



T.H. Stone Memorial St. Joseph Peninsula State Park
Post-Hurricane Michael Recovery Plan
LAND USE IMPROVEMENTS & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Multiuse Path and Entrance Area

- A multiuse (bicycle-pedestrian) path separated from the park road will extend north from the existing Cape San Blas Trail, providing a safe alternative to driving into the park.
- Repairs to gate and lower park road completed to welcome visitors and for ease of driving.
- Completed minimally-invasive debris removal along east and west sides of park road to maximize natural regrowth of flatwoods vegetation and scenic viewsheds for visitors on arrival.
- Reduced fire hazard adjacent to neighboring residential communities.

Support Area

- Support buildings for maintenance and storage have been repaired to continue daily park operations to support visitor services and resource management.
- Two new off-grade staff residences are designed, permitted, and under construction.

Eagle Harbor Marina

- Create new parking for beach visitors and boaters, within former paved footprints, realigning the configuration to maximize safety and convenience.
- Redesign of pedestrian walkways between concession area amenities.
- Basic landscape enhancements to encourage growth of naturally occurring coastal vegetation.
- Re-dredge boat basin to maximize safe navigation by visiting watercraft.
- Extend electrical utilities underground north from the marina site.
- New concession building with restroom to replace existing structure has been designed and permitted. To be constructed in a later phase.

Main Gulf Beach Access

- Renovate existing aged day-use restroom.
- Connect to Cape San Blas/Gulf County wastewater facilities south of park.
- Replace boardwalks extending to beach from parking and picnic area.

Former Breach Site (project area 1)

- Road reconstruction has been completed along nourished sand corridor with restored dunes and coastal vegetation.
- Extend electrical utilities underground through this corridor.

Former Breach Site (project area 2)

- A newly constructed road now crosses significant slough feature utilizing large box culverts, where on-grade roadbed formerly bisected the waters.
- Box culverts have restored natural hydrology to this slough (consistent with 2014 UMP) and are sufficiently wide to allow passage of paddlers during low tide conditions.

Proposed Gulf Breeze Day Use Area (Former Gulf Breeze Campground)

- Extensive debris scatter from former campground has been removed and natural dunescape is returning.
- Ruined bathhouses have been demolished.
- A short segment of new roadway will bring visitors to a parking area with access to the Gulf beach where previously the park only offered overnight facilities.
- The new Gulf Breeze Day Use area will allow visitors to explore an area of beach north of Eagle Harbor with a scenic backdrop of piney flatwoods and open marsh that provide habitat for an abundance of wildlife.
- Opportunities for passively viewing and interpreting this interior landscape will be provided by short walking paths and a potential observation platform.
- Additional amenities at this location will include overflow parking for vehicles with boat trailers, a restroom, and covered pavilions.

Shady Pines Campground

- Complete redesign and reconstruction planned, including realignment/reconfiguration of campground roads away from the natural wetlands to maximize use of dry terrain for campers
- Significant natural and infrastructural debris scattered throughout has been removed
- Many standing declining/dead trees removed.
- Reestablishing access to Gulf beach directly from the campground.
- New campground will feature approximately 36 standard facility campsites and 10 tent campsites with the potential for some elevated tent camping platforms overlooking the forested interior of the peninsula. Other observation decks may also be included for campers to interpret surrounding landscape.
- Two new bathhouses will be centrally located within the campground.

Bayview Day Use Area

- Regrading and restoration of original terrain to be completed where deep soil erosion occurred.
- Reestablish the Bayview Hiking Trail stemming from this day use area.
- Continue to utilize this site for launching paddlecraft/small watercraft where Eagle Harbor is optimally suited for larger motorized boats.
- Construct new shade pavilions for picnics and use by hikers and paddlers.

Proposed Bayview Campground

- A new campground loop will be created on the site of a former boat trailer parking loop road
- Campers will enjoy a scenic view over the waters of St. Joseph Bay.
- Approximately 19 standard-facility campsites proposed within interior of this loop.
- Potential design elements:
 - Interior within campground loop will be canopied by a natural scrubby flatwoods landscape.
 - Interior of loop will be traversed by a footpath with a centrally located bathhouse.
 - Observation boardwalk with covered platform extending from camping area.

Residence Areas

- Staff residences, heavily damaged by the hurricane will be reconstructed to ensure that management presence continues to serve the resources and visitors of the park.
- Campsites for volunteers may be established to promote ongoing community-supported stewardship and recovery of the park.

Cabin and Group Camp Areas

- The eight cabins and linked boardwalks were moderately to severely damaged by storm surge flooding and will be renovated and/or reconstructed as necessary to bring back this highly popular overnight accommodation within the park.
- Gulf access trail from cabins will be reestablished for cabin visitors to reach the beach within short walking distance.
- Restore water and electric utilities to group camp area.

Wilderness Preserve

- Natural debris scatter along shoreline and within scrub interior has dissipated by natural processes, making way for growth of successional vegetation.
- Where there was extensive acreage of standing dead trees with widespread canopy loss, new oaks and pines are rapidly emerging in the understory.
- These highly sensitive natural communities not suitable for clearing but have demonstrated natural resilience to the impacts of the hurricane.
- Wilderness preserve management calls for minimal, non-mechanical solutions.
- Seven designated primitive campsites to be reestablished after safety and access concerns are resolved.