

# Fort Loudoun State Historic Park Strategic Management Plan

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## 2023-2033

Updated 2024



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## Park Purpose, History and Description

The Mission of Tennessee State Parks: To preserve and protect, in perpetuity, unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic areas and provide a variety of safe, quality, outdoor experiences through a well-planned and professionally managed system of state parks

The Mission of Fort Loudoun State Historic Area is: To provide the visitor with the opportunity to step back 250 years to the time of the French and Indian War through rich interpretive and educational experiences, and to experience a landscape, facilities and activities reminiscent of centuries past that allows the visitor to appreciate our cultural and natural heritage.

On 05/24/1977 a permanent easement was granted to the Fort Loudoun Association for the operation of the historic site by the TVA. The area covering the remainder of the park including the McGhee/Carson Wildlife Area and the Tellico Block House were granted a permanent easement and use agreement by TVA in 1978. An agreement for the co-management of the McGhee/Carson area was contracted between Tennessee State Parks and TWRA in 1985.

## 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:

- By offering interpretive programs that cause the participants to discover both real and intrinsic value in the park as a resource.
- By having visitors participate in programs that provide them with hands on activities that provide a feeling of "ownership" in the parks mission.
- Revitalization of the Friends Group. This would increase our volunteer base and revenue streams.

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

Action Plan:

- Continuing to obtain training and research to better maintain the cultural and natural resources in the park using best practices.
- Developing working relationships with other agencies and organizations (i.e., TWRA, Forestry, Other Historic sites, etc.) to build better resource management practices.

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

Action Plan:

- Acquire and use cataloging software to maintain a catalog of the park cultural resources in the museum and fort.
- Getting the park on the best available internet grid (fiber optic).
- Acquiring and participating in training to teach staff how to utilize new and better technologies.
- Develop digital catalog of fort structures, blueprints, building materials, material resources and construction techniques for future staff.

## THE VISITOR: Welcoming and Inviting to All

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

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

Action Plan:

- Visitors find themselves more readily in truthful interpretation and history. Accordingly, we tell full stories in our interpretation and educational programs. This requires well designed interpretation based current historical research. Of particular relevance is the relationships between the British and the Cherokee and working to dispel the “Nobel Savage” and represent both groups honestly and contextually.

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

Action Plan:

- Continued development of tours and programs for all the parks sites.
- Continued development of the Tellico Block House and McGhee/Carson sites especially as it relates to interpretive signage and preservation.
- Become members of professional organizations, such as Tennessee Association of Museums (TAM), American Association of State and Local History (AASLH), and Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums (AHLFAM). Utilize the training and certifications provided by all.

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

Action Plan:

- Outdoor museums, like Fort Loudoun, have a potential to introduce museum-experience oriented visitors to the outdoors through a curated, and safe experience

- Implement interpretive experiences that by necessity takes place outside. For example: a recreated historical Cherokee and English garden.
- Continued use of the trail system for guided hikes and kayak floats.

## 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:

- Work with Park Manager's regional maintenance team developing specifications on projects, requesting assistance and guidance on maintenance needs, attending pre-bid meetings, and being engaged with capital, deferred and 327.15 projects.
- Conduct trail inspections and repairs including bridges, steps and overlook platforms, coordinating efforts with the Tennessee State Parks Trails and Vistas Coordinator.
- Follow Go Green with Us Maintenance Guidelines to follow environmentally sound, best practices in the areas of Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping, Electrical, HVAC, Janitorial, Vehicles, Equipment, Building Maintenance, Plumbing, and Lighting.
- Utilize maintenance reporting software system to develop seasonal maintenance schedules, document equipment maintenance, manage work orders and document work completed

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

Action Plan:

- In support of the Access 2030 initiative, we are committed to providing universal access experiences that are welcoming and inviting to everyone. A park should be for all users to permit them opportunity to experience the natural and cultural resources to encourage stewardship of those resources through action
- Improve physical access to areas of the park, but still retaining the parks cultural and historic significance.
- Expand the role of augmented experiences for persons who are not physically able to access locations such as the interiors of fort structures and other inaccessible fort areas.
- Offer Park visitors the opportunity to participate in those experiences in the language familiar to them.

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

Action Plan:

- Maintain an excellent visitor center experience. It should include:
- Open during regular hours (8:00 – 4:30)
- Well maintained.
- Stocked gift shop
- Clean and operable restrooms
- High quality exhibits and site introductory material
- Staffed

## 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:

- Ensure that performance plans meet the strengths of employees, while meeting the operational needs of the site.
- Identify and provide training for employees according to their responsibilities and help them grow professionally and experientially.

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

Action Plan:

- Develop staffing plans to reflect the growing needs of the park and its primary themes.
- Work to be more forward thinking and less reactionary, or jump at every new trend.
- Remembering that fiscally responsible and revenue driven are not the same thing.

## Park Overview

### Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Fort Loudoun
Site Manager	Eric Hughey
Area Manager	Kim Moore
Park acreage	853
Total number of visitors (FY 2024)	229,283
Total expenses before CO (FY 2024)	735,630
Total revenues (FY 2024)	75,974
Retail cost recovery % <sup>1</sup>	7.2%
Park cost recovery %	10.32%
Average expense per visitor (FY 2024)	3.21
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2024)	.33
Gross profit or loss	-659,656
Total full-time available positions / filled	7/7
Total part-time available positions / filled	1/1
Primary feeder markets	SE Tennessee, North GA; world-wide recognition.
Primary reasons people visit	The historic programs and facilities. Also, picnicking, fishing, paddling & walking.
Opportunities for improvement	Local and regional promotion.

### Key Attractions

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

- The reconstructed Fort
- The Museum and Visitors Center
- Picnic Area
- Hiking trails and walking areas
- Kayaking rental and boating access
- Fishing
- Interpretive Programs

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

## Site and Operations Assessment

This site and operations assessment is a culmination of analyses and findings from a review of the condition of facilities, infrastructure, and operations at Fort Loudoun State Historic 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.

<b>Scale of Conditions</b>	
<b>Rating</b>	<b>General Description</b>
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 Fort Loudoun, and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in May, 2023.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition	Notes
Museum/Visitor Center	1	Fair	The museum and visitor
Picnic Area	1	Good	
Picnic Area Restrooms	1	Good	
Maintenance facility	1	Good	
Picnic Shelter	1	Good	
Ranger residence	2	Good	

## Trail Inventory and Assessment

Trail Name	Mileage	Condition
Island Loop Blue Way Trail	5.41	good
Lost Shoe Spur Trail	0.42	Good,
Meadow Loop Trail	2.50	Good, needs 2 new bridges and maintenance
Ridge Top Trail	1.55	Good, some erosion issues
River Gate Trail	0.10	Poor, needs to be replaced with an ADA boardwalk
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>9.98</b>	

The majority of the land-based trail system at Fort Loudoun was designed and built by the park staff during the early existence of the park. The trails see heavy usage and is in constant need of maintenance. The trails could be improved using modern trail construction techniques. Expansion of the trail system on the main park or additional trails at the Mcghee/Carson area would require a great deal of volunteer or outside labor and the inclusion of parks staff from outside the park, as the park staff are not versed in trail construction best practices. Despite the trails not being part of the park’s primary interpretive theme they remain functional.

### **New Assets Needed**

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

<b>New Asset &amp; Amenities</b>	<b>Description</b>
Parking	Increase main and picnic area parking
Parking	Trail head parking
Museum and Visitor Center	Build new separated museum and visitor centers or an overall more useful facility.
Restroom	Tellico block house site
Picnic Shelter	Add additional picnic shelter
Larger Tractor	The current tractor is open cab and not large enough to handle the need of the park, both for fort work and land management needs.

### **Prioritized Facility Needs**

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

<b>Facility Need</b>	<b>Priority Assignment</b>
Security system at Visitor Center/Museum	High
Security Cameras at Block House site	High
Security Cameras at McGhee site	High
Fence Installation at McGhee/Carson Cemetery site	High
Fence installation at McGhee/Carson Home site	High
ADA upgrades to park	High
Non-intrusive trail lighting to the fort	medium
Better Wi-Fi/ Fiber optic	High

## 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 Fort Loudoun have been identified as **core services**:

- Support the mission of Tennessee State Parks which is to preserve, protect, and share Tennessee's natural and cultural resources while providing safe and quality outdoor experiences.
- Provide public access to the park, the facilities, and the grounds.
- Provide public safety for visitors and protection of natural and cultural resources.
- Provide for maintenance of grounds, facilities, and infrastructure.
- Maintain facilities developed through the LWCF program to required ADA standards.
- Provide basic, non-staff supported day-use activities (such as hiking and picnicking) with trails, informational signage, picnic tables, trash cans and restroom facilities.
- Maintain Park drinking water and wastewater programs to state standards.

**CATEGORY 2 – IMPORTANT SERVICES** *[Supported by a balance of revenues and public subsidy]*

Important programs, services and facilities are those the agency should provide, and are important to governing and effectively serving residents, businesses, customers and partners. Providing Category 2 services expands or enhances the agency’s ability to provide and sustain its core services. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as important are:

- The services expand, enhance or support identified core services.
- These 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 how the services are paid for or funded.
- The services generate income or revenue that offsets some or all the operating cost and/or are deemed to provide economic, social, or environmental outcomes or results.

The following programs and services offered at Fort Loudoun have been identified as **important services**:

- Provide educational and interpretive programs that enhance the public’s appreciation for natural and cultural aspects of Fort Loudoun and the park.
- Provide programs that meet the educational and curriculum needs of school groups.
- Provide a well-managed and park specific museum and visitor center.
- Offer living history programs and living historians to bring visitors an interactive historical experience.

**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 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 Fort Loudoun have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Operate and provide retail support services for the gift shop.
- Provide support services for Kayak Rentals.
- Provide support services for picnic shelter.

## Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at Fort Loudoun represent the largest area of budgetary expense at an average of 79% of the total operating budget each year for the last three complete years, which is more 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	1	*
Park Ranger 2	3	*
Administrative Assistant 1	1	45,060
TSP Maintenance Supervisor	1	48,324
TSP Maintenance Lead	1	38,364
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>371,232</b>

\*Law enforcement compensation confidential by TN law.

### Part Time Employees

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
00009930/TSP op worker	1	14.10
<b>TOTAL</b>		

### Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	1250 not including living history
Community Service Workers	
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	
Other: _____	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1250</b>

### Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
Full Time Equivalent Employees	371,232
Part Time Employees	
<b>TOTAL Annual Labor Expense</b>	<b>371,232</b>

**Additional Future Positions Needed**

<b>Position / Title</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>FTE or PT</b>	<b>Year Needed</b>	<b>Justification</b>
Museum curatorial Assistant 1	1	FTE	Upon	dedicate employee to the operation of new/ revised museum, thereby
Interpretive Specialist 1	2	FTE or PT	2025	Providing full time interpretation in the historic areas and programs to the
Job Share position	1	PT	2025	This would allow the park to higher college level interns to help with research and programing during the regular school semester.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4</b>			

**Customer Service**

<b>Platform / Site</b>	<b>FY/Year</b>	<b>Customer Satisfaction Level</b>
<b>Facebook</b>	23	5/5
<b>Google</b>	23	4.8/5
<b>TripAdvisor</b>	23	4.5/5
<b>Yelp</b>	23	5/5

**Professional Development and Training**

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

- Historic construction, timber framing and woodworking training
- Historic trades and skills training
- Oral History Collection (for Mcghee/Carson)
- Volunteer living historian and docent training
- Trail construction training
- Routine management training
- Routine law enforcement training

## Summary of Key Recommendations

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

### Short Term Recommendations (Less than 1 year)

1. **Site and Facilities**
  - a. Ongoing maintenance of Fort
  - b. Ongoing exotic plant removal and native savannah restoration.
  - c. Implement signage and recognition at the McGhee cemetery.
  - d. Improve educational exhibits
2. **Operations and Staffing**
  - a. Grow membership of the Fort Loudoun Association.
  - b. Grow community partnership opportunities to support park operations.
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
  - a. Addition of more water bottle stations
  - b. Increase program offerings
  - c. Increase volunteer offerings

### Mid Term Recommendations (2–5 years)

1. **Site and Facilities**
  - a. Development of management plan for the McGhee/Carson Site
  - b. Completion of ADA improvements
  - c. Institution of Woodland and native grass improvement plan.
  - d. Additional parking areas
2. **Operations and Staffing**
  - a. Addition of new FTE and PT positions
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
  - a. Paving of park roads and current parking lot
  - b. Complete public access plan to McGhee slave Cemetery
  - c. Bathrooms at Block house

### Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

1. **Site and Facilities**
  - a. New museum and Visitor Center
2. **Operations and Staffing**
  - a. Addition of Full time and part time positions
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
  - a. New parking areas (if not completed)

## 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.

Resource Protection is inextricably connected to the process of interpretation; thus, resource management always has interpretive value. Fort Loudoun (FLSHP) preserves the site of Tennessee's only British Military Fortification, American Fort pivotal in Cherokee relations with the new American Government and a pre-civil war era Mansion and farm site and slave cemetery. The purpose FLSHP is to protect, preserve, and interpret the historical, archaeological, and natural resources of these sites and show the visitor how they can meaningfully connect to the stories of Tennessee. Fort Loudoun will protect and professionally manage the resources of the these sites and its environs to include archaeological remnants, oral histories, records, physical settings, and sense of place. By preserving our resources in such a manner, we are ensuring their continued longevity and impact on people's lives for years to come.

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

- Nurture and manage a robust and professional research program. This is essential for all resource management. "We don't know what we don't know". We must always pursue greater depth in understanding of the resources we are charged with managing.
- Entrench and formalize partnerships with outside preservation agencies
- Seek continuous historic preservation and interpretation training for staff



- Ensure programming is often centered on the resource management experience.

## 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** – resources are generally in good condition and stable; threats to the integrity of the resource require regular management to mitigate.
3. **Fair** – resources are 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 require immediate management prioritization.

Significant Park Resources	Quantity	Current Conditions	Notes
Fort Loudoun Structures	17	good	The buildings are in good condition. They require regular maintenance and upkeep.
Fort Loudoun Palisade	1	good	The palisade walls are in good condition overall. The gate structures have been the weak point historically and require more maintenance. Due to age the posts that form the palisade will require more constant care and replacement in the future.
Tellico Block House watch tower	1	good	This structure is currently in great shape and will require regular maintenance to remain this way.
Tellico Block House Foundations	1	good	Needs constant repairs and maintenance.
McGhee Carson farm ruins	3 so far	critical	Major deterioration and site damage.
McGhee Slave cemetery	1	poor	Needs major work to remove threats and mark site
<i>Riparian corridors</i>	<i>Approx. 16 miles</i>	<i>poor</i>	<i>Most riparian corridors have severe erosion and significant invasive plant species.</i>
Hardwood forest	Approx. 500 acres	fair	Formerly fence rows and reclaimed farm lands that have reforested with naturally, mixed with intentionally planted pine stands that are

			now blighted and falling. Constant encroachment of invasive species.
Managed native grasslands	Approx. 180 acres	good	Converted fam fields. Expansion and removal of exotic are ongoing. Staff use prescribed fire to maintain.

## 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
Fort Loudoun Structures	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Confined to general exploration and programed interpretation including living history and regulated by park hours. No non-interpretive use permitted.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> These structures are used for interpretive living history programs and to educate the visitors about the for and its importance. The upkeep and care of the structures is a constant work in progress for the staff. The site is of such significant historic program value that it should not be used for non-interpretive events.</p>	High
Fort Loudoun Palisade	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Confined to general exploration and programed interpretation including living history and regulated by park hours. No non-interpretive use permitted.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Monitored for deterioration from rot, insects and animals. Maintenance and repair as necessary by park staff.</p>	Moderate
Tellico Block House watch tower	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Confined to external exploration, no internal visitors or programing currently. regulated by park hours. No non-interpretive use permitted.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Used a program meeting point to attract visitation to the site. Maintenance and upkeep are done by the park staff in consultation with East TN Maintenance.</p>	Moderate

Tellico Block House Foundations	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Confined to general exploration and regulated by park hours. No non-interpretive use permitted.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Maintaining the stonework in its current form and general maintenance and up keep.</p>	High
McGhee Carson farm ruins	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Public has access to site for managed hunting and walking.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> A management plan is currently under development.</p>	High
McGhee Slave cemetery	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Public has access to site for managed hunting and walking.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> A management plan is currently under development.</p>	High
<i>Tellico Lake Riparian corridors</i>	<p><b>Public Use:</b> Fishing and swimming from bank. Access for Kayaking and boating.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Continued process of shoreline stabilization in critical erosion area. Long term plans for erosion control in less critical areas. Addition of a motorized boat to patrol the shorelines and harder to access park areas.</p>	Moderate
Hardwood forest	<p><b>Public Use:</b> open to exploration by the public during regular park hours. Contains most of the parks trail system.</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Currently develop a management plan that will create a healthier woodland and grassland ecosystem, using a combination of spraying, cutting and Prescribed Fire. These areas are also under pressure from exotic plants, so a constant program of removal is underway.</p>	High
Managed native grasslands	<p><b>Public Use:</b> open to exploration by the public during normal business hours</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> Currently develop a management plan that will create a healthier woodland and grassland ecosystem, using a combination of spraying, cutting and Prescribed Fire. These areas are also under pressure from exotic plants, so a constant program of removal is underway.</p>	High
Cultural artifacts, structure, furnishings, historic original paper documents & early books	<p><b>Public Use:</b> No direct contact with out specific research permits</p> <p><b>General Management:</b> consistent care based on nature of artifact, ensure security from theft &amp; fire; conduct annual inventory. Protect original paper using approved archival techniques and house in archival cabinet.</p>	Moderate

## 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
Acquisition of management authority from TVA of lands in our viewshed	Mid
More control over McGhee/Carson wildlife area from TWRA	Short
Removal of deadfall and pines via contract	short

## 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.

### Primary Interpretive Theme:

The primary interpretive theme of Fort Loudoun State Historic Area is to provide park visitors with historically accurate interpretation on Fort Loudoun, the role it played in the French and Indian War and the relationship with the Cherokee.

### Secondary Interpretive Themes:

The secondary interpretive theme of Fort Loudoun State Historic Area is to provide park visitors with historically accurate interpretation of the Tellico Blockhouse, McGhee Carson home site and the Tennessee Valley Authority Tellico Lake controversy.

## 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:

- Formalize a working relationship with the Cherokee to better tell the story of the fort from both perspectives.
- Ensure that the standard narrative of Fort Loudoun is inclusive of stories about women, enslaved African Americans and Cherokees during the era the French and Indian War.
- Ensure that the standard narrative of Tellico Block House is inclusive of women, enslaved and freed African Americans, and Cherokees prior to the era of Indian Removal.

**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:

- Develop a short series of videos for in-classroom use that connect viewers to the site’s story via primary documents.
- Continue the use of Skype and similar platforms to bring programs into classrooms and schools that would otherwise not have access to the fort due to location, time, cost, etc.

**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:

- Develop a docent program through which future Friends Group members can become certified by Park staff to present basic programs.
- Diverse programs exist—they should be compiled into a portfolio.
- Task programming staff to create a variety of subject-specific walking programs.
- Task staff with developing hand on historical project classes that could be used to increase revenue.

**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:

- By its very nature, Fort Loudoun presents a largely passive outdoor experience. The hallmark Fort tour requires visitors to be outdoors for most of the program.
- Passive recreation should be promoted as a secondary feature.

- Active recreation should NOT be pursued nor promoted in the historic sites as it interferes with mission specific directives.
- Active recreation throughout the rest of the park should be included in programs.

#### 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 (2024)	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2025	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2026	Target Cost Recovery: FY: 2027	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2028	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2029
Park Overall	10.32%	10.04%	10.04%	10.01%	10.04%	10.14%



