



BEAR CREEK LAKE STATE PARK
929 Oak Hill Road
Cumberland, Virginia 23040-9518

Bear Creek Lake State Park MASTER PLAN

2002 Executive Summary
And 2009 Amendment



Department of Conservation & Recreation
CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

Bear Creek Lake State Park
Master Plan Amendment
June 10, 2009

The Bear Creek Lake State Park master plan is scheduled to be updated in October 2014. At that time, cost figures for phased development and staffing/operations will be revised.

The adopted master plan for Bear Creek Lake State Park was signed on December 6, 2002, by Department of Conservation and Recreation Director, Joseph H. Maroon. Since adoption of the plan, the meeting facility, YCC Bunkhouse, and 13 cabins with access roads have been constructed. The park is now connected to county water and sewer service, which has led to the disconnection of existing wells, storage tanks, and sand sewage filters. Bear Creek Lake State Park and the Department of Forestry also have a working agreement in place to enforce a no-hunting buffer on the park's border. During the five-year review of the master plan, several changes were recommended.

After carefully evaluating site conditions and traffic flow within the park, it was recommended that the proposed visitor center site be changed from an area near the park entrance to the day-use area of the park. This location will be closer to the majority of park users; parking opportunities will be included.

The site chosen for the visitor center overlaps the archery range, so the latter would be relocated to a new location near the park entrance. This new site provides space for a good safety buffer around the range.

The current location of the contact station is not functioning well now that the cabin area is on the other side of the lake. It is proposed that the contact station be relocated to near the park entrance.

With addition of the new cabins, another ranger residence will be needed, and it has been added near the cabin area. All other proposed projects in the adopted master plan will remain as set forth in the original plan.

On March 12, 2009, a public input meeting was held at Bear Creek Lake State Park to inform the public about the proposed changes to the master plan and to gauge public sentiment toward the changes. The meeting was well attended, and the proposed revisions as presented were supported by those in attendance. Based on the outcome of the public meeting, DCR staff recommends that the Master Plan for Bear Creek Lake State Park be amended as follows:

- Construct the visitor center and its parking lot in the day-use area.
- Relocate the archery range to a location near the park entrance.
- Relocate the contact station to the intersection of Route 629 and Bear Creek Road.
- Construct a new ranger residence near the cabin area.
- Renovate the concession area and beach bathhouse
- Construct an accessible trail from the meeting facility to the beach and across the beachfront.

The Board of Conservation and Recreation recommended adoption of these amendments at their meeting on April 28, 2009. Based on the requirements of §10.1-200.1 et seq., these proposed amendments are approved and made part of the Master Plan for Bear Creek Lake State Park.

_____/S/_____
Joseph H. Maroon, Director
Department of Conservation and Recreation

6/10/2009
Date

BEAR CREEK LAKE STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
December 6, 2002

Bear Creek Lake State Park consists of some 325 acres nestled in the heart of the 16,242- acre Cumberland State Forest in central Virginia's Cumberland County. The park is located 4.5 miles northwest of the Town of Cumberland. Access is from U.S. Route 60. A driver would turn north on Route 622 and then west (left) on Route 629 to the park entrance.

The property today known as Bear Creek Lake State Park was originally acquired from private citizens around 1932 by the United States Department of Agriculture under the Federal Resettlement Administration. In 1939 the State Forest Service took over management of the property. In 1940 it was opened as a "State Recreation Area" with concession, bathhouse facilities, and boat rental. In 1962 the property became a state park. Providing recreational opportunities to the public was a major consideration behind the establishment of Bear Creek Lake State Park in its earliest days, and this continues to be a focus of efforts today.

Recreational opportunities presently offered visitors include a campground with a total of 53 campsites, picnic shelter, playground, trails, boat ramp, and a 40-acre lake for swimming, boating and fishing.

The table below reflects park attendance over the last ten years:

1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
55,142	56,953	70,305	62,460	32,280	87,219	89,500	75,939	71,969	54,173*

* Reflects change in traffic counting procedures

In preparation for development of the Bear Creek Lake Master Plan, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staff met with a park technical advisory group. This group was comprised of local citizens and representatives of stakeholder groups. A Park Purpose Statement and Goals and Objectives were developed by the group, and then presented at a public meeting for additional input. The technical advisory group also met to discuss both current park issues and what direction the park should take over the next 20 years. A final public meeting was held to present and obtain input on proposed developments. The master plan describes new developments for the park in phases as follows:

Phase I – Enhancements include construction of up to 20 housekeeping cabins, consisting of a combination of two-bedroom units, three-bedroom units, and six-bedroom family lodges; a connection to the county sewer system will also be built. Other enhancements will include renovation of the beach restroom/shower for year-round use, expansion of the beach parking area by approximately 50 spaces, provision of additional trails, and construction of both a multi-purpose building/meeting space and a picnic shelter, plus roads and utilities.

Estimated construction cost for Phase I

\$7,711,161

Phase II – Enhancements will include renovation of the restroom/shower building in campground loop C for year-round use, construction of a staff residence, and installation of three pedestrian bridges for the trail system.

Estimated construction cost for Phase II \$ 819,267

Phase III – Improvements in this phase include development of a new restroom/shower building for camping loop B and reconfiguring the campground to add approximately 15 new spaces with water and electric service. During this phase, the archery range will be relocated to the Cumberland State Forest.

Estimated construction cost for Phase III \$1,117,855

Total development cost (2002 dollars) \$9,648,283

There is some private property along the entrance road of the park near the staff residences and maintenance area. In a future action, if the property becomes available, planning should include an attempt to purchase this property to protect the aesthetics and integrity of the park's main entrance. Should any of the private property contiguous with the park be offered for sale, it should be considered on an individual basis as it becomes available.

This plan represents the envisioned desired future condition, or “build-out” for the park. Although open-ended, the master plan considers a planning horizon of approximately 20 years. The plan will be reviewed every five years to track progress and ensure that any significant changing conditions are considered. The proposed developments will be constructed in at least three phases, depending on available funding, and will impact about 30-40 additional acres of parkland.

These developments will require increased operational cost of approximately \$368,984 above the present annual operating budget. (See Attachment 1) Part of this cost will include salaries for additional staff positions to operate and maintain the additional developments. It should be noted that a portion of the operating budget would be offset by additional revenues coming into the park through rental of the new cabins, meeting facility, and shelter. Once the developments are completed, Bear Creek State Park will become a significant destination for park visitors from throughout the surrounding region and the entire state of Virginia.

All future phases of park construction will be developed in an environmentally sensitive manner. The construction projects will meet or exceed the requirements of the DCR Best Management Practices Handbook. A 100-foot setback has been established around the lake. Trails and water dependent facilities such as fishing stations and the beach will be the only developments permitted within the setback.

OPERATING AND STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

STAFF: Existing	Proposed Increase	Future
Park Manager		Park Manager
	Assistant Park Manager	Assistant Park Manager
	Program Support Tech.	Program Support Tech.
Chief Ranger		Chief Ranger
Park Ranger	Park Ranger (2)	Park Ranger (3)
SALARY* TOTAL:		
\$108,290	\$135,315	\$243,605
WAGE TOTAL:		
\$44,818	\$118,708	\$163,526
OTPS TOTAL:		
\$51,116	\$120,803	\$171,919
TOTAL BUDGET: Existing (FY02 dollars)	Proposed** (FY04 dollars)	Future (FY04 dollars)
\$204,224	\$368,984	\$579,050

* Salary based on FY03 dollars for Existing, Proposed and Future needs

Budgeted Wage/OTPS based on FY02 park budget

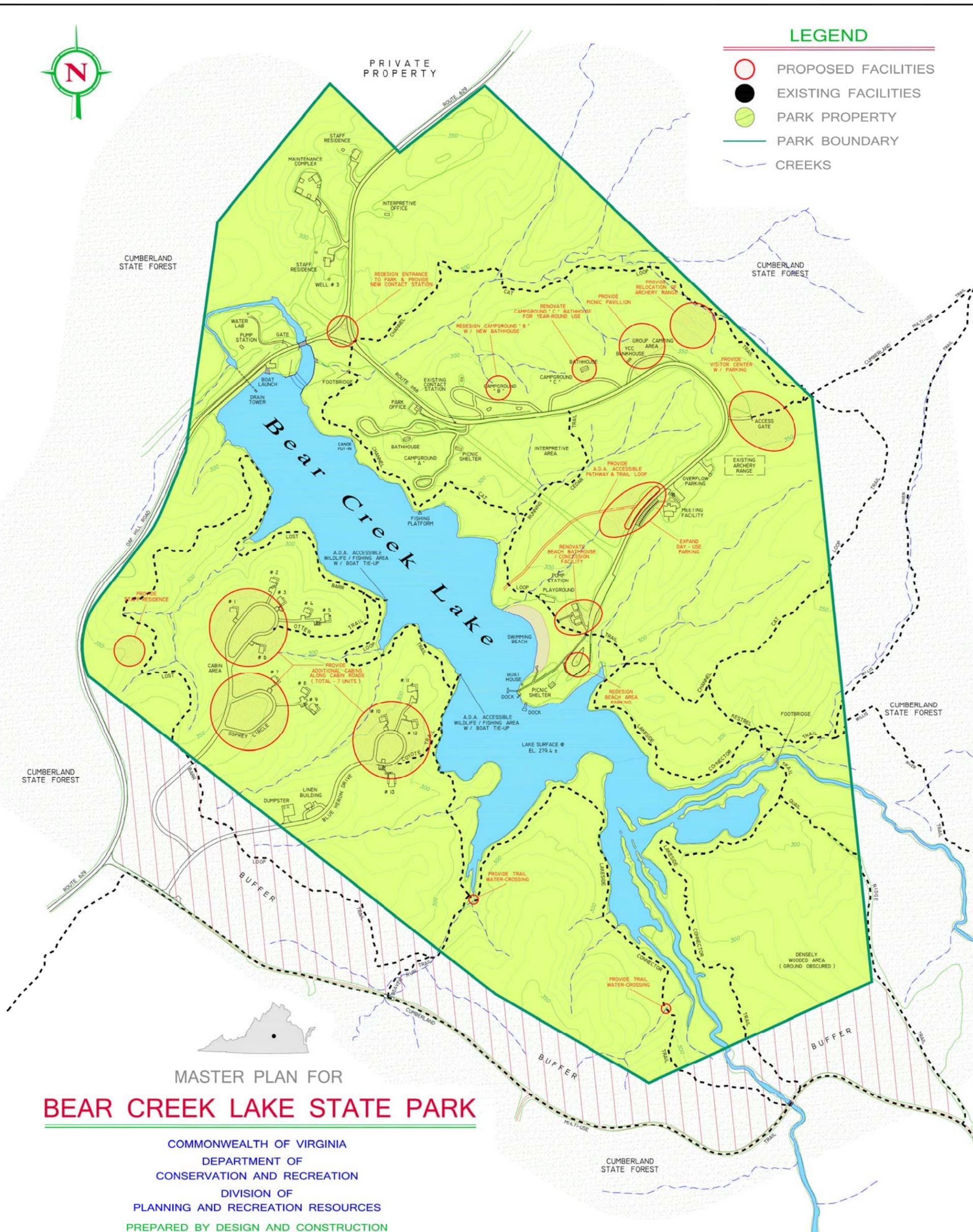
** Proposed and Future Budget estimates based on FY04 dollars

Proposed budget estimates for wage and OTPS include increases for existing budget to correlate to FY04 dollars



LEGEND

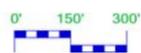
- PROPOSED FACILITIES
- EXISTING FACILITIES
- PARK PROPERTY
- PARK BOUNDARY
- CREEKS



MASTER PLAN FOR BEAR CREEK LAKE STATE PARK

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
DIVISION OF
PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES
PREPARED BY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

APRIL 2009



CONTOUR INTERVAL: 10 FEET