

CONNECTICUT PARTNERSHIPS IN PARKS INITIATIVE NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT, AND PUBLIC MEETING

January 11, 2024

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) is launching a Partnerships in Parks initiative to identify concepts for potential partnerships with the private sector that elevate outdoor recreation and visitor experiences, expand tourism destinations, and/or provide equitable and sustainable access to outdoor recreation in Connecticut State Parks. As part of this initiative, DEEP is (1) issuing a **Request for Information** seeking concepts for partnerships involving State Parks, (2) hosting a **Public Informational Meeting** about the RFI, and (3) issuing a **Request for Written Comment** from the public about desirable amenities and services, questions, concerns, or ideas relevant to this initiative.

1. REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

DEEP is issuing a Request for Information (RFI) to gather information from a wide range of businesses, non-profits, and other interested stakeholders on the scope of potential concepts current market conditions may support in its State Parks. In the event it determines that such collaborations and new outdoor activities are in the best interest of the State and within DEEP's authority, DEEP will use the information gathered to inform a subsequent competitive Request for Proposals for new and/or expanded services or amenities at its State Parks.

DEEP invites businesses, non-profits, and individuals to submit concepts for outdoor recreation services that they would be interested in providing in Connecticut State Parks. This RFI is intentionally broad to encourage innovative, creative concepts in any State Park. The complete RFI – including goals, example concepts, review process, and submission template – is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP-parks-partnerships>.

The final submission deadline for all concepts is Tuesday, April 30, 2024, at 11:59 PM EST. Respondents submitting a low impact partnership concept to be implemented in 2024 should submit these concepts to the RFI as soon as possible and no later than Friday, March 1, 2024, at 11:59 PM EST, so DEEP can review appropriate concepts through the regular Special Use License program.

2. PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

DEEP will host an Informational Webinar about the RFI for businesses, organizations, and individuals considering submitting a response to the RFI as well as members of the public who may be interested in providing further comment. DEEP representatives will be available to answer questions about the information provided in the RFI including the submission and review process.

The webinar will be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 10:00 - 11:00 AM EST. Please register in advance at

https://ctdeep.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HxvodOMQT9a5RLTpj8_tTA. DEEP will post a recording of the meeting to its website. For other questions, contact Christopher Shepard at deep.partnershipsinparks@ct.gov.

3. REQUEST FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS

Any member of the public, including those who are not submitting a concept in response to the RFI, may submit written comments about the RFI to help inform DEEP's information gathering efforts, subsequent RFPs, and concept review process. DEEP welcomes comments including feedback from the public about the types of amenities and services that would be desirable (or undesirable) in State Parks and any other ideas, questions, or concerns that DEEP should take into account as part of this initiative.

Submit written comments to deep.partnershipsinparks@ct.gov by Friday, February 16, 2024, at 11:59 PM EST. Include "Parks RFI Comment" in the subject line. After this deadline, DEEP will post the comments to its website.

4. ACCOMMODATIONS

DEEP is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer that is committed to complying with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please contact us at 860-418-5910 or deep.accommodations@ct.gov if you seek a communication aid or service, have limited proficiency in English and may need information in another language, require some other accommodation, or wish to file an ADA or Title VI discrimination complaint. Any person needing hearing accommodation may call the State of Connecticut relay number at 711. Requests for accommodation must be made at least two weeks prior to any agency hearing, program, or event.