

Clinch River State Park Comprehensive Plan

Master Plan Public Input Meeting

February 15, 2023





Agenda

6:00pm-7:30pm

- **Welcome** – Kelly McClary, Planning and Recreation Resources Director
- **Meeting purpose**
- **Introduction to State Parks** – Dr. Melissa Baker, Virginia State Parks Director
- **Project process** – Tristan Cleveland, Project Manager, LPDA
- **Summary of previous input**
- **Market Analysis results**
- **Program prioritization**
- **Anchor property site design**
- **Park Master Framework Plan**
- **Park development**
- **Public Comments and Discussion**
- **Next steps**





Housekeeping

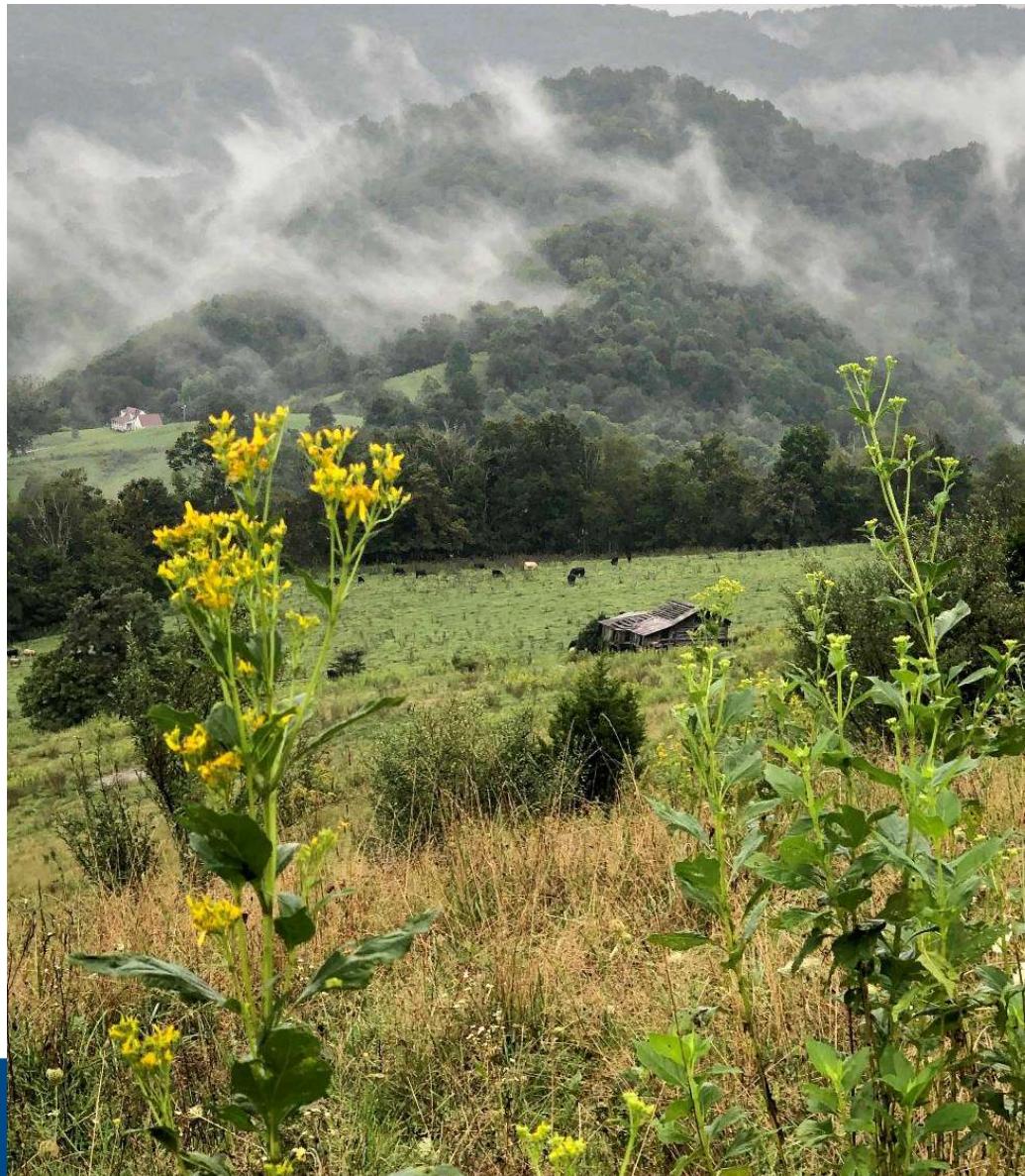
- Please mute your phones
- Please hold questions until the end of the presentation
- Additional comments will be received until **March 17, 2023** via email to: Samantha Wangsgard at samantha.wangsgard@dcr.virginia.gov.
- The pdf of the presentation slide show will be made available after the meeting.
<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/cr-masterplan>



Meeting Purpose

In conformance with State Park Master Plan requirements, the purpose of this meeting and workshop will be to:

- share project process and objectives
- summarize and report on previous input
- present site programming and site plans
- present overall park master plan
- give the public an opportunity for comment



Introduction to State Parks

DCR Mission:

Conserve, protect, enhance & advocate wise use of the Commonwealth's unique natural, historical, recreational, scenic & cultural resources.

State Park Mission:

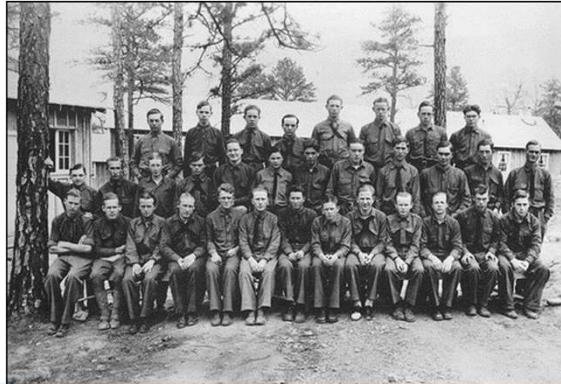
To conserve the natural, scenic, historic & cultural resources of the Commonwealth & provide recreational & educational opportunities consistent with the good stewardship of these lands, waters & facilities that leave them unimpaired for future generations.



History of Virginia State Parks

The first 6 parks...out of the Depression

1936: Virginia opens a system of
6 state parks...most were a
combination of donated land plus
state funds for development





The System Grows

1940's through 1980's:

A steady procession of new parks acquired & developed through a combination of funds: donations, federal grant money, & state capital development

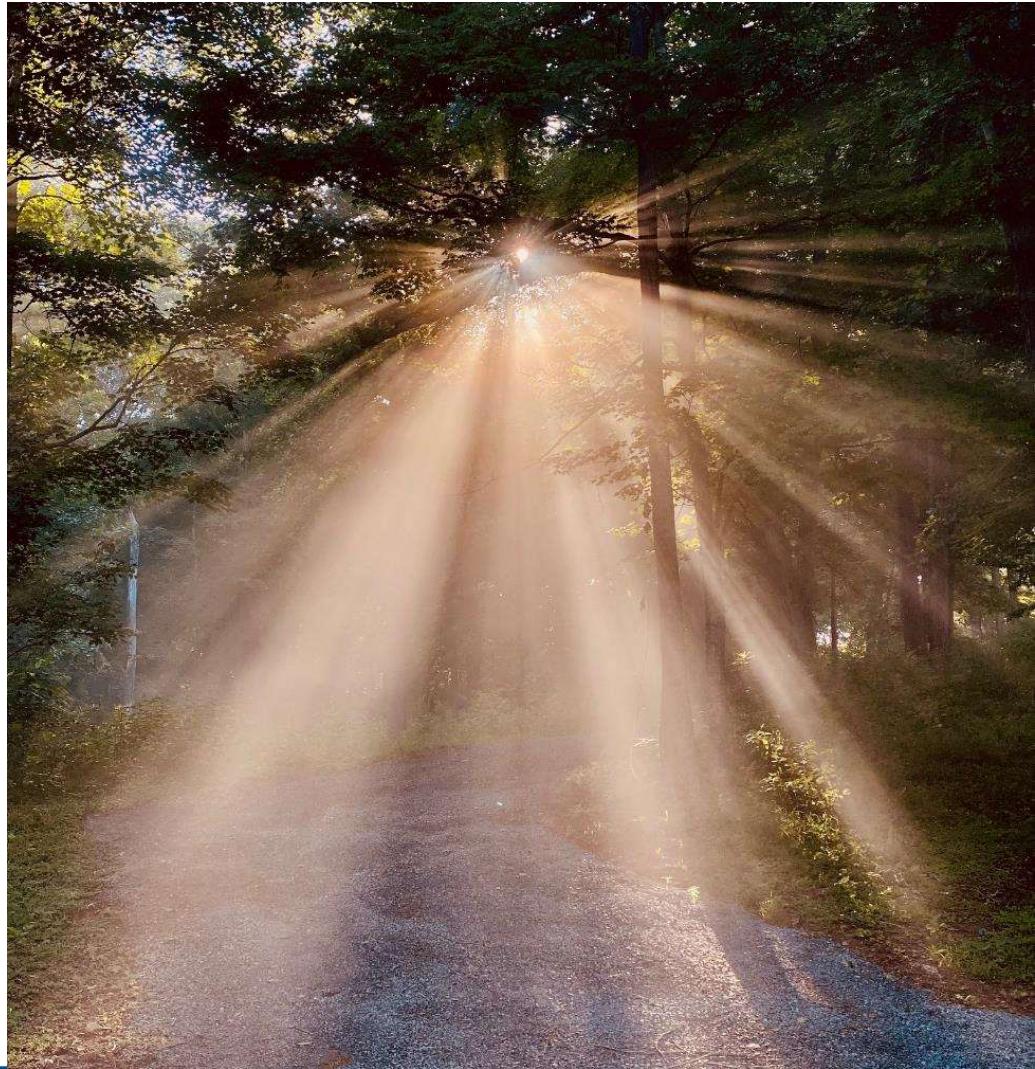
Voters support more growth & development

- 1990's through present: Two major bond referendums in 1992 & 2002 funded more than \$214 million in funds; 5 new parks & land for 6 more; 31 natural areas; 296 building projects: campgrounds, cabins, support facilities, etc.
- We continue to acquire lands, largely by donation or discounted sales...challenge is to find the development funds

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Today's Virginia State Park System



- 41 parks, 4 under development
- 76,000 + acres
- 33 historic register sites
- 703 miles of trails
- 99 picnic shelters
- 11 swimming beaches
- 1,692 campsites & 50 yurts
- 313 full-service cabins
- Visitation in 2021 – 7.9 million

Park Services & Facilities

Each park has a unique set of facilities, activities, and services

- Day Uses: hiking, swimming, picnicking, boating, bicycling, horseback riding, canoeing, kayaking
- Overnight: cabins and camping
- Programs, education, interpretation
- Conference and meeting facilities





The relevancy of state parks in the 21st century & beyond

- Parks are a part of the Community: Friends Groups, volunteerism, economic benefit.
- Solutions to many of today's challenges: "Nature Deficit Disorder", daily stress, and the need for affordable recreational opportunities
- The need for parks is greater today than it has ever been...places to reconnect to nature, to be with families and friends, and to re-establish personal well being

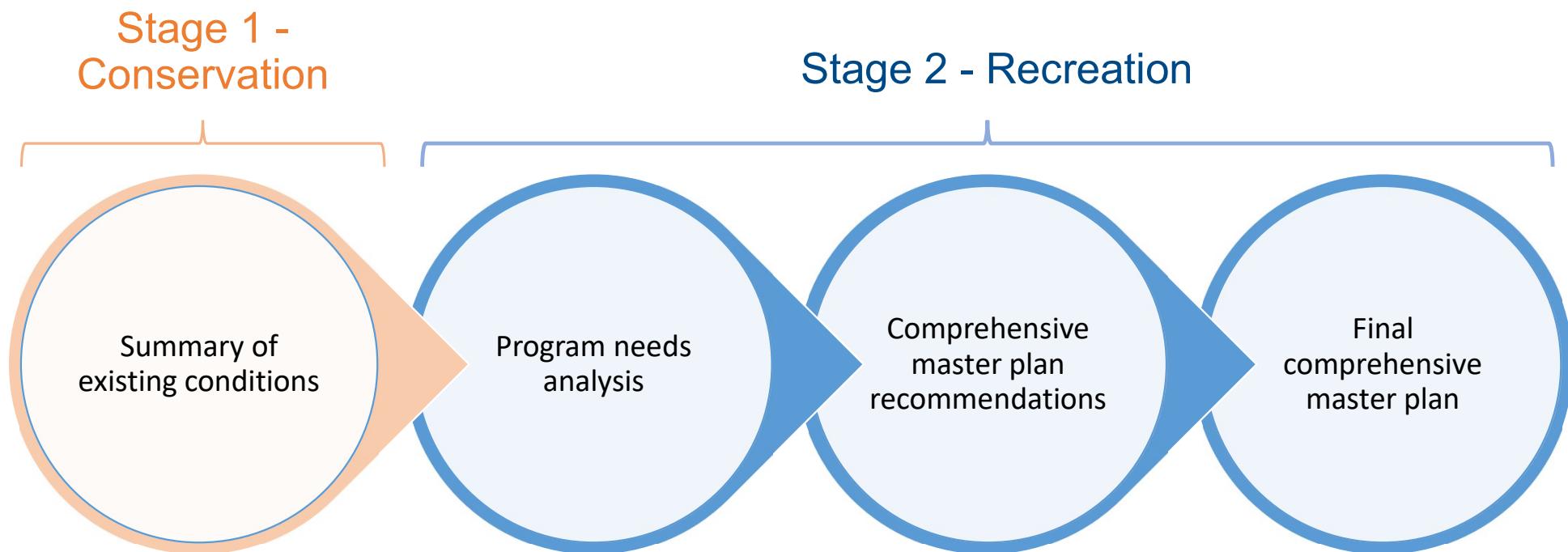
Project Objectives

Once developed, Clinch River State Park will highlight the Clinch River's natural, historical, and recreational resources as the first blue-way state park in Virginia.

The comprehensive plan will set a framework of goals, programming, and priority implementation for the development of current sites and future site acquisitions.



Process



Clinch River State Park Purpose Statement

“Clinch River State Park is envisioned as a string of pearls along the ecologically significant Clinch River, providing opportunities for all for recreation and education that connects visitors to the environmental and cultural significance of the river and the region, conserving and enhancing sensitive resources; and fostering connections within and between adjacent communities.”



CRSP Goals

Goal 1.0 – Protect, conserve, and enhance the natural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources of the park.

Goal 2.0 – Create a welcoming and safe experience for all

Goal 3.0 – Provide a range of overnight and day use opportunities and facilities for visitors to the park

Goal 4.0 – Provide facilities and programs for environmental, cultural, and historical education and interpretation

Goal 5.0 – Work across sectors to provide mutually beneficial efforts to enhance the Clinch River and the surrounding region

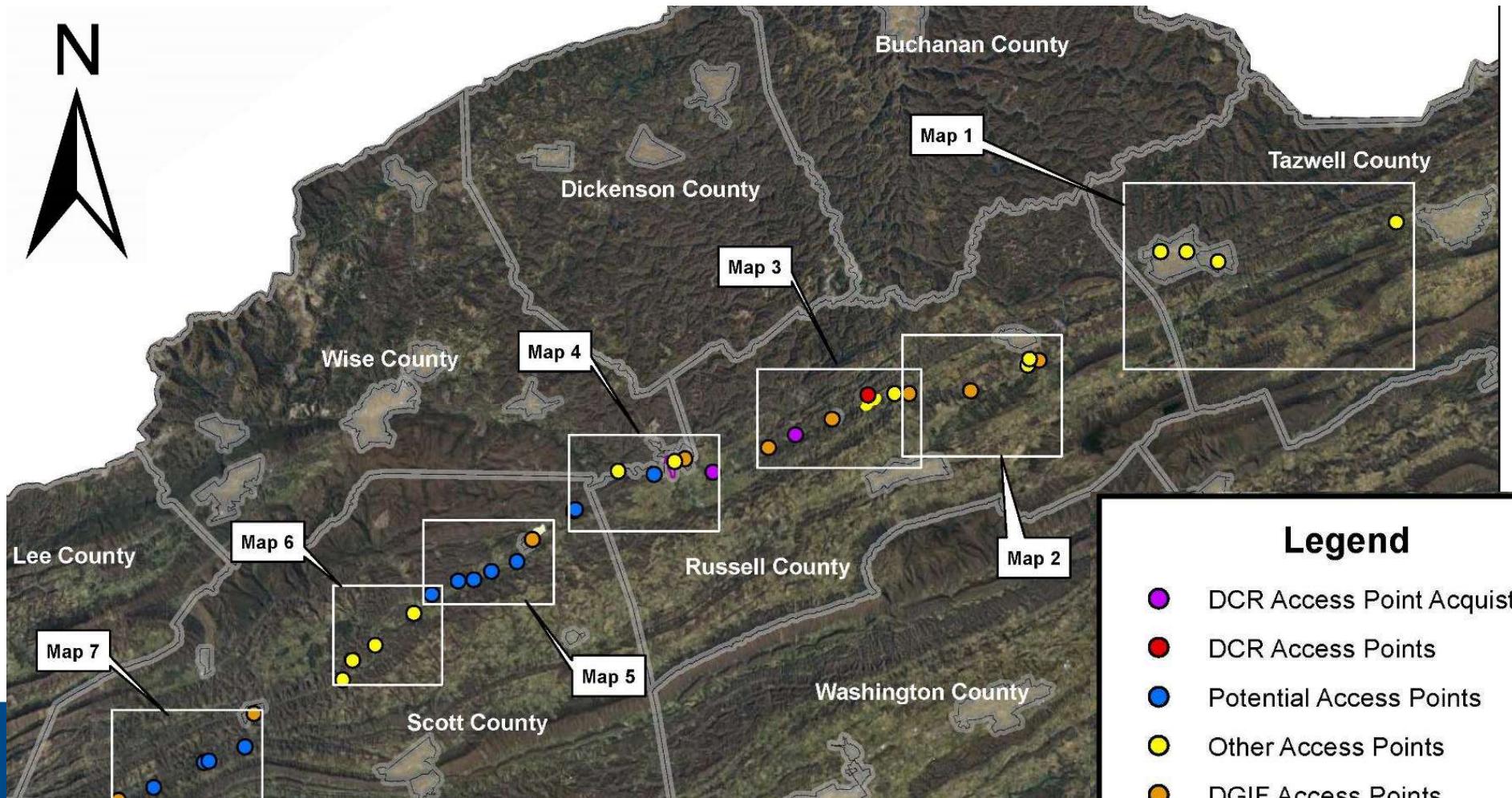
Goal 6.0 – Administer and manage the park in a professional and transparent manner which fosters the public's trust

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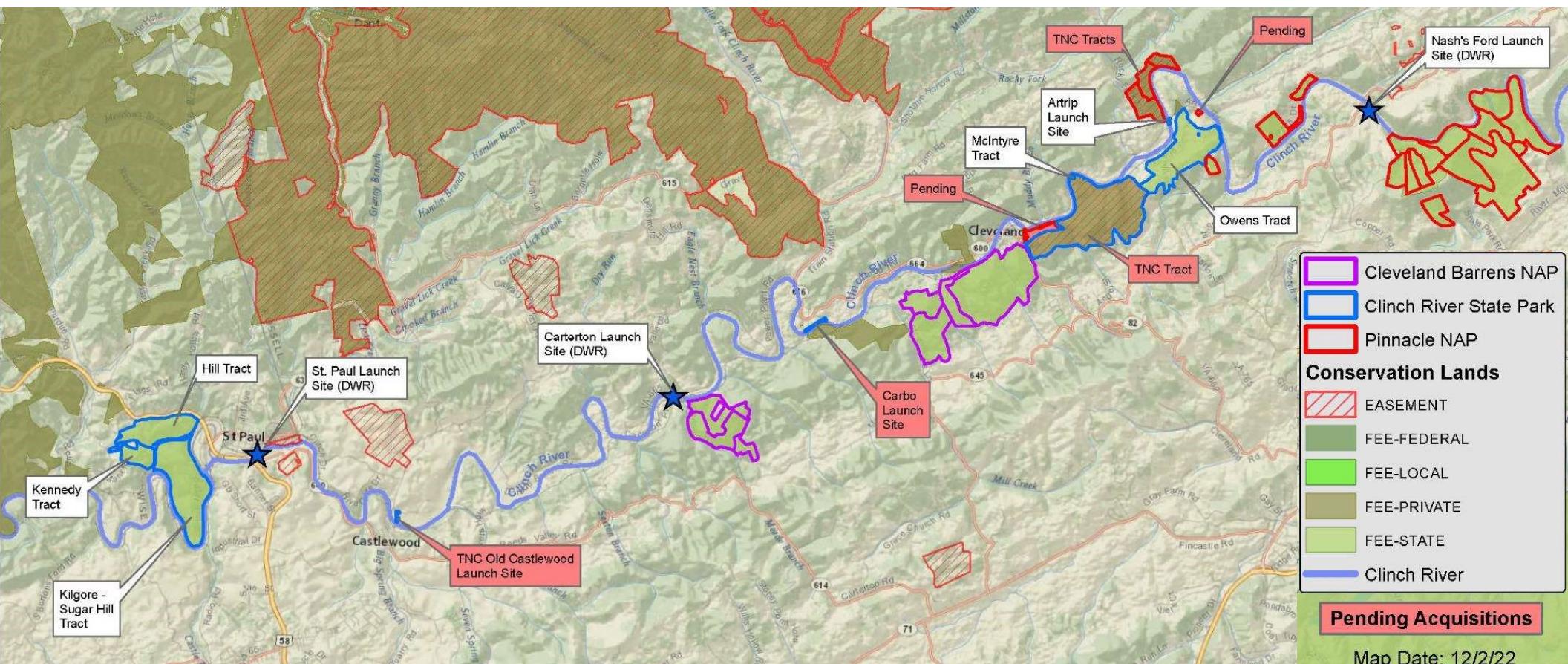


Clinch River State Park Locations



DCR Acquisition Lands Along Clinch River

Pinnacle to St. Paul



A scenic view of the Clinch River flowing through a lush green landscape. The river curves from the left foreground towards the center, surrounded by dense trees and foliage. In the upper portion of the image, large, bold, white letters spell out "CLINCH RIVER" across two lines. The "C" and "R" are on the first line, and "LINCH" and "IVER" are on the second line.

CLINCH RIVER



Stakeholder Input

- Three meetings with the Advisory Committee, Sept. 2021 – Dec. 2022. 30 members representing 20 organizations in the Clinch River region
- Public Input meeting Dec. 2021 and Feb. 2023.
- 170 respondents to the online public needs survey, (Dec. 2021-Jan. 2022)
- Alignment of priorities and programming from all sources:
 - Preserve and celebrate the Clinch River's biodiversity
 - Water access, trails, overnight stays, visitors center
 - Engage with the community and connect the park with the region

Market Analysis

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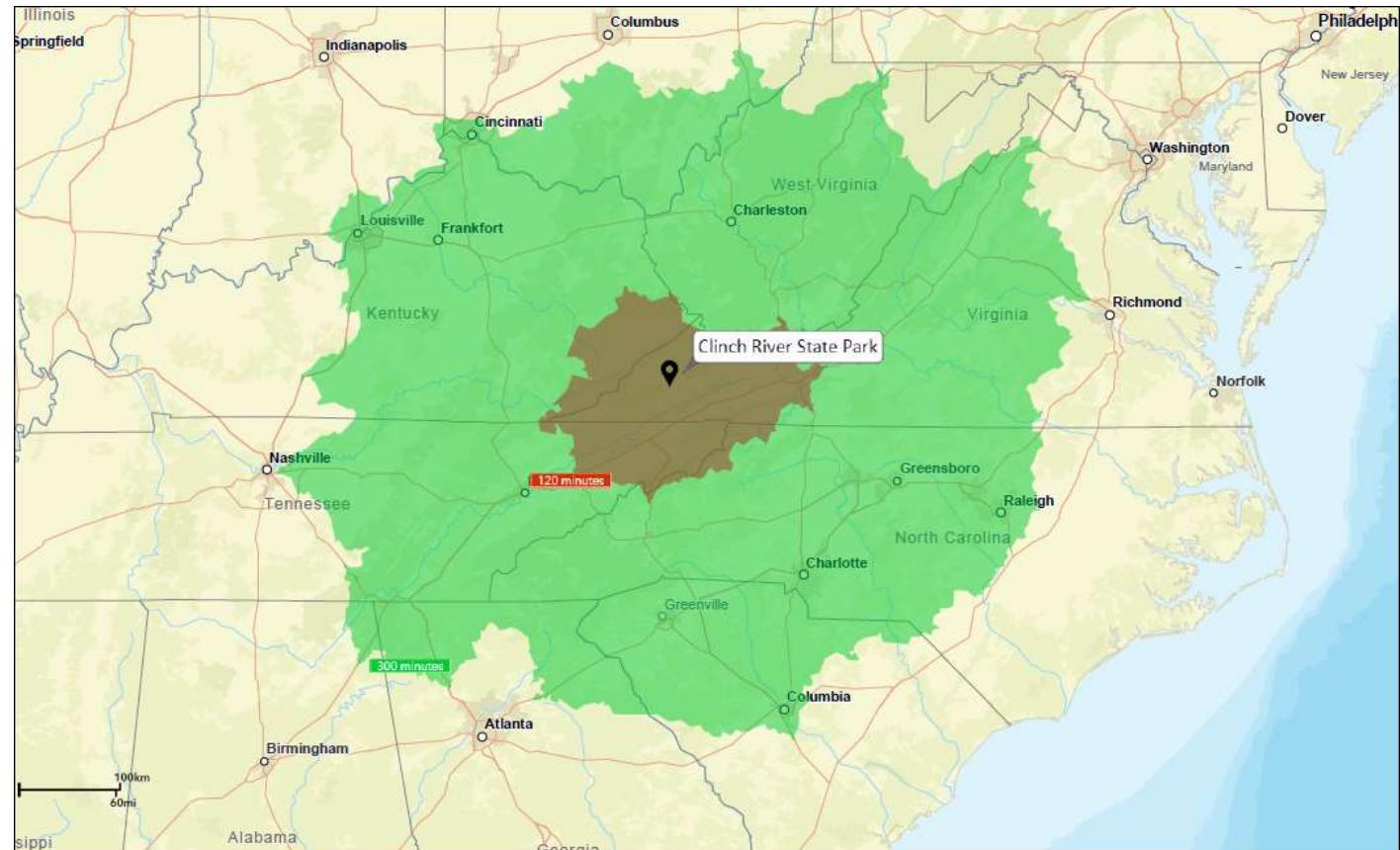
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Market Study Results

Primary Service Area =
2-hour drive time
1.4 million residents

Secondary Service Area =
5-hour drive time
23.8 million residents



Market Study Results

Based on recreation participation rates, the total potential user market within a 5-hour drive is over **17 million people** across the various experiences at Clinch River State Park

| User Market | Participation Rate | Primary Service Market | Secondary Service Market | Total User Market |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| General Users | 53.0% | 716,858 | 11,879,141 | 12,595,999 |
| Non-whitewater Paddlers | 4.3% | 58,160 | 963,779 | 1,021,940 |
| Whitewater Paddlers | 0.9% | 12,173 | 201,721 | 213,894 |
| Camping | 15.8% | 213,705 | 3,541,329 | 3,755,034 |
| Local Market Population | | 1,352,563 | | |
| Secondary Market Population | | 22,413,473 | | |
| Total Market Population | | 23,766,036 | | |

Market Study Results

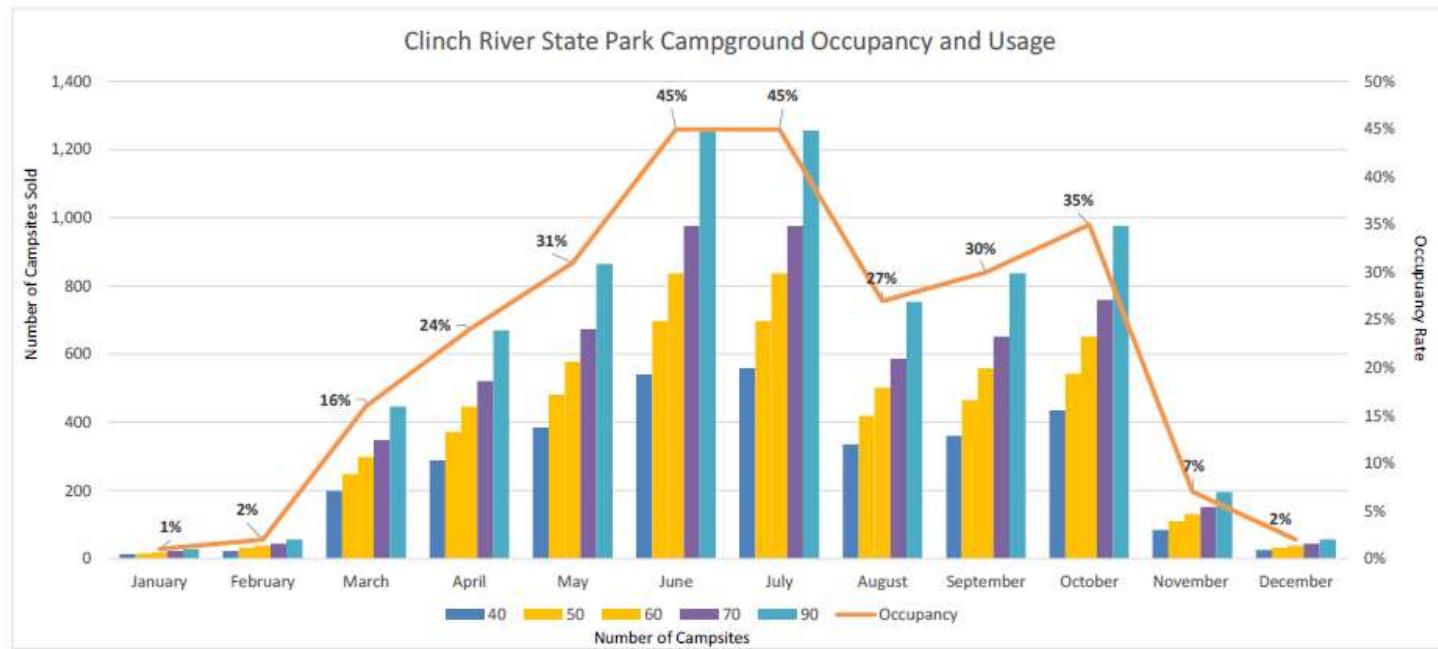
Utilizing both a conservative and aggressive market capture rates across various experiences and service markets, annual visitation is projected to be between **25,000 – 32,000 visitors**

| | Percent of Annual Visitation | Annual Visitation 24,730 | Annual Visitation 31,995 |
|-----------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| January | 1% | 247 | 320 |
| February | 3% | 742 | 960 |
| March | 8% | 1,978 | 2,560 |
| April | 10% | 2,473 | 3,200 |
| May | 12% | 2,968 | 3,839 |
| June | 14% | 3,462 | 4,479 |
| July | 14% | 3,462 | 4,479 |
| August | 12% | 2,968 | 3,839 |
| September | 8% | 1,978 | 2,560 |
| October | 10% | 2,473 | 3,200 |
| November | 6% | 1,484 | 1,920 |
| December | 2% | 495 | 640 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 24,730 | 31,995 |



Market Study Results

Market results and estimated visitor levels were used to determine recommended quantities of campsites, yurts, and cabins



*Estimated occupancy is based on monthly and annual performance metrics of current and similar state parks in the region

Park Programming

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Program Prioritization

- Potential programs were scored for suitability, with the highest total scores earning the highest priority for inclusion.
- Overnight facilities, trails, river access, education/interpretation, and picnic were all high priority scoring items.

| Program | Site Assessment | | Survey Evaluation | | Market Analysis | | Park Purpose Alignment with Park Purpose Statement | Score |
|--|------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|---|--|-------|
| | Site Feasibility | DCR Priority | Advisory Committee Priority | Public Priority | Market - Primary Service Area (2 hr. drive) | Market - Secondary Service Area (5 hr. drive) | | |
| Camping - Tent | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 13 |
| Camping - RV | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Camping - Yurt | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Camping - Paddle in | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Cabins, rental | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 12 |
| Camping - Hike in | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 11 |
| Trails - Hiking | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| Trails - Blueways/water trails | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| Water access - fishing | 1 | | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 10 |
| Water access - paddlers | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 10 |
| Interpretive programs, signs, etc. | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 8 |
| Visitors Center | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 8 |
| Trails - Mountain Bike | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | 6 |
| Picnicking areas | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | 6 |
| Outdoor Classroom | 1 | | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 6 |
| Scenic driving routes | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 5 |
| Water access - wading | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 | 5 |
| Picnic shelters | 1 | | | 1 | | | 2 | 5 |
| Open play lawns | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Playground | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Ampitheatre/Event Stage | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Camp Store | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Gift Shop | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 4 |
| Trails - Multi-Use (10', hard surface) | 1 | 1 | | | | | 2 | 4 |
| Disc golf | 1 | 1 | | | | | 1 | 3 |
| Sprayground/Splash pad | 1 | | | | | | | 1 |
| Trails - Equestrian | 0 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |

High Priority - Programs will be included in master plan
 Medium Priority - Include in master plan as appropriate
 Low Priority - Do not include

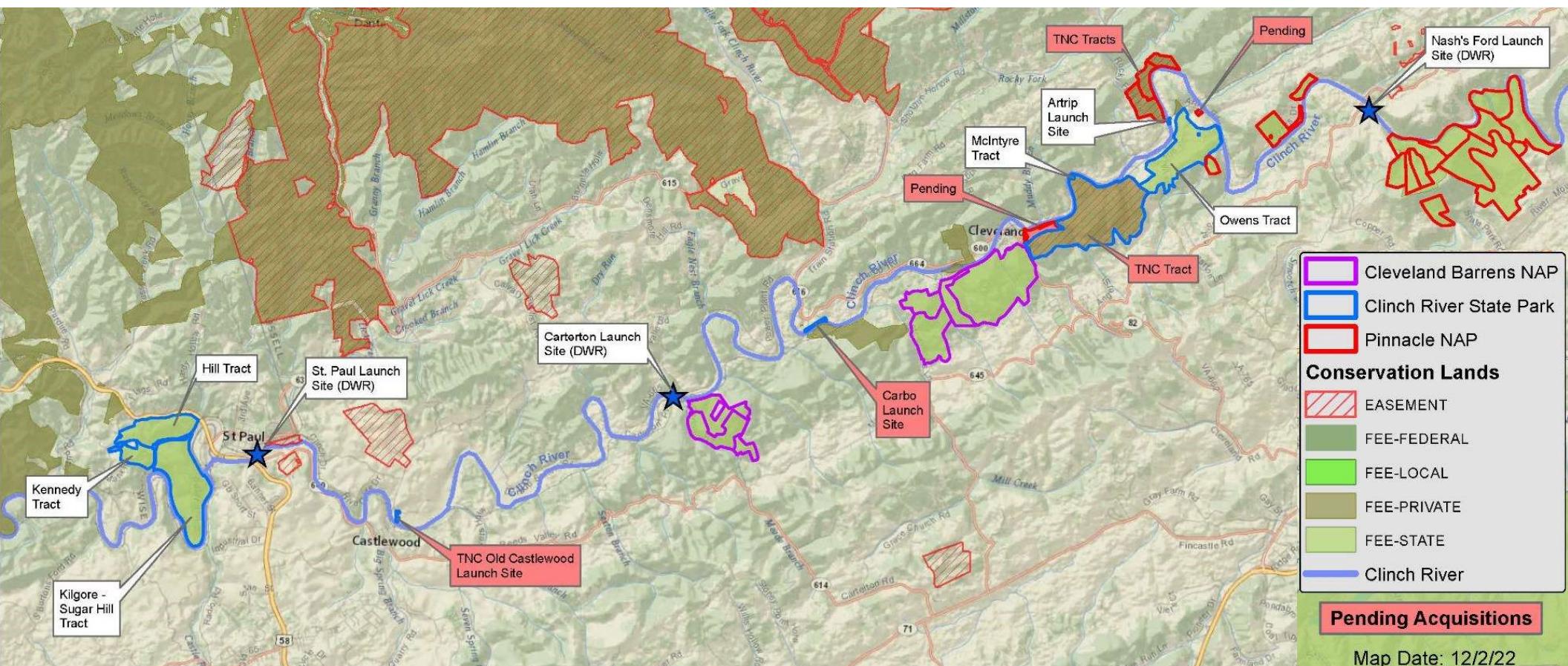
Site Design of Anchor Properties

Russell County Tracts (Artrip) and Wise County Tracts (St. Paul acquisitions)



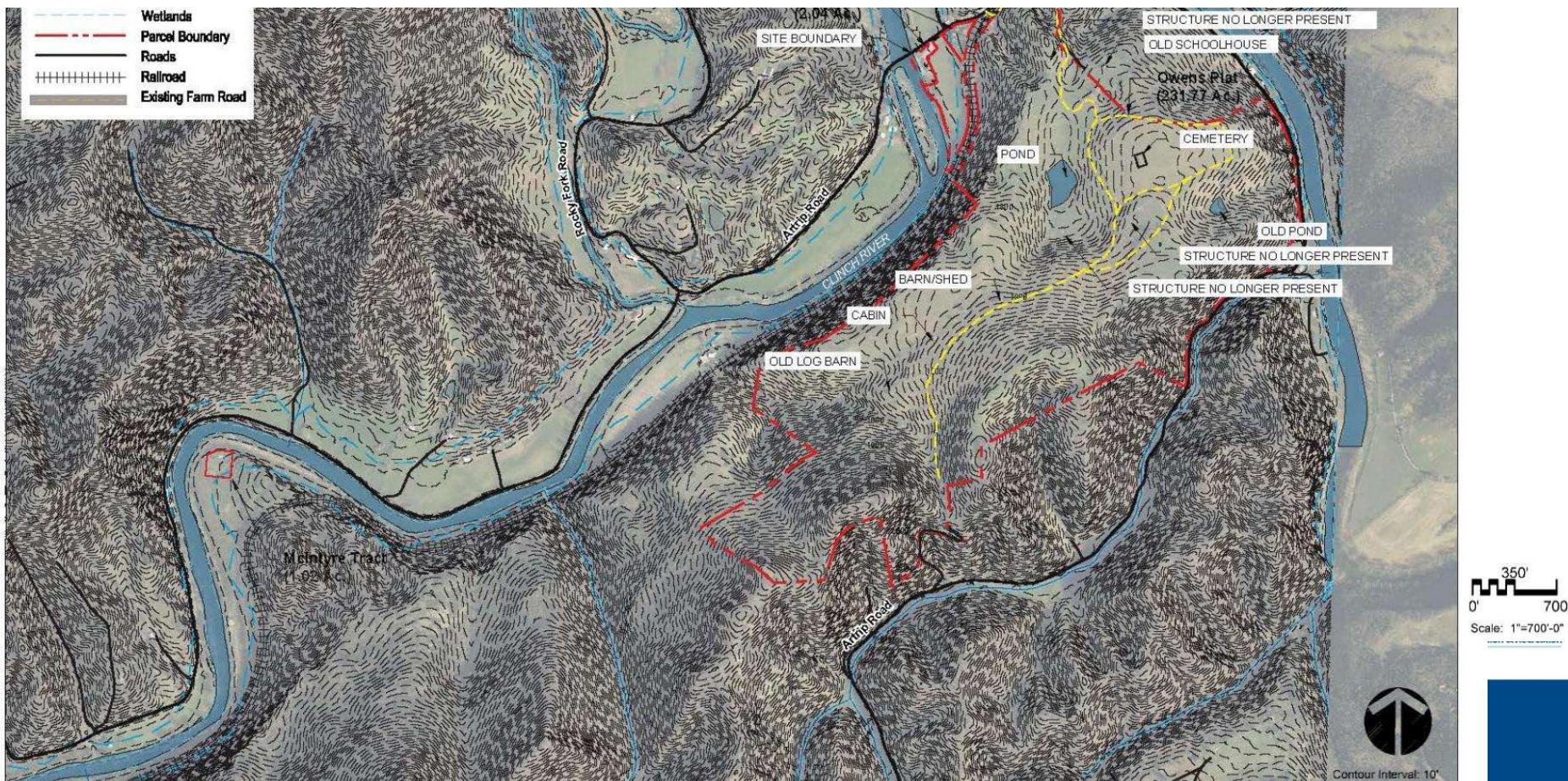
DCR Acquisition Lands Along Clinch River

Pinnacle to St. Paul



DCR Acquisition Lands Along Clinch River

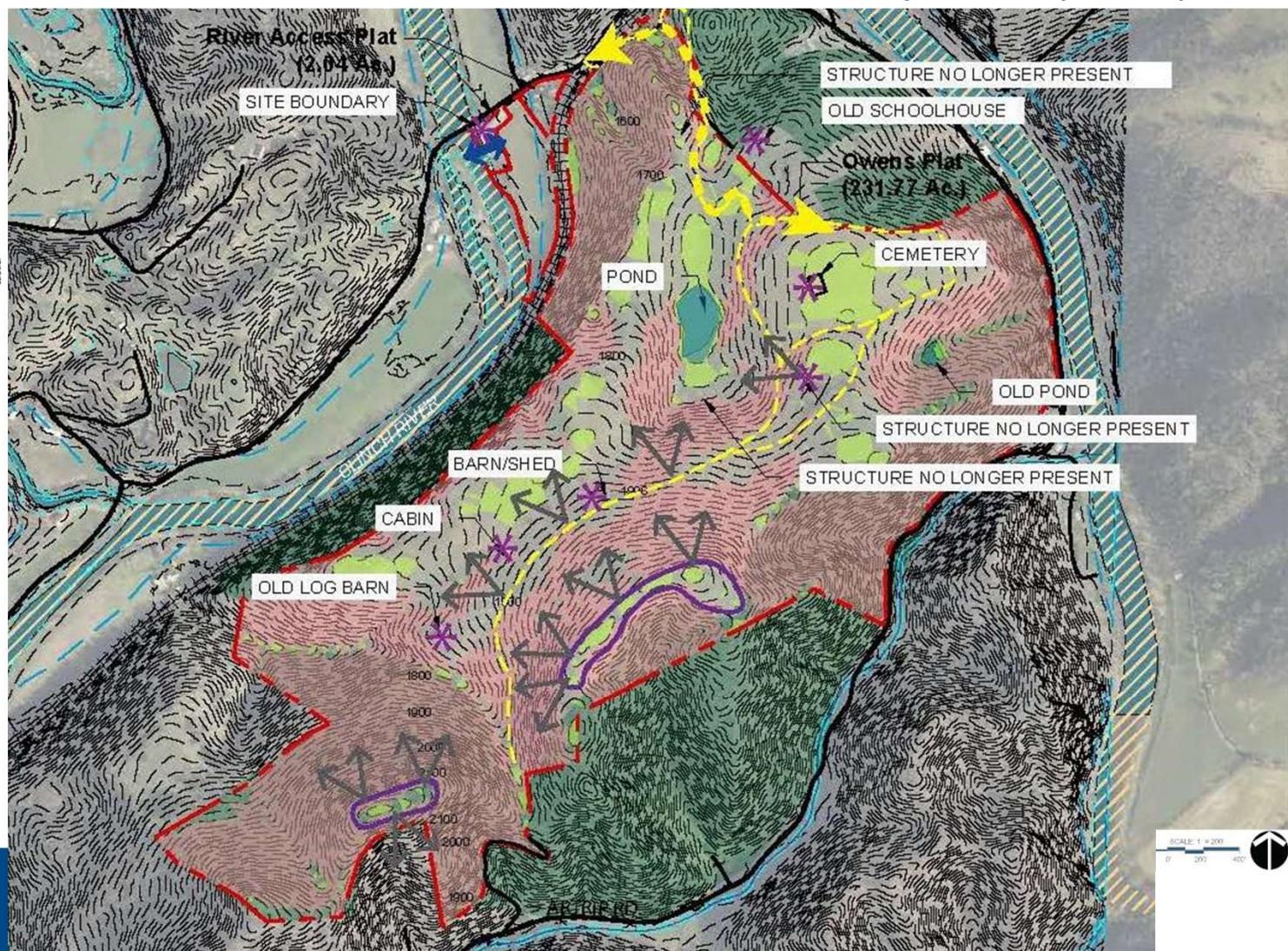
Russell County Tracts (Atrip Acquisitions)







Opportunities and Constraints - Russell County Tract (Artrip)



Site Master Plan- Russell County Tract (Artrip)

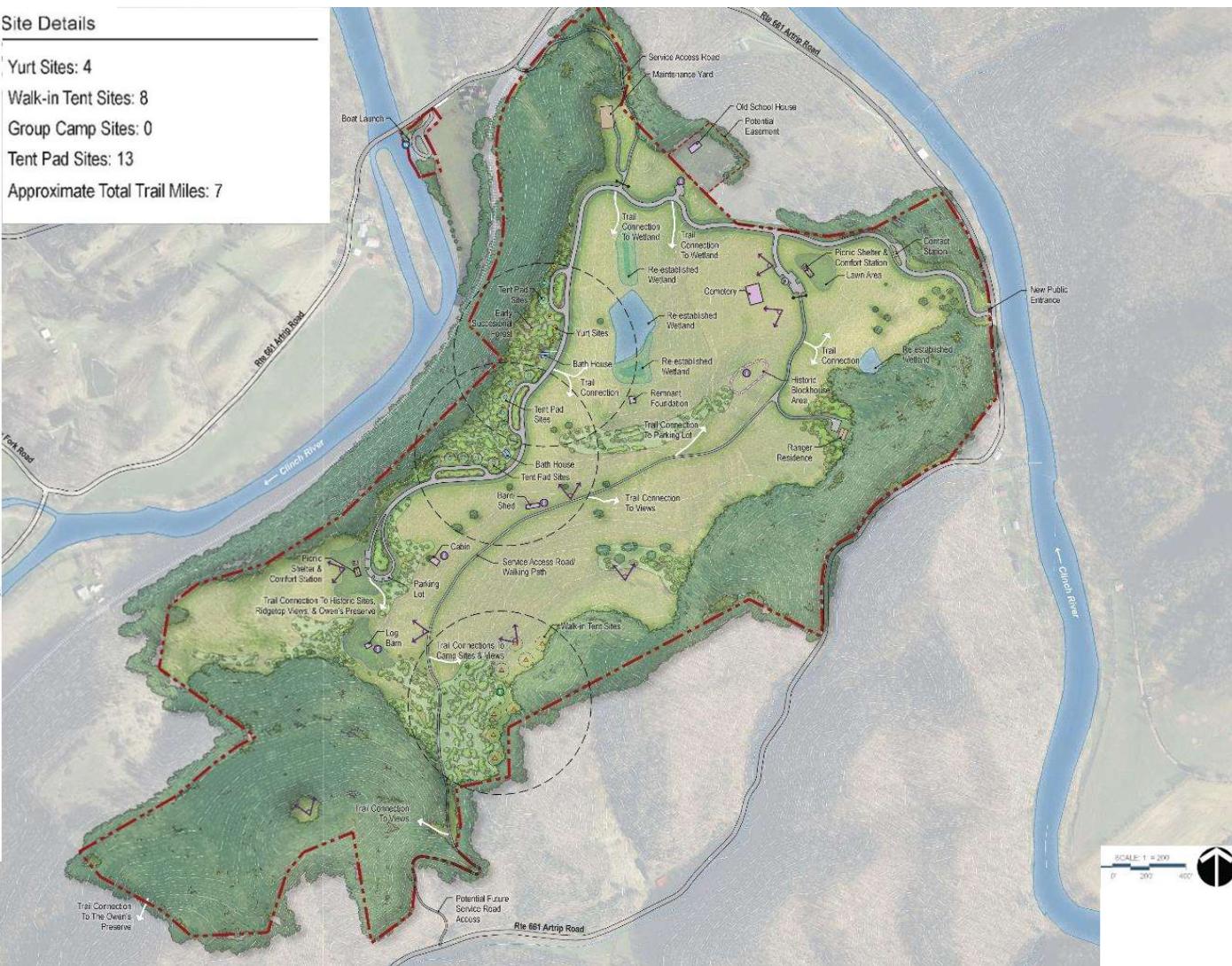
Legend

- Legend:

 - Project Boundary
 - Existing Forest Canopy
 - Meadow
 - Wetland Meadow
 - Water Body
 - Early Successional Forest
 - Mowed Lawn
 - Existing Hiking Trail
 - Proposed Hiking Trail
 - 10' ADA Accessible Trail
 - Tent Pad Sites with water/electric
 - Walk-in Tent Site
 - Group Camp Site
 - Cabin Site
 - Yurt Site
 - RV Site
 - Picnic Shelter
 - Bath House w/ 500' service radius
 - Comfort Station
 - Interpretive Area
 - Vault Toilet w/ 500' service radius
 - Water Access
 - Sign Kiosk
 - Historic Site
 - Gate
 - View

Site Details

- Yurt Sites: 4**
Walk-in Tent Sites: 8
Group Camp Sites: 0
Tent Pad Sites: 13
Approximate Total Trail Miles: 7





Programming at Russell County Tract (Artrip)

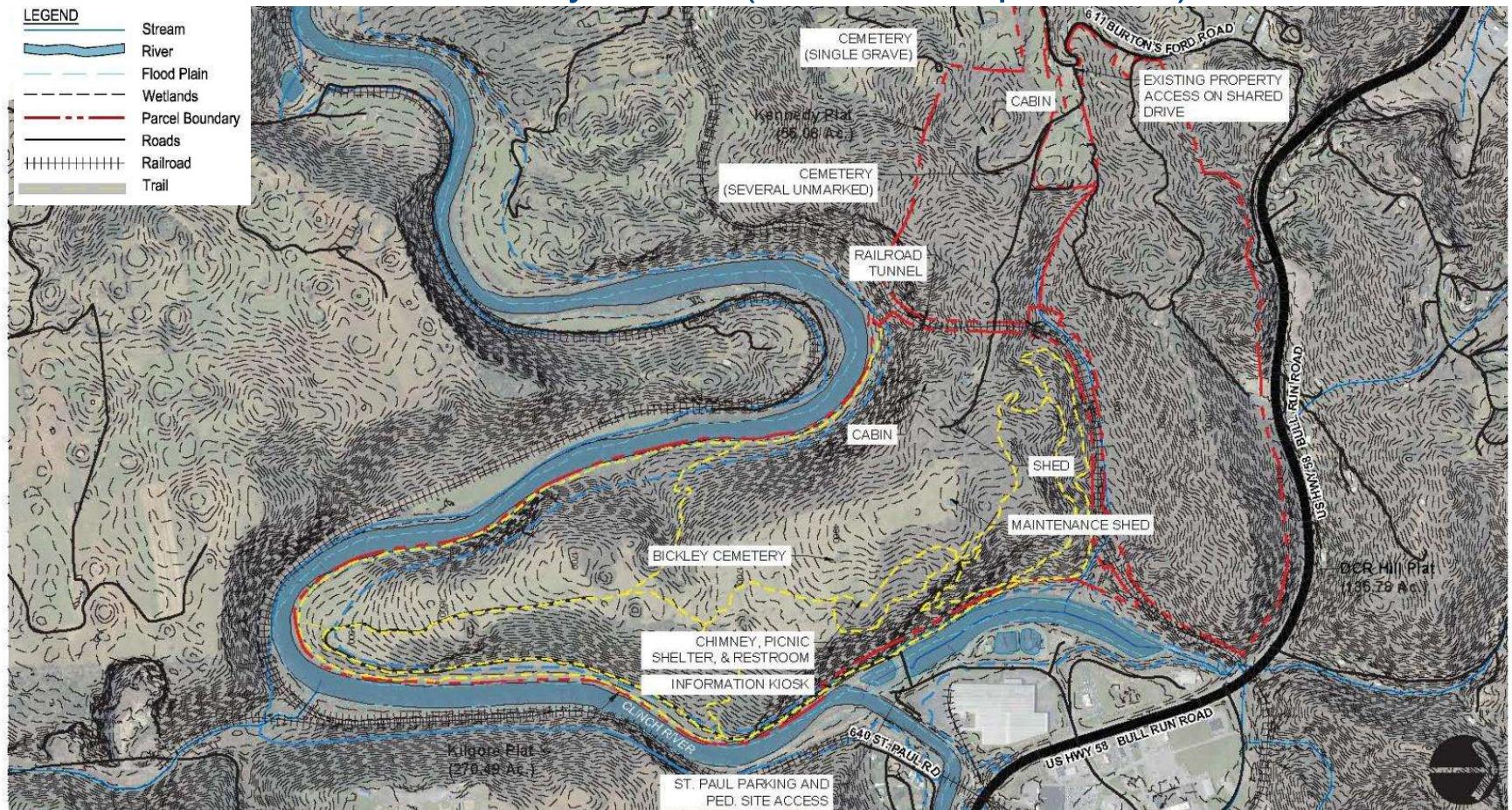
- **Walk-in Camping**
- **Tent Camping**
- **Yurts**
- **Hiking Trails**
- **Interpretive Areas**
- **Restrooms**
- **Picnic Shelters**
- **Historic Sites**

-
- Contact Station
 - Ranger Residence
 - Maintenance Facility



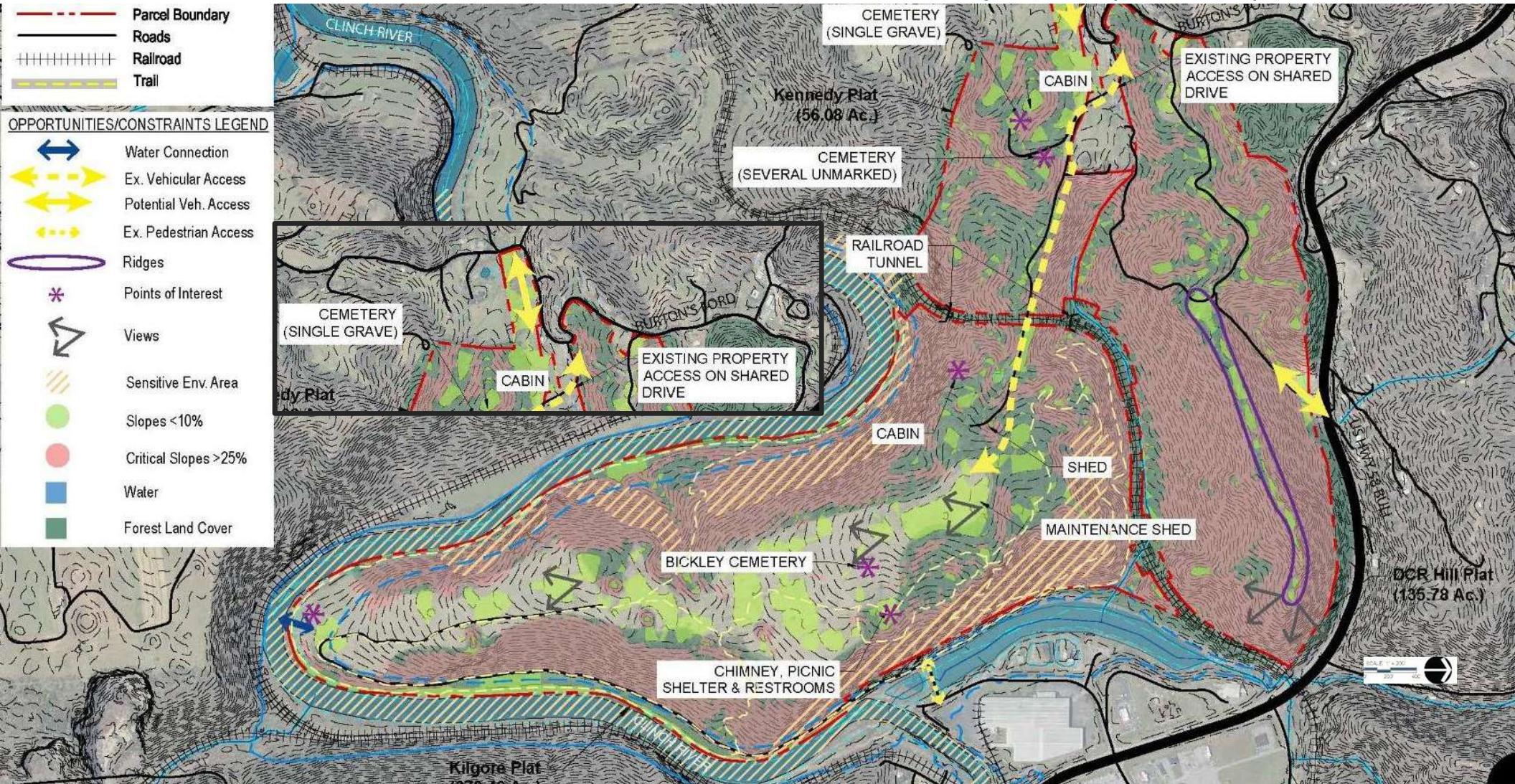
DCR Acquisition Lands Along Clinch River

Wise County Tracts (St. Paul Acquisitions)

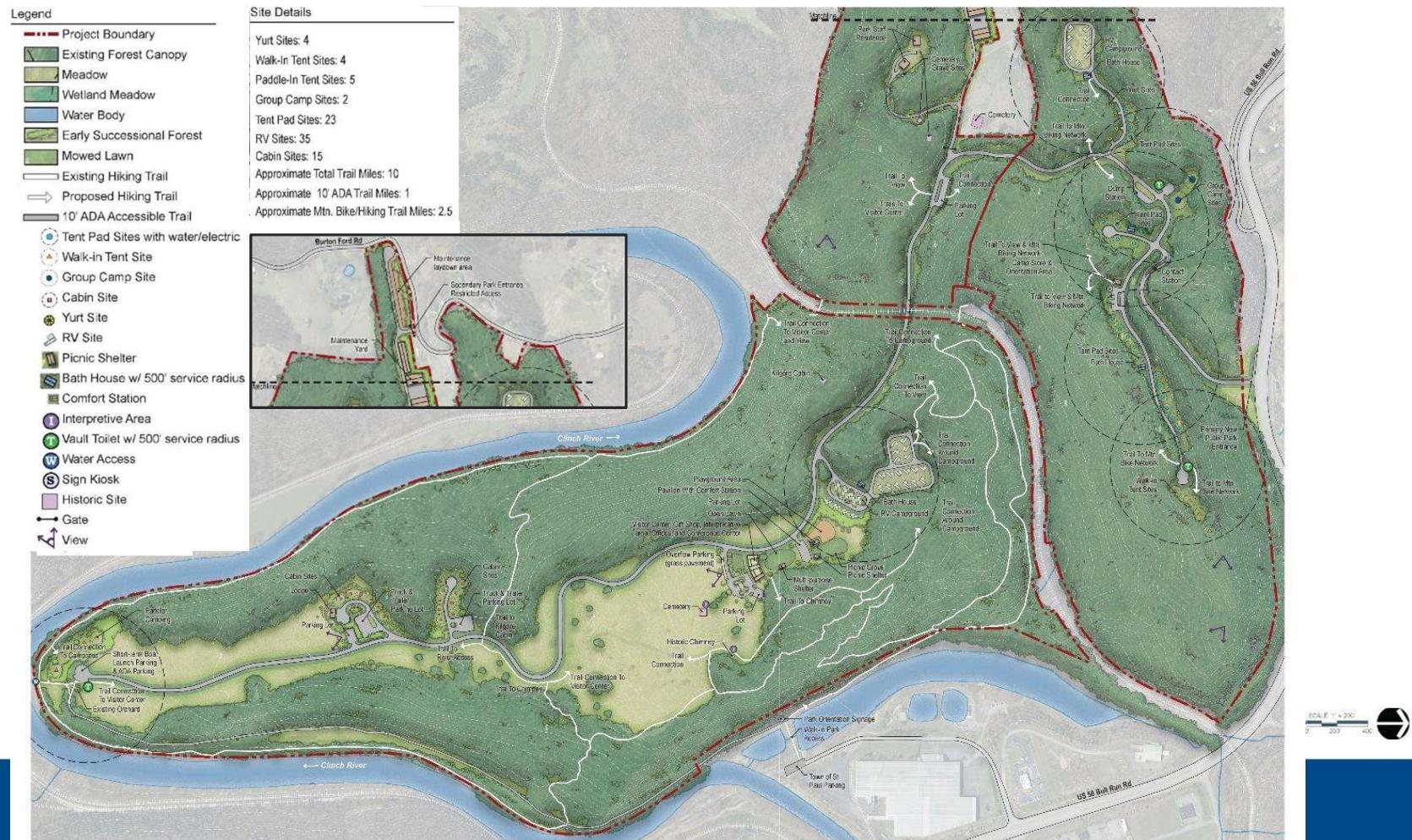




Opportunities and Constraints - Wise County Tract (St. Paul)



Opportunities and Constraints - Wise County Tract (St. Paul)





Programming at Wise County Tracts (St. Paul Acquisitions)

- **Walk-in Camping**
 - **Paddle-in Camping**
 - **Tent Camping**
 - **Group Camping**
 - **RV Camp Sites**
 - **Yurts**
 - **Cabins**
 - **Lodge**
 - **Hiking Trails**
 - **Mountain Biking Trails**
 - **Accessible Trails**
 - **Canoe/kayak launch**
 - **Visitor Center**
 - **Camp Store**
 - **Playground**
 - **Interpretive Areas**
 - **Historic Sites**
 - **Restrooms**
 - **Picnic Shelters**
 - **Multi-purpose Shelter**
-
- Contact Station
 - Ranger Residence
 - Maintenance Facility

Park Master Framework Plan

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Site Development Levels

- Facilities to support day and overnight river trips, as well as day visitors to the river.
- Long term goal is for facilities that facilitate a continuous float along the navigable river from Cedar Bluff (mm 20) to the Tennessee state line (mm 140)

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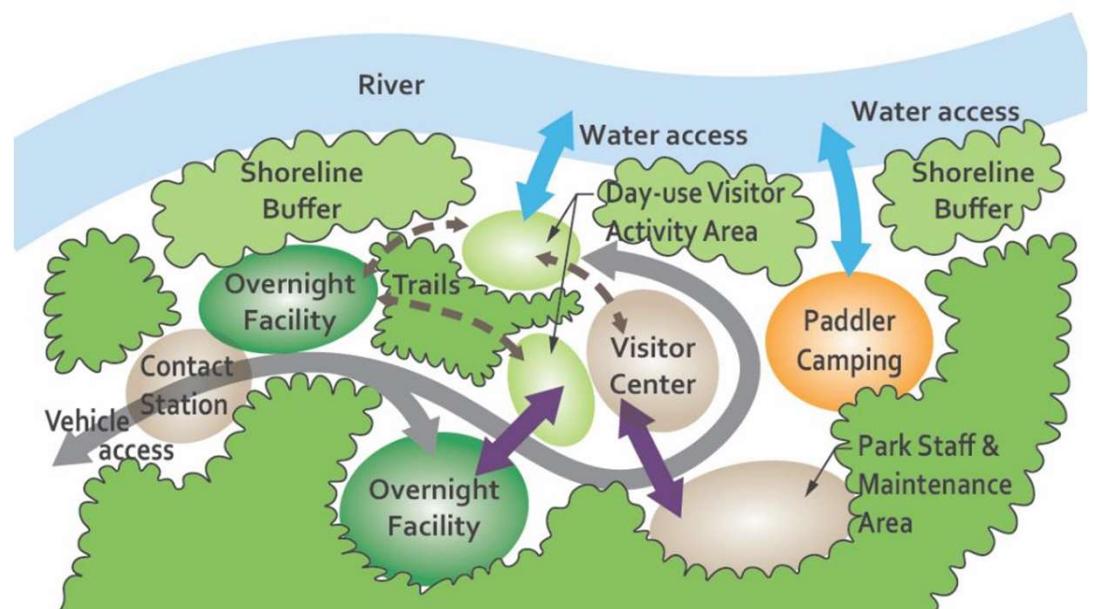
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Anchor Properties

240-450 acres, located to share unique experience or aspect of the Clinch

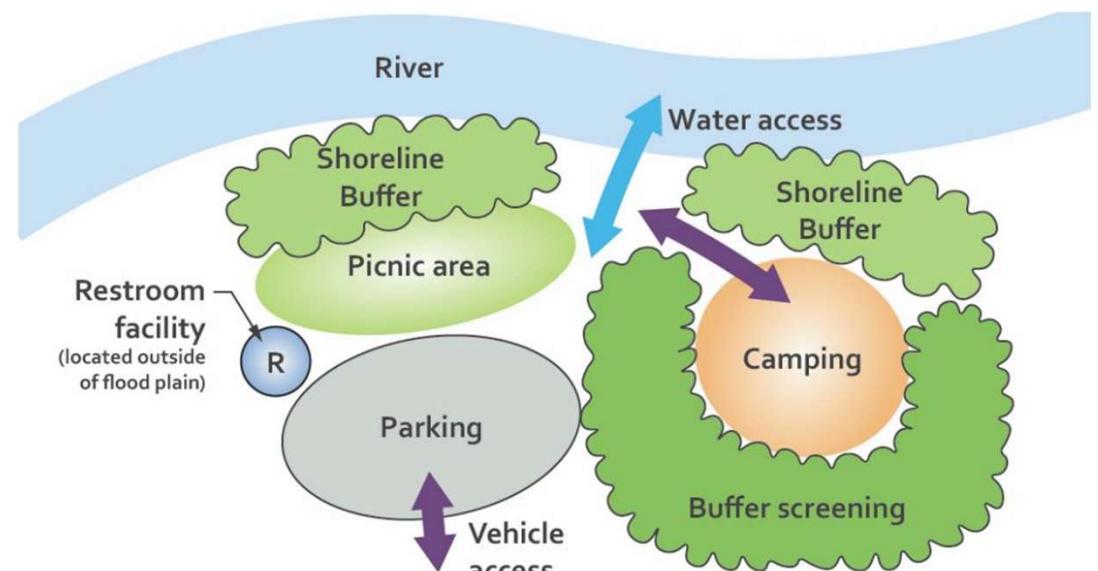
- Serve as hubs for the Clinch River SP.
- Large properties developed with a diverse range of recreation opportunities and services.
- Locations are site opportunity-based, showcasing unique features of the Clinch River.
- Standard amenities include visitor contact and info station, river access, trails, and a variety of overnight facilities.



Level 1: Overnight River Support Site

2-10 acres, 11 river miles maximum spacing

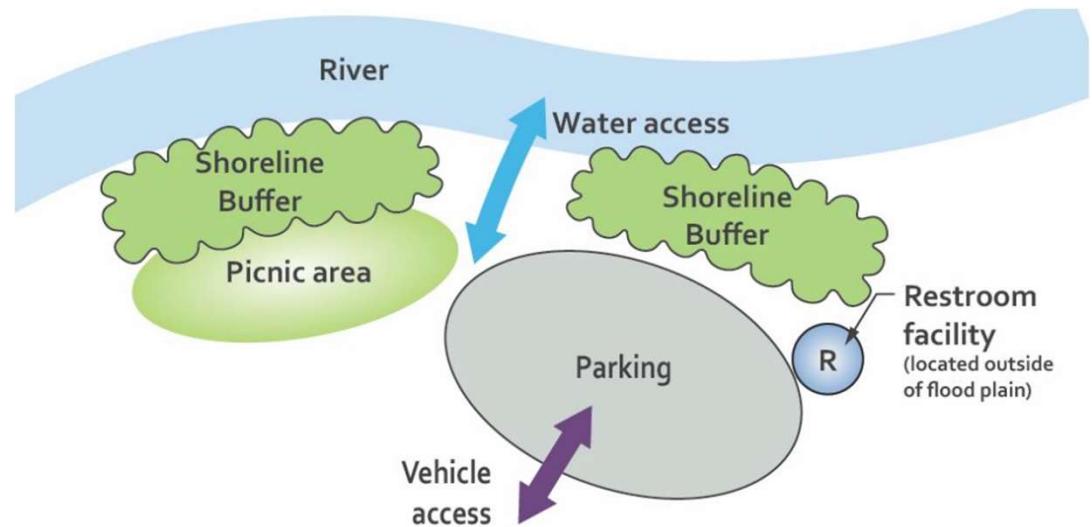
- Serve the needs of paddlers on overnight river trips, as well as offer day-use rest and support amenities.
- Spaced approximately 8-11 miles (maximum 11 hours) apart to provide full trip coverage.
- Focus is for river users, so site may not have vehicular access.
- Standard amenities include canoe/kayak launches, camp sites, restroom facilities, informational signage, and picnic facilities.



Level 2: Day-Use River Support Site

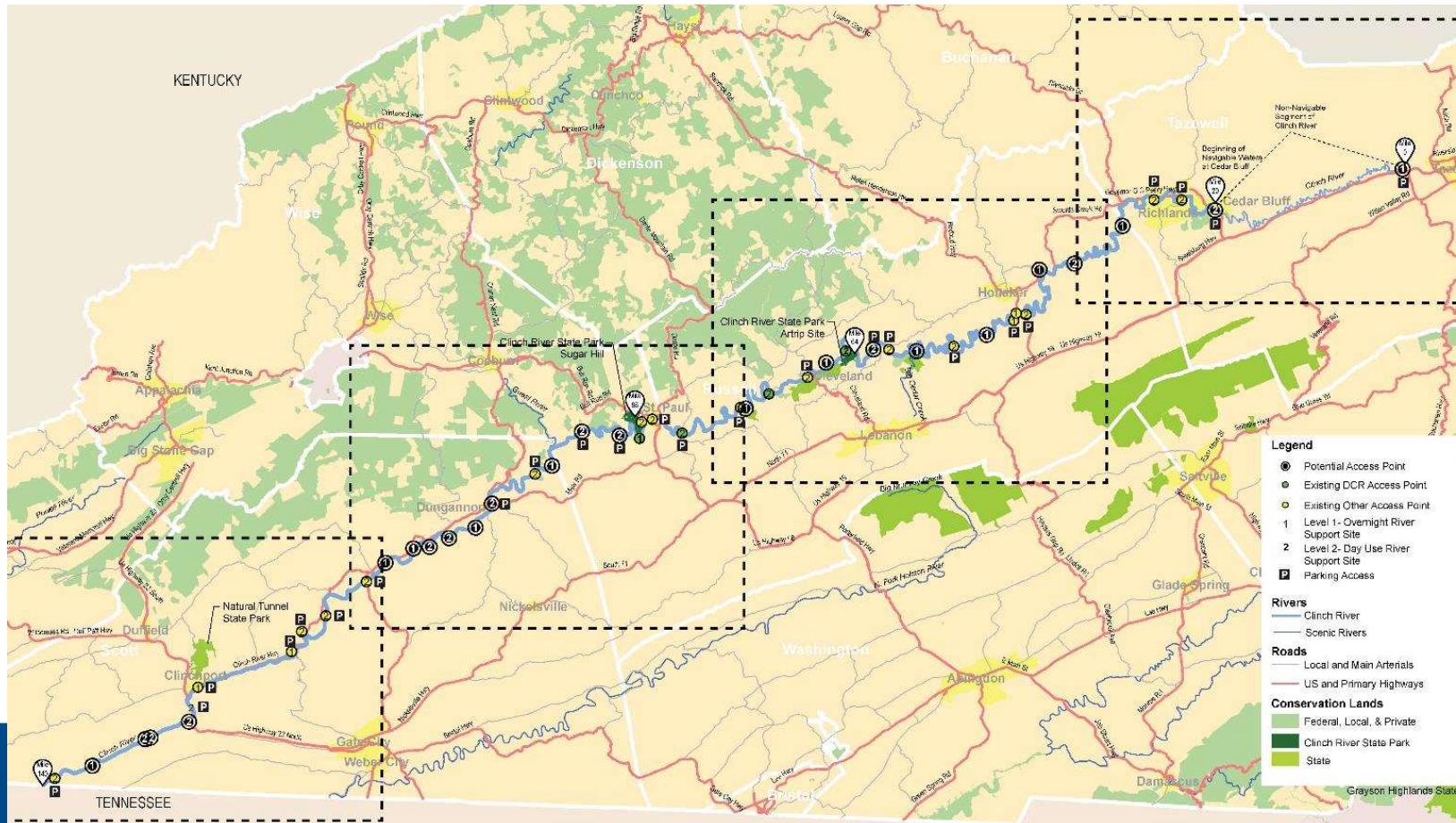
0.5 - 5 acres, 3 river mile maximum from another support site

- Serve as interim rest and support locations for paddlers on the Clinch River.
- Spaced a maximum of 3 miles (1.5 – 3 hours) apart to provide full trip coverage.
- Focus is for river users, so site may not have vehicular access.
- Standard amenities include canoe/kayak launches, restroom facilities, informational signage, and picnic facilities.



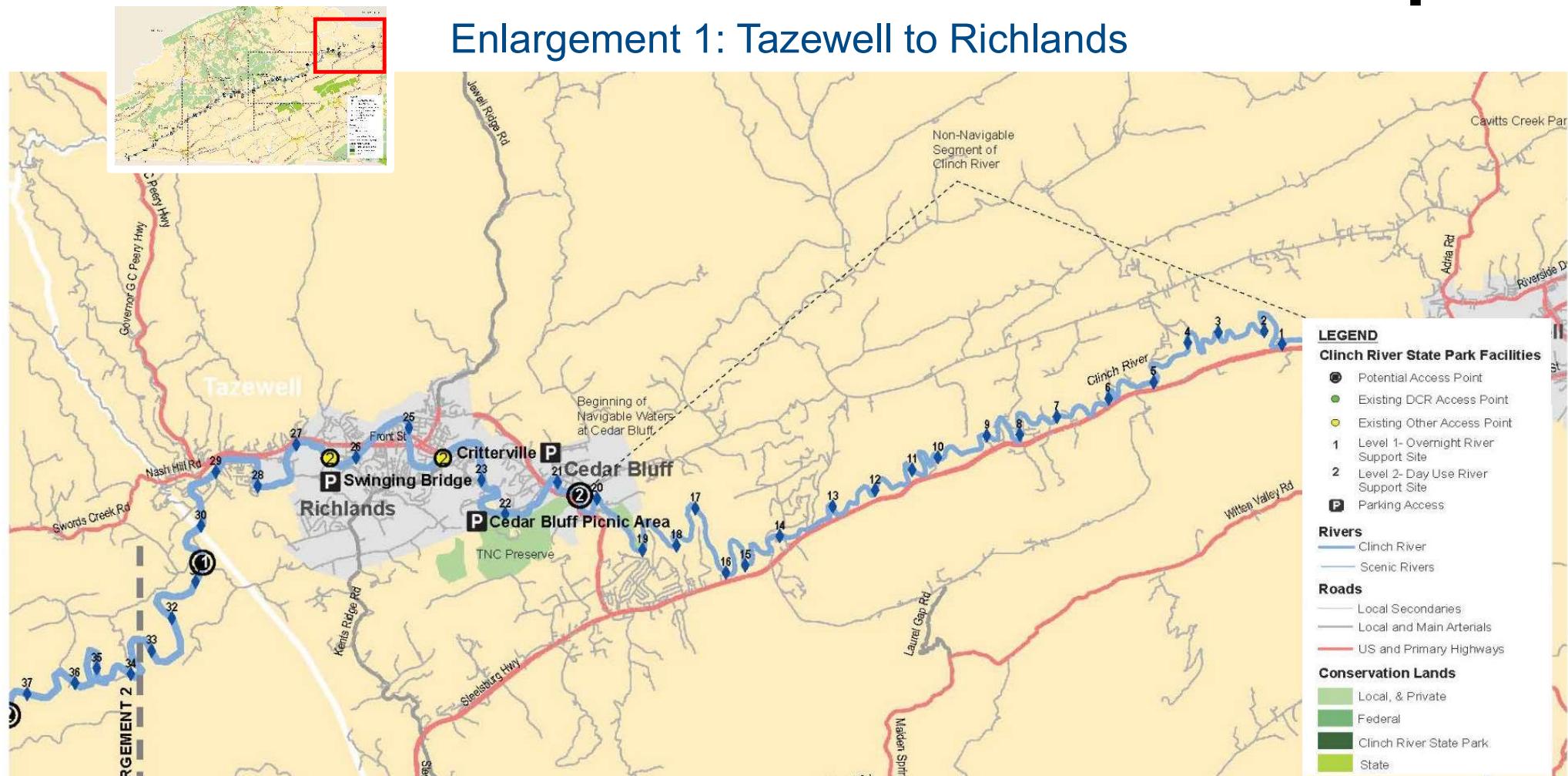
Clinch River SP Site Framework Map

Tazewell to Tennessee State Line



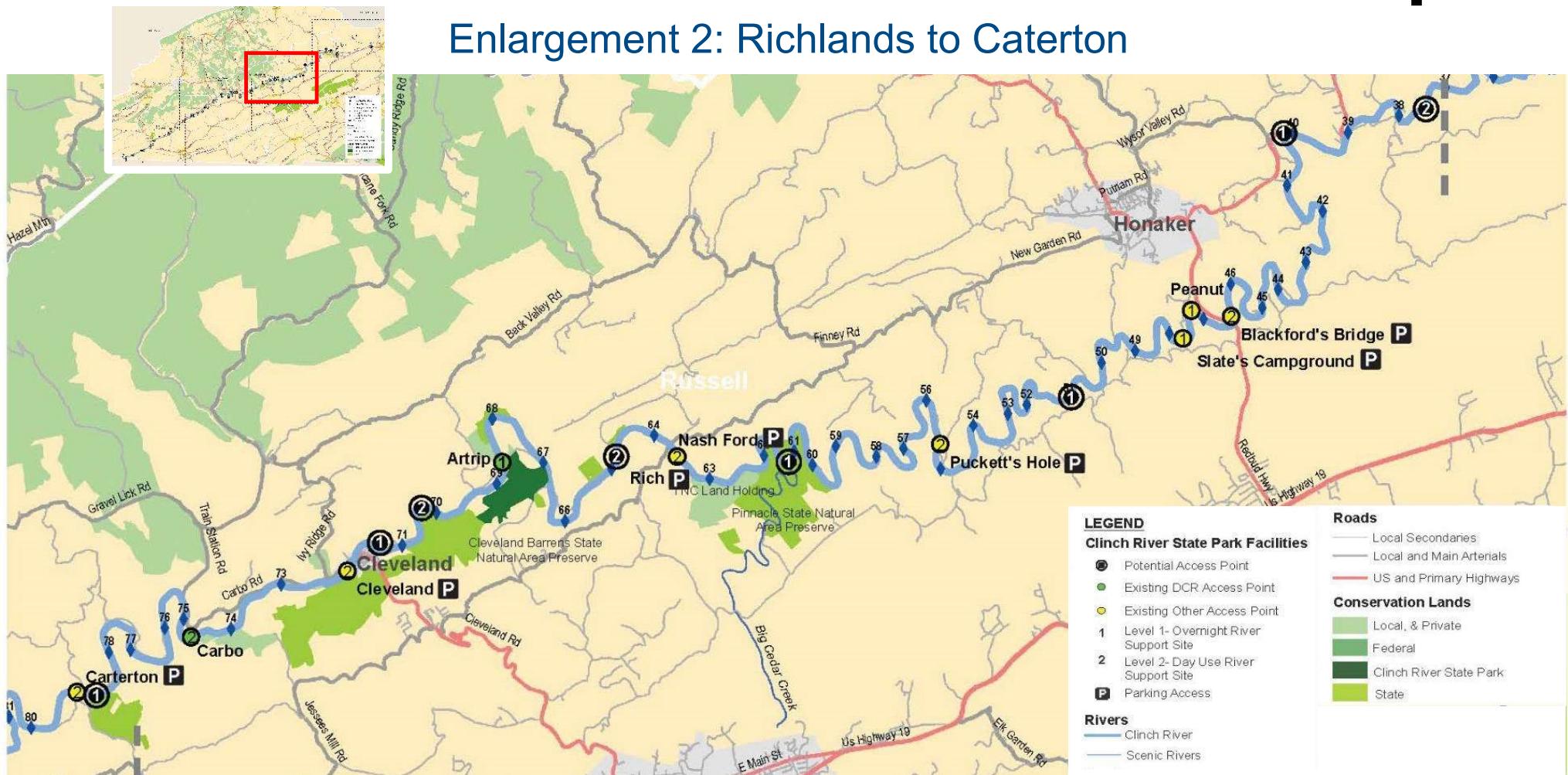
Clinch River SP Site Framework Map

Enlargement 1: Tazewell to Richlands



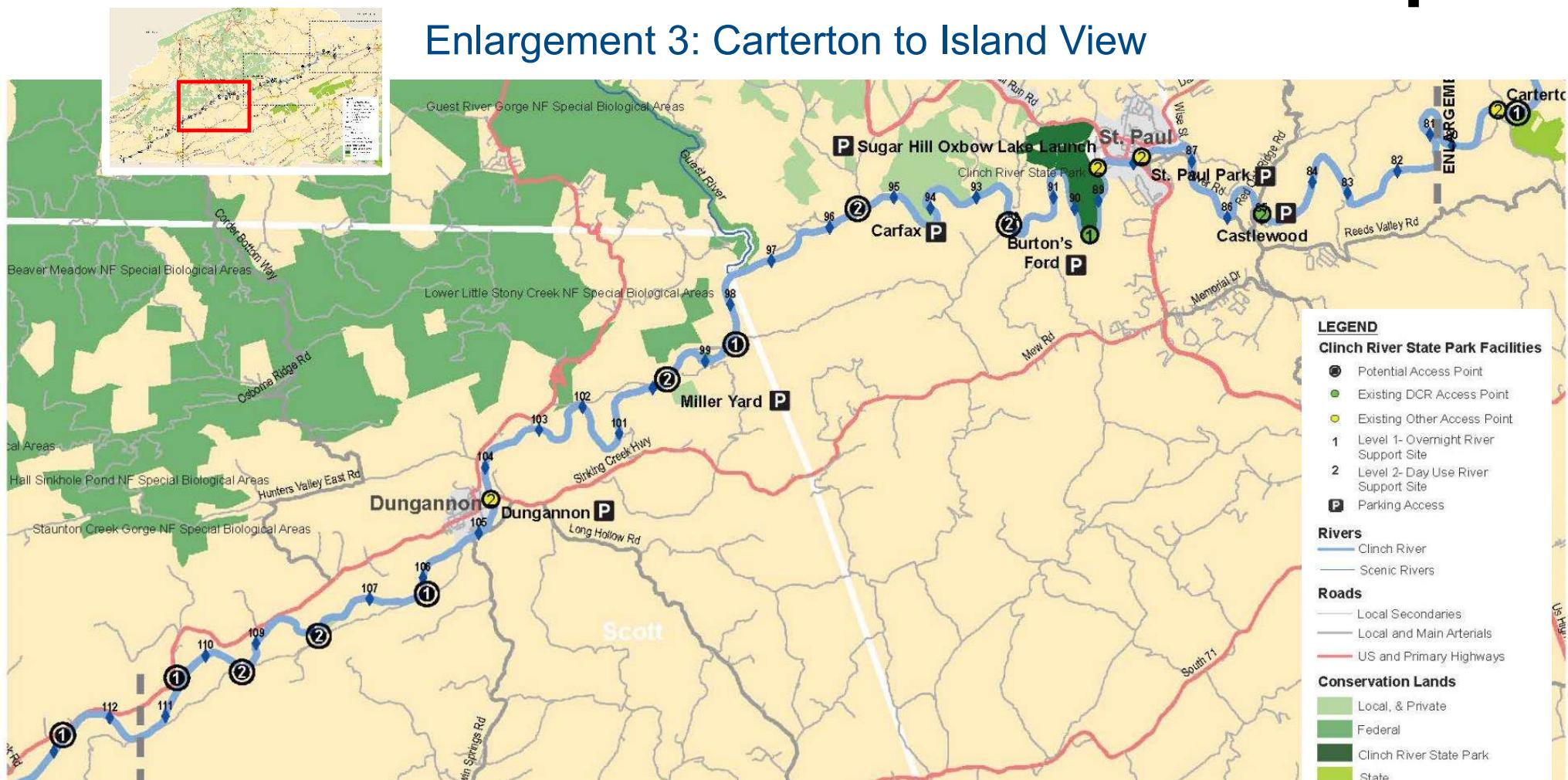
Clinch River SP Site Framework Map

Enlargement 2: Richlands to Caterton



Clinch River SP Site Framework Map

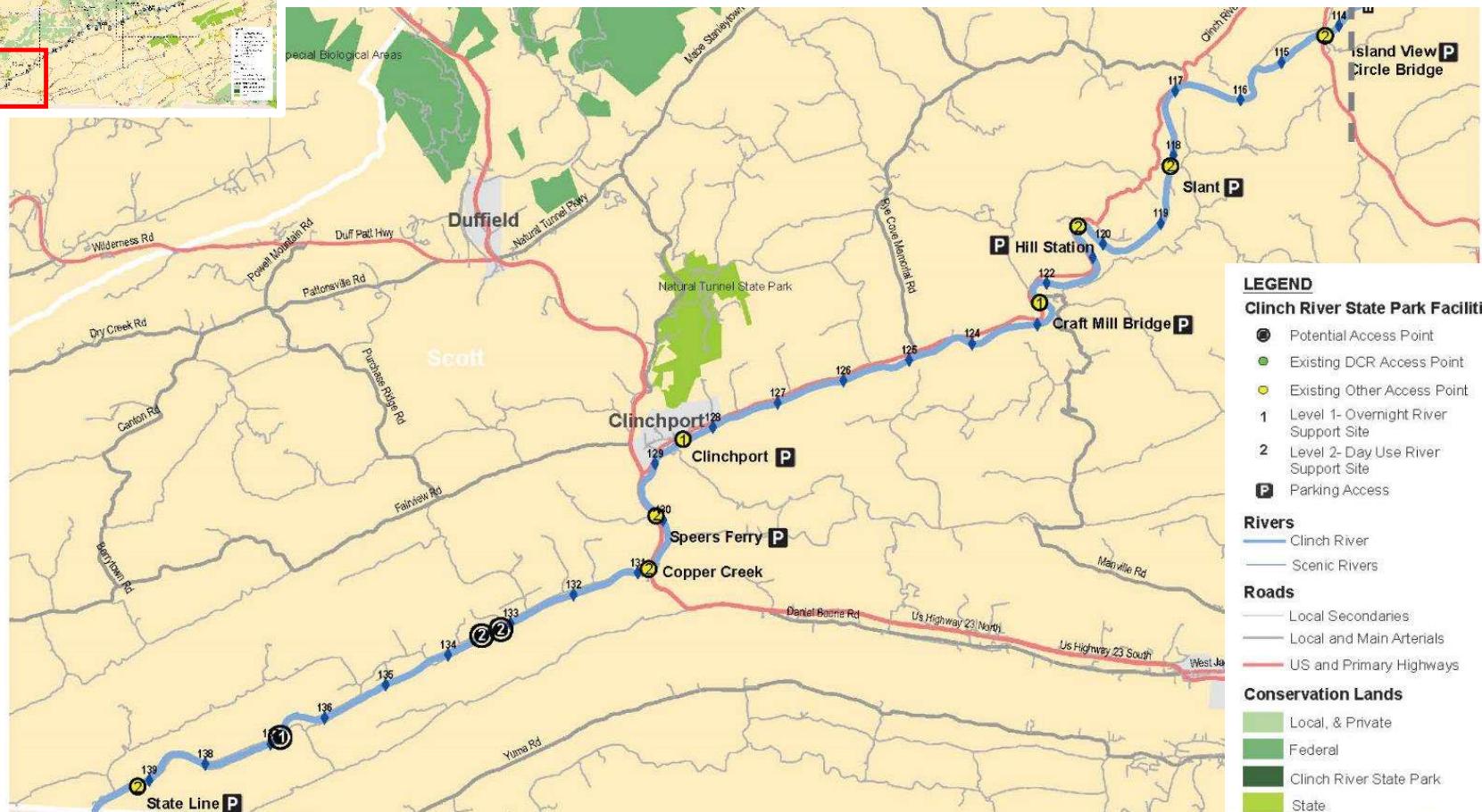
Enlargement 3: Carterton to Island View



Clinch River SP Site Framework Map



Enlargement 4: Island View to State Line



Clinch River State Park Development

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Phased Development

Phase 1

- St. Paul Tract: Entrance road, utilities, Contact Station, Visitor Center, maintenance shop, trails, boat launch, picnic shelters (2)
- Artrip Bent: Entrance road, payment station, maintenance yard

Phase 2

- St. Paul Tract: Variety of camping types (30-37 sites), yurts (4), picnic shelter (1), staff residence
- Artrip Bent: Contact Station, picnic shelters (2), comfort stations (2), utilities, trails

Phase 3

- St. Paul Tract: RV campground (20-25 sites), cabins (12-15), lodges, group campsite, final utility needs
- Artrip Bent: Campgrounds (18-22 sites), yurts (4), bathhouses (2), staff residence, final utility needs



Implementation Timeline

- Tonight. Public meeting to share master plan.
- Spring 2023. Master plan finalized.
- Master Plan be reviewed by the Board of Conservation and Recreation and adopted by the Director.
- The Master Plan will be made available to the General Assembly for review.
- Expected build-out timeline is 30 years.



Implementation Priorities

1. Conduct acquisitions on existing anchor properties.
2. Phase 1 development of St. Paul and Artrip anchor properties
3. Develop river support sites between Artrip and St. Paul.
4. Installing branded and consistent signage at all existing river access points between Artrip and St. Paul, where necessary.



Next Steps

Public comment through March 17th, 2023

Present the Master Plan to BCR at the May 2023 meeting

The pdf of the presentation slideshow will be made available after the meeting.

<https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/cr-masterplan>



Public Comments and Discussion

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Thank you for attending!

If you have any questions, please contact:

Samantha Wangsgard at samantha.wangsgard@dcr.virginia.gov

by March 17, 2023

All emails and questions will be taken under consideration and responses provided

