

Audit of Silver Springs State Park

Division of Recreation and Parks

Report: A-1819DEP-006

Office of Inspector General

Internal Audit Section

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

June 21, 2019

3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, MS 40
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

<https://floridadep.gov/>





Audit of Silver Springs State Park
Division of Recreation and Parks



Report: A-1819DEP-006

Table of Contents

Scope and Objectives	1
Methodology	1
Background	2
Results and Conclusion.....	2
Findings and Recommendations.....	6
Division Response.....	10

Report: A-1819DEP-006

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducted an audit of Silver Springs State Park (Park) Division of Recreation and Parks (Division). This audit was initiated as a result of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2019 Annual Audit Plan.

Scope and Objectives

The scope of this audit included Park financial records and activities between July 1, 2017, through June 30, 2018, as well as additional timeframes considered necessary. The objective was to determine whether the Park is operating in compliance with applicable requirements and controls are in place with respect to:

- revenue collection and reporting
- attendance reporting
- park expenditures, procurement, and Purchasing Card (P-Card) use
- property, equipment, and firearms management
- volunteers

Methodology

This audit was conducted under the authority of Section 20.055, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and in conformance with *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing*, published by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Our procedures included review of authoritative documents, interviews with Park and Division staff, review of Park financial records and activity documents, and review of prior Audit of Agreement CA-0617 with Cape Leisure Silver Springs, LLC at Silver Springs State Park, A-1819DEP-007 (Agreement).

Report: A-1819DEP-006

Background

Located in Ocala Florida, Silver Springs is a historic Florida tourist attraction that was acquired by the State in October 2013. Park amenities include camping, cabins, hiking trails, the Pioneer Cracker Village, Silver River Museum, and Environmental Education Center. Park revenues are derived primarily through day use and camping.

A contracted Concessionaire provides glass bottom boat tours, food service, equipment rentals, and operates a gift shop in the Park. The Concessionaire also collects visitor admission fees and reports daily attendance on behalf of the Park through operation of the Historic Ticket Booth. Additionally, the Concessionaire collects vessel launch fees on behalf of the Park at the boat launch area. During FY 2017-2018, Park revenues were \$1,389,724.49 and reported attendance was 339,708.

Results and Conclusion

Revenue Collection and Reporting

Camping and Cabin revenue are primarily collected through the Division's online Central Reservation System. Daily revenue is also collected at the ranger station and from the Equestrian Trail Head honor station. In accordance with the Agreement, the Concessionaire remitted \$366,060.00¹ in vessel launch and visitor admission fees for daily activities during FY 2017-2018. The Agreement requires the Concessionaire to remit all fees on a monthly basis.

To verify the accuracy of reported revenue, we compared reported amounts on the

¹During FY 2017-2018, the Concessionaire's reported collections were \$366,412.00. The \$352.00 difference was due to the timing difference between the dates fees were collected and the dates payments were remitted to the Park.

Audit of Silver Springs State Park
Division of Recreation and Parks

Report: A-1819DEP-006

Deposit Worksheets to Point of Sale (POS) summaries² for the sampled months of March and April 2018. Amounts collected and reported were consistent with minor differences, which were documented by Park staff.

Financial Summary Sessions were documented consistently with Deposit Worksheets for the sampled months. All Daily Report of Receipts reviewed for the sampled months contained two signatures as required in the Division's Operations Manual (OM).

According to the Florida State Parks and Coastal Aquatic Managed Areas Revenue Collection Procedures (Revenue Procedures), deposit slips should be initialed by the staff preparing the slip as well as a second staff for verification of the deposit amount. Of the 69 deposits reviewed, 10 were not initialed by two staff as required.

According to the OM, if daily receipts exceed \$2,000, a night bank deposit is required. For the two sampled months, deposits totaled \$184,476.06. Of the 60 days during the months sampled, documented revenue collected for 29 days were not made timely as required. This was primarily due to inconsistencies between the Concessionaire's requirements in the Agreement for remittance of daily fees and deposit requirements in the OM.

Revenue documentation during the sampled months included 24 refunds and 17 voided transactions recorded in the POS system. For the refund transactions, documentation was generally maintained by the Park with original receipts. With respect to voids, the OM requires Parks to document the reason for the void on the original receipt, mark the receipt as void, and maintain the transaction documentation in the cash drawer. Of the 17 voided transactions, voids

²POS summaries reviewed included Daily Report of Receipts and Settlement Reports.

Report: A-1819DEP-006

were generally documented as required with minor discrepancies.

During the sampled months, two tax exempt transactions were recorded. Documentation of tax exempt certification had been maintained.

Attendance Reporting

According to the Park's Attendance Reporting Plan (ARP) approved by the District on February 22, 2018, actual visitors are counted by Park staff at the ranger station and overnight guest count is collected daily from the Central Reservation System camping reports. Actual visitor counts are also documented by Concessionaire staff at the Historic Ticket Booth and reported to the Park daily. The ARP requires that estimated river counts are based on 130% of day use visitors at State Road 35 entrance. Equestrian Trail Head estimates are based on the amount received in the honor envelopes.³ During FY 2017-2018, the Park had not reported estimated attendance in accordance with the ARP. However, during the course of our audit, Park management took corrective steps and demonstrated that beginning in FY 2018-2019, estimated attendance was being recorded and reported as required.

Expenditures and P-Card Use

To verify compliance with purchasing requirements, we reviewed a sample of eight MyFloridaMarketPlace⁴ (MFMP) purchases and 40 P-Card expenditures. We verified the eight MFMP purchases documented procurement and payment requirements in accordance with Chapter 60A-1, Florida Administrative Code. We also verified that all 40 P-Card purchases

³For the \$5.00 fee, individual entry permit, or empty envelopes, one visitor is counted and three guests are counted for \$8.00 fee or family entry permit envelopes.

⁴MyFloridaMarketPlace is the State online procurement processing system for Florida.

Report: A-1819DEP-006

were documented in compliance with Department P-Card requirements.

State Property and Equipment Management

To verify compliance with Department requirements regarding property, we reviewed a sample of 25 items listed on the Park's Master Property file. Upon review, all 25 items, including two firearms, were identified and contained required decals. We also verified the firearms were located in a locked safe in a secure location. Under the Division's Firearm Use Standard, Park employees using firearms are required to complete range and classroom training and obtain approval for firearm use from the District Bureau Chief. Employees must requalify on the range every two years. According to the Park's Firearm Activity Logs, one employee documented firearms use during the audit period. We verified documentation of the District Director's approval for the employee's firearm use. The employee had certified that applicable training requirements had been met. However, the Park had not maintained documentation of the training as referenced in the firearms approval memos.

Staff Residents

According to the Housing Policy in the OM, *a request for Housing Perquisite Change and Residency Agreement (DRP-013), and either an Agreement of Occupancy for State-owned Residence form (DRP-028) or an Agreement of Occupancy for Employee-owned Mobile Home Site form (DRP-029), must be executed by the recommended/approved resident and approved by the Bureau Chief per DEP Directive 150 prior to: any recommended resident residing on Park property.* In addition, an annual inspection for all residences should be performed utilizing the Residence Inspection Report (DRP-027). For the audit period, we verified that the required Agreements of Occupancy and annual inspections were completed and approved as required with

Report: A-1819DEP-006

the exception of one Agreement of Occupancy. Subject to our request, the Agreement of Occupancy was completed by the Park resident and approved by the District.

Resident Volunteers

We reviewed Park resident volunteer records provided by the Park and in the Volunteer Service Tracking System (VSystems) for 11 volunteers during the audit period. We verified all Volunteer Agreements and Applications were completed through VSystems digitally or provided by the Park as required. According to the OM, all regular service volunteers must have searches conducted through the U.S. Department of Justice National Sexual Offender Public Website and Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators and these searches must be recorded in VSystems by electronic documentation maintained in the volunteer's VSystems profile. Of the 11, two volunteer files did not include U.S. Department of Justice National Sexual Offender searches and two volunteer files did not include Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Sexual Offenders and Predators searches as required.

Conclusion

Based on our audit, the Park demonstrated compliance with Division requirements regarding revenue collection and reporting, property and equipment management, attendance reporting, and staff resident documentation with the exception of noted control weaknesses with respect to deposits, an Agreement of Occupancy, resident volunteers, and firearm training documentation.

Findings and Recommendations

Finding 1: Deposit Verification and Timeliness

Per the Revenue Procedures, deposit slips should be initialed by the staff preparing

Report: A-1819DEP-006

the slip as well as a second staff for verification of the deposit amount. Of the 69 deposits reviewed, 10 were not initialed by two staff as required. According to discussions with Park management, this was due to clerical oversight.

According to the OM, if daily receipts exceed \$2,000, a night bank deposit is required. For the two sampled months, deposits totaled \$184,476.06. Of the 60 days during the months sampled, documented revenue collected for 29 days was not made timely as required. This was primarily due to inconsistencies between the requirements in the Agreement with the Concessionaire and the deposit requirements outlined in the OM.

Recommendation:

We recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure deposit slips are signed by two staff as required in the Revenue Procedures. In addition, consistent with our finding and recommendation in the prior audit of the Agreement, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure deposits are made timely as required in the OM.

Finding 2: Firearm Training

Under the Division's Firearm Use Standard, Park employees using firearms are required to complete range and classroom training and obtain approval for firearm use from the District Bureau Chief. Employees must requalify on the range every two years. Although the Park maintained documentation of the District Director's approval for the one employee who had firearm use in the audit period, which included employee certification that training requirements were met, the Park had not maintained documentation of the referenced training. After discussions with Park Management, the required training had been completed, but the training records were not maintained.

Report: A-1819DEP-006

Recommendation:

We recommend the Division work with Park management to ensure documentation of required firearms training is maintained on file for each Park employee that is authorized to use firearms by the District.

Finding 3: Agreement of Occupancy

The Housing Policy in the OM states that a *request for Housing Perquisite Change and Residency Agreement (DRP-013), and either an Agreement of Occupancy for State-owned Residence form (DRP-028) or an Agreement of Occupancy for Employee-owned Mobile Home Site form (DRP-029), must be executed by the recommended/approved resident and approved by the Bureau Chief per DEP Directive 150 prior to: any recommended resident residing on Park property.* For the audit period, we verified the required Agreement of Occupancy for all Park staff residents were completed and approved as required in the OM, with the exception of one. Subsequent to our request, the required Agreement of Occupancy was completed by the Park resident and approved by the District.

Recommendation:

Going Forward, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure the required Agreements of Occupancy are signed and approved at the time Park staff occupy residences, as required in the OM.

Finding 4: Resident Volunteers

Based on our review of documentation for 11 resident volunteers during the audit period, we verified Volunteer Agreements and Applications were completed as required. According to the OM, all regular service volunteers must have searches conducted through the U.S.

Audit of Silver Springs State Park
Division of Recreation and Parks

Report: A-1819DEP-006

Department of Justice National Sexual Offender Public Website and Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators and must be recorded in VSys by electronic documentation maintained in the volunteer's VSys profile. Of the 11, two volunteer files did not include U.S. Department of Justice National Sexual Offender searches and two volunteer files did not include Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Sexual Offenders and Predators searches as required.

Recommendation:

Going Forward, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure all U.S. Department of Justice National Sexual Offender Public Website and Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators searches are completed at the time the volunteer begins service at the Park and are maintained in the volunteers VSys file.

To promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in state government, the OIG completes audits and reviews of agency programs, activities, and functions. Our audit was conducted under the authority of Section 20.055, F.S., and in conformance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing, published by the Institute of Internal Auditors, and Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General, published by the Association of Inspectors General. The audit was conducted by Angie Cringan and supervised by Valerie J. Peacock.

Please address inquiries regarding this report to the OIG's Audit Director by telephone at (850) 245-3151. Copies of final reports may be viewed and downloaded via the internet at <https://floridadep.gov/oig/internal-audit/content/final-audit-reports>. Copies may also be obtained by telephone (850) 245-3151, by fax (850)245-2994, in person or by mail at Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Inspector General, 3900 Commonwealth Boulevard, Mail Station #41, Tallahassee, FL 32399.

*Valerie J. Peacock,
Director of Auditing*

*Candie M. Fuller,
Inspector General*



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399


Ron DeSantis
Governor

Juanette Nuñez
Lt. Governor

Frank White
Secretary

Memorandum

TO: Valerie Peacock, Audit Director
Office of the Inspector General

FROM: Chuck Hatcher, Assistant Director
Division of Recreation and Parks 

SUBJECT: Audit of Silver Springs State Park (Report A-1819DEP-006)

DATE: June 10, 2019

This memorandum will serve as the Division's response to the following subject audit findings and recommendations:

Finding 1: Deposit Verification

Per the Revenue Procedures, deposit slips should be initialed by the staff preparing the slip as well as a second staff for verification of the deposit amount. Of the 69 deposits reviewed, 10 were not initialed by two staff as required. According to discussions with Park management, this was due to clerical oversight.

According to the OM, if daily receipts exceed \$2,000, a night bank deposit is required. For the two sampled months, deposits totaled \$184,476.06. Of the 60 days during the months sampled, documented revenue collected for 29 days was not made timely as required. This was primarily due to inconsistencies between the requirements in the Agreement with the Concessionaire and the deposit requirements outlined in the OM.

Recommendation

We recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure deposit slips are signed by two staff as required in the Revenue Procedures. In addition, consistent with our finding and recommendation in the prior audit of the Agreement, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure deposits are made timely as required in the OM.

Division Response:

Agree. Park Management discussed the audit findings with Administrative staff and provided a copy of the Audit for Park staff to review. In addition, Park Management sent an email to the entire Park staff regarding the deposit issues and will cover the procedure in an upcoming personnel meeting to ensure staff understand and implement the procedures correctly.

Finding 2: Firearm Training

Under the Division's Firearm Use Standard, Park employees using firearms are required to complete range and classroom training and obtain approval for firearm use from the District Bureau Chief. Employees must requalify on the range every two years. Although the Park maintained documentation of the District Director's approval for the one employee who had firearm use in the audit period, which included employee certification that training requirements were met, the Park had not maintained documentation of the referenced training. After discussions with Park Management, the required training had been completed, but the training records were not maintained.

Recommendation

We recommend the Division work with Park management to ensure documentation of required firearms training is maintained on file for each Park employee that is authorized to use firearms by the District.

Division Response:

Agree. Park Management will cover the procedure in an upcoming personnel meeting to ensure staff understand and implement the procedures correctly. Training records will be maintained at the Park level in the future.

Finding 3: Agreement of Occupancy

The Housing Policy in the OM states that a request for Housing Perquisite Change and Residency Agreement (DRP-013), and either an Agreement of Occupancy for State-owned Residence form (DRP-028) or an Agreement of Occupancy for Employee-owned Mobile Home Site form (DRP-029), must be executed by the recommended/approved resident and approved by the Bureau Chief per DEP Directive 150 prior to: any recommended resident residing on Park property. For the audit period, we verified the required Agreement of Occupancy for all Park staff residents were completed and approved as required in the OM, with the exception of one. Subsequent to our request, the required Agreement of Occupancy was completed by the Park resident and approved by the District.

Recommendation

Going Forward, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure the required Agreements of Occupancy are signed and approved at the time Park staff occupy residences, as required in the OM.

Division Response:

Agree. Park Management will ensure all housing documents are up to date, signed as appropriate and maintained in a Park file according to OM standards. Paper copies of perquisite and housing agreements will be maintained in the personnel files of individuals living on property in addition to electronic copies.

Finding 4: Resident Volunteers

Based on our review of documentation for 11 resident volunteers during the audit period, we verified Volunteer Agreements and Applications were completed as required. According to the OM, all regular service volunteers must have searches conducted through the U.S.

Recommendation

Going Forward, we recommend the Division work with the Park to ensure all U.S Department of Justice National Sexual Offender Public Website and Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders and Predators searches are completed at the time the volunteer begins service at the Park and are maintained in the volunteers VSys file.

Division Response:

Agree. Silver Springs Volunteer Coordinator attended Vsys training on May 7, 2019 and will be mindful to improve volunteer recording keeping according to OM standards.