

# Cumberland Trail State Park Strategic Management Plan

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**2023 – 2033**



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## Park Purpose, History and Description

The Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park (JPWCTSP) and the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail (CTSST) are two complementary initiatives, fulfilling the management needs for development of a long-distance trail system. The CTSST segments, enabled by the Tennessee Trails System Act of 1971 may be “established on private, Federal or State lands running roughly from the Tennessee state line near Marion and Hamilton counties to Cumberland Gap, following the scenic mountains, gorges, and escarpments of the Cumberland as the route is determined by the department.” The JPWCTSP was established by Governor’s Proclamation in 1998.

The mission of the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail and State Park shall be: to identify and acquire the most scenic, the most ecologically significant, and the most historically important features along the eastern edge of the Cumberland Mountains, for the creation of a long distance hiking trail and state park focused on outdoor recreation, and ecological and cultural education; to protect the natural features and ecological integrity of the state park through state park management, education, and cooperative management with State, Federal, private and community partnerships; to protect the cultural features and intangible cultural assets through state park management, education, and cooperative initiatives with State, Federal, private and community partnerships; to plan for appropriate outdoor recreational and educational opportunities consistent with the protection of the natural and cultural resources and visitor safety; to work with partnering organizations and institutions in the development, maintenance, and management of scientific, cultural, recreational, and education initiatives.

## 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 preserve, protect, and share Tennessee’s natural and cultural resources.

Action Plan: Establish management principles and requirements toward protection natural and cultural resources. Establish training and active projects that increase knowledge and skills in resource management for students, staff, park volunteers, and local leadership. Develop educational materials for youth, schools, and parents regarding the values and benefits of natural and cultural resources. Develop program presentations that interpret, discover, and display the features of the CT’s geology, ecosystems, flora, fauna, hydrology, human history, cultural and economic practices, from Archaic Period to contemporary industrial society.

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

Action Plan: Continue identification and elimination of exotic pest plants and fauna, presentation of interpretive programs that encourage local pride in positive cultural traits and practices that contribute to environmental protection, document and interpret cultural assets that reinforce positive features of traditional, ethnic, and family, local, and national culture.

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

Action Plan: Continue development of the Cumberland Trail GIS database to add cultural features, management concerns, floral and faunal populations of concern. Budget for GPS units for field collection, GIS software, and GIS training. Increase GIS data management competency within CT staff.

## 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: CT PMs will provide programming needs and resources to CT interpreters and schedule time for program development for Ranger staff and SIRs. Require staff contacts with community organizations and schools, offering presentations of CT-related natural and cultural history. Require interpretive presentations online to support the State and the Friends Facebook and websites. Assist staff to maintain TSP standards for interpretive services on park sites and in community and online venues.

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

Action Plan: CT staff will share CT, TSP, and relevant community and natural history storylines via written documentation. Development of outlines, transcripts, and recordings would indicate excellent effort. Recorded presentations would provide documentation and assistance to future interpreters.

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

Action Plan: CT staff will schedule a minimum of one program every 2 months that invite participation in a hike, rock climbing event, aquatic/stream-based program (snorkeling, fishing, paddling), birding, trail running orientation or fun run.

## 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: Volunteer maintenance programs should be increased – scheduling 1 every month, at least, with a system of recognition and reward. Increase Trail Maintainer and Trailhead Adopter programs. Provide training for CT Maintenance staff to accommodate volunteer training. Update written descriptions of maintenance standards for CT trail, trailheads, kiosks, and bridges. Undertake maintenance to preserve 3 “shelters” (buildings) at Head of Sequatchie.

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

Action Plan: CT Staff must discuss together the significant features of each trail section – trailhead to trailhead. Develop written transcripts or audio-recorded presentations for site-specific orientation programs and carry them in digital form so they can be shared via email at sites that have internet connectivity, and in print form at sites that have no connectivity. Such programs will benefit many visitors, including those with hearing impairment, memory impairment, sight impairment, and mobility impairment. The CT must post website addresses where such orientation and interpretation can be downloaded from the internet, and post locations where signal is available in the park area. The weekly half-hour “Cumberland Trail” radio broadcast/webcast should be continued with updates regarding program and volunteer opportunities, and the program should be promoted on Facebook and other social media.

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

Action Plan: Funding for development of the Head of Sequatchie Visitor Center exhibits is an important step in CT evolution. The proposed construction of a North CT Office in proximity to Cove Lake State Park should include interpretive exhibits and AV productions. Shuttle service to drop off hikers should be explored for the CT. (It is now a very active service around the Great Smoky Mt. National Park.) Evaluation of collaboration with parks in proximity to the CT should be evaluated for provision of CT maps, brochures, programs, and possibly shuttles to the CT from Cumberland Mountain State Park, Booker T. Washington State Park, Harrison Bay State Park, Frozen Head State Park, Cove Lake State Park, Norris Dam State Park, and Indian Mountain State Park.

Funding should be sought for a southern ranger station. One potential location would be Laurel Snow State Natural Area. The facility should be small enough to be accommodated within the space but large enough to provide for ranger offices and enough room for a few visitors to enter the building for questions, maps, and general information. Additional parking should also be constructed within Laurel Snow to accommodate around 25 more vehicles than what is currently provided.

## 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: The CT staff must have the opportunity to fulfill agency training requirements and should have the opportunity to continually learn administrative skills and acquire knowledge of natural and cultural history. The CT should maintain and share its library of resource materials, including books, reports, audio and video recordings, interpretive program transcripts and concepts. The CT has supported and should continue to support academic advancement, cooperating with projects that jointly serve the park and the academic goals of the employee. Customer service should be evaluated and advanced by all CT staff through written comments and recommendations. CT Ranger staff should take advantage of opportunities for grants, donations, and volunteers and improve their skills in those undertakings. The Clerk 3 in North Office should be promoted to ASA 2, to fairly take advantage of advanced experience, education, and skills for the support and promotion of the Cumberland Trail throughout CT North counties (5 counties), and allow more effective and reasonable coverage of the CT North counties (6 counties) by the current ASA 2 based in Cumberland County. ASA 2 and current Clerk 3 employees have the skills necessary to pursue, Federal, State, and local grants and contributions, information exchange with county officials, and coordination with local and statewide organizations that can support or utilize the CT facilities and public lands.

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

Action Plan: Budget development will precede the new fiscal year with the participation of all staff and include a review and analysis of previous FY expenditures. Spending priorities will be assigned by Park Manager 2 with input from Park Manager 1s. Monthly fiscal reports should be shared with staff to encourage satisfaction with Division budget limits and goals.

## Park Overview

### Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail State Park
Site Manager	Anthony Jones/Seth Webster
Area Manager	Kenneth Gragg
Park acreage	38,000
Total number of visitors (FY 2022)	114,966
Total expenses before CO (FY 2022)	\$1,081,934
Total revenues (FY 2022)	\$5,370 (gift shop sales)
Retail cost recovery % <sup>1</sup>	50% - based on COGS and no overhead
Park cost recovery %	Close to 0%.
Average expense per visitor (FY 2022)	\$1.00
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2022)	\$0.00
Gross profit or loss	Close to 0% - no income/revenue numbers to show exact loss.
Total full-time available positions / filled	13/13
Total part-time available positions / filled	12/3
Primary feeder markets	Chattanooga, Knoxville, Nashville, Cookeville, Atlanta, and trail towns – Cumberland Gap, Lafollette, Caryville Wartburg, Crossville, Spring City, Dayton.
Primary reasons people visit	Hiking, swimming, trail running, whitewater paddling, nature study, backpacking, rock climbing
Opportunities for improvement	Maintenance, revenues, Friends group membership, national outreach, overall trail connectivity

### Key Attractions

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

- North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Natural Area is the most visited site – creek swimming, wading, hiking, paddling, rock climbing, backcountry camping, picnicking.
- Ozone Falls State Natural Area – waterfall viewing, hiking.
- Cumberland Gap National Historical Park - hiking
- Chimney Rocks at Mt. Cloud – hiking, viewing panorama from boardwalk.

<sup>1</sup> Based on T.C.A. 11-3-305, Cost recover of revenue-generating facilities

- Laurel-Snow State Natural Area – creek swimming, hiking, waterfall viewing, backcountry camping, rock climbing, scenic overlooks.
- Head of Sequatchie – hiking, history, interpretation.
- Piney River Trailhead – hiking, creek swimming, picnicking, paddling, fishing
- Black Mountain – scenic overlook, hiking, backcountry camping, rock climbing,
- Deep Creek – rock climbing, hiking, trail running.
- Cumberland Mountain Trail Section – bluff overlooks, natural bridges, rock houses.

## 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 JPW Cumberland Trail State Park and Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail. 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.

### Facility Inventory and Assessment

The table below is an inventory of facilities and amenities at JPW Cumberland Trail State Park and CT State Scenic Trail, and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in May 2023 .

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Cove Creek Office (North CT)	1	Fair / Poor
HOS Office (South CT)	1	Good
HOS Visitor Center	1	Fair
HOS Maintenance Building	1	Fair
HOS Selby Ridge Lodge	1	Fair
HOS Backcountry cabin 1	1	Poor
HOS Backcountry cabin 2	1	Poor
HOS Meeting cabin	1	Poor
Audubon cabin	1	Poor (should be removed)
HOS Equipment Shed	1	Fair
Large metal barn (Gilbreath TH)	1	Fair

### Trail Inventory and Assessment

Trail assessment findings have not been summarized in annual reporting. Trail maintenance need and information is included in monthly reports. The trail inventory is continually updated through the CT's GIS database manager, Jim Brannon, stationed at the Head of Sequatchie. New trail construction data is collected by GPS field units.

### 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
Head of Sequatchie shelter	Large shelter, paved road and parking, fencing, interp signage.
CT Bridges	Major bridges on Daddy’s Cr. and others.
Head of Sequatchie dam	Restore small lake beside HOS lodge.
Laurel-Snow Coke Oven Interpretive assets	Following kudzu removal, fencing, observation decks, signage.
South CT Office	New office building to better service the southern sections of the CT

### Prioritized Facility Needs

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

Facility Need	Details
Head of Sequatchie Visitor Center	Exhibit Plan
Head of Sequatchie Parking Area	Paving
Head of Sequatchie Entrance Road	Guardrails / fencing
Head of Sequatchie Bridge to Lodge	Replacement
Head of Sequatchie road to Lodge	Paving and widening
North CT Office - new construction	Building plan and construction
South Trail Maintenance Building/Park Ranger office	Efficiency and quality of maintenance and Park Ranger duties

### 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 Cumberland Trail State Park have been identified as **core services**:

- Development and maintenance of the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail infrastructure including main trail, access trail, trailheads, backcountry campsites, bridges, entrance roads, parking areas.
- Search and rescue, emergency response, public safety.
- Law enforcement.
- Resource protection via education, enforcement, research, and responsive actions.
- Land acquisition to develop a contiguous backcountry trail through 11 counties.
- Directions to locations and orientation/safety information via multiple platforms.
- Operations in three buildings in two counties providing public information, restroom facilities, and staff office needs.

**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:

- 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 Cumberland Trail State Park have been identified as **important services**:

- Educational programs via school system collaboration via on-site and off-site presentations, including a continued relationship with Ivy Academy in Hamilton County.
- Interpretation and visitor orientation via park staff and temporary exhibits at Head of Sequatchie and the Cove Creek CT office.
- Publication of trail section maps for the CT visitors

- Publication of trail descriptions, alerts, and campsite registration on Friends of CT website and Cumberland Trails Conference website.
- Weekly Cumberland Trail 30-minute program broadcast/webcast via WDVX – Knoxville.
- Mixed media presentations in concert venues in Nashville, Knoxville, Crossville, LaFollette, Cumberland Gap, and park venues at Cumberland Mt. SP, Cove Lake SP, Frozen Head State Park, and Justin P. Wilson Cumberland Trail SP.
- Educational and interpretive programs at CT special events at Cove Lake, Frozen Head, Cumberland Gap, Head of Sequatchie, Laurel-Snow SNA, North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SNA, including CT Reunion with attendance from CT staff, administrator, and volunteers from 50 years of CT management, all interviews conducted on stages were recorded.
- Three annual special events providing general park information and thematic interpretive programs.
- Lodging for CT volunteers and special event participants at the Selby Ridge Lodge at the Head of Sequatchie.

**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 Cumberland Trail State Park have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Cumberland Trails Conference is a non-profit organization dedicated to the construction of the Cumberland trail, including volunteer programs. Alternative Spring Break (Breakaway) is one of the organization’s major annual events.
- Ranger Fest – supported by Friends of the Cumberland Trail along with staff from numerous State Parks.
- Louie Bluié Music and Heritage Festival in Campbell County is a 15-year annual event organized by the non-profit Campbell Cultural Coalition, annually featuring programming led by Cumberland Trail staff.
- Numerous annual trail races organized by local business and organizations include Stump Jump 50K, Running with Sasquatch 5K, Stillhouse 100K, Upchuck 50K.
- Cumberland County Hiking Marathon organized by Cumberland County’s “Friends of the Trails.”

- CT Maintainer Program is managed by CT State Park promoting volunteer service with trail and campsite maintenance.
- CT Adopter Program in managed by CT State Park promoting business and organization support of trailhead maintenance.
- Sale of informational and interpretive books, pamphlets, patches, and souvenirs at Head of Sequatchie and Cove Creek gift shop/offices.

## Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at JPW Cumberland Trail State Park represent the largest area of budgetary expense at an average of **51%** of the total operating budget each year for the last three complete years, which is **14% less** 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 2	1	*
Park Manager1	2	*
Park Ranger 3	1	*
Park Ranger 2	6	*
Administrative Assistant 1	1	\$42,924
Clerk 3	1	\$30,204
Facilities Supervisor	1	\$60,300
Conservation Worker 2	1	\$34,326
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$853,032</b>

*\*Law enforcement compensation confidential by TN law.*

### Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
Seasonal Interpretive Ranger	Up to 6 positions	\$13,822
Laborer	Up to 6 positions	\$13,822
Laborer	Up to 6 positions	\$13,822
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$41,466</b>

### Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	50
Community Service Workers	0
Engineering and Construction Crews	0
Resource Management Crews	0
<b>Other: Cumberland Trails Conference Breakaway</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>450</b>

### Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
<b>Full Time Equivalent Employees</b>	<b>\$853,032</b>
<b>Part Time Employees</b>	<b>\$41,466</b>
<b>TOTAL Annual Labor Expense</b>	<b>\$894,498</b>

### Additional Future Positions Needed

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
AA 1	1	FTE	2023	Promote current Clerk 3 to AA 1. North Trail administrator is needed for community outreach, publications, grants, meetings that are not in Clerk 3 job description
Maintenance	2	FTE or PT	2024	North Trail and Hamilton/Rhea Co. need maintenance support on site. Commuting from Cumberland County is inefficient. New VC in 2026 will require grounds maintenance and trail/trailhead maintenance. South trail office will require building maintenance and trailhead/trail maintenance.
Clerk 3	2	FTE	2026	Increased public visitation to Visitor Center will require receptionist.
GIS specialist	1	FTE or PT	2024	Advanced knowledge of GIS will be a continual need to manage and present the Cumberland Trail. TDEC's resources in Nashville will not have time to handle CT needs. TDEC establishment of REGIONAL GIS SPECIALISTS would be a great benefit to all TSPs and NAs. The CT's Ranger/GIS specialist will retire in 2024.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>			

## Professional Development and Training

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

- Sustainable Trail Construction
- Trail Maintenance for volunteers
- GIS Database training
- Natural Resource Management
- Historic Preservation – Coke ovens
- Routine management training
- Routine law enforcement 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. Acquisition of remaining CT properties including reroute to Big Rock – all landowners in proposed CT corridor will be contacted concerning CT project. Acquisition of Tank Springs Coke Ovens beside the CT Tank Springs bridge and parking area should be considered.
- b. Full acquisition of trail corridor is anticipated for Mount Cloud, Big Creek, ,
- c. Federal CMA agreement completed with Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.
- d. Federal CMA agreement meetings with NPS leadership at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park and Obed National Wild and Scenic River.
- e. All CT road crossings identified and assessed by TDOT. At least one unmarked major road crossing will be marked according to TDOT requirements.
- f. Trail design and description for: Mt. Cloud backcountry campsite and Chimney Rocks trail, Big Creek, Lone Star, Lewis Creek, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park.
- g. Continue 2-mile Bird Mountain Trail Construction.
- h. Initiate Daddy’s Creek Trail construction through the upcoming SIR CT experience.
- i. Complete Piney River 3 Trail Construction with initiation of Piney River Section 4.
- j. Complete 2-mile (Laurel-Snow SNA) Morgan Creek trail construction to Hwy 30.
- k. Assist development plan of North Chickamauga Creek Gorge State Park.
- l. Develop plan for Sequatchie River bridge stabilization at HOS.
- m. Increase volunteer base for trailhead and trail maintenance.
- n. Native plant landscaping installation at HOS.
- o. Improvement of road signage leading visitors to HOS.
- p. Bid events for CT trail construction sections: Carr Gap, Daddy’s Creek, Lone Star, Big Creek, Cumberland Gap NHP.
- q. Establish CT Archive inside upstairs, secure room at HOS Lodge with shelving, storage, equipment.
- r. Head of Sequatchie Building and Site improvement including visitor center remodel, shelter, and river overlook.

#### 2. Operations and Staffing

- a. Hire seasonal trail maintenance crew for North CT.
- b. Hire part-time trail construction crew for Bird Mountain section.
- c. Hire part-time archival assistance.
- d. Hire new PM2 at 3 months preceding retirement of current PM2 (hiring in mid-August, retiring in mid-November).

#### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. Develop large print maps for major CT trail sections.
- b. Increase video presentations and program at HOS Visitor Center, working with Friends of the CT.



## Mid Term Recommendations (2–5 years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- a. Completion of entire CT main trail including remaining land acquisition, bridge construction, trailhead improvements, and backcountry campsites.
- b. Bridge and road repair to HOS Selby Ridge Lodge and grounds.
- c. Restore 2 HOS small Cabins and Group cabin.
- d. Develop Interpretive exhibits at HOS.
- e. Develop expanded parking area at HOS.
- f. Construct North CT office with small exhibit area.
- g. Improve CT exhibits at Morgan County Visitor Center.
- h. Fund and rent/acquire South CT Maintenance equipment and Ranger office.
- i. Native plant landscaping at CT buildings.
- j. Laurel-Snow Coke Ovens area kudzu removal and fencing
- k. HOS Selby Ridge dam removed or repaired.
- l. CT Library and resource center maintained, seasonal staff possibly continually developing media productions, and archival work in partnership with the Tennessee State Library and Archives.
- m. HOS Selby Ridge trails developed.
- n. Possible evolution of Cumberland Trails Conference to trail maintenance contractor.
- o. Bridge inspections, maintenance, repair, and replacement throughout the CT.

### 2. Operations and Staffing

- a. Increase gift shop sales.
- b. Recruit chainsaw/trail maintenance crew.
- c. Increase paid programs.
- d. Archival worker and volunteers to develop CT Archives at HOS.

### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. Grand opening events of full trail at both termini – Cumberland Gap and Signal Point, and Trail Builders Reunion Celebration at HOS, possible event at final foot of trail construction.
- b. Increase video production for CT and FCT websites
- c. Develop a written guidebook and/or a third-party mobile app for offline mapping and navigation.
- d. Continued development of exhibits including video and audio productions.
- e. Substantial increase in Ranger-led interpretive and outdoor recreation programs on park sites and within park community venues and organizations. An increase in paid programs will benefit the CT and visitors.
- f. CT community partnerships strengthened with organizational membership and service days.
- g. Continue and restore CT special events: Louie Bluie, Ranger Fest, Cumberland Trail Spring Festival, wildflower events, trail runs.

## Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- a. Bridge inspections, maintenance, repair, and replacement.
- b. Laurel-Snow Coke Ovens area fenced, platforms, trail, and signage installed.
- c. Tanks Springs Coke Oven areas cleared, fenced, and signage installed.
- d. Continue contract with Morgan County for operation of Visitor Center.
- e. HOS Selby Ridge Trails developed.
- f. CT Library and resource center maintained, seasonal staff possibly continually developing media productions, and archival work in partnership with the Tennessee State Library and Archives.
- g. Long-term boundary marking contracts.
- h. Historic preservation analysis.

### 2. Operations and Staffing

- a. Increase in gift shop sales.
- b. Possible evolution of Cumberland Trails Conference to trail maintenance contractor.
- c. Possible contracts with trail experience providers – hiking, fishing, backpacking, rock climbing.
- d. Possible full-time staff to maintain HOS Visitor Center including an additional maintenance position..
- e. Volunteers and part time staff to continue archival work and digitization to provide images, video, and sound files to accompany presentation of CT’s site specific and regional history and cultural interpretation.

### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. High quality CT video and audio productions.
- b. Permanent and temporary exhibits.
- c. High quality annual events focused on outdoor recreation, appreciation of natural resources, and enjoyment and understanding of regional history and culture.
- d. Backpacking workshops and experiences fully integrated into programming schedule throughout CT.
- e. CT community partnerships strengthened with organizational membership and service days.
- f. Resource Management focus on environmental quality and protection. Illegal OHV traffic control, poaching, invasive pest plant control, cave management, restoring “unofficial/illegal” trails and campsites.
- g. Registration and recognition for through hikers.

## 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 primary resource management priority of Cumberland Trail State Park is to project the integrity of the natural and cultural resources along the corridor working in collaboration with local, state and federal partners.

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. Identify threatened resources through study of published research and outreach to TDEC resources and external institutions, and experts. Colleges serving the region have offered CT projects to graduate and undergraduate students. Site specific research can be a great benefit in understanding resources and implementing protections.
- B. Prioritize management response to issues based on external advice and recommendations, and internal advice, recommendations, and requirements. External advisors working with the CT include TWRA, Tennessee Division of Forestry, at least seven colleges in the CT region, Federal natural resources specialists at NPS, USFWS, and TVA, and, often resource experts that are affiliated with conservation or outdoor recreation organizations. External cultural specialists are affiliated with college programs, Tennessee State Museum, Tennessee State

- Library and Archives, Tennessee Historical Society, Tennessee Folklore Society, and dozens of regional and local organizations. Internal contacts are the Tennessee Historical Commission, TDECs many environmental offices and the Division of Natural Areas, and throughout Tennessee State Parks.
- C. Create budgets for priority projects, and funding goals. Investigate and commence funding and partnerships via internal and external sources. The CT has worked extensively with The Nature Conservancy, TennGreen, The Conservation Fund, Tennessee Citizens for Wilderness Planning, and Chattanooga Audubon Society, and the Friends of the Cumberland Trail for a variety of conservation needs and land protection and acquisition.
  - D. Utilization of GIS is critical in development and analysis of resource management data and mapping. The CT must prepare and plan for continual employment of or access to GIS-proficient staff. Graphic design is another skill often needed for messaging to volunteers and public supporters.
  - E. Explore the idea of opening designated areas for hunting. This would mainly be in the North with the Lonestar property being a possible location to allow hunting.
  - F. Restoration of Old Farming Fields at Head of Sequatchie clearing out invasives and planting Native Warm Season Grasses and/or Trees.

## 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
HOS dam	1	Fair	Though the dam appears stable, it may require an architectural historian to evaluate the scattered blocks that have been moved or have collapsed below the dam. Stabilization of the dam should be a priority. County records indicate an antebellum dam at this site.
HOS Devilstep Hollow Cave	1	Good	This Mississippian glyph site is protected by a steel gate that will require inspection over longer periods. The cave is closed to the public and CT staff without approval from UTK archaeologist Dr. Jan Simek.
Tank Springs Coke Ovens	1 bank	Fair	This large bank of coke ovens remains from the heyday of coke production in LaFollette. They are “protected” by thick growth of invasive exotics and vulnerable to unauthorized “entry” by OHV riders who traffic nearby. The TSP has no ownership of these resources, but they are valuable enough to merit investment. They are currently owned by the Campbell County Historical Society – the organization is considering a potential transfer to the State.
Nemo Bridge	1	Poor	Nemo Bridge have been evaluated by two companies for restoration. A third evaluation has been initiated. The bridge spans the Emory River, providing a unique viewpoint of a

			beautiful river gorge. Bridge restoration may be too expensive for State consideration. The matter is under discussion.
Spencer's Rock Access	1	Good	Spencer's Rock is accessed from the Cumberland Trail. The rock spire sits within the I-40 ROW, just beside the CT near Crab Orchard. Since the late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century, the rock pillar has been remembered as the site of the death of Thomas Sharp "Bigfoot Spencer," a long hunter, and an early leader in the Nashboro settlements.
HOS stone fences	Undetermined	Fair-Poor	Stone fences on HOS grounds are extensive, some section almost destroyed, some sections holding strong. They appear to be mid-19 <sup>th</sup> century paddock fences, quite possibly constructed by enslaved persons noted in the census records. The Sequatchie Valley, Nashville and Middle-Tennessee's South Central region carry this feature and history in common with the Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. We began mapping the HOS fences this year.
HOS cemeteries	2	Good	Two family cemeteries are kept on HOS grounds, and are periodically tended by family.
Laurel-Snow Coke Ovens and coal mines	Dozens of coke ovens, and another two dozen features	Critical to fair	Two extensive banks of coke ovens are intact, along with remains of many other features of coal and coke production within Laurel-Snow SNA. The coke oven site is covered with kudzu, which has protected the site from human damage, but is slowly damaging the ovens. Removal and site control will be necessary. A thorough inventory of the features within this area was funded and published.

Piney River walls and road	Unknown	fair	A historic logging/mine road parallels Piney River in Rhea County. The road sometimes includes rockwork above or below the road. The Piney logging dates to early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century.
Hamilton County Glyph site	1	Fair	A small Mississippian glyph site is located on Upper Possum Creek in Hamilton County
Tenant House ruin by Chatt. Audubon Soc.	1	Fair	A former plank tenant house, circa. 1920, was included in a property acquisition from the Chattanooga Audubon Society. CT staff stabilized the structure, but it has not been useful since approved 2009 when the CAS leadership closed a trail connection with the main CT and this site.
Graysville Coke Ovens	Many features	Critical to fair	Cove oven banks, haul roads, and other stabilizing structures are throughout the Graysville trail section parking area and along the trails to the north. Kudzu and other invasives are slowly deteriorating the features. Initial removal is planned during this summer.
Rock/Possum/Soddy coal and log roads, mine slopes	Many features	Critical to fair	The trail system intersect many former mined areas through this lengthy trail section. They have not been properly inventoried.
North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SNA	Many features	Critical to fair	Strip mines, deep mine entrances, and haul roads are found on the slopes and tableland within North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SNA. Mining there first occurred in the mid-19th Century.
Old Anderson Pike	1	Poor	The original pioneer roadway connecting Sequatchie Valley produce with nascent Chattanooga is crossed and used by the CT for a short segment, and as access to CT parking. The road has been damaged by OHV traffic.
Signal Point	1	Good	Signal Point was designed at the southern terminus of the CT in 1998. The NPS manages the site, a Civil War signaling point to messengers across the Tennessee River.

## 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
HOS dam	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Managed access via bridge walk, visitors often hike along and on the dam.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>Exclusion of such use is not feasible, and stabilization is best action.</i></p>	Moderate
HOS Devilstep Hollow Cave	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Visitors not permitted to walk below a viewpoint that overlooks the cave entrance. Bench seat should be replaced.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The signage at the viewpoint which states the rules is intrusive in itself, but it is more effective than the previous low-profile files.</i></p>	Moderate
Tank Springs Coke Ovens	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>None permitted</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>Private property in consideration for acquisition.</i></p>	Moderate
Nemo Bridge	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Visitors walk the entire length of the bridge to view the Emory River. The NPS installed one interpretive sign, CT installed a kiosk.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The CT must accept an option within the budget for major maintenance and which provides long term use and safety. A decision is not settled.</i></p>	High
Spencer’s Rock Access	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Federal I-40 Interstate ROW, will be included in ROW agreement under construction for State trail construction. for State acquisition and CT management.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The CT is within 150 feet of Spencer’s Rock, and a short trail will allow access to this pioneer period landmark.</i></p>	High



<p>HOS stone fences</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Visitors view Antebellum stone fences on most every trail in the Head of Sequatchie unit.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The fences obviously have longevity. The continued inventory will provide information necessary for management and interpretation. Repair may be justified in a few circumstances, but the great body of the work is best not disturbed.</i></p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>HOS cemeteries</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>The two cemeteries on Selby Ridge are not closed to public visitation. No trail system has been created to the sites, and vehicle traffic is limited by our closed gates. Family can access on request. The Sherrill Cemetery near the Devilstep Hollow Cave is along an open trail.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>Family can access the Selby Ridge cemeteries on request. The Sherrill Cemetery has been monumented and decorated by the DAR. The Sherrill family has not objected.</i></p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>Laurel-Snow Coke Ovens and coal mines</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>The public is restricted from practical use during the summer season as new kudzu growth chokes very avenue of foot travel. During the winter, the dead kudzu limits foot traffic.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>Trail leading to the coke oven site is not improved or maintained, so few visitors enter the site. OHV entry into the site is possible from adjoining private land, but the kudzu has also discouraged that potentially devastating situation. That road must be blocked for the protection of the coke ovens.</i></p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Piney River walls and road</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>A public hiking trail was opened on this route in the 1960s by the Bowater Paper Company. Bowater conveyed the property to the State in 2010.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>Under Bowater the site had been a popular picnicking and party site. State ownership has not increased hiking use substantially, though substantial additional trail have been added north and south of the earlier Bowater system. Most picnic tables have been removed. The Bowater bridge across Piney River will require replacement within 10 years.</i></p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>Hamilton County glyph site</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>Essentially none - off trail, known to few people</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The site could easily be destroyed by vandalism. It is not described in public literature or postings. No public trail has been built to the site.</i></p>	<p>High</p>

<p>Tenant House ruin by Chatt. Audubon Soc.</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Essentially none – off trail. No legal public access, though neighboring families have members that use a fire ring at the site.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> With the CAS limitation on Cumberland Trail access, this site has no value to the CT. The CT has used the property to store equipment, but that has not been necessary since the HOS acquisition. The property should be traded to Audubon or sold to them.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>Graysville Coke Ovens</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> The main bank of Coke Ovens on this section of State Park property lie around thee Graysville trailhead, and are obscured by kudzu. Many have been “robbed” of stone. With upcoming kudzu treatment, they may become more visible.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> The condition of the coke ovens cannot be assessed until the vegetation is removed. Possible interpretation the CT website or on site could be of value. Pilferage of stone would be a concern.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>Rock/Possum/Soddy coal and log roads, mine slopes</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> The coal and log roads in Rock/Possum/Soddy gorges are used for some trail footage. The old roads can invite OHV traffic, though no such reports have been made.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> The roads have confused hikers a very few times, but no complaints in the past 8 years.</p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>North Chickamauga Creek Gorge SNA parking</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>The North Chick SNA has suffered from an inadequate road and unmarked parking on a gravel surface.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>The poor structure at this most popular CT site has required the greatest appropriation of CT staff hours for any site.</i></p>	<p>Moderate</p>
<p>Old Anderson Pike</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> <i>The old roadway leads to 5 houses along the road, then continues into CT property and a CT trailhead. The road is poorly paved and pitted.</i></p> <p><b>General Management:</b> <i>A Sequatchie County commission attempted to abandon the road with the expectation that the State would assume management. The management has not been resolved, and the issue will likely require attention from TDEC legal counsel.</i></p>	<p>Moderate</p>

## 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
Land acquisition for contiguous corridor on the Cumberland Trail	Short Term
Possible land swap with Chattanooga Audubon Society to acquire an unencumbered corridor there.	Short term
Land acquisition for protection of significant historic feature and viewscape	Short term
Possible Cooperative Management Agreement with NPS at Signal Point to recognize the short CT crossing.	Short term

## Interpretive Programming and Education Plan

The Interpretation, Programming, and Education planning is currently going through a planning process to further build out the process. This section only represents the very basic framework. As TSP moves forward with the future of Interpretive programming and education this section will likely be changed to accommodate those modifications.

Attached to this plan are the Interpretive Program Templates in fillable PDF forms.

### 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:** Collaboration with Ivy Academy in Hamilton County provides a strong partner in effort to meet this shared goal. CT Staff member Leigh Gardner is active in the TDEC Commissioner's Diversity and Inclusion Initiative, and had led program outreach to diverse schools in Hamilton County. CT's significance to diverse audiences has been aimed toward improving volunteer experience and community support. The CT's presentation of our region's multi-ethnic history has been presented, celebrated and strengthened through special interpretive events at Cove Lake State Park (Louie Bluie Music and Arts Festival celebrating an African-American musician and artist, Frozen Head State Park, celebrating ethnic origins, community theaters and venues in LaFollette, Cumberland Gap, Wartburg, Crossville, Soddy

Daisy, Dayton, Signal Mountain, and Chattanooga, as featuring culturally diverse artists and their backgrounds. Cumberland Trail radio broadcasts present music heritage that is closely tied to creations, inspiration, and performances of diverse racial heritage.

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

**Action Plan:** The CT should continue to present our story via weekly broadcasts via radio and internet – the Cumberland Trail’s weekly broadcast is unique production among America’s State and Federal parks. The CT staff’s contributions of images and video shorts to Facebook should focus on visitor and community diversity, and on staff diversity, and park outreach. An accessible trail to the Head of Sequatchie Cave is proposed at the HOS and will be funded and constructed. Video productions sharing the CT’s beauty will be produced, and accessible at the HOS visitor center and the North CT office. Spanish language information will be posted on CT kiosks.

**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:** The CT will interpret natural resources including Cumberland Plateau plant communities, aquatic communities, sandstone bluff ecology, sandstone rockhouse communities, Sequatchie Valley limestone plant communities, cave communities. Human history from each of the CT’s 11 counties will be interpreted, including Native American cultures, early to present Euro-American exploration and settlement and conflict, African-American culture, enslavement, resilience, and achievements, women’s history and contributions (Emma Bell Miles), multi-ethnic communities (Italian and Polish miners and storekeepers in the Cumberlands. Partnerships for program delivery will be pursued through community contacts, including local historians, civic leadership, and community organizations.

**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:** Effort must be made to protect North Chickamauga Creek Gorge from overuse. Parking and visitor capacity will be researched. Park staff will be focused on overuse and misuse of trailhead parking areas, and employ necessary barriers to site damage. Guided experiences can be expanded when the mission of CT full opening is accomplished, but should be continued at the current level. Partnership opportunities should continue and increase, and exploration and

experience with contracted services will be pursued. Fee based programs will be proposed and developed for CT visitors.

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.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE GOALS						
	Current Cost Recovery (2022)	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2023	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2024	Target Cost Recovery: FY: 2025	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2026	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2027
Park Overall	0%	.01%	.01%	.5%	1%	2%