



**In this Newsletter:** [Responding to the Funding Crisis](#), [Cama Beach Addition](#), [Commissioner and Parks Director Join Foundation Board](#), [What's Your Favorite Park](#), [Featured Friends: Friends of Fort Flagler State Park](#)

#### A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear Friends of State Parks,

While our system of State Parks is a tremendous natural, recreational and cultural asset to all of us, local "friends" groups are an equally important asset to the parks. Most "friends" groups focus on a single park and undertake a range of activities to support that park. Such groups recruit and oversee volunteers, raise money for the park, repair and upgrade equipment, trails and interpretive centers, develop websites to publicize activities in the park, operate a store at the park, hold events there, and much more.

Some "friends" have been organized and active for many years, while others are relatively new and just building their infrastructure. Washington State Parks Foundation recognizes the importance of "friends" and has been working to find ways to support them and help them to develop. As State Parks faces the need to generate funds through sales of the Discover Pass, "friends" groups will become even more important partners in generating support for parks, helping market the Discover Pass, recruiting volunteers, and generating funds to improve their local park.

The Foundation/Parks initiative now underway includes, among other things, canvassing "friends" to see what they need, seeking their ideas and recommendations, and finding out their interest in becoming part of a statewide Parks support network. See John Floberg's report below for more

information on the initiative.

One aspect of the Foundation's initiative is already underway. We have established a resource panel of experienced leaders from four "friends" groups who are available to consult on incorporation, by-laws, tax matters, licenses, and much more. If you are interested in establishing a "friends" group or need help moving your group to the next level, you may want to speak with one of the panel members. We can help make the transition easier. Contact information for the panel can be found on the Foundation website. [www.wspf.org](http://www.wspf.org).

The \$30 Discover Pass is now the prime source of funding for State Parks; only a small amount of State Funding to assist in the transition will be available. Thus far, sales of the Discover Pass are generating less funding than had been predicted, and the predicted level already envisioned a reduction in funding for Parks. We hope all of you who care about and enjoy state parks have bought or will buy a Discover Pass, and that you will urge your friends and relatives to purchase Passes as well. You might want to buy a Pass as a gift for a friend or relative. An icon on the Foundation website will link you to purchase information or you can get the information directly on State Parks website. [www.discoverpass.wa.gov](http://www.discoverpass.wa.gov).

One complaint about the Discover Pass derives from the current requirement that a Pass be obtained for each car a person will use in a park. State Parks' staff are aware of this issue, and The Foundation has been working with the State Parks and the legislature to revise this provision and to allow a Pass to be used with more than one family vehicle. The legislature will likely take up this issue during the special session in early December, and by the time you read this newsletter, the matter may be resolved.

Washington State Parks Foundation offers an excellent means for you to make a tax deductible donation to help maintain and improve our parks. Please consider making a donation at this time to assist us in meeting the current funding crisis, by visiting [www.wspf.org](http://www.wspf.org).

You can make the donation directly online by going to the Foundation website. [www.wspf.org](http://www.wspf.org). Some of you may be interested in donating stock, donating through your IRA, or making a bequest in your will. The IRA Charitable Rollover provision may expire at the end of this year unless Congress extends it. Be sure to check with your accountant or financial advisor before using any of these charitable vehicles. If you would like more information from the Foundation, please email your request or question to [info@washingtonstateparksfoundation.org](mailto:info@washingtonstateparksfoundation.org).

All of us at the Foundation wish you a joyous holiday season.

Sincerely,



Peter Reid,  
Interim Chair  
Washington State Parks Foundation  
*Interim chair report 11/25/11*

## RESPONDING TO THE FUNDING CRISIS



Executive Director Report



First, I'll give you the bad news. Because of the recession and resulting Washington State budget crisis, the 2011-2013 state operating budget reduces State Parks general fund support by over 70% in the first fiscal year and eliminates it in the second. State Parks general fund support, which had represented the majority of funding for State Parks' \$150M budget in the last biennium, is expected to be zero in the next biennium (2013-2015). While the Discover Pass is a critical new tool that will significantly help to offset these losses, the pass by itself is expected to fall short of fully providing basic operating revenues and services to parks.

Now I want to share some signs of hope. State Parks, recognizing the seriousness of this challenge, has joined with the Foundation and stakeholders to explore 61 different revenue and efficiency measures to help further close the revenue gap and deliver services from limited funds most efficiently and effectively. These ideas include expanding partnerships with non-profits, establishing stronger sustainability practices, and exploring new business opportunities. [The full report](#), which included public input, describes all of the initiatives, the process used to create them, and how they were evaluated. Although these are challenging times and there is an imperative for State Parks to find support in new places, it is also an exciting opportunity; now is the time for developing creative solutions and implementing bold actions.

As State Parks is transforming itself to meet the challenge, so is the Foundation. We are expanding our work beyond capital improvement projects and education programs to help devise strategies to raise operations funding. We're also interested in building a strong State Parks' constituency in order to act on behalf of Parks with legislators and to help inform the political process. The challenges in funding have also brought the Foundation's work to a more central and prominent role within State Parks, including the formation of a new Partnerships Unit to work closer with the Foundation and partners to build strength for jointly pursuing fundraising and sponsorship initiatives. In fact, the Foundation and State Parks have just signed a new MOU and Cooperative Agreement that will collectively help us make immediate progress on the most promising new initiatives. Two initiatives I'd like to touch on are Virtual Ranger and the Friends Initiative.

Virtual Ranger is a proposal to develop a new technology-based way of experiencing and interacting with Washington Parks, including a deep cultural, natural and recreational exploration of the parks through web, mobile applications, social media, and in-park features. We're engaged with The Collins Group in Seattle to help us professionally evaluate the potential of this effort, with results expected next spring. Just as important as learning the potential success of Virtual Ranger, however, is the process we're using to evaluate this project, including case development, an advisory committee, and interviews with potential users and funders. Importantly, this approach allows us to "truth-test" ideas and shows great promise in serving as a blueprint to evaluate many of the 61 priority initiatives.

Another exciting new initiative involves expanding the network of State Park friends groups. Friends groups form when volunteers from a particular park or set of parks want to accomplish more for their favorite park(s) and establish a park-supporting organization. Since this is such an obvious benefit to State Parks, the Foundation and Park staff are working to encourage and support friends groups on several fronts. In addition to the Foundation providing advice to friends groups from a panel of experts featured on our website (as mentioned earlier in this newsletter by Chair Peter Reid), both State Parks and the Foundation are currently engaging with existing friends groups in the field to discover ways we can both help friends groups be even more effective. One of the ways we will be demonstrating the value of this coordination is through a Foundation-hosted friends workshop in the first part of next year to share resources and troubleshoot problems together. In this new era of funding challenges, we'll also be discussing potential ways to raise operating revenues and explaining how groups might work together to

potential ways to raise operating revenues and explaining how groups might work together to effectively reach legislators about important State Park issues.

The goal of all our current work is to create a fully self-sustaining Washington State Park system under the new paradigm of dramatically reduced public funds. We're not there yet, but there are many signs of hope for making progress together. For anyone who has walked the beaches of our State Parks with an eagle overhead, or camped together at their favorite park with family around an evening fire, you know that these parks are not just worth fighting for; they are what we commit to bringing our children and the next generation.

## CAMA BEACH STATE PARK ADDITION



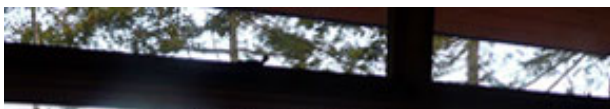
### WSPF Partners for New Major Building at Cama Beach State Park



Funding for the construction of the Cama Center and Cafe, a new 5,000 square foot multipurpose dining, meeting, and event venue at Cama Beach State Park on Camano Island, was facilitated by the WSPF. The new hall greatly adds to the value of the 34 rental cabins and other existing facilities from the original Cama Beach Resort. The building offers spectacular views over Saratoga Passage to Whidbey Island and the Olympic Mountains.

In 2004, the family originally owning the Cama Beach State Park property donated \$2.2 million to the WSPF, earmarked for the new building. Construction was delayed due to archaeological concerns and a later need for an appropriation from the state Legislature due to increased building costs. In the meantime, the Foundation used income from the funds to spearhead projects in other state parks and to defray operating expenses. The WSPF then made payments of invoices for the design and construction of the building.

Sandra Worthington, an original co-owner with her sister Karen Hamalainen and donor of much of Cama Beach State Park, has been an active board member of the Washington State Parks Foundation since 2003. Worthington says, "We're grateful to the State Parks Foundation for its key role in helping create this wonderful new building for the public to use and enjoy."





**COMMISSIONER AND PARKS DIRECTOR  
JOIN FOUNDATION BOARD**



**Commissioner Patricia Lantz and Parks Director Don Hoch Join  
Washington State Parks Foundation Board**



The Foundation is extremely fortunate that both Washington State Parks & Recreation Commissioner Patricia Lantz and Washington State Parks Director Don Hoch have agreed to join the Foundation Board beginning in 2012.


Commissioner Patricia Lantz is a retired lawyer and former legislator from the Washington House of Representatives. She practiced law in the area of land-use planning and environmental law, served on the House Natural Resources Committee, and chaired the Heritage Caucus, comprised of state parks, arts, cultural resources, civics and historic preservation organizations and advocates around the state. She has received numerous awards for her work in historic preservation, arts advocacy, and promotion of criminal and civil justice.

Don Hoch, who was appointed Director of State Parks in December of 2010, has seen a long and distinguished career in parks management, including five years at Washington State Parks as Puget Sound Region Director and two years as Southwest Region Director. Prior to coming to Washington, Don was a director of one of the largest outdoor recreation areas in the state of Georgia. Don has received many awards in outdoor recreation, including a Lifetime Achievement award from the Historic Heartland Travel Association and the distinguished Professional Award from the Georgia Recreation and Park Association.

If the Foundation is to effectively expand its role and provide maximum value to State Parks in the future, then close involvement from both the Parks Commission and State Parks agency leadership will be of fundamental importance. The appointment of these two key people to the Foundation Board will be of great assistance in helping us to reach our goals.

**WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE STATE PARK?**





**So, What's your Favorite Park?** We've been asking this question for the past year, and the answers confirm that we have one heck of a park system ... beaches, forests, lakes and shorelines. We all have a favorite and there is a park just for you. In fact, the survey is the most visited page on our website at: <http://washingtonstateparksfoundation.org/state-parks-survey>.

What is reassuring is that around 103 out of 116 State Parks have been mentioned at least once; and the most popular, Deception Pass, Fort Flagler, Grayland Beach, and Cape Disappointment, are mentioned by no more than 2-4% of those taking our survey.

Recently,



SF from Gig Harbor wrote that he loves Dosewallips State Park. "It's open all year, it takes reservations year around, it is within my traveling range (from Gig Harbor) and once in a while it provides an extra treat with an elk herd coming thru the park. Another extra is the odd year when the "Humpies" run up the river in great numbers."

JC from Richland loves Steamboat Rock State Park. She writes, "We hiked to the top of the Steamboat Rock and enjoyed the great views of the Grand Coulee valley. We found amazing granite boulders on top from the ice age flood. We went swimming in the lake and enjoyed ice cream from the snack stand."

MS from Vancouver, WA loves Larrabee State Park. He writes, "I regularly spent hours and hours here during college doing homework, reading, and/or watching the water. I took a special trip to Bellingham after college just to sit and reflect on the years that have passed, and know I could count on this beautiful and peaceful park to stay the same."  
*WSPF: Amen*

So, tell us **What's your Favorite State Park** and **What Make it a Special Place for You**. Finally, make a promise to explore a new park in 2012.

Go to: <http://washingtonstateparksfoundation.org/state-parks-survey>



**FEATURED FRIENDS**





Friends of Fort Flagler (FOFF) is a remarkable state park friends group and non-profit organization that was formed in 1999 to protect and enhance Fort Flagler State Park. FOFF's membership has grown 25% since 2010 and now consists of 68 families.

The wide range of programs the Friends host at Fort Flagler include a Valentine's Daddy and Daughter Dance, a series of 10 concerts, a Halloween carnival and a Sea Stories storytelling event. They also help with a Fort to Fort Bike Ride between Flagler and Fort Worden. In addition, the group gives historical and other interpretive tours for a fee to park users and had over 700 people participating this year. Aside from these sources of support, the group makes income from merchandising at the museum.

FOFF uses their income, along with the hard work of their members and other volunteers to take on restoration of historical buildings and sidewalks as well as restoring special features like an old search light. They do this in close working relationship with the local rangers. They also help support an education program called junior rangers. Perhaps their most notable work involves the restoration of an army hospital which represents a prominent focal point within the Park. A detailed business plan for the hospital has not yet been completed but weddings, meetings, parties, concerts, and other community events are all potential opportunities.

The next time you visit Fort Flagler, don't forget to thank the Friends who have helped make this unique destination even more special.



*Friends of Fort Flagler contributed over \$14K and countless volunteer hours to help restore this old hospital building at Fort Flager. Building photos courtesy of Jonathan Nelson.*



*July 4th Concert with bluegrass group Deadwood Revival at Fort Flagler*





*Showing the restored searchlight to an interested visitor*

## MORE INFORMATION



More information on the Washington State Parks Foundation is available on our website at [www.wspf.org](http://www.wspf.org), by e-mailing us at [info@washingtonstateparksfoundation.org](mailto:info@washingtonstateparksfoundation.org), or by calling us at 800-324-9605



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