

**Director's Report**  
STATE PARKS SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL  
Division of Parks and Recreation  
June 10, 2019

**FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

- See **2019 YTD Parks & Retail Comparative Statement** covering period July 1, 2018 to May 30, 2019. FY YTD day use revenue of \$8.750 million is down 0.1% from \$8.761 million the previous year. Hampton meters are off 5%. Retail is up 6.7% across state parks, up 12% at FNSP/Cannon but off 12.7% at Mt. Washington compared with last year.
- **Cannon Mountain Ski Area.** 2018-19 ski season visits of 208,420 were 12% ahead of last year and 17% ahead of the 8-year avg. for the same timeframe. Ski season revenue of \$5.476M was 3% ahead of last year and 11% ahead of the 8-year avg. for the same timeframe.
- **Campground occupancy** FY2019 YTD is up 5.8% in camping revenue. With \$3.1 million in revenue going into June, we expect to beat the previous revenue record of \$3.3 million.
- **State Park Plate** As of 06/05/19, there are 10,023 State Parks Plates registered; FY2018 revenues earned are \$705,240; FY2019 YTD revenues earned are \$753,405.
- **Cale Metered Parking** April 2 to June 2, 2019 revenue is \$293.9K with 76,318 purchases. Revenue for the same timeframe in 2018 was \$316.5K with 83,790 purchases.
- **Donations** FY2019 YTD: 2,461 online donations, \$16,165, and expected to exceed FY2018: 2,600 online donations, \$17,196, made through the camping reservations program. Campers who cancel their reservations will have the option to donate their refund to NH State Parks. A separate, stand-alone donation webpage will be rolled out in the coming weeks.
- **Gift Card Sales** Since the start of the program in November 2018, revenue is \$12,127 with 259 gift cards sold.
- **E-Commerce Sales** Since the May 2019 start, the online shop has YTD revenue of \$5,254. Additional items, including apparel, will be added in the coming months.

**FRANCONIA NOTCH STATE PARK/CANNON MOUNTAIN**

- **Hiker Shuttle Service** is offered May 18 through Oct 20<sup>th</sup> on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays, running continuously from 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., rain or shine. Cost is \$5 per person, cash only. For more info: visit [www.nhstateparks.org/visit/state-parks/franconia-notch-state-park](http://www.nhstateparks.org/visit/state-parks/franconia-notch-state-park)
- G&C authorization to implement the Cannon Mountain Aerial Tramway & Ski Area capital improvement projects, to be funded in the amount of \$1,976,000 by the Cannon Mountain Capital Improvement Fund.
- **Lafayette Place Campground:** Installation of a new playground that started in October 2018, was approximately 80% complete when work was halted by winter weather. Final installation of the climbing structures is now complete.
- **Lafayette Campground** Ed Pinsky was hired as the new campground manager.

## BUREAU OF PARK OPERATIONS

### South Region

- **Monadnock** is preparing to open its new 4-season bathhouse to provide guests a year round facility and expand services to the many hikers that visit the park year round.
- **Bear Brook** State Park is in the process of developing a Horse Camping area.
- **Pawtuckaway** added a new dock for boat rentals allowing staff to easily and efficiently load and unload guests from boats. It expands the number of boats that can be rented at any given time and provides a more secure area for the boats to be stored.
- Pavilion rentals were added to the online reservation system, Reserve America, for **Pawtuckaway, Bear Brook and Monadnock**.
- **Silver Lake** State Park and **Kingston** State Park welcomes new park managers this season, Cody Doan and Ryan Bell, respectively.
- Alec Woolley was promoted to be the new Park Manager at **Greenfield** State Park. He started with Parks in 2011, he had been with the Forest Society before joining us full time at Pawtuckaway State Park in 2014.
- Logan Thorner was added to the **Monadnock** team as the new Assistant Park manager. She had previously been the Park Manager at Kingston State Park for 3 years, and started her internship at Pawtuckaway State Park in 2015.
- Clare Joyce is the new Assistant Supervisor for the **South Region**. She had been working at Pawtuckaway State Park since 2011, and worked in the Concord office with Shawn Hamilton working on and launching the Enterprise System for the past two winters.

### Seacoast Region

- Winter plowing operations kept parking lots and sidewalks clear of snow after storms on the main beach at **Hampton** and the walkway at **North Beach**.
- **Ocean Lifeguard** positions were given a \$3 increase to make the job more desirable. Water Safety day scheduled for July 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Sunfish painting and work to be conducted this fall at **Hampton Beach** was put out to bid.
- Maura Marchese was hired on as our new fulltime Facilities Manager at **Hampton**.
- Robert Fuller was hired on as Manager for **Odiorne Point, Rye Harbor and Jenness** state parks
- A Public Community Meeting held at Hampton Beach to inform interested parties of the improvements, challenges and operations plans for **Hampton Beach**.
- Line striping and numbering parking spaces from **Hampton Beach** to **North Beach** was done.
- Electricity is being installed at **South Beach** to install the Point-of-Sale system and credit card processing at tollbooth. Installation of second tollbooth will improve traffic flow.
- New fire rings were installed at all campsites at **Hampton Beach RV Park**. Two accessible fire rings and picnic tables were installed to have two handicapped accessible campsites.
- With no place to accept recycling, the collection of recyclables at **Hampton Beach** has been discontinued.
- Sixteen J1 students have been hired for trash and **beach operations**, up from 0 last year.

- New handheld ticket writing units for **Meter Patrol** and new systems will allow instant upload of tickets so tickets can be paid immediately, eliminating the 24-hour waiting period for tickets to synchronize with the online system.
- The Seacoast staff joined the Seacoast Science Center, Timberland and Rockingham County Conservation District for a day of Volunteer Action at **Odiorne Point** State Park. Accomplishments include trash pickup, installing grills, mulching, raking, trimming, clearing pathways, building owl houses, plantings, painting, bunker cleanup, fence repairs, and staining the Gazebo, picnic tables and bike rack.

### Mount Washington

- **Memorial Day** weekend brought 9,532 visitors to the summit and \$33,344 in retail sales.
- G&C approval to purchase a new **SnowCat** to replace the 2002 Bombardier.
- New kitchen equipment for **food concessions**, including new convection oven new single-door beverage cooler, and new steam table for serving soup and chili.
- New historical replica sign for **Tip Top House** entrance with delivery in coming weeks.
- Broke November's all time monthly low temperature record; November 22 recorded a low temperature of -26 degrees Fahrenheit (wind chill was near -70).
- Broke February's all time monthly high wind, recording a gust of 171 mph on February 17, 2019. Recorded a wind chill of -83 on January 21.
- Winter started early with a mid-October storm that dropped 2 feet of snow at the summit, shutting down the Mount Washington Auto Road earlier than scheduled. Winter has continued lingering through opening of this season as 4" of snow fell at the summit as recently as May 28th. A wind of 135mph was recorded on May 21st.
- Cog Railway reached the summit on May 11th for seasonal operations. MW Auto Road fully on May 25th. The **Sherman Adams Building** had a soft opening for the season beginning on May 11th with a full opening on May 25th for visitor services and retail and concessions.

### Central Region

- The **Central Region** has been extremely busy recovering from a record snowfall and making improvements to better serve park guests and sustainability.
- All the **campgrounds** did very well with near 100% occupancy for Memorial Day weekend. **Day use** also did quite well for the weather. It was partly sunny and in the 60s to low 70sF and we did have some rain.
- Urban Tree Service has been removing trees at **White Lake, Ellacoya, Echo Lake**, and soon at **Wadleigh**. They did years' worth of work in just days. Big improvements!
- New Park managers were hired at **Wentworth, Wellington, and Livermore Falls**.
- **Crawford Notch**. The new store improvements with display racks, lights, and other improvements look fantastic and should increase sales.

- **Echo Lake.** The park just keeps getting busier with day use numbers expected to increase this year. Work is getting ready for the new store. Looking forward to see how boat rentals do for their inception.
- **White Lake.** Major removal of trees by park staff and professional crews. They had a great Memorial Day weekend in camping and day use.
- **Ellacoya.** The new playground looks awesome and saw plenty of use already. The sea wall on the RV side is moving slowly but they are making progress. The campers seem to be taking the disruption in stride.
- **Wellington.** The Eagle's Nest Pavilion was moved to a much better location. The move freed up valuable beach space and increased the space for larger groups to use the pavilion without interfering with other guests. A new ramp and deck was also added to allow ADA accessibility.

#### Great North Woods Management Area (GNWMA)

- Lingering snow with rainy conditions with saturated campsites, roadways and soils caused a few of the far northern parks to close planned early walk-in open periods in May. Much work was done to repair **winter/spring damage** right as visitors were arriving to the parks on Memorial Day weekend to get campsites open.
- **Deer Mountain Campground** remained closed through Memorial Day weekend with an expected late opening on June 7th.
- The new full time manager for **Umbagog Lake** has been named and is hard at work at the park. Ann Marie Chaisson of Milan has been promoted to this role after 19 years of service with NH State Parks at Mollidgewock State Park where she was the park manager.
- **Umbagog** Work on the new bathhouse is ongoing, with the contractor targeting a late June completion date.
- **Moose Brook** State Park toilet building roofing project contract has been awarded. The project is expected to commence June 3rd.

#### **BUREAU OF HISTORIC SITES**

- The Governor and Executive Council approved the nomination of **Ben Wilson as Director of the Division of Historical Resources.** His start date is August 1, 2109.
- The Bureau of Historic Sites was given a **New Hampshire Preservation Alliance award** at their annual conference on May 31, for the ongoing restoration of the **Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion** located in Portsmouth. The award highlighted the collaborative effort to restore the site by the Bureau and the Wentworth-Coolidge Commission. Established in 1982 by then Governor Hugh Gallen, the Wentworth-Coolidge Commission is a Governor's appointed commission, dedicated to the support and advocacy for this National Historic Landmark. The Bureau is grateful for the support of the Commission and the Division of Parks for their support of the historic resources under its management.
- **Mid-Century Modern 1945-1975.** Approximately 75% of our buildings are 50 years old or older; all these resources are potentially eligible for the National Register. Working with DHR

we agreed it would be better to get an overview of the state park system, its historic landscapes and buildings rather than going property by property. Many of our most popular parks (Pawtuckaway, Greenfield, and White Lake) were developed in this time period and are ripe for redevelopment. The study has one of the best summaries of the development of the state parks from our founding to modern day. Many thanks to Amy Dixon at DHR for being the project coordinator and to the author Lisa Mausolf who did amazing research all over the state to tell our story.

## **BUREAU OF TRAILS**

- The Bureau of Trails is self-funded by registration fees from OHRVs and snowmobiles, as well as a portion of un-refunded gas tax from these same vehicles. During the FY 2019, 80,803 vehicles (OHRV and snowmobile) were registered in NH. The Bureau bases its annual budget on registering 85,000 vehicles. These figures are based on reported registrations from the Fish & Game Department as of March 31, 2019.
- This fiscal year, there were 43,940 **snowmobile registrations**. Roughly 80% of registrants are NH club members. **OHRV registrations** through the end of May were approximately 36,000. This is on par with FY 18. Roughly 50% of OHRV registrants are members of NH clubs.
- **Winter Snowmobile Club GIA** - Grants are effective from 12/15/18 to 5/31/19
  - \$1,673,747.52 awarded to 103 clubs for snowmobile trail grooming. The Bureau reimbursed clubs approximately \$1.35 million for trail grooming this winter.
- The **winter** had a lower than average snowfall for south and southeastern NH, however the rest of the State had above average snowfall and snow was on the ground for several weeks longer than in the past few years and riding was above average for most of the winter. Riding in Pittsburg formally ended on May 12th.
- The **2019 OHRV Riding Season** is underway, however there have been delays in opening most of the trail networks in northern NH. The late winter and usually wet spring have left trails and roads in extremely wet condition, and in some cases, the frost is still in the ground. The interconnected trail network is slowly opening each week and it is anticipated that the entire network will be open by the end of June.
- **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)**. The Bureau administers the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program, funded by un-refunded federal gasoline taxes on off-highway vehicles nationwide. 25 grants were awarded in 2019, totaling \$801,000, to local municipalities and non-profit trail organizations around NH, to perform trail construction and maintenance projects. This is the only government grant program in NH that non-motorized trail organizations can receive funds for projects. The funding is tied to the Federal Highway Bill and the program is a sub-program of transportation funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. The Federal Highway Bill guarantees these annual funds to NH, through 2020, with the funding level set at \$1.25 million.

- Spring of 2019, Bureau of Trails staff assisted Park Operations with the first phase of construction for a new campground in **Bear Brook** State Park, which will be intended for equine camping, and with a new bridge at The Basin, in **Franconia Notch** State Park.

**COMMUNITY RECREATION OFFICE**

- **Volunteer Programs** – For calendar year 2018, 19,191 volunteer hours with an estimated value of \$489,754 was reported.
- Currently we are in the process of hiring a **Volunteer Supervisor** with the absence left by Patrick Hummel’s move to Mt Washington. We have re-posted the position externally, completed a second round of interviews and we are looking to pick a candidate to fill the position in the coming weeks.
- The past few months have been focused on getting our current groups under agreement updated with their **annual work plans** and **hosting multiple workdays** with SNHU, Eversource and other organization helping our parks get ready to open.
- We have a new **summer intern** from UNH Department of Recreation, Management and Policy assisting with the Community Recreation Office this summer. Her focus will be on helping to modernize our LWCF program files and getting the opportunity to spend some time with each Bureau within the Division in our HQ as well as in the field.
- Attended the **National Outdoor Recreation Conference** in Rapid City South Dakota.
- **NASORLO DC Delegation trip**- Went to DC to promote the Land and Water Conservation Fund recent reauthorization and focus on the appropriations of funds for FY 2020.
- **Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program** is a partnership between the National Park Service (NPS) and the States intended to create and maintain a nationwide legacy of high quality recreation areas and facilities and to stimulate non-federal investments in the protection and maintenance of recreation resources across the United States. Per Section 6(f)(3) of the LWCF Act of 1965, no property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance may be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The program was recently and permanently reauthorized under the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act of 2019, with no less than 40% of program funds dedicated to state and local assistance. However, annual funding is still subject to the congressional appropriations process.
- Funds are received and administered by the States, with state governments and political subdivisions being eligible for assistance. \$42,000,000.00 in LWCF apportionments has supported outdoor recreation area projects in New Hampshire since 1965.
- LWCF Apportionments:

Apportionment: Fiscal Year/Amount			Available	Expiration	Notes
LWCF	2018	\$1,004,160.00	\$734,509.00	9/30/2020	
GOMESA*	2018	\$618,445.00	\$618,445.00	9/30/2020	
SRA**	2018	\$1,649.32	\$1,649.32	9/30/2019	
LWCF	2019	\$1,000,000.00	\$0.00	9/30/2021	<i>Anticipated amount. Final amount pending USDOJ Secretary signature/funding notice (unknown)</i>

Apportionment: Fiscal Year/Amount			Available	Expiration	Notes
GOMESA*	2019	\$600,000.00	\$0.00	9/30/2021	Anticipated amount. Final amount pending USDOJ Secretary signature/funding notice (unknown)
SRA**	2019	\$11,484.64	\$11,484.64	9/30/2020	Current amount to date. Final amount pending projects closed by end of Fed FY 2019 (9/30/2019)
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$3,235,738.96</b>	<b>\$1,366,087.96</b>		
*Section 105 of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act designates 12.5 percent of the proceeds from leases in Areas 181, 181 South and the 2002-2007 planning areas to be dispensed to the States in accordance with Section 6 of the LWCF Act.					
**Special Reapportionment Account: Unspent funds from previously closed or terminated NH State or Local projects. Not available until regular (LWCF) apportionment of the same federal fiscal year is fully obligated.					

- Open projects:

Project #	Sponsor	Project Name	Scope	Grant \$
33-00695	State of NH DNCR	Monadnock Visitor Services Bldg	Development	\$443,165.00
33-00699	City of Dover	Cocheco River Park	Development	\$150,000.00
33-00700	City of Concord	Merrimack River Greenway	Development	\$100,000.00
33-00701	Town of Bedford	Pulpit Rock Area Trails	Development	\$42,500.00
33-00702	Town of Milford	Osgood Pond Restoration	Development	\$325,000.00
33-00705	Town of Deerfield	Hartford Brook Ballfields	Development	\$25,000.00
33-00706	Town of Brookline	Nissitissit River Park	Combination	\$50,000.00
33-00707	City of Nashua	Greeley Park Boat Ramp	Development	\$200,000.00
33-00708	Town of Bristol	Bristol Falls Park	Development	\$153,002.00
33-00710	City of Claremont	Monadnock Park Playground	Development	\$53,700.00
33-00711	Monroe Consolid. SD	Monroe School Playground	Development	\$96,300.00
33-00713	State of NH DNCR	Kearsarge Mtn-Tusoni Lot	Acquisition	\$20,000.00
33-00714	State of NH DNCR	FNSP-Lafayette Playground	Development	\$75,000.00
33-00715	State of NH DNCR	Ellacoya SP Playground	Development	\$75,000.00
33-00716	City of Franklin	Mill City Park	Combination	\$200,000.00
33-00717	Town of Newmarket	Landroche Field Splash Pad/Bathrooms	Development	\$199,407.00
33-00718	Town of Lincoln	Riverfront Park	Development	\$200,000.00
33-00719	Town of New Boston	New Boston Rail Trail Rehabilitation	Development	\$100,000.00
33-00720	Town of Plaistow	PARC Trail Network	Development	\$51,500.00
33-00721	Town of Littleton	Littleton Health Park	Combination	\$200,000.00
33-00722	Town of Salisbury	Maplewood Field-Bleachers and Playground	Development	\$25,000.00
33-00723	Town of Windham	Moeckel Pond Dam Restoration	Development	\$150,000.00
33-00724	City of Somersworth	Jules Bisson Park Rejuvenation	Development	\$45,000.00
33-00726	Town of Moultonborough	Kraime Meadow Park Improvements	Development	\$62,500.00
				\$3,042,074.00

## PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

- On May 10, 2019, the Division received the **2019 Excellence in Energy Efficiency Award** for the Implementation of a Successful Waste Management Project.
- **Jeness Beach:** The building is complete and is open and operational. There is a ribbon cutting scheduled for June 14.
- **Monadnock:** Work is progressing well despite spring road closures. The interior concrete slab has been poured, exterior siding is ongoing and interior finishes are in progress. The contract is on pace for a summer completion date.
- **Umbagog:** Work on the new bathhouse is ongoing, with the contractor targeting a late June completion date. Roofing, insulation and siding are progressing and work on the plumbing and mechanical systems are ongoing. The team is targeting getting the toilet rooms and showers up and running for use by campers no later than June 28, with final sitework following soon after.
- **Mt. Washington:** The Yankee Building hosts all communication site tenants. The communications study to determine the future of the building and the best way to accommodate the communications equipment is nearing completion. Task 8 of 9 has been completed, and a presentation to the client team is scheduled for early June. The final Task 9 report is due mid-July.
- **Ellacoya:** The project is progressing with the first section of retaining wall being completed at the end of May. Due to unforeseen difficulties and to avoid disruption to campers, the contractor is demobilizing from the site until after Labor Day, after which they will return to complete the second section of the retaining wall.
- **Cannon Mountain:** Two separate requests for proposals have been issued to address sprinkler and fire alarm work at four buildings at Cannon Mountain. The proposals are currently in review and discussions with the Bureau of Public Works.
- **Echo Lake:** Site clearing and foundations for a new 12 foot by 24 foot park store are scheduled for completion in early June. Delivery of a prefabricated shed from Reeds Ferry is currently scheduled for June 16.
- **White Island:** Construction work for the new generator building roof at White Island is scheduled to begin August 12. Additional work required by the Fire Marshal's Office will be done around the same time.
- **FEMA Funds:** \$310,113.56 received by DNCR (F&L, Trails and Parks). An additional \$89,444.55 will be released by HSEM as projects are completed. \$150,000 more obligated to Parks within the next couple of months. DISASTER 4355 Account Total : \$460,149.39.

## DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

- **Brent Wucher** joined the Division as the **Public Information Officer and Marketing Administrator** responsible for overseeing and coordinating public information contacts and distribution. He can be reached through his office phone at: 603-271-4142 or via email at: [Brent.Wucher@dncr.nh.gov](mailto:Brent.Wucher@dncr.nh.gov).



- Collaborating with the Upper Valley Trails Alliance, the Division will post their **Trail Finder** information portal as an additional resource to provide trails information.
- **Social Media** accounts as of 5/31/19:
  - Facebook Likes: 246K;
  - Twitter followers: 21.4k;
  - Instagram followers: 38.5K.
- **Season opening Facebook statistics** – May 6 – June 2
  - Posts Engagements: 22,009 increase 38%
  - Posts People Reached: 456,399 increase 325%
  - Video Views: 3,094 increase 329%
  - Page New Followers: 6544 increase 1836%
  - *Note: Top Parks posts were Related to Hiring and positions in NH State Parks.*
- **Website** from 2/15/19 - 5/30/2019:
  - 399K total sessions; avg. 1:58 min/session; 30% MA, 28% NH, 6% NY, 5% CT, 3% RI
- **Press Releases:**
  - 4/15/2019 - [Recreational Trails Program Grant Applications for 2020 Available](#)
  - 4/18/2019 - [Join NH Parks at Discover Wild NH Day](#)
  - 5/20/2019 - [Federal Grant Money Available for Recreational Projects](#)
  - 5/20/2019 - [Late Winter Snows and Heavy Spring Rains Causing Delay to Start of OHRV Season in Northern NH](#)
  - 5/22/2019 - [NH State Parks provides Hiker Shuttle at Franconia Notch State Park](#)
- **Media Opportunities:**
  - WABC 7 NYC – spotlighted the Wolfeboro area and local State Parks within 7 hour for weekend travel show.
  - New Hampshire Magazine – Mount Washington pullout feature – Mount Washington [https://issuu.com/mcleancommunications/docs/nhmagazine\\_mount\\_washington\\_feature](https://issuu.com/mcleancommunications/docs/nhmagazine_mount_washington_feature)
  - New Hampshire Magazine - Remote Camping at Umbagog Lake <https://www.nhmagazine.com/remote-camping-at-umbagog-lake/>
  - PBS – Late June filming on Mount Washington.
  - NHPR “Where the lilacs Grow” spotlighted Wentworth-Coolidge Mansion, <https://www.nhpr.org/post/where-lilacs-grow>
- **Advertising** Summer 2019 campaign planning began with a launch in mid-April. The target audience is Millennial and Gen Xers with and without kids, are active and have outdoor interests ages 25-54 in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, other New England states and Northeast Canada. Parks will also be looking at ways to help raise the awareness of NH State Park license plate.
- **Marketing** efforts this summer will concentrate on targeting and timing. Given the inherent popularity of certain Parks destinations within the state during the summer, we need to think of alternative ways to drive visitation outside of the peak season and beyond the

state's most popular parks that are constantly busy. We will continue to focus our efforts on top revenue generating activities like camping, beaches and other water-related activities.

- **NH State Parks best of:**

- New England Today Travel, Best of the New Hampshire White Mountains, Franconia Notch State Park, <https://newengland.com/today/travel/new-hampshire/white-mountains/best-of-white-mountains/>
- All American Adventure Guide, U.S. Bucket List: 200+ Places to Visit in the USA, <http://allamericanadventureguide.com/best-places-visit-usa/>

- **Reports provided separately:**

- a. FY2019 Financial Forecast
- b. HB 25 Capital Budget Comparison
- c. Parks Comparative Statement
- d. Visitation Report & Comparison
- e. Campground / Reserve America Comparison
- f. Legislative 2019 Report

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