

Middle Fork Bottoms State Park Strategic Management Plan

2023 – 2033

Updated in 2025

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Park Purpose, History and Description

Before being purchased by the state of Tennessee, the land now composing Middle Fork Bottoms State Park was used primarily for row crop agriculture and sod farming. However, after the Middle Fork Forked Deer River was channelized, the farmland began to flood too frequently, and the plot became untenable. Subsequently, the land was purchased in a joint effort by the Nature Conservancy, Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency, and West Tennessee River Basin Authority to serve as a recreational area and flood mitigation site to relieve the local communities and surrounding areas of flooding. Funds were awarded in 2023 for the land to become a Tennessee State Park, after visitation reached levels sufficient for the previous agencies to determine it would be better served as a more closely managed state park. The land that is now Middle Fork Bottoms State Park was officially dedicated on August 12, 2024.

With 861 acres of various biomes indigenous to West Tennessee, as well as 2 miles along the Middle Fork Forked Deer River, Middle Fork Bottoms serves as a bastion of the diverse habitats historically present in West Tennessee. These habitats, particularly warm season and oak prairies have seen enormous decline, and thus Middle Fork Bottoms is able to provide refuge to many grassland-obligate species, especially migratory birds. The park is also poised to serve as both a tourist destination, as it is less than 15 minutes from Interstate 40, and a recreational hotspot for the City of Jackson and local communities, being the largest public park in the area.

Goals, Objectives and Action Plans

THE RESOURCES: Exemplary Natural and Cultural Stewardship

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be nationally recognized for exemplary stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *More and better stewards:* Increase internal and external stewards who share Tennessee State Parks core values and can contribute to the State Parks mission to steward Tennessee's natural and cultural resources.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will offer a host of interpretative and recreational opportunities with an emphasis towards building the first generation of Middle Fork Bottoms stewards. Interpretive programs will be driven by communicating these values to park guests, and recreational opportunities will be accompanied by nonpersonal interpretive exhibits reminding guests of best practices and TN State Parks' values and missions.

Objective - *Better resource management practices:* Identify, manage, and restore unique natural and cultural resources for generations to come.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will make use of resource management techniques, such as prescribed burns, invasive species removal, and litter cleanup efforts, to ensure the protection in perpetuity of all present natural resources. Park staff will continue to coordinate with West Tennessee River Basin Authority to restore and promote native habitats and ensure a successful ecology within the park.

Objective: *Better data and technology:* Leverage data and technology to help inform and guide decisions on natural and cultural resources stewardship.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will continue to utilize GIS services, including TNSP One Smart Parks and Custom GIS maps for purposes of both data collection and resource management planning. Additionally, Middle Fork Bottoms will utilize services such as eBird, iNaturalist, and other citizen science platforms in order to involve the public in gathering an understanding of the natural resources.

THE VISITOR: Welcoming and Inviting to All

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be the most accessible, welcoming, and inviting system of parks that enriches Tennesseans and visitors through excellent interpretation, education, and resource-based recreation.

Objective: *accessible, welcoming, and inviting to all:* create quality and varied programs of interpretation, recreation, and outreach so that all audiences feel welcome and invited.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will create quality interpretive, educational, and recreational experiences for people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities through the guidance of the Telling Full Stories process, including both free and fee-based opportunities. The park will work to ensure universal accessibility, focusing on ADA compliant facilities, trails, and amenities throughout the construction phase. Additionally, the park will use technology, such as virtual tours, QR codes, and social media, to enhance the visitor experience and increase access to interpretive and educational programming.

Objective: *high quality programming:* develop and support mission-based and resource-relevant programs to engage visitors, empower staff, and develop community wellbeing.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will develop a variety of interpretive, educational, and recreational programs that can be repeated on a seasonal basis. The park will also develop and maintain program descriptions, outlines, and materials for all our core programs. Outlines and descriptions will be uploaded to SharePoint as well as stored in a park database. Materials will be well organized, labeled, and stored on-site for easy access by staff. The park will maintain a calendar for scheduling and presenting our core programs.

Objective: *resource-based outdoor recreation:* provide resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities that ensure representation of Tennessee's natural, scenic, and cultural resources.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will develop and provide resource-based opportunities including birding, hiking, fishing, and boating. These opportunities will be carefully managed to avoid damaging or over-utilizing the resources, ensuring their protection in perpetuity.

THE AMENITIES: Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be well maintained with facilities and amenities that delight visitors and make Tennesseans proud.

Objective: *Improve maintenance:* Improve overall maintenance and upkeep of all park facilities and amenities that contribute to meaningful visitor experiences.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park has filled a full-time maintenance position which is responsible for minor repairs, landscape management, assists with natural resource management, custodial efforts, and overseeing maintenance job share positions. The park will use facilities management software to track and monitor facilities maintenance work orders, and work with West TN regional maintenance team to identify and address 'Top 15' and deferred maintenance projects, as well as track preventative maintenance efforts.

Objective: *Better park accessibility:* ensure all visitors have opportunities for meaningful experiences in every Tennessee State Park.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will construct an adaptive kayak launch at Papershell Lake and will evaluate additional opportunities for additional locations. The park will continue to monitor and maintain accessible paved trails and benches throughout the property and ensure accessibility compliance when constructing all amenities and facilities.

Objective: *Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities:* provide high-quality and well-planned facilities and amenities that enrich the visitor experience.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will construct and maintain one visitor center, two picnic shelters, 3 sets of public restrooms, a by-reservation event space, and a variety of boardwalks and fishing piers. These facilities will be constructed with accessibility as a priority, and, where possible, follow appropriate ADA guidelines.

THE OPERATIONS: Operational Excellence

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be a national model for operational excellence in a state park system.

Objective: *Support and empower our people:* support and empower our workforce by creating a caring environment that encourages professional growth and great customer service.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms will implement, where possible, schedules that prioritize work/life balance and downtime, manager support for professional development and training, clear and reasonable job duties and responsibilities, and proper training and outfitting of staff to avoid injury whenever possible. Park management will ensure the staff knows that they are assets, not commodities, through words and actions.

Objective: *Efficient and effective operations:* provide efficient, effective, and fiscally responsible service to Tennesseans and our visitors.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms will coordinate volunteers, foster community support for the park's goals and objectives. The park will work within the department's purchasing guidelines to



source cost-effective materials and products. Middle Fork Bottoms will also make use of volunteer labor, when possible, strive to accomplish park goals and objectives, set revenue goals to improve the fiscal sustainability of the park, and provide value-added programming at reasonable rates that generate revenue.

Park Overview

Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Middle Fork Bottoms State Park
Site Manager	Michael Champagne
Area Manager	Zach Tinkle
Park acreage	861
Total number of visitors (FY 2025)	68,416
Total expenses before CO (FY 2025)	\$347,844
Total revenues (FY 2025)	\$803
Retail self-sufficiency % ¹	N/A
Park self-sufficiency %	0.2%
Average expense per visitor (FY 2025)	\$5.08
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2025)	\$0.01
Gross profit or loss	-\$374,041
Total full-time available positions / filled	4/3
Total part-time available positions / filled	3/1
Primary feeder markets	Jackson, Humboldt, Three-Way, Medina, Nashville, Memphis.
Primary reasons people visit	Fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, biking, photography, picnicking, and water recreation
Opportunities for improvement	Addition of facilities and infrastructure, trails, kayak/canoe access, boardwalks, employees, and natural resource management projects.

Key Attractions

The amenities or features listed below are those that seem to be most popular for visitors.

- Paved Trail – The park’s wildlife can be viewed along four miles of interconnecting paved walking trail. The paved trail sections are bicycle and wheelchair accessible and are rated easy. Flora and fauna of several intersecting ecosystems including, a newly planted cypress grove and bottomland hardwood plots, oak savannah, warm season grasslands and meadows, river corridor, wetlands and depressions, and lakes are also viewable along these trails. The lakes that

¹ Based on T.C.A. 11-3-305, Self-sufficiency of revenue-generating facilities

can be viewed from the trail are Papershell Lake, Bulrush Lake, Retriever Lake, Cypress Lake, and Middle Fork Lake. The trail crosses over the Middle Fork Forked Deer River as well.

- Middle Fork Forked Deer River – The Middle Fork section of the Forked Deer River flows from east to west through the middle of the park for 2.2 miles. There are plans for a future boat ramp for visitors to access the river near Hwy 45 from park property. Wildlife such as reptiles, mammals and various birds can be viewed from the river. Fishing is permitted with valid Tennessee Fishing License.
- Cypress Grove – The Cypress Grove is a 2-acre wetland with Bald Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) planted at regular intervals. These Cypress trees are a widely recognized symbol of the bottomlands of West Tennessee, and an important species for the ecology of West Tennessee wetlands. The easily accessible Cypress trees will allow visitors the opportunity to experience this ecology without the need to attend guided programs into difficult-to-reach areas of the park.
- Lakes – There are 5 small lakes situated throughout the park. From west to east along the property there is Papershell Lake, Bulrush Lake, Retriever Lake, Middle Fork Lake, and Cypress Lake. Middle Fork Lake is stocked by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency and includes Catfish, Bream, and Bass. All of the other lakes have naturally inhabiting Bream. Fishing is permitted at all lakes with a valid Tennessee fishing license except for Retriever Lake as it is designed to cater to owners that wish you use this lake for retriever training purposes. Papershell lake is projected to have an ADA accessible kayak/canoe launch for those who wish to recreate with floating vessels.

Site and Operations Assessment

This site and operations assessment is a culmination of analyses and findings from a review of the condition of facilities, infrastructure, and operations at Middle Fork Bottoms. The findings and observations are not intended to be an exhaustive review of all issues present but provide a basic understanding of the predominant issues that contribute to the site’s current operating conditions. The assessment includes the following:

1. Site and Facilities Assessment
2. Operational Assessment
3. Financial Assessment

Site and Facility Assessment

Methodology

Facility and asset conditions are rated using a differential scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor. Descriptions of conditions that are attributed to each of these findings are also provided.

Scale of Conditions	
Rating	General Description
Excellent	Facilities/amenities are in ‘excellent’ condition when they show little or no maintenance or repair problems. Facilities do not feature any major design or operational issues or flaws that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities are easy to clean and maintain in order to place them back into public use and the users perceive them to be in excellent shape.
Good	Facilities/amenities are in ‘good’ condition when they show only minor maintenance or repair problems. Most maintenance issues with these facilities typically appear to be the result of age and/or heavy use. Facilities may only feature minor design or operational issues that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities are moderately easy to clean and maintain in order to place them back into service and the users perceive them to be adequate for their use, but probably not in excellent shape.
Fair	Facilities/amenities are in ‘fair’ condition when they show significant maintenance or repair problems. Facilities generally exhibit ongoing maintenance issues that appear to be the result of age, heavy use, or design or operational flaws. Some maintenance and repair needs may compound their fair condition by being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities require more effort to clean and maintain before placing them back into service and the users may perceive them as being less than adequate for their use and in a state of deterioration. The facility or structure may need of major repair or replacement.

Poor	Facilities/amenities are in 'poor' condition when they show significant, on-going maintenance or repair problems that ultimately may result in suspended use for repair/replacement. Maintenance and repair issues are possibly the result of poor maintenance and clearly the result of age, heavy use, or design or operational flaws. Problems with the facilities are often compounded over time due to consistently-deferred maintenance and repair because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may feature major design or operational issues that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities require excessive effort to clean and maintain before placing them back into service and the users often perceive them as being inadequate for their use and in a state of serious deterioration. The facility or structure may need of major repair or replacement.
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Facility Inventory and Assessment

The table below is an inventory of facilities and amenities at Middle Fork Bottoms State Park and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in September 2025.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Paved Trail (4 miles)	1	Excellent
Parking Lots	3	Fair (graveled lots with plans to
Maintenance Shed	1	Excellent
Overlook Pier	1	Excellent
Drainage Weir	1	Excellent
Trail/Information Kiosks	2	Excellent
Outdoor Classroom	1	Excellent

Trail Inventory and Assessment

Please insert summary findings from the Trail Inventory and Assessment completed within the last couple of years.

Trail Name	Mileage	Condition
Paved Trail	4.0	Paved and in excellent condition
<i>Additional Trail</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>Planned</i>
<i>Multiuse Trail</i>	<i>3.0 - 4.0</i>	<i>Planned</i>

New Assets Needed

List new assets and amenities that would fall under capital expenditures that are needed to improve visitor experience and operational efficiency.

New Asset & Amenities	Description
Visitor Center	A Visitor Center will provide a place for visitors to receive information about the park, its natural features and its history as well as provide a place to purchase gift shop items, make reservations, and utilize reservable space. Additionally, staff will be able to use this facility for office space, park programming, and events.

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Picnic Shelter #1	Picnic Shelter #1 will provide a reservable, covered open shelter for visitors to use for birthdays, cookouts, family reunions as well as other family/work friendly gatherings. Additionally, staff will be able to use this facility for park programming and events.
Picnic Shelter #2	Picnic Shelter #2 will provide a reservable, covered open shelter for visitors to use for birthdays, cookouts, family reunions as well as other family/work friendly gatherings. Additionally, staff will be able to use this facility for park programming and events.
Event Hall	An Event Hall will serve as a reservable space for visitors to use as a wedding venue, photography venue, general events, and wildlife and scenic viewing. Additionally, staff will be able to use this facility for park programming and events.
Boardwalk	The Boardwalk will serve as a pathway from the paved trail, making nearly a one-mile loop to the Middle Fork Forked Deer River through a mature wooded area and concluding back at the paved trail. Visitors will have an additional viewing option of the river and be able to view wildlife and natural scenery. Park staff will be able to utilize this amenity for educational and recreational programming.
ADA Accessible Kayak/Canoe Launch	An ADA Accessible Kayak/Canoe Launch will serve as a safe accessible option for water recreation without boundaries. This launch is projected to be installed on Papershell Lake. Visitors will be able to enjoy fishing from their kayaks and canoes as well as have access to the kayak/canoe chute as well as be able to view the many natural resources residing on the park.
Maintenance Facility	A Maintenance Facility will predominantly serve as an area where landscaping equipment, maintenance equipment, and trash will be stored and to be kept from public view. Several items are needed to maintain aesthetically pleasing grounds and facilities and this facility will be a valuable resource with those efforts.
Restroom Facility # 1	Restroom Facility #1 will offer a safe, accessible and sanitary option for visitors to utilize as there are currently no permanent restroom facilities on the park.
Restroom Facility # 2	Restroom Facility #2 will offer a safe, accessible and sanitary option for visitors to utilize as there are currently no permanent restroom facilities on the park.
Picnic Area	The picnic area will provide a first come, first serve option for families and visitors to come and enjoy cookouts and picnics while enjoying the natural scenery of Middle Fork Bottoms State Park.

Natural Playscape Playground	A natural playscape playground will provide a recreational opportunity for youth and families and serve as an additional natural resource interpretation opportunity.
Campground	A campground (either primitive or with amenities) will provide a recreational and overnight accommodation opportunity for visitors.

Prioritized Facility Needs

Based on the facility inventory and assessment, these prioritized needs have been identified.

Project	Category	Priority	Funding	Goal	Objective
Visitor Center	Customer Services	High	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Picnic Shelter #1	Customer Services	Medium	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Picnic Shelter #2	Customer Services	Medium	Non-funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Event Hall	Customer Services	Medium	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Boardwalk	Trails	Low	Funded	Welcoming and Inviting to All	Resource-based outdoor recreation
ADA Accessible Kayak/Canoe Launch (Papershell Lake)	Water Resource Accessibility	High	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Better Park accessibility
Maintenance Facility	Maintenance	High	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Improve maintenance
Restroom Facility #1	Customer Services	High	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities

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Restroom Facility #2	Customer Services	High	Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Picnic Area	Customer Services	Low	Non-funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Natural playscape	Customer Services	Low	Non-Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Resource-based outdoor recreation
Campground	Customer Services	Low	Non-Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities
Additional Paved Trail	Trails	Medium	Funded	Welcoming and Inviting to All	Resource-based outdoor recreation
Multiuse Trail	Trails	Low	Non-Funded	Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities	Better park accessibility

Operational Assessment

The Operational Assessment includes:

1. An inventory and classification of programs and services being provided at the site,
2. A review of staffing at the site,
3. A review of concessionaires and partners operating at the site,
4. Visitation and customer satisfaction, and
5. Professional development and training.

Inventory and Classification of Programs and Services

Programs and services are classified into one of three major categories:

- 1) Core or Essential Services;**
- 2) Important Services; and**
- 3) Value added or Visitor Supported Services.**

Functions of the site are classified into these categories based in part on the mission and public mandates for both the site and the agency. For the programs and services in each of these categories, there are financial performance expectations that will define how services are funded and evaluated.

CATEGORY 1 – CORE SERVICES *[Largely supported by public subsidies]*

Core programs, services and facilities are those the agency must provide and/or are essential in order to capably govern and meet statutory requirements. The failure of the agency to provide Category 1 services at adequate levels could result in significant negative consequences for the public and the resources under protection. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as core or essential are:

- The services are mandated by the agency's law or charter or are contractually obligated by agreement to provide the services.
- The services are essential to protecting and supporting the public's health and safety.
- The services protect and maintain valuable assets and infrastructure.
- The services would generally and reasonably be expected and supported by residents, businesses, customers and partners.
- The services are those that cannot or should not be provided by the private sector.
- The services provide a sound investment of public funds.

The following programs and services offered at Middle Fork Bottoms have been identified as **core services**:

- Visitor and Resource Protection
- Safety and First aid
- Resource Management
- Restrooms
- Access to passive use activities; hiking, biking, birding
- Parking

CATEGORY 2 – IMPORTANT SERVICES *[Supported by a balance of revenues and public subsidy]*

Important programs, services and facilities are those the agency should provide, and are important to governing and effectively serving residents, businesses, customers and partners. Providing Category 2 services expands or enhances the agency's ability to provide and sustain its core services. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as important are:

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- The services expand, enhance or support identified core services.
- The services are broadly supported and utilized by the community, and are considered an appropriate, important, and valuable public good. Public support may be conditional upon the manner by which the services are paid for or funded.
- The services generate income or revenue that offsets some or all of the operating cost and/or are deemed to provide economic, social or environmental outcomes or results.

The following programs and services offered at Middle Fork Bottoms have been identified as **important services**:

- River access and boat launches
- Programming and interpretation
- Visitor Center

CATEGORY 3 – VISITOR SUPPORTED SERVICES *[Almost exclusively supported by earned revenue]*

Visitor supported programs, services and facilities are those discretionary services that the agency may provide when additional funding or revenue exists to offset the cost of providing those services. Category 3 services provide added value above and beyond what is required or expected. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as visitor supported are:

- The services expand, enhance or support Core Services, Important Services and the quality of life of the visitors, community or stakeholders.
- The services are supported, valued and well utilized and provide an appropriate and valuable public benefit.
- The services generate income or funding from sponsorships, grants, user fees or other sources that offset some or all of their cost and/or provides a meaningful return on investment.
- The Services can possibly be provided through outsourcing or use of concessionaires, providing opportunities for community enterprise or services that may not otherwise be provided by the agency.

The following programs and services offered at Middle Fork Bottoms have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Picnic area and shelters
- Meeting and gathering spaces such as the planned Event Hall and Conference Room
- Native pollinator habitats
- Fee-based programs and events
- Water Recreational Opportunities

Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at Middle Fork Bottoms State Park represent the largest area of budgetary expense at 67.7% of the total operating budget, which is more than the target of labor costs not exceeding 65% of total operating expenditures. The tables below and on the following page provide a basic review of the current staffing at the site.

Full Time Equivalent Employees

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Compensation Total
Park Manager 1	1	*
Park Ranger 2	1	*
Clerk 3	1	\$30,660
TSP Maintenance Lead	1	\$37,800
TOTAL	4	\$207,588

Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
TSP Maintenance	1	\$27,912
Seasonal Interpretive	1	Vacant
Conservation Worker 1	1	Vacant
TOTAL	3	\$27,912

Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers (FY25)	138
Community Service Workers	
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	
Other	
TOTAL	138

Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
Full Time Equivalent Employees	\$207,588
Part Time Employees	\$27,912
TOTAL Annual Labor Expense	\$235,500

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Additional Future Positions Needed

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
Administrative Services Assistant	1	FT	TBD	To meet the needs of a growing park with records and reporting of operations including programming and operational revenue, purchasing, inventory of state assets, special projects, onboarding, seasonal employees,
Park Ranger 2	1	FT	TBD	To meet the needs of a growing park for law enforcement, interpretation, and lands management. To provide adequate coverage for a medium-sized park
Maintenance Technician	1	FT	TBD	To meet the needs of expanding and caring for natural resource projects. To provide landscaping and janitorial needs.
Clerk 3	1	FT	TBD	To meet the needs of a growing park with records and reporting of operations including programming and operational revenue, purchasing, inventory of state assets, special projects, onboarding, seasonal employees, giftshop and online retail sales
TOTAL	4			

Financial Performance

Revenue per available room/cabin/campsite (**RevPAR**) for the last four years in overnight facilities is detailed in the table below.

Current RevPAR

Fiscal Year	Event Hall RevPAR	Day Use Facilities RevPAR
2023	N/A	
2024	N/A	
2025	N/A	
2026	N/A	

Projected RevPAR - Based on current RevPAR trends at the park and any known developments over the next four years.

Fiscal Year	Event Hall RevPAR	Day Use Facilities RevPAR
2025	N/A	N/A
2026	N/A	N/A
2027	N/A	N/A
2028	N/A	N/A

Customer Service

Platform / Site	Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
Facebook	2025	5/5
Google	2025	4.56/5
Yelp	2025	5/5

Professional Development and Training

The following professional development and training opportunities are being explored and planned for the staff and volunteers at this park:

- Emergency Medical Response
- Law Enforcement
- Prescribed Burn Training
- Habitat Management Training
- Wetland Restoration Training
- Certified Interpretive Guide
- Search and Rescue
- Captive Animals
- CIT Critical Incident Training

Summary of Key Recommendations

Please provide short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations for addressing operational issues at the park and improving overall park performance.

Short Term Recommendations (Less than 1 year)

1. **Site and Facilities**
 - a. Temporary Office - Completed
 - b. Restroom Facility #1 – In Progress
 - c. Additional Roadside Fencing – Completed
 - d. Electricity and running water – In Progress
2. **Operations and Staffing**
 - a. TSP Maintenance Worker/Job Share Positions (1-2 positions)
 - b. Administrative Services Assistant

- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. Restroom Facility #1 – In Progress
 - b. Highway and Interstate Signage - Completed
 - c. Outdoor Classroom – In Progress
 - d. Kayak/Canoe Launches (1-2)
 - e. Natural Resource Management Projects

Mid Term Recommendations (2–5 years)

- 1. Site and Facilities**
 - a. Visitor Center
 - b. Maintenance Facility
 - c. Restroom Facility #2
 - d. (3) Additional Automatic Gates
 - e. Widen Entrance #3 Access Road
 - f. Pave all driveways and parking lots
- 2. Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Clerk 3
 - b. TSP Maintenance Worker/Job Share Positions (1-2)
- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. Restroom Facility #2
 - b. Picnic Shelter #1
 - c. Picnic Shelter #2
 - d. Boardwalk
 - e. Picnic Area
 - f. Water bottle filling stations
 - g. Natural Resource Management Projects

Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

- 1. Site and Facilities**
 - a. Natural Playscape Playground
 - b. Middle Fork Forked Deer River boat ramp
 - c. Elevated viewing platform
- 2. Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Park Ranger 2, specifically with specialized skills in natural resource management
- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. Multiuse access trail on southern side of the park (~ 3 miles)
 - b. Establish internal paddling craft route
 - c. Establish Middle Fork Forked Deer River paddling craft route
 - d. Retriever training resources
 - e. Natural Resource Management Projects

Resource Management Plan

A resource management plan is a specific statement of the objectives you have for your land and natural resources, as well as any significant cultural and historic resources stewarded by the state park. This includes a defined series of priorities and activities that will take place in order to meet those objectives. This can include future potential land acquisitions or divestitures that are necessary to meet the park's resource management goals and objectives.

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation exists to enhance the quality of life for citizens of Tennessee and to be stewards of our natural environment by protecting and improving the quality of Tennessee's air, land, and water through a responsible regulatory system, protecting, and promoting human health and safety, conserving, and promoting natural, cultural, and historic resources, and providing a variety of quality outdoor recreational experiences. Middle Fork Bottoms intends to preserve and protect, in perpetuity, unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic areas and provide a variety of safe, quality outdoor experiences through a well-planned and professionally managed system of state parks and to provide memorable and educational experience for all the visitors of Middle Fork Bottoms State Park. Middle Fork Bottoms will forever be managed to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural, cultural, and recreational features of the park for future generations to use and enjoy.

Native grassland, hardwood plots, and wetland restoration and management are the primary focus of the management efforts at Middle Fork Bottoms State Park. The Northern Bobwhite quail (*Colinus virginianus*) has been identified as a target or "umbrella" species at the park. Habitat management is geared toward providing quality habitat for the Northern Bobwhite. By doing so, habitat is made available to a host of other grassland obligates, such as Dicksissel (*Spiza americana*), and LeConte's Sparrow (*Ammodramus leconteii*). Early successional habitat is managed primarily by prescribed burning on a rotational basis. Wetland habitat is also a focus at Middle Fork Bottoms. These wetland areas are managed to maintain biodiversity and species composition in concert with West Tennessee River Basin Authority by removing invasive species and planting native species in their place, such as Giant Rivercane (*Arundinaria gigantea*) and Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*).

Native pollinators are a secondary focus at Middle Fork Bottoms. To improve the availability of pollen, nectar, and host plants for native pollinators, native forbs, legumes, and wildflowers such as Black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) and Hairy Vetch (*Vicia villosa*) are maintained in the native warm-season meadows. These plants increase biodiversity in the grasslands and attract a multitude of insects that serve as food for birds and small mammals.

The contents of this resource management plan are as follows:

1. Resource Management Objectives
2. Resource Inventory and Assessment
3. Management Strategies
4. Priority Actions
5. Supplemental Information

Resource Management Objectives

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be nationally recognized for exemplary stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *More and better stewards:* Increase internal and external stewards who share Tennessee State Parks core values and can contribute to the State Parks mission to steward Tennessee's natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *Better resource management practices:* Identify, manage, and restore unique natural and cultural resources for generations to come.

Objective: *Better data and technology:* Leverage data and technology to help inform and guide decisions on natural and cultural resources stewardship.

Aligned with these objectives are specific strategies to achieve the desired outcomes for the natural, cultural, and historic resources of this park.

Strategies

- A. The rangers of Middle Fork Bottoms will provide educational and interpretive programming to the public on the resources and flood mitigation strategies of the park. These programs will be targeted to promoting the parks natural value and significance to the area. These values include recreational, aesthetic, and ecological services provided by the conservation and preservation of the state park
- B. The park plans to partner with the Tennessee Department of Natural Areas (DNA) to develop and implement management strategies to manage native species and eradicate invasive and exotic pests and vegetation (eg Bradford Pear and Kudzu).
- C. Middle Fork Bottoms State Park has been working with the West Tennessee River Basin Authority (WTRBA) and DNA, along with several other partners to create an inventory of plants, animals and ecological communities within the park in order to improve management of the park's natural resources.
- D. Use of GIS and Field Maps to designate habitat areas and identify burn plans, zones for protection and zones for development.
- E. Partner with DNA, TSP fire team, Madison County Fire Department, and the Department of Forestry to use prescribed burns as a tool to manage designated areas to improve ecological processes and improve habitat.
- F. Continued support and partnership with local and federal community agencies and groups such as the Madison County UT Extension, Union University, Madison County Master Gardeners, Middle Fork Bottoms State Park Friends Group, The Nature Conservancy, The Tennessee State Parks Conservancy, The Natural Resources Conservation Services, and the West Tennessee River Basin Authority.
- G. Implement volunteer events to assist with litter cleanup, flower bed maintenance, and natural resource management projects such as plantings and invasive vegetation removal.
- H. The park has partnered with DNA, WTRBA, TSP Regional Maintenance, and subject matter experts to create and execute waterway, lake, and habitat management plans.

Resource Inventory and Assessment

The significant natural, cultural and historic resources of the park requiring management are detailed below including a condition assessment rating for each. Condition assessments are selected from the following options based on what most describes the current condition of the resource:

1. **Excellent** – resource is in excellent condition; all potential threats to the integrity of the resource are currently managed and effectively mitigated.
2. **Good** – resource is generally in good condition and stable; threats to the integrity of the resource require regular management in order to mitigate.
3. **Fair** – resource is in stable condition but difficult to mitigate ongoing threats; additional management support is required.
4. **Poor** – resource is generally in poor condition with management support required to both improve existing conditions and address threats.
5. **Critical** – resource is highly threatened or deteriorated and requires immediate management prioritization.

Significant Park Resources	Quantity	Current Conditions	Notes
Lakes	5	Good	Each lake possesses developing aquatic communities and will require additional time for the ecosystems to mature. The lakes will also be managed to ensure a mixture of both quality fishing areas, and undisturbed vegetative water transition zones.
Creeks	5.1 mi	Good	Moize and Deloach creeks provide excellent undisturbed habitat for snakes and fish, while the creeks and drainages installed by WTRBA continue to mitigate flooding. Management will be created to control and eradicate noxious vegetation such as Floating Primrose-Willow
Riparian Corridor	2.3mi	Good	Channelized river provides steady flow of water, and development from WTRBA continues to mitigate flooding.
Meadows	220 acres	Good	Meadows provide excellent habitat for several bird species such as the Eastern Meadowlark, Prairie Warbler, and Red-winged Blackbird as well as numerous rodents and small mammals. All meadow areas will require regular prescribed burn treatment.
Bottomland Hardwood Forest and Wetlands	535 acres	Good	Wooded areas remain relatively clear of litter and noxious invasives. Mature forests will

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			require minimal management, while planted areas will need occasional burns once trees reach an acceptable level of growth. Mowing will be required between rows until trees are mature enough for burning.
Cane Brakes	3	Good	While the keystone species, <i>Arundinaria gigantea</i> , is not currently federally protected, the cane brake habitat, once numerous in riparian corridors in the South-Eastern United States, is considered an endangered ecosystem. The habitat will need infrequent burns, roughly once every 5-10 years.
Oak Savanna	100 acres	Good	Oak Savannas provide excellent habitat for several bird species, including Indigo Bunting, Dickcissel, and Grasshopper Sparrow as well as many other bird species. All savanna areas will require mowing and prescribed burn treatment, though less often than meadowed areas.

Management Strategies

The management strategies outlined below are directly correlated to the resources identified previously in the *Resource Inventory and Assessment* section immediately above. These are general and overall management recommendations for each resource from which priority actions will be determined. Each resource has both a “Public Use” management strategy (which could include limited or no public access, or managed access with infrastructure and regulation) and a “General Management” strategy.

The priority assignments reflect the highest resource management priorities of the park over the next 1-5 years (High Priority) and 6-10 years (Moderate Priority)

Resource	Management Recommendations	Priority
Lakes	<p>Public Use: Managed kayaking, fishing, and dog training on a per-body basis with signage and appropriate boundaries.</p> <p>General Management: Continue work with WTRBA in fulfilling the park’s purpose of flood mitigation, while developing recreational and interpretive opportunities.</p>	Moderate
Creeks	<p>Public Use: Managed access along trails, including potential opportunities for guided creek walks.</p> <p>General Management: Continue work with WTRBA and USDA in fulfilling the park’s purpose of flood mitigation, while developing recreational and interpretive opportunities.</p>	High

Riparian Corridor	<p>Public Use: Plans for limited kayaking utilizing a boat launch from a HWY45 park entrance</p> <p>General Management: Continue work with WTRBA in fulfilling the park’s purpose of flood mitigation, while developing recreational and interpretive opportunities.</p>	Moderate
Meadows	<p>Public Use: Managed access along trails</p> <p>General Management: Continued use of prescribed burn treatment and invasive species removal to ensure valuable habitat is not lost.</p>	High
Bottomland Hardwood Forest and Wetlands	<p>Public Use: Managed access along trails, including potential boardwalk access.</p> <p>General Management: Manage for improvement of overall forest health which includes ongoing invasive species management, erosion mitigation in areas of steep topography, and understory management through prescribed burns.</p>	Moderate
Cane Brakes	<p>Public Use: Managed access only along trails, including potential boardwalk access.</p> <p>General Management: Continued work with WTRBA in maintaining fragile river cane species. Limiting pedestrian access to ensure health of the plants and reduce risk of poaching.</p>	Moderate
Oak Savannah	<p>Public Use: Managed access along trails.</p> <p>General Management: Continued use of prescribed burn treatment and invasive species removal to ensure valuable habitat is not lost.</p>	High

Land Management Strategies

In some cases, strategic land acquisitions or divestitures are necessary to meet the overall resource management goals and objectives of the park. This can include opportunities to address buffers, watersheds, viewsheds, inholdings, and adjacent properties. The table below details **general strategies** for land management. Timelines refer to Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-6 years), and Long Term (7-10 years).

Land Management Strategy	Timeline
Acquire land to develop infrastructure for park operations and amenities	Short Term
Acquire land to ensure boundary integrity and continue habitat restoration and management	Long Term

Supplemental Information

Habitat Management

- Bottomland Hardwood Forest – The hardwood forest present in the park is in relatively good health, with the largest management item being the removal of Bradford Pear and kudzu. Once the 250,000 hardwood trees planted by TWRA are mature, we can begin to burn the lower story to keep the underbrush clean and clear in combination with undergrowth cutting plans.
- Wetlands – The park wetlands are largely inaccessible and will not need much management. However, the pockets of wetland on the North side of the river are heavily infested with Floating Primrose-Willow, potential treatments for that plant are detailed below.
- Planned Pollinator Habitat Area – This habitat is planned to be funded under a NEEF/Toyota grant. The pollinator habitat area will be planted with native seed, possibly purchased from Roundstone Native Seed Company. This area should be routinely managed for removal of invasives and other noxious plants. Sycamore is of significant note for a potential problem species, as they can quickly sprout and rise above the flowering plants, blocking their sunlight, as has happened in many other park areas.
- Meadow – The meadow habitats are notable for their total lack of trees. These habitats are comprised entirely of hardy and resilient warm season grasses. These grasses have deep roots which allow them to survive prescribed winter burns, while invasive species will perish. It is recommended to burn these habitats every 2-3 years, though more or less often may be appropriate depending on the presence of specific pest species.
- Oak Savanna – Similarly to the warm season grass prairies, these habitats will need to be managed with regular fire. The primary difference is that the planted oak trees will need to reach maturity and burn in the spring so as to not damage them. The dormant winter season may be too dangerous for the deciduous species to survive a burn.
- Lakes – Management of the lakes will aim towards two main goals: recreational use, and ecological development. The primary strategies working towards these goals will be mowing some sections of the lake for fishing use, and removal of aquatic weeds. Notable aquatic weeds include Floating Primrose-Willow in many of the canals running through the park, and the unidentified grass species under the surface of Middle Fork Lake. Mowed sections will allow fisherman to enjoy the lakes without snagging (and more importantly leaving behind) fishing lines and tackle.
- Creeks – Management of the park creeks (Deloach and Moize) will be limited in scope. Care will be taken not to introduce pollutants such as herbicides or pesticides into the creeks through ground water runoff. Other management strategies include the potential for creek litter cleanups.
- Canebrakes – This ecosystem was once numerous across the Southeastern United States. Now considered an endangered ecosystem, Middle Fork Bottoms has several sections of Canebrake planted by WTRBA. The park will ensure the sustained care for this habitat by following prescribed burn treatment and ensuring that the rivercane is not overgrown by weeds or mowed inappropriately.

Invasive Plant Removal

- Bradford pear - Callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana*) is a deciduous tree, more commonly known as “Bradford pear”. Management of Bradford pears is somewhat straightforward, as the primary means of control is simply removal. Trees can be easily identified and marked during the earliest

months of spring, when they bloom white flowers. Trees can then be cut and applied with herbicide to prevent regrowth from the original stump.

- Kudzu - Kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) is a notoriously difficult exotic plant to remove from infected areas. Dense vine mats create inhospitable conditions for native plants and smother entire ecological communities, leaving only the kudzu, which is a food resource for very few faunal species. The most successful method of eradication is a combination of prescribed burning in the spring, followed by application of herbicides in the late summer, and proactive native plant restoration in the following spring and summer. Kudzu must be continually monitored and maintained to prevent re-infection of an area.
- Floating Primrose-Willow (*Ludwigia peploides*) – This aquatic primrose species, while native to the region, can choke out and drastically reduce the ability for our aquatic ecosystems to grow and mature. The plants create a thick blanket-root system which provides too much shelter for mosquitos and young fish. This prevents predation by larger aquatic species and limits the ability of the ecosystem to support large fish, compounded by the plant’s tendency to suck all of the oxygen out of a water body. Management is difficult because there are no known biological means of eradication. Physical removal is challenging because the plant is notoriously good at regeneration from even a small stem left underwater. One of the most effective methods of removal is ‘sunlight strangulation’, wherein a black tarp is put on top of affected water for 30 days, followed by physical removal of the dead plant matter. This can be supplemented by use of light refractive dye. However, this method is highly destructive to the ecosystem as a whole and should be avoided. Ultimately, the use of aquatic herbicides will be the least destructive and most effective method of control. There are numerous herbicides to choose from, and park staff will research a solution with the lowest ecological impact.

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Recorded Species

As Middle Fork Bottoms is a new state park, the cataloging efforts are still very incomplete. This list composes only the species level, research grade identifications available on iNaturalist for the park. Many common species are missing, but this data will continue to refine overtime as the public uses iNaturalist.

Name	Common name	Name	Common name
<i>Solanum carolinense</i>	Carolina horsenettle	<i>Apocynum cannabinum</i>	hemp dogbane
<i>Vicia villosa</i>	hairy vetch	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	great mullein
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	<i>Cicuta maculata</i>	water hemlock
<i>Rumex crispus</i>	curled dock	<i>Lathyrus hirsutus</i>	Hairy Vetchling
<i>Juncus effusus</i>	Soft Rush	<i>Potentilla recta</i>	sulphur cinquefoil
<i>Melilotus albus</i>	White Sweetclover	<i>Hypericum mutilum</i>	Dwarf St. John's Wort
<i>Ludwigia peploides</i>	floating primrose-willow	<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	black-eyed Susan
<i>Senna obtusifolia</i>	American Sicklepod	<i>Teucrium canadense</i>	American germander
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i>	crimson clover	<i>Daucus carota</i>	wild carrot
<i>Coreopsis tinctoria</i>	plains coreopsis	<i>Oenothera laciniata</i>	cutleaf evening primrose
<i>Verbena brasiliensis</i>	Brazilian Vervain	<i>Scirpus cyperinus</i>	woolgrass
<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>	butterfly milkweed	<i>Rosa carolina</i>	Carolina rose
<i>Sagittaria latifolia</i>	broadleaf arrowhead	<i>Verbena urticifolia</i>	white vervain
<i>Ambrosia trifida</i>	giant ragweed	<i>Mimulus alatus</i>	sharpwing monkeyflower
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	prickly sowthistle	<i>Cyperus pseudovegetus</i>	Marsh flatsedge
<i>Brassica rapa</i>	field mustard	<i>Bidens polylepis</i>	Tickseed Sunflower
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	white clover	<i>Strophostyles helvola</i>	trailing fuzzy-bean
<i>Acer rubrum</i>	red maple	<i>Albizia julibrissin</i>	Persian silk tree
<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	purple coneflower	<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower
<i>Typha latifolia</i>	broadleaf cattail	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	eastern redcedar
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	American sweetgum	<i>Pilea pumila</i>	Canada clearweed
<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	American sycamore	<i>Smilax bona-nox</i>	saw greenbrier
<i>Populus deltoides</i>	Eastern Cottonwood	<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	ashy sunflower
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Ryegrass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switchgrass
<i>Eupatorium serotinum</i>	late boneset	<i>Rhexia mariana</i>	Maryland meadowbeauty
<i>Lactuca canadensis</i>	Canada wild lettuce	<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>	Tall Ironweed
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	ribwort plantain	<i>Luzula echinata</i>	Hedgehog Woodrush
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser hop trefoil	<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	partridge pea
<i>Ambrosia artemisiifolia</i>	common ragweed	<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	Illinois bundleflower
<i>Quercus coccinea</i>	scarlet oak	<i>Pyrrhopappus carolinianus</i>	Carolina desert-chicory
<i>Salix nigra</i>	black willow	<i>Croton glandulosus</i>	Tropic Croton
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	shepherd's-purse	<i>Cyperus echinatus</i>	Globe Flatsedge

<i>Trifolium campestre</i>	hop trefoil	<i>Penstemon laevigatus</i>	eastern smooth beardtongue
<i>Briza minor</i>	Little quaking-grass	<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	dark green bulrush
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	hedge bindweed	<i>Eryngium prostratum</i>	creeping eryngo
<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	Common Sunflower	<i>Erechtites hieraciifolius</i>	American burnweed
<i>Chenopodium album</i>	Common Lambsquarters	<i>Ludwigia alternifolia</i>	Seedbox
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Bermuda grass	<i>Diodia virginiana</i>	buttonweed
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnson grass	<i>Hypericum punctatum</i>	spotted St. John's wort
<i>Toxicodendron radicans</i>	eastern poison ivy	<i>Ipomoea lacunosa</i>	White Morning-glory
<i>Verbascum blattaria</i>	moth mullein	<i>Galium tinctorium</i>	Stiff Marsh Bedstraw
<i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>	Parrot's feather	<i>Pleurotus pulmonarius</i>	pale oyster
<i>Ammannia coccinea</i>	Scarlet Toothcup	<i>Symphotrichum pilosum</i>	hairy white oldfield aster
<i>Ludwigia palustris</i>	Water Purslane	<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	false aster
<i>Paspalum dilatatum</i>	Dallis grass	<i>Cyperus retrorsus</i>	Pinebarren Flatsedge
<i>Saururus cernuus</i>	lizard's tail	<i>Hydrolea uniflora</i>	Oneflower False Fiddleleaf
<i>Pueraria montana</i>	kudzu	<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i>	Chinese bushclover
<i>Persicaria lapathifolia</i>	pale smartweed	<i>Ludwigia glandulosa</i>	Cylindricfruit Primrose-willow
<i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	rice cutgrass	<i>Paspalum floridanum</i>	Florida paspalum
<i>Carex vulpinoidea</i>	fox sedge	<i>Phyllanthus caroliniensis</i>	Carolina leaf-flower
<i>Allium vineale</i>	wild garlic	<i>Pluchea camphorata</i>	Camphor-weed
<i>Alopecurus carolinianus</i>	Tufted Foxtail	<i>Ranunculus fascicularis</i>	Early Buttercup
<i>Bacopa rotundifolia</i>	Roundleaf Water-hyssop	<i>Rhynchospora corniculata</i>	short-bristled horned beaksedge
<i>Campsis radicans</i>	American trumpet vine	<i>Rumex altissimus</i>	tall dock
<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	Lance-leaved Coreopsis	<i>Urochloa platyphylla</i>	broadleaf signalgrass
<i>Cyperus iria</i>	Rice flat-sedge	<i>Neolentinus lepideus</i>	Trainwrecker
<i>Dysphania ambrosioides</i>	Mexican tea	<i>Croton lindheimeri</i>	Lindheimer's Doveweed
<i>Eclipta prostrata</i>	false daisy	<i>Hexasepalum teres</i>	rough buttonweed
<i>Eleocharis obtusa</i>	Blunt Spikerush	<i>Acalypha persimilis</i>	hornbeam copperleaf
<i>Erigeron annuus</i>	annual fleabane	<i>Leucocoprinus cepistipes</i>	onion-stalk parasol
<i>Erigeron canadensis</i>	horseweed	<i>Fulvifomes robiniae</i>	Cracked Cap Polypore
<i>Fimbristylis autumnalis</i>	Slender Fimbry	<i>Procambarus clarkii</i>	Red Swamp Crayfish
<i>Gratiola neglecta</i>	clammy hedge-hyssop	<i>Utterbackia imbecillis</i>	Paper Pondshell
<i>Helenium amarum</i>	Bitterweed	<i>Pachydiplax longipennis</i>	Blue Dasher
<i>Heterotheca subaxillaris</i>	Camphorweed	<i>Vanessa virginensis</i>	American Lady

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<i>Ipomoea hederacea</i>	ivy-leaved morning-glory	<i>Celithemis eponina</i>	Halloween Pennant
<i>Lindernia dubia</i>	Yellowseed False Pimpernel	<i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	Black Swallowtail
<i>Mollugo verticillata</i>	green carpetweed	<i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Orange Sulphur
<i>Nuttallanthus texanus</i>	Texas toadflax	<i>Erythemis simplicicollis</i>	Eastern Pondhawk
<i>Peltandra virginica</i>	Green Arrow Arum	<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	Red Buckeye
<i>Persicaria pensylvanica</i>	pinkweed	<i>Plathemis lydia</i>	Common Whitetail
<i>Plantago aristata</i>	bracted plantain	<i>Melanoplus femurrubrum</i>	Red-legged Grasshopper
<i>Potamogeton diversifolius</i>	diverse-leaved pondweed	<i>Libellula luctuosa</i>	Widow Skimmer
<i>Rotala ramosior</i>	Toothcup	<i>Tamea lacerata</i>	Black Saddlebags
<i>Setaria parviflora</i>	knotroot bristlegrass	<i>Limenitis archippus</i>	Viceroy
<i>Sida spinosa</i>	prickly fanpetals	<i>Celithemis elisa</i>	Calico Pennant
<i>Solidago altissima</i>	tall goldenrod	<i>Chauliognathus marginatus</i>	Margined Leatherwing Beetle
<i>Sphenopholis obtusata</i>	prairie wedge grass	<i>Junonia coenia</i>	Common Buckeye
<i>Utricularia gibba</i>	humped bladderwort	<i>Hyles lineata</i>	White-lined Sphinx
<i>Phlox divaricata</i>	blue phlox	<i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	Fiery Skipper
<i>Penstemon digitalis</i>	foxglove beardtongue	<i>Bombus pensylvanicus</i>	American Bumble Bee
<i>Carex crinita</i>	fringed sedge	<i>Polygona interrogationis</i>	Question Mark
<i>Helenium flexuosum</i>	Southern Sneezeweed	<i>Pyrrharctia isabella</i>	Isabella Tiger Moth
<i>Juncus canadensis</i>	Canada Rush	<i>Perithemis tenera</i>	Eastern Amberwing
<i>Monarda fistulosa</i>	wild bergamot	<i>Limenitis arthemis</i>	Red-spotted Admiral
<i>Betula nigra</i>	river birch	<i>Leptoglossus phyllopus</i>	Eastern Leaf-footed Bug
<i>Claytonia virginica</i>	Virginia Springbeauty	<i>Melanoplus differentialis</i>	Differential Grasshopper
<i>Liatris spicata</i>	dense blazing star	<i>Leptysma marginicollis</i>	Cattail Toothpick Grasshopper
<i>Monarda punctata</i>	spotted horse mint	<i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	Variegated Fritillary
<i>Perilla frutescens</i>	beefsteak plant	<i>Schistocerca americana</i>	American Bird Grasshopper
<i>Cisseps fulvicollis</i>	Yellow-collared Scape Moth	<i>Libellula pulchella</i>	Twelve-spotted Skimmer
<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>	Callery pear	<i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	Silver-spotted Skipper
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Cow Parsley	<i>Orgyia leucostigma</i>	White-marked Tussock Moth
<i>Houstonia pusilla</i>	tiny bluet	<i>Cicindela repanda</i>	Bronzed Tiger Beetle
<i>Houstonia micrantha</i>	Southern Bluet	<i>Calopteryx maculata</i>	Ebony Jewelwing
<i>Pilea pumila</i>	Canada clearweed	<i>Libellula cyanea</i>	Spangled Skimmer
<i>Smilax bona-nox</i>	saw greenbrier	<i>Helicoverpa zea</i>	Corn Earworm Moth
<i>Helianthus mollis</i>	ashy sunflower	<i>Scolia bicincta</i>	Double-banded Scoliid Wasp

<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	switchgrass	<i>Stagmomantis carolina</i>	Carolina Mantis
<i>Rhexia mariana</i>	Maryland meadowbeauty	<i>Estigmene acrea</i>	Salt Marsh Moth
<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>	Tall Ironweed	<i>Cupido comyntas</i>	Eastern Tailed-Blue
<i>Luzula echinata</i>	Hedgehog Woodrush	<i>Galleria mellonella</i>	Greater Wax Moth
<i>Chamaecrista fasciculata</i>	partridge pea	<i>Dissosteira carolina</i>	Carolina Grasshopper
<i>Desmanthus illinoensis</i>	Illinois bundleflower	<i>Coleomegilla maculata</i>	Spotted Pink Lady Beetle
<i>Pyrrhopappus carolinianus</i>	Carolina desert-chicory	<i>Melanoplus bivittatus</i>	Two-striped Grasshopper
<i>Croton glandulosus</i>	Tropic Croton	<i>Solenopsis richteri</i>	Black Imported Fire Ant
<i>Cyperus echinatus</i>	Globe Flatsedge	<i>Tarache aprica</i>	Exposed Bird Dropping Moth
<i>Penstemon laevigatus</i>	eastern smooth beardtongue	<i>Tritoxa incurva</i>	Picture-winged fly
<i>Scirpus atrovirens</i>	dark green bulrush	<i>Orchelimum agilis</i>	Agile Meadow Katydid
<i>Eryngium prostratum</i>	creeping eryngo	<i>Manomera blatchleyi</i>	Blatchley Walkingstick
<i>Erechtites hieraciifolius</i>	American burnweed	<i>Callirhytis quercuscornigera</i>	Horned Oak Gall Wasp
<i>Ludwigia alternifolia</i>	Seedbox	<i>Sceloporus undulatus</i>	Eastern Fence Lizard
<i>Diodia virginiana</i>	buttonweed	<i>Gastrophryne carolinensis</i>	Eastern Narrow-mouthed Toad
<i>Hypericum punctatum</i>	spotted St. John's wort	<i>Hyla chrysoscelis</i>	Cope's Gray Treefrog
<i>Ipomoea lacunosa</i>	White Morning-glory	<i>Pseudacris feriarum</i>	Upland Chorus Frog
<i>Galium tinctorium</i>	Stiff Marsh Bedstraw	<i>Anaxyrus fowleri</i>	Fowler's Toad
<i>Pleurotus pulmonarius</i>	pale oyster	<i>Lithobates clamitans</i>	Green Frog
<i>Symphyotrichum pilosum</i>	hairy white oldfield aster	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>	Swamp Sparrow
<i>Boltonia asteroides</i>	false aster	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	Savannah Sparrow
<i>Cyperus retrorsus</i>	Pinebarren Flatsedge	<i>Ictinia mississippiensis</i>	Mississippi Kite
<i>Hydrolea uniflora</i>	Oneflower False Fiddleleaf	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Grasshopper Sparrow
<i>Lespedeza cuneata</i>	Chinese bushclover	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	Eastern Meadowlark
<i>Ludwigia glandulosa</i>	Cylindricfruit Primrose-willow	<i>Passerina caerulea</i>	Blue Grosbeak
<i>Paspalum floridanum</i>	Florida paspalum	<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great Egret
<i>Phyllanthus caroliniensis</i>	Carolina leaf-flower	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	Northern Harrier
<i>Pluchea camphorata</i>	Camphor-weed	<i>Spizella pusilla</i>	Field Sparrow
<i>Ranunculus fascicularis</i>	Early Buttercup	<i>Spiza americana</i>	Dickcissel
<i>Rhynchospora corniculata</i>	short-bristled horned beaksedge	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	Belted Kingfisher
<i>Rumex altissimus</i>	tall dock	<i>Ardea herodias</i>	Great Blue Heron
<i>Urochloa platyphylla</i>	broadleaf signalgrass	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle

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<i>Neolentinus lepideus</i>	Trainwrecker	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	Marsh Wren
<i>Croton lindheimeri</i>	Lindheimer's Doveweed	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>	Lincoln's Sparrow
<i>Hexasepalum teres</i>	rough buttonweed	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	Song Sparrow
<i>Acalypha persimilis</i>	hornbeam copperleaf	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Red-winged Blackbird
<i>Leucocoprinus cepistipes</i>	onion-stalk parasol	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>	Indigo Bunting
<i>Fulvifomes robiniae</i>	Cracked Cap Polypore	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	Bobolink
<i>Procambarus clarkii</i>	Red Swamp Crayfish	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>	Eastern Phoebe
<i>Utterbackia imbecillis</i>	Paper Pondshell	<i>Ammospiza leconteii</i>	LeConte's Sparrow
<i>Pachydiplax longipennis</i>	Blue Dasher	<i>Cistothorus stellaris</i>	Sedge Wren
<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	American Lady	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>	Wild Turkey
<i>Celithemis eponina</i>	Halloween Pennant	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	Pectoral Sandpiper
<i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	Black Swallowtail	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	Long-billed Dowitcher
<i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Orange Sulphur	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	Greater Yellowlegs
<i>Erythemis simplicicollis</i>	Eastern Pondhawk	<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Pied-billed Grebe
<i>Aesculus pavia</i>	Red Buckeye	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Turkey Vulture
<i>Plathemis lydia</i>	Common Whitetail	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>	Black Vulture
<i>Melanoplus femurrubrum</i>	Red-legged Grasshopper	<i>Butorides virescens</i>	Green Heron
<i>Libellula luctuosa</i>	Widow Skimmer	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	Sharp-shinned Hawk
<i>Tramea lacerata</i>	Black Saddlebags	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's Hawk
<i>Limenitis archippus</i>	Viceroy	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Red-shouldered Hawk
<i>Celithemis elisa</i>	Calico Pennant	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	Red-tailed Hawk
<i>Chauliognathus marginatus</i>	Margined Leatherwing Beetle	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Green-winged Teal
<i>Junonia coenia</i>	Common Buckeye	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Greater White-fronted Goose
<i>Hyles lineata</i>	White-lined Sphinx	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada Goose
<i>Hylephila phyleus</i>	Fiery Skipper	<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	Common Grackle
<i>Bombus pensylvanicus</i>	American Bumble Bee	<i>Progne subis</i>	Purple Martin
<i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	Question Mark	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow
<i>Pyrrharctia isabella</i>	Isabella Tiger Moth	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	Northern Rough- winged Swallow
<i>Perithemis tenera</i>	Eastern Amberwing	<i>Sialia sialis</i>	Eastern Bluebird
<i>Limenitis arthemis</i>	Red-spotted Admiral	<i>Contopus virens</i>	Eastern Wood-Pewee
<i>Leptoglossus phyllopus</i>	Eastern Leaf-footed Bug	<i>Vireo bellii</i>	Bell's Vireo
<i>Melanoplus differentialis</i>	Differential Grasshopper	<i>Vireo griseus</i>	White-eyed Vireo
<i>Leptysma marginicollis</i>	Cattail Toothpick Grasshopper	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	Common Nighthawk
<i>Euptoieta claudia</i>	Variegated Fritillary	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	Spotted Sandpiper

<i>Schistocerca americana</i>	American Bird Grasshopper	<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	Wilson's Snipe
<i>Libellula pulchella</i>	Twelve-spotted Skimmer	<i>Setophaga palmarum</i>	Palm Warbler
<i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	Silver-spotted Skipper	<i>Setophaga discolor</i>	Prairie Warbler
<i>Orgyia leucostigma</i>	White-marked Tussock Moth	<i>Spinus tristis</i>	American Goldfinch
<i>Cicindela repanda</i>	Bronzed Tiger Beetle	<i>Mareca americana</i>	American Wigeon
<i>Calopteryx maculata</i>	Ebony Jewelwing	<i>Spatula discors</i>	Blue-winged Teal
<i>Libellula cyanea</i>	Spangled Skimmer	<i>Centronyx henslowii</i>	Henslow's Sparrow
<i>Helicoverpa zea</i>	Corn Earworm Moth	<i>Ammospiza nelsoni</i>	Nelson's Sparrow
<i>Scolia bicincta</i>	Double-banded Scoliid Wasp	<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>	Double-crested Cormorant
<i>Stagmomantis carolina</i>	Carolina Mantis	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	White-tailed Deer
<i>Estigmene acrea</i>	Salt Marsh Moth	<i>Dasyopus novemcinctus</i>	Nine-banded Armadillo

Interpretive Programming and Education Plan

Tennessee State Parks' Interpretation, Programming, and Education team is helping park staff set and achieve programming goals by developing Interpretive Action Plans. This process begins with conversations with Area Interpretive Rangers that prepare field staff for the Scoping Meeting. This meeting brings park staff and stakeholders together to identify audience(s), themes, resources, and set goals and objectives. This information then turns into the five-year Interpretive Action Plan.

One purpose of Middle Fork Bottoms State Park is to connect the Jackson and Madison County community with local natural resources using a diverse showcase of multiple habitats indigenous to West Tennessee, including multiple grassland ecologies, wetlands, and bottomland hardwood forests. These natural resources, particularly grassland ecologies, are under-represented in recreational spaces in the region, and our ADA accessible trail system allows all members of the public the opportunity to experience the habitats without limit. This site offers a unique opportunity to interpret land management and restoration of farmland, returning it to its natural state, as the park was created using this method.

Another purpose of Middle Fork Bottoms is to connect the same group of people with the Middle Fork of the Forked Deer River and its associated water-features. This is accomplished again by the planned use of ADA accessible kayak launches in both the Middle Fork Forked Deer River itself, and the more approachable proposed kayaking trail, which will give park visitors the opportunity to explore the length of the park in a calmer and less intimidating body of water.

Interpretation, Programming and Education Goals

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be the most accessible, welcoming, and inviting system of parks that enriches Tennesseans and visitors through excellent interpretation, education, and resource-based recreation.

Objective: *accessible, welcoming, and inviting to all:* create quality and varied programs of interpretation, recreation, and outreach so that all audiences feel welcome and invited.

Objective: *high quality programming:* develop and support mission-based and resource-relevant programs to engage visitors, empower staff, and develop community wellbeing.

Objective: *resource-based outdoor recreation:* provide resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities that ensure representation of Tennessee's natural, scenic, and cultural resources.

Within these objectives are the following desired outcomes:

- Building stewards
- Ensuring Equity
- Provide the Highest Value
- Develop Resource Based Programming
- Support Staff

Strategic Programs and Services

The strategies detailed below with corresponding action plans are aligned with the Comprehensive Strategic Plan of Tennessee State Parks.

Strategy – Telling Full Stories: to identify and replicate best practices while establishing new methods for representing diverse, equitable, inclusive, and just dialogues.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park staff will continue to serve as a TSP model for IPE and coordinating efforts to support sister parks in the development and presentation of high-quality interpretive programming as well as support the training of TSP interpreters (e.g., SIR training), will promote the telling of full stories, and will continue to develop and present research-based programs to expand the reach of the interpretive programming audience.

Strategy – Interpretive Efforts: Connecting people to the resources of Tennessee State Parks with technology in ways that compliment and expand interpretation within and beyond the park, giving everyone access to becoming a park steward.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will create positive social media and online experiences including interpretive videos, GoGreenWithUs posts, Virtual Races, ArcGIS Storymaps, iNaturalist Projects, and other appropriate mediums. The park has plans to design and incorporate interpretive exhibits in the Visitor Center Interpretive Space as well as install interpretive panels and signs along the paved trail and at various locations in the park to enhance the visitor experience.

Strategy – Develop and maintain a portfolio of programs across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Interpretation of natural, historic, and cultural resources
- B. 3-5 unique experiences for all audiences
- C. Varying intensity from self-guided to immersive experiences
- D. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- E. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant.

Action Plan: Develop a program outline for all the core programs presented at the park. Include programs meeting the criteria above. Upload outlines to SharePoint to make them accessible to all park staff.

Strategy – Develop and maintain diverse and varied resourced-based outdoor recreation opportunities across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Managing recreational use with the stewardship needs of the resource
- B. Varying intensity from self-guided to guided experiences
- C. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- D. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant and impact to the resource.

Action Plan: Middle Fork Bottoms State Park will develop a rich line of interpretative offerings, spanning the range of guided hikes and floats to nonpersonal exhibits using signage.

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Interpretative offerings will be developed with an eye towards building a new set of stewards for MFBSP.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

- Nonpersonal Interpretation: Interpretive media that do not require a person to deliver a message (i.e. exhibits, waysides, brochures, signs, magazines, books, etc.).
- Personal Interpretation: One person or persons providing interpretation to another person or persons.
- Interpretive Program: Activities, presentations, publications, audio-visual media, signs, and exhibits that convey key heritage resource messages to audiences. (Adapted from US Fish & Wildlife Service)
- Interpretation: a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us.

Financial Performance Goals

Financial performance goals are a critical performance management tool of the Tennessee State Park System. While the financial performance of parks are managed more intently at the system level, individual parks are expected to recover a portion of their operating costs through the generation of earned revenues where appropriate and to contribute to the system goals. The majority of earned revenues at state parks are generated through facility usage (campsites, cabins, lodge rooms, rentable pavilions, etc.), the delivery of fee-based programs and services, equipment rental and usage, and retail sales. Other forms of revenue generation come from golf courses and restaurants where those amenities are present. That said, not all parks have the same ability to generate earned revenues because the availability of facilities or programs vary widely from one park to the next. The “recovery” of operational costs by earned revenues is referred to as “cost recovery”. Operating costs beyond those supported by earned revenues represents the extent to which state funding support operations at each park.

The table below represents the overall park cost recovery for this specific park for the most recent fiscal year and forecast estimates for the upcoming five years. These estimates are based on projection estimates for known and foreseeable costs and recovery figures.

FINANICAL PERFORMANCE GOALS						
	Current Cost Recovery (2025)	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2026	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2027	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2028	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2029	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2030
Park Overall	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%	2.8%	3.0%	3.5%

