

# **City of Rocks National Reserve Business Plan**

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## **National Parks Business Plan Process**

The purpose of business planning in the National Park Service (NPS) is to improve the ability of parks to more clearly communicate their financial and operational status to principal stakeholders. A business plan answers such questions as: What is the business of this park unit? What are its priorities over the next five years? How will the park allocate its resources to achieve these goals?

The business planning process is undertaken to accomplish three main tasks. First, it provides the park with a synopsis of its funding sources and expenditures. Second, it presents a clear, detailed picture of the state of park operations and priorities. Finally, it outlines the park's financial projections and specific strategies the park may employ to marshal additional resources to apply toward its operational needs moving forward.

A basic framework is applied by all parks developing business plans, although it allows each park to highlight certain aspects of its operations that the management team feels are especially important. In this case, the business plan highlights the unique partnership between the State of Idaho and federal government.

Park operations are divided into six divisions that describe all areas of business for which the park is responsible. These groupings allow park management to communicate the park's financial situation more clearly.

Completing the business plan process not only enables a park to produce a powerful communication tool, but also provides park management with financial and operational baseline knowledge for future decision making.

## Superintendent's Foreword

On November 18, 1988, Congress created one of the more unique units of the National Park System – City of Rocks National Reserve. While there are four designated Reserves in the U.S., only two are within the National Park System, and only one of these – City of Rocks – is managed and administered by state park staff. This arrangement meets the intent of Public Law 100-696, the purpose of which is to protect the nationally significant values at City of Rocks while maintaining a local jurisdiction. Some of the nationally significant values include the historic California Trail landscape and scenic granite spires and monoliths experienced by the emigrants of 1843-1882.

The unique partnership between the National Park Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation provides a number of advantages, including a high degree of management flexibility. Both agencies offer different strengths and resources; however, the Reserve can be a complex and often perplexing operation, given the mix of state and federal business rules, two budgets, two different fiscal years, and two park units – City of Rocks National Reserve and Castle Rocks State Park – being operated seamlessly as one.

City of Rocks National Reserve recently celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. In the past two decades, both the National Park Service and Idaho Parks and Recreation have learned, refined, and relearned which business practices work best. In early 2009, Reserve managers believed it was time to develop a document that communicated the management practices currently employed, articulated near-term operational priorities, and identified areas for improvement. It was also our desire to demonstrate complete transparency in order to build trust and confidence in the partnership. Finally, we believe this document will inform our stakeholders, visitors, and members of the public about how their tax dollars are utilized efficiently in the process of protecting one of our nation's sacred treasures. We believe this business plan, as developed by an objective third party, meets these goals and desires.

We invite you to follow our progress during this five-year plan as we protect and interpret the Reserve, as we provide new facilities for an ever-increasing visitation, and as we continue our trek to becoming the model for state and federal park partnerships.

Thank you for your interest and support of City of Rocks National Reserve.

Wallace F. Keck  
Superintendent, City of Rocks National Reserve  
Park Manager, Castle Rocks State Park

## Executive Summary

City of Rocks National Reserve (the Reserve or City) is the only unit of the National Park System (NPS) that is co-managed with a state government and operates jointly with a state park. As an integrated organization, the Reserve and Castle Rocks State Park (the Park or Castle) achieve efficiencies, offer broader recreational opportunities, and provide a richer context for its resources than either would be able to attain separately.<sup>1</sup>

This business plan communicates how City of Rocks National Reserve/Castle Rocks State Park (City/Castle) allocates its funding and utilizes each functional area to carry out the missions of the National Park Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. The plan describes the financial and operational condition of City/Castle in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, and describes priorities and planned actions over the next five years.<sup>2</sup> This business plan is the result of an objective, in-depth look at City/Castle's historical trends, current operations, projected financial outlook, comparative performance, and management priorities.

### Overview and Financial History

The City of Rocks National Reserve and Castle Rocks State Park Overview describes City/Castle's cultural and natural resources, recreational offerings, visitation trends, volunteer utilization, and the structure of the partnership between the NPS and IDPR that allows the Reserve and the Park to be managed as a single entity. The Financial Overview analyzes City/Castle's funding and expenditures; the Financial History Appendix examines trends and fluctuations in City/Castle's base appropriations, including the difference in federal and state allocation.

Base funding has grown from \$566,000 in FY 2000 to \$723,000 in FY 2009 – an inflation-adjusted annual growth rate of 0.25 percent.

At the same time visitation reached nearly 150,000 in 2008, following three years of steep growth. This trend can be connected to the opening of Castle Rocks State Park, Smoky Mountain Campground, and various other infrastructure developments over the previous five years. Therefore, the rate of visitation growth may be less dramatic in subsequent years.

### Operations and Priorities

In FY 2009, City/Castle operated with 17.2 full-time equivalents (FTE) across five divisions: Natural Resources, Visitor Services & Interpretation, Climbing Management & Compliance, Maintenance & Operations, and Management & Administration.<sup>3</sup> A sixth division, Cultural Resources, was established at the end of FY 2009 with new funding from the National Park Service.

City/Castle's expenditures totaled \$829,000 in FY 2009, which included 82 percent from base appropriations. Employee salaries and benefits comprised \$514,000.

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<sup>1</sup> The Reserve designation indicates a partnership between multiple government agencies. There are only four Reserves in the U.S., and only one other that is based on a partnership between the NPS and another government agency (Ebey's Landing on Whidbey Island, WA).

<sup>2</sup> Unless otherwise noted, fiscal year in this business plan refers to the state of Idaho's fiscal year (July 1 – June 30), unlike the federal (NPS) fiscal year (October 1 – September 30).

<sup>3</sup> An FTE is equal to 2,080 work hours per year.

City/Castle's management team identified ten priorities that they would like to achieve within the next five years, and the business plan outlines the implementation of these goals. Many of these priorities require a cross-functional approach and were selected based on the benefit to the park overall.

This business plan also analyzes several small actions City/Castle could take help address park-wide priorities. The three strategies outlined below constitute actions City/Castle could take to generate additional revenue and to better leverage available resources:

- *Incorporate yurts into operations as visitor lodging and/or employee housing.*
- *Increase volunteerism at City/Castle through targeted recruiting efforts.*
- *Increase Visitor Donations*

### **Critical Themes**

Throughout the business planning process, several key themes emerged:

#### ***The state/federal partnership offers multiple opportunities as well as challenges.***

NPS and IDPR approach park management with two different and complimentary missions: resource protection and recreational opportunities, respectively. As City/Castle works toward these two goals, it embodies the best of both organizations. However, the management team must reconcile the added complexities of dual administrations and continually evaluate whether the partnership model is being utilized to its fullest.

#### ***As a result of co-managing City and Castle, employees are often stretched beyond a standard work load.***

When Castle Rocks State Park opened to the public in 2003, the size of the management team remained roughly the constant and seasonal staff did not increase significantly. Many divisions have difficulty fulfilling their annual work goals, resulting in deferred maintenance, unending trail work, lack of time to recruit and manage volunteers, and difficulty completing projects. Furthermore, the position of Natural Resources chief has experienced high turnover given the varied tasks required of that role. Recent efforts to overcome the challenge of staffing shortages include hiring a Cultural Resources chief and filling multiple new seasonal roles in FY 2010 with an NPS base increase.

#### ***An increase in visitation has resulted in more diverse demographics and user groups.***

Climbing continues to be the predominant recreational activity at City/Castle. Nevertheless, the recent influx of visitors has increased demand for additional cultural and ecological interpretation of the area. Visitors demographics are shifting toward families and senior citizens, and users are increasingly partaking in hiking, equestrian riding, and mountain biking; interpretation, events, and projects must continue to evolve and meet the needs of changing visitor needs.

#### ***Positive community relations are vital to the national significance of the City and Castle.***

City/Castle's western rural setting has been identified as a nationally important resource. The traditional ranching lifestyle continues in the small town of Almo, and it adds to the scenic and historical capital of the area. City/Castle must balance resource protection and grazing management in a way that is symbiotic for both stewards and ranchers. Furthermore, the intermingling of private property and public land within Reserve boundaries necessitates maintaining agreeable community relations. One step towards fulfilling this objective includes relocating the Circle Creek parking area off of private property.

**INSERT: "CIRO Map (Revised)"**

## City of Rocks National Reserve & Castle Rocks State Park Overview

In the Albion Mountains of Idaho's Northern Great Basin, City of Rocks National Reserve ("the Reserve" or "City") and Castle Rocks State Park ("the Park" or "Castle") encompass a unique and dramatic geologic landscape that abounds with both natural and cultural significance. The area's granite formations have long been an oddity and wonder, serving as a landmark for passing emigrants of the California Trail (1843-1882), and for the Shoshone and Bannock Tribes who hunted in the area.

### **CALL OUT/SIDEBAR BOX: Primary Interpretive Themes**

The City/Castle area can be appreciated for its natural, cultural, geologic, and recreational resources, which are identified in the Reserve's six statements of significance and primary interpretive themes:

- **California Trail**: The Reserve was a major landmark for emigrants traveling along the California Trail. City of Rocks provided rest and inspiration for the many weary travelers who were heading for Granite pass and ultimately for California or Oregon.
- **Scenery**: The timeless scenery of the Reserve is broad and expansive yet accessible and personal. People developed a personal relationship with this landscape as evidenced by pioneer journals and comments from modern-day visitors.
- **Western Rural Setting**: The rural historical setting of the Reserve still provides authenticity to the traditional western rural lifestyles of the past 150 years, as well as much of the prehistoric culture period.
- **Geologic Landscape**: Erosion of a cross-jointed granite Pluton has resulted in the formation of a maze of spires and domes that are noted for their impressive scenery, stark silence, and inspirational qualities.
- **Study of Geologic Processes**: The uplifted and eroded rocks at the Reserve are like an open window into the earth where visitors and scientists can view tectonic events that raised the mountainous interior of the western U.S. and can view surficial processes that are shaping the current landscape.
- **Rock Climbing**: People come from around the world to experience the challenge of climbing the rocks in a quiet and scenic western setting.

[END CALL OUT]

### **Mission and History**

#### **City of Rocks**

It is the mission of City of Rocks National Reserve to preserve and protect, through cooperative efforts, the scenic qualities and attributes of the California Trail landscape, the historic rural setting, and the granite features, while interpreting its values and managing recreation.

While City of Rocks National Reserve was not officially designated until 1988, it has enjoyed a long history of public interest. Since the 1920s, City of Rocks has been proposed as a national monument numerous times. It was declared a state park in 1957, designated a national historic landmark in 1964, and established as a national natural landmark in 1974. After study throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the City of Rocks National Reserve was created on November 18, 1988 through the Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-696). The act drew a 22-mile boundary around lands owned or managed by the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Idaho

Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), and private individuals. The NPS officially transferred on-site management to IDPR on May 2, 1996.<sup>4</sup>

Since the Reserve's inception, its 14,407 acres have consisted of a mix of private, state, and federal ownerships, although the amount of private land has declined. Originally, over fifty percent of the land within the Reserve was privately held, whereas approximately thirty percent is privately held today, as illustrated in the map below. Currently, Cassia County maintains rights-of-way and jurisdiction on City of Rocks Road and Twin Sisters Road. Raft River Rural Electric Cooperative also maintains a utility right-of-way in the Reserve. This mix of ownership requires cooperation and coordination among owner groups. City/Castle operates under a "willing buyer, willing seller" model and continues to increase the percentage of park-owned land within the Reserve.

[INSERT PHOTO: "CIRO Ownership"]

### Castle Rocks

It is the mission of Castle Rocks State Park to protect and interpret the geological features, ranching heritage, and prehistory. Park management and operations aim to preserve its intrinsic values such as scenic views, silence, and nature. Through innovative partnerships, the Park provides appropriate recreational opportunities and public access.

The Castle Rock Ranch Acquisition Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-421) directed the procurement of private lands and subsequent exchange of public lands between the NPS and IDPR.<sup>5</sup> Congress believed that it was important that Castle Rocks be fully protected within public lands, thus many of its granite monoliths were already included in the City of Rocks National Historic Landmark in 1964. Castle Rocks State Park opened to the public on May 23, 2003. Today, the Park consists of three named units: Ranch (1,440 acres), Smoky Mountain (240 acres), and Administrative (12 acres). Since the Park's foundation in 2003, IDPR has purchased 200 additional acres and a 200-acre conservation easement (10-acres of which is accessible to the public), bringing the Park's total acreage of management concern to 1,892. The geological formations known as Castle Rocks continue beyond the Park boundary into BLM jurisdiction and the Sawtooth National Forest; thus, IDPR works in partnership with BLM and USDA Forest Service to develop recreation plans, policies, and facilities for the area.

### **State/Federal Partnership**

City/Castle provides a unique model for partnership between the NPS and IDPR. Through a number of Acts and cooperative agreements, City and Castle are managed by IDPR under a single organizational structure headquartered in Almo, Idaho. For this reason, the Reserve and the Park are viewed together as a single operating entity.

In addition to on-site management responsibilities, IDPR implements the City/Castle Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), provides partial funding for the management and operation of City, provides

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<sup>4</sup> The IDPR employed personnel to conduct visitor surveys, maintain a few primitive facilities, and educate visitors on recreation and resource protection rules prior to the Reserve's establishment. The role of IDPR was formalized with the NPS in an early cooperative agreement. The agreement led to permanent on-site maintenance and some administration by IDPR beginning in 1990, but full management and administrative authority occurred in 1996.

<sup>5</sup> Through the agreement the NPS exchanged approximately 1,240 acres (the "Ranch"), which it bought from a private owner, for approximately 492 acres of land near Hagerman, Idaho, located within the boundary of the Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument. This ensured that the Castle Rocks area would be protected and jointly managed with City of Rocks.

full funding for Castle, and coordinates joint NPS/IDPR programs.<sup>6</sup> IDPR owns the City/Castle visitor center, employee residences, and maintenance facilities. The visitor center is leased from the state of Idaho by the NPS through the Federal General Services Administration (GSA).<sup>7</sup> Operations are supported by the National Park Service, which provides partial operational funding and periodic program grants for City, in addition to technical assistance, expertise, and training in a number of program areas.<sup>8</sup>

Similar to the funding structure, regulations and operating standards vary from the Park to the Reserve. State standards are secondary to federal regulations in the Reserve since Congress designated City of Rocks National Reserve as a unit of the National Park Service and directed that the lands be managed according to standards established by the Secretary of the Interior. However, Cassia County ordinances take precedence on private lands within and adjacent to the Reserve. State cultural resource protection standards are enforced within Castle in consultation with the NPS and Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

The cooperative agreement between the NPS and IDPR allows the City/Castle superintendent flexibility in using the most appropriate state or federal authorities in day-to-day operations. The NPS brings more stringent standards of natural and cultural resource management and national recognition, while IDPR provides a local face to government, simplified administrative processes, personnel, and an emphasis in visitor services and recreation. Furthermore, resource sharing between City and Castle creates economies of scale. For example, when Castle Rocks State Park was established, management staff levels remained nearly constant despite the increased amount of land under management and overall complexity. In addition, the joint-utilization of a shared visitor center and maintenance and operations division enables a lower capital outlay than if City and Castle were managed separately.

Nonetheless, the partnership does present some challenges. The most significant difficulties include negotiating which administrative procedure supersedes the other, the increased complexity of operations due to multiple reporting and funding systems, and difficulty in securing state spending authority for federal funds. Personnel are state employees and must follow IDPR human resources procedures; however, they must also function within the culture of the NPS. More specific benefits and challenges will be discussed in detail in later sections. See Appendix B for the City/Castle 2009 Operational Plan and Guidelines and Appendix C for the revised Cooperative Agreement (2003).

## **Natural Resources**

City/Castle protects a wide range of flora and fauna in addition to geologic features that have become world renowned for academic study and rock climbing.

Two major user groups of City/Castle —ranchers and climbers— give rise to complex natural resources management issues that highlight the difficult balance between utilization and preservation. City is one of the few NPS units that permits regulated livestock grazing. Livestock grazing is the primary use of private lands within the Reserve, and the NPS and IDPR assumed management of

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<sup>6</sup> The CMP is equivalent to a General Management Plan (GMP), which is required for every NPS unit. City is currently developing a new GMP, and the term “CMP” will no longer be used.

<sup>7</sup> This GSA lease arrangement enables the NPS to provide additional funding to maintain the visitor center in line with NPS standards.

<sup>8</sup> Program areas include: interpretation and visitor services, resources and visitor protection, resources management, information management, facilities maintenance and development, and planning.

grazing on publicly-owned rangeland within the Reserve according to legislation. Since the economic livelihood of many local ranchers is largely dependent on their ability to continue grazing in City/Castle allotments, any change to grazing management is highly sensitive within the community.

Coordination is a crucial aspect of natural resource management within the Reserve. Grazing allotments on public lands adjacent to the Reserve are administered by the USDA Forest Service and BLM, which formerly administered allotments on the public lands within the Reserve. There are no boundary fences separating the Reserve/USDA Forest Service administered lands on two allotments, the Reserve/BLM lands on two allotments, and the Reserve/private land on three allotments. Thus, coordination with other Federal agencies is complex but imperative to maintaining the natural resources of the Reserve.

Grazing is integral to City's history and represents one of its primary interpretive themes. However, it also impacts trails, vegetation, cultural resources, and adds a layer of management responsibility and community engagement. Enabling grazing to continue at City at an economically viable level for the permittees -- while meeting the long-range objectives to preserve and protect the significant natural and cultural resources -- will be a continuing challenge.

Similarly, enabling access for climbers carries some unique natural resource considerations. Trail alignment must take into consideration climbing route access in order to avoid the development of social trails; staging areas, where climbers prepare to climb, must be contained to limit impact; and climbing routes must be monitored to limit impact on wildlife, such as nesting raptors, and potential impact on cultural resources.

Implications of grazing and climbing are discussed in more detail in the Current Operations section of this document.

## **Cultural Resources**

City/Castle contains a wide variety of cultural resources from a number of pre-contact and historical periods. Evidence that can provide new insight into one of the oldest documented cultures in Idaho has been discovered at Castle Rocks, such as hunting blinds, pictographs, stone tools, and fire pits. The Shoshone and Bannock Tribes also utilized the area, and fur trapping brought French Canadians and Americans into the general vicinity as early as 1826. The emigrants of the California Trail passed through the region from 1843 to 1882, and seasonal ranching was established as early as 1869. With the addition of a Chief of Cultural Resources, City/Castle will be able to ensure continued protection as well as increase awareness of these resources.

### **CALL OUT/SIDEBAR BOX: Resources at City/Castle**

#### Land Area:

- City of Rocks: 14,407 acres
- Castle Rocks: 1,692 acres (plus a 200-acre conservation easement)
- Reserve elevation range: 5,720 to 8,867 feet with a total relief of 3,147 feet
- State Park elevation: 5,640 to 6,840 feet, with a total relief of 1,200 feet

#### Natural Resources:

- Vegetation communities: sagebrush steppe, pinon-juniper woodlands, mountain mahogany

woodlands, and higher forest communities of aspen, sub-alpine fir, lodge-pole pine and limber pine

- 498 species of plants
- Fauna of note: cliff chipmunk, mule deer, coyote, bobcat, mountain lion, moose, elk, and big-horn sheep
- 147 species of birds
- 3 species of amphibians
- 14 species of reptiles
- 47 species of mammals

#### Cultural Resources:

- 6.2 miles of the California National Historic Trail
- 1.8 miles of the Salt Lake Alternate Trail
- Remnant trail ruts from early emigrant wagons
- Over 350 historic signatures from emigrants on at least 22 rocks
- Portion of the Mormon Battalion Trail
- Kelton-Boise Stage Route and City of Rocks Station
- Over 10,000 pre-contact artifacts
- Homesteads, irrigation, and ranching improvements
- Mica mines
- Seven authorized allotments and private land for grazing between May and September

#### Recreational and Visitor Resources:

- 30 miles of multi-use trails
- 102 individual campsites, and 3 group camps: Juniper, Twin Sisters, and Bread Loaves
- Over 1,100 climbing routes

**[END CALL OUT]**

#### **Recreational Opportunities**

According to a 2008 visitor study, rock climbing was the primary recreational activity (53 percent of visitors) at City. There are over 750 established climbing routes within the Reserve and over 350 established routes within the Park. Recreational climbing has enjoyed a rich and illustrious history at City of Rocks, and probably began in the early 1960's with a climbing club known as the Steinfells, as well as members of the Lowe family. The area is world-renowned for the variety and quality of its climbs.

City and Castle also offer excellent opportunities for camping, hiking, backpacking, equestrian riding, mountain biking, site-seeing, photography, hunting, bird watching, and more.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Most of the Reserve is open to hunting. Hunting opportunities include big game, upland bird, and small game. Hunting in City/Castle is authorized by Public Law 101-512 and regulated by Idaho Fish and Game, Unit 55.

## Visitation

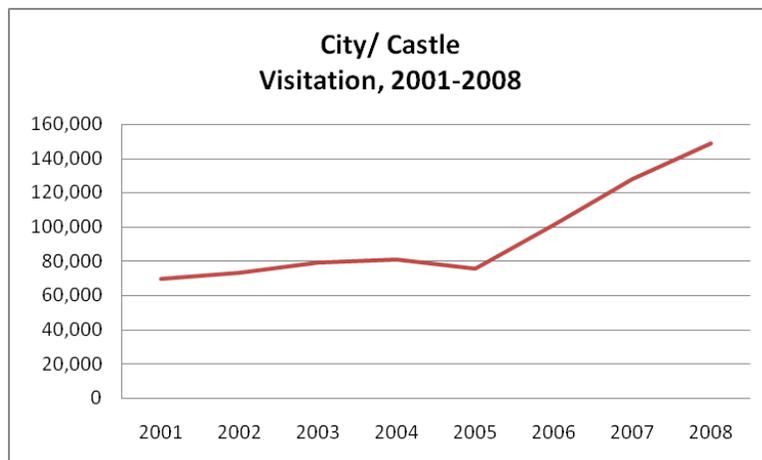
City/Castle welcomed nearly 150,000 visitors in 2008, following three years of remarkable growth: visitation rose 33 percent in 2006, 26 percent in 2007, and 16 percent in 2008.<sup>10</sup> Visitation declined in 2004 and 2005, likely as a result of multiple construction projects related to the opening of Castle Rocks State Park, Smoky Mountain Campgrounds, and the reconstruction of the primary county road into the area. The resulting infrastructure enabled the visitation boom that followed. See the figure below for annual visitation since 2001. It is unlikely that visitation will continue to grow at the explosive rates experienced for the past three years. However, with more widespread marketing and development of City and Castle's resource and recreational offerings, staff members expect a slower yet steady increase in visitation to the Park and the Reserve.

Visitation to City/Castle is highly seasonal, peaking in the months of May through September, which see a monthly average of 23,000 visitors. As a result, nearly half of the City/Castle staff members, by hours, are seasonal employees (7.2 FTE). According to the most recent NPS/University of Idaho in-depth visitor study, the average visitor stay in 2008 lasted 47.3 hours (1.97 days). Of the visitor groups who spent less than 24 hours in City/Castle, 30 percent spent five or more hours. For those who visited for more than one day, two-thirds spent between two to three days.<sup>11</sup>

Visitation declines sharply in the winter months due to weather and road conditions; in the winter months, roads are sporadically maintained beyond the Reserve entrance sign. Nonetheless, City/Castle still hosts events such as snowshoe hiking, a Valentine excursion, and Winter Day Camp, attended by local and regional visitors.

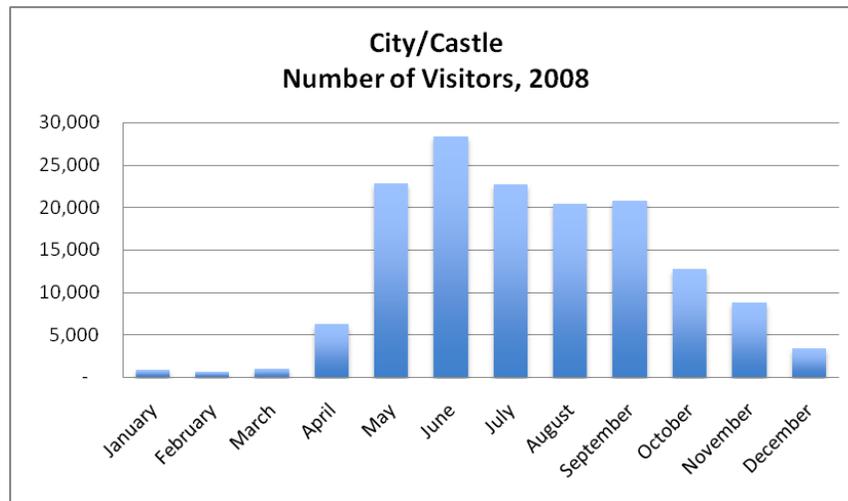
While nearly every state and a dozen countries are listed on the visitor registry and camping receipts, the majority of visitors are relatively local, coming from Utah's Wasatch Front (including Salt Lake City) and the populated areas of Southern Idaho (Boise, Twin Falls, Pocatello, and Idaho Falls).

### Figures:



<sup>10</sup> This visitation statistic is based on the IDPR multiplier of 3.38 persons per vehicle entering City/Castle. NPS calculates 2.94 persons per vehicle, but IDPR revised upwards based on recent surveys of the past three years. NPS estimates visitation to be 13% lower than IDPR.

<sup>11</sup> Visitor Services Project by the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho. September 2008.



### **CALL OUT/ SIDEBAR BOX: 2008 Visitor Services Project Summary**

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed randomly to visitors on September 6-14, 2008. Of these, 256 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 73.1 percent response rate. The following visitation and visitor use trends were identified from the survey results:

- There is a growing percentage of family groups: 42 percent of visitor groups were in family groups while 30 percent were with friends
- The majority of visitors are from Idaho and Utah: 97 percent of visitors are from the United States, the majority from Idaho (38 percent) and Utah (34 percent)
- There are many repeat visitors: 46 percent of visitors had visited the park once in their lifetime; 30 percent had visited five or more times
- City/Castle is a stand-alone destination: City of Rocks National Reserve was the primary destination of 66 percent of visitor groups
- Visitors participate in many activities: The most common activities included general sightseeing (70 percent), taking photographs/ painting/ drawing (68 percent), and rock climbing (59 percent)
- City/Castle visitors are satisfied: 91 percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at City as “very good” or “good.”

**[END CALL OUT]**

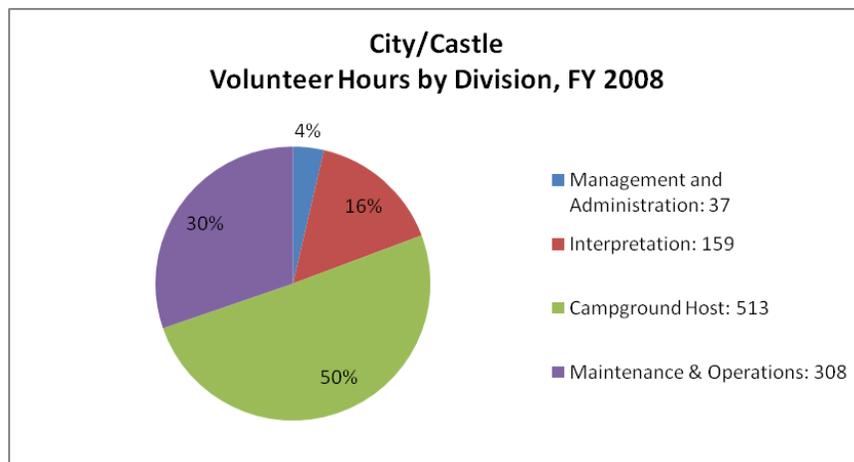
### **Volunteers-In-Parks**

The Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program provides meaningful opportunities for volunteers to contribute their talents towards the mission and resource stewardship of City/Castle. A number of non-profit, religious, and civic organizations volunteer on trail and natural resource management projects

including the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), High Desert Backcountry Horsemen Association, Boy Scouts of America, the Boise YMCA climbing team, and Weber County Search and Rescue. Several individuals also volunteer their time to conduct special interpretive programs and events or to serve as camp hosts.

Over the past five years, volunteers contributed an average of 1,721 hours annually; however, there has been a steep decline in non-camp host volunteer hours since FY 2004, in which non-camp host hours peaked at 3,331 hours. One reason for this decrease was the passing of a dedicated volunteer. In FY 2008, volunteers contributed 1,017 hours of in-kind service, valued at \$19,842, based on the NPS valuation rate of \$19.51 per hour (see figure below for a breakdown of volunteer hours by division). The VIP program engaged over 20 volunteers in FY 2008 at a cost of \$1,500 for program support in the form of housing, meals, supplies, training, transportation, and other incidental costs, amounting to approximately \$1.50 in cost per volunteer hour or \$68 per volunteer. This does not include the expense of program oversight and recruiting time.

The potential value of volunteers is evident; however, there are a number of obstacles to expanding the program. The remote location of the park and lack of regular local visitors along with little housing availability naturally limits the program. Without added emphasis on recruitment and training for the program, the VIP program will remain a relatively small piece of City/Castle operations.



**GRAPHICS NOTE: Please total the numbers at the bottom of the legend for all pie charts and include units label in the total (i.e. "hours" in this case)**

## Financial Overview

In FY 2009, City/Castle expended a total of \$829,000 across all divisions; this amounted to 97 percent of its approved base and project appropriations (\$856,000).<sup>12</sup> Of this amount, employee salaries and benefits accounted for the largest single category of expenditures, totaling \$514,000, or 62 percent. The figures below illustrate the expenditures of funds by division and by type of expenditure. City/Castle operated with 17.2 FTEs, in terms of the number of hours worked by permanent and seasonal park employees.<sup>13</sup>

The Maintenance and Operations (M&O) division utilized the majority of City/Castle's budget since it employs the most FTEs and is responsible for maintaining all park infrastructure. In addition, M&O purchases fuel and utilities, which accounts for 6 percent of the overall budget. Management and Administration (M&A) expends the second highest amount because of the high-level staff within the division. See figures below for breakdowns of staffing and expenditures by division.

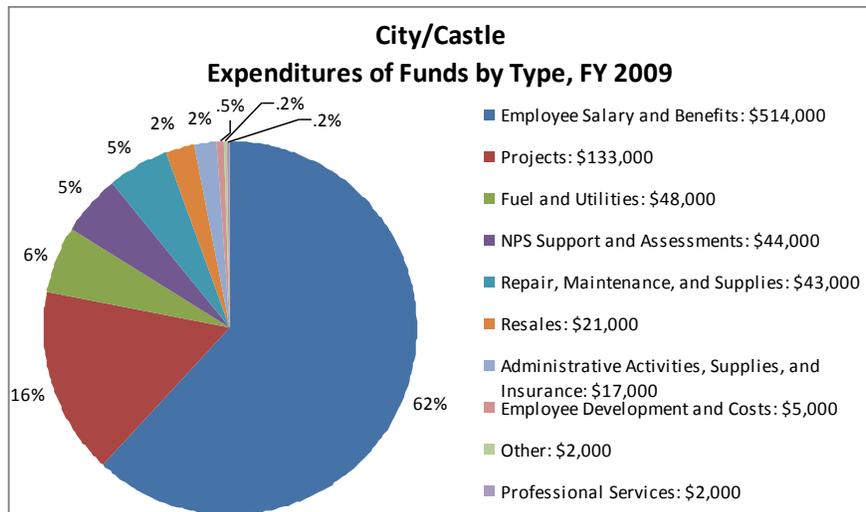
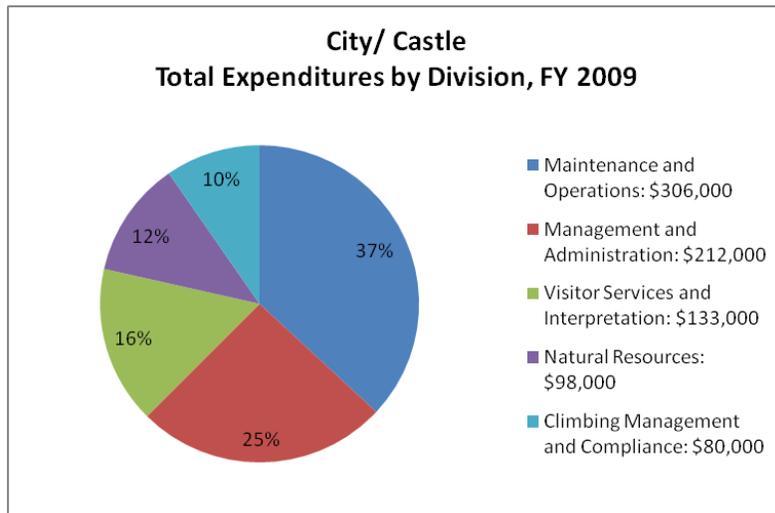
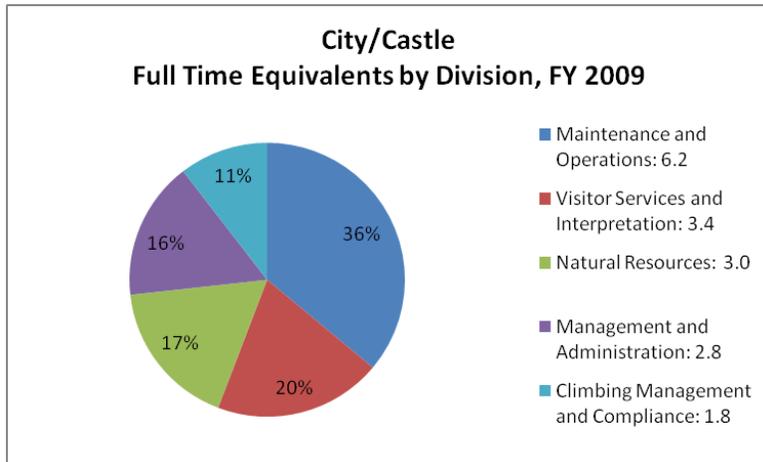
The IDPR/NPS partnership has created two unique issues for City/Castle: accounting for funds that are appropriated based on two different fiscal years, and working within its state spending authority, which is sometimes lower than the total amounts appropriated (allocated) by IDPR and NPS. The federal government's fiscal year runs from October 1 through September 30, but the state of Idaho's fiscal year closes at the end of June. City/Castle reconciles the different fiscal years and base fund sources by committing the remaining NPS contribution to the state budget's subsequent fiscal year on June 30. In other words, the remainder of FY 2009 NPS base appropriations on June 30, 2009 is committed to the City/Castle FY 2010 budget, which is managed under state authority. In FY 2009, \$348,000 of unexpended appropriated base was transferred to the FY 2010 budget.

Idaho's Division of Financial Management (DFM) grants a single spending authority for the Reserve and the Park. City/Castle M&A division submits a request to DFM for each division, which outlines its spending for employees, base expenditures, and projects. State spending authority is not always granted for approved funding, resulting in delays and the inability to utilize money that has been allocated to City/Castle.

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<sup>12</sup> City/Castle was unable to spend the remaining 3 percent due to a delay in spending authority, as explained in detail under "Budget Surplus" in the Financial Plan section

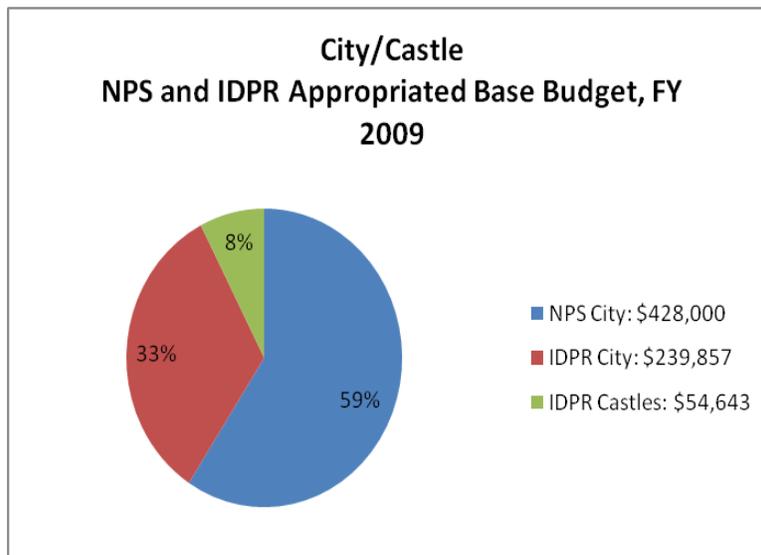
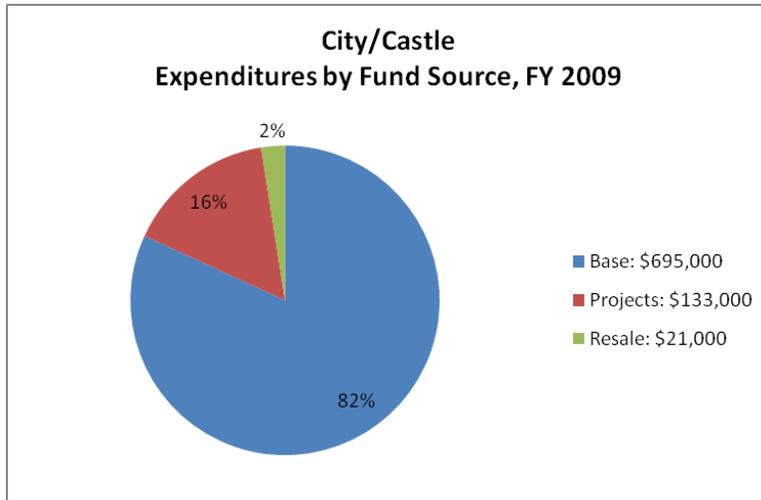
<sup>13</sup> One full time equivalent (FTE) equals 2080 hours worked in one year.



**GRAPHICS NOTE: Please total the numbers at the bottom of the legend for all pie charts and include units label in the total**

### **Fund Source Analysis**

City/Castle receives base budget appropriations from NPS and IDPR, as well as project funding from NPS. All revenues generated in City/Castle (camping, grazing, day use fees) are retained by the state and a percentage is reallocated back to all state parks as part of each park’s annual base appropriation. All of the resale revenue generated at the Park is held in an account by IDPR, and the Park receives spending authority for a portion of those funds each fiscal year. Funds from the resale program are used to perpetuate the resale program and partially fund a visitor services employee, though these funds can be used toward other park operations as well.<sup>14</sup> A percentage of the gross resale revenue is also deducted each year for IDPR administrative purposes. See figures below for breakdowns of appropriations by source and expenditures by fund source.



### **Appropriated Base**

In FY 2009, City/Castle’s expended base budget totaled \$675,000, 82 percent of total expenditures. The NPS partially finances City’s base budget, and IDPR partially funds City and fully funds Castle. City/Castle’s total base appropriations amounted to \$723,000, when adjusted for carryover from the previous NPS fiscal year and allocation of some NPS funds forward to FY 2010. According to the

<sup>14</sup> IDPR uses the term “resale” to refer to merchandise and bookstore sales.

Cooperative Agreement, IDPR must contribute approximately 50 percent of base funding for City/Castle and no less than 25 percent. In FY 2009, IDPR financed 41 percent of appropriated base funds.

Federal money is allocated annually by Congress, and the Idaho legislature and governor ultimately approve IDPR funding. The base budget is used to pay all permanent and some seasonal staff, equipment maintenance, and other typical operating costs.

### **Appropriated Non-Base (Projects)**

Congress appropriates funds to the NPS for one-time projects, which are awarded based on NPS priorities and park need. In FY 2009, non-base funding accounted for 16 percent (\$133,000) of City/Castle's total budget, and provided for a range of projects including campsite and trail maintenance and volunteer programming. The Park continues to utilize federal funds from a grant provided by the Idaho Transportation Department for the purpose of mitigating wetlands. IDPR also provides capital improvement support for City/Castle, which includes roads, bridges, and deferred maintenance. These purchases draw from IDPR's regional budget, not City/Castle's base funding. State-funded capital purchases for City/Castle totaled \$25,728 in FY 2009.

### **Park Revenue**

City/Castle collects revenue for resale, camping, grazing, special events, donations, and the Park day-use fee. All revenues except resale and donations are pooled into a statewide parks fund and reallocated as a portion of IDPR's appropriated base budget. In FY 2009, City/Castle took in \$60,000 in revenues that were reallocated by the state, of which camping contributed 61 percent. City/Castle received \$85,000 from IDPR's revenue fund, an amount \$25,000 greater than City/Castle collected. Money earned from resale and donations goes to an IDPR account, but it is not pooled and reallocated to other Idaho state parks.

## Park Operations

This section of the business plan describes in detail the roles and responsibilities of each of the major functional areas of the combined Reserve and Park operation. Running City/Castle to the standards of the NPS and IDPR is no small feat, as will become apparent in the breadth and depth of program responsibilities discussed below.

### [CALL-OUT SIDEBAR]

#### **Park Divisions**

**Natural Resources (NR)** is responsible for the preservation and restoration of natural resources and works to mitigate threats to these resources. NR personnel implement grazing, noxious weed, wildland fire, water quality, and research programs.

**Cultural Resources (CR)** is responsible for the preservation and restoration of City/Castle's cultural and historic resources. CR's central responsibility is to provide cultural and historical screening for future projects, coordinate CR research programs, and develop CR-specific interpretive programs.

**Visitor Services and Interpretation (VS&I)** includes all activities related to the visitor experience, including visitor center operations. VS&I is responsible for interpretation, special events, publications, campground reservations, fee collection, resale, and the volunteer program.

**Climbing Management & Compliance (CM&C)** is responsible for enforcement of rules and regulations, visitor and workplace safety, trail maintenance; and climbing route regulation, maintenance, and interpretation.

**Maintenance and Operations (M&O)** maintains and repairs all buildings and grounds, including campsites and parking areas, roads, employee housing, utilities, and systems, and oversees all construction projects and fleet management. The division also coordinates recycling, waste, and Environmental Management Systems.

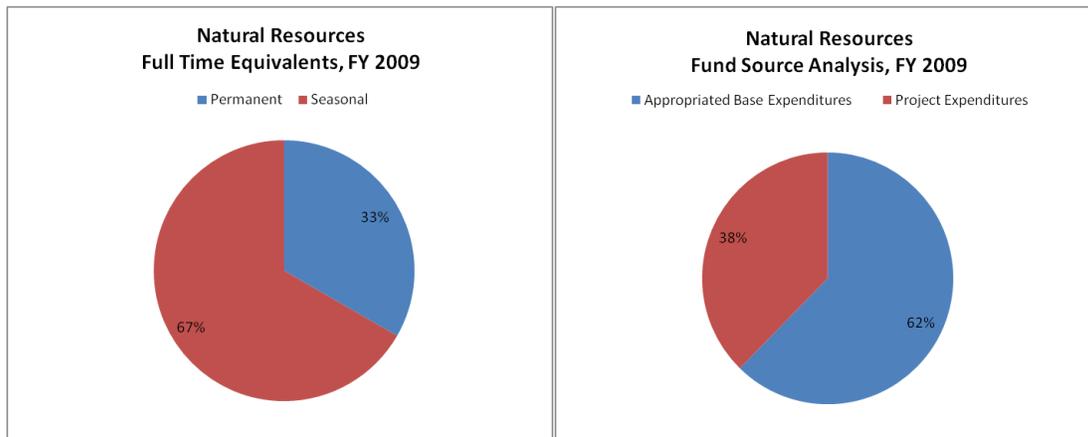
**Management and Administration (M&A)** coordinates the activities of the six divisions and provides strategic direction for City/Castle. M&A ensures that operations are in accordance with the Cooperative Agreement, and serves as a liaison to the national, state, and local stakeholders. M&A submits the budget to state and federal authorities, and monitors spending throughout the year. M&A also encompasses accounts receivables and payables management, human resources management, acquisition and property management, information technology, records and archive management, and statistics analysis. The superintendent also serves as the public information officer.

### [END CALL-OUT/SIDEBAR]

## Natural Resources

The Natural Resources (NR) division works to ensure well-being of the park's unique species and ecosystems while also managing the livestock grazing program. The NR division is a critical piece of City/Castle operations even though it has only been in place for six years. Typically one permanent employee and 2 seasonal FTE support the division, as shown in the figure below. However, a high level of turnover within the division has limited its ability to make significant progress on some long-term projects. The NR division is projected to grow in proportion with future staff time and monetary resources allocated to City/Castle.

In FY 2009 division expenditures totaled \$97,000, of which \$37,000 were appropriated base funds.



NR personnel are delegated a huge range of responsibilities, all the more impressive considering the small size of the division. Staff responsibilities include inventory and monitoring natural resources, conducting assessments, completing environmental compliance documents, managing natural resource projects, issuing and monitoring compliance for research permits, controlling noxious weeds, coordinating grazing and irrigation programs, coordinating fire management activities, maintaining more than 50 miles of boundary and pasture fences to manage grazing cattle, managing rehabilitation and restoration activities, managing a drinking water quality program, and conducting natural resource-based interpretive programs.

### *Inventory and Monitoring*

Inventory and monitoring of the Almo Creek Wetlands, grazing allotments, and raptor nests are performed by the NR division. Protocols are established by the Upper Columbia Basin Network (UCBN) Inventory and Monitoring program for vital signs monitoring and are often carried out by contractors. City/Castle depends on the UCBN, a network of nine national parks across Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, for baseline inventory and monitoring protocols of natural resource vital signs. The group conducts resource inventories to determine current status and trends of park ecosystems and how management decisions impact protection of those resources.

### *Natural Resource Projects*

The NR division is responsible for managing a number of projects that are applicable to the protection and preservation of City/Castle's natural resources. One recent projects included a soundscape acoustic monitoring, data analysis, and protection plan that will provide City with quantifiable information to help protect its fundamental values as the "Silent City of Rocks."

### *Research Coordination*

Research coordination is a critical function of the NR division. City/Castle receives a number of visits from contractors and scientists working on a variety of projects each year. In FY 2008, ecologists working on inventory of the sagebrush steppe and aspen stands spent time in the Park and the Reserve, as well as geologists publishing detailed interpretation of the Reserve's geology. It is the responsibility of the NR division to coordinate permits for researchers and ensure compliance.

### *Noxious Weed Management*

Noxious Weed Management focuses on controlling alien plants and restoring native habitats. Staff members utilize mechanical and chemical techniques to control aggressive, non-native plants. Target weed species include Canada thistle, spotted knapweed, bull thistle, musk thistle, field bindweed, black henbane, and hoary cress.

### *Grazing Management*

Domestic livestock grazing in the Reserve can be traced back to the first emigrant wagon trains in 1843 and is a critical interpretive theme City/Castle. Grazing also continues to play a critical role in the local economy. For these reasons, successful management of the grazing program is of high importance. The NR division maintains fences and irrigation systems on grazing allotments and coordinates grazing permits. A large proportion of the over 50 miles of fences required for grazing management are in a state of extensive disrepair, and require replacement in order to protect non-grazing allotments within the Reserve. Passing fence replacement costs on to permit holders would make grazing within the Reserve cost prohibitive and disrupt community relations. However, due to the limited NR staff at City/Castle and other resources, the park cannot entirely bear the cost from base funds, and it will be necessary to apply for project grants.

### *Fire Management*

The NR division is responsible for coordinating fire management activities; however, this task does not currently receive much attention due to resource constraints and other overriding division priorities. For this reason, the fire management plan directs for suppression-only techniques in the event of a wildland fire. The plan does introduce the concepts of prescribed fire and mechanical fuels reduction, but these management activities are not currently being implemented. In the past year, City/Castle staff members have responded to two fires, and in 1999 and 2000, the southern portion of the Reserve experienced large wildfires that have noticeably affected vegetation. Without fuels reduction, future wildfire poses a threat to the Reserve. The need for a fire management program is understood, and efforts to increase the resources toward this activity are being considered.

### *Rehabilitation and Restoration*

Rehabilitation and restoration projects are conducted on an ongoing basis throughout City/Castle and managed by the NR division. Most recently, the division has implemented a wetland mitigation project that includes fence construction and ongoing noxious weed treatment to restore two natural wetland habitats in the Park.

### *Drinking Water Quality*

Ongoing tests for water quality are undertaken by the NR division, and subsequent actions, if necessary, are managed by M&O. Failing water quality sampling tests results in considerable use of resources and time and decreases visitor satisfaction. When a site fails, the park must wait days before re-sampling the source, during which time the source may be closed. Additionally, M&O must analyze the potential causes of quality failure. There have been a number of occasions at City/Castle in which

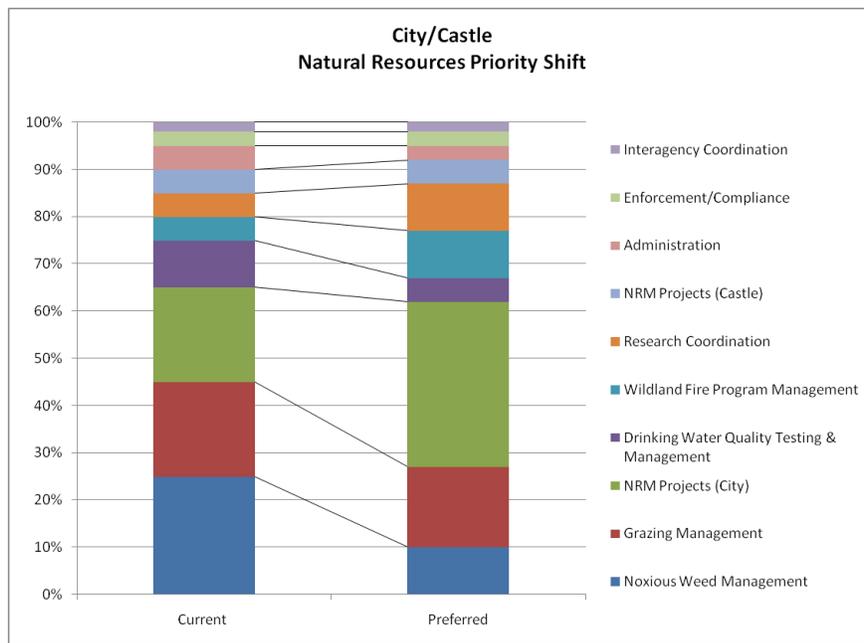
water quality failure may have resulted from sampling error, an easily addressed issue that could reduce overall costs.

*NR Interpretive Programming*

While previous staffing levels and turnover have limited interpretive programming by the NR division, City/Castle management is planning for increased participation in the future. In the past, other personnel have provided NR interpretation. For example, the superintendent has led a Sawtooth Science Institute workshop and a birding and wildflower walk. Volunteers have also presented astronomy and geology events.

**[CALL-OUT BOX/SIDEBAR (near RM section): Reallocation of Natural Resource Personnel Hours]**

As the figure below demonstrates, the NR division aims to shift its personnel hours from some of the mandatory, compliance activities like management of noxious weeds, grazing, and water quality into more strategic goals like projects, research, and partnerships. Through improved procedures, training, and continuity of division leadership, the superintendent plans to improve efficiency in baseline activities so that he can refocus staff on these other priorities. Over the next three to five years, the NR priority is to shift employee efforts in terms of time spent as follows:



**[End Call-out/Sidebar]**

**Cultural Resources**

The new Cultural Resources (CR) division is poised to grow into a significant part of City/Castle’s overall operations and priorities. The NPS approved a base increase of \$162,000 for CR development, including a chief of Cultural Resources position. In FY 2009, City received \$117,000 of this amount and expects the remaining 28 percent in FY 2010. The Reserve and Park area is rich in history and cultural significance, and there is great potential for City/Castle to expand its cultural resource activities: the majority of Park and Reserve land has not been surveyed, and a comprehensive

knowledge base of previous inhabitants has yet to be consolidated. New artifacts and archeological sites are still being discovered on a regular basis, making the CR division dynamic with considerable growth potential.

In addition to general survey work and data collection, the CR division is responsible for cultural resource compliance to ensure protection of cultural and historic resources throughout City/Castle's development. The division will also handle administrative and record archiving, library management, academic research permitting and compliance monitoring, artifact management, and cultural resource-based interpretive program development.

#### *Cultural Resource Compliance*

The chief of Cultural Resources conducts all required CR compliance activities under applicable state and federal regulations prior to any new project development. Through regular communications with the other division chiefs, the CR chief can ensure protection of cultural and historic resources as City/Castle continues to develop and improve visitor facilities and infrastructure. In the past, the lack of in-house CR compliance capacity in this has been a considerable challenge to the staff's ability to accomplish projects in a timely manner.

#### *Research Coordination*

Permits for any cultural or historical research within the parks must be recommended by the CR chief, and approved by the superintendent. The CR division is also responsible for ensuring compliance with the permit agreements. The new CR division will increase the capacity for the park to manage outside research and leverage findings that bolster knowledge about City/Castle.

#### *Archiving and Artifact Management*

The CR division administers records that are sent to State and Federal archives and manages the City/Castle library. Artifact management is handled differently for pieces found in the Reserve than for those found in the Park. Artifacts found in the Reserve are dealt with under the Museum Management Plan for the consolidated curatorial operation at Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, done in partnership with City, Minidoka National Historic Site, and Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve. Artifacts found in the Park are owned by the State of Idaho, and the CR chief is currently developing a collections management plan based on IDPR policies and procedures.

#### *Interpretive Programming*

The CR division's interpretive programming function will certainly grow in the coming years. In the past, this responsibility has fallen to VS&I and the superintendent, but the three divisions will work jointly to develop interpretive programming in the future. CR staff has an opportunity to increase cultural research and development of interpretive programs, especially those relating to some of the initial inhabitants of the land, the Native Americans, as well as the development of the ranching community that is still dominant in the Almo community. Increasing interaction with and knowledge of these cultures could also help to improve overall community relations. Research for interpretation of the California Trail emigrants (1843-1882) remains the highest priority.

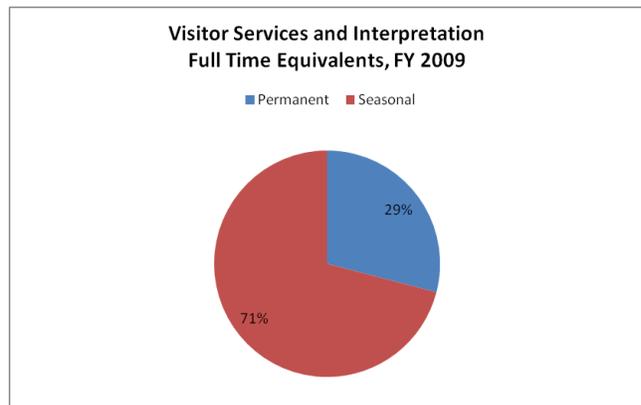
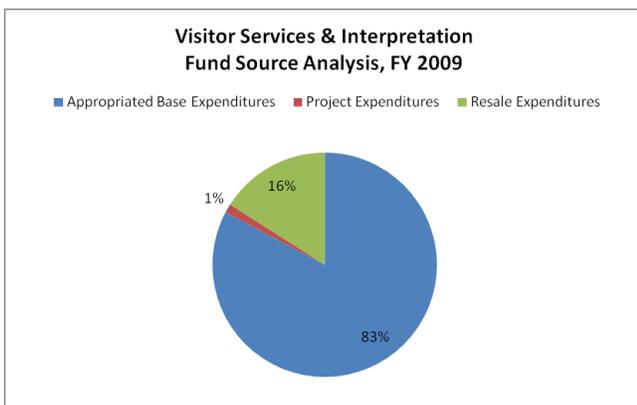
City/Castle has a wealth of cultural and historic resources, and new artifacts are discovered each year. The CR division plans to increase awareness of these resources to both the general public as well as the scientific community. Increased awareness can lead to greater appreciation and therefore better protection of the resources. Heightened interest can also create and sustain a cycle of CR research within City/Castle.

## Visitor Services and Interpretation

The Visitor Services and Interpretation (VS&I) division engages distant visitors as well as the local community in City/Castle's resources and recreational opportunities. As visitation has grown, the visitor demographics have become more diverse. The 2008 Visitor Services Project confirmed anecdotal evidence that more families and seniors are visiting City/Castle in addition to mainstay climbers – a trend likely spurred by the development of the Smoky Mountain Campgrounds, better marketing, a user-friendly reservation system, and varied interpretive/educational programs.

The visitor center offers information and customer service, sells maps, souvenirs, and climbing gear, and showcases a video about City/Castle's history and geology. Within the Reserve and the Park, information is communicated to visitors through twelve wayside exhibits describing the area's cultural history. In addition, the visitor services staff members update the City/Castle websites, as well as respond to inquiries by phone, e-mail, and mail. The division conducts about ten annual events targeting different interests and age groups. Other VS&I responsibilities include maintaining visitation statistics, camping reservation and fee collection, and organizing the volunteer and camp host programs.

In FY 2009, expenditures for the VS&I division totaled \$133,000 with 3.4 FTE (see figures for more detail).



### *Visitor Center Operations*

The visitor center (VC) is located between the Reserve and the Castle Rocks State Park Ranch Unit. The VC operates for 307 days a year from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., seven days a week from April 15 to October 15; weekdays only, October 16 to April 14; and is closed on holidays, November through March. VS&I staff members manning the visitor center provide a variety of services including responding to visitor inquiries, managing the resale program, developing the City/Castle-specific brochures, managing the camping reservations, playing the interpretive video, tracking visitation statistics, and providing janitorial services to the facility. Since the visitor center also serves as the VS&I and M&A offices for City/Castle, many employees occupy the building. Typically, three to four seasonal employees engage solely in visitor interaction from April through October, and two employees maintain the center from November through March.

### *Resale Program*

The goal of the resale program is to sell books and merchandise that support interpretive themes, enhance visitors' recreational experiences, facilitate memories of the park experience, promote Idaho

recreation and tourism, and communicate the missions of IDPR and NPS. The product mix includes City and Castle-specific items such as books, maps, apparel, mugs, magnets, pins, and climbing equipment. Efforts toward cost reduction are developed by building relationships with suppliers and forming a retail network with other buyers, but volume discounts are not frequently utilized as a result of space limitations. Profits from the program are reinvested in resale purchasing, development of exhibits, printing of brochures, and partially funds personnel. The head of the resale program uses multiple performance metrics to analyze and improve the resale program, such as average expenditure per visitor, buying patterns, and profit margins. The sales area and visitor center are staffed by the same employee(s).

### *Camping and Fee Collections*

Visitors can make reservations and pay for campsites either online, through a call center, or on location. City/Castle began using ReserveAmerica, a commercial camping reservation system, in April 2009. Each morning, a VS&I employee collects fees at City's 64 campsites, three group camping areas, and at Smoky Mountain Campground's 38 sites from campers who have not already paid online. Day use fees are not collected at City, but a \$4/day entrance fee is collected in Castle.

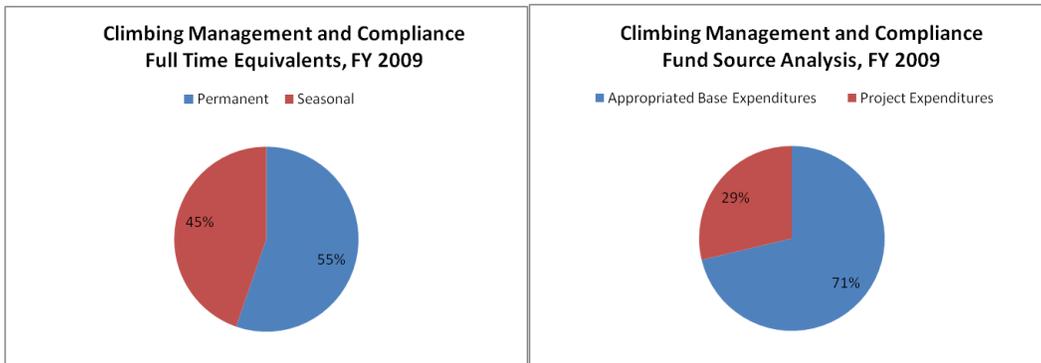
### *Interpretation and Events*

The six interpretive themes of the 2007 City of Rocks National Reserve Foundation Statement serve as the basis for all interpretive and educational programming. Self-guided opportunities are provided by 12 wayside exhibits, 10 park-specific brochures, and trail maps. The VS&I division plans about ten annual events throughout the year (e.g., nighttime star viewing parties, nature walks, hiking trips, etc.); in addition, the division targets conducting two to four scheduled programs per week between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day. These activities appeal to both children and adults, and highlight recreational opportunities and the natural and cultural resources at City/Castle. Recent budget cuts to IDPR have severely affected City/Castle's ability to meet this goal of two to four interpretive presentations per week. Some events, such as the Valentine Excursion and the trail rides, engage local businesses, including the Almo Inn, Durfee Hot Springs, the Almo Creek Outpost, and Indian Grove Outfitters. Attendance typically reaches capacity, and events attract visitors from region population centers such as Boise, Salt Lake City, and Twin Falls. Youth-focused programming is most often attended by children of the local communities.

### **Climbing Management and Compliance**

The Climbing Management and Compliance (CM&C) division, while small in terms of budget at only 10 percent of City/Castle's total expenditures, is critical to visitor satisfaction and safety. The Reserve and Park's largest user group is climbers, and many tasks of the division are related to climbing and its impacts. CM&C responsibilities include rules compliance within the Reserve and the Park, safety, trails maintenance, climbing management, and climbing-related interpretation.

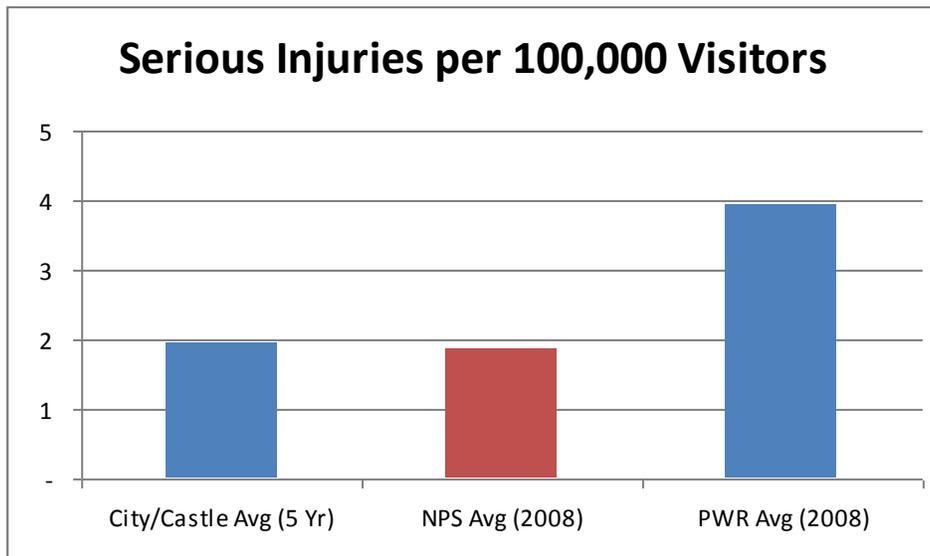
In FY 2009, the CM&C division was able to accomplish its goals with \$80,000 and 1.8 FTE, with the majority of funds coming from base appropriations and only one permanent employee. (See figures below.)



*Safety and Compliance*

Employee and visitor safety is a necessary emphasis of the division, though it requires less time than trail maintenance and climbing management. The climbing ranger, who is a registered nurse and certified as a first aid/CPR instructor for the American Heart Association, coordinates and leads personnel in CPR and First Aid training as well as other job safety trainings. With the growth of the division’s responsibilities and other competing priorities at City/Castle, highly technical emergency response training has necessarily decreased. However, both the climbing ranger and chief of visitor services are members of the area Quick Response Unit. In addition, the climbing ranger is an EMT instructor, serves on the IDPR safety team, and maintains an Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) which describes the response procedures in the event of an accident or the need for evacuation (e.g., during a wildland fire). The climbing ranger is also responsible for managing incident reports and coordination with county law enforcement, courts, and emergency personnel.

Climbing accidents account for approximately half of all visitor injuries each year, with bicycling, horse-back riding, and automobile accidents accounting for the remainder. Relative to other National Park units, the visitor incident rate in City/Castle is quite low.



**CALLOUT BOX/SIDEBAR: City/Castle Safety Record**

City/Castle has had a strong safety record. In the past five years (2004-2008), 19 visitor injuries have been documented, nine of which were serious. All of the serious visitor injuries were climbing-related. Given that City/Castle receives approximately 50,000 climbers annually, however, the accident rate for

climbers (less than 0.01 percent of climbers each year) is relatively low. This healthy safety record may be attributed to closely spaced bolt anchors, short climbs, and solid rock.<sup>15</sup>

[END CALL OUT]

### *Trail Maintenance*

Trail maintenance requires the most time and resources within the CM&C division and is one of the most challenging tasks, especially within the Reserve. Most trails in the Reserve are poorly aligned because they were formed prior to the establishment of the Reserve. Steep grades and disintegrating granite soils throughout the Park and the Reserve add to the difficulties of trail maintenance. The situation at the Park is somewhat different. While the recent opening of the Park has allowed staff to proactively design trails so that they require less maintenance, it has been difficult to keep pace with visitor use.

### **CALLOUT BOX/SIDEBAR: City/Castle Complexities of Trail Development**

The best way to fully experience the wonderland of rocks, forests, and meadows of City/Castle is by trail. Due to the specific needs of climbers, trails constructed to reach climbing routes are more development intensive than traditional hiking trails. Climbing trails need to reach steep approaches and require staging areas that will minimize erosion and vegetation impacts. For each new trail constructed, the crew needs to undertake the following process:

- Analyze the rock formations to determine what will be popular routes, and then align a corresponding trail system to minimize impact and erosion;
- Consult the City/Castle NR Program, CR program, and the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)/NPS for potential natural and cultural resources concerns;
- Receive concurrence and approval from the superintendent;
- Realign trails to avoid damage to resources, if necessary;
- Construct trails; and
- Over time, reinforce or improve the trail for multiple use.

[END CALL OUT]

### *Climbing Management and Interpretation*

City/Castle serves as a model for climbing management, and it is one of the few national climbing areas to offer such extensive oversight, improving both visitor safety and resource protection. Climbing management and interpretation responsibilities include coordination of permits to develop new climbing routes, maintenance of fixed anchors, and presentation of climbing related talks and demonstrations. The current permitting system is outlined by the City and Castle Climbing Management Plans, with the climbing ranger responsible for the recommendation and compliance monitoring of new routes and areas. The climbing ranger also monitors and maintains fixed anchors to enhance visitor safety, satisfaction, and resource protection. Resources are protected when fixed anchors are replaced with stainless steel hardware, slings are removed, and hardware is camouflaged with paint.

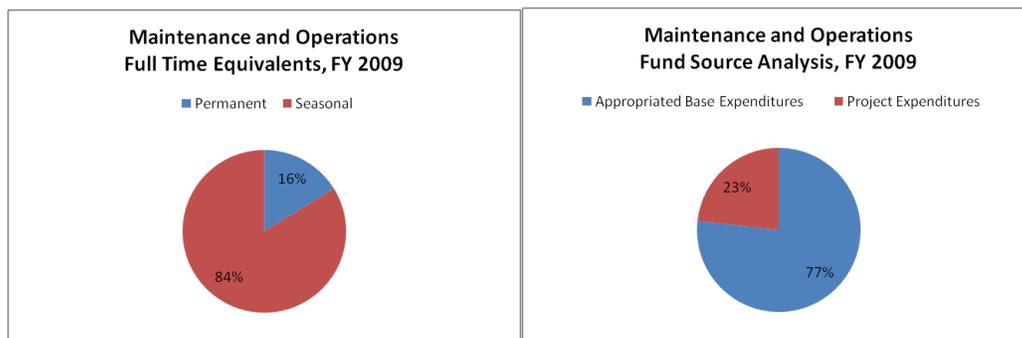
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<sup>15</sup> Often, nearby climbers will assist a non-critically injured or stranded climber and the City/Castle response unit is not summoned. Therefore, it is fair to assume that the number of accidents documented is likely to be lower than the actual. This is also true for other climbing areas nationally.

## Maintenance and Operations

The Maintenance and Operations (M&O) division keeps City/Castle running and supports the day-to-day operations of all divisions. The division's responsibilities include maintaining all facilities and grounds, overseeing new construction, managing the park's vehicle fleet, and carrying out preventative/scheduled maintenance and emergency repairs. One of the greatest challenges for the division is the rural location of City/Castle, making inventory of supplies and materials a crucial component of successful operations. Because of these significant duties and responsibilities, as well as fuel usage, the M&O division accounts for 37 percent of expenditures, the largest percentage of City/Castle's base and project expenditures.

In FY 2009 M&O expenditures totaled \$306,000, of which \$235,000 was appropriated base funding. The M&O division is composed of 1 permanent employee, the chief of maintenance (also called the maintenance foreman), three seasonal leads, and several short-term seasonal employees and volunteers. In total, division employees worked the equivalent hours of 6.2 full-time employees in FY 2009. (See figures below.)



### **CALLOUT BOX/SIDEBAR: Maintenance and Operations Routine Responsibilities at City/Castle**

The M&O division plays a critical role in park operations and, is responsible for maintaining:

- 9.54 miles of jurisdictional roads, including snow removal
- 102 campsites, 3 group camps and 14 parking areas
- Over 1,800 signs
- 13 buildings and 13 separate vault toilets
- 18 vehicles and 22 pieces of special use equipment
- Utility system and 7 wells
- 3 acres of manicured lawns, trees, shrubs, and flowers

**[END CALL OUT]**

#### *Planning and Management of New Construction*

With 23 percent of expenditures going toward projects, the M&O division is often busy with construction projects from relatively minor improvements such as the installation of a payphone, bulletin boards, and concrete sidewalks in Smoky Mountain Campground in 2008, to more intensive projects like the construction of a new picnic area in Castle. On an annual basis, M&O is typically responsible for three or more construction projects.

#### *Road Maintenance*

In order to improve visitor and employee safety, M&O staff members maintain and repairs over nine miles of jurisdictional roads. The division undertakes grading, compacting, installing water drainage structures where needed, and managing the dust abatement program. Since the community is reliant upon county roads through the Reserve in winter, snow removal requires significant resources. During frequent blizzards in 2008, the M&O crew provided over 500 hours of snow removal from park roads, sidewalks, and county roads.

The M&O division goes above and beyond regular maintenance activities by proactively taking advantage of special projects (detailed below), improving energy efficiencies, recycling, and modernizing the fleet management system.

### *Special Projects*

The City/Castle maintenance crew often exemplifies the flexibility needed in a remote park with limited resources. For example, in 2008, the crew spent four days deconstructing Ponderosa State Park yurts for future use in City/Castle. The crew also collected 35 free trees from an area wholesale nursery that was offering hundreds of trees at no cost to IDPR units. In addition to unplanned opportunities, the crew also responds to calls for assistance, such as one from Lake Walcott State Park when it sustained heavy tree damage in a 2008 storm. However, due to the small size of the maintenance crew, unplanned projects can cause a significant disruption to daily workflow.

### *Solid Waste Management*

The M&O division underwent a comprehensive study of its solid waste management program in 2005 in accordance with the NPS program for diverting solid waste from disposal in landfills, and the division is working to implement an integrated solid waste management program.<sup>16</sup> In 2008 alone, the division processed 557 pounds of aluminum, 7,372 pounds of glass, 2,091 pounds of plastic (#1 and #2), and 500 pounds of paper. City/Castle also recycles batteries, tires, cardboard, and scrap metal. Approximately six tons of waste were recycled for onsite use or deposited at a nearby recycling center. Glass is crushed onsite and the sand byproduct is used in concrete mixtures or in the bedding of pipe. Excess wood materials are cut and sold to campers, used for heating, or chipped for landscaping.

### *Energy Use and Fleet Management*

Energy efficiency and fleet management has been a priority at City/Castle for a number of years: within the past year, monthly kilowatt usage has decreased by as much as 28 percent, and the division utilizes fleet management software that enables tracking of a wide range of data including maintenance needs, fuel use, mileage, and conditions of travel. By using this program, M&O has been able to increase knowledge of the fleet and improve inventory management, which enables the division to increase overall efficiency, especially fuel efficiency. For example, if a vehicle is often used on dirt roads, a software program tracks performance filters so that they can be changed more frequently, if necessary.

## **Management and Administration**

Management and Administration (M&A) is composed of the superintendent, assistant manager (often referred to as the administrative officer), part-time administrative technician and management intern. M&A coordinates overall park activities and sets the priorities of City/Castle's six divisions. The superintendent sets the overall strategic direction for City/Castle and serves as a liaison to multiple

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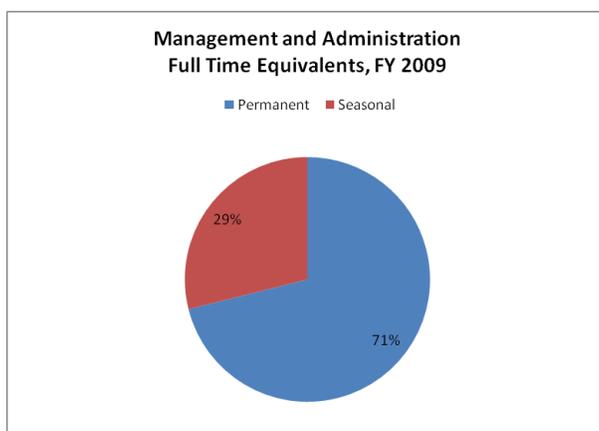
<sup>16</sup> NPS's goal is to divert 45% of solid waste from landfills by 2005 and 50% by 2010, unless significant barriers exist.

organizations and spokesperson to the media and public. Management also establishes policy and procedures that tier from NPS Director's Orders and IDPR Policies and Procedures.

The City/Castle management team is composed of the superintendent, administrative officer, and the chiefs of each division. The division chiefs develop preliminary budget priorities, goals, and activities. The superintendent submits the final budget to both the federal and state governments each year, outlining future goals and functional needs. In addition, the superintendent and administrative officer monitor the discretionary spending of the budget by each division. Hiring of new employees is undertaken by the respective division chief, and a second interview must be conducted by at least one other person on the management team.

Administrative responsibilities include human resources management, processing accounts receivable and payables, managing the inventory and disposition of assets and property, providing on-site information technology (IT) assistance to staff including GIS, coordinating IT activities between the NPS and IDPR, maintaining records and archives, and compiling and analyzing business statistics.

In FY 2009, the Management and Administration division expended \$212,000 of base funding with 2.8 FTE. (See figures below.)



### *Public and Community Relations*

City/Castle stakeholder groups and their respective interests are diverse and often complex. Keeping the special interest groups, partner agencies, and community leaders informed requires significant effort. The superintendent represents the interests of the NPS, IDPR, and City/Castle to the local communities, organizations, and to other agencies. In addition, the M&A division coordinates media relations and press releases, reviews and approves all park publications and websites information, and issues permits for filming, group use, grazing, and climbing route development.

### *Budgeting*

Both the federal and state governments contribute to the City/Castle budget; therefore, M&A submits proposals to both entities. Congress approves the NPS base budget. City/Castle receives base funding from IDPR after it is approved by the Idaho legislature and governor. The federal government's fiscal year extends to September 30 while the state of Idaho's fiscal year ends on June 30. The different fiscal years are reconciled by committing a portion of City/Castle's federal base appropriations on June 30 to the state budget for the next fiscal year. In other words, the leftover FY 2009 NPS funds on June 30, 2009 are committed to City/Castle's FY 2010 budget, which is managed under state authority. This

action allows for more thoughtful spending throughout the year than would be possible if City/Castle was required to expend all federal funds prior to the end of the state fiscal year.

The budget provides for an amount of discretionary spending by the divisions. In the past, high performing divisions, based on if they were achieving their goals and tasks, were given spending priority. However, future allocation will be based on cross-functional expenses that have been divided into accounts according to Idaho purchasing sub-object codes. The budget will be evaluated with divisional chiefs on a quarterly basis.

The superintendent encourages divisions to compete for project-based grants from IDPR, the NPS, and other fund sources, but some divisions lack the time or grant-writing skills necessary to apply for these funds. Frequent turnover in the NR division has hindered follow-through on NPS projects and state grants. Nonetheless, project and grant money account for a significant portion of the overall budget (16 percent in FY 2009), and allows City/Castle to protect its resources and build its visitor services.

#### *State/Federal Partnership Budgetary Considerations*

Budgetary restrictions represent the most cumbersome management issue in City/Castle's state-federal partnership model. NPS funds are committed to the state budget; however, sufficient spending authority is not always provided by IDPR, which can delay or inhibit staff's ability to utilize federal funding. According to the Cooperative Agreement, IDPR is expected to contribute 50 percent of City's base funding and no less than 25 percent. Therefore, any new increase in NPS base funding should be correspondingly matched by IDPR funding as well as spending authority. As a result of the partnership, City/Castle operations have proved more resilient than other Idaho state parks during times of economic and budgetary fluctuations.

## State/Federal Partnership Performance

Most units of the National Park Service utilize the NPS Scorecard, which is designed as a diagnostic tool to evaluate System-wide performance and efficiency. The Scorecard is still fairly new in the NPS, but it already provides valuable information to park management teams. The Scorecard's measures highlight park strengths and help identify areas of need so that resources can be used to the greatest effect.

Due to the administrative and funding implications of City/Castle's unique state/federal partnership, it does not utilize the Scorecard as a formal diagnostic tool.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible to construct some metrics which highlight some of the differences in funding and focus areas relative to other NPS and IDPR units. This process can also bring into relief City/Castle's key operational strengths as well as potential areas for improvement.

### **CALL OUT/SIDEBAR BOX: NPS And IDPR Mission Statements**

- National Park Service: “**Preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values** of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The Park Service cooperates with partners to **extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation** throughout this country and the world.”
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation: “To **improve the quality of life** in Idaho through **outdoor recreation and resource stewardship.**”

[END CALL OUT]

### **Overall Benefits of the Partnership**

The NPS and IDPR missions lead to differences in management approaches. While the NPS focuses on resource protection first and foremost, IDPR is most concerned with providing recreation and access opportunities for its user groups. City/Castle has the opportunity to leverage the best of NPS and IDPR to both protect the natural and cultural resources and enhance recreational offerings.

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<sup>17</sup> The Reserve/State Park does not fully utilize all of the NPS accounting systems and handles many administrative duties in accordance with IDPR protocol. Therefore, its ability to compile data in the same format is overly burdensome, especially with such a small administrative staff.

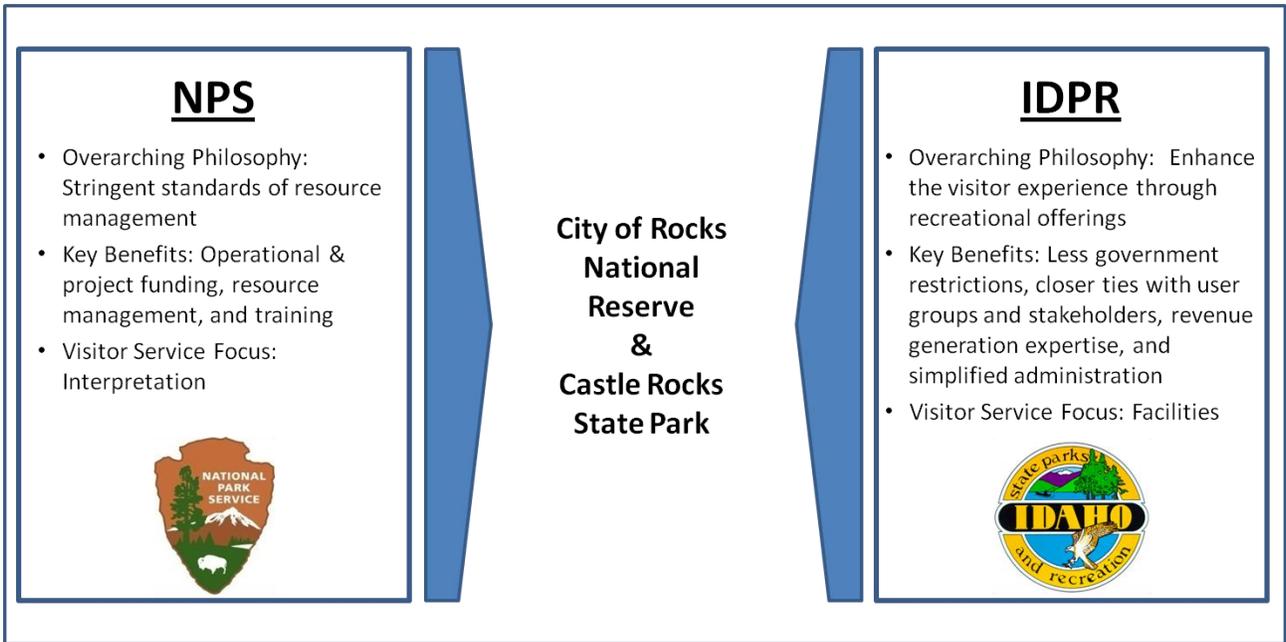
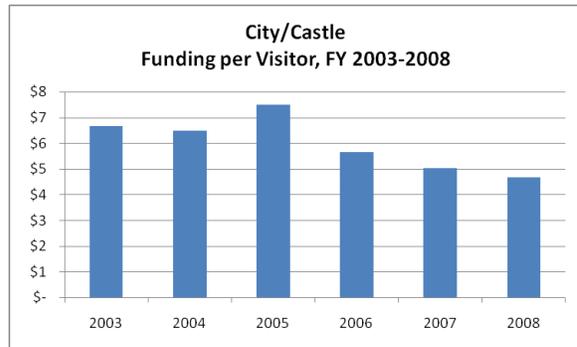
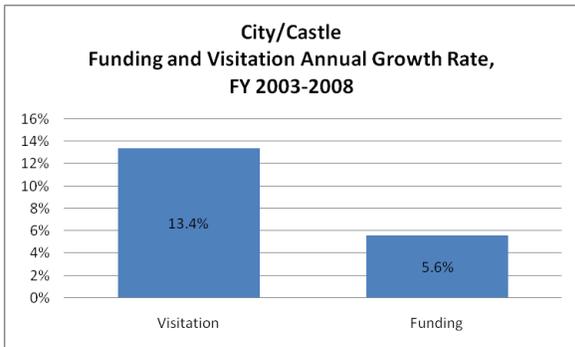


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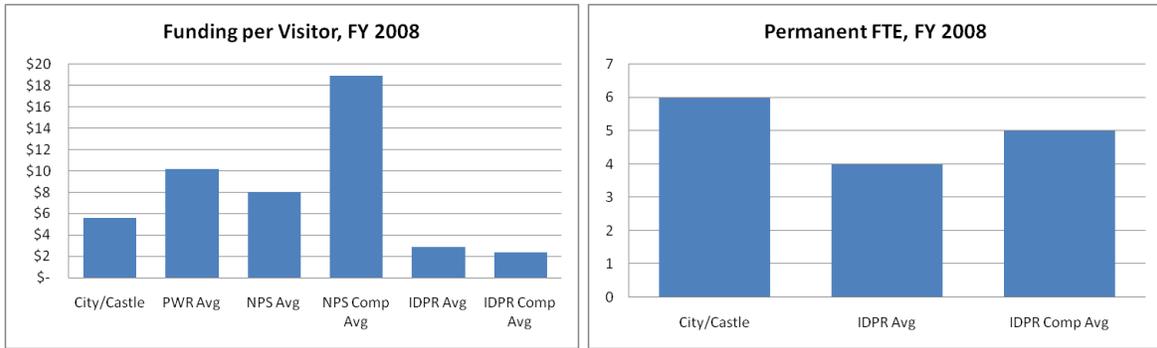
Through the state/federal relationship, City/Castle is able to realize impressive economies of scale in day-to-day park operations. After the opening of Castle Rocks State Park in 2003, visitation increased by 13 percent annually, but expenditures increased by less than six percent annually. This trend has resulted in an annual decline in funding per visitor while maintaining a 99 percent rate of visitor satisfaction with facilities, services, and recreational opportunities.<sup>18</sup> (See figures below.)



Relative to other NPS units, City/Castle receives less funding for its level of visitation, but it is better funded fiscally and in terms of FTE than comparable IDPR units. (See figures below.)<sup>19</sup>

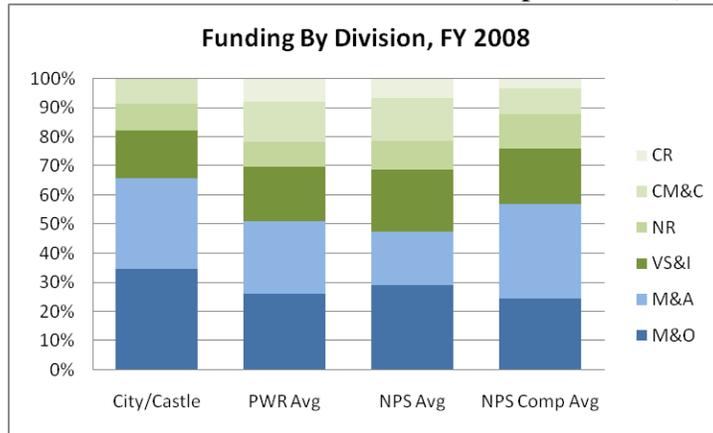
<sup>18</sup> Percent of visitors responding “good” or “very good” to overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities in NPS 2008 Visitor Survey

<sup>19</sup> City/Castle financials are based on IDPR FY09; NPS financials are based on NPS FY08; IDPR comparative data is based on IDPR FY08. NPS comparable group is based on region, visitation, funding, and unit type (NM/NB/NHS) and includes Craters of the Moon NM, Hagerman Fossil Beds NM, Big Hole NB, Devils Tower NM, Fossil Butte NM, Golden Spike NHS, Great Basin NP, and Pinnacles NM. PWR is the Pacific West Region. NPS average includes all NPS units. IDPR comparable group consists of units that are within 25 percent of City/Castles on the following metrics: total funding, FTE, acres, revenue, and visitation. It includes Harriman/Henry’s Lake, Hells Gate, Heyburn, Lake Cascade, Lucky Peak, Ponderosa, and Priest Lake State Parks. IDPR average includes all IDPR units.

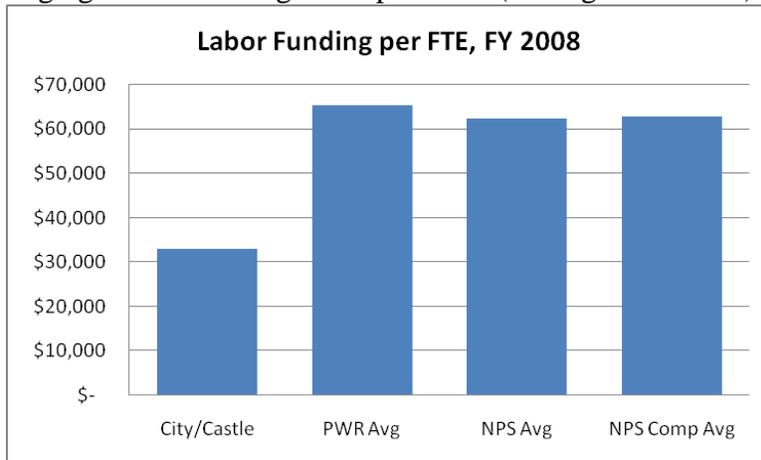


[Note to graphic designer: Make City/Castle bars a different color to highlight in these two charts]

While better funding and an expanded staff allows City/Castle to focus more resources on natural and cultural resource protection than other IDPR units, City/Castle must spend a greater percentage of its funding on base operations—administrative activities and operating park facilities and infrastructure—than other NPS units. The focus on base operations (81 percent of total funding, as opposed to the 60 percent PWR average and 69 percent NPS average) reduces City/Castle’s financial flexibility for improvement projects, visitor services, and visitor and resource protection. (See figure below.)<sup>20</sup>

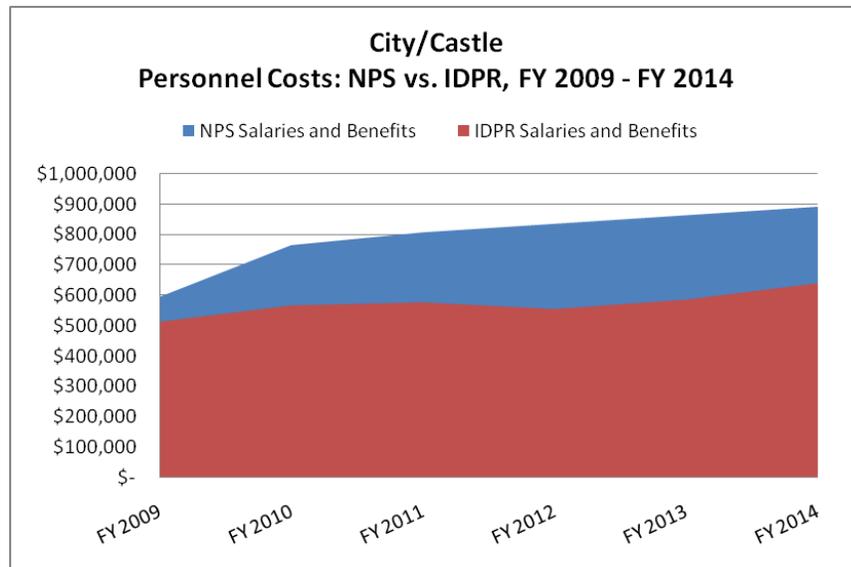


Since City/Castle is managed by IDPR, staff salaries are considerably lower than other NPS units, which can be seen through gross labor obligations per FTE. (See figures below.)



<sup>20</sup> CM&C is equivalent to NPS Visitor and Resource Protection division for comparables; M&O is equivalent to the sum of Facility Maintenance and Facility Operations; Beginning in FFY 2009 and State FY10, City/Castle will have CR funding.

The difference in labor costs between the two agencies will continue to grow over the next two fiscal years. IDPR has instituted a salary freeze that will likely remain in effect until FY 2012, and will only increase by approximately two percent annually onwards. On the other hand, NPS salaries increase by an average of 2.9 percent annually to account for inflation, along with all federal employees, and federal pay grades start at a higher level.<sup>21</sup> If City/Castle personnel were paid according to the NPS scale, personnel costs would have been about \$80,000 higher in FY 2009. This gap would increase to nearly \$250,000 by FY 2014 since City/Castle will hire more seasonal employees with base funding in the next year. While the lower labor cost improves fiscal efficiency of City/Castle, the salary gap can make it more difficult to hire and retain staff. (See figure below.)



City/Castle’s base funding has increased for the past five years at 3.2 percent annually (0.9 percent annually in constant dollars). However, this is lower than the NPS regional, overall NPS, and NPS comparable park averages (19, 18, and 26 percent respectively), which illustrates how the funding disparity has grown over time. The gap in overall funding and wages is likely to continue.

**Advantages and Complexities of the Partnership by Division**

The state/federal partnership impacts operations of each of City/Castle’s divisions in different ways. Although most of the impacts are positive, the partnership does add a layer of complexity in some cases.

**Natural Resources**

A key benefit of the state/federal partnership is access to federal project funding and specialists in natural resources. City/Castle depends on the Upper Columbia Basin Network (UCBN) for baseline inventory and monitoring protocols for natural resource vital signs and also receives assistance from the Northern Rocky Mountains Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) stationed at Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve (CRMO) which, together with park staff, work to control aggressive, state-listed, noxious weeds.

<sup>21</sup> Federal salary estimates follow these assumptions: Superintendent at Grade 13/ Step 4; Division Chiefs starting at Grade 11/ Step 4, and seasonal employees at Grade 5/ Step 1.

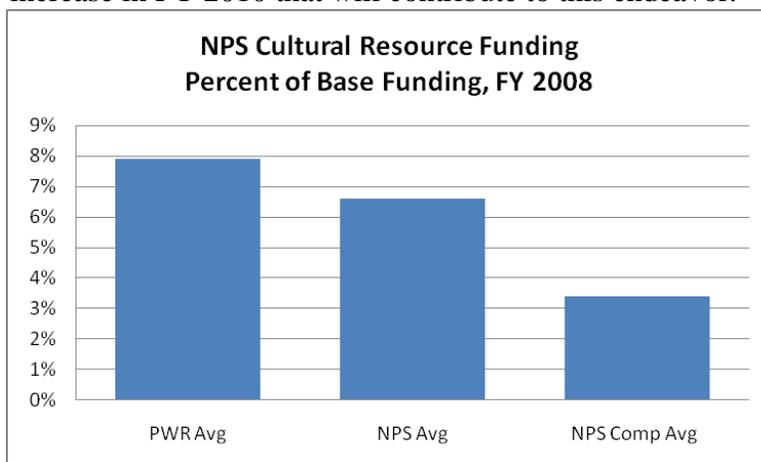
Over the past five years, the NR division has received over \$125,000 in NPS project financing that includes annual funding for Youth Conservation Corps groups to work on erosion mitigation and resource protection as well as a number of larger one-time projects like vegetation mapping, fire history, and invasive species management grants.

Another benefit of the relationship is the ability to pilot new programs and policies within Castle Rocks State Park before beginning the more arduous federal approval process. Examples of actions that can be undertaken at Castle include more strategic grazing policies and, in the future, prescribed fires.

The different NR regulations for City and Castle can add management complexity to the NR division. For this reason, City/Castle manages natural resources to the federal standards of natural resource management as much as possible. While following a stricter set of regulations increases administrative workload, it reduces complexity of processes by streamlining to one standard.

### Cultural Resources

A significant benefit of the NPS/IDPR relationship for City/Castle is the emphasis that NPS places on cultural resource management. In addition to stringent standards and extensive training opportunities, the NPS allocates a high percentage of funding to cultural resources. On average, nearly seven percent of base funds are allocated to this division. (See figure below.) In FY 2009, City received an increase of \$117,000 in base funding for the development of a Cultural Resources division and will receive another \$45,000 base increase in FY 2010 that will contribute to this endeavor.



The state/federal partnership becomes especially complex with regard to cultural resources due to strict federal regulations and compliance applicability to both state and federal projects. Specific procedures and regulations vary between City and Castle. For example, artifacts found in City of Rocks National Reserve are handled under the NPS-required Museum Management Plan for the consolidated curatorial operation housed at Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument. City partners with Hagerman, Minidoka National Historic Site, and Craters of the Moon National Monument to support curatorial activities and share resources. However, artifacts found in Castle Rocks State Park are owned by the State of Idaho, and the chief of cultural resources is currently working to develop a separate artifact management plan for those items. Having separate artifact management plans adds a layer of bureaucracy to the CR division, increasing the amount of time spent on artifact management for the division chief, as well as for potential researchers.

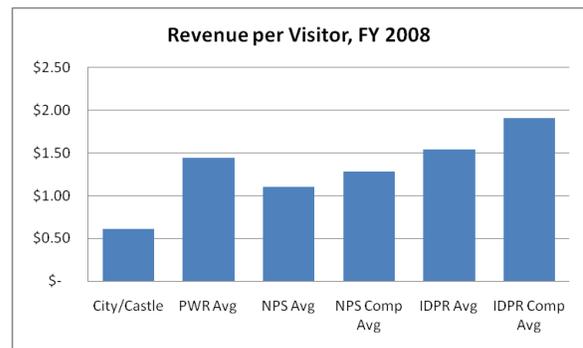
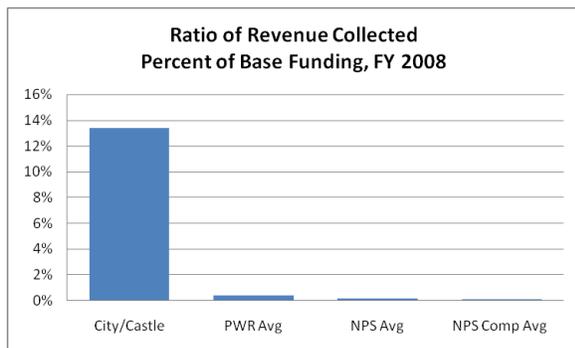
In CR compliance cases concerning City, the chief of cultural resources must report to the Pacific West Regional (PWR) office of the NPS, while in cases concerning Castle, the chief consults with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). When possible, all cases are managed to the stricter federal regulations in order to streamline compliance and ensure observance of the highest standards.

Visitor Services and Interpretation

The state/federal partnership has allowed the VS&I division to take a well-rounded approach to providing physical amenities as well as interpretive programming.

A primary performance metric for Idaho State Park performance is revenue generation. As such, IDPR places the greatest emphasis on providing high-quality facilities for visitors and maximizing revenue generation through these park facilities. While City/Castle visitors rate facilities highly, the unit lags behind other Idaho state parks and national park units in revenue generation per visitor. City ranks highly for visitor satisfaction with combined park facilities (99%), scoring particularly well for restrooms (100%) and campgrounds and picnic areas (97%).<sup>22</sup>

City/Castle’s ratio of revenue to base budget is high for NPS standards, but its revenue per visitor is below average for both NPS and IDPR. One explanation for this fact is that City does not charge a day use fee, which would not be cost effective to collect, when personnel and construction costs are taken into account. Furthermore, City may receive more funding from fee demonstration projects allocated by the NPS versus the 80 percent of collected fees it would retain if it implemented an entrance fee.<sup>23</sup> Since the Reserve contains private property and county roads within its borders, a day use fee would be controversial for those entering the park for non-recreational purposes and would difficult to monitor. (See figures below.)<sup>24</sup>



Interpretation is a key focus of the NPS, and City/Castle benefits greatly from this relationship through funding and training. For example, over the past three years, City/Castle has received \$7,500 in project funding for the Volunteers-in-Parks program. The VS&I division has leveraged this into over \$64,000 worth of volunteer time based on the NPS hourly valuation rates. Still, City/Castle has been unable to

<sup>22</sup> NPS GPRA Study (2008)

<sup>23</sup> The Federal Lands Recreational Enhancement Act (FLREA) authorizes that NPS units that charge day use fees to return those revenues collected to the NPS. The money is then reallocated so that the fee-collecting unit retains 80 percent of the revenue, and the NPS distributes the other 20 percent to non-fee collecting units through fee demonstration project funding.

<sup>24</sup> IDPR revenue collection for City/Castle does not include NPS funding.

attract many long-term or annual volunteers, which means that recruiting, training and managing the volunteer program is difficult and time consuming every year.

While visitor satisfaction is outstanding at 99 percent, visitors routinely score lower on their understanding of City/Castle's key themes. The Visitor Services and Interpretation division believes that visitor understanding could be improved by increasing visitor services and interpretation programs. Currently, 84 percent of visitors surveyed rate learning about nature, history, or culture as good or very good, compared to the PWR and NPS averages of 87 and 88 percent respectively. City/Castle also lags in contacts per visitor with 0.08 interpretive contacts, including visitor count and event attendance, per visitor versus 1.03 and 1.22 for PWR and NPS.

The NPS offers extensive expertise in interpretation that City/Castle can utilize such as project funding for a seasonal interpretive ranger, innovative educational media, ongoing training for employees, and assistance with American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance measures. The FY 2009 ONPS base increase includes nearly \$18,000 for interpretive services. When fully funded, the ONPS base increase will provide up to \$35,000 for this purpose. Furthermore, by leveraging IDPR statewide outdoor recreation research and the 2008 Visitor Study, City/Castle can better modify its programming to meet the needs of changing visitor demographics.

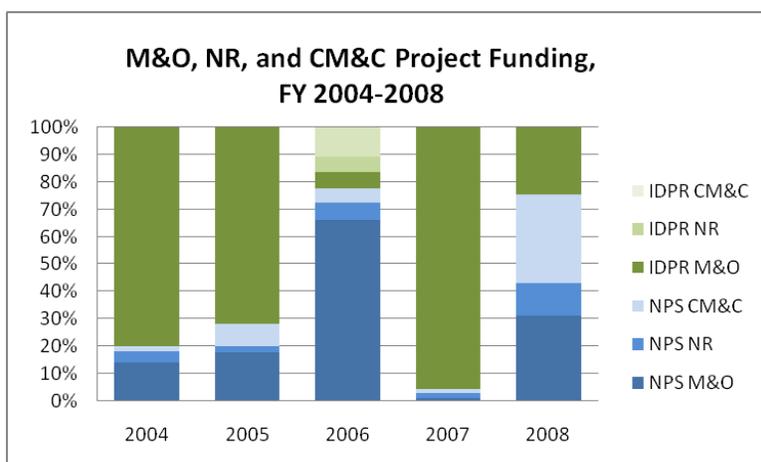
#### *Climbing Management and Compliance*

One of the major benefits of the partnership is access to federal cyclic maintenance funds that can be used for trail maintenance and the Montana Public Land Corps teams that provide trail work assistance for two weeks every summer. Between FY 2004 and FY 2008, City benefitted from \$135,000 in trail maintenance funding. Castle was able to access \$50,000 in state funds for trail maintenance in 2006, but has been unsuccessful in receiving IDPR Recreation Trails Program grants in subsequent years.

Complexities in administration of the NPS/IDPR Cooperative Agreement are also apparent in other aspects of the division's operations. For example, questions regarding climbing's impact on cultural, historical, or natural resources within the Reserve must be addressed through federal guidelines. However, the administration of commercial guiding within the Reserve must follow IDPR and Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board (OGLB) guidelines. All commercial guide and outfitter businesses that conduct operations within City/Castle must be properly permitted by IDPR and the Licensing Board.

#### *Maintenance and Operations*

As is the case with the other divisions, one of the key benefits of the state/federal partnership is the ability to access project-based federal and state funds, which has enabled the park to complete a number of improvement projects. While there is a high level of variability in both the level of funding as well as division allocation, IDPR tends to fund more projects related to facility development than resource management, which can be seen in the figure below.



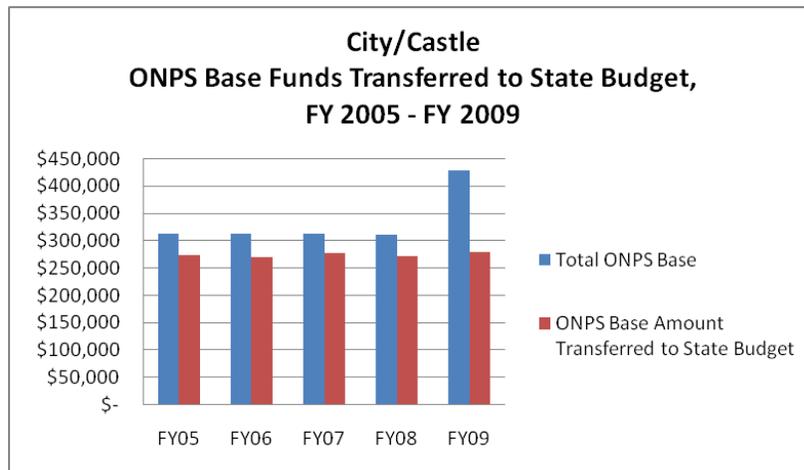
Transparency in project fund expenditure is a high priority for the management team. In the past, the NPS raised concerns about improper use of project funds on state grounds (i.e. the administrative unit of Castle Rocks State Park, which also serves City). For example, NPS project funds are not used to make capital improvements to the maintenance compound on state lands, even though that facility serves the needs of City. Sometimes this mutually agreed decision can reduce the ability of the park to gain economies of scale.

Additionally, City/Castle still has a great need for M&O funding to reduce its relatively high average Facility Condition Index (FCI) of high priority facilities.<sup>25</sup> A high FCI indicates a higher level of unfunded maintenance needs. At 20 percent, it is 26 percent higher than the PWR average and 55 percent higher than the NPS average.

### Management and Administration

A vital benefit of the state/federal relationship is how the budgeting process allows for more thoughtful spending over a longer period of time compared to other units of the NPS. As a result of the state/federal partnership, City/Castle follows two fiscal years – state and federal. Typically, a unit of the NPS must spend the entirety of its base budget within the federal fiscal year, or that money reverts back to the US Treasury. In recent years, NPS units have not even received their final budget until well into the fiscal year. However, as a result of being managed by the IDPR, City/Castle can commit its remaining funds to the state budget for the following fiscal year. In other words, the 2009 federal fiscal year ends on September 30, 2009. Instead of utilizing all ONPS funding by this date, City/Castle committed a sizeable portion of its federal base appropriation to the FY 2010 state budget, which ends on June 30, 2010. This flexibility has benefitted City/Castle, which typically commits over 80% of its ONPS base to the next fiscal year, giving the City/Castle management team much more financial predictability than other NPS units typically experience.

<sup>25</sup> Avg. FCI includes assets with Asset Priority Index >=50. FCI = Total unfunded maintenance needs divided by the unit-wide Current Replacement Value.

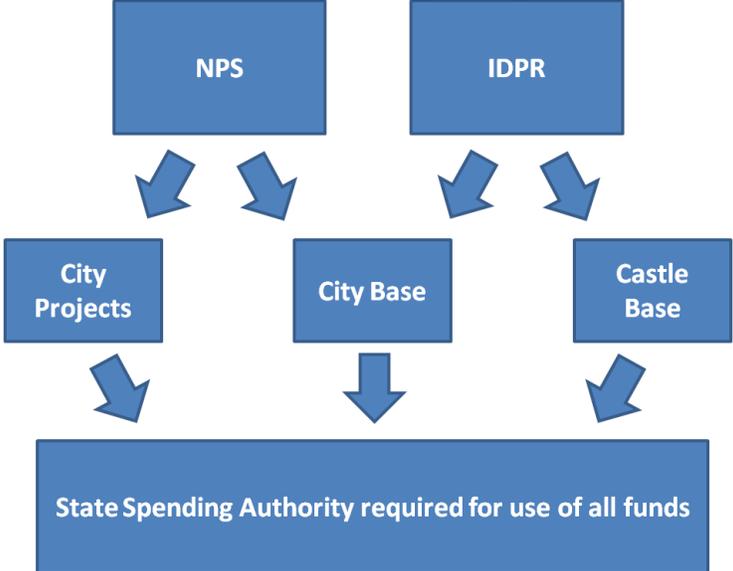


City/Castle also has the advantage being able to transfer project funds to the state budget, which extends the length of time over which management can stretch project financing. Other than Repair/Rehabilitation projects, City/Castle has five years to complete a project after funding has been shifted to the state budget versus the typical two to three years.

City/Castle benefits from a more flexible process for retaining funds; however, the approval process for spending appropriated money can delay or inhibit their utilization. (See diagram below.) In FY 2009 and FY 2010, IDPR must receive a waiver to the state hiring freeze from Idaho's Division of Financial Management. NPS funds projects at City that include labor, and often the hiring of additional employees is critical to accomplishing the project. Furthermore, the NPS may commit funds for a project, yet IDPR has insufficient spending authority to utilize those funds. Both of these state business practices severely impact the staff's ability to address the maintenance backlog. For the first time in FY 2009, the DFM approved less than City/Castle's requested amount by \$25,000. As a result, City/Castle will utilize their contracting arrangement with Craters of the Moon NM to make additional expenditures; however, this places an undue burden on Craters.

**City/Castle Sources of Funds and Spending Authority**

**PICTURE: "Sources and Spending Authority"**



## Operational Priorities

Through a park-wide effort, City/Castle’s management team has developed a shared vision of where it would like to focus energy and resources in the near term. The following section articulates the priorities that City/Castle plans to address during the next five years, as well as the key steps toward implementing these goals.

### *1. Protect resources, improve viewsheds, and provide additional interpretive opportunities by relocating Circle Creek Overlook Parking Area and associated facilities.*

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Circle Creek Overlook was developed improperly prior to the creation of the Reserve, resulting in a popular parking area sited on private property and inadequately designed for current parking and traffic flow.</li> <li>• Relocation will improve the viewshed from Bath Rock and other key locations in City, improve visitor safety by widening the overlook access road, reduce natural resource impacts, and provide improved interpretive exhibits and visitor facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project is likely to receive \$142,000 in NPS project funding in FY 2010. The project will entail relocation of the parking area and construction of a vault toilet, bulletin board, wayside exhibit, and geologic interpretive trail.</li> <li>• Existing trails will also need to be realigned, taking into consideration drainage and erosion issues.</li> </ul>

### *2. Complete development of CIRO’s new General Management Plan (GMP).*

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple stakeholders develop a GMP, which guides development for 15 to 20 years, through a multi-year process of planning and community engagement. Issues that will be addressed in the revised GMP include the preservation of key resources, the development of visitor services facilities and recreational activities, the establishment of land boundaries, assessment of staffing needs and responsibilities, and improved transportation planning.</li> <li>• The GMP will have long-term effects on City/Castle and the local community. Given the document’s importance, GMP development requires a large investment of time by staff and other stakeholders to ensure a high-quality, useful plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GMP Planning Team includes the City/Castle management team, resource specialists from the NPS Pacific West Region, and the IDPR East Region Manager.</li> <li>• Foundation Statement and Internal Scoping Workshops have already taken place, and the GMP process is scheduled to continue into FY 2013. The next phase will engage public opinion on the GMP’s areas of concern, and alternatives for potential actions will be discussed and finalized by FY 2011. The GMP Planning Team will assemble the draft GMP and submit it for public review in FY 2012 and submit the final</li> </ul>

	<p>GMP for regional review in FY 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GMP budget estimates a total cost of \$411,000 from FY 2009 to FY 2013, and PWR project funding pays for this expense. Costs include salaries for supplies, printing costs, travel, lodging, and per diem expenses.</li> </ul>
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**3. *Develop internal capacity to address resource assessments and compliance prior to initiating projects.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A significant barrier to City/Castle’s ability to move forward on projects has been the lack of personnel dedicated to managing the NEPA, NHPA, and NPS compliance processes.</li> <li>The new chief of cultural resources and the chief of natural resources will serve as the lead for the coordination and completion of the compliance process.</li> <li>Internal capacity for assessments and compliance will ensure the long-term protection of nationally significant values and resources and the completion of projects in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to build capacity, the new CR and NR chiefs will learn the NEPA, NHPA, and compliance process and complete environmental assessments related to the backlogged and upcoming projects.</li> <li>Over time, staff will develop a library of examples and templates that will improve efficiencies in developing compliance documents.</li> </ul>

**4. *Build equestrian staging area within City.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City/Castle enjoys a sizable and growing equestrian user group, but does not contain an equestrian parking and staging area that is suitable for truck and trailer traffic.</li> <li>The construction of an equestrian parking and staging area will enhance trail access for visitors, and encourage experiencing the City’s natural, cultural, and scenic resources. Furthermore, a dedicated staging area for equestrian use will reduce conflict among different user groups and allow staff to more easily manage recreational use.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The management team expects funding for this project beginning in FY 2011 and anticipates completing the project over 2-3 years.</li> <li>Project costs, as projected in the funding request, total \$89,000 for equipment, materials, labor, and compliance assessments.</li> <li>The new GMP and a proposed Development Concept Plan for the rim will help guide the development of an equestrian staging area.</li> </ul>

**5. *Implement revised grazing management plan with emphasis on repair and maintenance of the 50+ miles of fences in order to reduce time spent on grazing management.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Much of City/Castle’s 50 miles of border and internal fencing required for grazing management is in need of replacement. As fences degrade, more resources must be devoted to monitoring and enforcement of</li> </ul>
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	<p>grazing policy to ensure resource protection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implementing the grazing management plan and improving fence conditions will increase natural resource protection of City/Castle (especially riparian areas) and will significantly decrease trespassing onto adjacent lands and visitor facilities.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A revised Grazing Management Plan should be approved prior to the 2010 grazing season. With the addition of a chief of NR, implementation and monitoring can be more stringently enforced.</li> <li>The NR division will have to apply for project funding and enter into a contract with local vendors to hire a fencing crew. City/Castle will begin implementing the plan in the most sensitive areas such as riparian zones, culturally significant areas, and around visitor facilities.</li> </ul>

**6. *Maintain and improve trails within City/Castle through trail reinforcement and increased signage.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many trails in City were developed prior to the creation of the Reserve, resulting in many existing trails being steep, poorly sited in disintegrating soils, subject to storm damage, and expensive to maintain.</li> <li>In contrast, the recent opening of Castle Rocks has allowed staff to design trails that require less maintenance and open climbing areas to fixed anchors only after completion of a trail system. However, in the next three to five years, the CM&amp;C division expects that it will need to develop additional trails and signage to accommodate the continued development of existing areas (such as those around Taco Cave and Comp Wall), and increased usage by other groups like hikers, bikers, and equestrians.</li> <li>Improved trails will result in more enjoyable and safe hiking and riding opportunities, as well as decreased maintenance costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff must continually realign and reinforce trails within the Reserve; therefore, the CM&amp;C division plans to spend considerable resources to improve trails so that they require less maintenance through better drainage and other standard techniques.</li> <li>The division will begin by addressing high-use trails along the rim, then move on to primary trails in the Inner City, such as South Fork, Boxtop, and North Fork.</li> <li>The management team hopes to utilize funding from NPS cyclic maintenance funds and Fee Demo project funding for trail projects in the Reserve, and with the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funding through IDPR.</li> </ul>

**7. *Proactively address deferred and cyclic maintenance projects by incorporating FMSS into scheduling and coordination.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A significant backlog of deferred and cyclic maintenance projects is demonstrated by City/Castle's high FCI. City will incorporate FMSS for long-term scheduling of projects, enabling staff to reduce project time to</li> </ul>
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	<p>completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The goal of this strategy is to reduce backlog of projects, initiate and complete future projects on time, improve the FCI of assets, demonstrate that project funds are properly utilized, and decrease staff stress.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to achieve this goal, City will increase FMSS training and utilization of FMSS to guide annual work plans.</li> </ul>

**8. *Restore California Trail cultural landscape, and provide appropriate facilities for visitors to access cultural features and resources.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many modern intrusions on the California Trail landscape degrade City's connection with its most important cultural resource.</li> <li>• Removing obsolete structures and rehabilitating the landscape to its historical setting will more accurately reflect the experience of emigrant pioneers and settlers.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removing manmade physical features (obsolete fences, gates, cattle guards, irrigation pipes, etc.) will restore the California Trail corridor to its historical appearance.</li> <li>• Management will likely secure cyclic project funding to place power lines underground to restore the California Trail viewshed and hopes to complete 25 percent of this undertaking within five years.</li> <li>• Management will also apply for project funding for additional directions and signage to key features and appropriate parking.</li> <li>• Negotiations with the local power company are pending.</li> </ul>

**9. *Increase appreciation for historic trails, geologic processes, and archeological resources through interpretation, especially by offering experience-based learning opportunities, high quality A/V and web products, visitor center exhibits, and in-house publications.***

<b>Description and Potential Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City/Castle's has scored lower than NPS averages on visitor understanding surveys in recent years, despite obvious cultural and natural resources.</li> <li>• In order to address this issue, the visitor services division is moving toward a more coordinated, cross-divisional approach to interpretation.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CR, NR, and VS&amp;I divisions will engage in coordinated research that results in various interpretive media and presentations such as guided hikes, evening talks, and hands-on learning activities. Research and interpretive themes will evolve from the Foundation Statement.</li> <li>• The CR division plans to participate in Idaho Archeological Week each May and write articles for journals, depending on the number and type of discoveries made at City/Castle.</li> <li>• The VS&amp;I division will foster a stronger connection with NPS's resources to fund multimedia educational tools in the visitor center.</li> <li>• The FY 2010 budget includes a plan to hire a dedicated seasonal interpretive ranger, which was vacant in FY 2009.</li> </ul>

***10. Develop wildland fire program management in order to ensure better protection of natural resources.***

<p><b>Description and Potential Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to resource constraints and division focus, the wildland fire program currently does not receive an optimal amount of attention.</li> <li>• Without brush and tree monitoring, uncontrollable wildfire poses a potential threat to much of City/Castle.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the next three to five years, management would like to increase the percent of time spent by the NR division on fire program management from five to ten percent.</li> <li>• In accordance with the City/Castle Fire Management Plan (updated May 2007), management would like to increase its usage of prescribed natural fire and prescribed burning in the long term.</li> <li>• In the next three to five years, the NR division’s focus will be on training, interagency participation and coordination, and accumulation of fire suppression tools.</li> </ul>

## Strategies

The strategies outlined below address actions City/Castle could take to generate additional revenue and to better leverage available resources. Undertaking these strategies over the next three to five years will enhance City/Castle’s ability to accomplish the operational priorities articulated in this business plan.

### Incorporate yurts into operations as visitor lodging and/or employee housing

#### Context

In 2008, City/Castle received two yurts from Ponderosa State Park and is working to determine the best use of these yurts. The management team is considering three options:

1. Utilize yurts for additional seasonal quarters.
2. Rent yurts to visitors for overnight stays.
3. A combination of options one and two, in which the yurts would be used for seasonal housing in the summer and visitor use in the winter.

#### Benefits

The benefits to each user group as well as to City/Castle are outlined for each option below.

**[INSERT PHOTO: “Yurt Benefits”]**

		Yurt Use		
		Seasonal Employee	Summer Visitor	Winter Visitor
Beneficiary	User Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheltered housing option</li> <li>• Increase percent of seasonals with housing from 16 to 58 percent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More rustic, less expensive sheltered overnight option</li> <li>• Good option for families and groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More rustic, less expensive sheltered overnight option</li> <li>• Good option for families and groups</li> <li>• Opportunity to explore park in relative solitude</li> </ul>
	City/Castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve ability to attract and retain highly qualified seasonal employees</li> <li>• Earn up to \$4,800 of rental income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase revenue by up to \$20,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase revenue by up to \$8,000</li> <li>• Increase visitation during low season</li> <li>• Expand visitor demographics/user groups</li> <li>• Coordination with interpretive and recreational programs</li> </ul>

#### Costs

The main costs of incorporating the yurts into operations include furnishings, ongoing maintenance and repairs, necessary capital improvements like decks, snow removal, and management oversight. Depending on how much construction can be completed by staff, furnishings—e.g. bunk beds, futons, tables, cabinets, wood-burning stove — are estimated to cost approximately \$5,000 per yurt. Maintenance and repairs will vary based on operating procedures. Some IDPR units with yurts do not allow cooking inside in order to minimize vermin impact and some hold guests responsible for cleaning. Depending on yurt placement, one of the biggest expenses could be snow removal, making siting of the yurts a key decision.

#### Analysis and Recommendation

In deciding which option to pursue, City/Castle management must consider the tradeoff between seasonal housing and incremental revenue. Some key factors to take into account are the expectations of the employees that management is trying to recruit and the current number of seasonal housing

spaces. By adding the yurts, the proportion of seasonal employees with housing would increase from 16 percent to 58 percent, for a total of 11 available spaces and could earn up to \$4,800 in rental income at full utilization. The management team could ensure full utilization by assigning summer seasonal employees to the yurt housing. On the other hand, City/Castle could expect to earn anywhere from \$4,000 to \$20,000 in additional revenue from visitor rental fees.<sup>26</sup> Although visitor utilization rates are difficult to predict, the hot summer season could make yurts less attractive to visitors than camping. City/Castle employs most of its seasonal employees for the summer months, so there would be no possibility of earning employee rental income in the winter.

For these reasons, City/Castle should implement the third option: utilizing the yurts for employee housing in the summer and renting them to visitors in the winter months. By locating the yurts in an accessible location—near the Ranch House in Castle, for instance— they can be used for both purposes at an expected net return of approximately \$10,000 in added revenue. We expect that this option will carry the additional benefit of improving seasonal employee recruiting and retention. City/Castle’s approach in future years can be flexible based on seasonal housing needs and actual yurt demand.

### **Increase volunteerism at City/Castle through targeted recruiting efforts**

#### Context

Volunteer hours have decreased significantly over the past five years as a result of difficulty attracting parties with a personal tie to the area and lack of time for management to recruit individuals. Currently, City/Castle relies on IDPR, which targets its recruiting efforts toward senior citizens interested in volunteering in Idaho. Unfortunately, applicants from this pool are primarily interested in locating to forested areas with water recreation.

The VS&I and CM&C divisions have identified the following types of volunteers as the most needed for City/Castle’s operations and the most beneficial because they would not require a burdensome amount of supervision but would have a noticeable impact on operations.

- Camp hosts at Smoky Mountain Campground, City of Rocks Campground, Visitor Center, and Ranch House;
- Short-term and long-term trail crews;
- Special events volunteers, such as the parents of participating children; and
- Specific project volunteers who could contribute their time and effort for academic credit or professional development.

#### Benefits

The benefits to each type of volunteer, as well as to City/Castle are outlined below. The estimated quantitative benefit of increased volunteerism is projected to be 3250 hours/year for a total value of \$64,000 based on the NPS volunteer equivalent of \$19.51/hour.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Employee rent based on NPS benchmark average of \$4/night charge and four person/yurt occupancy. Visitor revenue based on average IDPR yurt utilization rates and fee structures.

<sup>27</sup> Assumes that four VS&I hosts would work 25 hours per week for 24 weeks, a group of four short-term trail volunteers would work a total of 100 hours, two long-term trail volunteers would work 400 total hours, and special project volunteers would make up the remaining 350 hours through community event participation, ecological and cultural studies, and a videography internship

**[INSERT PHOTO: “Volunteer Benefits”]**

		Volunteer Type		
		Camp Host	Trail Work	Special Events & Projects
Beneficiary	Volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free campsite</li> <li>• Opportunity to live in beautiful and unique setting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to be outside and to give back to development of climbing/hiking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to get to know local resource</li> <li>• Internship/research credit</li> </ul>
	City/Castle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase visitor contacts = increased visitor awareness and understanding</li> <li>• Added security</li> <li>• Insight into visitor trends, interests, and complaints</li> <li>• Four hosts: 2,400 hours</li> <li>• NPS equivalent value: \$47,000</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional labor to put toward areas of greatest need</li> <li>• Engage user groups in protection of the resource</li> <li>• Short-term group + long-term/ongoing volunteers: 500 hours</li> <li>• NPS equivalent value: \$9,800</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build community relations</li> <li>• Improve resource knowledge base</li> <li>• Increase interpretive offerings and recognition</li> <li>• Parents + researchers + intern: 350 hours</li> <li>• NPS equivalent value: \$6,800</li> </ul>

Costs

The chiefs of the respective division would be in charge of recruiting, training, and supervising efforts. Costs associated with housing support, meals, training, travel time, supplies, and management supervision are estimated to be \$10,000.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the net benefit of volunteerism in these positions would be \$53,000/ year.

Analysis and Recommendation

A more targeted approach could yield greater volunteerism by contacting specific groups who would be interested in City/Castle’s recreational offerings, opportunities for professional development, and ties to the community.

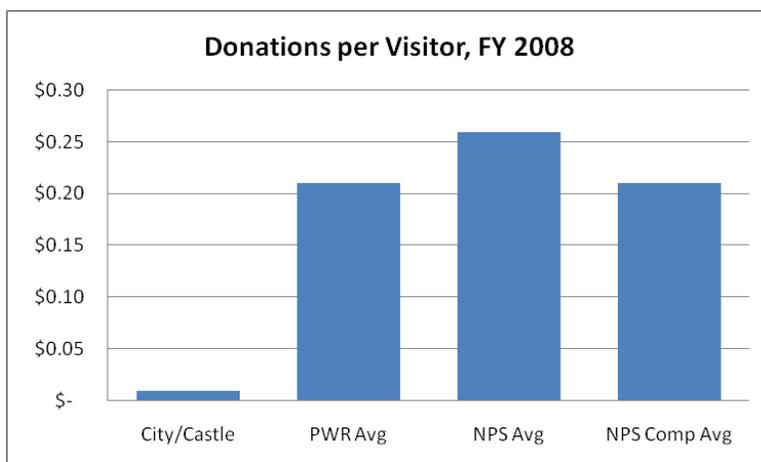
The following are examples of organizations who would likely be interested in partnering with City/Castle: local and national climbing organizations and gyms, California Trail historical associations, outdoor organizations with previous involvement, volunteer vacations for trail work, and academic programs related to special projects. Through proactive annual outreach and emphasis on benefits to each volunteer group, City/Castle can realize a strong return on its volunteer program investment.

**Increase Visitor Donations**

Context

Through comparative analysis, it is evident that City/Castle lags in donations per visitor with only \$0.01 per visitor donated on average. Donations totaled less than \$1,000 in FY 2009, much lower than most other national park units. (See figure below.) City/Castle currently has only one donation box, located in an inconspicuous place in the visitor center. Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument, which used to have a similarly low average donation per visitor, realized a huge jump after installing additional donation boxes in more visible locations throughout the park.

<sup>28</sup> Volunteer data from the NPS for FY 2003-2008 indicates that the average cost per volunteer hour for City is \$1.30/hr, which includes housing support, meals, travel, training, supplies, and other incidental costs. The cost of management time beyond training is estimated at \$16/hr for 120 hours for hosts, 100 hours for trails, and 15 hours for special events and projects.



### Benefits

By increasing donations per visitor to the PWR average, City/Castle could realize an additional \$30,000 in revenue. By increasing to even Hagerman’s level of average donations per visitor—now \$0.05/visitor—City/Castle would realize an additional \$7,000 in annual revenue.

### Costs

City/Castle has an opportunity to potentially increase visitor donations through some relatively straightforward, low-cost actions. Currently, there is only one low visibility donation box located at the register in the visitor center, and it could be moved to a more noticeable part of the counter. If City/Castle were to increase donations to the level of Hagerman’s, it could cover the \$300 cost of a new indoor donation box and outdoor donation box, which can be a \$1,000 to \$3,000 capital cost, in the first year. Fee boxes could also double as donation boxes; the only associated cost would be new signage. Collection costs would be minimal, because donation boxes would be either in the visitor center or on the same route as camp fee collections.

### Analysis and Recommendation

Some first steps that City/Castle should take to increase donations include the following:

1. **Increase number of donation boxes.** Less than 6 percent of visitors stop at the visitor center, so adding a donation box to another well-trafficked area would dramatically increase the number of potential donations. Visitors who see donation boxes out near park facilities may be more inclined to contribute than those who stop at the visitor center and purchase park merchandise. If every visitor were to donate at the rate of those who visit the visitor center, donations would reach over \$13,000 annually.
2. **Place donation boxes in high traffic, high visibility areas.** City/Castle will increase the potential donors by repositioning the existing box to a more visible location, like near the visitor center door as Hagerman Fossil Beds NM does, and by placing new boxes in highly visible areas, like the Bath Rock parking area.
3. **Make donation boxes more engaging.** Hagerman Fossil Beds NM realized a 400% increase in donations between 2007 and 2008 with the addition of a \$300 donation box with an eye-catching sabre-toothed tiger fossil inside. City/Castle could design a similar type of box for the visitor center. Additionally, by pairing the box with an explanation of the use of funds, like climbing bolt replacement, or next to a free service, like the restrooms or brochures, visitors will be more likely to see the value donations can bring and how contributions can add to the visitor experience.

In the future, City/Castle can utilize volunteers to expand its donations program through the organization of a benefit event, festivals, or in-kind donations.

## Financial Plan

The figure below illustrates the financial plan for City/Castle's operations from FY 2009 through FY 2014.<sup>29</sup> FY 2009, the most recent complete fiscal year, and serves as the baseline. FY 2010 reflects City/Castle's proposed budget, and the subsequent years follow projections based on best assumptions from NPS, IDPR, and City/Castle management.

### City/Castle Appropriated Income

#### *Base Appropriations*

City/Castle receives base funding from both the NPS and IDPR. Since the state and federal governments follow different fiscal years, City/Castle typically commits the majority of NPS base funds to the state's subsequent fiscal year. The financial projection reflects this action by separating the NPS amount used in the state fiscal year in which it is appropriated from funds carried forward from the previous federal fiscal year.

The National Park Service approved a base increase in FY 2009 of \$162,000 for the protection and interpretation of resources, including the instatement of a Cultural Resources division. City/Castle received \$117,000 of the approved increase in FY 2009, and anticipates obtaining the remaining \$45,000 in FY 2010.

Due to a tightening state budget, IDPR decreased the state-funded portion of City/Castle's base budget by nearly 10 percent in FY 2009 – an annual reduction of approximately \$32,000. City/Castle expects another five percent cut in FY 2010, or \$15,000. However, the state's FY 2011 base amount will likely rebound to the FY 2009 level and increase by two percent annually until FY 2014.

The Cooperative Agreement between NPS and IDPR specifies that the each agency should contribute roughly equal amounts to City/Castle's base budget, and that neither agency's allocation can fall below 25 percent. In FY 2009, IDPR provided for only 40 percent of City/Castle's total base appropriations, and in FY 2010, this share will decline even further to 37.5 percent.<sup>30</sup> This trend puts the park in the difficult position of potentially not being able to submit future base budget increase requests to the NPS, regardless of upcoming operational needs.

#### *Non-Base (Project) Funding*

Project funding provides for cyclic maintenance, trails rehabilitation, volunteers-in-parks, and one-time capital developments. NPS appropriates all project funding for City, and Castle received a federally-funded highway construction and wetlands mitigation grant from the Idaho Department of Transportation.

### City/Castle Costs

At over 60 percent of total expenditures, labor costs comprise the largest portion of City/Castle's overall budget. Several new positions account for the 11 percent increase in labor costs from FY 2009

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<sup>29</sup> The financial projection follows the state's fiscal year, which spans July 1 to June 30.

<sup>30</sup> A more extensive discussion of the base budget history can be found in Appendix A: Park Financial History.

to FY 2010. Positions being filled include a full-time Cultural Resources ranger, who recently joined the staff, a Natural Resources ranger to fill the post that became vacant late in FY 2009, and four seasonal employees for weed crew and trail crew, positions that were previously funded with project money.

Non-labor operating costs will likely increase at a rate greater than inflation from FY 2009 to FY 2010 to account for the formation of the Cultural Resources division and other expenses associated with the NPS base increase. City/Castle does not purchase capital assets from its base budget. The IDPR East Region evaluates City/Castle's capital needs, and can procure significant one-time expenditures out of its regional allotment.

### **Project Costs**

The financial plan includes only project funding that management believes is likely to be awarded, based on its requests and regional priorities. Beginning in FY 2010, City has budgeted approximately \$140,000 for the relocation and reconstruction of the frequently used Circle Creek Overlook and parking area. In FY 2011, City will embark on an \$85,000 project to construct an equestrian parking and staging area for this growing user group. Annual projects that will presumably continue include trail maintenance and YCC crew.

### **Projected Balance/Deficit**

City/Castle experienced a \$49,000 budget surplus in FY 2009. This represents the difference between total appropriated (available) funds from NPS and IDPR, less City/Castle's actual expenditures for the fiscal year. The surplus for FY 2009 developed primarily due to delayed action by Idaho's Department of Fiscal Management. Management budgeted for a Cultural Resources division chief to begin working mid-FY 2009, but delayed spending authority by DFM prevented City/Castles from advertising the position until the end of the fiscal year. The resulting hiring delay created a \$20,000 surplus. In addition, the chief of the Natural Resources division resigned one month before the end of FY 2009, contributing to another \$4,000 to the surplus. City/Castle's total spending authority from DFM fell short of available funds by \$25,000, further adding to the budget surplus. This additional \$25,000 was to be allocated towards operating expenses, such as travel and supplies.

Delayed or insufficient spending authority impedes City/Castle's ability to utilize NPS funding and meet federal expectations of resource management. Craters of the Moon NMP can use the remaining NPS base appropriations to make purchases for City/Castle, but this errand places an undue burden on Craters.

City/Castle aims to spend the entirety of its base appropriations each fiscal year and avoid a surplus or deficit. When a surplus is projected, City/Castle will utilize funds for hiring seasonal employees, deferred maintenance, travel and training, and unexpected emergencies. In the case of a projected deficit, City/Castle would reduce the number of hours for seasonal employees, apply for project funding, and decrease expenditures for travel.

### **Resale**

IDPR uses the term resale to refer to retail and bookstore revenue. City/Castle maintains its resale account separately from appropriated funding, and can utilize these revenues to finance merchandising costs. IDPR has ultimate authority over this account, but allows profits to accumulate over a number of

years and does not reallocate the money to other accounts or parks. A portion of a visitor services employee's salary (\$8000) will be deducted from the resale account from FY 2010 to FY 2012. City/Castle anticipates a budget shortfall for labor in those years, and will absorb state budget cuts through this action.

**[Call Out Box: Financial Notes and Assumptions]**

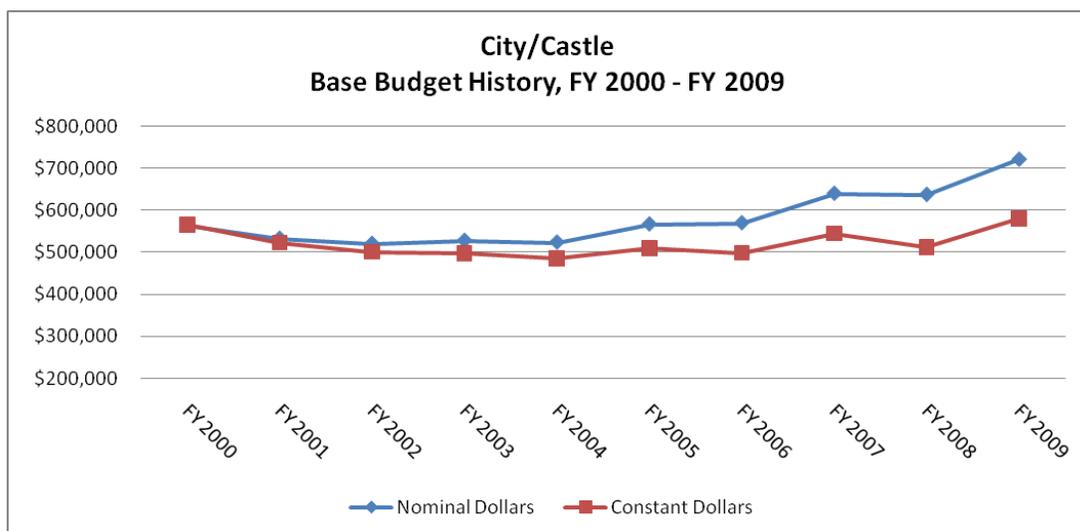
- Labor Costs: Due to state budget constraints, IDPR employees will likely not receive a salary increase from FY 2010 to FY 2011. IDPR Human Resources conservatively estimates a salary increase of two percent per year from FY 2012 to FY 2014. IDPR estimates that labor costs, including insurance and benefits, will increase by six percent annually.
- (Non-labor) Operating Costs: FY 2010 non-labor operating expenditures will increase by about five percent from FY 2009 to account for the use of the NPS base increase to develop a Cultural Resources division and bolster the protection and interpretation of resources overall. Non-labor costs are also projected to increase three percent per year due to inflation.
- NPS Support and Assessments: NPS Support and Assessments includes travel, technological needs, and administrative assistance from Craters of the Moon National Monument and Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument. These costs may be slightly higher in FY 2010 as a result of a new vehicle lease, but are projected to increase with inflation beyond FY 2010. Future projections estimate that these costs will increase steadily with inflation using a five-year average (FY 2005 to FY 2009) as the base.
- Projects: The financial projections include both projects with remaining balances and those that management is confident will be approved. Project expenditures may be spread out over multiple years depending on staff workload, and management has estimated what percentage of the projects will be completed in each fiscal year.
- Resale: City/Castle yields about a 30 percent profit margin in resale, and expects a growth rate commensurate with inflation.

**[END CALL OUT BOX]**

## Appendix A — Park Financial History

### Base Budget Historical Trends

City/Castle’s base budget totaled \$723,000 in FY 2009, with \$295,000 from IDPR and \$428,000 from NPS. IDPR base funding decreased from FY 2001 to FY 2004. However, City/Castle’s base budget grew as a result of efforts to develop visitor infrastructure and protect resources after the 2003 opening of Castle Rocks State Park, implementation of the 2006 master plan, and subsequent facility expansions in 2007. In addition, NPS approved a base budget increase of \$162,000 for the development of a cultural resources program; however, Congress only approved 72 percent or \$117,000 in FY 2009. The base budget grew from \$566,000 to \$723,000 (a difference of \$157,000 in nominal dollars), amounting to a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.48 percent from FY 2000 to FY 2009. However, when adjusting for inflation to calculate constant dollars, City/Castle’s base budget increased by \$15,000, amounting to a CAGR of 0.25 percent, using FY 2000 as a base year for calculations. The figure below demonstrates City/Castle’s base budget history in both nominal and constant dollars from FY 2000 to FY 2009.<sup>31</sup>

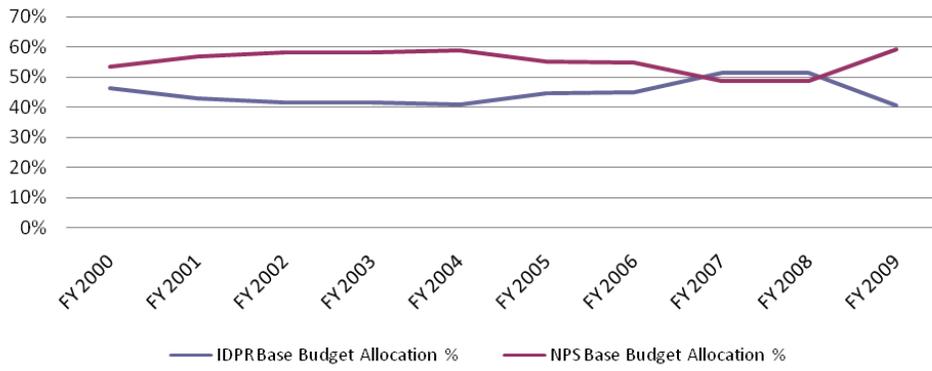


### State/Federal Base Funding Trends

Under the Cooperative Agreement between IDPR and NPS, the two organizations committed to split the City’s base funding support approximately in half with neither organization providing less than 25 percent. Between FY 2000 to FY 2009, IDPR contributed 42 percent to 51 percent of base funding, in nominal dollar terms. The state’s allocation steadily increased after 2005. NPS’s significant base increase of \$117,000 in FY 2009 and IDPR’s budget cuts explain the disparity in contributions. NPS provided 59 percent of base appropriations in FY 2009 versus 49 percent in FY 2008. (See figure below.)

<sup>31</sup> The NPS formulates CPI calculations on its fiscal year versus the calendar year. FY2009 uses the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ CPI data since NPS’s calculation was unavailable at the time of publication.

**City/Castle**  
**NPS and IDPR Base Appropriations, FY 2000 - FY 2009**



## Appendix B — Current Authorities & Reporting Systems by Division

While the NPS/IDPR relationship is highly beneficial to City/Castle, management can be complex, as illustrated by the numerous authorities and reporting systems that must be consulted within each division. The table below illustrates just a few of these authorities.

<b>Division</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Federal</b>	<b>Cooperative</b>
<b>NR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Almo Water Company Bylaws*</li> <li>• South Central Idaho Wildland Fire Cooperative Charter</li> <li>• IDPR Monthly Weed Management Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Law 101-512 (Hunting permitted)</li> <li>• Research Permit and Reporting System</li> <li>• Integrated Pest Management Systems</li> <li>• NEPA</li> <li>• Director's Order 77</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource Mgt. Plan, 1996</li> <li>• Grazing Mgt. Plan, 2008</li> <li>• Fire Mgt. Plan, 2008</li> <li>• Noxious Weeds Mgt. Plan, 2006</li> </ul>
<b>CR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programmatic agreement, SHPO</li> <li>• IDPR Heritage Resource Management Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOU Curatorial Services (City/Hagerman)</li> <li>• NHPA</li> <li>• Tribal Consultation</li> <li>• Director's Order 28</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope of Collections Statement, 2004</li> <li>• Museum Mgt. Plan, 2008</li> </ul>
<b>VS&amp;I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDPR Visitation Statistical Analysis</li> <li>• IDPR Monthly and Annual Interpretive Reports</li> <li>• IDPR Volunteer Statistics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal Lands Recreational Enhancement Act (FLREA; 2005)</li> <li>• American Disabilities Act (ADA)</li> <li>• NPS Visitation Statistical Analysis</li> <li>• NPS Servicewide Interpretive Report</li> <li>• NPS Volunteers in Parks Annual Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpretive Prospectus, 2007</li> </ul>
<b>CM&amp;C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Castle Climbing Mgt. Plan, 2003</li> <li>• Incident Reporting System (IRS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climbing Mgt. Plan, rev. draft 2009</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Trail Mgt. Plan, 1997</li> </ul>
<b>M&amp;O</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital Improvement Needs Database</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PMIS, FMSS</li> <li>• Integrated Solid Waste Mgt. Plan, 2005</li> <li>• Environmental Management System (EMS)</li> </ul>	

<b>M&amp;A/ Overall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Law 106-421 (Castle Acquisition)*<sup>32</sup></li> <li>• Idaho Administrative Procedures Act*</li> <li>• IDPR Policies and Procedures Manual*</li> <li>• IDPR Strategic Plan 2006-2010*</li> <li>• Castle Rocks Master Plan, 2006*</li> <li>• State Property Inventory System</li> <li>• I-Time</li> <li>• Pre-STARS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Law 100-696 (Enabling Legislation)</li> <li>• Code of Federal Regulations</li> <li>• NPS Management Policies, 2006</li> <li>• NPS Directors Orders &amp; Associated Manuals</li> <li>• Operation Formulation System (OFS)</li> <li>• Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC)</li> <li>• Performance management Database System (PMDS)</li> <li>• Environmental Management System (EMS)</li> <li>• Federal Property Inventory System</li> <li>• DOI Electronic Acquisitions System (IDEAS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMP, 1994</li> <li>• Foundation Statement, 2007</li> <li>• Operation Plan &amp; Guidelines, 2008</li> <li>• Superintendent Compendium, 2003</li> <li>• Cooperative Agreement</li> <li>• MOA Fed. Admin. Services</li> <li>• Annual Report and Work Plan</li> </ul>
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**[END CALL OUT]**

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<sup>32</sup> Lands managed by IDPR outside the Reserve in Cassia County (Castle Rocks) are subject to IDPR guiding documents

## Glossary of Terms

**Appropriated Non-Base (or Project) Funding** – Those funds authorized by Congress to support fixed-term projects for a variety of park activities (including, but not limited to, construction, research, and education).

**Appropriation** – Congress passes 13 appropriation bills (for each part of the administration) so that the government has the funding required to operate during a given fiscal year.

**Base Funding** – Those funds authorized by Congress to support basic and ongoing park operations. It does not include funds to support one-time or limited-horizon projects and investments.

**Business Plan** – Concise document that presents financial and strategic information for a business to its stakeholders, constituents, stockholders, and customers.

**Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR)** – A financial statistic that measures average annual growth rate over time, similar to a bank account that compounds interest.

**Consumer Price Index (CPI)** – An economic statistic that measures the price of a representative basket of goods and services. The change in CPI over time measures the rate of price inflation in the economy. The CPI is published monthly by the Federal Government.

**Fiscal Year (FY)** – The year's period over which the government keeps its financial records (FY 2005 spans October 2004 to September 2005). Only charges incurred during the 12 months are included in accounting.

**Full Time Equivalent (FTE)** – One FTE is calculated as the number of hours worked in a year by a full-time employee (i.e., 52 weeks x 40 hours per week = 2,080 hours). For example, a seasonal employee working full time for 3 months would equal 0.25 FTE.

**Functional Area** – The highest level of classification into which park operations are grouped. This includes Resources Management, Visitor Services and Interpretation, Maintenance and Operations, Climbing Management and Compliance, and Management and Administration.

**Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)** – GPRA was passed to mandate that all federal agencies develop a performance based management approach which includes a five-year strategic plan, annual performance plans, and annual performance reports.

**Investments** – One-time expenditures that include both physical improvements (e.g., a new bridge or wayside exhibit) as well as “informational” improvements (e.g., biological or archeological inventories).

**Protection** – or “anchors” indicate the various devices which a climber places in or on the rock for safety or to descend. The term includes chockstones, camming devices, pitons, and hangers/bolts.

**Resale** – The term IDPR uses to denote bookstore and merchandise sales.

**Revenue** – This funding source includes all fee revenues, permit revenues, donated funds, services and items.

**Route** – The vertical path on the rock face which a climber ascends. A route is created when it is first climbed and is usually given a name by the first ascensionist, which is recorded in a guidebook for other climbers to use to find and identify the route.

**Species of Concern**- An informal term to refer to plants or animal species that are potentially at risk of becoming threatened or endangered and might be in need of concentrated conservation actions.

**Staging Area**- Is the area at the base of climbing routes where climbers unpack their backpacks and prepare their equipment for ascending the climb. Staging areas in sensitive or popular areas can suffer devegetation and erosion if not well-defined and supported with intervention measures.

## Acronyms Used

The excessive use of acronyms can be a burden to any reader outside the government agency that created them; yet to the primary audience in which this document is intended, acronyms communicate considerable meaning in a short space and time. The following table may assist the stakeholder or member of the general public that may find value in referencing this document.

ADA	Americans With Disabilities Act	M&A	Management and Administration
API	Asset Priority Index	MCC	Montana Conservation Corps
AUM	Animal Unit Month	MIIN	Minidoka Internment National Monument
BLM	Bureau of Land Management	MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
CA	Cooperative Agreement	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CIRO	City of Rocks National Reserve	M&O	Maintenance and Operations
CMP	Comprehensive Management Plan	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
CM&C	Climbing Management & Compliance	NHL	National Historic Landmark
CPR	Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation	NHPA	National Historical Preservation Act
CR	Cultural Resources	NNL	National Natural Landmark
CRMO	Craters of the Moon National Monument	NPS	National Park Service
CRSP	Castle Rocks State Park	NOLS	National Outdoor Leadership School
DFM	Division of Financial Management	NR	Natural Resources
EA	Environmental Assessment	PLC	Public Lands Corps
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician	PMDS	Performance Management Data System
EPMT	Exotic Plant Management Team	PMIS	Project Management Information System
FCI	Facility Condition Index	PWR	Pacific West Region
FHA	Federal Highway Administration	RTP	Recreation Trails Program
FMSS	Facility Management Software System	SAR	Search and Rescue
FTE	Full-time Equivalent (or Employee)	SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office (or officer)
FTP	Full-time Permanent	SIPT	Southern Idaho Parks Team
FY	Fiscal Year	SMC	Smoky Mountain Campground
GIS	Geographical Information Systems	UCBN	Upper Columbia Basin Network
GPS	Global Positioning System	USFS	United States Forest Service
GSA	General Services Administration	USFWS	United States Fish & Wildlife Service
HAFO	Hagerman Fossil Beds Nat. Monument	VIP	Volunteer In Parks
IDEAS	DOI Dept. Electronic Acquisitions System	VS&I	Visitor Services and Interpretation
IDPR	Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation	WASO	Washington Office (of the NPS)
IRA	Interagency Recreation Area	YCC	Youth Conservation Corps

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