

Natural Bridge State Park

Master Plan

Public Meeting 2
October 21, 2020



AGENDA

- Housekeeping
- Introductions
 - Melissa Baker –
New Director of
State Parks
 - James Jones –
Park Manager,
NBSP
- State Park History



- Master Plan Process
- Review NBSP MP
- Public Comment via
Chat Box

- All phone/ mics on mute
- All comments & questions in Chat Box
 - These will be recorded and responses will be done before Nov. 21, 2020
- Additional comments will be received until Nov. 21 via email or in writing at:
- Lynn Crump, Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

600 East Main Street, 24th Floor, Richmond, Va 23219

- Lynn.Crump@dcr.virginia.gov, 804-786- 5054 or by fax @ 804-371-7899.

Meeting Purpose

To present the park master plan and facility phasing. Public input is encouraged regarding recommended park amenities. Attendees will have the opportunity to provide input with regard to priorities for facilities and outdoor recreational opportunities.

Introduction to state parks

DCR Mission

Conserve, protect, enhance & advocate wise use of the Commonwealth's unique natural, historical, recreational, scenic & cultural resources.

State Park Mission

To conserve the natural, scenic, historic & cultural resources of the Commonwealth & provide recreational & educational opportunities consistent with the good stewardship of these lands, waters & facilities that leave them unimpaired for future generations.



History of Virginia State Parks

The first 6 parks...out of the Depression

1936: Virginia opens a system of 6 state parks...most were a combination of donated land plus state funds for development



The System Grows

1940's through 1980's:

A steady procession of new parks acquired & developed through a combination of funds: donations, federal grant money, & state capital development



Voters support more growth & development



- 1990's through present: Two major bond referendums in 1992 & 2002 funded more than \$214 million in funds; 5 new parks & land for 6 more; 31 natural areas; 296 building projects: campgrounds, cabins, support facilities, etc.
- We continue to acquire lands, largely by donation or discounted sales...challenge is to find the development funds

Today's Virginia State Park System

40 parks, 5 under development

70,000+ acres

30 historic register sites

600+ miles of trails

25 parks with overnight facilities

8 day use parks

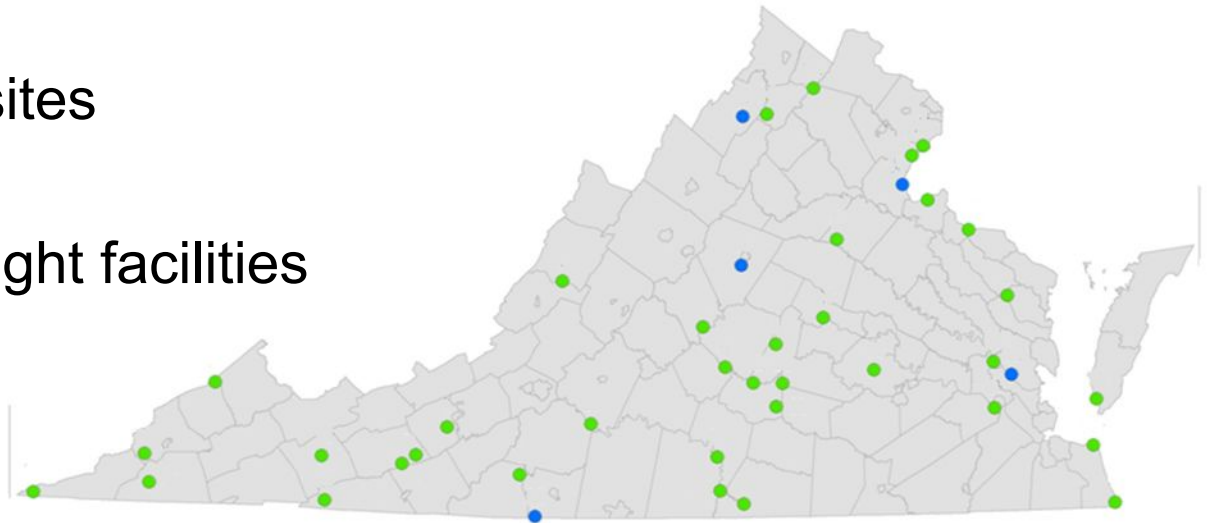
28 visitor centers

87 picnic shelters

11 swimming beaches

5 swimming pools

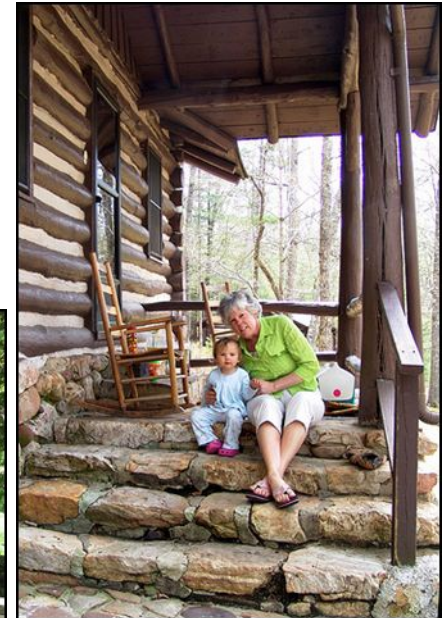
2 restaurants; 19 snack bars



Park Services & Facilities

Each park has a unique set of facilities, activities, and services

- Day Uses: hiking, swimming, picnicking, boating, bicycling, horse riding, canoeing, rafting
- Overnight : cabins and camping
- Programs, education, interpretation
- Conference and meeting facilities



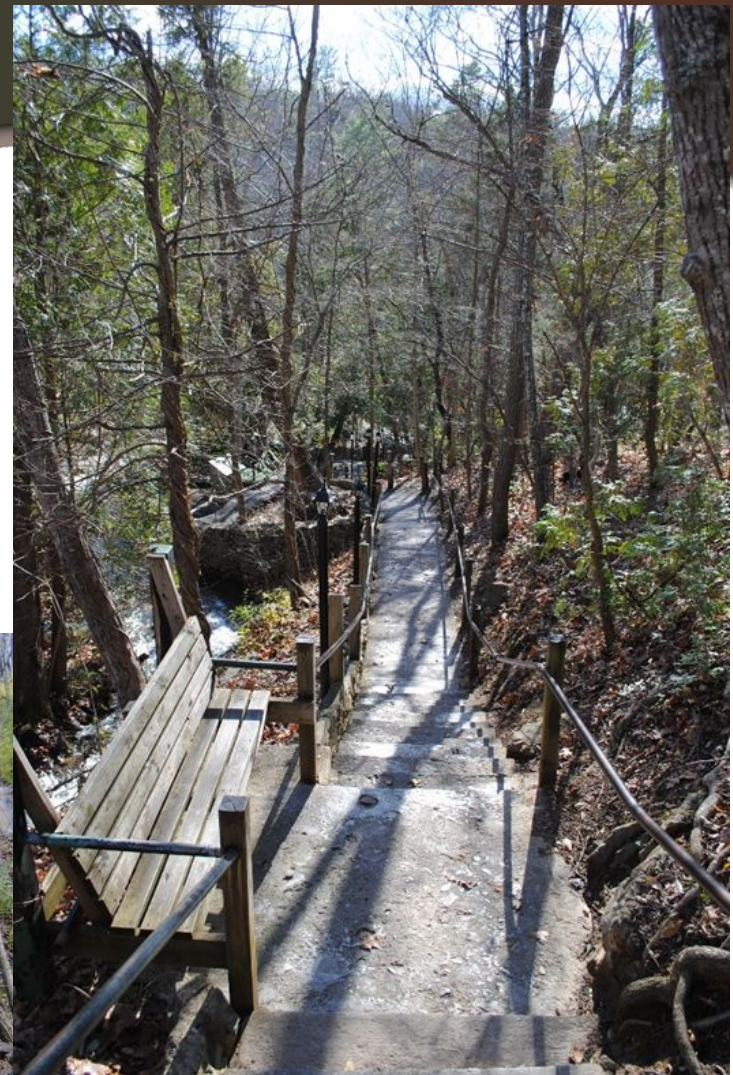
The relevancy of state parks in the 21st century & beyond

- Parks are a part of the Community: Friends Groups, volunteerism, economic benefit.
- Solutions to many of today's challenges: "Nature Deficit Disorder", daily stress, and the need for affordable recreational opportunities
- The need for parks is greater today than it has ever been...places to reconnect to nature, to be with families and friends, and to re-establish personal well being



NBSP





Cedar Creek Pavilion



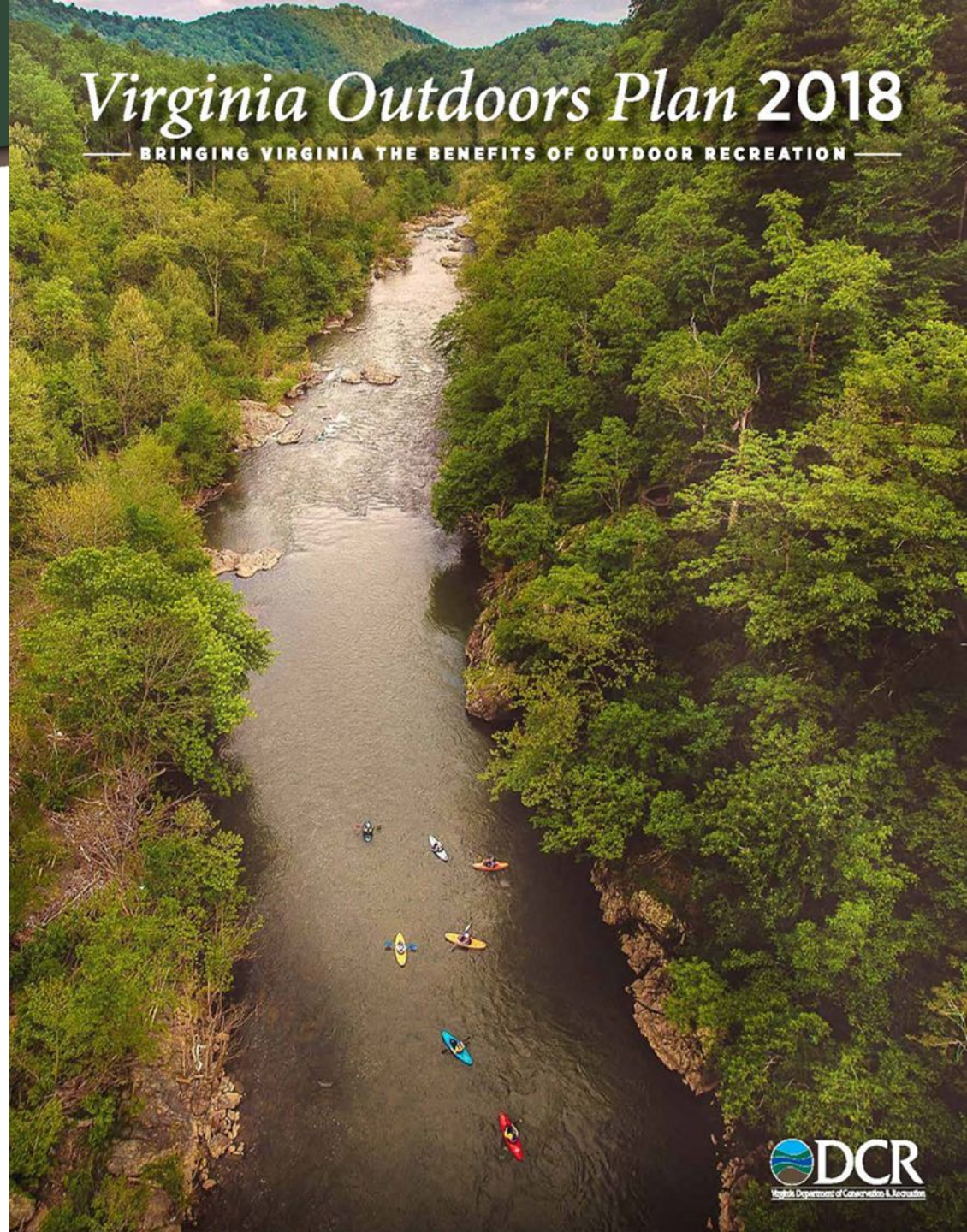






Master Plan Process

Virginia Outdoors Plan 2018
— BRINGING VIRGINIA THE BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION —



State Park Master Planning Code

§ 10.1-200.1. State park master planning

- (i) for all **existing state parks**, (ii) substantial **land acquisitions**, and (iii) prior to major **improvements**
- A **guide for the development, utilization and management** its natural, cultural and historic resources
- developed in stages with public input

Establish Advisory Committee

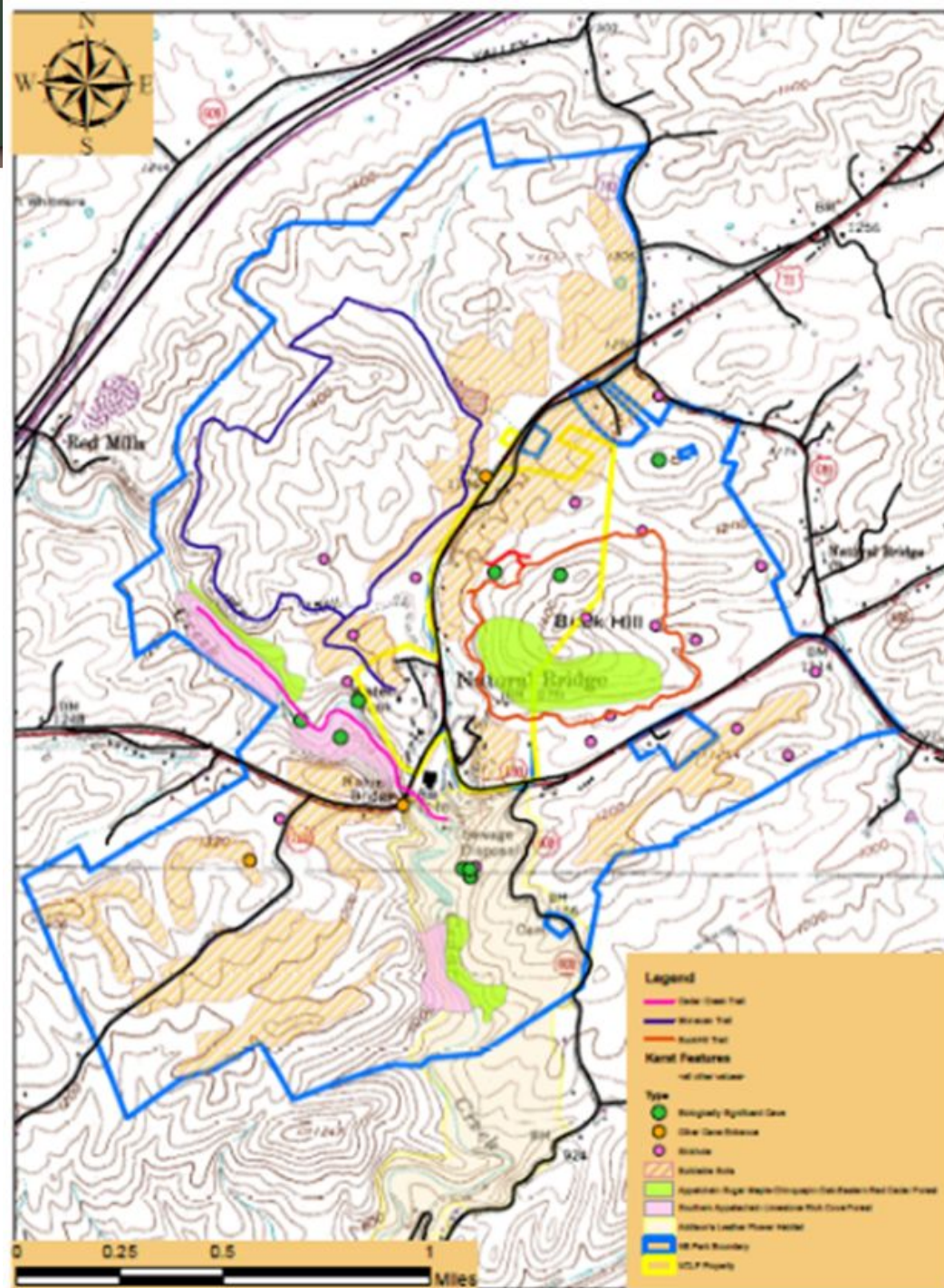


Site Analysis

Develop Resource Analysis/
Future Conditions Plan

Base Map w/

- Existing conditions
- Natural and cultural resources of significance
- Topography, water resource areas, soils, vegetation
- **Identify buildable areas**



NBSP Purpose



Purpose: To protect one of Virginia's unique natural features, the Natural Bridge; connect visitors to our storied past; demonstrate ecologically sound management; offer a range of outdoor recreation opportunities; & work across sectors to promote this premier destination.

NBSP Goals

GOAL 1 – Protect, conserve and enhance the natural, scenic, cultural & historic resources of the park, especially **the Natural Bridge.**

GOAL 2 - Create attractive spaces that provide visitors an experience that enhances & sustains their park visit.

GOAL 3 – Provide a range of overnight & day use opportunities & facilities.

GOAL 4 – Provide facilities & programs for environmental education & interpretation including cultural & historical programs.

GOAL 5 – Work across sectors to provide mutually beneficial efforts to enhance Natural Bridge & the surrounding region.

GOAL 6 – Administer & manage the park in a professional & transparent manner, which fosters public trust.

Design Charrette



NBSP Master Plan



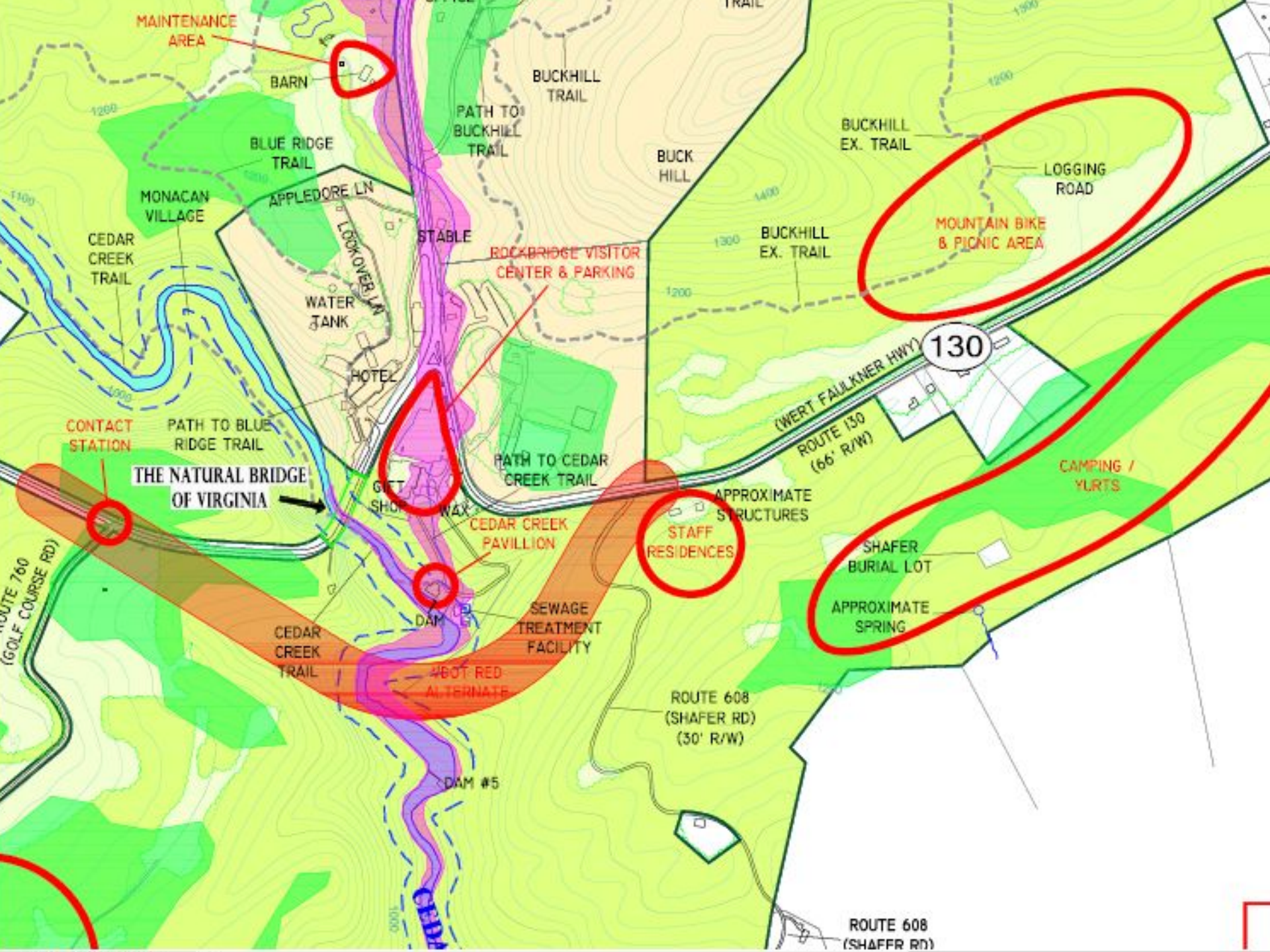
PHASE 1 – Protect the Bridge

- Protect the Bridge (VDOT)
 - Upgrade drainage to remove runoff from bridge
 - Develop alternative bypass downstream of the Bridge
- Renovate Rockbridge Center (RBC)– as discovery center/ environmental education facility with meeting/training facilities and exhibit space that provides a tourism component, retail, administration and snack bar/catering kitchen; and the 3rd floor for housing or office space [determine good use of inside pool area]. Complete utility renovation/replacement.
- Renovate Cedar Creek Pavilion for an event venue
- Maintain other existing structures
- Develop a Maintenance Area with shop and storage facility near the barn. Renovate barn for storage
- Develop Blue Ridge Trailhead on Route 11 with parking, restrooms, small shelter, and picnic tables
- Renovate staff residence
- Develop a detailed site design plan to upgrade parking and access sequence; including upgrades to vehicular circulation to and through the park*
 - Identify clear park access
 - Create a stronger front door appearance
 - Removal of museum building
 - Re-work parking in front of RBC to include tree islands
 - Upgrade satellite parking and shuttles, if necessary
 - Create an attractive trail to connect to the Bridge
- Remove /repair/ renovate dams (in priority order)
 - Remove lower, high hazard dam
 - Lower Turner Pond dam
 - Repair Cedar Creek dam
- Trailhead access at Buck Hill to include parking



PHASE 2 – Celebrate The Bridge

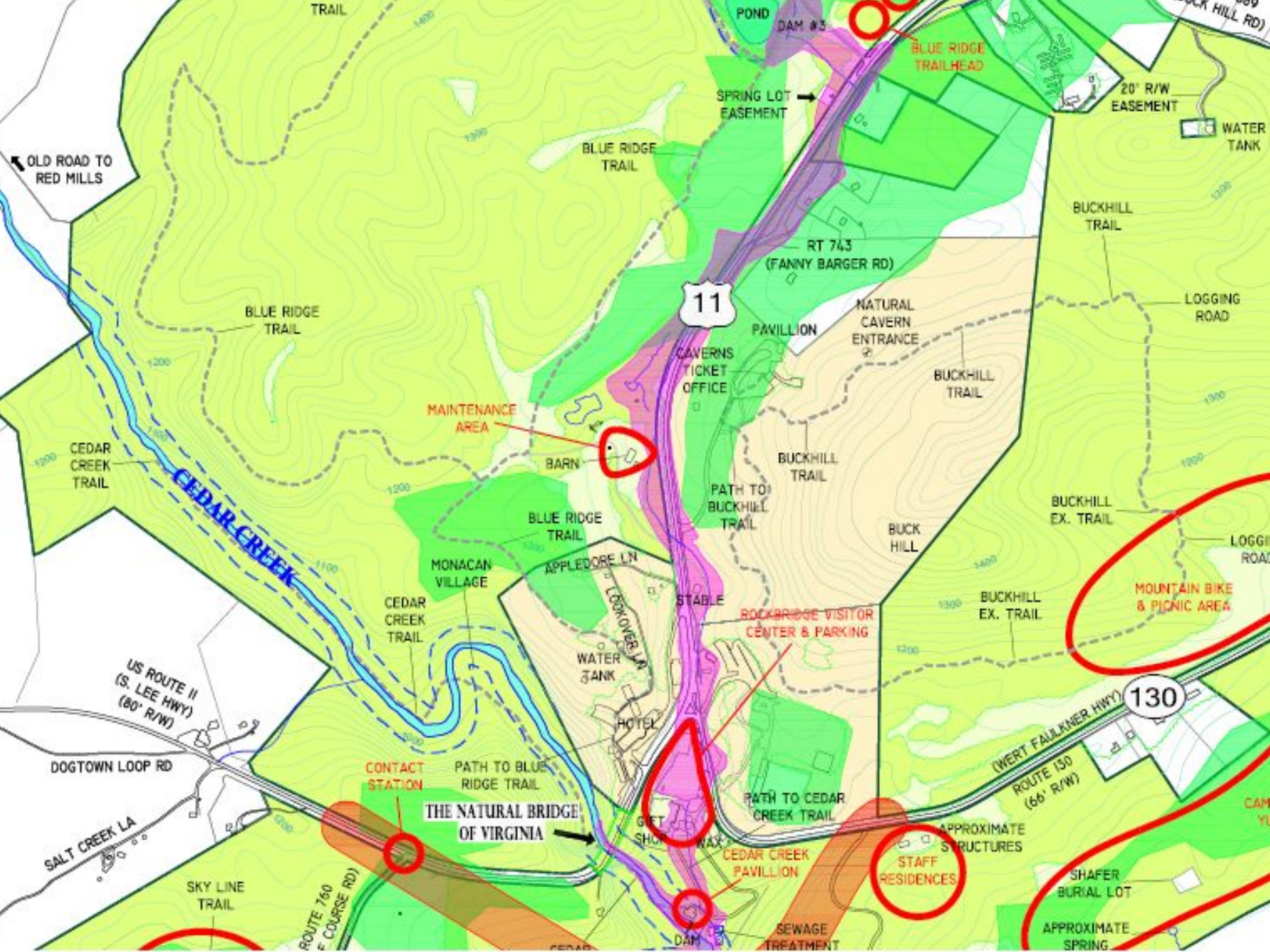
- Remove Wax Museum
- Upgrade satellite parking and provide shuttles and/or attractive trail to connect to the Bridge
- Create additional parking for up to 250 for car and RV parking*
- Upgrade walking trail to base of bridge
- Demolish temporary staff residence
- Construct new Staff Residence
- Construct a new more park like visitor center entrance facade sequence*
- Development along Golf Course Road
 - Create an observation point with small shelter/gazebo on north side of Golf Course Road
 - Provide for a large gathering area including a large shelter with catering kitchen, picnic facilities, restrooms and parking. Also well and septic will be needed
 - Create a trailhead, parking and restrooms with discovery area south of Golf Course Road
 - Add group camp to discovery area
- Create campground [non- RV] and yurts south of Route 130
- Add shelter to Blue Ridge Trailhead
- Remove concrete amphitheater near Monacan Village
- Develop a mountain bike area on the north side of Route 130



PHASE 3 – Experience the Bridge – It's a Park

- Provide picnic area near mountain bike area on the north side of Route 130 east in the park; include restrooms and water
- Add chairlift or alternative transportation to the base of the Bridge
- Contact station at Golf Course Road and one along Route 11 near Buck Hill Road
- Develop walk-in primitive camping with designated sites, vault toilet above Blue Ridge Trailhead

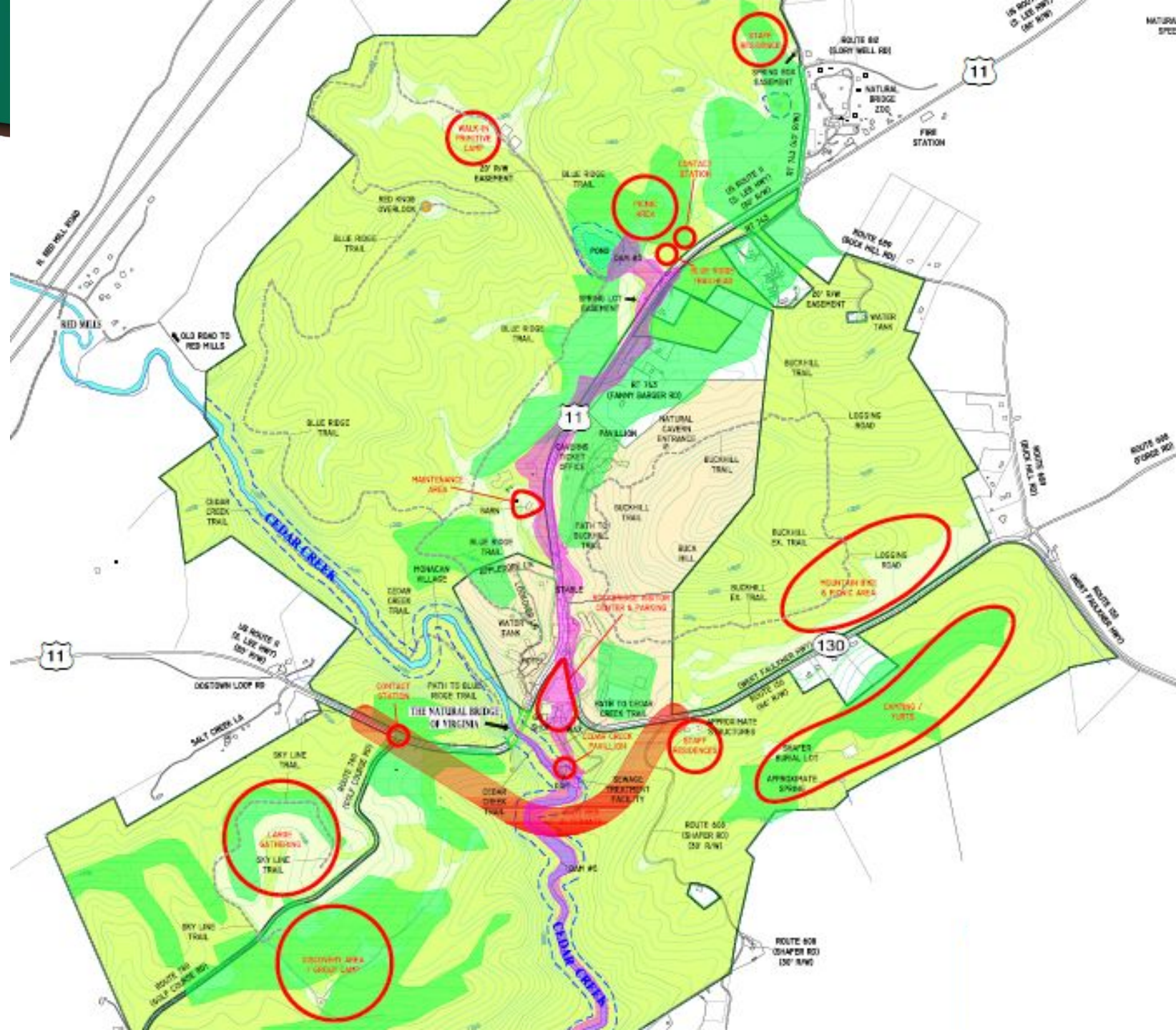




Public Input Session Guidelines

Lynn Crump, Facilitator





Send comments

Written comments will be accepted up until 5:00 p.m. on Nov. 21, 2020.

Please send to:

Lynn Crump, Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

600 East Main Street, 24th Floor

Richmond, Virginia 23219

or email Lynn.Crump@dcr.virginia.gov or
by fax to 804-371-7899.



Next Steps

- Write the plan & Executive Summary
- Present plan to Board of Conservation & Recreation (3rd public meeting)
- Executive summary sent to all legislators
- Final plan adopted by DCR Director

