

Director's Report
STATE PARKS SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL
Division of Parks and Recreation
September 28, 2018

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- See **Comparative Statement of Parks & Retail Income** covering FY 2019 YTD
- **State Park Fund Forecast Report** will be provided.
- **State Park Plate** As of 09/01/2018, there are 8,959 State Parks Plates registered; FY2018 revenues earned are \$705,240; FY2019 YTD revenues earned are \$140,960.
- **Retail Operations** Retail revenue is projected to gross over \$2.3 million in revenue for our campground's and beach's, \$1.3 million atop Mt. Washington, and \$1.7 million for Cannon Mountain. These are milestones that cumulatively project concessions revenue above \$5 million for the first time in the history of NH State Parks. This accomplishment provides financial stability and security for all parks and provides more opportunities to update and add to park infrastructure.
- **Donations** FY2018: 2,600 online donations, \$17,196. YTD FY2019: 933 online donations, \$5,931.

FRANCONIA NOTCH STATE PARK/CANNON MOUNTAIN

- Director Bryce enjoyed celebrating the 90th Anniversary of Franconia Notch State Park by taking photos with park visitors at the Tram, Flume, Old Man Plaza, Basin, Echo Lake, and Lafayette Place.



- The Flume Gorge gift shop has nearly doubled in size and the retail staff successfully managed the transition. They have planned, set up, and orchestrated one of the nicest gift shops in the park system.

- Construction on the playground at **Lafayette** starts late September and is funded using Parks operating funds.
- Construction of the **Profile Lake** walkway is scheduled for May 2019. Cost is being split with Parks operating funds and a donation from the Old Man Legacy fund.
- **Hiker Shuttle Service** Two vans are offered Friday through Monday for \$5/rider. For the period of Aug. 3 to Sept. 24, there were 1,086 riders using the service with \$5,430 in gross revenue. After expenses (labor, vehicle rental, fuel), the total cost of the program YTD is (\$11,969). For more info: <https://www.nhstateparks.org/visit/state-parks/franconia-notch-hiker-parking.aspx>

BUREAU OF PARK OPERATIONS

Great North Woods Management Area (GNWMA)

- As of mid-September, GNWMA is posting the highest Parks Ops percentage revenue increase for all park regions. Moose Brook has been especially busy and booked 100% of reservable sites for every weekend from Memorial Day to the weekend after Labor Day. Part of this is due to the nearby USFS Dolly Copp Campground being closed for redevelopment for nearly two years. Many of the diverted Dolly Copp customers have said they will continue camping at Moose Brook as their new favorite campground.
- As a direct response from a local disability advocacy group (Northern Human Services-Berlin), **Jericho Park** and regional staff embarked on a project to improve universal accessibility to the day use area at the park.
- **Umbagog** campground redevelopment is scheduled to start in mid-October.
- **FEMA** recently awarded 75% of the department's request for the 2017 fall storm damage. \$3,488 was allocated to the Parks operating fund.
- **Lake Francis retail** netted \$10K in profit for the year. For a small campground store, the park manager has worked some magic.
- Re-roofing the toilet building at **Moose Brook** is scheduled for Fall 2018.
- During the eviction of a person camping illegally at **Umbagog**, the Division of Forests and Lands Forest Ranger discovered there were active warrants from three different states on the individual. The Forest Ranger arrested the person and transported him to be turned over to the State Police.

Central Region

- It was a good season despite a number of rainy weekend days. **Labor Day** was just what was needed to help boost day-use numbers: many central region parks were at capacity over that weekend.
- Swim with a Mission went well having changed the location of the event at **Wellington** to allow more space for beach goers. The offsite parking was a great help with traffic control. The use of many parking spots was lost due to the location of the Blackhawk helicopter. The helicopter also creates logistical impacts. For the second year of this event, the weather

was not a favorable beach day which helped to keep some attendance for beach goers to a minimum.

- Construction on the playground at **Ellacoya** starts mid-October and is funded through the Park operating funds.
- Re-roofing the pavilion at **Wadleigh** is scheduled for Fall 2018.
- **Pillsbury State Park** has a computer set up so that the Park Manager finally has Email, is able to control her camping reservations, and do timecards while working at the park via generator power.
- **Employment.** It is still hard to find Lifeguards at many parks this season. Also, retail help is hard to find at Crawford Notch State Park.

Seacoast Region

- **Employment.** The Seacoast Region had difficulty finding good, qualified staff. Although never fully staffed for the busy summer season, they were successful at hiring the new Plant Maintenance Engineer.
- **Jeness** bathhouse redevelopment started mid-September.
- The annual **Seafood Festival** went well: operations ran smoothly.
- Parks continues to work with **FEMA** on storm damage resulting from winter storm Riley.
- Placement of a tollbooth is planned at the boat launch at **Odiorne Point**, where the Park Manager has been spending a lot of time staffing over the summer informing visitors of the changes that will be made this month. Staff presence at that area has been very well received.
- Invasive Bittersweet mowing and treating has continued at **Odiorne Point** in partnership with Rockingham County Conservation District (RCCD).
- **Hampton Beach** parking revenue for Weekend 09/22-23 and YTD:

Date	#Purchases	Purchase Amount
September 22-23, 2018	3147	\$11,917.40
September 23-24, 2017	7333	\$34,839.62
September 24-25, 2016	3853	\$14,635.29
September 26-27, 2015	3550	\$13,804.00
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Year to Date		
April 1 - September 23, 2018	420163	\$2,049,013.64
April 1 - September 23, 2017	429493	\$2,036,686.80
April 1 - September 23, 2016	414391	\$2,051,565.68
April 1 - September 23, 2015	424042	\$2,074,239.40

South Region

- The SCA crew painted the newly renovated bathhouse at **Kingston**.
- A contractor has been selected for the new bathhouse addition at **Monadnock** HQ.
- **Greenfield** has a new shelter and group use tent platform built by the SCA crew.

- The SCA crew built a trail bridge and trail re-route at **Pisgah**.
- **Pawtuckaway** has a new entrance at the administration/store building and a new dock at the beach. The boat rental program surpassed the \$300k mark for the first time and we look forward to expanding and improving the fleet moving forward.
- Parks met with the equestrian community at **Bear Brook** to look into providing horse camping opportunities.
- Staff renovated the **Bear Brook, Bear Hill Camp** washhouse and opened three cabins for rentals. Roofing was completed on 11 camp buildings. The remaining 5 cabins will be offered for rental after the bathhouse is renovated. Bathhouse renovation will be done with own forces during the fall and spring of 2018-19. Reservations for the three cabins have been very popular for the short time they've been available.

Mount Washington

- **Patrick Hummel** was promoted on September 14th to serve as the Park Manager at Mount Washington State Park. Mr. Hummel was the Division's Volunteer Coordinator and had also served as the Park Manager at Monadnock State Park. The park's **retail operation** is building a foundation that is supporting the largest retail operation in the park system.

BUREAU OF HISTORIC SITES

- Construction on the **White Island** generator building is scheduled for August of 2019.
- Re-roofing the **Wentworth Coolidge Mansion** with 75 squares of Alaskan yellow cedar shingles is complete. Each shingle was hand dipped twice in a solid barn-red stain to match the original roof color. Reconstruction of the retaining wall is scheduled for Fall of 2018.
- A consultant was selected to research, write, and design, interpretive signs at **Livermore Falls**. The new signs will be installed for the summer 2019.
- The **Weeks State Park Association** received a Commendation from Governor Sununu, acknowledging the group's 35th anniversary and work in support of Weeks State Park.



- Restoration of the exterior stucco at the **Weeks Estate** was just completed. The splatter dash finish was expertly replicated by a father son ornamental plaster company out of Vermont. It's taken three years to find a contractor who was both willing and able to tackle this difficult project.
- The Bureau is currently working with a preservation consulting firm from Rhode Island to complete a National Register Nomination for the Historic **Nansen Ski Jump**. So far there is an indication we will ultimately be applying for National Landmark status for the Jump site, which is the highest recognition of national significance the Department of the Interior can bestow on a historic resource.
- New this year, visitors can buy **historic site tour tickets online**. Over 370 tickets were purchased online by guests and the program has been a great success with guests and staff.

COMMUNITY RECREATION OFFICE

- **Volunteer Programs** – 3,450 volunteer hours as of 9/1/18
 - NEMBA (New England Mountain Bike Association) Southern NH Chapter has completed construction of two new trails in **Bear Brook State Park**, approved through the Department and Land Management Teams
 - Trail blazes above treeline at Mount Kearsarge (**Winslow State Park**) have been repainted, improving hiker safety
 - Two **chainsaw certification** courses were hosted for Department volunteers with additional planned for 2019
 - Two volunteer work days, including one partnered with Eversource employees, resulted in nearly 50 pounds of invasive dandelions removed from the summit at **Mount Washington State Park**
 - The 13th Annual Monadnock Trails Week, through the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, resulted in 5 days of volunteer trail improvements at **Monadnock State Park**, providing 22 new stone steps, 61 new feet of bog bridging, 30 feet of bridge decking replaced, 20 new and rebuilt waterbars, and nearly 500 volunteer hours donated.
 - New MOA with the **Nansen Ski Club** finalized (3 years) and the **Friends of the Pemi-Livermore Falls** (3 years)
 - Significant **Hiking Trail Improvements** have also been completed by volunteers at Pisgah State Park, Belknap Mountain State Forest, Mount Sunapee State Park, Winslow State Park, Franconia Notch State Park, and sections of the Cohos Trail (165 mile long hiking thru-trail) through Nash Stream, Coleman, and the Connecticut Lakes.
- **Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program**
 - Grant Round 29-Group 1 project proposals have been submitted to the National Park Service for approval. Approvals of these projects, listed below, are scheduled to occur by the end of September.

- New **pit toilets** reflecting the new design were installed at the Basin, Miller, Pillsbury, Moose Brook, Lake Francis and Mollidgewock.
- **Student Conservation Association (SCA) NH Corps – Interpretive Services**
 - Total program attendees: 9451
 - Total campground contacts: 3733
 - Total trail contacts: 4223
 - Total tollbooth/hiker cabin contacts: 9929
 - Total park visitors (excluding program attendees): 17885
 - Fall outreach, 57 programs scheduled (so far!)
- **Student Conservation Association NH Corps – Conservation Services**
 - Spring Cleanup – Three crews worked statewide to clean up winter and storm debris.
 - Odiorne Point State Park: Two crews battled invasive species at the park. Partnered with the Rockingham County Conservation District.
 - Bear Brook State Park - Spruce Pond Camp: Resurface the lodge floor, built foundation ventilation screens, cleaning roofs and cutting back vegetation (complimentary).
 - Pisgah State Park - Trail re-route and constructed a trail bridge.
 - Crawford Notch State Park – Arethusa Falls Trail: The crew 20 days constructing a 24’ replacement bridge across Bemis Brook and closed the old trail.
 - Moose Brook State Park - Painted the maintenance building and the interior and exterior of a campground toilet building.
 - Bear Brook State Park – Bear Hill Camp: Brush removal, bucking up downed trees into firewood, chipping brush, constructing picnic tables, installing fire rings, and painting cabins.
 - Greenfield State Park - Constructed two camping shelters.
 - Northwood Meadows State Park - 3 days clearing brush from the dam
 - Kingston State Park - Painting the toilet building
 - Sunapee State Park - Brush removal from jetty and fence lines

DIRECTOR’S OFFICE

- **Point of Sale (POS) system** POS revenue is comprised of day use admission and retail. \$4.8 million in point of sale revenue in FY18 (excludes FNSP, Mt. Washington, and seacoast meters), with over 1 million point of sale transactions. \$3.3 million in point of sale revenue in FY19 YTD.
- **Campground reservations** for Labor Day Weekend were at 98% occupancy for online reservable and onsite reservable and walk-ins, see table. The Division closed out FY18 with \$3.3 million in revenue with over 45,000 reservations made. This represents a 26.5% increase in revenue over the past 5 years. The Division’s camping revenue is up 7.24% YTD in FY19 over FY18.
- **Firewood sales** Lafayette finished second in firewood sales (42K) this year as they were overthrown by Pawtuckaway (49K). White Lake (36K), Bear Brook (35K), and Umbagog (31k)

rounded out the top five. Firewood generated \$311,000 in revenue for the calendar year. An amazing amount of bundles are managed by our partnership with Correctional Industries.

- **Legislation** The House and Senate obtained the required two-thirds vote to override the Governor's veto of **SB 365**, relative to the use of renewable generation to provide fuel diversity. The bill requires electric distribution companies to offer to purchase the net energy output of eligible biomass and waste-to-energy facilities. Although the department did not take a position on the bill, we were concerned of the potential impact to public access to the trail system located on private lands. *"The Trails Bureau and local clubs have had a 50-year history of working with private landowners in NH, and more than 80% of our trails are located on private lands. These lands are open for snowmobile use by generous agreement of these private landowners"* said Bureau Chief Chris Gamache, *"they support, and in a very real way subsidize, public recreation and tourism."*
- **Legal** Town of Hampton v. State of NH – The Town of Hampton withdrew its lawsuit.
- **Leadership NH** – Retail Supervisor Grant Goulet was accepted into the competitive Leadership NH program whose mission is "to broaden each Associate's perspective by providing a deeper understanding of the issues facing our state and by building connections with fellow classmates, a diverse group of emerging, influential leaders. We seek to improve leadership skills and development through issues education. The LNH experience also exposes Associates to new opportunities to serve their communities and the state."
- **Advertising.** A small social media and paid ad word campaign is currently running for the fall. The campaign is targeting New Hampshire, Massachusetts, other New England states and Northeast Canada. The campaign is targeting women 25-54 (because women make the travel decisions), outdoor enthusiasts and families.
- **Social Media.** As of 09/24/18: Facebook Likes: 243.4K; Twitter followers: 20.9k; Instagram followers: 32.8K.
- **Website.** From 06/07/18-9/23/18: 964K total sessions; avg. 1:57 min/session; 32.59% MA, 28.89% NH, 9.10% NY, 5.78% CT, 3.52% ME; 25.61% age 24-34, 19.26% age 35-44, 19.42% age 45-54.
- **Blogs.** A recent blog posting of [Family Glamping at Coleman Estates](#) generated 4,000 views over the weekend.

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