



Division of Recreation and Parks Management Plan Updates

Cayo Costa • Charlotte Harbor Preserve Don Pedro Island • Gasparilla Island • Stump Pass Beach

The Division of Recreation and Parks is updating the Unit Management Plans for five parks in Southwest Florida. Many proposed improvements focus on storm recovery following recent hurricanes and building more resilient facilities that will allow parks to reopen more quickly after future storms while continuing to protect natural resources.



Planned Improvements

Cayo Costa State Park

- Reconstruct the camp store and concessions building and rebuild the park's maintenance facilities to support park operations.
- Rebuild one staff residence destroyed by recent hurricanes and construct up to three additional off-island residences to support faster storm recovery.
- Redevelop the semi-primitive tent campground designed to be more resilient and easier to restore.
- Expand interpretive opportunities by developing a park-wide interpretive trail plan and installing new interpretive signage.
- Evaluate improvements to visitor facilities at Pelican Bay, including docks, slips and visitor support services.

Charlotte Harbor Preserve State Park

- Improve trail access throughout the park and expand hiking opportunities near water bodies, including the Garrod Lakes area.
- Enhance visitor orientation and interpretation at key access points.
- Coordinate with local partners to improve pedestrian safety along Burnt Store Road.
- Replace maintenance facilities and establish RV sites for park volunteers to support park operations.
- Install low-water crossings and other stabilization measures along flood-prone trail segments to improve safety and maintain access during wet conditions.

Don Pedro Island State Park

- Improve the mainland parking area to better accommodate visitors and provide access to the park.
- Stabilize pathways to improve pedestrian access and support park operations.
- Replace culverts as needed to maintain water flow and support healthy mangrove habitat.
- Repair and replace boat slips, paddlecraft landings and access paths on the island damaged by recent hurricanes to improve water-based recreation.
- Develop interpretive elements to enhance the visitor experience.
- Construct a maintenance facility with storage, ranger residences and volunteer sites on the mainland to support park operations.

Gasparilla Island State Park

- Resurface and improve parking areas for safety and easier visitor access.
- Repair beach access boardwalks and establish accessible beach access points.
- Construct a permanent restroom at the Seagrape Use Area and upgrade maintenance and administrative facilities to support park operations.
- Preserve the historic Amory Chapel and install interpretive elements highlighting the area's cultural and maritime history.
- Conduct assessments and repairs to the Port Boca Grande Lighthouse complex to preserve this historic landmark and improve visitor access.
- Restore beach dunes, improve stormwater management and construct a replacement seawall to increase resilience to hurricanes and flooding.

Stump Pass Beach State Park

- Upgrade the park entrance and parking area to safely manage high visitation and improve visitor access.
- Reconstruct the restroom facility and operational support areas damaged by previous hurricanes.
- Rebuild the bayside paddlecraft launch to restore water-based recreation opportunities such as kayaking, canoeing and paddleboarding.
- Reestablish beach access pathways, remove damaged boardwalks and plant native species to restore habitats and support storm resilience.
- Evaluate the establishment of a Critical Wildlife Area at the southern tip of the park to protect sensitive habitat while maintaining current recreational access.

Public Comments

Public input is an important and valued part of all DEP decision-making, and we encourage the community to take advantage of this opportunity. People can provide oral comments at the meeting by visiting the comment table. Written comments are also welcome and can be submitted either at the comment table during the meeting or by email to FLStateParkPlanning@FloridaDEP.gov. The public comment period will conclude on Aug. 10, 2026.



To access all documents related to the five Unit Management Plan updates, please visit:

