



**BENTON COUNTY
Parks Department**

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

FINANCIALS

Park Development Fund Cash Balance: \$ 719,682.26 (Sep 01 2024)
2024 Revenue from Camping & Donations: \$ 15,081.20 (Sep 01 2024)

GENERAL NEWS

Communications Coordinator: We had 39 applicants in our initial round. We interviewed 5 of the 39, and have second interviews with 2 finalists. We may have a decision by the time of the Board meeting.

Traffic Counters: We are working on getting the three traffic counters installed and will run trials through September with the goal of having everything up and running for full, “official” counts beginning October 1. Additional counters will cost us less from this vendor, so we will see how things go and possibly add counters next year.

Annual Joint Park Boards Dinner: West Richland is hosting this year. The date is the evening of Monday, September 16, at the new police station. So far I have heard that the following Board members shall be in attendance: Cannon, Cooper, Emmingham, McBurney, and McNeal. Frank Cooper will be making the presentation.

Committee Work: The main active committee at the moment is Mr. Emmingham, Mr. Mendoza, and myself working on staffing and resources for Parks going forward. We need to schedule our next meeting, but in the meantime I’ve been trying to gather some information and also extract from what Tom Beckwith provided us in the comprehensive planning process.

Tapteal Annual Celebration: Board members and partners are invited to the Tapteal Greenway Annual Celebration, which will be held at the Richland Community Center, Saturday, October 12, 4:00-6:00.

BADGER MOUNTAIN CENTENNIAL PRESERVE

Badger Mountain Centennial Preserve – Boot Brushes: The boot brushes have arrived. We plan to install them later in the fall when things cool down and we get some moisture in the soil. There is one for Badger and one for Candy, plus Adam is donating one at McBee Grade.

CANDY MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

Candy Mountain Preserve – Weed Brigade: The Friends of Badger Mountain noxious weed volunteers continue their work through the summer with two work parties most weeks. They have transitioned almost fully over to Badger Mountain for the remainder of the season.

Candy Mountain Preserve – Rogue Trail: As reported previously, we have had some concerted unapproved trail building occurring on the lower north slope of the hill, mostly on private property but now extending into the County property. I walked much of this down with FOBM Trailmaster Jim Langdon in August. We will need to discuss this and how to deal with it, and I propose possibly making it a topic for the October meeting with participation from FOBM.

HORN RAPIDS PARK

Horn Rapids Park – Campground: We have added another small group for mid-October. The water will be off, but the group is fine with dry camping.

Horn Rapids Park – Boat Launch: The Taptal Greenway will lead a fall work party at the boat launch at 9:00 on Saturday, November 23. The purpose will be vegetation management in this area, starting with and focused around opening the access/visual mouth of the boat launch, which can be hard to see from upriver and that is getting narrow for boat launching. Also included will be weeding, litter detail, and trail maintenance. Interested Board members and other patrons are invited to stop by.

Horn Rapids Park – Meacham Hall Garden: We had a Life Scout interested in taking on this project, but the scope ends up being more than he can handle. We have some other folks looking at it.

Horn Rapids Park – Water Stargrass: Benton Conservation District is winding down their stargrass harvesting season. They have been using the park's shoreline as authorized. It seems like it has been good for them, helping their operation to be more efficient.

TWO RIVERS PARK

Two Rivers Park – Tree Work: We will be doing some significant tree maintenance at the park this fall. One of the cottonwoods needs to come down altogether, and several other trees will be lightly or heavily pruned. Staff is currently working on getting a vendor under contract.

Two Rivers Park – Boardwalk (and Hover Park Parking Lot): We are now down to just having the building permits issued for both projects. We finally got out of the Planning Department's whirlpool. I will keep you posted.

Two Rivers Park – Compliance Inspection: We received our inspection report, which included only three minor findings.

OTHER COUNTY PARKS

Horse Heaven Cemetery: No update at this time.

Horse Heaven Vista: No update at this time.

Hover Park: Please see Boardwalk under Two Rivers Park above.

Rattlesnake Mountain Shooting Facility: No update at this time.

Vista Park: No update at this time.

Wallula Gap Preserve: The Yellepit purchase closed on August 30. A replacement gate has been set at the end of Ayers Road on our property, but is not yet locked pending notification of the BNSF railroad. A site visit with Corrections staff is set for September 24 to look over the property and plan for Work Crew cleanup activity later in the fall.

OTHER NON-COUNTY PARKS

Kennewick Paths & Trails Plan: No update at this time.

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