
**Innovation, Community & Economic
Development, & Veterans Committee**

HB 2138

Brief Description: Promoting outdoor learning in state parks.

Sponsors: Representatives Rule, Barkis, Senn, Simmons, Ramel, Paul, Riccelli, Doglio and Reeves.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) to consider design elements that support outdoor learning when developing certain capital projects.
- Requires the Commission to assist with coordinating outdoor education events in state parks.
- Requires the Commission to conduct a survey of facilities within state parks that may be used for outdoor educational purposes.

Hearing Date: 1/17/24

Staff: Emily Poole (786-7106).

Background:

Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) is tasked with caring for and supervising the state parks. The Commission's duties include enforcing rules pertaining to the use of state parks, permitting the use of state parks by the public, erecting structures and comfort stations, and building and maintaining trails. The Commission is required to maintain policies that

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increase the number of people who have access to free or low-cost recreational opportunities for physical activity.

The Outdoor Learning Grant Program.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) administers the Outdoor Learning Grant Program (Program), which supports educational experiences for public school students. Through the Program, the OSPI awards grants to eligible school districts, federally recognized tribes, and outdoor education providers.

Summary of Bill:

Commission Duties.

When developing capital projects for new or existing structures and facilities, the Commission is required to consider design elements that support outdoor learning opportunities.

The Commission is required to coordinate with the OSPI, school districts, outdoor education program providers, and grantees to assist with coordinating outdoor education events in state parks.

Survey of Facilities.

The Commission must conduct a survey of facilities within state parks that may be used for outdoor educational purposes. In conducting the survey, the Commission must assess:

- current policies and use of state park retreat centers and environmental learning centers;
- the needs of the OSPI, school districts, outdoor learning program providers, and tribes for outdoor learning facilities;
- the current condition of and necessary upgrades to state park retreat centers and environmental learning centers;
- the development of dedicated funding to support upgrades to state park retreat centers and environmental learning centers; and
- best practices and considerations for the development, maintenance, and use of outdoor learning facilities.

The Commission must submit a report on the outcomes of the completed survey to the Legislature by December 1, 2024.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 2024.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.