

# Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources

## Strategic Plan

### FY 2011 - 2012

#### **Wyoming Quality of Life Results:**

- Wyoming values the unique aspects of its western heritage, providing residents and visitors expanding access to cultural, historical and recreational experiences.
- Wyoming's natural resources are managed to maximize the economic, environmental and social prosperity of current and future generations.
- Wyoming families and individuals live in a stable, safe, supportive, nurturing, healthy environment.
- Wyoming state government is a responsible steward of state assets and effectively responds to the needs of residents and guests.

#### **Contribution to Wyoming's Quality of life:**

This agency contributes to the Wyoming quality of life through a combination of preservation, education/outreach, planning/construction/maintenance, public safety and economic development by providing opportunities to learn about and enjoy the state's arts, parks and history.

#### **Basic Facts:**

The Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources (Arts Parks & History) consists of approximately 181 full time, 12 permanent part-time, and 130-150 seasonal personnel. The department consists of two divisions: the Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails (SPHS&T), and the Division of Cultural Resources. In addition, the department includes an administrative services arm (Director's Office, Human Resources, Accounting, Information Technology and Public Information/Education) serving both divisions.

The department's headquarters is located in Cheyenne, with State Historic Preservation and State Archaeologist field offices in Laramie, Trails Program offices in Lander and State parks and historic sites located statewide. Our programs serve over 2,500,000 people each year, in-state and out-of-state.

The total operating budget for the department for Fiscal Year 09-10 was \$50,579,884, of which \$35,480,412 were general funds. The Department's budget accounts for less than 1% of the state's overall General Fund budget.

A major economic development survey conducted in 2004 indicated that Wyoming’s state parks and historic sites had a \$39.7 million impact on the state’s economy, “...supporting 859 jobs, generating \$22.5 million in wages and salaries and contributing \$2.7 million in state and local taxes.”

**Five primary functions of our department include:**

*Preservation* – Protecting Wyoming’s important cultural resources

*Customer Service & Outreach* – Providing high quality access to Wyoming’s cultural, natural and recreational resources, and opportunities

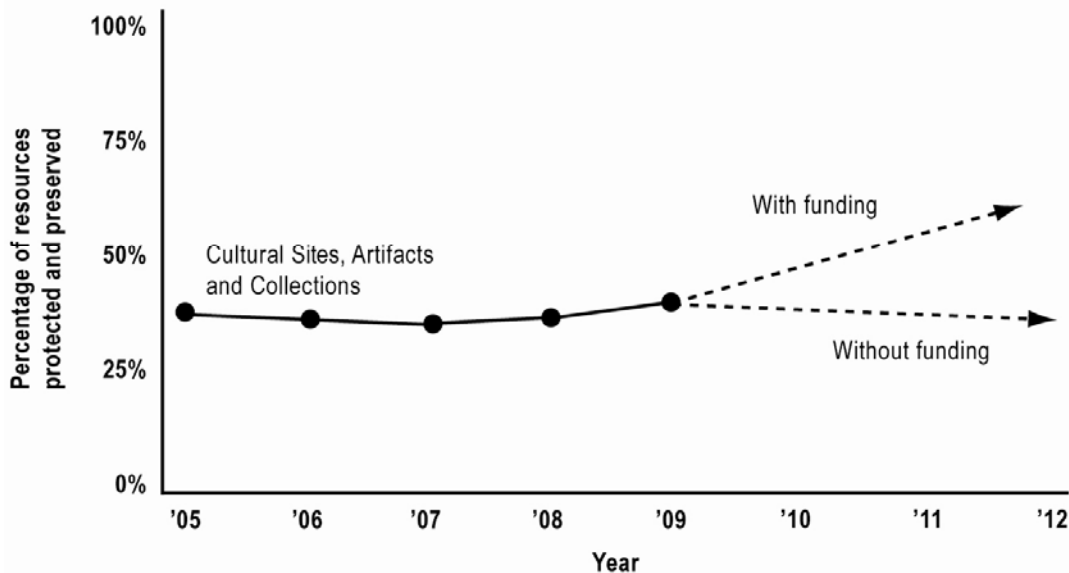
*Construction, Maintenance & Planning* – Providing high quality facilities for the public’s enjoyment

*Public Safety* – Providing a safe and healthy environment for our visitors and staff

*Economic Development* – Supporting jobs, attracting businesses and generating revenue for the state of Wyoming and Wyoming communities

**#1: Preservation**

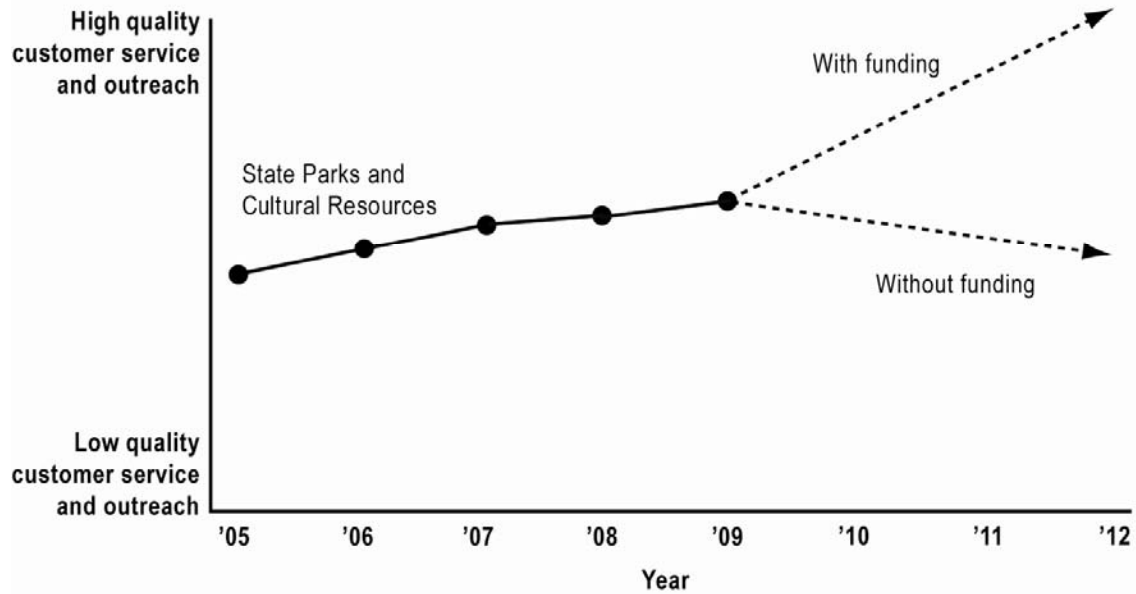
\$312,000 Exception Budget Request



The above graph is a pictorial estimate reflecting the recent quality of historical preservation across all of the relevant agency programs and the desired qualitative outcomes.

## #2: Customer Service and Outreach

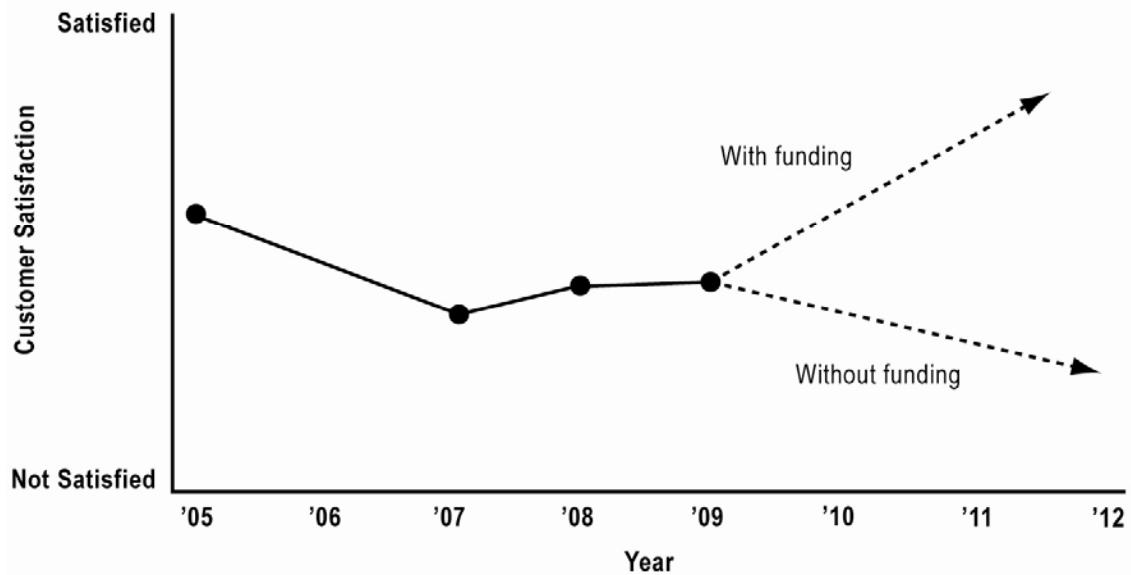
\$315,509 Exception Budget Request



The above is a pictorial estimate reflecting the recent quality of customer service and outreach across all of the relevant agency programs and the desired qualitative outcome.

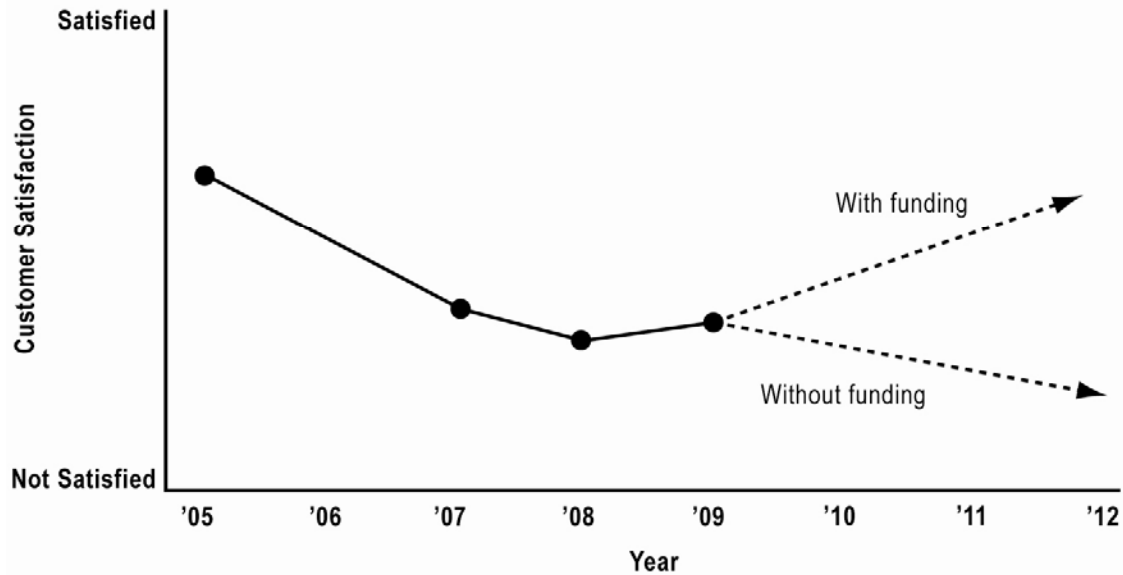
## #3: Planning, Construction, and Maintenance

\$529,500 Exception Budget Request



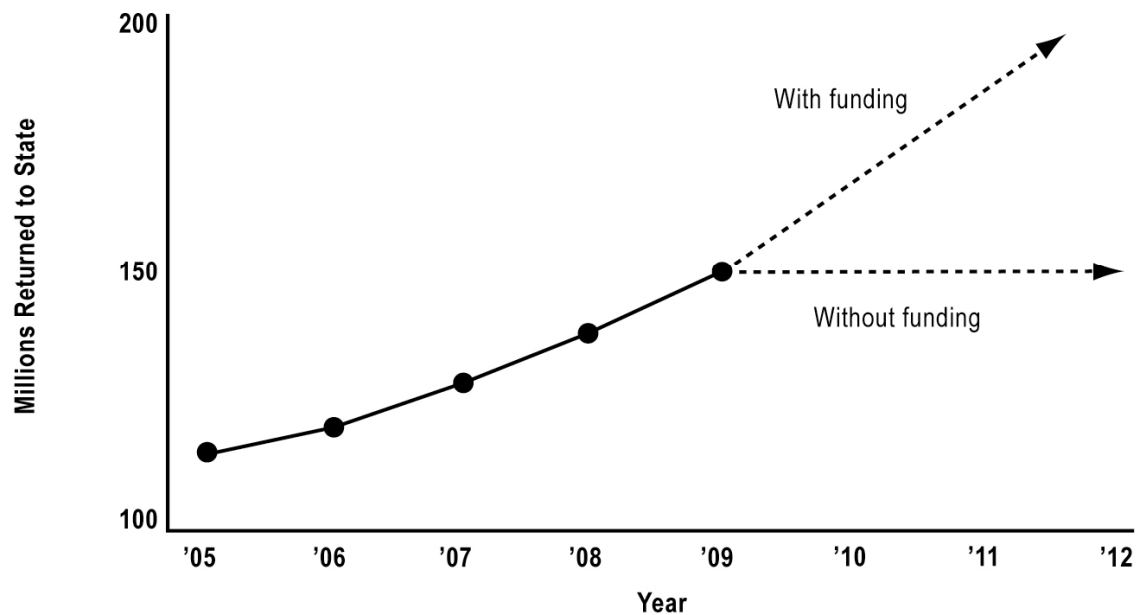
The above is a pictorial estimate reflecting the recent Construction, Maintenance and Planning across all of the relevant agency programs and the desired qualitative outcome.

#### #4: Public Safety



The above is a pictorial estimate reflecting the quality of customer satisfaction in relation to Public Safety across all of the relevant agency programs and the desired qualitative outcome.

#### #5: Revenue Generation



The above is a pictorial estimate reflecting the economic impact of the department on the state of Wyoming and the state's local communities.

### **The Story Behind the Performance:**

**#1: *Preservation*** - Protecting Wyoming's important cultural resources.

Part of the Agency's responsibility is to preserve Wyoming's important cultural resources. It accomplishes this function through stewardship of State Historic Sites and through the State Museum's artifacts collections, the State Archives collection of government documents, the State Archaeological Repository in Laramie, and the State Historic Preservation Office's identification and inventory of cultural resources.

The major challenges in accomplishing the 100% preservation goal are that constantly growing collections are exceeding available storage space for records, and the pressures on human and material resources precipitated, in part, by energy development, are making it difficult to maintain good preservation practices and to address serious backlogs in cultural resource inventory and database entry. Without increased dollars to continually upgrade and change museum exhibits customer satisfaction will decrease.

Although the programs within the Cultural Resources division did show some slight increases in their ability to provide protection and preservation to resources, without additional funding many of the program's abilities to continue to increase these numbers may remain status quo or decrease.

Lack of funding to preserve our historic sites and monuments could lead to vandalism, deterioration and possible loss of these wonderful resources.

**#2: *Customer Service & Outreach*** – Providing high quality access to Wyoming's cultural, natural & recreational resources and opportunities.

A primary function of both divisions in this agency is to provide high quality access to Wyoming's cultural, natural & recreational resources through excellent customer service and outreach. The agency accomplishes this goal for its customers by providing comprehensive, up-to-date information, recreational opportunities, safe environments, technical assistance, training, grant funding, interpretation and educational and award programs.

The major challenges in accomplishing the highest possible quality customer service and outreach involve increased customer expectations for up-to-date information technology; deficiencies in existing databases and servers; the diversion of user-generated and federal funds to cover external cost adjustments for staff; a lack of dedicated funding for outreach programs and inadequate funding for granting programs and associated administrative functions relative to increasing demand.

**#3: *Construction, Maintenance & Planning*** – Providing high quality facilities for the public's enjoyment.

Part of the Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails' responsibility is to assess, plan, maintain, improve and develop the department's 745 facilities, 239 miles of state parks and historic sites roads, 2000 miles of snowmobile trails and up to 7000 miles of enrolled ORV trails and routes. It accomplishes this through the allocation of resources for critical, deferred and major maintenance; through a regimented and robust planning and customer use survey process and through the regular use and deployment of motor vehicles and equipment. The major challenges in achieving the 100% customer satisfaction goal include lack of funding for addressing the remainder of a 30 + year backlog of critical and deferred maintenance of facilities and roads; increasing operations and maintenance costs relative to available funds; a lack of adequate financial resources to institute quality public surveys and planning, and continually worn out vehicles and equipment.

The goal of the Cultural Trust Fund is to serve the citizens of Wyoming by supporting Wyoming's culture and heritage through grant funding of innovative projects including the construction of cultural facilities and the preservation of historic structures. Funding these projects is accomplished by granting interest earned from the trust fund corpus to Wyoming organizations. Historically the ratio of requested funds to available funds has been 5:1. The funding level available for grants to address this deficiency will increase only as the corpus increases. This year saw a slight increase in funding, but will likely remain the same for the next two years without additional funds.

**#4: *Public Safety*** – Providing a safe and healthy environment for our staff and visitors.

Part of the Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails' responsibility is to ensure the health and safety of our visitors. It accomplishes this by ensuring adequate law enforcement personnel and equipment to enforce pertinent state laws and agency rules and regulations, and by hiring seasonal personnel charged with keeping our parks and historic sites clean and well maintained.

The major challenges in achieving the 100% customer satisfaction goal include a lack of funding for necessary law enforcement equipment that keeps officers safe.

**#5: *Economic Development*** – Supporting jobs, attracting businesses and generating revenue for the state of Wyoming and Wyoming communities.

Economic development is a major component of the business the Department does. Whether by supporting artistic and cultural functions in local communities, or having a historic site that is a flagship destination for the nation, the department attracts visitors who spend money and bring revenue to the state of Wyoming. By supporting the cultural and recreational life of the state, the Department enhances Wyoming's quality of life, fostering an attractive business climate that assists communities in developing their economies.

The Division of State Parks, Historic Sites and Trails has done economic studies that indicate that for every dollar of general fund the department receives or every user dollar that is produced, the department returns money to the state of Wyoming. This common factor across the department is why this is being added as a major function.

## **What Do You Propose To Do To Improve In The Next 2 Years?**

### ***#1: Preservation***

Preserving Wyoming's history, as well as its arts and other cultural resources is just as important as providing access to them. The Office of the Wyoming State Archaeologist must ensure proper curation of archaeological artifacts and must look toward meeting the challenge of an increasing workload for curating these collections with only one curator. As oil and gas activity increase in Wyoming, so does the demand for curation at this federally recognized repository. If the demand is not met, research cannot be conducted efficiently which impacts the ability to understand and interpret archaeological resources throughout Wyoming.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) continues to be actively engaged in providing grants and technical assistance to communities throughout the state. SHPO and Wyoming Main Street have developed a partnership to provide architectural assistance, by licensed historic architects, to communities for assessment of historic buildings in need of maintenance, for emergency situations, to address code issues, ADA compliance and bringing structures back into economic use. Funding for this type of assistance was widely distributed across the State, but has been completely utilized.

Protecting the historic sites and historical monuments and markers the Department is responsible for is a core part of its mission. With current funding and staffing levels, most unstaffed sites, monuments and markers do not have proper care or monitoring and are in peril. Having site stewardship and care helps preserve and develop Wyoming's historical treasures. Therefore, the Department requests an ongoing exception budget of \$212,000 for the care and maintenance of monuments and markers, unmanned historic site operations and for site stewardship.

### ***#2: Customer Service & Outreach***

One of the important ways the Cultural Resource Division provides customer service and outreach is through providing technical assistance on historic buildings in Wyoming. Given that retaining a full time historic architect on staff is cost prohibitive, the department requests a one-time exception budget of \$100,000 to continue to partner with Wyoming's Main Street program to provide architectural assistance to communities in need. This funding allows the SHPO to provide architectural assistance to property owners without having to retain permanent staff. The funding also allows property owners to determine if and how buildings should be historically preserved and/or restored.

To serve customers throughout the state, the Department requests a one-time exception budget of \$275,500 for vehicles and equipment, an ongoing request of \$16,000 to compensate for increases in general operational costs related to new department facilities coming online, and an ongoing request of \$50,000 for the implementation of the Volunteer strategic plan to allow the Department to compensate for inadequate and diminishing human and material resources in maintaining high customer service standards.

The Wyoming Arts Council (WAC) provides customer service and outreach to Wyoming's communities in support of artists, arts organizations, events and education. To increase the WAC's ability to provide these services, the Department requests an ongoing exception budget of \$265,509 to replace the federally funded half of four WAC full time positions with general funds, allowing the WAC to reallocate these federal funds towards grants to Wyoming communities, as the federal funds were intended to be used.

***#3: Construction, Maintenance & Planning***

To improve our planning, construction and maintenance efforts for Wyoming's parks and historic sites the Department requests a one-time exception budget \$3.6 million for major maintenance.

In addition, providing opportunities for the Wyoming Conservation Corps (WCC) to work on state parks and historic sites projects has proven to be an extremely productive and cost-effective way to accomplish construction and maintenance projects. Therefore, the department requests an ongoing exception budget of \$198,000 to continue to contract with the WCC.

***#4: Public Safety***

There is no exception budget request for public safety at this time. The department will continue to educate the public on laws and regulations and support the communication network at low or no cost.

***#5: Economic Development***

Although no exception budget is requested in this category, it should be noted that all of the requests tied to the Department's other four primary functions generate increased economic impact for Wyoming – with increased funding, the economic return on investment for the state will increase.