

Seven Bends State Park

Master Plan

Public Meeting | December 15, 2021



Agenda

Introductions

Melissa Baker

Director of Virginia State Parks

Veronica Flick

Park Manager, Seven Bends State Park

Lynn Crump

DCR Park Planner

- State Park History
- Intro to Seven Bends State Park
- Master Plan Process
- Review SESP MP
- Public Comment via Chat Box



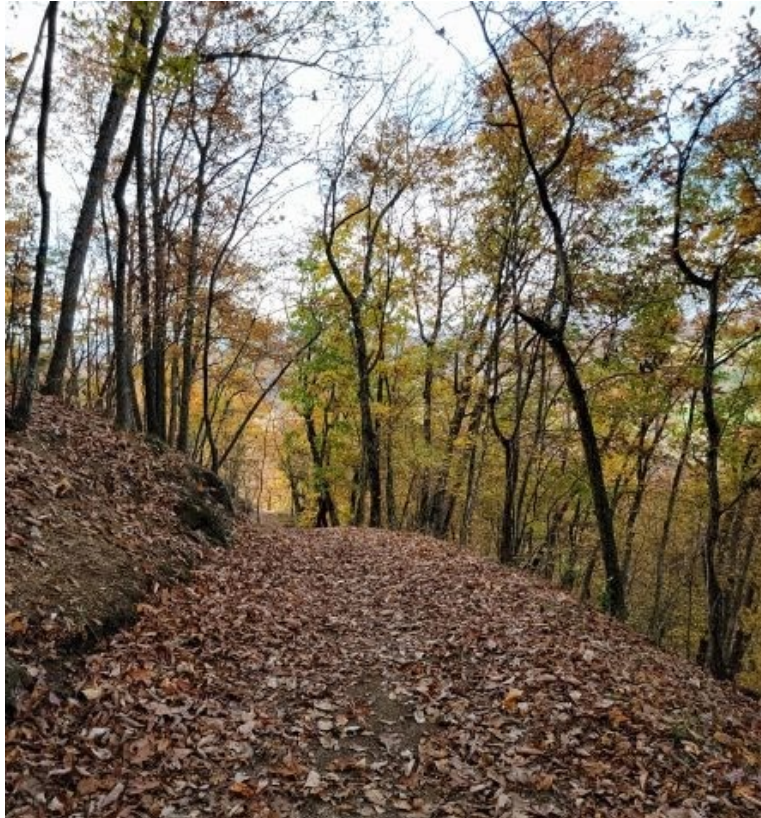
Housekeeping

- Place all phones / mics on mute
- All comments & questions accepted in Chat Box (These will be recorded and responses will be made prior to Feb. 1, 2022)
- This presentation will be available online following the meeting

Additional comments will be received until Feb. 1,
via email or in writing at:

Bill Conkle
Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219
Bill.Conkle@dcr.virginia.gov
804-786-5492 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 and park priorities.

Attendees will have the opportunity to provide input via chat box or email after this meeting.

Introduction to state parks

DCR Mission

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

State Park Mission

To conserve the natural, scenic, historic and 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 and developed through a combination of funds: donations, federal grant money and state capital development



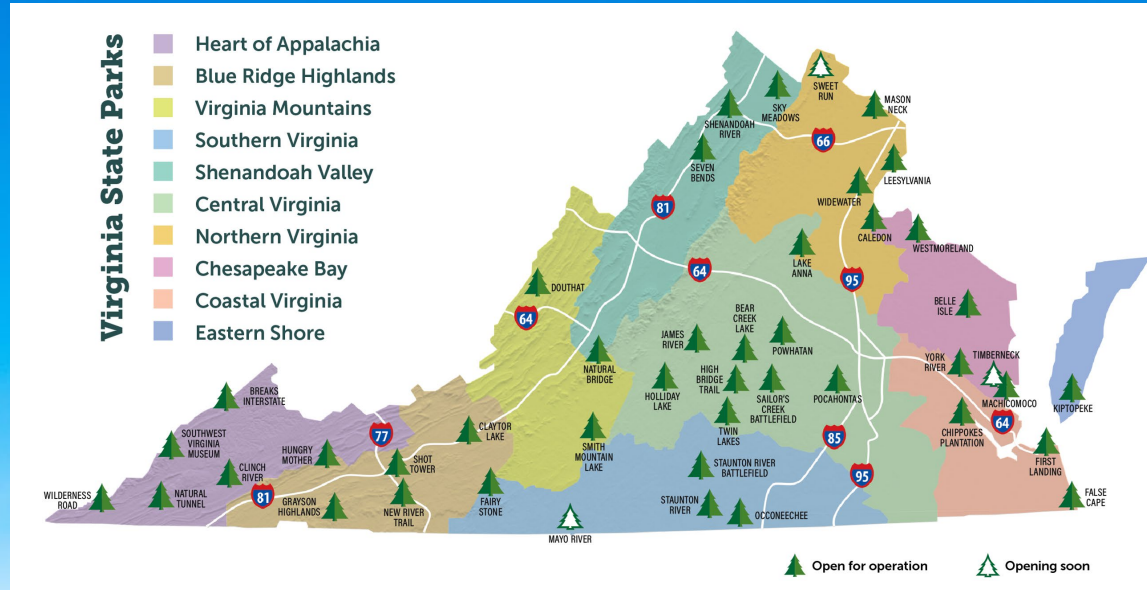
Voters support more growth and development

1990's through present: Two major bond referendums in 1992 and 2002 funded more than \$214 million in funds; 5 new parks and 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 ... the challenge is to find the development funds.

Today's Virginia State Park System

41 parks, 3 under development
74,000+ acres
30 historic register sites
600+ miles of trails
32 parks with overnight facilities
11 day use parks
28 visitor centers
87 picnic shelters
11 swimming beaches
4 swimming pools
19 snack bars



Park Services and 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

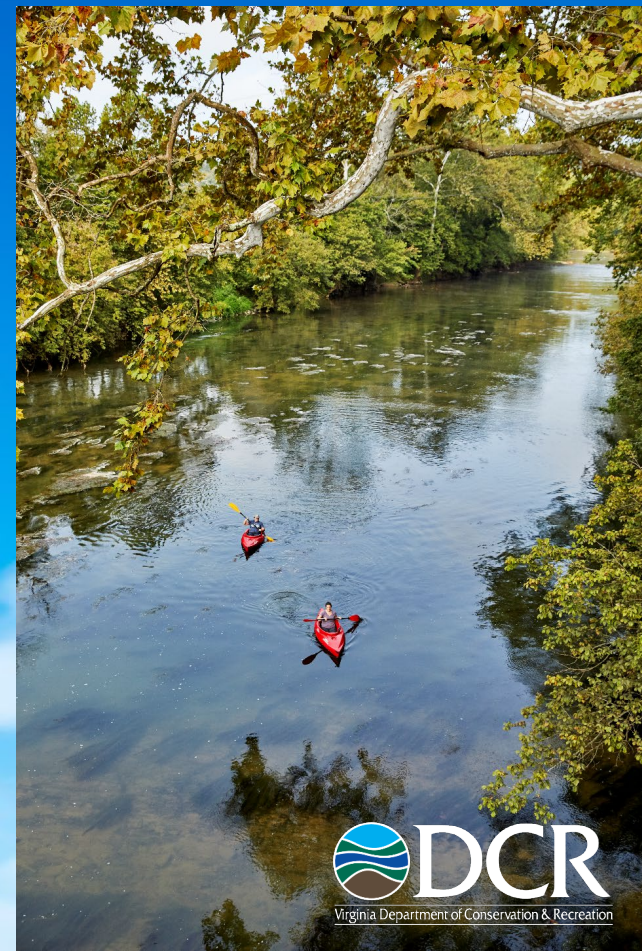
Parks are a part of the Community: Friends Groups, volunteerism, economic benefit.

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.

Seven Bends State Park

“The gateway to the heart of the Shenandoah Valley” provides water and land based outdoor recreational and educational opportunities while protecting and interpreting the spectacular scenic view shed and the unique geological, natural, and historical resources of the storied Seven Bends area of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River in Virginia.



The Park's Namesake



Seven Bends State Park's 1066 acres is situated in the geographically unique Seven Bends area of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River.

Natural Resource

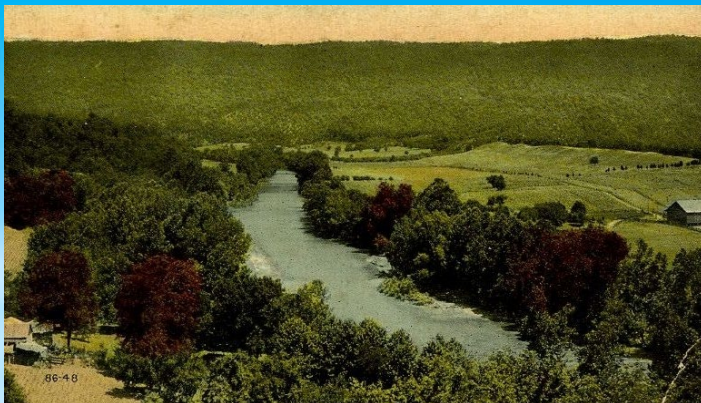
- 91 acres of agricultural with 31 acres being crop rotation
- Riparian buffer restoration
- Invasive species removal / native planting



History

Seven Bends State Park was acquired in three parcels:

- 306 acres known as Camp Lupton was deeded from Massanutten Military Academy
- The Town of Woodstock donated 85 acres what had been the town reservoir site
- Dr. James R. Myers donated approximately 674 acres, adjacent to the reservoir site



Connection

65 Programs for 1,300 people including education outreach and off-site events as well as friends group and ranger led programming

Over 1200 Hours of Volunteer efforts including Eagle Scout Projects, Trail Maintenance, River Cleanup, Natural Play Space Installation, Educational Programming, Invasive Removal, Native Planting, and more





- Almost 4 miles of river frontage
- 2 riverside fishing platforms
- Over 8 miles of hiking trails – 1 of which is ADA Accessible
- 2 hand-carry boat launches
- Picnic Areas
- 1 family-sized picnic shelter



Staffing

- 2 Full Time Onsite Staff:

- Chief Ranger
- Park Ranger

One of these positions is Law Enforcement

- 7 Part Time

- 5 Maintenance Rangers (1 vacant)
- 1 Education Support Specialist
- 1 Office Assistant (Vacant)



Financial

Annual Operating Budget - \$239,859

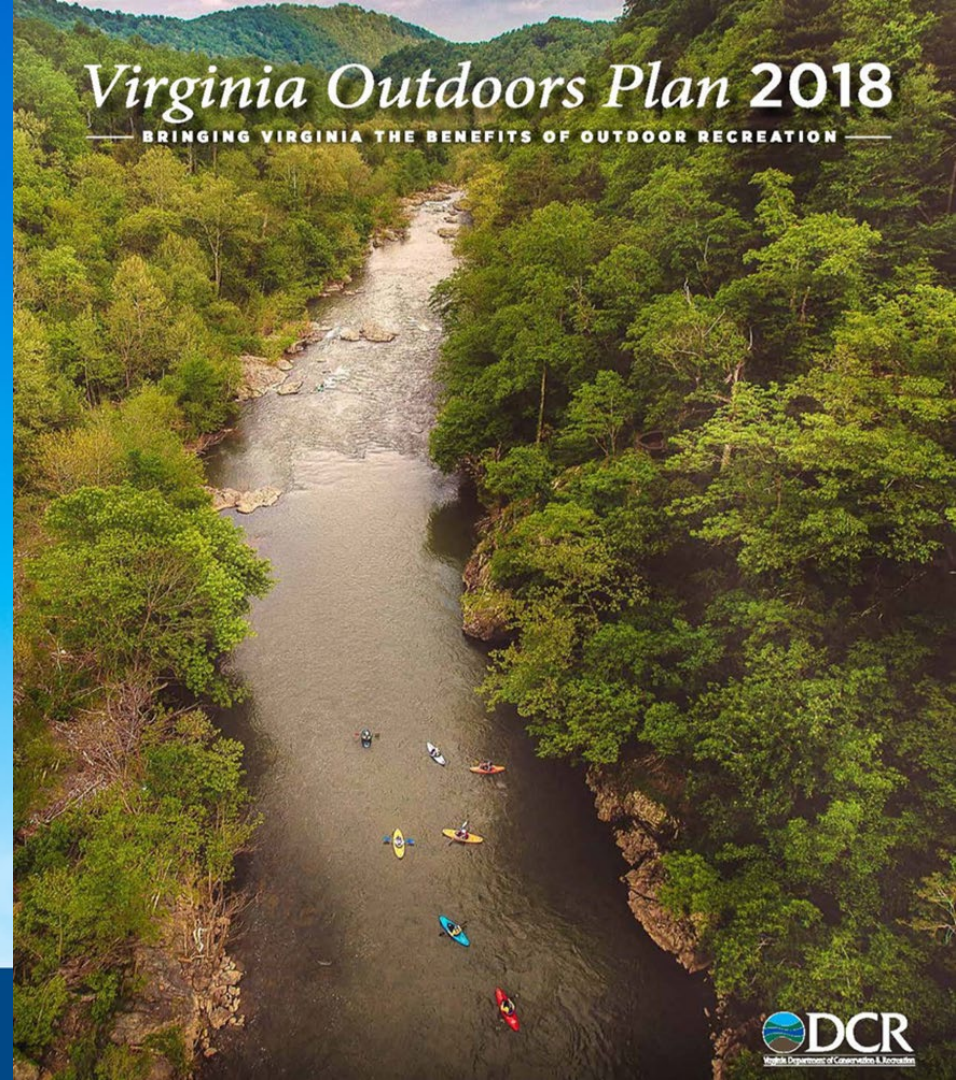
Annual Revenues - \$25,345

State parks rely on park generated revenues to support operations.

Master Plan Process

- Commonwealth's Outdoor Recreation and Land Conservation Plan
- Guide to Master Plan process
- Updated every 5 years
- Next Plan in 2023-Welcome public participation

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**, (iii) prior to major **improvements**
- A **guide for the development, utilization and management** of its natural, cultural and historic resources
- Developed in stages with public input
- Required to be updated every 10 years

Original Master Plan

Completed in 2009

Update started in 2017

VDOT Access study 2021



Seven Bends State Park Access Study

Final Report
November 5, 2021



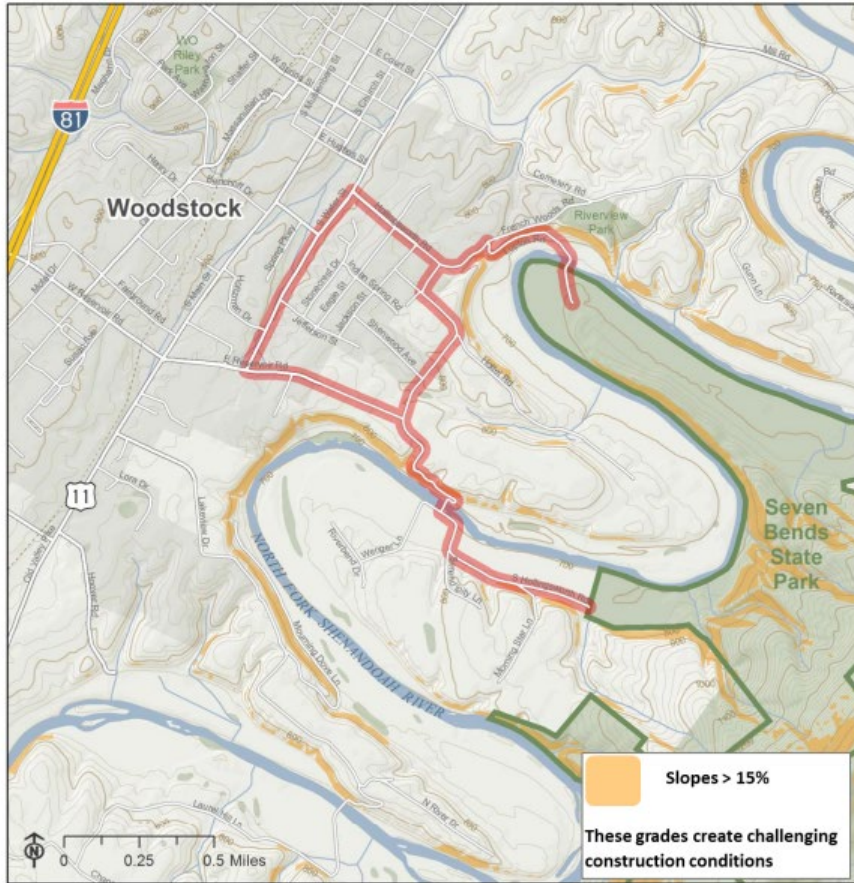
VDOT

Michael Baker

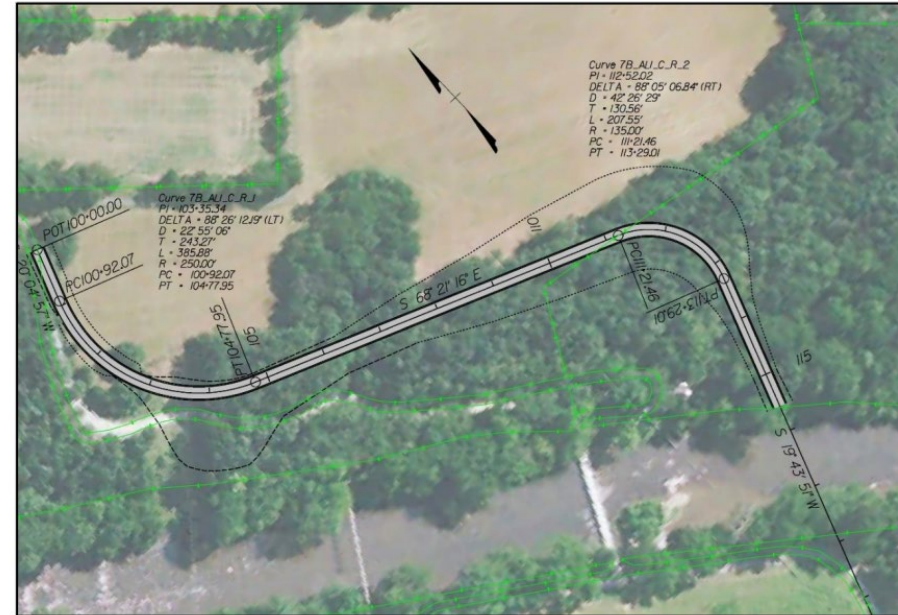
INTERNATIONAL



Figure 5: Study Area Topography and Steep Slopes



VDOT Access Study



https://www.virginiadot.org/projects/staunton/shenandoah_county_8211_seven_bends_state_park_study.asp

Site Analysis

Develop Resource Analysis/ Future Conditions Plan

Existing conditions

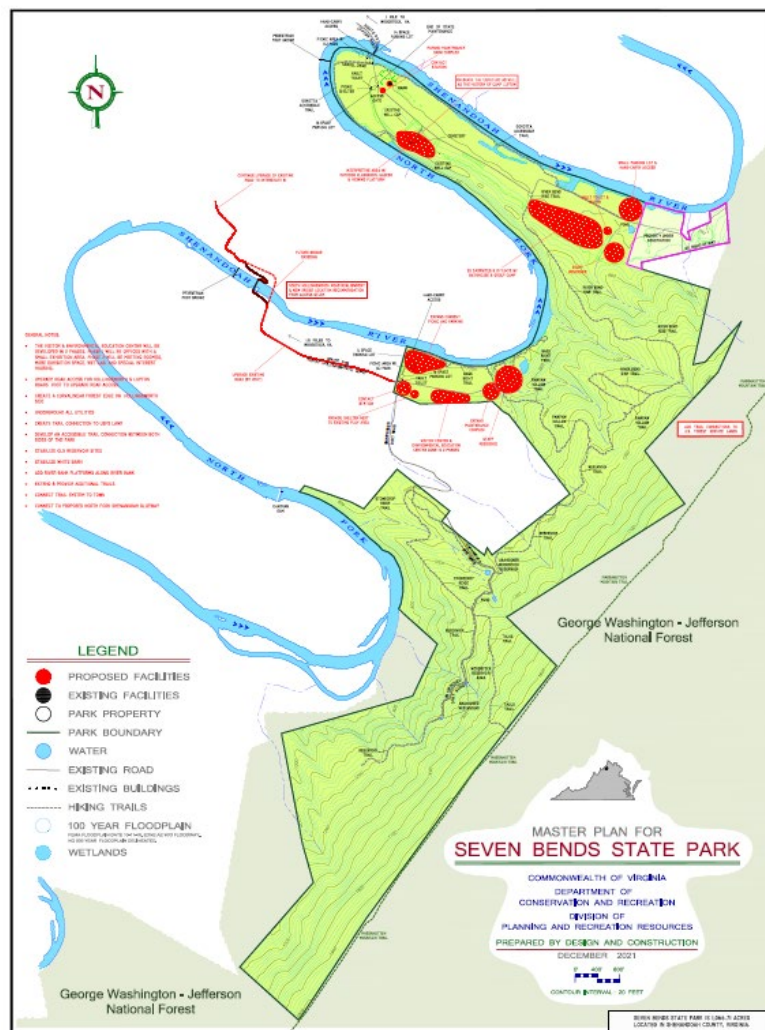
Natural and cultural resources of significance

Topography, water resource areas, soils, vegetation

SESP Goals

- Goal 1.0 – Protect & conserve the park's scenic & natural resources.
- Goal 2.0 – Protect & conserve the park's historic & cultural resources.
- Goal 3.0 – Provide recreational opportunities for day-use visitors to the park.
- Goal 4.0 – Provide enhanced facilities for overnight visitors to the park.
- Goal 5.0 – Provide environmental education & cultural interpretive services to the public.
- Goal 6.0 – Participate in mutually beneficial efforts with partner organizations and neighbors to enhance the entire region.
- Goal 7.0 – Administer & manage the park in a manner that fosters the public's trust.

Seven Bends State Park Master Plan



PHASE 1

- Group camp for volunteers –small shelter, vault toilet, water
- Develop infrastructure – water, sewer, electric [underground], telephone, internet, internal roads
- Staff residence
- Contact station with electricity
- Visitor Center – Phase One w/ offices, parking and a small exhibit area [750 sq. ft.]
- Expand maintenance complex
- Day-Use facilities: 2 riverbank platforms; river-side trail; picnic area along the river with large shelter, restrooms & parking; upgrade park multi-use trail system; connector trail to the GW-Jefferson NF from trailhead parking; improve existing play area, add a shelter
- Develop Interpretive area w/ outdoor classroom, viewing platform and gazebo
- Complete protection of Woodstock Reservoir sites

Blowup of Lupton Road area

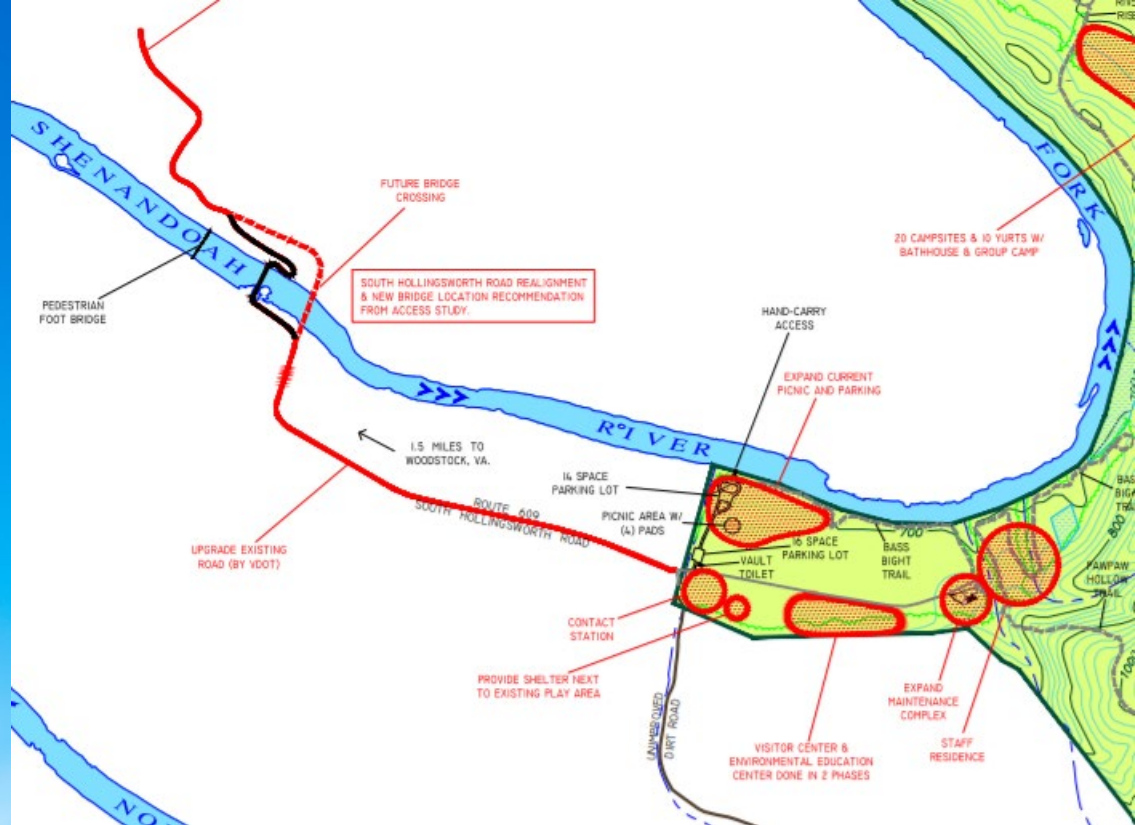


PHASE 2

- Develop additional infrastructure – water, sewer, electric [underground], telephone, internet, internal roads
- Environmental education addition to the Visitor Center w/ meeting spaces, more exhibits, wet lab, and special interest housing
- 10 yurts with amenities
- 20 primitive campsites with bathhouse [to be shared w/ yurts]
- Expand Maintenance Facility on Lupton side
- Staff residence
- Extend trail system
- More accessible trail between boat launches

Seven Bends State Park Master Plan

Blowup of Hollingsworth Road side





PHASE 3

- Boat launch on Lupton side with parking for 20, water & vault toilet
- Trail system expansion
- 2 observation decks
- Expand current picnic and parking on Hollingsworth side

Public Input Session Guidelines

Lynn Crump, Planner

Please make comments in the chat box.

These will be recorded and responded to by Feb. 1, 2022



Send comments

Written comments will be accepted up
until 5:00 p.m. on Feb. 1, 2022

Please send to:

Bill Conkle, Virginia Department of
Conservation and Recreation

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

or email Bill.Conkle@dcr.virginia.gov
or by fax to 804-371-7899.



Next Steps

- Update the Executive Summary and Map
- Present to Board of Conservation & Recreation for recommended approval
- Send updated plan to General Assembly for 30 day review
- Adoption of plan by DCR Director