



Legislative Fiscal Bureau

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Joint Committee on Finance

Paper #570

Parks Operations (DNR -- Forestry and Parks)

[LFB 2009-11 Budget Summary: Page 467, #1]

CURRENT LAW

Currently, DNR park staff operate 71 recreational properties open to the public, including 45 state parks, 15 state trails (another 22 trails are state owned, but locally operated and maintained), seven southern forests and four recreation areas. Operating costs for the parks system include staff costs for: (a) park managers, who supervise the daily operation of state parks; (b) park rangers, who are primarily responsible for enforcement and skilled maintenance activities; (c) park naturalists, who develop and present the educational programs offered at the parks; (d) visitor services staff; (e) maintenance personnel; and (f) a position for an outdoor skills program targeted to urban families and other non-traditional outdoor recreation groups. Limited-term and seasonal employees are also utilized extensively in the state park system.

GOVERNOR

Provide \$232,700 in 2009-10 (\$52,700 forestry account and \$180,000 parks account) and \$332,700 in 2010-11 (\$52,700 forestry and \$280,000 parks) for limited-term employees, utilities, fleet expenses, and supplies to operate new buildings and campgrounds developed in recent years in the Wisconsin state park and southern forest systems.

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Over the past several years, new buildings have been added to upgrade park facilities including park entrance and visitor stations, toilet and shower buildings, accessible cabins, and shop facilities. As the new park buildings have become operational, funding has been required for routine maintenance and utility costs. Additionally, the Department plans to add campsites at several

existing campgrounds as well as add new campgrounds at some parks and recreation areas in the 2009-11 biennium. The new campgrounds will require ongoing repair, road maintenance, and staff services.

2. Under the bill, the parks account would have an estimated June 30, 2011, available balance of approximately \$1.2 million as shown in the following table.

Estimated Parks Account Condition Under AB 75

	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>
Opening Balance	\$3,371,400	\$3,288,600	\$2,633,500
Revenue	<u>14,904,400</u>	<u>15,425,000</u>	<u>15,575,000</u>
Available Balance	\$18,275,800	\$18,713,600	\$18,208,500
 Estimated Expenditures	 \$14,987,200	 \$16,080,100	 \$16,428,900
Cash Balance	\$3,288,600	\$2,633,500	\$1,779,600
Encumbrances/Continuing Balances*	<u>578,600</u>	<u>578,600</u>	<u>578,600</u>
Available Balance	\$2,710,000	\$2,054,900	\$1,201,000

*Includes amounts encumbered (committed, but not yet paid) as well as balances from certain appropriations (such as rental property maintenance and for campground reservation system payments) that are not available for general appropriation.

3. The bill would provide \$232,700 in 2009-10 and \$332,700 in 2010-11 in operational funding from the parks and forestry accounts of the conservation fund for 38 properties (29 state parks, two state recreation areas, four state trails, and three southern state forests), as follows:

	<u>Park/Recreation Area</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>Total</u>
1	Amnicon Falls	Shelter Building	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
2	Big Foot Beach	Toilet/Shower Building	0	7,000	7,000
3	Brunet Island	Storage Facility	0	2,200	2,200
4	Buckhorn	Amphitheater	1,500	1,500	3,000
		Campground Expansion	9,000	9,000	18,000
		Vault Toilet	2,500	2,500	5,000
		Toilet/Shower Building	6,000	6,000	12,000
5	Bong Recreation Area*	Accessible Cabin	5,000	5,000	10,000
		Storage Facility	2,200	2,200	4,400
		Vault Toilet	2,500	2,500	5,000
		Toilet Building	3,000	3,000	6,000
		Toilet/Shower Building	7,000	7,000	14,000
6	Council Grounds	Group Camping Sites	5,000	5,000	10,000
		Park Entrance & Visitor Station	0	3,000	3,000
7	Chippewa Moraine Ice Age Recreation Area	Campground Expansion	0	23,000	23,000
8	Devil's Lake	Vault Toilet	2,500	2,500	5,000
		Rescue Services Contract	5,000	5,000	10,000
9	Elroy-Sparta Trail	Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
		Flush Toilet Building	3,500	3,500	7,000
10	Glacial Drumlin Trail	Office Building	3,700	3,700	7,400
		New Trail Miles	0	6,200	6,200
11	Governor Dodge	Toilet/Shower Building	8,000	8,000	16,000
12	Governor Nelson	Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
13	Harrington Beach	Observatory	1,000	1,000	2,000
14	Hartman Creek	Toilet/Shower Building	0	7,000	7,000
		Storage Facility	0	2,200	2,200
15	High Cliff	Bathhouse	3,000	3,000	6,000
		Shelter Building	0	1,500	1,500
16	Interstate	Park Entrance & Visitor Station Addition	0	1,000	1,000
		Ice Age Center	0	6,000	6,000
17	Kettle Moraine-State Forest Northern Unit*	3 Vault Toilets	7,500	7,500	15,000
		New Campsites	2,000	2,000	4,000
18	Kettle Moraine-State Forest Pike Lake Unit*	Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
19	Kettle Moraine-State Forest Southern Unit*	5 Vault Toilets	12,500	12,500	25,000
		Concessions Building	2,000	2,000	4,000
		Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
		Campground Expansion	6,000	6,000	12,000

	<u>Park/Recreation Area</u>	<u>Facilities</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>Total</u>
20	Kohler-Andrae	Vault Toilet	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$5,000
		Accessible Cabin	5,000	5,000	10,000
21	LaCrosse River Trail	Toilet Building	3,000	3,000	6,000
22	Lake Kegonsa	Campground Expansion	9,000	9,000	18,000
		Park Entrance & Visitor Station	0	7,200	7,200
23	Lake Wissota	Campground Expansion	41,900	34,900	69,800
24	Mill Bluff	Changing Stalls	1,000	1,000	2,000
25	Mirror Lake	Group Campground	0	16,500	16,500
26	Nelson Dewey	Concessions Building	2,000	2,000	4,000
		Vault Toilet	2,500	2,500	5,000
27	New Glarus Woods	Storage Facility	0	2,200	2,200
28	Peninsula	Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
		Amphitheater	1,500	1,500	3,000
29	Perrot	2 Vault Toilets	5,000	5,000	10,000
30	Potawatomi	Nature Center/Office Building	0	6,200	6,200
31	Rib Mountain	Day Use Area Renovation	0	8,300	8,300
32	Roche-A-Cri	3 Vault Toilets	5,000	5,000	10,000
		Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
33	Rocky Arbor	Shop/Storage Facility	0	2,500	2,500
34	Tuscolbia	2 Vault Toilets	0	5,000	5,000
35	Wildcat Mountain	Park Entrance & Visitor Station	11,500	11,500	23,000
		Horse Campground	21,900	21,900	43,800
36	Willow River	Shelter Building	1,500	1,500	3,000
37	Wyalusing	Office Building	4,500	4,500	9,000
38	400 Trail	Toilet Building	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>
	Total:		\$232,700	\$332,700	\$565,400

*Forestry SEG

4. As shown in the table, the bill would provide \$34,900 annually in operations funding (\$17,900 LTE salary and fringe costs and \$17,000 supplies and services) for a 35-unit campground expansion at Lake Wissota (item #23 in the table above). In addition, in 2009-10, the bill would provide \$7,000 in one-time funding for start-up costs related to the campground including computers for camping registration, signs, maps, and equipment. The campground is expected to open in summer 2009.

5. However, some of the new facilities and campgrounds are not expected to open as early as initially anticipated. The Wildcat Mountain Park Entrance and Visitor Station (PEVS) is not

expected to open until 2010-11 (item #35 in the table). However, DNR indicates that \$7,500 of the total \$11,500 provided under the bill in 2009-10 for the Wildcat Mountain PEVS would still be needed for equipment costs including building security installation, a registration printer, and a copy machine as well as LTE costs associated with installing self-registration signs, an informational kiosk, and landscaping and outdoor maintenance (the remaining \$4,000 in LTE costs would not be necessary in 2009-10 as the visitor station would not be open to the public). An alternative could be to provide \$7,500 in 2009-10 and \$11,500 in 2010-11 for the Wildcat Mountain PEVS.

6. In addition, the campground expansion at the Chippewa Moraine Ice Age Recreation Area (item #7) and the new Mirror Lake State Park (item #25) group campground are still in the planning stages and are not likely to open during the 2009-11 biennium. The bill would provide \$23,000 in 2010-11 for the Chippewa Moraine campground expansion and \$16,500 in 2010-11 for development of the Mirror Lake campground. As these campgrounds are not expected to open during the 2009-11 biennium, it could be argued that operational funding may not be necessary for these projects during the biennium. If the campgrounds were to open in 2010-11, the park and recreation area would be required to operate using existing resources until the 2011-13 biennium.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Adopt the Governor’s recommendation to provide \$232,700 in 2009-10 (\$52,700 forestry account and \$180,000 parks account) and \$332,700 in 2010-11 (\$52,700 forestry and \$280,000 parks) to operate new and existing facilities in the Wisconsin state parks and southern forests systems.

2. Adopt the Governor’s recommendation, except delete \$4,000 parks SEG in 2009-10 related to limited-term employees at Wildcat Mountain State Park and \$39,500 parks SEG in 2010-11 at Chippewa Moraine Recreation Area and Mirror Lake State Park related to delayed campground or other facility openings at these parks.

ALT 2	Change to Bill Funding
SEG	- \$43,500

3. Delete provision.

ALT 3	Change to Bill Funding
SEG	- \$565,400

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