

## 2019 Legislative session

# Capital Budget request supports healthy parks

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission's 2019-21 **capital budget** request protects the state's investment in its legacy state park system. Renovations, rehabilitations and upgrades contained in the Commission request will improve facility conditions in more than 80 parks. The Commission's priorities help State Parks respond to the demands placed on parks by a growing population with continually increasing and evolving recreation needs.



*Modern new facilities for visitors: Recent capital improvements at Belfair State Park include a new welcome station, cabins, kitchen shelter and this energy-efficient bathroom with solar panels.*

The capital request for \$120.6 million is aligned with the operating request to achieve a healthy and sustainable park system – one that continues to be a strong partner in driving economic development in communities across the state.

The request includes \$96 million for new projects, with the remainder covering costs to complete projects started in previous budget cycles.

## State Parks' 10-year Capital Plan: a solid future for the park system

In 2018, State Parks completed substantial work on the future of the parks system through the development of a 10-year capital plan. The planning process identified the full range of park system needs and created a plan to preserve and construct facilities during the next 10 years. This plan for the future identifies \$783 million in projects, including \$603 million from the State Capital Construction Account and the remainder from state and federal grants, private investment and development partnerships.

Examples of 10-year plan elements include: construction of two new state parks on existing land holdings; major park renovations in eight parks; a new interpretive center; two new campgrounds, significant renovations and refurbishments to more than 1,300 campsites; redeveloped day-use areas in 35 parks; improved access to attractions in 45 parks for people with disabilities; and much more.

The 2019-21 Capital request makes a solid down payment on fulfilling long-term needs with state park projects such as:



- Major renovations and campground improvements at Kopachuck, Lyon’s Ferry, Pearygin Lake, Riverside, and Steamboat Rock state parks
- Campground development at Schafer State Park
- Entrance and welcome center construction at Cape Disappointment State Park
- Improvements for people with disabilities throughout the state
- Roadway re-development at Steptoe Butte State Park
- Initial work on two new park developments
- Protecting the most at-risk historic and cultural facilities, and significant investment in overall facility condition.

The majority of the of the 2019-21 request – 80 percent – will be used to care for existing facilities, and 20 percent is to develop new and expanded facilities. One goal of the request is to raise the agency’s facility condition index rating from 65 percent (current) to 70 percent by 2021.

The 2019-21 capital budget request, together with the 2019-21 operating budget request, continue moving the park system toward a more stable foundation. Maintaining, improving and enhancing state park facilities and offering high-quality programs and customer service provide benefits to all Washingtonians. A strong park system supports public health, quality of life and strong state and local economies.

**The Commission’s 2019-21 Capital Budget proposal is a sound investment for the future of Washington state.**

*Note: Governor Jay Inslee’s 2019-21 Capital budget proposal provides solid support to the State Park system through \$66 million in new State Parks projects. The Governor’s proposal includes development of the first new full-service park in more than a decade, day-use and camping upgrades and projects that would modernize facilities across the state.*

## Did you know?

- Washington State Parks is responsible for more than one-quarter of all state-owned facilities, including historic properties such as lighthouses and forts.
- The state park system was created in 1913, four years before the National Park System. The state park system is an integral part of what it means to be a Washingtonian.
- A study by Earth Economics in 2015 showed that 35 million state park visits generated \$64 million for the state General Fund and created 14,000 jobs statewide.
- The park system received 36.7 million visits in 2017.