

Cedars of Lebanon State Park Strategic Management Plan

2023 – 2033



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Park Purpose, History and Description.

Cedars of Lebanon State Park is part of the 10,000-acre Cedars of Lebanon State Forest, considered the “largest contiguous cedar glades-barrens complex in public ownership in Middle Tennessee.” The park is near five cedar glade state natural areas, including three located within the state forest, and within 27 miles of nine additional glades-barrens SNAs in southeastern Davidson, northern Rutherford, and southern Wilson counties. Cedar glades and barrens ecosystems are globally rare. The highest concentration of glades occurs in the Central Basin of Tennessee with 23 endemic or near-endemic plant species noted. To date, 31 rare and/or endemic species have been found in the park and surrounding forest.

Cedars of Lebanon encompasses a spectrum of rich cultural history. Small communities grew and prospered around the bountiful timber, particularly eastern red cedar, growing in the rocky limestone soil. They were able to weather the temporary hardships of civil war and early economic downturns thanks to the variety of industries needing wood. Depleted forest resources coupled with severe economic depression and lack of farmable land in the 1930s led to the demise of these communities and resettlement of families under Roosevelt’s New Deal policies. The buildings, cabins, and shelters constructed by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) following resettlement represent Cedars of Lebanon’s primary cultural assets.

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:

- Visit county schools try to determine what grade would be best for teaching karst topography or Tennessee Central basin environmental facts
- Develop a lesson plan for rangers to use in the classroom for annual visits
- Work with REI distribution center to develop a Lunch and learn type visit to showcase The Cedars Forest and TSP in general
- Continue to partner with TDNA to enhance grassland environments.
- Continue to try to work with the Tennessee State Fair to increase ranger presence at the annual event

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

Action Plan:

- Identify resources in need of action Develop specific work outcomes related to Management of a particular resource

- Develop specific prescribed burning schedules for grasslands to maintain habitat for birds, insects and grassland mammals
- Engage local businesses such as Publix and REI to establish a regular volunteer force
- Build bicycle and hiking trails in the natural area in attempt to endear the resource to the local residents
- Seek expert help to identify at risk resources and to develop restoration plans. Middle Tennessee State University, state historical commission

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

Action Plan:

- Use GIS to Map cultural and natural resources through the Cedar Forest complex
- Catalog and rank resources in most need of protection or intervention

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:

- We will study the history of the land to find out what happened on the land prior to the park and after the establishment of the park.
- we will try to tell all those stories to promote a sense of ownership
- Develop programing venues that are accessible to all guests regardless of ability
- Design programing to be used in accessible spaces.

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

Action Plan:

- Create a wider variety of resource-based programing using multiple aspects of the natural resource including flora Fauna and geologic with such topics as Karst topography birding and flower identification.
- Use these programs to make the visitors comfortable and interested in the natural resource of the park
- Create a catalog of High Adventure programs to target younger visitors and get them interested in protecting the resource

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

Action Plan:

- Develop hiking trails in the Natural area.

- Create bicycling trails.
- Backcountry camping opportunities.
- Encourage birding and nature photography through programming efforts

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:

- Upgrade, modernize tools and equipment at the maintenance shop
- Educate maintenance staff through classes training and certification
- Work to identify and replace worn parts and systems before they break
- Address any deferred maintenance issues by priority

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

Action Plan:

- Develop outreach and information about the Cave Creek Accessible trail
- Continue to develop area around Cave Creek trail into a native grass environment
- Provide educational signage for Cave Creek trail
- Develop programming around W.P.A. experience from multiple points of view
- Develop Sadie Ford Farm to illustrate the local experience during the time the park was founded

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

Action Plan:

- Complete campground remodel project Nov 1, 2023 – July 15, 2024
- Redesign and build main entrance and roadway at Hwy 231 and Cedar Forest Road to match TSP design criteria
- Provide new bathhouse for campground one
- Work to replace any old furnishings in the campground not addressed by the 2023 remodel
- Pursue project to repurpose area around slash pad 2025 capital projects list
- Remodel and upgrade group lodge
- Continue to refurbish rental cabins_
- Develop area around entrance and parking for Disk golf course Kiosk, informational signage, paving.

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:

- Find ways to build employee morale. Regular staff meetings to share information, uniforms, checking on employees regularly.
- Encourage staff to explore certification in various skills
- Encourage staff to participate in activities outside of their normal duties such as fire teams or participation in search and rescue operations on the park.
- Meet with staff to discuss best or safe practices.

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

Action Plan:

- Train employees to lessen calls for others to make repairs to buildings and mechanical systems
- Better seal and insulate buildings to lower energy costs
- Study and implement a lean operational system
- Operate within budgetary limits

Park Overview

Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Cedars of Lebanon
Site Manager	Jeff Buchanan
Area Manager	Kenny Gragg
Park acreage	1000
Total number of visitors (FY 2022)	1,634,441
Total expenses before CO (FY 2022)	2,074,666
Total revenues (FY 2022)	1,312,549
Retail cost recovery % ¹	144.68
Park cost recovery %	63.3
Average expense per visitor (FY 2022)	1.26
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2022)	.80
Gross profit or loss	(\$762,117)
Total full-time available positions / filled	16 / 15
Total part-time available positions / filled	5 / 5
Primary feeder markets	Day use – Lebanon and Wilson County. Overnight – Wilson & Surrounding Counties
Primary reasons people visit	Cedars of Lebanon State Park has 117 campsites, 12 picnic shelters, a splash pad, 9 miles of hiking trails, 12 miles of horse trails, rustic cabins, the Cedar Forest Lodge, a group lodge, a meeting hall, the Dixon Merritt Nature Center, Frisbee Golf course, Sadie Ford Farm.
Opportunities for improvement	Expanded day use...Hiking, bicycling.

Key Attractions

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

- Camping
- Assembly hall
- Cedars forest Lodge
- Disk Golf
- Hiking

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

- Cabins
- Nature Center
- Saide Ford Farm
- Butterfly and Native Plant Garden

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 Cedars of Lebanon State 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.
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Facility Inventory and Assessment

The table below is an inventory of facilities and amenities at _Cedars of Lebanon State Park, and provides the assessed condition of each.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Assembly Hall	1	Fair
Cedar Forest Lodge	1	good
Picnic shelters	12	Fair
Park office	1	good
deluxe cabins	9	poor
Splash pad	1	Excellent
Ranger residences	4	Good
Nature Center	1	poor
Sadie Ford Farmhouse / out	1	bad
Camp store	1	Good
117 campsites	1	Fair
Historic cabins	4	Fair
Group Lodge	1	Poor
Horse Barn	1	Fair
bath houses	3	2 good 1 poor
Sadie Ford Broom House	1	
Corn Crib	1	
Milking Shed	1	
Barn	1	

Trail Inventory and Assessment

Trail Name	Total	Conditions
Cave Creek ADA Trail	0.61	Excellent
Cedar Forest Trail	1.73	Good
Cedar Glade Trail	0.52	Good
Cedar Run Trail	1.64	Good
Cedars of Lebanon Horse Trail	5.11	Fair
Dixon Merritt Trail	0.40	Good

Hidden Springs Trail	4.19	Fair
Limestone Sink Trail	0.39	Good
Grand Total	14.58	Good

The trails at cedars of Lebanon are reflective of the karst topographic conditions of the Middle Tennessee Central basin. The thin soils tend to wear quickly leaving exposed rock and tree roots. Where the thin soils remain the underlying bed rock often proves impenetrable to water causing muddy conditions during wet seasons. The best way to combat these conditions is to raise the trail surface. Since raising trail requires hauling and placing of material it is more labor intensive and a bit more costly than digging trail surface. This leads us to be selective as to where we focus our efforts generally targeting the sections of trail in the worse condition. The existing trails on the park seem adequate for the size and visitation at present, as more residents move into the area visitation is bound to rise. The increased visitation will call for increased trail choices. To counter this increase we will need to explore the possibilities of new trails and support facilities in the adjacent natural area.

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
Day use at splash pad	Add picnic shelter restroom and outdoor event venue
Add restrooms, parking, hiking trailhead, and bicycle trails at natural area	Natural area needs to be developed for passive resource-based recreation

Prioritized Facility Needs

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

New Asset & Amenities	Description
Day use at splash pad	Renovation of pool buildings
Bath House Campground one	replaces bath house in campground one
Replace group lodge	Building, plumbing, electrical fixtures and finishes are 50 years
Restroom at Hill picnic area	Replace restroom at hill picnic area

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 Cedars of Lebanon State Park have been identified as **core services**:

- Ranger program
- Park maintenance program
- Outdoor Recreational opportunities

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 Cedars of Lebanon State Park have been identified as **important services**:

- Entertainment programming (hayrides, Campfires, music)
- Educational programming highlighting the resource.
- Butterfly and Native Plant Garden

CATEGORY 3 – VISITOR SUPPORTED SERVICES *[Almost exclusively supported by earned revenue]*

Visitor supported programs, services and facilities are those discretionary services that the agency may provide when additional funding or revenue exists to offset the cost of providing those services. Category 3 services provide added value above and beyond what is required or expected. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as visitor supported are:

- The services expand, enhance or support Core Services, Important Services and the quality of life of the visitors, community or stakeholders.
- The services are supported, valued and well utilized and provide an appropriate and valuable public benefit.
- The services generate income or funding from sponsorships, grants, user fees or other sources that offset some or all of their cost and/or provides a meaningful return on investment.
- The Services can possibly be provided through outsourcing or use of concessionaires, providing opportunities for community enterprise or services that may not otherwise be provided by the agency.

The following programs and services offered at Cedars of Lebanon State Park have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Splash pad
- Disk Golf
- Event Venues
- Camping
- Event spaces
- Butterfly and Native Plant Garden

Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at Cedars of Lebanon State Park represent the largest area of budgetary expense at an average of 52% of the total operating budget each year for the last three complete years, which is less than the target of labor costs not exceeding 65% of total operating expenditures. The tables below and on the following page provide a basic review of the current staffing at the site.

Full Time Equivalent Employees

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Compensation Total
Park Manager	1	*
Park Ranger 3	1	*
Park Ranger 2	3	*
Facility Supervisor	1	60,300
Building maintenance Worker 2	1	38,184
Conservation worker 3	1	37,800
Conservation worker 2	2	68,472
Custodial supervisor 1	1	34,236
Account Clerk	1	40,308
Administrative Assistant	1	33,024
Clerk 3	1	34,812
Clerk 2	1	29,346
TOTAL	15	687,042

**Law enforcement compensation confidential by TN law.*

Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
Conservation worker 1	1	30,204
Laborer	2	55,575
Lifeguard	1	23,692
TOTAL	4	109,471

Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	1244
Community Service Workers	
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	1770 (Master Gardners)
Other: _____	
TOTAL	3015

Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
Full Time Equivalent Employees	687,042
Part Time Employees	109,471
TOTAL Annual Labor Expense	796,513

Additional Future Positions Needed

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
Conservation 2	1	Full time	2025	Addition of facilities at splash pad and natural area
Custodial worker 2	1	Full time	2025	Addition of facilities at splash pad and natural area
Interpreter	1	fulltime	2024	Staff the nature center and administer programming service
TOTAL	3			

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	Cabins Rev Per Unit	Campground Rev Per Unit	Day use Rev Per Unit	Group Camps Lodges Rev Per Unit
2019	62,42	9.97	41.82	46.11
2020	56.96	8.99	25,37	28.83
2021	81.66	13.34	28.11	81.66
2022	86.33	16.35	86.33	46.57

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	Cabins Rev Per Unit	Campground Rev Per Unit	Day Use Rev Per Unit	Group Camp Lodges Rev Per Unit
2023	87	8	87	46
2024	89	8	88	47
2025	90	15	89	46
2026	91	20	90	48

Customer Service

Platform / Site	Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
Campground (Net Promoter Score)	23	61
Cabins (Net Promoter Score)	23	43
TripAdvisor	23	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:

- Park Manager Technical institute
- Field Training Officer certification
- HVAC technician certification
- Trade certification plumbing, electrical, welding, H.V.A.C.
- Administrative Professional certification
- Routine management training
- Routine law enforcement training

Summary of Key Recommendations

Please provide short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations for addressing operational issues at the park and improving overall park performance.

Short Term Recommendations (Less than 1 year)

1. **Site and Facilities**
 - a. Wired internet service to offices and overnight guest facilities
 - b. Campground refurbishment, site furnishings, Markers, signage, roadways
2. **Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Seasonal campground attendants
 - b. Seasonal staff for Sadie ford farm
 - c. ¾ or 1 ton truck for maintenance
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. New furniture bedding and appliances and lighting in Cabins
 - b. Additional improvement to camp store and office
 - c. Full-time year-round staff for nature center and administer programming duties

Mid Term Recommendations (2-5 years)

1. **Site and Facilities**
 - a. New restroom for Hill picnic area
 - b. New restroom picnic shelter and repurpose of old buildings at splashpad
 - c. Foundation repairs to Sadie Ford Home
2. **Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Add 2 staff members to maintenance crew to cover new facilities and trails
 - b. ATV or Automobile to cover new patrol areas
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. New directional and informational signage
 - b. New trails in Natural area
 - c. Native grass prairie at cave creek trail

Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

1. **Site and Facilities**

- a. Parking and restrooms for natural area
 - b. New or remolded group lodge
 - c. New Cabins
 - d. Pavement various lots and roadways
- 2. Operations and Staffing**
- a. Full time trial maintenance worker
- 3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
- a. New visitor center with informational museum
 - b. Working plan for the Sadie Ford farmstead

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 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.

There are two primary ecological systems at Cedars of Lebanon: glades and barrens of the Nashville Basin Limestone Glade and Woodland and the Southern Interior Low Plateau Dry-Mesic Oak Forest, each with their component associations and rare species. Both systems have areas needing active management. It will be a priority to identify potential transitional areas between open glades and cedar forests for selective management (burning, thinning, Gyro-trac) to improve ecological health, increase habitat diversity within the glade/barren/forest mosaic and encourage conservative species currently shaded out by dense growth at glade margins. A second priority is to identify locations of non-native species invasion and eliminate or reduce the threat through appropriate management techniques.

Historical significance and craftsmanship place a high value on the park's WPA structures and dictate appropriate periodic refurbishing and ongoing regular maintenance to retain their structural integrity and visual charm. These structures located within the historical envelope area of the park will be constantly assessed and plans made to preserve them for future generations. We will continue efforts to solicit and document family and community histories, photo collections, and other artifacts to document park and pre park history in the area while highlighting the Sadie Ford Farm.

The contents of this resource management plan are as follows:

1. Resource Management Objectives
2. Resource Inventory and Assessment
3. Management Strategies
4. Priority Actions
5. Supplemental Information

Resource Management Objectives

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be nationally recognized for exemplary stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *More and better stewards:* Increase internal and external stewards who share Tennessee State Parks core values and can contribute to the State Parks mission to steward Tennessee's natural and cultural resources.

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

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

Aligned with these objectives are specific strategies to achieve the desired outcomes for the natural, cultural, and historic resources of this park.

Strategies

- A. Identify and GIS map glades in need of management
- B. Seek grant funding to Gryo track glade edges
- C. Author a prescribed burn plan for areas in need of management
- D. Develop regular programing to highlight natural resources on the park to secure public support for protection
- E. Develop park and statewide policy for public use of historical buildings and activity apply the policy
- F. Collect and study old photographs of the WPA structures and try to return them to original condition
- G. Catalog and repair fixtures and lighting replace with period correct pieces as often as possible

Resource Inventory and Assessment

The significant natural, cultural and historic resources of the park requiring management are detailed below including a condition assessment rating for each. Condition assessments are selected from the following options based on what most describes the current condition of the resource:

1. **Excellent** – resource is in excellent condition; all potential threats to the integrity of the resource are currently managed and effectively mitigated.
2. **Good** – resource is generally in good condition and stable; threats to the integrity of the resource require regular management in order to mitigate.
3. **Fair** – resource is in stable condition but difficult to mitigate ongoing threats; additional management support is required.
4. **Poor** – resource is generally in poor condition with management support required to both improve existing conditions and address threats.
5. **Critical** – resource is highly threatened or deteriorated and requires immediate management prioritization.

Significant Park Resources	Quantity	Current Conditions	Notes
Cedar glades	Multiple	Good to fair	Glades in general are in danger of being choked by edge vegetation and are in need of clearing by prescribed fire or mechanical tools
Caves	5	fair	Caves contain rare species of fish and salamanders. They are in need of protection from watershed run off from surrounding roads and lawns.
Dry-Mesic Oak Forest	800 acres	good	Some invasive plants Tree of Heaven and privet for the most part
Grass land	100 Acres	poor	In need of management invaded heavily with Bradford Pear, Privet and black berry

WPA Structures	8	Fair / poor	Some upgrades and maintenance needed
Sadie Ford Farm	1	poor	Structures in poor to bad shape

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
Cedar Glades	Public Use: access generally restricted to guided hikes and programs, research General Management: in a lot of cases glades contain refuse left over from sustenance farms this debris needs to be removed vegetation is thick around most glades and in need of thinning by prescribed burning or gyro tack machinery	high
Caves and sink holes	Public Use: Public access by permit only General Management: Identify and monitor water shed areas for chemicals or fertilizers, purchase land or easements in the water shed areas for the cave system	High
Dry-Mesic Oak Forest	Public Use: Public access by hiking trails off trail use is not encouraged General Management: invasive species management ash trees will need to be monitored for emerald ash borer infestation	Moderate
Native grassland	Public Use: Public access by hiking trail General Management: cut and poison brad ford pear and privet. Develop and implement a prescribed burning plan. Introduce mechanical plowing and planting of native grass species.	Moderate
WPA Structures	Public Use: rental Facilities General Management: Rent large halls picnic shelters and cabins for public use. Manage public use without detriment to structures inspect structures closely and maintain to prevent damage from weather and insects.	Moderate

Sadie Ford Farm	Public Use: programming, events venue General Management: perform delinquent maintenance to shore up existing buildings, develop a demonstration 1940 era sustenance farm	Moderate
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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
Watershed protection	Mid term
Attempt to move park boundaries to paved roads	Long term

Supplemental Information

Work to become more active in state forest land to lesson ATV use and invasion.

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.

Cedars of Lebanon State Park is recognized as a unique educational resource with quality outdoor opportunities around the rare cedar glade ecosystem and the vast Cedar Forest that provides a sense of place and creates meaningful connections to its historical and cultural heritage. The interpretive mission of Cedars of Lebanon State Park is to guide visitors to enjoy, explore, and understand the ecological fragility of the cedar glade landscape and the stories of relocation and resettlement that underpinned the establishment of the park as a conservation demonstration area.

The mission of Cedars of Lebanon State Park is to provide rich visitor experiences that inspire the perpetual appreciation, enjoyment, and protection of the fragile cedar glade ecosystem and the cultural heritage of the landscape and park system. Cedars of Lebanon State Park showcases a strong history, highly specialized plant community of species in one of nature's most fragile and unique habitats, offering rich opportunities to connect with the park's natural and cultural resources.

Interpretation, Programming and Education Goals

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be the most accessible, welcoming, and inviting system of parks that enriches Tennesseans and visitors through excellent interpretation, education, and resource-based recreation.

Objective: *accessible, welcoming, and inviting to all:* create quality and varied programs of interpretation, recreation, and outreach so that all audiences feel welcome and invited.

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

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

Within these objectives are the following desired outcomes:

- Building stewards
- Ensuring Equity
- Provide the Highest Value
- Develop Resource Based Programming
- Support Staff

Strategic Programs and Services

The strategies detailed below with corresponding action plans are aligned with the Comprehensive Strategic Plan of Tennessee State Parks.

Strategy – Telling Full Stories: to identify and replicate best practices while establishing new methods for representing diverse, equitable, inclusive, and just dialogues.

Action Plan: Develop educational QR codes for the Nature Center’s exhibits and displays and Butterfly Garden, so that visitors can self-guide through the exhibits and garden. Develop QR codes at the trailheads with a virtual interpretive guide to use on trails with either video or state websites and add some interpretive signage to the trail kiosks. Add permanent signage to some of our historical sites like the Cedar Forest Lodge (outside and inside of building) with QR codes to interpretive information or other additional interpretation resources including the archive resource/website. Add the storybook trail and add an arboretum guide to the new paved Cave Creek Trail. With the help of the Friends Group and MTSU Center for Cedar Glade Studies, we want to collaborate and combine the current cedar glade handouts to create a comprehensive printed Cedar Glade Guidebook that can be either free or at cost to the public to use to explore the cedar glades. Redo the interpretive signage on the Cedar Glade Trail to add QR codes and updated signage that is easier to clean and maintain.

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

Action Plan: Utilize the IPE SharePoint resource to help digitize programs, using the program outlines, and maintain a database portfolio for current and developed programs at the park. Digitized the park’s current physical program library and make it more accessible either through the IPE digital library and/or create a digital library for the park. Develop QR codes for self-guided trails and virtual interpretive information for self-guided tours of the Nature Center and Butterfly Garden. Develop some virtual programs for online use, i.e. like a virtual tour of a cedar glade or cave. Utilize the program value assessment tool to create reasonable fee-based programming to enhance and immerse visitor engagement. Continue to use partners like the Friends Group, Master Gardeners, and MTSU Center for Cedar Glade Studies but also branch out and use other departments and local colleges for more immersive experiences outside of our major events. Build a public aviary, so that any Interpretive Staff can do programs, inside or outside of the cages, despite experience levels with birds of prey, create more immersive experiences with the birds, and develop interpretive signage and QR codes for public self-guide. Develop offsite programs promotional and age-appropriate materials that can be standardized for promotional and/or educational purposes when visiting schools for career days, STEM events, or to be presenter for fairs, etc., so that any Ranger or interpretive staff can easily participate.

Strategy – Develop and maintain a portfolio of programs across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Interpretation of natural, historic, and cultural resources
- B. 3-5 unique experiences for all audiences
- C. Varying intensity from self-guided to immersive experiences
- D. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- E. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant.

Action Plan: Utilize the State Park archive database to research and develop rich history and cultural based programs as well as to use the resources to enrich and elevate our WPA Day/ History Festival. Develop

more historically accurate programs with possibly living history and period programs. Research and develop a women's history program with the women who have influenced and impacted the growth of Cedars of Lebanon like Mae Ricketts and Elsie Quarterman.

Strategy – Develop and maintain diverse and varied resourced-based outdoor recreation opportunities across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Managing recreational use with the stewardship needs of the resource
- B. Varying intensity from self-guided to guided experiences
- C. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- D. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant and impact to the resource.

Action Plan: Offer more experiences with the cave tours including levels of experience from beginning to advance with varying costs. Develop a QR resource at the Kiosk of Jackson Cave for virtual tours and add a Kiosk to Hermit Cave with QR resources as well. Resource options to contract out production company for VR tours for both Jackson and Hermit Cave, and then purchase VR Headsets for scheduled programs offering caves tours for visitors that cannot physically tour the caves. Continue to offer fee-based Guided Wagon tours with added stops and tours of Cedar Glades or Historical sites. Research and locate the old family homestead cemeteries and offer hikes or wagon tours (highly requested program) Offer more advertised ADA accessible hikes with our paved trail to reach the needs of this demographic. Reach out to the local clubs to offer recreational experiences like a disc golf tournament through the local disc golf club or a hiking event through a hiking club. Develop and organized at least one or two overnight backpacking adventures for different levels of experiences or for youth or women with sponsorship from Friends Group or organization like REI.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

- Nonpersonal Interpretation: Interpretive media that do not require a person to deliver a message (i.e., exhibits, waysides, brochures, signs, magazines, books, etc.).
- Personal Interpretation: One person or persons providing interpretation to another person or persons.
- Interpretive Program: Activities, presentations, publications, audio-visual media, signs, and exhibits that convey key heritage resource messages to audiences. (Adapted from US Fish & Wildlife Service)
- Interpretation: a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us.

Financial Performance Goals

Financial performance goals are a critical performance management tool of the Tennessee State Park System. While the financial performance of parks are managed more intently at the system level, individual parks are expected to recover a portion of their operating costs through the generation of earned revenues where appropriate and to contribute to the system goals. The majority of earned revenues at state parks are generated through facility usage (campsites, cabins, lodge rooms, rentable pavilions, etc.), the delivery of fee-based programs and services, equipment rental and usage, and retail sales. Other forms of revenue generation come from golf courses and restaurants where those amenities are present. That said, not all parks have the same ability to generate earned revenues because the availability of facilities or programs vary widely from one park to the next. The “recovery” of operational costs by earned revenues is referred to as “cost recovery”. Operating costs beyond those supported by earned revenues represents the extent to which state funding support operations at each park.

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

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE GOALS						
	Current Cost Recovery (2022)	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2023	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2024	Target Cost Recovery: FY: 2025	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2026	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2027
Park Overall	63.3%					

