

Management Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we have to write a management plan?

The management plan is a 20-year strategic vision for the state park. It guides the development of facilities and management of park resources. For example, a management plan will point out what activities will be offered, where new facilities may be built and what areas should be restored as prairie or forest, or what the focus for the state park's interpretive programs will be.

Management plans are required by Minnesota state statute for some units of Minnesota's outdoor recreation system, including state parks.

What are the steps involved in developing a management plan for Buffalo River State Park?

Management plans are developed through an open public process. Parks and Trails Division staff and planners work with other Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, other agencies, local government officials, local legislators, and citizens during the planning process. Public input is a valued part of the management plan.

Below are the general steps taken to develop a management plan. Over the next several months, the division will be working through these steps – actions on some of which have already begun:



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- Division staff collect data and identifying issues for the management plan.
- **An open house is held to expand on the issues that will be addressed by the plan, identify people to serve on the Citizens Advisory Committee and to invite people to participate in the process.**
- Division staff work with other DNR Divisions on issues identified for the plan that are their areas of expertise – for example, Forestry Division staff may help identify techniques for managing forest resources in the state park.
- Citizen Advisory Committee meetings are held. The committee is made up of representatives from the local communities, state park visitors, and interested citizens. The committee reviews information collected during the planning process, and comments on possible plan recommendations.
- A draft plan is prepared. The draft is presented to the Citizen Advisory Committee for their review and comment.
- The revised draft is released for public review. Another open house is held to give the general public an opportunity to review the draft plan and make comments or suggestions. A management plan is open for public review for at least 30 days.
- A final version of the plan is prepared and, following review within the DNR, is approved by the Commissioner of Natural Resources. The plan is then implemented as funding is available.

How will the new activities, facilities or renovations proposed in the management plan be funded?

Capital improvements such as new buildings or structures, and most land acquisitions are typically funded through state bonding requests. The Parks and Trails Division has other resources it can use for interpretation and natural resource projects, including revenue from state park operations as well as Legacy Amendment funds. Legacy funds can also provide additional resources for outreach and interpretation.

How do I get involved?

Following the open house, a Citizen Advisory Committee will be established to assist with the planning process. This group will meet several times in the next few months to provide input, help evaluate alternative courses of action, and review the draft management plan once it is written. To join the committee, please leave your contact information at the sign-in table. You will also have the opportunity to comment on the draft plan when it is released for public review next year.

Comments or questions about the management plan are welcome at any time during the planning process. Comments can be sent to:

Gratia Joice, Principal Planner
MN DNR, Parks and Trails Division
500 Lafayette Road N.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Comments or questions can also be emailed to gratia.joice@state.mn.us.

Web link for more information:

To get the latest information regarding the status of the Buffalo River State Park management plan, go to https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/parks_trails/buffalo-river-state-park-planning.html.