

DNR: Rib Mountain State Park draft master plan available for public review and comment

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking public input on the [Rib Mountain State Park Draft Master Plan](#), which describes proposed future public use and management at the park. The public may submit comments through a variety of opportunities, including a public open house meeting from 4-7 p.m. on Nov. 3, 2022, at the Northcentral Technical College, Center for Health Sciences Building (Room 1004A/B), 1000 W. Campus Drive in Wausau.

[Rib Mountain State Park](#) was established in 1927 and centered on what, at the time, was believed to be Wisconsin's highest point – Rib Mountain. The park has grown in size and popularity over the years and now encompasses nearly 1,600 acres and receives over 400,000 visitors annually. About 400 acres of the park are currently leased for a downhill ski operation called Granite Peak Ski Area. Except for the ski area, most of the park's public use areas and facilities are clustered on about 60 acres of the more level terrain at the mountain's top, which provides spectacular views of the surrounding landscape.

“The Rib Mountain State Park Draft Master Plan reflects the park's many public uses and ecological capabilities, as well as the public input the department has received throughout this process,” said Terry Bay, DNR Bureau of Facilities and Lands Director. “We hope all who are interested in the park take the opportunity to learn more about what the draft plan proposes and have their voice heard.”

A master plan, guided by Chapter NR 44, Wisconsin Administrative Code, establishes the level and type of resource management and public use permitted on

department-managed properties. The result of this master plan revision process will be a plan that replaces the park's existing 2005 master plan. Highlights of the proposed management in the Rib Mountain State Park Draft Master Plan include:

- Upgrades and expansions to the recreational facilities on the mountain to improve the park's value as a year-round community asset.
- Development of an extensive network of mountain biking trails that accommodate different skill levels and connect to nearby bicycling opportunities as part of a regional trail network.
- A proposed expansion of the current lease area from 412 to 512 acres.
- Development of a trail encircling the mountain for hiking, bicycling and winter activities such as snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and winter bicycling.
- Construction of a small campground accessible from the park entrance road.
- Expansion of climbing and bouldering opportunities.
- Adjustment to the boundary of the state natural area to include all the highest quality occurrences of talus forest, bedrock glade and glaciere talus natural communities.
- Management to improve the diversity and structure of the forest and benefit the park's wildlife.
- Expansion of the park's project boundary to potentially connect the park with Nine Mile County Forest and to protect a large, wooded hill west of the park.

The public is encouraged to visit the [Rib Mountain State Park Master Plan website](#) for additional information about the planning process and to provide input.

The DNR will host an in-person public meeting from 4-7 p.m. on Nov. 3, 2022, at the Northcentral Technical College, Center for Health Sciences Building (Room 1004A/B), 1000 W. Campus Drive in Wausau. DNR Staff will give a brief presentation at 5:30 p.m. The presentation will be recorded and uploaded to the Rib Mountain State Park Master Plan webpage following the meeting.

Printed copies of the document are also available at the Rib Mountain State Park Office and the Wausau, Rothschild and Marathon City public libraries.

Written comments may be submitted through Nov. 14, 2022, using [this interactive public input form](#) or downloading a [hard copy form](#) to be sent via U.S. Mail. Following the close of the public comment period, the department will summarize the comments and adjust the plan as necessary before proposing the plan for approval to the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board. Comments may also be



submitted to John Pohlman, lead planner for the Rib Mountain State Park Draft Master Plan, by email at john.pohlman@wisconsin.gov, by phone at 608-264-6263 or by mail:

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