

Oleta River 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 the 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 Oleta River 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

Cabin Area

Objective: Expand/diversify overnight accommodations.

Action:

- *Design and develop additional cabins or glamping.*

Expansion of the cabin area by up to 10 cabins is recommended in the space directly south of the array of existing cabins.

Alternatively, to increase and diversify opportunities for overnight stays in the park, glamping sites may be considered in the same area where additional cabins may otherwise be constructed.

Concession Area/Recreation Field

Objective: Introduce new recreation facilities.

Action:

- *Design and develop pickleball courts.*

Up to four pickleball courts are recommended in the open space on the north side of the concession building/outdoor center. The courts would be served by the existing parking and restroom associated with this use area.

Northern Day Use Area

Objective: Introduce new recreation facilities.

Action:

- *Design and develop one disc golf course.*

A disc golf course is proposed in the northern day-use area of the park located southwest of the entrance station where sufficient uplands are available. This area was previously populated with non-native Australian pines, which have been removed. A restroom and parking spaces will be required for this proposal.

Both the pickleball courts and disc golf course would be readily accessible by both overnight and day-use visitors.