



# RHODE ISLAND STATE PARKS

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS STUDY



A PATH FORWARD TO SUSTAINING AND STRENGTHENING RHODE ISLAND'S HISTORIC PARKS, BEACHES, BIKEWAYS, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Janet Coit, Director

### BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Terri Bisson, Project Manager;  
Chief Program Development;  
Dean Hoxsie, Associate Director (Acting)  
Larry Mouradjian, Associate Director (Retired)

### Division of Parks & Recreation

John Faltus, Deputy Chief (Retired)  
Frank Floor, Administrator,  
Bureau of Natural Resources & Parks (Acting)  
William Mitchell, Jr., Superintendent  
Jennifer Ogren, Deputy Chief (Acting)  
Robert Paquette, Chief (Retired)  
Gina Simeone, Chief Implementation Aide

### Consultant Team



Margaret Bailey, Sr. Vice President,  
CHM Government Services  
Leon Younger, President, PROS Consulting  
Austfin Hochstetler, Senior Project Manager,  
PROS Consulting Inc.

*Beach area on Olney Pond at Lincoln Woods State Park*

*Cover Photos clockwise from top: East Matunuck State Beach, East Bay Bike Path,  
Fort Wetherill State Park, Pulaski State Park, Lincoln Woods State Park,  
Farmers Market at Goddard Memorial State Park*

*Editorial Layout: Emily Lynch, DEM Public Affairs; Katy Patrick, Katy Patrick Designs  
Photos: Mike Stultz, DEM Public Affairs*

*Report Date: 2018*



**CHAPTER ONE:**  
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... 4-14**

- OVERVIEW ..... 5**
- BACKGROUND..... 7**
- KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 10**
  - INVESTING IN OPERATION AND STAFFING ..... 10**
  - INCREASE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL ..... 12**
  - PROTECT STATE PARK ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ..... 13**
  - MOVING FORWARD..... 14**

**CHAPTER TWO:**  
**MAKING THE CASE ..... 15-19**

- STUDY GOALS AND PROCESS ..... 17**
- PARKS ORGANIZATION ..... 18**

**CHAPTER THREE:**  
**FOCUS AREAS..... 20-33**

- OPERATIONS & STAFFING ..... 20**
- FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL ..... 26**
- ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE ..... 30**

**CHAPTER FOUR:**  
**FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:  
 DIVING DEEP INTO THE DATA ..... 34-77**

**CHAPTER FIVE:**  
**SYSTEM SOLUTIONS:  
 MOVING TOWARD SUSTAINABLE  
 BEST PRACTICES ..... 78-99**

**CHAPTER SIX:**  
**APPENDIX:  
 MAINTENANCE STANDARDS... 100-111**



Brenton Point State Park in Newport



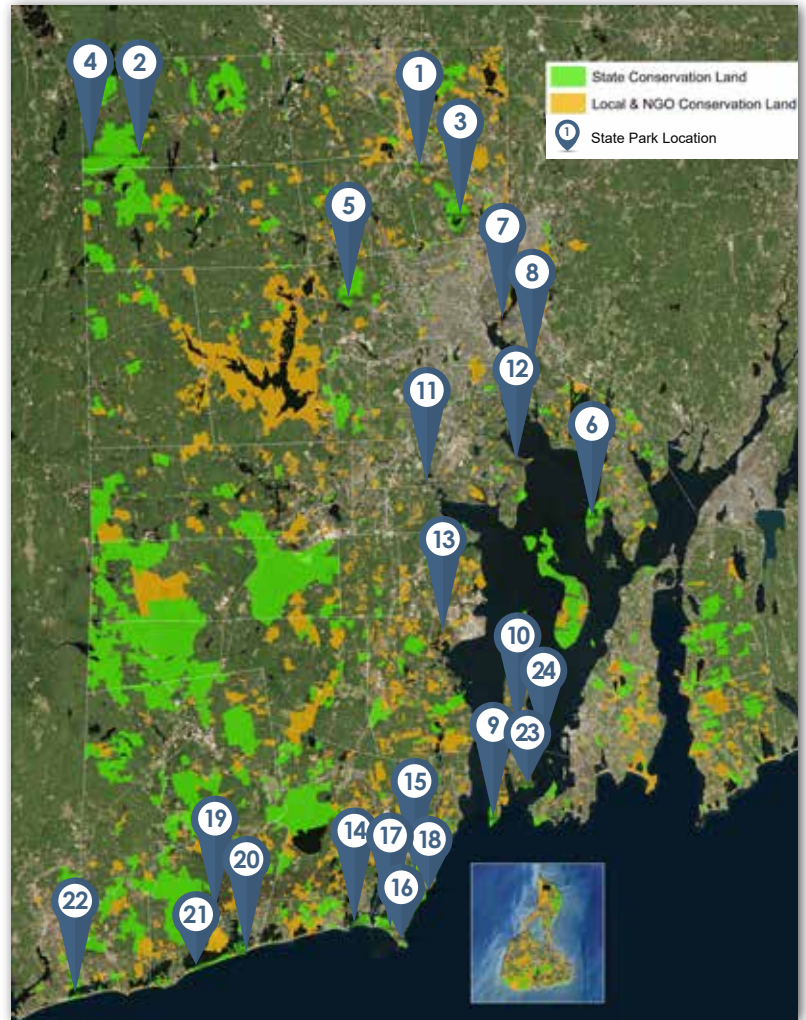
Burlingame State Park & Campground in Charlestown



Fort Wetherill State Park in Jamestown

**Legend**

Baseball	Jogging/Walking Trail
Bike Paths	Mountain Biking
Boating	Performing Arts
Camping	Picnicking
Concert	Playground
Cross Country Skiing	Road Race
Freshwater Fishing	Rugby
Game Fields	Sailing
Golfing	Saltwater Fishing
Hiking Trails	Scuba Diving
Horseback Riding	Shellfishing
Horseshoeing	Sightseeing
Hunting	Snowmobiling
Ice Fishing	Soccer
Ice Skating	Swimming
In-Line Skating	Tennis



*This list represents major facilities. It does not include numerous roadside and small areas managed by DEM Parks & Recreation. Location markers are for representation only and are not exact.*

**1 Blackstone Valley Bikeway & Visitor Center**



**2 George Washington State Campground**



**3 Lincoln Woods State Park**



**4 Pulaski State Park**



**5 Snake Den State Park**



**6 Colt State Park**



**7 East Bay Bike Path**



**8 Haines Memorial State Park**



**9 Beavertail State Park**



**10 Fort Wetherill State Park**



**11 Goddard Memorial State Park**



**12 Rocky Point State Park**



**13 John H. Chafee Nature Preserve**



**14 East Matunuck State Beach**



**15 Fishermen's Memorial State Park**



**16 Roger Wheeler State Beach**



**17 Salty Brine State Beach**



**18 Scarborough State Beach**



**19 Burlingame State Park & Campground**



**20 Charlestown Breachway State Beach**



**21 East Beach State Campground**



**22 Misquamicut State Beach**



**23 Brenton Point State Park**



**24 Fort Adams State Park**





Beavertail State Park in Jamestown

## Overview

This report examines staffing and operations in Rhode Island State Parks conducted by PROS Consulting, Inc. and CHM Government Services. It identifies key challenges and opportunities facing the Rhode Island State Park System today. The recommendations reflect the consultants' experience in working with national, state, and local parks and recreation agencies who are using best practices to deliver sustainable, relevant, and purposeful recreation programs and services to the people they serve. Successful implementation of key recommendations will protect iconic landscapes, natural resources, and cultural heritage; help engage Rhode Islanders in healthy lifestyles; and sustain a major economic driver and tourism engine for the State.

“  
 Our state’s world-class beach facilities, parks, and green spaces are beloved by residents and tourists alike and generate millions of dollars for the local and state economy every year.”

- DEM Director Janet Coit

2016 SNAPSHOT:

 **9.4**  
 MILLION  
 VISITS

**\$38.8**  
 MILLION  
 TAX REVENUE

 **\$311.9**  
 MILLION  
 CONSUMER SPENDING

 **3,709**  
 JOBS  
 SUPPORTED/CREATED  
 ANNUALLY



Newport Folk Festival at Fort Adams State Park in Newport



**123 → 42**

**FULL TIME STAFFING**  
HAS DECREASED BY **67%** SINCE 1989



**1:67**

EXISTING STAFFING LEVELS EQUATE TO 1 FULL TIME EMPLOYEE FOR EVERY 67 MAINTAINED ACRES;  
**BEST PRACTICE IS 1:30**



**> \$800,000**

ANNUAL COST FOR  
**CONTRACTED SERVICES**



**> \$50 MILLION**

**INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS**  
IDENTIFIED DUE TO AGING FACILITIES AND DEFERRED MAINTENANCE



**37.2%**  **INCREASE**

**IN BEACH VISITATION**  
ALONE FROM 2010 TO 2017. 9.4 MILLION VISITORS ANNUALLY TO THE PARK SYSTEM



Guided nature hike at Pulaski State Park

## BACKGROUND

The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) Division of Parks and Recreation manages over 8,200 acres of land, including parks, beaches, campgrounds, bike paths, historic sites, picnic areas, trails, athletic fields, dams, fishing access, and boat ramps. The State's parks offer ample and diverse recreational opportunities for Rhode Island families and tourists, whether taking a family camping trip, finding seashells or building a sandcastle at the beach on a warm summer day, catching the biggest fish ever, or simply finding the ideal spot to relax and read a favorite book.

Rhode Island State Parks attract upwards of nine million visitors each year and host high-profile national and international events such as the Newport Jazz Festival, Newport Folk Festival, and Volvo Ocean Race. The State parks are highlighted in the Rhode Island's "Fun-Sized" marketing campaign because of the variety of experiences they provide and their close-proximity to each other. People can easily visit places like George Washington Campground tucked deep in the woods of Glocester, or Lincoln Woods which is a short commute from downtown Providence, or sandy beaches in Narragansett, South Kingstown, and Westerly. The parks contribute an estimated \$312 million of economic output and support over 3,700 jobs. The parks system is vitally important to the State's environment, economy, and well-being of its citizens.

However, over the past 15 years, budget and staffing cuts, combined with heavy and increasing visitor use, aging facilities, and expanded responsibilities, threaten DEM's ability to provide residents and tourists with well-maintained and accessible recreation facilities and opportunities.



Golf Course at Goddard Memorial State Park



Educational program by Coggeshall Farm Museum at Colt State Park in Bristol



THESE CONSTRAINTS HAVE LED TO:

- **CRITICALLY LOW LEVEL OF STAFF** in some areas, at certain times.
- **UNDER-PERFORMANCE OF THE DAY-TO-DAY MAINTENANCE** and cleaning tasks that visitors expect.
- **THE INABILITY TO ATTRACT MORE OR DIVERSE VISITORS** and tourists through extended programming, special activities, events or expanded hours of operation at some facilities.
- **A REDUCTION IN SERVICES AND PUBLIC OPPORTUNITY FROM PREVIOUS LEVELS**, such as dedicated park police officers and education and interpretive programming.
- **A SEVERELY LIMITED LEADERSHIP PIPELINE AND TALENT POOL** to ensure leadership continuity and succession planning.
- **OVER-RELIANCE ON SEASONAL EMPLOYEES** to operate multi-million-dollar facilities.
- **OVER-RELIANCE ON CONTRACTORS** for grass cutting, plumbing, and electrical services that are expensive and may not provide an adequate level of service or be available when needed.
- **BURDENS OF GREATER ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES** that reduces the amount of time managers spend on facility planning, maintenance, and staff oversight.





Clamming at Rocky Point State Park

The Rhode Island State Park system is at a critical crossroad. Without a concerted effort to increase staffing and funding, the system will continue to deteriorate, and the Department will be unable to keep some facilities open and adequately staff and maintain others.

In January 2016, Governor Gina Raimondo signed an executive order that created the Outdoor Recreation Council (ORC) and charged the group with developing a strategic plan to grow and promote recreation in Rhode Island. In its December 2016 report, *A New Vision for Outdoor Recreation in Rhode Island*, the ORC envisioned a recreation system that would support economic prosperity, promote healthy people, encourage stewardship of outdoor resources, and inspire a recreation culture that connects people to each other and to nature.

The ORC recognized the State Park system as a highly valued provider in Rhode Island's outstanding network of outdoor recreational resources and programming. The ORC noted that reductions in funding combined with heavy and increasing use were having significant impacts and recommended a comprehensive staffing and operations study of Rhode Island State Parks to ensure that the assets and resources are properly stewarded for future generations.

This study represents the staffing and operations analysis recommended by the ORC. The report provides an objective assessment and corresponding recommendations to support continued investment in and preservation of Rhode Island State Parks. The intent is to guide in the delivery of excellent parks, trails, public facilities, activities, programs and services that will contribute to public health and enjoyment, location, community prosperity, and quality of life, while also enhancing statewide tourism capabilities and opportunities.



Mountain biking at Lincoln Woods State Park



By adopting recommendations, Rhode Island can ensure stewardship of State parks, beaches, and other recreational assets.

The following outlines key recommendations based on a review of staffing levels, operations and maintenance practices, and system financing and funding mechanisms.

### INVEST IN OPERATIONS & STAFFING

The number of full-time staff in Rhode Island State Parks has declined by 67%, from 123 in 1989 to 42 in 2018. At the same time, visitation and the number of facilities managed by DEM have increased. Climate change, with warmer temperatures year-round, combined with increasing popularity of outdoor recreation, has also extended the length of the outdoor season beyond the typical April to October timeframe. Parks employees take pride in welcoming visitors to clean, well-maintained facilities, but are hampered by low staffing levels, expanded responsibilities, an outdated organizational structure, and under-investment in technology and business tools. Investing in operations and staffing is critical to transforming the system.

The following recommendations will allow the Department to meet nationally accepted park maintenance standards and will equip the staff with the tools and resources they need to provide adequate, responsive stewardship and enhance visitor services, programming and amenities.

This report specifically recommends:

- **INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MAINTENANCE TECHNICIANS** to meet industry best practice maintenance standards of 1 FTE (full-time equivalent) per 30 maintained acres for routine maintenance and repair of facilities and equipment. For Rhode Island this means increasing maintenance technicians by 12. Providing adequate personnel to maintain facilities will also reduce the need for major repairs and will eliminate over-reliance on seasonal labor who do not have adequate skills, knowledge or experience.
- **ADD APPROPRIATELY SKILLED FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES TO REDUCE OUTSOURCING OF MAINTENANCE.** This investment would reduce the approximate \$245,000 the Department spends each year for outsourcing plumbing, electrical, and arborist services. Adding six skilled labor positions will also facilitate appropriate routine and preventative maintenance and allow faster response to emergency repair needs.

- **PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF TO RELIEVE MANAGERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS** and increase their ability to appropriately supervise and support operational and maintenance functions. The consultants recommend adding three administrative positions.
- **CREATE TWO TO THREE POSITIONS DEDICATED TO OVERALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES** (see discussion Financial Sustainability Recommendation below).
- **REALIGN THE DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION INTO FEWER REGIONS** to help facilitate a coordinated approach to park management, focus on functional requirements, minimize administrative responsibilities, and promote resource sharing of skilled staff and equipment.
- **EXPAND DEM'S LEAN INITIATIVE** to develop unified approaches to park oversight and management that will increase efficiency and effectiveness in areas such as staff management, training, and recruitment, and communicate the approaches across all regions.
- **ESTABLISH BEST PRACTICE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS** that reflect each facility's level of use and public profile and meet visitor expectations, along with appropriate performance indicators for each facility.
- **EXPLORE AN INTEGRATED WORK ORDER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM** that tracks assets and costs and preventative and routine maintenance to maximize the useful life of Park assets and to minimize maintenance costs for buildings, vehicles, grounds keeping, and other equipment routinely used in the parks.



*Parks staff performing maintenance work on the East Bay Bike Path*

NATIONALLY, RHODE ISLAND PARKS RANK



# **1** VISITOR PER ACRE



# **1** VISITS PER FULL TIME STAFF



# **47** EXPENDITURE PER VISIT



Goddard Memorial Farmers Market



Campground at Fishermen's Memorial State Park

## INCREASE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF STATE PARKS

The outdoor recreation industry is thriving. According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, a preliminary look at the United States gross domestic product (GDP) for 2018 shows that growth in the outdoor industry continues to outpace the growth of the economy as a whole and accounts for over 2% of the entire US GDP. Many jurisdictions now recognize the economic value and revenue generating potential of public parks. Rhode Island State Parks have the same potential but are not necessarily recognized as such. The system plays an important role in Rhode Island's outdoor recreation economy, and, with the right fiscal philosophies and practices, has the opportunity to capitalize on the growth of the industry. The recommendations below make good business sense and have the ability to enhance the State Park system's economic potential and to increase revenue generating opportunities for the State.

This report specifically recommends:

- **ESTABLISH A BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE** with two to three FTEs who could concentrate on revenue generating strategies including cost accounting, sponsorship and donor development, grant opportunities, fees, concessions, leases, and fiscal entrepreneurship as recommended in the staffing and operations section.
- **ESTABLISH NEW PRICING AND FEE SETTING POLICIES** for special events, site rentals, special uses, etc. based on the market value, cost of service, and the classification of the service depending on essential, important, or value-added criteria.
- **WORK WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB) TO DEVELOP A NEW BUDGET PROCESS** that includes: incentives to increase revenue by allowing earned revenue, or a percentage thereof, to be re-invested in state parks to enhance services for visitors, rather than be absorbed into general state fund; and, a consistent minimum annual capital funding level that DEM can count on for facility and infrastructure needs.
- **EVALUATE EXPANSION OF RECREATION AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN EACH PARK** with a strategic program and business plan to increase revenue generation and visitor experiences as appropriate. Include in analysis an assessment of which type of entity is best suited to develop and manage operations (e.g., State Parks, nonprofit, and/or private sector).

## PROTECT STATE PARK ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

A preliminary RI Department of Administration Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) study of 218 buildings and structures in the State Park system estimates that more than \$47.1 million is needed to address State Park capital needs over the next 10 years. DEM engineers believe estimates may be even higher based on recent bids for capital improvement projects. It is also important to note that the DCAMM assessments evaluated buildings only. They did not include infrastructure such as roads, bridges, guardrail systems, and water supply and septic systems, which will significantly increase the amount needed for deferred capital and maintenance. Most private sector and innovative public agencies follow a regular schedule of investment in facilities and infrastructure each year to optimize operating conditions and to keep the assets in good repair. It is critical to have consistent capital funds to properly maintain infrastructure (beyond general maintenance) to ensure that assets reach their anticipated lifecycles. The goal of the following recommendations is to create a lifecycle management approach that protects critical State Park infrastructure and assets and prepares for future renovation and upgrades.

This report specifically recommends:

- **WORK WITH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND OMB TO ENSURE A REGULAR AND CONSISTENT CAPITAL FUNDING STREAM** to support State Parks deferred and capital asset needs.
- **UTILIZE A PRIORITY SYSTEM TO REDUCE MAINTENANCE BACKLOGS** by creating 5-year allocation plans that demonstrate reductions in the existing maintenance backlog while also accounting for new development as appropriate.
- **ADOPT DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE ENTIRE PARK SYSTEM** (e.g., buildings, color scheme, signage, interpretation, etc.) to minimize operations and maintenance costs after development, using Total Cost of Facility Ownership practices.
- **INCORPORATE CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCY STRATEGIES** into facility design and development as recommended in the 2018 Resilient Rhody report.
- **EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIPS** through the business development office to identify partnerships, concessions, and other opportunities to support State Park assets.
- **USE LEAN, ESTABLISH STANDARDIZED PROTOCOLS** to maintain facilities and systems such as opening and closing facilities, winterizing buildings, etc.



*Tour group at Fort Adams State Park in Newport*



*Tulip farm at Snake Den State Park in Johnston*



Misquamicut State Beach in Westerly



East Bay Bike Path

## MOVING FORWARD

Now is the time to transform Rhode Island State Parks into a modern and dynamic system with the resources, structure, and tools needed to advance its mission and protect its assets to better serve the Rhode Islanders and tourists who visit them. With several foundational and philosophical shifts, the Rhode Island State Park system will be well-positioned to continue leveraging public assets while demonstrating the system’s significance to the state’s economic landscape. Moreover, these recommendations address the key challenges and opportunities that will have the most impact on sustainable park operations.

Working together, Rhode Island’s decision makers can optimize the value and benefits of the incredibly diverse system and create a model for public agency excellence and innovation.



MAKING THE CASE

# A new vision for Rhode Island State Parks, Beaches & Campgrounds

*Scarborough State Beach in Narragansett  
Opposite page: State Parks maintenance staff at Goddard Memorial State Park*





Investing in Rhode Island State Parks will support the state’s broader efforts to grow our green economy, build a healthier Rhode Island and protect and strengthen families.

In 2017, the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) hired PROS Consulting, Inc. and sub-contractor CHM Government Services (CHMGS) to conduct an independent organizational and operational study of the Rhode Island State Park system. Like many states, Rhode Island State parks, beaches and campgrounds have experienced significant declines in staffing and resources to adequately maintain facilities and infrastructure, while at the same time experiencing increased visitation and expanded responsibilities.

The 2016 Outdoor Recreation Council called for an analysis to secure the data and information needed to support efforts

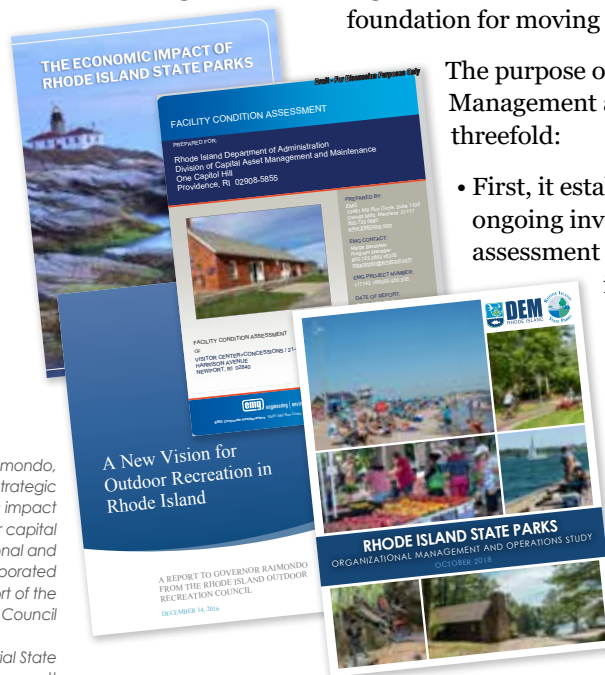
*Under the leadership of Governor Raimondo, DEM has conducted studies to inform strategic actions — 1. Evaluate the economic impact of our state parks (URI); 2. Assess major capital needs (DCAMM); 3. Assess operational and staffing needs (this study) — and incorporated recommendations from the 2016 report of the Rhode Island Outdoor Recreation Council*

*Far above: Fishermen’s Memorial State Campground in Narragansett*

to increase resources. This report represents that analysis and follows a 2016 University of Rhode Island evaluation of the economic impact of the parks system and the State’s Division of Capital Asset and Maintenance and Management (DCAMM) assessment of major capital repair and maintenance needs of part of the Parks infrastructure. Used together, the data from the three reports provides the foundation for moving the system forward.

The purpose of this Organizational Management and Operations Study is threefold:

- First, it establishes a systematic and ongoing inventory, analysis and assessment process to help DEM now and in the future.
- Second, to determine the context of recreation facilities, programs, practices, policies, and procedures system-wide.
- Third, to provide guidance for determining the most effective operations and management of the Rhode Island State Park system.





The study is not an end product in itself, but rather a means to guide the provision of parks and recreation and advance the overall mission and vision of the Division of Parks and Recreation. The goal is to be a guide in the delivery of excellent parks, trails, public facilities, activities, programs, and services that will contribute to public health and enjoyment, local community prosperity, and quality of life while also enhancing statewide tourism capabilities and opportunities. This, ultimately, will guide DEM in an appropriate direction for current and future programs, services, budget, operations, and management.

### STUDY GOAL AND PROCESS

The project goal is to conduct an analysis that identifies adequate levels of service, staffing, and funding required to provide high quality facilities and year-round outdoor experiences for visitors to Rhode Island State Parks. The analysis identifies resources needed to meet core services as well as opportunities to attract more visitors and events.

The Rhode Island Organizational Management and Operations Study followed an iterative process of data collection, staff input, on-the-ground study, assessment of existing conditions, market research, and open dialogue with agency leadership, as illustrated below (see Figure 1.1).

Interviews and focus group meetings with DEM management and parks and recreation staff were held early in the process and were aided by site assessments of the system to provide context and clarity. Parks staff completed a time-task analysis and two online surveys. The information gleaned from these assessments, coupled with independent technical research and review, provided a firm foundation for the consultant team to draw the conclusions found in the Executive Summary.

A more detailed discussion of the key challenges and recommendations follows the next section and is broken down into three focus areas: staffing and operations, financial sustainability and economic potential, and assets and infrastructure.



Lifeguards at Pulaski State Park



FIGURE 1.1 Study process and research



Rhode Island State Parks were established in 1909 with the acquisition of Lincoln Woods State Park

## Parks Organization

Rhode Island’s State Park system encompasses more than 8,200 acres and includes more than 67 areas with freshwater and saltwater beaches, large major parks, campgrounds, bike paths, historic sites and roadside areas. System oversight is provided through the Division of Parks and Recreation, which is part of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management’s Bureau of Natural Resources. In addition to State Parks, the Bureau is responsible for stewardship of major public assets such as commercial fishing ports and open space and conservation lands and for fish, wildlife, habitat and agricultural resources (see Figure 1.2).

FIGURE 1.2 - Parks staffing by region (includes direct park staff only)

### Staffing Overview

~ **440**  
SEASONALS

~ **42**  
FTEs



George Washington State Park

### REGION ONE

MAJOR ASSETS

- Blackstone River Bikeway & Visitors Center
- George Washington State Campground
- Lincoln Woods State Park
- Pulaski State Park
- Snake Den State Park
- John L. Curran State Park
- Numerous Roadside Assets

STAFFING: Full-time 8 FTEs • 91 Seasonals



Colt State Park

### REGION TWO

MAJOR ASSETS

- Colt State Park
- East Bay Bike Path
- Haines Memorial State Park
- Veterans Parkway
- George Redman Bridge

STAFFING: Full-time 5 FTEs • 23 Seasonals



Beavertail State Park

### REGION THREE

MAJOR ASSETS

- Beavertail State Park
- Fort Wetherill State Park
- Goddard Memorial State Park
- Rocky Point State Park
- John H. Chafee Nature Preserve
- Trestle Trail Bikeway
- Numerous Roadside Assets

STAFFING: Full-time 10 FTEs • 46 Seasonals



Salty Brine State Beach

### REGION FOUR

MAJOR ASSETS

- East Matunuck State Beach
- Fisherman’s Memorial State Campground
- Roger Wheeler State Beach
- Salty Brine State Beach
- Scarborough State Beach North & South

STAFFING: Full-time 5 FTEs • 105 Seasonals



Burlingame State Park

### REGION FIVE

MAJOR ASSETS

- Burlingame State Campground
- Burlingame State Park Picnic Area
- Charlestown Breachway State Beach & Campground
- East Beach State Beach & Campground
- Misquamicut State Beach
- Camp Pastore

STAFFING: Full-time 4 FTEs • 103 Seasonals



Fort Adams State Park

### REGION SIX

MAJOR ASSETS

- Brenton Point State Park
- Eisenhower House
- Fort Adams State Park
- Purgatory Chasm
- Black Regiment Monument
- Gull Cove
- Lehigh High Grove

STAFFING: Full-time 3 FTEs • 21 Seasonals

The Rhode Island State Park system is organized into six regions and operates with 42 full-time regional staff and more than 440 seasonal employees (includes regional, management and administrative positions). Each region has a regional manager that is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the parks within that region. All regions have an assistant regional park manager; however, the number of full-time staff positions (in addition to the managers) varies by region. In some instances, only one to three full-time positions exist beyond the regional manager position.

Park operations are funded by appropriated general funds. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, general revenue expenditures were \$10,647,835, with 34% for full-time staffing, 29% for seasonal staff and the balance for general operating. These expenditures make up less than one percent (0.30%) of the State general revenue expenditures and 28% of the Department's general revenue expenditures.

Capital expenditures are funded by Rhode Island Capital Plan (RICAP) and State Green Economy Bonds. Capital investments in Parks over the last five years was approximately \$16 million, which funded major renovation projects such as a new beach facility at Lincoln Woods State Park, bathhouses at Fishermen's Memorial Campground and improvements on the East Bay and Blackstone Bike Paths.

Revenue from State Park operations is generated through beach parking fees, camping fees, and leases and concessions. The revenue is directed to the general fund and re-appropriated by the General Assembly. Revenue in FY 2016 was \$6,821,711.



Parks staff clearing brush at Goddard Memorial State Park

FY2016 RI PARKS GENERAL REVENUE EXPENDITURES (ACTUAL)

**\$10,647,835**

**34%** FULL-TIME STAFFING    **29%** SEASONAL STAFFING    **37%** GENERAL OPERATING

2016 TOTAL REVENUE BY SOURCE

**CONCESSIONS/ LEASES 23%**

\$1,576,489

**PARKS 2%**

\$109,095

**GOLF 3%**

\$231,038

**CAMPING 27%**

\$1,807,759

**BEACH PARKING 45%**

\$3,097,331



TOTAL REVENUE

**\$6,821,711**

FOCUS AREA

# Invest in staffing and operations

*Scarborough State Beach in Narragansett  
Opposite page: State Parks maintenance staff at Goddard Memorial State Park*





The men and woman who serve as stewards of our state parks provide enjoyment to millions of people every year in all seasons.

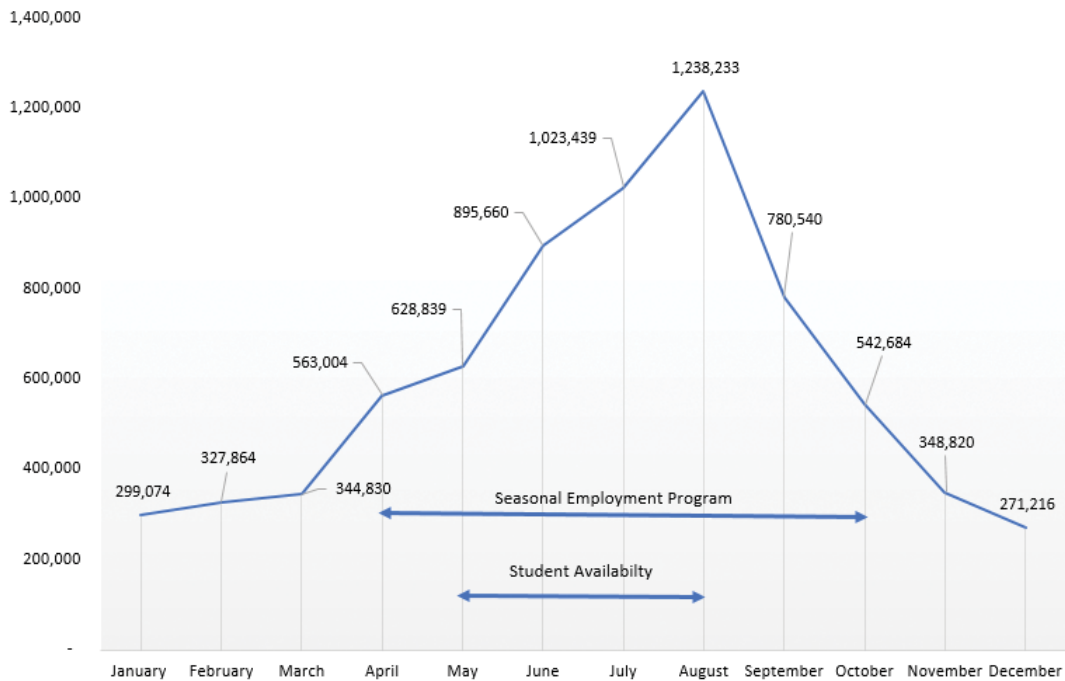
Rhode Island State parks staff are dedicated and committed to providing safe, clean and well-maintained facilities. However, a 67% reduction in staffing since 1984 is taking a toll. The insufficient staffing level, combined with increasing visitation, a longer outdoor recreation season and more administrative responsibilities for managers, hinder the ability to keep up with basic maintenance needs that visitors expect. Despite some creative partnerships to help manage budget and staffing reductions, the Division has been forced to close or transfer facilities, eliminate dedicated park police officers and reduce education and interpretive programming. These reductions limit the State's ability to attract more and diverse visitors which also affects the economic potential of the system.

The limited number of FTEs (full-time equivalents) also results in a reactive approach to park management rather than a proactive, strategic approach. Parks staff routinely perform maintenance tasks on an emergency basis as

opposed to performing preventative maintenance. Also, managers (both regional and park) are more "hands on" managers due to the low FTE level. Therefore, these "doer-managers" perform operations and maintenance (O&M) tasks along with senior maintenance technicians and other positions. With the increasing responsibilities of administrative duties (i.e., special park use permits, payroll, personnel management, customer relations, general paperwork, public safety and risk management etc.), managers' ability to perform O&M activities is greatly hindered. Conversely, general administrative duties are hindered by the need for managers to perform O&M activities.

The current staffing levels also do not meet industry best practice standards for maintenance of park and recreation areas. The best practice standard is 1 FTE per 30 acres. The Rhode Island system ratio equates to 1 FTE per 67 acres. In addition, when compared to other states, Rhode Island has the highest park visitor per FTE ratio of all 50 states.

FIGURE 2.1 - 2017 Park Attendance by Month



Month	Attendance
January	299,074
February	327,864
March	344,830
April	563,004
May	628,839
June	895,660
July	1,023,439
August	1,238,233
September	780,540
October	542,684
November	348,820
December	271,216

*These figures do not include bike paths. They also do not capture beach attendance before Memorial Day or after Labor Day or after 4 p.m. between Memorial Day and Labor Day.*

## SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

Seasonal workers play a significant role in and are essential to State Park operations. Each year, the Department hires more than 450 seasonals in positions such as lifeguards, park rangers, restroom attendants, laborers, and naturalists. Seasonals have become increasingly more prominent in State park operations as the permanent labor force has shrunk. With more visitors and an extended outdoor recreation season, relying on seasonal employees to adequately manage and steward park facilities and ensure public safety is becoming increasingly challenging.

Seasonal employees are mostly high school and college-age students who typically lack the experience, skill or commitment to maintain facilities, provide quality service, and to handle public safety situations. Also, student seasonal workers are mostly available from mid-May through August leading to severe staffing shortages in the spring and fall shoulder seasons when visitation remains high. Staffing facilities with non-student seasonal employees is also difficult since they are restricted to 925 hours or 6 months per year, whichever comes first (see Figure 2.1).

Recruitment of high-quality seasonal workers can also be a challenge, especially when the job market is competitive. As employment expands, the pool of available seasonal workers shrinks, and the competition increases. DEM’s seasonal rates tend to be less competitive than other sectors and DEM does not have the flexibility to adjust accordingly. The problem is especially acute with lifeguards. DEM lifeguard wages range from \$10.50 to \$11.25 per hour, while the pay for private, non-profit and



Lincoln Woods State Park

municipal lifeguards range from \$9 to \$16 per hour, with most in the \$13 to \$16 range. The shortage of lifeguards is also exacerbated by the approximately \$350 it costs an individual to obtain required certification.

Finally, park managers report that it takes a significant amount of their time to hire, adequately train and supervise such a high number of seasonal employees. The hiring process, now completed by managers through an online system, is cumbersome and they no longer have the assistance of human resources personnel to pre-screen, interview or refer applicants and to provide on-boarding assistance. Managers rely on permanent employees (FTEs), who are already stretched too thin, to train seasonal employees. The training may not be as thorough, and the training time reduces the amount of time the FTEs can spend on priority projects and maintenance tasks. Also, with so few FTEs available to staff facilities, especially on night shifts or at off-site locations, supervision and oversight of seasonals is difficult.

### CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

The decline in staffing has also resulted in the loss of skilled laborers with more O&M activities being outsourced (contracted) instead of completed in-house. Out-sourcing O&M activities can be beneficial for systems when contractors act as more of an “extension” of staff. However, in the Rhode Island State Park system, outsourcing certain activities has resulted in the over-reliance or dependency of third parties. This scenario limits park staff’s ability to deliver timely visitor services in many instances. There is a noticeable lack of professional trade knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) in the Rhode Island



Maintenance staff at Burlingame State Campground



Seasonal staff hosting a Rhode Great Outdoors Pursuit event



Parks Ranger at Lincoln Woods State Park

State Park system. As such, staff are limited in what they can perform in-house, must wait on others, and pay more money per task due to third party overtime and emergency response. The system lacks certified arborists, plumbers, and electricians, among others. This personnel absence has led to the system paying more for contracted services in many instances than what could be performed in-house if those positions were available. Additionally, contracted services require oversight which adds another layer of required administrative duties to that of already over-burdened park managers.

In 2016, \$1,523,030 was spent on contracted services throughout the park system. “Trees/landscaping” is the number one contracted service and it equaled \$374,082 in 2016. This function cost \$150,000 more than the second most expensive contracted service (“cleaning”). Plumbing is also a major concern for the parks because of the number of bathroom/shower facilities located in beaches and campgrounds and the heavy usage. It should be noted, however, that similar to the overall contracted services distribution among the regions, the type of contracted services and expenses is also not equally distributed. For example, Region III recorded more than half of the electrician costs, Region IV recorded all of the paving costs, and all welding costs were attributed to Regions I and II. The difference between regions can be attributed to: 1) the type and condition of facilities located in the region, 2) the different staff abilities (skills) found in each region, and/or 3) the difference in contract decision-making by the different regional managers.



## REGIONAL STRUCTURE

Breaking the system into six regions in such a small geographic area has also resulted in inconsistencies in park management and programming approaches across the system. Each region has a regional manager and an assistant regional manager. Beyond that, each region varies with the number of technicians and other field staff they have available. Additionally, some regions rely more heavily on seasonals than others because of the need to staff the system’s beaches and waterfront areas. Since every region is unique with the park sites and facilities, and overall staffing levels are low, each region tends to be managed differently than the next. The regions take on the personality of the managers which reduces the commonalities and consistencies across the system. This has led to a decentralized management approach. Consequently, messages, goals, and objectives are not necessarily translated or communicated down the chain of command. Often, it is not guaranteed that systematic approaches created from DEM management are supported and implemented in the field consistently. And there is no equipment/ fleet replacement process or maintenance standard that spans across all regions.

The Consultant Team recommends additional staffing for maintenance, skilled trades and administrative support, fewer regions, more consistent park management processes, and standardization of maintenance practices to address staffing and operational issues.



Grounds staff maintaining the golf course at Goddard Memorial State Park



Parks Naturalist at Beavertail Aquarium

KEY RECOMMENDATION:  
**INVESTING IN OPERATIONS  
 AND STAFFING**

- Increase parks staffing, including maintenance, administrative, and skilled staff to reduce outsourcing
- Consolidate regional management structure
- Expand LEAN practices
- Establish standards for best management practices
- Use technology to minimize maintenance costs

FOCUS AREA

Increase  
the financial  
sustainability  
and  
economic  
potential of  
State parks





The outdoor recreation industry is thriving and with the right fiscal philosophies and practices Rhode Island can enhance economic potential of State parks and increase revenue.

The Rhode Island State Park system is inadequately funded and does not meet its potential for cost recovery, revenue generation and economic benefit. The current approach to budgeting and pricing and fee setting, along with lack of staff to focus on business development and revenue generation, are major challenges that limit recreation programming and the economic potential of the system.

## FUNDING AND BUDGET PROCESS

The Rhode Island State Park system generates enough revenue annually to cover more than 60% of its operating expenditures. The revenue is channeled to the general fund. The General Assembly then decides how much of the dollars to “appropriate” back to State Parks through the annual budget process. The “appropriation” of general revenues collected and lack of a guarantee that 100% of park proceeds will be returned to the parks department provide a disincentive to creating an earned income philosophy and strategy.

A best practice approach across the industry is to include incentives to increase revenue by allowing all or a portion of earned revenue to be retained by Parks and re-invested in visitor services. The present budget process also does not include a minimum annual capital funding level that the Department can count on for facility and infrastructure needs, which are discussed in more detail in the next focus area.

Another issue with the budget process is the lack of knowledge that regional and park managers have about the Parks budget. The disconnect results in making financial decisions that are not data driven and compound the idea that regions are managed differently as presented in the last section. One region’s decision to contract a service may be completely different than another region’s and could significantly impact the overall budget and lead to competition for resources among the regions.



Roger Wheeler State Beach in Narragansett



Farmers Market at Fishermen's Memorial State Park



Charlestown Beach State Campground



Crowds enjoying the music at the 2017 Jazz Fest at Fort Adams State Park

## REVENUE GENERATION

The revenue and economic potential of Rhode Island State Parks could also be expanded with the addition of a business development staff to focus on fee setting policies and revenue generating strategies. Currently, the system does not have pricing and fee setting policies in place to guide the level of public funding for services and the costs that could or should be supported from user revenues and fees. The scope and scale of revenue generating activities offered within the parks department is less than other state parks system offerings. A comprehensive fee setting policy is essential to increasing revenue. Factors should be based on the cost of service and classification of the service, which consider the needs and interests of visitors, available resources and the market rates of providers who offer similar services. Classification and cost of service models are described in more detail later in this report. Opportunities for revenue generation include sponsorship and donor development, grants, concessions and leases, and other recreation and business opportunities.

Existing statutory and regulatory provisions for parks provide a solid foundation for the Department to move forward with revenue policy and program changes. However, the lack of available staff dedicated to the effort, combined with the disincentives for taking risks and creating additional revenue with no guarantee that this revenue will be returned to parks, hinder revenue optimization and potential increases to the economic benefits of Rhode Island State Parks.



Farmer at Snake Den State Park



Yoga on the beach at Scarborough State Beach

KEY RECOMMENDATION:  
**INCREASE FINANCIAL STABILITY AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL**

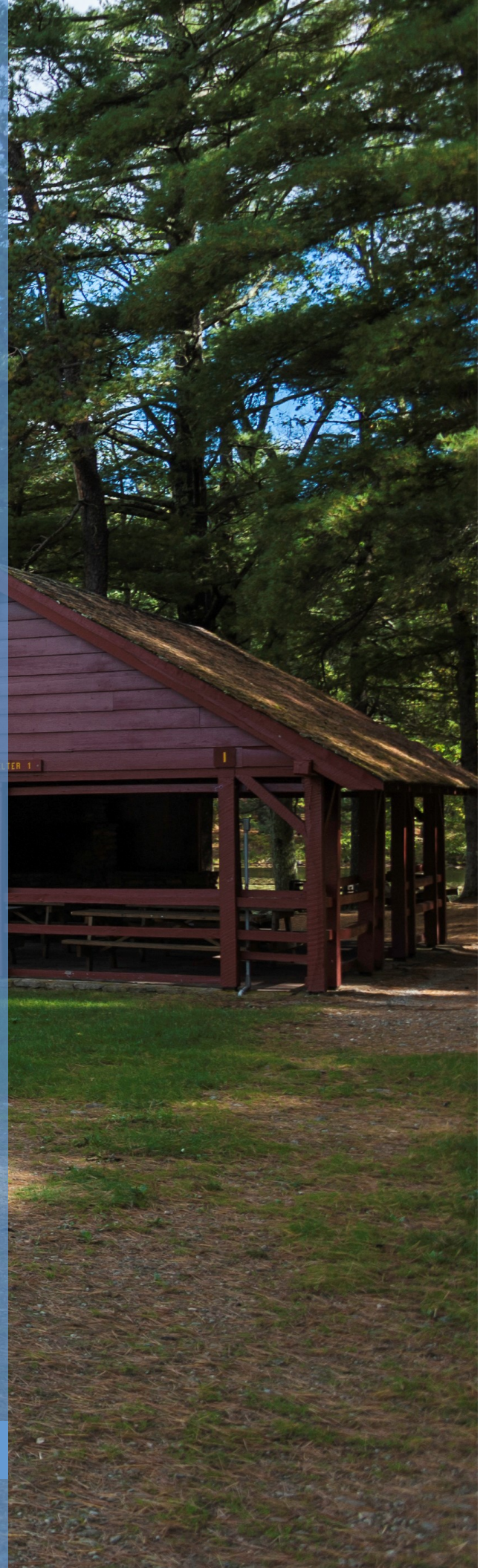
- Create a business office to explore new partnerships that support assets
- Establish pricing policy and philosophy for all visitor services based on market and cost
- Work to establish a new budget process that includes incentives to increase revenue by allowing earned revenue to be re-invested in state parks to enhance services for visitors; and, a consistent minimum annual capital funding level that DEM can count on for facility and infrastructure needs.
- Evaluate expansion of recreation and business opportunities within each park



FOCUS AREA

# Protect State Park assets and infrastructure

*Pulaski State Park in Gloucester  
Opposite page: Gazebo at Goddard Memorial State Park in Warwick*





A consistent and regular schedule of investment in State park facilities is needed to protect critical infrastructure and assets for future generations.

There is little doubt the Rhode Island State Park system contains some of the most scenic locations in all the country, and the system's economic impact has a tremendous impact on the State's tourism industry. Unfortunately, the system's assets and infrastructure are not being sustainably maintained or designed. Although wind and solar power are used throughout the system, a different type of sustainability is needed – lifecycle management.

Every asset, whether it be a sign, a road, a building, a vehicle, etc., has a designated lifespan. Each asset requires a set of preventative maintenance, recurring maintenance, and component renewal activities to allow the asset to reach its full lifecycle. A proper O&M schedule also allows a system to develop a predictable capital improvement program (CIP). Industry best practice indicates that approximately 80% of an asset's total cost over its lifespan comes from O&M activities. Based on the data review and on-site observations, the concept of total cost of ownership (TCO) is absent in the Rhode Island State Park system.

## CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

According to the Rhode Island Department of Administration's Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) study of 218 buildings and structures in the State Park system, approximately \$47.1 million exists for the system's deferred maintenance (deferred maintenance is all the maintenance that has been "backlogged" or not performed). This figure means that it would cost almost \$50 million to elevate existing building infrastructure to a "good" condition. Each asset also has a facility condition index (FCI) number associated with it (an FCI score is the result of dividing an asset's deferred maintenance cost by the asset's current replacement value). The FCI is used in tandem with deferred maintenance to understand the needed financial effort to adequately sustain the system. It is also important to note that the DCAMM assessments evaluated buildings only. They did not include infrastructure such as roads, bridges, guardrail



Ribbon cutting at new Lincoln Woods State Park pavilion



Electric vehicle charging station at Pulaski State Park

systems, and water supply and septic systems, which will significantly increase the amount needed for deferred capital and maintenance.

The current capital improvement program is not sufficient for the system’s needs. Capital monies come mainly from Rhode Island Capital Plan (RICAP) Fund. RICAP provides approximately \$650.9 million toward the FY18-FY22 capital improvement plan statewide. A total of 5.6%, or approximately \$36.5 million, is budgeted for Natural Resources. Natural Resources includes all the Divisions within DEM, Coastal Resources Management Council, Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, and Narragansett Bay Commission. All monies fall into one of five major project categories:

1. Narragansett Bay and Watershed Restoration Projects
2. Environmental Protection Programs
3. Open Space and Natural Land Protection
4. Municipal Recreation Projects
5. State Recreation and Infrastructure Facilities

The State also has a \$4.5 million Historic State Park Development Program bond funding to support major capital development improvements in State parks.

Another component to ensure the TCO concept is implemented is by adhering to design standards. Many systems identify components, branding, and overall specification parameters in all bid projects. This allows the system to maintain control over the system’s infrastructure as it is developed or enhanced. Each park should have a unique identity, but the overall Rhode Island State Park system





Boat ramp at Goddard Memorial State Park

brand should be apparent throughout the state. Having set design standard principles will aid in O&M efficiency, budgeting, and visitor/user awareness. This concept is not currently employed by the system and so different components are being developed throughout the system which will create a future challenge in addition to the ongoing challenges for existing O&M activities.

The Consultant Team recommends that the State move to a regular and consistent capital funding stream and take a more strategic long-term approach to asset management and maintenance, adopt design standards that address TCO and climate resiliency, and look toward partnerships and other opportunities to support state park assets.



Bathroom facilities at East Beach in Charlestown

KEY RECOMMENDATION:

**PROTECT ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

- Establish a consistent capital funding stream
- Use standardized protocols for facility maintenance
- Adopt system-wide design standards to minimize costs
- Incorporate climate resilience strategies in facility designs
- Explore opportunities for new partnerships to support park assets



FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

Diving  
deep into  
the data  
with detailed  
findings &  
analysis

Rocky Point State Park in Warwick  
Opposite page: Joggers at Colt State Park



With the key changes, Rhode Island has an opportunity to optimize the value and benefits of its incredibly diverse state park system and create a model for public agency excellence and innovation

The following is a detailed discussion of findings from the assessments, focus groups, surveys and research conducted by the consultant. These findings, combined with the Consultant Team's experience and technical knowledge for parks and recreation systems, provide the basis for the key recommendations put forth in the Executive Summary and in the next chapter: Moving toward sustainable best practices.

## SITE ASSESSMENTS

In October 2017, the Consultant Team spent 3.5 days conducting a comprehensive site tour of the Rhode Island State Parks System. The consultant team focused on making observations related to operations and maintenance procedures, practices, issues, and challenges. The team also focused on opportunities the system can capitalize on. This assessment establishes a base-line understanding and "snapshot" of the system's existing conditions and amenities.

## STRENGTHS

- The Rhode Island state park system includes many scenic vistas and viewsheds
- It is clear that the parks are well-used by visitors
- The system offers a diverse experience for users that includes:
  - Beaches and waterfront access
  - Historic facilities
  - Campgrounds
  - Special events
  - Trails and bikeways/paths
  - Day use areas
  - Some park sites utilize concessionaires to deliver recreational services, including food and beverage, retail, horseback riding, and golf services
- The regional management approach allows for concentrated focus areas within the system
- The system takes advantage of both solar and wind energy within some park sites



Erosion damage at Goddard Memorial State Park



Example of an aging infrastructure at Burlingame State Park Campground

## WEAKNESSES

- With the regional management approach, there are clear differences in how each region approaches maintenance, financing, and strategic planning
- There are different approaches to contracting out services versus doing them in-house
- The system is understaffed in terms of full-time employees to adequately manage the system as it exists today
- There are specific maintenance challenges that are pervasive throughout the system including:
  - Electrical
  - Plumbing
  - Masonry
  - Surface repairs (both asphalt and grounds)
- There is little signage throughout some of the parks
- There are no real operating budgets for the parks other than salary; park managers do not know what their expenses and revenues are per site or in general
- Special event facilities are not conducive to fully maximizing the site (such as lack of heat, catering space, etc.)
- There are a lot of road side areas and other managed sites that require maintenance attention throughout the year
- Due to the space between park sites and the visitor use, travel time is lengthy for park staff
- Capital planning is inconsistent throughout the system because of the way it comes from concessionaire contracts – there are many sites that do not have concessionaires
- There is a large dependence upon seasonal employees to operate large and highly visible facilities

- There is a lot of deteriorating infrastructure due to lack of routine/preventative maintenance capabilities
- Support systems such as internet, phones, and technology are weak compared to the product the system sells to visitors
- Many parks lack “active” amenities for users
- Concessionaire deal structures do not represent industry best practices and oversight of contracts is a challenge
- No consistent fee structure for special events is in place
- Over the years, the system has lost a lot of skilled labor positions
- There is no labor bridge between managers and seasonals

## OPPORTUNITIES

- The visitor experience could be enhanced with:
  - Addition of proper programming and event spaces
  - A consistent plan for routine/preventative maintenance
  - More full-time staff to assist with informal visitor contacts and perceived public safety
- A dedicated funding mechanism for both operations and capital planning is paramount given the vast park infrastructure
- A consistent approach to contracted services is needed; additionally, this could be aided by the addition of skilled labor positions back into the workforce
- There is a need for an equipment replacement schedule (both for maintenance and technology)
- A unified approach to park management across regions is needed
- A focus on Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) concepts is needed
- A consistent approach to concession deal structuring and oversight would yield improved visitor services delivered through third parties
- Adopted design standards for the entire park system would help with operations and maintenance costs after development



White paint highlights root damage to the Blackstone Valley Bike Path

### KEY TAKEAWAYS: SITE ASSESSMENTS

After reviewing the Rhode Island State Parks System, it is clear that there is a need to address deteriorating infrastructure. However, it is also recognized that the ability of the existing staff to adequately maintain the diverse facilities has been reduced by:

- Loss of staff positions (especially skilled labor)
- Inconsistent funding mechanisms for both operations and capital
- Inconsistent regional approaches and practices
- Increased visitor use to Rhode Island facilities

The ability to both generate and retain funds within a given park provides a solid way to approach overall park operations and maintenance. With the system staffed the way it is currently, financial practices need to ensure the proper funding is allocated for contracted services, capital improvements, and commensurate maintenance dollars coincide with any and all capital projects.

The opportunity exists for the Rhode Island State Park System to battle back from a defensive approach to management and, in turn, focus on a sustainable model that provides more flexibility and ability to be on the offense.



Seasonal parks staff at Fishermen's Memorial State Campground

## STAFF FOCUS GROUPS

The Consultant Team conducted stakeholder focus groups and interviews over a two-day period in December 2017. Stakeholder focus groups and interviews provide a foundation for identifying Department issues and key themes along with understanding context for the overall planning process. The Consultant Team developed a facilitation guide that included a series of questions that spurred conversation. Follow up questions were asked as appropriate. Invited stakeholders included:

- Park Headquarters Staff
- Regional Managers
- Assistant Regional Managers
- Park Managers
- Operations Staff

## SYNTHESIS

After speaking with staff at all levels, it is clear the Rhode Island Park System employees are a team of extremely dedicated individuals. However, the current systems and processes, staffing levels, and positions are not aligned, and in some cases, not appropriate. The impact of this is ineffective use of staff time and low morale. The agency's staff reductions and transfer of some services to external third-party providers appear to not have taken into account the impact of these decisions on overall staff effectiveness. The interviews identified that there are staff positions that could be added back that could result in additional capacity for existing staff. Additionally, reassessment of functions provided by third party entities could also result in increased capacity to Rhode Island State Parks. These are important analyses to conduct because the staff's dedication (and time and money) can be taken advantage of if proper systems/channels are not in place.



Park ranger at Blackstone Valley State Park

Staff support is a large theme brought forward by the focus groups. The challenges to staff support are manifested in staffing numbers (and position types/distribution), available training opportunities, and succession planning. The staffing numbers have been greatly reduced over recent years and contracted services have increased to take their place. However, with the decreased staff numbers, the Rhode Island Park System has lost its ability for specialized maintenance tasks (e.g., electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, mechanical, etc.) and has consequently relied more on seasonal assistance. Additionally, there has been a commensurate increase in administrative responsibilities required from park and regional managers, which has reduced their availability to provide operational and maintenance support to their units. With a reduced workforce, the "right person for the right job completing the right task" is not necessarily adhered to because of the reliance for staff to take on more responsibilities and tasks.

Additionally, the current policies and procedures in place for leveraging third party contracts appear to have reduced staff availability to

undertake critical tasks. Interviews consistently identified that staff time was spent traveling to “approved” vendors or returning to approved vendors when work was not sufficiently completed – resulting in staff utility reduction. Also, with increased staff responsibilities, it is easy for an agency to reduce the focus on strategic initiatives such as training and instead concentrate more on day-to-day operations. Staff succession planning is important to implement as there are detractions currently in place that deter staff from moving up positions (such as pay scale and union restrictions).

Capital planning priorities appear not to be focused on infrastructure that has a large visitor impact. Universally, staff indicated that they are spending operational and maintenance time on facilities that have passed their useful life and need to be replaced. Specifically, staff and visitors are most concerned with restrooms and bath houses. It is the consensus of the staff that addressing this one asset category through a targeted capital campaign would allow for a shift in operational and maintenance priorities.

There are many challenges to the system in terms of both capital and operational financing. Revenue generation has been “discouraged” over the years by the financial restrictions placed on the park system. All revenues are transferred to the state’s general fund which is allocated to all state divisions/ departments. Those park sites that have concessionaires can take advantage of “50/50” monies that can be leveraged for capital investments; however, the 50/50 money has been spent with a “use it or lose it” mentality and so monies are not carried over to the next year. Therefore, it is difficult for larger capital procurements with a limited monetary resource available. Historically, the park system pricing strategy is driven by the state park agency regulation, but at times has been driven by General Assembly legislation. Also, with no incentive to keep the revenue, the agency has not developed a pricing philosophy that is based upon cost recovery and sustainable business practices.

It is clear that the planning effort must result in an accurate depiction of the park system’s current state while providing actionable strategies that can be implemented to provide philosophical shifts in thinking. After all, the State Park System is integral to Rhode Island’s economy and livability.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:  
**FOCUS GROUPS**

What People **VALUE MOST** About the System

1. Activity/opportunity diversity
2. Accessible (cost and locations)
3. Destination
4. A part of daily routine and family traditions
5. Scenic beauty

Parts of the System That **NEED IMPROVEMENT**

1. Staffing
2. Approach to budgeting, revenue generation, and funding the system
3. Specialized maintenance assistance
4. Fee philosophy
5. Aging and deteriorating infrastructure
6. Outsourcing vs. doing things in-house
7. Data tracking and reporting
8. Succession planning

Biggest **CHALLENGES** Faced

1. Identifying, hiring, training, and working with seasonals
2. Administrative functions
3. Capital procurements
4. Job training (and cross-training)
5. Bid process and working with contractors
6. Preventative maintenance
7. No work order system
8. Special event planning, permitting, and capitalizing on fees
9. People “gaming” the reservation system

Key **PROGRAMS** and **SERVICES**

1. Technology investments (Wi-Fi, mobile apps, etc.)
2. Updated park information literature
3. Revenue generation (equipment rentals, park entrance fees, food vendors)

Key **FACILITIES** and **AMENITIES**

1. Keeping up with camping trends (yurts, cabins, pavilions, etc.)

Key **OUTCOMES**

1. More staff support (staffing, training, and strategic direction)
2. Proper equipment and replacement
3. Understanding the costs and implications associated with contracted services
4. Better procurement processes (capital and routine costs)
5. Ability to generate revenue and retain funds
6. Actionable strategies for us to implement

**ADDITIONAL** Comments

1. Need to examine job descriptions and classifications to ensure consistency
2. Onboarding process needs to be examined



Parks staff at the grand opening of the beach pavilion at Lincoln Woods State Park beach in 2017.

## STAFF SURVEYS

The DEM team participated in two online surveys as part of the data collection for this study:

- Job Analysis Questionnaire
- Malcolm Baldrige “Are We Making Progress” Assessment

### JOB ANALYSIS QUESTIONNAIRE

The online survey was conducted in January and February 2018. The purpose of this assessment was to evaluate staff on how important they believe certain competencies are and to have staff perform a self-evaluation on each competency. There were two separate surveys for park managers and operations staff. A total of 40 employees participated in survey (17 park managers and 23 operations staff). The competency areas assessed were as follows:

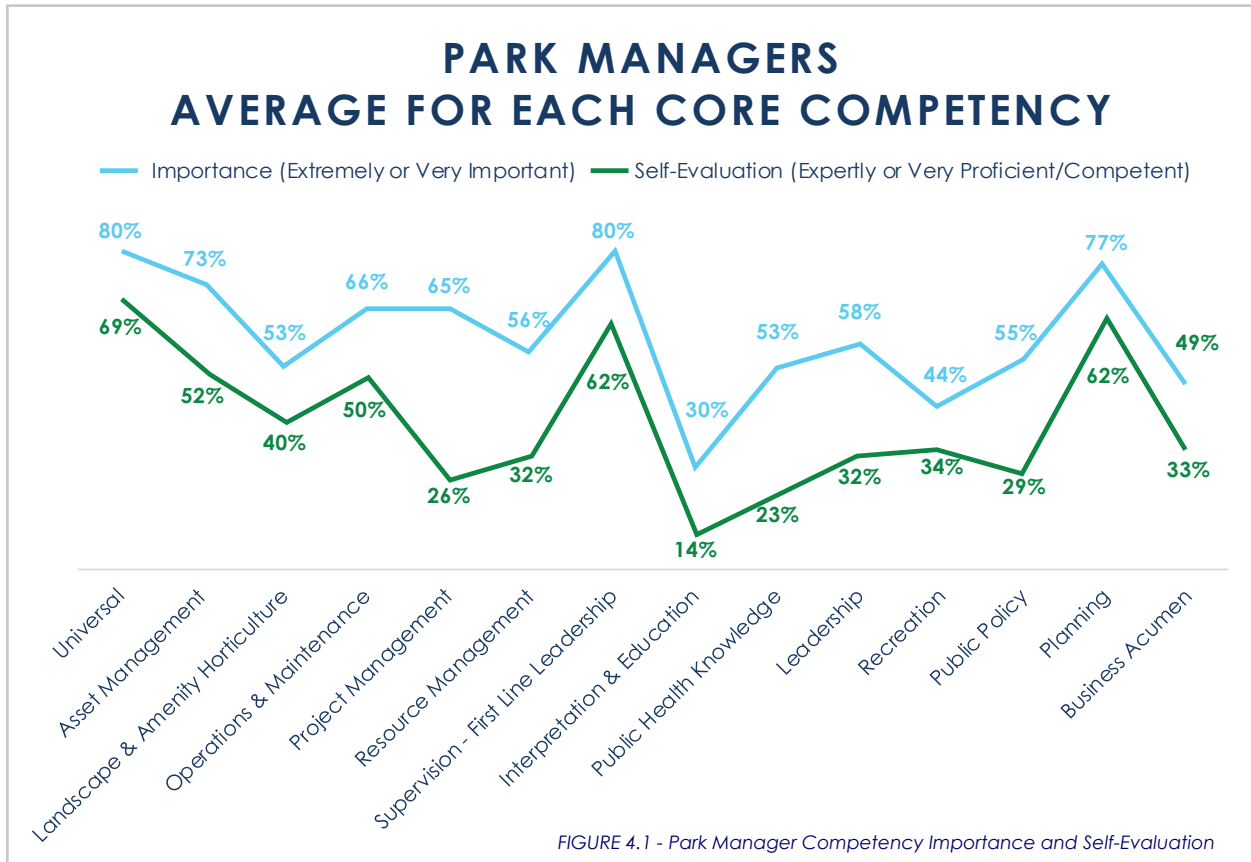
- Asset management
- Interpretation and education
- Landscape and amenity horticulture
- Leadership
- Operations and maintenance
- Planning
- Project management
- Public health knowledge
- Public policy
- Recreation
- Resource management
- Supervision – first line leadership
- Universal

It should be noted, however, that not all competencies were assessed for Operations staff as were for Managers.



Seasonal lifeguards at East Matunuck State Beach





## PARK MANAGER RESULTS

By averaging the park managers overall results for each core competency, the survey results showed that the team yielded moderate to high percentages of importance for each category; but when the park managers conducted a self-evaluation of themselves performing each task, the percentages declined significantly when rating if they were able to perform the competency either expertly or very proficiently.

Initial results (see Figure 4.1) can indicate that the park managers are not equipped with the training and knowledge to perform each task effectively and confidently; however, a further conversation was had with park staff to discuss the survey results in detail. Park managers indicated that the self-evaluations are lower than the competency importance rankings for several reasons:

- There are a lot of silos when it comes to information being distributed across the system
- Inadequate time and support (financial, personnel, etc.) to effectively perform the competencies
- The fact that there are a lot of competing priorities which makes it difficult to understand and perform tasks in a timely fashion

Understanding that these surveys were done individually, and (see Figure 4.1) present the total average of all park manager surveys, the results are more likely a truer reflection of the overall system, and individual results will vary by region. A regional analysis was not conducted due to the small sample size that analysis would yield.

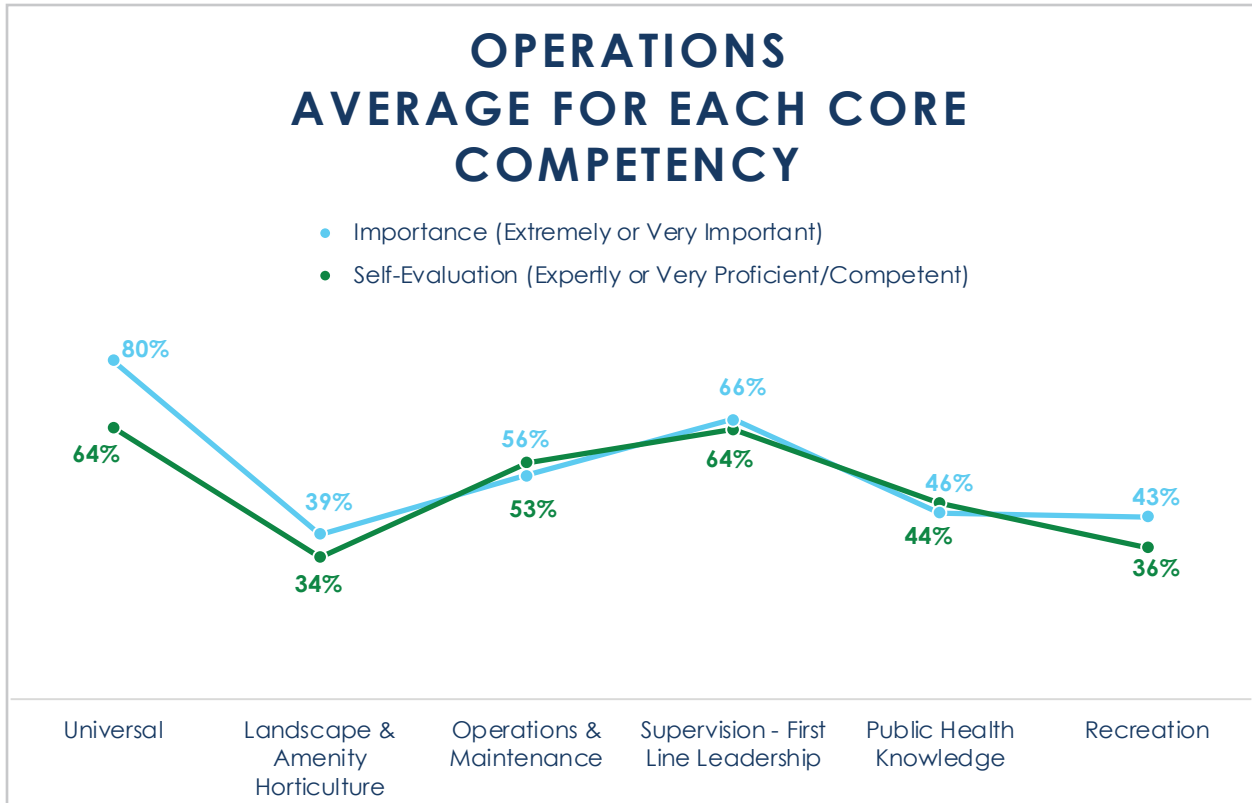


FIGURE 4.2 - Operations Staff Competency Importance and Self-Evaluation



Parks staff hosting an arts and crafts table at Scarborough State Beach

## OPERATIONS

The operations staff survey yielded a more aligned competency importance and self-evaluation rating trend (see Figure 4.2). However, even though there is alignment, overall rating percentages are rather low with the highest rated importance being 64% (universal and supervision).

Initial results can indicate that the operations staff are comfortable meeting the expectations required of them, and in most cases, their performance can exceed their level of job importance; however, the rather low importance ratings given to the competencies warranted further analysis. After discussing with operations staff, they indicated the lower ratings were a result of:

- Trying to juggle multiple tasks on a day-to-day basis which therefore lowers the “importance” rating of any one given competency listed
- How priorities change on a daily basis and they are a result of what needs to be accomplished that day

In addition to the two points mentioned above, Operations staff also indicated that weather is a major factor to how they can accomplish their work. Thunderstorms, heavy snow falls, and wind storms create more work related to debris cleanup and tree removal than normal. These instances create longer maintenance backlogs as time is spent clearing pathways and public spaces to ensure they remain open to the public as often as possible.



Maintenance staff at Goddard Memorial State Park Golf Course

## MALCOLM BALDRIGE SURVEY

This assessment was undertaken as a part of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. The assessment, “Are We Making Progress,” was circulated to all parks staff. In total, 40 staff members participated in this survey conducted in January and February 2018. The questionnaire is organized by seven categories:

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Customer and Market Focus
- Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management
- Workforce Focus
- Process Management
- Cultural Results

The reason for evaluating an organization’s culture is to better understand and assess how an organization functions. Understanding the organizational culture makes it easier to build, maintain, and implement change (if desired) within the organization. Additionally, utilizing staff perspectives allows leadership to understand needs and concerns, which can help develop a more resilient organization.

Staff were asked to respond to a set of 40 statements. They were

### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

#### TOP RANKING STATEMENTS

- **MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS & KNOWLEGE MANAGEMENT:** I know how to measure the quality of my work
- **RESULTS:** My work results / outcomes meet all requirements
- **WORKFORCE FOCUS:** I am committed to my organization's success
- **CUSTOMER & MARKET FOCUS:** I can use this information to make changes that will improve my work
- **RESULTS:** My customers are satisfied with my work

### KEY TAKEAWAYS:

#### BOTTOM RANKING STATEMENTS

- **RESULTS:** My organization removes things that get in the way of progress
- **RESULTS:** I know how well my organization is doing financially
- **RESULTS:** My organization has the right people and skills to do its work
- **MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS & KNOWLEGE MANAGEMENT:** I know how my organization as a whole is doing
- **STRATEGIC PLANNING:** My organization is flexible and can make changes quickly when needed



Parks staff at Lincoln Woods State Park



Parks staff at Burlingame State Park Campground

to indicate how well they agreed with the statement as it relates to their organization.

As indicated by the Malcolm Baldrige survey results, park staff understands what is required of them and how they know if what they are doing is correct or not. Staff indicate a high level of dedication/service to the parks system, which is also evident as experienced through the Consultant Team’s site assessments and focus group process. Additionally, staff indicate having an external outlook by the way that they have the end user, the park visitor, in mind, and they care about providing a great customer experience at all Rhode Island State Park facilities.

In contrast to these statements, staff indicated three results-orientated areas where they least agreed:

1. Internal processes and procedures that act as barriers to performing work
2. Financial health of the organization
3. Staffing levels and skills present within the system

These findings further correspond to those from the site assessments and focus groups. In addition to the results-oriented statements, staff also indicated that the organization may not be as transparent and flexible as desired. Transparency is important for staff because it ensures that everyone is on the same page and moving toward the same goals with the identified path shared department-wide. Flexibility is typically an oxymoron in government, but there are processes that can be put in place to create flexibility in a more bureaucratic environment. Specifically, staff indicated in focus groups that they have difficulty with the procurement process.

## REVENUE PROGRAM MANAGEMENT REVIEW BACKGROUND

The Consultant Team’s program assessment of revenue opportunities included the following steps:

- Identified the existing legal authorities guiding policy for revenue strategies and assessed whether they met current program needs.
- Evaluated the current inventory and performance of revenue programs.
- Gained insight from Park Managers regarding opportunities to enhance revenue programs.
- Identified current best practices for revenue programs.
- Identified gaps in revenue programs as compared to best practices.
- Identified recommendations for improving the revenue program.



Sally Brine State Beach

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Consultant Team identified the core legal authorities that inform the park division’s policies regarding revenue program management. The Consultant Team focused on understanding how these authorities enabled or challenged the park division in their ability to enhance their revenue program. Figure 4.3 outlines the key authorities that were part of the Consultant Team’s research. Following the table are the Consultant Team’s observations regarding the benefits of and challenges which these authorities provide. The Consultant Team identifies the challenges and benefits using its expertise in undertaking reviews of state park systems nationwide.

FIGURE 4.3 - Legal Authorities Reviewed Pertaining to State Parks

RI General Laws or Code of Regulations	Authorities
Chapter 32-1-5	Leases and Concessions
Chapter 37-2	State Purchases
Chapter 37-6-2	Acquisition of Land: State Property Commission -Rules, Regulations and Procedures
Chapter 37-7	Management and Disposal of Property
Chapter 42-17.1-9-1	User Fees at State Beaches, Parks and Recreation Areas
Title 220-RICR- Chapter 30 – Part 8	Department of Administration: Purchases – Contracts
Title 220-RICR-Chapter 30 Part 10	Department of Administration: Purchases – Expenditures that are not Procurements
Title 250- RICR- Chapter 100 – Part 1	Park and Management Area Rules and Regulations -Definitions of Special Use and Special Events, Authority to Collect Fees
Title 250- RICR Chapter 100- Part 3	User Fees at State Beaches, Parks and Recreation Areas



Colt State Park

CHAPTER 32-1-5: LEASES AND CONCESSIONS

**BENEFITS:** This authority provides the opportunity to enter into agreement of varying types (e.g. let, lease, concession) at park and reservations for periods up to 25 years based upon the opinion of the Director if they deem them necessary or advisable. The broadness of this authority allows for several types of agreements and provides for term lengths that would provide most third-party entities the opportunity to recover their investments.

**CHALLENGES:** None identified

CHAPTER 37-2: STATE PURCHASES

**BENEFITS:** This authority defines what a “contract” is. This definition includes leases, fixed fee and incentive contracts. This authority provides for agreements that could include leases and management contracts which are two types of options for engagement with third parties for revenue generating activities.

**CHALLENGES:** This authority is silent as to “concessions” as a contract.

CHAPTER 37-6-2: ACQUISITION OF LAND: STATE PROPERTY COMMISSION-RULES, REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

**BENEFITS:** This authority identifies the State Properties Committee as the empowered agency to be responsible for any process and approval of lease agreements. This secondary authority with expertise in real estate transactions is an appropriate secondary review process for agreements that provide use of state resources use by third parties.

**CHALLENGES:** None Identified.

CHAPTER 37-7: MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

**BENEFITS:** This authority identifies that the State Properties Committee can approve other state entities' rights to grant concessions in or to lease or license of any land or building or structure, a part or portion of any governmental facility, public work, or public improvement for industrial or commercial purposes for a term or terms not exceeding in the aggregate in any one case twenty (20) years. It also states that if these rights are granted as a lease, that the agency responsible shall report on a semi-annual basis the amount of income revenue generated by the leased property.

**CHALLENGES:** This authority appears to contradict Chapter 32-1-5 which states the term could be up to 25 years. Outside of this issue, the rights granted in this authority are favorable in providing for several types of agreements and provides for term lengths that would provide most third-party entities the opportunity to recover their investments.

CHAPTER 42-17.1-9-1: USER FEES AT STATE BEACHES, PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

**BENEFITS:** This authority has several key sections intended to form the basis of fee policy.

Section (a) identifies the rights of the agency to charge fees for use of its services and/or facilities. This is the global right to charge and is beneficial to the agency.

Section (b) identifies that the way the fee can be charged can vary (e.g. daily, annually, etc.), and also states that, “The fees may recognize the contribution of Rhode Island taxpayers to support the facilities in relation to other users of the state’s facilities. The fee structure may acknowledge the need to provide for all people, regardless of circumstances.” This language provides the foundation for the concept of equity in fee policy and provides the foundation for employment of a cost recovery model, which to date has not occurred. The cost recovery model assumes that there are some activities that are inherently public (e.g. supported by taxes) and others that are inherently private (e.g. supported by user fees).

Section (c) identifies that fees for “camping and other special uses may be charged where appropriate. Rates so charged should be comparable to equivalent commercial facilities.” This is beneficial to the agency since comparability is part of the fee setting process. Cost Recovery combined with comparability is a best practice for fee policy.

Section (d) identifies that “All such fees shall be established after a public hearing.” This provides for public input after the cost recovery and comparability which is a best practice.

Section (f) identifies that fees are general revenue and are, “specifically dedicated to meeting the costs of development, renovation of, and acquisition of state-owned recreation areas and for regular maintenance, repair and operation of state-owned recreation areas”. This section also talks about an allocation dollar value for vehicles and equipment and repairs to facilities that shall not exceed four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) annually. The intent to dedicate fees to specific costs is clear and the categories of activities for fee use is beneficial to the agency. The second part of Section (f) identifies that, “the director of the department of environmental management is hereby authorized to accept any grant, devise, bequest, donation, gift, or assignment of money, bonds, or other valuable securities for deposit in the same manner as provided above for user and concession fees retained by the state”. While the rights to accept these revenue sources are beneficial to the state, the location of deposits, and how they are managed is not a best practice.

Section (g) identifies that “No fee shall be charged to any school or other nonprofit organization provided that a representative of the school or other organization gives written notice of the date and time of their arrival to the facility”. This authority recognizes the importance of nonprofits and educational entities and their role in bringing visitors to state park areas. However, this is not a best practice in that these groups have an impact on the resources like an entity that is not in this category. Typically, there are discounts considered, not complete fee waivers.

**CHALLENGES:** This authority provides several important foundational elements for a revenue policy. However, to date, the most problematic issue is that fees are not being set in alignment with the guiding principles of this authority. Additionally, while the authority allows for deposit of 100 percent of general revenues received by the state, these general revenues then need to be



Naturalist area at Roger Wheeler State Beach



Beavertail Aquarium at Beavertail State Park

“appropriated” to the parks division. Also, these general revenues in the statute have “limits” on expenditures for vehicle, and equipment and repairs to facilities that are not best practices. It is appropriate to evaluate a percentage of use or consideration of use, for these categories of investments and expenditures, but setting the dollar value provides a challenge to the agency. Also, the depositing and management of donations and gifts as well as concession fees does not provide the flexibility for use of these fees that need consideration. These types of revenue sources differ in their method of acquisition and disposition. Finally, the intent to not charge nonprofits or educational institutions for usage of facilities does not recognize that these user groups have an impact on the resources and that their costs need to be recovered through some mechanism.

TITLE 220-RICR-30-8: DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION:  
PURCHASES – CONTRACTS

**BENEFITS:** This regulation identifies the core components of procurement including contract rights; characteristics; purchase order contracts; multi-year contracts; letter of authorizations; changes and cancellation of contracts; types of purchase order contracts (e.g., fixed price or cost reimbursement); principles for selecting type of contract; construction contract guidance, and contract administration. The benefits of this regulation are that it identifies the structures in place for evaluation of how the park division can structure their various agreements with third party entities for concession contracts.

**CHALLENGES:** The challenge for this regulation is ensuring that agreements that are not suitable for this regulation are not issued under it. Since concessions, are not considered procurements, it is critical that the right type of regulation is guiding the right components of the concession program. To date there has been no distinction between large and small concession contracts nor between management and concession contracts. Some of these types of agreements may fit appropriately under this regulation and others do not.

TITLE 220-RICR-30-10: DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION:  
PURCHASES – EXPENDITURES THAT ARE NOT PROCUREMENTS

**BENEFITS:** This regulation identifies “Concession” as meaning, “the granting of a license to a commercial entity for the conduct of a commercial enterprise on state premises, in consideration of which the state receives a regular rent and/or a percentage or other share in net proceeds”. Additionally, this regulation identifies that, “In general, awards on concession agreements shall be made to the offeror whose proposal represents the greatest cash benefit to the state. The Purchasing Agent shall be responsible for the issuance of publicly advertised solicitations for such opportunities and shall refer the responses to the requesting agency chief executive and the State Properties Committee for review, selection, endorsement, and execution of a concession agreement.”



This regulation provides broad guidance for issuance of concession contracts which is beneficial to the parks division. It does not provide specifics on process which means the parks division could develop policies and procedures that result in the outcomes identified by these regulations. It does provide guidance on the role of the State Properties Committee which provides the parks division additional expertise in real estate agreements.

**CHALLENGES:** The challenge for this regulation is that currently, there are no policies and procedures governing the development of the Request for Proposal as well as standard contract documents nor reporting standards. Absent standard policies and procedures, the parks division is subject to inconsistencies in developing and managing concession agreements.

#### TITLE 250- RICR- CHAPTER 100 – PART 1– PARK AND MANAGEMENT AREA RULES AND REGULATIONS -DEFINITIONS OF SPECIAL USE AND SPECIAL EVENTS, AUTHORITY TO COLLECT FEES

**BENEFITS:** This regulation provides park management guidelines. Part of these guidelines include definitions of Special Events and uses for Special Use Permits; define what User Fees are in existence, and when Special Use Permits are necessary and requirements of entities that receive them. The definitions of special event and special use permit are appropriate and assist the state in management of entities on park lands. Specific information on User Fees is in the next section. The description of Special Use Permit creates no exclusions for this permit by category of user except for three management areas. While statutorily no fees can be charged to school or other nonprofit organization, there is no prohibition on charges for special use permits for commercial or individual use that are identified under this regulation. This provides the opportunity for consideration of a fee structure for these categories

**CHALLENGES:** None identified.

#### TITLE 250- RICR-100-3: AUTHORITY TO COLLECT FEES USER FEES AT STATE BEACHES, PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS

**BENEFITS:** This regulation provides a schedule of fees, definitions of general categories for charging and discounts and then provides a fee schedule. The schedule provides a distinction between resident and non-resident fees which is one strategy to differentiate fees. It also ties to the underlying authority of 42-17.1-9.1 which states that the fees could recognize the benefit of funding for parks from Rhode Island taxpayers.

**CHALLENGES:** A review of the fee schedule indicates that to date the other benefits of the 42-17.1-9-1 statute are not being taken advantage of particularly in regard to cost recovery and comparability. Additionally, there are no fees for other services and facilities that are being provided under special use permits for commercial entities or private individuals.



Playground at Burlingame State Campground



Brenton Point State Park

## INVENTORY AND PERFORMANCE OF REVENUE PROGRAMS

### BACKGROUND

The Consultant Team collected information on the inventory of assets and services under the revenue programs of the park division. The Consultant Team assembled data, where available, on the revenue programs usage as well as revenue collected over a five-year period. In some cases, data were not available over this period. This section covers fee-based revenue programs, special use permit volume, concession and leases for recreational activities, and services and donations/gifts/grants. It does not include a lease information review for residential or agricultural leases.

### FY2016 RI PARKS GENERAL REVENUE EXPENDITURES (ACTUAL)

**\$10,647,835**



**CONCESSIONS/ LEASES 23%**  
\$1,576,489

**PARKS 2%**  
\$109,095

**GOLF 3%**  
\$231,038

**CAMPING 27%**  
\$1,807,759



**BEACH PARKING 45%**  
\$3,097,331

TOTAL REVENUE  
**\$6,821,711**

**REVENUE PROGRAMS:** The Consultant Team categorized the revenue programs based upon their authorities and regulations since these guides the framework for any opportunities or challenges in changes. Overall, revenue from these program areas generated a total of \$6.8 million dollars in FY 2016.

**FEE-BASED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:** The Consultant Team reviewed the User Fee Schedule as a basis for forming this inventory and performance. Data on revenue from fee collection is captured by four different categories: Beach, Camping, Golf, and Park Revenue. The data available represents the volume of revenue over the last four to five years. Except for Beach Parking Fees which were changed recently, all the other fees have been stable over the last five years. Therefore, the revenue data represents the usage trends as well.



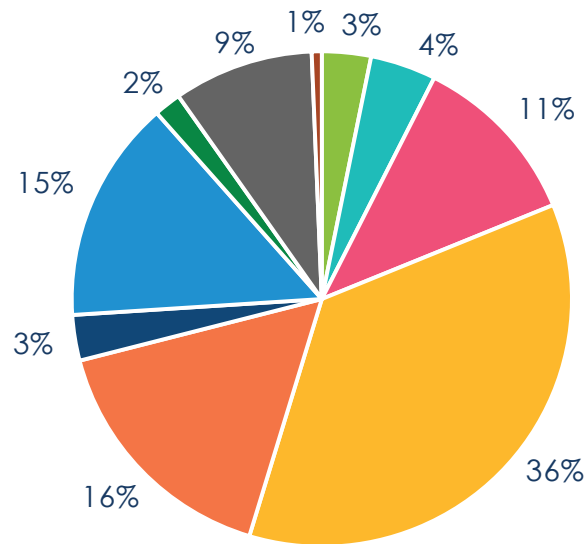
East Beach in Charlestown

## RHODE ISLAND STATE BEACHES

### 2017 Beach Parking Revenue by Location

FIGURE 4.5 - Beach Revenue Collected 5-Year Trend

Year	Total Beach Parking Revenue Collected
2010	\$2,777,480.43
2011	\$3,321,683.90
2012	\$4,021,261.75
2013	\$3,671,427.96
2014	\$3,777,931.45
2015	\$3,809,197.45
2016	\$3,097,330.75
2017	\$2,317,063.65
<b>CAGR*</b>	<b>-2.6%</b>



- Charlestown Breachway
- Roger Wheeler
- Misquamicut
- Scarborough North Overflow
- Scarborough North
- East Matunuck
- Tower Hill
- Salty Brine
- East Beach
- Scarborough South

\*Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)



Fishermen's Memorial State Campground

## RHODE ISLAND STATE CAMPGROUNDS

### 2017 Camping Segmentation

FIGURE 4.5 - Camping Revenue by Source

- RES\_CAMP
- NRES\_CAMP
- Second Car Pass - Resident
- Second Car Pass- Non-Resident
- Visitor Entrance Pass
- Dump Pass
- Extra Picnic Table
- Shower Revenue

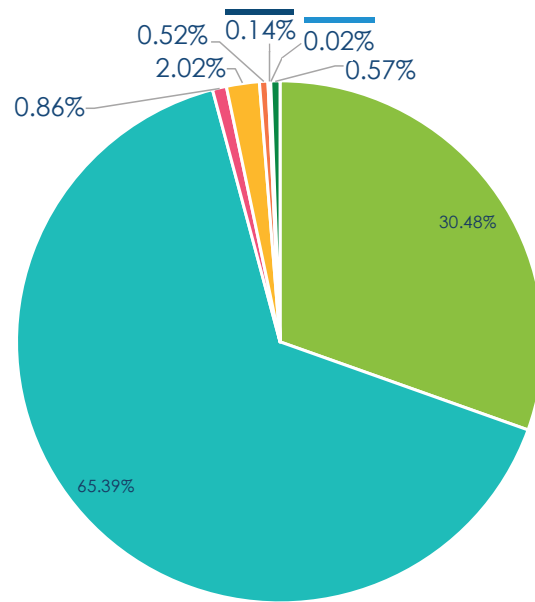


FIGURE 4.6 - Camping Revenue by Park 5-Year Trend

Park	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	CAGR*
Burlingame State Park	\$895,479.00	\$923,794.00	\$867,896.00	\$883,545.00	\$821,450.00	\$875,907.00	\$891,498.00	\$912,891.00	\$897,795.00	0.03%
Charlestown Breachway	\$142,220.00	\$145,152.00	\$131,140.00	\$140,854.00	\$137,348.00	\$139,194.00	\$145,682.00	\$152,282.00	\$156,316.00	1.19%
East Beach	\$10,430.00	\$10,368.00	\$8,912.00	\$10,282.00	\$6,712.00	\$10,276.00	\$9,312.00	\$9,748.00	\$11,364.00	1.08%
Fishermen's Memorial State Park	\$528,822.50	\$541,856.00	\$546,828.00	\$576,365.00	\$597,047.00	\$567,275.00	\$637,977.00	\$656,446.00	\$699,779.00	3.56%
George Washington Campground	\$53,373.00	\$58,722.00	\$60,983.00	\$64,578.00	\$61,425.00	\$66,927.00	\$72,539.00	\$72,891.00	\$111,910.00	9.70%
Pulaski Park	\$1,575.00	\$2,555.00	\$2,700.00	\$2,600.00	\$2,950.00	\$2,850.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00	10.50%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$1,631,899.50</b>	<b>\$1,682,447.00</b>	<b>\$1,618,459.00</b>	<b>\$1,678,224.00</b>	<b>\$1,626,932.00</b>	<b>\$1,662,429.00</b>	<b>\$1,760,008.00</b>	<b>\$1,807,758.00</b>	<b>\$1,880,664.00</b>	<b>1.79%</b>

\*Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)

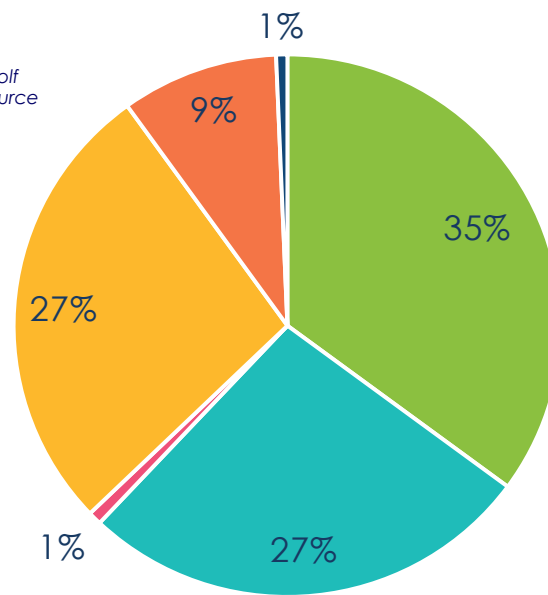


Goddard Memorial State Park Golf Course

## RHODE ISLAND STATE GOLF COURSE

### 2016 Golf Segmentation

FIGURE 4.7 - Golf revenue by source



- Regular Weekday
- Juniors Weekday
- Seniors Weekend/Holiday
- Seniors Weekday
- Regular Weekend/Holiday
- Juniors Weekend

FIGURE 4.8 - Golf Revenue 5-Year Trend

Year	Total
2008	\$248,395.00
2009	\$267,959.00
2010	\$265,177.00
2011	\$243,766.00
2012	\$246,265.00
2013	\$236,146.00
2014	\$252,656.00
2015	\$245,656.00
2016	\$231,038.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,237,058.00</b>
<b>CAGR*</b>	<b>-0.90%</b>

\*Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)



Goddard Memorial State Park

## RHODE ISLAND STATE PARKS

The Consultant Team evaluated both the revenue and resulting demand for Park data for the period 2008 to 2016. This data includes transactions for items including Facility Rentals (e.g. Carousel, Pavilions, Chapel); Equipment Rental (e.g. picnic tables) and Area Rentals (e.g. Fields, Equestrian Rings, etc.). Figure 4.9 illustrates that Park Revenue data has increased as a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 2.4% over the last nine years.

The Consultant Team then looked specifically at demand and noted the differences in how demand has changed by type of rental item.

FIGURE 4.9 - Summary of Park Revenue 5-Year Trend

Year	Revenue
2008	\$90,269.21
2009	\$88,131.20
2010	\$100,940.59
2011	\$116,330.30
2012	\$123,477.89
2013	\$114,916.04
2014	\$119,838.14
2015	\$115,164.14
2016	\$109,095.00
<b>Avg.</b>	<b>\$108,684.72</b>
<b>CAGR*</b>	<b>2.4%</b>

\*Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)



Volvo Ocean Race at Fort Adams State Park in 2018

**PARK USAGE DATA**

The usage data illustrates that demand by type of rental has varied significantly over the last eight years. The usage of the Carousel at Goddard has not been consistent, but the usage of the Wedding Chapel at Colt has held at consistent levels. Equestrian field rental has continued to increase as has usage of soccer fields at Fort Adams. Level II picnic pavilions have continued steady growth with Level III pavilions experiencing growth of approximately 1.5%.



Fort Wetherill State Park

FIGURE 4.10 - Park Revenue by Type and Growth Rate

Revenue Area	2008 Revenue	2009 Revenue	2010 Revenue	2011 Revenue	2012 Revenue	2013 Revenue	2014 Revenue	2015 Revenue	2016 Revenue	Total Sum of Revenue	CAGR*
Banquet Tables	\$726	\$1,272	\$1,662	\$1,860	\$3,010	\$2,170	\$1,830	\$1,460	\$2,530	\$16,520	16.9%
Carousel Per Day For Profit Organizations	\$2,200	\$3,000	\$6,400	\$200						\$11,800	-55.0%
Carousel Per Day Non-Profit Organizations	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$3,700	\$500		\$100				\$9,100	-40.7%
Chapel (3 Hours)	\$1,755	\$1,770	\$1,650	\$1,590	\$1,560	\$1,770	\$1,890	\$1,725	\$1,800	\$15,510	0.3%
Equestrian Area Daily	\$75	\$15	\$180	\$150	\$120	\$195	\$240	\$90	\$15	\$1,080	-18.2%
Equestrian Area Per Season	\$150	\$100	\$150	\$150	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$200	\$200	\$1,250	3.7%
Fields (Little League Season)	\$2,350	\$2,025	\$400	\$2,875	\$2,450	\$1,600	\$25	\$300	\$50	\$12,075	-38.2%
Fields (Soccer Rugby)	\$270		\$1,130		\$75	\$500	\$1,825	\$950	\$1,200	\$5,950	20.5%
Gift Certificates Sold	\$1,880	\$1,149	\$904	\$912	\$735	\$918	\$494	\$922	\$697	\$8,611	21.0%
Level I				\$6,200	\$5,950	\$5,500	\$5,950	\$5,150	\$6,400	\$35,150	0.6%
Level II				\$29,625	\$31,125	\$30,675	\$29,100	\$29,550	\$32,550	\$182,625	1.9%
Level III				\$7,100	\$7,100	\$7,000	\$7,600	\$7,000	\$7,600	\$43,400	1.4%
Mule Barn	\$2,700	\$2,600		\$2,900						\$8,200	2.4%
Open Fields	\$5,752	\$6,320	\$7,040	\$3,216	\$3,048	\$2,848	\$2,816	\$2,728	\$3,344	\$37,112	-6.6%
Performing Arts				\$5,000	\$12,750	\$8,750	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$53,500	12.5%
Picnic Tables	\$27,316	\$28,402	\$27,960	\$26,430	\$29,294	\$27,232	\$28,012	\$27,062	\$29,504	\$251,212	1.0%
Shelter/Gazebo	\$13,090	\$14,665	\$21,770							\$49,525	29.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$60,664</b>	<b>\$63,718</b>	<b>\$72,946</b>	<b>\$88,708</b>	<b>\$97,317</b>	<b>\$89,358</b>	<b>\$88,882</b>	<b>\$86,137</b>	<b>\$94,890</b>	<b>\$742,620</b>	<b>0.9%</b>

\*Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)



Newport Folk Festival at Fort Adams State Park



Regatta at Goddard Memorial State Park

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Special Events (e.g., any event in which 75 or more participants not to exceed 150 participants assemble on a Public Reservation not under the jurisdiction of the Division of Parks and Recreation) is a category of events. Special Events outside of Fort Adams State Parks have no special event fees. The parks division did not have special event data for multiple years. It did have it available for 2015 and 2016. The data indicates approximately 40 Special Events in 2016 and 24 in 2015. The majority (i.e., 14 events or 35%) of these Special Events occur at Fort Adams State Park with Lincoln Woods State Parks second at 12 events or 30%.

**Rhode Island State Parks 2015 Major Events**

Location	Event	Estimate of Participants
Colt	March of Dimes Walk-a-Thon	3,000
Colt	British Invasion Car Show	2,000
Colt	Trident Obstacle Course	1,500
Goddard	New Balance Road Race	6,000
Goddard	Brown Invitational	5,000
Goddard	NBX Race	3,000
Goddard	Imagine Walk	7,000
Goddard	Oh My Goddard	3,000
Goddard	Junior High XC Championship	4,000
Goddard	Autos of the World	5,000
Misquamicut	Spring Fest	14,000
Scarborough	BoldrDash	5,000
Brenton Point	Kite Festival	4,000
Fort Adams	Laser Lightshow	2,500
Fort Adams	Lafayette's Hermione	1,000
Fort Adams	Newport 10 Mile Race	2,200
Fort Adams	4th of July Fireworks	1,500
Fort Adams	Middletown Rotary	2,000
Fort Adams	Volvo Race	131,000
Fort Adams	Folk Festival	33,000
Fort Adams	Jazz Festival	21,000
Fort Adams	Fort Aqua Concert	5,000
Fort Adams	Fortress of Nightmares	5,000
Fort Adams	USCG Eagle	3,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>269,700</b>



## Rhode Island State Parks 2016 Major Events

Location	Event	Estimate of Participants
Brenton Point	Kite Fest	6,000
Colt	March of Dimes	1,500
Fort Adams	World Match Racing Tour	150,000
Fort Adams	Rugby Tournament	2,500
Fort Adams	Newport 10 Mile Road Race	3,500
Fort Adams	Chowder Cook Off	5,000
Fort Adams	Rugby Tournament	1,200
Fort Adams	4th of July Fireworks	3,500
Fort Adams	Newport Regatta	1,000
Fort Adams	Lacrosse Tournament	2,000
Fort Adams	Craft Brew Race & Beer Festival	2,000
Fort Adams	Folk Music Festival	35,000
Fort Adams	Jazz Music Festival	25,000
Fort Adams	US Opti Championships	3,800
Fort Adams	Alzheimer Walk	1,000
Fort Adams	Rotary Car Show	3,000
Goddard	Autism Project of RI Family Fun Day	8,500
Goddard	Pancreatic Cancer Walk	2,500
Goddard	American Liver Foundation Walk	2,500
Goddard	Ocean State Cross Country Race	5,000
Goddard	Brown Invitational	3,500
Goddard	NBX Bike Races	1,500
Lincoln Woods	EcoTulip Event	2,000
Lincoln Woods	YMCA Camp/Outing	1,400
Lincoln Woods	Shannon's Fierce Race	1,100
Lincoln Woods	Fisk Triathlon	1,300
Lincoln Woods	Greenway Challenge	1,250
Lincoln Woods	RI Bass Stalkers	800
Lincoln Woods	Brandon Dee, Blackstone Bicycles	1,150
Lincoln Woods	WPRI Whiffle Ball Challenge	700
Lincoln Woods	Blue Cross Blue Shield Outing	1,300
Lincoln Woods	Kaleigh Perkins Connecting for Children & Families	1,000
Lincoln Woods	Chris Nicholas, Wellness Event	800
Lincoln Woods	Lincoln Public Schools	3,000
Misquamicut	Spring Fest	4,000
Misquamicut	Fall Fest	4,000
Pulaski Park	Governors Campout	250
Pulaski Park	Run With the Beavers	300
Rocky Point	Movies in the Parks	4,500
Rocky Point	BoldrDash	2,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>300,350</b>



Music in the Park at Rocky Point State Park



Fallfest at Misquamicut State Beach



Lincoln Woods State Park

### Special Use Permits by Region

Region	Est. # of Events	Types of Organizations
1	80	Non-Profit, State
2	60	Non-Profit, State, Education, Private
3	80	Non-Profit, State, Education
4	90	Commercial, Non-Profit, State, Education
<b>Total Permits</b>	<b>310</b>	

### SPECIAL USE PERMITS

Special Use Permits are, “written permission for authorized groups either organized or assembled by any means including advertisement of social media of 10-75 people for Management Areas”. The Consultant Team requested data from the parks division regarding the number of special use permits issued per year as well as type of organization receiving the issuance. The park division’s special use permit system is a paper-based system using PDF forms that individuals submit. Also, there is currently no fee for special use permits; therefore, there is no revenue tracking of this data unless the special use permits involve a Facility Rental or an Area Rental. Interviews indicate that most of these Special Use Permits do rent a facility. However, the parks division was unable to identify what percentage of Facility Rentals or Area Rentals include a Special Use Permit. Therefore, the data set available to the Consultant Team was not complete and did not allow for year over year demand trends. However, the Consultant Team reviewed the data available and identified the following attributes regarding Special Use Permits.

The data indicates that most of the special use permits are for non-profit, state and educational events. The current fee authority identifies that no fees shall be charged for non-profits or schools as long as they have provided the date and time of their event. This analysis indicates that those entities are using the Special Use Permit for that notification. There were a small number of Special Use Permits for Commercial and Private entities. As such, there remains an opportunity to create a special use permit fee separate from a rental fee for these two categories.

### CONCESSION/LEASES

The Consultant Team requested data from the parks division on the number and type of concession/ leases, the gross revenue generated by the concession/leases and the concession/lease fees paid to the parks division. The parks division was able to provide most of the data but was unable to provide gross revenue generated by the concession/leases for all the contracts.

The reporting of gross revenue generated by concessions is a requirement of most of the existing contracts, but the parks division has not been

managing the receipt of this data. Also, since most concession contract fees are based upon a fixed schedule, the amounts due to the parks division do not vary substantially over the course of the contract.

Park division data received indicate that concession contracts contribute approximately \$800,000 excluding the contribution from the parking service contract. The addition of the parking service contract adds an additional \$750,000 equating to a total concession fee volume of \$1.55 million to the parks division. All the concession contracts allocate 50% of the concession fee to concession fees and 50% to a capital improvement fund. The allocation towards capital improvement payments is based upon guidance that the State Properties Committee gave to the parks division as a strategy to create capital improvement funding in lieu of caps on capital appropriation funds. While the concept of a maintenance fee to steward assets is sound, the method for calculating this fee is not based upon facility needs.



*Kayaking at Lincoln Woods State Park*

### Concessionaire Listing

Name	Location	Type of Concession	50 Percent Concession Fees	50 Percent Capital Improvement Fees
Kitt Kites	Brenton Point	Food concession & Kite Sales	\$2,750.00	\$5,500.00
Longade, LLC	Brenton Point	Frozen Beverage concession	\$2,025.00	\$4,050.00
BA Services Inc	Burlingame Campground	Campground operation	\$170,000.00	\$340,000.00
MC's Lemonade	Colt Park	Frozen Beverage concession	\$6,562.50	\$13,125.00
Fire & Water Concessions Inc.	East Matunuck	Beach / Food concession	\$18,550.50	\$37,101.00
Longade, LLC	Fort Adams	Frozen Beverage concession	\$2,025.00	\$4,050.00
C & L Stables	Goddard Park	Horse Riding / Stable	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
PGS Inc.	Goddard Park	Food concession & Golf car rental	\$11,047.00	\$22,094.00
Knights Lemonade	Goddard Park	Frozen Beverage concession	\$4,288.00	\$8,576.00
Bar J Company	Lincoln Woods	Horse Riding / Stable	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00
Eastern Mountain Sports	Lincoln Woods	Kayak rental	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
Jose Franco	Lincoln Woods	Food concession	\$13,250.00	\$26,500.00
DAC Ceaser	Misquamicut	Beach / Food concession	\$58,500.50	\$117,001.00
DAC Ceaser	Roger Wheeler	Beach / Food concession	\$33,000.50	\$66,001.00
Fire & Water Concessions Inc.	Salty Brine	Beach / Food concession	\$7,550.50	\$15,101.00
DAC Ceaser	Scarborough State Beach	Beach / Food concession	\$63,500.50	\$127,001.00
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$804,100.00</b>	



Beach parking entrance

As stated previously, concession contracts are either bid out with a minimum fee or percentage of revenue. Ultimately, all result as fixed fee at contract award. While this provides ease in management and predictability for the parks division, it does not provide the parks division any upside if revenue increases and therefore, concessionaires benefit from the upside. Conversely, it protects the agency and not the operator from decreases in revenue.

The Consultant Team notes that concession fees should be based upon a variety of factors and there are no “standard” concession fees by asset class. Many factors influence an appropriate setting of concession fees, and the Consultant Team notes these under best practices later in the report. However, the Consultant Team’s work within other state park agencies for similar asset classes and for similar volume and revenue indicates some anomalies in the concessions fee percentages charged by the parks division. Based upon information that is available regarding some of the concession gross revenue, it appears that the concession fee for beach snack bars is unusually high. The Consultant Team also notes that the percentage payment for PROPARK appears high as a percentage of revenue but if viewed as a percentage of the initial beach fees (e.g., prior to the reduction of beach fees), the concession fees equate to approximately 20% which is like other parking operations that the Consultant Team has seen.

The Consultant Team notes that Concession Program contract oversight is not occurring. Specifically, ensuring that reporting is occurring as well as an annual review of scope of services. This is primarily due to lack of staffing overall as well as competencies to undertake these functions.

The Consultant Team received leases from the parks division but only reviewed those that are related to historical, cultural or recreation activities. The largest of these are the leases for non-profit entities operating within Ft. Adams State Park. This includes Sail Newport, Newport Jazz Festival, and the Oliver Perry Ship. The Fort Adams Trust does not have a lease but has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the parks division. The Consultant Team identifies elements of this MOU on the previous page. [Figure 21](#) identifies the names of the recreational leases that are currently under contract, their term and the lease fee to the parks division. Most of these leases are conveying the rights to the lease for a nominal fee (e.g., \$1.00) with the understanding

### Contracts Listing

Relevant Service Contracts	Location	Annual Fee	Annual Summation		Gross Revenue Most Recently Reported Period	Recently Reported Period	Concession Fee Percentage of Gross Revenue
ProPark Parking	State Beaches	\$728,050.00	2016 Payment	\$772,389.00	\$2,317,063.65	2013	33.33%
ReserveAmerica	State Campgrounds			N/A Transaction Based			
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$728,050.00</b>					

that all proceeds from leased activities are put towards management, maintenance and in some cases new development on the site.

Since the preponderance of these leases are with non-profit organizations, the parks division lease fees are in essence “transfer” fees in lieu of the non-profit undertaking stewardship of the locations including maintenance and potential capital improvements. There are two leases for golf course operations that do not appear to be non-profits. These include those for Potowomut Golf Club and Pawtucket Country Club. The latter lease is for an easement and the former is for rights for land to operate a private golf club on portions of Goddard State Park. The Consultant Team notes that the lease for Potowomut Golf Club has a portion of its lease extension optioned. The Consultant Team notes that any further extension should have a lease reassessment to ensure that the parks division is receiving the fair market value of the parcel.

The Consultant Team notes that monitoring of the lease requirements is not occurring on an annual basis. As such, the parks division cannot verify if the “value” of the lease in lieu of payment is appropriate. Like the concession program, lease oversight is not occurring.



The Oliver Hazard Perry docked at Fort Adams State Park in Newport

FIGURE 4.11 - Listing of property leases

### Property Leases Listing

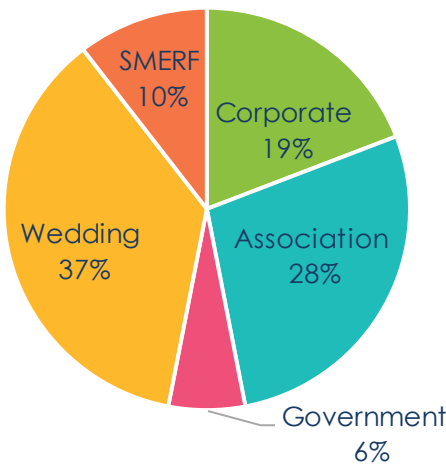
Tenant	Location	Annual Rate
Golf Foundation of Rhode Island	Dyerville State Park	\$1.00
Blackstone River Visitor Center		\$1.00
Potowomut Golf Course	Goddard Memorial State Park	\$16,500.00
Oliver Hazard Perry Boat/Pier	Fort Adams State Park	\$1.00
Pawtucket Country Club	Ten Mile Reservation	\$704.00
Sail Newport	Fort Adams State Park	\$1.00
Newport Festival Foundation	Fort Adams State Park	\$1.00
Coggeshall Farm	Colt State Park	\$1.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$17,210.00</b>
Memorandum of Understanding	Location	Annual Rate
Fort Burnside Communication and Coastal Defense Museum	Beavertail	\$6,240.00
Fort Adams Trust	Fort Adams State Park	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$6,240.00</b>



Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Newport Folk Festival at Fort Adams State Park in Newport

### Fort Adams Event Segmentation (2017)



### Fort Adams Event Listing

Type	Number
Eisenhower House*	48
Fort Adams Trust	62
Sail Newport	41
Folk/Jazz Festival	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>

\*12 special events are from Historic Preservation

## FORT ADAMS STATE PARK

### EVENTS AT FORT ADAMS STATE PARK

Fort Adams State Park is the host to multiple subtenants through leases as well as Memorandum of Understandings (MOU's). Within Fort Adam State Park, special events are connected with Fort Adams Trust, Eisenhower House, Sail Newport, and Newport Festival Foundations. Some Fort Adams events are high-profile, bring international recognition to the Park and generate millions of dollars in economic benefits to the state.

The historic Newport Jazz Festival and Newport Folk Festivals bring thousands of people to Fort Adams every summer. In 2018, DEM signed a lease and license agreement with Newport Festivals Foundation that ensure that these events – and a new museum - will continue at the Park each year and provide a year-round presence for the Newport Festivals Foundation.

Since the 1980s, DEM has leased facilities at Fort Adams to Sail Newport, an arrangement that brings many benefits through a community sailing program. Working with Sail Newport, the parks division helps to support dozens of regattas each year, including huge events like the America's Cup World Series and the Volvo Ocean Race, which bring tens of thousands of people from around the world to the Park and generate tens of millions of dollars for the state.

To understand the volume of special events occurring, the Consultants requested data for 2017 and 2018. Data was inconsistent and there were data gaps. In 2017, the special event listing detail did not include any Sail Newport events, but the summary provided did. In 2018, the data available only represents information booked through the beginning of the first quarter of 2018. Data received from the parks division indicates that there were 153 Special events at Fort Adams State Park in 2017.

The Consultant Team reviewed the detailed information from 2017 to note the overall segmentation of events. The Consultant Team notes that this detail data did not include the Sail Newport or Newport Jazz & Folks Festival events.

Of the approximately 115 events held in 2017, between Fort Adams and Eisenhower House, approximately 37% of the events were weddings followed by events put on by non-profits or associations. The Eisenhower House events represented 41% of events with the balance occurring within Fort Adams. Between the two locations, the mix of demand is relatively similar with the Eisenhower House.

Prior to 2017, events at the Eisenhower House were managed by the Rhode Island Historic Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC). In April 2017, the RIHPHC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with DEM and the Fort Adams Trust to coordinate events and manage the House. In August 2017, the General Assembly formally transferred responsibility from RIHPHC to the parks division. The fees for this venue are special event fees and are set to be comparable/competitive with other high-quality historic wedding and special event venues. The rights to charge fees and provides services to the Eisenhower House are based upon Statute 42-45.12.

**FORT ADAMS STATE PARK MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

As the Department geared up to take on management of the Eisenhower House it continued to operate under the terms of the MOU with Fort Adams Trust to guide operation and management.



*Interpretive signage inside Fort Adams*

Management and scheduling of the Eisenhower House occurred through the Fort Adams Trust with assistance from a parks division employee. Event approval for the Eisenhower House occurred through the parks division. The Trust handled event deposits and payments through a Trust account set up for the Eisenhower House. The Trust has the responsibility to report revenue and expenses to the parks division. Currently, marketing and promotion for the Eisenhower House is part of the Fort Adams Trust marketing efforts. The Trust handles all event inquiries and sends interested parties to the Eisenhower House. After events are booked, the parks division employee manages and coordinates details of the bookings with the client. Staff from the Trust assist with set up and clean up and the parks division employee is typically on site to greet the client.

As of this writing, the parks division is considering new arrangements to guide the management of the Eisenhower House.



Sailing regatta at Goddard Memorial State Park

## REVENUE PROGRAMS GAPS

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Consultant Team has identified that the statutes and codes of regulations that exist to guide the program provide a solid foundation for revenue program changes. The Consultant Team sees clear guidance and intent under 42-17.1-9.1. The primary challenge lies in the “appropriation” of general revenues collected and no guarantee that 100% of park proceeds will be returned to the parks division.

To date, the parks division has not met the intent of its authorities to ensure that pricing is based upon cost recovery and comparability. Additionally, there are categories of fees, such as special use permits for commercial services, that are more suitable as concession permits vs. a special use permit.

### REVENUE PROGRAMS

The scope and scale of activities offered within the parks division are less than other state parks system offerings. This is a program gap and a revenue gap. This gap is due to the lack of available staff and the disincentive for taking risks and creating additional revenue with no guarantee that this revenue will be returned to the park division. None of the best practices identified within the revenue program discussion is occurring and hence there is no optimization of revenue opportunities.

### CONCESSIONS/LEASES

The concession program has the proper statutory authorities for concessions but lacks policies and procedures for planning, contracting and contract oversight. Currently, there is no delineation between what constitutes a commercial special use permit, small contract, large contract and what should be a concession vs. a management contract. The ability of a concession program to grow is a function of being able to understand how to grow and having the policies and procedures in place to do so. None of this exists to date.





The lease program appears to be functioning with clear guidance. With the majority of the leases being with nonprofits at low or no costs, the biggest gap observed was in ensuring that lessees adhere to lease terms in regard to maintenance and capital improvement are adhered to.

## PARK MANAGERS' PERSPECTIVES ON REVENUE PROGRAMS

### BACKGROUND

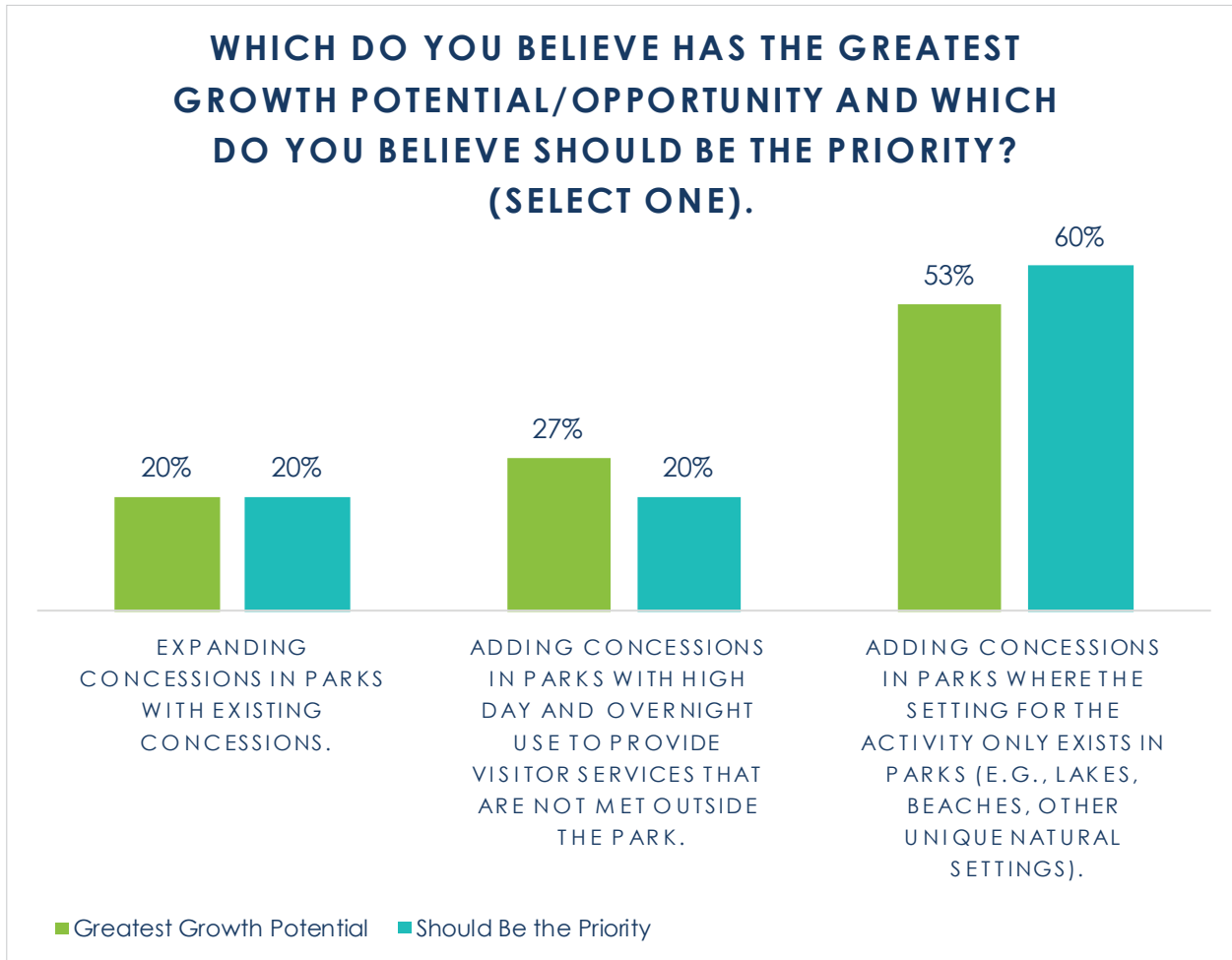
The Consultant Team undertook two surveys to ascertain what opportunities exist to expand revenue programs at the various park units. The first survey focused on overall opportunities to expand or add revenue programs and the second survey focused on priorities for growing the concession program.

Park Managers identified their interest in expanding or adding revenue programs to their parks. All parks indicated some interest in expanding revenue programs within their park units. Fort Adams, Burlingame, Goddard and Lincoln Woods State Park each identified more than six opportunities to expand revenue programs within their parks. Fee based programming, food and beverage and picnic pavilion rentals were the areas receiving the highest number of support for expansion of programming. The preponderance of responses from Park Managers indicated that the preferred management model for expansion of services would be state park management. For those that desired fee base programming and food and beverage, the majority of responses indicate an interest in having a concession manage and for picnic pavilions the desire is for state park management. The interest in fee-based programming being done by concessions may be an opportunity for a non-profit or for-profit organization (e.g. Eastern Mountain Sports, REI, University of Rhode Island Campus Recreation, etc.) to enter into concession agreements for expanded services. Eastern Mountain Sports had a concession contract, and it appears that REI is operating under a special use permit in several parks. Food and Beverage expansion provides opportunities for consideration of additional roving food and beverage trucks in park locations.

FIGURE 4.12 - Park Managers Priority for Revenue Growth

**Park Managers Priority for Revenue Growth**

Row Labels	All Camping	Alternative Overnight Accommodations	Bicycle Rentals	Bike/Scooter Rentals	Boat Rentals	Bounce House Rentals	Camp Store	Fee Based Programming	Food and Beverage	Group Camping	Individual Camping	Kayak Rentals	Marinas	N/A	Picnic Pavilion Rentals	Picnic Store with Picnic/Fishing Supplies	Special Events	Grand Total
Pulaski Parks								1	1			1			1		1	5
Beavertail																	1	1
Blackstone River Bikeway								1	1						1		1	4
Brenton Point															2		1	3
Burlingame Campground								1	2						1		2	6
Burlingame Picnic Area															1			1
Charlestown Breachway													1					1
Colt State Park			1		1													2
East Bay Bike Path														1				1
East Beach														1				1
East Matunuck														1				1
Fishermen's Memorial								1	2		1							4
Fort Adams		2					1					1					2	6
Fort Wetherill																	1	1
George Washington	1	1					1		1	1								5
Goddard Park																	8	8
Lincoln Woods				1		1		1							1	1	1	6
Misquamicut									1									1
Roger Wheeler								1									1	2
Salty Brine								1									1	2
Scarborough North								1									1	2
Scarborough South								1									1	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>65</b>	



Park Managers identified where the greatest opportunities to grow concession revenue as well as what should be the highest priorities for the parks division. Managers had three options for consideration:

FIGURE 4.12 - Park Managers Opportunity for Revenue Growth

1. Expanding Concessions in parks with Existing Concessions
2. Adding Concessions in high day and overnight visitation parks for needs that are not met outside the park
3. Adding concessions in parks where the setting for the activity only exists in parks (e.g., lakes, beaches, other unique natural settings).

Figure 4.12 confirms that Park Managers believe the best opportunities lie in those places where the parks division has a unique setting such as the parks division’s beaches and lakes. When asked about priorities for the parks division should be, the data indicates alignment with individual Park Managers beliefs: focusing on parks that have unique settings. The Consultant Team noticed in the first survey that there is nominal interest in expanding concessions at Beach settings. There was greater interest in expanding at lake settings.



Parks staff at Roger Wheeler State Beach

## PARK SYSTEM EXPENDITURES

In addition to the revenue analysis provided in the last sections, the Consultant Team also conducted a detailed expenditure analysis for the system. The expenditure analysis provides DEM with an understanding of how expenditures are distributed throughout the entire system, by region, and by park.

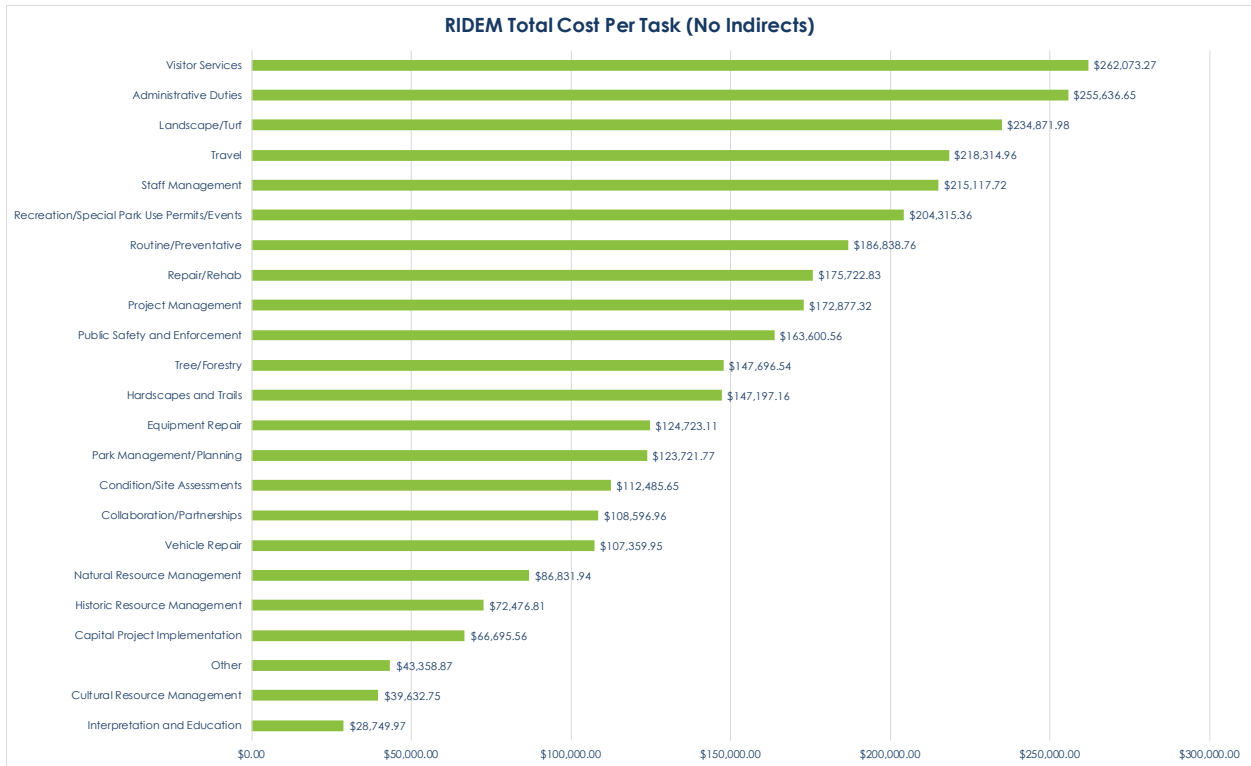
### TIME-TASK ANALYSIS (DIRECT COSTS)

Staff were asked to assist the Consultant Team by completing a time-task analysis. A time-task analysis requires staff to assign time percentages across various function categories. In total, staff were asked to separate their time across 23 work functions. The assigned percentages were then combined with fully loaded hourly wages (including benefits) to produce a total cost per task sum. In total, approximately 74,000 hours were attributed to maintaining the existing park system through full-time positions. This equates to approximately 35.64 FTE. This figure does not include seasonal labor.

FIGURE 4.13 - Time-Task Analysis Summary by Category

Time/ Task Analysis				
Core Function	All Staff Analysis			
	Percentage of Time	Total Hours per Task	Total FTE per Task	Total Cost per Task
Visitor Services	7.77%	5,759.42	2.77	\$262,073.27
Public Safety and Enforcement	4.93%	3,656.02	1.76	\$163,600.56
Park Management/Planning	2.94%	2,178.90	1.05	\$123,721.77
Administrative Duties	6.72%	4,979.00	2.39	\$255,636.65
Staff Management	5.64%	4,183.50	2.01	\$215,117.72
Interpretation and Education	0.80%	592.80	0.29	\$28,749.97
Recreation/Special Park Use Permits/Events	5.48%	4,058.60	1.95	\$204,315.36
Project Management	4.70%	3,486.70	1.68	\$172,877.32
Condition/Site Assessments	3.11%	2,306.62	1.11	\$112,485.65
Collaboration/Partnerships	2.69%	1,994.20	0.96	\$108,596.96
Cultural Resource Management	1.05%	777.82	0.37	\$39,632.75
Historic Resource Management	2.09%	1,550.02	0.75	\$72,476.81
Natural Resource Management	2.47%	1,828.22	0.88	\$86,831.94
Travel	6.27%	4,649.22	2.24	\$218,314.96
Routine/Preventative	6.39%	4,733.33	2.28	\$186,838.76
Repair/Rehab	6.02%	4,465.53	2.15	\$175,722.83
Capital Project Implementation	1.81%	1,343.81	0.65	\$66,695.56
Vehicle Repair	3.64%	2,698.83	1.30	\$107,359.95
Equipment Repair	4.37%	3,239.63	1.56	\$124,723.11
Landscape/Turf	8.72%	6,461.03	3.11	\$234,871.98
Hardscapes and Trails	5.31%	3,932.53	1.89	\$147,197.16
Tree/Forestry	5.52%	4,088.53	1.97	\$147,696.54
Other	1.56%	1,156.58	0.56	\$43,358.87
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>74,120.80</b>	<b>35.64</b>	<b>\$3,298,896.43</b>

\*FTE total is less than actual RIDEM FTE levels because hours reflect actual hours/position (e.g., 2018, 1820, etc.)



As shown in Figure 4.14, the top five most costly activities include:

FIGURE 4.14 - Cost Per Task (Payroll Only) in Descending Order

**1. VISITOR SERVICES**

(visitor contacts, answering inquiries, providing assistance, etc.)

**2. ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**

(purchasing, payroll, maintaining records/files, emailing, etc.)

**3. LANDSCAPE/TURF**

(maintenance activities related turf such as mowing, trimming, fertilizing, etc.)

**4. TRAVEL**

(to and from job sites, meetings, stores, parks within/out of the region, etc.)

**5. STAFF MANAGEMENT**

(recruitment, hiring, supervision, training, etc.)

Not surprisingly, visitor services are the category with the most amount of personnel dollars attached to it because it is the category that spans across all staff the most. Conversely, administrative duties are the second highest category in terms of personnel dollars attached. This data point corroborates information gleaned in the staff focus groups that staff are continuing to take on more administrative duties. Administrative duties are typically part of a manager’s purview; however, this data indicates that more and more staff outside of managers are having to associate with administrative duties in their daily routine. Given the size of the Rhode Island system, it is understandable that staff will have to travel within their park region and to headquarters in Providence for meetings and such; however, staff indicate that collectively they spend

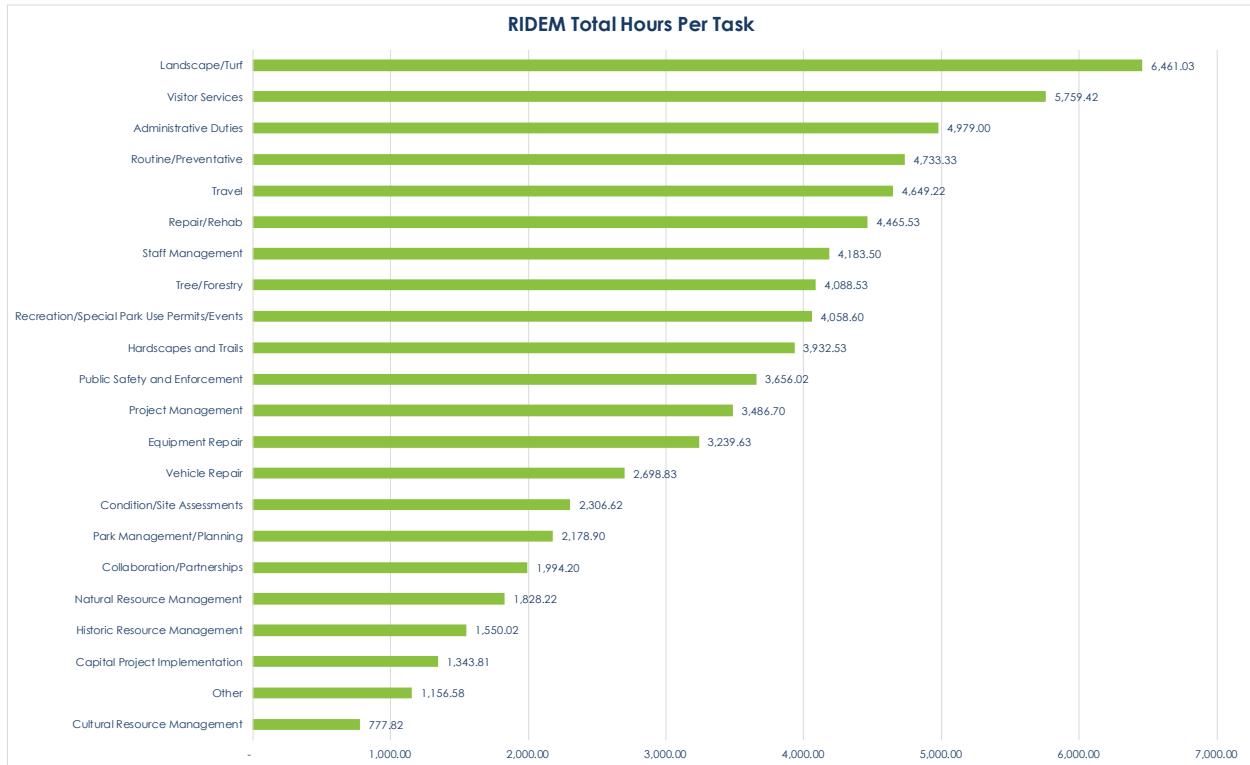


FIGURE 4.15 - Time Per Task (Payroll Only) in Descending Order

approximately 4,600 hours/year traveling. This equates to over 2 FTE that cannot be doing other responsibilities within the system.

However, as shown in Figure 4.15, the top five activities staff report for their time include:

- 1. LANDSCAPE/TURF**  
(maintenance activities related turf such as mowing, trimming, fertilizing, etc.)
- 2. VISITOR SERVICES**  
(visitor contacts, answering inquiries, providing assistance, etc.)
- 3. ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**  
(purchasing, payroll, maintaining records/files, emailing, etc.)
- 4. ROUTINE/PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE**  
(activities related to regularly scheduled maintenance)
- 5. TRAVEL**  
(to and from job sites, meetings, stores, parks within/out of the region, etc.)

There is not a direct correlation/relationship between the top five activities staff spend their time on and their associated costs. This is due to the differing employee pay scales. Interestingly, routine/preventative maintenance is in the top five in terms of hours spent, but out of the top five in terms of total dollars expended. This indicates those that are completing routine/preventative maintenance tasks are not compensated at the same level as those performing visitor services, administrative, and landscape/turf functions.

Figure 4.16 shows the time-task analysis broken down by region. The figure indicates the top five categories in terms of percentage of time spent (highlighted in blue) for each region and overall for the park system. All regions, with the exception of Region 1, have visitor services in their top five. There are also varying amounts of time spent on maintenance activities among the regions. For example, Region 3 is the only region that has any maintenance category in a double-digit range (landscape/turf). Region 4 does have a double-digit category, but it is for recreation/special park use permits/events. This makes sense given that Region 6 includes Fort Adams where the majority of the system’s special events take place.

### COST ACCOUNTING (INDIRECT COSTS)

To understand the full financial picture for system expenditures, a cost accounting analysis was conducted. It involved examining the system’s indirect expenditures assigned to each project code category. Staff are required to select project codes when making purchases or assigning outside work contracts. All data was then separated by region (and park). Approximately \$1.5 million was spent in 2017 for indirect costs within the system (See Figure 4.17). Region 4 spent the most money in 2017 with approximately \$443,000. Region 2 spent the least at approximately \$137,000. Another way of looking at the indirect costs is by the percentage of total dollars by project code category attributed to each region and by overall category (See Figure 4.18).

FIGURE 4.16 - Personnel Time Allocated to Job Functions by Region

Core Function	Admin	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Hours	% of Total Time
Visitor Services	<b>9.25%</b>	5.58%	<b>10.64%</b>	<b>7.35%</b>	<b>6.82%</b>	<b>8.14%</b>	<b>9.36%</b>	<b>7.77%</b>
Public Safety and Enforcement	6.75%	6.03%	1.50%	3.19%	<b>7.63%</b>	<b>6.74%</b>	3.91%	<b>4.93%</b>
Park Management/Planning	<b>11.25%</b>	1.75%	1.84%	2.45%	1.16%	2.27%	3.05%	<b>2.94%</b>
Administrative Duties	<b>13.25%</b>	5.58%	<b>8.06%</b>	<b>7.32%</b>	6.37%	1.87%	4.50%	<b>6.72%</b>
Staff Management	7.75%	<b>6.65%</b>	5.86%	5.48%	6.24%	3.20%	2.68%	<b>5.64%</b>
Interpretation and Education	1.25%	0.43%	1.84%	0.54%	0.37%	0.47%	1.45%	<b>0.80%</b>
Recreation/Special Use Permits/Events	7.75%	2.93%	5.36%	6.30%	2.76%	4.67%	<b>12.91%</b>	<b>5.48%</b>
Project Management	<b>9.00%</b>	5.28%	4.57%	2.62%	6.32%	3.67%	3.05%	<b>4.70%</b>
Condition/Site Assessments	4.00%	2.85%	5.20%	1.13%	4.37%	4.41%	1.36%	<b>3.11%</b>
Collaboration/Partnerships	<b>9.25%</b>	1.15%	0.18%	3.55%	0.97%	0.00%	<b>6.82%</b>	<b>2.69%</b>
Cultural Resource Management	1.50%	0.43%	0.18%	0.55%	0.37%	4.06%	2.32%	<b>1.05%</b>
Historic Resource Management	1.50%	0.66%	1.42%	1.71%	0.74%	4.99%	<b>7.50%</b>	<b>2.09%</b>
Natural Resource Management	2.75%	1.10%	1.44%	3.33%	1.32%	5.81%	2.32%	<b>2.47%</b>
Travel	6.25%	<b>9.37%</b>	6.83%	4.26%	5.29%	<b>6.97%</b>	3.95%	<b>6.27%</b>
Routine/Preventative	0.25%	6.52%	<b>7.44%</b>	<b>7.16%</b>	<b>8.24%</b>	<b>6.97%</b>	5.58%	<b>6.39%</b>
Repair/Rehab	0.25%	<b>6.70%</b>	<b>7.44%</b>	5.86%	<b>9.26%</b>	<b>6.97%</b>	2.72%	<b>6.02%</b>
Capital Project Implementation	2.75%	3.02%	0.18%	0.78%	1.61%	2.33%	3.04%	<b>1.81%</b>
Vehicle Repair	0.25%	3.30%	3.99%	3.67%	4.55%	5.81%	3.68%	<b>3.64%</b>
Equipment Repair	0.00%	4.37%	4.41%	4.54%	5.61%	5.34%	<b>5.90%</b>	<b>4.37%</b>
Landscape/Turf	0.00%	<b>9.77%</b>	<b>7.56%</b>	<b>15.78%</b>	<b>6.66%</b>	5.34%	4.95%	<b>8.72%</b>
Hardscapes and Trails	0.00%	<b>8.07%</b>	5.55%	5.46%	5.42%	5.34%	3.36%	<b>5.31%</b>
Tree/Forestry	0.00%	6.60%	<b>8.50%</b>	<b>6.39%</b>	5.42%	4.64%	3.04%	<b>5.52%</b>
Other	5.00%	1.87%	0.00%	0.58%	2.53%	0.02%	2.55%	<b>1.56%</b>
<b>Total Hours</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

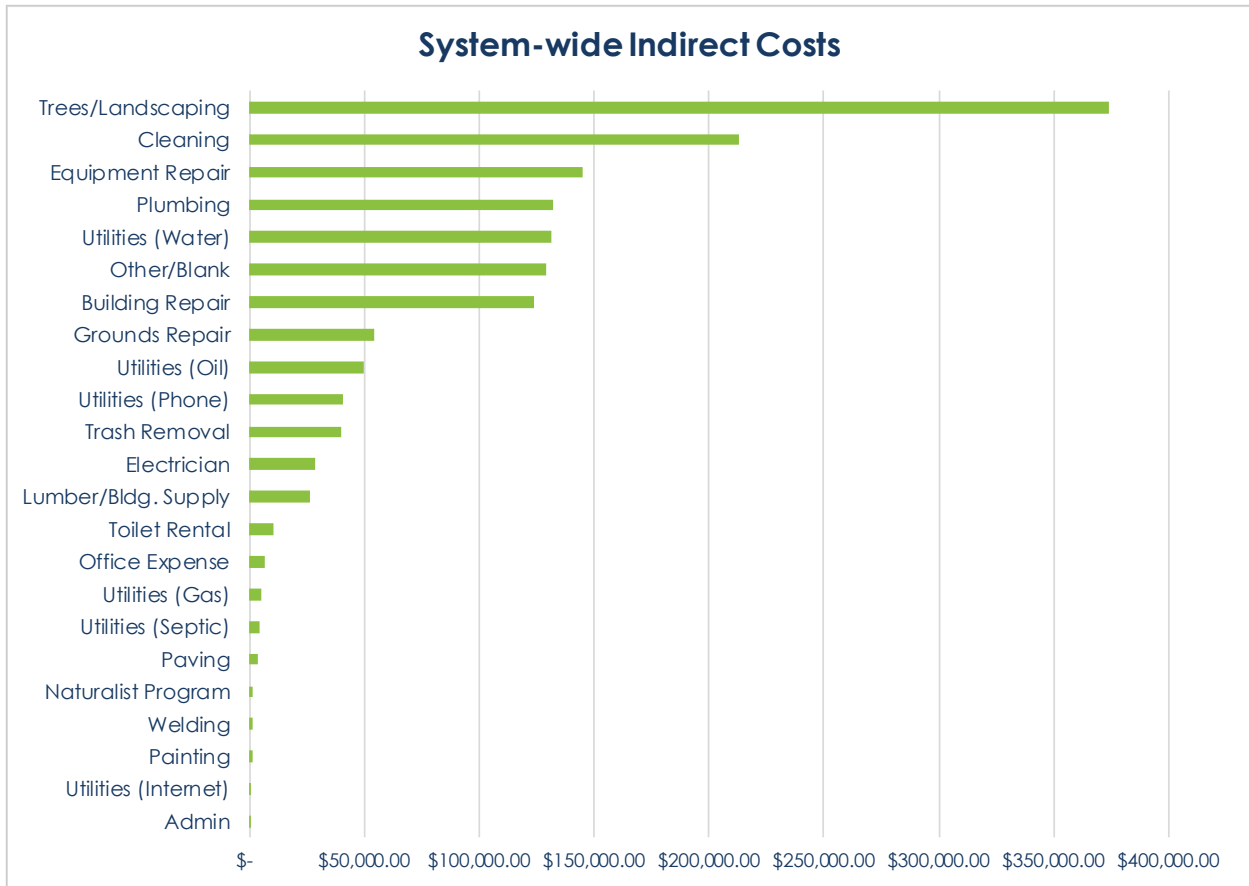
FIGURE 4.17 - Indirect Costs Allocated to Project Codes by Region

Project Code Category	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V	Region VI	Total
Admin	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$324.00	\$324.00
Office Expense	\$2,414.44	\$61.28	\$1,371.56	\$1,773.83	\$520.52	\$366.30	\$6,507.93
Grounds Repair	\$16,717.66	\$4,376.00	\$18,604.37	\$5,805.78	\$9,038.50	\$-	\$54,542.31
Building Repair	\$39,081.36	\$10,076.15	\$827.64	\$33,613.48	\$35,467.84	\$4,392.55	\$123,459.02
Lumber/Bldg. Supply	\$14,709.83	\$7,194.75	\$1,300.74	\$1,612.54	\$1,218.68	\$392.37	\$26,428.91
Equipment Repair	\$22,709.77	\$578.23	\$78,277.98	\$29,433.35	\$11,006.51	\$2,659.00	\$144,664.84
Trash Removal	\$1,813.41	\$4,960.05	\$3,705.93	\$23,777.88	\$2,599.57	\$2,728.93	\$39,585.77
Toilet Rental	\$7,932.56	\$202.37	\$1,469.60	\$708.50	\$219.80	\$-	\$10,532.83
Utilities (Water)	\$3,555.17	\$17,413.78	\$25,552.04	\$46,904.51	\$3,034.04	\$35,175.91	\$131,635.45
Utilities (Phone)	\$5,725.61	\$545.54	\$11,520.36	\$10,736.93	\$6,102.42	\$5,684.82	\$40,315.68
Utilities (Internet)	\$25.59	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$299.96	\$325.55
Utilities (Oil)	\$19,746.72	\$4,749.78	\$6,354.95	\$664.71	\$7,200.11	\$11,334.42	\$50,050.69
Utilities (Septic)	\$4,516.44	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,516.44
Utilities (Gas)	\$3,011.44	\$-	\$1,795.38	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$4,806.82
Naturalist Program	\$-	\$-	\$1,167.83	\$429.95	\$-	\$-	\$1,597.78
Trees/Landscaping	\$71,678.89	\$76,697.29	\$75,210.06	\$88,489.00	\$2,456.80	\$59,549.59	\$374,081.63
Paving	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$3,800.00	\$-	\$-	\$3,800.00
Plumbing	\$26,686.58	\$5,994.92	\$32,384.13	\$36,275.95	\$28,715.30	\$2,282.25	\$132,339.13
Electrician	\$1,627.10	\$1,530.03	\$14,678.13	\$4,023.90	\$6,308.71	\$295.00	\$28,462.87
Cleaning	\$12,382.84	\$-	\$19,101.69	\$106,832.83	\$70,477.89	\$4,158.50	\$212,953.75
Painting	\$204.48	\$-	\$-	\$1,326.38	\$-	\$-	\$1,530.86
Welding	\$1,206.10	\$345.00	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$1,551.10
Other/Blank	\$35,467.68	\$2,486.28	\$19,578.58	\$47,418.21	\$10,633.17	\$13,372.53	\$128,956.45
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$291,213.67</b>	<b>\$137,211.45</b>	<b>\$312,900.97</b>	<b>\$443,627.73</b>	<b>\$194,999.86</b>	<b>\$143,016.13</b>	<b>\$1,522,969.81</b>

FIGURE 4.18-Total Percentage of Indirect Costs Allocated to Project Codes by Region

Project Code Category	Region I	Region II	Region III	Region IV	Region V	Region VI
Admin	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Office Expense	37.1%	0.9%	21.1%	27.3%	8.0%	5.6%
Grounds Repair	30.7%	8.0%	34.1%	10.6%	16.6%	0.0%
Building Repair	31.7%	8.2%	0.7%	27.2%	28.7%	3.6%
Lumber/Bldg. Supply	55.7%	27.2%	4.9%	6.1%	4.6%	1.5%
Equipment Repair	15.7%	0.4%	54.1%	20.3%	7.6%	1.8%
Trash Removal	4.6%	12.5%	9.4%	60.1%	6.6%	6.9%
Toilet Rental	75.3%	1.9%	14.0%	6.7%	2.1%	0.0%
Utilities (Water)	2.7%	13.2%	19.4%	35.6%	2.3%	26.7%
Utilities (Phone)	14.2%	1.4%	28.6%	26.6%	15.1%	14.1%
Utilities (Internet)	7.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	92.1%
Utilities (Oil)	39.5%	9.5%	12.7%	1.3%	14.4%	22.6%
Utilities (Septic)	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Utilities (Gas)	62.6%	0.0%	37.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Naturalist Program	0.0%	0.0%	73.1%	26.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Trees/Landscaping	19.2%	20.5%	20.1%	23.7%	0.7%	15.9%
Paving	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Plumbing	20.2%	4.5%	24.5%	27.4%	21.7%	1.7%
Electrician	5.7%	5.4%	51.6%	14.1%	22.2%	1.0%
Cleaning	5.8%	0.0%	9.0%	50.2%	33.1%	2.0%
Painting	13.4%	0.0%	0.0%	86.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Welding	77.8%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	27.5%	1.9%	15.2%	36.8%	8.2%	10.4%





Additionally, Figure 4.19 shows the indirect costs in descending order. The most amount of money by far was spent on trees/landscaping services. Staff indicated that this area was a stress point/concern of theirs in terms of risk management and due to the fact that Rhode Island experiences frequent winter storms annually and strong winds/rain throughout the year. Other noteworthy items include cleaning, equipment repair, and plumbing. First, the park system spends a lot of money on cleaning supplies and services for their facilities. Second, staff indicated that their equipment is in need of repairs often and the data suggests that there is a need for an equipment replacement schedule/protocol to limit the amount of dollars associated with outside equipment repairs. Third, staff indicated there is a lack of specialized skill within the existing park system staff. Data indicates that over \$130,000 is spent annually on plumbing services. The risk associated with reliance on outside services is availability. Park staff are at the mercy of availability and issues most commonly occur on weekends which results in 1) unavailable repairs or 2) more costly repairs due to weekend/overtime service charges from plumbing companies.

Figure 4.19 - System-Wide Indirect Costs in Descending Order

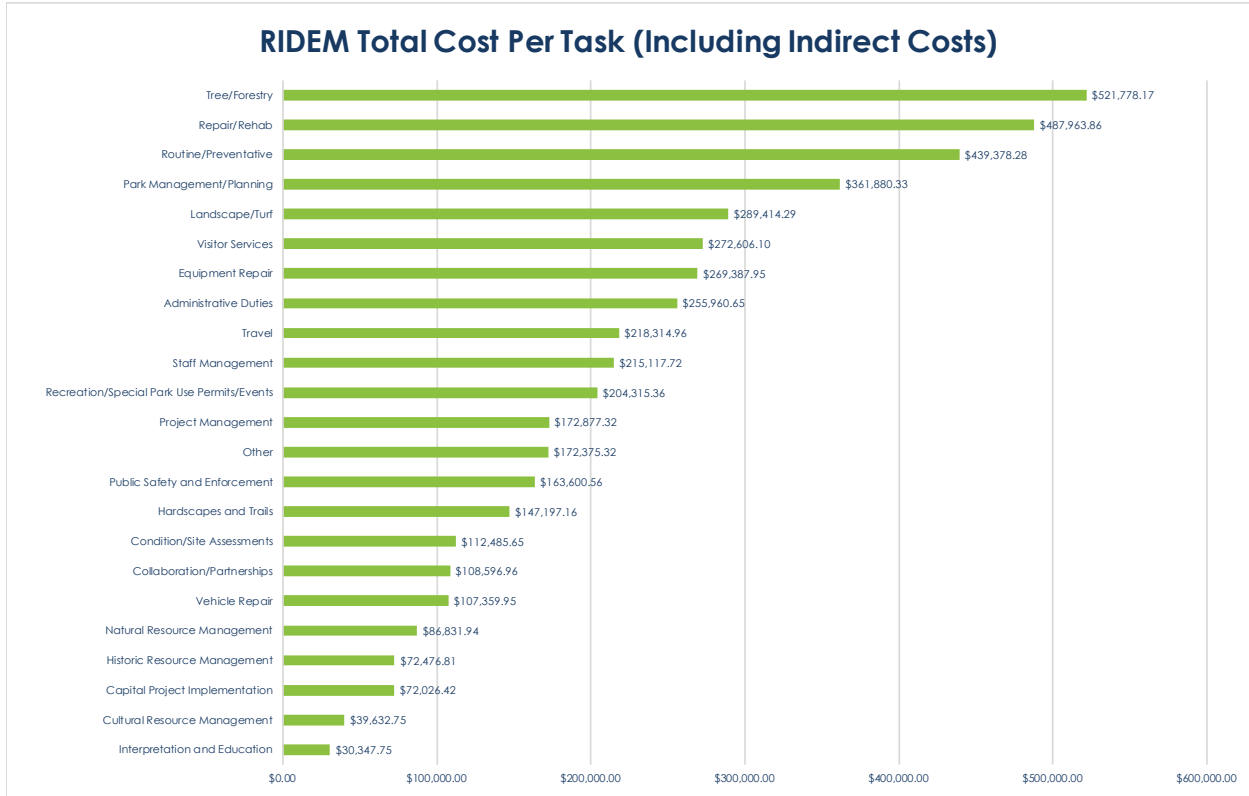


Figure 4.20 - System-Wide Total Costs (Direct and Indirect) in Descending Order by Core Function

### COMBINING DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS

After completing the time-task and cost accounting analyses, the results were merged to create a combined total cost per task (Figure 33). The results indicate the top five most expensive categories overall are:

1. Tree/forestry/maintenance
2. Repair/rehab maintenance
3. Routine/preventative maintenance
4. Park management/planning
5. Landscape/turf maintenance

It should be noted, however, that four out of the five categories above fall outside of the top six categories staff indicate they spend most of their time on. This means that there are exceedingly high amounts of indirect costs associated with these tasks. This could be the result of several factors:

- Not enough staff exists to properly maintain the existing system
- More acceptance has been given to outsourcing operations and maintenance over the years
- Lack of specialized skill/laborers available within the park system
- Lack of necessary equipment



Parks staff at Goddard Memorial State Park

## MAKING THE CASE FOR STAFFING, NOT OUTSOURCING

The time-task and account costing analyses indicate there are efficiencies that can be realized if a change in outsourcing is implemented. Based on the 2017 data, it would be more cost-effective and time-effective to reallocate some of the outsourced costs to internal staff positions, especially for:

- Tree/forestry (*arborists*)
- Plumbing (*plumbers*)
- Equipment repair (*mechanics and small-engine specialists*)

Hiring at least two additional FTE for each would make the state park system more effective with completing these maintenance and operations functions. There would still be instances that outsourcing may be necessary, but as a whole, service would be more timely leading the state park system to implement a better (and more effective) routine/preventative maintenance schedule. This would also reduce the existing staff's time currently spent on assisting with these tasks/functions.



Parks staff checking first aid supplies at Lincoln Woods State Park

CRITERIA TO CONSIDER	CORE PUBLIC SERVICES	IMPORTANT PUBLIC SERVICES	VALUE ADDED SERVICES
Public interest or developmental importance as well as mandated by law and is mission aligned	High Public Expectation	High Public Expectation	High Individual and Interest Group Expectation
Financial sustainability	Free, Nominal or Fee Tailored to Public Needs — Requires Public Funding	Fees Cover Some Direct Costs — Requires a Balance of Public Funding and a Cost Recovery Target	Fees Cover Most Direct and Indirect Costs — Some Public Funding as Appropriate
Benefits – i.e. health, safety, and protection of a valuable asset.	Substantial Public Benefit (negative consequence if not provided)	Public and Individual Benefit	Primarily Individual Benefit
Competition in the market	Limited or No Alternative Providers	Alternative Providers Unable to Meet Demand or Need	Alternative Providers Readily Available
Access	Open Access by All	Open Access / Limited Access to Specific Users	Limited Access to Specific Users

Figure 4.21 - Classification of Services Model

## CLASSIFICATION OF SERVICES



Parks staff at Charlestown State Beach & Campground

The final layer to understanding costs was to perform a classification of services exercise. Conducting a classification of services exercise informs how each functional area serves the overall Department mission and how the service should to be funded with regard to tax dollars and/or user fees and charges. How a service is classified can help to determine the most appropriate management and funding strategies. The Consultant Team uses a classification method based on three indicators: Essential, Important, and Value-Added.

The effectiveness of the criteria linked to performance management expectations relies on the true cost of a service (direct and indirect cost) being identified. Where a program or service falls within this matrix can help to determine the most appropriate cost recovery rate that should be pursued and measured. This includes being able to determine what level of public benefit and private benefit exists as they apply to each program or service area. Public benefit is described as “everyone receives the same level of benefit with equal access.” Private benefit is described as “the user receives exclusive benefit above what a general taxpayer receives for their personal benefit.”

Core Function	Core/Essential	Important	Value-Added
Visitor Services	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Public Safety and Enforcement	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Park Management/Planning	1,2,3,4	5,6	
Administrative Duties	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Staff Management	1,3,4,5,6	2	
Interpretation and Education		3,4,6	1,2,5
Recreation/Special Park Use Permits/Events	3	1,4,5	2,6
Project Management	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Condition/Site Assessments	4,5	1,2,3,6	
Collaboration/Partnerships	3,6	1,2,4,5	
Cultural Resource Management		1,3,6	2,4,5
Historic Resource Management	1,2,3,6	4	5
Natural Resource Management	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Travel	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Routine/Preventative	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Repair/Rehab	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Capital Project Implementation	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Vehicle Repair	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Equipment Repair	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Landscape/Turf	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Hardscapes and Trails	1,2,3,4,5,6		
Tree/Forestry	1,2,3,4,5,6		

Figure 4.22 - Classification of Services Results by Region

With assistance from staff, the Consultant Team performed a classification of services exercise with each region. Each region was asked to assign a classification to the 23 areas examined in the time-task analysis. The following figure presents the overall results.

Figure 4.22 shows that there is both consistency and inconsistency across the system in terms of how regions view services. Areas of agreement include all maintenance activities, travel, project management, administrative duties, public safety and enforcement, and visitor services. Those core functions are essential to park operations, so it is encouraging to see alignment. Areas of inconsistency are minor with the exception of recreation/special park use permits/events. Many regions host events due to their unique facilities or locations. Therefore, they are typically seen as “core” or “important” but not necessarily in the way the Consultant Team is defining those words in terms of cost recovery and who is benefiting from those services. Anything that removes or reduces public access should generally fall more into the important or value-added categories. Additionally, the regions have differing viewpoints on cultural and historic resource management. This could be a result of the type of assets and features found within each region.



Parks staff at the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum located at Beavertail State Park



SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS

# Moving toward sustainable best practices

Fort Wetherill State Park in Jamestown  
Opposite page: Pulaski State Park in Gloucester



The vision of a resilient, modern State Park system will depend on collaboration among many partners to ensure that key recommendations move forward.

Many reports, including this one, demonstrate the value of the Rhode Island State Park system. There is little denying the benefits residents and non-residents alike receive from the public lands and spaces afforded to them. However, it is also clear the system is inadequately staffed and funded and that philosophical changes need to be implemented to move the system toward sustainable best practices; sustainable in terms of financial, operational, capital and staffing. The TCO mindset should be instilled throughout the system to help the system create, track, and leverage data for planning purposes.

The nexus of recreation programming, asset/resource management, operations, capital planning, revenue generation, and staff development is where high-achieving park and recreation agencies are established. Once established, sustaining high functionality takes a concerted effort and focus on each of the areas independently, but with a mindfulness of how they are all interconnected. The Rhode Island State Park system has real challenges that inhibit the Department's ability to be resilient in terms of fiscal management and revenue generation, asset and resource management, staffing, communicating priorities and risk management.

To address the identified challenges, solutions are presented in three categories or approaches for consideration. The effort-based approach includes solutions that can be implemented within the existing organizational framework and budgeting structures. The outcome-based approach requires a

fundamental shift to a more business-like mindset in budgeting and management. The conservancy-based approach uses a non-profit organization to take on specific operations and maintenance of certain facilities. The three approaches are not all or nothing solutions. They can be mixed and matched to meet the needs of the state.

These system alternatives are described in detail below.

## EFFORT-BASED SOLUTIONS

The existing park system can best be described as an “effort-based” system. There are two key components of an effort-based system:

- 1. PERSONALITY AND RESOURCE-DRIVEN**
- 2. RESOURCES ARE MANAGED BASED ON TRADITIONS**

Both criteria are evident in the existing park system. The system has become more personality-driven over the years as staff levels have decreased. Resources are managed based on how they have always been managed with an appropriated budget based on past years. This is a result of both the personalities within the system and the way Rhode Island State government operates.

Key recommendations in this category can be implemented within the existing organization, regardless of any structural changes.



Charlestown Breachway Campground



Campsite at Burlingame State Park Campground

## REVENUE PROGRAMS

Enhancing revenue programs requires commitment to many industry best practices. The Consultant Team recognizes that in some cases the ability to execute on these best practices will be a function of statutory authorities and regulations, the willingness to change internal policies, and adequate levels of competent staff. The following sections provide an overview of the recommendations.

## COMMIT TO CLASSIFICATION OF SERVICES AS A KEY FUNDING ALLOCATION PRINCIPLE

Non-core services should be evaluated yearly and reduced, eliminated, or transferred if necessary. Classifying programs and services is an important process for a park to follow in order to remain aligned with the visitor’s interests and needs, the park’s mission, and to sustainably operate within the bounds of the financial resources that support it. The criteria utilized and recommended in program and service classification stem from the foundation’s concept detailed by Dr. John Crompton and Dr. Charles Lamb. In Marketing Government and Social Services, they purport that programs should be evaluated on the criteria of type, who benefits from it, and who bears the cost of the program.

The approach taken in this analysis expands classifying services in the following ways:

- **FOR WHOM THE PROGRAM IS TARGETED**
- **FOR WHAT PURPOSE**
- **FOR WHAT BENEFIT(S)**
- **FOR WHAT COST**
- **FOR WHAT OUTCOME**

## ESTABLISH PRICING POLICY BASED UPON THE CLASSIFICATION AND COST OF SERVICE MODEL

Statutorily, the parks department has the basis for a pricing policy in 42-17.1-9.1 (b). However, the parks department has no formal written pricing policy and hence fee setting is not done comprehensively and is subject to legislative priorities. A pricing policy needs to be established which includes rationale for pricing, strategies to set prices, and options permitted for consideration regarding collecting fees.

Pricing policies and practices are central to producing more revenue at each site. The benefit of adopting the classification and cost of service model as part of the pricing policy is that it provides a basis which can be used to discuss pricing with stakeholders. Developing a cost of service assessment for each amenity, program and service at the site level determines its level of public funding or contribution from revenue/fees.





*Fishermen's Memorial Campground in Narragansett*

## CONSIDER THE INTRODUCTION OF VARIABLE PRICING

Pricing policy should also address pricing strategies which are designed to align with policy goals and visitor expectations for services. Additional concepts that should be considered as part of the pricing policy include:

- **PRICING SERVICES BASED ON PEAK AND OFF-PEAK TIME**, the proposed/existing sites' competitive market set (e.g. those other recreational providers who are offering similar services and settings) and guest length of stay.
- **ESTABLISHING TIERED PRICING STRUCTURES** that encourage early reservations, off-peak usage and diverse user groups, and supports the cost recovery goals of the site /system. Examples of pricing methods that should be evaluated include:
  - Peak season/off season
  - Group discounts
  - Family / household discounts
  - Price by location (within a site or within the state)
  - Price by competition (within the site's competitive market set)
  - Price by volume (reward quantity purchases)
  - Price to support loyalty (reward repeat purchases)
  - Price based on the level of benefits received (from customer's perspective)
  - Price based on the level of exclusivity (perception of unique offerings)
  - Price by age segment (seniors, juniors, etc.)
  - Pricing policy should include training staff and volunteers on how pricing works and how to communicate prices to users



*The Eisenhower House at Fort Adams State Park*



Interpretive sign at Rocky Point State Park



Guided hike on Kids to Parks Day at Pulaski State Park

## ENHANCE REVENUE GENERATION STRATEGIES SYSTEMWIDE AND AT EXISTING SITES

### Establish Business Opportunity Analysis Processes

Identifying expanded or new business opportunities for revenue enhancement requires a focus on understanding if business opportunities exist at the unit level. There are three categories for assessing future business opportunities:

- 1. FOCUS ON ENHANCING THE USAGE OF EXISTING FACILITIES AND AMENITIES**
- 2. IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES**
- 3. IDENTIFY NEW REVENUE OPPORTUNITIES**

A best practice is to have a preliminary process for vetting revenue programs and what type of entity should be offering (e.g. State park or concession management). This analysis should include an evaluation of the opportunities from a market, financial, and investment perspective. Understanding if project opportunities are feasible requires an additional level of analysis. Other state park agencies have undertaken either revenue opportunity analysis across multiple parks or have committed to evaluating business opportunities within each park in the form of a parks business plan.

## INCORPORATE NEW STRATEGIES

In addition to identifying new and/or expanded business opportunities, there are business processes that could be introduced to expand the potential of revenue programs at existing sites. These include:

- **MARKETING:** A best practice is to have a robust web presence for parks. This includes having an individual focused on marketing and promoting parks at least part time. This individual would be focused on engagement activities for visitors including events and activities and rental opportunities at the parks.
- **EXPAND RECREATIONAL AND INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMMING:** A best practice is to have a strategic program plan by park unit in place each year that focuses on appropriate natural, cultural, historical and recreational programming by location and season. These programs focus on each age and lifestyle cohort (e.g. toddler, elementary, teen, young adult, family, seniors) as well as the diverse ethnic population of each park unit’s drawing area. Additionally, these programs can include a focus on adaptive recreation populations. This will assist in supporting/increasing/retaining day use and overnight visitors to sites. For those sites which are experiencing high visitation rates, these programs serve to retain visitors. For sites with lower levels of visitation, these programs will assist in the potential of growing visitation.

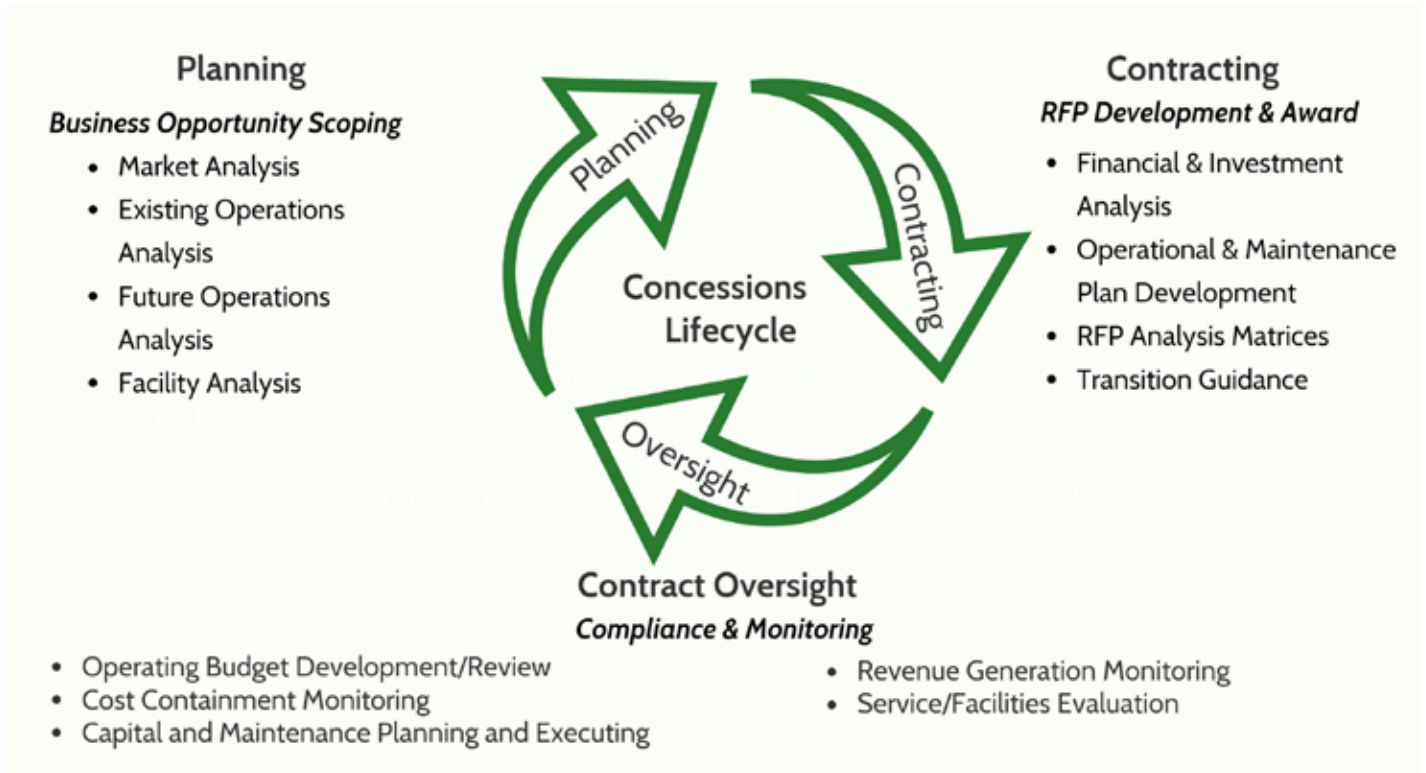


Charlestown Breachway Campground

- **INCENTIVIZING REPEAT VISITATION FOR RENTALS AND OVERNIGHT VISITORS:** Park visitors, whether day use or overnight, have chosen to visit a specific park unit for a variety of reasons. It could be proximity to home, a special park setting, etc. The best practice is to encourage repeat visitation in the off season and at new locations. With the new campground reservation contract, it is essential that the parks department controls the customer contact data base and leverages its current partner to develop promotions for repeat visitation. Additionally, annual passes provide another opportunity to leverage park users for promotions and repeat visitation.
- **PACKAGING:** The modern consumer is often motivated by the convenience of having “packaged” experiences that combine multiple aspects or dimensions of desired experiences. For example, packaging lodging/accommodations with certain programs can create a themed experience that will appeal to specific target market segments. Packaging does not always require price discounting but can include some pricing incentives or value-added features that help the “sell-ability” of the package; also, packages should not discount prices disproportionately causing one to lose revenue while another gains revenue.



Clamming at Fishermen's Memorial Campground



Goddard Memorial State Park Golf Course

## EVALUATE POTENTIAL CHANGES TO CONCESSION PROGRAM PROCESSES

A properly managed Concession Program has three core program elements: “Planning,” “Contracting” and “Contract Oversight.” Exhibit illustrates the interrelationship between these program elements and subprogram elements included under each of these areas. Each of these subprogram areas need to be functioning appropriately for a Concession Program to be effective.

**PLANNING ELEMENTS:** Planning for concessions ensures that the future concession contract aligns with a park unit’s natural, cultural and historic resources, addresses market needs, and works within the context of the infrastructure provided.

**AUTHORITIES:** Planning for a concession begins with an identification of the role of concessions in delivering public agency visitor services. Specifically, there needs to be statutory or regulatory recognition of the role that concessions can play in delivering existing visitor services or as an expansion of visitor services. Additionally, there needs to be a policy decision stated regarding public agency resource (e.g. staff time, financial resources, and capital resources) support for concessions.

**MASTER PLANNING:** The public agency’s master planning process should assess the role of concessions in delivering visitor services in a park. However, typically most master plans do not assess who should be delivering visitor services. This lack of identification of role of concessioner vs. agency managed visitor services is a function



*Sail Newport's Mid-Park Marine Education and Recreation Center at Fort Adams State Park*

of public agencies not addressing the full costs of operational management into their planning decisions.

A master plan can identify that a visitor service is suitable within the setting; however, it is essential that there be an understanding as to where the visitor services are to be located geographically within the park and the availability of facilities and infrastructure to support the visitor service. Facilities include roads, parking, structures, trails and supporting infrastructure such as water, sewer, utilities, and telecommunications.

## FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENTS AND CAPITAL PLANNING

If a concession operation is going to leverage existing facilities or require new facilities, understanding the condition of facilities and infrastructure is essential. A best practice is facility condition assessment for assets and infrastructure. A facility condition assessment identifies both the current condition of the assets but also can provide a plan for addressing the costs to cure and/or improve the facility over its lifecycle. Infrastructure assessments include an identification of where the infrastructure is located, and the capacity/condition of the infrastructure (e.g. number of parking, capacity of septic, capacity of transformer, condition of roads etc.).

Planning for the facilities and infrastructure component of a proposed visitor service is necessary since there needs to be a determination of the costs to expand and/or maintain the facilities and infrastructure. Facility planning needs to include investments to cure deferred maintenance, investments to improve the assets and the costs to



*Fishing pier at Colt State Park*



Picnic space at Lincoln Woods State Park



Beach pavilion at Roger Wheeler State Beach

maintain the asset in its current condition over the life of the asset (e.g. maintenance reserve for component renewal). Understanding these costs is essential since asset stewardship must be the priority in all concession deal structures.

The public agency must identify what resources are available to fund facility and infrastructure improvements and what portion of these can come from a concessioner vs. public agency. The public agency’s capital, operational and maintenance budgets must include the portion of public funding for a proposed concession operation. A concession contract deal structure is not complete without commitments.

**PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS:** In some concession contracts, the personal property (e.g. kitchen equipment, boats, horses, etc.) is a key component of service delivery. Like real property, it is critical that there is an assessment of the age and condition of the personal property and its capabilities to continue to provide service over the course of a future contract.

**OPERATIONAL ISSUES:** Planning for a new or reissued concession requires an understanding of the current operational conditions existing at the location. This includes insight to day use and overnight visitation trends, as well as volume of business that currently is occurring. Specifically, if there is an existing concession, it is critical that a public agency understand how it is performing. Is the current operation experiencing increases, decreases or flat growth in customers? Is revenue increasing for the operation and at what rate? Additionally, the public agency needs to identify how any changes in the operations could impact park staffing levels.

**COMPETITIVE MARKET CONDITIONS AND MARKET TRENDS:** Visitor services in parks exist within the larger competitive market. While a park provides access to unique settings, the visitor services provided in the park may compete with local and regional businesses. Competitive market assessments include identifying how an existing and/or proposed service in the park compares to a similar service outside the park. This includes identifying the quantity, quality and performance of visitor services outside the park.

Additionally, visitor services continue to evolve as market changes occur. Understanding market trends for recreation and hospitality services is essential when planning for visitor services. Examples of this are changes in desires for camping to including cabins, and glamping; shifts in food service to include healthy eating and desires for connectivity requiring increased Wi-Fi access.

**CONTRACTING ELEMENTS:** A contracting best practice is to have agreement types that are available for use that vary based upon the scale of the business opportunity, use of public facilities and investment level. This includes special use permits that involve commercial use of parks, contracts that include use and nonuse of park facilities, contracts that involve improvements to facilities or new construction and potentially lease authorities to provide for excess land parcels that could provide for visitor services.

**DECISION ON TYPE OF CONTRACT:** The contracting process should start by determining what type of contract is suitable for the opportunity and what vehicle type is necessary. In Rhode Island, by regulation concessions are not procurements and therefore do not need to follow standard procurement formats. The authority for special use permits exists and currently there are no fees associated with these for commercial use. The authority for leases exists as well. Service contracts under a firm fixed-price model is a possible vehicle, but the key issue is whether the activity is a service contract vs. a concession contract.

For a commercial use that is one time or reoccurring, many public agencies develop special use permits that have a fee associated with them. These can include a base fee for the permit as well as a percentage or simply a standard fee. If it is a special use permit, there will likely be standard fees and terms and conditions. Some public agencies separate contract types by dollar and investment value and those of a lower dollar and investment value have different processes than those of a higher dollar value. For the parks portfolio of assets, the likely threshold would be for units or combination of contracts that have gross revenue over \$250,000. For those contracts that have gross revenues below this threshold, a special use permit or small concession contract framework is worthy of consideration. The lower revenue value of the contract requires less of a focus on contract deal structuring.

The contract deal structure represents the benefits to a public agency from a concession operation. The benefits to the public agency should reflect the opportunity that the public agency is offering and the value of that opportunity to both parties. The following exhibit provides an outline of the elements of a concession contract deal structure. The Consultant Team outlines the key elements of the process for contracts that gross over \$250,000.

## FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Financial analysis requires both an understanding of the current operating position as well as how that position would alter if changes to an existing operation occurs. There are three analysis steps in this process.

- **AS IS FINANCIAL POSITION:** This analysis identifies the current profit or loss of an existing operation based upon the agreement's terms and conditions. Typically, this data would exist over a three to five-year historical period to identify trends in revenue and expenses. This type of data provides insight as to the current operational and fiscal position of a concession.
- **BASELINE FINANCIAL POSITION:** This incorporates taking the historical operating trends and projecting both usage and rates for any proposed operation to generating a five or ten-year revenue and expense analysis of the operation resulting in a baseline income statement.
- **POTENTIAL CHANGES TO OPERATION:** This analysis involves creating scenarios for additions or changes to operations. This allows the public agency who owns the asset to identify tradeoffs between different operating and investment scenarios.



*Interpretive signage at the Beavertail Lighthouse Museum at Beavertail State Park*



*National Parks Service staff at the Blackstone Valley State Park*



Concession at Lincoln Woods State Park



The Captain Wilbur Kelly House Museum at Blackstone River State Park

- **IF A CONCESSION OPERATION HAS FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY,** (e.g., it provides for positive net operating income) then an evaluation of investment feasibility occurs. If there is no financial feasibility, operations operate through internal resources (e.g., self-operation) and/or considered for a management contract. In this case, the role of investment analysis becomes a secondary priority.

## INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

- **INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS:** Investment requirements are involved in several phases of a concession operation. It begins with the startup costs for an operation that include working capital as well as investments in supplies, equipment and personal property needed to operate a business. These startup costs and their carrying costs are part of an operator’s return. Other investments could include “curing” any deferred maintenance that exists but a public agency cannot fund. Concessioners seek a market-based return on their investments (“ROI”) over the course of their term. The larger the investment the longer period needed for a return. Conversely, the smaller the investment the shorter period needed for a return. Therefore, understanding the scope and scale of investments in new and altered concessions is an essential element of future contract structuring.
- **RETURN ON INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS:** Return on investment requirements vary based upon the owner’s objectives and ownership structures. The form of a return for a sole proprietor varies from a privately held company. Therefore, understanding each agreement’s financial attributes is critical. Overall, the key issue considered for a concession agreement is that if there is not an adequate market-based return available for a concession operator, they will either decide it is not suitable for them to continue to operate and/or potentially change the way they operate (e.g., change services, alter quality or lower costs) to yield their desired returns. As such, understanding if operators have an opportunity to achieve a market-based return on investments prior to them commencing operations is a critical part of structuring a concession agreement. This level of analysis is not necessary for very small operations where it is likely that the entity is operating at multiple locations (e.g., outfitters and guides, fitness programs, mobile food service). In those cases, the return expectation may occur across multiple business operations.
- **TERM OF AGREEMENT:** The term of an agreement affects an operator’s risk and hence their return expectations. As such, the term of the agreement needs to be set to factor in risks first to the operator vs. the public agency. This includes both base as well as option year contracts. Option year contracts issued on an annual vs. fixed year basis increases risk for operators as well. Developing suitable terms to address risk factors is an essential part of deal structuring.



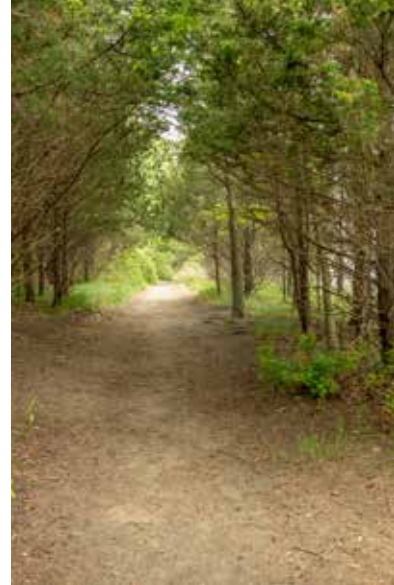
## FEE SETTING

- **THREE RETURNS (ASSET + OPERATOR + AGENCY):** A concession agreement needs to recognize three returns: to the Asset, to the Operator and to the Agency. The estimating of two of these returns results in the final return to the public agency in the form of a concession fee. Currently, the parks department is not developing its concession and maintenance/capital fees through this method.
  - The first return needs to be to the asset in the form of a maintenance reserve, personal property reserve and or capital fund. The “asset” includes the real property or personal property used for the concessioner’s operation. Poorly maintained facilities, grounds and or personal property results in dissatisfied visitors and in the end unsustainable concession operations. Stewardship of assets involves addressing deferred maintenance and ensuring an adequate maintenance reserve and/or maintenance fund.
  - The second return is in the form of a market acceptable return to the operator on their invested capital. Estimating this return involves calculating the unlevered after-tax return on the invested capital (e.g., startup costs and all other appropriate investments). As stated previously for smaller operations, the return can include owner salary payments.
  - The third return goes to the public agency in the form of a concession fee. This may seem counter intuitive. Why does the public agency receive the last return component? It is because if the first two returns are not in place and adequate, there are overall risks to sustained high quality visitor service at the concession operation and ultimately, the concession fee as well.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

State procurement policies guide most public agencies’ Request for Proposal (“RFP”) processes rather than concession deal structuring. Best practices for an RFP include the following elements:

- **BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY:** The most important part of an RFP is a section that accurately describes the future Business Opportunity to an operator that is not the incumbent. This document should start at a macro level and move to specifics. This document is a “sales brochure” for the opportunity. The document should include the mission and vision of the public agency, the role of concessions in the public agency, provide insight to the history and importance of the park and identify the planning framework for the park. Following this, there needs to be an overview of the park operations including the facilities and services at the park, historical park visitation information, existing visitor profile and any proposed changes to the park over the contract term. It is a



*John H. Chafee Nature Reserve*



*Farmers market at Fishermen's Memorial State Park*



Beavertail Aquarium at Beavertail State Park



Coggeshall Farm at Colt State Park

best practice to identify the concessioner’s “required” scope of services. These are those that must occur vs. those that the public agency considers optional service offerings. Also, an RFP should identify if the concessioner gets an exclusive or nonexclusive right to the required services.

- **MINIMUM FEE:** It is a best practice to provide a required minimum concession fee. However, there are public agencies that provide a recommended vs. required minimum fee. CHMGS is of the opinion that if there is adequate and accurate data to set the minimum fee it should be required. If there are concerns with the accuracy of data, a recommended vs. minimum fee makes sense. Additionally, it is a best practice to set a concession fee on total revenue vs. varying concession rates on different revenue sources.
- **SELECTION FACTORS:** Most state procurement systems guide the selection/evaluation factors for RFPs. A best practice is to align the selection factors with the overall mission and vision for the concession program as outlined in statute/regulations. A best practice is to not make the compensation to the agency the determining factor in the selection factor point system. Revenue to that public agency should be subordinate to ensuring resource protection, assets stewardship and safe and quality visitor services. Ensuring that the proposed concessioner has demonstrated experience in providing the scope of visitor services is essential. Financial capability and competency are critical to assess in the selection factors. It is essential that the proposed concessioner has the financial capacity to undertake the startup and ongoing financial obligations of a concession contract. Demonstration of capacity occurs with evidence of credible funding sources. A proposed concessioner’s ability to complete a standard financial template that represents all the elements of a concession operation indicates their understanding of the financial requirements of the contract.
- **OPERATING AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS/PLANS:** A key element of the concession contract is the standards for the delivery of the scope of services and the maintenance of land areas assignment and facilities. A best practice in this regard includes establishing general operating and maintenance standards that apply to all land uses and then developing asset specific (e.g., food and beverage, marina, equipment rental, equestrian) standards for operations and maintenance. This provides for consistency across a public agency’s concession units.
- **BUILDING AND LAND AREA ASSIGNMENTS:** Ensuring that all parties understand the land areas that they are responsible for maintaining is key. This includes access roads, trails and facilities. A building and land area assignment map is the method used and review of this document is critical. A listing of all publicly owned facility and personal property assets is essential.

- **STANDARDIZED FINANCIAL TEMPLATES:** A best practice in selection factor reviews is to provide for a standard template for responding to the selection factor dealing with financial competency. The standardization of this factor allows for identifying variance in bids and creates efficiencies in reviewing the bids and measuring the fiscal benefits offered by each proposed concessioner.
- **ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION:** A best practice for advertising and promotion is a multifaceted strategy that extends beyond the State's procurement system. Creating a secondary webpage for concessions on the parks webpage that highlights existing concession, solicits names for interested parties, and posts summaries of RFP information and then links to the State procurement site is a recommended strategy.
- **CONTRACT TRANSITION:** Frequently, standard contracts do not appropriately address contract transition issues. This is particularly important to recognize in any operations where there are advanced reservations as well as monthly or annual rentals. A best practice is to ensure that the standard contract includes an exhibit that addresses transition responsibilities and timing.

## CONTRACT OVERSIGHT FRAMEWORKS

Contract oversight includes ensuring that all legal agreements governing a concession program are compliant. Additionally, contract oversight can maximize concessioner and contract performance in the areas of visitor services, asset stewardship and resource protection.

## CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

Contract compliance includes the monitoring of the terms and conditions of a concession contract. Overall, while a concession contract has multiple terms and conditions, the most critical deal with issues related to the scope of services, visitor services delivery, health and safety, risk management and reporting of fees, revenue, financials and operations. A best practice for contract compliance begins with ensuring that park staff has a full understanding of all the terms and conditions of a concession contract. A best practice to achieve this is to require training of staff who are managing concessions.

The areas identified for contract compliance are the most important for monitoring since they impact the visitor, the assets, agency and the concessioner. Each of which are elements in the delivery of visitor services in park environments. Scope of services monitoring involves ensuring that the hours of operation and array of services committed to under the contract are in place and appear as advertised. Health and safety monitoring includes ensuring that safety procedures agreed upon in the contract are adhered to. This includes training and certifications for food handlers, public health inspections, and other service delivery providers. Reporting requirements on concession fees and



*Beach raking at Roger Wheeler State Beach*



*Smokey Bear greets guests at the Blackstone Valley Visitor Center*



Event hosted by LL Bean at Fort Adams State Park



Fort Adams State Park

or maintenance fees/fund ensures that contractual commitments are arriving at the appropriate location at the right time. Revenue reporting typically accompanies fee reporting. Financial and operational reporting in the form of incomes statements, balance sheets and usage reporting is a best practice since the public agencies benefits are based upon these factors. Without understanding the usage that generates the revenue, the public agency cannot be certain that the revenue is accurate. Additionally, financial reporting provides both the revenue and expenses of the operation. Having insight to the operational issues that a concessioner faces allows both parties to understand the impacts of operational decisions on a concession operation.

## LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A best practice for enhancing revenue programs is a leadership culture which understands the requirements to support revenue enhancement and supports accountability and transparency for new business ventures. This includes funding staff to develop processes and having proper infrastructure and training to develop revenue programs. Additionally, a best practice includes ensuring the removal or reconsideration regarding the retention of fee revenue vs. re-appropriation. Absent this, there is no incentive in place for developing and experimenting with new ideas.

## PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

These recommendations are an overview of existing partnership opportunities available to the Rhode Island park system, as well as a suggested approach to organizing partnership pursuits. This is not an exhaustive list of all potential partnerships that can be developed for the system but can be used as a reference for the system to identify priorities for partnership development.

The following five classifications of partners are recommended for the system:

- 1. CONCESSION AND LEASE OPERATIONAL PARTNERS:** Partners that help to maintain facilities and assets, promote amenities and park usage, support park needs, provide programs and events, and/or maintain the integrity of natural/cultural resources through labor, equipment, or materials.
- 2. VENDOR PARTNERS:** Service providers and/or contractors that can gain brand association and notoriety as a preferred vendor or supporter in exchange for reduced rates, services, or some other agreed upon benefit.
- 3. SERVICE PARTNERS:** Non-profit organizations and/or friends groups that support efforts to provide programs and events, advocacy and education, and/or collaboratively serve specific constituents in the community.



*Cross country race at Goddard Memorial State Park*

**4. CO-BRANDING PARTNERS:** Private organizations that can gain brand association and notoriety as a supporter in exchange for sponsorship or co-branded programs, events, marketing and promotional campaigns, and/or advertising opportunities.

**5. FUND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS:** Private, non-profit organizations with the primary purpose to leverage private sector resources, grants, other public funding opportunities, and resources from individuals and groups within the community to support park goals and objectives for mutually agreed strategic initiatives.

## MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Updated maintenance standards are recommended for DEM. These maintenance standards are supported by best practices from the Consultant Team's experience working with other similar agencies. Ideally, the staff would establish work plans to support these standards, using the right type of staff position (either FT/PT/ seasonal), with the right skills required for the tasks to be accomplished, with the right pay level to achieve the most efficient operation while meeting the standards outlined. Maintenance standards can change by season and month depending on the type of park area level of use. Best practice maintenance standards, sorted by the level of facility usage and public profile, are included in Appendix.



*Trail maintenance at George Washington State Park*



Tree maintenance work at Goddard Memorial State Park



Naturalist area at Roger Wheeler State Beach

## STAFF TRAINING

Continual learning and staff development are key to both retaining workforce and growing existing staff competencies. Data suggests there are several areas that DEM would benefit from investing in training:

- **FOUNDATION OF PARKS AND RECREATION PRINCIPLES**
- **PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
- **ASSET AND INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT**
- **BUSINESS ACUMEN AND POLICY**

A great resource for training would be to invest in national conference attendance such as the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and National Association of State Park Directors (NASPD). NRPA provides different “schools” that would benefit DEM staff:

- **DIRECTORS’ SCHOOL**
- **EVENT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL**
- **PARK AND RECREATION MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SCHOOL**
- **REVENUE DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT SCHOOL**
- **SUPERVISORS’ MANAGEMENT SCHOOLS**

These training avenues would be important to pursue in addition to an in-service training regimen that facilitates information sharing and cross-training across divisions.

## OUTCOME-BASED SOLUTIONS

Different from the “effort-based” model, the “outcome-based” system is more of a sustainability mindset. This type of organization is driven by two major tenets:

- 1. PRODUCE DESIRED OUTCOMES THAT ARE PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN**
- 2. ADOPT CORE MANDATES AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Both criteria can be achieved within the existing park system to an extent. There are foundational strategies that can be employed (as presented in the last section) but there are fundamental shifts that need to be employed to fully transition to an outcome-based system.

To help shift the existing effort-based culture, key recommendations are provided by category that the park system should implement.

## ZERO-BASED BUDGETING

Zero-based budgeting is a process in which the budget starts from zero each year. This allows an organization to analyze its true needs and costs regularly. A key component of this recommendation is to also move to having two operating budgets for the park system:

### 1. GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATED BUDGET

### 2. NON-REVERTING FUND BUDGET

As described earlier in this report, the existing system is funded through General Fund monies. Each year, any revenue generated (less “50/50” monies) is allocated back to the General Fund, which in turn, is issued to State agencies. This strategy provides a disincentive to generate revenue. The proposed strategy employs two budgets that helps the park system help itself. A General Fund appropriated budget can be used to subsidize the “core” and some of the “important” functions described through the classification of services process. Then, the non-reverting fund budget can be used to fund the remaining “important” and all “value-added” services. This process will result in:

- AN INCENTIVE FOR THE PARK SYSTEM TO GENERATE REVENUE
- A METHOD TO ALLOW FOR CAPITAL PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS
- MORE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- ENHANCED USER EXPERIENCE

Park systems have been successful with implementing two budgets and they can use them to fund staff positions that otherwise would not be able to be budgeted.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The existing organizational structure is spread across six regions. A different approach to collective thinking is warranted to maximize the system. A more functional organizational structure would benefit the park system. A functional organizational structure categorizes like activities and indicates the hours associated with completing those activities. Given the maintenance standards provided in this report, it will be vital to organize the parks system by function to understand the actual requirements to maintain the system to its desired standard. It is still necessary to have a “traditional” hierarchical organizational structure to coincide with the functional one.

This analysis may indicate a need to consolidate the existing regions which would maximize travel time and would also facilitate information sharing/cross-training for existing staff. This transition would also allow for more separation between administrative management duties and day-to-day operations and maintenance.



*Picnic area at Colt State Park*



*Beach pavilion at Lincoln Woods State Park*



Staff at George Washington State Campground



East Matunuck State Beach

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

A change to the organizational structure should also include a business development office. This kind of office would help support the system by concentrating on cost accounting, sponsorship and donor development, grant solicitations, revenue generation, and fiscal entrepreneurship. Centralizing business operations would remove the onus from park managers and would allow them to reallocate their time to other day-to-day operational activities. This office would provide more flexibility for administrative staff while also injecting additional dollars into the system that might not otherwise be available for operations, maintenance, and capital planning.

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Operational best practices and performance measures for DEM should include the following elements that need to be implemented at each State park site:

1. **EACH STATE PARK HAS A BUSINESS PLAN** unique to that park that focuses on each cost center (cost-based accounting) including the level of tax subsidy required or revenues over expenses that are achieved annually
2. **EACH STATE PARK CREATES IN-PARK SURVEYS** each year and provides a report on how well they are meeting customer satisfaction levels (satisfaction levels need to be at least 90% or greater for visitor experiences to be considered acceptable)
3. **EACH STATE PARK ANNUALLY GENERATES EARNED REVENUES** (not including public subsidy) equal to a required percentage of operating expenses based upon the performance expectations outlined within the park classification system included within this plan
4. **EACH STATE PARK SHOULD EVALUATE AND PURSUE OPPORTUNITIES TO EMPLOY PRIVATE OR PUBLIC SERVICE PROVIDERS** on-site to accomplish elements of park operations that can be more cost-effectively provided
5. **EACH STATE PARK ANNUALLY EVALUATES THEIR USER PROFILE** as it applies to appropriate demographic and park usage, and incorporates this information into a yearly program plan for the park to attract all demographic segments
6. **EACH STATE PARK SHOULD UTILIZE SPECIAL EVENTS** (as appropriate) annually to draw people to the park
7. **EACH STATE PARK SEEKS LOCAL PARTNERS** to support portions of the state park programs and services
8. **EACH STATE PARK SHOULD MAINTAIN SUFFICIENT NON-LABOR OPERATIONAL FUNDING** so that required staff operational costs with benefits to maintain a high-quality park does not exceed 65% of the total budget



**9. EACH STATE PARK IS DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE 10 VISITOR EXPERIENCES AT A MINIMUM**

**10. EACH STATE PARK MAINTAINS AN UPDATED MASTER PLAN CONDUCTED EVERY 10 YEARS**

**11. EACH STATE PARK MANAGES BY MAINTENANCE STANDARDS,** program standards and operational standards adopted and enforced by State park management.

**12. EACH STATE PARK (WHERE APPLICABLE) HAS REPRESENTATION AT EACH OF THE CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE,** or other applicable tourism and business promotional organizations, within their community in order to promote the park in their region as a usable and friendly asset

**13. EACH STATE PARK HAS A FRIENDS GROUP** who raises money that is given to the state park each year to use for improvements or to support programs that are agreed upon prior to fund raising

**14. EACH STATE PARK MANAGES BY AT LEAST 10 PERFORMANCE MEASURES.** It is critical that the park system grow to adopt performance measures over time. These could include the following:

- Capacity management by amenity
- Revenue versus expenses based against anticipated budget
- Cost center goals for efficiency and revenue development are met at 95% of the goal
- Customer satisfaction is at least 90%
- Retention of the core market returns at least once each year at 70% or greater
- Four to six percent (4% - 6%) of the total asset value in the park is funded annually for maintenance and repairs
- Each State park should maximize the number of partnerships in place that help them to manage the resources and provide services in the State park
- Each State park is provided additional funding equal to at least 5-7% of their annual operational budget committed to promoting the State park in the region and the state
- Each State park effectively manages constituent groups to maintain balanced and appropriate park use
- Each State park features a minimum of annual volunteer hours equal to 15% of paid staff hours
- Equipment replacement is set on a schedule and is met at 95% level on a yearly basis
- Each State park has a Friends group that raises funds equal to a minimum of 5% of the annual operating budget at the park to support maintenance and operations



*Clamming at Colt State Park*



*Beavertail State Park*



Snake Den Farm at Snake Den State Park



Blackstone Valley Bike Path

## CONSERVANCY SOLUTIONS

A conservancy is a non-profit organization that takes on specifically identified operations and maintenance of a facility. However, the park land remains under government ownership. Typically, the government entity “hires” the conservancy. The major difference moving toward a conservancy model involves the idea of donor development and stewardship. The conservancy, or alliance, would benefit DEM by funding a significant portion of a park’s operating budget including staffing. The conservancy would be highly engaged with community outreach along with stewardship of the site(s).

### EXAMPLE: FORT WORDEN STATE PARK, WA

A good example of this relationship in action is Fort Worden State Park in Port Townsend, WA. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission utilizes a management partnership with the Fort Worden Public Development Authority (PDA) for a component of the park’s facilities and services including:

- **CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT**
- **PROGRAM AND EVENT MANAGEMENT**
- **VISITOR SERVICES**
- **MARKETING AND SALES**
- **IMPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS MANAGEMENT**
- **PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

In addition, the PDA serves as a coordinator and support entity for partner-derived capital investment in Fort Worden facilities and infrastructure. The PDA has the responsibility to attract and manage outside funding support and partner investment in the following areas:



Vintage baseball game at Rocky Point State Park

- CAPITAL PROJECTS IMPROVING THE USE OF FACILITIES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MISSION AND VISION OF THE LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER
- CAPITAL PROJECTS SUPPORTING THE IMPROVED COORDINATION AND PERFORMANCE OF PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING ON-SITE
- MAINTENANCE PROJECTS ON THE INTERIOR OF FACILITIES THAT DO NOT INVOLVE MAJOR STRUCTURE OF SYSTEM REPAIR/REPLACEMENT
- IN 2012, A REPORT IDENTIFIED CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THESE FOCUS AREAS WOULD AMOUNT TO \$15-25 MILLION THROUGH 2023.

## APPLICATION TO RHODE ISLAND

Given the unique facilities within the system, it is justifiable that DEM should seek a conservancy management partnership where applicable and appropriate. Rocky Point State Park is one example. Rocky Point was recently added to the system in October 2014. There is a long history with the site and its proximity to downtown Providence has made it a popular destination for locals. With the existing staffing levels and operational responsibilities, it may make sense to seek a conservancy to help manage this asset. The site has a lot of local history and so there is probably a diverse list of groups/agencies that would want to help preserve and protect the site. It should be noted, however, that all operating agreements should clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of each party as it relates to staffing, funding, capital dollars, marketing, branding



Touch-A-Truck event at Rocky Point State Park

APPENDIX

# Recommended maintenance standards

*Brenton Point State Park in Newport*

# LEVEL 1

## AREAS OF HIGH USAGE AND PUBLIC PROFILE

### AREAS

- VISITOR CENTER AND SURROUNDING AREA
- CAMPGROUNDS
- PICNIC AREAS
- GOLF COURSE
- EQUESTRIAN AREA
- BEACH AREA

### STANDARDS

**TURF MAINTENANCE** high profile areas  
(small areas, entire area visible to foot traffic)

- Mowing will occur 2 times/week
- Mowing heights
- 2 1/2 " during warm season  
(day time highs consistently above 75 degrees)
- Edging of all turf perimeters will occur 1 time/week
- 95% turf coverage
- 3% weed infestation for existing areas  
(all efforts should be made to keep new areas 100% weed free)
- 2% bare area
- Remove grass clippings if visible
- Aerate 1 time/year (additionally if needed)
- Inspect thatch layer regularly and remove as needed
- Test soil and water annually
  - Additional testing will occur if deemed necessary
- Soil moisture will be consistent
  - No wet areas
  - No dry areas
  - Firm enough for foot and mower traffic
  - Apply wetting agents to assist in uniform soil moisture
  - Hand water as needed
- Inspect daily for insects, disease, and stress and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours
- Fertilize (3) times per year
- Top dress/over seed once a year





## **TREE AND SHRUB MAINTENANCE**

- Prune/trim trees and shrubs as dictated by species twice annually during spring and fall
- Remove sucker growth annually
- Test soil annually to insure application of appropriate nutrients as needed
- Apply fertilizer to plant species according to their optimum requirements as needed or yearly
- Inspect regularly for insects and diseases. Respond to outbreaks within 48 hours
- Place 2” of organic mulch around each tree within a minimum 18” ring
- Place 2” of organic mulch around shrub beds to minimize weed growth
- Remove hazardous limbs and plants immediately upon discovery
- Remove dead trees and plant material immediately unless located within an environmental area
- Remove or treat invasive plants within 5 days of discovery
- Flower bed maintenance done yearly
- Fertilize once a year
- Pond maintenance done yearly and inspect weekly
- Water features maintained weekly
- Invasive plant removal annually

## **STORM CLEANUP**

- Inspect drain covers at least twice monthly, before rain and immediately after flooding
- Remove debris and organic materials from drain covers immediately
- Maintain water inlet height at 100% of design standard

## **IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

- Inspect irrigation systems at least once per month or computer monitors as necessary
- Initiate repairs to non-functioning systems within 24 hours of discovery
- Back flow testing done annually

## **LITTER CONTROL**

- Pick up litter and empty containers at least once daily or as needed
- Remove leaves and organic debris once a week or as necessary

## **PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE**

- Audit each playground to insure compliance with the current version of ASTM Performance Standard F1487 and the Consumer Product Safety Commission “Handbook for Public Playground Safety”
- Complete low-frequency playground inspections at least bi-monthly or as required. All low-frequency inspections are to be completed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Complete safety-related repairs immediately, and initiate other repairs within 48 hours of discovery
- Complete high-frequency inspections at least weekly
- Grooming surface three times weekly, nine months a year

## **HARD SURFACE MAINTENANCE**

- Remove debris and glass immediately upon discovery
- Remove sand, dirt, and organic debris from walks and hard-court surfaces weekly
- Remove trip hazards from pedestrian areas immediately upon discovery
- Paint fading or indistinct instructional / directional signs annually
- Blow grass clippings after mowing around hard surfaces
- Remove grass growing in cracks as needed

## **TRAIL MAINTENANCE**

- Inspect hard and soft surface trails at least once monthly
- Remove dirt, sand, and organic debris from hard surfaces at least once weekly
- Remove organic debris from soft surfaces at least once weekly
- Maintain a uniform 3-4" depth of compacted material on soft surface trails at all times
- Graffiti removed weekly
- Remove overhanging branches within 84" of the trail surface at least twice annually
- Mechanically or chemically control growth 24" on either side of the trails
- Inspect signs, benches, and other site amenities at least once monthly. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery
- Inspect and make necessary repairs to lighting systems at least once monthly
- Repair / replace bulbs to maintain lighting levels to design specifications at all times
  - Apply wetting agents to assist in uniform soil moisture
  - Hand water as needed
- Inspect weekly for insects, disease, and stress, and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours
- Fertilize twice yearly

## **TREE AND SHRUB MAINTENANCE**

- Prune/trim trees and shrubs as dictated by species at least once annually
- Apply fertilizer to plant species only if plant health dictates
- Remove sucker growth as needed
- Inspect regularly for insects and diseases. Respond to outbreaks within 48 hours
- Place 2" of organic mulch around each tree within a minimum 18" ring
- Place 2" of organic mulch around shrub beds to minimize weed growth
- Remove hazardous limbs and plants immediately upon discovery
- Remove dead trees and plant material within 30 days of discovery
- Remove or treat invasive plants yearly





### **STORM CLEANUP**

- Inspect drain covers at least once monthly and immediately after flooding occurs
- Remove debris and organic materials from drain covers within every other month
- Inspect and clean drains before forecasted storms begin
- Maintain water inlet height at 100% of design standard
- Invasive plant removal once a year or as needed
- Drain system maintenance done once a year

### **IRRIGATION SYSTEMS**

- Inspect irrigation systems a minimum of once per month and as necessary
- Initiate repairs to non-functioning systems within 48 hours of discovery
- Annual back flow inspection done yearly

### **LITTER CONTROL**

- Pick up litter and empty containers at least every other day or as needed
- Remove leaves and organic debris once a week

### **PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE**

- Audit each playground to insure compliance with the current version of ASTM Performance Standard F1487 and the Consumer Product Safety Commission “Handbook for Public Playground Safety”
- Complete low-frequency playground inspections at least bi-monthly or as required. All low-frequency inspections are to be completed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). Complete safety-related repairs immediately and initiate other repairs within 48 hours of discovery
- Complete high-frequency inspections at least weekly
- Grooming surface two times weekly

### **HARD SURFACE MAINTENANCE**

- Remove debris and glass immediately upon discovery
- Remove sand, dirt, and organic debris from walks, lots, and hard surfaces every 30 days
- Remove trip hazards from pedestrian areas immediately upon discovery
- Paint fading or indistinct instructional/directional signs every other year
- Remove grass in the cracks monthly

### **TRAIL MAINTENANCE**

- Inspect hard and soft surface trails at least once monthly
- Remove dirt, sand, and organic debris from hard surfaces at least once monthly
- Remove organic debris from soft surfaces at least once monthly
- Maintain a uniform 2-4” depth of compacted material on soft surface trails



- Mechanically or chemically control growth 24” on either side of the trails
- Remove overhanging branches within 84” of the trail surface at least once annually
- Inspect signs, benches, and other site amenities at least once monthly. Complete repairs within 10 days of discovery

#### **SITE AMENITY MAINTENANCE**

- Inspect benches, trash containers, picnic tables, grills, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, and other site amenities at least monthly. Complete repairs within 5 days of discovery
- Cleaning and washing annually
- Inspect daily for insects, disease, and stress and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours
- Soil moisture will be consistent
- No wet areas
- No dry areas
- Firm enough for foot and mower traffic
- Inspect weekly for insects, disease, and stress, and respond to outbreaks within 24 hours

#### **FENCE AND GATE MAINTENANCE**

- Inspect fences, gates, and bollards at least once annually. Complete safety-related repairs immediately, and complete other repairs within 5 days of discovery
- Clean debris annually

#### **SIGN MAINTENANCE**

- Inspect sign lettering, surfaces, and posts at least once every 3 months
- Repair/replace signs to maintain design and safety standards within 5 days of discovery
- Clean sign once a year

#### **PEST CONTROL**

- In accordance with the Departments Integrated Pest Management Program (IPM), inspect problem areas monthly and remedy immediately upon discovery

#### **VANDALISM AND GRAFFITI REMOVAL**

- Initiate repairs immediately upon discovery. Document and photograph damage as necessary

#### **PICNIC SHELTERS**

- Reserved units cleaned and litter removed prior to and after each reservation
- Minor repairs are made immediately upon discovery
- Non-reserved units are cleaned bi-weekly, or as necessary

#### **LIGHTING SECURITY/AREA**

- Inspect quarterly
- Repairs/bulb replacement will be completed within 72 hours of discovery





---

## CAMPGROUND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

The following recommended campground maintenance standards apply specifically to amenities unique to the campground and overnight accommodations. Campgrounds should otherwise be maintained at a Level 1 standard for general park maintenance.

### **BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES**

- Cabins and shelters should be cleaned and/or disinfected after each use
- Buildings and structures shall be maintained in good repair at all times in a fashion which is consistent with fire and safety codes and regulations. All storage tanks above ground must comply with containment requirements. All below-ground tanks must be pressure treated at mandated intervals
- Tools, supplies and equipment will be organized in an orderly fashion
- Restrooms shall be checked at least twice daily and maintained in a manner to provide clean and sanitary facilities. Soap, towels, toilet issue, etc., shall be provided in adequate quantities at all times. Portable facilities shall be maintained similarly. There are to be no exceptions to this clean restroom policy

### **CAMPING AREAS**

- High use areas such as restrooms and camp areas need to have higher frequency levels of cleaning, repairs, and trash pick-up than normal. Additional staff must be available in the late afternoon and weekends to accomplish this

### **CABINS AND SHELTERS**

- Reserved units cleaned and litter removed prior to and after each reservation
- Minor repairs are made immediately upon discovery
- Non-reserved units are cleaned bi-weekly, or as necessary

---

## GOLF COURSE MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

DEM shall establish and administer maintenance standards for the Goddard State Park Golf Course. The following recommendations are provided at a minimum to be considered for these maintenance standards.

### **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

- Hole signs with yardage, par, and other signs are properly positioned
- Ball washers are operational, kept full of solution, and changed every 3 days
- Towels are available at ball washers and changed daily
- Player tee benches are adequate in number and well placed
- Trash containers are available on the course and emptied at appropriate intervals

- Ice water with drinking cups is available on the course at several locations
- Restrooms are available on golf course at up to 3 locations, depending upon the size of the golf course
- Shoe cleaners are available at alternate holes and the clubhouse

#### **GROUNDS**

- Entrance is clearly visible with appropriately placed road signs to access the golf course
- Entrance is well landscaped with a “Welcome To” sign in place
- Parking lot is clean and well maintained
- Parking lot has designated handicapped slots
- Area surrounding clubhouse is neatly groomed and landscaped
- Area surrounding maintenance building is neatly groomed and landscaped
- Maintenance building is neat and clean
- First and tenth tees are nicely landscaped and attractive
- Tee boxes are well maintained with multiple markers where space allows
- Grass seed and sand mix is available
- Tee markers are moved at least 2 times a day by course rangers
- Grounds and bunkers are consistent in speed, appearance, and playability
- Greens are consistent in speed, appearance, and playability
- Fairways are distinguishable from rough

#### **MAINTENANCE CENTERS AND BARNs**

- All buildings shall be maintained in a fashion which is consistent with fire and safety codes and regulations. All storage tanks above ground must comply with containment requirements. All below-ground tanks must be pressure treated at mandated intervals
- Maintenance yards and buildings shall be kept in a neat and orderly fashion. Tools, supplies and equipment will be organized in an orderly fashion
- Chemical storage shall be reported to the Department on an annual basis as part of SARA III reporting requirements. All chemicals shall be stored in a fashion consistent with local/state pesticide storage recommendations

#### **RECORD KEEPING**

- The staff shall keep true, accurate, and complete records of golf cart maintenance, fertilizer, chemical, and pesticide applications

#### **GREENS, PRACTICE PUTTING GREENS, AND NURSERIES**

- A minimum of six days per week at a height of 1/8” – 7/32”. Mowing height on collar or apron of green should be the same as height of tee-box
- Change cup locations on all greens and practice putting greens daily during the active season, March 1 through October 31 of each year. Cup location will be moved at least twenty feet from the previous placement and will be determined by the weekly/daily cut placement plan. As a rule, 6 cups will be set back, 6 will be set middle and 6 will be set front





- Repair ball marks, divots, or any other damaged turf on or near greens and practice greens daily. Rangers are to assist
- Aerate all greens, practice putting greens, and nurseries a minimum of two times annually, or as dictated by conditions
- Top-dress all greens, practice putting greens, and nurseries as needed to maintain a smooth surface and manage thatch. Topdressing will only be of 100% sand, meeting the specifications for a USGA root zone
- Light vertical mowing of all greens, practice putting greens and nurseries shall be performed as appropriate to smooth and true the putting surfaces
- Spiking of all greens shall be performed as needed between aerations to maintain water infiltration and algae control
- All greens, practice greens, and nurseries shall receive a complete fertilizer in a consistent manner to deliver 3 to 5 pounds of nitrogen per year
- All greens, practice greens, and nurseries shall have appropriate fungicide applications to prevent and/or control fungal disease activity
- Pre-emergent herbicides shall be used in the appropriate amounts and times to prevent intrusion into turf areas of weeds difficult to eradicate
- All greens, practice greens, and nurseries shall be maintained virtually free of undesirable weedy plant types. When necessary, turf shall be treated with plant protectants to guard turf grass health and vigor, in accordance with the integrated pest management philosophy. All plant protectant applications will be administered and recorded according to state laws
- All greens, practice greens, and nurseries shall be treated as necessary to prevent or halt insect damage. This shall be accomplished by using an integrated pest management philosophy
- The green speed shall be maintained consistently throughout the course. Speed shall be further determined with regards to the surface contours and size of the greens. Green speed may change during periods of stress, aeration, or for certain events

#### **TEES**

- All tees shall be mowed at a height of .35" - .50" at least 3 times a week during growing season
- Worn areas on tees shall be top-dressed weekly, or more often if needed, to fill divots and level tee surface
- Tee areas shall be over-seeded annually, using a suitable species or blend.
- Tee markers and all tee equipment shall be moved daily for proper teeing, and control of turf wear. Placement of tees shall be done in conjunction with pin positions and a weekly plan
- Tees shall be kept weed free to an extent of at least 98% of the area by the proper and timely application of post-emergent herbicides
- All tees shall be vertically mowed as necessary to control mat or thatch build-up or uneven growth
- Core aerate all tees a minimum of once per growing season, or as conditions dictate
- All tees shall receive fertilizer at a rate, which promotes consistent, healthy growth and recuperation

**FAIRWAYS** (All areas of play except, greens, tees, and natural growth areas)

- Fairways shall be mowed at least 3 times per week at a height of .375” - .675” during the growing season
- Core aerate all fairways a minimum of once per growing season, or as conditions dictate
- Fairways shall be fertilized with a complete fertilizer per soil test results to promote healthy growth and recuperation
- Fairways will be vertically mowed as necessary to control mat or thatch build-up
- Undesirable weedy plant types, diseases, and insects will be monitored and assessed regarding their effects on conditions. When necessary, fairways shall be treated with plant protectants to protect turf grass health and vigor, in accordance with the integrated pest management philosophy. All plant protectant applications will be administered and recorded according to state laws
- Divots will be filled with sand to promote healing and playability of the surface. An appropriate (sand/seed/soil) mix may be used in this procedure
- Over-seeding of the golf course is mandatory in all areas sparse of grass annually in the fall of each year

**ROUGHS** (All turfed areas of play except greens, tees, fairways and natural growth areas)

- Roughs shall be mowed as necessary during the year to maintain a height between 2” to 3”
- Fairway to tree line play areas shall be aerated at least once per year
- Roughs shall be fertilized as necessary to maintain turf vigor
- Weed control shall be performed as necessary to control weed formation, or to allow proper play
- Wooded Play Areas (Maintains necessary to establish and/or maintain turf)

**NATURAL GROWTH AREAS**

- Natural growth areas are defined as all areas in which native or introduced vegetation is allowed to survive without routine mowing, cultivating, irrigation, or other routine turf maintenance procedures. These may include out-of-play areas, steep slopes, barriers, windbreaks, nature trails, etc. Such areas are to be maintained free of trash, noxious weeds, and vertebrate pests, in such manner as to comply fully with Fire Department regulations or other such regulations as they apply. Such natural growth areas may be improved and may from time to time be subjected to irrigation, cultivation, pruning or other such practices as may be necessary or desirable to establish or maintain them. All natural areas will be appropriately signed as “Natural Areas.”
- Planters (All areas planted with ornamental plants, not intended for golf play and having a definable border)
- Planters shall be maintained free of trash and debris such as (e.g., paper, drinking cans, bottles, fallen limbs and leaves, etc.)
- Planters shall be maintained free of weeds or grass by mechanical, manual or chemical means





- Plant material (e.g., trees, shrubbery and ground covering) in planters shall be trimmed for protection from wind, insect damage, and appearance

#### **TREES**

- Trees within the property lines of the golf course shall be pruned every 6 years
- Trees shall be staked until of sufficient size to stand unassisted. Stakes shall be removed as soon as possible
- Trees shall be properly pruned for protection from wind and pests, as well as for appearance and safety by using established arboricultural practices
- Large area mowers shall not be used within 1 foot of the trunk of any tree
- Dead trees shall be removed, and replaced within twenty working days if weather conditions permit or during the period from November through March Replacement shall be made with a tree of appropriate type and size with Department approval

#### **IRRIGATION**

(All equipment required to irrigate all areas of the property)

- Repair or replace all heads, valves, control equipment, wiring and pipe as needed to maintain the proper operation of the golf course irrigation system (including but not limited to greens, tees, fairways, planters, and flower beds) on an ongoing basis
- The golf course shall be irrigated as necessary to support proper growth of the golf turf and associated landscaping (including but not limited to trees, shrubs, and flowers)
- The course shall comply with applicable local laws, moratoriums or restrictions to golf course watering, unless exceptions have been negotiated with the Department

#### **FENCES**

All fences, chain links, walls, or barbed wire on or within boundaries of the property

- Repair all broken or damaged fencing as necessary
- Immediately repair or replace all fences, gates and locking devices as needed for the protection of the golf course or equipment

#### **MOTORIZED AND IMPLEMENT FLEET**

- The staff will provide for the maintenance and upkeep of all motorized equipment according to the original equipment's manufacturer standard

#### **STRUCTURES**

All structures within the boundaries of the golf course

- Golf course restrooms shall be checked at least twice daily and maintained in a manner to provide clean and sanitary facilities. Soap, towels, toilet issue, etc., shall be provided in adequate quantities at all times. Portable facilities shall be maintained similarly. There are to be no exceptions to this clean restroom policy
- Buildings and structures shall be maintained in good repair at all times Surrounding areas shall be maintained free of weeds, brush, disorganized junk, broken equipment, trash piles, or etc. Interior areas shall be clean, and neatly organized, safe, and sanitary for

- customers and employees. Painting, rodent and insect control, and landscaping shall be performed as necessary
- Maintain all cart paths in a smooth and clean condition and repair promptly as needed
  - All sidewalks, patios, and concrete paths must be kept edged. Edging around valve boxes, meter boxes, backflow preventers, etc., shall be done as needed to ensure there is no obstruction of play or maintenance from growth around these areas
  - All sand traps shall be edged, as necessary to maintain appropriate lip, raked daily, and filled with fresh sand as needed to maintain a minimum of 4" depth on slopes and in the bottom. Replacement sand will be of a dust-free type, suitable for trap use, and compatible with the original course sand in appearance and playability
  - Practice greens will be maintained in the same manner as the holes on the golf course
  - Range tees will be maintained more aggressively than golf course tees to ensure rotation of hitting status and good quality grass tee areas for customers
  - Individual tee stations will be delineated at 10-foot minimum intervals using ropes or other markers. Bag racks will be provided at all stations
  - Various planting areas throughout the course will be cultivated, weeded, pruned, and fertilized regularly, with at least 2 replanting programs for annuals scheduled yearly
  - Any change in the physical characteristics of the golf course, such as the addition or removal of sand traps, addition or removal of any hazards (e.g., water, trees or native vegetation), movement of soil exceeding twenty cubic yards in any single area, or the modification of any portion of the golf course or the buildings, shall only be undertaken with the direct approval of the Department
  - Other than during inclement weather, a maintenance crew of sufficient size shall be on duty at the course daily and supervised by the superintendent. Regular hours will be established and maintained
  - Trash and refuse shall be collected daily and removed from the property as necessary to ensure minimal problems from refuse odors, insects, etc.
  - Vertebrate pest control shall be routinely performed throughout the property on an ongoing basis, in such a manner that vertebrate pest populations are steadily reduced and eventually eliminated, in a fashion consistent with applicable state laws
  - Lakes, ponds and streams shall be maintained in a safe and sanitary manner and in good appearance through the application of appropriate aquatic vegetative controls
  - Analysis will be performed yearly by an approved professional laboratory. Soil pH of turf shall be maintained at a level of 6.3 to 6.8. Planter soil shall have a pH supportive of plant species





*Beavertail State Park in Jamestown*

To learn more

Contact Terri Bisson  
DEM BUREAU OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
terri.bisson@dem.ri.gov  
401-222-4700 ext. 2771

Learn, engage, and discuss at

[dem.ri.gov/RIparks](https://dem.ri.gov/RIparks)