

Fort Worden Lifelong Learning Center

History

- Established as a State Park in 1972
- In collaboration with the Washington State Arts Commission and State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Washington State Parks adopts plan for Fort Worden Center for Creative Development in 1973
- Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977 (only Washington State Park with this designation); listed in both State and National Registers of Historic Places

Facts

- The Park encompasses 434-acres with 85 campsites
- Houses over 443,000 square feet of facilities—about 100 buildings; many underutilized
- People come from all over the world to attend programs, camp, and rent accommodations for vacations, retreats and conferences and day use of the park
- Fort Worden is one of two WA State Parks located within an incorporated city
- Fort Worden is unique in the state park system because it operates as a state park and conference center: offers over 68,000 square-feet of meeting rooms and event spaces
- Offers two performance venues: 1200-seat McCurdy Pavilion and the 275-seat Wheeler Theater

Fort Worden Financials

- Fort employs over 200 employees/32 state park employees
- Supports 15 nonprofits and local businesses
- Annual aggregate revenues for all Partner institutions is approximately \$10.5 million
- Generates \$113,600 in 2009 lodging taxes (1/3 of city LTAC funds)
- State Park's total operating budget is \$6,384,711 (2009-2011 biennium)
- Attracts over 200 park volunteers (45,000 volunteer hours contributed in 2010)

Lifelong Learning Center

- The Learning Center vision and master plans were adopted by State Parks Commission after 6-year planning process funded with over \$1 million in private and public support
- The Commission recognized that the state did not have adequate resources to implement the plans and a new management entity was needed to manage and operate the park
- Significant investments have been made by public and private partners towards implementation of a Lifelong Learning Center
- Legislature appropriated \$4.37 million toward Building 202 restoration to serve as a higher education center with Peninsula and Goddard College; the City of Port Townsend has allocated \$500,000 towards this capital project
- The City established the Fort Worden Public Development Authority (FW-PDA) as the new independent entity to manage and operate the Fort and implement the Learning Center
- The Commission has directed State Parks (March 2011) to seek agreement on legislation to facilitate Fort Worden State Park becoming a Lifelong Learning Center

- State budget cuts and parks' personnel changes have resulted in the need to accelerate the authorization of a lease or transfer of some, or all, of Fort Worden to the FW-PDA