



Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy

## **Accountability Audit Report**

# **Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission**

**For the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024**

*Published September 26, 2024*

Report No. 1035564



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**Office of the Washington State Auditor  
Pat McCarthy**

September 26, 2024

Diana Dupuis, Director  
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
Olympia, Washington

**Report on Accountability**

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you to promote accountability, integrity and openness in government. The Office of the Washington State Auditor takes seriously our role of providing state and local governments with assurance and accountability as the independent auditor of public accounts. In this way, we strive to help government work better, cost less, deliver higher value and earn greater public trust.

Independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency for Commission operations. This information is valuable to management, the governing body and public stakeholders when assessing the government's stewardship of public resources.

Attached is our independent audit report on the Commission's compliance with applicable requirements and safeguarding of public resources for the areas we examined. We appreciate the opportunity to work with your staff and value your cooperation during the audit.

Sincerely,

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor  
Olympia, WA

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## AUDIT RESULTS

### Results in brief

This report describes the overall results and conclusions for the areas we examined. In those selected areas, Commission operations complied, in all material respects, with applicable state laws, regulations, and its own policies, and provided adequate controls over the safeguarding of public resources.

However, we noted certain matters related to fuel cards that we communicated to Commission management and the Commission in a letter dated September 18, 2024. We appreciate the Commission's commitment to resolving those matters.

In keeping with general auditing practices, we do not examine every transaction, activity, policy, internal control, or area. As a result, no information is provided on the areas that were not examined.

### About the audit

This report contains the results of our independent accountability audit of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2024.

Management is responsible for ensuring compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. This includes the design, implementation and maintenance of internal controls relevant to these objectives.

This audit was conducted under the authority of RCW 43.09.310, which requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to examine the financial affairs of all state agencies. Our audit involved obtaining evidence about the Commission's use of public resources, compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures, and internal controls over such matters. The procedures performed were based on our assessment of risks in the areas we examined.

Based on our risk assessment for the years ended June 30, 2024 and 2023, the areas examined were those representing the highest risk of fraud, loss, abuse, or noncompliance. We examined the following areas during this audit period:

- Accounts payable - general disbursements and credit cards
- Payroll - gross pay, benefits, overtime and leave cashouts
- Cash-receipting - timeliness and completeness of deposits
- Compliance with grants
- Tracking and monitoring of theft sensitive assets - fleet vehicles, equipment, and fuel cards

## RELATED REPORTS

### Financial

We perform an annual audit of the statewide basic financial statements, as required by state law (RCW 43.09.310). Our opinion on these financial statements is included in the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The ACFR reflects the financial activities of all funds, organizations, agencies, departments and offices that are part of the state's reporting entity. The results of that audit are published in a report issued by the Office of Financial Management in December of each year and can be found at [www.ofm.wa.gov](http://www.ofm.wa.gov).

### Federal programs

In accordance with the Single Audit Act, we annually audit major federal programs administered by the state of Washington. Rather than perform a single audit of each agency, we audit the state as a whole. The results of that audit are published in a report issued by the Office of Financial Management in March of each year.

### Special investigations

During the current audit period, we issued a report pursuant to the State Employee Whistleblower Act (Chapter 42.40 RCW). That report is available on our website, <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission sets policy direction for a diverse system of 124 developed state parks, marine state parks, long-distance trails, heritage sites and many state park properties. Parks also administers a variety of recreation programs, including recreational Boating Safety, Winter Recreation and Folk and Traditional Arts. The Commission has approximately 550 full-time and 500 seasonal employees who provide public access to significant natural, cultural, historical and recreational resources. There are also another estimated 1,200 volunteers across the state who contribute approximately 190,000 hours annually to help provide parks and recreation services and protect resources under the Commission's care.

The Commission, headquartered in Thurston County, has a \$234 million operating and \$164 million capital budget for fiscal years 2022 and 2023. The mission of the Commission is: "To care for Washington's most treasured lands, waters, and historic places. State parks connect all Washingtonians to their diverse natural and cultural heritage and provide recreational and educational opportunities that enhance their lives."

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is made up of seven citizen volunteers appointed by the governor to staggered six-year terms. The commission is charged with providing policy direction for the agency. The Commission holds four regular meetings in pre-determined locations around the state, four virtual meetings and one planning meeting a year. The Commission hires a Director to manage the park system and make all operational decisions."

### Contact information related to this report

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Address:   | Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission<br>P.O. Box 42650<br>Olympia, WA 98504-2650 |
| Contact:   | Natasha House, Deputy Director, Administrative Services                                      |
| Telephone: | (360) 902-8840   |
| Website:   | <a href="http://www.parks.wa.gov">www.parks.wa.gov</a>                                       |

*Information current as of report publish date.*

### Audit history

You can find current and past audit reports for the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission at <http://portal.sao.wa.gov/ReportSearch>.

## ABOUT THE STATE AUDITOR'S OFFICE

The State Auditor's Office is established in the Washington State Constitution and is part of the executive branch of state government. The State Auditor is elected by the people of Washington and serves four-year terms.

We work with state agencies, local governments and the public to achieve our vision of increasing trust in government by helping governments work better and deliver higher value.

In fulfilling our mission to provide citizens with independent and transparent examinations of how state and local governments use public funds, we hold ourselves to those same standards by continually improving our audit quality and operational efficiency, and by developing highly engaged and committed employees.

As an agency, the State Auditor's Office has the independence necessary to objectively perform audits, attestation engagements and investigations. Our work is designed to comply with professional standards as well as to satisfy the requirements of federal, state and local laws. The Office also has an extensive quality control program and undergoes regular external peer review to ensure our work meets the highest possible standards of accuracy, objectivity and clarity.

Our audits look at financial information and compliance with federal, state and local laws for all local governments, including schools, and all state agencies, including institutions of higher education. In addition, we conduct performance audits and cybersecurity audits of state agencies and local governments, as well as state whistleblower, fraud and citizen hotline investigations.

The results of our work are available to everyone through the more than 2,000 reports we publish each year on our website, [www.sao.wa.gov](http://www.sao.wa.gov). Additionally, we share regular news and other information via an email subscription service and social media channels.

We take our role as partners in accountability seriously. The Office provides training and technical assistance to governments both directly and through partnerships with other governmental support organizations.

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