



Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



2016-2017 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET

State Parks Operations and Maintenance

\$4,600,000 in FY 2016 / \$4,900,000 in FY 2017 (expenditures)

[General Fund and Natural Resources Fund]

It Is Needed Because

This initiative will help sustain, operate and maintain 75 state parks and recreation areas for a growing number of visitors seeking the health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation is a key component of Minnesota's quality of life and a cornerstone of its \$12.5 billion tourism industry.

This initiative is connected to the DNR Conservation Agenda goal of natural resources and outdoor recreation contributing to strong and sustainable job markets, economies and communities. Without an appropriation increase to address the increased costs of doing business, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will have to reduce customer services, camping and lodging nights, and staff.

Major Program Elements

- Increase the DNR general fund appropriation by \$3.6 million each year and raise an additional \$1.3 million of revenue annually through increased entrance fees to parks (\$1 daily and \$5 annually). This funding will allow the DNR to operate and maintain parks at a level the public has become accustomed to over the past biennia.
- Use of the Minnesota state park and trail system has increased significantly (one-day and year-round permit sales have increased 24% since 2008) so there is a clear and growing demand for the services we provide.
- The Division has cut costs by approximately \$3 million since 2010 by shortening camping seasons at dozens of parks, by expanding the number of "co-managed" parks (where one park manager oversees multiple parks), and by reducing routine maintenance.
- Over the past couple of years the Parks and Trails Division, with significant stakeholder input,

developed a system plan with criteria to help ensure that future investments focus on Minnesota's most important natural and cultural resources and its highest-quality recreational opportunities.

- This initiative impacts an estimated 9 million visitors to state parks annually.

Key Measures and Outcomes

- Providing high-quality recreation opportunities at Minnesota state parks gives people a reason to travel. Annual spending in local economies by Minnesota state park visitors totals \$229 million.
- Protecting the state's natural and cultural resources for future generations and interpreting them meets the statutory requirements in the Outdoor Recreation Act.

Fiscal Impacts

This proposal increased appropriations by \$9.5 million in FY16/17. This increase is partially offset by \$2.3 million in increased fees. Total net fiscal impact for the biennium is \$7.2 million in the General Fund and net zero in the Natural Resources Fund. One-time funding was used to offset reductions in general fund support in each of the last two biennium's. This change provides a more permanent and consistent solution going forward.

For Further Information, Please Contact:

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