



Rex Derr  
Director

STATE OF WASHINGTON

## WASHINGTON STATE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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February 24, 2009

*Approved for 3/3/09*

*Rex Derr*

**TO:** Rex Derr, Director

**THROUGH:** Judy Johnson, Deputy Director

**FROM:** Larry Fairleigh, Assistant Director *LJF 2/25/09*

**SUBJECT:** Fort Worden State Park Non-Profit Management Partner Selection

### Background

At its September 2008 meeting, the Commission adopted a *Use and Development Plan and Guidelines for Rehabilitation* for Fort Worden State Park. The September 2008 action also created new possibilities for adapting the park's management structure to more fully engage the private sector in developing programs, rehabilitating park facilities, and helping the Commission achieve its vision for the park as a center for life-long learning.

Towards this end, the Commission authorized a series of steps and guidance for selection of a potential non-profit management partner with which to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Preliminary to a long-term agreement, the intent of the MOU is to build a formal relationship with a suitable non-profit and for both parties to demonstrate to each other the commitment and capacity necessary to enter a long-term agreement that would achieve the Commission's life-long learning center vision.

A summary of the Commission-approved non-profit selection process, MOU negotiation framework, and other specific direction regarding transition of selected Fort Worden State Park management functions to a non-profit management partner is included in Attachment A.

### Non-Profit Selection

As per the Commission-approved process, Fort Worden State Park and Parks Development staff recently published a solicitation for letters of interest from non-profit organizations interested in developing a long-term management partnership at Fort Worden State Park (Attachment B). The solicitation was posted on Washington State Parks and the WSU Extension Economic Development websites for contracting opportunities, sent to Port Townsend-Jefferson County Leader, Peninsula Daily News, Seattle Times, mailed to ten (10) non-profit organizations in five states and sent to five philanthropic websites around the country.

Additionally, the Friends of Fort Worden provided funds to advertise the solicitation in *The Chronicles of Philanthropy*, a periodical geared towards non-profit boards and managers recognized as the leading publication in the field and with a nation-wide circulation. The five-week response period for letters of interest ended on January 9, 2009.

We have received a single letter of interest from Centrum, one of our existing major non-profit partners (Attachment C). Fort Worden State Park and Parks Development staff have determined that the letter of interest from Centrum is responsive and provides the information requested through the agency's formal solicitation. **I recommend your approval of State Parks entering into negotiations regarding development of an MOU with Centrum.**

#### Negotiating Team

I have assigned the task of negotiating the MOU with Centrum to Kate Burke, Fort Worden Area Manager, Steve Hahn, Parks Development Program Manager, and Peter Herzog, Parks Planner. This core team will draw upon assistance from other agency specialists (e.g., Robyn Malmberg, Senior Budget Analyst) as necessary.

#### MOU Negotiation Process and Schedule

The next step in the process is to negotiate a MOU with Centrum for eventual consideration by the Commission and Centrum's Board. Again, the MOU is not the long-term agreement, but rather a systematic process through which Centrum will prove it has the capability to become a long-term management partner and we will demonstrate our willingness to transfer significant management authority, set necessary policy, and to the extent we can, commit adequate resources.

The Commission-approved framework will guide the negotiation process. Negotiations will generally include the following stages:

1. Hold an initial meeting with Centrum representatives to set ground rules, understand basic needs/desires, and agree to process specifics (March 2009).
2. Check-in and provide a status report to executive leadership (March 2009).
3. Work through management areas outlined in MOU Framework one by one, leaving budget-related items until after the 2009-11 agency budget is finalized (March – October 2009).
4. Check-in and provide a status report to executive leadership as the negotiating team completes key areas outlined in the framework (Monthly).
5. Provide a status report to the Commission at one of its regularly scheduled workshops (June 2009).
6. Preview draft MOU with a subcommittee of the Fort Worden Advisory Committee (October 2009)
7. Seek Commission approval of the MOU (December 2009).

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Authorization to Proceed

Through this memo, I request authorization to negotiate the MOU with Centrum for the purposes and using the process described above. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can provide any clarification.