



BENTON COUNTY
Parks Department

**STAFF REPORT TO
BENTON COUNTY PARK BOARD
FEBRUARY 2024**

FINANCIALS

Park Development Fund Cash Balance:	\$ 799,977.99 (Feb 07 2024)
2024 Revenue from Camping & Donations:	\$ 0.00 (Feb 07 2024)

GENERAL NEWS

Comprehensive Parks Plan: Thank you to everyone for your comments. I have been a little bogged down, but got all of those comments integrated and will have a better report out to you all shortly.

Park Board Tours: We will do two afternoon tours, two weeks apart on Saturdays:

- **Feb 24** – WEST – Badger Mtn, Candy Mtn, Horn Rapids, Rattlesnake Mtn, McBee Gr
- **Mar 9** – EAST – Two Rivers, Hover, Ayers Rd (Wallula), Vista

Parks Website: We have made some adjustments based on some Board feedback. There are still some things to update, and we would like to add more content. Please provide continuous input. Glenn can continue to build the site.

Parks Videos: Also, Glenn continues to build-out our video and audio portfolio. He is going to make a video about the Park Board in the next several weeks and is working with Robin on that project. There will be follow-up projects as we move into the spring (things photograph very nicely then) which will include features on the individual parks and other topics. These videos are housed on our County YouTube channel.

Conservation Easements: Staff has not moved this along too much. Our legal counsel would like Greg Wendt and I to run this idea past commissioners first, so we are working on doing that.

BADGER MOUNTAIN CENTENNIAL PRESERVE

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve – Defibrillators: The cabinets are installed at both locations. The AED units are ready to go. There will be some small signs added on the summit in the next few weeks. We will do a public unveiling on **February 21 at 11:00 at Trailhead Park**. We encourage Park Board and public attendance. More details to come.

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve – Westgate: Friends of Badger completed the loading ramp near the building with the help of some Backcountry Horsemen. We have additional railroad ties with which we will update the traffic barriers around the parking area. We will be doing this with staff with the assistance of a few volunteers.

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve – Viewscape Signs: This is on me, and I just do not quite have the mark-ups done yet as promised. Getting close.

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve – New Event: A new event will come to Westgate this fall. It is simple, but challenging. A local organizer will put on “Climb 89” on December 6 and 7. Theoretically a “run”, though I doubt there will be much of that, participants in this event will travel out and back on the designated course shown below as many times as they are able in the time allotted (up to 32 hours total). The course is 0.35 mile long (one-way) and has an 292-foot (89-meter) elevation gain. Completion of 100 laps will result in a total elevation gain that essentially mimics the height of Mount Everest. This niche is called “Everesting” in the endurance world, and people do it by running, hiking, or cycling. Finisher awards will be distributed based on how many laps are completed with the following categories: 100 laps (Everest - 29,032 ft), 85 laps (Annapurna III - 24,787 ft), 70 laps (Denali - 20,310 ft), 50 laps (Mount Rainier - 14,411 ft), 29 laps (Mount Saint Helens - 8,363 ft), and 13 laps (Rattlesnake Mountain - 3,531 ft). I did raise some concerns about facilitation and course preparation and we are working through those. This organizer is a real professional and obviously not a rookie.



CANDY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

Candy Mountain Preserve – Candyland Run: Speaking of new events, we had one in 2023 at Candy Mountain. The organizer will bring the “Candyland Run” (actually three different run distances) back in the fall of 2024.

HORN RAPIDS PARK

Horn Rapids Park – December 30 Incident: Just a little bit of follow-up to the effect that the coroner’s conclusion was that the young man died by drowning alone, with no other signs of trauma and no presence of drugs or alcohol.

Horn Rapids Park – Cheatgrass Spraying: This was completed on February 6. Please see separate email for detail.

RATTLESNAKE MOUNTAIN SHOOTING FACILITY

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility – Law Enforcement Training Area: Please see Robert Blain’s separate memo for update and detail.

TWO RIVERS PARK

I received a mild-mannered but pointed complaint from a neighbor about how tree clippings and other similar refuse are being stored and not being permanently removed from the park. I’m looking into this with staff and will provide the Board with a better update later.

Two Rivers Park – Boardwalk: Please see Robert Blain’s separate memo for update and detail.

Two Rivers Park – Annual Management Plan: This has been submitted to the Corps of Engineers. Our annual compliance visit has not yet been scheduled.

OTHER COUNTY PARKS

Horse Heaven Cemetery: Nothing new to report.

Horse Heaven Vista: Nothing new to report.

Hover Park: Please see Robert Blain’s separate memo for update and detail.

Vista Park: Nothing new to report.

Wallula Gap Preserve: Waiting for completion of the appraisal and assessment.

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