

Project Summary

Tims Ford State Park is a 2,200-acre state park on the Cumberland Plateau in south-central Tennessee, located between the cities of Tullahoma and Winchester. We offer multiple outdoor recreational activities including hiking, biking, camping, boating, and interpretive nature and history programs. In addition, we have recently partnered with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) and Winchester to establish the Tims Ford Blueway, which will create and promote over 50 miles of canoe and kayak trails along Tims Ford Lake and encompass the park's six island campsites.

Despite having over 20 miles of hiking and biking trails, only about 10 miles receive the majority of visitor use. In addition, visitors cannot easily access the entire northwestern section of the park due to erosion damage and unauthorized mountain bike switchbacks on our Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails. These two trails create a combined 15.5-mile one-way path along Tims Ford Lake, or 31-mile round trip, which is too far for visitors to hike entirely in one day. In addition, our park patrol boat is unusable due to engine damage, so we cannot effectively partner with TDEC and Winchester to patrol and maintain our island campsites along the Blueway. This situation creates a potential safety hazard for Blueway visitors because we lack the means to respond quickly to search-and-rescue, medical, or other emergency situations. The average response time of off-site rescue squads typically exceeds one hour, which is unacceptable in life-threatening situations.

Therefore, we propose the following grant projects to improve the function of our trails and enhance our involvement with the Tims Ford Blueway. First, we will repair the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails and construct a backcountry campsite to create a 31-mile roundtrip overnight backpacking loop. We will install new benches, trail signs, and information kiosks with updated trail maps across the park and purchase new hand and power tools exclusively for trail use so we no longer have to share with the maintenance staff. Next, we will repair the park's patrol boat so we can easily access the proposed backcountry campsite and our six island campsites for regular maintenance. We will also purchase aquatic search and rescue equipment for all our park rangers and manager for responding to emergency situations. Finally, we will hire two 3-month seasonal positions per year to assist our full-time rangers with trail repairs, grant reporting, and interpretive programming during the busy spring and autumn months.

This project will diversify our outdoor recreational activities and maximize our educational outreach potential by opening up a currently underused section of the park. We will also promote visitor safety as water traffic increases on the Blueway. Finally, we will provide opportunities for outstanding seasonal personnel to gain experience and training in environmental education and outreach through Tennessee State Parks.

A. Planning and Design

1. Project is identified in an approved planning document

Tims Ford State Park does not have a planning document prior to December 2013 to apply to this section. All aspects of the proposed project – specifically trail and boat repairs – were outlined, designed, and approved in January 2014.

2. 2008 Tennessee Greenways and Trails Plan

Tims Ford State Park meets the following “Guiding Principles” of the 2008 Tennessee Greenways and Trails plan in its proposal.

Connections: People to Trails... Trails to Community

Guiding Principle: *Every community in Tennessee will have access to technical resources and the knowledge necessary to develop their own system of greenways and trails.*

Tims Ford State Park is part of Franklin County, which is one of 50 out of 95 counties in Tennessee with Greenway Trails, according to the 2008 Tennessee Greenways and Trails plan. Our trail systems and islands on Tims Ford Lake provide excellent locations to encourage connections from people to trails, and our visitors create a sense of community when they use our expansive campgrounds and cabins. The park rangers further enhance this community through interpretive programs about the nature and history of the park.

The park has over 20 miles of hiking and biking trails, but only about 10 miles receive the majority of visitor use. The Evans Loop and Ray Branch trails in particular currently do not promote connections between people and the places they want to go on the park due to extensive trail damage and unauthorized switchbacks for mountain bikes. Together, they form a 15.5-mile one-way trail, which most visitors will not hike in a single day. By repairing the damage, widening the trails, and adding a backcountry campsite, we can transform these two disjointed trails into a 31-mile loop ideal for overnight backpackers of all skill levels and allow visitors better access into the entire northwestern section of the park.

The Tims Ford Blueway, which is a collaborative effort between the city of Winchester and TDEC, falls under non-motorized “Water Trails” by promoting canoe and kayak traffic along with current motorboat traffic. The Blueway encompasses our six islands and campsites on Tims Ford Lake and our boat ramps. This grant will enable Tims Ford State Park to partner with the Blueway by repairing our boat so we can more easily identify points of interest along our islands and provide technical assistance when needed.

Health and Safety

Guiding Principle: *Greenways and trails are tangible ways to increase the health benefits in communities. Therefore, government agencies will assume a proactive leadership role as responsible advocates for cost-effective programs that enhance human health.*

Tennessee State Parks create a visitor-friendly, cost-effective environment that encourage healthy and active lifestyles, and Tims Ford State Park is no exception. Our ample camping, hiking, bicycling, and boating opportunities encourage our visitors to unplug from technology and engage in outdoor activities, and our interpretive programs and nature hikes for visitors, community organizations, and school groups echo this message.

Repairing the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails and adding a backcountry campsite will further diversify our selection of outdoor activities by promoting overnight backpacking along an extensive 31-mile loop. By repairing our boat, we will be able to access the backcountry campsite to maintain these trails and island campsites, patrol the Blueway, and respond to

emergency calls in a timely manner. We will also use grant funds to outfit our manager and rangers with aquatic search and rescue equipment to effectively respond to emergencies.

Economic Development and Tourism

Guiding Principle: *As more people seek outdoor recreation opportunities, we must also educate local governments and other agencies about the economic benefits associated with new and existing trails.*

While state parks are typically viewed as a government service to the citizens, they also provide significant economic benefits through fees paid to use campgrounds and cabins, revenue from gift shops, and healthy lifestyle choices that help prevent obesity and increased medical costs. The Tims Ford Blueway will encourage economic development by attracting kayak, canoe, and motorboat tourism over 55 miles of water trails and six island campsites. Increased visitor traffic will bring in more revenue from campground use, gift shop sales, and travel costs. Diversifying our trails by repairing Ray Branch and Evans Loop will encourage more tourism from overnight backpackers, and having a usable watercraft will ensure that the park can maintain the trails long-term. The health benefits associated with increased use of park property will likely reduce long-term medical costs for the visitors.

Alternative Transportation

Guiding Principle: *Greenways and trails connections should be used as alternative transportation modes – they promote health and fitness, energy conservation, improved air and water quality, reduction of noise pollution and create safe bicycle/pedestrian corridors.*

Tims Ford State Park encourages alternative transportation within its grounds for park visitors. All major amenities – campground, picnic shelters, recreation hall, cabins, marina, trail heads, and park office – are easily accessed on foot or bicycle through our system of paved trails. The Tims Ford Blueway will promote alternative transportation via canoe and kayak along a combined 55 miles of possible aquatic trails. However, we cannot effectively partner with Winchester and TDEC to patrol our property along the Blueway or respond to emergency calls without a usable boat or aquatic search and rescue equipment for our rangers and park manager.

Natural Resource Conservation and Education

Guiding Principle: *“The use of greenways and trails provides opportunities for all Tennesseans to be outdoors and these inherent benefits should be infused into nature-based education offerings.”*

The mission of Tennessee State Parks is “to preserve and protect, in perpetuity, unique examples of natural, cultural, and scenic areas and provide a variety of safe, quality, outdoor experiences through a well-planned and professional managed system of State Parks.” Tims Ford State Park embraces this mission through interpretive programs that connect people with the nature and history of the park and natural resource management practices.

Currently, our park rangers are familiar with the plant and animals species found along the easily accessible trails, but we have minimal knowledge of the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails due to the extensive damage and lack of access. Repairing these trails and our boat will let

us patrol park property along Tims Ford Lake and the northwestern forests, where we can identify new biodiversity hot spots for native plants and target invasive species. We can then diversify the interpretive programs based on this knowledge to reinforce our conservation message. Finally, we will have the mobility to partner with TDEC for future conservation projects along the Blueway.

Off Highway Vehicles (Motorized Trails)

Guiding Principle: *The State of Tennessee should continue to work with state and federal agencies, local governments and trail user organizations to provide trails for user types with significant unmet needs.*

Currently, no trails on Tims Ford State Park allow motorized vehicles of any kind. However, in keeping with providing trails for user types with “significant unmet needs,” the proposed repairs for the Evans Loop and Ray Branch trails will create an overnight backpacking loop, which will appeal to an underrepresented user group at the park.

Educational Outreach and Technical Assistance

Guiding Principle: *TDEC-RES believes that if Tennesseans have access to a broad range of educational opportunities they will embrace the importance of greenways and trails to community health and well-being. They will build more trails, use more trails and connect more trails.*

Tims Ford State Park already emphasizes interpretive programs as educational outreach, encourages trail use through ranger-guided nature hikes, and reaches out to the community through major annual events. For example, the park hosts an annual Heritage Day and invites various craftsmen and historical re-enactors to demonstrate and interpret the history and past culture of the area surrounding the park. The proposed trail and campsite repairs and partnership with the Blueway will greatly expand our opportunities for new programs and community outreach. We can offer ranger-guided overnight hikes, create new programs based on the Blueway, and encourage community involvement through volunteer trail workdays. Currently we cannot host workdays due to a severe lack of hand and power tools, but using grant funds to purchase them will allow us to reach out to school, civic, and scout groups. Finally, the seasonal personnel will gain experience and training in education outreach by assisting the park rangers with interpretive programs during the spring and autumn.

Trails for the Future

Guiding Principle: *Be proactive in planning and funding greenway and trail infrastructure throughout the State of Tennessee by creating dedicated state funding each year and establishing linkages with neighboring communities.*

The mission of RTP, according to the 2008 Tennessee Greenways and Trails program, is to develop and maintain trails for motorized, pedestrian, bicycling, and other recreational uses. Our project falls under this mission by developing and maintaining the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails as an overnight backpacking loop.

We will establish linkages with neighboring communities through trail maintenance and participation in the Blueway. By using grant funds to purchase hand tools, backpack blowers, and a portable chainsaw, we can host volunteer trail workdays to encourage community involvement with Tennessee State Parks. The Blueway joins neighboring communities through multiple access points across miles of aquatic canoe and kayak trails, and repairing our boat will allow us to patrol and promote safety for the visitors.

3. Tennessee 2020 – Vision for Parks, People and Landscapes

Tims Ford State Park meets the following initiatives of the Tennessee 2020 Recreation Plan in this proposal.

Parks: Recreation Infrastructure

1. Advocacy and Funding

The proposed trail and boat repairs support the value of funding for parks and recreation. Renovating the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails will draw more visitors to the park, particularly overnight backpackers. More park visitors will also take advantage of the Blueway, which will contribute to the state's economy through money spent for campsites, sporting equipment, and travel. In addition, increased participation in outdoor activities will improve the health of park visitors, reducing long-term medical costs related to obesity and preventable diabetes.

2. State Parks Management

The Tennessee 2020 Recreation Plan lists six challenging new issues – *Facilities Costs*, *Sustainability*, *Invasive Plants*, *Water Quality*, *Boundary Encroachment*, and *Historic Resources* – that park managers must confront within and outside their park boundaries. Our proposed grant relates to all six concerns in the following ways:

We will use grant funds to make a single two-year investment in our trails and facilities by purchasing hand tools, repairing our boat, repairing the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails, and hiring two seasonal personnel to implement the proposed projects. This investment will reduce *Facilities Costs* long-term by preventing future costly trail repairs. Having a usable boat and hand tools will provide a reliable means of transportation and the necessary tools for our full-time rangers, staff, and volunteers to perform continued trail maintenance.

The trail repairs and boat will allow the rangers to easily access the northwestern section of the park to identify any *Invasive Plants* to eradicate, and having new hand tools and smaller, more fuel-efficient backpack blowers promotes *Sustainability* by letting us perform trail repairs on foot. In terms of *Historic Resources*, Tims Ford State Park prides itself on preserving the history of Marble Plains, Elk River, and the local families that trace their lineage back to these grounds. Having usable trails, hand tools, and a means of aquatic transport will give us the means to easily monitor and maintain the numerous historic sites on the park.

The Tims Ford Blueway presents management opportunities to monitor *Water Quality* and *Boundary Encroachments*. While identifying suitable paddle routes for canoes and kayaks along the Blueway, we have noted a number of subdivisions and growing developments near our

boating ramps and property along Tims Ford Lake. To prevent any possible encroachments, our park management requires a means of transportation to regularly patrol the expansive area. Finally, we will be able to partner with TDEC for any future water quality initiatives as water traffic increases along the Blueway.

3. Local Parks and Recreation

Tims Ford State Park is in an excellent geographical location to offer diverse outdoor recreational opportunities for local rural communities and out-of-town visitors. Local families from Franklin, Moore, and Coffee counties can take advantage of the close proximity to hiking, swimming, boating, and camping, while out-of-town visitors can easily travel from larger cities such as Nashville and Chattanooga. Repairing the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails to create an overnight backpack trail and using our boat to partner with the Blueway will further diversify our outdoor activities for current and future visitors.

People: Outreach & Engagement

4. Recreation One-Stop

Tims Ford State Park regularly advertises its outdoor activities, upcoming interpretive programs, and community outreach events online and with social media. The proposed trail repairs to create an overnight backpacking loop and partnering with the Tims Ford Blueway will diversify our online advertising presence as a recreation one-stop. Purchasing hand tools will also let us publicize and host volunteer workdays for trail maintenance.

5. Public Health

Despite the availability of nationally recognized State Parks, Tennessee citizens suffer from a staggering level of obesity, lack of physical activity, and the nation's highest rate of preventable adult diabetes. Our proposed trail repairs will encourage long periods of sustained physical activity through long day hikes, overnight backpacking trips, and outdoor community involvement with volunteer trail workdays. Repairing our boat will let us patrol the Tims Ford Blueway to maintain our island campsites and newly renovated backpacking loop, as well as promote the safety of canoe and kayak users and respond to emergency situations.

6. Children in Nature

Tims Ford State Park actively participates in childhood education through interpretive programs for school groups and park visitors, particularly families, and the proposed grant will enhance our opportunities for children in nature. We will use grant funds to hire two 3-month seasonal positions per year for two years who, in addition to helping implement the grant, will assist our park rangers in giving programs to school groups when they visit in the spring and fall.

The Tims Ford Blueway will likely attract more families with children for canoeing, kayaking, motor boating, and island camping. Repairing our boat and outfitting our rangers with aquatic rescue equipment will assure families that we have the tools on-site to respond quickly to any medical emergencies, promote safety along the entire system of water trails, and maintain our island campsites.

7. Environmental Education

Environmental education is an integral component of the mission of Tennessee State Parks, and Tims Ford State Park frequently hosts interpretive programs for school groups, community groups, summer camps, and daily park visitors. Hiring additional seasonal personnel during the spring and fall will help tremendously with programs for school groups while we are implementing this grant. They will in turn receive valuable training and experience with Tennessee State Parks that can help them move forward in careers as future full-time rangers, environmental educators, and other related professions.

Landscapes: Regional Perspectives

8. Quality Growth

Tims Ford State Park is located in a highly rural area between Tullahoma, Manchester, and Winchester. Improving our trails and using our boat to promote safety along the Blueway will help improve the quality of life for the citizens in terms of outdoor recreation and help us partner with TDEC to conserve natural resources as the population grows.

9. Recreational Waters

A major portion of the proposed project revolves around recreational waters by repairing our boat to partner with the Tims Ford Blueway. We are already submitting write-ups of canoe and kayak trails to Winchester and TDEC to advertise to prospective visitors, but we have no means of aquatic transport aside from borrowing a boat from the local marina or collaborating with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. We need aquatic transportation on-site so we can partner with TDEC and Winchester to promote safety along the Blueway and maintain our trails and island campsites.

10. Rural Economies

As previously stated, Tims Ford State Park is located in a rural area between Tullahoma, Winchester, and Manchester. Diversifying our trails and using our boat to maintain our island campsites will attract more local and out-of-town visitors, which will benefit the local rural economy as people pay for travel, campsite usage, gift shop merchandise, food, and boat rentals.

4. 3-year Budget

Please see the following .xls attachments: “Budget work sheet 2014,” “Budget work sheet 2015-16,” “Budget work sheet 2016-17,” and “Over all grant budget” for a detailed breakdown of the budget for all proposed projects.

5. Management System

The operation and maintenance staff includes a park manager, four full-time park rangers, and eight full and part-time maintenance staff year-round. Park Manager Kenneth Gragg will give final approval on all operations, purchases and reports. Craig Underwood (Ranger 1) will oversee the day-to-day operations, management and of the project. As the safety and security officer for the park, Craig Underwood will ensure that all staff, rangers, and volunteers abide by our written safety protocols. The park manager and rangers will oversee all trail work. At least

one ranger will be present at all volunteer trail workdays, and the rangers will also operate the boat for island campsite repairs and Blueway trail patrols. The manager, rangers, and maintenance staff will be responsible for operations and management after completion of the grant project.

Tims Ford State Park's operating budget is adequate to maintain current staffing levels, but we cannot provide written documentation due to confidentiality issues. The park rangers provide year round programming and community outreach to educate the public about nature, history, and conservation, in keeping with our mission to preserve and protect Tennessee's natural and historic resources.

6. Public Meeting

As a state park, Tims Ford is not required to host public meetings to gain approval for this project. Our approval comes from the state, and we have received letters of support from Michael Robertson (Director of Operations, Tennessee State Parks) and Christopher Padgett (West Tennessee Park Area Manager, Tennessee State Parks), which are attached to Section 8 – Support from governing board/body. However, we acknowledge the importance of public involvement and plan to develop partnerships with the local Chamber of Commerce and major decision makers for parks and recreation.

7. Support from civic (non-governmental) groups

We were unable to acquire letters of support from any civic (non-governmental) groups. However, we have had numerous park visitors express interest in volunteering. We also plan to establish a Friends Group and host trail workdays to give school, church, civic, and scout groups opportunities to volunteer time and labor for this grant.

8. Support from governing board/body

We have received letters of support from Michael Robertson (Director of Operations, Tennessee State Parks) and Christopher Padgett (West Tennessee Park Area Manager, Tennessee State Parks) that demonstrate the approval of the state. Please see the PDF attachments labeled "Robertson_Letter of Support" and "Padgett_Letter of Support."

9. TRAIL SPECIFICATION AND DESIGN SYSTEM

Tims Ford State Park will use the following source as a guideline for the proposed trail repairs and maintenance. The sections that we will use are listed and summarized.

TDEC-RES. Tennessee *Pathways to Trail Building*, May 2010 Edition.

• Trail Design Criteria

- *Single file backcountry trails*: We will repair the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails as a 31-mile overnight backpacking loop and install a backcountry campsite that we can easily access by boat for maintenance. As such, we will follow the minimum construction measurements by building the trailhead 24 inches wide and the trail tread 18 inches wide. We will use the proposed hand tools, chainsaw, and backpack blowers to regularly clear vegetation and debris from the trails.

- *Mountain bike trails:* We can maximize usage of the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails with minimal extra time and effort by also following the construction guidelines for “single track” mountain bike trails. The minimum trail tread width is the same, ranging from 18 to 24 inches, and we will use the proposed tools and equipment to clear a 6-foot wide by 8-foot tall corridor to allow passage for mountain bikers.
- **Trail Construction**
 - *Trail safety:* Safety is paramount when conducting trail maintenance, whether we do the work with our park rangers or recruit volunteers. We already follow the two basic rules of planning our work and always sending at least two people, and we ensure the personnel carrying out the repairs bring the necessary gear (food, water, rain jacket, first aid kit, and cell phone/radio), wear proper clothing, and take the weather into account. Hiring seasonal positions with grant funds will ensure that we have the required number of personnel for the extensive proposed repairs, as our park rangers also have to balance law enforcement, programming, and administrative duties. We currently do not have enough hand tools or power tools to effectively maintain our trails. We have to share the backpack blowers and chainsaw with the maintenance staff, and the chainsaw we own is too large to easily and safely carry on foot to clear debris on longer trails. This grant will provide our park rangers with enough hand tools, smaller power tools, and new personal protective equipment (PPE) that we will use exclusively for trail maintenance and can use for volunteer trail workdays.
 - *Trail construction equipment:* We are proposing to purchase several of the primary trail building tools listed in this section, including fire rakes and lopping shears, and will protect our investment by keeping the tools sharp, cleaning them regularly, and spraying them with rust inhibitors between usages.
 - *Trail corridor construction:* We will follow the guidelines for corridor construction by removing branches, twigs, and small debris less than 2” in diameter along the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails. The corridor will be at least 6 feet wide by 8 feet tall to allow mountain bikes, but we will cut branches 2 feet higher in areas with rhododendron thickets or older evergreens and widen trail sections along steep hillsides.
 - *Trail tread grade construction:* The Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails contain sections of the three trail grades outlined in this section, namely Level Terrain (10% grade or less), Gentle Slopes (10-20% side slopes), and Steep Slopes (20-60% side slopes), but the majority of the proposed loop will consist of Gentle Slopes. We will follow the specific guidelines for each trail grade during construction.

B. Current System Development

1. COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL SYSTEM MAP

The Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails create a combined 15.5-mile (81,840 linear feet) one-way trail ranging from 8-18 inches wide. The majority of the trail is 8-10 inches wide, which is approximately half of the minimum required width of 18 inches (TDEC, *Pathways to Trail Building*).

Please see the excerpted trail map below. The Evans Loop trail is circled in blue, and the Ray Branch trail is circled in red. The yellow star indicates one potential location for the backcountry campsite. A full trail map of the park is included as an attachment.



2. CONNECTIONS

Physical connections to parks, schools, residential, commercial/retail businesses:

Unfortunately, Tims Ford State Park does not have any physical connections to neighboring parks, schools, residential areas, or commercial/retail businesses. The main park areas and satellite sites (i.e., boat ramps and islands) are surrounded on all sides by private land and/or water. However, the shore of Tims Ford Lake contains numerous private residences and neighborhoods that are close to park property and boat ramps.

Health related opportunities for programs/event:

By repairing the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails, we will gain access to the underutilized northwestern section of the park and offer more options for health-related programs and events. We will be able to host more ranger-guided nature hikes, have enough hand tools for volunteer workdays, and begin advertising overnight backpacking as a new outdoor activity. In particular, we can reach out to churches, schools, civic organizations, and scout groups for programs and community involvement.

Environmental education opportunities/programs that relate to this project:

Tims Ford State Park already focuses heavily on environmental education through interpretive programs, and the proposed grant projects will enhance our outreach opportunities. We can tailor nature hikes and programs based on the Blueway to children and school groups and offer guided overnight hikes on the newly renovated Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails to school and scout groups. In addition, the seasonal personnel we hire with grant funds will gain experience in environmental education by assisting the full-time rangers with programs during the spring and autumn.

3. DIVERSE USE Trails

Tims Ford State Park already maintains **Non-Motorized** paved trails that fall under *Accessible Trails* for guests with disabilities and *Road Bicycling*. By repairing the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails and creating an overnight backpacking loop, we will expand our number of **Non-Motorized Trails** for *Hiking/Backpacking* and *Mountain Bike Trails*. The proposed repairs, along with our current trail system, count as **Multi-Use** because multiple user groups (e.g., hikers, bikers, backpackers, and joggers) can use the trails simultaneously. The Tims Ford Blueway counts as a **Non-Motorized Water Trail** by offering paddling routes specifically for canoes and kayaks. By using grant funds to repair our boat, we will enhance the Blueway by maintaining our island campsites and promoting visitor safety through regular patrols.

C. Management and Maintenance

Project Managers:

Craig Underwood (Ranger 1, Tims Ford State Park) will serve as the lead Project Manager and oversee the planning, construction, and completion of the proposed projects. Kenneth Gragg (Park Manager, Tims Ford State Park) will give the final approval on each project and sign off on the quarterly grant reports.

The following is a two-year timeline for the completion of all proposed projects:

Autumn and Winter 2014-15 (Fiscal Year 2014-15)

- Complete grant contract
- Purchase equipment and supplies
- Repair & refit boat
- Reach out to local organizations (TTA, scout troops, civic groups, etc.) for trail workdays
- Clean up park islands and identify site for backcountry campsite along the Evans Loop trail.

Spring 2015 (Fiscal Year 2014-15)

- Hire two seasonal personnel, organize trail workdays, and begin repairs on Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails.
- Build backcountry campsite on Evans Loop trail.
- Repair campsites on islands.
- Patrol park islands, Tims Ford Blueway, and other trails accessible by boat.

Summer 2015 (Fiscal Year 2015-16)

- Patrol park islands, Tims Ford Blueway, and other trails accessible by boat.
- Organize volunteer workdays, and continue work on the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails.
- Promote the Tims Ford Blueway with water-based interpretive programs.

Autumn and Winter 2015-16 (Fiscal Year 2015-16)

- Hire seasonal personnel.
- Organize volunteer workdays, and continue work on the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails.
- Clean island campsites from summer use, and patrol islands, Tims Ford Blueway, and trails accessible by boat.
- Note: Trail work will be slowed during the winter. Tims Ford State Park allows hunting on the land encompassed by the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails. For safety, we will concentrate winter work on the islands and trails where hunting is prohibited.

Spring 2016 (Fiscal Year 2015-16)

- Hire seasonal personnel.
- Organize volunteer workdays, and complete all trail and campsite repairs.
- Patrol park islands, Tims Ford Blueway, and trails.
- Complete final inspections and certify the grant projects as complete.

Available Manpower:

Tims Ford State Park currently has four full-time park rangers, one full-time park manager, and eight full and part-time maintenance staff as manpower to carry out trail and campsite repairs and construction. Due to the current workload of our on-site rangers and staff, we will recruit additional manpower through volunteers in the community and hiring two 3-month seasonal positions per year for two years for trail repairs, assistance with interpretive programs, and grant reporting.

Partnerships and Support:

Tims Ford State Park has received support for this project from Michael Robertson, the Director of Operations for Tennessee State Parks, and Christopher Padgett, the West Tennessee Regional Manager for Tennessee State Parks. We have partnered with the City of Winchester and TDEC to establish and implement the Tims Ford Blueway. Finally, we intend on reaching out to the local chapter of the Tennessee Trails Association to establish an ongoing partnership and obtain volunteer support for the proposed trail repairs.

Volunteer Support:

Tims Ford State Park currently plans to establish a Friends Group to help coordinate volunteer and community outreach. We will also reach out to school, civic, and scout groups for volunteer labor to assist with trail and campsite repairs.

D. RES Program Compliance**1. RES Program Compliance**

Tims Ford State Park has received RTP grants in the past under previous managers. However, we do not possess written records from these grants because the former managers may have taken those documents when they moved to different parks. We pledge to comply with all grant requirements outlined by the RES and complete the projects proposed in this grant. We invite RES to perform any inspections and request additional documents or supplemental information as necessary.

2. On-site Recreation System Criteria

Tims Ford State Park welcomes RES to perform an on-site inspection of the park, including the Ray Branch and Evans Loop trails, the six islands along the Blueway, and any additional trails or facilities deemed relevant to the grant.