

Grayton Beach State Park Unit Management Plan Amendment

INTRODUCTION

In support of Florida's Great Outdoors Initiative, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is working to enhance public access, recreation, and lodging at state parks— reinforcing the state's dedication to conservation, the outdoor recreation economy, and Floridians quality of life.

Land use planning and park improvement decisions are based on the dual responsibilities of DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks. These responsibilities are to preserve Florida's natural landscapes, heritage sites, and to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities for Florida's citizens and visitors. Over time, park-specific management plan amendments are implemented to accommodate park-specific needs in real time to boundary changes and land acquisitions, impacts from natural forces like hurricanes and severe weather, and to prioritize additional opportunities for outdoor recreation and other amenities as needed.

PLAN AMENDMENT

Overview

This amendment to the current Acquisition and Restoration Council-approved unit management plan for Grayton Beach State Park includes the addition of overnight and recreation facilities. These proposals are organized and presented by use area. Design details and precise location of proposed facilities will be determined and developed according to conceptual land use elements described below and are contingent on funding and concession agreements.

Best Practices

All improvements shall employ best practices utilized by park systems across the country, ensuring that all facilities, functions, and amenities are welcoming and reflective of Florida's heritage, harmonious with park-specific resources, compatible with native lands and plants, aesthetically fitting within surrounding landscapes, and are functional.

CONCEPTUAL LAND USE PLAN

West Tract – Cabin Area

Objective: Expand overnight accommodations and add an essential amenity.

Actions:

- *Design and develop up to 10 additional cabins and a beach access restroom.*

Development of up to 10 additional cabins is recommended within the footprint of the existing cabin area in the West Tract of the park, south of County Road 30A. This addition would be accompanied by a new restroom, located within or adjacent to the existing beach access parking area that is used by cabin guests. The beach access restroom should be setback to avoid impacts to surrounding dunes and the salt-pruned coastal scrub.

Considerations:

- Avoidance of sensitive habitat, including the coast scrubs and dunes, will be a priority in the design of the proposed facilities.

East Tract – Main Use Areas

Objective: Introduce new recreation facilities.

Actions:

- *Design and develop pickleball courts.*
- *Design and develop a disc golf course.*

To diversify recreation opportunities and meet demands for new trends, construction of up to four pickleball courts and one disc golf course is recommended in the interior of the East Tract of the park where day-use activity and camping are concentrated. The proposed location for the pickleball courts is just north of the campground entrance road, while the disc golf course would occupy scenic space modestly farther north, along either side of the park entrance road – offering convenient access for both day-use and overnight visitors. Addition of the proposed day-use facilities will require accompanying parking and a restroom facility.

Considerations:

- Avoidance of sensitive habitat will be priority in the design of the proposed facilities.

Objective: Provide additional parking spaces for additional visitor access.

Actions:

- *Provide additional parking areas for the eastern beach access.*

As popularity of the park increases, additional parking capacity is necessary. Planned improvements should be focused near or adjacent to existing facilities and the use of gravel and sand can provide for enhanced drainage of rainwaters through the existing natural landscapes.

Considerations:

- Avoidance of sensitive habitat will be priority in the design of the proposed facilities.