

# KENTUCKY STATE PARKS



TEAM  
KENTUCKY®

*New*  
Kentucky  
Home



# OUR MISSION

Provide a sustainable system of parks that delivers quality programs, amenities, and services, creating memorable experiences and a sense of place. This system will contribute to the economic growth of the commonwealth and preserve the historic and natural integrity and traditions of our parks for existing and future generations.





# OUR VISION

- Promote Kentucky as an inclusive travel experience
- Build public and private partnerships
- Pursue funding opportunities that will allow Kentucky State Parks to continue to address the continuous maintenance needs at each state park
- Protect and conserve Kentucky's natural resources
- Continue to be a leader in Kentucky's tourism industry
- Focus on advertising efforts
- Expand our travel market
- Exceed guests' expectations by creating memorable experiences
- Continue to improve facility enhancement initiatives





"Mere words can never adequately describe the many points of natural beauty in Kentucky...The striking contrasts in nature cannot be forced within the covers of a book. The vastness of the great outdoors; the infinite detail of each physical component; the myriad forms of life...and a thousand other wonderful experiences await the lover of nature in the wilderness...Here are the natural parks awaiting State custodianship. Their acquisition and preservation by the Commonwealth constitute a service in which we may all unite with pride and enthusiasm."

**WILLARD ROUSE JILLSON, MAY 1924**

**1ST STATE PARK DIRECTOR**





A photograph of two people standing in a cave, looking out through an opening. The cave walls are dark and textured. The person on the left is wearing a blue jacket and the person on the right is wearing a green shirt. The text "44 PARKS" is overlaid in large white letters at the top.




# 44 PARKS

IN 45 COUNTIES  
& 2 STATES



# Wherever you travel in Kentucky, you are never far from a Kentucky State Park.

Each has its own unique draw, from historic sites that preserve the past to modern lodges and restaurants to refresh you for your next adventure. Whether you plan to climb a mountain, play a nationally recognized golf course, pitch a tent, or paddle a river, your next Kentucky State Parks experience is closer than you think.

-  **State Resort Park (Lodge)**
-  **State Recreational Park**
-  **State Historic Site**







# \$14.3 BILLION

impact of tourism in Kentucky





# OVER 8 MILLION ANNUAL VISITORS

1.6 million overnight visitors



A photograph of two people standing in a dense forest, viewed from behind. The person on the left is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt and a brown quilted vest. The person on the right is wearing a green and white plaid shirt. They are both looking towards the right side of the frame, where the forest path leads into the distance. The background is filled with tall trees and lush green foliage.

# **RANKED 3<sup>RD</sup> IN THE NATION BEHIND CA & NY IN REVENUE PRODUCTION**

Generating \$55 million annually with a  
\$118 million dollar annual allotment



A blacksmith in a tan shirt and apron is working at an anvil in a rustic blacksmith shop. A family of four (father, mother, and two children) is standing to the left, watching the process. The shop is made of wood and has a sign that reads "FORT HARRIS BLACKSMITH". The background shows a log cabin and a stone wall.

# OVER 700 FULL-TIME PEOPLE EMPLOYED

800-1000 seasonal employees during busy season





**44 State Parks**



**300 miles of trails**



**30 campgrounds**



**34 pools & beaches**



**49,000+ acres**



**13 golf courses**



**600 full time & 1000+ seasonal employees**



# INVESTMENTS

## HJR 76

\$40 Million	Campground Upgrades
\$20 Million	Utility Improvements
\$6 Million	Broadband Upgrades

## HJR 56

\$27 Million	Building Systems and Safety Improvements
\$22 Million	Accommodation Hospitality Upgrades
\$22 Million	Recreational Amenities Upgrades

## HB 6

\$45 Million	Utility Infrastructure Replacement
\$18 Million	Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades
\$15 Million	Yatesville Lake Marina Replacement
\$12.2 Million	Jenny Wiley Marina Reconstruction
\$10 Million	Cumberland Falls Lodge Room Upgrades
\$7.5 Million	John James Audubon New Conference Center
\$6 Million	Lake Barkley Lodge Wing Exterior Repair
\$3.1 Million	Big Bone Lick State Park Nature Center
\$3.1 Million	Conference Center Upgrades
\$3 Million	Lake Barkley Fitness Center Upgrades
\$1.5 Million	Perryville ADA Accessible Restroom Facility
\$1.5 Million	Kenlake Structure Refurbishment
\$1.5 Million	Jenny Wiley Archery Center
\$1.2 Million	Pennyrile Beach Complex Repair
\$1.1 Million	John James Audubon Beach House Conversion





# NATURAL DISASTER RESPONSE

- This year's impact:
  - February floods:
    - 6,743 room nights
    - Buckhorn, Cumberland Falls, Jenny Wiley, Natural Bridge, Lake Barkley, Pine Mountain
  - April floods:
    - 2,700 room nights
    - General Butler and Pennyryle
  - May tornadoes:
    - 72 room nights
    - Cumberland Falls and Lake Cumberland
- Currently, we are still housing victims
  - 49 travel trailers at Jenny Wiley
  - 10 at General Butler
  - 42 people in 14 rooms at Jenny Wiley, General Butler and Natural Bridge





## **2021 Western Kentucky Tornado Natural Disaster**

- Kentucky State Parks used 6 Resort Parks to house displaced victims
  - Provided 13,300 room nights
  - Provided 48,15 room nights for first responders
  - Housed 44,963 total victims

## **2022 Eastern Kentucky Flood Natural Disaster**

- Kentucky State Parks used 3 Resort Parks to house displaced victims
  - Provided 9951 total room nights
  - Housed 33,794 total victims



# COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Government entities
  - County judges
  - Local government
- Tourism commissions
- Friends groups
  - Fundraisers
  - Infrastructure investments
  - Volunteer clean-ups
  - Trail work
- Example: Lake Malone State Park
  - Big Twigs
  - Accessible playground equipment





# TRAIL TOWN GRANTS

- Support from Governor Beshear and the General Assembly resulted in the establishment of a **Kentucky Trail Town Grant Fund** of \$720,000 for eligible Kentucky Trail Town communities
- 2024 Grant Cycle: 19 Towns applied for a total of \$546,374.08
- 2025 Grant Cycle: Currently open for remaining Trail Towns that did not apply in 2024



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Schools
  - Group visits
  - In-school programs
- Over 1000 parks programs this year
- Libraries
- 4-H
- Tour buses
- Weddings
- Family reunions
- Conferences





# PARTNER PROJECTS

- Examples:
  - Johnson County
    - Recreational Trails Project to enhance Dawkins Line Rail Trail
  - City of Dawson Springs
    - Recreational Trails (RTP) Project to develop mountain bike skills area at Pennyrile Forest State Resort Park
  - Kentucky Dam Village State Resort Park - Calvert City hike bike trail connection and Bo Beckett Memorial Mountain Bike Trail
  - Jenny Wiley State Resort Park - Sugar Camp Mountain Bike Trails
  - Historic Cherokee State Park - Lodge renovation and Coach Mimms Trail construction
  - Buckhorn Lake Trail renovations and Park Staff Trail Maintenance Class - Perry County Fiscal Court Trail crew



# CONTINUED...

- Multijurisdictional Projects: These long distance trail and recreation based projects include a variety of partners such as Federal agencies, local governments, universities, non-profits and additional state agencies
  - Tennessee RiverLine Project (Kenlake, KDV)
  - Ohio River Recreational Trail (Blue Licks Battlefield, Big Bone Lick, General Butler, John James Audubon, Wickliffe Mounds)
  - Pine Mountain State Scenic Trail/Great Eastern Trail (Breaks, Kingdom Come, Pine Mountain)
  - Riverlands Alliance (Kentucky Dam Village, Kenlake, Lake Barkley, Mineral Mound, Wickliffe Mounds, Columbus-Belmont)
  - US Bike Route 21/Boone Trace (Pine Mountain, Dr. Thomas Walker, Fort Boonesborough)
  - US Bike Route 23/John Muir (Dale Hollow, Barren River)
  - Cave Country Trails/Green River National Water Trail (Barren River, Nolin)



# UNIQUE EVENTS

- Louisville Orchestra In Harmony Tour
  - Cumberland Falls State Resort Park
- Writing Workshops
  - Silas House
  - Frank X Walker
  - Crystal Wilkinson
- Concert series at Rough River
- Salt Fest at Big Bone Lick
- Wildlife watching
  - Barren River
  - JJ Audubon





# MARKETING IMPACT

- We market all 44 state parks and the system as a whole
  - Both in-state and in surrounding states
- We are driving outdoor recreation, lodging, dining and camping
  - Special events
  - Festivals
- We are targeting families, outdoor recreation enthusiasts and legacy park visitors
- The official Kentucky State Parks app powered by Outerspatial coming soon...
- We'd love to collaborate!





A man in a red and black plaid shirt, blue jeans, and a blue cap is walking on a paved path towards a wooden tunnel entrance. The tunnel is built into a rocky hillside, and the surrounding area is lush with green foliage and trees. The scene is captured in a cinematic style with a slightly desaturated green tint.

**WHAT IS YOUR COMMUNITY'S  
VISION FOR YOUR PARK?**





KENTUCKY STATE PARKS  
"the nation's finest"

# THANK YOU!

*follow for more updates!*



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parks.ky.gov