

Sampson State Park

Seneca County
Town of Romulus, New York



Master Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

March 3, 2021



Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation

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Abbreviations Used

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BCA	Bird Conservation Area
DEC	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
DOT	New York State Department of Transportation
EAWPP	Emergency Action Written Preparedness Plan
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
IBA	National Audubon designated Important Bird Area
NHA	Natural Heritage Area
NYNHP	New York Natural Heritage Program
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
NYS	New York State
OPRHP	Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
RV	Recreational Vehicle
Sampson	Sampson State Park
SEQR(A)	Environmental Quality Review Act
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office

Introduction

Situated on the shores of the largest of New York State's Finger Lakes, Sampson State Park on Seneca Lake is a popular destination for campers, boaters, events, nature-lovers, and – due to its military background – history buffs. Changes at the park in recent years have added new recreation amenities, new infrastructure, and offered new challenges. The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has determined that the preparation of a master plan for Sampson State Park (Sampson) will further its mission to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

The OPRHP administers 180 state parks and 35 historic sites statewide, encompassing more than 350,000 acres of parkland in 11 regions. The Finger Lakes Park Region, where Sampson is located, contains 25 parks, two historic sites, and four golf courses.

Under Section 3.02 of the Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Law, OPRHP is directed "...to conserve, protect and enhance the natural, ecological, historic, cultural and recreational resources contained therein and to provide for the public enjoyment of and access to these resources in a manner that will protect them for future generations." Master planning is an important tool that can be used to help meet the substantial responsibility of providing recreation while at the same time protecting and interpreting resources.

Master planning explores the existing physical, natural, cultural, recreational, and structural resources of the park, assessing the condition of its resources to ensure it provides recreational and interpretive opportunities in a healthy and productive environment. The planning process calls for the development and consideration of alternatives for actions that will improve recreational opportunities and experiences offered at the park, while enhancing stewardship of its natural, cultural, and historic resources. The preferred alternatives that are ultimately selected are considered to best meet OPRHP's mission and vision for the park; together they form the master plan.



Map in Gibson's 1850, Plat-Book of Topographical Maps, Seneca County, New York

Planning that has been done in the past

In 1976, a master plan revision was drawn by C.H. Dunlap, a landscape architect for the Finger Lakes State Park & Recreation Commission. The plan shows locations of the regional maintenance center, a "Great Meadow", camping loops, a nature center, wildlife pond, marina, large picnic areas, group camps and a golf course.

In 2008, an additional 165 acres of land was acquired from Aspen Square Management. The purpose of this acquisition was to buffer privately developed areas to the north of the park from the park's recreational and operations facilities.



Planning and Environmental Review

The environmental review of proposed master plans for state park facilities is conducted in accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR). OPRHP fully integrates the planning and environmental review processes. This document is accompanied by a Revised Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which provides that review and compliance with SEQR.

Park Description



The Region

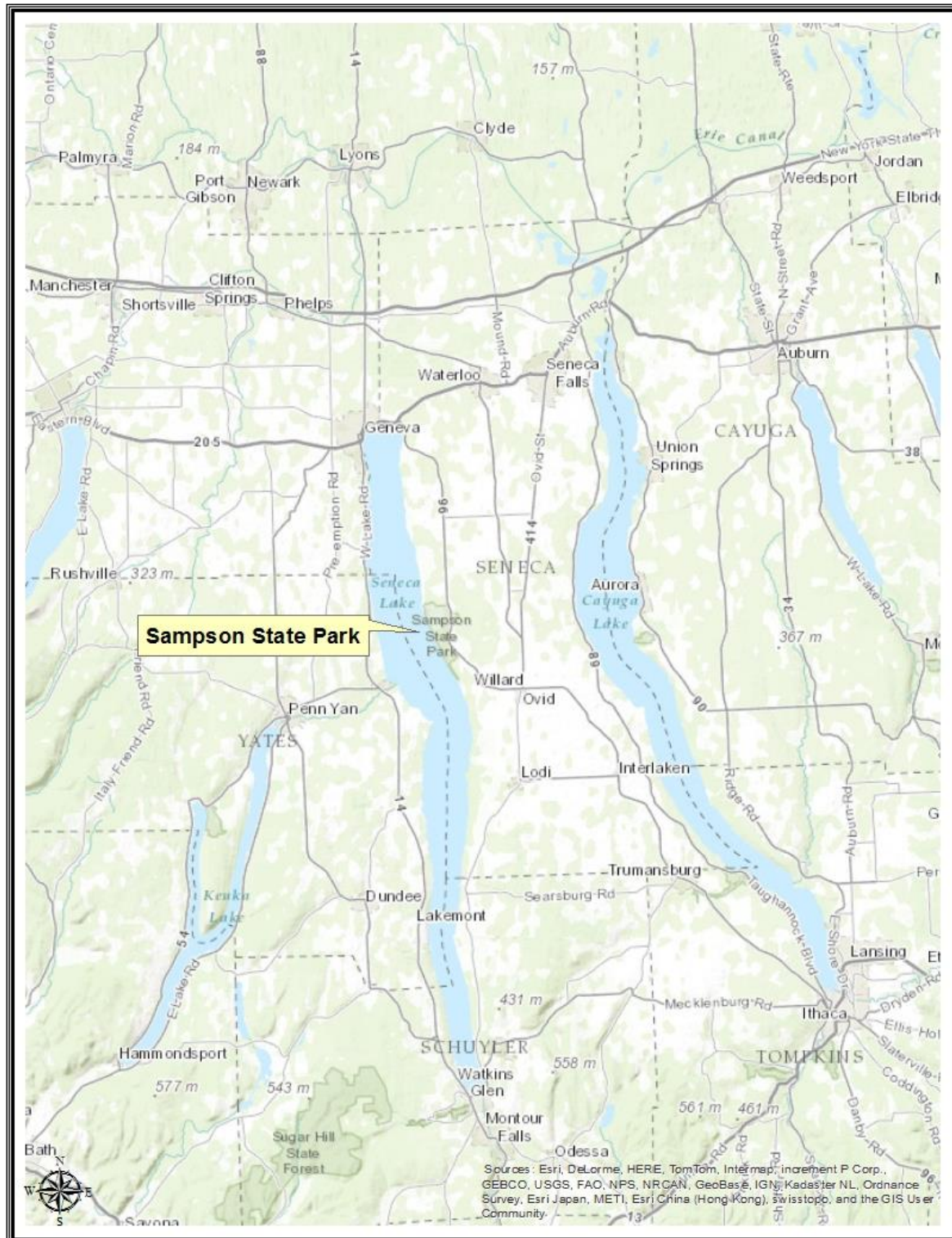
Sampson State Park is located in Seneca County, on the eastern shore of Seneca Lake, within New York's Finger Lakes region (See Location Map, Figure 1, in the Appendices). This region covers all of Wayne, Cayuga, Ontario, Seneca, Yates, Steuben, Schuyler, Tompkins, Chemung and Tioga Counties.



Best known for its scenic lake views, wineries, and productive fishery, the region's vineyards, breweries and distilleries; restaurants, cultural venues, and retail shopping are all accessible from the park, and popular destinations such as the Waterloo Premium Outlets and del Lago Resort and Casino in Waterloo, NY, are within a 30-mile radius. Access to area tourist attractions by boat is also convenient, with Geneva and Watkins Glen approximately 10 and 20 nautical miles, respectively.

Sampson State Park is centrally located on the eastern shore of Seneca Lake, in the Town of Romulus. Seneca Lake, at 618 feet deep, is one of the deepest in the region. Like giant fingerprints of Ice Age glaciers, the eleven Finger Lakes fan out across Central New York. The movement of water shaped the gorges, lakes and other land features characteristic of this region. Eleven state parks front on these lakes, six featuring gorges with waterfalls. Taughannock Falls SP, near Ithaca, features one of the highest waterfalls in the Eastern U.S., plunging 215 feet past rocky cliffs that tower nearly 400 feet above the gorge.

Sampson is accessible by motor vehicle using the main entrance located on NY 96A. There are no public bus routes from nearby metro areas that access the park. Pedestrians and bicyclists may enter the park using the main entrance located on NY 96A or any of several other gated access points where interior park roads meet local residential roads. There are no public hiking or snowmobile trails connecting to Sampson. The park is easily accessed off the NYS Thruway from the major cities of Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse. The cities of Auburn, Geneva, and Ithaca are within a reasonable driving distance.



Sampson State Park location

Establishment of the Park

Sampson State Park was established in 1960 on land purchased from the United States Air Force. Located in southeastern Seneca County in the Town of Romulus, NY, the park has over 2,000 acres of land adjacent to Seneca Lake in the scenic Finger Lakes region. Before transitioning into a state park, the site was used variously as a U.S. Naval training center, a college for returning veterans, and a U.S. Air Force base. Named in honor of a local native, Rear Admiral William T. Sampson, who fought in the Spanish-American War, the naval training facility was active during World War II. Between 1942 and 1946 more than 400,000 recruits were trained at the site. After World War II, a portion of the grounds became Sampson State College, which educated returning servicemen from 1946 to 1949, until the Korean War. The site then became an Air Force base, which was active from 1950 to 1956.

After the purchase of the facility by New York State, in the process of transforming the facility from a military base to a public recreational facility, many of the existing structures were removed. Some buildings were retained and repurposed for park use, and existing roads were reconditioned or removed. Today, in some parts of the park, vacant, unused buildings from earlier uses remain, a reminder of the site's military past.

In the 1980s, a group of WWII veterans approached OPRHP asking to rehabilitate the former Navy brig into a military memorial museum for the veterans that had been stationed there. Air Force veterans joined in the effort and sited an Air Force museum on the opposite side of the same building. The museum contains artifacts including guns, uniforms, and household items from the site's days as a military base.

Existing Conditions

This description of the existing conditions at the park highlights the most important elements that lead to the formation of the master plan. More detailed descriptions and maps of the existing resources are included in Chapter 1 and Appendices of the EIS.

Physical Resources

Geology

Bedrock in the area consists entirely of the Ludlowville Formation, a sheet of shale with some limestone. The surficial geology (see Figure 4 of the EIS), influenced by the Wisconsin Ice Sheet, consists of till deposited underneath the glaciers consisting of a poorly sorted sand-rich sediment of variable texture from boulders to silt consisting of a wide range of non-sorted to poorly sorted sand or larger size particles suspended in a mud mix (diamict).

Soils

Weathered stone is the parent material for the soils found throughout the area. The soils in the park are primarily silt loams derived from glacial till. A description and map of soil types found in the park is found in Appendix C and Figure 6 of the EIS.

Topography

The dozens of gorges scattered throughout the landscape of the Finger Lakes are quintessential elements of the region's physical landscape. The topography in Sampson is typical of the region, with gently rolling hills, open meadows, and steep gorges running perpendicular to the lake (EIS, Figure 2). The park has four smaller gorges, known locally as ravines, which were carved by streams flowing east to west from the uplands into Seneca Lake.

Water Resources

See Figure 5 of the EIS for a map of these resources.

Lakes and Ponds

The most prominent water feature of the park is Seneca Lake. At 38 miles long, it is the second longest of the Finger Lakes. Its surface area is 42,800 acres, with an average depth of 291 feet. Seneca Lake supports a healthy fishery, a key part of Finger Lakes tourism. The lake is classified AA(TS) by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), indicating that its waters are suitable as a source of drinking water (Seneca provides drinking water for nearly 100,000 residents), and for swimming and fishing and may be suitable for trout spawning. The park has approximately three miles of shoreline along the lake.

Streams

There are four streams located in Sampson. Two of these streams originate from the watershed in the uplands east of the park's boundaries, and two originate from the uplands within the park. All four streams flow to Seneca Lake. Three have a "C" classification from the DEC, and the most northern one has a C(TS) standard. The "C" classification designates streams where fishing can be recommended. The C(TS) standard means that the stream is likely to support trout spawning.

Watersheds

The entire park is part of the Oswego River/Finger Lakes Watershed, one of the largest in NYS, and includes all of Seneca County and most of the Finger Lakes. This watershed has 8,896 miles of rivers and streams and 76 significant freshwater lakes (including Seneca Lake) and covers 5,070 square miles of land area entirely in New York State. The watershed feeds the Oswego River and empties into Lake Ontario.

Wetlands

There are no DEC-regulated wetlands in the park. The federal National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) identifies several wetlands in the park (Figure 5 in the EIS).

Natural Resources

Despite the site's long history of human activity, the park's woodlands, ravines, meadows and wetlands continue to provide valuable habitat for the region's wildlife and plant species, some of which are declining in the state. A number of reports are available that document the natural resources of the park or area. The New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) compiles a report with information and scientific expertise on rare species and natural ecosystems.

Ecological Communities

According to the NYNHP (Lundgren, 2014-B), there are 14 distinct community types that were observed within the park in 2014 (Figure 7 in the EIS). There are no designated significant natural communities of statewide significance in the park but there are locally significant natural communities.

Rare and Endangered Species

Four rare species, three plants and one animal, have been documented in the park to date (NYNHP, 2020). Two rare plant species were discovered in the park as recently as 2014.

Flora

The flora of Sampson includes species typical of forests and fields of the region as well as less common species that occur in more unique habitats such as the park's ravines. Appendix D of the accompanying EIS has plant lists from ecological community and rare plant surveys in the Park.

Fauna

The birds, fish, mammals, amphibians and reptiles that are found in the surrounding areas are representative of those found in the Park. The ecosystems of the Park provide a variety of habitats that support a variety of fauna typical of this area of New York State. These include both terrestrial and aquatic species. A comprehensive list is available in Appendix D of the accompanying EIS.

Invasive Flora and Fauna

Nineteen species of non-native invasive plants have been documented in the park by NY Natural Heritage Program, OPRHP and other organizations. These records are available on the iMapInvasives website (www.imapinvasives.org). One of the most problematic is the pale swallowwort (*Cynanchum rossicum*) which is hard to control and is prevalent along the lake's shoreline and edges of some of the ravine forests.

Emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) was detected in the park by DEC in 2017. Asian Longhorn Beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*) and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, (*Adelges tsugae*), two common destructive invasive insects, have not been officially detected in the park, but Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is likely present due to proximity of known infested trees. Zebra Mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*) have been found on the shoreline north of the guarded swim amenity area, and Bloody-red Shrimp (*Hemimysis anomala*) have been found at the park's marina.

Cultural Resources

Sampson State Park's physical landscape has been shaped by a broad range of forces, both natural and man-made. Centuries of human habitation by native communities, early European settlers, and the United States military have all left their traces, from land uses that have included agriculture and the construction of villages with buildings, roads, utilities and other infrastructure. The present-day park continues to evolve to accommodate public recreation's changing needs. As new trends arise, demographics change, and visitor preferences shift, and as older infrastructure deteriorates or becomes obsolete, OPRHP will respond with new or updated recreation amenities at the park.

Archaeological

The archeology and history of the Finger Lakes is of particular interest because of the region's long history of Native American habitation, particularly the Iroquois nations. Within today's Sampson lies the site of a 19th century Iroquois (Cayuga) village, locally known as Kendaia. The village site, located about a quarter mile from the shores of Seneca Lake, represents an important cultural resource within the park.

Prehistoric

Long before Europeans arrived on the continent, Native Americans were living and traveling by way of footpaths throughout the Finger Lakes and along the shores of Lake Ontario. For more than 10,000 years, prehistoric people made settlements, grew agricultural crops, hunted, and fished in the Finger Lakes region, with the Iroquois Nation the last of a series of Indian cultures to have lived here.



Historical marker at the location of Kendaia, a Native American archaeological site located within the park.

Historic

In 1779, during the Revolutionary War, an army under General John Sullivan was dispatched, in what is known as the Sullivan Campaign, to attack Seneca and Cayuga populations in the region. Iroquois villages and hamlets were systematically destroyed, with crops and stored food cut and burned and their lands seized. Among the villages destroyed was Kendaia.

During World War II, the Sampson site was first used as a naval training base, later a college and then an Air Force Base. Recognized as the second largest naval training facility in history, an astounding 411,429 recruits trained here between 1942 and 1946. In 1960, the State of New York bought the base with the intent to use it for recreational purposes. The former brig is now a military museum that houses exhibits on the history of the military bases and servicemen in WWII.

Scenic Resources

The primary scenic resource of Sampson are the vistas of Seneca Lake from various parts of the park. Views across the lake, its waters, with variations at different seasons and times of day, such as its dramatic sunsets or autumn colors, are the highlights of visual scenery from the park. The viewshed extends along the lake far to the north and south, as well as to the lush western shore of the lake where the Keuka Lake outlet flows into Seneca Lake in the Village of Dresden. The wineries of the region appear as patterned agricultural expanses, adding to the texture and openness of the visual landscape.

Other visual resources in the park are the closer views of landscaped areas, woodlands, waterways, and the park's distinctive ravines.

Recreational Resources/Activities

The primary recreational resource at the park is camping. The park has 309 campsites in existing camping loops, with 242 electric and 64 non-electric sites. These sites accommodate tents, pop-up trailers and RV's. Ten contemporary cottages along the lakeshore are available for rental. Twenty new cabins and 67 short term or seasonal RV sites will be available for rental in the 2020 season. Additional camping accommodations and amenities may be developed in the future, dependent on funding and market conditions.

The marina at the park is very popular both for seasonal rentals and visitors to the area. Refurbished in 2019, the marina offers 90 new seasonal and transient boat slips, a gas dock, hookups for electricity, water, and pump-out stations. A ship store opened in 2020. Other recreational amenities include:

- A sandy beach is available seasonally as a guarded swim amenity.
- A playground, which is scheduled to be updated, is available in the waterfront area.
- The park has tennis, horseshoes, court games, picnicking and trails.
- Winter activities include snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- The park recreation building offers indoor games such as table tennis, shuffleboard, and miniature golf.
- Bicycle and paddle boat rentals are available.



Hunting and fishing are popular activities at the park, which is open for deer, waterfowl, small game and spring turkey hunting seasons. All hunters must have park hunting permit and adhere to [NYS DEC hunting regulations](#) in addition to having a current [NYS hunting license](#). Maps and other information on hunting in Sampson are available on the [OPRHP website](#).

Fishing is allowed along the shoreline of Seneca Lake, except in the marina and beach areas. Ice fishing access to Seneca Lake is also available during the winter months. All anglers 16 years old or older must have a NYS fishing license to fish in the park.



Agency Mission

The mission of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation is to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

Vision Statement

An early part of the planning process was creating a vision for the park. The vision statement provides a framework for future development and stewardship of the park for the future:

Vision Statement:

Sampson State Park will be the extended-stay waterfront destination of the Finger Lakes, providing a variety of recreational opportunities that are compatible with and make the best use of the natural and cultural resources of the park.

Goals

To further this vision, the plan will be implemented with consideration of, and commitment to, the following:

Recreation Resources

- Update the existing campground areas and amenities, and provide new camping opportunities.
- Create a plan for a variety of trails to enable all patrons to experience the park's landscape.
- Provide waterfront day-use recreation opportunities for both day-use patrons and campers to enrich the experience of Seneca Lake and its surrounding landscape.

Natural and Cultural Resource Protection

- Develop and implement a Stewardship Plan, identifying, mapping, and addressing the enhancement of early successional habitat for species of conservation concern, including grassland and shrubland birds, and incorporating Invasive Species Management Plan.
- Identify, preserve, protect, and interpret elements of Sampson that are significant to the history, archeology and culture specific to Sampson and the local community, region, state and nation.

- Minimize park development in known, mapped areas and buffer zones of special habitat types and archaeological sensitivity.
- Protect locally significant natural communities and areas of known habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species.
- Increase patron awareness of natural, historic and cultural resources within Sampson through interpretive signage and education.
- Partner with external groups to provide a variety of environmental and cultural education programming.
- Ensure that cultural resources are preserved and protected, receive appropriate treatments (including maintenance), and are made available for public understanding and enjoyment.

Park Operations and Management

- Move forward with recommended operations and maintenance strategies.
- Offer quality service to patrons and support employees by providing a clean, safe, and respectful work environment.
- Increase access for patrons of all abilities, backgrounds, and interests to enjoy the natural, cultural, and recreational resources of the park in a safe and secure environment.
- Protect open space within and adjacent to the Park using open space conservation strategies.
- Provide opportunities for patrons to learn about the park's natural, cultural, and physical resources.
- Develop a consistent and efficient way to share information with patrons, partners, and the surrounding community.
- Encourage opportunities for the creation of new partnerships



Pickleball at Sampson

Actions

The planning process for developing a master plan for Sampson included fieldwork and research, public meetings, input from park resource staff, and collaborations with OPRHP partners. The ultimate result of this process is a series of specific actions contained in the master plan that are to be implemented at the park. Guided by the vision developed for Sampson, these proposed actions have been developed to address the park's current, and future anticipated, needs. They are intended to protect the natural environment and to enhance the facility for the enjoyment of future visitors for the years to come.

The actions in this plan are intended to realize each element of the park's vision: this comprises the master plan. Some of these actions are administrative or managerial in nature and will not be articulated in other master plan documents. The actions described below are based on an analysis of the alternatives developed and analyzed in the accompanying Final EIS (FEIS Chapter 2). The proposed actions are also presented graphically in the large format Master Plan Map that accompanies, and is part of, this document. A table with prioritized actions is also provided in the Master Plan.

The actions are divided into subject areas: actions that will help to protect the park's natural and cultural resources, actions for developing its recreational resources, and actions related to park management and operations.

Natural Resource Protection

Stewardship Plan

Action #1 – A comprehensive stewardship plan will be developed that includes invasive species management strategies, including early detection and rapid response.

A stewardship plan developed for the park will follow the recommendations of OPRHP and other state agency staff, biologists, and other partners. The stewardship plan will identify science-based natural resource projects at the park that promote healthy forests and habitats for a variety of native flora and fauna. Protection of the park's known rare species and invasive species management will also be part of the plan. Under this alternative, management protocols can be updated and expanded with new techniques and strategies.

Firewood Procedures

Action #2 – Firewood procedures remain status quo.

No alternatives to the status quo were considered. The planning team feels that the current system is the best strategy for protecting the park's natural resources and for complying with OPRHP and DEC Firewood Regulations. The park will continue to provide firewood for campers through a concessionaire; complying with OPRHP and DEC Firewood Regulations and thereby continuing to protect the park's natural resources.

Wildlife Resources

Action #3 – Wildlife habitat management strategies that follow recommendations of OPRHP and DEC staff and partner organization wildlife biologists will be included in the stewardship plan.

This alternative will allow a team of natural resource professionals to work collaboratively with other partner organizations and stakeholders in the region. Led by representatives of OPRHP and DEC, the team will be charged with formulating long-term strategies for accomplishing park, region, and statewide wildlife goals.

Cultural Resource Protection

Documentation

Action #1 – Identify and document cultural/historic resources at the park and provide for the protection, stewardship, and preservation of both designed structures and landscape.

This action will further identify the park's historic and cultural resources, as well as offer new opportunities for education and interpretation. It will help inform future development and improve operations at the site, allowing for appropriate management practices to be established for identified elements.

Action #2 – Develop a document library/annotated bibliography on original documents on resources related to historical elements at the park (DHP staff to support/guide).

Implementing this action will provide a resource for park management. It will facilitate future development at the site and will contribute to a larger OPRHP effort to identify and document the agency's institutional history.

Education and Interpretation

Action #3 – Develop an updated interpretation program that tells the story of the site's native inhabitants.

Providing a more comprehensive picture of the site's history will offer expanded education opportunities and potentially attract new visitors.

Action #4 – Identify gaps and/or missing information on key periods in the site's military history and develop relevant programming/materials.

This action will allow the park to offer a more complete picture of the site's military history. There is strong interest in this type of content, and it may help attract new visitors to the park.



Sampson Memorial Naval and Air Force Museum

Recreational Resource Development Actions

Concessionaire Lease Area

OPRHP's contract with the concessionaire includes proposals for additional camping facilities, recreation amenities, and services. Under the Master Plan, in a full build-out scenario, the following facilities will be provided:

- New full-service RV camping sites east (uphill) of the marina and RV sites installed in the open mowed field area;
- Additional cabins to the south of this area, on the south side of the park road;
- Full-service RV camping sites and cabins in the successional shrubland areas in the southern third of the lease area;
- Associated amenities including playgrounds, pools, picnic areas, comfort stations, open areas for events/gatherings, gazebos, a small band shell, and pedestrian pathways/ trails; and
- A hotel and event center with associated parking.

Campground Improvements and Expansion

Action #1 – Upgrade existing campsite loops in the park with improved electric and water service.

Upgrading the camping loops will address the expectations and preferences of patrons camping at the park. These upgrades will help move the park toward realizing the master plan vision.

Waterfront Redevelopment

Action #2 – Improve accessibility for the guarded swim amenity.

Improved access to the park's waterfront amenities will create more useable space and better circulation for more patrons to enjoy these activities.

Action #3 – Upgrade the existing fishing pier.

Fishing is a popular activity at Sampson, and planned waterfront development may increase demand for recreation activities in this portion of the park. The park's fishing pier is deteriorated and requires upgrades for safety and accessibility, including resurfacing the concrete deck and replacing rails.

Day-Use Facilities

Action #4 – Provide a pavilion.

Providing a new full-service pavilion will help the park to meet its vision for this facility. It will offer additional opportunities for patrons to relax in the park. The final location will be determined in the future as the leased area plans are implemented.

Action #5 – Provide an accessible picnic area.

Existing picnic facilities are located within the concessionaire contract area. Providing a new picnic area will provide additional opportunities for patrons to relax in the park. Location is to be determined in the future.

Action #6 – Improve and expand opportunities within the existing recreation building.

The park's existing recreation building's size and location meets the current needs of the park, and the building's location is convenient to other areas in the park, especially the campground loops. New indoor amenities such as table tennis, foosball, and pool; energy-efficient elements, and aesthetic improvements will help to provide a more appealing venue for patrons and for hosting regional events.

Action #7 – Field Games: Status Quo – No improvements to existing field game facilities or new field game facilities.

The planning team determined that there is not enough demand for improved or new field game facilities. The park receives very little day use of this type, and current facilities and open spaces meet internal demand by campground patrons. It is highly likely that facilities found at local schools meet the demand created by the communities surrounding the park.

Action #8 – Court Games: Improve existing tennis courts; improve existing basketball court; provide outdoor bocce ball courts, and provide outdoor Pickleball courts

New recreation amenities such as these will help meet demand in the region for these activities. These amenities will make the experience of park patrons more enjoyable, and new court game activities may attract new patrons to the park.

Trail System

Action #9 – Improve the trail system through development of a comprehensive circulation plan, which will address vehicle/pedestrian/trail circulation and improve water access at the park in the future.

Although the 2015 Draft Master Plan/EIS laid out a direction for the trails system within the park, the OPRHP has since leased a central portion of the park to a concessionaire, impacting some existing and some planned improvements. The planning team recognizes the need to develop a comprehensive trail system in the park but has decided to allow some time for the integration of the concessionaire's planned improvements prior to developing a park-wide trails system.

The plan has tentatively identified the following: to improve cycling facilities; to develop nature and history interpretive trails; to create multi-use natural surface trails in the park; and to improve and designate water access along Lake Shore Trail. These were selected as the tentative preferred alternatives due to the desire to improve and expand trail opportunities and experiences within the park while protecting the resources of the park. Trails will be an integrated part of an overall trail system plan to be developed for the park in the future.

Action #10 – Develop connector paths near camping loops.

Improving pedestrian connectivity in the park will improve patrons' experience and safety. The development of new connector paths at the campground will be coordinated with the park's overall vehicle/pedestrian/trails circulation plan to be developed in the future.

Action #11 – Cross-country Ski Trail System: Status quo – Do not develop cross-country specific trails.

The planning team determined that a multi-use trail system will be a better fit for the park based on current use and information gathered during the planning process. The nearby Finger Lakes National Forest has a trail system where cross-country skiing is permitted. For Sampson, cross-country skiing will be permitted on appropriate designated trails. These will be determined at a future date with the development the park's overall vehicle/pedestrian/trails circulation plan.

Facilities and Operations Actions

Energy Facilities

Action #1 – Provide a new electrical substation.

Improving park utilities will ensure the park has appropriate infrastructure to accommodate anticipated electrical needs for planned development in the park.

Action #2 – Add solar energy infrastructure to the park.

This action addresses agency goals to increase overall sustainability. The location(s) for solar infrastructure will be determined in the future with further on-site assessment.

Action #3 – Internet Connectivity: provide Internet and Wi-Fi coverage in the park.

The planning team determined that a need exists to update the park's current network. There is also supporting information that there is a demand for these services.

Comfort Stations

Action #4 – Modernize existing comfort stations at camping loops.

The existing comfort station buildings are in satisfactory condition supportive of the park's new and future improvements. Additional comfort stations are also available within the concessionaire contract area.

Campground Dump Station Improvement/Expansion

Action #5 – Dump Station Improvement/Expansion: Provide a new four-bay dump station.

A new and expanded dump station addresses health and safety concerns as well as patron dissatisfaction regarding the current dump station. A larger dump station will help to improve circulation at the park.

Park Office/Visitor Center

Action #6 – Improve existing park office building.

The location and size of the existing park office meet the current needs of park operations. Improvements will help improve both accessibility and sustainability by making the facility ADA accessible and improving energy efficiency, water conservation, and facility maintenance issues.

Park Water System

Action #7 – Replace core water system infrastructure in the park.

This action aligns with the vision for the park and accommodates new development. It will also meet the statewide goal for repairing aging infrastructure in the park.

Park Roads

Action #8 – Develop a uniquely designed park road system plan to connect existing and new facilities, improving roads that are retained and removing unneeded roads.

Although the 2015 Draft Master Plan/EIS laid out a direction for redesigning the road system, OPRHP has since leased a central portion of the park to a concessionaire, with some existing and some future planned improvements. The planning team recognizes the need to redesign the park road system in the park but has decided to allow some time for the integration of the concessionaire's planned improvements prior to developing a redesign plan. The core team chose this alternative because it was identified that the road system should better meet the needs of the park, as described in the vision. This alternative also likely allows reversion of some road sections to natural vegetation and meets agency goals for sustainability. OPRHP will further assess the vehicular/pedestrian/trails system in the future.

Parade Ground and Museum

In 2018, OPRHP entered a contract (40-year lease) with a concessionaire to redevelop the marina, waterfront, and adjacent upland areas with additional camping, recreation activities and services. The Parade Grounds are now within the leased area. For the 2020 season, the parade grounds will be used as they have in the past. It remains to be determined if this use will continue or move elsewhere in the park. This will be further assessed in the future.

Action #9 – Parade Ground: No changes to Parade Ground.

The Parade Grounds are within the concessionaire's contract area. For the 2020 season, the parade grounds will be used as they have in the past. In the future, assessments will be made to determine if this use will continue in this location or be moved elsewhere in the park.

Action #10 – Implement an improved circulation and entry plan for the Navy and Air Force Veterans Museum and adjacent grounds which responds to the desired usage and needs of the park.

This action was selected for implementation because it will help meet the master plan goal of improving the visitor experience and public safety at the park.

Water Tower

Action #11 – Remove the water tower and accessory building.

The core team selected this alternative because implementation will meet the master plan goal of improving public safety.

Firing Range

Action #12 – Firing Range: No Changes to Range; continue to mow twice annually and retain for occasional use by Park Police.

The planning team selected this alternative because this will continue to fill an operational need in the region. A gate along the park road, signage and fencing may be installed to further enhance public safety.

Sustainability and Green Infrastructure

Action #13 – Explore and incorporate new green infrastructure and sustainable practices at the facility.

This alternative was selected because it directs the Park to strive for energy efficiency and explore new sustainability practices that can reasonably be incorporated into its operations. Training in-house sustainability staff, utilizing OPRHP support, exploring emergent technologies and potential funding opportunities will serve to make green infrastructure and practices increasingly accessible.

Implementation

Timeline

The master plan sets forth OPRHP's vision for capital improvements and operational enhancements to the Park for the next ten to fifteen years. OPRHP has not developed detailed cost estimates for the proposed components. Cumulatively they will cost tens of millions of dollars to implement. The pace and sequencing of recommended actions will be determined by the availability of funding, which is a function of the size of OPRHP's annual capital budgets and the need to balance investments throughout the park system. The master plan will be reviewed annually to select projects that will be added to the Park's budget for implementation and to assess the progress of plan implementation.

Several of the action items included in the master plan are projects that are fully funded and have advanced in the design process. The implementation of these projects fully aligns with the vision for the park and are important actions for realizing the vision for the future park developed during the master planning process. Modernizing the existing campground comfort stations and making them compliant with ADA guidelines, as well as constructing accessible pathways to comfort stations and the park office in the campground loops will be implemented in the park immediately.

The implementation of the balance of the action items in the master plan for the Park will be divided into priority phases. These elements are subject to reorganization based on available funding for specific components in the Master Plan.



Sampson SP beachfront on Seneca Lake

Priorities

Action Item Sequencing and Priorities Table

Implementation Priorities	Description/Development Component
Natural and Cultural Resource Actions	
1st Priority:	Develop a Natural Resources Stewardship Plan that includes wildlife habitat management strategies that follow recommendations of OPRHP and DEC staff and partner organization wildlife biologists and invasive species management strategies.
	Identify and document cultural/historic resources at the park and provide for protection, stewardship, and preservation of both designed structures and landscape.
	Develop a document library/annotated bibliography on original documents on resources related to historical elements at the park.
	Develop an updated interpretation program that tells the story of the site's native inhabitants.
	Identify gaps and/or missing information on key periods in the site's military history and develop relevant programming/materials.
Ongoing:	Continue current firewood procedures & enforcement of regulations.
	Implement natural resource management strategies for invasive species and wildlife.
Recreational Development Actions	
1st Priority:	Develop a comprehensive vehicular/pedestrian/trails circulation plan for a redesigned park roadway, pedestrian pathway and trails system which will connect and integrate existing and new facilities.
	Construct a new accessible picnic area.
	Install outdoor bocce ball courts.
	Improve tennis and basketball courts .
	Provide pickleball courts.
	Improve and expand opportunities within the existing recreation building.
	Construct a new pavilion.

Implementation Priorities	Description/Development Component
Underway	Improve existing campground loops, implementing Phase 2: site work and pad improvements; new paving, connector paths; reconfigure water; replace electric pedestals and upgrade to 50-amp service.
Capital Infrastructure Actions	
1st Priority:	Replace core water system infrastructure in the park.
	Provide a new substation.
	Construct a food concession facility (concessionaire).
	Modernize comfort stations at camping loops and improve accessibility.
	Provide seasonal camping facilities with new waterfront amenities (concessionaire).
2nd Priority:	Add solar energy infrastructure to the park.
	Guarded Swim Amenity – improve accessibility.
	Remove the water tower and accessory building.
	Upgrade the existing fishing pier – resurface pavement and replace railings.
	Improve existing park office building
Underway	Remove existing dump station; construct new four-bay dump station
Operations Actions	
1st Priority:	Maintain the firing range for Park Police use; a gate, signage and fencing may be installed.
2nd Priority:	Explore and incorporate new green infrastructure and sustainable practices at the facility.
Underway	Provide Internet and Wi-Fi coverage in the park.

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Photo: NYUpstate_com