

Identification of Key Parkwide Issues

Each park faces a variety of issues that need to be addressed through current and future planning. Key issues may relate to park significance or fundamental resources and values, or they may raise other management concerns that require them to be addressed in future planning.

Key parkwide issues exist at Catoctin Mountain Park and each are addressed in the analysis of fundamental resources and values and identification of planning and data needs. These include managing deer browsing activities that impact native tree regeneration, managing cabin camps and campgrounds, maintaining watershed quality, and developing partnerships with key stakeholders to improve road corridors and trail links near the park.

Prioritization of Planning and Data Needs

The final step of the assessment of planning and data needs is the prioritization process. This section ranks the level of need for future plans, studies, and research activities identified at the Foundation Workshop. Prioritization is based on a comprehensive review of plans and data that will protect and maintain the fundamental resources and values and other important resources and values of the park, and address key parkwide issues from 2013 through 2022.

Plans, studies, and research activities are prioritized as “high,” “medium,” or “low.” Planning and data needs ranked as “high” should retain primary consideration in the park’s planning and management decision making processes. This information will be used by parks, regional offices, and the NPS Washington office in determining priorities and considering future funding needs.

The following tables identify Catoctin Mountain Park planning and data needs by priority and provide a brief rationale for each:

Planning Needs

	PRIORITY	RATIONALE
SCENIC BYWAY CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN	High	Plan would provide comprehensive guidance on several key issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trails and road circulation within and adjacent to park • trail links to Cunningham Falls State Park and local Maryland state park units • enhance signage and park identity • develop road design standards and guidelines
CABIN AND CAMPGROUND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT PLAN	High	Plan would address the following key issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address long-term historic building preservation • define appropriate visitor use • provide economic analysis and financial strategies to promote sustainable use of facilities • address both cabin camps and campgrounds
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM AND PLAN (UNDERWAY)	High	Plan will include oral histories and strategies for capturing stories from individuals and groups associated with the activities that took place at the park before and after its creation as a national park.

	PRIORITY	RATIONALE
COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN	High	Plan would include strategies for preserving ethnographic resources, archives, and oral histories. The plan would help ensure the long-term maintenance of the park’s collections in specialized facilities.
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN	High	Plan would provide comprehensive guidance on several key issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • native tree regeneration • prescribed burns • pest and nonnative plant management • tree disease response
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN	High	Plan would provide comprehensive guidance on several key issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stormwater management • streams and riparian habitat protection • fish communities stewardship
FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN	High	Plan would develop strategies to achieve financial sustainability. It would include analysis on how to increase revenues and visitation at cabin camps.
PARTNERSHIP ENHANCEMENT PLAN	Medium	Plan would provide comprehensive guidance on several key issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan coordinate strategic agreements and links with adjacent state, county, and local municipalities and organizations • analyze resource pooling among partners to reach common objectives • identify efficiencies among partners • address overall viewshed, watershed, and land protection
CLIMATE-FRIENDLY PARKS PLAN (UNDERWAY)	Medium	As part of the NPS Climate-friendly Park designation, the plan would implement designs for new, environmentally friendly facilities, renovate existing buildings to operate more sustainably, and reduce overall environmental impacts of park operations. The plan would include completing a comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory as well as a climate action plan, with measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at the park.
EXTERIOR LIGHTING PLAN	Low	Plan would help improve quality of night sky viewing and identify historically appropriate lighting options

Data Needs

	PRIORITY	RATIONALE
ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT	High	Assessment would provide comprehensive background study of types, uses, and users of ethnographic resources and data gaps. Potential associated groups include those associated with therapeutic recreation, the Office of Strategic Services, and the nation's first Job Corps Center.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE REPORT OR OTHER TREATMENT PLAN (CLR) FOR CATOCTIN MOUNTAIN PARK, CAMP MISTY MOUNT, AND CAMP GREENTOP	High	The CLR or other treatment plan would document the history and outline an accompanying treatment plan for the park. The CLR would evaluate the history and integrity of the park landscape, including any changes to its geographical context, features, materials, and use.
ARCHEOLOGICAL PROTECTION STRATEGY FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT RANGERS	High	This set of strategies, geared specifically toward law enforcement staff, would enhance protection and monitoring of archeological resources. Law enforcement officers would use the park atlas and GPS units to verify archeological UTMs/ locations and help monitor these sites.
IDENTIFY PRESERVATION NEEDS FOR 14 STRUCTURES NOT RATED IN GOOD CONDITION; COMPLETE HISTORIC STRUCTURE REPORTS (HSRs)	High	The HSRs and/or HSARs would provide physical information for each property's history and existing condition and would address the goals for the use or re-use of these structures. HSRs and HSARs outline approaches for treatment and provide a scope of recommended work. These reports serve as a guide for all changes made to a historic property for repairs, rehabilitation, or restoration.
DETERMINATION OF NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY FOR STRUCTURES AT BRAESTRUP TRACT	High	Completing the determination process was indicated as a high priority given the potential historic significance of the Braestrup structures.
HISTORIC RESOURCE STUDY FOR ROUND MEADOW	High	Completing this study is a high priority because it will establish the historic significance of this former CCC/ WPA camp and thereby assist in park management of this potentially historic area.
DETERMINE INTEGRITY OF ROUND MEADOW CULTURAL LANDSCAPE	High	Determining integrity is a high priority because it will establish the significance of the landscape and its built environment.
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS FOR CABIN CAMPS AND CAMPGROUNDS	High	The park has a high need to study the economic dynamics of operating its cabin camps and campgrounds given the declining visitation and revenue at these facilities
DETERMINE INTEGRITY OF BRAESTRUP PROPERTY CULTURAL LANDSCAPE	Medium	Review the historic significance of the Braestrup landscape and associated structures within the park and identify the location, size, physical development, condition, characteristics, and other landscape information useful to park management. It will also identify structures eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
BAT AND SMALL MAMMALS POPULATION SURVEY	Medium	Bat and small mammal population surveys would provide baseline figures and fill moderate data gaps to assess overall ecological health at the park.

	PRIORITY	RATIONALE
Baseline population surveys for certain insect communities	Medium	Surveys for insect communities, such as beetles, help fill a moderate data gap by providing a baseline indicator for the park to monitor its overall ecological health.
BASELINE AIR QUALITY MEASUREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC PARK LOCATIONS	Medium	There is a moderate need to add an air quality station within park boundaries that would collect park-specific data to add to existing air quality measurements taken throughout a series of stations in the Appalachian Mountains.
BASELINE NIGHT SKY MEASUREMENTS	Medium	There is a moderate need to collect measurements and record baseline data to monitor night sky qualities.
Use data loggers to monitor water temperature and water quantity on Big Hunting Creek and Owens Creek	Medium	Water temperature and water quantity data provide vital records for documenting baseline stream conditions.
TRAIL USE / PARKING LOT COUNTS	Medium	Trail and parking lot use counts fill a moderate data need and provide particularly beneficial information for park staff to monitor visitation numbers at park areas, such as overlooks.
REVIEW EXISTING ARCHEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW AND COE LEGACY REPORT	Medium	There is a moderate need to verify OSS-related archeological resources near Camp Greentop at the fire cache site.
HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE PROGRAM PERIODS	Medium	There is a moderate need to better understand the data gaps associated with its various New Deal era program periods.
ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT ROUND MEADOW NEAR ORIGINAL CCC/WPA CAMP	Medium	Completing an archeological investigation at Round Meadow was determined to be a medium priority because the results will inform the historic resource study and cultural landscape inventory for Round Meadow.
Documentation of major environmental education programs	Medium	Documentation would highlight major cabin camp programs for visitors from Washington, D.C., Frederick, and Washington counties.
CONDUCT ADDITIONAL ARCHEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION ON PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC SITES IDENTIFIED IN THE ARCHEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT	Low	These sites could tell potentially significant stories of park prehistoric and historic periods, but remain a low priority with regard to filling cultural resource data gaps.
REVIEW ASMIS RECORD TO IDENTIFY IF ANY SITES ARE IN POOR CONDITION	Low	Rated as a low data gathering priority in comparison to other archeological sites within park boundaries. Park staff intends to review the ASMIS record and may need to rehabilitate, protect, or mitigate sites in poor condition accordingly.
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE INVENTORIES FOR CHARCOAL HEARTHES AND HISTORIC AGRICULTURAL SITES	Low	Rated as a low information gathering priority, the park has a wealth of known charcoal hearth and historic agricultural sites that would add to baseline documentation of these sites.
BASELINE NATURAL SOUND MEASUREMENTS	Low	Collecting measurements to better understand and record baseline data for natural sound qualities represents a lower priority data need.