

Seven Bends State Park Master Plan Update Meeting Notes

August 30, 2018, 5:30 PM to 7:30PM

Board of Supervisors Meeting Room

600 N. Main Street

Woodstock, VA 22664

Purpose of Meeting – Update the community on proposed changes to the Seven Bends State Park Master Plan

48 +/- Community Members in Attendance

10 +/- DCR Staff in Attendance

Materials provided (attached): Agenda, Guidelines for Comments, Updated Phasing (attached)

Summary of presentations and discussions

Craig Seaver, Director of State Parks, welcomed the audience then gave a brief overview of the state park system in Virginia. He talked about the importance of the resources and the experience of making memories for all who visit state parks. He referenced Article XI of the Virginia Constitution, and 10.1-200 of the Code of Virginia and discussed the need for state park in the vicinity of Seven Bends as identified in the Virginia Outdoors Plan (VOP).

Danette Poole, Planning and Recreation Resources Division Director, gave an overview of the Virginia Outdoors Plan and Virginian Outdoors Survey ([VOS](#)), with a focus on §10.1-200 of the Code of Virginia, which requires the development of a statewide outdoors recreation and land conservation plan. The plan helps to guide the location and facility development of state and local parks. The survey summary states: Natural areas, parks, trails, and access to waterways remain among the top recreational needs in Virginia; increased participation in freshwater fishing and paddle sports; Increased visitation to natural areas and preserves; strong support (74%) for public funding for outdoor recreation; and importance of scenic resources in travel planning. She then gave an introduction to the master plan process for state parks. Established by the General Assembly in 1998 -- § 10.1-200.1 --state park master planning requires that every state park have a master plan and these plans are to be updated every 10 years or when there is a major change in the park acreage or facility development. The update meeting is a requirement for that process.

Al Cire, resource specialist for State Park District 3, provided a general update of the natural resources of Seven Bends, focusing on the new information on the shale barrens at the park and the unique concerns for those resources. He presented a map of the buildable areas of the park based on the natural resources: slope, water, unique resource areas.

Lynn Crump, Environmental Programs Planner, presented the changes to the master plan since the last public input meeting several years ago. The changes focused on challenges due to access via the two one-lane bridges and the identification of the shale barrens within the park. The major changes were the elimination of the internal road and the proposed cabins.

The Public Input Portion of the meeting Opened at 6:58 PM - Summary of comments received

- Residents downstream of the park are concerned about increase in large motor boats using the river. They feel the river is unsafe for this use and recommend that DCR work with DGIF to manage this problem. Desire a 'No Wake' zone at the park for paddlers using the proposed launches.
- Many were concerned about the safety of the access to the park. That the current roads will not accommodate an increase in traffic and are not suitable for trailer traffic. Several accidents have already happened and they are concerned the increase in traffic volume will increase those numbers. Desire VDOT install 'No Parking' signs along Lupton and Hollingsworth Roads.
- One adjacent landowner, across from the Lupton Road entrance, is concerned about the increase in illegitimate use of the park and current parking area. They were told before they bought the property that this entrance would be a secondary entrance to the park and now feel they were misled, since it looks like most of the development in the park will be on the Lupton Road side. Additionally, they are concerned about the view of the parking area and toilet from their house.
- Many also wanted to know why the internal road was removed and why it cannot be added back into the park plan. They noted that by removing the interior road, DCR is putting increased pressure on the access roads to the park, which will impact public safety and quality of life for local residents.
- There is interest in having the cabins saved due to their historical and community value. There should be funds set aside for preserving the current cabins as well as for upgrade to the current road system, especially if there is to be camping on the ridge.
- There is a concern that the park and use of the existing roads as they are will take away the safety and current lifestyle of the adjacent residents. Passing options on the one-lane roads are limited and often not possible. That needs to be improved before inviting additional visitors to the park. Also, a recommendation was presented that would limit use of trailers on those roads as well as kayaks and canoes, since shuttling would require four to six vehicular trips on roads already not safe. Do not build the boat launches until the road situation is addressed, including a 2-lane road with shoulders.
- One stated that they understood the road situation, but felt the park is a great asset for the community and felt that VDOT needs to be watching the situation.
- A recommendation was made to develop an internal road to transfer kayakers between the two new access points.
- Additional accesses are being considered outside of the park by DGIF and Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River group.
- There was a request for more open communication for expressing concerns and to inform individuals about responses to the presented concerns.

After the public input meeting section was closed, several suggested that there be a community meeting with VDOT to discuss the road concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Matthew J. Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources
Clyde E. Cristman
Director



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

Rochelle Altobiz
*Deputy Director of
Administration and Finance*
Russell W. Baxter
*Deputy Director of
Dam Safety & Floodplain
Management and Soil & Water
Conservation*
Thomas L. Smith
Deputy Director of Operations

AGENDA
SEVEN BENDS MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Public Input Meeting

Thursday, August 30, 2018

5:30 P.M.

Board of Supervisors Meeting Room
600 N. Main Street
Woodstock, VA 22664

Agenda

Welcome
Introduction to the Virginia State Park system
Review of state park master planning process
Orientation to Seven Bends State Park
Overview of park resources
Review proposed master plan revisions for Seven Bends State Park
Public Comment Period (see back for procedures)
Next Steps
Adjourn

THANK YOU!

Written public comments are also accepted for Seven Bends State Park until 5:00 p.m. on September 30, 2018. Please make comments to:
Lynn Crump, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, 600 E. Main St., 24th Floor,
Richmond, VA 23219
Lynn.crump@dcr.virginia.gov, fax 804-371-7899

600 East Main Street, 24th Floor | Richmond, Virginia 23219 | 804-786-6124

*State Parks - Soil and Water Conservation - Outdoor Recreation Planning
Natural Heritage - Dam Safety and Floodplain Management - Land Conservation*

GUIDELINES FOR COMMENTS ON THE MASTER PLAN

It is the intent of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to hear everyone who wishes to speak on the proposed Seven Bends State Park master plan during this meeting. A sign-up list for speakers will be used if there are comments. Sometimes discussion has to be limited because of time constraints. If a previous speaker has stated your position, you may make that known by reference. Speakers are limited to one appearance of three minutes. If additional time is required, it may be granted by consent of DCR for good cause, but such decision shall be at DCR's discretion. The timekeeper will signal when your time is up. In order to give all speakers equal treatment and courtesy, we request that speakers adhere to the following guidelines:

- Individuals are allowed a three-minute time limit in which to speak.
- Come forward to the speaker's podium and state your name (if you have an unusual spelling for your name, please spell it).
- Do not speak from your seat or out of turn.
- State your position and give facts and other data to back it up.
- If you represent a group or organization, you may ask others present to rise and be recognized.
- Back-and-forth debate is prohibited.
- We will listen to all speakers before responding to questions asked on issues raised.
- Give written statements and other supporting material to park staff (written comments are also welcome if you do not wish to speak).
- Please hold all applause and other forms of approval or disapproval, as a courtesy to each speaker.
- Please turn off all pagers and cellular telephones.

PROPOSED SEVEN BENDS STATE PARK PHASED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Phase I

Phase IA – complete construction by 2019

Demolish buildings on Camp Lupton site and stabilize white barn for use by park, remove trailers

Hollingsworth Road side - maintenance complex, parking for 44 vehicles, hand carry boat launch, vault toilet, underground electric

Lupton Road side - parking for 46 vehicles, hand carry boat launch, vault toilet, underground electric, small picnic shelter, entrance road

Phase IB Hollingsworth side

Develop infrastructure – water, sewer, electric, telephone, internal roads and parking (Hollingsworth side)

Staff Residence

Contact station with office

Expand maintenance complex, remove existing trailers

Day-Use facilities:

- Bank fishing nodes and river-side trail
- Picnic area along the river with large shelter, playground, restrooms and parking
- Upgrade park multi-use trail system
- Connector trail to the GW-Jefferson NF from trailhead parking

Protect Woodstock Reservoir sites with a fence

Phase II

Environmental Education & Visitor Center with park office, meeting spaces and parking

10 yurts with bathhouse

20 primitive campsites with bathhouse [to be shared w/ yurts]

Portage on downstream side of Lupton Road bridge

Expand Maintenance Facility on Lupton side

Staff residence

Bank fishing nodes

Extend trail system

Phase III

Group camp – small shelter, vault toilet, water

Boat launch on Lupton side with parking for 20, water & vault toilet

Trail system expansion

Bank fishing nodes and two observation decks