



Fairy Stone State Park
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FAIRY STONE STATE PARK

MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2011 UPDATE

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
203 Governor Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219



FAIRY STONE STATE PARK MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2011 UPDATE

The Fairy Stone State Park Master Plan Executive Summary is an update to the official unabridged master plan document adopted in 2005 by the Department of Conservation and Recreation. This 2011 executive summary represents the most recent five-year review described in §10.1-200.1 of the *Code of Virginia*.

Fairy Stone State Park, one of the six original Virginia state parks to open on June 15, 1936, is renowned for the mythical “fairy stones” that can be found in the park and surrounding areas. Considering the park’s proximity to Fairy Stone Farms Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the US Army Corps of Engineers (hereafter referred to as “the Corps”) Philpot Reservoir, and the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway, it’s no surprise that visitors from near and far are inspired to visit the park to enjoy its beautiful scenery, rich history, and ample recreational opportunities. All this, and the opportunity for visitors to engage in their very own fairy stone hunt, is what makes this 4,741-acre state park (including the 168-acre Fairy Stone Lake) nestled in the mountains of southwest Virginia a special place for state park enthusiasts.

In the late 1920s, various groups across the Commonwealth began working towards the establishment of state parks in Virginia. It wasn't until 1933, however, with the assistance from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), that the state was able to begin acquisition of land and construction of Virginia’s first six state parks. Julius B. Fishburn, a Roanoke newspaper publisher and president of the Southwest Virginia Trust Company, donated the 4,639-acre site, making it the largest of the six original parks. The CCC provided the labor and materials for construction of park amenities from 1933 until the CCC camp was removed in the spring of 1941. The original park amenities -- roads, trails, picnic areas, a restaurant, sanitation system, bathhouse, dam, and log cabins -- are classic examples of CCC design and workmanship.

Fairy Stone State Park is located in the West Piedmont Planning District (Region 12) in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Patrick and Henry Counties. The park lies within a half hour’s drive of Martinsville, home of the Martinsville Speedway, and is within reasonable driving distance of major cities in Virginia and North Carolina including Roanoke, Greensboro, Charlotte, Raleigh, Richmond, and the metro Washington, DC, area. Access to the park is via Route 57 West off Route 220 from Bassett. The park also can be reached from the Blue Ridge Parkway using either Route 58 East or Routes 8 South and 57 East.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has a cooperative agreement with Fairystone Farms Wildlife Management Area (WMA) to manage 2,400 acres of park land. In addition to this agreement, park staff and Fairystone Farms WMA staff have a long-standing partnership to co-manage hunting activities in the area. Extending park trails on this land should be explored.

This 2011 update places value on connecting Fairy Stone to other resources in the community. Aside from the Fairy Stone Farms WMA, Philpot Reservoir, and the scenic Blue Ridge Parkway, there are many opportunities for connectivity and partnerships with other facilities in the region. The Beaches to Bluegrass statewide trail and the regional Smith River Trail could connect to Fairy Stone. Sections of the Smith River, the South Mayo River, the North Mayo River, and the Blackwater River are designated Virginia Scenic Rivers. The Dan River Basin Association has mapped blueways on the Smith and Dan Rivers, while Franklin County has done the same for the Blackwater and Pigg Rivers. Conservation areas located close by include the Turkeycock Wildlife Management Area, Grassy Hills Natural Area Preserve and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Fairy Stone is listed as a site on the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' Birding and Wildlife Trail. The Fairy Stone State Park Regional Connectivity Map is an attachment to the full Master Plan document.

Fairy Stone State Park received Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) in 1968 and 1984 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.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation Planners and State Park Staff conducted this master plan update in accordance with §10.1-200.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. The 2005 Fairy Stone State Park Master Plan was developed with the assistance of a technical advisory committee, which was comprised of local citizens, business owners, and representatives from federal, state and local government. With the assistance of the advisory committee, a park purpose statement and goals and objectives were developed. Public input was solicited at the beginning and at the end of the process to ensure that plan recommendations were understood and accepted by the community. This plan outlines the desired future condition of the park over a 20-year planning horizon. As required by the *Code of Virginia*, it must be revisited every five years to ensure that the development objectives outlined in the plan continue to meet the recreational and environmental protection needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

As a part of the 2011 master plan process, the 2005 park master plan was reviewed. It was determined that no significant changes occurred to warrant a full revision of the master plan. The goals and objectives and the desired future condition of the park have not changed since adoption of the 2005 plan. The phased development plan and costs have been revised to reflect projects that have been completed since 2005, and 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 Fairy Stone State Park is to provide premiere outdoor recreational and educational opportunities while protecting and interpreting the natural, historical, and cultural resources of the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.”

The following table depicts park attendance during the period 2002 to 2010:

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
130,226	100,223	128,580	126,290	167,015	108,607	98,559	92,129	98,452

In 2010 Fairy Stone had 98,452 visitors: 32,642 were overnight guests, while 65,810 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 \$3,501,110. 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.

Existing facilities at Fairy Stone include 25 cabins, one lodge, Fayerdale Hall Conference Center, a nature center, 51 campsites with water and electric hook-ups, a group camp with six sites, lake, boat rental area, boat launch for gas-free vessels, multi-use trails, swimming area with bathhouse, concession area, water toys and diving platform, amphitheater, six picnic shelters, and one group shelter. Maintenance and management facilities include park office, staff residences, and a maintenance complex as well as a road system, water system, and septic drain fields.

Park improvements since the writing of the 2005 Master Plan include: acquisition of 101.875 acres, dredging of the upper portion of Fairy Stone Lake, construction of a 10-site Equestrian Campground with a restroom (SST), construction of equestrian/multipurpose Trails, and hook-up to public water supply to replace antiquated park water system.

This 2011 master plan update represents both new facilities and improvements to existing facilities. New facilities at this park should be designed and built with consideration to the original CCC design and layout of facilities. To the greatest extent possible, Virginia State Parks strives to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards. All future phases of park construction will be developed in an environmentally sensitive manner. Building and site design will implement green energy standards using energy-efficient and sustainable materials and process to the greatest extent possible. These facilities will be carefully sited to minimize impacts to the views of the park from the adjacent lands and water bodies. Development activities will comply with the requirements set forth by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Best Management Practices (BMP) Handbook for Erosion and Sediment Control in order to protect water quality.

The dredging of Fairy Stone Lake will be an ongoing issue, and planning and financial resources will be needed to protect and improve the recreational value of the lake. Roads and parking areas in Fairy Stone State Park that are in poor condition need to be resurfaced for safety and aesthetics. Acquisition of additional park land should be considered to enhance the park or buffer it from inappropriate development.

Additional land acquisition is recommended to enhance park offerings, buffer the park from inappropriate development or protect valued viewsheds. 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.

The proposed developments for Fairy Stone State Park are presented in priority order. 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.

PHASE I

- Replace the park office.
- Upgrade the beach bathhouse, concession facility and beachfront.
- Construct a new visitor center/discovery center
- Renovate cabins
- Renovate campground and replace the bathhouse
- Resurface roads and parking lots throughout the park.
- Renovate boat ramp.
- Improve ADA accessibility to park resources, facilities and programs.
- Develop a trail around Fairy Stone Lake.
- Extend horse trail system and explore connections to other area trails.

The total estimated cost for Phase I development is \$19,312,020

PHASE II

- Water tank demolition and adaptive re-use of water treatment facility
- Stabilize CCC era restroom near picnic shelter #1 for adaptive re-use
- Construct restroom near picnic shelter #1.
- Renovate the amphitheater and add restroom facilities.
- Relocate equestrian day-use parking.
- Construct bathhouse in equestrian area.
- Construct additional playgrounds for campground and cabin guests.
- Construct a staff residence

The total estimated cost for Phase II development is \$3,341,520

PHASE III

- Develop a new campground loop at the old overflow campground site.
- Renovate group camp to include camping cabins.
- Dredge Fairy Stone Lake
- Construct a water feature/sprayground complex near beach area.
- Construct up to ten additional cabins, including one 6 bedroom cabin.

The total estimated cost for Phase III development is \$18,399,420

The total cost to bring Fairy Stone State Park to its desired future condition is \$41,052,960

Staffing and Operations

Staffing and operational costs at Fairy Stone State Park are presently budgeted at \$963,000 annually, including salaries for 6 staff positions. With the current facilities and operational requirements, the park has an identified need for 9 additional positions and \$387,000 in funding. At complete build out of the proposed 3 phases of development, 2 additional staff will be needed and an additional \$348,000 in operating funds. In order for the park to operate effectively and efficiently at full build out, the park must be provided with the projected staffing and operating cost identified as “existing additional needs” and the costs for the 3 development phases. The total budget for Fairy Stone at full build out is projected to be \$1,698,000 with 17 staff positions.

Fairy Stone State Park – Operating and Staffing

EXISTING (FY 11)	EXISTING ADDITIONAL NEEDS *	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	FULL BUILD OUT
<u>STAFFING</u>					STAFFING
Park Manager					Park Manager
Asst. Park Mgr					Asst. Park Mgr
Chief Ranger	Chief Ranger				Chief Ranger (2)
	Educ. Specialist				Educ. Specialist
Park Ranger (2)	Park Ranger (3)			Park Ranger	Park Ranger (6)
	Housekeeper (2)			Housekeeper	Housekeeper (3)
Office Manager					Office Manager
	Program Support Tech.				Program Support Tech.
	Business Manager				Business Manager
SALARY TOTAL					SALARY TOTAL
\$354,000	\$387,000			\$80,000	\$821,000
WAGE TOTAL					WAGE TOTAL
\$311,000		\$37,000	\$24,000	\$62,000	\$434,000
OTPS TOTAL					OTPS TOTAL
\$298,000		\$59,000	\$18,000	\$68,000	\$443,000
TOTAL BUDGET (FY11 dollars)					TOTAL BUDGET (FY11 dollars)
\$963,000	\$387,000	\$96,000	\$42,000	\$210,000	\$1,698,000

NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY11 budget projections.

* Existing additional needs represents staff shortages that were identified as part of the 2002 re-benchmarking effort, and/or staff positions and operating costs reduced due to multiple years of state wide budget reductions.



LEGEND

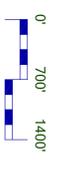
- PROPOSED FACILITIES
- EXISTING FACILITIES
- PARK PROPERTY
- PARK BOUNDARY
- WATER
- ~ TREE LINE
- EXISTING ROAD
- · · · · EXISTING BUILDINGS
- HIKING TRAILS
- - - 100' RPA SETBACK
- ▨ WETLANDS

- RESURFACE ROADS & PARKING LOTS IN PARK
- ONGOING LAKE DREDGING
- ENHANCE ADA ACCESS THROUGHOUT PARK
- EXPAND PARK TRAILS & EXPOSE TRAIL CONNECTIONS OUTSIDE PARK BOUNDARIES

MASTER PLAN FOR FAIRY STONE STATE PARK

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

MARCH 2011



CONTOUR INTERVAL: 50 FEET

