

ISSUES SUBMITTAL FORM

Date: 10/13/2021

ISSUE:	Should the hunting reservation system (HRS) be used to manage hunter access on the Jefferson County portion of Golden Gate Canyon State Park?
DISCUSSION (FACTS AND FIGURES, EXPLANATION OF ISSUE):	
<p>Golden Gate Canyon State Park is located in Gilpin and Jefferson counties northwest of Golden. Big game and small game hunting are allowed on the Jefferson County portion of the park. Hunting is managed as first come, first served with a sign-in/sign-out requirement for hunters. Each day a limited number of hunters are allowed to hunt and each hunter is required to go to the Visitor Center to sign in and sign out. The regulation reads as follows:</p> <p><i>Parks Board regulation # 100-D.13(b)(1) - During deer and elk seasons, any lawful method of hunting may be used for hunting such big game; and beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day and continuing through the Friday prior to Memorial Day, any lawful method of hunting may be used during hunting seasons for small game, in areas not posted as prohibiting such use or uses. Provided further that hunters must visit the designated check station to check in prior to hunting and check out after hunting.</i></p> <p>The number of visitors at the park has increased by 60% since 2019 and this has corresponded to an increase in reported conflicts between hunters and non-hunters. The number of hunters allowed per day (35) has not changed for over 20 years but harvest success rates have decreased and hunter complaints about the number of non-hunters in hunting areas has increased. Big game harvest success rates for Golden Gate State Park are very low compared to most other Front Range hunting areas and may be attributed to the increase in park user numbers. The 3-year average of big game harvest success for Golden Gate State Park is estimated at 2% and hunters have complained about the hunting experience. It is recommended to reduce the number of hunters each day from 35 to 15 to address the concerns of increasing user-user conflicts, the concern for recreational safety during hunting seasons from increasing park visitors, and poor harvest success. Based on the daily number of hunters who have signed in to hunt at the park in recent years, which has typically been below 15 per day, setting the maximum daily number of hunters at 15 should satisfy demand while addressing concerns.</p> <p>The current process of signing in and out at the Visitor Center is not convenient for hunters who hunt areas of the park that are 20-30 minutes in driving distance from the Visitor Center. We are recommending the hunter reservation system (HRS) be implemented for reserving hunting access and regulating the number of hunters on the Jefferson County portion of Golden Gate State Park. The HRS system adds convenience to the daily sign in/sign out requirement for hunters.</p> <p>Implementing HRS will allow for staff to more easily access hunter contact information to collect and analyze data like the number of hunter days, harvest data, and hunter satisfaction to inform future management of recreational uses on the park.</p> <p>The proposed changes are the result of multiple meetings between numerous internal CPW staff to address hunter complaints, low hunter harvest success, and the number of hunters using the park. During the 2021 hunting seasons, CPW staff will gather hunter input regarding the utilization of HRS for future hunting seasons and gather feedback on the hunting experience at Golden Gate State Park. This feedback will be used to guide management decisions and the potential implementation of HRS.</p>	
<p>STATE LAW REQUIRES CPW TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS THAT MAY BE AFFECTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY BY THE PROPOSED RULES. THE FOLLOWING STAKEHOLDERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED OF AND INVITED TO PROVIDE INPUT ON THE REGULATORY CHANGES PROPOSED IN THIS ISSUE PAPER:</p>	

IT IS ASSUMED THAT ALL NECESSARY INTERNAL PARTIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED.	
<p>External Stakeholders will be surveyed throughout the 2021 hunting seasons and have an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the proposed regulation change to mandatory reservations through HRS for the 2022 big game hunting seasons.</p> <p>Internal Stakeholders include: Area Wildlife Manager – Mark Lamb, District Wildlife Manager – Tim Woodward, Senior Terrestrial Biologist, now Northeast Deputy Region Manager – Shannon Schaller, Policy and Planning Staff – Kacie Miller & Jonathan Boydston. These internal CPW Stakeholders have been involved in discussions and support this proposed regulation change.</p> <p>All contact information from hunters that registered to hunt on the Jefferson County portion of the park in 2020 were compiled and those hunters will be contacted with a short survey to gather feedback. In addition, CPW staff will conduct field surveys of hunters during the 2021 seasons to gather their input on hunter satisfaction and the use of HRS. This feedback will be used to guide management decisions on the park.</p>	
ALTERNATIVES: (POSSIBLE OUTCOMES or POSSIBLE REGULATIONS):	
<p>1. *Preferred Alternative*: <i>During deer and elk seasons, any lawful method of hunting may be used for hunting such big game; and beginning the Tuesday after Labor Day and continuing through the Friday prior to Memorial Day, any lawful method of hunting may be used during hunting seasons for small game, in areas not posted as prohibiting such use or uses. To make a reservation, hunters must already possess a valid big game license for the specific hunt code permitted on the property or a valid small game license. Reservations must be made through the Hunter Reservation System in accordance with #901.A of these regulations.</i></p> <p>2. Status Quo</p>	
Issue Raised by:	Todd Farrow (Park Manager – Golden Gate Canyon State Park) and Shannon Schaller (NE Deputy Regional Manager)
Author of the issue paper (if different than person raising the issue):	
CC:	Mark Leslie, Mark Lamb, Tim Woodward, Kacie Miller, and Jonathan Boydston
APPROVED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY:	Mark Leslie
REQUIRES NEW SPACE IN THE BROCHURE?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
ARE ADEQUATE STAFF AND FUNDING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
REGION, BRANCH, OR SECTION LEADING IMPLEMENTATION	NE Region, Licensing
RECOMMENDED FOR CONSENT AGENDA?	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO