

KITTITAS COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

**AGENDA STAFF REPORT**

**AGENDA DATE:**                   **October 21, 2014**

**ACTION REQUESTED:**   Request to set a Public Hearing on November 4, 2014 to consider transfer of property at Helen McCabe Park from Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to Kittitas County.

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**BACKGROUND:**               The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is considering the transfer of approximately 20 (20) acres of the Helen McCabe property to Kittitas County in order to facilitate the development of an environmental interpretive center on the site. The item advances the Commission Transformation Strategy: “Form strategic partnerships with other agencies, tribes, and non-profits” and with the Agency culture and core values.

The Helen McCabe property is located just east of Ellensburg Washington in Kittitas County. The property totals just over 64 acres and was acquired in 1973/74 through three separate transactions.

In 1967, the Washington Legislature passed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 424. This law established the scenic and recreational highway system of from which, the Yakima Can yon Scenic Highway (US Highway 97), became the first road system developed as a scenic highway in Washington.

The Helen McCabe property, as the first recreational site that travelers encounter when driving southbound through the Canyon, is a natural location for an interpretive center.

In March of 1974, State Parks published a master development plan for the Wilson Creek area (now referred to as the Helen McCabe property). The property was to be developed as the “entrance” to the Yakima Canyon Scenic Highway system.

In 2004, the Commission entered into lease agreement with the Kittitas Environmental Education Network (KEEN). The lease allows KEEN to construct and operate an interpretive center. This lease expires in 2033 and additionally provides KEEN non-exclusive access and use of all other areas within the Helen McCabe Property.

In 2013, KEEN, in cooperation with Kittitas County and several other non-profit organizations approached State Parks with a request for the Commission to transfer the Helen McCabe property to Kittitas County. The acreage to be transferred is 16.2 acres in parcels #060333 and #090333.

INTERACTION:	Public Works, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
RECOMMENDATION:	Set a Public Hearing for November 2, 2014 to hear public comment on the proposed ownership transfer.
ATTACHMENTS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Map of Area</li><li>2. State Parks Staff Report to Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission</li></ol>
LEAD STAFF:	Kirk Holmes Public Works Director

**Public Notice**  
**Kittitas County, Ellensburg WA**

The Board of Kittitas County Commissioners will meet at 2:00 pm on November 4, 2014 at the Commissioners' Auditorium, 205 W. 5th, Room 109, Kittitas County Courthouse, Ellensburg, WA to consider transfer of property at Helen McCabe Park from Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission to Kittitas County.

More information is online at <http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/notices/>.

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Clerk of the Board

Publish:

Daily Record: 10/23/2014; 10/30/2014

For more information, contact Public Works

Anyone with an interest in this matter is urged to attend said hearing where all testimony will be taken. Written comments may be received at 205 W 5th Ave. STE 108, Ellensburg, WA 98926 at or prior to the hearing.

Kittitas County complies with all ADA requirements.