



Douthat State Park
14239 Douthat State Park Road
Millboro, VA 24460

Douthat State Park

MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2008 UPDATE



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

DOUTHAT STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
(2008 Update)

*Recommended for Adoption at the November 14, 2008
Meeting of the Board of Conservation and Recreation*

Douthat State Park is a registered Historic Landmark situated in the Alleghany Highlands in Bath and Alleghany Counties. Opening in June 1936, it was the first recreational facility acquired by the Commonwealth. Three Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camps developed the site. Since opening, the park has more than doubled in size and now equals 4,538 acres. Central to the park and serving as a hub of recreational and scenic resources is the 50-acre Douthat Lake. Facilities and services available to visitors include 30 cabins (25 dating to the CCC era), 3 picnic shelters, 2 guest lodges, 3 campgrounds, a restaurant, a maintenance complex, swimming beach with bathhouse, boat rental facility, forty-three miles of hiking trails, and a park office.

Visitation at the park is consistently high as the park is a popular destination for visitors from out of the region as well as a popular day trip for local residents. The following chart shows the range of attendance over the last 10 years. Fluctuations in weather have a lot to do with attendance each year.

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
246,386	169,061	167,820	175,491	186,719	170,943	173,199	179,692	178,706	194,580

All facilities developed in this park are carefully sited to minimize impact to the park’s setting and viewshed. The “CCC” design motif is carried forward in to all new construction. Building designs will utilize “green,” energy efficient, and sustainable materials and processes as much as practical. All future phases of park construction will be developed in an environmentally sensitive manner.

For the process of developing this master plan, the following goals were established for Douthat State Park:

- Protect, conserve, and enhance the natural, scenic, and cultural resources of the park
- Provide year-round, high quality opportunities for people to enjoy and value the resource
- Participate in mutually beneficial regional economic development efforts which highlight the region’s significance within the State
- Provide for visitor safety and satisfaction

These goals, in keeping with the tradition and design intentions for the park during the CCC era, have served as a driving force in the crafting of this master plan.

Completing the plans in the Douthat State Park Master Plan would fulfill the park’s purpose statement, which is to provide, “...now and into the future, opportunities for visitors to enjoy the natural and cultural resources of the park, with special emphasis on the culture of the CCC era, and to serve as a base for enjoyment of the Alleghany Highlands”.

The current Douthat State Park Master Plan was first adopted in 1998. In 2004, in keeping with our five year review schedule, the plan was reviewed to determine if any changes were necessary and it was determined that none were. Several projects identified for future development in the 1998 plan were funded with the 2002 General Obligation Bond. Several cabins and a new six-bedroom lodge were proposed to be constructed in the cabin area. A 20-site equestrian campground with bathhouse and horse stalls was also funded as well as a day-use horse trailer parking lot and trail head facility. Some new trails were to be constructed and many existing trails to be upgraded under the bond to support use by mountain bicycles, pedestrians, and equestrians.

In 2007, the state acquired the Whispering Pines Campground as an addition to Douthat State Park. This 52-acre campground was in need of considerable renovation to bring it to code and to upgrade the access road and bridges. Existing facilities on the property were removed and a new site plan for the property has been formulated. This site provides enough suitable land to expand camping in the park to meet the measured demand.

In 2008, planners and state parks staff from the Department of Conservation and Recreation conducted a review of the current master plan in accordance with § 10.1-200.1 of the Code of Virginia. After a thorough review of the adopted master plan and a discussion of what had changed, it was determined that conditions had changed to the point where some modifications of the master plan were advised.

While the park purpose statement, goals and objectives have not changed, the desired future condition of the park has been modified as a result of this review. It has been determined that some of the recommended developments in the 1998 Plan would have a detrimental impact to the remote and scenic character of the park. These two developments are the Middle Mountain Lodge and the Middle Hollow Camp. These two proposed developments would have required extensive new road construction. By removing the proposed developments from the back country portions of the park, the developed footprint of the park will be substantially reduced and the plan will retain more of its original CCC design vision.

The 1998 master plan identified a location at the southern end of the park for construction of an equestrian campground. However, the proposed site was found to be too restrictive to meet the requirements for the campground. With the acquisition of the Whispering Pines property, a solution to the problem became evident. It is proposed that, following completion of the new Whispering Pines Campground, that Campground 'B' be converted to an equestrian campground. This would put the equestrians on the west side of Douthat State Park Road where the horse trails are located, thereby negating the need for a road crossing for horses.

The 24 campsites in "B", will be replaced by 38 campsites in Phase I at Whispering Pines. There is room for another full 27-site loop at Whispering Pines which is scheduled for Phase III. The new sites will include 50 amp service, a modern bathhouse, and will use the new state parks campground design, including some buddy sites and other popular features. The 65 new campsites at Whispering Pines will bring the park up to total of 135 standard campsites at full buildout.

Another change made in the master plan is the reduction in the number of new cabins proposed for the park. It was determined that terrain limitations and the impact of so much new road

construction and its incumbent storm water management requirements would have detrimentally impacted the setting of the existing cabin area. New cabin construction has been proposed for only one new area instead of four. A total addition of up to eight new cabins and one 6-bedroom family lodge is now all that are being proposed.

The phased development plan and costs have been updated to reflect those projects that have been completed since 1998 and the other changes that have been made to the master plan. Three projects listed in Phase I will be constructed using funds from the 2002 General Obligation Bond. The remaining projects in Phase I are high priorities but have not been funded to date. Completion of all of the projects in this list will represent total build-out (completion of the master plan), and covers a 20-year timeframe. The estimated cost to complete development of Douthat Park, including the 2002 GOB projects, is \$39,800,536.

PHASE I.

- Upgrade 12 miles of existing trail (RTP grant)
- Develop 30-space horse trailer parking lot (RTP grant)
- Connect to County utilities
- Construct first loop of Whispering Pines Campground (2002 Bond)
- Convert "B" Campground to an Equestrian Campground (2002 Bond)
- Construct one 6-bedroom family lodge in Cabin Area 12-30 (2002 Bond)
- Underground Utilities in Whispering Pines Campground
- Construct 5 new cabins in Cabin Area 12-30
- Construct visitor center/ environmental education center
- Construct or acquire two new staff residences
- Construct camping cabins in Campground "C"

PHASE II

- Upgrade crossing of Wilson Creek into Campground "C"
- Upgrade Park Restrooms and Bathhouses
- Renovate Douthat Lodge and CCC Cabins
- Renovate Restaurant
- Construct 3 new cabins in Cabin Area 12-30

PHASE III

- Upgrade 31 miles of trails
- Expand Campground 'C' by adding primitive hike-in sites
- Dredge Silt from Foot of Dam
- Replace Lake Control Tower
- Stream Restoration of Wilson Creek
- Add Second Loop to Whispering Pines Campground

Staffing and Operations

Staffing and operational costs for Douthat State Park are based on fiscal year 2009 budget projections. The park budget underwent a 15% reduction due to the statewide budget shortfall. In addition to the funding reduction, the park is also 4 positions below the necessary number of permanent positions to adequately provide the needed services and maintenance of the park as it presently exists. This reduction equated to a loss of \$338,000 in operating and salary costs. The current park budget is \$882,000 which includes salaries for seven (7) permanent staff.

Each development phase has specific staffing needs and operational costs. The total costs for Phase 1 development including wages, salary for one additional permanent staff, and OTPS expenses is \$278,000. At complete build out, to be able to achieve full operation, an additional \$721,000 in operating funds will be needed which includes salaries for five (5) permanent staff. Douthat State Park also serves as the home park for State Park District 6. At full complement, there should be six (6) district staff with total salary costs projected at \$262,000. These district salaries are not included in the overall budget needs of Douthat State Park.

Without the projected staffing, and operating costs for the 3 development phases, as well as that needed to offset the 15% reduction, there will be insufficient funds or staff to adequately operate the park at full build out. The total cost to operate the Douthat State Park at full build out is projected to be \$1,603,000.

Douhath Operating and Staffing Requirements

EXISTING (FY 09)	BUDGET SHORTFALL*	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	FULL BUILD OUT
DIST STAFFING	VACANT				DIST STAFFING
District Park Mgr					District Park Mgr
Visitor Serv. Spec					Visitor Serv. Spec.
Dist. Resourc. Spec.					Dist. Resourc. Spec.
	Dist. Maint. Mgr				Dist. Maint. Mgr
Business Manager					Business Manager
	Program Support Tech.				Program Support Tech.
DIST SALARY TOTAL					DIST SALARY TOTAL
\$184,000	\$78,000				\$262,000
PARK STAFFING	VACANT				PARK STAFFING
Park Manager					Park Manager
	Asst. Park Mgr.				Asst. Park Mgr.
	Chief Ranger				Chief Ranger
Chief Ranger - Interp					Chief Ranger - Interp
Park Ranger (4)	Park Ranger (2)	Park Ranger			Park Ranger (7)
Office Manager					Office Manager
SALARY TOTAL					SALARY TOTAL
\$235,000	\$148,000	\$31,000			\$414,000
WAGE TOTAL	REDUCTION				WAGE TOTAL
\$327,000	\$93,000	\$100,000	\$15,000	\$41,000	\$577,000
OTPS TOTAL					OTPS TOTAL
\$320,000	\$97,000	\$146,000	\$20,000	\$29,000	\$612,000
TOTAL BUDGET** (FY09 dollars)					TOTAL BUDGET** (FY09 dollars)
\$882,000	\$338,000	\$278,000	\$35,000	\$70,000	\$1,603,000

NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY09 budget projections.

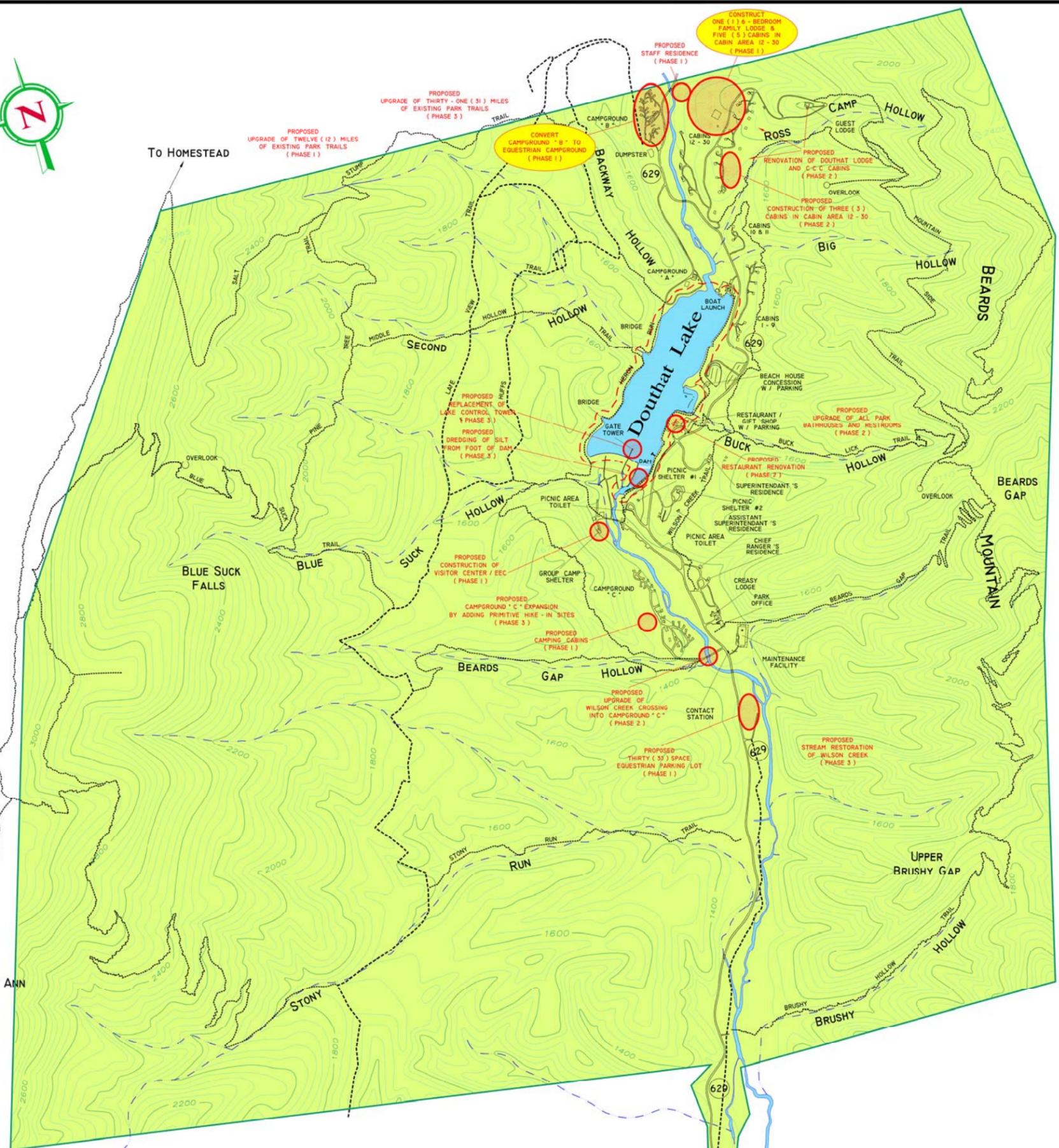
*Budget shortfall represents positions and operating costs either frozen or reduced due to state wide budget reductions.

**Total Budget amount does not include salaries specific to district positions.



To HOMESTEAD

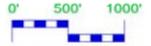
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MASTER PLAN FOR DOUTHAT STATE PARK

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

OCTOBER 2008



CONTOUR INTERVAL: 40 FEET

LEGEND

- PROPOSED FACILITIES
- EXISTING FACILITIES
- PARK BOUNDARY
- PARK PROPERTY
- HIKING TRAILS
- MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS
- - - - RPA SETBACK LINE
- BOND PROJECTS 2002 BOND PROJECTS

CONSTRUCT FIRST LOOP OF WHISPERING PINES CAMPGROUND (PHASE 1)

PROPOSED UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AT WHISPERING PINES CAMPGROUND (PHASE 1)

ADDITION OF SECOND CAMPGROUND LOOP AT WHISPERING PINES CAMPGROUND (PHASE 3)

PROPOSED STAFF RESIDENCE (PHASE 1)

PROPOSED CONNECTION TO COUNTY UTILITIES (PHASE 1)

TO CLIFTON FORGE