



Tennessee State Parks

Park Strategic Management Planning Response to Comments

Middle Fork Bottoms 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 on November 18th, 2025, at the Three-Way City Hall 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 Middle Fork Bottoms State Park. Respondents expressed strong enthusiasm for the park and provided suggestions related to access, amenities, natural resource conditions, and trail expansion.

Key themes included:

- **Parking, Access, and Circulation Improvements** – A request was made for a paved parking lot to reduce mud, improve year-round accessibility, and enhance visitor experience, particularly after rain events.
- **Water Quality and Pond Conditions** – One respondent recommended dredging the large pond and installing a fountain to address excessive algae that makes fishing difficult for children and beginners.
- **Trail Expansion & Connectivity** – Suggestions included creating an unimproved hiking trail system on the southern end of the park and developing a paved bike path parallel to



the river that would connect to a long-distance route, offering up to 20 miles of bikeable trail.

- **Shade & Vegetation Needs** – A request was made to plant more trees to reduce extreme sun exposure in summer, noting that much of the park currently lacks shade.

- **Entrance Completion & Lake Access** – A respondent expressed appreciation for the park and requested completion of the remaining park entrance to allow trail access from an additional direction, along with improved access to the large lake.

Department Response

The Department appreciates the public’s enthusiasm for Middle Fork Bottoms State Park and values the thoughtful suggestions offered. All comments were reviewed by Tennessee State Parks leadership in relation to the park’s mission, natural resource protection goals, operational needs, and the strategies outlined in the draft Strategic Management Plan.

Requests for improved parking surfaces will be evaluated as part of ongoing access and circulation planning, taking into account environmental impacts, stormwater management, and visitor safety. Comments regarding pond dredging and algae control highlight an important resource concern; these suggestions will be assessed in conjunction with aquatic habitat management priorities and feasibility.

Feedback on expanding both unpaved and paved trail networks is appreciated and will inform future planning efforts aimed at increasing access while preserving natural resources. Recommendations to plant additional trees support the park’s long-term ecological goals and will be considered during vegetation and habitat enhancement planning.

The Department also acknowledges the interest in completing the additional park entrance and improving lake access. These items will be reviewed within the context of capital planning, safety considerations, and resource protection.

The Department is grateful for the community’s strong support and will continue incorporating public input as the Middle Fork Bottoms State Park Strategic Management Plan is refined and implemented over the next decade.