



# COLORADO

## Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Policy and Planning  
1313 Sherman St, Room 111  
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To: Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission

From: Kacie Miller, Planning Manager

Date: August 23, 2019

Subject: CPW Property Planning

When it comes to properties managed by CPW, it is considered essential to protect the unique natural, cultural and recreational resources in each Colorado State Park, State Recreation Area or State Wildlife Area for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

The former Parks Board believed in this tenet and approved Board Policy A-102 (Park Management Planning) in July 2009. CPW staff have drafted for consideration by the Parks and Wildlife Commission an updated version of that policy. This draft Policy broadly supports planning for all CPW properties and references using criteria to evaluate potential new state parks or expansion of an existing park.

Details from the Parks Board policy related to the planning process for park management plans have been moved to an Administrative Directive. Administrative Directives are internal documents that provide staff guidance from CPW's Director on internal programs or procedures.

To inform the Commission's consideration of the updated planning policy, I will present an overview of park management plans and the associated planning process at the September Commission meeting.

Policy A-102 and suggested language for a new Policy are included with this memo for your reference.



## COLORADO PARKS AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION POLICY

**TITLE: State Park, Recreation Area and State Wildlife Area Planning**  
Effective Date:

### I. PURPOSE

This policy supports the development of resource stewardship and management plans for State Park and Recreation Areas, and the development of State Wildlife Area management plans. Such planning informs short and long-term decision processes, resulting in benefits for current and future generations of Coloradans and our visitors.

### II. AUTHORITY

- A. C.R.S § 33-10-101 (1) - It is the policy of the State of Colorado that the natural, scenic, scientific, and outdoor recreation areas of this state are to be protected, preserved, enhanced, and managed for the use, benefit, and enjoyment of the people of this state and visitors of this state. It is further declared to be the policy of this state that there shall be provided a comprehensive program of outdoor recreation in order to offer the greatest possible variety of outdoor recreational opportunities to the people of this state and its visitors and that to carry out such program and policy there shall be a continuous operation of acquisition, development, and management of outdoor recreation lands, waters, and facilities.
- B. C.R.S § 33-10-106 (2) - CPW Commission shall adopt rules as may be reasonably necessary for the administration, protection, and maintenance of all state parks and recreation areas under the direct control of the division.
- C. C.R.S § 33-1-101 (1) - It is the policy of the State of Colorado that there shall be a continuous operation of planning, acquisition and development of wildlife habitats and facilities of wildlife-related opportunities.

### III. POLICY STATEMENT

Property specific planning is essential to protect the unique natural, cultural and recreational resources in each Colorado State Park, State Recreation Area or State Wildlife Area for the enjoyment of current and future generations.

Plans are important tools for prioritizing management actions and budget expenditures. Other benefits of planning include the creation of collaborative interdisciplinary staff teams to, highlight current and future property management needs, foster sustainable property management and visitation, build public support, appropriate distribution of staff and capital resources, and meet regulatory requirements (e.g., leased lands often need plans to meet federal or other requirements).

The Commission directs CPW staff to prioritize planning for existing and new properties as an essential activity for meeting the agency's mission. When considering new state parks or the expansion of existing parks, CPW should use its evaluation criteria to inform such a decision. Plans are most successful when they are current, realistic, specific, allow for flexibility, resolve key issues, integrate with other plans, and involve stakeholders.

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

**Board Policy A-102**

**SUBJECT: PARK MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

**AUTHORITY:** The Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation currently is not required by statute to develop park management plans. The Parks Board, however, believes that a strong park management plan serves as an important planning and budgeting tool for park managers and for use in agency-wide decisions.

**DATE APPROVED: July 31, 2009**

**REVIEW DATES:**

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I. PURPOSE

The *Colorado State Parks Management Plan Template* (Template) and the supplemental *Management Planning Instruction Guide* (Instruction Guide) were developed to ensure Division-wide consistency in park management plan content, style, and format. Using the Template and Instruction Guide as a point of reference, each management plan will describe the existing conditions of park resources, park enhancement opportunities, and the steps necessary to ensure the long-term protection and enjoyment of the unique resources at each park. Each park management plan will serve as an “overarching management guide” for each park by outlining management priorities and specific management direction. Perhaps more importantly, future park leadership and staff can refer to the management plan to readily “get up to speed” on park operations, needs, and issues. Other important aspects of the plan are that it:

- Serves as a point of reference and policy document for current and future Park staff, other partnering agencies, elected officials, and interested members of the public.
- Establishes accepted park management “zones” to guide future use and development
- Guides management of natural, cultural, and recreational resources.
- Provides a framework for monitoring and maintaining resources at a park.

- Identifies park enhancement opportunities including possible facility upgrades, new park facilities, restoration and rehabilitation projects, and important management initiatives.
- Serves as a guide for future park budget allocations and annual funding requests.

Because of the comprehensive nature of park management plans, it is expected that these be developed as part of a collaborative planning effort involving key Region, Park, Program and Section staff.

## II. POLICY

Park Management Plans will be developed based on the approved planning framework reflected in the *Colorado State Parks Management Plan Template* (Template). Each park management plan will be the product of a collaborative effort involving key Region, Field, and Program and Section staff that will comprise a “Planning Team.” Possible Planning Team members include:

- Park staff
- Planning staff
- Assistant region manager or designee
- Natural resource stewardship/GIS staff
- Capital development staff

Each Plan should be reviewed annually with formal updates occurring every 10 years (pending available staffing and financial resources), with a detailed review occurring at the 5-yr mark to address possible amendments. Examples of when formal amendments to the plan may be necessary are listed below.

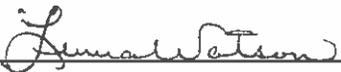
- There are changes to the land base (e.g., additional lands are purchased or portions of the park are sold off)
- Major new facilities or infrastructure are planned for the park
- A policy or directive is instituted that significantly affects park management direction
- Major changes to land use occur within or adjacent to the park
- Changes to the management zoning
- Significant environmental stress (i.e., fish kill, drought, etc.)

Relevant members of the management planning team should assist with any plan amendment as needed. Depending on the scope of the amendment, some staff will play more or less of a role in the amendment process. Staff members likely to be included in this process are the park manager, region manager or designee, GIS/natural resource stewardship staff, planning staff, and development staff. Depending on the scale, cost, or significance of a plan amendment, approval by the Parks Board may be warranted.

**III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- A. Each park is unique and has different needs. Therefore, it is expected that members of each Planning Team use the Template as a point of reference and incorporate those sections that are most applicable to each park.
- B. Each park management plan will be developed based on a 10-year planning horizon.
- C. Most park management plans can be developed entirely by State Parks staff. However, consultants may be needed to assist with a particular element of a management plan (e.g., financial assessments, cultural resources, or public involvement) or, in some instances, development of the entire management plan (particularly for those parks with complex land ownership arrangements or those requiring NEPA compliance).
- D. Determination of the appropriate budget for each park management plan will likely vary by park and will depend on a variety of factors (e.g., whether the plan will be completed in-house or whether professional consultants are needed, level of public involvement necessary, and area of the state which the park is situated). The budget should be determined based on discussions between park managers, region staff, and planning staff prior to the outset of the planning process.
- E. Public input is an important part of the management planning process.

Policy No. A-102 is approved this 18<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2009.

By \_\_\_\_\_  


**Parks Board Chairperson**

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