

# Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park Strategic Management Plan

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**2023 – 2033**



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## Park Purpose, History and Description

PINSON MOUNDS STATE ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK (PMSAP) is one of two state archaeological parks in the Tennessee State Parks (TSP) System. Pinson Mounds is designated a State Archeological Park and is managed in accordance with the rules of the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (Chapter 0400-2-8; appendix I). Pinson Mounds is deemed an area of significant archeological interest with an archeological overlay across the park that includes mounds and earthworks from the Middle Woodland Period (Hopewell Peoples). PMSAP is set aside to preserve, protect, and promote the archeological, cultural, and natural resources within its boundaries. The namesake prehistoric earthworks complex consists of at least 17 earthen mounds that encompass more than 400 acres of the 1,300-acre park. Pinson is the largest Middle Woodland period (200 B.C. to 500 A.D.) mound center of the Southeast. Sauls Mound, at 72 feet, is the second tallest mound in the United States.

The Pinson Mounds complex was first documented in modern history in 1820 by a surveying crew led by surveyor, Joel Pinson, for whom the local community is named. In 1947, the Tennessee Division of Forestry purchased the Western sector of the Pinson Mounds complex. Across the 1950s and 1960s, local interest in the preservation of the mound structures increased, and in 1961, a professional archeological evaluation was conducted by two professors of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The National Park Service funded a more significant extension of this investigation in 1963. In 1964, Pinson Mounds received the designation of National Historic Landmark.

Established in 1966, the State acquired additional acreage to add to this sector to form the Pinson Mounds State Park. In 1972, land purchases were made to expand the park's boundaries again. A two-year investigation of the site by the Tennessee Division of Archeological was begun in 1974. A three-year study of the larger earthworks structures was completed across the years of 1981-1984 by this same Division. The Johnston Site satellite with additional prehistoric Indigenous structures was added to the State's holdings in 2006 and is connected to the Pinson Mounds complex via the Forked Deer River. An independent set of archeologists, initially through the PEARL Field School and in collaboration with the Division of Archeology, has completed research across Pinson Mounds and the Johnston Site from 2013 to the present. As recent as July of 2022, an unimproved parking area, low-profile kiosk, and interpretive sign with corresponding new trail was established to highlight contemporary archeological discoveries (2019-2022) in the Western sector.

## 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: PMSAP staff will work with the Friends of Pinson Mounds to increase both organizational membership and active participation in park activities; develop new program offerings to increase the variety of individuals engaged with the park; coordinate with the Division of Archeology to upgrade facilities and develop programs for university archeological and

anthropological research on-site to include the Anderson Collection; and mentor a cadre of potential future park rangers with the development of Initial and Advanced Ranger Camps for high school students.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will coordinate with the Division of Archeology, IPE, supportive legislators, and other critical individuals and organizations to complete the application process for UNESCO World Heritage Status; coordinate with TSP Major Maintenance/Capital Projects on park facility, infrastructure, and trail projects such that a deliberate schedule is created for cost-efficient, time-efficient resource management; and enhance present efforts to protect and preserve unique natural, prehistoric, and cultural resources by involving additional support and interest groups. In tandem with TDOA, research the Bray site with an eventual goal of adding this site to the PMSAP set of properties.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will work with both the Division of Archeology and the research team headed through CO State University/Appalachian State University to provide a searchable database of research information. Prepare QR code accessible videos for park guests who are not able to visit specific resource points within the park or for specific events so that they can have a corresponding experience within the park. Pursue higher-quality internet connectivity for staff and visitors to enable AR/VR for programming as well as enhanced accessibility for all.

## 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: PMSAP staff will expand the present set of program offerings to reach new age brackets (e.g., high schoolers), underserved groups (e.g., at-risk youth), and visitor needs (e.g., sensory hike for visually impaired).

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will continue to focus programming efforts on the park's primary and secondary interpretive themes so that the park's natural, prehistoric, and cultural resources are protected, preserved, and promoted through excellent educational programs, both free and fee-based. Serve as a resource site for other TSP parks for school field trip and interpretive programming.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will support continued use of park trail and roadways for both running (e.g., Virtual Honeybee, ultramarathon) and bicycling events (e.g., Kent Jones Century Ride) and will explore additional resource-based outdoor recreational opportunities.

## 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: PMSAP staff will utilize the newly structured staffing pattern for coordination and completion of maintenance tasks through the Park Ranger 2 maintenance-lead position that will coordinate staff (e.g., seasonal maintenance/jobshare), contractors, and volunteers.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will maximize promotion and use of the newly upgraded ADA access facilities and resources and add to these to achieve the best access possible in line with TSP’s ACCESS 2030 initiative.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will work with West TN Maintenance to pursue upgrades for technology, plumbing, paving, and entrance signage. Pursue additional grants and volunteer assistance.

## 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: PMSAP staff will build a team-oriented work atmosphere, promote in-house skill sets, and seek additional training for staff to encourage their professional growth, improve park operations, and enhance the visitor experience.

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

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will work to prioritize preventative and timely maintenance, budget effectively, utilize resources wisely, and pursue outside funding and volunteer assistance wherever possible.

## Park Overview

### Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park
Site Manager	Tim Poole
Area Manager	Zach Tinkle
Park acreage	>1,300 (1,256 plus acreage shifted from Dept of Ag/Div of Forestry with additional acres to be possibly transferred in fall of 2023)
Total number of visitors (FY 2022)	93,509
Total expenses before CO (FY 2022)	\$ 512,215
Total revenues (FY 2022)	\$ 50,385
Retail cost recovery % <sup>1</sup>	151.5%
Park cost recovery %	9.8%
Average expense per visitor (FY 2022)	\$ 5.48
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2022)	\$ 0.39
Gross profit or loss	(\$461,830)
Total full-time available positions / filled	5/5
Total part-time available positions / filled	Job-share/1
Primary feeder markets	Jackson, Memphis, Nashville, Area-wide school groups, Indigenous Groups (e.g., Chickasaw Nation), National/International travelers
Primary reasons people visit	Significance of the archeological resources, beauty of the natural resources, convenience of recreational resources, quality interpretive programs, connection with TN Dept of Ed standards
Opportunities for improvement	Completion of UNESCO application to receive World Heritage Status, replacement of aging water lines and T-1 line, updating technology access for visitors/staff, repaving park roadway and adjacent drives and lots

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

## Key Attractions

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

- **Museum & Visitors' Center/Gift Shop/Office** – The Museum & Visitors' Center houses exhibits on Indigenous culture and artifacts from the Paleo period through historic times. This facility includes an 80-seat auditorium and site-specific interpretive video, a Discovery Room for children's programs/exploration, a gift shop with an emphasis on both educational materials and Indigenous-made items, and the park office.
- **Sauls Mound/Prehistoric Archeological Resources** – Sauls Mound is the second-tallest prehistoric mound in the United States. (For the 1,000 years prior to the development of Monk's Mound at Cahokia around 1400 ACE, Sauls Mound was the tallest man-made structure in the United States.) Central to the Pinson Mounds complex of prehistoric earthworks, Sauls Mound potentially served as an axis point within the complex to document solar and lunar cycles as well as serve as a gathering point for groups from diverse locations. Additionally, PMSAP features trailways to 9 easily viewed earthworks from the Middle Woodland period.
- **Group Camp** – The ADA-accessible Group Camp consists of a central lodge and four cabins, all with heat and air conditioning, and is available year-round. The lodge contains a furnished kitchen, shower/restroom facilities, outdoor fire pit, and meeting area. Cabins have four twin bunk beds to house 32 occupants. Guests must bring linens and a deposit is required.
- **Picnic Facilities** – PMSAP offers 20 picnic sites, 3 of which are ADA-welcoming. In addition, the park offers two rentable picnic pavilions which include tables, restrooms, grills, and a trash/recycling center.
- **Park Trails** – The park's archaeological features and wildlife can be viewed along six miles of interconnecting trail. The paved trail sections are bicycle and wheelchair accessible. Gravel/forest floor hiking trails, which do not permit bicycles, are of easy to moderate level. Flora and fauna of three intersecting ecosystems, a cypress swamp, mixed beech-oak slopes, and oak-hickory uplands, are viewable along these trails.
- **Playground** – PMSAP provides a playground area that includes interactive opportunities for preschool to elementary aged children.

## 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 Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park. 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 Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in May, 2023.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Museum & Visitors' Center/Gift Shop/Office	1	Museum & Visitors' Center – Good Gift Shop – Excellent Office – Good
Group Camp (Lodge w/4 cabins)	1	Good
Picnic Pavilions	2	Group Camp – Fair Playground – Fair
Playground	1	Good
Maintenance Shop and Bays	1	Good
Park Residences	2	Pinson – Excellent Johnston Site – Excellent
Portable Storage/Seasonal Residence Building	1	Excellent
Boardwalk	1	Fair
Sauls Mound Stairs/Platform	1	Excellent

## Trail Inventory and Assessment

The PMSAP trail map identifies the variety of trail resources and types of traffic permitted for each. The trail system is designed to encourage visitors to see prehistoric earthworks as well as natural resources.

Trail Name	Mileage	Condition
Boardwalk Loop	0.30	Boardwalk is old. In need of replacement.
Ducknest Access	0.20	Natural surface. In good condition.
Earthworks Trail	0.47	Natural surface. In good condition.
Inner Loop	1.62	Paved. In very good condition.
Nature Trail	1.08	Natural surface. In fair condition. Some erosion and steps that need replacement.
Outer Loop	2.46	Paved. In very good condition.
Passion Flower Trail	0.32	Natural surface. Good condition.
Western Mounds Trail	0.11	Grass trail. Good condition.
Grand Total	7.50	

### 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
High-speed internet access	Enhanced internet access speed/capacity is needed for internal operations as present system is quickly overloaded with basic work tasks and online trainings are difficult at best. Visitor internet access (wifi) at both the Group Camp and Museum Auditorium would expand the park's capacity for rentals as groups could provide needed amenities for training. This would also enable the park to expand accessibility through and AR/VR platform.

### Prioritized Facility Needs

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

Priority Projects	Category (Sub-Category)	Maintenance/ Renovations		Proposed Capital Improvements		Funding	Additi onal Staff Neede d	System wide Goal	Systemwide Objective
		Quantity	Priority (L/M/H)	Quantity	Priority (L/M/H)				
<b>Roadways</b>									
Repave park roadway *after water lines	Main Drives		N/A	1	High	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Better park accessibility
Repave maintenance lot	Parking Lots (Paved)	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Operati ons	Efficient & effective operations
Repave maintenance drive	Maintenance Roads (Paved)	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Operati ons	Efficient & effective operations
Repave Ranger residence driveway	Other	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Operati ons	Efficient & effective operations
Replace/reinforce causeway culverts	Bridges		N/A	2	Medium	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Better park accessibility
Repair contractor damage to new museum lots	Parking Lots (Paved)	2	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all



Create unimproved lot for Johnston Site	Parking Lots (Unpaved)	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
Remark lines on parking lots	Parking Lots (Paved)	3	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
<b>Signage</b>									
Replace entrance sign	Wayfinding	1	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
Create Johnston Site interpretive signage	Interpretive	4 panels	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming
Create Medicine Wheel interpretive signage	Interpretive	2 panels	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming
Install interpretive signage along Nature Trail	Interpretive	10 identifiers	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
Install interpretive signage at whorled sunflower plot	Interpretive	1 panel	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming
Install interpretive signage along Boardwalk	Interpretive	8 identifiers	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
<b>Infrastructure</b>									
Replace water lines (before paving - some lines under)	Water		N/A	entire park	High	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
Repair dam for inherited Forestry pond	Dams	1	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Resources	Better resource management practices
Upgrade park internal internet access	Communication	office area	Medium		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Operations	Efficient & effective operations
Empty septic tanks for ranger residence	Septic	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Operations	Efficient & effective operations
Inspect/repair sewer lines at museum (Lift stations)	Sewers	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Improve maintenance
Update security/fire system	Other		N/A	w/TDOA project	High	Non-Funded	No	Resources	Better data & technology
<b>Public Structures</b>									

## Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park Strategic Management Plan

Replace outdoor amphitheater seating	Amphitheater	4 risers	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
Provide visitor wifi at Group Camp	Meeting Facilities	1 system	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
Provide visitor wifi at Auditorium	Meeting Facilities	1 system	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
Complete First Peoples exhibit in museum	Museum	1	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming
Provide water refill stations at pavilions	Pavilions	2	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
Renovation of additional museum exhibits	Museum	4	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming
Renovate the picnic shelter restrooms (tile, paint, HVAC)	Pavilions	4 restrooms	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
AR/VR for interpretive programming (ACCESS 2030)	Visitor Center	1	High		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Visitor	Accessible, welcoming & inviting to all
<b>Recreation Facilities</b>									
Replace trail bridges	Bridges	2	High		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Better park accessibility
Replace boardwalk and observation deck	Boardwalks		N/A	entire boardwalk	Medium	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Better park accessibility
Repave improved trails	Paved Trails		N/A	5 miles	Medium	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
ADA door-opener for Group Camp and 1 cabin	Group Camps	2	Low		N/A	Non-Funded	No	Amenities	Better park accessibility
Replace aged/damaged park trail benches	Other	10	Medium		N/A	Funded	No	Amenities	Quality & welcoming facilities & amenities
<b>Environmental</b>									
Continued moundcare treatments to prevent woody growth	Other	7 per treatment	High		N/A	Funded	No	Resources	Better resource management practices
Complete medicine wheel garden	Specialty Flora	1	Medium		N/A	Funded	No	Visitor	High quality programming



Mowing contract - disabled veterans	Other	per contract	Medium		N/A	Funded	No	Operations	Efficient & effective operations
Prairie bushhogging - MOI w/local contractor	Other	per agreement	Medium		N/A	Funded	No	Resources	More & better stewards
<b>Non-Public Structures</b>									
Paint maintenance storage bays	Maintenance	1 building	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Operations	Efficient & effective operations
Provide furniture for seasonal storage/portable housing	Other	room	Low		N/A	Funded	No	Operations	Support & empower our people

## 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 PMSAP have been identified as **core services**:

- Protect, preserve, and promote the archeological, cultural, and natural resources
- Educational programming
- Paved/unimproved trail system
- Public restrooms
- Museum/visitors center
- Law enforcement
- Park roadways
- Park maintenance
- Trails

### **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 PMSAP have been identified as **important services**:

- Picnic facilities, picnic pavilions
- Playground
- Park residences

### **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 provide 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 PMSAP have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Gift Shop
- Group Camp

### Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park 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 less than one percentage point greater 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. The staffing pattern changed significantly across the FY 2023 to more efficiently and effectively meet visitor and park needs.

#### Full Time Equivalent Employees

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Compensation Total
Park Manager	1	*
Park Ranger 2	2	*
Administrative Assistant 1	1	\$42,924
Clerk 2	1	\$27,780
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>\$258,912</b>

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

#### Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
Museum Cur. Asst. (Jobshare)	1	\$25,252.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>\$25,252.50</b>

#### Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	725
Community Service Workers	1008
Engineering and Construction Crews	25
Resource Management Crews (mow, moundcare)	236
<b>Other: Other agency contributions (Forestry, TDOT)</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,034</b>

#### Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
<b>Full Time Equivalent Employees</b>	<b>\$258,912</b>
<b>Part Time Employees</b>	<b>\$25,252.50</b>
<b>TOTAL Annual Labor Expense</b>	<b>\$284,164.50</b>





### Additional Future Positions Needed

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
Non-commissioned Interpreter	1	FTE	2025	Increasing requests for educational and interpretive programming including work with TDOA, IPE, school partnerships, as well as continue to grow fee-based offerings.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</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	Group Camp Rev Per Unit	Day Use Facilities Rev Per Unit
2019	\$21.47	\$1.99
2020	\$9.9	\$1.09
2021	\$5.19	\$3.27
2022	\$7.26	\$1.88

**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	Group Camp Rev Per Unit	Day Use Facilities Rev Per Unit
2023	\$9.5	\$1.9
2024	\$10	\$2.1
2025	\$11	\$2.3
2026	\$12	\$2.5

## Customer Service

PMSAP is grateful for the feedback provided by our visitors and appreciates the consistent positive ratings.

Platform / Site	Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
Google	2023	4.7
Facebook	2023	4.9
TripAdvisor	2023	4.5
Yelp	2023	4.0
Review Push (average)	2023	4.5

## Professional Development and Training

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

- PMSAP consistently supports individual staff professional development through support in attending conferences (e.g., CRITA), hosting conferences (e.g., Mid-south Archeological Society), achieving/retaining certifications (e.g., EMS), exploring individual interests/skill development (e.g., SSPPS), supporting enhanced guest services (e.g., Understanding Bias), meeting TSP and TN standards (e.g., Title VI training, Quarterly Admin, VAcademy), and additional trainings as team members identify needs and will continue to support the professional growth of team members. Professional development comprises 10% of each team member’s IPP evaluation each year.
- Routine law enforcement training
- Routine management 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. Replace trail bridges
  - b. Replace security/fire system in tandem with TDOA improvements
  - c. Complete medicine wheel garden
- 2. Operations and Staffing**
  - a. Effectively utilize the new (2022-2023) staffing pattern to meet park and visitor needs.
- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
  - a. Complete First Peoples exhibit

## Mid Term Recommendations (2-5 years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- a. Replace/reinforce causeway culverts at Hudson Branch crossings of park roadway.
- b. Repave park roadway and adjacent drives and lots (after water line, T-1 line, and culvert updates)
- c. Replace/update museum sewer/Lift system
- d. Replace water lines

### 2. Operations and Staffing

- a. Add non-commissioned Interpreter position
- b. Paint maintenance shop bays
- c. Update internal internet lines/capacity to meet daily work and training needs

### 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. Provide visitor wifi access in Group Camp and Auditorium to enhance training/presentation capacity
- b. Complete UNESCO World Heritage Site application process
- c. Extend interpretive signage
- d. Replace outdoor amphitheater seating
- e. Update museum exhibits including AR/VR portions

## Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

### 1. Site and Facilities

- a. Repave improved trails
- b. Replace boardwalk and observation deck

### 2. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. Renovate pavilion restrooms
- b. Install water refill stations at pavilions
- c. Install ADA door openers for Group Camp lodge and 1 cabin

## 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:** The mission of Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park is to provide a protective, research-oriented, and educational facility, with a three-part purpose, in descending order of priority as follows:

1. To preserve, protect, and promote the archaeological resources of the Pinson Mounds site;
2. To provide interpretive and educational opportunities for learning about the site, Indigenous cultures in general, and archeology; and
3. To provide general recreational opportunities for the public, to the extent that they do not conflict with the responsibilities in 1 and 2.

As a subset of 2, the interpretive/educational goals that are of equal importance are:

- a. To interpret the Pinson Mounds site,
- b. To interpret prehistoric, historic, and modern Indigenous cultures,
- c. To interpret the methods and theories of archaeology.

**Park Vision:** Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park will be a premier archeological site with international visitation as a result of its World Heritage Status and will provide a variety of exceptional programming and recreational opportunities to meet the interests and needs of the varying visitors.

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 prehistoric resources of this park.

**Strategies**

- A. Complete the application process for UNESCO World Heritage Status
- B. Continue to enhance educational programming and involve additional organizations and resources
- C. Coordinate with West TN Maintenance and Division of Archeology and Division of Forestry to identify and address all issues and needed upgrades
- D. Continue to preserve, observe, protect, promote, remediate, document, and research the prehistoric resources in tandem with Division of Archeology, outside researchers, and needed mound care/landscape contracts

**Resource Inventory and Assessment**

The significant natural, cultural and prehistoric 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
PMSAP prehistoric earthworks and significant sites	At least 17	Good	Overall archeological resources are in good condition, they are continuously observed for potential erosional issues (e.g., the holes from the previous platform are observed for potential sloughing and remediated as needed), the main mounds (Sauls, 28, 29, 30, Ozier, Twins) are treated quarterly to maintain grassy coverage/prevent woody growth, regular mowing/bushhogging during the grass season is required to maintain protective corridors and prevent woody growth from damaging the soil context.

## Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park Strategic Management Plan

Access structures to Sauls Mound	1	Good	Sauls Mound stairs and platform were replaced in 2020 and handle consistent visitation well
Johnston Site earthworks	3	Good/Fair	2 mounds are in Good condition, but the 3 <sup>rd</sup> is being impacted by the erosional patterns of the adjacent Forked Deer River
Forested areas (oak-hickory uplands, mixed beech-oak slopes, cypress swamp)	~1000 acres	Good	Perimeter kudzu will eventually impede on park forests, periodic storm events/flooding impact older trees
Hudson Branch Creek	1	Good	Beaver dams periodically impact the natural flow of this creek and change the watershed structure
Prairied areas (Pinson and Johnston)	~525 acres	Good	An MOI is set up with two local farmers to bushhog these prairies and prevent woody growth damage to the soil archeological context

### 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
PMSAP prehistoric earthworks and significant sites	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Managed access with infrastructure and regulation – access limited to trails with usage policies and regulations.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Earthworks/sites are continuously observed for potential erosional issues (e.g., sloughing via holes from prior Sauls Mound platform; storm events). The main mounds (Sauls, 28, 29, 30, Ozier, Twins) are treated quarterly to maintain grassy coverage/prevent woody growth. Regular mowing/bushhogging of earthworks perimeters, grass trails, and prairied sites (e.g., Cochran Locale) during the grass season is required to maintain protective corridors and prevent woody growth from damaging the soil context.</p>	<b>High</b>



<p>Access structures to Sauls Mound</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Managed access with infrastructure and regulation – access limited to stairs and platform with usage policies and regulations.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Seasonal weedtrimming of mound growth adjacent to and underneath stairs and platform, identification of potential structure issues (e.g., splintering, aging).</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p>Johnston Site earthworks</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Limited access with ongoing archeological research – access limited to program-specific guests and archeological research teams with usage policies and regulations.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Earthworks/sites are continuously observed for potential erosional issues. One mound is being impacted by the erosional patterns of the adjacent Forked Deer River and PMSAP staff is working with the Div of Archeology to document and remediate. Regular mowing/bushhogging of earthworks perimeters, grass trails, prairied sites during the grass season is required to maintain protective corridors and prevent woody growth from damaging the soil context.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>
<p>Forested areas (oak-hickory uplands, mixed beech-oak slopes, cypress swamp)</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Managed access with infrastructure and regulation – access limited to trails with usage policies and regulations.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Forested areas are observed to follow the park’s hazardous tree policy and to identify any invasive species encroachment. Kudzu has been identified on the perimeter of the park boundary on the southwestern edge of PMSAP and at the juncture of the Johnston Site park residence and prairied segments.</p>	<p><b>Moderate</b></p>
<p>Access structure to cypress swamp</p>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Managed access with infrastructure and regulation – access limited to boardwalk trail with usage policies and regulations.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> The boardwalk structure receives damage from seasonal flooding and storm events that result in fallen limbs/trees. Regular observation and storm cleanup identifies potential issues and these are addressed with on-site repairs. The boardwalk is closed from December 1- February 1 to protect visitors from duck hunters who set up at blinds across the Forked Deer from the boardwalk viewing area. The entire structure needs replacement with a corresponding removal of larger debris that could impact the structure during flooding.</p>	<p><b>High</b></p>

Hudson Branch Creek	<p><b>Public Use:</b> There is no public use of this resource established or needed as the watershed is prone to flooding, changes in path, and significant erosional damage would occur with regular access. The resource is viewable via park roadway causeways and nearby trails (e.g., Boardwalk)</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Observe and remediate potential blockages (e.g., beaver dams) and potential erosion of causeway culvert passage points</p>	<b>Moderate</b>
Prairied areas (PMSAP and Johnston Site)	<p><b>Public Use:</b> These areas are the backdrop for the prehistoric earthworks/moundscape and are viewable via established park trailways. There is no public use of this resource.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Seasonal cuttings via MOI arrangements with two local farmers to maintain prairies and prevent woody growth damage to soil archeological context.</p>	<b>Moderate</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
Coordinate with TDOA for present and ongoing research opportunities and eventual acquisition of the Bray Site as a satellite property	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.

### PMSAP Interpretive Statement

The interpretive purpose of Pinson Mounds State Archeological Park is threefold in descending order of priority to coordinate with the PMSAP Mission (as provided above):

1. To promote the archeological resources of the Pinson Mounds site in ways that protect and preserve these resources as well as inspire visitors toward future preservation and protection of this site, parallel sites, and archeological resources in general.
2. To present excellent, research-based, educational programs that interpret the Pinson Mounds site, its archeological and natural resources, as well as its history and status; prehistoric, historic, and modern Indigenous cultures; and the methods and theories of archeology.
3. To provide general recreational opportunities for the public which do not conflict with the PMSAP Mission.

### 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.

Park Interpretation and Programs should be developed with the following desired outcomes:

- Building stewards
- Ensuring Equity
- Providing the Highest Value
- Developing Resource Based Programming
- Supporting 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: PMSAP staff will continue to serve as a TSP model for IPE and coordinating efforts to support sister parks in the development and presentation of high-quality interpretive programming as well as support the training of TSP interpreters (e.g., SIR training), will promote the telling of full stories with sensitivity for sacred sites, and will continue to develop and present research-based programs to expand the reach of the interpretive programming audience.

**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: PMSAP staff with the help of TDOA and IPE will develop and use AR/VR presentation technology to provide a richer, more accessible set of interpretive offerings.

**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 the benefit to the participant, value to the park, and impact to the resource.

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will utilize the established programming portfolio to provide excellent programs and will continue to add to the selection of offerings to expand the audiences reached.

**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 the benefit to the participant, value to the park, and impact to the resource.

Action Plan: PMSAP staff will expand the offerings presently available to new audiences. For example, in 2023, the high-interest, established Junior Ranger Camp offering has been restructured to provide an additional in-depth exploration of archeology for grown-ups.

#### 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 represent the extent to which state funding support operations at each park.

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

FINANICAL PERFORMANCE GOALS						
	Current Cost Recovery (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	9.8%	9.9%	10.0%	10.1%	10.2%	10.3%

