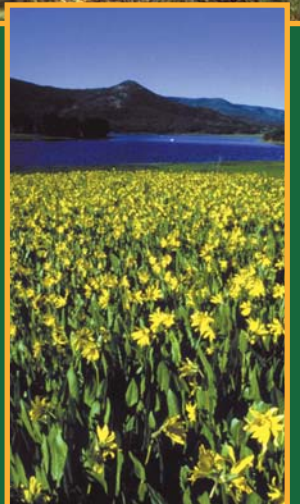
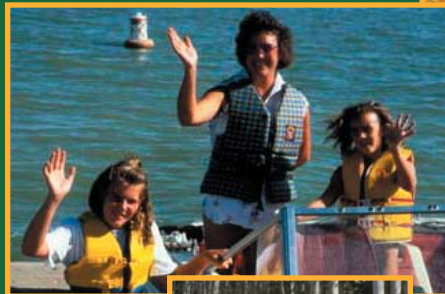




Colorado State Parks Five-Year Strategic Plan 2005-2009





May 1, 2005

Dear Friends:

I am excited to present this new Colorado State Parks Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2005-2009. As the foundation for Colorado State Parks planning, this Strategic Plan is a clear and comprehensive blueprint for managing our beautiful park system for the people of Colorado now and into the future.

I applaud the dedication and hard work of the Colorado State Parks staff, the State Parks Board, and all of our partners and supporters who participated in its creation over the last 15 months. We received valuable input from the public we serve throughout the planning process. Their contributions helped shape the goals, objectives and strategies designed to meet the future outdoor recreation needs of Coloradans.

The people of Colorado love the outdoors and take great pride in the diversity of beautiful landscapes and natural features found within the state parks system. I am confident that this Strategic Plan represents the priorities outlined by the public. It provides a framework for the future for our agency as the state's outdoor recreation leader, guiding our educational and statewide programs, while providing unparalleled stewardship of our parklands.

Sincerely,

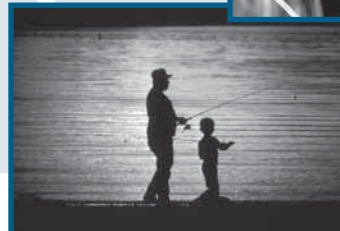
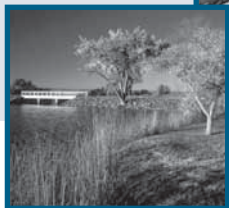
Lyle Laverty, Director
Colorado State Parks



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Introduction



The state parks in Colorado enable everyone, regardless of age, background, economic or social circumstance to enjoy the state's internationally famous natural beauty and experience a wide range of activities. Park visitors and beneficiaries of State Parks' many statewide outdoor recreation programs can literally "re-create" themselves both physically and spiritually. The parks are a priceless, irreplaceable legacy for future generations. Enabling that enjoyment and protecting the legacy is the essence of the Colorado State Parks' mission.

However, as Colorado State Parks (State Parks) approaches its 50th year providing quality outdoor recreation to the public, it faces unprecedented challenges. Recovery from a sluggish statewide economy and the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR)¹ growth restrictions create substantial challenges for the agency to continue satisfying outdoor recreation demands of a rapidly expanding population. Drought conditions, increased recreational use and budget cutbacks threaten to damage park resources, and challenge the agency's ability to sustain facilities and programs.

This backdrop of social, economic, and environmental influences requires continual, innovative approaches and dedication by State Parks' personnel to provide the outdoor settings and programs people desire while effectively meeting resource management goals. State Parks has long been familiar with these challenges; they are embodied in the agency's multi-faceted legislative mission mandated in Colorado state law. Those holding the fate of Colorado's state parks have an awesome responsibility. State Park system leaders "...must decide – or seek to influence those who decide – what kind of parks we want to leave our children, and then pursue that vision with unswerving determination."² In Colorado, these responsibilities extend to the management of statewide outdoor recreation programs as well.

Mindful of these responsibilities to Coloradans, the agency presents this new Five-Year Strategic Plan for Colorado's state parks. The plan builds on the vision, themes, and common statewide recreation issues identified within the federally required Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

(SCORP)³. The SCORP, entitled "Colorado's Outdoor Recreation Future: Strategies For Colorado's Outdoor Heritage," was completed at the end of 2003 and has guided the strategic planning process.

The Colorado State Parks Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2005-2009, is the product of a comprehensive planning process. In addition to building on the SCORP, the plan reflects significant public feedback. Over the past two years, State Parks' personnel have listened to park visitors and others about Colorado's parks and statewide recreation programs. The feedback, including suggestions for improvements and new experiences, has been incorporated into this plan. By including visitor feedback and following the objectives and actions laid out in this Five-Year Strategic Plan, Colorado State Parks can respond to the needs of Colorado's recreationists and pursue effective investments and decisions.

The State Parks Strategic Plan

Why the Plan?

This strategic plan is a tool to improve policy analysis and priority setting for State Parks over the coming years. It is dynamic, allowing the agency to adjust to unexpected issues that will inevitably appear during the five-year planning time frame. The strategic plan provides overall direction to State Parks, as well as guidance and stated purpose for its leaders, employees and stakeholders.



¹Specifically, "TABOR" refers to amendments to Article X, § 20 of the Colorado State Constitution.

²Comments by Ney Landrum, former Executive Director, National Association of State Parks Directors, 1993.

³An electronic copy of the 2003 SCORP entitled Colorado's Outdoor Recreation Future: Strategies For Colorado's Outdoor Heritage, visit the State Parks Web site at www.parks.state.co.us; for a compact disc, call 303-866-3437. For a complete listing of the 2003 SCORP strategic issues and goals, see Appendix F in the 2005-2009 Strategic Plan Appendices.

What is the Plan?

Three essential pieces comprise this new strategic planning model for State Parks:

- **Strategic Plan** - To succeed, an organization must have a clear view of its purpose and reason for existence. With this in mind, new Mission and Vision statements have been created for the agency. The Mission and Vision build largely from the Colorado State Parks core values which were developed and articulated by Parks employees in March 2004:
 - ◆ Commitment to providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities
 - ◆ Commitment to natural resource stewardship
 - ◆ Commitment to customer service
 - ◆ Commitment to ourselves and each other
 - ◆ Commitment to being leaders and innovators in our field

Through the planning process, a new *Mission Statement* has been developed to clarify the agency's reason for existence. The new *Vision Statement* explains the agency's future. Seven planning *Goals* frame the steps over the next five years that will move State Parks closer to the agency's vision. *Objectives* and specific *action strategies* during that time frame will help the agency reach desired goals.

- **Annual Implementation Plan** – An annual Implementation Plan, for implementation at the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1), closely links prioritized planning action strategies to actual State Parks budget initiatives and other resource allocations. The plan specifically identifies actions to pursue in the upcoming fiscal year, as well as budget initiatives that will be reflected in the budget process for the following fiscal year. Envisioned to be dynamic and to assist in developing benchmarks and performance planning, the plan is to be developed and approved by the Leadership Team each spring. Prioritized action strategies from the Five-Year Strategic Plan will be identified, quantified and considered in the annual budget process. State Parks, however, must realistically balance the ability to fund new initiatives in the action strategies against the need to continue providing adequate resources for core work and initiatives not specifically mentioned within the Five-Year Strategic Plan.
- **Annual Report** – A State Parks Annual Report will be published near the end of each calendar year. The Annual Report will cover prior fiscal year (July through June) accomplishments and agency priorities for the coming fiscal year.

With these three integrated planning pieces, Colorado State Parks will be prepared to respond to legislative and executive branch initiatives, social and economic trends or themes, and immediate threats to important natural or cultural resources.

What the Plan is Not

The Five-Year Strategic Plan is not intended to list all activities undertaken by State Parks over the next five years; it focuses only on the Division's highest priorities. If an activity or product is not identified in the plan, it is not to be assumed that item is not important or that it will not be pursued.

This document, as well as integrated agency plans, is *not* intended to supplant other critical planning processes conducted regularly by State Parks. Each of these plans and processes will consistently include State Parks' priorities, mission, and vision. Other important State Parks planning processes include the:

- Annual State of Colorado budget and plan, submitted by State Parks to the Governor's Office and the General Assembly
- Five-Year Acquisition and Development Plan, updated annually by the State Parks Leadership Team, which reflects intended capital budget investments from all funding sources over a rolling five-year planning horizon
- State Parks Annual Funding Plan for Great Outdoors Colorado⁴ (GOCO), developed each fall to reflect the intended use of GOCO funds by State Parks over the coming year.

Trends, Influences and Public Preferences

Over the past two years, State Parks' personnel gathered and analyzed trends, influences and public preferences related to the agency's mission. We have listened to Coloradans and as a result, the goals, objectives and action strategies contained within this new Five-Year Strategic Plan reflect this information. *For a summary of the key findings from this analysis, as well as other key documents that provide greater background on this State Parks plan, please review our Five-Year Strategic Plan Appendix, available at www.parks.state.co.us.*



⁴Great Outdoor Colorado, created in 1992 through a citizen initiative creating Article XXVII of the State Constitution, receives and distributes one-half of all net proceeds derived through the State Lottery. Of those GOCO proceeds, Colorado State Parks receives at least twenty-five percent to meet acquisition, development, programmatic and other agency priorities.



Colorado State Parks Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2005-2009

Mission Statement

To be leaders in providing outdoor recreation through the stewardship of Colorado's natural resources for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of present and future generations.

Vision Statement

Colorado State Parks offer exceptional settings for renewal of the human spirit. Residents and visitors enjoy healthy, fun-filled interaction with the natural world, creating rich traditions with family and friends that promote stewardship of our natural resources. Parks employees and their partners work together to provide ongoing and outstanding customer service through recreational programs, amenities and services.



Goal: Recreation



Provide sustainable outdoor recreation settings, statewide programs and education opportunities to keep pace with the rising demands, needs and diversity of Colorado citizens and visitors.

The State Parks system has accumulated a sizeable portfolio of park facilities and infrastructure. To ensure park visitors continue to enjoy quality outdoor recreation experiences and interaction with Colorado's natural world, these invaluable state assets must be properly maintained. Park visitors and other Coloradans have agreed that taking care of existing resources should be a high agency priority. To that end, State Parks will develop and fund a sustainable maintenance schedule over the years ahead.

Sustainable Development meets present needs without compromising the ability of younger generations to meet future needs. Design of new park construction, operative guidelines and efficient energy use and conservation all have tremendous impacts on the environment and on the agency's economic bottom line. Applying sustainable development principles in state parks will lower long-term maintenance and operating costs and likely improve the State Parks experience.

At the same time, in the face of Colorado's burgeoning growth, the agency must continue seeking opportunities for additional parklands and water for recreation. State Parks will continue to pursue opportunities and leverage its effectiveness in acquiring new park properties and water for recreation by partnering with GOCO, local communities and others to protect Colorado's most special places.

Through its "outdoor classrooms," State Parks has the power to provide outstanding learning opportunities to today's adults as well as children who are the future stewards of Colorado. An effective way to foster these connections is by providing creative, effective interpretation and environmental education opportunities.

Although outside of agency boundaries, State Parks will retain its responsibility to fulfill an outdoor recreation leadership role by managing statewide outdoor recreation programs and advocating outdoor recreation, open space conservation and the benefits that these efforts provide.

Objective I.

Operate State Parks to enhance visitor experiences and promote positive interaction with Colorado's natural environment.

Action Strategies:

1. Update the system-wide park sign plan beginning in **July 2005** to effectively meet the need for consistent, simple signage for park visitors. Park entrance signs and other signs with the State Parks' logo will be funded and installed at all parks, starting in **July 2007**.
2. Create a Preventive Maintenance and Management Plan to provide data and strategies needed to bring park facilities and infrastructure up-to-date, beginning in **July 2007**.
3. Re-write the statewide five-year Interpretation and Environmental Education plan to identify interpretive and educational opportunities and techniques to implement these opportunities. Beginning in **January 2007**, create a charter that directs the plan update; begin to implement the plan by **July 2007**.
4. Use the Preventive Maintenance and Management Plan to identify and prioritize major renovation and maintenance needs and fund associated budgets by **July 2007**. Utilize a system such as Leed-EB (Existing Building) standards⁵ where applicable and feasible; Design baseline standards for updating and/or rehabilitating park infrastructure (i.e., roads and utilities) by **December 2009**.
5. Deploy an automated law enforcement records and citations management system to re-establish a centralized database. Provide access to the database to agency law enforcement officers, connectivity to outside databases, Web browser access and data processing capabilities by **March 2008**. All staff are to be trained and ready to use the system to its capacity.
6. Correlate Parks' educational programs provided to school groups with state academic standards by **January 2009**.

⁵ Existing building renovation/rehabilitation standards, which conform to LEED rating system - a voluntary consensus-based national standard for developing high performance, sustainable buildings. More information may be found at: www.usgbc.org/leed/leed_main.asp

Objective II.

Design and develop sustainable park facilities and infrastructure that meet visitors' needs and enrich the State Parks experience.

Action Strategies:

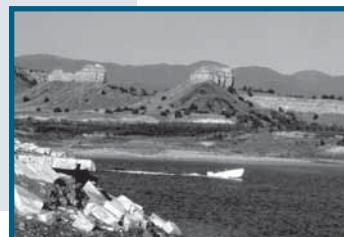
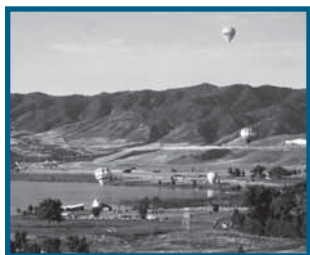
1. Design baseline standards for newly constructed park infrastructure (i.e., utilities and roads) beginning in **July 2006**; fully implement into all new projects by **July 2008**.
2. Beginning in **July 2006**, new park capital asset planning and design at two parks will meet criteria of a respected, well-known design system such as Leed-NC⁶ (new construction) standards. Approved planning and design standards will be required for all new facilities by **July 2008**.
3. Seek new funding opportunities to design and construct additional sustainable trails in State Parks, where appropriate, to meet public demand for trails beginning in **July 2006**.
4. Design, construct and enhance non-personal interpretive facilities (such as kiosks and trailside exhibits) and other media in 12 State Parks starting in **July 2007** to serve public demand for cultural and environmental education opportunities. Develop a maintenance schedule and funding plan for these facilities and other media as they come on-line.

Objective III.

Pursue new state park lands and water resources to meet current and future demand.

Action Strategies:

1. Produce an annual, prioritized list of land acquisition needs at existing park areas beginning in **April 2005**.
2. Create a plan to acquire water storage rights for Chatfield and Pueblo Reservoirs and for the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area by **January 2007**; begin to implement and update it annually.
3. Survey those holding water rights that could impact parks by **July 2007**, to determine the feasibility of water acquisition as an alternative to short-term leasing.
4. To help maximize existing water supplies within our parks by **December 2009**, annually review and renew existing water management agreements and pursue new purchase agreements with major providers, irrigation districts and municipalities.
5. To meet the recreation demands of an increasing population, design, develop and open Cheyenne Mountain, St. Vrain and Staunton State Parks by **December 2009**. Initiate development planning for Lone Mesa State Park by **July 2009**.



Objective IV.

As a statewide leader, promote participation in Colorado's outdoor recreation opportunities.

Action Strategies:

1. Annually offer one trail grant writing workshop within each of the three Parks regions to public and private entities, beginning in **April 2005**, to increase the awareness of on-the-ground funding for trails and to help future grantees become more competitive in the State Trails Program grant application process.
2. To more effectively provide boating safety in Colorado, pursue legislation in **2006** to expand the educational requirements for young motorboat operators.
3. Create three additional Adopt-A-Trail programs in State Parks by **January 2006**. Modify and improve the program, then implement it in 50 percent of State Parks beginning in **January 2007**.
4. Create an Internet-based, statewide inventory map of all trails in Colorado beginning in **July 2007**. The system should provide general trail information and promotion, way finding, trail planning, management and monitoring. It will be accessible to the general public, user groups and all government entities.
5. Update Colorado's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) starting **July 2007**; distribute the new document by **January 2009**.
6. Hire a consultant to produce a development plan for the Colorado Front Range Trail (CFRT) by **September 2005**. The plan will be finished by **September 2006** and implementation will begin immediately to complete the plan's identified priorities for the CFRT corridor.
7. Provide outstanding service to customers in vessel, snowmobile and off-highway vehicle registrations programs through quality facilities, maps and other efforts.





Goal: Natural Resources



Improve and sustain the ecological, scenic and scientific assets in and around state parklands through proactive stewardship.

Colorado State Parks is duty-bound to provide places that are the best and most representative of the state's available resources, as well as to preserve and protect these resources for all time. With increased threats to the natural resources in state parks, taking care of existing resources and meeting the agency's resource stewardship mandate will require increased focus and attention on parkland natural resources.

As intact natural systems are reduced throughout Colorado, state parks should, where appropriate and possible, serve as models of healthy, natural and sustainable ecosystems. To succeed in such efforts, existing resources must be understood. This understanding begins with an inventory of all flora, fauna and other resources within each park.

State Parks must continue to increase collaboration with other agencies and higher-education institutions, taking advantage of outside expertise to expand agency knowledge and foster help with resource management. To ensure that resource management

remains a high priority, these values and priorities must be integrated into agency plans and agency staff must be properly trained to effectively manage these resources.

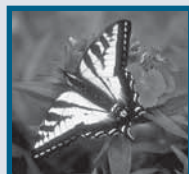


Objective I.

Inventory State Parks natural resources to determine their nature, location and overall condition.

Action Strategies:

1. Continue installation of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping data in at least three parks per year, beginning in **September 2005**, and ensure all remaining parks have data by **January 2009**.
2. Complete a set of baseline natural resource inventories and a matrix of additional inventories desired at all parks by **July 2007**.
3. Develop and implement a GIS plan by **July 2007** that identifies the most cost-effective way to meet the natural resource inventory and mapping needs for the park system. Implement the plan by **July 2008**.
4. Formalize a stewardship plan template by **July 2007**, which defines the categories and extent of resources to be assessed through natural resource inventories.



Objective II.

Manage and monitor State Parks natural resources to limit impacts and ensure that the condition of the resources, natural view-shed and ecological communities remain intact for future generations.

Action Strategies:

1. To help enhance State Parks' natural resource decisions and expertise, form an interdisciplinary team of Parks' staff and external natural resource scientists and experts. Define the team scope and role through the development of a charter, and conduct the first team meeting by **July 2006**.
2. Use the natural resource interdisciplinary team to review park stewardship plans and best management practices, such as re-vegetation performance standards, at least four times per year, starting in **July 2006**.
3. Ensure on-the-ground actions to meet stewardship objectives are carried out at each park by creating annual work plans listing resource accomplishments and targeted resource actions for the coming year, along with associated funding requests, beginning in **January 2006**.
4. Create and implement a natural resource monitoring schedule for each park, beginning in **January 2007**, that addresses monitoring needs by resource categories and identifies appropriate monitoring frequency and responsibilities.
5. To provide adequate and timely stewardship program staff assistance to parks for natural resource issues (i.e., noxious weeds and native revegetation), address prioritized needs of at least eight parks per year, or 50% of the annual requests, beginning in **July 2008**.

Objective III.

Integrate monitoring and management of State Parks' natural resources into management, development, training and marketing plans.

Action Strategies:

1. Complete draft stewardship plans for the remaining seven parks, beginning in **April 2006**, and ensure all parks have final plans approved by **July 2008**. Create a schedule by **July 2009** to bring the 41 older stewardship plans up to the new standards in coordination with park management plan revisions.
2. The natural resources interdisciplinary team will identify baseline training needs and standards for all Parks employees to enhance natural resource management, beginning in **July 2006**; provide these to the agency's training committee identified in the agency's Human Resources Goal on page 22.
3. Formalize and institutionalize stewardship concepts, resource education needs and standards beginning in **July 2007**. Concepts will include approaches to legal mandates on resource protection, adoption of a landscape zone system and carrying capacity measurements and thresholds.



Objective IV.

Cooperate with other agencies and conservation organizations to collect, share and disseminate natural resource information and to coordinate resource management.

Action Strategies:

1. Improve the Natural Areas understanding and visibility within State Parks, Colorado's conservation community and with the public by beginning to create a communications plan in **January 2006** and implementing it by **July 2007**.
2. Provide stewardship for the designated Colorado Natural Areas by maintaining stewardship volunteers and by Parks staff monitoring Natural Areas at least once annually, beginning in **July 2006**.
3. Work closely with universities and state and federal agencies to coordinate collection and evaluation of natural resource information within state parks. Provide a matrix of resource study needs to these entities by **July 2007**; secure at least four agreements with these entities by **July 2008**.
4. Improve the visibility and emphasis on natural resource protection by offering recognition and awards for good stewards starting in **January 2007**. At least three resource protection awards will be presented to staff each year, and at least one will go to a volunteer or collaborating organization member.
5. Ensure State Parks' personnel identify opportunities for resource management collaboration within watersheds by providing annual training for park managers, starting in **July 2008**. Each park will actively engage in at least one watershed related project, beginning in **July 2009**.





Goal: Financial Management



Develop and implement appropriate strategies to stabilize and strengthen State Parks' financial condition.

Colorado's current economic backdrop poses financial challenges for State Parks over the coming years. State spending restrictions outlined in the TABOR significantly limit the ability of State Parks to maintain adequate growth. As a result, state General Fund tax dollar support to State Parks has fallen considerably over recent years from an historically consistent 30% level of the agency's overall budget. To remain financially stable in the uncertain times ahead, State Parks remains committed to being innovative, creative and willing to step outside the agency's "comfort zone."

In the near future, continuing efforts by the Governor and state Legislature to ease the TABOR restrictions appears to be the best approach to resolve State Parks' financial challenges. If a remedy to the spending restrictions under TABOR do not materialize, then State Parks must explore the potentials that statutory "Enterprise" status may hold.

This enterprise status, viewed as a way for State Parks to operate with more flexibility (as in the private sector), may be the most practical way to increase the agency's self-sufficiency, enabling it to better meet the public's needs and expectations.

Strong sentiment from participants of the town meetings and 2002 Market Assessment Study indicate that the State Parks system should not pay for itself entirely through fees. Beneficiaries of the agency's parks, recreation opportunities and statewide programs are not simply limited to those who pay the park fees. The personal, social and economic benefits of State Parks, including the opportunity to experience physical and spiritual "re-creation", should remain available to all citizens, regardless of their economic status. Although State Parks must generate revenue through user fees, the agency recognizes its historic and legal responsibility to keep parks accessible and affordable to all visitors. In the coming years State Parks will make a reasonable, understandable and equitable system of user fees a priority. The agency will also commit to working with the State Legislature to retain a reasonable percentage of its total budget from the state's General Fund tax dollars.

Efficient financial strategies must be in place in the future to achieve this agency goal. Through solid financial planning techniques, such as business planning for new parks and initiatives, the agency will ensure more effective and efficient financial decisions.

Objective I.

Deliver a financially stable yet diverse park system that meets a range of visitor needs.

Action Strategies:

1. To ensure a financially viable Parks system, work with the General Assembly, the Governor's Office, the Department of Natural Resources, park constituents and others to explore legislative and other remedies.
2. Conduct a professional, comprehensive asset-investment analysis at one pilot park by **July 2006** to identify and recommend specific actions to improve efficiency, including increased investment and potential divestment of park assets. Complete similar analyses in all remaining parks by completing six parks annually, beginning in **July 2006**.
3. Through an outside contractor, evaluate the specific impacts that varying levels of State Parks self-sufficiency will have on park visitors, the general public, Parks' natural resources and staff by **July 2006**. Develop a self-sufficiency communication plan and disseminate this information to decision and policy makers, the public and State Parks' staff, beginning in **July 2006**.

⁷As defined by the TABOR amendment, an "Enterprise" is "a government-owned business authorized to issue its own revenue bonds and receiving under ten percent of annual revenue in grants from all Colorado state and local governments combined." State Parks would need to meet all of these criteria to qualify as an "Enterprise."

Objective II.

Base all decisions on reliable (long and short-term) financial planning and analysis.

Action Strategies:

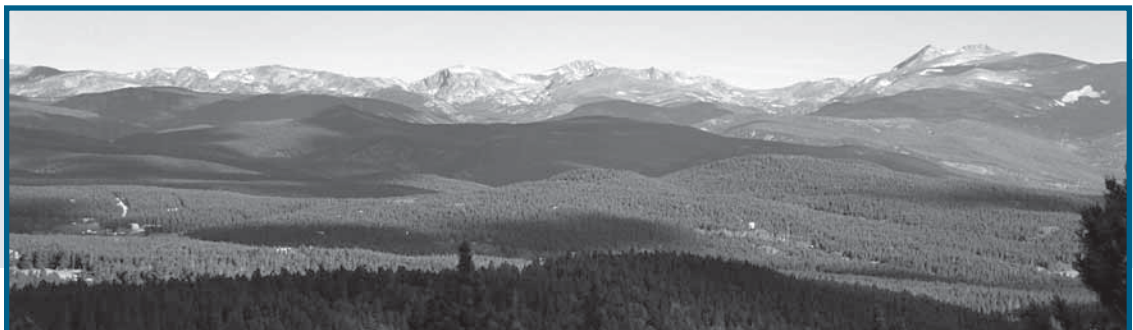
1. Utilize the information prepared in the annual implementation plan to set State Parks priorities and resource allocations, beginning in **April 2005**.
2. Create a business plan template for considering proposed projects and initiatives, beginning in **April 2006**, which will apply an effective cost-benefit analysis with a full accounting of administrative, fiscal and workforce expenditures. Implement for use in **FY 2007-2008** budget.
3. Develop a five-year agency-wide business plan to provide a blueprint for our business decisions, guide efforts to efficiently generate revenue, and to be used in the annual budget implementation plan process, for **FY 2008-2009**; update this business plan annually. Based on available surveys, trend analyses and other information, this plan should project expenditures and revenue, identify fee changes and other initiatives to increase revenue.

Objective III:

Improve the management of State Parks' project and program funding and its strategic use of available resources.

Action Strategies:

1. By **July** of each year, review ongoing GOCO, Lottery and federally funded projects that are not meeting anticipated timelines. Reprioritize if necessary and determine whether to reallocate specific project funds for other Park concerns, beginning with the **FY 2005-2006** budget cycle.
2. Analyze and assess the feasibility for State Parks to operate concessions, as conditions warrant, beginning in **April 2005**.
3. To more effectively manage capital projects, implement an automated system by **July 2007** to track and report on all existing capital projects.
4. Modify the State Parks' capital development program, beginning in **October 2005**, to be implemented with the **FY 2006-2007** budget to effectively manage the planning, development, coordination and tracking of all agency capital projects, including those specifically mentioned in this strategic plan.
5. Work directly with the Colorado Transportation Commission, beginning in **January 2007**, to review the annual funding received for park roads. Road funding priorities will be consistent with the agency's Preventive Maintenance and Management Plan and findings in the 2002 State Parks Road Assessment Plan.
6. As part of the project-specific business plans and regular budgeting process, build projected controlled maintenance and operating costs into the funding plan of every capital project, beginning with the **FY 2007-2008** budget.



Objective IV:

Evaluate and structure state park fees to maximize revenues while providing accessibility and affordability to all visitors.

Action Strategies:

1. Revise the State Parks concession program by **July 2005**, where appropriate, to maximize State Parks' revenue from concessions.
2. Work with the General Assembly in **2006** to increase the agency's flexibility in adjusting fees in response to changes in the marketplace.
3. Develop a more comprehensive, simple and understandable system of fees and passes, beginning in **July 2006** that includes an analysis of park fee elasticity.





Goal: Human Resources



Motivate and enable a dedicated and customer-focused workforce.

State Parks takes pride in its ability to accomplish so much with so few staff. For years the agency has ranked as one of the leanest park systems in the nation, with one of the lowest ratios of employees to both visitors and resources managed in the country. State Parks employs people who are passionate about their jobs, are capable of accomplishing a lot with very little, have outstanding “people skills” and possess a deep-seated commitment to both customer and public service.

To help the professional staff retain and develop necessary skills to perform their duties, State Parks is committed to increasing human resource investments, enabling the agency to build and retain a creative and competitive workforce. To ensure that we can retain our ability to provide quality recreation opportunities, we clearly must identify and quantify staffing needs across the agency.

As part of these efforts, State Parks is committed to developing a succession plan, ensuring that as more senior employees move toward retirement, junior employees can fill their shoes. The agency must identify the kind of jobs needed for the future along with the necessary skills and expertise.

To motivate and enable its workforce, State Parks must also commit to creating an atmosphere that encourages effective internal communications and ensures and promotes employee ideas, cultivating involvement when agency decisions are made. Outstanding work by employees will be recognized and encouraged through identified employee incentives.

Objective I.

Facilitate clear and effective communication among State Parks employees.

Action Strategies:

1. Survey all Parks employees, beginning in **October 2005**, to determine effective ways to improve and encourage internal communications, staff creativity and innovative thinking. Implement appropriate recommendations by **January 2006**.
2. Identify improved methods for staff to voice concerns and make suggestions for improvements to supervisors and the Parks Leadership Team, beginning in **October 2005**. Implement appropriate recommendations by **January 2006**.
3. Create a recommendation for a new State Parks Intranet for internal communications, beginning in **April 2006**. The Intranet should be fully deployed by **January 2007**.



Objective II.

Assure that State Parks has a sufficient number of full-time and seasonal employees, and the necessary equipment and workspace to efficiently perform their job responsibilities.

Action Strategies:

1. Ensure State Parks' staff is provided with adequate hardware, software and technical support to effectively utilize the IT projects being deployed across the agency. Update the agency-wide IT needs assessment by **July 2005**, and begin funding an annual and sustainable plan to meet these agency IT needs.
2. Provide assistance to the Department of Natural Resources Personnel Office by **January 2006** to help exclusively with filling State Parks priority vacancies.
3. Develop a State Parks' recruitment strategy to advertise and promote full-time and seasonal State Park Ranger positions, beginning in **July 2005**.
4. Establish an allocation plan, equipment standards and replacement schedules for heavy equipment, State Parks-owned vehicles and alternative vehicles, beginning in **July 2006**.
5. Establish employee workspace requirements based on job functions for all staff workspaces by **June 2006**. Prioritize these investments by **December 2006** and lease or purchase needed workspace based on available funds.
6. By **July 2008**, update the agency's current staffing model to evaluate staff deficiencies and analyze the efficiency of using seasonal employees, volunteers and contractors. Implement appropriate recommendations, beginning in **July 2009**.

Objective III.

Assess, develop and select training opportunities and requirements for State Parks employees.

Action Strategies:

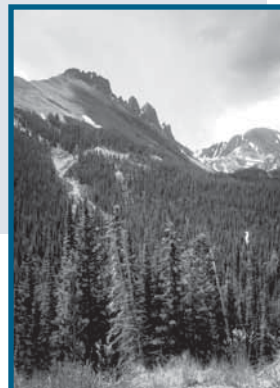
1. Form a training committee through a team charter by **July 2005** to assess and prioritize Division-wide training needs and development for current employees. Training recommendations will be implemented beginning in **January 2006**. The team charter will specifically mention, but may not be limited to customer service, resource stewardship and asset management standards training, performance appraisal training, IT and other regularly scheduled training opportunities through the Employee Development Seminars.
2. Through the Training Committee or another identified individual or group, institute an annually updated succession plan by **July 2006**, which includes an employee-mentoring program to develop existing staff for career advancement.
3. Implement a State Parks' employee work exchange program with at least 10 percent of staff participating for eight to 16 hours each year, beginning in **January 2006**.
4. Develop and implement a formal new employee training and evaluation program by **July 2006** for all new full-time employees. Ensure that the training is tied to customer service, resource stewardship and asset management standards.

Objective IV.

Implement employee incentive programs to recognize and reward motivated and dedicated employees.

Action Strategies:

1. Create and implement a formal employee awards and incentives program by **July 2006**, which will include an established nomination, selection and recognition process.





Goal: Marketing



Retain current and acquire new customers through exceptional service and by improving State Parks' visibility with innovative marketing.

State Parks' extensive public outreach over the past two years has revealed the importance of taking care of existing customers and seeking new ones. However, to the public, Colorado's State Parks remain a relatively undiscovered resource. To thrive, the agency must increase public awareness of Colorado's outdoor recreation opportunities; this task can be accomplished by encouraging responsible, public participation in the enjoyment and protection of natural resources through improved and more integrated visitor information and marketing.

Building on findings in the 2002 State Parks Market Assessment Study⁸, the agency must target marketing dollars toward increasing knowledge of the parks' unique attributes. State Parks will also focus on propelling park visitors along a continuum of public engagement with State Parks. Objectives and actions will be tailored to establish long-term connections with visitors. Those who currently do not use the parks will be educated about the resources, then enlightened about park programs and resources. Existing visitors

will be encouraged to support State Parks and become lifelong advocates for its programs and services.



Objective I:

Broaden the agency's visibility by applying marketing strategies that emphasize the unique attributes of State Parks.

Action Strategies:

1. Display the State Parks logo on all park vehicles, equipment and agency internal and external communications, beginning in **April 2005**. Complete this task by **December 2006**.
2. Develop, maintain and increase the distribution of effective printed individual park and system-wide brochures, seasonal attractions information and other park promotional materials, beginning in **April 2005**.
3. Beginning in **April 2005**, enhance and update electronic communications through direct customer mailings and Web site links.
4. Continue to track and analyze news releases, feature stories and media familiarization tours to strategically increase State Parks' media exposure, beginning in **April 2005**.
5. Identify and participate annually in high profile and profitable trade and travel shows in Colorado and surrounding states, beginning in **April 2005**.
6. Identify and participate annually in ten community events in Colorado that provide the greatest marketing value, beginning in **April 2005**.
7. Begin developing the scope of a major State Parks Web site overhaul by **July 2005**. Provide funding for this project by **January 2006** and complete the overhaul by **December 2006**.
8. In the **2006** State Parks Marketing Plan, fully implement a consistent theme, image and message.

⁸ 2002 State Parks Market Assessment Study, PricewaterhouseCoopers, L.L.C., December 2002.

Objective II.

Retain and foster impassioned customers by building life-long relationships through exceptional service and innovative approaches.

Action Strategies:

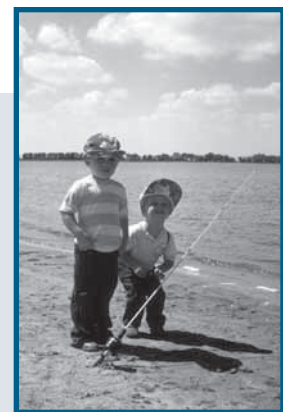
1. Update the media guide by **July 2005** to provide procedures on internal and external communications when conducting day-to-day operations and in providing responses to emergency situations.
2. Develop a guest services program to connect with more frequent customers by **January 2006**. Implement the program in the **FY 2007-2008** budget cycle.
3. Complete an Entrance Automation Feasibility Study by **March 2006** that will determine the best technology to provide effective customer interaction and park management at Park entrances.
4. Identify and fund the acquisition of a functional software database by **February 2007** that will consolidate all State Parks customer and stakeholder databases. Fully implement and maintain the database by **December 2007**.

Objective III.

Attract future visitors by creating connections to the outdoors and opportunities for discovery that will inspire individuals and groups to experience State Parks.

Action Strategies:

1. Annually develop three or more marketing campaigns that will target infrequent State Parks users and promote the diversity of activities available in the parks, as well as year-round use, beginning in **April 2005**.
2. Beginning in **April 2005**, increase efforts to attract individuals who are interested but who do not currently visit the parks, by developing three or more marketing campaigns each year that promote the benefits of the parks.
3. Begin development of a specific and measurable program by **January 2006**, to increase park visitation during weekdays and the off-seasons, and implement the program by **September 2006**.
4. Encourage each state park, management area and relevant program areas to attract first-time visitors by hosting at least one public event annually. Planning for these events would begin **April 2006**.
5. Conduct a system-wide marketing assessment study every five years, beginning in **January 2007** that identifies the needs and expectations of current and future customers. Questions within the survey will determine State Parks' success in significantly increasing name recognition compared to the 2002 study.





Goal: Partnerships



Strengthen partnerships and strategically engage new partners to achieve common goals and mission.

Many successful partnerships have been established and nurtured to improve State Parks' programs and promote outdoor recreation statewide. For this agency to survive, it must transition further toward seeking assistance from other agencies, volunteers, local constituency groups, the private sector and individuals through partnerships.

State parks are superb locations to attract and retain legions of volunteers. Volunteerism provides camaraderie, serves as a connection to "place" and provides opportunities for Colorado residents of all ages to give something back to their state and community. Over the next five years, the agency will expand volunteerism, enabling seniors to pursue learning opportunities, youth to develop skills and knowledge, and others to serve within their local communities. Volunteerism at State Parks can grow significantly. The agency pledges to increase its recruitment, retention and recognition of talented volunteers.

Additionally, State Parks personnel will concentrate on strengthening the agency by cultivating advocates for the State Parks mission and vision. Partnerships have been a cornerstone in effectively leveraging the agency's financial resources through GOCO funds and cost-share agreements. Agency staff must investigate ways that private philanthropy can become part of the mix. State Parks must seek ways to increase opportunities for the public to contribute to park acquisitions and educational opportunities. By strengthening relationships with "Friends" groups, individuals can make a significant difference through donation and support of individual park operations and other public services.

Over the coming years it will be more important than ever for State Parks to also serve as a statewide organizer and catalyst for planning and partnership efforts by recreation professionals, constituents and others.

Objective I.

Establish and cultivate State Parks' champions and advocates, including individuals, organizations, government entities and user groups.

Action Strategies:

1. Ensure each park communicates at least twice a year with county commissioners, municipal officials, chambers of commerce, tourism offices and/or other local officials, beginning in **April 2005**.
2. Expand State Parks' board member involvement to accomplish agency priorities through State Parks programs and park manager briefings and board member attendance at relevant meetings, beginning in **April 2005**.
3. Create and maintain a contact list of retired State Parks employees in the agency's stakeholder database, beginning in **April 2005**, to keep them informed about important State Parks events and issues.
4. To secure ongoing support for State Parks priorities, develop an annual plan by **May 2005** to increase agency outreach efforts with all Colorado congressional delegation members and key staff.
5. Strengthen a working partnership with the Colorado General Assembly by developing a legislative plan by **June** of each year, which includes regular briefings, site visits and collaboration on relevant issues.
6. Expand opportunities for Colorado's youth to develop an awareness of natural resource stewardship and outdoor recreation by increasing learning, volunteer and work opportunities in parks, beginning in **July 2007**.

Objective II.

Expand and promote meaningful opportunities for volunteer partners.

Action Strategies:

1. Provide four established volunteer program training opportunities per year that are available to all agency employees, beginning in **April 2005**.
2. Create and implement a five-year volunteer program plan by **January 2006**, which includes the strategic deployment of program resources to foster existing volunteer partnerships and increase the agency's volunteer numbers and functions.
3. Create and implement a volunteer marketing strategy by **January 2006** that addresses recruitment and retention.
4. Develop a comprehensive, ongoing strategy to increase State Parks volunteer retention, including a suggested list of award items and formal recognition options, by **January 2006**.
5. Analyze and report on current "Friends" groups and make recommendations on charters, agreements and the financial viability and sustainability of these existing partnerships by **June 2007**.

Objective III.

Emphasize partnerships to leverage and enhance on-the-ground park and program resources.

Action Strategies:

1. Through strong support from the agency's Congressional delegation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, secure federal funds on an annual basis that are needed to complete the recreation facility renovations at Chatfield, Cherry Creek and Trinidad State Parks, beginning in **April 2005**.
2. To increase partnership potential, arrange joint meetings at least once each year with the leadership staff, commission or board of the Division of Wildlife, the State Land Board, GOCO, the Colorado Department of Transportation, other policy setting bodies within the Colorado Department of Natural Resources agencies and (state-) or region-level leadership within the federal land management agencies, beginning in **April 2005**.
3. Pursue and secure at least three appropriate cooperative marketing agreements, corporate sponsorships or similar fundraising partnerships each year, beginning in **April 2005**.
4. Acknowledge State Parks' financial partners through recognition on signs and other agency information, beginning in **April 2005**.
5. Develop a cost share agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) by **January 2006** to renovate recreation facilities at Lake Pueblo State Park and provide project funding, beginning **July 2008**.
6. Through **2009**, actively coordinate the implementation of the objectives and actions proposed within SCORP. To further statewide financial leveraging and sustainable outdoor recreation strategies from the SCORP, host one meeting annually, beginning in **September 2005**, with statewide recreation leaders at the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Resource Project (CORRP) meeting.
7. By **July 2007** and upon completion of a project-specific business plan, State Parks will enter into at least one joint recreation management agreement with a federal or local public agency or a non-governmental organization, such as Lake Nighthorse near Durango.
8. Working with the State Parks Foundation, examine ways to expand the Foundation's impact, using effective models demonstrated by other government agencies and non-profit organizations, beginning in **January 2007**.

Objective IV.

Increase the relevance and effectiveness of State Parks' partnerships.

Action Strategies:

1. Develop an evaluation tool by **December 2007** that includes an analysis of existing and proposed partnerships. Using this tool, conduct analyses of at least ten existing partnerships and proposed partnerships, as opportunities arise, by **July 2008**. Begin to allocate or withdraw resources for these partnerships through **2009**.
2. To better facilitate partnerships, identify specific ways to more effectively coordinate and provide resources and leadership for grant writing, creating and implementing interagency agreements, simplifying processes and providing relevant information, beginning in **July 2008**.





Goal: Planning



Apply effective, accurate and reliable information for the analysis, planning and implementation of all decisions.

Effective organizations establish ways to ensure accuracy in important decisions at all levels of the organization. It is essential that State Parks creates and maintains reliable processes to disseminate accurate and timely information within the agency. Although the agency will pursue a variety of strategies, technology is viewed as a primary tool to accomplish this vision. Therefore, the agency is committed to continuing the implementation of its electronic portal for administrative applications such as public safety and agency revenue reporting.

Effectively gathering external information is a key component of the agency's efforts over the coming years as well. Agency personnel will need to continuously and proactively check information from park visitors, state residents and other resources.

To ensure that the best interests of State Parks and the people of Colorado are met, integrated planning will occur at all levels of the organization - all agency staff

will be involved with and responsible for successful planning. The Five-Year Strategic Plan will be the blueprint for allocation of State Parks' budget and other resources. This will also largely determine content of other planning efforts including the annual implementation plan, our agency annual report and plans for specific parks and programs.



Objective I.

Improve the collection, interpretation and distribution of current, reliable information to ensure consistent and strategic agency planning and decision-making.

Action Strategies

1. Develop comprehensive evaluation criteria for potential new park properties and apply it to current park properties by **January 2007**.
2. By **July** of each year, beginning in **2005**, identify critical agency reports and articulate the annual timeline for production. Then produce and distribute the reports to Parks board members and affected staff throughout the agency on a regular basis.
3. Every five years, beginning in **April 2005**, update visitation estimation parameters to ensure accurate and reliable visitation reporting at each park. At the same time, complete a comprehensive, system-wide visitor expectation and satisfaction study to assess critical and important issues to more thoroughly understand park visitors.
4. By **June 2005**, assess State Parks' automated record keeping system and related IT applications to determine its effectiveness as the backbone for future agency IT projects. Determine necessary changes to this system and future modules that the system will include by **December 2005**. Begin fully funding development of and staff training for these system modules by **July 2006**.
5. Create a summary data report of Colorado-specific and national recreational demands and trends every five years, beginning in **January 2007**.
6. Beginning in **July 2007**, provide reliable statewide electronic access to all documents, using imaging technology and other methods. Complete agency access by **July 2009**.

Objective II.

Create, implement and annually update the agency-wide, Five-Year Strategic Plan to allocate agency resources.

Action Strategies

1. Complete an annual implementation plan by **April** that integrates with State Parks' budgeting process. Finalize the plan by **early June** of each year, beginning in **2005**.
2. Develop a procedure and timeline for producing a State Parks Annual Report to assess the agency's strategic plan and other accomplishments from the prior fiscal year, beginning in **April 2005**. By the same deadline, establish a process to review and update the Five-Year Strategic Plan action strategies and other related components each year that will be evaluated when considering the annual Implementation Plan. Implement both of these efforts, beginning in **July 2005**, and produce the first annual report by **December 2005**.
3. Prepare and finalize a Strategic Plan every five years, to be reviewed annually and updated as needed, beginning in **January 2009**. Apply to preparation for next Five-Year Strategic Plan, 2010-2015.

Objective III.

Develop specific, consistent plans for each program and section that support the Strategic Plan.

Action Strategies

1. Design and produce a template for staff to use when developing program and section plans by **October 2005**.
2. Establish the guidelines, including timeline, for developing a program or section plan by **January 2006**; effectively communicate these guidelines to staff.
3. Beginning in **January 2006**, review and update program and section plans for analytical thoroughness, consistency with the Five-Year Strategic Plan and realistic and justifiable budget projections.

Objective IV.

Produce an integrated Management Plan for each park that supports the Strategic Plan.

Action Strategies

1. Design and produce a template for each individual park management plan by **July 2007**. These integrated plans may include: natural resources stewardship, business, conceptual design, interpretation, IT management and operations, recreation, archaeological and cultural resources, marketing, interpretation, volunteer resources and land and water assets.
2. Prepare at least three individual state park management plans each year, beginning in **October 2007**.
3. Periodically review individual park management plans for analytical thoroughness, consistency with the Five-Year Strategic Plan and realistic budget projections. This will occur annually, beginning in **January 2008**.

Objective V.

Update and maintain policies and procedures to provide direction for all agency planning and decision-making.

Action Strategies:

1. Beginning in **April 2005**, review current board policies, administrative directives, procedures and manuals. Develop a list of specific sections and full documents that need to be updated or repealed beginning in **January 2006**. By **January 2007**, create a schedule for future maintenance of this information. This will include concession data, public safety procedures and volunteer manuals.
2. Ensure all staff have access to and comprehension of the process for creating agency rules, policies and procedures by **January 2006**. Then begin to regularly update an electronic version of agency rules, regulations, policies and procedures, as well as Executive Orders.





Glossary of Terms



Annual Report

Produced each year, this report will highlight Division-wide annual accomplishments and highlight upcoming actions that Parks will undertake in the following year.

Asset Management Plan

Provides a comprehensive assessment and analysis of State Parks assets, their identification and current status and resource needs to rehabilitate them.

Action Strategies

Methods to achieve the planning goals and objectives – quantified end products or outcomes with the best use of resources.

Charter

A written document, signed by the State Parks Leadership Team, which conveys specific rights to a group of individuals to complete a (short-) or long-term task on behalf of the Division.

Commercial River Outfitter Licensing Program

To ensure safe, exciting whitewater rafting experiences for hundreds of thousands of individuals each year, State Parks annually registers approximately 170 commercial river outfitters.

Concession

A formal agreement with a person, corporation, partnership, association or entity for the use of certain lands and/or facilities with the specific purpose to provide the general public with services, products, facilities or programs.

Cost Share

A formal agreement to share project or program funding between State Parks and one or more public or private entity(ies).

Ecological Communities

Groups or individual species of plants and animals of several kinds living together.⁹

Enterprise (or “enterprise status”)

Defined in Colorado statute as, “a government-owned business authorized to issue its own revenue bonds and receiving under 10% of annual revenue in grants from all Colorado state and local governments combined.”

Environmental Education

“A life-long process of discovering and understanding Earth’s natural systems and the human role in those systems.”¹⁰ State Parks make excellent outdoor classrooms, providing a direct and first-hand experience with the natural resources existing in state parks.

Facility

Something tangible that is built, installed or established in a park to serve a particular purpose (i.e., visitor center, trails, picnic site or campground).

Fair Market Value

The fair market value established through the appraisal process. It includes the capital assets as well as the going concern value of the business.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

A computer program that creates multi-layered and multipurpose geographic maps for planning and other practical applications.

Goals

Set the desired future for State Parks in stating what the agency needs to do to accomplish its mission and vision.

GOCO¹¹

In 1992, the citizens of Colorado voted to create Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund, Article XXVII of the Colorado Constitution. GOCO administers grants from a portion of state lottery proceeds to projects that preserve, protect, and enhance the state’s wildlife, parks, rivers, trails, and open spaces.

Implementation Plan

An annual planning process, due at the end of March each year, which specifically describes action strategies from the Five-Year Strategic Plan to be funded in the next State fiscal year and/or budgeting cycle. It further identifies specific agency funds and staff resources responsible for accomplishing the action strategy and the timeline for completion. It is developed internally and ultimately approved by State Parks’ Leadership Team by May of each year.

⁹ Brewer, Richard. (1988). *The Science of Ecology*. Orlando: Saunders College Publishing.

¹⁰ Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education definition.

¹¹ Provided by Great Outdoors Colorado - for more information, go to www.goco.org.

Infrastructure

The stock of facilities and capital equipment needed for the basic functioning of a state park. These include, but are not limited to, utilities (water, sewer, gas and electricity) and roads.

Interpretation

An informational and inspirational process designed to enhance understanding, appreciation and protection of Colorado's cultural and natural resources.

- Personal: Delivered by an interpreter/naturalist to visitors, this method can include everything from hikes, fireside programs and slide presentations to children's activities, field experiences, demonstrations and living history.
- Non-Personal: Not delivered by an interpreter/naturalist. Rather, the visitor is provided diverse opportunities ranging from self-guided trails, wayside exhibits, interpretive kiosks, interactive exhibits and exhibits in a visitor center to brochures, video and cassette tapes and CD-ROMs.
- Self-directed: Directs the visitor to explore or discover the resource in a particular way. It is one form of non-personal interpretation.

Interpretation and Environmental Education (I&EE) Plan

Provides direction and establishes priorities to guide State Parks in its provision of environmental education and interpretive services. The plan was last revised in 1999 and is targeted to be updated in 2005 to reflect the agency's new vision, mission and goals.

Leadership Team

Consists of the State Parks Director, two Assistant Directors, Chief Financial Officer, three Region Managers and three Assistant Region Managers. The Team sets the overall management direction for the agency.

LEED-NC

New building construction standards that conform to the LEED rating system - a voluntary consensus-based national standard for developing high performance, sustainable buildings.

LEED-EB

Existing building renovation/rehabilitation standards, which conform to LEED rating system a voluntary consensus-based national standard for developing high performance, sustainable buildings.¹²

¹²More information found at: http://www.usgbc.org/leed/leed_main.asp

Management Plan

A long-term outline of a project or government function.

Mission

State Parks' reason for existence: basic purpose, what it does, why it does it and for whom.

Natural Areas

Areas considered being original or unique Colorado landscapes on either public or private land. Areas can consist of native plant communities, geologic formations or processes, paleontological sites, or habitat for rare plants or animals that State Parks' manage. The Natural Areas program serves a vital role in providing information to protect these unique and treasured places in Colorado. This has primarily been accomplished through resource inventories and stewardship plans.

Natural View-Shed

The ability to view natural and scenic vistas from a given area in their intended state.

Objectives

Statements that reflect the desired expectations and requirements to be achieved by State Parks under each goal statement.

Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Program

State Parks administers the Colorado Off-Highway Vehicle Program, a registration fee program for off-highway recreation vehicles such as motorcycles, ATVs, and some four-wheel drive vehicles that are operated on public lands. OHV registration dollars fund trail maintenance and construction, administration, and programs encouraging safe and responsible OHV use.

PARKS Project

Parks' Automated Record Keeping System - continuously being used and designed to house important data and information for all aspects of Parks' operations and planning is accessible to all employees and volunteers throughout the state.

Park Management Plan

A public document that outlines the overall direction for a Colorado State Park. The primary goals are (1) to ensure there is a clearly defined direction for the maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity in the park, and (2) to guide the management and development of the park. The direction outlined in the management plan is used by park managers to set the strategic direction for the development and operation of the park.

Program

A formal system of projects or services within State Parks intended to meet a public need. State Parks' programs directly support legal directives from the State Legislature and include such projects and services as recreation trails, natural areas, registration of snowmobiles, boats and off-highway vehicles, volunteerism, camping reservations and boat safety. Plans for each program are developed accordingly.

SCORP

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is funded by federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants under a congressional act passed in 1964. It provides a collaborative response to the challenges facing recreation and tourism leaders across the state. It also examines outdoor recreation trends and demands with special attention to the contribution of recreation and tourism to Colorado's regional economies. It must be periodically updated and in place for Colorado to receive federal LWCF dollars for outdoor recreation property acquisition and development.

Self-sufficiency

The level of budget support generated by Colorado State Parks from revenue sources other than the state's General Fund.

Snowmobile Registration

State Parks administers a registration fee program for snowmobiles and directs all funding back into projects that benefit the users.

Statutory Authority

"It is the policy of the state of Colorado that the natural, scenic, scientific, and outdoor recreation areas of this state are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and visitors of this state. It is further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program of outdoor recreation in order to offer the greatest possible variety of outdoor recreational opportunities to the people of this state and its visitors and that to carry out such program and policy there shall be a continuous operation of acquisition, development, and management of outdoor recreation lands, waters, and facilities." [33-10-101 (1), Colorado Revised Statutes]

State Parks Board

A Governor appointed, five-member decision-making body for State Parks. Board members represent four regions of the state and an additional member serves at-large. Members are appointed to four-year terms and must be confirmed by the State Senate.

State Trails Program

Nationally recognized, this program annually grants funding (over \$3 million in 2004) from a variety of sources for local and regional trails projects through a highly competitive grant process. Additionally, the program serves as a statewide resource for trails planning and grant writing.

Stewardship

An ethic and practice of maintaining the viability of Colorado's lands, resources, species and natural processes. Stewardship involves managing, conserving, and improving natural resources and the environment. A steward promotes awareness of environmental values and uses sound environmental protection, compliance and restoration practices.

Stewardship Plan

A comprehensive natural resource plan, which is based on a set of baseline resource inventories and always includes comprehensive vegetation mapping and a set of wildlife surveys. The plan contains goals, objectives and recommendations that provide input to the park manager for resource management decisions.

Strategic Plan

The five-year plan sets the future direction for the Division and outlines goals and expectations to meet internal and external environmental challenges. The plan will provide guidance for developing the State Parks' operational, business, marketing and other efforts.

TABOR¹³

The Taxpayer's Bill of Rights (TABOR) – Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution - imposes limits and requirements on the amount of revenue that may be kept by the state in any particular year. Any revenue during a fiscal year in excess of the limitations provided for in TABOR must be refunded to the taxpayers during the next fiscal year unless voters approve its retention.

Vessel Registration and Boat Safety

This program improves boating experiences on Colorado's lakes and reservoirs and registers almost 100,000 boats and personal watercraft annually.

Vision

An expression of State Parks' ideal future - highlighting what the agency wants to strive to become and what it wants to be known for.

Volunteer partners

This term refers to individuals and groups who volunteer for State Parks as well as other groups and organizations that provide support for the State Parks' volunteer program.

¹³ Provided by the Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting - for more information, go to www.state.co.us/gov_dir/govnr_dir/ospb/index.html

Watershed level project

A natural resource management project outside of park boundaries in the same watershed as the park. Project examples include noxious weed control, erosion control and stream habitat improvements.

Work plan

A plan created and submitted to Region Managers by individual Park Managers on an annual basis, which outlines priority park-specific stewardship practices and funding requests for upcoming budget cycles.



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