



## The Spokane Whitewater Park project is at a critical juncture and Friends of the Falls is asking for your help

The Spokane Whitewater Park project is a cooperative effort between Friends of the Falls and Spokane's Parks and Recreation Department and has been endorsed by the Park Board, the Spokane City Council, Mayor Verner, and other key stakeholders.

Friends of the Falls is currently working with the City's new Parks Director, Leroy Eadie, to initiate an Environmental Impact Study which will provide the data needed to move forward with permitting and construction of the Whitewater Park. The City has selected a contractor to perform the study and is ready to issue a contract but before the City can do so, we must resolve an emergent challenge to the project funding.

The Whitewater Park is funded through three sources:

- \$200,000 (approx.) in the form of private donations
- \$400,000 State grant to Friends of the Falls
- \$530,000 grant to the City of Spokane. This grant is administered by the Recreation Conservation Office (RCO). **The City's grant is set to expire on June 30th of this year. The City has requested an extension, but the RCO staff has recommended that the grant be allowed to expire. The City's request to extend the grant will be decided by the executive board of the RCO at a formal meeting in Olympia on June 23.**

Should the \$530,000 RCO grant be allowed to expire, the Spokane Whitewater Park may cease to exist.

Spokane's Whitewater Park will be the first of its kind in the state of Washington. Similar Whitewater Parks in places like Denver, Reno, Missoula, and many other western cities have had significantly positive impacts to their communities. Based on those experiences, we are confident that Spokane's Whitewater Park will do the same for our community by drawing all types of water recreationists and spectators, creating a center of focused activity that will make the High Bridge and People's Park areas safer and alive with positive activity.

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To name just a few of the benefits, the Whitewater Park will:

- Improve access to one of Spokane's most important assets, our river.
- Provide economic value in the form of increased tourism and recreational spending.
- Provide a venue for Spokane to host regional and national kayaking competitions.
- Create a vibrant hub which ties together several of our city's great neighborhoods.
- Provide improved parking and rest rooms facilities for all users within the High Bridge, People's Park and Gorge area.
- Provide an easily accessible place to teach young people kayak, canoe and whitewater safety.
- Increase safety for all river users by removing several very large abandoned concrete bridge piers.

At this point, the most important thing you can do is send a letter or e-mail to the Recreation Conservation Office expressing your support for the Spokane Whitewater Park. We have attached a sample message for your consideration.

All communication should be sent to the attention of Rachael Langen, Deputy Director of the RCO, at [Rachael.Langen@rco.wa.gov](mailto:Rachael.Langen@rco.wa.gov), or by mail to her attention at RCO, PO Box 40917, Olympia, WA 98504 – 0917. Your letter will be most effective if it is received by the RCO by June 1, 2011.

Thank you! Your continued support for the Spokane Whitewater Park is deeply appreciated.

Friends of the Falls  
Tim Sanger, President

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