That's her only observation from traveling. When she can, she's going to try to go to each of the CAC meetings in each region this fall and meet with each of the regional supervisors and have some one on one conversations with them and really be trying to support regions and not just Helena headquarters staff.

## **5. Administrator Report**

Beth Shumate, Parks Division Administrator, stated due to the extensive and maybe somewhat lengthy work session she now knows that all of you are better informed of all the progress that we have been making over the past few months since our last board meeting. Hopefully now the Board has a much better understanding of our strategic direction, moving forward. We really are trying to work very hard in laying that foundation, and really establishing the inventory of everything that we have in existence to date, and really assessing the condition of all of our assets and infrastructure. In order for us to be able to do that, she realized early on that you have to tap into the knowledge that exists and that is truly within our staff, and our partner groups and our friends' groups and in our volunteers. She does have a couple of notes that she just would like to state in regards to some of the work

session discussion: There has been some really great comments made by the board members, especially in regards to that education, interpretation and stewardship work stream that we're developing and the idea all around podcasts. She had the opportunity two weeks ago to meet the National State Parks podcast developer; this does exist, it is not just an idea; this gentleman is a previous park ranger for the Washington State Park system and he has now started a whole business all around developing state park related podcasts; what a great idea that you brought forth. She does think that we have a possible avenue to really pursue those types of educational opportunities. She has always been a firm believer that our parks are truly the physical plant for nature based and even health based educational opportunities and so she'd love to see when we can explore some of those additional partnerships. One that we are exploring is with the Audubon; We have been meeting with the Montana State Audubon folks. In part of the issue in trying to get more, especially the youth and the next generation, we want to create those next stewards of the land and water out to our physical plants, whether they're parks, fishing access sites (FAS), wildlife management areas (WMA), you have it, is the transportation funds that the schools have and the lack of flexibility in being able to actually bus the children out to our state parks. That is part of the impetus behind us meeting with Audubon is due to the fact that the whole entire Great Falls school system has decreased their environmental education program and so now they're looking to us to see what type of resources we can provide and what type of resources can they provide in this partnership type effort in order to embellish those outdoor environmental education opportunities. She really thinks that there are some neat opportunities and such a need. In talking with John Taillie, the Regional Park Manager here and Colin Maas, Park Manager for Sluice Boxes State Park just down the road (which we were hoping to take the Board members to today, but it's just lack of time and Giant Springs is a very big park to tour), there used to be a lot more educational programs that were occurring at Sluice Boxes and unfortunately, because of those funds decreasing at the school system, it's just not happening anymore. In my tour at Sluice Boxes last year, she realized the need very much to truly better inform that next generation that is using that site and recreating there to really think about caring for that site and what are the impacts of their visits. Just the trash cleanup alone that our staff members are doing is significant. It's ethics, it's education, it's developing those next stewards. Really excited to have Joe Naiman-Sessions as the lead of that program now, she thinks that we're going to make some really great strides along those lines. She has had the fine pleasure to get out to some of our signature events in the last couple months. She is trying to do as many of those events as she possibly can fit into her calendar. Two in particular that are really those signature events: Bannack Days where we see typically over 5,000 visitors, and she cannot say enough about the exemplary service provided by our staff; we bring in the entire Americorps team to help put that Bannack Days event on. Just so proud of all of the work ethic displayed throughout the course of the event and how the restrooms are constantly clean, the toilet paper is restocked on an hourly basis, visitors are directed by staff members. It's not only park staff and AmeriCorps staff, it is FWP wide staff that are coming to this event to help even just collect fees and things like that. If you haven't been to Bannack Days, she definitely encourages you to go. She's also been able to go to Salmon Lake, Placid Lake and Madison Buffalo Jump to really witness just some of the caretaking of those sites, and to really see how we're setting that high standard of cleanliness across the system and also just that customer service. This leads to those improved visitor experiences that we are now talking about in our classification policy. She also had the lovely opportunity, as Board Member Brown mentioned that he attended the Day of Honor event at Chief Plenty Coups State Park. She believes it was Board Member Moe comment about signs and as you're trying to get to a park, we seem to have a lack of signage well before you're near the park. Really glad that we have this coordinated graphics work stream within the classification and implementation effort because that will help us really develop this inventory, what's in existence and where are the gaps. After seeing Scott Harvey's presentation this morning, we are mapping, geo locating where some of those additional signs can then be placed to help direct the visitor. She sees this truly as a full-on way finding system that we're trying to develop statewide. The Day of Honor event at Chief Plenty Coups State Park, she can definitely say that the tribal relations that was also mentioned this morning, they are very strong and healthy, and we witnessed that with the Crow tribe during that event. Hundreds of people in attendance. She had the fine honor to present some gifts from us to Grant Bulltail. He is a nationally renowned interpreter for the Crow tribe and friend of Chief Plenty Coups Park and has recently been recognized for the National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship Award; it is a really high honor to receive that award.

Chief Plenty Coups State Park it's situated within the Crow Indian Reservation, 40 minutes south of Billings, the day use preserves the log home, sacred spring and home of Chief Plenty Coups. The Day of Honor event was a 25th year anniversary, it really continues those native traditions and we saw that throughout the course of that event. She was able to talk to the one of the education directors at the Little Bighorn college that day and we actually do provide a lot of Indian Education for All curriculum at Chief Plenty Coups State Parks. So back to my earlier statement about how we provide the physical plant for that nature-based education or that tribal education that is occurring within our state parks; this is a true indication it's already occurring; can it be enhanced and more robust? Absolutely! There is also a six week Crow language immersion summer camp that occurs at Chief Plenty Coups every summer, this includes Crow language instruction, traditional life skills classes, traditional games, and if it wasn't for those dedicated friends group volunteers, which are made up of tribal members and just local citizens, these types of events and camps just wouldn't occur. A great example that some of this stuff is really occurring, and it's actually pretty successful. That is some of my recent events and visits over the course of the last couple months but now she wants to switch over to the recreation programs because we don't have that on the agenda this time around. The recreational trails program, which is our federally funded program, was awarded over \$1.7 million to trail projects throughout the state. Member Stone, you had mentioned you have a potential trail to project up there along Fort Peck, so this is a great program that could provide some of those types of funding sources for that.

Member Stone stated she would just like to say thank you. She us aware of that and they are having a grant information workshop on that coming up, which she will attend.

Shumate stated the Trail Program Manager, Michelle McNamee is really trying to make a good effort and trying to provide additional technical assistance and training opportunities, especially in some of those areas in eastern Montana where we haven't visited more frequently. On the Senate Bill (SB) 24 trails program, we have collected the initial comments from the Montana Trails Coalition. As a reminder, the Montana Trails Coalition was really the group that spearheaded that whole SB 24 legislation, it was met with great success, as we all know. We are due to have a SB 24 and House Bill (HB) 355 (the motorized trail pass legislation that also occurred in this last session), meeting next week to discuss the administration of those programs and what does that look like as far as eligibility and to really establish the rulemaking behind that state trails program and then how was that coordinated with all of the other programs that are in existence, we want to make sure that the timing of grant allocations and even these trainings and the technical assistance offerings are all coordinated throughout the state.

Chair Grove stated Director Williams has other obligations and needs to leave, I thought maybe she'd like to say something

Director Williams stated that she has a Sage Grouse Oversight Team meeting that she'll be a little late for, and she's not allowed to ask for delegate to this meeting so it does not trump this meeting, but she can't have someone else sit in for her. She thought this morning was really positive and appreciates all of your energy into helping state parks, thinks we're in a good direction.

Shumate stated with the Off-Highway Vehicle Program that is already in existence, there were 10 grants awarded in June; pretty standard, we help fund some of those trail steward positions across the state, as well as some education funding; again, speaking about the ethics that we're trying to make sure that we are instituting across all trail user groups. We also had a unique one this year where there's a grant to the Lolo Ranger District for \$16,000 to do an assessment and engineering study for efforts on the Saltese Trestle; we have put in recreational trails program funds into the Saltese Trestle in the past and this will be a key link for not only summer recreational activities, but also snowmobiling as well in the winter time, which is a really key economic driver for those rather remote locations in the wintertime. The Snowmobile Program preparation season is in full swing. The 25 clubs are out clearing trails, working on equipment and equipment maintenance. We are also in the process of soliciting for three groomers; we have the Bozeman, Dillon and Haugen snowmobile clubs and we're also working to rebuild a groomer as well. We have a full Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Statewide Comprehensive



Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) update. That's one of the agenda items coming up here so she won't go into too much detail here. We are working with the National Park Service on documentation for the Big Arm permanent easement acquisition; the appraisal is in and we're just waiting for the appraisal review and the budget breakdown for that project. For the outdoor recreation programs, we are hiring an Outdoor Recreation Program Manager that will really help become that liaison for outdoor recreation with our staff, especially with our park staff and internally within FWP but also externally and really trying to engage at that community level that Martha was talking about is so important. Some future, upcoming meetings and dates that are of significance: the National Public Lands Day is September 28, there are events that are already scheduled, one that she knows of for sure is at Lewis and Clark Caverns; it's a cave cleanup; one of our AmeriCorps members is actually bringing together all of the different volunteers for that, so in case you're bored on September 28, cruise on down to the caverns. She knows that there's a handful of others across the state, but another great opportunity where we can work with other government agencies, community members, friend groups, partners to think about just getting out on our public lands and the importance of them. The Parks and Recreation Division meeting will be held March 18 through the 20<sup>th</sup>, would like everyone to put that on their calendars; this meeting is really more of an internal meeting opportunity for us to really have some additional trainings; classification will be a huge part of that division meeting discussion.

#### **6. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Update – Informational**

Libby Metcalf stated she really appreciates the Board giving her some opportunity to share some of our findings and talk to you a little bit about the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). Her name is Libby Metcalf and she is an associate professor at the University of Montana in the College of Forestry and Conservation; she chairs and is the Director of Parks Tourism and Recreation Management Program, but she sits on other programs as well. She has three degrees in recreation, something she deeply loves is the outdoors. She also considers herself as a recreation resource management professional and a lot of her research ties directly into larger social ecological systems. Sometimes you'll see her in different facets of research since she's working with state parks, sometimes she's working with wildlife issues or fisheries issues so she has an understanding of the large landscape in Montana. She brought with her today Rachel Shouse, who is her research assistant on this project. She was an undergrad in our curriculum program, graduated and she'll be hopefully staying on with doing some work with Kyan, myself and Ken on state parks because she's phenomenal, and this effort would not have happened without Rachel's help. First, she wants to outline what the SCORP effort is. (see power point presentation in the September 18, 2019 meeting file) A little history because she is a professor, the work reports of the 1960s were the impetus for this type of statewide planning. The work reports were a president commissioned effort to understand the outdoor recreation landscape in the United States. These work reports are really fat thick documents that you can find online; she has some hard copies at UM, which are cool. But really what happened with this work reports was a need to understand how to plan for outdoor recreation and in the face of a changing society. Throughout the 60's up through 65, LWCF and Department of Interior (DOI) started asking for these reports. States got together and started making them. These state plans or SCORP are done across all 50 states and this is the way LWCF funds are allocated to this day, so you need the plan to get the LWCF funds. That is why this is a pretty important report to actually have. They are done on a five-year rotation, so every five years you do the plan, and they take all different types of forms. Sometimes a plan is just a few page document outlining the priorities for the state and sometimes these plans are massive. Our last SCORP report was a really thick media report. Every few years states decide to either do a full-on data collection effort, or just to update, and so when we started thinking about this round of SCORP, her conversations with Beth and Tom were about updating the existing plan. We didn't have the time or the resources to conduct a giant statewide effort with multiple data collection points. We did that five years ago and we felt like we could do some internal stuff until that next plan. SCORP reports are intended to understand the strengths and weaknesses and future opportunities for outdoor recreation, as well as some of the threats outdoor recreation might be receiving. It's to establish outdoor recreation funding priorities and to set an evaluation criterion for how those LWCF funds will actually be used. They're also there to protect, conserve and manage recreation lands and recreation spaces, and to communicate those linkages between outdoor recreation and health benefits and wellness benefits, as well as to help bolster the economic impacts about recreation on society.



What she set out to do, when we were essentially just setting this up, she knew we're going to be on a very short time frame, so she wanted to use existing data sources. We have the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, it's called BRFSS. It's put on by Public Health and, and there's all these questions about health-related data, smoking habits, leisure, physical time activity and sometimes we have some state park related questions on those. We want to look at existing planning documents that already were in the state, we wanted to look at existing statewide data so we utilized Norma Nickerson's data with the Institute for Tourism and Recreation research, and then we want to look at some work that was coming out of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and interest groups. We knew that we needed to go out and get information from folks and so we did a series of three facilitated group discussions across the state of Montana. We invited over 300 people to those meetings and they just had to have some affiliation with outdoor recreation, could have been health providers, local park directors, everything from NGOs to just people who had an invested interest in outdoor recreation. We held those three meetings across the state and we gathered input from those participants on the needs they saw in Montana, what they thought they wanted to retain with regards to after recreation in Montana, and where they saw growth and potential areas for movement. The first thing is we are nearing the end of the process. You will see those final goals and recommendations. We are currently in the public comment period, the press release went out yesterday asking folks to comment. We will then take those comments back and update the plan. In terms of how we actually think about all of these components of developing this SCORP, plan, a critical piece that we needed to tap into was our SCORP Advisory Committee. State Parks, the Office of Outdoor Recreation, and some other key individuals sat down to identify who those people should be. We wanted to understand the breadth of outdoor recreation interest in Montana. We wanted to understand the variety of agencies that administer outdoor rec in the state, and then the suite of NGOs and economic development groups that are also part of this. We recognize that our SCORP committee all have different hats that they're wearing. They might represent one organization, but they have other interests. The people that we had in committee represented a multitude of outdoor recreation interests. Our SCORP Advisory Council and committee was essential to helping us craft our goals and recommendations that you see forth in this plan. From all of these different data sources, from all of conversations that we had with our advisory council, we got together in late spring, early summer and drafted a set of goals and recommendations. This is an iterative process that we went through with everybody; people had a chance to provide feedback at multiple points. It was not just one meeting and then we stopped talking about it, it was a of iterative in multiple points of contact. Our goals and recommendations were developed out of these. The first goal and these are in no particular order, Kyan, Pat and herself sat for a while thinking about the order to put these in, but there is no particular order.

- Our first goal is promoting outdoor recreation opportunities for all Montanans. What we learned was that throughout facilitated group discussions, is that a lot of people had a sentiment that month outdoor recreation should be a rite of Montanans, that every Montanans should be able to access the outdoors in whatever way they want; folks felt really strongly about this. According to the Center for Disease Control, one in four Montanans have a disability and a quarter of Montanans struggled with some type of ambulatory disability. This came out really strong in our recommendations. Individuals wanted to see support for outdoor recreation participation to the underserved, disadvantaged and persons with disabilities. Part of understanding that recommendation is understanding where on the landscape there ADA accessible areas are, places that could be bolstered and supported with additional ADA accessibility. We had one board member who is pretty strong and advocated hard for education to recreation providers that encourages the use of access-based standards; the American Disabilities Act, there's all these standards that are associated with it. Interesting, that Forest Service actually has a lot of standard guidebooks for how to create ADA accessible outdoor recreation areas and so she'll come back to that in a little bit. The other piece in goal one, is access to outdoor recreation exposure for youth. We constantly have this sentiment that we want to get kids outdoors. If you read the Richard Louv book on Nature-Deficit Disorder, this is something that comes up frequently when he's talking about outdoor recreation. How do we better expose kids to the outdoors? We know exposure to nature education, prevents better cognitive, behavioral and emotional abilities, and that we think that there's a real chance to partner with youth.

- Our second goal is enhancing public access to outdoor education resources and facilities. This is perhaps one of the strongest sentiments that we've built across our facilitated discussions. Access, access, access was the word that we heard. We thought a lot about what access. The recommendations that came out of this was supporting data collection efforts that actually address some of the visitor management challenges related to access. Part of that is creating a central system of where recreation access points are on the Montana landscape. We're seeing pockets of this happen. Bozeman and Livingston for example, are creating these GIS tools to understand and map all their recreation asset maps. She is seeing that in Missoula. She's in conversations with Missoula park and rec about mapping. There is a need to maybe do this at a statewide level, so that there's one recreation access map. There's also interest in the access coordinator position. Establishing long term funding for a position like that might be a recommendation that came out of our meetings.

Chair Grove asked if that that position will no longer be funded?

Metcalf stated it is unclear to her. She thinks that would have to be a question for the DNRC to answer, because that's where it's currently happening. When we see this SCORP as perhaps assisting with this.

- Metcalf continued...lands locked; public lands came up quite a bit. If you're following some of the national narratives on unlocking our public lands. Currently, we have over three million acres of public land that's landlocked in the state of Montana that's both state and federal lands. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), Teddy Roosevelt Conservation partnership, for example, in conjunction with onx maps have been identifying those areas. In fact, one of my graduate students is the mapper, the one doing the mapping on some of that. Teddy Roosevelt has this nice interface on the internet, if you have a chance to look at it, it's referenced in our report.
- The third recommendation is about expanding front country outdoor recreation opportunities. Considering how we connect community to community, through trails or through recreation green spaces, in creating programs that help enhance that. Rural development programs are one place that we might see some movement towards outdoor recreation funding and planning,

Vice-Chair Moe asked what is front country?

Metcalf stated there is not a clear definition of what constitutes front country versus back country. For her it's the wildland urban interface, the space that's adjacent to a community, that a lot of locals have direct access to, and might see as their backyard outdoor recreation area.

Chair Grove stated it usually has more recreating infrastructure and urban interface with it, generally speaking.

Metcalf stated it's very interesting, it's varied. It could be anything from restrooms, to very developed trails to a little bit more primitive tech trails that make you feel like you're in the back country, but you're still close to an approximate center.

- Metcalf continued...goal number three is supporting economic vitality to communities in the state. There's a strong connection especially in Montana, between outdoor recreation and economic activity. The outdoor industry assessment puts Montana as a \$7.1 billion outdoor recreation industry, which is a pretty significant amount of money, not to mention that the outdoor record economy is now part of the Bureau Economic Analysis as the contribution to GDP. Outdoor recreation is now being counted in the way it needs to be counted. In terms of our vitality for community state, we wanted to have continued investment in the outdoor recreation, industry and economy. This is where we think that supporting the Office for Outdoor Recreation and Rachel VandeVoort office is critical. Making sure her office is continued in perpetuity, that there's the support for it, that there is staff for it, and that this type of office

can continue to exist. The other place that we want to see continued investment, which is one that's near and dear to her heart, is expanding workforce training and education. She is in the business of developing the future of recruiting outdoor professionals.

- Lastly, we had a recommendation for diversifying funding sources for outdoor recreation in and around communities. She really appreciated Beth's review of the different grant programs within state parks. There are a lot of different pockets of grants in the state and within the federal government. Simply finding those opportunities is an incredible constraint for a lot of outdoor recreation providers. There's been a lot of dialogue about a one stop shop for grants programs and not simply being the one person who administers the grant, but just a clearinghouse for all the different grants that people have opportunities to apply for. We also heard that some folks didn't know that much about all LWCF funding opportunities. We want to make sure that out of this work that we as a unit, whether that be SCORP advisory council or as a State Park Board, that we're making sure that we communicate great opportunities within LWCF.
- The fourth goal is improving quality of life through outdoor recreation experiences. This is where we really wanted to make the connection between health, well-being and outdoor recreation. Several of us go outdoors, we want to run on trails, and we receive dramatic benefits from doing that. One place that we wanted to understand is senior populations and making sure that we had enough recreation in the state of Montana for seniors. Currently, 15% of the U.S. population is 65 years or older. Trying to think about what opportunities exist for seniors and coordinating and partnering with other health challenge populations. This can be in the form of creative partnerships with AARP, the health care industry and assisted living communities. We have a beautiful story that's in our SCORP write-up about Bozeman and the hospital, creating cross country ski trails and opening hospital lands for cross country skiing. We also see that there's a recommendation to promote health benefits direct through the health care industry themselves. Are we doing enough in the state of Montana to tap into our healthcare professionals? A lot of our doctors are the very doctors that are doing a lot of outdoor rec in the state of Montana and so how can we make those connections. We have prescription trails programs; for example, the Missoula prescription trails program, was featured in Glamour magazine.
- Our fifth goal is adapting outdoor recreation for a changing environment. This is perhaps the most cutting-edge goal that we have in SCORP plan. She's gone through most all of the 50 states' plans and not a lot of them are talking about the changing environment. This is one that sets our SCORP apart from other states. There are so many natural hazards in the state of Montana from wildfires to floods to drought. Thinking about how outdoor recreation interfaces with those is a critical need. Preparedness and coordination between the outdoor recreation managers, staff and emergency first responders is critical. A lot of times what happens in the wildfire events is that our recreation staff gets pulled onto the fire, you work for the Forest Service, you better have credentials in fire as well. That's a common thread. We see outdoor rec staff being pulled on to these natural hazard events and then the outdoor recreation resource not being managed at all. We need to figure out surge workforce to come in and help with that. There's also a way for outdoor recreation to interface with natural hazard planning and emergency response teams. We see that community wildfire protection plans, for example, are a natural place for outdoor rec professionals to be engaged. We also think outdoor recreation planning can integrate further with the land use planning and community planning efforts. One place that she'd been increasingly surprised about is that outdoor professionals are not talking to our climate scientists and getting the projections they need to think about climate changes across the landscape. She is working with a climate scientist to understand which ski hills in Montana will be most dramatically impacted by climate change and the news she heard is that Montana is going to fare better than most other states in the ski industry. Being able to take those projections and share them with the ski industry for the outdoor recreation professionals is pretty critical.
- The sixth goal is to honor Montana's outdoor legacy. She really appreciates this one, because there's a sentiment that we live here because outdoor recreation is what Montana does best. In figuring out the



right way to interface outdoor recreation with this existing legacy of the outdoors means conserving our outdoor natural resources, including making sure our fish and wildlife in their habitat are conserved and preserved through outdoor recreation and everything else. Thinking about how pressure from use are impacting some of these resource needs, she thinks this is a potential place for continued understanding. We also want to strengthen the connection between tribes through outdoor recreation. One of the voices that was largely missing in our planning efforts was tribal voices. We want to make sure that we are doing everything we can to include those and we have these beautiful pockets of tribal connection in with state parks and other facets of outdoor recreation. We want to make sure that we are strengthening those and talking about how tribes' interface with planning efforts across the state. This also means promoting our LWCF funding opportunities directly to tribes and coming up with maybe an alternative approach to marketing. We want to make sure we continue to protect to preserve our historic sites and our heritage resources. Bannack is a great example of something you want to continue and making sure that we have the interpretation and the staff to honor those resources.

The last thing she wants to touch on is just what we did a little bit different in this plan but are cool, cool things. We solicited all these stories about outdoor recreation in the state of Montana and we started with our advisory council to reach out to state parks and to reach out to all different groups to find out what's happening across the state. These are not just projects that have been LWCF funded, but these are projects that are feel good stories about how outdoor recreation is working. We also tried to incorporate these "Did You Know". This is what we came up with, but cute little facts to tell us a little bit about outdoor recreation across the state and to provide resources for people. Her point with these is that there are so many resources that already exists, simply compiling them into one document and making sure people know what to utilize. Lastly, we have some interesting facts about Montana. Our next step is to solicit for public comment which ends October 17. She will work with state park staff to look at that this couple of comments and figure out how to best integrate them into the plan. We have gotten some feedback from Beth, Director Williams and others. Some of the deficiencies in the plan are we do not have enough on municipal recreation in this plan. This is a product of connecting this the SCORP Advisory Council with what we heard in the facilitated group discussions. One way we might do that is through each of the goals, making sure we identify which municipal resources we want to make sure that we have information about. She has talked to Mary Riddle and she was interested in how Montana wild and scenic rivers are incorporated and then we wondered if we should be engaging a little bit with wilderness and how do we bring in more protections or different protected areas into this plan as well? Thinking about crowding and carrying capacity and direct tie to how many people is too many people on the landscape. Crowding in the recreation sense is simply the perceived density of people in one area. Her perception of crowding in one area is very different than your perception of crowding in one area. Having those different perceptions and how we interface that with some of our goals, will also be critical.

Chair Grove stated she really appreciates Rachel coming today and she is excited that deficiencies you talked about we actually talked about at dinner last night and have some ideas. Overall, her comments directed on what role can the board play and who is providing oversight and monitoring this? What are the metrics for success and who's getting those metrics? She would really like to see the Board get more involved in this, not only the finalizing of the document necessarily, but in the monitoring and managing of it in these five years windows. That's what a lot of my questions are. In the interest of that we are so behind time, and we have people here and have a Board member who must leave early, she would like to suggest if there's pressing questions, we can ask those today. She would like to ask Beth and Libby if we could set up a Board work session or a Board meeting specifically for this, because she could see where we might need some action items from the Board on this. For example, she would like to see a letter from the Board in the plan and would like to see an annual reporting requirement to the Board and some things like that. She would like the Board to take action on. If that's possible, she would leave it up to Beth and Rachel if we need to do that before October 17 or if that's something, we can do down the road. Erica is very interested in being our contact point on the Board so if Libby, Beth, Kyan, and Erica could work on that, maybe reach out to the Board, and we can have a work session, she thinks that would be useful. Does the rest of the Board agree?

Member Lighthiser stated she agrees. She has a lot of very specific feedback. Would love the opportunity to discuss that and in addition to submitting formal comments, of course.

Vice-Chair Moe stated she does have an immediate comment. Rachel made the comment about municipal engagement. Are you thinking maybe next time or are you still trying to get that done before October 17?

Metcalfe replied we had municipal engagement with the facilitated group discussions, we were conscious of that. We identified and invited key people. She will probably reach out to the MTRPA president to ask them to specifically comment on that and making sure that they have a voice and that they really a municipal group, she will reach out to Donna, Corey and JP specifically just because they are part of my cadre of people she connects with and ask for specific comments. There's not a lot out there that are specific to Montana on municipal recreation. We did miss the window for the BRFSS data set to ask specific questions. That's sometimes where our questions lay, we will do that for the next round. Hopefully through public comment and feedback from those folks, we will be able to do it.

Vice-Chair Moe stated she is just wondering if you met the parks and rec municipal directors?

Metcalfe stated she hasn't met them, but she is going to reach out to them, or at least the big cities. That's just what she has time for, given the plan is due in early December.

Member Lighthiser stated she was thinking in terms in the plan, a lot of the projects that she knows of in her community that were funded LWCF were the soccer field, the playground and the splash park, a lot of the things that are municipal. She'd like to see that incorporated in the plan as a key goal, as increasing the opportunities for all Montanans.

Chair Grove stated a kind of an overarching thing she would say is the tribal interface. She thinks there's a couple of the goals that you have very specific references to the need for tribal, but she can see incorporating that in almost every goal, even like the tribal health organizations. Overall, she thinks that was another thing that she was surprised at because that is a pretty big presence across our landscape. In conjunction with the overuse, she thinks there could be a goal or some objective that also talk about dispersing use. There are some communities that are saying "come on down we'd love to have you" they want more visitors. As you said, overcrowding is definitely a matter of perception, but there are some communities, and you have touched on the tourism economic impacts of this, but we could look at not only the overcrowding, but also the dispersion of use; that's definitely an overarching goal that we could look at, both sides of that coin would be useful. Who will be the overarching role? Like the Boards role versus the EQC role and the Governor's Office opposite for the Office of Outdoor Recreation. How can all of us work together because she knows that EQC has talked about this area quite a bit too. If we do have a future meeting, she would like to focus on that. She thinks she'd like some information on how this plan compares to previous plans and how did we monitor those? What is holding us back and some of the areas and does this plan address those areas that holding us back. She hasn't been involved in the SCORP process before. She thinks we don't have a real sense of context. She has seen the SCORP before and this plan is awesome compared to those previous reports. It was a very easy read and was very interactive. She loved the little "did you know facts" and the little stories from across the state and the broad breadth of the variety you pointed out. It is a great document. She thanks everybody that was on the advisory council, they did a great job.

Member Stone stated she thinks the SCORP plan is great, but she did not see anything in there promoting safety. Looking at the goals and not quite sure where it fits in. She hasn't read the whole plan in depth but from what was on the PowerPoint today, she didn't see anything addressing safety. She would somehow like to see that addressed in the plan.

Chair Grove and Member Lighthiser commented that is a really great point.

Chair Grove stated with that, maybe Erica, Libby, Kyan and Beth can exchange numbers or something and we can just see what happens.

Chair Grove stated we do have one action item on our agenda, and we have several folks here to present that, and we do have a Board member who needs to leave early. If we move the action item up, maybe we could watch the warm season highlights while we eat lunch. We could do the action item, take public comment on items not on the agenda and then we could have the fun part with our lunch. If that is ok with everyone, will do the capital projects next.

## 8. Parks Capital Projects – Final

Tom Reilly, Parks Assistant Administrator stated the agenda item is here today is virtually the same as we had at the June meeting. Just to recap for everyone, in the recent legislative session, we received \$2 million of parks funding to do major maintenance project statewide. We allocated about \$1.0 million of that in June. This is the second million that we're proposing to allocate here today. HB 436 was passed in the 2019 legislative session, which revised the Boards approval amount for proposed capital expenditures from \$5,000 to \$50,000. In the recent proposed allocation of projects, we have 26 projects that we picked at our meeting in July in Three Forks and 10 of them are over \$50,000. The projects are:

- Big Arm/Finley Point State Park's – water line replacements/upgrades \$ 50,000
- Big Arm/Wayfarers/Whitefish Lake/Logan State Park's – comfort station upgrades \$ 50,000
- Fort Owen State Park – access road upgrade, fencing, miscellaneous upgrades \$ 50,000
- Travelers' Rest State Park – roof replacement on the visitor center building \$ 50,000
- Anaconda Stack State Park – electrical infrastructure upgrades \$ 50,000
- Bannack State Park – ongoing church historic preservation (siding, roofing) \$ 50,000
- Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park – reroof upper visitor center and concession building \$ 50,000
- Chief Plenty Coups State Park – foundation repairs on the Chief's house \$125,000
- Sign Replacements – statewide \$ 50,000
- Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park/Parks Foundation Project – shade shelter/bike camps \$100,000  
(\*Funded in part with private and grant funds)

The total is about \$625,000. These estimates will be refined as our design and construction group get into these further and decide how to bid and what to bid. This is the last of our \$2 million of major maintenance allocation from the 2019 session. These projects are all tied our Facility Condition Inventory.

Member Brown stated at the June 20 meeting, we talked about rather than listing one price range, and discussed the pros and cons of that. Any thoughts on that?

Reilly stated what he would like to do is get into these little farther and then at the next meeting, he will come back as we get some of these refined. As an example, the Anaconda Stack work with Northwest energy, is going to be at least \$55,000, he has \$50,000 here, that's just how it develops. There will be some that come in under, not as many coming over but that's just how it works as we react to the bidding climate.

Member Lighthiser asked if these expenditures beginning to be meshed with the classification policy and how we allocate expenses.

Reilly stated no, these are identified needs from the 2015 and 2016 independent Facility Condition Inventory we did for the most part, and then there are other things that just come up. Those will be addressed in the future as we refine this, but for the most part, these are needs we've known for a long time. We rely a lot on our field staff to advance these projects and be a part of selecting them.



Chair Grove asked if these priorities would, in general, align with our new system? There are no outliers here that as we go through the system that Scott Harvey walked us through this morning, that's like oh wait, these shouldn't be a high priority, something else should be. Are we comfortable that these still are what we'll do up to the top.

Reilly stated that is correct and the one outlier he can offer here is the Parks Foundation project. That's just sort of an opportunity to do something with outside funding that just wasn't identified

Chair Grove stated then on the Fort Owen road upgrade and fencing things, at the CAC meeting, one of the comments that was made was, if we can get Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) support or any funding support. The legislator at the meeting talked about often you can find, and she's not sure this is true, but she's going to pass it on, that if there's a project in the area where they're shaving a highway or something they have shavings, and can we use that opportunity to support this? Has there been any discussions with MDT on that project specifically?

Reilly explained at this point there hasn't been any discussions and sometimes those go with the contractor depending how MDT would bid the project. It would take a in-person discussion with them and then having a project in a reasonably close area.

Chair Grove asked if these are projects that are ready to go, or will there be some that may not actually happen? She means, we're talking about projects from the 2015 and 2016 infrastructure survey, so they've been out there a while. Will we be revisiting some of these amounts down the road, like you said, the Parks Foundation may not happen this biennium, so then would we have an opportunity to put that money somewhere.

Reilly explained this is all capital funding, so this money does not go away on a fiscal year cycle. It stays on our books until we can revert it back through the budget office process or we expend it.

Chair Grove asked so then how would that work? If we do through our new maintenance system, come up with different priorities and some things just sitting out there and we have an opportunity to spend money. Can we revisit these items?

Reilly stated yes, we could, but in his opinion, there are really none that we shouldn't do. We should get all these done. The comfort stations are never going to get any better, electrical system at the stack isn't going to get any better. They are preventive type things for the most part.

Member Brown asked what happens if we overspend. For instance, talking about Anaconda and that were possibly already \$5,000 over on that project. How do we balance that?

Reilly stated there is always a little bit of flex in here, it isn't allocated exactly to the last dollar. We must have the flex do that adjustment. If something really went sideways, we would have to possibly look at canceling one project, but he doesn't foresee that happening. At this point, that's why you see such round numbers here. That's just where we must start.

Vice-Chair Moe stated she has two concerns. The first is that she notes, except for Chief Plenty Coups State Park, they're all the park specifics are not only in western Montana, but west of the divide. Is that just how it shook out in terms of highest need?

Reilly replied remember there were several other projects that don't exceed \$50,000 and he will provide you with the list here.

Vice-Chair Moe stated it's helpful because she'd like to be able to ask answer questions. Her other concern is that in light of the classification policy and the re-visitation of graphics, etc., can you assure her that the sign replacements aren't going to be something that we end up having to redo in short order.

Reilly explained this is more intended to deal with vandalism, if somebody shoots up a sign or there faded, or things like that. That is more what this is intended for, as an unforeseen condition where we have to go in and fix signs and deal with stuff right away. This is not intended to be addressing a huge big new logo or anything like that, it's to address emergency situations, which we always have, whether somebody hits them with a car, and they're gone, a shotgun blast or just faded beyond recognition.

Shumate stated she'd like to add just one more comment. Through our old classification policy, we actually had some signs removed from some of our state parks, Prairie Dog and Tower Rock. Just to try and actually install and put those signs back up now in light of our revised classification policy, there's some costs associated with that. Also, the coordinated graphics work stream that Kyan talked about earlier, is already moving along. We have a designated FWP employee, Amy Glasscock, who is our sign specialist agency wide. We will make sure to have all of our sign updates with the FWP branding effort in mind and in place. We won't have to go back and replace a sign that we're trying to put up this winter or next spring, this most likely will be done this next spring.

Member Lighthiser commented she really appreciates the signage across the state that has the state parks emblem on it. There are a lot of brown signs and have the state parks emblem really differentiates state parks and not all have that right now. So maybe that would be part of this effort.

Chair Grove stated something that Member Brown brought up is having a capitals project update at every meeting. She hopes that we continue to do that at every meeting. At the last meeting, we talked about the Caverns project, we talked about Cooney, Fort Owen, the land donation at Milltown and the Clearwater station. She's assuming at our next meeting, we can get an update on all those and then any of these that we've approved in the in the past few months, because she thinks this is important. These are the kind of comments that we're going to get from people and as we go out for CAC meetings. This is what people see out on the ground.

Chair Grove asked if there were any other questions or comments?

***Motion: Member Brown moved, and Vice-Chair Moe seconded that the Parks and Recreation Board approve the proposed approve the Parks Division capital projects as we talked about and at the estimated amounts indicated.***

Chair Grove asked if there are any further questions from the Board or from the public?

***Action on Motion: Motion Carried. 5-0***

Chair Grove explained what she proposes is to do the public comments for issues not on this agenda next and then we will take 10-minute break to get lunch and then do Pat's section. The next item is public comments for issues not on this agenda. She'd like to remind the Board we don't ask questions or act with anybody that comments during this time, but if there is a need, we can put it on a future agenda item.

## **9. Public Comment For Issues Not On This Agenda**

Bob Walker, Montana Trails Coalition (MTC) stated he wants to just report on three items. You probably already heard about these because he included you and emails they send out about programs and projects that are going on. SB 24 was already discussed; there will be a meeting in Helena, September 25. It will be a member meeting of the State Trails Advisory Committee in the morning and a meeting to discuss SB 24 and HB 335 in the afternoon; MTC will be there. MTC has a subcommittee of the coalition has submitted. We have had a good work group working on suggestions for the state trails grant programs. He sent to many of you in the room and the

Board information about the upcoming Business Outdoor Summit, which will be in Whitefish on October 10 and 11, it's a Thursday and Friday. There will be a recreation innovation lab and it's going to include a lot of information on sharing success stories of small communities with trail projects, the how too and how not to. It will be pretty much a full day of that that summit and we're trying to get representatives from communities around the state. He heard a discussion a little bit ago about the State Comprehensive Plan update. That will be a target of this summit. It's incidentally coordinated by the Governor's Office of Outdoor Recreation and he thinks they limited to 200 people, so if you want to take part, he suggests you register soon. Montana Outdoor Heritage Project. You've heard about that before and you've been getting emails about that project. Currently there is a public survey going on and the deadline for comment on that is September 23. The project coordinators have received more than 9,000 comments from Montanans so far. We've had some discussions about the project, and he wants to let you know that the MTC has taken part in this and supported it. It's a broad range, it goes from ranchers to wilderness people. It's a big project, big program. Why MTC is so involved in it, as he mentioned to Chair Grove and a few others, is that whenever you can bring a broad coalition of people together to try to solve problems, or at least identify common ground, he is going to be a part of it; we need a lot more of that. That's the purpose he sees of this project. It's going to be complicated. They are going to have a draft report out in October, was last he heard, of the findings of the survey. He knows there's some hope that they might come up with some legislative suggestions for the 2021 session, there's all kinds of rumors flying around out there. He thinks the challenge is going to be once the results of this surveys done, there is going to have to be a lot of interaction amongst those groups. He thinks there might be some controversy that will arise. There will be some differences of opinion on what needs to be done and how we do it. At least the survey and what's being done right now will pull ideas from the broad range of people in Montana. He suggests that this Board watch this process very carefully, because it will definitely involve state parks and outdoor recreation before it's all done. He was also on the train ride, which is just a fantastic experience, but he wanted to tie it to this topic. We get on this train, and we are riding up a beautiful valley and Chair Grove comes up and says, "What do you think about the Outdoor Heritage Project?", so we're sitting there, there's about six of us sitting there talking about this and all sudden he looks out the window, we're up this beautiful valley in the mountains he said, look at us, it's the norm. We get together and we start talking about issues, programs, projects, and we're in one of the most beautiful valleys in Montana. That's dedication. The interest especially in this project and discussing our various ways of looking at it. Keep your eye on that one and he can't wait for the next board meeting.

Chair Grove thanked Bob for his comments and asked if anyone else has public comment they would like to submit. Seeing none, we will take a 10-minute break, get our lunch and then we'll hear from Mr. Doyle.

12:47 p.m. - Break

1:28 p.m. – Chair Grove reconvened the meeting and stated the next agenda item is our warm season highlights from Mr. Patrick Doyle.

## **7. Warm Season Highlights – Informational**

Pat Doyle, Marketing Communications Manager for the Parks Division. Since the summer season is winding down, we've never really done a comprehensive thing asking what are the highlights that we have in our state park system? So, what are these? We live in an incredible state. We all live in Montana for multiple different reasons, but one reason is outside recreation and access to public land. We obviously have 55 awesome state parks in our state and also seven national historic landmarks in our state park system. We also have over 30 million acres of federal land, so we don't have a lack of places to recreate. One of the things that makes state parks extremely relevant is that our staff makes our system stand out in this crowded playing field. Some of the highlights Mr. Doyle talked about in detail were:

- What makes our park system relevant
- Customer Service
- Interpretive and Education Programming



- Public Safety
- Campsite Reservation Program
- Volunteer Management
- Historic Preservation
- Montana State Parks Americorps
- Park Events
- Infrastructure Improvements
- Marketing
- Media
- Partnership

See a copy of the power point and audio of Mr. Doyle's presentation electronically in the *ParksShare Drive\!Parks & Recreation Board\!!2019CoverSheets&SupportingDocumentation\4.September18\Presentations*.


Chair Grove thanked Mr. Doyle for his great presentation; good stuff.

Chair Grove stated that's our last agenda item, next is a tour of Giant Springs State Park. She wants to remind everybody about the Bannack ghost walk, it's super cool, she loved it. The next Board meeting will be held December 11 at Montana WILD; there was some talk about us doing that jointly with the Commission, doesn't know where we are on that. Does anybody have anything else we need to say before we take a motion to adjourn?

## 9. Adjournment

***Motion: Vice-Chair Moe moved, and Member Lighthiser seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried. 5-0***

Chair Grove adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

  
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Angie Grove, Chair

  
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Martha Williams, Director