



COLORADO STATE PARKS

2011 MARKETING PLAN

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• Monthly Performance Reports PARKS Marketing Report (by month and location: revenue per visitor, Visitation, Revenue, Passes, Camping, Gift Certificates, and Miscellaneous – special use and event fees)	
• Other Suggested Monthly Reports --E-store --Reservations --Website Traffic	

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I. Marketing Mix Components



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II. Budget

Marketing Operating Budget 2011

\$328,229

Advertising/Media Buyer-Research	\$160,000
Print/Collateral/Distribution	\$100,000
Marketing/Communications Temp Salary	\$30,000
E-newsletter, VRM & E-mail Database	\$13,000
Events & Activities	\$5,500
Communications/Media Relations	\$5,000
Website	\$4,000
Social Media	\$4,000
Misc expenses: supplies, travel, meetings, etc. x 2 staff	\$4,200
Mktg Co-ops/Chambers/Partnerships	\$3,000
Reservations	\$500
TOTAL	\$328,200

*Colorado State Parks marketing budget (including salaries for fy10-11) is 0.8% of gross revenue (\$49,254,717). Conservative industry standards for allocating marketing budgets as a percentage of gross revenues are 5-10%.

III. Introduction and Background

Marketing is an extremely important part Colorado State Parks' plan to address its long-term fiscal stability. Given the current status of the State's General Fund contribution to the Division, Colorado State Parks should be poised and prepared to embark on an aggressive marketing campaign. The direction provided to us by legislation clearly states that we are legally required to generate revenues through user fees that cover a reasonable portion of the parks' operation costs.

Coloradans are fortunate to have a plethora of outdoor recreation choices. As such, Colorado State Parks must think and operate much like a business rather than as a government to promote our services and facilities to the public. We need to actively engage our customers and keep Colorado State Parks in the top of our customers' and potential customers' minds.

The purpose of the Colorado State Parks Marketing Plan is to serve as a guiding document for a shared Division strategy that focuses on the current needs and desires of identified park customers. Recognizing the need to remain flexible in an ever-changing marketing landscape, the plan and action items provide a platform for the process rather than serving as an inflexible document.

As evidenced in the results of **Corona Research's 2009 Market Assessment for Colorado State Parks**, we have a brand identity problem - a significant portion of the population has difficulty recognizing state parks. Low awareness levels are not unusual in organizations with minimal marketing resources. The good news is that researchers found that the general public, both visitors and non-visitors, held state parks in very high regard.

Colorado State Parks' marketing strategy has traditionally focused on a "shotgun" approach, where we would try to be all things to all people/visitors. This method was used due to low budgets and the lack of clearly identified target audiences. Increasingly, customers expect tailored communications that speak to their specific needs. That requires that State Parks make strategic decisions about where to spend the limited marketing dollars and to shift traditional organizational beliefs.

This was a key finding of the **Corona** study. "Based on the research in the study, the research team concludes that three disparate objectives can be met by deliberately differentiating each park's individual assets and unique characteristics. First and foremost, it will enhance visitors' experiences if they are directed to a park that fits their ideal image and activity goals, which will improve word of mouth marketing for Colorado State Parks."

IV. Customer Profile (**Corona Research 2009**)

-Geographic: Over 98% of the state's population lives within 50 miles of one or more state parks. The location of the 42 parks appears to be a key driver of visits, as well as the location of other competitors such as Forest Service land. Approximately 12% of visitors come from out-of-state (8% of day visitors, 14% of campers, 20% of RVers).

-Demographics: Our core market is 45 to 54 year olds but strong visitation exists across several age levels. State park visitation increases in frequency as education levels increase. People tend to visit in mixed gender groups

(3.19 average group size). The *current* market for Colorado State Parks is 46% of the state's population while the *potential* market is 94% of the state's population.

-Psychographics: Visitors choose state parks for camping, fishing, hiking, cleanliness, trails and facilities. In addition, park visitors desire good weather, beautiful scenery and wildlife. A majority of visitors are thinking of *activities first*, and then state parks compete with other venues as a place to perform those activities.

-Trends:

Seniors – Within the next 20 years, this market will grow to 18% of the Colorado population 20 years; this rate is three times faster than any other age group. Age and health concerns will negatively impact state parks visitation among seniors, since visitation drops rapidly for populations age 65 and older. This group prefers amenities, RV camping, annual pass use, walking, sightseeing, photography, wildlife watching, directional signage, and accessible local parks.

Hispanic – this population is expected to grow by 66% compared to 33% growth in White, non-Hispanic and 48% in all other minority populations. This population is younger (median age 27), prefers to visit in larger groups, uses daily passes rather than annuals, prefers backcountry experiences and motorized trails.

-Customer retention: visitor satisfaction levels for the whole park system and every park in the system were rated as high.

V. Challenges & Opportunities

1. Brand identity

Creating a strong brand identity typically requires a significant marketing investment and system-wide agreement with a joint vision of what we do and who we are. Increasing awareness of Colorado State Parks goes beyond a marketing function to encompass a more **global organizational commitment**.

Creating a strong brand identity is possible with standards for all communications through all possible channels and relies heavily on strong internal support and leadership. Careful attention to the overarching brand of Colorado State Parks must be made to effectively differentiate parks for specific niches.

2. Differentiation

Another important marketing strategy is to focus our brand to reflect diversity of parks with a common core. Core features are cleanliness, natural experiences, convenient facilities, and locations/proximity. Park and region managers should lead the discussion of which features/niches their parks can offer specific markets for customized visitor experiences. Each park should identify their top three niches, which will be used to determine marketing investments and content.

3. Marketing Resources

Limited marketing resources, including funding and staff resources, pose a significant challenge to increasing awareness of state parks and creating a strong brand identity. The section is currently staffed

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with 1.5 FTE and temporary help (24 hrs/week), which underscores the importance of system-wide staff support for marketing efforts. Coordination and a team approach to interrelated sections (e-store, reservations, registrations, etc.) can result in greater productivity and synergy.

Recognizing the staff and funding shortage to accomplish our marketing goals, this year's plan recommends hiring a Media Buyer. While this requires an investment of funds (approximately 10-15% of media buy), once we commit to a certain level of advertising, the benefits far outweigh the cost. Media buyers are able to stretch our ad dollars by leveraging them to receive more for the money. They are able to negotiate lower rates and better placement due to the volume of media they typically buy for multiple clients. Media buyers can also offer expertise on media outlets to choose based on our target demographic and marketing goals. Lastly, and most importantly, a media buyer will allow us to be responsive and respond quickly to opportunities, which is not possible when we purchase ads through the lengthy state procurement process.

Another way to augment the marketing effort is to enlist the help of a marketing advisory board, comprised of select internal park staff and external marketing experts. With continued reduction in state budget funding, state parks should investigate alternative funding sources for marketing efforts which might be achieved through partnerships. Issues with purchasing regulations that preclude "bartering" also hinder our efforts to use strategic partnerships to replace lost funding.

Colorado State Parks could also look at creating a check-off box on state income tax forms or when we sell Annual Passes or vehicle registrations that would give customers the option to donate \$1 toward marketing and outreach efforts (modeled after the Division of Wildlife check off programs).

4. **Competitors**

Corona Research identified the top four competitors to Colorado State Parks as: municipal parks and open space, National Parks and other national lands, private land, and other state parks. Visitors who find our entrance fees objectionable will likely seek no-fee local, county and federal lands instead. Visitors who are seeking more amenities may turn to private campgrounds and resorts. Considering the vast budgets of privately-held resorts, and the fact that they have turned into year round destinations, it's difficult for parks to compete at this level.

5. **Customer Barriers**

Corona Research identified the main barriers for customers to visit parks are: time, cost/money, age/health, and lack of knowledge. Less frequently cited significant barriers include accessibility (traffic along I-70 corridor not specifically addressed in Corona but is a reality) and perceived crowding. Also, developed facilities in parks were deemed an asset by some and a liability to others. Marketing messages and ad themes could be developed to address some of these barriers. Lack of knowledge is directly tied to resources invested to increase awareness, previously addressed above. A number of these perceived barriers could be overcome through the use of creative marketing promotions (discounts or promotional offers) provided we are able to come to consensus and approval on them.

6. Website and Internet

After more than a decade of operating without a permanent web programmer, Colorado State Parks hired its first web programmer/analyst in late 2009. Having an FTE for this position has allowed us to work more closely with DNR IT on software changes and service issues, resulting in faster and more complete transitions and solutions. We are able to improve our site through consistency and offer thorough staff trainings. We are just now beginning to catch up by including features on our site that would allow more customization and the use of Web 2.0 resources.

With the addition of a dedicated staff person, we are also now able to track more closely some significant service issues. Parks website is consistently plagued by site access problems, component breakdowns, and down time. These issues are due to the complexity of the site as well as aging and outdated applications. It is clear there is a need for a higher level of dedicated support and infrastructure to avoid disruption to our customers and potential loss of revenue.

It is essential for our website to function 24/7, for a number of reasons – the most important of which is public safety. With a year-round average of approximately 5,000 visitors per day (over 10,000 in the peak season), Parks' website is the primary tool for emergency information dissemination. Outdated or inaccessible information is a serious safety issue opening the door to lawsuits, injury, or loss of life. Public safety information such as high water advisories or beach closures is communicated through our website, and we open ourselves up to liability and loss of credibility when our site is unexpectedly unavailable or outdated.

Our website is responsible for close to \$6 million in annual Parks revenue. Visitors' inability to access the website to purchase park passes, merchandise, registrations, and make reservations yield potential lost revenue averaging \$16,000 per day (\$1,000 average daily estore sales and \$15,000 per day average reservation sales).

Lastly, many Parks resources are dedicated to driving visitors to the website. Paid online and print advertising campaigns, social media, content contributors, and programmers all work in concert to keep website content relevant and inviting. Any down time results in these valuable resources going to waste.

To minimize any future website problems, Parks' Website requires 24/7 support, dedicated infrastructure, and the availability for technical support that can be tasked to respond to specific issues in a timely manner when problems arise.

Additional challenges that we face are having access to Internet sites that are denied due to concerns over security and liability. State firewalls frequently block sites that are needed for day-to-day business. The business need and validation for accessing these tools exists. Restricting access will become increasingly problematic as revolutionary shifts on the importance of these tools to an organization's marketing efforts are recognized. Social media sites are key drivers to improved search engine optimization, user generated content, and customer feedback. These sites are also useful for

disseminating timely, relevant information to our park visitors, such as fire bans, campground closures, wildlife sightings/precautions, etc.

A recent victory was won with social media sites. In January 2011, Facebook amended their indemnification clause that was problematic for government entities, and it is now sanctioned for use by State of Colorado employees.

While we lost the nearly 1,000 fans we had when our first Fan page was forced to be deleted, but we have almost recovered about 75% of the fan base in the months since our page has been back online. Because it is such a cost-effective means of communicating with customers, we will update our Social Media Plan and resume our social media staff trainings, hopefully this spring.

7. **Diversity**

There are tremendous opportunities for Colorado State Parks to expand its outreach to multi-cultural, particularly Hispanic visitors. Forecasts project that persons of **Hispanic** origin will represent 23% of the total Colorado population in 2030, with about 1.7 million people (Corona 2009, SCORP 2008, U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Currently, the Hispanic population represents one-fifth of Colorado's population.

Corona research suggested that this is a potential target market for Colorado State Parks. However, before embarking on a marketing campaign to attract this audience, there are some system-wide operational factors that will need to be addressed. As this population continues to increase, the Division needs to incorporate decisions and practices to meet the need for bilingual reservation agents and park staff to assist these customers; signs, rules and regulations, website content and brochures in both English and Spanish; research and planning for desired amenities sought by this group.

The importance of addressing this need is two-fold: we have seen an influx in visitors of Hispanic origin so we need to be able to serve them, educate them and be prepared for increasing numbers; as the future voters of this country who will have a say in how our public lands will be used, we have the opportunity to share important messages of conservation, as well as help instill a deeper appreciation of our natural resources.

There are undoubtedly many other aspects that need to be reviewed and those perhaps warrant a committee made up of representatives from the Hispanic population. Therefore, it is prudent to come up with a more comprehensive Parks plan for the Hispanic population before the marketing section can initiate outreach actions to this group. We believe we should begin Hispanic marketing efforts by 2012, assuming the majority of operational considerations have been met.

8. **Conservation, Education and Youth**

While the push for increased revenue amidst impending budget cuts is paramount, we can at the same time inspire conservation messages that resonate with our visitors. Increased user fees accompanied by education may ease the sting of visitors having to reach deeper into their pockets and foster understanding for resource stewardship. Our conservation and education message may be as simple as including a line with all our advertising, online and outreach collateral materials.

In light of heightened interest in connecting youth to the outdoors, this year's marketing plan designates a small portion of funds to support these efforts in parks. As future stewards of parks, it's never too early to promote conservation messages and positive outdoor experiences. Often, parks are already offering programs and activities for children that we can bring to light through enhanced marketing strategies.

9. **Demand vs. Inventory**

In its most simplistic view, marketing's charge is to increase awareness, visitation (daily/annual passes), reservations and therefore, revenue. Since we receive the greatest revenue return from users through camping and lodging reservations, we have considered ways to maximize these assets. Past efforts included promotions to:

- increase midweek summer reservations (targeting out-of-state visitors, promoting staycations)
- extend shoulder season reservations (fall Rush to the Gold, spring Tour de Fleur); it's difficult to compete with ski resorts in winter and park inventory is even more limited.

With the current majority of park visitors coming from in-state, it is reported (anecdotally) that weekend reservations in summer are booked solid (100% occupancy?). If we have no inventory to market to the majority of people who demand it when they want it, then even the best marketing campaigns will not change the outcome. Having access to reports that provide an analysis of our occupancy percentage (weekdays vs. Fri/Sat) by park would be helpful to future marketing efforts. Many other state park systems have addressed this issue by requiring minimum stays (2-7 nights) for holidays, summers and popular destinations, all of which Colorado State Parks should also consider.

Past campaigns to extend shoulder seasons received fairly good publicity, but it was difficult to directly measure economic impact to Parks. With some inventory taken offline during non-peak seasons, we may lose customers who see the unavailability of online reservations as a barrier. It would seem prudent at this time, to revisit this practice and consider keeping our online reservations available to customers all year. This should be a cost neutral change and would allow us to have a complete picture of reservation trends annually. Most importantly, it is proven that customers prefer to use our online reservation system so we may see better response if customers can use the same process to reserve sites for the entire year.

10. **Customer Database**

Colorado State Parks current practices to capture customer information represents a tremendous opportunity for future improvements. Data is currently stored in separate databases for registrations, reservations, e-store purchases, LECS as well as a variety of other program and park stakeholder lists. We can start collecting customer data of annual pass sales fairly quickly and easily. Using our parks website and existing software license (SalesForce), park staff can collect annual pass purchaser info into centralized database/system. Going forward, there are many additional ways Parks can consolidate and share customer contact information to foster loyalty and retention efforts. Due to the complexity and variety of systems currently employed, it would require a database analyst's expertise to assess feasibility and potential outcomes.

VI. Key Marketing Plan Concepts & Rationale

In order to address low public awareness levels of Colorado State Parks identified by Corona 2009, the marketing plan allocates the largest percentage (roughly 40%) of the marketing budget to advertising. Salaries (1.5 permanent FTE and 0.6 FTE temporary) and printing brochures comprise another 54% of the marketing budget. The Marketing Plan presents the Action Plans in descending order of budget percentage. Often, there are additional activities listed that could be implemented but staff resources are insufficient to fulfill.

In 2011, we will continue to make significant improvement in our website as recommend in **Corona Research's** findings. "Given the fact that the Internet is far and away the greatest source of information for people seeking recreation information, the expansion of Colorado State Parks' Internet presence is a straightforward recommendation, and it can attack four challenges."

We will use the website as our primary means to create niche parks and promote unique features. Advertising will direct these target markets to landing pages or unique URLs, where customers can find the information of specific interest to them.

We know from previous and current research studies that Colorado State Parks visitors are by and large state residents. While Corona Research has focused exclusively on in-state visitors, we cannot exclude the **out-of-state** market as a potential segment to grow. This segment is attractive from a marketing and revenue perspective for several reasons. Out-of-state visitors tend to stay longer, spend more money, reserve earlier, visit midweek when we have available inventory and are not as likely to change their plans based on weather. We can also direct out-of-state visitors to less busy, underutilized parks around the state rather than promoting more visitation to urban parks already at capacity.

While Corona Research suggested we focus on increasing our outreach to the growing Hispanic population, as previously indicated, Parks will need to address some operational issues before we can aggressively target this group.

Lastly, a more integrated approach within all operational facets – parks, reservations, retail, registrations, etc. can improve marketing efforts. One way to increase communication and consistent, timely measurement data sharing is to have this information included as part of our monthly staff meeting reports, with particular attention to percent changes over previous years. The new PARKS marketing report is a good start in obtaining some of this data.

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Action Plan 1: ADVERTISING			
Objective: Strengthen brand and increase awareness of Colorado State Parks	Coordinator: Clare Sinacori Team: Amy Thornton		
Images of Accomplishment: Created a branded, consistent look and feel to all communications. Selected 2-3 target audiences and appropriate branded messages. Determined media and specific outlets for each target.	Budget: \$ 145,000 + \$15,000 media buyer		
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
1. Create an updated brand image and message for Colorado State Parks. Consider focus group drawings and word clouds from Corona research. Use customized experiences and benefits , not features (clean, safe, close, nature, facilities). Consider identified barriers from Corona: time, money, knowledge (health/age).	ongoing	ongoing	Amy/Clare
2. Incorporate conservation messages in future materials, website, etc.	"	"	"
3. Determine ad plan for target markets for 2011 efforts. Write RFP to hire media buyer to determine media type and specific outlet; procure space/time -Print (magazines/newspaper/directories/maps) -Online: banner ads, social communities and UGC -Email -Broadcast (radio/TV) -Outdoor/Bus -Events -Other travel destinations -Airport -Retail -Video/web casts of interviews, public health message -Mobile marketing devices	Jan	Feb	Clare
4. Based on Corona Research results select 2 to 3 Target Markets	Spring		Clare/Amy

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<p>and develop potential messages and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For 2011, we will focus on Family, Boomers/Retirees, and Youth. There may be some overlap into some of these other target markets but future years' efforts may focus on Fishing, RVers, Campers, Latino and OHVers. -Seasonal campaign: will continue paid ads for Holiday/December but will discontinue paid ads for Rush to Gold and Wildflowers, relying on unpaid PR efforts instead. -Consider including ad buys for Colorado Springs CVB and business journals to promote group facilities. <i>Contacted Colo Spgs Official Visitors Guide re: advertising. They do not allow any ads unless vendors are members and operate in the three counties they serve: El Paso, Teller and Fremont. Cheyenne Mtn already places a park ad; contacted Mueller re: advertising, no response.</i> -Determine regional designated market areas (DMAs) around bordering states to target. <p>Ways measure effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -increased website traffic to our site, referring sites, create specific campaign URL, increased park visits, increased reservations and calls. 	October		Clare/Amy
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Action Plan 2: PRINT/COLLATERAL MATERIALS			
Objective: Increase awareness and knowledge of our 42 state parks, our website and reservation contact information.	Coordinator: Amy Team: Clare, Arts Prof, Temp		
Images of Accomplishment: Increased visitors to parks, increased website visits and increase reservations (online and phone).	Budget: \$100,000 (-\$14,400 for distribution)		
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
<p>1. Individual park brochures: --Print annually as needed with updated information. --Evaluate placement of brochures at parks located in geographic proximity.</p> <p>--Identify 5 parks that are a high priority for Spanish brochures and add those to FY 10-11 brochure printing order. Volunteer has translated: Quick Guide, Barr Lake, Boyd Lake, Chatfield, Eldorado Canyon. (Rifle Gap, Rifle Falls have Spanish versions). Lake Pueblo in progress</p>	Nov	Mar	Amy Temp/vol
<p>2. Parks Quick Guide: – Design and print scaled down brochure with general information (est. quantity 50,000). Completed June 2010. -Print Quick Guide in Spanish</p>	Sept	Feb	Volunteer
<p>3. Brochure Distribution: Contract service in place to deliver brochures to State Welcome Centers and REI monthly.</p>	Mar	May	Amy
<p>4. Create Kids Activity Pack with laminated education cards. Completed July 2010 for 25 Parks. Additional parks have requested backpacks for 2011-2012.</p>	Monthly	Monthly	Clare
<p>5. Create an event flyer template to enable Park staff to customize and use for various park specific events and promotions.</p>		done	Amy

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<p>6. Distribution of Quick Guide to other venues such as Chamber of Commerce, Visitor Centers, retail outlets, hotels, airport, train stations, malls, RV dealers, sporting goods.</p> <p>7. Ideas/Future suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain new photography with people/action photos through one or all: photo contest, intern/class project, staff incentive, hire photographer. Submitted Volunteer Opportunity form for photographer/videographer in May 2010. • Research possibility of brochure recycle bins to install in parks; service or volunteer group project? • Research installation of computer kiosks in Visitor Centers to provide visitors with park information and replace park brochures to cross market among parks 	<p>TBD -Need \$ to provide ongoing service</p>		
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Action Plan 3: E-NEWSLETTER/EMAIL DATABASE			
Objective: Increase awareness of Colorado State Parks through an enewsletter.		Coordinator: Clare Team: Mercedes, Temp, Amy	
Images of Accomplishment: Grow opt-in newsletter subscribers by 10%		Budget: \$13,000	
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
<p>1. Include articles in e-news on Trails, Kids Activities/Kids Corner, Families and Boomers/Retirees. Kids Corner monthly e-news featured started in March 2010 e-news and have been continuing with each issue. Some trail articles included but would like to receive additional story/content suggestions or monthly feature.</p>	Ongoing	Ongoing	Clare/Temp
<p>2. Ask all online and phone reservations if they would like to be added to e-news list. Include on reservation confirmation letter. ReserveAmerica sent files of customers with emails from Jan-May 2010 to upload into Salesforce. Monthly opt-in list sent monthly thereafter.</p> <p>Inform call center customers, who do not provide an email address with a reservation, about the E-Newsletter and direct them to the State Parks web page to sign up. Consider posting enews on our website for customers who do not have email addresses.</p>	Sept	Ongoing	Mercedes
<p>3. Begin segmenting users for more targeted content through Internet Honey. Camping leads were started Feb 2010 in Salesforce with a total of 369 subscribers (as of 5/31/10). Fishing leads started in Feb 2010 and has 268 subscribers (as of 5/31/10). Will continue to monitor and revise content as critical mass in specific topic area is reached.</p>	Jan	ongoing	Clare
<p>4. Find out which parks currently have their own newsletter,</p>			

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<p>sending electronically or mail. Sign up as subscriber to keep updated on local park events. Ask parks and programs to sign up visitors for statewide enews.</p>	May & Nov	Repeat 2x/yr	Temp
<p>5. Signs posted at park offices and visitor centers to sign up for e-news. Signs will also include revenue generating opportunities: buy pass, make reservation, buy gift certif., etc. Signs at VC to inform visitors sent to parks July 2010.</p>		done	Amy/Clare
<p>6. Include opt-in signup message on Registration (OHV, Snowmobile, Boat) web pages.</p>	Feb	Ongoing	Clare/David
<p>7. Email previous reservation customers with special offer to camp with us again in shoulder seasons. Need to determine if offers/discounts are possible.</p>	Spring & Fall		Mercedes/ Clare/David
<p>8. Educate volunteers, Friends groups, retirees and park temp staff of enews existence. -Mention in Diggin In volunteer newsletter, put on Facebook page, hard copies to each park</p>			
<p>9. Other Groups to target– interest orgs/clubs, CORRP, GOCO, Lottery, corporations on back of payroll check , etc,</p>			
<p>10. Include message/link on email signature; include fun value statement to draw them in. Other messages: conservation, annual pass, reservations, etc.</p>			

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Action Plan 4: EVENTS & ACTIVITIES			
Objective: Increase awareness of Colorado State Parks, Park programs, Park facilities and Park benefits among identified targeted groups.		Coordinator: Clare Team: Temp, Deb F.	
Images of Accomplishment: Target markets identified and 100 or more contacts made within each.		Budget: \$5500	
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
<p>**Since marketing no longer has a budget to attend large-scale trade shows, these events must be FREE for participation with minimal expenses for staffing, travel, parking, materials, etc.</p>			
1. Wild Times at St. Vrain – DOW event	Sept	Sept	
2. Scouts – University of Scouting Midway	Oct	Oct	
3. National Recreation Resource Planning Conference? www.narrp.org (Parks is a co-host of conference)	May 23	May 26	Scott/???
4. National Get Outdoors Day/Get Outdoors Colorado	Jan	June 11	Clare/Temp Deb/Faye
5. Put together Kids Activity Nature Packs for use and promotion at Parks as a way to encourage kids and families to spend time outdoors at State Parks. Packs and content items purchased. --suggested activities on laminated card w/ lanyard --instructions for sign in/out and placement --ideas to promote: new release, articles, etc. Packs and support materials sent June-July 2010. Consider purchasing additional packs for parks that did not receive in 2010. Provide ideas to promote backpacks.	Apr	Done	Clare/Faye, Temp
	March	May	Clare/Faye, Temp
6. Other ideas for future on groups to target and how to reach them pending additional resources/partners/volunteers			

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop corps of volunteers/retirees who could attend events on our behalf. • Upcoming events at the Colorado Convention Center: http://denvercc-web.ungerboeck.com/coe/coe_p1_all.aspx?oc=M4&cc=COE • Contact Associations, Meeting Planners, Corporate team building facilitators • Work with DMOs – destination management organizations on group tours and special programs • Promote park facilities for weddings, reunions, BBQ, group volunteer, etc. • Promote parks to relocation service and realtors. • School Groups – field trips, promote park info into curriculum for environmental ed (science, nature, wildlife, plants, geology), cultural, and historical, physical education. Enrichment programs before/after school; faith based programs; school breaks by county. • Promote parks to youth organizations (Scouts, 4-H, etc.) and health groups (yoga, American Heart Assoc, American Diabetes Assoc., etc.) • Promote parks at Green Events – Gov’s Energy Office, Green Meeting Industry Council. 			
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Action Plan 5: WEBSITE			
Objective: Increase awareness of parks via our website to build public support of parks and increase revenue. Provide a web site that is user-friendly, accurate, accessible, and timely.	Coordinator: Clare Team: David & temp staff		
Images of Accomplishment: Increased postings of park calendar events and photos. Increased accuracy and timeliness of web content and consistency. More active, weekly posting of events and imagery by staff or customers. Decreased customer and staff complaints about web site. Increased online revenue. Increased SEO of our site through online ads and social community discussions.	Budget: \$4000		
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
1. Remedy barriers to staff posting information on web. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase understanding and awareness of MOSS functionality and interactivity. b. Merge separate Website components into MOSS infrastructure. c. Implement tools to aid staff in posting enhanced Website content. 		Done	David
2. Develop Administrative Directives that would include expectations and standards for Parks website and online communications. Use Social Media Temporary Guidelines issued 12/16/09 as basis.		Done AD:D 103 AD: A-127	Clare/David/Carl
3. Include requirement to post timely and accurate web content, conditions and calendar items in designated park and program staff's IPOs.	Feb	Mar	Gary/Dean
4. Hold website training for field and program staff	Sept/Mar	ongoing	

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<p>in MOSS or designated web tool twice annually. Goal = train 100% of all parks and program Website contributors. Use See and Share to facilitate training. See Appendix for Website Timeline.</p>			David
<p>5. Conduct periodic online survey for customers and staff to provide feedback on site. Survey tool will also be capable of gathering demographic and interest-specific information.</p>	Feb	July	David
<p>6. Change website park-specific email addresses to a form-based public input page. This will allow all park correspondence to be stored in a database for trending analysis, identifying issues and future correspondence purposes.</p>	Jan	Feb	David
<p>7. Explore photo contest – through either ReserveAmerica or Social Media sites. Staff incentive to post more photos. Find out about rights to use photos from these contests, other sites</p>	Jan 2011	Sept 2011	Clare/Amy/temp
<p>8. Home Page revisions: -Replace Adventure of the Week (AOW) spot on website with home page rotating image tool. -Image and corresponding links will highlight activity specific landing pages (camping, hiking, fishing, biking), seasonal landing pages (fall colors, wildflowers, winter sports, xc skiing, snowshoeing, ice fishing, snowmobiling), targeted marketing activities (wedding spots, group facilities, holiday campaign, passport program, trip tips, staycations, kids, events, pets), and programs (volunteer opportunities, trails program, etc.).</p>		Done	David/Clare/ Temp
	Apr	Apr	David

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-Rotating tool will be refined to incorporate specific date ranges and number of impressions.		Done	
9. Create activity specific landing pages (fishing, hiking, camping, etc.) to improve SEO. Use Corona Research word clouds to identify specific activities that customers visit certain state parks to do and top site navigation paths from Urchin to identify specific activities that customers visit certain state parks to do.	Nov	Ongoing	David
10. Blog template now available for use on these activity landing pages if desired.		Done Ongoing	Clare/Erin/ Mercedes
11. Use Sales Force software to build parks database of customers who have purchased an online pass or made an online reservation. Forward list monthly to upload into Salesforce. Started e-store customers Feb 2010; started reservation customers June 2010.	Jan	ongoing	David
12. Monitor social community discussions via Facebook, MySpace, Linked In, Twitter. Additional info in Social Media Action Plan. Create YouTube channel for Colorado State Parks	Jun 2010	Ongoing per IEE staff Done	Clare/David/Faye/ Temps
13. Enhance child and family related content on education page and newly created pages for interpretive and environmental education and family/child specific information. -Flyer for Family-Friendly Hikes created June 2010. -Family and Kids landing page created July 2010. -Activities for families/kids added monthly.		Done Ongoing Done	 Trails staff/David
14. Include message on Trails web page that details funding sources devoted by Parks and others to			

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State Trails.			Trails staff
15. As requested by Trails staff, support efforts to enhance message that Colorado State Parks is THE primary trails resource in Colorado.	Nov	May	David/ trails staff/ Rob B. or assigned staff
16. Improve online access to trail program information (e.g. GIS, trail specific maps, self-guided interp modules).	Jan	Feb	David
17. Design mobile-friendly version of website to reach increasing number of smart phone users.	Feb	May	David/Clare/Temp Park staff
18. Poll parks through SharePoint to collect data on local and regional attractions and other visitor interests to post on Park website local attractions page.	Jan 10	TBD	Clare/David/Temp
19. Use local attraction info to enhance previously developed and create new “staycation” and “trip tips” for visitors to explore several parks within a region. Incorporate virtual tours, YouTube videos and other social media resources as able.	July 2010	Done – pending DNR IT	David
20. Add a blogging capability to Website for parks/program wishing to participate.	Jan 2011	Dec 2011	David
21. Create mobile device applications to further disseminate park/program information and enhance parks visitors’ experience.	Aug 2010	Done	David
22. Develop a Website platform for parks to place videos/virtual tours.	May	July	David

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23. Develop comments placeholder for visitor testimonials on the Website.	Nov	May	Amy/David/Clare
24. Update website templates with: - updated photos -updated photos			

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Action Plan 6: SOCIAL MEDIA			
Objective: Increase awareness of state parks through online communities to build support for parks and improve SEO.		Coordinator: Clare Team: David, Deb. F, Temp, Possible: Consultant, Intern, volunteer	
Images of Accomplishment: 20% increase in inbound links to our website.		Budget: \$4000	
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
Background: -Aug'09-Apr'10 Parks Facebook page creative and online; ~1000 fans. -Consultant hired Dec '09 and plan developed. -Staff training held 3-17-10; training scheduled for 5-4-10 cancelled. -Ordered to remove by CO State Attorney General's office Apr '10 to Sept '10. -Jan'11 Facebook amended agreement for governments; ~800 fans.			
1. Rehire a social media consultant to --Assist with updating a sustainable social media plan --Appropriate sites to participate (Facebook, Twitter, other recreation social communities, blogs). --Outreach to use visitor testimonials and passport champions as spokespeople. Consider identified target markets identified from Corona Research: family, youth, and seniors. Create a Facebook page for kids.	Feb	May	Clare/team
2. Identify parks/ staff who are interested in pursuing social media and/or volunteers who are proficient.			
3. Other possible ideas: -Consider recruiting an unpaid intern/student to assist with developing social media networks. -Podcasts – find one park who would be interested in doing a pilot interp program podcast -Videocasts, upload videos to YouTube -Social media photo contest or video contest though fees now imposed by Facebook.			

Action Plan 7: Communications/Media Relations

Objectives:

External: Enhance public awareness of Colorado State Parks activities and mission through a variety of media and communications products.

Internal: Complete Parks SharePoint as the “go-to” site for park employees for forms, documents, policies and information.

Coordinator: Deb Frazier

Team: Rory Millard, Temporary

Images of Accomplishment:

External: Increased coverage of all facets of Colorado State Parks, such as partnership with GOCO and parks role in getting kids outdoors, Market Assessment study, by multiple media outlets, including outdoor recreation websites, free-content websites (examiner.com, etc.).

Resources:

\$ 5,000

ACTIONS

START

FINISH

WHO

1. Expand informational outreach to the public and legislature through news releases, interviews, telephone calls and other tools to gain “earned media” coverage from news organizations to promote the accomplishments, programs, initiatives and leadership role of Colorado State Parks. Builds relationships with media through fast responses and by providing additional useful information.
2. Work with park leadership, park managers, program managers and others to identify other issues and events to promote and enhance the image of state parks.
3. Develop and execute a communication plan around the CORONA marketing study.
4. Revise media guide to provide staff with guidance, train staff on media relations to enhance positive media coverage and provide talking points as needed.

ongoing

ongoing
as
needed

Done

ongoing

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Action Plan 8: MARKETING CO-OPS AND PARTNERSHIPS			
Objective: Strengthen existing partnerships to achieve common goals and mission, and strategically evaluate new partner opportunities.		Coordinator:	
Images of Accomplishment: Expanded reach to our target audiences.		Budget: \$3,000	
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
<p>There are many organizations that could be considered Colorado State Parks partners. Given our limited resources, other marketing priorities, and time required to achieve effective partnerships, we will not create an extensive plan for partnerships. We will continue to explore opportunities within existing relationships and assess possibilities for future partners.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colorado Tourism Office: Continue ad co-ops (OSVG, Welcome Offer, Hot Deals) and brochure distribution at Welcome Centers. Consider applying for future Marketing Grants and ways to target tour group operators and target markets identified in Corona Research. 2. Chamber memberships: SE Metro (school STEMEC program) and Visit Denver 3. Lottery Propose a new State Parks scratch game through Colorado Lottery; sell at Parks retail locations. 4. GOCO 5. Division of Wildlife: Participate in the Statewide Clearinghouse concept for Outdoor Recreation information as proposed by DOW-Newman as this effort progresses. <p>DOW – obtain list of fishing and hunting clinics. School</p>			

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<p>outreach partnership. Outreach to fishing and hunting license holders, provide park information to education clinic participants and clinic leaders/volunteers, cross marketing on print materials, relevant articles in <i>Colorado Outdoors</i> magazine, Watchable Wildlife joint programs, collaborate on outreach to families/children, build shared online database of outdoor events, promote joint conservation messages, joint corporate sponsorships.</p> <p>6. Other partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KKFN show • GSG Welcome Kits • Colorado Kids Outdoors (CKO) • Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) • Other travel destinations • Denver International Airport • Retail • CDOT signs • Denver Museum of Nature & Science • Foundation & Friends Groups • Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) • Health Organizations such as Kaiser, Colorado Dept. of Health, Denver Health, etc. • Athletic Clubs – 24 Hour Fitness, Colorado Athletic Club, etc. • Private Companies • Outdoor Professional Organizations • Other Recreation Government agencies 			
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Action Plan 9: RESERVATIONS			
Objective: Promote awareness and use of phone and online reservation system.	Coordinator: Mercedes Team: Clare		
Images of Accomplishment: Increased reservations by 5% . Targeted by demographic groups, geographic areas (in-state vs. out-state), interest groups.	Budget: \$500		
ACTIONS	START	FINISH	WHO
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include reservations phone/web address on all ads, news releases, emails, enews, email signature. 2. ReserveAmerica Marketing Plan : With contract delays and Active.com merger, we have been on hold with many RA activities. Awaiting new marketing plan from them. <div> <div>-Submit 3-4 monthly spotlights</div> <div>-Nominate Top 100 Campground entries</div> <div>-Nominate Ranger of Year</div> <div>-Photo Contest</div> <div><i>These activities may be removed/revised from RA's 2011 marketing plan.</i></div> </div> 3. RA is sending monthly lists each month of new customers; and we will send email asking if they want annual pass, e-news through Salesforce/IH. 4. Signs at all park campgrounds, visitor centers, offices for reservation contact info. Coordinate with Enews signs. <i>Signs at VC sent July 2010.</i> 5. Provide link to retail store for annual pass sales to be printed on the reservation confirmation letter. 6. Provide basic information on Reservations "how-to" online and in print 7. Inbound calls to Parks reservation center will be asked if 	Ongoing	Ongoing	All
	June 2010	Ongoing monthly	Clare/Mercedes
		done	Clare/Amy
			Mercedes
	pending \$		Mercedes/Amy
	Ongoing	Ongoing	Mercedes

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they would like to purchase an annual pass.			
8. Reach out to RV community via blogs, online sites, trade show advertising, etc. to promote reservations.			Deb/Clare/ Temp

References and Appendices

Baseline Assumptions & Future Measurements: See PARKS Marketing Graphs 2003-Present

-Visitation

-Revenue

-Revenue per Visitor

Projection Estimates for Visitation & Revenue for next five years is flat.

Internal Factors Affecting Visitation & Revenue Projections

1. **Facility changes:** Any park facility (campgrounds, rest rooms, Visitor Centers, group facilities, etc.) changes such as openings, closures, maintenance construction, upgrades, etc. has the potential to positively or negatively impact our visitation and revenue projections.
2. **Staff resources:** Increases or decreases in staff resources can impact park cleanliness, fee collection, safety/patrolling, facility operations, customer service, and resource protection. All of these could positively or negatively impact visitation and revenue, and play a large role in visitor satisfaction.
3. **Fee changes for:** The potential exists for fee changes in the future, which will impact both revenue and visitation. These fee changes could pertain to existing passes, new passes – such as the lifetime senior pass, registration, special use permits, group facilities, conference rooms, reservations, park stores, concessions, camping (primitive, basic, electric, deluxe, winter, aspen, etc.), cabins, yurts, teepees, and guest houses.
4. **Reservation system:** Having a functional reservation system is critical to our revenue and visitation. We could incur risks both internally (to our call center) or externally with our online vendor, and may involve reservations software, call center staffing and management, equipment failure, public access, and staff connectivity issues.
5. **Marketing Promotions/Offers/Discounts:** see p. 32 for details
6. **E-store and Retail Partners** (internal and external): Some of the internal and external factors that could affect Parks revenue, and to some degree visitation are having operational online software for our e-store, internal (DNR) technical support for our website, bank/credit card/vendor relationships, staff resources, product storage space, fulfillment and mailing costs, public access, connectivity issues

External Factors Affecting Visitation & Revenue Projections

1. **Economic Trends:**

While we head out of the “Great Recession,” economic projections are flat for the next five years. Retail trade sales will grow a modest 2.5 percent in 2010 as spending will be constrained by high unemployment and the continued paying down of debt and higher savings levels. Although spending growth will improve slightly in 2011, it will remain below that experienced during the years before the recession. The state experienced an overall decrease in consumer prices, or deflation, last year. Consumer prices are expected to remain constrained in 2010,

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growing 1.8 percent, due to a large amount of slack in the economy and weak demand in the housing and retail markets. Though the economy is beginning to rebuild in 2010, it will be a protracted process as the economy finds new sources of growth and corrects from the excesses of recent years. Also, weak property values, high debt levels, and tighter credit will constrain business expansion. (Source: *Focus Colorado: Economic and Revenue Forecast Colorado Legislative Council Staff Economics Section, March 19, 2010*)

Going forward, we expect the economy to grow fairly rapidly - almost 3-1/2 percent this year and over 4 percent in 2011 and 2012. However, the level of economic activity is so depressed that, even with solid growth, it will take years to eliminate slack and return to full employment. (Source: *Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, FedViews, April 8, 2010*)

Additional economic factors that can impact park visitation and revenue are higher air fares and higher gasoline prices.

2. Demographic Trends:

The population of the United States is expected to grow roughly 21% between 2006 and 2030, an increase in population of 64 million people to 363.6 million. Six of the 10 fastest growing states are located in the West: Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Texas, Utah, and **Colorado**. (Source: *Christie, L. "Growth States: Arizona Overtakes Nevada." Editorial. CNNMoney.Com 25 Dec. 2006.*)

Between 1990 and 2000, the Colorado population increased 31% or just over 3% annually. Population growth has slowed, but remains higher than the national average. Since 2000, the Colorado population has averaged annual growth of about 1.75%, reaching an estimated total of 4.75 million people in 2006. The Colorado State Demography Office estimates the state will reach a population of 7.3 million by 2030. This represents 54% growth over the 2005 population and an increase of nearly 2.6 million people. The Northwest is the state's fastest growing region with annual growth rates of about 3% through 2015. This region includes the fast-growing mountain resort communities of Eagle, Pitkin, and Summit counties as well as energy boom counties such as Garfield, Moffat, and Rio Blanco. State Demography Office. (Colorado Department of Local Affairs. 26 Jan. 2008 <http://www.dola.state.co.us/dlg/demog/index.html>).

Colorado's Front Range experience the greatest increase in total residents equaling 3 million people. The counties that had the greatest growth were Adams (55%), Broomfield (64%), and Douglas County (83%). The Northwest region is expected to expand the most rapidly in the future.

- 2009 Colorado population =5 million (DOLA)
- Median age 32-37
- 2008 Median household income \$57,184

Between 2005 and 2010, the population age changes that occurred:

- 60-79 year olds had a 93% growth
- 80+ year olds had a 41% growth
- 0-19 year olds had a 28% growth
- 20-39 year olds had 26% growth

-40-59 year olds had 11% growth

By 2015, those aged 60 and older will represent 18% and by 2020 over 20% of the population will be over 60 years of age. (Source: *State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs*, 26 Jan. 2008 <http://www.dola.state.co.us/dla/demog/index.html>).

Participation in outdoor activities among boys and girls ages 6 to 12 dropped significantly from 2006 to 2007. Girls had the biggest decline, falling from 77% to 61%. The decline in participation open a significant gap between the participation rates of boys and girls ages 6 to 12. In 2006, participation in outdoor activities among these two groups were nearly equal – 79% for boys and 77% for girls. The rapid changes in participation among girls age 6 to 12, the youngest age group measured in The Outdoor Foundation’s *Outdoor Recreation Participation Report*, deserve significant attention.

Forecasts project that persons of Hispanic origin will represent 23% of the total population in 2030, totaling just under 1.7 million people. Hispanics represent the fastest growing ethnic group in Colorado, but other ethnic groups show continued growth as well. Persons of Hispanic origin are projected to grow by 94% between 2005 and 2030. Over the same time period, the population of non-Hispanic blacks will increase by 70%, the Asian/Pacific Islander population by 66%, and American Indians by 64%. Non-Hispanic whites, in contrast, will increase by roughly 44%. (Source: *Colorado State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs*. 10 Feb. 2008 <http://www.dola.state.co.us/demog>).

3. Recreation Trends

With more leisure time, comparably high disposable income, and concern for health and fitness, baby boomers are expected to increase the demand for recreation services. While many plan to remain active and pursue passive recreation such as hiking, wildlife viewing, skiing, and bicycling, some recreation planners foresee potential shifts in recreational use patterns. For example, recreation that is less physically demanding may increase (e.g., off-highway vehicle use and scenic driving) along with recreation activities that provide higher levels of comfort (e.g., camping in cabins or RVs). (Source: *SCORP Steering Committee Meeting #2, Meeting Minutes*, May 2007, *Denver Museum of Natural History*)

In 1998, the millennial generation was the first generation to show a decrease in the percentage of participants in sporting activities (Source: *Glaeser, John*. “*Millennials, the New Generation Boom Proves to Be Highly Desirable Market*.” *California Parks and Recreation Society*. Winter 2002. 1 Apr. 2008 http://www.cprs.org/membersonly/Win02_Millennials.htm).

According to the Outdoor Industry Associations State of the Industry Report (2006), millennials respond to activities that are “accessible” — those that are visually in the media and practical in terms of how much time the activity requires. Millennials are also more technologically sophisticated than past generations. As a result, park and recreation planners are pondering ways to integrate technology into how they communicate with this generation.

In general, Hispanics tend to enjoy the “gathering” type of activities versus the organized type of activity that characterizes much of the municipal recreation landscape. “Spending the day at the park” is an enormously popular choice for Hispanic families, and park activities commonly range from having family cookouts, softball and

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soccer games, riding bikes, or simply soaking up the sun and listening to music. (Source: McChesney, J., M. Gerken, and K. McDonald. "Reaching Out to Hispanics in Recreation." *National Parks and Recreation Association*. Mar. 2005)

National Outdoor Recreation Trends:

- Nationally walking for pleasure was the most popular outdoor recreational activity (2007).
- Americans are most interested in the "low commitment" activities. Which means learned quickly, are low cost, and don't require intensive equipment or planning.
- The largest segments of outdoor recreationists are Baby Boomers (46-64) and Millennials (7-23)
- Nationally, the favorite activity among youth between the ages 6-17 is bicycling; young adults 18-24 prefer running, jogging, or trail running.
- Land-based activities are generally favored with the top five most popular activities in CO: walk for pleasure, family gathering outdoors, visit nature centers, picnicking and attend outdoor sports events (1995-2006)
- According to OIF (Outdoor Industry Foundation) trail-related activities are the most popular with a quarter of a million folks who trail run or day hike on an unpaved trail, backpack, and rock climb. 35% of residents bicycle, 33% watch wildlife and 28% camp.
- The most popular water-based activities in Colorado in order of preference are: fishing, swimming and boating.
- Nearly one million Coloradans are campers, according to Outdoor Industry Foundation.
- Camper-trailer registrations grew 43% more than motor homes
- Over 1.8 million residents and visitors viewed wildlife in CO in 2006, including birding.
- Wildlife festivals are gaining popularity in CO, with thousands of participants enjoying the Monte Vista Crane Festival, High Plains Snow Goose Festival, and many more events.
- Engaging in volunteerism, stewardship projects, and environmental education programs are additional ways of experiencing Colorado outdoors.

Summer of 2007, Business Research Division in the Leeds School of Business at University of CO conducted a public survey on trends , issues and needs of CO. Findings were:

-75% of Coloradans participate in outdoor recreational activities on a weekly basis.

More than 32% engaged in outdoor recreation 2 to 4 times per week and 20% participated more than four times per week.

- 47% used trails, open spaces, or parks one to four times per week in the past year.

Average distance traveled to recreate outdoors was 17 miles during the week and on weekends increased to 41 miles.

-About 44 % of those who participated in the Colorado Public Survey learn about outdoor recreation activities

from friends or family and one-third finds out about opportunities from magazines or newspapers. Many respondents also reported they gather information from living in the area and through personal experience.

4. Environment

Following are just some of the potential environmental changes that could impact Parks revenue and visitation.

- Forest die-offs from the mountain pine beetle infestation and other arboreal diseases, which causes immediate and long-term issues ranging from diminished scenic value to elevated forest fire risk to trail and campground safety concerns.
- Potential closures of our lakes and reservoirs to boating because of non-native invasive species such as zebra mussels. Tamarisk continues to invade quality riparian areas commonly used for outdoor recreation.
- Climate change increases the serious long-term threat to Colorado's recreation and tourism economy. (Tourism comprised about 10% of the state's economy in 2006) (Longwoods 2007).
- Forest Fires near or in state parks. Fire bans in effect.
- Drought and water shortages.
- Highway construction on I-70, I-25 and other major routes.
- Wildlife threats: perceived heightened danger from predatory animals (bears, mountain lions, etc.); rabies outbreak in squirrels, rabbits or rodents.
- Upswing in diseases associated with outdoor activities tick fever, hantavirus, West Nile virus, etc.
- Safety perceptions: media coverage of child abductions, gang activities and drug violence at state parks; fear about people carrying guns at state parks.
- Competition: Fee implementation or changes on other public or private lands.

5. Partnerships

Any changes in our existing partnerships and funding sources (Federal, General Fund, GOCO, Lottery, Foundation, Friends Groups) would have an impact on our park operations thereby affecting our revenue and visitation. Likewise, new partnerships could have a positive effect and are typically limited by staff resources to build these relationships. Potential and existing partners are listed in Action Plan #8.

The next two sections are covered by Action Plans in the website section (#3) above.

Promoting Parks by Geographic Regions

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The concept is to cross promote parks within a geographic region, to collaborate on shared community events and to develop potential external organizational partnerships between several parks within a region. Parks that are in close proximity to one another can provide visitors with information that reaches beyond park boundaries to the surrounding communities. This gives visitors reasons to stay longer while building good community relationships that may participate in reciprocal information about parks.

Identify local and regional attractions categorized by topic:

- Art (galleries, museums, practical opportunities)
- Biking (rentals, trails, scenic routes)
- Fairs, festivals, races, and tournaments
- Other recreational Activities (golf courses, horseback riding, paintball arenas, whitewater rafting)
- Historical Attractions (markers, monuments, sites, train loops)

- Alternative Places for Outdoor Activities
 - Fishing (Gold Medal water, float trips)
 - Camping (bordering wilderness areas, national forest, KOA)
 - Geocaching
 - Geology (rockhounding, features, interpretive tours, spelunking)
 - Hiking (14ers, trail loops, wilderness areas)
 - Hunting (GMU borders, species list)
 - Wildlife viewing

Provide several trip options targeting other interests of visitors:

- Gym for exercising
- High-risk sports (bungee jumping, skydiving)
- Internet café/Free Wi-Fi
- Movie theaters
- Restaurants
- Shopping (antiques, malls, quaint towns)
- Starbucks

Base Camp: *Promote the Park as an economical/green/adventurous/relaxing place to stay as a base camp for the whole family/group.*

- Emphasize creature comfort amenities:
 - Cleanliness
 - Bathrooms
 - Showers
 - Visitor Centers

Costs/Investments

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Web page in each Park's Website (Could replace *Local Attractions* link): *Virtually free*

Could also make money by charging for ad placement on page if policy and guidelines developed and approved.

Individualized Flyer/Brochure at each park: Would incur moderate setup/printing/maintenance costs. Could recoup costs by charging for placement in literature.

Marketing exchanges with local businesses/agencies: *Relatively high*

From Colorado State Parks Marketing Assessment Summary – 2009 Corona Research

ANCILLARY SERVICES

It is worth noting that approximately 34 percent of park visitors leave the park and return during the course of their visit. While the purpose of this departure is not known, it may warrant further research, as the placement of ancillary services in parks may hold the potential for generating additional revenues while also providing convenience to park visitors.

Such a service would likely be unnecessary at all parks, because the practice varies by park. For example, the parks with the highest leave-and-return rates have very high proportions: San Luis (87% leave and return at least once), Pearl Lake (71%), and Lathrop (59%). At other parks, it is an uncommon practice, as seen at Eldorado Canyon (9%), Lory (10%), and Castlewood Canyon (11%). Statistics for every park are shown in the Visitor Survey report.

The addition of such services would likely be somewhat controversial, though. In another question series in the Future Directions Survey, visitors were asked if they would be pleased or displeased with specific changes. When asked about the addition of places to buy convenience items or supplies, 36 percent said they would be pleased by that change, but 19 percent said they would be displeased. (The remainder had no opinion.) Of nine potential changes, only three – this, the addition of cabins with comfort amenities such as bedding and linens, and added campsite features such as child play areas and upgraded showers/bathrooms – had significant opposition, though in all cases approval was greater than opposition.

SAMPLE PARK MANAGER SURVEY

Barr Lake State Park

Park's Unique Features

Since the early 1900s, Barr Lake State Park has been known as a premier bird-watching area where over 300 species of birds have been spotted. Home to the Colorado Bird Observatory, the park has recently gained fame for hosting one of only a few successful bald eagles nests on the Front Range. Nature enthusiasts can enjoy a unique combination of activities from the wildlife watching to hunting and fishing at Barr Lake. The 2,715-acre park located northeast of Denver also provides a peaceful, relaxing haven for visitors to enjoy sailing and canoeing in calm waters.

Regional Outdoor Activities Outside of the Park

Fishing

Gold Medal Water/float trips

Camping

Bordering wilderness areas/national forest/ROA

Geocaching

http://www.geocaching.com

Geology

rockhounding/features/interp tours/spelunking

Hiking

14ers/wilderness areas/trail loops

Hunting

park GMUs/species list

Wildlife Viewing

species list

Other

Regional Events

Fairs

Festivals

Races

Tournaments

Other

Regional Attractions

Art

galleries/museums/places to photograph/paint

Biking

rentals/trails/scenic routes

Historical/Cultural

markers/monuments/sites/train loops

Most Prevalent Flora and Fauna

Rare/Unique Flora/Fauna

Other

Recreational Activities Outside the Park (non-outdoor specific)

Golfing

Horseback Riding

Paintball

Whitewater Rafting

Non-Outdoor Related Activities Outside of Park

Gyms

yoga/pilates/curves

Extreme Sports

bungee jumping/skydiving

Internet Access

Wi-Fi Hotspots/Internet cafes

Theaters

Movie/Play/Orchestra

Restaurants

fancy/home cookin'/chain/specialty

Shopping

malls/antiques/quaint towns

Coffee

Starbucks/cafe

Other

Promoting Parks by Recreation Interests

Based on Corona Research's word clouds, favorite activities and interests were identified for each park. Using this data, we could potentially group parks that offer similar activities so that visitors are aware of all State Park locations where they can engage in their interests. Camping, fishing, hiking and boating were by far the most often cited activities. Others word that came up included nature, park experience, family time/vacation, wildlife, weekend getaway. Our next task is to group the parks by interest and then also integrate the Park's unique features (separate doc posted in SharePoint) to develop a more detailed plan for each park. An efficient, cost-effective way to get this information to the public is through our website and we will create landing pages for each of the most popular activities.

Other Marketing & Promotional Ideas

A comprehensive review of Colorado State Parks past promotional and marketing efforts was made by the Marketing Team (include doc in Appendices?). In addition, findings and recommendations from external sources were reviewed and include:

-SCORP 2008 Update

http://parks.state.co.us/SiteCollectionImages/parks/Programs/LWCF/SCORP/2008_SCORP_Exec_Summary.pdf

-Corona 2009 Recommendations

<http://parks.state.co.us/SiteCollectionImages/parks/News/COSateParksMarketingAssessmentSummaryFinalReport.pdf>

YOUTH- Lt. Governor's Colorado Kids Outdoors Initiative Report 2010

http://dnrteams/divisions/parks/DFPlan/mark/Shared%20Documents/LtGov%27s_CKO_Initiative_Report_2010.pdf

YOUTH, HISPANICS, WOMEN- Outdoor Foundation Research Participation 2008

http://dnrteams/divisions/parks/DFPlan/mark/Shared%20Documents/Outdoor_FoundationResearchParticipation2008.pdf