



Tennessee State Parks

Park Strategic Management Planning Response to Comments

Cove Lake State Park

The 10-year individual Park Strategic Management Plans for Tennessee State Parks are part of the overall planning processes within the department and are developed to guide the management and direction of each park. These plans steer continued success of each park and influence long term innovation by the park staff. Building on Tennessee State Parks' strong foundation they seek to address the various challenges anticipated for each park. The Strategic Management Plans present a strategic and actionable strategy for the next 10 years.

This response to comments document is shared publicly as a record of comments that were made at a public information meeting as well as an online survey. The public information meeting was held at Cove Lake State Park's Recreation Building on November 10th, 2025, at 5:30pm.

Summary of Public Comments

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation received **2 public comments** specific to the draft Strategic Management Plan for Cove Lake State Park. Commenters expressed support for the park and offered suggestions focused on recreation, habitat balance, and trail improvements.

Key themes included:

- **Balance of Play Areas and Natural Spaces** – One respondent recommended reducing playground footprint and expanding natural habitat areas, noting this would diversify visitor experiences and create quieter areas for wildlife and passive recreation. The respondent also expressed interest in potential expansion of the park footprint if feasible.
- **Trail Expansion and Maintenance Needs** – Another respondent requested more walking, running, and biking trails, including potential single-track trail options. Concerns



were raised about existing trail conditions, including pavement uplift caused by tree roots, creating tripping hazards.

Department Response

The Department appreciates the public's thoughtful engagement and interest in the future of Cove Lake State Park. All comments were reviewed and evaluated by Tennessee State Parks leadership in relation to the park's mission, site conditions, operational needs, and the goals outlined in the draft Strategic Management Plan.

Suggestions regarding the balance between structured recreation areas and natural spaces will be considered as part of long-term park planning, with attention to ecological health, visitor use patterns, and the park's unique landscape. Comments about potential park expansion are noted and will be evaluated in the context of land availability, budget constraints, and conservation priorities.

Feedback on the need for additional trails and maintenance of existing routes will be factored into future trail assessments and improvement planning. Issues such as pavement uplift, root exposure, and user safety are ongoing considerations within the park's maintenance program. Opportunities for expanded trail offerings—including natural-surface or single-track trails—will be explored as part of recreational development planning while ensuring protection of the park's natural resources.

The Department is grateful for the strong support expressed for Cove Lake State Park and will continue to incorporate public input as it refines and implements the Strategic Management Plan over the next decade.