

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Beginning in 1907 areas designated as “scenic and recreational” were administered by the State Land Board. The Department of Parks and Recreation wasn’t created until the 1965 Legislative Session. Today the Department manages 26 state parks in three regions throughout the state, and also manages trails, boating, and interpretive programs.

Educating the Public

One of the Department of Parks and Recreation’s goals is to educate. Department programs, such as the interpretive program, stimulate park visitor interest and appreciation for the parks’ natural, historical, and recreational resources. Some examples of the interpretive program include exhibits at park visitor centers, brochures, and trail guides. Environmental education is one of the many aspects of the interpretive program. Many parks host school groups of all sizes and ages for environmental education activities. During the off-season many park rangers visit schools to teach resource education to students.

Funding

In fiscal year 2007 the General Fund supported 11 percent of the Department of Parks and Recreation appropriation, with 83 percent of the Department’s activities and programs funded by fee-supported dedicated funds. The balance comes from federal funds. The fees that flow into the dedicated funds are primarily derived from ATV, boat, motorcycle, and snowmobile registrations; and fees charged to park visitors for day use and overnight camping.

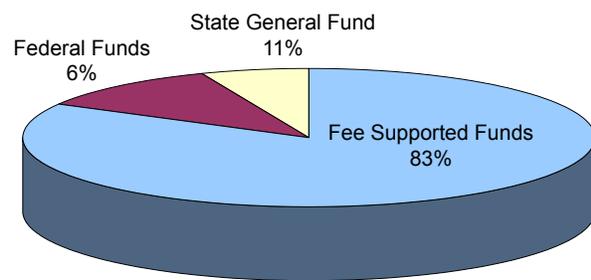
Funding highlights from the 2007 Legislative Session for the Department include \$7.6 million for replacement items and general improvements at parks across the State. Legislators also approved \$3.0 million to build a bridge at Eagle Island State Park. The bridge will create a new entrance into the park and will accommodate heavy equipment related to gravel extraction and park development.

Visitors

The number of visitations to state parks has been inconsistent over the past five years. Visits reached a five year low of 2.36 million in fiscal year 2004 and rebounded to a high of 2.74 million in fiscal year 2006.

Revenue Sources

Fiscal Year 2007

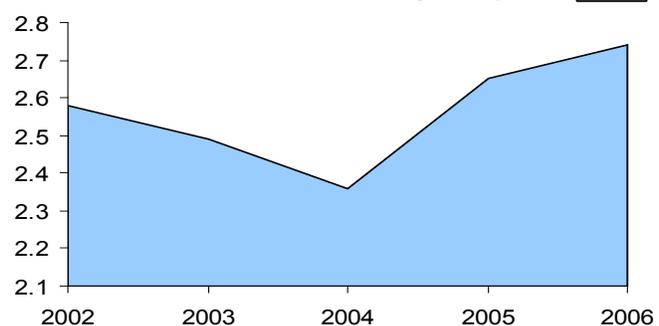


Data Source: Idaho Legislative Fiscal Report 2007

State Park Visitations

Fiscal Years 2002 - 2006

(in millions)



Data Source: Department of Parks and Recreation