

Director's Report
STATE PARKS SYSTEM ADVISORY COUNCIL
Division of Parks and Recreation
March 23, 2018

Franconia Notch State Park/Cannon Mountain

- **Cannon YTD visits** of 158,208 are now up 1% from the 7-yr avg. through the same period. **Ski season revenue** of \$4.443M is now up 3% from the 7-yr avg. through the same period.
- We'll make a decision by Saturday, March 31st after looking at a long range forecast as to whether we'll close on April 15th or 22nd.
- **Cannon** is expected to hit the targeted \$369K in energy savings from investments in more energy efficient equipment including snowmaking guns.
- Cannon is rolling back 2018-2019 season pass prices to celebrate **Cannon's 80th anniversary**. Celebratory events are tentatively scheduled will be held in June and December. Check the website over the next few weeks for updates: www.cannonmt.com
- Dept of Revenue Administration is appraising **Lonesome Lake Hut** in preparation for a new agreement with AMC for their use and operation of the Hut.
- An RFP is being issued for new playground facility at **Lafayette Campground**.
- The renovations to expand the bathrooms and gift shop at the **Flume Gorge** building is nearing completion.
- **Profile Lake** walkway: Current proposal from the Legacy Fund to build an accessible path to an accessible fishing platform.

Bureau of Park Operations

Great North Woods

- 8th Annual Nansen-Milan Winter Festival on Jan. 19-21 with a Nordic ski race and many other family-oriented winter outdoor activities occurring at **Milan Hill State Park**
- 5th Annual Moose Brook Fat Bike Race on January 21st with most of the race taking place on the trails in **Moose Brook State Park** as well as on the **Presidential Rail Trail**. The renovation and shower room addition to the campground toilet building at Moose Brook State Park will be complete by May 1.
- **Jericho Mountain** doubled its retail sales by expanding and improving its product offering. ATV riders have created a demand for Jericho logo apparel and merchandise. In 2017, 5,544 visitors including those from 39 other countries signed the log book located in the warming hut, up from the 4,002 visitors who registered in 2016. The Androscoggin Valley Chamber estimates 27,000 visitors at Jericho for 2017.
- **Concession revenue** for the region, including park stores, firewood, and boat rentals, is up 30% from three seasons ago.
- Design for the new visitors center for **Umbagog Lake State Park** is 65% complete and expected to go out to bid in May.. The project will provide new restrooms, shower rooms, family bathroom, laundry room, and pot washing station. The building will be designed to allow the future installation of a new park store and park office.

Central Region

- The retail store at **Wellington State Park** is being moved to the lifeguard area in the short term so customers have a walk-in store with a wider range of product offerings. There are long-term plans to expand the store significantly.
- **White Lake** manager's house is being renovated and it has heat for the first time in more than thirteen years!
- The bridge at **Ellacoya** washed out as a result of high water due to the January thaw cycle. An RFP will be issued for new playground facility.
- NH Trails Day on July 21 will be celebrated in **Crawford Notch** through volunteer trail work in partnership with the AMC.
- Friends of the Pemi received a Spirit of New Hampshire Award from Volunteer NH for their contributions to **Livermore Falls** recreation area.
- **White Lake** is reviewing its policy regarding allowing campers to park at the beach after checkout time on Sunday. Campers are displacing other paying day use visitors, resulting in campers actually paying as little as \$10 to camp on Saturday night.
- "Swim with a Mission" will hold a major event at **Wellington** on Sat, July 14th. They raised \$370,999 gross revenue last year to support the US Navy SEAL Museum in FL, and other Veteran-related charities in the Lakes Region. They held the event on a Friday last year limiting the impact on weekend visitors.

Seacoast

- **March storm damage.** As of March 9, the Initial Damage Assessment totals \$658,000, including \$168K at **Hampton Beach**, \$275K at **North Hampton Beach**, and \$120K at **Jenness Beach**.
- Plans and bid specs are being finalized for **Jenness Beach** redevelopment and will go out to bid at the end of the month.
- F&L ranger patrolled **Hampton Beach** on 02/21 to educate dog owners of the leash and dog waste rules. New signage and educational outreach is underway.
- The Penguin Plunge drew large crowds of plungers and their supporters to **Hampton Beach** to benefit Special Olympics New Hampshire. Even Governor Sununu joined the fun!



South Region

- Winterized addition to the main toilet building at **Monadnock State Park** is expected to go to bid in September.
- In collaboration with the volunteer non-motorized user groups, the multi-year-long process to review and approve trail improvements and new construction at **Bear Brook State Park** is complete and will begin construction this year. Suggested loops have been created for equestrians and mountain bikers to reduce negative trail encounters.
- Recruitment and training of new trail work volunteers is planned for **Rhododendron** and **Winslow State Parks**.

Mount Washington

- The feasibility study for a sewage line down the Cog Railway is complete. The ESTP influent study and existing system model is 85% complete. The water system/water storage tank replacement design is 25% complete.
- A study of the communications facilities on the summit is underway with a final report due in September.

Bureau of Trails

- BOT is completing bridge repairs from the **October storm damage** and will meet with FEMA about potential reimbursement to cover the cost of repairs.
- **Councilor Kenney Ride** – Commissioner Rose, Director Bryce, the Great North Woods staff, and Bureau of Trails staff joined Executive Councilor Kenny on his annual snowmobile tour on February 16. Several leaders from New Hampshire's snowmobile industry joined the tour of **Northern New Hampshire trails**. Our group traveled from **Coleman State Park** to the Pittsburg Border Patrol Station to the Pittsburg Ridge Runners Snowmobile Clubhouse on Back Lake Road in Pittsburg, finishing up back at Coleman State Park. Discussions included developments and improvements to area trails, information about border crossings, and the impact snowmobiling has on the North Country economy and the significant improvements to Coleman State Park.



- Trails Bureau staff are grooming **snowmobile trails** following the 03/08 storm.
- BOT staff also assists Parks with several construction projects, including **White Lake State Park** maintenance garage, **Bear Brook** equine loading ramp/platform, **Weeks tollbooth/shed**, and **Franconia's Basin** foot bridge.
- The annual **Three-State Reciprocity Weekend** allowed registered snowmobilers to enjoy the trails in Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire for a whole weekend from Friday, January 26 to Sunday, January 28.
- Winter 2018/19 **snowmobile registrations** are ~41K. Last winter was 47K with a 5-year average of 41,640. BOT budgets for 49,000 registrations.

Bureau of Historic Sites

- At an event held in Berlin and with support from Red Bull, the Bureau celebrated the redevelopment of the historic **Nansen Ski Jump**, Sarah Hendrickson's launch off the jump last year, and her participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics in PyeongChang. ABC picked up the story which can be viewed at: SLEEPING GIANT FINAL <https://youtu.be/EpSALsbMTIY>
- The Bureau also produced the "NH Cheers You On" video to let Sarah know the hometown crowd was rooting for her to win: <https://youtu.be/NjJRVpWaPaU>
- A RFP was issued for the selection of a national consultant to prepare a National Register nomination for the historic **Nansen Ski Jump**.
- Guests are now able to book online for **historic site tours**.
- The new roof for the generator building at **White Island Light Station** will go to bid in June with an August start date.

Community Recreation

- LWCF NPS approval of land acquisition for **Kearsarge Mtn** (\$21.3K) the **Lafayette** Playground (\$76.7K) and **Ellacoya** Playground (\$76.7K). Community project selection is under way.
- **Volunteer Program** FY2017 closed with 18,565 volunteer hours and \$462,269 in volunteer time, compared to FY2014 of 10,456 hours and \$240,279 in labor. Liability insurance was provided by the State to 15 volunteer organizations working in 25 park properties. A new cargo trailer outfitted with trails and grounds maintenance tools was deployed last season.

Planning & Development Office, in addition to the above listed construction projects

- Archeological studies are contracted for **Ellacoya**, **Franconia Notch**, **Odiorne Point**, and **Lake Francis**
- A DPR and Div Historic Resources are partnering to prepare a **Mid-Century Modern Context Study of State Park facilities** funded by a Super Storm Sandy grant.

Director's Office

- **DPR FY 2017 Financial Report**, posted on [DPR website](#) and hard copies provided.
- **Consolidated Annual Report for FY 2016 & FY 2017** pursuant to Chapter Law posted on [DNCR website](#).

- Campground reservations for Memorial Day are at 64%, up 1% over last year:

Campground % of booked reservable sites for Memorial Day	
100%	Jericho Mountain
100%	Hampton Beach
100%	Dry River
86%	Cannon
82%	Bear Brook
81%	Lafayette
81%	Pawtuckaway
78%	Ellacoya
73%	Lake Francis
73%	Monadnock/Gilson Pond
65%	Pillsbury
53%	White Lake
52%	Greenfield
50%	Umbagog
46%	Coleman
40%	Milan Hill
39%	Moose Brook
23%	Mollidgewock
16%	Deer Mountain
0%	Sunapee
0%	Wellington

- Lake Sunapee Boat Access Development Commission released its [final report](#) on 02/28. The Majority Report recommended “1) near-term increase in access for trailered boats on Lake Sunapee, 2) allow the NH Department of Fish and Game to explore new options for deep water boat access points, 3) provide increased access for the public to Lake Sunapee, 4) end the long-term divisions and concerns associated with the Wild Goose boat launch site.” The Minority Report found “that Wild Goose provides the only realistic possibility for providing adequate public boat access to Lake Sunapee in the next few years.” See also [Dir Bryce letter](#) to Rep Daniel Wolf, 11/27/17 and specifically review the findings in the report. Parks was most concerned with the significant impact an expanded boat launch at Sunapee State Park on access by visitors to the beach.
- DNCR leadership met with NH Homeland Security/Emergency Management last week. DNCR will be updating its **COOP (Continuity of Operations)** in the months ahead and HLS/EM will be updating the state’s Emergency Support Functions (ESF) over the course of the year.
- **Legislation Tracking:** [HB1104](#) regulatory permits and time limits under 541-A (Maj: OTP w/ Amend, Min: Refer to Interim Study for 3/21); [HB1365](#) OHRV on public ways (Passed House, Intro to S-Trans); [SB400](#) RE: Canoe fees. New Title: Study committee on creating a boat safe

card (H-PWH hearing on 3/28); [SB560](#) updating the state trails plan (Passed Senate, Intro H-RRD); [HB1706](#) Lake Sunapee boat launch (ITL) ; [HB1696](#) Hampton Beach capital improvement fund (ITL).

- **Special Use Permits (SUPs)** are issued for a variety events, such as fundraising and races. Permitting has increased 12% annually and 120 SUPs were issued in 2017. The Division applied the LEAN process to the SUP Program resulting in standardized forms, post event evaluations, developing an online application process, and review of its permit fees. These improvements will provide better customer service and more timely response as part of the Governor's Regulatory Reform initiatives (HB1104-FN).
- **State Park Plate** As of 03/03/18, there are 7,740 State Parks Plates registered; FY 2017 revenues earned are \$545,190; FY- YTD 2018 revenues earned are \$411,335.
- **Donations** Since December of 2016, the N.H. Division of Parks and Recreation have been receiving donations through our online reservation system. During the online reservation process, there is an option for the camper to add an optional donation above and beyond the required fees for their campsite. We have received 2,535 individual donations totaling \$17,070 since launching the program. FY 2017 donations revenue is \$8,988 from 1,307 donors; FY- YTD 2018 donations revenue is \$8,479 from 1,290 donors to date. The Director sends a thank you letter to every donor.
- **Holiday Gift Purchases:** Since 2012, the number of purchases has increased from 48 to 145 and is generating 4 times as much revenue (\$10,300 in 2017). This includes gift certificates, coupon books and season's passes.
- **Advertising** over-delivered results; Pet-friendly hikes was a bigger selling point; Increase of impressions of 13% year over year, engagements and link clicks more than doubled
- **Social Media** – As of 02/28/18: Facebook Likes: 218,180; Twitter followers: 20.2k; Instagram followers: 20.2k
- **Website** – 12/01/17-03/15/18: 230,238 total sessions; avg. 1:58 min/session; 29.6% NH, 29.4% MA, 7.6% NY, 5.9% CT, 3.0% ME; 23.4% age 24-34, 19.9% age 35-44, 21.6% age 45-54
- **Videos:** 52k watched, 106.4k minutes watched; New videos produced since 12/1/18:
 - [Limitless Adventure: Fat Biking at Moose Brook State Park](#)
 - [Limitless Adventure: Coleman State Park](#)
 - [Limitless Adventure: Cross-Country Skiing at Milan Hill State Park](#)
 - [Limitless Adventure: Winslow State Park](#)
 - [Limitless Adventure: Odiorne Point State Park](#)
 - [Good Luck Sarah Hendrickson](#)
 - [Public Skating at Bear Brook State Park](#)