



Photo Courtesy of D. Leonard



Strategic Management Plan

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Updates





Tuckahoe State Park

Strategic Management Plan

2019

Overview

This document is the result of a statewide initiative by the Maryland Park Service to develop strategic management plans for its properties in order to establish a path toward a sustainable future. The purpose of each Park's strategic management plan is to use a collaborative process to identify and evaluate the following essential elements of each park: 1) natural resources; 2) cultural and historical resources; 3) recreational resources; 4) human resources, and; 5) infrastructure. Using this background data, a "Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats" (SWOT) analysis is performed. The SWOT analysis facilitates the identification of big-picture goals and targeted objectives that are used to develop a work plan for the park.

This plan documents the process and is divided into five parts:

Part 1: Core Values

This section includes the Maryland Park Service mission and goals, brand promise, and a summary of the features that make the park a significant component of Maryland's state park system.

Part 2: Park Resources

This section identifies and describes park-specific resources including natural resources, cultural and historical resources, recreational resources, human resources, and infrastructure.

Part 3: Resource Assessment

This section documents a resource assessment using the SWOT Analysis process and identifies park-specific strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Part 4: Big Picture Goals

Using the SWOT analysis in Part 3, this section identifies "big-picture" goals that are focused on promoting strengths, overcoming weaknesses, maximizing opportunities, and eliminating threats. The goals are directly connected to reinforcing the core values of the Maryland Park Service.

Part 5: Work Plan

This section serves as a road map that identifies specific actions and projects to effectively achieve the stated goals. It includes a timeline for completion, so that appropriate resources can be dedicated to accomplishment, and employees are empowered to move forward with tasks that support the park's goals and mission.

Maryland Park Service Mission and Goals

The mission of the Maryland Park Service is to manage the natural, cultural, historical, and recreational resources to provide for wise stewardship and enjoyment by people.

The goals of the Maryland Park Service are as follows:

- ▶ To promote, cultivate, and expand public knowledge, understanding, appreciation and support for the resources and services managed by the Maryland Park Service.
- ▶ To operate the Maryland Park Service in a manner that generates an atmosphere of teamwork, shared information, cooperation and trust at all levels of employment.
- ▶ To manage the Maryland Park Service in a manner that ensures the maximum benefit from each dollar and hour of labor expended.
- ▶ To promote the management of natural and cultural resources to ensure the continuing benefits for present and future generations.
- ▶ To provide diverse recreational services with an emphasis upon public safety and the provision of neat, clean and well-maintained resources.

Maryland Park Service Brand Promise

The Maryland Park Service is dedicated to providing an outstanding experience to all park visitors and is committed to the following principles:

1. Providing a place where visitors can bring their children that nourishes their well-being in ways that only nature can provide.
2. Connecting visitors with each other and their surroundings, through the beauty and serenity of nature, in a safe and welcoming place that belongs to them.
3. Preserving and providing opportunities for visitors to discover important historical sites and relics that tell inspiring stories of people and events that give context and meaning to their lives today.
4. Creating an environment for relaxation with the reassuring presence of a friendly and dedicated Park Ranger who inspires and supports the desire to be a good steward of the Earth.
5. Imparting visitors with a sense of well-being and happy memories, so when they leave they are feeling stress-free and revitalized.



Photo Courtesy of Maryland Park Service

Significance Statement

The significance of Tuckahoe State Park is...

- ▶ To conserve and foster an appreciation of the natural resources of the Delmarva Peninsula, featuring Tuckahoe Creek which supports spawning habitat for anadromous fish, large contiguous, mature bottomland hardwood forest, and upland forest and meadows that support diverse wildlife and rare plant and animal species.
- ▶ To provide recreational opportunities for visitors that immerse them in the outdoor world through fishing and paddling adventures on a man-made lake and flooded woodland and through camping, hiking, biking, and horseback riding on 18 miles of trails.
- ▶ To preserve and interpret the region's history including American Indian village sites, potential Underground Railroad activity, Frederick Douglass' early life, and 18th and 19th century farm life on the Eastern Shore.

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Park Resources

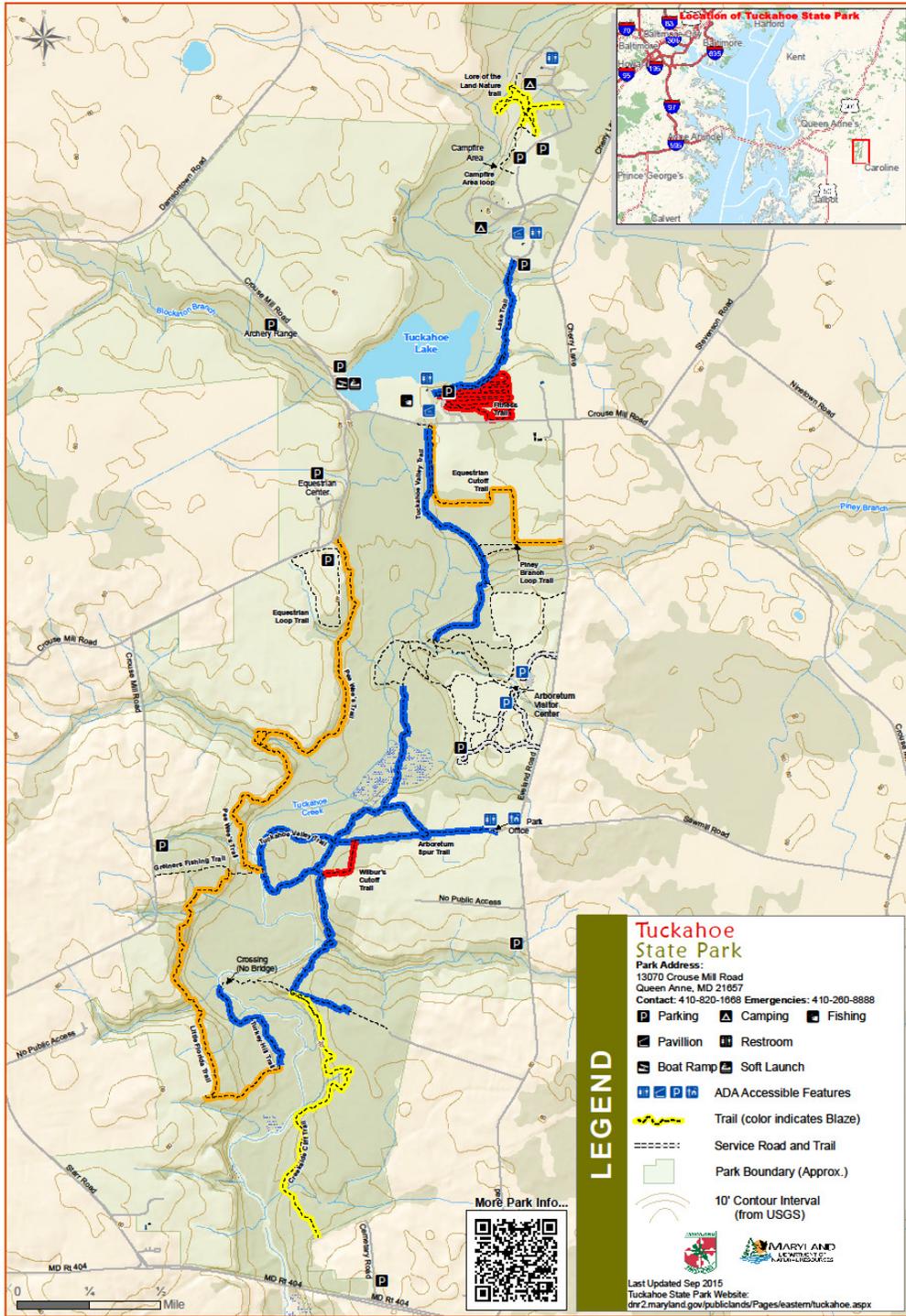
PARK STATS (Fiscal Year 2017)

TOTAL PARK ACREAGE	3,800
ANNUAL VISITATION 2017	99,517
ANNUAL REVENUE (excluding concession revenue) FY2017	\$314,121
ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET* (excluding classified employee payroll) FY2017	\$236,991
TOTAL CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES** (including filled and vacant PINs)	11
*OPERATING BUDGET IS SHARED BY THE FOLLOWING STATE PARKS & NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AREAS (NRMAs):	Tuckahoe, Martinak, Wye Oak, Love Point State Parks, Wye Island, Cypress Branch, Black Walnut Point, Sassafras NRMAs and Bridgetown Ponds, Hollingsworth and Andover Flatwoods Heritage Areas
**EMPLOYEES ARE SHARED BY THE FOLLOWING STATE PARKS & NRMAs:	As noted above

YEAR	SCHEDULED CAPITAL PROJECTS	AMOUNT
FY 2022	Additional Camping and Cabin Loop	\$1,500,000
YEAR	SCHEDULED CRITICAL MAINTENANCE	AMOUNT
FY 2019	Replace Shop Skylights and Paint Roof	\$30,000
FY 2020	Replace Shop Overhead Doors	\$15,000
FY 2022	Insulate Park Office	\$25,000
FY 2022	Replace Water Control System – Water Tower	\$10,000
FY 2023	Inspect/renovate Water Tower	\$10,000
FY 2023	Replace floor in Cherry Lane Restroom	\$3,600
FY 2024+	Multiple Projects	\$150,000+
2016-2027	Total Tuckahoe Complex Critical Maintenance Projects	\$1,000,000+

2 Park Resources

AREA MAP



Natural Resources

KEY FEATURES

- ▶ 63-acre lake and flooded woodland provide habitat for countless species of fish, amphibians, reptiles, waterfowl and other wildlife species.
- ▶ Over four miles of tidal Tuckahoe Creek, which flows from the lake and is fed with several small streams as it travels south toward the Choptank River, providing excellent habitat for many species of anadromous fish.
- ▶ Due to the rare species that are found in the coastal plain floodplain forest, Tuckahoe Creek is regulated as a Wetland of Special State Concern by the Maryland Department of the Environment
- ▶ Over 2,000 acres of mature and naturally aging forest provides habitat for multiple species of wildlife, including the rare Delmarva fox squirrel.
- ▶ Several rare plant species and rare dragonflies and damselflies are found in and around the coastal floodplain forest, and the dry uplands include other rare and threatened species, as well as important pollinator plants.

DESCRIPTION

Tuckahoe State Park is comprised of various ecosystems, including a man-made lake, a natural flooded woodland stream valley, numerous vernal pools, stands of mature oak/hickory forests, and plantations of 50 to 60-year-old loblolly and white pine. This diverse habitat supports a wide array of wildlife, including coyote, fox, white-tailed deer, raccoon, beavers and multiple species of birds and waterfowl.

The forest stands within the park are part of a large block of forest along Tuckahoe Creek that provides habitat for a large number of Forest Interior Dwelling Bird Species (FIDS).

Tuckahoe Lake supports a healthy and predominantly native community of sub-aquatic vegetation. The lake also supports resident fish species, including largemouth bass, bluegill, pumpkinseed, pickerel and crappie. Tuckahoe Creek is a tidal tributary to the Choptank River. The creek and upper reaches above the lake provide excellent spawning habitat for many species of anadromous fish, including shad, perch, striped bass, and others. The creek and upper reaches, as well as associated wetlands and vernal pools provide excellent habitat for a diverse array of amphibians, reptiles, and aquatic insects.

Cultural / Historical

KEY FEATURES

- ▶ The Tuckahoe State Park area is noted for once being occupied by American Indian tribes in the past, and village sites, pottery shards and projectile points are frequently found.
- ▶ Crouse Mill, a local grist mill, once stood on park grounds and part of the mill race is still visible.
- ▶ Several typical older barn and farm structures are located on park grounds, including sites at the Equestrian Center and the park office.

DESCRIPTION

Tuckahoe State Park is located in an area rich in local history dating back to American Indian village sites. Documented archaeological studies have found artifacts in several fields on park grounds. The Tuckahoe stream valley is considered an undocumented route of the Underground Railroad and includes the birth site of the well-known abolitionist, Frederick Douglass.

The Crouse family grist mill (water-powered) was once located on park property and the mill race still exists. Mill stones and other historic pictures, documents, and materials from the mill are preserved and maintained by the park staff.

Recreational Resources

KEY FEATURES

- ▶ 63-acre man-made lake and flooded woodland for fishing and paddling
- ▶ 18 miles of trails for hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and birding
- ▶ Overnight accommodations, including 8 camper cabins, 55 campsites and 4 youth group sites
- ▶ Challenge course with high ropes elements
- ▶ Two picnic areas with pavilions and playground equipment, including volleyball courts and horseshoe pits
- ▶ 18-hole disc golf course
- ▶ Equestrian Center with arena, training ring and jousting track
- ▶ Archery range with a variety of target distances and types
- ▶ Equipment rentals, including kayaks, canoes, mountain bikes and recreational equipment
- ▶ 1,000 acres of fields and woodland open to hunting
- ▶ Adkins Arboretum includes 340 acres of native forests and fields

DESCRIPTION

Tuckahoe State Park is a year-round destination for many forms of classic and passive recreation. The lake provides recreational fishing opportunities for resident fish species, such as largemouth bass, bluegill, and pumpkinseed. Trout are stocked below the lake in Tuckahoe Creek for a limited “put and take” fishery. During the months from April through October, kayaks and canoes are available for rent at the boat house. A boat launch is also available for non-gas-powered watercraft. The trail system (both water and land) is well-defined and offers diverse recreational experiences, including hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, geocaching and cross-country skiing. In addition to equipment rentals, the boat house and camp store also feature a small gift shop, with limited food and drink. The camper cabins and campground are open from April through November. Other recreational facilities are open year-round (weather permitting). Approximately 1,000 acres of woodlands and fields have been designated for hunting, including small game, deer, turkey and waterfowl. The Adkins Arboretum offers a diverse array of habitats, including meadow, deciduous and coniferous forest, wetland, and stream. Visitors can hike or bike on more than 4 miles of packed stone trails. Tuckahoe is a popular site for birding.

Human Resources

KEY RESOURCES

- ▶ 11 full-time classified employees
- ▶ 15-20 seasonal / contractual employees
- ▶ 1 Maryland Conservation Corps crew (5 employees plus 1 crew leader)
- ▶ 1 affiliated foundation / volunteer organization (Friends of Tuckahoe and Martinak State Park)
- ▶ Tuckahoe Equestrian Center, LLC (non-profit group operating the 20-acre equestrian center)
- ▶ Friends of Adkins Arboretum (non-profit group operating the 340-acre Adkins Arboretum)
- ▶ Tuckahoe Bowmen (non-profit group assists in maintaining the 20-acre archery range and targets)

DESCRIPTION

There are 11 full-time classified employees assigned to the Tuckahoe State Park complex, including 1 Park Manager, 2 Park Services Supervisors, 1 Park Services Associate Lead, 2 Park Services Associates (Park Rangers), 1 Maintenance Supervisor, 3 Park Technicians, and 1 Administrative Specialist. In addition to Tuckahoe State Park, these employees are responsible for the maintenance and operation of Martinak, Love Point and Wye Oak State Parks, as well as Wye Island, Black Walnut Point, Cypress Branch and Sassafras Natural Resources Management Areas and three Heritage Areas.

Tuckahoe's seasonal labor force varies based on budget appropriations, but typically includes 3 Park Rangers, 2 naturalists, 5-8 maintenance workers, and 3 concession attendants. Also assigned to Tuckahoe State Park is a Maryland Conservation Corps (MCC) crew, consisting of 5 crew members and 1 long-term contractual crew leader. Although this crew provides operational support to Tuckahoe State Park with programming and maintenance projects, the crew also is frequently assigned to conservation-based projects throughout the region and the state.

The non-profit groups assist in their particular areas of interest and provide the visiting public with additional recreational opportunities.

Infrastructure

KEY FEATURES

- ▶ Park office complex that includes an office (former farm house), the Scales & Tales Aviary, storage shed and an historic barn
- ▶ 3 rental pavilions
- ▶ A maintenance complex, comprised of 4 maintenance buildings
- ▶ Campground, including 2 bathhouses, 8 camper cabins, 55 campsites and 4 youth group sites
- ▶ 3 comfort stations
- ▶ Challenge Course with climbing tower and storage shed
- ▶ Camp store and two wood sheds
- ▶ Boat rental shop
- ▶ Equestrian Center with barn and meeting/club house and improved grounds
- ▶ Archery range with meeting/club house and improved grounds
- ▶ Adkins Arboretum with visitor center, several outbuildings and improved grounds
- ▶ Operational ranger residence
- ▶ 50,000-gallon water tower

DESCRIPTION

Tuckahoe State Park development began in the 1960s and has continued to evolve. Campground buildings were constructed in the 1970s and development has continued with new structures and additional facilities. The Park office is a 1920s farmhouse with improvements, including ADA accessibility to restrooms and interpretive room.

The lake area has a large parking area with a pavilion, playground, restroom and boat rental facility, and is filled to capacity on most weekends. The area is also a major trailhead for both paddling trips and hiking trails. The Cherry Lane portion of the park has two camp loops with electric sites, bathhouses, eight camper cabins and store. The picnic area has a pavilion, playground and recreational equipment and parking.

The Youth Group area has four sites, a pavilion and restroom facility, as well as the Challenge Course equipment and elements. The park water tower and treatment room is also located near this area.

Three areas are managed by associated groups: the Equestrian Center, Bow Range and Adkins Arboretum.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ Healthy forests and streams protect multiple rare and threatened species, including freshwater mussels in the main creek and feeder streams.
- ▶ Lake and creek provide excellent habitat for fish to spawn and reproduce.
- ▶ Fish ladder at lake has been very successful in allowing anadromous species to move to headwaters to spawn.
- ▶ The park has good diversity of ecological systems.
- ▶ The park is an ideal "Dark Skies" location.
- ▶ Proximity to and relationship with Adkins Arboretum provides opportunities for activities, education, and management partnerships.
- ▶ Forest stands are part of a large forest block along Tuckahoe Creek that is recognized as an Important Bird Area by the National Audubon Society due to the extraordinary number of Forest Interior Dwelling Bird Species that have been documented as breeding there.
- ▶ The park provides excellent habitat for rare, threatened and endangered odonate (dragonfly and damselfly) species.

Weaknesses

- ▶ Even-aged pine stands lack diversity.
- ▶ Traditional row crop leases occupy land that could be used for sustainable agriculture, enhancing and increasing wildlife habitat and biological diversity.
- ▶ Invasive species are spreading in several areas.
- ▶ Areas of the park are susceptible to storm damage and flooding along creek valley.
- ▶ Areas around the lake and around the picnic area and playground are showing signs of excessive use.
- ▶ The comfort station is dated and fixtures should be replaced with modern, water-saving sinks and toilets.
- ▶ Habitat enhancement efforts for specific important species within the park are needed.

Natural Resources

Opportunities

- ▶ Continue to evaluate and transition cropland to natural meadows and forests and explore partnerships with Washington College and other interested groups.
- ▶ Develop a long-term program to manage invasive species.
- ▶ Interpretive flyers about ecosystems, habitat features (i.e. fish ladder, pollinator gardens, etc.) can assist the public with learning about and understanding conservation goals.
- ▶ Partner with local clubs or develop star-gazing programs using open field in camping area.
- ▶ Explore partnerships with Adkins Arboretum to expand the nature center to highlight the natural resources of the park.
- ▶ A partnership with Adkins Arboretum and Maryland Eastern Shore Native Plant Society could be used to facilitate efforts to promote native plant species and control or eradicate non-native plant species.
- ▶ Forest stands along Tuckahoe Creek include significant breeding populations of several declining bird species, such as Prothonotary warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, and Kentucky warbler. These forests provide for their conservation and attract birders.

Threats

- ▶ Southern pine bark beetle outbreaks in old pine stands would decimate some sections of forest.
- ▶ Excessive runoff of sediment, nutrients, pesticides and fertilizers from nearby agricultural fields can be detrimental to both rare stream species and rare plant populations.
- ▶ Invasive vegetation from boaters or fishing gear may begin to establish in the lake.
- ▶ Several invasive species are known to be present in the park, including Ailanthus, multiflora rose, Oriental bittersweet, garlic mustard and wavy-leaf basket grass.
- ▶ Damage to vegetation from visitors (tree carving, flower picking / digging) may adversely affect the park's natural beauty.

3 Resource Assessment

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ Use of farm house as an office allows for historic interpretation of a typical farm location.
- ▶ Partnership with Tuckahoe Equestrian Center to preserve facilities on the Equestrian Center grounds (historic barn and shed).
- ▶ There is interesting local cultural information on topics such as agrarian lifestyles, the underground railroad, Frederick Douglas, steamboat travel and more, that could be interpreted.

Weaknesses

- ▶ There is a lack of up-to-date historic information. An historic sites survey would facilitate efforts to identify historic landscapes and sites and inventory artifacts.
- ▶ There are unmet opportunities to interpret the history of the park or to develop interpretive displays.
- ▶ With staff attrition, park history needs to be documented.
- ▶ More effort could be made to interpret local history.

Cultural/Historical Resources

Opportunities

- ▶ Utilize the DNR Committee for Maryland Conservation History (CMCH) for historic resources, artifacts, research, and contacts.
- ▶ Develop a self-guided brochure for historic sites.
- ▶ Improve interpretive exhibits related to the history of the Tuckahoe area within the current park office area.
- ▶ Expand interpretation of 18th and 19th century history, including the mills, railroads, agriculture and other industrial sites within the park.
- ▶ Local American Indian resources could be a resource to expand interpretation of pre-European settlement and environmental history.
- ▶ Use geocaching to highlight cultural resources.
- ▶ Partnerships with Washington College, Chesapeake College and/or Adkins Arboretum could be explored to help with developing interpretive materials /programs.
- ▶ Reach out to experts in local history to teach staff, design interpretive panels, etc.
- ▶ Partner with other local parks for joint programming on common themes (e.g., Harriet Tubman).
- ▶ Hiring interpreters with historical or cultural expertise, in addition to naturalists could diversify programming.

Threats

- ▶ Remaining historic structures are in need of maintenance.
- ▶ The opportunity to interpret some landscapes and structures may be permanently lost if action is not taken to stabilize and protect them.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ Excellent campground, multi-use trail system, fishing and paddling opportunities.
- ▶ Tuckahoe's terrain offers opportunities to create a natural surface trail destination on the Eastern Shore.
- ▶ The only public archery range in the area and exceptional archery programs for kids.
- ▶ The only challenge course in the State Park system.
- ▶ Adkins Arboretum provides an additional educational opportunity for park visitors.
- ▶ Destination playground and waterfront elements.
- ▶ There is a reserve of recreational carrying capacity (good balance of opportunities for solitude, as well as human comradery in various areas).
- ▶ Park feels safe and well-cared-for, with welcoming staff and excellent customer service.
- ▶ Organized annual events, such as the Tuckahoe Triathlon, provide venues to partner with the local community to introduce new constituents to the park.

Weaknesses

- ▶ Some existing trails do not meet accepted guidelines for physical sustainability (low-lying, chronically wet areas) and need to be modified or relocated to be sustainable.
- ▶ Maintenance of the archery range challenges the limits of the small partnering organization (Tuckahoe Bowmen).
- ▶ Heavy vegetation along edge of lake limits shoreline fishing opportunities.
- ▶ The campground is in need of electrical upgrades to eliminate outages.
- ▶ Marketing and communication efforts could be further optimized.
- ▶ The downstream paddle portion of the stream needs additional maintenance.
- ▶ There is an increasing number of ticks and other nuisance insects (possibly linked to an increase in some invasive species).

Recreational Resources

Opportunities

- ▶ The Bikeways-funded trestle conversion in the south end of the park will expand access and opportunities for new trails on the east side of the creek.
- ▶ New loop trail could be developed through north end.
- ▶ Water trail could be improved by clearing farther north to Mason Bridge Road.
- ▶ Archery range could be improved and programs added.
- ▶ The Challenge Course could be expanded to make it a key feature of the park.
- ▶ Campsites could be improved with electric and water.
- ▶ Trail resources could be improved (maps, trail marking, waysides, etc.)
- ▶ Social media could be better utilized to expand awareness / public interest in Scales & Tales program.
- ▶ Tire playground could be replaced with a new nature-themed playground.
- ▶ Partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions could be fostered to support development of the Upper Chesapeake Rail Trail.
- ▶ Partnership with Adkins Arboretum could be enhanced (i.e. shared parking for trails, events, etc.).

Threats

- ▶ Poor design of trails in some areas is causing trails to break down.
- ▶ Expanding use of irrigation along creek and upper reaches of Mason's Branch reduces flow during dry summer months.
- ▶ Eutrophication of the lake is changing the fishery and paddling waters.
- ▶ Perception of conflicting user groups may require additional coordination and education to accommodate all park visitors.
- ▶ There is overuse and some crowding at certain times in the lake area.

3 Resource Assessment

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ Employees are very committed to the park, its resources, and the visiting public.
- ▶ Seasonal staff is also very dedicated to the park. Most employees are, or become, "local," and are therefore quite knowledgeable about local flora, fauna, recreational opportunities, customer service questions, etc.
- ▶ This dedication / loyalty is not only to the park, but also to their park "family."
- ▶ Diverse backgrounds, skills, strengths, knowledge.
- ▶ Staff is very flexible, well-rounded and hard-working.
- ▶ Willingness to "get dirty" on all types of projects and assist others as needed regardless of job classification / assignments.
- ▶ The park is a good place to work and learn how to be a great Ranger and park employee.

Weaknesses

- ▶ Aging equipment and infrastructure needs to be on a regular schedule for replacement and upgrades.
- ▶ There is a need for more cross-training, so staff can gain broader knowledge about management issues, and learn new ways to deal with situations and challenges.

Human Resources

Opportunities

- ▶ Work with other parks to cross train staff and broaden their experience by working in a different park.
- ▶ Good seasonal employees can be provided with opportunities for full-time positions.
- ▶ Continue to cultivate and foster a team work ethic and sense of community with staff and their families.
- ▶ Strengthen volunteer network to help ease the workload in areas where it is feasible.
- ▶ Enhance employee recognition, commendations, appreciation at the park level and agency level.
- ▶ Encourage participation in optional training sessions, networking events, and other opportunities for staff to enhance their knowledge and skills in areas that interest them, in order to maintain their job satisfaction.
- ▶ Enhance communication through reporting efforts, staff meetings, etc.
- ▶ Short term work details at other parks would be beneficial.

Threats

- ▶ Large complex makes it challenging for staff to complete projects in a timely manner.
- ▶ Staff attrition due to transfers, promotions, retirements or resignations.
- ▶ MCC crew is a temporary workforce maintained on a year-to-year basis.

3 Resource Assessment

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- ▶ A number of substantial park elements are already in place, e.g. campground, shelters, etc.
- ▶ Challenge course, disc golf course and playgrounds are in place.
- ▶ Aviary is a relatively unique educational amenity.

Weaknesses

- ▶ The park does not have a dedicated visitor center to serve as a focal point and contact opportunity for guests.
- ▶ The park facilities are aging. Most of the major buildings are over 40 years old.
- ▶ The park office is not centrally located to busy park areas and could be better designed to be more functional.
- ▶ Lack of electric service for campers limits stay for many units.
- ▶ Park lacks a single designated entry point, resulting in confusion for new visitors.
- ▶ There is no dedicated nature center or camp store.

Infrastructure

Opportunities

- ▶ Current visitation levels would likely support an increase in improved campsites and cabins.
- ▶ Enhancing Camp Host sites with upgraded connections would improve the Host program.
- ▶ Providing on-site housing for interns could help with seasonal workload.
- ▶ Formalizing the route for the Upper Chesapeake Rail Trail and coordinating with County economic development groups could make additional funding sources available.
- ▶ More amenities, e.g. cabins and a bathhouse in the youth group area, could increase use.
- ▶ Exploring alternative energy sources, e.g. solar energy, wind energy for the park office and other facilities could make the park “greener” and save money.
- ▶ The park has ample land area to spread visitors out, away from the over-used areas.
- ▶ Explore the possibility of an additional pavilion on the far side of the lake and identify the best location.
- ▶ Implementing the new sign and wayfinding standards will improve wayfinding throughout the park.
- ▶ Coordinating with Adkins Arboretum on a “combined visitor center” could benefit both groups.

Threats

- ▶ Facilities are aging and need to be updated, and in some cases, replaced.
- ▶ Maintenance costs will continue to increase as facilities continue to age.
- ▶ Institutional knowledge is being lost with staff attrition.
- ▶ There is limited funding for capital improvement and critical maintenance projects, especially those that exceed \$500,000.

4

Big-Picture Goals

NATURAL RESOURCE GOALS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Develop and implement a plan to increase habitat for Forest Interior Dwelling Birds by gradually reducing the park's agricultural leased areas and converting land to forest. |
| 2 | Develop and implement a prioritized plan of action for control of non-native invasive plant species and promotion of environmentally beneficial, native trees, shrubs and plants. |
| 3 | Develop and implement a plan of action to improve or maintain pollinator habitat and increase efforts to educate visitors on the importance of pollinators. |

CULTURAL/ HISTORICAL RESOURCE GOALS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 4 | Research, plan and begin implementation of a cultural/historical resource interpretive plan for the Park. |
| | |
| | |

RECREATIONAL RESOURCE GOALS

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|---|--|
| 5 | Review recreational amenities and develop a plan to explore enhancements, such as a new playground (possibly with a water feature), challenge course improvements and expanded trail system. |
| 6 | Plan and implement improvements to the existing campground, to complete electrification of the second camp loop. |
| 7 | Improve, enhance and expand the trail network utilizing the MPS Trail Signage and Wayfinding Guide and replace park signage with wood routed signs per MPS Routed Sign Specifications. |

HUMAN RESOURCE GOALS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 8 | Work with Senior Staff to program short-term work details for interested staff, review staffing levels for the complex, and add both full-time and seasonal employees as budget and resources allow. |
|---|--|

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS

- | | |
|----|---|
| 9 | Review infrastructure and uses and begin planning for replacement, renovations and new facilities. |
| 10 | Work with the Maryland Energy Administration and Engineering and Construction to design and program funds for alternative energy projects for park buildings to make the park "greener" and save money. |
| 11 | Develop and implement a plan of action to decrease light pollution and preserve the night sky. |
| 12 | Collaborate with Adkins Arboretum to explore opportunities for the development /expansion of mutually beneficial shared facilities and infrastructure, including a nature center and park office. |

GOAL #1

Develop and implement a plan to increase habitat for Forest Interior Dwelling Birds by gradually reducing the park's agricultural leased areas and converting land to forest.

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS**TIMELINE**

Identify an interdisciplinary team of people to participate in the planning and implementation process.	2019
Communicate with stakeholders and MPS leadership to identify realistic management goals.	2019
Set up regular meetings to draft a plan and identify necessary resources.	2019
Draft plan and identify specific implementation actions and timelines.	2019-20
When the plan is approved, submit proposed actions for internal review.	2020
Implement the plan management strategies.	2020-21

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

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GOAL #2

Develop and implement a prioritized plan of action for control of non-native invasive plant species and promotion of environmentally beneficial, native trees, shrubs, and plants.

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS**TIMELINE**

Identify expert resources available for training and assistance (Wildlife and Heritage Service, Maryland Native Plant Society, Statewide Eyes, etc.).	2019
Utilize available resources to perform a comprehensive inventory of non-native invasive species within the park.	2019
Define priorities and develop a plan of action for eradication, control and prevention of non-native invasive species.	2019
Submit the plan of action for internal review.	2019
Once approved, utilize available resources to implement the plan.	2019-21
Assess progress and update the plan of action at annual intervals.	2019-21

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL #3

Develop and implement a plan of action to improve or maintain pollinator habitat and increase efforts to educate visitors on the importance of pollinators.

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS**TIMELINE**

Inventory park areas that are routinely mowed and assess possibility of conversion to meadows.

2019

Work with the Wildlife and Heritage Service to produce a list of important pollinators for the geographical region.

2019

Assess presence/absence of important pollinators within the park and focus planting on host/nectar-producing plants.

2019-20

Develop or utilize pre-developed educational materials to highlight pollinator habitat and why it is important.

2019-20

Establish a maintenance protocol for pollinator / meadow areas to ensure long term viability and improve aesthetics.

2020-23

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #4 **Research, plan and begin implementation of a cultural / historical resource interpretive plan for the Park.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Identify local historical experts or organizations to initiate the planning process.	2019
Contact history departments at Chesapeake College, Washington College and other organizations for possible research assistance.	2019
Gather and catalog available information on various historical aspects of the park and identify focus areas.	2019
Hire a seasonal intern dedicated to the task of historical research and planning.	2019
Convene a group of experts to review available historical information and draft plan for interpretation.	2019
Provide opportunity for public input, comment and circulate plan for review.	2020
Initiate implementation of the plan as funding and resources allow.	2021

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

GOAL #5	Review recreational amenities and develop a plan to explore enhancements, such as a new playground (possibly with a water feature), challenge course improvements, and expanded trail system.
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PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Research options for alternative amenities based on other parks in the area (Maryland and Delaware).	2019
Develop a project list, coordinate with Park Service planners and submit capital improvement project form.	2019
Work with Engineering and Construction to develop and design projects and programs.	2022
Coordinate with Engineering and Construction and participate in formal design process.	2024
Prepare for project construction.	2025

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #6 **Plan and implement improvements to the existing campground to include complete electrification of the second camp loop.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Inspect/assess campground and identify needs for improvement.	2019
Develop list of prioritized maintenance projects, identifying those for in-house or Maryland Conservation Corps crews and those for critical maintenance.	2019
Develop a project list, coordinate with Park Service planners and submit project justifications and capital improvement project form(s).	2019
Work with Engineering and Construction to develop design program(s).	2022
Coordinate with Engineering and Construction and participate in the design process.	2024
Prepare for project construction.	2025

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #7 **Improve, enhance and expand the trail network utilizing the MPS Trail Signage and Wayfinding Guide and replace park signage with wood routed signs per MPS Routed Sign Specifications.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Inspect all trails and determine areas that will need work and improvements.	2019
Evaluate all structures and facilities and identify those that need new wood-routed signs	2019
Submit projects for trail grants and possible capital projects.	2019
Work with regional sign shop to fabricate and paint new wood routed signs. Install new signs as they are completed.	2019
Complete trail design and review process.	2019
Complete trail projects.	2020-21

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #8 **Work with Senior Staff to program short-term work details for interested staff, review staffing levels for the complex, and add both full-time and seasonal employees as budget and resources allow.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Assess current staffing levels and facilities and identify needs.	2019
Work with Senior Staff to provide work detail opportunities for interested staff.	2019
Develop staffing plan based on complex.	2019
Request additional staff in budget.	2019
Add seasonal employees.	2019

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #9 **Review infrastructure and uses and begin planning for replacement or renovations.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Assess existing structures and develop project justifications necessary for Critical Maintenance Program.	2019
Discuss proposals with MPS planning staff and submit forms to Engineering and Construction.	2019
Use staff to make repairs possible within budget guidelines.	2020-21
Develop an annual maintenance work plan.	2019-23

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #11 **Develop and implement a plan of action to decrease light pollution and preserve the night sky.**

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Review the International Dark Sky Association (IDA) Dark Sky Park Program Guidelines.	2019
Use the IDA Program Guidelines to perform a comprehensive inventory and analysis of all outdoor lighting within the park.	2019
Develop a Lightscape Management Plan and submit for internal review.	2019
Once approved, implement the Lightscape Management Plan as budget allows.	2019-20
If / when qualified, complete the application process for IDA Dark Sky certification.	2021

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

5 **Work Plan**

GOAL #12 Collaborate with Adkins Arboretum to explore opportunities for the development/expansion of mutually beneficial shared facilities and infrastructure, including a nature center and park office.

PROJECTS AND ACTIONS	TIMELINE
Initiate regular meetings with Adkins Arboretum to identify and better define needs for new facilities and infrastructure.	2019
Identify specific projects and begin discussions about design programs, funding opportunities, and related programs and staffing.	2020
Collaborate with appropriate Department of Natural Resources staff and other public or private entities to identify funding (including Natural Resources Development Funds managed by the Department of General Services).	2021
Begin design development of one or more projects.	2021-23

COMMENTS / PROGRESS REPORT

Acknowledgements

COLLABORATOR	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
Brett Coakley	Fisheries Biologist	DNR – Fisheries Service
Pete Smith	Regional Manager	DNR – MD Park Service (retired)
Susan Simmons	Recreation and Parks Director	Caroline County
Bob Baltz	Volunteer / Friends Group	Friends of Upper Shore Parks
Mike Riley	Regional Manager	DNR – MD Park Service
Wesley Knapp	Regional Biologist	DNR – Wildlife and Heritage
Teri Batchelor	Forester	DNR - Forest Service
Jim Harris	Forester	DNR - Forest Service
Jessica Conley	Assistant Park Manager	DNR – Park Service
Debbie Cooper	Park Manager	DNR - Park Service
Roy Rafter	Area Lieutenant	DNR – Natural Resources Police
Ginna Tierman	Acting Director	Adkins Arboretum
Dan Hudson	Trails Coordinator	DNR – MD Park Service
Sam Durner	Volunteer/Bow Shooter	Tuckahoe Bowmen
Charlie Mazurek	Historic Specialist	DNR – Engineering and Construction
Dorie Coleman	Office Manager	DNR – MD Park Service
Wayne Suydam	Chief of Maintenance	DNR – MD Park Service
John Ohler	Park Manager	DNR – MD Park Service (retired)