

# Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area Strategic Management Plan

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2023 – 2033

DRAFT

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## Park Purpose, History and Description

### Mission:

The primary mission of Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area is to protect and preserve the unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic resources and to save one of the last vestiges of undisturbed landscapes in the Cumberland Mountain region. Management of this area shall restore and maintain the diversity and integrity of the resource through lawful protection, education, research, and restoration.

### History:

During the Appalachian Orogeny, the modern day African and North American tectonic plates collided to create the main chain of the Appalachian Mountains. This orogeny also caused a second folding of the Earth which pushed sandstone high into the air, creating the smaller Cumberland Mountains that make up Frozen Head to this day. Nomadic tribes of Yuchi, Shawnee, and Eastern Cherokee roamed this land seasonally until approximately 1804, when early European settlers designated Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau as part of the United States of America. Families such as the Armes, Kellys, Stoneciphers, and Halls became prominent members of the new local community. In the late 1800's this area was known for its abundance of coal and was harvested heavily by both private companies and primarily prison labor from Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary. In the 1910's, the Emory River Lumber Company and the New River Lumber Company used steam locomotion to heavily harvest the virgin Cumberland hardwoods of Frozen Head. In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the CCC, and a large portion of what is currently Frozen Head State Park & Preserve was designated as Morgan State Forest. CCC Camp 1463 was stationed within Morgan State Forest, building trails and roads and conducting miscellaneous forest maintenance activities until 1941. In 1970 this land was finally designated as a state park, and in 1988 most of the park was designated as state natural area.

### Description:

Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area consists of 24,000 acres, with all but 330 acres being designated as state natural area. It is found within rural Morgan County, nestled between the communities of Wartburg and Petros. The two closest larger-population cities are Crossville (42 miles west) and Knoxville (48 miles east). It is named for the 3,324 feet tall Frozen Head Mountain, which is the tallest in the park and often covered in snow in the winter, giving it a "Frozen Head." It is densely forested and mountainous, containing fourteen peaks over 3000 feet and a multitude of waterfalls (two of which can be hiked to). The park contains over 50 miles of hiking trails, a lookout tower, and a tract of huntable land. The terrain is rich in diverse flora, fauna, and fungi. The park's main recreational area is situated in the Flat Fork Valley and was protected in part due to the unique features of the Flat Fork Watershed, which drains into the Emory River. The lower elevations support mixed mesophytic forest, while the upper elevations consist of oak-dominated forest. This park encompasses many significant historical sites, including Native American archaeological sites, early European settlement remains, decommissioned coal mines and timber railroads, a removed Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) base camp, and the nearby Stonecipher-Kelly House. The entire park, to include all camping areas, is open year-round (unless adverse weather conditions force a road/trail closure) from sunrise until sunset.

## 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:

- Engage Morgan County through park programming off site at schools and community events. Schools included: Central Elementary, Central Middle, Wartburg High, Oakdale, Sunbright, Coalfield, and Joyner.
- Meet with county and city officials on a yearly basis to discuss upcoming events and projects.

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

Action Plan:

- Offering resource based recreational opportunities to enhance stewardship and education of the importance of our natural and cultural resources such as backpacking programs, iNaturalist conferences, watershed and creek stomps, etc.
- Catalog and inventory resources yearly for continual management.

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

Action Plan:

- Continue to collect data for ATBI database and continue to partner with USDA and TWRA for wildlife inventories of the park for habitat protection.

### 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:

- Providing resource-based programming that excels in quality not quantity to interpret the importance of Class 1 and 2 Natural Areas and our Historic resources such as the CCC Camp and SK House. This will be achieved through Virtual and Static trails at the SK House and CCC Camp.

- Natural Areas will be interpreted through hands on learning such as creek stumps, watershed tables, canopy tours, environmental observation hikes, nature based backpacking trips, etc.

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

Action Plan:

- Continue to develop outdoor experience field trip guide that highlights the different opportunities that FHSP offers to visitors. Guide breakdown includes times, dates, costs, summary, and educational criteria.

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

Action Plan:

- Establish quarterly workshops covering natural resources and local historical topics and issues within the state park and natural area for visitors to not only learn about importance but also to give feedback on their understanding of the resources.

## 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:

- Record and review quarterly maintenance projects to ensure there are not alternative methods to establishing highest visitor services offered.

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

Action Plan:

- Continue to develop accessible trail within the day use area utilizing Flat Fork trail between Rocky Fork field and Flat Fork Valley.

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

Action Plan:

- Work with Capital Project team to ensure new campground additions do not effect the overall aesthetics of the visitor experience at FHSP.

## 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:

- Provide additional training opportunities for all employees to better their skillset and encourage leadership qualities.

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

Action Plan:

- Utilize partnerships in the community to help with maintenance needs.
- Utilize fundraisers and donation drives to offset budget expenditures.
- Continue to utilize all volunteers for the gap in labor resources.

## Park Overview

### Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area
Site Manager	Jacob Ingram
Area Manager	Kim Moore
Park acreage	24,000
Total number of visitors (FY 2022)	384,223
Total expenses before CO (FY 2022)	865,726
Total revenues (FY 2022)	222,579
Retail cost recovery % <sup>1</sup>	66.9%
Park cost recovery %	25.7%
Average expense per visitor (FY 2022)	2.25
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2022)	.58
Gross profit or loss	643,147
Total full-time available positions / filled	9/9
Total part-time available positions / filled	0/0
Primary feeder markets	Knox, Roane, Blount, Cumberland, Loudon, Anderson
Primary reasons people visit	Hiking, Trail Running, Camping and Picnicking
Opportunities for improvement	Parking, Boundary surveys, Restroom Facilities

### Key Attractions

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

- **Activities available:** Backpacking, hiking, mountain biking, photography, nature studies, birding, wildlife observation, fishing, volleyball, field sports, picnicking, camping, guided hikes and programs, creek walks, special events and other interpretive programs.
- **Facilities available:** Campground and bathhouse, restrooms, picnic shelters and open-air tables, interpretive park visitor center, volleyball courts, trails, back country campsites, special events stage and amphitheater.

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

## 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 Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area. 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 Frozen Head and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in 01/2023.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Amphitheater	1	Fair
Bathhouses	1	Good
Bridge	10	Fair to good
Bridges (small, foot bridge)		Good
Campsites	37	Fair
Conference Centers / Rooms	1	Good
Equipment Sheds	2	Good
Maintenance Building	1	Good
Picnic Shelters	3	Good
Playgrounds	2	Good
Rangers Residences	2	Fair / Good
Restrooms	2	Good
Roads / Paving		Good to poor
Storage Buildings	3	Good
Trails		Good
Visitor Center / Park Office	1	Good
Volleyball Courts	2	Good

## Trail Inventory and Assessment

Trail Name	Mileage	Condition
Cumberland Trail	1.36	Good
Bird Mountain	4.25	Good
Chimney Top	7.05	Good
Coffin Springs	.70	Good
Emory Gap	.50	Good
Flat Fork	.45	Good
Interpretive	.50	Good
Judge Branch	1.20	Good
East Lookout Tower	2.25	Fair
West Lookout Tower	6.30	Poor
North Bird Mt.	6.35	Fair
North Old Mac	3.55	Good

Old Mac	.30	Good
South Old Mac	2.70	Good
Prison Mine	.40	Good
Panther Branch	2.25	Fair
Ross Gap	2.10	Fair
Spicewood	2.55	Good
Other logging roads or service trails	8	Fair-Poor
<b>Total</b>	<b>52.77</b>	

**Trail Conditions and Needs**

The majority of the trails at Frozen Head State Park and Natural Area are the result of work done by the CCC in the late 30’s and earlier logging and mining operations. Most of the trails were constructed as fire patrol during Morgan State Forest management. Some trails are not constructed to current trail building specs. For the majority of the trail system at the park they have held up and are still in relatively good shape due to the increase in foot traffic. Trail maintenance is completed primarily through park staff and volunteers.

**New Assets Needed**

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

<b>New Asset &amp; Amenities</b>	<b>Description</b>
Bridge and Accessible trail	Bridge over Flat Fork to connect RF Field and VC, paved pathway
RV campground in RF Field	20 site full hookup campground
Additional parking in park	Adding parking at FF group campground, Shelter C, and
Bathhouse replacement	replacing campground bathhouse
Vault Toilet	Install vault style toilet at Flat Fork primitive sites/men's and
Accessible Pathway at Stonecipher-Kelly House	Accessible natural pathway around the Stonecipher-Kelly House from pedestrian bridge
Parking area at Stonecipher-Kelly House	Provide parking area for visitors in adjacent field to site. Parking should be for cars and up to 2 buses.
Accessible pedestrian Bridge at Stonecipher-Kelly House	Construct wooden accessible walking bridge to connect parking area to trail.

## Prioritized Facility Needs

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

Facility Need	Priority Assignment
New Wood on entrance signs	Med
Bathhouse replacement	Med
Debord falls steps and handrails	High
Replace siding on chicken shed	Low

## 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 Frozen Head State Park have been identified as **core services**:

- Support the mission of Tennessee State Parks which is "To preserve, protect, and share Tennessee's natural and cultural resources while providing safe, quality outdoor experiences."
- Provide for public access to the park, the facilities, and the grounds.

- Provide for public safety for visitors and protection of natural and cultural resources.
- Provide for maintenance of grounds, facilities, and infrastructure.
- Maintain facilities developed through the LWCF program to required ADA standards.
- Provide for basic, non-staff supported day-use activities with trails, informational signage, picnic tables, trash cans and restroom facilities.
- Maintain Park drinking water and wastewater programs to state standards.

**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 Frozen Head State Park have been identified as **important services**:

- Provide a full range of environmental, cultural and recreational programs.
- Offer park-specific information at the Visitor Center and Nature Center.
- Provide educational programs for schools and organized groups.
- Provide for basic, non-staff supported day-use activities such as hiking and picnicking.

**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 Frozen Head State Park have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Operate and provide retail support services for the gift shop.
- Provide support services for camping.
- Provide support services for picnic shelters/pavilions.

## Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at Frozen Head represent the largest area of budgetary expense at an average of 65.9% of the total operating budget each year for the last three complete years, which is equal to 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	*
Conservation Worker 3	1	\$38,184
Conservation Worker 1	2	\$61,008
Administrative Assistant 1	1	\$42,924
Park Ranger 2	3	*
Park Ranger 3	1	*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$402,240</b>

\*Law enforcement compensation confidential by TN law.

### Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
N/A		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

### Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	600
Community Service Workers	20
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	50
Other: Career Center	1500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2170</b>

### Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
Full Time Equivalent Employees	402,240
Part Time Employees	
<b>TOTAL Annual Labor Expense</b>	<b>402,240</b>

**Additional Future Positions Needed**

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
Clerk 1	1	FTE	2023	To assist with daily visitor services at VC, currently have one admin to handle all responsibilities and front desk.
Conservation Worker 2	1	FTE	2024	With 2 large Capital projects started and nearing completion to assist with an increase in visitation and more facilities to maintain
Conservation Worker 1	1	FTE	2024	With 2 large Capital projects started and nearing completion to assist with an increase in visitation and more facilities to maintain
Interpretive Specialist	1	FTE	2024	Full time at the SK house to do maintenance and welcome
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			

**Financial Performance**

Revenue per available unit (**Rev Per Unit**) for the last four years in park facilities is detailed in the table below.

**Current Rev Per Unit**

Fiscal Year	Camping Rev Per Unit	Day Use Facility Rev Per Unit
2019	4.6	4.59
2020	4.53	3.3
2021	7.33	5.28
2022	7.12	5.81

**Projected Rev Per Unit** - Based on current Rev Per Unit trends at the park and any known developments over the next four years.

Fiscal Year	Camping Rev Per Unit	Day Use Rev Per Unit
2023	8	6
2024	8.5	6.2
2025	9	6.4
2026	9.5	6.5

## Customer Service

Net Promoter Score/BCSP	FY- Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
Yelp	22-23	5.00
Google	22-23	4.80
TripAdvisor	22-23	4.50
Facebook	22-23	4.90

## Professional Development and Training

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

- Chainsaw Training
- CIG Training
- Master Trail builder/Mechanized
- Trail Maintenance Training-Volunteers
- High angle rescue Training
- 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**
  - Continue to work with Capital team to finish SK capital project.
  - Painting handrails at Shelter A.
  - Replace stairs to Debord Falls area.
- 2. Operations and Staffing**
  - Fund AmeriCorps position with park budget to help with SK House interpretation.
  - Work with park leadership to acquire seasonal clerk position for Front desk at VC.
- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
  - Park staff to continue to conduct area interviews and data collection for cultural exhibits.
  - Improve artifact collection and preservation in existing park visitor center.
  - Continue building community outreach programs in Morgan County that interpret the park's story and emphasize the state park's mission. ie. Jr. Ranger Program, CCC appreciation Day, Heritage Day, Wildflower Pilgrimage, etc.

## Mid Term Recommendations (2-5 years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- Create an accessible trail within the park, possibly on flat fork trail.
- Create a new backcountry campsite on Bird Mountain along new CT within park.
- Implement Emory River management plan

### 2. Operations and Staffing

- Acquire new Conservation 2 position for increase in visitation and park maintenance needs.
- Rocky Fork RV Campground

### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- Add a vault style restroom facility at Flat Fork Campground.

## Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- A pedestrian bridge over flat fork creek to connect Rocky fork field and Day use area.

### 2. Operations and Staffing

- Acquire a new con 1 position for full time at SK house for tours and maintenance to allow site to be open 5 days a week.

### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- Design and develop the exhibit area of the Interpretive Visitor Center to increase public awareness, to educate and interpret the natural and cultural resources of Frozen Head State Natural Area and the Cumberland Mountain region.



## 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.

### Park Mission and Vision

The primary mission of Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area is to protect and preserve the unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic resources and to save one of the last vestiges of undisturbed landscapes in the Cumberland Mountain region from development and land fragmentation. Management of this area shall restore and maintain the ecological integrity of the landscape through resource protection, law enforcement and through the research and restoration of the existing taxonomic biological diversity.

1. Maintain values as a Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Class I Scenic – Recreational and Class II Natural-Scientific Natural Area in addition to existing State Park lands.
2. Restore and maintain ecological integrity of the natural area and state park at a landscape scale within the context of the Cumberland Mountain topography and surrounding adjacent lands.
3. Provide and maintain reasonable, safe public access to the natural area for passive intermittent environmental and back country experiences and semi-supervised day-use area educational and recreational opportunities.

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.

## **Natural Resource Management Goals and Strategies**

### **Goal #1**

- Continue protection of neo-tropical migrant species in decline, protect habitat & document population changes at Frozen Head.
- Continue protection of the wildflower diversity and population density of herbaceous layer of Frozen Head.
- Continue Hemlock Woolley Adelgid program, monitoring of UT beetle release program, treatment of HWA in Conservation areas identified in the State Park & Natural Area, assist forestry with trap program and possible EAB infestations

### **Goal #2**

- Conduct current water quality surveys of the Emory River to determine occurrence of possible erosion run-off and location(s). Establish baseline data for water quality monitoring.
- Continue to implement existing Hog Management Plan and cooperative management strategies established by TWRA and USDA.
- Hunting issues: poaching and trespassing into the natural area for the purpose of illegal hunting should be stopped and a designated safety zone of 500' buffer should be established between the natural area and state park properties on the Emory River valley side of Frozen Head. Hunting activities should be contained within the designated State Park property of the Emory River Valley as agreed upon in the Emory River Interim Plan and consideration given to the promotion of traditional walk-in style hunting on those properties.
- Continue to develop cooperative agreement with TWRA to determine hunting season(s) and law enforcement on state park properties of the Emory River Valley.
- Emory River Management Area Plan complete and submit to leadership for approval.

### **Goal #3**

- Conduct survey of boundary line encroachments by motorized traffic into the Class I & Class II Natural Areas and review possible impacts to resource.
- Conduct survey at Gate 1 / Sang Branch Road for possible erosion damage and resource impact from motorized traffic access to Ross Gap

## **Cultural Resource Management Goals and Strategies**

### **Goal #1**

- Continue to acquire 327.15 funding to support maintenance and upkeep of Frozen Head CCC bridges and culverts and to maintain the historic integrity of existing CCC structures within the maintenance area, rock foundations, walls, bridge facings and back country trails
- Continue to acquire 327.15 funding to support the maintenance of the Stonecipher-Kelly historic site. Continue to fund contract field mowing through annual park operations.
- Identify and record historic significance of Stonecipher-Kelly historic site graveyard on state property only. Review site for possible historic type fencing to be installed around the graveyard.

### **Goal #2**

- Continue research of Stonecipher-Kelly historic site for National Registry nomination. Follow through with nomination process to achieve National Historic site status.
- Once National Historic site status is achieved begin work to obtain grant funding for site restoration and renovations.
- Develop and print Stonecipher-Kelly historic site home place map and brochure for public distribution.

**Goal #3**

- Interpret Stonecipher-Kelly historic site through public cultural programs, in period dress, depicting life in the wilderness and frontier in the early 1800's
- Continue to develop and grow annual Heritage Day special event in the day-use area of Frozen Head to include the "Stonecipher-Kelly Days" homecoming.
- Continue to develop and fund research for historic displays of CCC Company 1463, Morgan State Forest and the beginning of Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area to be presented in park visitor center auditorium.

**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
Class 1 Natural Area	Approx. 9,000 acres	Good	Invasive issues- hogs. Heavier use from visitors than have seen before
Class 2 Natural Area	6500 Acres	Good	Invasive issues but access limited to permits only
Stonecipher-Kelly House	33 acres	Excellent	Structural Renovations Complete and installing Interpretive element
Emory River Management Area	Approx. 8000 acres	Fair	Management Plan written and waiting approval for hunting in this area

## 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
Class 1	<b>Public Use: Educate on use limited to park rules</b> <b>General Management: Invasive Species Management/Illegal poaching</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Class 2	<b>Public Use: Research permit only</b> <b>General Management: Invasive Species Management/Illegal poaching</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
Stonecipher-Kelly House	<b>Public Use: Limited to staffing once open for visitors</b> <b>General Management: Tours, field trips, etc. once open. Estimated time for opening Spring 2024- Dependent on Staffing for site</b>	<b>High</b>
Emory River Management Area	<b>Public Use: Huntible area open during hunting seasons.</b> <b>General Management: Managed as hunting area so protection on resource and also buffer between NA.</b>	<b>High</b>

## 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
Protection of Flat Fork and Emory River watershed properties	Long Term
Green Lane and Rocky Fork Field Land Protection	Long 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.

The interpretive mission of Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area is to provide park visitors with a chance to embrace the peace and quiet of the Cumberland Mountains, enjoy a sense of solitude, and to reconnect with Tennessee's natural surroundings. Visitors should leave Frozen Head with a better understanding of the increasingly rare qualities found within its natural communities, what historic effort it took to protect this land, and why preserving it is vital.

### Main Interpretive Theme

The primary interpretive theme is to interpret the unspoiled natural features, flora, and fauna found within the state park & natural area and their relationships to the surrounding forest, aquatic, and geologic communities, along with the historical context that made this park possible and made the local community what it is today.

### Sub-Themes

1. Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area provides a significant contribution to the state park system, protecting Class I and II state natural area that provides a corridor for the Cumberland State Scenic Trail and preserves a representative example of the ecological and geological diversity of the Cumberland Mountain region in Tennessee.
2. Since its designation in 1970, Frozen Head State Park & Natural Area has been left relatively undisturbed. During this time forest communities have grown and matured to resemble older growth stands of forest with a rich and diverse herbaceous layer. The forest floor is not compacted and desiccation-sensitive species such as salamanders thrive on the higher soil moisture levels found within these older growth forest communities. This has resulted in a haven for globally significant concentrations of neo-tropical migrants that breed and nest in the Cumberland Mountains of Tennessee. Viable populations of naturally occurring species exist in natural patterns of distribution and abundance offering insight into the natural history of the area.
3. Visitors will understand that it took the historical building blocks of the Native American's nomadic presence, coal mining and timber harvesting, early settler homesteader resiliency, and the CCC's hard work and ingenuity, to create the park that Frozen Head is today. They will also appreciate the nearby Stonecipher-Kelly House as being a satellite site of Frozen Head State Park, and its significance as an economic hub that led to the establishment of early Morgan County commerce.

## 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: Review cultural interpretation at park to identify if all-inclusive interpretation is addressed.

**Strategy – Interpretative Media:** 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: Research and Develop an orientation DVD for visitor and program use, along with more virtual programming. Could include Touch Screen info panel in VC.

**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: Continue to develop outdoor experience field trip guide that highlights the different opportunities that FHSP offers to visitors. Guide breakdown includes times, dates, costs, summary, and educational criteria.

**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: Providing resource-based programming that excels in quality not quantity to interpret the importance of Class 1 and 2 Natural Areas and our Historic resources such as the CCC Camp and SK House. This will be achieved through Virtual and Static trails at the SK House and CCC Camp. Natural Areas will be interpreted through hands on learning such as creek stomps, watershed tables, canopy tours, environmental observation hikes, nature based backpacking trips, etc.

#### 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	25.87%	24.36%	26.60%	21.97%	40.77%	41.71%



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