



TRI COUNTY PARK DIRECTORS
Meeting Agenda

Date: Thursday, April 23rd
Time: 12PM
Location: Conference Call
Meeting ID: 168 918 878
<https://zoom.us/j/168918878>

+1 253 215 8782 US
+1 301 715 8592 US

1) State Parks update- Mike Sternback, Assistant Director-Operations, Washington State Parks

Washington State Parks are working through challenges during these circumstances which are out of our control. They have sent all field staff home and have found that telework has been a challenge. They were forced to let 60 non-permanent staff go last week. WSP are not interested in offering layoffs. They have limited staff in the parks working on essential areas which are primarily facilities. They are working with John Snyder to produce 5-day notice of openings. Their general thinking regarding day use is that a wide-open start would be the best approach as this could separate people across more areas. Enforcement has been difficult for WSP. They are technically closed but they have still had much use as people continue to walk into parks. They highlighted that they are struggling with particularly sensitive areas such as the ocean beaches. Washington State Park areas with small communities are concerned with the large influx of travel to parks if/when they reopen. They have had conversations about mitigating density by decreasing parking stalls and limiting entry, but this can just push problems to the outside county roads while people continue to walk in. While the WSP is facing budget issues, they still intend to bring on our seasonal staff in the next few weeks. 80% of their budget comes from earned revenue, so they are forecasting for various timeframes for opening camping and the related impacts. Without incoming revenue, the budget shortfalls are magnified each week. They are targeting a May 5th reopening date and plan to use education and signage to clearly message guidelines and restrictions. They plan to keep some of their play structures closed. Visitor centers will stay closed this season and they will proceed with the determined cancellation of events this season. They would like to see concessionaires back in the park if possible, to provide services to visitors. WSP has concern over swim beaches areas and wonders how other agencies are handling

this challenge. The opening of overnight camping means that 10's of thousands of people will be traveling through the state and from outside the state to recreate. They initially considered only opening RV camping but determined that this is not equitable. WSP believes that even though some sites are close together, the communal areas of each site are still separate. Their reservation system is eating about \$20 in transaction fees for each refund, which adds even more to the revenue loss on top of the refund itself.

Snohomish County Parks and Recreation are working closely with Washington State Parks in their reopening efforts. They agree on the May 5th target date. They have a plan to implement day use timeframes using 2-3-hour recreation increments. Snohomish County Parks and Recreation wants to align reopening efforts across the board so that we all can provide consistent messaging. They have had to reduce some of their seasonal hiring and will be understaffed. They would also like to see a wide range of open recreational areas at once to help decrease crowds. Snohomish County Parks and Recreation plan to mirror the reopening timeline of Washington State Parks

It was discussed that the coordination of opening is important across many departments. It is also important to focus on how we are going to very quickly pull coordination and communication together once the Governor makes his next decision. Once he makes his decision, we need to be able to quickly and comprehensively deploy plans across agencies and move on them. It is possible that different agencies could have varied restrictions by the Governor so this could be an issue when trying to align. The sooner that the governor can release timeline for opening recreation lands the sooner we can all focus our timelines.

2) Update- WA Parks & Recreation Position Statement & Recovery Framework

- a. A "universal" recovery framework or adaptable template for parks and recreation intended to align our respective efforts

Most of the changes to the proposed document were small. Oregon, Idaho, and California were all very receptive and supportive of the document. A signed cover letter will be added to the document for submission. The document has started conversations government level which will assist in its positive reception and keep parks and recreation at the forefront of these decisions. Doug Leavy has also sent it to his legislative distribution list. We are prepared to transmit this document with the cover letter to the Governor's office either tonight or tomorrow morning. This work will also be shared with other states who we have great collaboration and consensus with. They will use it as a framework in creating their own letters to their local governments. The final document will be viewable on the WRPA website. The document will be sent to key officials based on the Governor's Policy Advisor's recommendation.

3) Recreation Conservation Office Update

The RCO board met on Tuesday and discussed the proposed match reduction from 50% to 25% for any applicant. They have previously required that 10% comes from non-state or nonfederal source, this does not apply now. Also, in the category of Water Access and Trails which previously had no grant limits they are capping the total match to \$500,000. RCO is doing this as a proactive measure to reduce the volatilities that agencies are experiencing. They will be sending out an email to survey responders and the news release lists by Monday. In order to be responsive to sponsors, they have granted additional authority to the RCO Director. Any

decisions that need to be made in a timely manner can be made by the Director. This is temporary authority granted through July 21st to quickly address issues such as scope changes, reducing overmatches, and non-state, nonfederal shares. If you are having issues with active projects, please reach out to grant managers.

4) Update on Association of WA Cities & Gov's Stakeholder Group re: Summer Programming for School-age Kids

Parks and Recreation representatives joined in a meeting with AWC regarding industry plans for summer day camps and childcare options. There is an understanding that that we will need to use schools differently in the future, and that agencies will need to use parks differently. We need to be aware of to the extent that the childcare and summer day camp programs are deemed essential and we may need to seek additional funds from stimulus/FEMA. It is important to be more proactive in advocating that even though we are not licensed in childcare we are critical in providing these types of services. Discussion regarding the American Camping Association and their upcoming guidelines for camps that will be issued in the first week of May. Discussion of current offerings to childcare of first responders and that these services have been expanded to includes childcare of grocery store workers. Currently these services are free, and they are using a registration portal through the school district. They are being reimbursed by CARES money. As staff and kids come in a nurse is providing assessments. More information and meetings to come on this topic of childcare and day camps.

5) DRAFT Framework for Reopening Oregon's Parks, Outdoor and Recreation Facilities

The city of Tualatin, (Oregon) presented on their document which focuses on operationalizing the concepts of cooperation and coordination. This document was created to answer questions such as what it looks like to begin to reopen operationally, how we can create consistency, what are the key considerations, and how to provide consistent messaging to our users.

Phase I - Initial Feasibility and Budget focuses on the up-front re-opening costs as well as continuing costs. With the assumption that earned income will go down, identifying other sources of funding is paramount.

Phase II - Staffing and Coordination, focuses on getting people back into work sites and providing training. This will include meeting OSHA safety requirements, following distancing plans, and implementing a cleaning and disinfecting plan.

Phase III – Implementing and Reopening outlines specific procedures and steps of the reopening plan.

Phase IV- Eval and Ongoing Coordination includes informed decision making and identify triggers that will mandate changes. In this phase the focus is on governmental regulations and guidelines as they continue to change.

The City of Tualatin will share this document when it is finished early next week. This document is a well written considerations of how to act. This document was greatly received by this the group and is a tool we can use to build out the next steps of implementation The public's expectation is that as soon as the Governor determines to opens recreation, they expects to be able to come to parks and facilities in masses. Spending time now to make sure we have framework in order to reopen is important and this document will be helpful in establishing this framework.

6) Group share/Questions for the Group

- If folks are trying to get things in front of their councils, this may be difficult as there is a hold for 10 days which lasts until May 4th.
- Department of Emergency Management Webinar to be held on 4/29/2020. Pierce County will share information from that call with this group regarding the details surrounding safety and procedures of the future of large events.
- Whatcom County is forming a public health task force to help with recovery and re-opening operations.
- Metro Parks Tacoma will be hosting a Day Camp Webinar on May 4th from 2-3pm.

Meeting Adjourned 1:03PM

*Respectfully Submitted
Emily Young
Administrative Coordinator
City of Everett Parks and Community Services*