



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

MASTER PLAN

Executive Summary
2014 Update

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
600 East Main Street, 24th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219



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

Douthat State Park

MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2014 UPDATE

Presented for review at a public meeting on August 5, 2014, then recommended for adoption by the Board of Conservation and Recreation on August 21, 2014, and then reviewed for 30 days by the Virginia General Assembly.

Adopted:

_____/S/_____

Clyde E. Cristman, Director
Department of Conservation and Recreation

October 15, 2014

Date



Department of Conservation & Recreation

CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

DOUTHAT STATE PARK
MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
2014 Update

The Douthat State Park Master Plan Executive Summary is an update to the official unabridged master plan document adopted December 29, 1998, by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Director David G. Brickley. The plan was then renewed on December 16, 2004, by DCR Director Joseph H. Maroon. An updated plan was adopted by DCR director Joseph H. Maroon on November 14, 2008. This current master plan update is intended to set forth a clear vision for the future based on the phased development. This 2014 executive summary represents the most recent five-year review described in §10.1-200.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. It outlines the desired future condition for Douthat State Park when it is fully developed.

Douthat State Park traverses Bath and Alleghany Counties in the Ridge and Valley region of Virginia surrounded by the George Washington and Jefferson National Forest. Located in the 5th and 6th Planning Districts, the park is 169 miles west of Richmond, 54 miles north of Roanoke, and 36 miles west of Lexington. Douthat is accessible from U.S. 64, U.S. 60, and Virginia Route 60; the primary park entrance is from Virginia Route 629.

This 2014 update places value on connecting Douthat State Park to other resources in the community. Close to Clifton Forge and Covington, the park is in close proximity to the James, Jackson and Cowpasture Rivers. It is within the James River watershed and is included in the James River Heritage Trail Corridor. The U.S. Forest Service James River and Warm Springs Districts are nearby, connected to the park through the Alleghany Highlands Horse Trail. The proposed Midland Trail Virginia Byway along Route 60 passes close to the park, and Route 629 (Douthat Road) is a Scenic Byway that passes through the park. Further west, The Great Eastern Trail passes near the West Virginia border. The T.M. Gathright Wildlife Management Area is also nearby. The Jackson River Scenic Trail follows the river valley not far from the park. Nearby is the historic Homestead Resort and Lake Moomaw, which offer additional recreational opportunities. Douthat Road is listed on the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' Birding and Wildlife Trail. The Douthat State Park Regional Connectivity Map is an attachment to the full Master Plan document.

Douthat State Park, in the Alleghany Highlands, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for the role its design played in the development of parks nationwide. 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 to the current 4,545.69 acres. Central to the park and serving as a hub of recreational and scenic resources is the 50-acre Douthat Lake.

Douthat State Park received Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) in 2005 and 2009 for park facility development. In compliance with the LWCF Act of 1965 and amendments thereto, the Commonwealth of Virginia is required to maintain the park for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. In 1986, the 50th anniversary of Douthat State Park and the Virginia State Park System, Douthat was recognized as a Nationally Registered Historic District. In 1998, Douthat won the Virginia Lakes and Watersheds Association award for best operated and maintained dam for its Douthat Lake Dam. In 1999, Douthat received the Centennial Medallion from the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Planners from the Department of Conservation and Recreation conducted this master plan update in accordance with the *Code of Virginia* section §10.1-200.1. It was presented and reviewed at a public meeting on August 5, 2014, prior to being presented to the Board of Conservation and Recreation on August 21, 2014 and to the General Assembly for review and comment, and finally to the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation for adoption. This update clearly outlines the development objectives for the park that continue to meet the recreational and environmental protection needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

As a part of the 2014 master plan update, the 1998 park master plan, the 2004 renewal and the 2008 update were reviewed. It was determined that enough significant changes had occurred within the master plan to warrant a full revision. The executive summary and accompanying map have been updated. The phased development plan and costs have been revised to reflect current proposed projects. The park staffing and operations costs data have been also updated to reflect current conditions.

The adopted park purpose statement is stated below:

“The purpose of Douthat State Park 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 the enjoyment of the Allegheny Highlands.”

The following table depicts park attendance during the periods 2005 to 2013.

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
179,692	178,706	194,580	195,564	205,654	224,269	220,917	220,983	235,655

In 2013 Douthat had 235,655 visitors: 81,106 were overnight guests, while 154,549 were day-use visitors. With this level of visitation, it is estimated that the park had an economic impact on the local economy of approximately \$8,555,734. Master plan recommendations designed to increase visitation and improve the visitor experience, once implemented, should have a further positive impact on the region’s economic vitality.

Additional land acquisition is recommended to enhance park offerings, establish connective trail easement/corridors, and buffer the park from inappropriate development to protect valued viewsheds, and/or protect water quality. Future land acquisitions will only be negotiated with willing property owners. The placement of conservation easements on adjacent property to preserve the natural resources, cultural landscapes, and scenic resources in close proximity to the park will be encouraged, In working cooperatively with neighboring landowners, the park will be enhanced and protected over time.

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, 43 miles of hiking trails, and a park office. Also available at the park are multi-use trails, a small amphitheater complex, 2 playgrounds and 2 picnic shelters. Other management facilities include a park office, staff residences, a maintenance complex, a road system, parking, contact station, comfort stations, and water/septic systems, although most of these have been converted to public utilities.

This 2014 master plan update describes both proposed facilities and improvements to existing facilities. New facilities are sited to minimize impact to the park, and in keeping with the prescriptive management areas as defined by the Park Resource Management Plan and the guidelines of the Park Visitor Experience Plan, when available. To the greatest extent possible, Virginia State Parks strives to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards. Building and site design will implement green energy standards using energy-efficient and sustainable materials and process to the greatest extent possible. Green design initiatives will be considered during the design process for park renovations and new construction. These facilities will be carefully sited to minimize impacts to the views in the park and of the park from adjacent lands and water bodies. Consideration will be given to eliminate excessive, misdirected, or obtrusive artificial light in the park in order to maximize the dark sky effect and encourage astronomy and night-sky viewing. Development activities will comply with the requirements set forth by the Department of Environmental Quality's best practices for erosion and sediment control and stormwater management in order to protect water quality.

The proposed developments for Douthat State Park are presented in priority order. Phases I through III are representative of total build-out (completed development of this master plan). This plan outlines the desired future condition of the park over a 20-year planning horizon. Total estimated cost is \$45,390,127, based on 2014 costs.

Douthat State Park Proposed Phasing

PHASE I

- Construct visitor / environmental education center
- Renovate bathhouse and comfort stations at Lakeside Campground
- Add water and electric to Lakeside Campground sites
- Upgrade bathhouse and comfort stations at White Oak Campground
- Renovate restaurant
- Upgrade Wilson Creek crossing to White Oak Campground
- Renovate Douthat Lodge
- Renovate CCC cabins
- Replace lake control tower
- Upgrade 10 miles of trail
- Connect to county sewer

The total estimated cost for Phase I development is \$21,118,266.

PHASE II

- Renovate five cabins
- Renovate comfort stations at Camp Malone Picnic Area
- Renovate comfort stations at Camp Douthat Picnic Area
- Upgrade 10 miles of trail
- Add second loop and camp cabins to Whispering Pines Campground, including YCC bunkhouse and picnic shelter
- Place utilities underground in Whispering Pines Campground
- Construct 2 3-BR cabins near cabin 30
- Add camping cabins at White Oak Campground
- Renovate Creasy Lodge

The total estimated cost for Phase II development is \$2,675,593.

PHASE III

- Construct a staff residence
- Add primitive hike-in sites at White Oak Campground
- Dredge silt from base of dam
- Upgrade low water bridge at Camp Carson Picnic Area
- Provide comfort station at Camp Carson Picnic Area
- Wilson Creek stream restoration
- Develop a group camp with comfort station in Discovery Area
- Upgrade 11 miles of trail

The total estimated cost for Phase III development is \$11,596,268.

The total estimated cost for Phases I, II and III development is \$45,390,127.

Staffing and Operations

Staffing and operational costs at Douthat State Park are presently budgeted at \$1,568,000 annually, including salaries for nine staff positions. Four additional staff positions are identified in Phase I which are either vacant positions or would bring the current park staffing to a standard base level for the complexity of the operation. At complete build-out of the proposed three phases of development, seven additional staff and an additional \$558,000 in operating funds will be needed. In order for the park to operate effectively and efficiently at full build-out, the park needs the projected staffing and operating costs for the three development phases. The total budget for Douthat at full build-out is projected to be \$2,126,000 with 16 staff positions.

DOUTHAT STAFFING AND OPERATING COSTS

EXISTING (FY 15)	PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III	FULL BUILD OUT
STAFFING				STAFFING
Park Manager				Park Manager
Asst. Park Mgr				Asst. Park Mgr
Chief Ranger			Chief Ranger	Chief Ranger (2)
Educ. Specialist			Educ. Specialist	Educ. Specialist(2)
Park Ranger (3)	Park Ranger*(2)		Park Ranger	Park Ranger (6)
	Housekeeper*(2)			Housekeeper (2)
Office Manager				Office Manager
Business Manager				Business Manager
SALARY TOTAL				SALARY TOTAL
\$523,000	\$184,000		\$162,000	\$869,000
WAGE TOTAL				WAGE TOTAL
\$446,000	\$37,000	\$34,000	\$27,000	\$544,000
OTPS TOTAL				OTPS TOTAL
\$599,000	\$64,000	\$29,000	\$21,000	\$713,000
TOTAL BUDGET (FY15 dollars)				TOTAL BUDGET (FY15 dollars)
\$1,568,000	\$285,000	\$63,000	\$210,000	\$2,126,000

NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY15 budget projections.

* Additional positions which are vacant and/or will bring park to standard base level staffing.



9.3 MILES TO HOMESTEAD

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

MIDDLE MOUNTAIN

BLUE SUCK FALLS

17.6 MILES TO DOLLY ANN

BATH COUNTY ALLEGHANY COUNTY

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

BATH COUNTY ALLEGHANY COUNTY

GENERAL NOTES:

- ENHANCE ADA ACCESS THROUGHOUT THE PARK
- EXPAND PARK TRAILS & EXPLORE TRAIL CONNECTIONS OUTSIDE PARK
- RELOCATE UTILITY WIRES UNDERGROUND
- UPGRADE OF 31 MILES OF EXISTING PARK TRAILS
- UPGRADE OF ALL PARK BATHHOUSES AND COMFORT STATIONS
- CONNECTION TO COUNTY UTILITIES

LEGEND

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

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

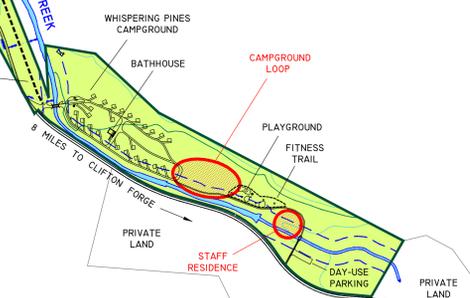
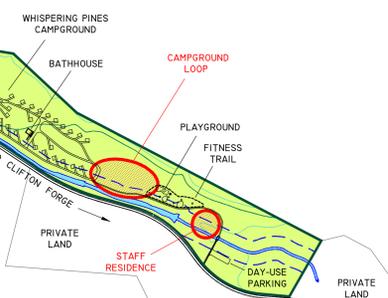
OCTOBER 2014

0' 500' 1000'

CONTOUR INTERVAL: 40 FEET

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST

GEORGE WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON NATIONAL FOREST



8 MILES TO CLIFTON FORGE