

# FUTURE FOCUS



July  
2016

THE 2017 TO 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE  
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## IDAHO PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

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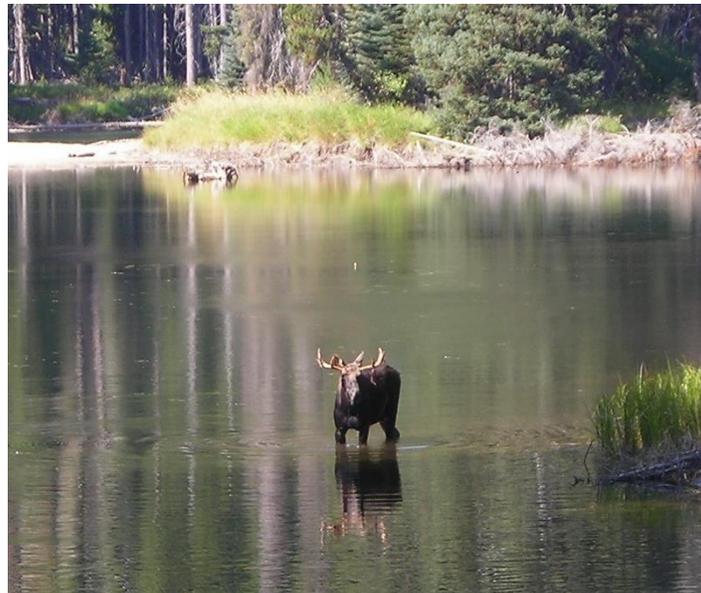
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# Future Focus

## THE 2017 TO 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

### IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (IDPR)

#### What We Do

IDPR manages thirty state parks throughout Idaho. IDPR also administers the recreation sticker programs for boats, snowmobiles and other off-highway vehicles. Money from these sticker programs goes back to customers to develop and maintain trails, facilities, and education programs for snowmobilers, boaters and off-highway vehicle operators. IDPR administers non-motorized trail programs like *Park N' Ski*. IDPR also assists in the Department of Agriculture *Invasive Species* program. Furthermore, IDPR manages several outdoor recreation grant programs that provide facilities and services to a wide variety of recreationists and the local governmental and nongovernmental organizations that serve them. We are a diverse agency with diverse constituents, but when one combines it all together, we are recreation leaders in Idaho.



#### Mission and Vision

The mission of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation is to improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship. We are innovators in outdoor recreation, committed to excellent service and resource stewardship. We foster experiences that renew the human spirit and promote community vitality.

#### Core Values

Core values are the essential and enduring tenets of an organization. They are its guiding principles. For the Idaho Department of Parks and

Recreation, our core values are integrity, compassion, service, stewardship and commitment. We protect the resources entrusted to us, we strive to help visitors experience those resources in a positive way, and we endeavor to be vital members of our communities in which we operate.

#### Why this is Important

The Idaho Park and Recreation Board and the IDPR employees identify with and support the mission, vision, and core values of the organization. IDPR employees are proud to call ourselves public servants. The Board and employees value the public we serve and continually aim to improve our service to them. We enjoy our

jobs, and as the work day ends, we feel good about what we accomplished that day. That is our organizational culture, and that is the culture we aim to preserve.

Through this plan, IDPR seeks to strategically position itself for the future in a coordinated, fiscally responsible manner that will increase the quality and breadth of the experiences we offer our current customers, foster new customers, and preserve the organizational culture.

## THE STRATEGIC PLAN

IDPR develops a strategic plan every four years, as required by state statute. A strategic plan sets an organization's direction and guides its allocation of resources. The effective date of this strategic plan begins July 1, 2016 (the first day of Fiscal Year 2017) and extends through June 30, 2020 (the last day of Fiscal Year 2020).

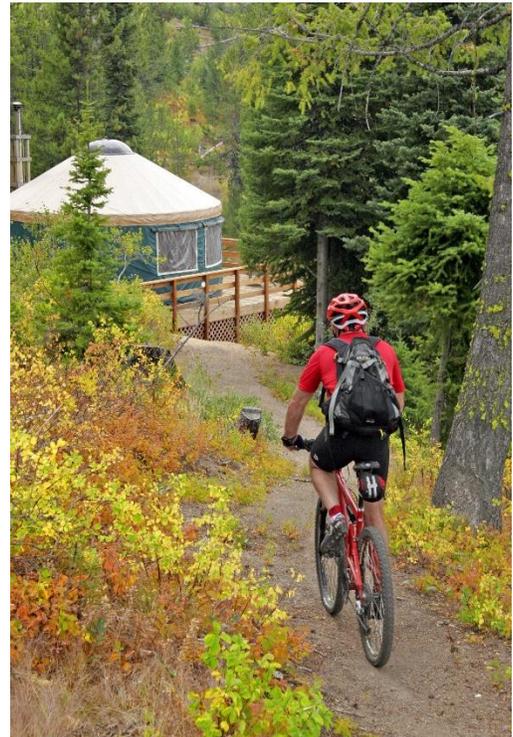
### The Content of the Strategic Plan

The intent of the strategic plan is to provide direction for the Department and set measurable goals regarding performance over a four-year period. The plan must also *"identify those key factors external to the agency and beyond its control that could significantly affect the achievement of the strategic plan goals and objectives."* The word "measurable" in the previous section is critical to the intent of the strategic plan. State Code gives several requirements regarding how to create measurable standards. First, the strategic plan must address all major divisions and core functions of the agency. Second, the plan must include objectives and/or tasks that indicate how the Department will achieve its goals. Third, the strategic plan must include performance measures that assess the Department's progress in meeting those goals. Finally, the plan must be updated annually.<sup>1</sup>

### Using the Strategic Plan

It is important that the strategic plan be structured in a manner that makes it useful to IDPR throughout the year—not just at budget time or when updated. State code mandates that the plan include performance measures that are also included in IDPR's annual budget request.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the plan should guide IDPR in addressing setting work expectations at all levels—the Board, the Director, and all staff. For example, if IDPR receives a large endowment without spending restrictions, how should those monies be used to best meet agency strategic goals?

The strategic plan is made a part of our daily work lives in a number of ways. Initially, the performance targets were assigned to program managers to see that the tasks were assigned appropriately. This was taken to a new level this year; all Parks and Recreation Bureau programs prepared annual reports that specifically referenced the strategic plan objectives. This reporting mechanism reinforces the importance of the



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<sup>1</sup> Idaho Code §67-1903.

<sup>2</sup> Idaho Code §67-1904.

strategic plan and gives us the ability to track our performance from year to year. Additionally, the Park and Recreation Bureau programs will prepare an annual work plan that mirrors strategic plan objectives.

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

The process of preparing a plan is as important as the final document itself. Only with the support of the individuals that make decisions daily regarding the operation and administration of IDPR, can the document truly become a useful tool. IDPR Executive Staff were asked to participate in all aspects of the initial—and all subsequent—drafts of this plan. The Executive Staff consists of the Director, Operations Administrator, Management Services Administrator, Recreation Bureau Chief, North Region Manager, South/East Region Manager, Communications Officer, Finance Officer, Reservation Program Manager, Management Information Systems Manager, Development Bureau Chief, and the Human Resources Director. As you can see, this group includes the key decision makers within IDPR staff.

The initial strategic plan was based on the 2013 Idaho Park and Recreation Board Goals; the IDPR Mission, Vision, and Core Value statements; the Executive Staff 20-, 10-, and 5-year goals; the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Plan; and IDPR's previous Strategic Plan.

The Board first approved the plan on June 27, 2014. The Board considered and approved the first update on June 25, 2015. This, the second update, was first considered by the Board on May 25, 2016, and later approved on June 23, 2016. All Board meetings were properly noticed as set forth in Idaho Code §67-2343. The final plan was then sent to the appropriate legislative bodies, distributed to staff, and posted on the IDPR website.

## ORGANIZATION

In order to make this document a living and useful document, it focuses on goals related to how IDPR runs and develops our parks and recreation programs. These three goals are: access, experience, and stewardship. The remainder of this document is organized around those goals. Each goal has at least one associated objective and performance measure. The plan also details a number of tasks associated with meeting the objective and/or performance measures.



## EXPERIENCE

### **Goal: Foster experiences that renew the human spirit and promote community vitality.**

IDPR provides not only recreation facilities for the public, but also recreation experiences through education and interpretation on a wide range of topics such as star gazing, nature photography, wild flower identification, bird watching, junior ranger skills, ice fishing, hunting academy, state history, yoga, safety and instruction classes for off-highway vehicles and boats, and avalanche awareness and safety classes for snowmobile users, skiers, snowshoers, and other winter-time, back-country recreationist. These experience-based programs are opportunities to develop new customers and to promote community partnerships.

### **OBJECTIVE 1: PROVIDE DIFFERENT AND UNIQUE OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES.**

#### **Topic A: Wider range of park and recreation audiences.**

Staff is encouraged to identify potential new activities and experience-based programs that tap into the emotions of our customers and foster a sense of adventure. The new activity or program should have an emphasis on youth and first-time customers; may be in a park or recreation program; may be a mix of passive and active recreation experiences, should be geared to the setting, and should be a high-quality experience that meets current trends while respecting the past and the ability of the state facilities to hold the activity. If necessary, the required resources shall be identified as a budget priority or redirected from existing activities that fail to meet stated goals and objectives.



Task A.1: Create at least one new experience-based program in each park annually

Task A.2: Create at least one new experience-based program within the Recreation Bureau annually.

Task A.3: Implement at least one new activity or program with our federal and state partners by December 2017.

Task A.4: Develop an interpretive plan (and accompanying five-year implementation plan) that sets a vision for interpretive activities within IDPR by July 2017.

### **Performance Measure: Increase the number of participants in park and recreation programs.**

#### **Topic B: Technology improvements geared toward park and recreation customers.**

Task B.1: Assist the Recreation Bureau in their ongoing improvements associated with the Idaho Trails mapping application.

Task B.2: Begin implementing electronic mobile guides for park and recreation facilities and programs by December 2017.

Task B.3: By January 2019, offer assistance in trip planning by enhancing customer on-line access to—and/or purchase of—associated activities or programs.

## ACCESS

### Goal: Protect and improve public access to outdoor recreation statewide.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation can and does provide access to outdoor recreation through a variety of means. The term “access” as used here includes not only a point of entry, but also the full recreational opportunity. IDPR impacts all recreationists, not only those that enjoy state parks for thousands of reasons but also those that enjoy motorized and non-motorized recreation of all types throughout Idaho. IDPR also vigorously seeks public and private partnerships and sponsorships with willing groups and agencies for the purpose of expanding access to recreational opportunities and ensuring continued access to existing opportunities.

### OBJECTIVE 2: PROTECT AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO VALUABLE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.



Access issues and possible closures may result through changes to local, state and/or Federal plans and management strategies.

#### Topic C: No net loss of motorized or non-motorized access to recreational trails.

Task C.1: Meet with Federal land management partners to advocate our goal of no additional loss of trails.

Task C.2: Continue to meet regularly with Federal land management partners and document successes and/or failures. Present results to the Board prior to July 1<sup>st</sup> each year.

**Performance Measure: Maintain at least 1,500 miles of trails annually through trail ranger and other IDPR efforts.**

#### Topic D: Public access to safe and convenient boating facilities.

Task D.1: Inventory boat launches statewide to identify those in need of repairs and upgrades by July 2020.

**Performance Measure: Add at least five new life jacket loaner stations annually until we meet a point of saturation.**

**Topic E: Pedestrian and bicycle access.**

IDPR has the opportunity to work with the Idaho Transportation Department, local highway districts, and other park and recreation agencies to develop additional bicycle and pedestrian paths into our parks—particularly those that are within an urban area or that adjoin a community. For example, connecting the City of Hagerman to Billingsley Creek or the City of Eagle to Eagle Island. Similarly we have the opportunity to connect units of dispersed parks, such as Thousand Springs or Lake Cascade.

Task E.1: Develop or assist in the development of an average of ¼ mile of sidewalks and/or pathways each year.

**OBJECTIVE 3: BE LEADERS IN ADVOCATING FOR AND PROVIDING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT IDAHO.**

In order for IDPR to be leaders in providing recreation opportunities throughout Idaho, it is important that staff has the opportunity to understand trends and new developments in a variety of disciplines: recreation, education; marketing; application development; planning; tourism; etc. It is equally important that we share our successes with others. As always, budget funds are limited and, therefore, attendance at any one conference or training should be limited to key personnel that can then report out results.

**Topic F: Broaden our scope of knowledge and involvement.**

Task F.1: Starting July 2016, strategically engage in training and education opportunities that contribute to our efforts to be leaders in recreation as budgets allow.

**Topic G: Future park properties.**

Our current emphasis is to take care of our existing parks and facilities. However, acquisition funds may become available at any time, and it is important that IDPR is prepared to act on that availability. For that reason, the Department should maintain a list of suitable park properties. Eastern Idaho is underserved and should be an initial priority.

Task G.1: By February 2018, develop and maintain a vetted list (as approved by a majority vote of the Board) of potential properties of outstanding natural, scientific, cultural, historic or recreation value.



## STEWARDSHIP

**Goal: Be responsible stewards of the natural resources and funds entrusted to Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.**

### **OBJECTIVE 4: BE GOOD STEWARDS OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND ASSETS ENTRUSTED TO IDPR.**



For the purposes of this objective, stewardship of natural resources, includes but is not limited to, care and maintenance of campground and day use facilities, control of invasive species (plants, snails, etc.), planting trees, forest fuels management, erosion control, care and maintenance of historic and cultural properties and structures, and riparian restoration projects. Our resources are finite, and the failure to care for these important resources is generally the cause for complaint and dissatisfied customers.

#### **Topic H: Satisfied customers.**

Task H.1: Improve the availability and stability of customer Wi-Fi service in the parks by March 2018.

Task H.2: Survey our recreation bureau program customers starting in July 2019 and continually thereafter in order to determine (at a minimum) the following: Who are we attracting and not attracting? How do they rate the experience? What are the negative connotations about our programs we need to overcome? What are the positive aspects of our programs we need to keep?

**Performance Measure: Maintain or increase overnight customer satisfaction each year as measured through post-stay surveys.**

#### **Topic I: Fire safety within our parks.**

As the incidence of Western wildfires has increased over the recent past, so has the need for IDPR to be better equipped to manage fires within our Parks and Recreation sites. The first steps in improving fire safety within our parks are to decrease the fuel load and to establish forests that are more fire-resistant.

Task I.1: Actively seek partners in fire safety efforts and implement a prioritized forest fuels management schedule by July 2017.

#### **Topic J: Backlog of deferred maintenance.**

IDPR has a large backlog of deferred maintenance projects. The long-term goal is to decrease the overall backlog while maintaining an up-to-date list of needs.

Task J.1: By January 2017, inventory all maintenance needs within state parks and update annually.

**Performance Measure: Decrease the total value of deferred maintenance projects by an average of 3% annually.**

**OBJECTIVE 5: BE GOOD STEWARDS OF THE FUNDS ENTRUSTED TO IDPR.**

**Topic K: Additional revenue from dedicated funding sources, the passport program, fundraising, and general fund support.**

Task K.1: Evaluate and document Passport Program revenues and consider opportunities to increase such revenue through additional advertising, increased fees (from \$10 to \$15), and/or additional sales outlets. Present results to the Board annually.

**Performance Measure: Continue to increase park revenue (including but not limited to, greater occupancy rates in camping, cabins, yurts, and moorage; increased revenue from retail sales, special events, concessions, leases and donations; and increased day use visitors) by an average of 3% annually.**

**Performance Measure: Secure grants, corporate sponsorships, donations, and other fundraising commitments for at least \$75,000 or greater annually.**

**OBJECTIVE 6: RECRUIT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT THROUGH EXCEPTIONAL JOB EXPERIENCE, OUTSTANDING JOB SATISFACTION, JOB SAFETY, AND THE TOTAL IDPR COMPENSATION PACKAGE.**

**Topic L: As funding and appropriation become available, improve IDPR wages to be competitive with other state agencies.**

Task L.1: As full-time employees leave IDPR employment, conduct a separate exit survey to rate the employee's job experience, job satisfaction, job safety, and compensation. Aggregate the results of the surveys and report annually to the Board.

Task L.2: Continue to increase the seasonal hiring rate where and when necessary to attract and retain qualified seasonal employees.

**Performance Measure: Continue to incrementally move our hiring rate closer toward the state policy rate. The target is to raise our compa-ratio by an average of 2% annually.**



**Topic M: Additional labor resources during peak season.**

Task M.1: By February 2017, quantify and analyze changes in labor resources since July 2007. Use the analysis to develop a targeted performance measure to include in the 2017 strategic plan update.

**OBJECTIVE 7: COMMUNICATE HOW STATE PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS ADD TO THE ECONOMIC, HEALTH, AND SOCIAL VALUE OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES, THE REGION, AND THE STATE.****Topic N: Economic studies on the impact of state parks and recreation programs.**

IDPR recently completed an economic impact study on summertime off-highway vehicle use (ATV, UTV, and motorbike). The next study underway is for parks. Wintertime vehicle use (snowmobiles) and then boats will follow. The purpose of the economic studies is to determine how much a dollar spent participating in IDPR recreation activities and within IDPR parks adds to the Idaho economy.

Task N.1: Initiate an economic impact study on boats by July 2017.

Task N.2: Initiate an economic impact study on non-motorized use (including but not limited to, back-country horseman, mountain bikers, snow bikes, skiers and snowshoers) by July 2018.

Task N.3: Update the Board as studies are complete and communicate the results of economic impact studies individually and comprehensively through press releases, Legislative presentations, local chambers of commerce, and budgets.

Task N.4: Implement an informational campaign to further educate constituents on how the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation puts recreation dollars to work for Idahoans on a local and state-wide basis by July 2017.

**OBJECTIVE 8: INSTILL A CULTURE OF INNOVATION WITHIN IDPR.****Topic O: Recognize innovation.**

Task O.1: Develop new award criteria for Board consideration by February 2018. The possible award criteria qualities such as, having a vision of innovation, stealing the best ideas from other communities or agencies, being at the cutting-edge or forefront of a new program or service, having a proactive rather than reactive approach—anticipating the unknown—particularly with regard to technology, illuminating a problem or issue in a new way, and not only out-of-the-box thinking, but also helping others to see out-of-the-box.



## KEY FACTORS EXTERNAL TO THE AGENCY AND BEYOND ITS CONTROL

There are a number of factors external to the agency that may delay or prevent implementation of this strategic plan. These factors can be generally grouped as weather, disasters, legislative, and national and regional trends.



### Weather and Disasters

Given that the focus of IDPR is enjoying the outdoors, the weather can greatly impact programs and facilities:

- Weather extremes (very hot and very cold) can affect park attendance.
  - Wind and rain storms can down trees and destroy facilities.
  - Lightning strikes can destroy electrical systems and start fires.
  - Ice build-up can damage docks and increase and/or cause shore erosion.
- Low snow levels may impact funds generated from the recreation registration program.
  - Drought may shorten the boating season and can impact IDPR's ability to sustain desired vegetation and control weeds.
  - Natural disasters such as floods, fires, and earthquakes create severe impacts on facilities, customers, and programs. In particular, fires during the peak season can have a drastic impact on our revenues.

In general, staff is accustomed to weather related impacts and can adjust accordingly. However, repair and maintenance activities can be very expensive and outside the spending authority in place at the time.

### Legislative and Gubernatorial Support

IDPR is dependent on the support of the Idaho State Legislators and the Governor for its continued operation. Inability to fund programs will obviously impact IDPR's ability to meet the strategic plan goals and objectives.

### State and National

The state and national economy/unemployment rate impact the discretionary income of would-be park attendees and recreationalists to enjoy our facilities and programs. The relative cost of fuel for would-be customers can encourage or discourage out of state visitors and/or motorized recreationists such as motorbikes, boats, ATVs, UTVs, and RV (recreational vehicle) users. A decrease in customers and/or decrease in fuel sales both impact the revenue stream of IDPR.

Access to recreational trails is a very important goal of IDPR. However, most of the recreational trails are on federal properties, and IDPR has very limited direct control over such decisions. Therefore, decisions by Federal and other State land management agencies to close access to recreational trails for motorized and/or non-motorized use will affect our ability to meet that goal. As the technology for battery driven vehicles improves, it is unclear if this may have a favorable impact on Federal land management policies.

## Regional

Regional impacts out of IDPR control include the rising cost of water, fuels, and utilities. Sharp increases such as occurred during the winter of 2013/2014 can impact operating budgets for the parks and recreation programs, reducing on-going preventative maintenance efforts.

## IMPLEMENTATION

In making budget requests Administration and Executive Staff will consider the priorities outlined in this plan. In making decisions on policy, operations, and administrative issues, Administration and Executive Staff will seek guidance from this plan. In making large purchases or hiring decisions, Administration and Executive Staff will consider the guidance this plan provides. Noted performance measures will be tracked and reported annually to the Division of Financial Management. Annual reports will be available to the public.

The following implementation schedule summarizes the tasks and performance measures, lists the responsible parties, and the timeframe in which the items need to be completed.

<b>IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE</b>			
<b>2017 TO 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION</b>			
<b>No.</b>	<b>Task or Performance Measure</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<b>Goal: Foster experiences that renew the human spirit and promote community vitality.</b>			
A.1	Create at least one new experience-based program in each park.	Parks	Annually
A.2	Create at least one new experience-based program within the Recreation Bureau.	Recreation	Annually
A.3	Implement at least one new activity or program with our federal and state partners.	Recreation	12/2017
A.4	Develop an interpretive plan (and accompanying five-year implementation plan) that sets a vision for interpretive activities within IDPR.	Operations	7/2017
<i>PM</i>	<i>Increase the number of participants in park and recreation programs.</i>	<i>Operations</i>	<i>Annually</i>
B.1	Assist the Recreation Bureau in their ongoing improvements associated with the Idaho Trails mapping application.	Management	Annually
B.2	Begin implementing electronic mobile guides for park and recreation facilities and programs.	Management	12/2017
B.3	Offer assistance in trip planning by enhancing customer on-line access to—and/or purchase of—associated activities or programs.	Management	1/2019
<b>Goal: Protect and improve public access to outdoor recreation statewide.</b>			
C.1	Meet with Federal land management partners to advocate our goal of no additional loss of trails.	Operations	Annually
C.2	Continue to meet regularly with Federal land management partners and document successes and/or failures.	Operations/ Recreation	Annually
<i>PM</i>	<i>Maintain at least 1,500 miles of trails annually through trail ranger and other IDPR efforts.</i>	<i>Recreation</i>	<i>Annually</i>
D.1	Inventory boat launches statewide to identify those in need of repairs and upgrades.	Recreation	6/2020
<i>PM</i>	<i>Add at least five new life jacket loaner stations annually until we meet a point of saturation.</i>	<i>Recreation</i>	<i>Annually</i>
E.1	Develop or assist in the development of an average of ¼ mile of sidewalks and/or pathways.	Development	Annually
F.1	Strategically engage in training and education opportunities that contribute to our efforts to be leaders in recreation as budgets allow.	Management	7/2016
G.1	Develop and maintain a vetted list of potential properties.	Board	2/2018
<b>Goal: Be responsible stewards of the natural resources and funds entrusted to Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.</b>			
H.1	Improve the availability and stability of customer Wi-Fi service in the parks.	Management	3/2018
H.2	Survey our recreation bureau program customers.	Recreation	7/2019

<b>IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE</b> <b>2017 TO 2020 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION</b>			
No.	Task or Performance Measure	Responsible	Timeframe
PM	<i>Maintain or increase overnight customer satisfaction each year as measured through post-stay surveys.</i>	Parks	Annually
I.1	Actively seek partners in fire safety efforts and implement a prioritized forest fuels management schedule.	Resource Manager	7/2017
J.1	Inventory all maintenance needs within our state parks.	Development	Annually
PM	<i>Decrease the total value of deferred maintenance projects by an average of 3% annually.</i>	Development	Annually
K.1	Evaluate and document Passport Program revenues and consider opportunities to increase such revenues.	Management	Annually
PM	<i>Continue to increase park revenue by an average of 3% annually.</i>	Parks	Annually
PM	<i>Secure grants, corporate sponsorships, donations, and other fundraising commitments for at least \$75,000 or greater annually.</i>	Management	Annually
L.1	Conduct exit survey to rate the employee's job experience, job satisfaction, job safety, and compensation.	Management	Annually
L.2	Continue to increase the seasonal hiring rate where and when necessary to attract and retain qualified seasonal employees.	Operations	Annually
PM	<i>Continue to incrementally move our hiring rate closer toward the state policy rate. The target is to raise our compa-ratio by an average of 2% annually.</i>	Management	Annually
M.1	Quantify and analyze changes in labor resources since July 2007. Use the analysis to develop a targeted performance measure to include in the 2017 strategic plan update.	Management	2/2017
N.1	Initiate an economic impact study on boats.	Recreation	7/2017
N.2	Initiate an economic impact study on non-motorized use.	Recreation	7/2018
N.3	Update the Board as economic impact studies are complete.	Operations	Varies
N.4	Implement an informational campaign.	Management	7/2017
O.1	Develop new award criteria for Board consideration.	Management	2/2018

