

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our county, with its breathtaking scenery, its rural and unspoiled native environs, its rich history, and its friendly, nature-loving people, is undeniably an outdoor recreation enthusiast's idea of heaven. Only recently have community leaders in Pend Oreille County realized the potential parks and recreation can play in providing a quality life for its residents, promoting tourism and providing jobs for its residents and huge strides in outdoor recreation have been made since our last Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan. The County has preserved Pend Oreille County Park, developed Sweet Creek Rest Area, acquired and developed Yocum Lake Wildlife and Recreation Area and become an important partner in developing the new Pend Oreille River Water Trail. And, along with our outdoor recreation partners; WSU Extension, Pend Oreille River Tourism Alliance, Pend Oreille PUD, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Seattle City Light, U.S. and Washington Departments of Transportation, United States Forest Service, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and Pend Oreille County Conservation District, just to name a few, the future of outdoor recreation in the County is bright.

This bright future, however, will not be without its challenges. The demand for outdoor recreation opportunities in our county is increasing. Expansion and improvements of the Water Trail, Off-Road Vehicle and other outdoor recreational opportunities are essential in promoting tourism and improving our economy. County residents and visitors alike are requesting additional hiking trails and new nature related programs. Our young people need added outdoor recreation opportunities and environmental education. Pend Oreille County Park requires updating and renovation. Maintenance and repair costs are continually increasing and, at the same time, necessary funding is becoming more and more difficult to find.

With all these factors in mind, we present this 2014 Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan to the Pend Oreille County Board of Commissioners and to the people of Pend Oreille County. It is a management tool that will be indispensable to Parks and Recreation Staff and Advisory Board members while making decisions throughout the next 6 years. It contains a complete inventory of parks and recreation opportunities found inside county borders along with carefully deliberated goals and objectives for each county-owned site. It includes descriptions of current research on national and state recreation trends as well as results of local outdoor recreation surveys and meetings. And most importantly, it outlines the steps needed to implement the prudently defined parks and recreation goals and objectives including the hiring of a Parks, Recreation and Tourism Coordinator, a first for Pend Oreille County.

With this plan, a new era of parks and recreation begins in our County. It will be an era of excitement and energy but also an era displaying detailed forethought and careful development. It is an era that will be applauded not only by current county residents but by future generations as well.