

## STAKEHOLDER PUBLIC MEETING 2013

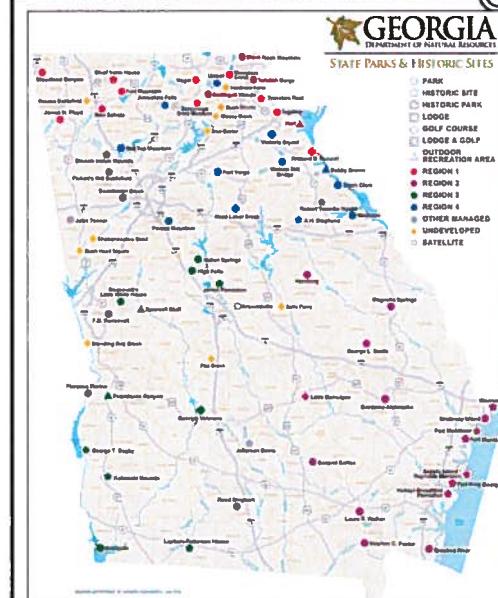
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Defining a Sustainable and Responsible Future

- **Thanks for coming tonight to learn more about our site business plan and how you can support it.**
- **The handout I'd like to review with you is a brief overview of our Division's efforts to define a sustainable and responsible future for Georgia's state parks and historic sites.**

## Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites



46 state parks  
3 state historic parks  
15 state historic sites  
85,647 acres  
8 golf courses  
382 cottages  
55 group shelters  
41 campgrounds/2,400+ sites  
14 group camps/lodges  
5 lodges/conference centers  
530 miles of hiking, biking,  
nature, canoeing/kayaking &  
equestrian trails

- Our park (or historic site) is one of 64 Georgia state parks and historic sites.
- Our system has a wide variety of outdoor recreation and interpretive opportunities , with specific facilities for almost everyone's needs.
- Our Division's mission is to protect Georgia's special places and engage our guests in fun and educational activities.

## Georgia State Parks & Historic Sites

**VISION:** Using our system's diversity and a commitment to excellence as our strengths, we will be a national model for quality service, resource protection, recreational opportunities, ecosystem management, and interpretation of our natural resources and heritage.

- Protect our state's important natural and cultural resources
- Engage millions of people in outdoor recreation, historic interpretation, nature appreciation and conservation
- Perform as one of Georgia's strongest tourism generators with important economic relationships with our host communities

- Our Division's vision challenges us to be the best possible stewards of our state's natural and cultural resources and to engage people in ways that makes our state parks and historic sites relevant for generations to come.
- This vision is important to the state and each host community because of the economic impact from our sites. In FY 2012, the statewide economic impact of our system was estimated at over 530 million dollars.
- The FY 2012 estimated economic impact of \_\_\_\_\_ park/historic site is \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

## Mandate to Reposition

State appropriations for division operations reduced by half since FY 2009; directive to seek greater self-sufficiency.

Division Response: Responsibly pursue a strategy of self-sufficiency while honoring our mission to protect Georgia's natural and cultural resources and provide opportunities for public enjoyment and education.

"Direction 2015" (D15) initiated to chart a path toward a sustainable state parks system that strikes the proper balance between state funds and self-sufficiency, and between stewardship and revenue generation.



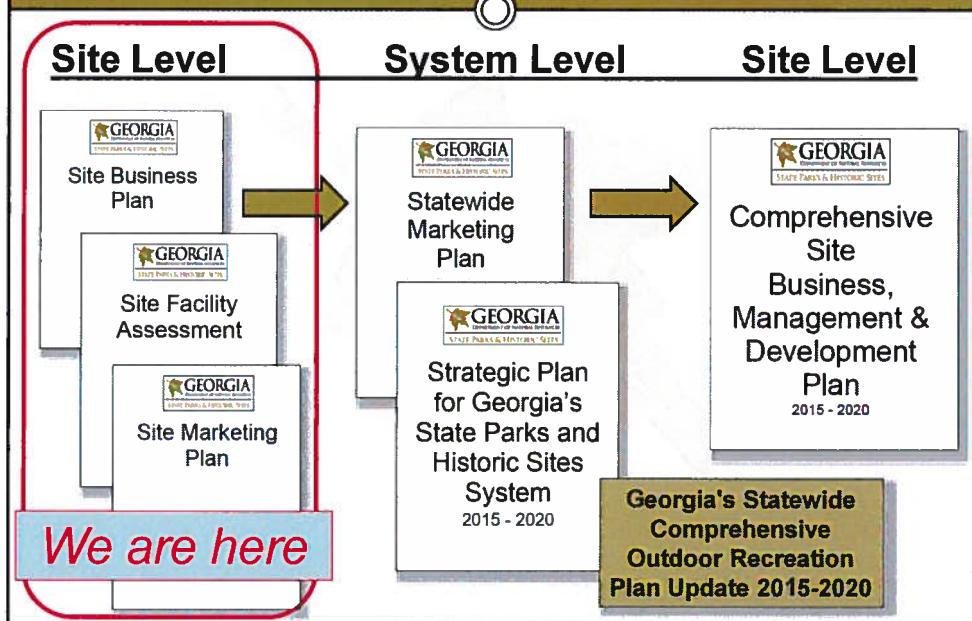
- **Georgia's state parks and historic sites were impacted by the economic crash beginning in FY 2010. That's the year our Division's state funds were reduced by 39% and we were directed to seek greater sustainability within our operations.**
- **Since then, additional cuts have been made and we are now operating with about half of the state fund support we had in FY 2009.**
- **To respond to these drastic funding shifts, we outlined a plan that would transition our system to a more sustainable operation, with minimal state fund support, by FY 2015.**
- **In order to create our "Direction 2015" (D15) plan, we had to clearly understand our situation, capabilities and potential, so we created clear business goals for our D15 effort that will strike a balance between stewardship and revenue generation.**

## "Direction 2015" Goals

- Define and prioritize costs of resource protection and public engagement for each state park and historic site.
- Develop responsible self-sustainability targets and site business plans for state each park & historic site.
- Engage staff, stakeholders and host communities in development and support of site business plans and system direction.
- Compile findings and recommendations into a new strategic system plan for Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites.
- Direct investment of operating funds, capital funds and partnerships to protect core resources and maximize site and system sustainability.

- We started by identifying and prioritizing critical resource protection and public engagement goals for each park and historic site.
- We spent significant time assessing the condition of the natural, cultural and physical assets; tracking the cost of doing business; defining operational priorities; identifying efficiencies; and looking for partnership opportunities that will enable us to chart a path toward greater self-sustainability.
- Tonight's presentation of our site's Strategic Business Plan will showcase our findings so we can get public input and engagement from our community stakeholders and partners.
- While we continue refining our site business plans, our Division will also be starting development of a new strategic plan for the state parks and historic sites system later this summer and fall.
- The ultimate goal of all of these efforts is to clearly define how we need to operate and invest in each individual park or historic site in order to improve the health and sustainability of the entire system.

## Planning Process - 2013/2014



- This slide highlights the process and timeline for all our Division's strategic planning and repositioning efforts.
- We're currently engaged in completing the initial site level assessments and plans, including site business plans, facility assessments and marketing plans.
- Tonight, we're presenting the initial business plan that's been developed for our site; however, all of this information will give us a roadmap to identify how our site can work with its state leadership, local host community, stakeholders and guests to move it to a more sustainable position.
- At the same time that we're focused on this site, the Division will be developing a statewide marketing plan and a new strategic plan for the entire system.
- Ultimately, it's our Division's goal to have comprehensive site business, management and development plans in place to guide our operations and our investments from FY 2015 through FY 2020.

## Site Business Plans

Every state park and historic site has developed an initial Site Business Plan (SBP) that outlines:

- **Site and Operations Assessment**
  - Site Inventory and Facility Assessment
  - Financial Performance Assessment
- **Business and Management Opportunities**
  - Business Goals
  - Core/Important/Visitor-Supported Service Designations
  - Marketing and Sales Plan
  - Partnership Development Plan
  - Revenue Generation Plan
  - Expense Management Plan
  - Financial Pro Forma through FY 2015

- Now that I've outlined the overall context of our system business planning efforts, let's dig into the reason we're here tonight: to review and discuss this site's initial business plan.
- This slide highlights the table of contents for the plan. Please note:
- Our first order of business in developing these SBPs was to assess our existing site and operational situation.
- We also began tracking the true costs of our operations and identifying the expense of protecting our natural, cultural, recreational and infrastructure assets.
- We also defined our core, important and visitor-supported services so we can prioritize the investment of state appropriated and self-generated funds into the most fundamental components of our operations.
- From all this, we have outlined strategies for improved marketing, partnership development, revenue management and expense management.
- We'll be taking time tonight to highlight these efforts, present our findings and get your input.

## SBP: Site & Operations Assessment

### Facility Assessment / Needs

- Natural resources
- Cultural resources
- Infrastructure and buildings
- Revenue generating opportunities
- Capital investment priorities

### Financial Performance Assessment / Needs

- Operating budget, staffing structure, revenues, cost recovery, visitation, occupancy
- Primary service markets, leading opportunities for improved site performance

- **Inspecting and assessing our facility needs and financial performance was our first order of business in developing our site business plan.**
- **This helped us understand the true health of our resources and the capacity of our operations.**
- **We will not spend a lot of time tonight discussing our site assessment, as our focus will be on the site business goals and strategies.**

## SBP Service Level Definitions

### Core/Essential Services *[Must provide]*

- Mission and statutory obligations that, if not provided, would result in significant negative consequences for the public and the resources under protection (largely tax-funds).

### Important Services *[Should provide]*

- Programs, services and facilities that serve the public and expands or enhances our ability to provide and sustain core services (balance of tax-funds and earned revenue).

### Visitor Supported Services *[May provide]*

- Discretionary services that provide a meaningful return on investment and expands or enhances our ability to provide and sustain core services (largely earned revenue).

- Because the state park and historic site systems has such limited financial resources, it's important to establish priorities so we can focus our efforts, funds, partnerships, etc. on the most critical parts of our operations. As part of the business planning process, we used three primary definitions to group our services, with suggested state funding support levels for each.
- Examples of Core/Essential Services, which we MUST provides, include:
  - Active management of a site's natural and cultural resources
  - Open and public access to a site and its resources
  - Maintenance of grounds, facilities and infrastructure
  - Public safety
- Important Services, which we SHOULD provide, are things like:
  - Education, interpretation and recreation opportunities
  - Trails, camping or visitor center
- Visitor Supported Services, which we MAY provide, include:
  - Special events
  - Cottages or other overnight accommodations
  - Retail/gift shop
  - Golf

## SBP: Business Goals & Support Opportunities

### **Business and Management Goals**

- Enhanced cost recovery
- Enhanced revenue generation strategies
- Expanded special events
- Customer satisfaction
- Diverse program offerings
- Site marketing strategies

### **Opportunities for Support and Engagement**

- Partnerships
- Visitor services
- Co-branding
- Concessionaires
- Marketing
- Fundraising

- The site business plans involved each site manager in identifying business and management goals that will improve cost recovery, revenue generation, programming, customer satisfaction and marketing.
- The site business plans also involved identifying opportunities for local support and engagement, including partnerships, concessionaires, marketing and co-branding, and fundraising.
- The last half of our meeting tonight will include an overview of our site business plan and discussion about how you can help support its implementation.
- We will appreciate your input and perspective and invite all of you (Friends, local supporters, partners ...) to get and stay involved.