

Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources

ANNUAL REPORT - July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006.

Wyoming Quality of Life Result –

- Wyoming values the unique aspects of its western heritage, providing residents and visitors expanding access to cultural, historical and recreational experiences.
- Wisely conserving and managing Wyoming's energy, natural resources and environment to meet the economic and social needs of current and future generations.
- Wyoming families and individuals live in a stable, safe, supportive, nurturing, healthy environment.

Department/Division Programs :

General Information:

Milward Simpson, Director
State Parks and Cultural Resources
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Year established and reorganized:

Established 1895 and reorganized July 1, 1999 as the Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources

Basic Facts: Full time employees authorized - 181

Part time employees authorized - 92

Budget – 07-08 -\$46,449,148.00

State Parks and Cultural Resources is comprised of three major divisions, Administrative Services, Cultural Resources and State Parks/Historic Sites/Trails. These divisions are made up of 35 state parks and historic sites, state trails program, state museum, state archives, arts council, historic preservation office, office of the state archaeologist, human resources, information technology, public information and accounting. The department headquarters is located in Cheyenne, with field offices in Laramie and at state parks and historic sites throughout Wyoming.

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life :

The mission of State Parks and Cultural Resources is to contribute to the quality of life in Wyoming and provide our citizens and visitors with enriched and well-rounded lives by enjoying the state's arts, parks and history.

Story behind the performance:

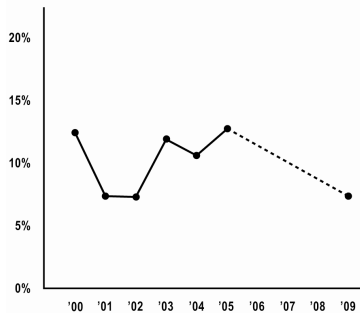
Performance measure #1 – Develop and maintain a staff of employees that are capable, efficient and proud to be employed by the Department.

Employee development and training started with evaluations of current position description questionnaires (PDQ's) to reflect current duties. This resulted in reorganization within the many sections of the department. Training sessions were held on stress management, health and wellness, methamphetamine awareness, employee recognition, accounting/WOLFS classes, and cross training for many functions. We contracted an Employee Satisfaction Survey that had incredible promising results for our workforce. Almost 90% new what was expected of them on the job, ethics are a strong consideration in their decision

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making on the job, 80% find the work they do challenging, and 77% say their responsibilities and priorities are clear. Employee training budgets will continue to be addressed in the future to cover all employees and continue our efforts towards making our workforce more focused, knowledgeable, productive and development of career paths. Our turnover rate was 13.3%, which included retirements, resignations, transfers and terminations.

Employee turnover rate



Performance Measure #2 – Provide educational outreach and customer service to the public. This includes providing information, through a variety of channels including brochures, web sites and the media, that is correct, timely and easily accessible. Because of the diversity of the department and programs involved, these measures are broken down into six distinct areas: Administrative, Arts Council, Historic Preservation Office, State Museum, State Archives and the Division of State Parks and Historic Sites and Trails.

Administrative Services - To improve service we started by upgrading sixty new desktop and notebook computer systems statewide. Future plans are to convert existing owned units to a leasing program to better maintain consistency with hardware and software. The department's website has been redesigned and now provides correct, up-to-date information. We receive about 6000 web sessions per month, encompassing an average of 70,000 page views per month. We hope to increase the numbers by 10-20% over the next fiscal year with our new web designer on board and updates to our site. With limited budget increases we have been able to increase our newspaper advertising to promote special events, as well as designing and publishing in-house brochures, pamphlets and flyers.

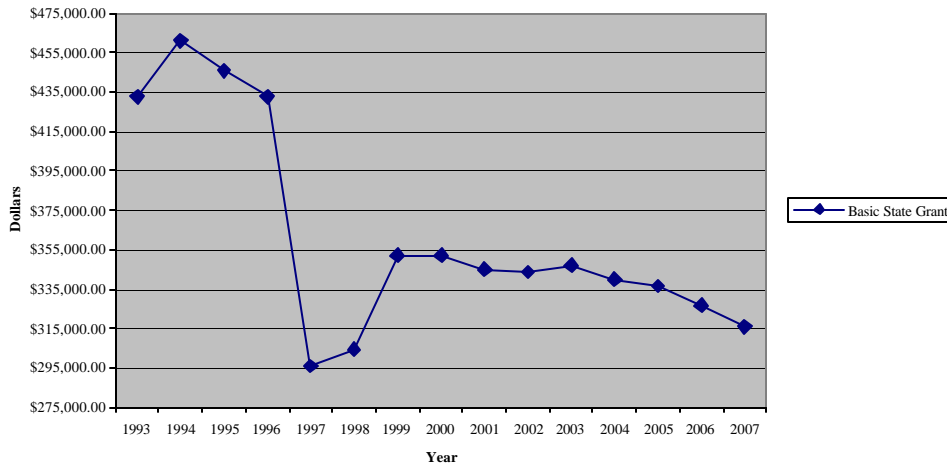
Our agency was also added administrative responsibilities for the Historic Mine Trail and Historic Byway Commission, Cultural Trust Fund Board, and the day-to-day operation of the Wyoming Veteran's Memorial Museum. In some cases personnel and fiscal capabilities were restricted or limited, and required adjustments with other program priorities. Future management options and funding may be sought to address these administrative responsibilities, including additional personnel or budgets as these programs evolve.

Arts Council - awarded grants in all 23 counties, plus Arts in Education, Arts Across Wyoming, Open Door, Arts Access, Folk Arts, Technology in the Arts and Tumblewords program, and Literary, Performing and Visual Arts Fellowship program reaching 1.8 million participants. Funding for many programs has been decreasing since 1997, forcing the elimination of key grant programs – General Operating Support, Year-long Arts in Education programs, and Technical Assistance. The size of award levels has not increased as costs of projects has risen, and in some cases the award levels have decreased. With costs of operation continually rising, the Arts Council works hard to keep funding grant programs that provide much needed support of arts programs and projects in communities and schools.

- In FY05 the WAC awarded 296 grants to organizations and schools totaling \$434,829.
- In FY06 the WAC awarded 259 grants to organizations and schools totaling \$458,951.
- With the increases in General Fund approved by the 2006 Legislature, the amount budgeted by the WAC in State General Funds and the NEA Federal funds for grants to organizations and schools in FY07 is \$520,000.

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Change in the Basic State Grant



The Wyoming Arts Council (WAC) seeks to replace reduced NEA federal grant funding with State of Wyoming General Funds to support grants to organizations, schools and underserved communities, and general administrative costs. A request of \$241,900 in the Supplemental Budget will allow the Council to reinstate grant programs discontinued when the NEA federal grant funds were reduced in FY97 and bring program levels back up to previous funding levels.

Folks Arts has been a success story. The Arts Council received a program grant for FY06 from the National Endowment for the Arts, to assist building a strong folk arts program in Wyoming. A full-time Folk-Arts specialist was hired in December 2005 to develop and build upon programs that had been initiated. This led to a successful request to the 2006 Legislature for general funds to support the Folk Arts program in the 07-08 Biennium. The following growth has occurred –

- Convened the Folk Arts Advisory Committee to plan for growth of the program
- Began building and organizing the Wyoming Folklife Collection of materials and resources
- Purchased fieldwork equipment and data management software
- Formed relationship with U.W. American Studies to build program for ongoing fieldwork and graduate assistance programs
- Expanded Folk Arts grant programs
- Recruited folk artists to apply for Arts Council Roster, and convened a Folk Arts Panel to evaluate the applications and make recommendations for the roster to the Arts Council Board
- Provided referrals to Wyoming, regional and national organizations for presenting Wyoming folk artists

State Museum – Through museum exhibits, programs, and collection activities, visitors received a better understanding of Wyoming’s heritage and culture. Visitors to the State Museum filled out 391 surveys; 304 of those visitors rated their experience “excellent”, 77 rates it as “good.” A total of 3,948 people attended museum child and adult education programs. Statewide 1,142 students used the State Museum “Discovery Trunks”. Usage was down due to elementary school curriculum requirements –Proficiency Assessment for Wyoming (PAWS) with requirements and emphasis placed on reading, writing and math. Future discussions with school districts are scheduled.

In order to make educational exhibits available to people in more areas of Wyoming, the State Archives and Museum are investigating the creation of a series of electronic kiosks that could be placed statewide. Each would provide exhibits and additional information about Wyoming history and prehistory.

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State Archives and Government Records – has strived to provide complete and accurate documentation of Wyoming governmental history for the public, ensuring efficient use of resources through access and accountability. The Government records section conducted a survey and 42 were returned, with 37 indicating that patrons had received excellent service. A total of thirty workshops, orientation programs and tours, and program/displays for the public and patrons were sponsored or co-sponsored by the Government Records Branch. Three of the workshops were co-sponsored with the State Historical Advisory Board (SHRAB), and activity funds by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), National Archives and Records Services. In partnership with local hosting organizations in Cody, Riverton, and Cheyenne, these workshops provided people from state and local government, and private organizations an opportunity to learn how to legally and properly manage all types of records including electronic, prepare for and handle disasters, and provide proper access to their records as provided by the Wyoming Public Records Law. Other workshops were conducted with groups such as the Wyoming Bar Association, University of Wyoming students and teachers, Municipal court staff, Laramie County Community College, Casper Employment Office, Albany County Genealogical Society, Department of Family Services and New State Employee Orientation. There were 122 new records retention schedules legally approved by the State Records Committee.

Micrographic Services microfilmed 709 cubic feet of records, and a total of 5,891 cubic feet of records were preserved and made accessible by staff, who processed 10,296 research requests for patrons.

State Parks and Historic Sites/Trails

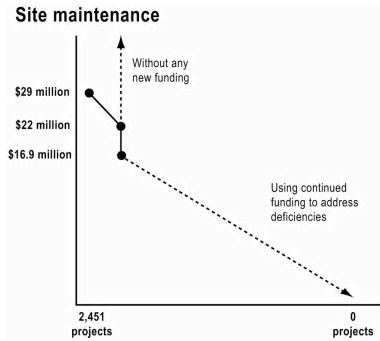
During the past year, staff worked with a noted contractor to conduct and complete an economic impact study for state parks and historic sites. The report determined that \$39.7 million of new visitor spending was generated per year, supporting 859 jobs, generating \$22.5 million in wages and salaries statewide and contributing \$2.7 million in state and local taxes. There were also six Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants totaling \$245,789 awarded to fund recreational based projects in various communities. Staff conducted site criteria reviews for Curt Gowdy State Park and Bear River State Park to evaluate additional park lands at these sites. Staff prepared an evaluation of the Fort Phil Kearny land expansion project and a preliminary park evaluation and development plan for Duncan Ranch. An emphasis has been placed on existing staff in developing and coordinating volunteer services in an effort to meeting a growing demand for services. The State Trails Program issued twenty-two Recreational Trail Program grants, and added 30 new miles of ORV trails and approximately 300-400 miles of new county roads were enrolled. Maintenance, grooming, rock removal, tree trimming, and signage improvements and construction of information kiosks were made to the trails system statewide.

The 2006 legislature allocated \$116,641 to the State Parks and Historic Sites division for seasonal employee wages to help attract more applicants for seasonal jobs. Hourly wages were increased and the adjustment has helped the division attract more applicants and offset high gas prices and increased seasonal employee driving costs since many of our parks and sites are located in remote locations.

Performance Measure #3 – Address critical maintenance needs at State Parks and Historic Sites.

The 2005 legislature provided the Division of State Parks and Historic Sites an appropriation of \$7 million to address critical and deferred maintenance deficiencies. The appropriation was used to correct several deficiencies that were identified in a report provided to the division by an architectural and planning firm in November 2003. The 2006 legislature provided the division an additional \$5.1 million to continue addressing same report. The report identified approximately \$29.4 million in critical and deferred maintenance deficiencies and the division will request an additional \$4.3 million in the 2007 legislative session to continue its effort to address and complete deficiencies related to buildings and facilities, and directed by the Joint Appropriations Committee. The Transportation, Highways and Military Affairs committee on behalf of the division are requesting \$15 million to address road related deficiencies and \$2 million every two years to maintain to help prevent the agency from a similar “catch up” situation in the future.

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There were 2,217,492 visitors to our state parks and historic sites. Based on a visitor use survey it is estimated that 45.8% of visitors to state parks are residents and 54.2% are non-residents. For historic sites it is estimated that 21.1% are residents and 78.9% are non-residents. Staff continually evaluate survey results to determine customer satisfaction with our state parks and historic sites. The Trails program continues to calculate the total number of permits and at this time 17,693 residents purchased snowmobile permits; 973 were sold for commercial use and 18,073 non-residents purchased permits. There were 39,221 Off-road vehicle (ORV) permits sold.

Staff oversees 11 state parks, 21 historic sites, 2 archaeological and petroglyph sites and 1 recreational area totaling 35 parks and sites. State parks and many historic sites were open for business 365 days this past year. The division continues to update and develop information for web page contacts dealing with state parks and historic sites. The division continues to calculate the total number of fees collected between July 1, 2005 and June 30, 2006.

The division has identified two critical needs not previously identified. They are: the need to drill a new well at Ft. Fetterman Historic Site and funding to meet federal EPA regulations regarding the prevention and control of oil spills at eight fuel storage tanks owned by the Department at various locations statewide. A supplemental budget request will be submitted to cover these two items – \$70,000 well & \$192,600 gas tanks.

Performance Measure #4 – Preserving Wyoming’s Museum and Archives artifacts and records by reducing or stopping the rate of decay. Preserving Wyoming’s history, as well as its arts and other cultural resources is just as important as providing access to them. Also, through the development of an educational history web portal, the department is able to preserve and promote the state’s history in an electronic form. This portal, suitable for use by students, would provide the historical information in an educational context.

Work continued on negotiations to obtain a new archives and museum collections center. Short-term and long-term solutions are still being addressed as identified in Paragon Research Associates consulting report. The department’s previous request to the State Building Commission for \$18 million was denied, and we were asked to look at other alternatives including existing commercial properties. Short-term the department has been negotiating with the landlord of the existing museum storage to fix windows, doors, HVAC and security systems, which will require renegotiating the existing lease for the short-term. Long-term the department is still working with DAI-Construction Management on solutions for a combined Archives/Museum storage, office and curation facility to meet our current needs, and allow room for growth. A recommendation will be made to the State Building Commission in the near future with potential budget appropriation request.

Discussions continue with various state agencies and other entities on the best process for developing the state’s history portal, or expanding existing sites that are already operating within the state. At this time the

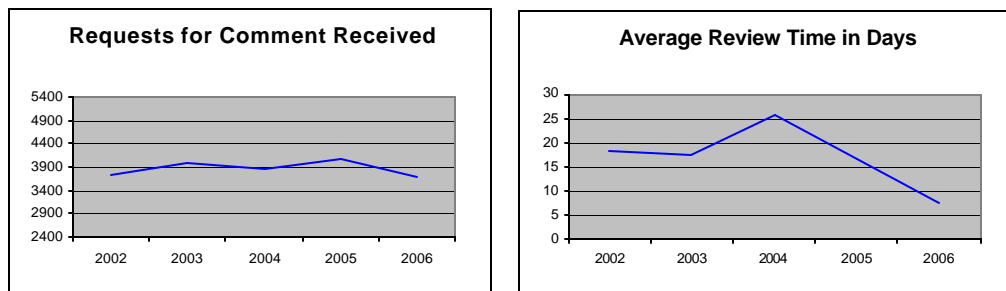
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department has not developed a final recommended plan and will continue the discussions, and work with the department's web designer, which position is currently being advertised.

Performance Measure #5 – Provide a balance between historic preservation and economic development through accurate and timely review of historically significant sites within the state.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has modified staff responsibilities to better serve the public and federal agencies. Staff attended formal training on Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and completing National Register Nominations. They also received training on GIS technical applications and basic database training. Due to training efforts staff are assigned to do some level of Section 106 review, complete National Register Nominations and are well equipped to provide technical assistance in these programs.

SHPO successfully negotiated and signed a statewide protocol with the BLM that will dramatically streamline the Section 106 review process. Training sessions provided by SHPO and BLM were attended by Federal staff, SHPO staff, and cultural resource contractors. A draft Programmatic Agreement with the U.S. Forest Services has also been completed on streamlining their Section 106 consultation process, and we are in negotiations with several other Federal agencies to develop agreements to streamline the Section 106 process. SHPO received 3,730 requests for comment on federal projects under Section 106 this past year and averaged 7 days to review and comment, which also included consultations with the State Land Board on proposed state land leases and potential affects to known cultural resources. SHPO is working closely with Federal agencies and local governments to develop planning documents for future projects, but were unable to provide up-to-date information on cultural resource sites due to a backlog of data waiting to be entered into our database. We will seek additional funding sources to facilitate bringing our databases current.



Cultural Records Office

During 2005, the Cultural Records Office completed a major project sponsored by the Department of Energy entitled "Adaptive Management and Planning Models for Cultural Resources in Oil and Gas Fields in Wyoming and New Mexico." This project helped to bring the GIS system to approximately 55% of being complete. This is 20% below our goal, however during this time period the number of new resources recorded and the number of new inventories almost doubled from what had been recorded and submitted to the SHPO in 2004. Other projects completed during this time period include Atlantic Rim, with funding provided by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Moxa Arch Oil and Gas Field, with funding provided by EOG, Inc. The EOG, Inc. funding was unique because the industry felt this was a critical piece of information for the oil and gas development to go forward smoothly.

All of the information created under the projects described above, are all now hosted on our website. During 2005, 56,826 site and project queries were run on our on-line system, an 80% increase from 2004. Electronic submission of Section 106 project information has also been a priority for the office with progress being made on a final version of the software. The backlog of Section 106 reports to be processed continues to be a priority, and with the dramatic increases in energy development is causing unprecedented demands to SHPO staff. At this time, there are approximately nine and one-half five drawer filing cabinets of materials, and along with the increase volume of new Section 106 projects, it

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remains at status quo. Two full time permanent positions are needed to meet the long-term demand, and funding addressed in our budget - \$212,000.00. Despite their best intentions, the BLM has met with us on several occasions to discuss using Energy Policy Act monies they received to fund SHPO assistance in processing Section 106 documentation, no such positions have yet been agreed upon and BLM has made clear these positions are to assist them with only two field offices and will be temporary (one year) in nature, where our needs are predicted to be ongoing 20-30 years. .

Cooperative agreements, which were renewed during 2005, include the BLM data sharing task order, the Bureau of Reclamation data sharing MOU, and a continuation of support from the Wyoming Department of Transportation. Consideration was given to several different federal grant programs during this time; however, many of these have undergone reduction in funding. Future cooperative grant projects are being considered.

Education and Outreach

SHPO managed to make some headway in building our education and outreach program despite having to focus our attention on Section 106 related work. Staff offered training sessions on Section 106, Preservation Tax Incentive Programs and Certified Local Governments and the National Register to the public, members of the Wyoming Association of Municipalities, Certified Local Governments, state and federal agencies. SHPO arranged for a nationally recognized speaker to discuss design guidelines for communities at the annual Wyoming Association of Municipalities meeting

SHPO established a new program called the "Wyoming Centennial Farm and Ranch". The program is designed to honor farms and ranches in Wyoming owned and operated for 100 years or more by the same family. The first awards will be presented by the Governor at the 2006 State Fair. We developed partnerships with the Wyoming Stock Growers, Wyoming Wool Growers, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Rural Electric Association and the Wyoming Business Council and we are seeking funding from private sources to purchase signs for each award recipient's fence or barn. This program was developed utilizing existing staff and with no additional funding. Continuing and growing this program and other outreach programs in future years will likely require additional funding resources.

Planning, National Register, Granting, and Tax Incentives Services

Four subcategories are represented within this program, Context and Planning, National Register, Certified Local Government, and Preservation Tax Incentives. The Governor appointed Historic Context Steering Committee met five times in this fiscal year and drafted a plan for developing Historic Contexts, including a cost analysis for developing a priority list of contexts, which was not ready prior to the biennium budget submittal. The SHPO staff completed a draft context for stone circle sites and progress was made on a draft context for historic military sites. The context studies are used to examine a specific historic theme by synthesizing existing data and analyzing what we already know, what is likely to be found, and what is worthy of preservation. Contexts will be a valuable planning tool that will ultimately expedite project permitting while enhancing the State's ability to protect important resources. This program was developed with no additional staff and no additional funding to develop and write contexts, therefore limiting SHPO's ability to produce contexts independently. To develop the contexts supplemental budget requests will be submitted as recommended by the Historic Context Steering Committee. \$2,250,000.00

SHPO staff attended training on writing National Register Nominations and each Cheyenne staff person was assigned the task of completing a nomination, one has been completed and 6 are in draft form. The National Register review board and National Park Service approved 13 National Register Nominations this year including 10 Cheyenne schools that were part of a National Register District nomination. A total of 7 more National Register nominations were submitted for review and 12 additional nominations are in progress.

As defined within the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) each SHPO is responsible for certifying local governments as CLGs and functions as a pass-through for at least 10% of our federal grant award for development of local historic preservation programs. SHPO provided \$54,608 in grants to local communities and approved 15 different projects throughout the state, representing 9 counties. SHPO staff

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provided training and technical assistance to Certified Local Governments. We are mandated to pass-through 10% of our total federal grant, which continue to decline.

Wyoming State Archaeology Office

The Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist, survey section completed 50 new projects in this fiscal year, including a partial inventory of the National Guard collection (in cooperation with the Wyoming Militia Historical Society) and survey projects for private engineering companies. Survey section highlights for this fiscal year included new survey and evaluative test excavations for the Wyoming National Guard at the Guernsey training areas. This resulted in over 100 new prehistoric/historic cultural resource sites being identified and recorded. Fieldwork was completed on an archaeological data recovery project for Yellowstone National Park.

The State Archaeologist's Office staff conducted 99 public outreach programs this fiscal year and reached over 3,500 people.

During a recent re-organization the Archaeology office became a program organizationally within the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), however, no funds existed for expenses related to attendance at meetings or in-service training, as this section is self-sustaining through billable time. We continue to work toward seeking funding solutions with fiscal limitations.

During the past fiscal year the curation facility at the University of Wyoming Archaeological Repository completed quality control checks on 97 inventory boxes. The curator and contract or intern assistants continue to conduct an inventory of the repository collections, handle research and outreach loans to various facilities, accession incoming collections from Section 106 projects, resolve old collection problems, assist with outreach, and a variety of other tasks. The demand for these services is increasing dramatically because Wyoming is the most active state in the nation with regard to Section 106 projects for federal undertakings. The curation facility was unable to do adequate outreach and effectively meet the increased demand on accessioning incoming collections with only one permanent employee.
