

# NATHAN AND OLIVE BOONE HOMESTEAD STATE HISTORIC SITE

## *PREAMBLE AND MISSION STATEMENT*

August 2021

### **HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

Nathan Boone (1781-1856) was the tenth child and youngest son of Daniel Boone. He played a key role in the spread of Euro-American settlers out of the Mississippi valley. Nathan followed his father and older brother, Daniel Morgan Boone, into Missouri in 1799. He and his sixteen-year-old wife, Olive, reportedly then possessed only three horses, a rifle, an axe, and blankets. Over the next few years, in the tradition of his father, Nathan made a living by surveying, fur trapping, and trading. Nathan was active in the state militia and with the Indian affairs. During the War of 1812, he served as an officer in the Mounted Rangers trying to maintain calm along the frontier from perceived and actual threats from Native Americans.

After the war, Nathan succeeded financially in civilian life and in 1820 was elected a delegate to the constitutional convention held in St. Louis. The family prospered until the 1830s. Nathan lost his house that he had built in 1810 overlooking the Femme Osage as the result of a defaulted loan for which he was the bondsman. At the age of 51, Nathan rejoined the Missouri Rangers to fight in the Black Hawk War. He became captain of the newly formed First Regiment of Dragoons in 1833. He retired as a lieutenant colonel in 1853 at the age of 72.

His sons, James, John, and Benjamin Howard had moved the family to Greene County in 1837. The extended Boone family most certainly found a landscape inclusive of a prairie and timber environment with “rolling good soil for cultivation” according to original land surveys conducted by Elias Bar in 1835. By late 1837 Olive Boone would begin her role managing the homestead, Nathan would only be in residence occasionally for the next 15 years. Olive would see the homestead grown to encompass nearly 1,200 acres by 1856. She would go on to raise 3 of her grandchildren on the homestead and care for her mother who would live to see her 104th birthday. Nathan would spend his last days on the homestead and was buried in the family plot north of the Boone Home. His wife Olive was buried beside him two years later.

The Boone’s owed much of their success on the homestead in part to the labor of enslaved people. Little is known about exact day-to-day life, but at the height of homestead operations in 1850, the Boone’s enslaved 15 people. The African American cemetery located north of the Boone cemetery contains at least 11 graves. The cemetery was started by the enslaved people of the Boone homestead, but saw use by the Ash Grove community for segregated burials until the late 1880’s.

The house, built in 1837, is a dogtrot log cabin modified in the 1840s by weatherboarding and enclosure of the breezeway between the two sections to the cabin. Since then, very little modification of the original fabric of the building has occurred. Archeological excavations have revealed, to date, the location of the original smokehouse, summer kitchen, and root cellar. Many additional outbuildings are suspected, including the slave quarters, and it is hoped that both

traditional archeology and remote sensing will provide additional data on the types and locations of these outbuildings.

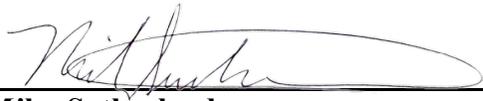
The homestead is situated within the fabric of a landscape that has both historic and biological significance. A small population of the federally threatened Missouri bladder pod is associated with a limestone glade found within the Ash Grove cluster of bladder pod populations. The Division's responsibility in interpreting the site is to provide the visitor with an image of the total environment at the time of settlement.

Nathan Boone has ties to many other facilities in the system. With his brother, Daniel Morgan, salt production was begun at Boone's Lick State Historic Site in 1805. These two brothers obtained several land grants encompassing salt licks; one of which was later purchased by Dr. Robert Graham and later became Graham Cave State Park.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

The primary mission of the Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead State Historic Site is the preservation and interpretation of the house and historic landscape as well as the interpretation of the personages of Nathan and Olive Boone and the Boone family in Missouri.

**APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mike Sutherland**  
Division Director, Missouri State Parks

8/27/21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Terry Bruns**  
Program Director, Planning and Development

08/27/2021  
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Date

*Laura L. Hendrickson*  
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**Laura Hendrickson**  
Director, Ozark Region

August 27, 2021  
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Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Justin Adams**  
Deputy Regional Director, Ozark Region

08/09/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mike Busekrus**  
Superintendent

08/11/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# NATHAN AND OLIVE BOONE HOMESTEAD STATE HISTORIC SITE

## *CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN*

**August 2021**

**Location:** Green County  
**Established:** 1991  
**Size:** 400.20 Acres

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The primary mission of the Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead State Historic Site is the preservation and interpretation of the house and historic landscape as well as the interpretation of the personages of Nathan and Olive Boone and the Boone family in Missouri.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Located in western Green County, north of Ash Grove, Missouri, Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead State Historic Site is situated within the fabric of a landscape that has both biological and historic significance. The historic site encompasses prairie grasslands with large areas of open limestone glades, supporting a small population of federally threatened Missouri bladder pod. Wooded areas scattered across the landscape consist of groves of ash, walnut, and oak trees broken by glades of limestone outcroppings. Notable historic features include the Boone Home, outbuilding remnants, Boone family and African American cemeteries, and 370 acres of the original homestead.

The State of Missouri purchased Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead in 1991. Previously known as Nathan Boone Homestead State Historic Site, it wasn't until 2020 that Olive's name was added to the facility, recognizing her vital role as the resourceful caretaker of the homestead.

### **SITE GOALS**

- Preserve the natural and cultural resources located within the site's boundaries;
- Provide recreational opportunities and public use facilities compatible with the site's mission, resources, and public needs;
- Provide adequate orientation and interpretive facilities to enhance visitor experience;
- Provide administrative support facilities to ensure successful operation and maintenance of the historic site.

### **INTERPRETIVE THEMES**

- The life of Nathan & Olive Boone, and the Boone family members who lived on the Homestead,
- The lives of the enslaved people who lived on the Homestead,
- Pre-settlement landscape and wildlife of the Greene County, and

- The diverse history of early Greene County and Ash Grove.

## **SITE STRUCTURES**

Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead State Historic Site encompasses one historic and six support structures. The historic Boone Home consists of a dogtrot log cabin modified in the 1840s by weatherboarding and enclosure of the breezeway between the two sections to the cabin; circa 1837 and original to the property. Support structures include:

- Restroom (1999)
- Shelter (2015)
- Well house (1993)
- Shop (1949)
- Barn (1959)
- Pole barn (unknown)

## **DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

To ensure the view from the Boone Home is preserved, along with primary points of historic interpretation, every effort will be made to prevent modern intrusions from disturbing/disrupting the viewshed. New development will also avoid areas of ecological importance.

### **Access**

Road access is to be constructed to the new visitor center area and maintenance area. Additionally, a new path will be constructed leading to the Boone Home from the new visitor center area, roughly following the historic “Road to Springfield”; enabling the interpretation of the historic site in chronological order.

### **New Visitor Center Area**

A new visitor center area is to be designated in a patch of wood southeast of the Boone Home. This area will include construction of a new site office and parking. Amenities located within the area may include but are not limited to picnic tables, information kiosk, and signage. The existing site office is to be removed.

### **New Maintenance Area**

Due to operational difficulties and safety concerns, the current maintenance area is to be eliminated along with the demolition of area structures. A new maintenance area is to be designated adjacent to the new visitor center area. This area will include construction of a new maintenance facility.

## **Cyclist Primitive Camping Area**

A temporary cyclist primitive camping area for touring/cross-country cyclists will be located at the northern edge of the current day use area where two existing picnic pads reside. Once construction of the new visitor center area is complete and foot traffic/interpretive tours shift, the cyclist primitive camping area will move to its final destination, east of the shelter where double and single picnic pads exist.

## **Multi-Use Trail**

Located towards the eastern portion of the site, a multi-use, single track trail (hiking and biking) will be established as an extension of the Prairie View Trail. Trail development will be placed out of the viewshed of the Boone Home.

## **Multi-Use Trailhead**

A multi-use trailhead will be developed in the new visitor center area, southeast of the Boone Home. A hybrid approach for trailhead parking will be available near the entrance gate, enabling trail access to the public when the gate is closed.

## **Special Considerations**

Cultural Resource Survey: A cultural resource survey did not produce cultural concerns within the new visitor center area and maintenance area.

Utility Services: Development southeast of the Boone Home will require extensive utility service construction and/or connection. Connection to the City of Ash Grove water and wastewater, approximately 1 mile away, necessitates investigation.

## **PROJECT PHASING**

1. Temporary cyclist primitive camping area
2. Multi-use trail and trailhead
3. New visitor center area and maintenance area
4. Cyclist primitive camping area (final location)

Cultural and natural resource clearances will be required before on-site modifications and development occur.

## **PLANNING AND RESEARCH GOALS**

- Update and/or complete the historic sites General Management Plan
- Documentary and archeological research of the historic site will continue, including:
  - African American slave cemetery
  - Slave quarters
  - Sink hole on top of hill

## **ACQUISITION UNITS**

If offered, acquisition of adjacent property may be pursued only through willing sellers or donors. To be considered, units should enhance the mission of Missouri State Parks through one of the following categories:

- Resource preservation and protection
- Recreational access and opportunity
- Management facilitation

## **CONTEXTUAL PLANNING INFORMATION**

### **Public Input**

Public input is an integral part of the CDP process. The following includes input opportunities throughout the planning process.

1. August 15, 2020: CDP Public Meeting #1 held in conjunction with ribbon cutting event.
  - a. August 17, 2020 to September 15, 2020: Public input opportunity #1
2. January 28, 2021: CDP Public Meeting #2 (virtual)
  - a. January 29, 2021 to March 1, 2021: Public input opportunity #2

### **CDP Team Members**

Laura Hendrickson – Ozark Regional Director  
Justin Adams – Ozark Region Deputy Regional Director  
Mike Busekrus – Superintendent  
Chris Crabtree – Natural Resource Steward  
Michael Ohnersorgen – Cultural Resource Program Director  
Rachel Campbell – Archaeologist  
Amanda van Woert – Registrar  
Terry Bruns – Planning and Development Program Director  
Don Stier – Design Section Chief  
Ryan Dunwoody – Planning Section Chief  
Rebecca Young – Outdoor Rec. Section Chief  
Ben Nagy – Trail Coordinator  
David Kelly – Deputy Division Director  
Brian Stith – Deputy Division Director  
Mike Sutherland – Division Director

## **APPENDIX**

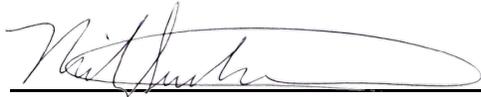
CDP Map  
Public Meeting #1 Survey Results  
Public Meeting #2 Survey Results

**NATHAN AND OLIVE BOONE HOMESTEAD  
STATE HISTORIC SITE**

**CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**August 2021**

**Approved by:**



**Mike Sutherland**  
Director, Missouri State Parks

8/27/21

Date



**Terry Bruns**  
Program Director, Planning and Development

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August 27, 2021

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**Justin Adams**  
Deputy Regional Director, Ozark Region

08/09/2021

Date



**Mike Busekrus**  
Superintendent

08/11/2021

Date

# NATHAN AND OLIVE BOONE HOMESTEAD STATE HISTORIC SITE

CDP- August 2021

Projected Coordinate System:  
NAD 1983, UTM Zone 15N  
Contour Interval: 20 Feet  
Absolute Scale: 1:3,822



**Use Area**

- Day Use Area
- Cyclist Primitive Camping Area
- Maintenance Area
- Visitor Center Area

**Trails**

- Homestead Interpretive Trail
- Prairie View Trail
- Spring Box Trail
- White Connector

**Landscape & Features**

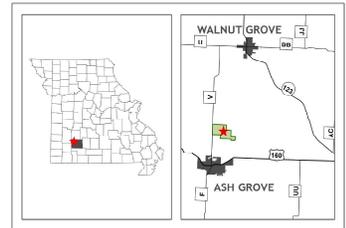
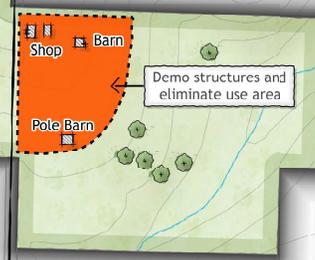
- Nathan Boone Homestead SHS

**Development**

- New Road Access
- New Path
- Development Note
- Viewshed Protection

**Other Symbols:**

- Trees/Wooded
- Waterbody
- Stream
- Structure
- Road
- Contour
- Parcel
- Feature



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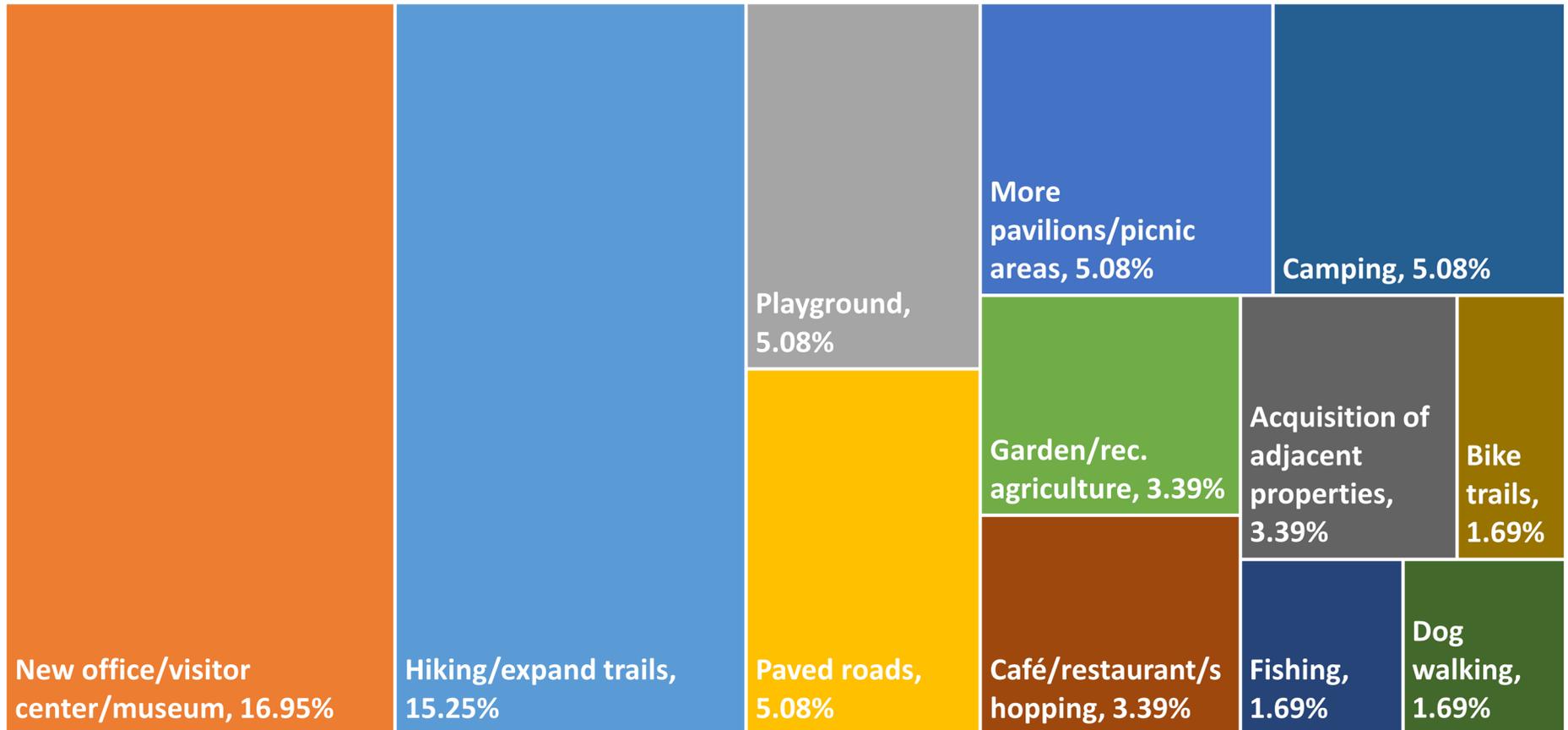
N Farm Rd 35

Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA



### NATHAN AND OLIVE BOONE HOMESTEAD SHS

Q: What recreational activities and facilities, if any, do you feel are missing and should be added to this park or historic site to enhance the visitor experience?



**Comments/suggestions regarding Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead SHS:**

1. It's fun and informative to have interactions with people truly knowledgeable about the site's historic significance. There was less to for fun in nature--interpretive trail about original plants and animals encountered by indigenous and European settlers, for example.
2. Love them all, keep them open
3. I don't know anything about this park or any really. Hoping to get more involved in our parks. I would like to see big plaques with descriptions of what we see, describing what would have been. It's probably a money thing, but our parks and historical sites are not well known.. or maybe it's because of vandalism?
4. I visit them frequently and hope to visit this one soon
5. Wi-Fi at state parks to be included in camping fees. I have visited other state parks and this is so helpful when looking for groceries, tourist sites, info about surrounding area, and maps. I love the MO state parks and historic sites.
6. I've been out of the state for 11 years and haven't had the chance to reconnect. I worked for the park system for 25 years.
7. Some of the cleanest well managed parks I have camped in.
8. I really enjoy them!
9. The State Parks are doing a real good job.
10. I really appreciate that you opened the trails for use even when the homestead is not open
11. I would like to see the hiking trails expanded. It seems like they were reduced since 2015 and some trails were converted into fire roads/trails. An expanded visitor center with more displays/artifacts and a film to introduce the story of the Boones. Overall, the park staff do a great job -- they need a larger budget and more of them. Parks like Nathan Boone and Current River State Park are unknown gems of the state park system. They deserve more funding for staffing and needed repairs and improvements.
12. My grandchildren love going to Nathan Boone hot beverage and craft to take home
13. Love them all.
14. As a history teacher, I say leave them fairly simple. Dummy clutter them up with attractions. I love being able to visit the Boone homestead and just stand there and hear/see nothing but nature as Nathan and Olive did. I have been dozens of times as an escape from the modern and frivolous world.
15. I miss the old barn! I wish it could be recreated. I also wish they still held Homestead Days out there like they did years ago when there would be a blacksmith set up, a few animals, tents, cooking, games for kids, rope making, etc. Anything and everything relating to the time period that could draw more visitors for the day and grow it into a larger festival. I feel like that has dwindled in recent years. Maybe something added to the property closer to the little creek, open field area just to enjoy that space. A table, swing, etc. I probably have a different perspective, Nathan and Olive are my 5th great grandparents, but I love being out there just to enjoy the ancestry and peace and quiet and I would be all for anything that keeps that



**Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead  
State Historic Site  
CDP Survey #1 Results (2020)**

**n = 59 (# of respondents)**

- alive for years to come so I can continue taking my sons out there to enjoy it as well.
- 16.** We were completing our passport books, a program that should just be ongoing. Ongoing passport stamps
- 17.** Just to take care of them. Once they are gone... gone forever!
- 18.** Heard the night program was excellent but I didn't attend; I have some difficulty walking. Thought the programs that were planned at the Boone Park this spring and summer were excellent but the virus stopped most of them. This has been a big improvement in the Boone Park in the last few years. It is being well maintained. The park supervisor is fantastic! Interesting programs draw a crowd but people are staying home right now.
- 19.** I would love to see the passport with stamps return in some form or another.
- 20.** Missouri has the best parks in the country. Keep up the outstanding job.
- 21.** Great trails
- 22.** You guys already do lots of cool stuff. Sometimes I kinda wish there were more or different hours. But I know you all do your best.
- 23.** Love them
- 24.** My family has camper. We love to go camping in your parks. It's normally our first choice, but lately we have had to look elsewhere. We find many older campgrounds need some changes for bigger rigs and more amenities like sewer and water. Your parks that have that
- are getting harder and harder to book these days with more people camping. Basically would love to see more modern campsites.
- 25.** I really enjoyed our trip to this site. We homeschooled and it was wonderful to be able to come and discover actual history.
- 26.** The state of Missouri has so many beautiful parks. They need to be promoted more.
- 27.** I love that they are free to all visitors
- 28.** I love that they are free to all visitors
- 29.** Really enjoy when a park is kept beautiful, freshly mowed, and has some wide open spaces, pastures
- 30.** Would appreciate additional information on lives of Boone slaves during this period. What, if any, individual freedoms did they have; how and where they lived, learned and raised their families on the farm.
- 31.** Keep them open! Let people know where these places are. Maybe do a feature every month in the Missouri Conservationist magazine or something.
- 32.** 100 year centennial passport program. Visited all 88 (at that time) Missouri State Parks and Historic Sites. Spent all summer (2016) doing it and many miles on my car making memories with my Husband and visiting/touring many great images in Missouri. Stayed in a few State Parks along the way. We also try to visit and camp in at least 5 different State Parks every year to earn our Camper award. Missed it



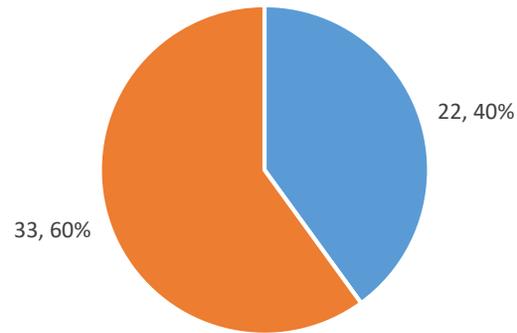
**Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead  
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CDP Survey #1 Results (2020)**

**n = 59 (# of respondents)**

by one last year (2019) as I had to spend most of my summer (camping time) taking care of my Mother after she fell and broke her hip twice in less than 2 weeks. I stopped in on a Sunday (2016) for only a brief time so I can't for sure say what it needs. But I will like to come back and's visit a little longer. Maybe offer a few camping sites?! I understand the reason and need for making reservations to camp this year, but I wish you would allow some first come- first serve, walk-in camping Sites again at a few campgrounds like it used to be.

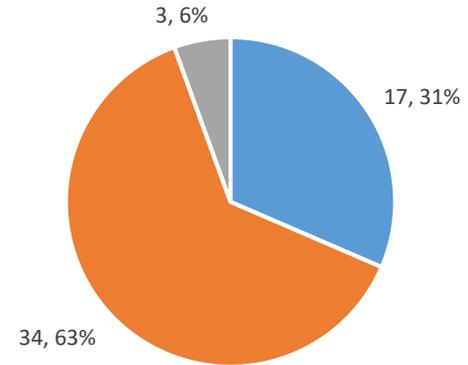
**33.** Lovely day trip! Learned a lot in the facility museum

### New Office Location



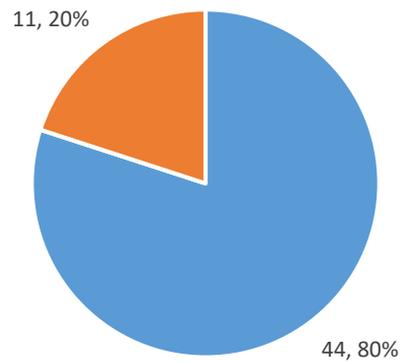
■ A (South of Boone Home) ■ B (Current Location)

### New Maintenance Area



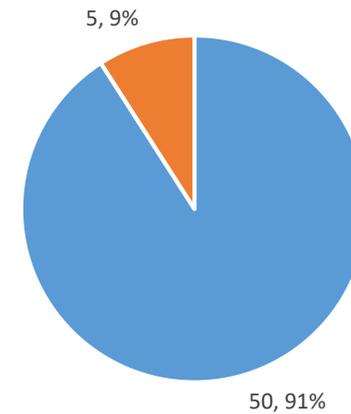
■ C (South of Boone Home) ■ D (North of Current Office) ■ None

### Bike Backcountry Camping Area



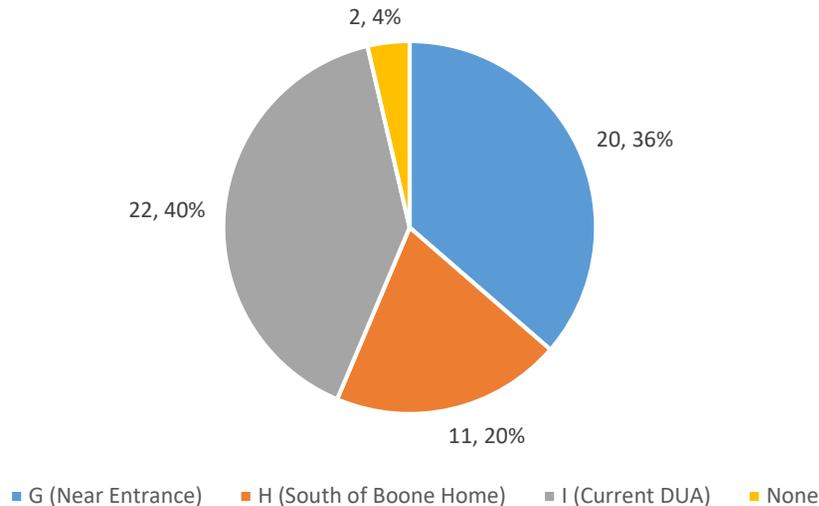
■ Like ■ Dislike

### Bike Trails



■ Like ■ Dislike

### Bike Trailhead



### Comments/suggestions regarding Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead SHS:

1. Like the proposed location of the new office in relation to the historic road.
2. I would encourage Boone Homestead staff, if they haven't already, to reach out to Ozarks Greenways and the Frisco Highline Trail. Given Ash Grove's location on the 76 National bike trail, this is a great way to bring more folks to the site.
3. I led a group of cyclists there in 2019. We were on road bikes which aren't really good on gravel. Many waited at the entrance but some ventured with me carefully down the gravel drive. There are really three main types of bikes in use. Road bikes, gravel bikes,

and mountain bikes. With gravel and unpaved trails, you'd probably want to appeal to mountain bikes (how long is the proposed trail?). If it's all going to be gravel, then gravel bikes or mountain bikes. If it's all going to be paved then any bike. The park was a stop along a 30 mile bike ride, so we only had road bikes with us. Road bikes are the best for roads and long rides. The other two types work on roads, but due to the way they're built and the wider tires, they take a lot more effort to pedal on the road than road bikes. Maybe having a paved option from the entrance to home and cemetery, for road bikers, and gravel or natural surface trails for the gravel and mountain bikers.

4. Looks good to me.

**Nathan and Olive Boone Homestead  
State Historic Site  
CDP Survey #2 Results (2021)**



**n = 56 (# of respondents)**

5. I like the thought of a bike trail around the perimeter, but not so sure on the camping.
  6. Love the idea of hiking and biking trails. It's a beautiful area but unless there are specific interpretive days I'm sure it is quite under used.
  7. None
  8. I feel like the current office is a good place bc it already has the drive and parking. Think we should not disturb the land to put up buildings, use the current ones. Installing trails is a great idea as it won't interfere with the original lay of the land.
  9. New office needs to have a museum / display space. Several community members have Boone related items we would like to donate but are concerned with the current lack of secure le display space.
  10. Like location of new office along the old road.
  11. Be sure to keep new office and maintenance areas close to keep utility cost lower for installation.
  12. Only visited once, but I grew up along the Katy Trail and am a big fan of bike trails generally.
2. I am concerned that lesser-known parks, such as the Boone Homestead and Current River SP, are not receiving their due in terms of budgetary priorities. In the case of the latter, Current River SP would be an excellent retreat/education center, but maintenance backlogs to a faulty septic system are being ignored.
  3. I hope to see Missouri continue to invest in its current parks and also add new parks. We have wonderful state parks and I think this is something that should continue to improve. I have noticed that there in a lack of parks with camping in central Missouri (Columbia area) outside of the ORV park.
  4. You do a good job.
  5. MO state parks are wonderful, you are doing great considering the budget you get.
  6. No
  7. Love the hiking paths. Make sure bathrooms available year round
  8. More bike trails and camping that will accommodate larger RV's
  9. You're doing a great job.
  10. Better information like Facebook etc. so people know you're out there to visit.
  11. I grew up along the Katy Trail and am a big fan of bike trails generally. But as a historian, I'm also happy to see historic sites featured along with natural wonders great and small.

**Comments/suggestions regarding Missouri State Parks:**

1. Please make invasive species control a priority on your properties. They so dramatically change the experience of a place, and the loss of native landscapes is felt even more at a historic site.



- 12.** My favorite state park experience was that year (a while back) when you had a passport program which encouraged Missourians to visit Parks and sites far from home. For me it became a great inspiration to visit places far from those that were in my back yard. I hope you do it again sometime.
- 13.** Unfortunately these days I am pretty much home bound (even without COVID concerns). But my park explorations make great memories.
- 14.** Charge admission, with discounts or season passes for state residents. This would bring in much needed revenue to the state. People from other states visit our parks for free, but we have to pay to visit theirs. If no admission, please consider a fee for boat launches. If someone can afford a boat they can afford to support the state.