

# LEWIS AND CLARK STATE PARK

## *CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN*

March 2025

**Location:** Buchanan County  
**Established:** 1934  
**Size:** 189 Acres

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Lewis and Clark State Park is to provide outdoor recreation compatible with available resources; to interpret the park's historical connection to the 1804 Corps of Discovery expedition; and to preserve, restore and interpret the park's Missouri River floodplain ecosystem.

### INTRODUCTION

Although one of the smallest parks in the system, the natural and cultural resources and recreational opportunities contained within its 189 acres make Lewis and Clark State Park a desirable destination for nature lovers, history enthusiasts, and outdoor recreationists alike. The adjacent 365-acre oxbow lake, not owned or managed by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, once offered fishing, boating, and birdwatching opportunities to park guests. The now absent lake and its natural transformation into an oxbow wetland presents new challenges on how to adapt this park for future use. However, the park has become a popular destination for camping, and the demand continues despite the loss of the lake and lake activities.

The site's former lake was once called "Gosling Lake" and was described by Captain William Clark in his July 4, 1804 journal entry during the Corps of Discovery Expedition. In addition to its association with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the park's history also includes ties to the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Their handiwork can still be seen in the park's existing picnic shelter and a former Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) hatchery pond which has since been closed.

### SITE GOALS

- Preserve the natural and cultural resources located within the Park's boundaries;
- Provide recreational opportunities and public use facilities compatible with the park'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 Park.

## INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery and their journey through Missouri.
- Native flora and fauna
- History of the former Sugar (or “Gosling”) Lake
  - Oxbow lake formation and evolution
  - Fish hatchery

## SITE STRUCTURES

<u>Structure</u>	<u>Sqft</u>	<u>Const. Year</u>	<u>Historic</u>
Storage Shed – Office Area	144	NA	No
Shelter *	1302	1949	Yes
Service Building	1200	1970	No
Shower House	1429	1977	No
Vault Toilet – Boat Ramp	90	1999	No
Vault Toilet – CG	90	1999	No
Maintenance Shop	1170	1992	No
Office	1200	1995	No
Storage Building	128	1985	No
Pump House – Abandoned	256	1967	No
Equipment Building	1650	1991	No
Wood Lot	568	1986	No
Restroom – Day Use	190	NA	No

\*National Register of Historic Places

\*\* National Historic Landmark

## USE AREAS & DEVELOPMENT

Lewis and Clark State Park’s development should support the interpretation of the 1804 Corps of Discovery expedition, restore and interpret the natural and cultural resources located within the park, and provide recreational and public use facilities that are consistent with the mission of the park.

### 1. Construct a Disc Golf Course

A 9-hole disk golf course is to be designed and constructed in the open field west of the camping area, will run throughout the existing Day Use Area, and will potentially be Lewis and Clark themed.

### 2. Construct an Outdoor Interpretive Area and Amphitheatre

A new Outdoor Interpretive Area and Amphitheatre, allowing for social, educational, and entertainment events, will be constructed near the existing shower house and campground.

**3. Create Native Vegetative Screening**

A series of native vegetative screenings are to be installed surrounding the campgrounds to separate campers from their neighbors and block the view of surrounding public neighborhoods.

**4. Upgrade Playgrounds (DUA and Campground)**

The existing Playgrounds in the Day Use Area and Campground are to be updated with new equipment. This equipment can potentially be Lewis and Clark themed with a sand base substrate to accommodate floodplain conditions.

**5. Better Define Park Entrance**

The Lewis and Clark Park entrance is to be better defined, with improved landscaping and/or aesthetics, making it clearer to visitors when they are entering and leaving the park's boundary.

**6. Develop Platform Tent Sites**

Platform Tent Sites are to be developed in the area just southwest of the current camping area. These tent sites will be Lewis and Clark themed and potentially surrounded by new screening vegetation. Special considerations should be given to the development in respect to future flood events.

**7. Develop New Trailhead**

A new trailhead is to be constructed immediately south of Lakecrest Blvd. adjacent to the existing Gosling Lake Trail. Trailhead amenities include but are not limited to parking, picnic tables, and a thematic feature accentuating the trail (Lewis & Clark-era theme). This new trailhead would provide day-use parking outside of the existing campground and encourage trail-use, enhance the aesthetics of the park entrance, and benefit future walk-in campsites.

**8. Develop Fish Hatchery Interpretation Area**

The fish hatchery kettle near the park office is to be dredged, filled, and stocked for public fishing opportunities. In addition, the park's historical fish hatchery operations and infrastructure are to be interpreted.

**9. Increase Interpretation Across the Park**

To improve visitor experiences, increased interpretation of the park's unique resources, history, and restoration efforts are to be developed throughout the park.

**10. Develop New Hiking Trail**

A new hiking trail is to be constructed which will lead hikers through the wooded area of the park and will connect with the rest of the trail system. This trail will feature multiple hike-in primitive camping sites.

## **Special Considerations**

- With the park's susceptibility to flood events, future development warrants special considerations and planning.
- Due to the oxbow lake's natural transformation into a wetland, lake amenities and infrastructure will be gradually removed overtime.
- If possible, conversion or swap of the standalone parcel in the village with adjacent park property from willing sellers or donors would be ideal. However, conversions must adhere to LWCF requirements.

## **PLANNING AND RESEARCH GOALS**

- Update and/or completion of the site's General Management Plan.
- Investigate possible glamping and platform tent options.

## **PROJECT PHASING**

- Phase 1
  - Better Define Park Entrance
  - Develop New Trailhead
  - Develop New Hiking Trail/Develop New Walk-In Camp Sites
  - Create Vegetative Screening
- Phase 2
  - Construct Disc Golf Course
  - Construct an Outdoor Interpretive Area and Amphitheater
  - Increased Interpretation Across the Park
- Phase 3
  - Upgrade the Playgrounds (DUA and Campground)
  - Develop Fish Hatchery Interpretation Area
  - Develop Platform Tent Sites

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

## **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. Throughout the CDP process, MSP staff utilized online surveys to gauge public opinions on various proposed developments. The following includes input opportunities throughout the planning process:

1. **Public Survey #1, February 2024 - March 2024**
  - a. n = 781
2. **Public Survey #2, October 2024 - November 2024**
  - a. n = 8

**Communication methodologies:** Press release, legislative letters, social media posts, [mostateparks.com/CDP](http://mostateparks.com/CDP), email bulletin, and QR business cards/flyer.

### CDP Team Members:

- Laura Hendrickson – Division Director
- Melanie Smith – Deputy Director
- Dustin Webb – Northern Region Director
- Matt Carletti – Northern Region Deputy Director
- Shanea Fredrick – Superintendent/Management Unit
- Carol Clark – Superintendent
- Anna Hartley – Naturalist/Interpreter
- Allison Vaughn – Natural Resource Program Ecologist
- Dr. Mike Ohnersorgen – Cultural Resource Management Program Director
- Kim Dillon – Cultural Resource Management Section Chief
- Terry Bruns – Planning and Development Program Director
- Don Stier – Design Section Chief
- Jim Kunce – Project Manager
- Ryan Dunwoody – Grants, Recreation & Interpretation Program Director
- Daniel Engler – Planning Section Manager
- Rebecca Young – Safety and Wellness Program Director
- Logan Nuernberger – Trail Coordinator
- Zane Price – Real Estate Manager
- Tisha Holden – Information Officer


### APPENDIX

- CDP Map
- Public Surveys #1 and #2 Results


**LEWIS AND CLARK STATE PARK**  
**CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (Draft)**

**March 2025**

**APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Laura Hendrickson**  
Director, Missouri State Parks

3/11/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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

03/06/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Dustin Webb*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dustin Webb**  
Regional Director, Northern Region

02/27/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Matt Carletti*  
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**Matt Carletti**  
Deputy Regional Director, Northern Region

3/3/25  
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**Date**

*Shanea Fredrick*  
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**Shanea Fredrick**  
Superintendent, Management Unit

3/4/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Carol Clark*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Carol Clark**  
Superintendent

3/4/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

# LEWIS AND CLARK STATE PARK

## *PREAMBLE & MISSION STATEMENT*

March 2025

### **HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

Lewis and Clark State Park is located in the Missouri River floodplain of northwestern Missouri. It is situated on the bank of an oxbow lake created when the river changed course. The Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-1806 (Known as the Corps of Discovery) encountered this lake on July 4, 1804. Captain William Clark recorded the following in his journal:

“Saw great numbers of Goslings to day which were nearly grown, the before mentioned Lake is clear and contain great quantities of fish an Gees & Goslings, The great quantity of those fowl in this Lake induce me to Call it the Gosling Lake, . . .” [sic]

Although the continual shifting of the river’s channel makes identification uncertain, the oxbow lake that Lewis and Clark named Gosling Lake is thought to be the 365-acre area where the Lake once bordered the Lewis and Clark State Park. In 1934, Buchanan County sportsmen donated approximately 50 acres adjacent to the lake (then known as Sugar Lake) for the creation of Sugar Lake State Park. Four years later, on the centennial of William Clark’s death, the park was renamed Lewis and Clark State Park to commemorate the Corps of Discovery’s expedition. Subsequent acreage was purchased from 1971 to 1981, and then again in 2000 when 68 acres were acquired. Also in 2000, 35 acres were acquired in a trade with the Missouri Department of Conservation. More recently, the Lake bordering Lewis and Clark State Park has all but completely disappeared, having dried up over the course of the past few years. The lake is currently owned by the State of Missouri Office of Administration.

The park currently consists of 189 acres, one of the smallest state parks in the system. The resources located within the park make Lewis and Clark State Park a desirable destination for history buffs, nature lovers, and outdoor enthusiasts alike. In addition to its association with the Lewis and Clark expedition, the park’s history also includes a connection with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Initial development of the park was made possible through the efforts of the CCC, the WPA, and the Missouri Game and Fish Department, predecessor of the Missouri Department of Conservation. All that remains of their handiwork is the picnic shelter, an earthen dam, and a former fish hatchery pond. The park was once the site of a hatchery operation managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation; however, all of the abandoned fish kettles have been filled and have reverted to wetland habitat, providing opportunity for interpreting both the natural and cultural history of this area.

Recreational facilities at the park include a 70-site campground with shower house and laundry facilities, and a day-use area with picnicking and a playground. As a part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration, located southwest within the park is a signature feature that

includes a uniquely designed walk leading visitors to an interpretive plaza showcasing a compass rose, seat walls, and interpretive panels interpreting the Lewis and Clark expedition.

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of Lewis and Clark State Park is to provide outdoor recreation compatible with available resources; to interpret the park's historical connection to the 1804 Corps of Discovery expedition; and to preserve, restore and interpret the park's Missouri River floodplain ecosystem.




**LEWIS AND CLARK  
STATE PARK**


***PREAMBLE & MISSION STATEMENT***

**March 2025**

**APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Laura Hendrickson**  
Director, Missouri State Parks

3/11/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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

03/06/2025  
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**Date**

*Dustin Webb*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Dustin Webb**  
Regional Director, Northern Region

02/27/2025  
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*Matt Carletti*  
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**Matt Carletti**  
Deputy Regional Director, Northern Region

3/3/25  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Shanea Fredrick*  
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**Shanea Fredrick**  
Superintendent, Management Unit

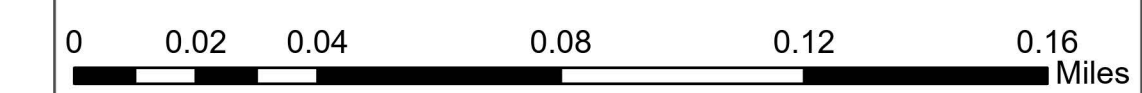
3/4/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

*Carol Clark*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Carol Clark**  
Superintendent

3/5/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

# LEWIS & CLARK STATE PARK

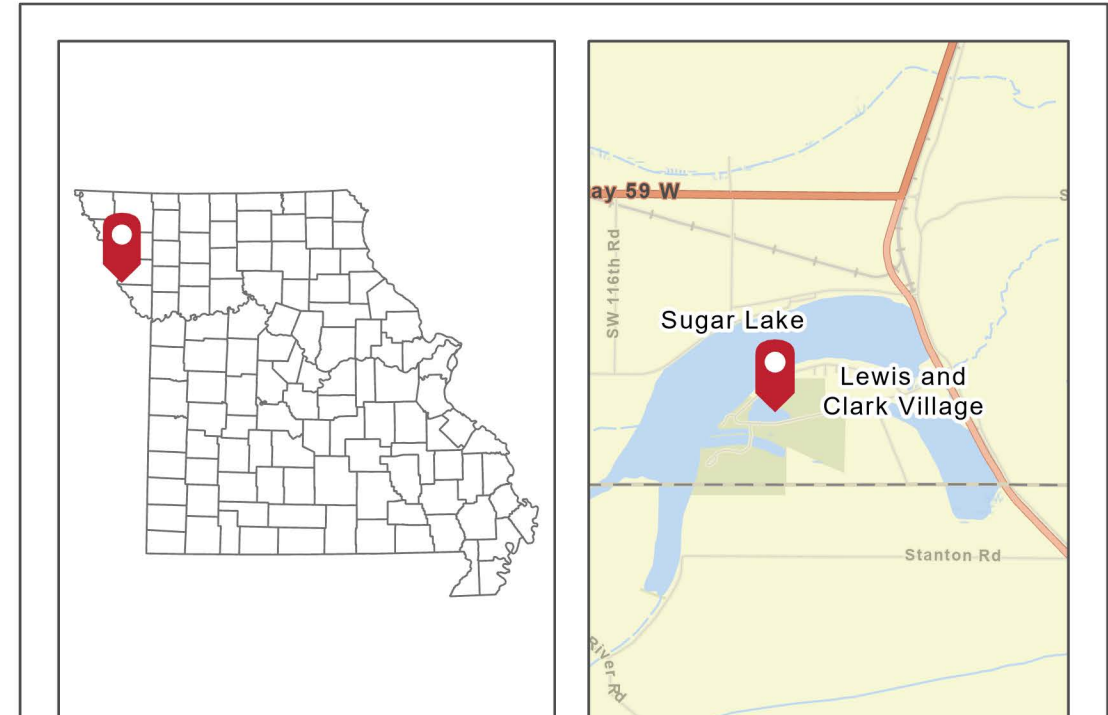
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NAD 1983, UTM Zone 15N  
Absolute Scale: 1:2,000



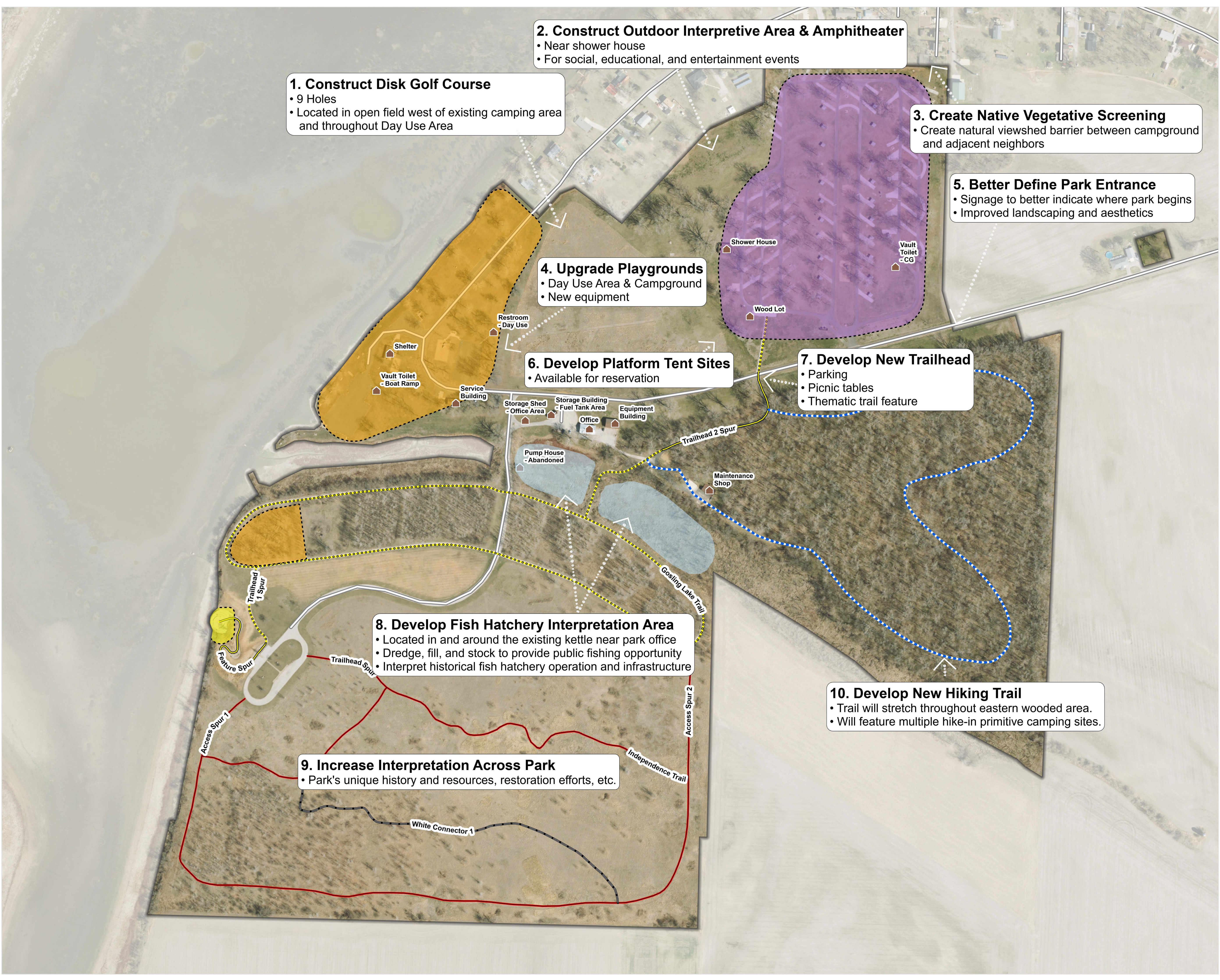
Conceptual Development Plan Date: 2.27.2025

## Legend

-  Camping Area
-  Day Use Area
-  Interpretive Area
-  Lakebed/Kettle
-  Structure



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**1. Construct Disk Golf Course**  
• 9 Holes  
• Located in open field west of existing camping area and throughout Day Use Area

**2. Construct Outdoor Interpretive Area & Amphitheater**  
• Near shower house  
• For social, educational, and entertainment events

**3. Create Native Vegetative Screening**  
• Create natural viewshed barrier between campground and adjacent neighbors

**5. Better Define Park Entrance**  
• Signage to better indicate where park begins  
• Improved landscaping and aesthetics

**4. Upgrade Playgrounds**  
• Day Use Area & Campground  
• New equipment

**6. Develop Platform Tent Sites**  
• Available for reservation

**7. Develop New Trailhead**  
• Parking  
• Picnic tables  
• Thematic trail feature

**8. Develop Fish Hatchery Interpretation Area**  
• Located in and around the existing kettle near park office  
• Dredge, fill, and stock to provide public fishing opportunity  
• Interpret historical fish hatchery operation and infrastructure

**9. Increase Interpretation Across Park**  
• Park's unique history and resources, restoration efforts, etc.

**10. Develop New Hiking Trail**  
• Trail will stretch throughout eastern wooded area.  
• Will feature multiple hike-in primitive camping sites.