

# LARIMER COUNTY PARKS ADVISORY BOARD

## MINUTES

Tuesday, July 12, 2016, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.,

Lake Loveland Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl, Larimer County Courthouse Office Building, 200 W. Oak, Ft. Collins, CO

*The mission of the Larimer County Parks and Open Lands Department is to establish, protect, and manage significant regional parks and open lands, providing quality outdoor recreational opportunities and stewardship of natural resource values. We are committed to fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the natural and agricultural heritage of Larimer County for present and future generations.*

*Please email Kim, [butlerkm@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:butlerkm@co.larimer.co.us) if you are unable to attend this meeting.  
Votes require a quorum. Thank you!*

In attendance: Mark Caughlan, Lori Smith, Ken Brink, Jenny Miller, Ron Kramer, Russell Fruits, Steve Ambrose, Dan Rieves, Gary Buffington, Steve Johnson, John Tipton, Nick Clark, Deborah Shulman, Pat Mckusker (visitor)

### 1. REGULAR MEETING OPENING (5:30pm) – 5 minutes

- Meeting called to order by Chair @ 5:31
- Approve minutes of last meeting – waiting on quorum
- Review Agenda and enclosures

### 2. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS – if any- None

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT: Items not on the agenda- None

### 4. GENERAL INFORMATION: - 45 minutes

Ken:

- Ken has done 28 ride-alongs and wants to report to the group about that the staff in the field.
- We move quicker than the state. We have a very high quality of people, and what folks are doing in the field is very impressive to Ken. They work hard, put in a lot of hours and being efficient.
- He spent a day spraying weeds, and the other programs are great too, but the Visitor's Center staff is really great, and so are our visitors.
- He went up for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July at Hermit, and saw families having a great time.
- He went to training on 21<sup>st</sup> through the Sheriff's Department on active shooter training at Wellington Middle School. It was mentally challenging and an opportunity for sworn officers to come together. The first mass killing in a school was 1931. It was a school bombing in the Midwest somewhere. This could impact Rangers.
- Johnson: Do you do training with other departments like the sheriff's department? Ken: Yes, all the time.
- We were very busy 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. Parks used to be very busy on weekends, and less during the week, giving us a chance to catch up and for staff to clean up the campgrounds, but now we're seeing a high level camping during the week, so we're missing that down time. Maybe we have to change our strategy in the future or increase resources.

Natural Resource Events for this month: See website <http://www.larimer.org/naturalresources>.

- To sign up for Parks Advisory Board minutes go to <http://larimer.org/subscriptions.cfm> put in your email and click 'subscribe', then check "Parks Advisory Board" box.

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Financial Update – Lori Smith, Natural Resources Senior Accountant (See attached Power Point)

- Discussed the sources of revenue for the Natural Resources Department. We receive only 2% funding from General Fund, all others are from specific revenues. Pest Control (weeds) revenue is made up of grants and a portion of the General Fund is provided to Pest Control and is used to pay for the County Forester. We have an allowable use of the ¼ cent sales tax. The Sales Tax was voted and extended to 2043 with slightly different ballot language with spending percent requirements.
- Slide #7 - Parks and Lottery Revenue 2015
  - Commissioner Johnson: Does this show the revenue from Parks or for Parks?
  - Smith: We receive about \$600,000 annually from Lottery based on population.
  - Rieves: This slide is for reservoir parks only, not including Open lands. The 1<sup>st</sup> slide showed the entire department.
  - Deborah Shulman: How much of the remaining of the slice ‘Bureau, Great Outdoors Colorado & grants’ is from the Bureau?
  - Buffington: Usually a 50/50 split.
  - Pat Mckusker from Bureau: We gave Larimer County \$198,000 for the administration and maintenance buildings at Horsetooth and \$26,000 for Weeds last year. It really depends on our funding. Bureau amounts fluctuate year to year.
  - Brink: Revenue from services is 2/3 of the money used to operate the reservoir-based parks. That’s why our customer service relationship is so critical in field.
  - Buffington: We always have to be thinking about revenue generating projects as other things could drop off the chart. We are a bit land limited for parks. Lottery money can be moved to Capital Projects for park operations. Over the last 4 years, we’ve been trying to get the Lottery money out of Park operations, because if the Lottery goes away, it will be a problem operationally.
- Slide #9 - Revenues
  - The arrows show which ways we’re allowed to move money.
  - Question: Is there a worry about the loss of Lottery?
    - Every year there is a legislative discussion. The money could go to education, roads, prisons, or several other options.
    - There is some talk that they’re going to try to come back early for lottery & GOCO approval. We may be asked to weigh in on this in the next few years. The sunset review could be in 8-9 years.
    - Fruits: What is the split on GOCO?
    - Buffington: Parks & Wildlife has half, local government, and open space are the 4 main programs. GOCO capped at approximately \$54 million.
    - Buffington: In regards to Park Operations, keeping our park access is #1. If the Lottery goes away, capital projects will take longer, and you can get visitor dissatisfaction, which makes it hard to charge fees...it’s a vicious circle. A decrease in any piece of the pie will affect the other pieces negatively.
    - Brink: Keep that in mind for the Master Plan. We need more places for people to recreate in parks.
- Slide #10 – Expenses
  - Shared Allocation Pools include:
    - Admin, Weeds, Trails, etc. that benefit many programs
    - We’ve created pools to manage and allocate the costs across the department
- Slide# 11- Shared Pools:
  - Sales tax is transferred in to cover volunteer, marketing and trail pools.
  - The Administration Pool includes salaries for Gary, Lori, accounting and front desk staff, our insurance (we are self –insured), copier, paper, supplies. The cost driver in this pool is wages.

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Services provided by this pool include payroll processing, cash flow projections, front desk support, mail, account payable, etc.

- Slide #12 - Reservoirs Operations Expenses: Operating expenses increased in 2015 due to centralized IT utility model and fleet model.
  - Notice in 2010, we took some of those share pool wages out of personnel and into shared allocation pools, so that that person can have better control because it's all in one place.
  - Question: Is there anything that can explain the jump in operating expenditures in 2014-2015?
    - LS: They centralized our model for IT and Fleet. And when they did that, we did see quite a large increase.
    - Johnson: Yes, we used to give IT all the money to service all of the departments in the county (except for Natural Resources), and we changed that and now give the money directly to the departments instead (except for Natural Resources) of IT and the departments then buy the service from IT.
    - LS: This was supposed to save money, but our costs have increased. This worked for other departments.
  - Rieves: The 2015 and 2016 cost also increased for health insurance (ACA). Eventually the fleet model will level out in another 2-3 years. It was a 25 year decision you're seeing hit in 1 year.
  - Buffington: In 2016 & 17, you're also going to see a facility model that will also be the same kind of utility model, but not as big of a jump. The take home message in the Master Plan is that we need to be fiscally responsible and look for ways to generate revenue. We will be discussing fee structure.
  - Rieves: It will never cost less to operate or for our external fees and we need to be able to generate revenue to be self-sufficient.
  - Question: Do we break out security expenses, like rangers and weapons? How much does that impact cost?
  - Buffington: Yes, they are broken out in Ken's budget. Yes, it's going up, but it's what it takes for them to be ready and trained on boat safety, search and rescue, etc. Safety for our visitors is our #1 priority.
  - Brink: There are different models out there. The Sheriff doesn't want to cover things that go on with people management on our property. They help with big things, but not little things that can really make the visitor experience. We have a good model with multipurpose rangers and temps that can respond to anything; help with wildland fire and medical and all types of emergencies. The opposite of this is a Specialized Model, like Boulder County. In their model, the cost of just 1 sergeant & 5 deputies assigned to their open space is the same as the cost of all of our rangers that do everything. Training and equipment are not free. Costs are higher, but it's better to have a multipurpose ranger than a specialist for us. Our rangers have unique skill sets. They go through active Shooter Trainings and all have the equipment and training that sheriffs have as well as Natural Resource training and boat safety. And this is the least expensive model that I have found.
  - Buffington: We feel it is cost effective and best for customer service. We have tried all the models for over 30 years. We could not afford the deputies. As far as the partnership with the sheriff's office, we think this is the most efficient.
  - Mckusker: The Bureau supports the rangers because the bureau does not have our own security, so it really helps. If we had to hire our own deputies, it would be very expensive.
  - Dan: If it's a Bureau issue, we do have a security resource there. Brian Cornell, we can call, for example, if a crime was against the Bureau or Northern Water. We also look for outside

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money (federal grants, “think tank” grants, etc.) to pay for things like some state mandated trainings, ex. terrorism, dog behavior.

- Slide #13 – Expenses increased by almost \$300,000 in 2016 due to the increase in seasonal wages so we could be more competitive and ACA health insurance that increased our expenses.
  - Brink: We’re doing OK on revenue, but we’re not swimming in money.
  - LS: The good thing is that we have the supplement of entry fees. However, we do not have much cushion for bad years.
- Slide #14 –
  - Our Lottery revenues fluctuate each year.
  - Fruits: Is that because lottery sales have decreased or because of population distribution?
  - LS: Population distribution
- Slide #15 –
  - The Solid Waste loan was borrowed from another department in our division. We agreed we would pay them the same rate that they would receive in a bank, about 0.6% so it’s a really good deal for us! And we could do some development projects. The loan is paid off.
  - The 17% “CO Dept of Nat Res.” represents grants to match whatever development project we were doing. The ANS grant is included there as well.
- Slide #16, 17, 18 shows details of capital projects over the years
  - Fruits: Was 2010 the dam construction year? Answer: No, 2004.
  - Buffington: In 2010, the Bureau had a nationwide ADA reconciliation act. We got \$2.2 million and we were the only ones in district with shovel-ready projects so we got it all. We matched their \$2.2 with our \$2.2 million.
- Slide #19 -
  - Rieves: Please note Carter Lake South Shore Restrooms is actually the entire improvement project.
- Plan on having Lori come to do this presentation annually.
- Break at 6:38 - 10 minutes

5. **DISCUSSION ITEMS: None**

6. **ACTION ITEMS: None**

7. **STANDING AGENDA ITEMS: - 10 minutes**

Pat Mckusker - Introduction

Pat Mckusker is here from the Bureau of Reclamation. He is the Natural Resource Specialist with the Bureau of Reclamation and works directly with Larimer County on managing the reservoirs. He has spent 30 years in federal government, 4 years in Coast Guard, 17 years at Fort Carson doing Natural Resources, wildland fire, noxious weeds, range conservation, etc. He has worked with the Bureau for 5 years now. He manages all of the recreation programs for Larimer County, CPW in Pueblo, and Estes Valley Recreation Park district, is a member of several partnerships regarding fire mitigation, and is responsible for herbicide applications, special use permits for projects, ag leases, and the ANS program. The Bureau gives money to Larimer County via the Title 28 program. They’re authorized through Congress to contribute to capital improvement projects up to 50% of the project. He is currently working on the Resource Management Plan with Ken. We try to do 10 year plans via the federal government. The federal government requires them to evaluate the environmental impact of any project. For ex, right now, he has \$50,000 for next year for his 3 managing partners: Larimer County, Estes Valley Recreation Park, and CPW in Pueblo. It is discretionary income. There is also different money allocated that may or may not be used. For example, they were able to give \$198,000 in 2015 to HT.

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Not all of the partners are so organized or have such a good plan in place. We have things called flap projects. For example, Larimer County will have to pay 13%, and the federal government will pay the rest of a re-paving of the Carter Marina parking lot. Pat guarantees that if we put that in, we will get the money. But we need to get permission to do the project.

- Rieves: Often we have banked the match before Pat calls with money. We have many projects 'shovel ready'.
- Deborah: Do you give money for general use?
- Mckusker: No, we must account for every dollar when we are audited. Often we select line items to have the bureau money pay for. Sometimes we know there's money coming, and sometimes we get more than we're expecting because another plan didn't happen.
- Rieves: The first level is that we write a scope of work (general idea/placeholder). But when it comes down to the money, we have to have the actual budget for items.
- Brink: We want to get all ideas in Master Plan, even if we don't think we can afford them right now, so that when Pat calls, we are ready to go.
- LS: And maybe an unexpected grant could come in and fund something, so they could take care of a project, and move onto the next one on the list.
- Mckusker: The Resource Management Plan also includes an Environmental Assessment.
- One of the biggest challenges we're going to face is ANS inspections. The state just lost all of its funding for ANS, so they asked us to contribute. Unfortunately, the Bureau doesn't have legal authorization to fund it. He was worried, they were going to take the Title 28 money to pay for it.
- They're in support of the Ranger program, and Pat would like their logo on more pamphlets etc.

*Park District updates and Parks Master Plan Implementation Progress report* – Dan Rieves, Carter Lake District Manager:

Dan was at meeting on Tuesday for ANS.

- The money is gone, but it is funded with a certain level of confidence, through 6-30-17.
- Almost \$4 million was spent in Colorado last year, way more than in other states. Why is that? Colorado has one of the most intense and robust programs.
- Now trying to figure out where else to find the money. The money originally came from the Oil & Gas Severance Tax. Maybe charge boaters? In my opinion, boaters want to comply, but waiting 2 hours for a decontamination is not ok with boaters.
- The process has grown from just mussels to include several other species. So a big question was asking how much Denver Water, etc. cares about those other species, because going back to just the mussels can streamline the process a lot. If they do, then Colorado is mussel free and if you're approved for Colorado, then you can move more freely within the state. It is likely that the water flea and milfoil will be removed from the list. They also talked about centralizing the efforts and catch boats as they come over the border like Wyoming. Or maybe we can share decontamination stations.
- Carter is currently negative for anything, so right now, even a boat from Horsetooth trips a flush if they have water in the boat. Carter Lake went from doing about 200 decontaminations a year to 1,500 decontaminations a year!
- We need to know what the gap is, so we can seek other funding. Colorado is the Gold Standard in ANS.
- There is Congressional interest.
- One of the big thing we're dealing with on the lakes is day use and during-the-week visitation. For one, it's a high water year again. We're turning over Sunday afternoon anywhere between

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60-83% campsites in reservations. We are 90 % full during the week. But we are not set up to handle that. We may need to look at a different model for business next year. Think about population growth in master plan. Every department must consider this. You can build 200 more campsites at Horsetooth or Carter, and we'll fill them. The 10-year master plan is good tool, but also look at the population growth. Carter Lake has turned people away for the last few weekends for day use at the picnic areas.

- Deborah: goes to HT every day, and sees so many people. Is this the new normal, should we plan for this in the future.
- Dan: I don't want to overreact, but has asked for more staff called park aids, to do things like direct traffic, etc.
- Deborah: We don't know if lower water levels will equate less people.
- Dan: Camping will be full, but will day use always be? This high level of activity brings districts, partners, and emergency service providers together to solidify relationships.

### *Mark Caughlan, Horsetooth District Manager*

- For the last 3 years, we've had that weekday issue at Horsetooth.
- Only two sites are available today. The number of emergency issues and infractions continue to climb.
- It is harder and harder to keep up with maintenance. High water eats away at your older facilities. We know it's coming, and we are ok with it, we just staff up. Facilities must be built solidly, so that we don't need to do as much maintenance.
- Besides it being crazy, the new patrol boats are fantastic. It helps us respond better and gives us better presence. We've had a couple of big incidents, boat fires, crashes, etc. We have an EMT or medical personnel on our boat on the weekends.
- The Sail and Saddle license renewal is coming soon. Gary wants to wait to until after the master plan to renegotiate. Another concessionaire is at Lions Park. Greeley water pipeline is boring underneath the river. We are mitigating neighbor issues.
- Because we are busier, we are seeing more crime. We had someone on FBI terrorist watch list show up at our parks.
- We have fire restrictions, but no bans are effective as of today. When we have fire bans, visitation drops off sharply. The fire rings at the boat-in campsite fire rings are not ok to use. Welding project are also in hold.
- Question: Do you feel you are ready if a fire started in a campground?
  - Mark: Thankfully, we've had several fires burn around Horsetooth, so we've had practice handling that.
  - Dan: Marks' got a fire station right in Inlet Bay. We had a grass fire last week, and they got it taken care of very quickly. We are well trained.

### 8. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – 10 minutes

Gary is appreciative of the board in regards to the master plan and how important the plan is. Carter Lake's South Shore project will be the last piece of the original Master Plan.

Mark suggested to have the next meeting at the new Horsetooth building. Staff is moving into Horsetooth August 15<sup>th</sup>, and the next week it should be open to the public. We had a sprinkler system line bust, and it flooded, so we have to do some repairs.

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The price for fiber to Horsetooth is \$480,000 from Centurylink. It would come from 38E below dam. Gary told consultant try to get another bid and to get it to below \$300k. If they can, we'll get it done. Carter is a different story. We're trying to get 3 T-1's married. We're working on it.

Ken: We need to treat it like this is just another utility. The cost is going to be big, but maybe we can find grants and partners, but we have to get it done one way or another.

Ken will send an email out because there are a few dates he wants everyone to be aware of:

- There are going to be public meetings August 22, 23, 24. August 22 is at Horsetooth, August 23 is at Carter, August 24 is at the Ranch. 5-8:30pm for all.
- August 25, our Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is going to meet after lunch, and you all are a part of that, and then the stakeholder group is going to meet after that too. Maybe a few people want to go to each of the public meetings, but if most of you could please make it to the TAC meeting, that would be great (at LC NR Administrative offices).

One last thing...Boulder County came to visit on June 22. They're one of the older programs in the state. They wanted to come talk about hunting on open space. 19 of them came. It was a great conversation. Boulder has environmental issues, hundreds of elk living there year round and destroying the environment, but also people don't want elk shot either.

Also in the Master Plan we are going to meet with Northern Water soon. We have also decided to send out post cards to residents within a quarter mile (at least) to make sure everyone feels involved.

**MEETING ADJOURNED @ 7:51pm**

Respectfully submitted:

Jenny Miller

APPROVED:

  
Russ Fruits, Chair

*Next regular meeting [if needed]: August 9, 2016,  
Bison Room, Natural Resources Administrative  
Offices, 1800 S. County Rd. 31, Loveland, CO*

Public can view agenda and minutes at  
[http://larimer.org/boards/minutes/parks\\_advisory\\_board.cfm](http://larimer.org/boards/minutes/parks_advisory_board.cfm)

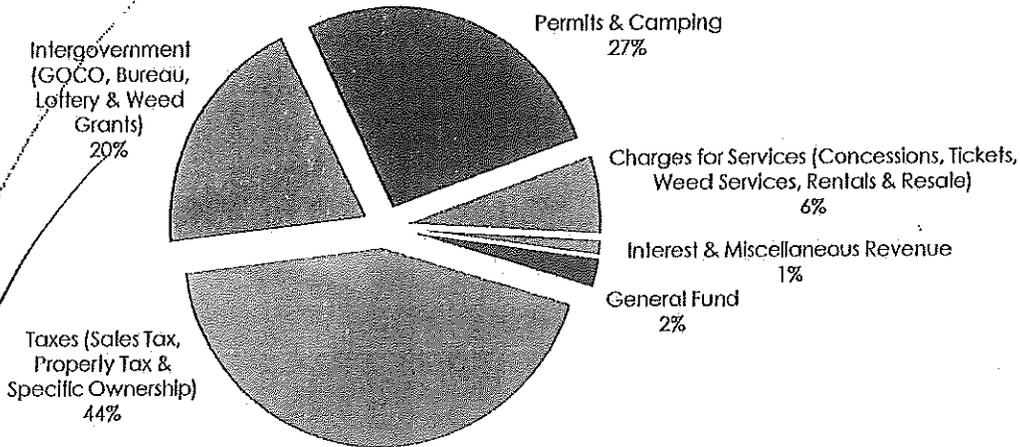


# Larimer County Department of Natural Resources

Review of Departmental Revenues and Expenses with Emphasis on Parks

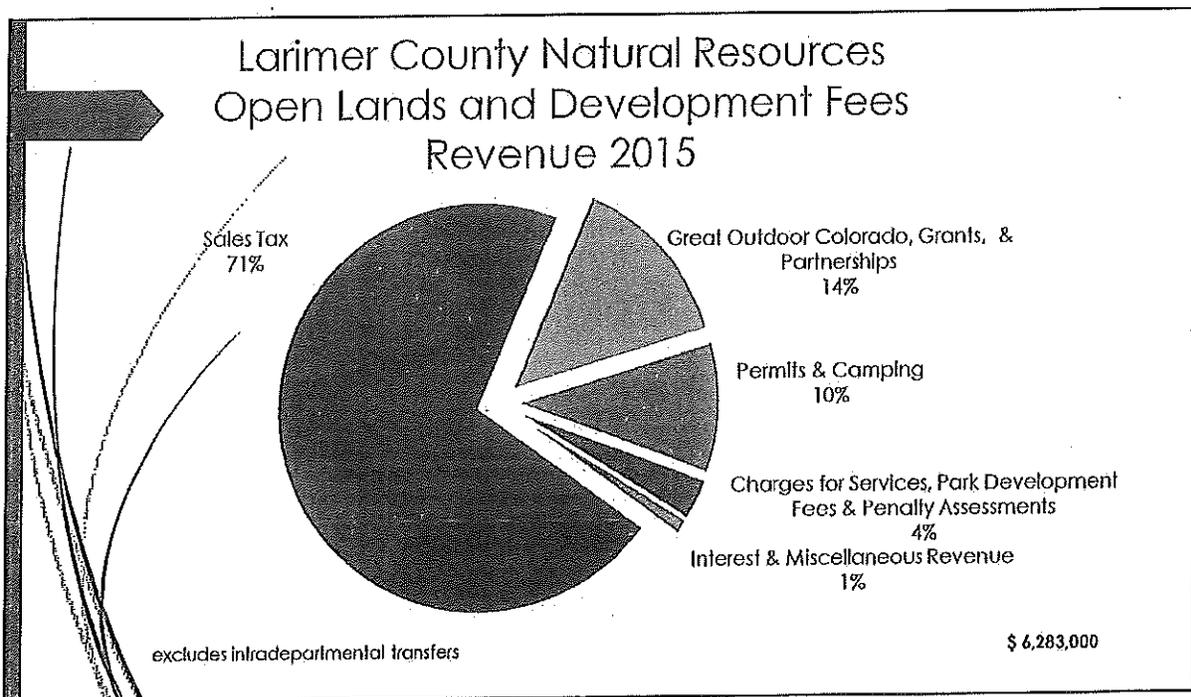
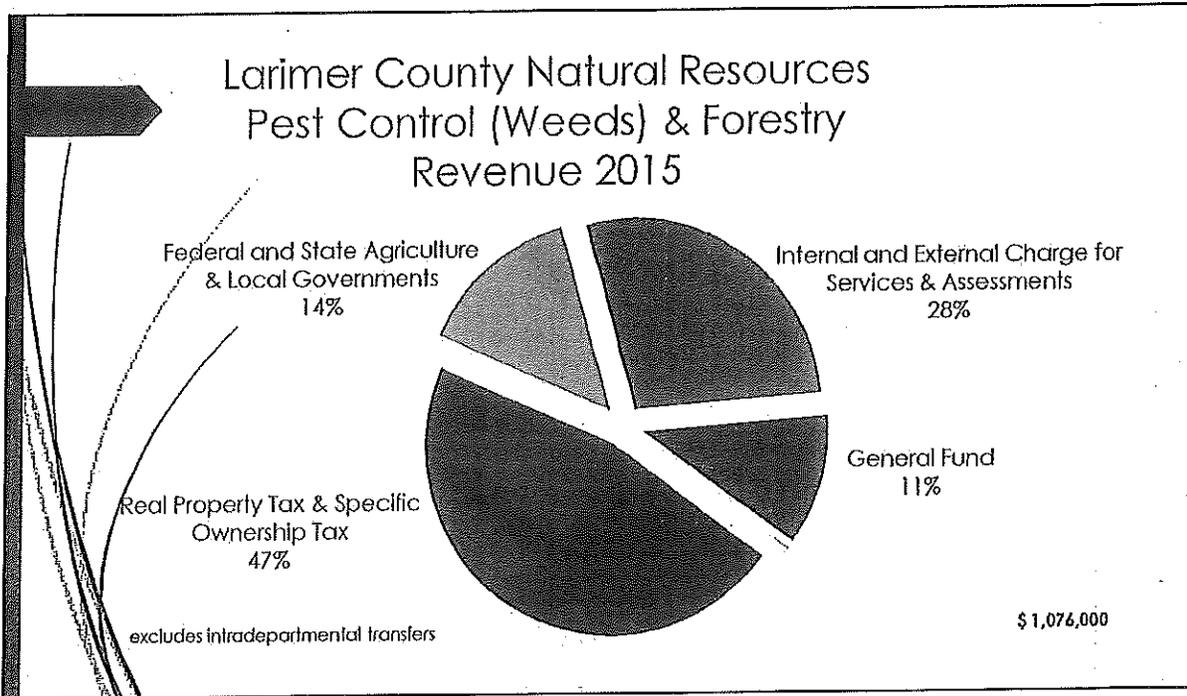
Lori A. Smith, Natural Resources Finance Manager

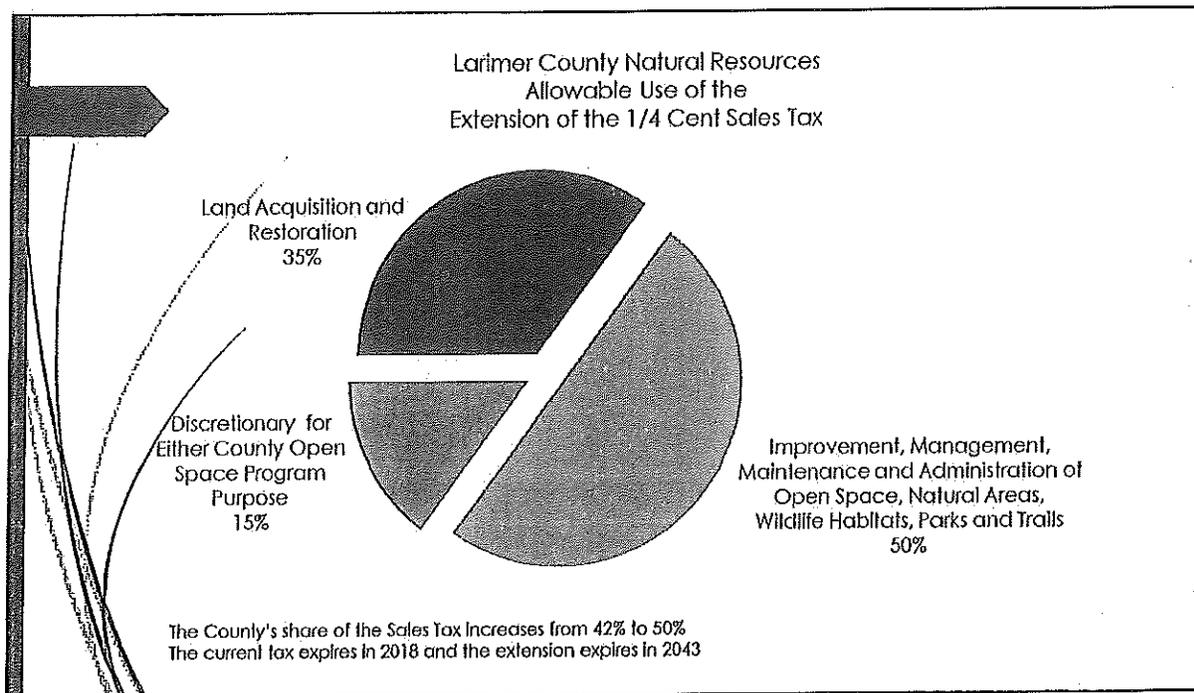
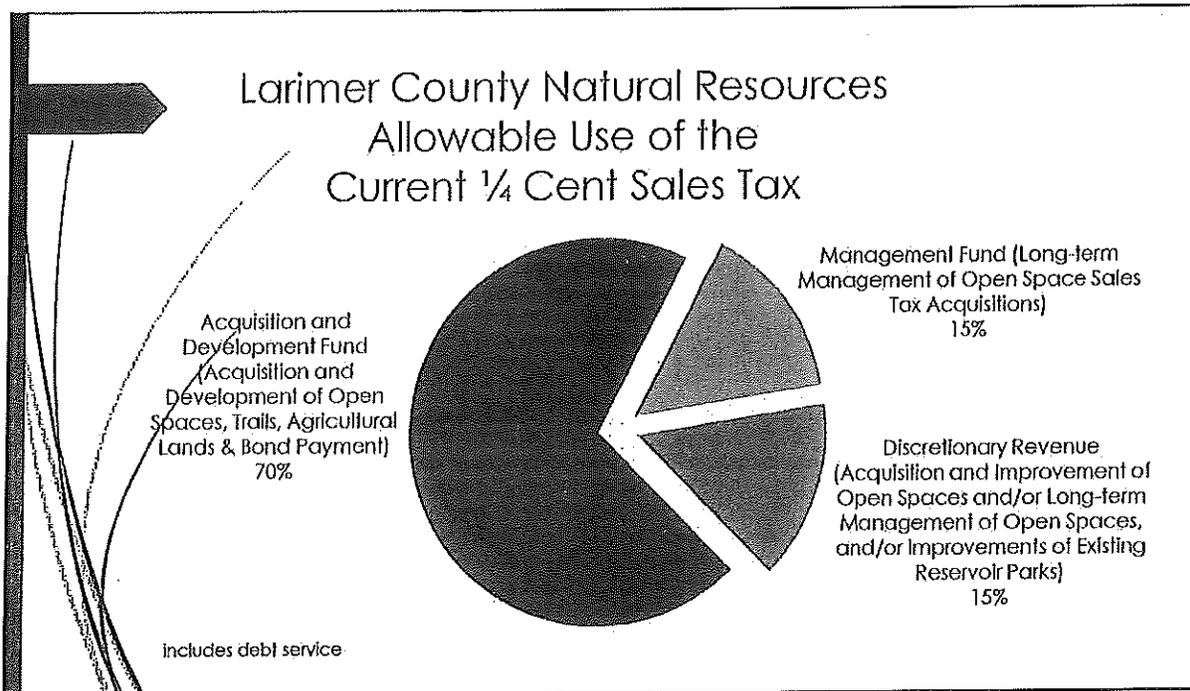
## Larimer County Natural Resources Departmental Revenue 2015

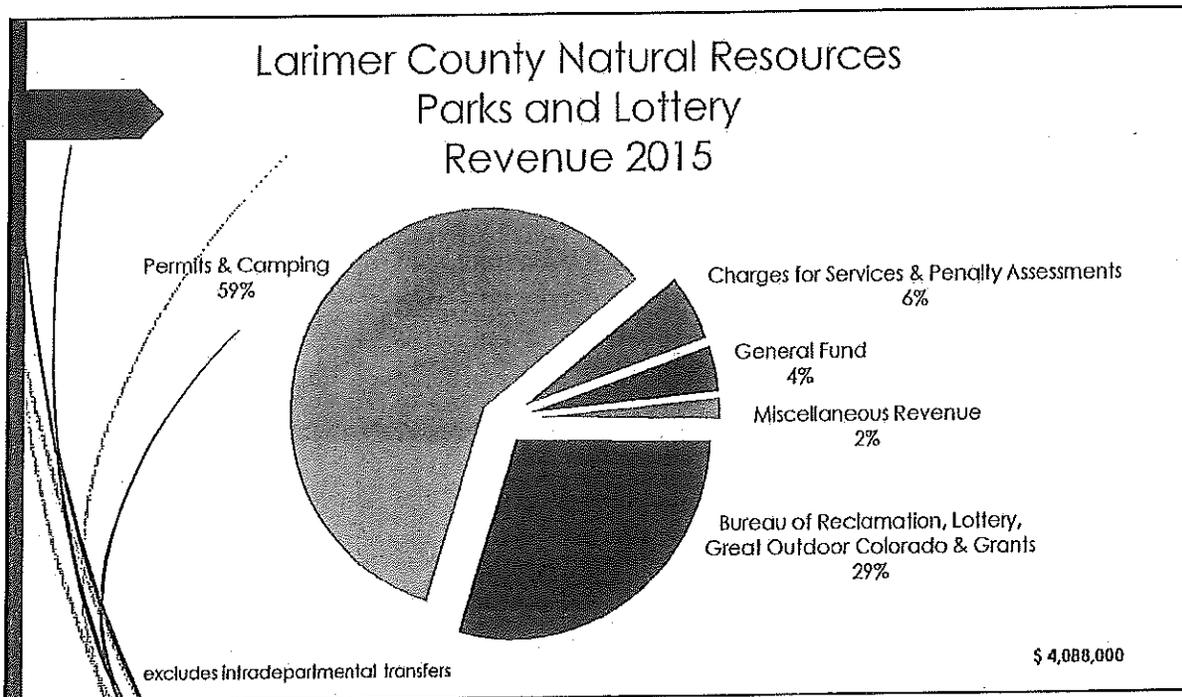


excludes intradepartmental transfers

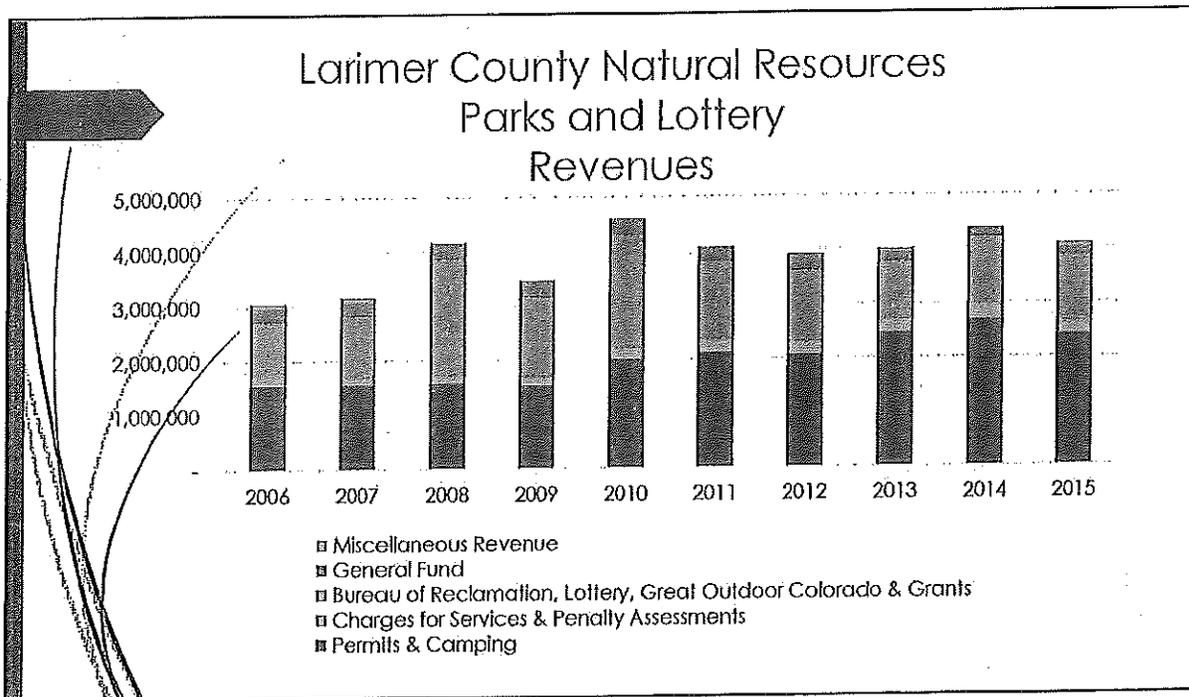
\$ 11,446,000



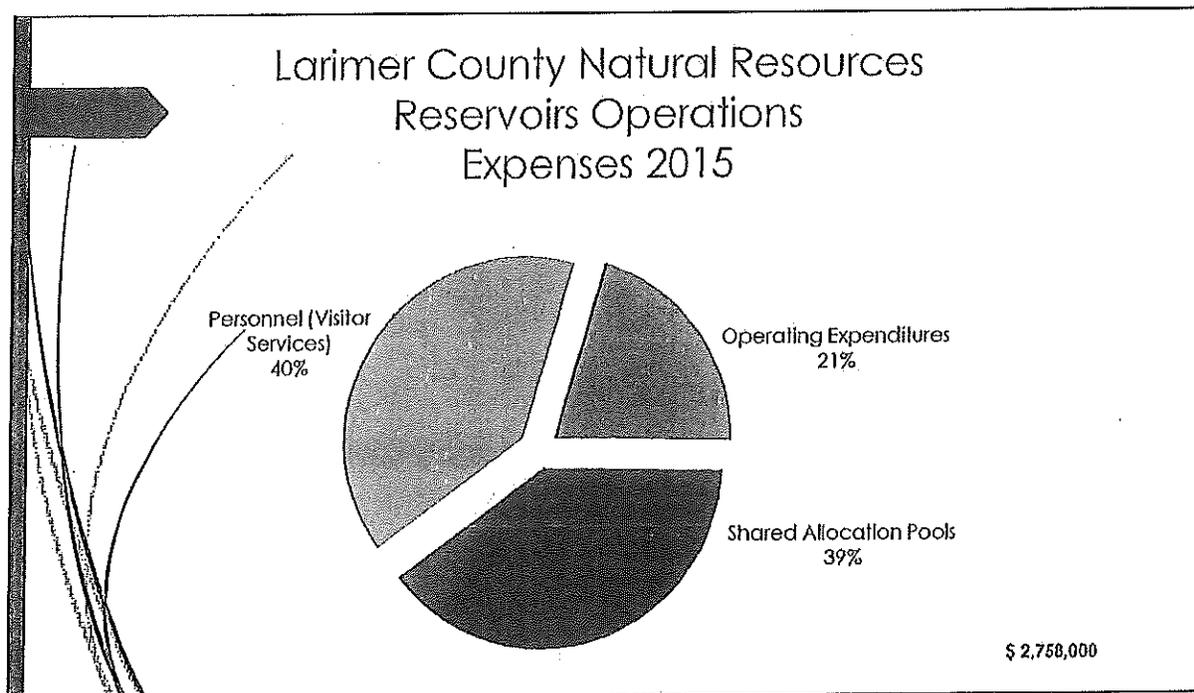
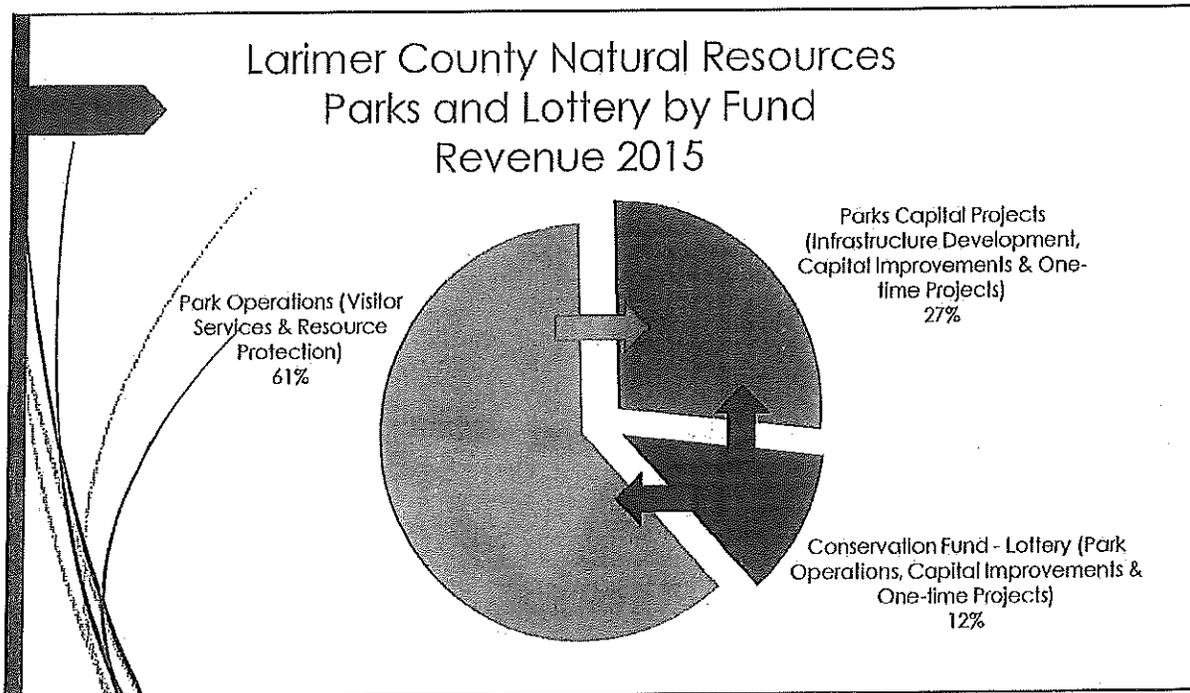


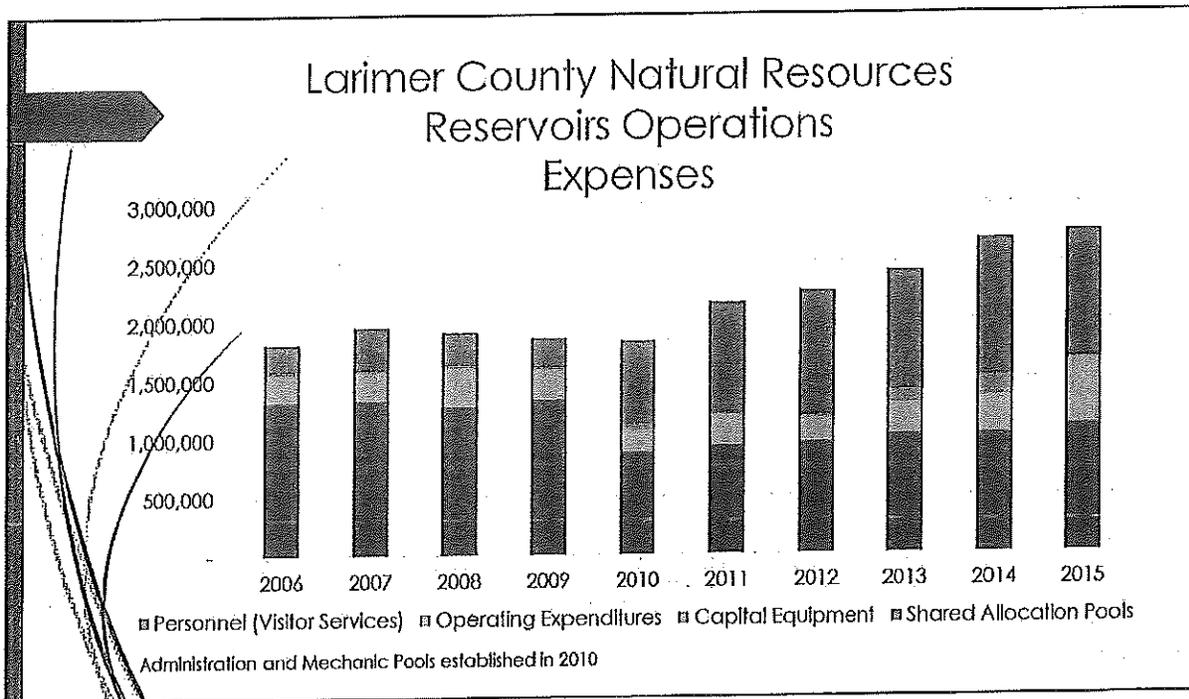
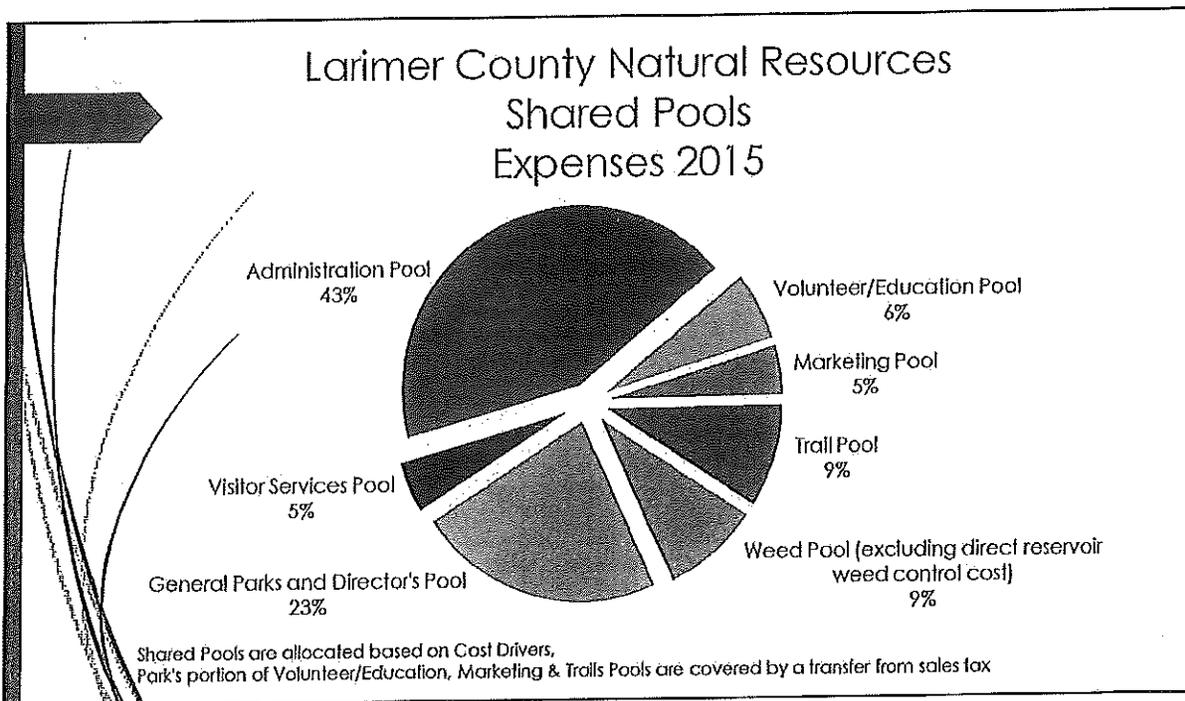


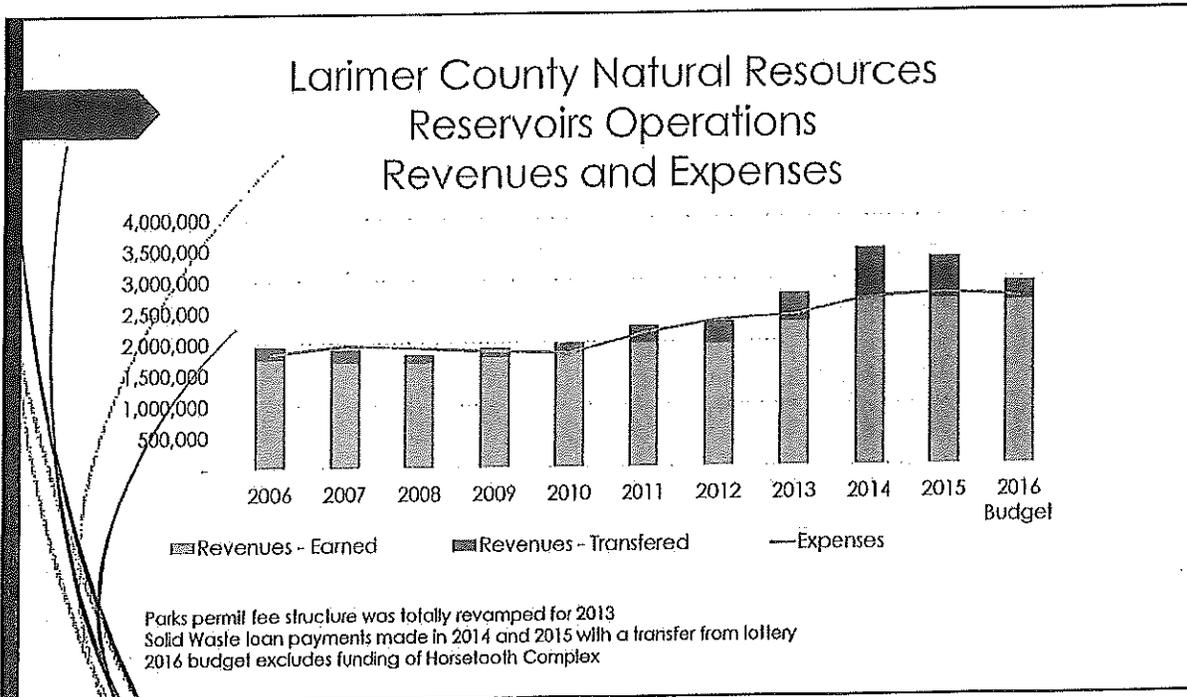
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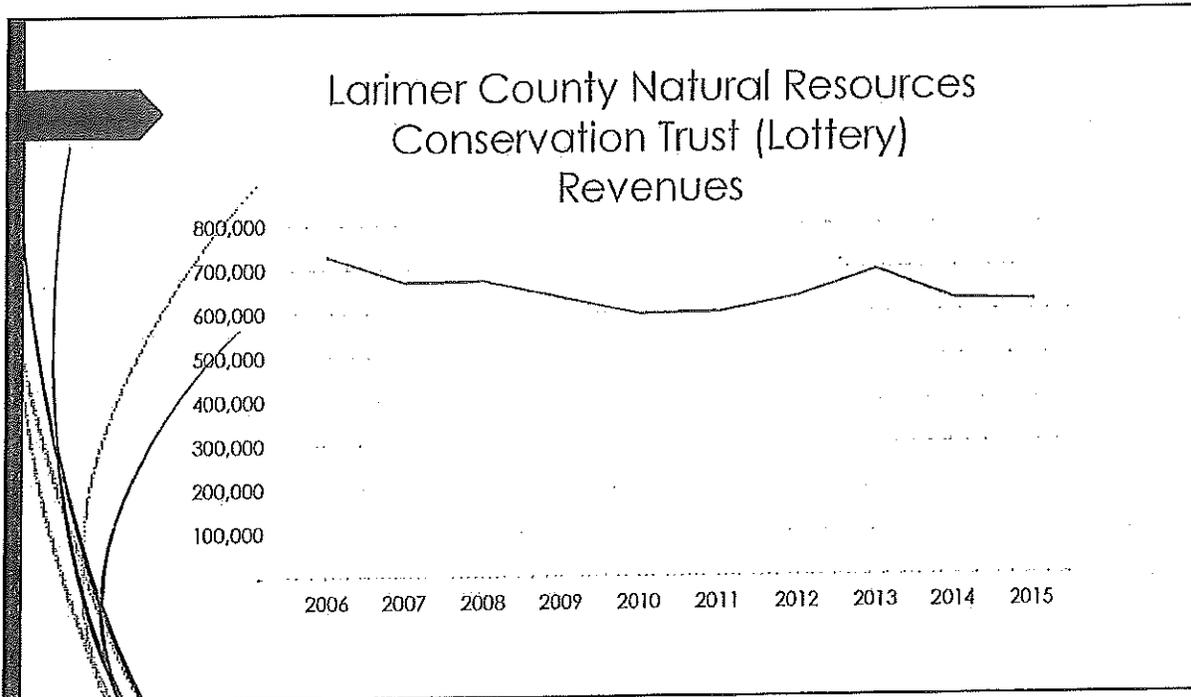
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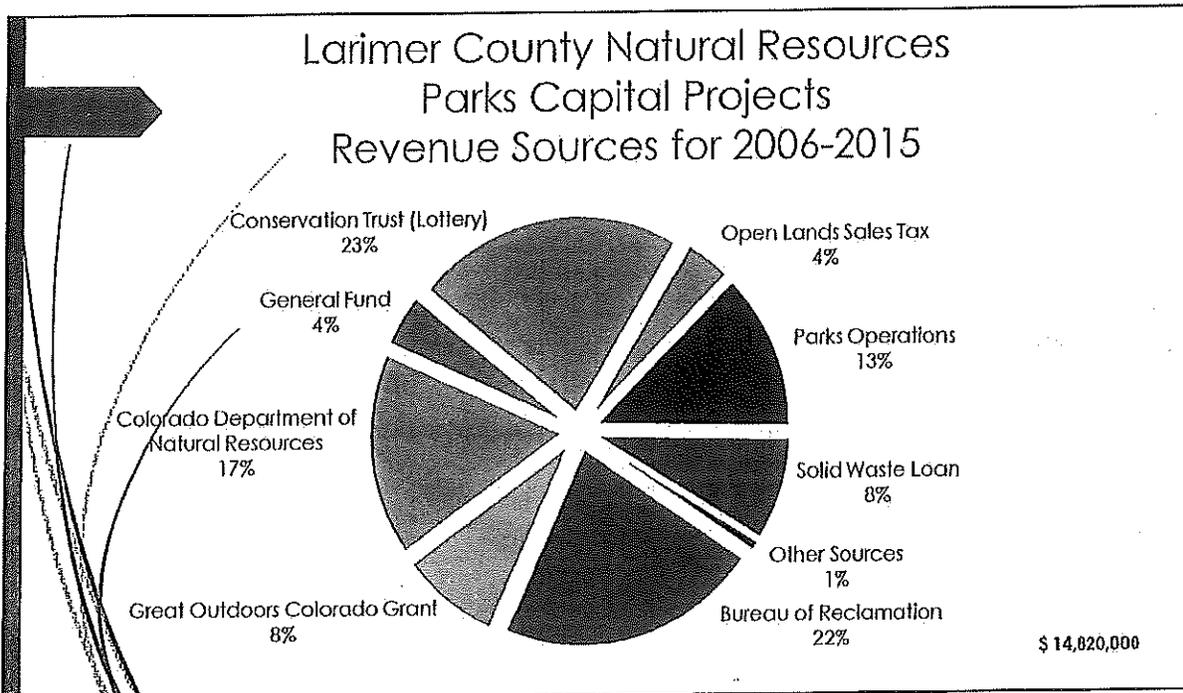




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### Natural Resources

General Capital Projects	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 Budget
Small Projects	0	4,900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Comper Cabins	6,875	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parks Master Plan & Reml	119,395	46,396	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parks Master Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	140,000
Highway Signs	16,839	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Automated Pay Stations	0	0	0	0	0	0	101,612	0	0	0	0
Reservoir Sign Project	0	0	0	0	0	0	23,932	0	0	0	0

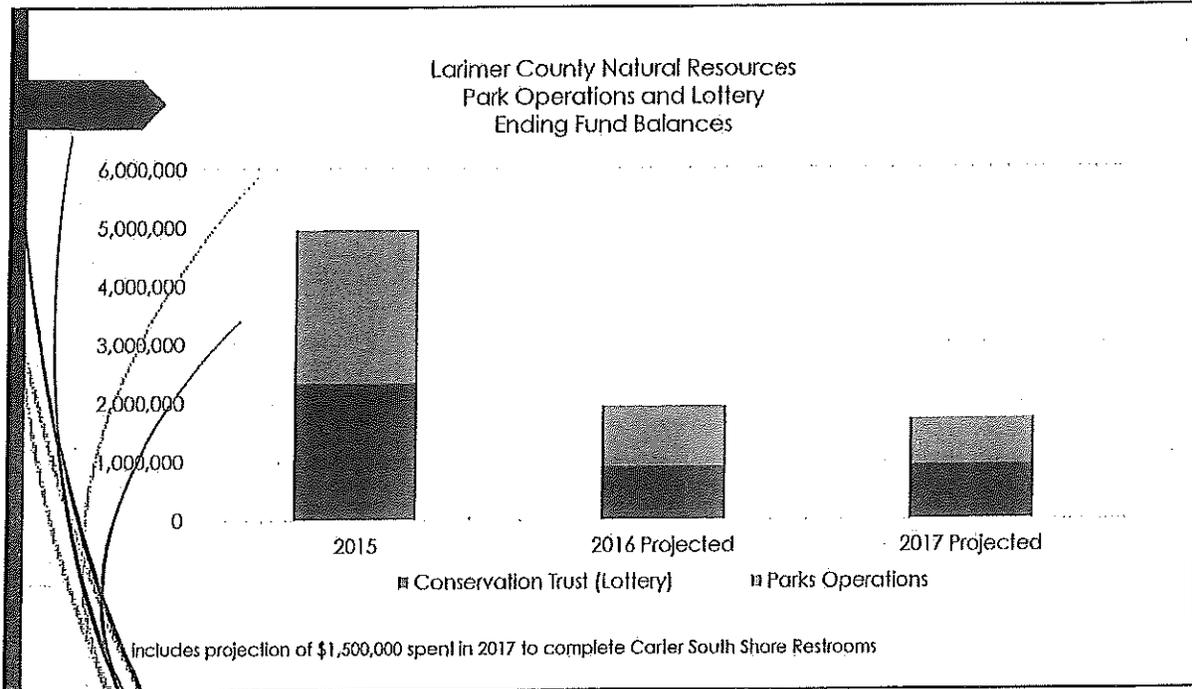
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Natural Resources Horseoath Reservoir Capital Projects											
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 Budget
Inlet Bay Area	7,465	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseoath E Side Day Use	1,802	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Sign Program	0	41,596	2,032	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseoath S Bay Entrance	260	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lighthouse Restaur Demolition	192,512	4,925	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Bay Shower Facility	0	0	144,562	223,412	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eastside Foothills Trail	8,559	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ADA Compliance & Retrofit -HF	0	0	41,521	35,059	23,434	0	0	0	0	0	0
Horseoath W Side Improve	0	59,907	30	0	6,050	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blue Sky Trailhead	0	0	0	0	188,920	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rotary Park Trail	0	1,022	0	25,129	31,118	590	0	0	14,704	0	0
Inlet Bay Camper Services Bld	0	0	135,437	231,647	3,820	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Bay Campground Impr	0	0	1,863	225,785	32,511	5,436	386,296	8,929	0	182,337	0
South Bay Swim Beach Impr	0	0	0	125,649	992,588	1,106	0	0	0	0	0
Sunrise Day Use/Swim Beach	0	0	0	11,358	279,653	(6,301)	0	0	0	0	0
Horseoath Boundary Fences	0	0	0	126	0	66,203	0	0	0	0	0
Horseoath Offices	0	0	0	0	939	26,165	0	0	13,038	434,070	5,046,173
Horseoath Forestry	0	0	0	0	15,973	12,740	0	0	30,000	0	0
Inlet Bay Campground	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,426	0	0	0	0
Ruston Olive Removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25,713	137	0

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Natural Resources Carter, Flalton and Pinewood Reservoirs Capital Projects											
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016 Budget
Eagle Campground	7,890	93,785	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Sign Program	6,715	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carter Lake Docks	(2)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carter Lake Forest Shrd	0	49,000	22	33,000	56,054	6,700	12,259	0	0	0	28,000
Carter Marina Fuel System	794	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flalton Campground Improve	1,094	333	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blue Mountain Equip Building	9,175	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carter Lake Marina Renovation	184,131	72,662	2,477,659	465	0	110,178	6,800	2,025	0	0	0
Carter Lake Shore Docks	63,311	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ADA Compliance & Retrofit -Ctr	0	0	679	44,770	116,906	15,462	0	0	0	0	0
Pinewood Fencing	0	22,788	5,495	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ADA Compliance & Retrofit -Fl	0	0	444	26,008	9,837	0	0	0	0	0	0
ADA Compliance & Retrofit -Pn	0	0	127	18,467	729	0	3,584	4,286	753,872	218,037	21,060
Pinewood Forest Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,000	0	0
Carter Marina Offices	0	0	0	32,679	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Eagle Camper Service Building	0	0	0	5,238	255,864	215,452	0	0	0	0	0
Carter South Shore Restrooms	0	0	0	0	0	0	183	0	0	0	500,000
Flalton Fishing & Fun Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	20,944	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>630,827</b>	<b>401,349</b>	<b>2,813,886</b>	<b>1,042,809</b>	<b>2,018,416</b>	<b>457,752</b>	<b>563,059</b>	<b>19,266</b>	<b>861,355</b>	<b>808,611</b>	<b>5,735,233</b>

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