

# **CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK**

## ***PREAMBLE & MISSION STATEMENT***

**March 2022**

### **HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE:**

Located in southern St. Louis County, Castlewood State Park embraces the dissected wooded hills and limestone bluffs carved out by the Meramec River. Throughout the park, visitors will experience woodlands, bottomland forest, and stream communities associated with the Meramec River Basin, along with evidence of cultural modifications significant to the area's history.

The Meramec River riparian corridor had a long history of human involvement extending back thousands of years to the earliest Native American occupation of the valley, through the first European settlers, and to the mining of its valuable gravel and sand. During the early 1900's, visitors traveled by train to the Castlewood area for canoeing, sunning, and swimming along the Meramec River. From 1915 to 1940, thousands of weekend visitors would flock to the area driving the development of hotels, clubhouses, stores, boathouses, and bathhouses. A grand staircase, which still exists today, guided visitors to the resort area. The area known as Lincoln Beach was the premier attraction and is being preserved today as Castlewood State Park.

The creation of the park was in part a response to concerns in the 1970s that suburban sprawl emanating from St. Louis would soon overwhelm all open space in the vicinity, and in particular, the beautiful bluffs and bottomland forest nearest the river. This concern resulted in creation of a number of parks, under jurisdiction of various agencies that brought major reaches of the river into public ownership as a part of a linked greenway concept. Castlewood State Park, named for the stately wooded bluffs along the river that resemble medieval European castles, was the first park acquired by the Missouri State Park system to function as an urban open space preserve.

The park is made up of three separate tracts: Castlewood (Lincoln Beach), Cedar Bluff, and Rock Hollow.

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

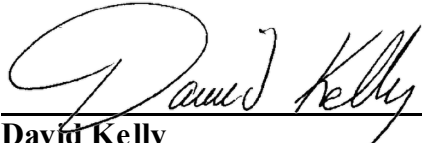
The mission of Castlewood State Park is to protect and preserve the Meramec River's natural communities and cultural resources while providing resource interpretation and recreational opportunities in a uniquely undeveloped setting in the midst of a growing metropolitan area.

**CASTLEWOOD  
STATE PARK**

***PREAMBLE & MISSION STATEMENT***

**March 2022**

**APPROVED BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**David Kelly**  
Director, Missouri State Parks

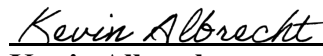
5/9/22  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Terry Bruns**  
Program Director, Planning and Development

03/28/2022  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Greg Combs**  
Director, Eastern Region

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Kevin Albrecht**  
Deputy Regional Director, Eastern Region

04-25-2022  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Ed Schott**  
Park Superintendent/Lower Meramec Management Unit

4/10/2022  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**David Meeker**  
Park Superintendent

3.29.2022  
Date

# **CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK**

## ***CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN***

**March 2022**

**Location:** St. Louis County  
**Established:** 1974  
**Size:** 1,818.77 Acres

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Castlewood State Park is to protect and preserve the Meramec River's natural communities and cultural resources while providing resource interpretation and recreational opportunities in a uniquely undeveloped setting in the midst of a growing metropolitan area.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Located in southern St. Louis County, Castlewood State Park embraces the dissected wooded hills and limestone bluffs carved out by the Meramec River. Throughout the park, visitors will experience woodlands, bottomland forest, and stream communities associated with the Meramec River Basin, along with evidence of cultural modifications significant to the area's history.

The creation of the park was in part a response to concerns in the 1970s that suburban sprawl emanating from St. Louis would soon overwhelm all open space in the vicinity, and in particular, the beautiful bluffs and bottomland forest nearest the river. A citizen conservation group, the Open Space Council of St. Louis, helped the state acquire the land now known as Castlewood State Park in 1974. The park is a centerpiece of the Meramec River Recreation Association (MRRA), established in 1975 for the protection and preservation of the Meramec River corridor.

The park contributes greatly to the goal of MRRA and the Great River Greenways in establishing a greenbelt along more than 100 miles of the lower Meramec River with public and private recreation facilities and interconnecting trail systems.

### **SITE GOALS**

- Preserve the natural and cultural resources located within the park's boundaries;
- Provide recreational opportunities and public use facilities compatible with the park's mission, resources, and public needs;
- Provide adequate orientation and interpretive facilities to enhance visitor experience; and
- Provide administrative support facilities to ensure successful operation and maintenance of the park.

## **INTERPRETIVE THEMES**

- Pre-European landscape and wildlife in the Meramec River valley area;
- Pre-European/Native-American history and activity in the area;
- Natural resources/management;
- 18th/19th century European settler's history and activity;
- Late 19th and 20th century resorts, hotels, dance clubs, and bootlegging during prohibition; and
- Leave No Trace principles and public safety.

## **SITE STRUCTURES**

Castlewood State Park encompasses seventeen structures, five of which are considered historic\*. None of the structures are on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Equipment building
- \*Kaes House (circa 1850)
- \*Outbuilding – River Bottom
- Park Office (1989)
- \*Pole Barn – River Bottom
- Residence (1979)
- Restroom – Picnic Area (1977)
- Restroom – Shelter #1 (2018)
- Restroom – Shelter #2 (1977)
- Service Building (1978)
- \*Shed #1 – Kaes House
- \*Shed #2 – Kaes House
- Shelter
- Shelter #1 (1978)
- Shelter #2 (1978)
- Storage Building – Lone Wolf TH
- Vault Toilet – Lone Wolf TH (2000)

## **DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**

Castlewood State Park's uniquely undeveloped landscape offers an oasis within a growing urban setting. Undeveloped areas of the park should remain as wild as possible, preventing modern intrusions from disrupting the natural landscape. Development philosophy should emphasize sustainability and passive public management techniques. Developmental focus should be put towards enhancing non-vehicular accessibility, improving traffic flow and public safety, and ensuring adequate recreational opportunities.

### **1. Paved Corridor Trail**

A paved corridor trail is to be developed generally following Kiefer Creek Road, stretching from the western park boundary to the trestle gate. This development will improve pedestrian safety throughout the heavily traveled day-use areas and improve traffic flow. Furthermore, this project will provide the public with a hard-surfaced trail to use when natural surface trails in the park are too wet for sustainable use. Depending on carrying capacity study and trail density research results, this trail may replace low-lying sections of existing Grottpeter trail. Lastly, the paved trail will serve as a long-term invitation to connect with the City of Ballwin/Village of Castlewood.

## **2. Paved Trail Loop**

Located within the peninsula, a paved trail loop replacing a portion of the River Scene Trail or developed aside from the existing trail may be considered. This development could increase accessibility and alleviate overuse on non-paved trails; suffering from wet weather erosion. In addition, trail construction must mitigate flooding and erosion concerns.

## **3. ADA Parking/Access**

To provide accessibility to the peninsula's paved trail loop, ADA parking is desired near the trestle. The appropriate road closure gate with associated ADA design must be installed. When the gate is open for special events/operations, the pathway under the trestle should be designed to meet ADA compliance.

## **4. Entrance Parking Area**

Compatible ground for supplemental parking is limited due to the presence of archaeological resources and operational considerations. However, entrance parking may be constructed within the park's gate, in the open field east of the office. Construction will increase parking availability and alleviate traffic/congestion through the park. This area could potentially encompass 30 parking sites along with oversized parking for buses.

## **5. Parking Lot Redesign**

Existing parking areas off Kiefer Creek Road are to be redesigned to improve traffic flow and alleviate congestion.

## **6. Road Redevelopment**

To further address congestion and traffic flow issues, Kiefer Creek Road redevelopment is vital. Proposed development options include a braided system, roundabout, and/or reroute.

## **7. Day-Use/Special Event Area**

To address special event operational concerns/overcrowding, the day-use area located within the peninsula is to be designated as a dual-use area (day-use/special event area). When not reserved for special events, the area use will revert to non-vehicular day-use.

## **8. Castlewood Narrows Connection**

Due to erosion from flooding, a section of the River Scene Trail has been closed since the early 2000s. This portion of the trail provides connection to the Al Foster Trail and Stinging Nettle Trail, including all sections of Castlewood State Park north of the Meramec River. A solution is to be developed providing safe connectivity to all park sections north of the river. This effort will be a significant undertaking requiring collaboration amongst multiple

stakeholders including the US Army Corps of Engineers, Union Pacific Railroad, and Great Rivers Greenway District.

## **9. Canoe/Kayak Access**

A canoe/kayak access area is to be constructed approximately 220 yards southeast of the Wildwood access at Glencoe (Al Foster Trail Head). Utilizing the existing trailhead, users will transport their boats to the park's designated access (park property).

## **10. Eliminate Equestrian Use North of the Meramec River**

Equestrian use on the Grottpeter Trail and associated connector trails (6.85 trail miles) is to be eliminated due to:

- Low frequency of equestrian use;
- Parking issues associated with high visitation and poor equestrian staging area;
- Misuse of non-designated trails;
- Trail erosion;
- Safety concerns; and
- Public support.

The Chubb Trail and Castlewood Loop (4.8 trail miles) will remain accessible for equestrian use, with a quarter mile connector trail added to the Castlewood Loop. Parking redesign south of the Meramec River to better accommodate equestrian use is warranted. Evaluation of equestrian use opportunity and partnerships south of the river will continue.

## **11. EMS Boat Launch**

A concrete or other sustainable surface boat launch, for first responder river access, is to be constructed in the peninsula at or near the existing gravel boat launch. This will eliminate the need to annually replace gravel after weather/flooding events and will provide improved EMS access to the Meramec River.

## **Special Consideration**

Located in the Cedar Bluff tract, the Kaes House is a three-story stone structure featuring unique architecture of the 1850s. The most recent Cultural Resources Management Plan (2005) recommends maintaining the resource in a stabilized state; however, the current structural integrity of the house continues to decline and presents a legitimate risk or injury to trespassers. Complexities surround the structure including access limitations (no easement or public access to the Cedar Bluff tract), public safety and security (property vandalism and trespassing), operational difficulties (distance to the park office and access), and renovation costs. As such, unless a reasonable solution arises with a partnering group/agency, it is recommended that the Kaes House be documented and then demolished.

*The Kaes House is not listed on the National Register of Historic Places and its rumored historic significance has not been documented as plausible.*

## PROJECT PHASING

- Phase 1
  - Day-Use/Special Event Area Designation
  - Eliminate Equestrian Use North of the Meramec River
  - Canoe/Kayak Access
  - Kaes House Documentation & Demolition
  - Castlewood Narrows Connection
- Phase 2
  - EMS Boat Launch
  - ADA Parking/Access
  - Paved Trail Loop
- Phase 3\*
  - Entrance Parking Area
  - Parking Lot Redesign
  - Road Redevelopment
  - Paved Corridor Trail

*\* Dependent on carrying capacity research.*

Cultural and natural resource clearances will be required before on-site modifications and development occur.

## PLANNING AND RESEARCH GOALS

- Continued documentary research and exploration of cultural and natural resources.
- Update and/or completion of the General Management Plan.
- Research human-related impacts to park resources through a carrying capacity study or similar approach (i.e. Leave No Trace - Hot Spot Program).
- Develop a trails master plan to provide long-term guidance for the development and maintenance of trails at Castlewood. The plan should evaluate and address the following:
  - User related impacts to park natural and cultural resources;
  - Trail density (trail mileage/acre) and use-sustainability;
  - Trail design and sustainability;
  - User satisfaction; and
  - Operation and maintenance utilizing industry best practices.
- Research other high-visitation public lands and parks nationally on a regular basis to determine best practices for sustainable management methods.

## ACQUISITION UNITS

If offered, acquisition of adjacent property may be pursued only through willing sellers or donors. To be considered, units should enhance the mission of Missouri State Parks through one of the following categories:

- Resource preservation and protection
- Recreational access and opportunity
- Management facilitation

## **CONTEXTUAL PLANNING INFORMATION**

### **Public Input**

Public input is an integral part of the CDP process. The following includes input opportunities throughout the planning process:

- 1. Public Meeting #1 September 17, 2020 – 5:00 pm**
  - a. Castlewood State Park, Shelter #2 & Facebook Live
  - b. Public input received September 17, 2020 to October 19, 2020
    - i. Comment card & online survey
- 2. Public Meeting #2 July 29, 2021 – 5:30 pm**
  - a. Castlewood State Park, Shelter #2
  - b. Public input received July 29, 2021 to August 30, 2021
    - i. Comment card & online survey

### **CDP Team Members**

- David Kelly – Missouri State Parks Director
- Brian Stith – Deputy Division Director
- Laura Hendrickson – Deputy Division Director
- Greg Combs – Eastern Regional Director
- Kevin Albrecht – Eastern Region Deputy Director
- Ed Schott – Park Superintendent/Lower Meramec Management Unit
- David Meeker – Park Superintendent
- Ken McCarty – Natural Resource Management Program Director
- Dr. Mike Ohnersorgen – Cultural Resource Management Program Director
- Kim Dillon – Cultural Resource Management Section Chief
- Rachel Campbell – Archeologist
- Terry Bruns – Planning and Development Program Director
- Don Stier – Design Section Chief
- Ryan Dunwoody – Planning Section Chief
- Jeremy Robinson - Planner
- Rebecca Young – Outdoor Recreation Management Section Chief
- Ben Nagy – Trails Coordinator
- Zane Price – Real Estate Manager

## **APPENDIX**

- CDP Map
- Public Meeting #1 Survey Results
- Public Meeting #2 Survey Results



**CASTLEWOOD  
STATE PARK**

**CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**March 2022**

**APPROVED BY:**



**David Kelly**  
Director, Missouri State Parks

5/9/22  
Date



**Terry Bruns**  
Program Director, Planning and Development

03/28/2022  
Date



**Greg Combs**  
Director, Eastern Region

4/29/22  
Date



**Kevin Albrecht**  
Deputy Regional Director, Eastern Region

04-25-2022  
Date



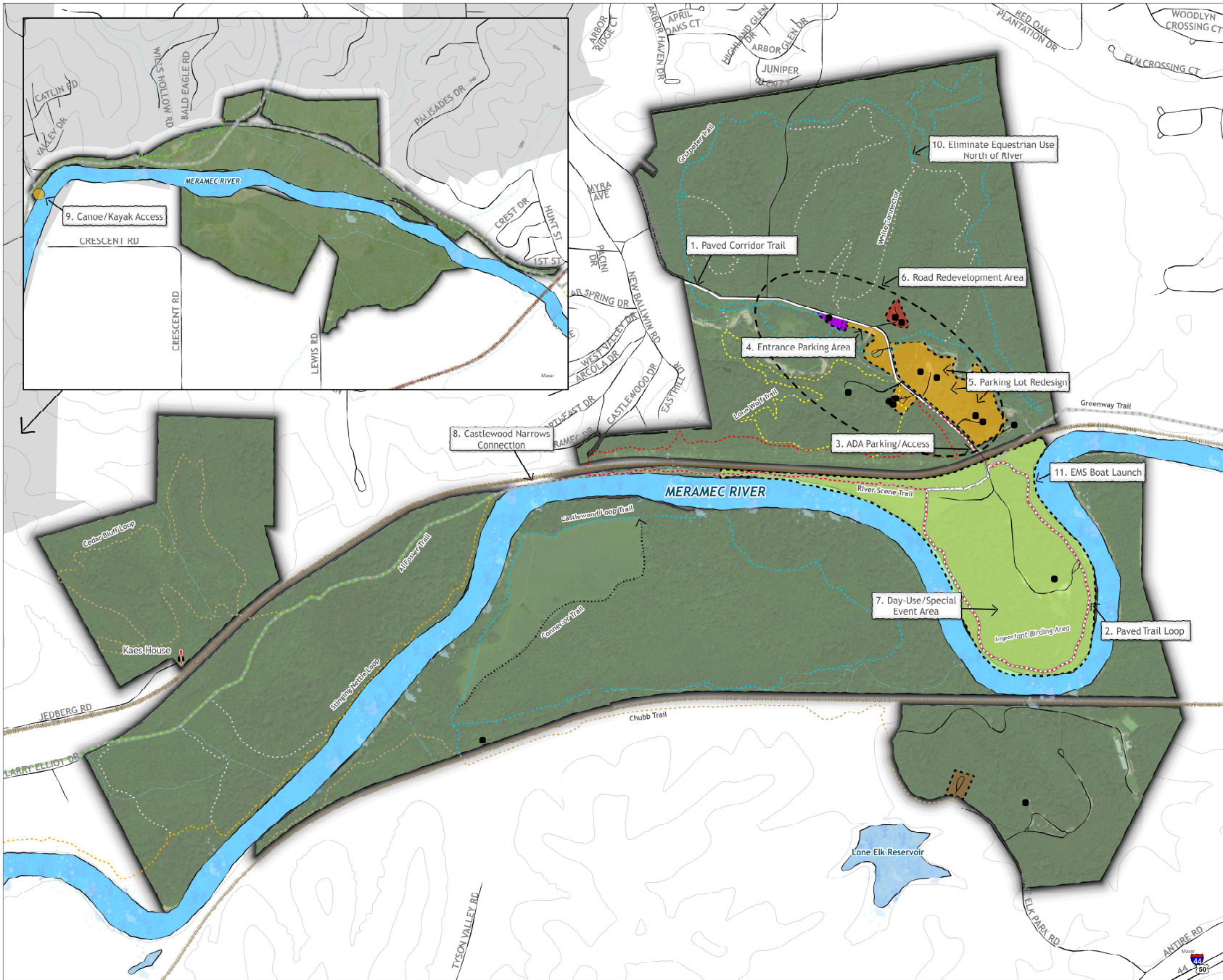
**Ed Schott**  
Park Superintendent/Lower Meramec Management Unit

4/10/2022  
Date



**David Meeker**  
Park Superintendent

3.29.2022  
Date



# CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK

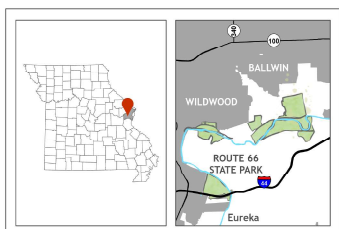
CDP, February 2022

Projected Coordinate System:  
NAD 1983, UTM Zone 15N  
Contour Interval: 100 Feet  
Absolute Scale: 1:8,000



### Legend

| Use Area                    | Landscape & Features  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Day-Use Area                | Castlewood State Park |
| Day-Use/Special Events Area | River                 |
| Equestrian Use Area         | Waterbody             |
| Service Area                | Stream                |
| Visitor Center Area         | Municipal Land        |
|                             | Contours 100ft        |
|                             | Road                  |
|                             | Railroad              |
|                             | Structure             |
| Trails                      | Development           |
| Al Foster Trail             | Paved Trail           |
| Castlewood Loop Trail       | New Trail             |
| Cedar Bluff Loop            | Redevelopment Area    |
| Chubb Trail                 | Development Objective |
| Grottopeter Trail           | Special Consideration |
| Lone Wolf Trail             |                       |
| Riverscene Trail            |                       |
| Stinging Nettle Loop        |                       |
| Greenway Trail              |                       |

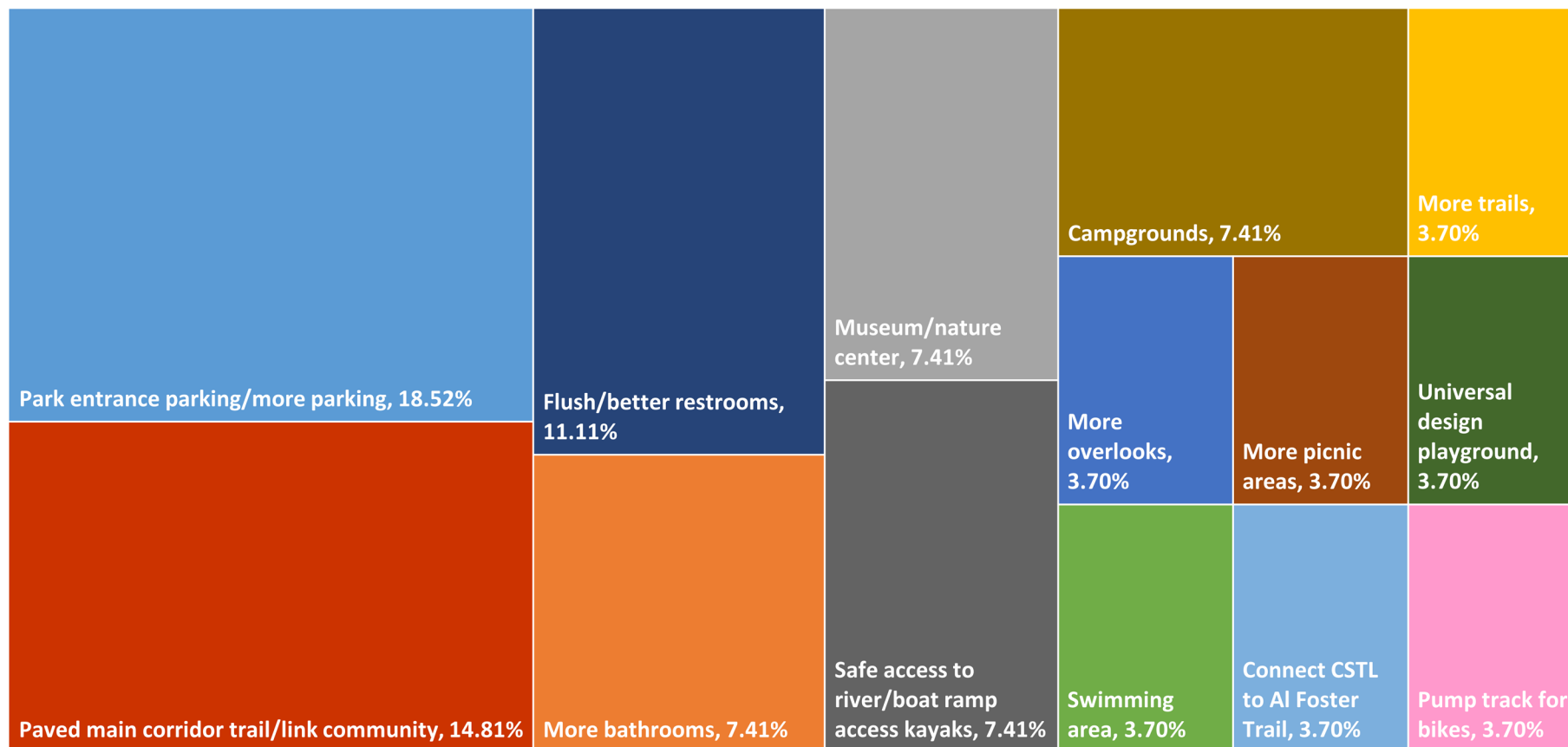


Although the data in this data set have been compiled by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, no warranty, expressed or implied, is made by the Department as to the accuracy of the data and related materials. The act of distribution shall not constitute any such warranty, and no responsibility is assumed by the Department in the use of these data or related materials.



### CASTLEWOOD STATE PARK

**Q:** What recreational activities and facilities, if any, do you feel are missing and should be added to this park or historic site to enhance the visitor experience?





**Comments/suggestions regarding Missouri State Parks:**

1. Castlewood is great
2. Castlewood's design makes it a nightmare for traffic. The vehicle traffic through the park is so high, with so many speeders and no sidewalks for walkers, that it is unsafe to take children into most areas of the park. I like that the gate at the lower part of the park has been closed because it's the only area families can go without fear of their children being hit by a car. It's been wonderful to have that quiet area away from the busiest areas of the park. Please make this permanent.
3. I feel like closing the gate down before the railroad tracks has increased the safety within that area and provided for additional opportunities for recreation. Upon my last visit I saw a family with their toddlers riding their bikes in this area. Closing it from vehicle traffic has allowed for locale residents to use this park more to ensure their children have a safe place to play in leu of playing in the busy streets and cul-de-sacs.
4. Showers at camp grounds need to be better taken care of.
5. Improved trail markings, particularly along river bottom; designated crosswalks
6. I would like better trail markers. I know on the river scene trail the markers are confusing.
7. MO state parks are a tremendous asset for the residents of and visitors to our state. I never cease to be amazed at how many wonderful and varied hiking/biking trails there are within 45 minutes of the city. Thank you to all who keep the parks safe and well maintained!
8. I very much appreciate that MO state parks and historic sites charge no admission fee.
9. Castlewood is a beautiful Park and one that has become more and more used--particularly the past couple of years. It badly needs expansion.
10. Wonderful park!
11. Nice job! Would not mind a small parking lot near the top of the hill along Ries Road to permit a bit of access to those less able but I like to keep the place wild, too.
12. The connection needs to be restored between castlewood & the al foster trail.
13. Please bring back the historic stamp collection
14. Missouri parks are beautiful, keep up the great work of taking care of them!
15. We love Missouri State Parks, they are great!

**Castlewood State Park  
CDP Survey #1 Results (2020)**



**n = 48 (# of respondents)**

16. Love them!
17. No
18. Have seen times in several parks where staff seem frustrated with people. Not in all staff, but several where a higher focus on customer experience could be enhanced.
19. Love Castlewood!!!
20. We have a travel trailer. We limit our camping to campgrounds with full hook up sites. Adding these to state parks which do not have them (or have enough) would be appreciated. We are happy to pay more for full hook up sites. We also enjoy a wifi connection and would be happy to pay more either as part of the fee or as an add on. We've visited a number of Mo State Parks. I write a blog ([www.ChambersontheRoad.com](http://www.ChambersontheRoad.com)), so you could read (if interested) about our visits to the State Parks. Thank you for conducting this survey.
21. I would like to see more rangers
22. This parks trails are really tore up and way to busy. Use to hike here at least once a month years ago. I don't now. Too crowded and the trail is pretty tore up
23. We love our state parks!
24. New creek fixes at Castlewood seem to be making creek inaccessible to people in many spots. Trails are being re-routed away from creek. Why?
25. Washed out area on River Scene trail connecting to Stinging Nettle needs to be fixed to be accessible to everyone. Railroad should be worried as this is a very serious safety hazard for all!!
26. Park should do more trail maintenance instead of relying on volunteers to cut weeds/grass and remove downed trees."
27. I volunteer at both Castlewood and St. Joe State Park. The staff at both parks are dedicated and provide outstanding service.
28. Something that several dirt bike and atv riders have questioned me about in the past is why users of the ORV Area at St Joe have to pay for use while bikers, hikers, and equestrian users do not pay for use. I don't personally have an issue with this but I mention it because I have heard it from many ORV Area users. Perhaps something could be added to the St. Joe website that explains why the use fee is needed and what those dollars are used for."
29. Are there plans to highlight the Kiefer creek restoration project? Also people still seem to swim in Kiefer Creek despite high e. coli. We also continue to advocate for continued invasive species control and provide signage to educate the many visitors about invasive species and what they can do at their home to help.



**Castlewood State Park**  
**CDP Survey #1 Results (2020)**

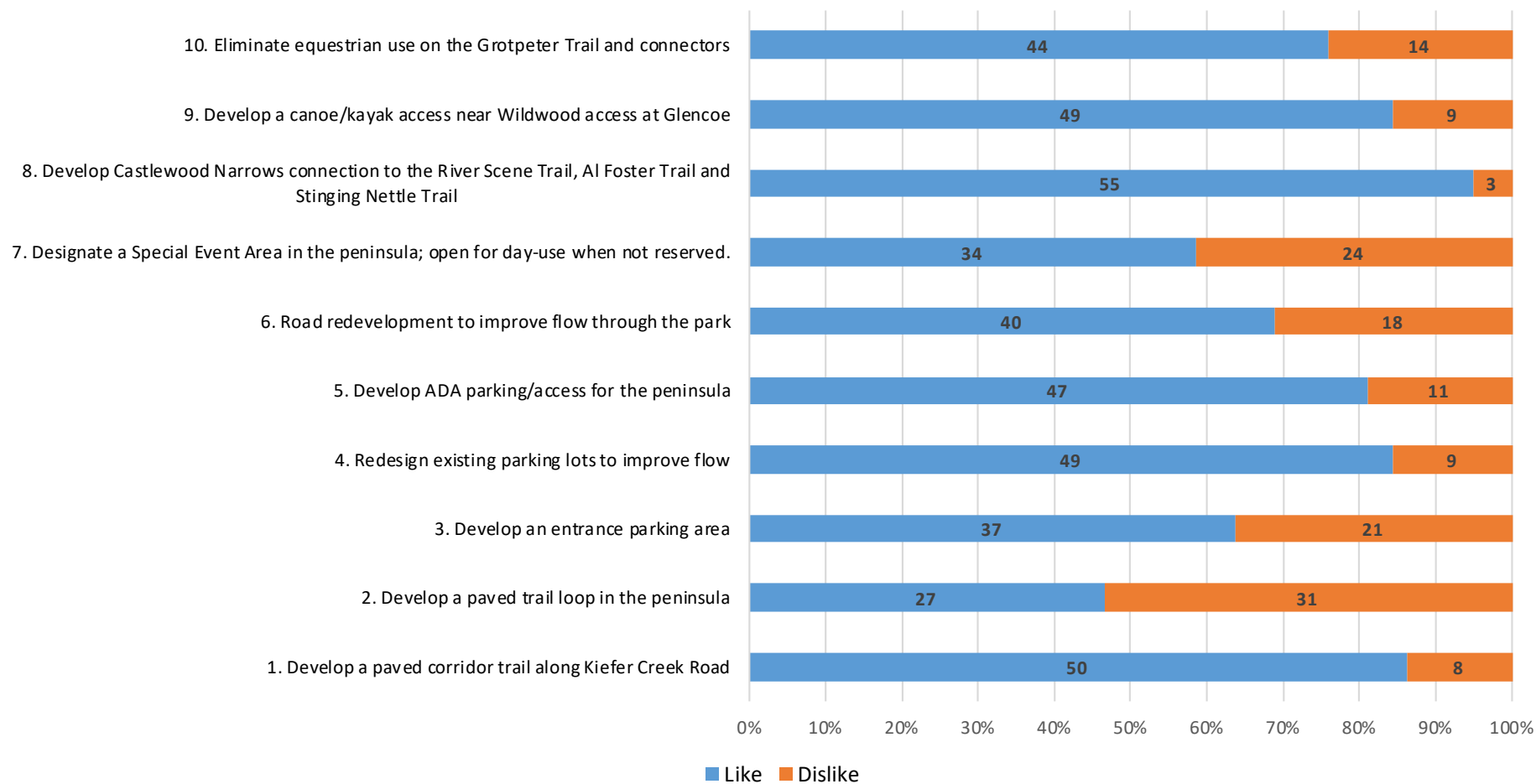


**n = 48 (# of respondents)**

- 30.** Parks have been very busy. Please find ways to reduce traffic. It's hard to enjoy with so many people. At castlewood there are always so many running groups, biking groups, large groups, etc. that make crowding worse. It is impossible to quietly enjoy nature at the park. Doesn't even feel like a state park. People treat it like a city park and it makes the park look horrible.
- 31.** I am proud of our parks. Thank you to park staff.
- 32.** "Wonderful park! Visited it on October 12 after many years!! Absolutely beautiful. Great the street is closed to traffic and parking past the railroad and along the river!! Thank you for all the work that is done to keep this park so accessible! Keep the area for walking - no cars, no parking along the river!!!
- 33.** Generally MO state parks are excellent, as is Castlewood.
- 34.** Park was closed
- 35.** If you are going to close the park or put restrictions then furlough all park employees and Park Rangers. Why are tax payers paying park employees if the park is closed? Many health experts have recommended fresh air, sunshine (vitamin D), and exercise as a way to increase the immune system. Instead restrictions were placed that impeded on my freedom of movement. Totally disgusted and ashamed.



### Public Input on CDP Alternatives





**CDP Alternative Comments:**

1. Developing the narrows is, without a doubt, the best alternative because it will greatly improve access to the other trails. Improving the flow of traffic is a close second given the volume of traffic.
2. It looks like you have come up with many good ideas.
3. Event space does not fit the site's missions to be a uniquely undeveloped setting.
4. People need the GRG greenway trail connection!!!
5. Make sure trail in floodplain along banks are secure making sure to contract a highly qualified geomorphological engineer to stabilize the slopes. This is the most important decision you'll make to ensure a sustainable project.
6. Fixing the narrows connection would be my highest priority. Currently there are too many disjointed park sections and this would allow a seamless connection to all areas on the north side of the Meramec. MO state parks are a tremendous asset for the residents of and visitors to our state. I never cease to be amazed at how many wonderful and varied hiking/biking trails there are within 45 minutes of the city. Thank you to all who keep the parks safe and well maintained!
7. A special use area near the river would bring many in experienced swimmers and children near an attractive hazard also frequent floods would limit options for sustainable development.
8. Add connector to access the chubb trail.
9. Fixing the Castlewood narrows is much needed to fix the dangerous situation of folks using the RR property to connect to the two trails.
10. Invest in more trails and making the current trails more sustainable. They are very eroded and nothing has been done recently to improve and maintain them. Fix the narrows connector.
11. #8 - Castlewood Narrows connection to the River Scene Trail, Al Foster Trail and Stinging Nettle Trail should be highest priority.
12. I suggest opening the Cedar Bluff Trail to equestrian use. It appears to be used by equestrians already. I think the data shows it is used very little by bikers and hikers. It would balance multi-use with the closing of equestrian use on the Grottpeter and connectors.

The trails in the northeast part of Castlewood are used quite heavily and have been for years. There are areas on these trails that need fill and rearranging. There are a group of volunteers who would help to maintain and improve trails but the park would need additional equipment and appropriate vehicles and



**Castlewood State Park  
CDP Survey #2 Results (2021)**



**n = 58 (# of respondents)**

tools to support trail maintenance activity. Could this be included in the CDP?

13. I like a soft dirt trail and the "wilder" look of the peninsula, thus my "dislike" on #2. However, if the intention behind a paved trail is to offer ADA access, then I support the plan.

I think adding parking at the entrance will bring more people into the park, and there are more than enough people now even with the parking past the railroad closed!

The peninsula is quite peaceful and I'm not eager to see the additional traffic a Special Event Area would bring.

I can't tell for sure from the map where the proposed canoe/kayak access is. If it's in a separate area of the park, I fully support it. I'd like to see access to the river from the main area of the park blocked as much as possible to try to prevent drownings.

14. Connection to Al Foster and Stinging Nettle is the most important thing that can be done.

15. 1 - Corridor trail needed to keep people safe and off the busy roadway.  
2 - Paved loop could be great for ADA accessibility.  
3 - The park is too already too busy to add any more parking! The park is so loud when it is full, and it takes away from my enjoyment. Why would anyone want to add more people into the mix?  
4 - The current design of the parking lots is terrible. They get so congested, and it takes forever for people to get in and out of them.

5 - It's a good idea to add ADA parking.

6 - Road design in the park needs to be some kind of loop. It would help traffic flow and be a lot more fun to cruise through.

7 - Great idea! Always hated it when you get to the park and some running event has taken over the whole park. How is that even allowed? Sometimes they use all of the trails and take up most of the parking. Might as well not let normal people in for the day if they can't park anywhere and can't use any of the trails.

8 - This needs to be done. I hope to be able to ride my bike from Eureka to Valley Park someday.

9 - Sure.

10 - It's not a good idea to have large animals in the park with so many people and dogs. Plus they poop everywhere and cause tons of trail damage.

16. I love visiting Castlewood! The problem is that the park is being loved to death and nobody seems to care. It is so busy there that it can make it hard to enjoy. I like the ideas to improve the roads and existing parking lots but please don't add more parking.

17. I think the narrows connection is the best part of the plan. Please open that connection with a permanent bridge or armored trail. Also, the parking improvement should be focused further into the park and not right at the entrance. More parking at the entrance means more cars and more congestion for everyone to drive past.

18. I like the idea of adding trail/walking access, but not additional parking — let people hike/walk-in from nearby neighborhoods (they already do anyways and it causes major safety/traffic

**Castlewood State Park  
CDP Survey #2 Results (2021)**



**n = 58 (# of respondents)**

issues on the roadways). This park is so overcrowded, and things seem better now that some parking is reduced. Traffic on the roads is still dense and on the trails there are so many people — please find a way to reduce this so this park can actually be enjoyable with peace and quiet! It's obvious based on trail conditions/traffic that there are too many hikers/bikers! Adding more parking for more cars is not the solution.

19. Check river bank on west side of peninsula for erosion; stake and monitor.

**Comments or suggestions regarding Castlewood State Park:**

1. I think parking issues and traffic flow should be primary focuses. More parking would be great.
2. #8, #10 need to be priority 1 and 2 for safety reasons. Both will improve safety for all park users as Castlewood has become a major use area for mountain bikers and pedestrians (especially families).
3. Really need to fix connection between CW and Al Foster. Such a great corridor.
4. Love the trails and am a very frequent user but believe trail maintenance could be improved. Either by the park staff or in partnership with GORC. Also, I suggest keeping the peninsula closed to vehicular traffic bc it's much safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Suggest adding signs regarding trail etiquette (i.e., "help care for the trails by avoiding using them in wet conditions").

5. We love this park for the natural setting and for its capacity to allow so many people to be out on trails at the same time, experiencing nature and getting some good outdoor adventure/activity
6. Please work to build GRG's greenway connection ASAP to link Castlewood and make it more accessible.
7. It is definitely an asset to the whole state that needs HELP with parking on site or nearby with trail connections to the park.
8. Getting road and road corridor for separated pedestrians and car use will fix many capacity issues. Moving hiking trail 2-3ft uphill from rs trail head to underpass would move reeling out from under power line to reduce Bird introduced vegetation, ex soaring road surface could be milled to save trucking on gravel for improvements and reduce truck emissions hauling rap off. Park has a long haul distance from quarry's due to river and road paths
9. Add connector to access the chubb trail.
10. Improvements to the park are greatly needed and would further improve this important and popular State Park in the St. Louis region.
11. I have mountain biked the trails at castlewood for 25 years. Unfortunately, a majority of the trails damage I have personally seen was caused by horses on wet trails. Some mountain bikers also ride the trails when too wet, which also upsets me, but

**Castlewood State Park  
CDP Survey #2 Results (2021)**



**n = 58 (# of respondents)**

typically the damage is not as great. Also, I have seen way too many cases of trail users cutting new trail around obstacles which needs to be curbed. I would support roping off to block rotearounds.

Additionally, I think it would be great if St. Louis County and Missouri State Parks would start and enforce a Rain out Line/WebsiteApp for all trails. St. Charles County had this, and it removes personal opinions (many poor ones) on the trails conditions.

12. Please add more trails for mountain biking. Connecting the closed narrows section would be fantastic. Bathroom facilities could be improved.
13. There needs to be more parking available up from away from the river.
14. Please consider work to improve the hiking/biking and running trails in the park. I love the park and the trails but some need a little attention
15. The park is well-managed and the staff are highly visible and clearly trying to improve the experience for park patrons. Thanks to all the staff for their professionalism and hard work.
16. Please try to do more to prevent people from swimming and wading in the river. I know you have done a lot to prevent drownings, and I'm not sure what else can be done to make

wading and swimming less attractive--maybe trying to block more of the accesses and having patrols in the area? I don't like the idea of a canoe/kayak access in the main area of the park. What you have right now is confusing--it looks like a place for people to walk down to the river as well as put in watercraft.

Some of the white numbered trail connectors need to be marked and mapped better. I used the Grottpeter Trail for the first time recently and all of the connectors were confusing as heck. It looks like some of them might offer some good hiking and it would be helpful to see them on a map before trying them.

Just wanted to say this is one of my favorite parks--thank you!

17. This heavily used park provides an excellent opportunity to provide public outreach programs. I encourage DNR to consider staffing this park with a dedicated naturalist to develop this opportunity.
18. Access to park by sidewalks or bike trails. Now if you want to enter the park, it must be by car. You should be able to walk or ride your bike.
19. Please fix the connection to the back part of the stinging nettle trail.
20. Would love a bathroom somewhere along the longer part of the trail maybe down by water.

**Castlewood State Park  
CDP Survey #2 Results (2021)**



**n = 58 (# of respondents)**

21. Love that they closed the area past the train tracks! It is nice and quiet down there. Now they just need a sidewalk around the gates, or a better gate system at the tracks.

Replace the old bathrooms.

22. Replace those old bathrooms. It is time to modernize.

They should close trails after it rains like they do in St. Charles county parks to keep the trails in good shape.

23. I love the park and most people treat it well. I would like to see more rangers and enforcement of park rules. People with unleashed dogs are the biggest offenders here, and this is not safe on trails or anywhere else in the park. Unsafe for the dogs, and especially unsafe for mountain bikers.

24. Changes due to COVID have really been beneficial, making the park an actually enjoyable place to visit. Just having fewer cars in has been really nice. I like that fewer events have happened because of COVID because the park is actually a quiet nature area that can be enjoyed instead of some event space that creates huge crowds/makes it difficult to use trails.

**Comments or suggestions regarding Missouri state parks and historic sites:**

1. Missouri has a wonderful state park system.
2. Push back against railroads that get in the way of the public using its parks.

3. Stream water quality is always a concern after rain events at the Meramec tributaries through the park my kids have played in many times. Always nervous about that.

4. Add connector to access the chubb trail.

5. Love the parks, much needed for Missourians and visitors to get outside and explore our beautiful state!

6. I think it would be great if St. Louis County and Missouri State Parks would start and enforce a Rain out Line/WebsiteApp for all trails. St. Charles County had this, and it removes personal opinions (many poor ones) on the trails conditions.

7. Establish rain out line and rope off to officially close trails on rainy days.

8. I like the greenway!

9. I don't know enough about the peninsula to really dislike the ideas but I was feeling that more people by the river might mean more swimmers getting pulled out in the strong current.

10. More connectedness. Castlewood should be connected to trails like Meramac Greenway and other biking/hiking corridors.

11. I'm very impressed with the planning efforts for improving our great state parks. Thanks for sharing this info.