

NEBRASKA'S OUTDOOR VENTURE PARKS

PARKS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION







OUTDOOR VENTURE PARKS



EXPLORE. LEARN. PLAY.

In today's world, families are becoming busier and busier and their time is becoming ever more precious. As families change, visitors to Nebraska State Parks are changing as well. While many visitors come for traditional activities, many others want a higher sense of adventure— a place to play that is close to home but offers them something different than what can be found in their backyard.

The Platte River Valley area between Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska, offers the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission the opportunity to provide the best of both worlds to visitors. Eugene T. Mahoney and Platte River State Parks (SPs) along with Schramm and Louisville State Recreation Areas (SRAs) in the Platte Valley provide an exciting playground to develop a mix of traditional and innovative activities that will attract both traditional park users and new thrill seekers alike. This is a whole new experience targeted at the next generation of park goers.

The four-park complex will be the backbone of this concept. More than one million residents live within 60 miles of the Platte River Valley. This population needs opportunities to relax, vacation, and maybe even have a thrill. The Outdoor Venture Parks will address the needs of both traditional and new park guests, and will meet the changing needs of visitors for years to come.

PURPOSE

The purpose of creating an Outdoor Venture Park is to meet and anticipate park visitors' expectations of the Nebraska Game and Parks. It is important to Nebraska Game and Parks to create positive, exciting and relaxing opportunities for visitors to the parks that leave a lasting impression which will keep them coming back.

Families and visitors to the parks are looking for more than just a walk in the park. They want the rush of adrenaline and a sense of exhilaration of the adventures they could have at the parks. They want to have an inspirational environmental educational experience that engages all of their senses. They want downtime to relax amongst the river bluffs and explore the tranquility of Nebraska's natural resources. And they want to create lifelong memories in the process. The Outdoor Venture Parks of the Platte Valley will provide just that.

Additionally, this concept provides unique opportunities to families, creates vocal advocates for the parks, and establishes the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. Generation after generation, the Nebraska Game and Parks relies on these advocates to support our State Parks and to conserve our outdoor heritage.

VISION OF AN OUTDOOR VENTURE PARK COMPLEX

This innovative concept is designed to encourage people to venture outdoors and discover the wonders of our natural world!

Nebraska's Venture Parks will attract and engage future generations of park-goers because the parks will be interactive destinations where people can explore, learn and play.

Venture parks' interactive activities will provide hands-on, exciting opportunities to discover and experience the outdoors in ways that appeal to many types of park-goers, including adventure seekers and those who want to relax, have fun and enjoy time with friends and family. Nebraska's park system is an economic force and is a major component of the tourism industry. Venture parks will be economically self-sufficient and be one economic unit within the park system. The complex will increase visitation and travel in the state, create more jobs and have a tremendous economic impact to the local and state economies.

Venture parks will be premier destinations, unlike anyplace else in Nebraska. Families will rediscover and grow their love for the outdoors. With so many unique experiences to offer in each venture park, visitors will return time and again.

OUTDOOR VENTURE PARK COMPLEX

It is important that the Outdoor Venture Parks provide multiple types of activities that meet different needs of visitors. Some activities will create excitement and active play; others will provide innovative learning opportunities that get you thinking; and yet others will just be for the pure fun of getting dirty. Five different zones were created to offer recreation options to the visitors of each park. Each of the parks (E.T. Mahoney, Platte River, Schramm and Louisville) have distinct themes that address all of the zones outlined below.

Each zone outlined below will be featured in each of the venture parks. This is to provide visitors with a wealth of recreational options, encouraging them to return again and again.



DISCOVER ZONE LEARN & PLAY

The Discover Zone is the part of the learning experience. Educational, interactive activities for people of all ages are included within this category. Visitors can touch critters, dig for fossils, spot birds, enjoy natural playgrounds, play in a tree house, participate in a naturalist program or explore nature trails with interpretive signage.



EXPLORE ZONE ENCOUNTER & PLAY

The Explore Zone caters to those who want a hands-on experience in which they learn by doing. This could be through geocaching, treasure quests, fishing, kayaking/canoeing, hiking, creeking, skipping rocks, or even playing on a rope swing. This zone gives visitors the opportunity to explore nature at its best.





EXCITEMENT ZONE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Getting dirty, having fun and taking risks is all part of the Excitement Zone. Different parks will provide opportunities such as zip lines, rope courses, mud slides, adventure courses, a floating playground, raging rivers, splash pads, an exciting bounce village and more. Creating a place for folks to go crazy and enjoy some adventure.



SERENITY ZONE REST AND RECHARGE

Everyone will need places to cool down, unwind and relax before moving on to the next adventure. This zone includes a lazy river, glamping, garden of senses, picnicking facilities, benches, snack shops, fishing and other activities that allow visitors to relax and catch their breath.



IMAGINATION ZONE BECOME A KID AGAIN

Remember what it was like to be a kid? The Imagination Zone provides opportunities for youth and adults to create and play. Build a sandcastle or an igloo, be king of the hill, play in the crawded creek, take a pirate raft ride, create a fort or get dirty. This zone provides the activities where your imagination can run wild!

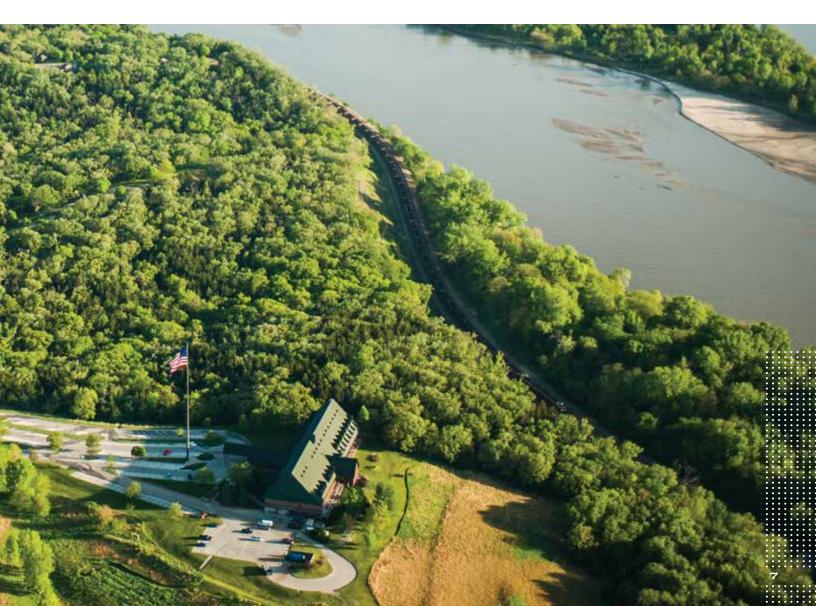
EUGENE T. MAHONEY STATE PARK



UNLEASH THE ADVENTURE

Eugene T. Mahoney State Park (commonly referred to as Mahoney State Park) is the flagship of the State Park System in Nebraska and already includes many unique and exciting opportunities for family fun. Nebraska Game and Parks would like to introduce several new features at Mahoney State Park. Visitors will unleash the adventure when they participate in these new activities.

The Family Aquatic Center hosts more than 100,000 visitors a year; a quaint theater provides entertainment for guests on hot summer and cold winter nights; a huge indoor playground allows kids to run, play and explore when it's cold or rainy and an outdoor ice rink has become part of many families' holiday traditions. The park has 57 cabins, 149 electrical campsites, and 40 lodge rooms for visitors.





TOBOGGAN RUN WITH TOWER

Winter Wonderland addition at Mahoney will provide a new sledding opportunity that provides the speed, the thrill and adventure visitors are seeking.



ALPINE SLIDE AREA/ZORBING AREA

During the spring, summer and fall, the toboggan run could be transformed, providing two more choices for fun—an alpine slide and zorbing. Race down the hill in a tube or a big ball!



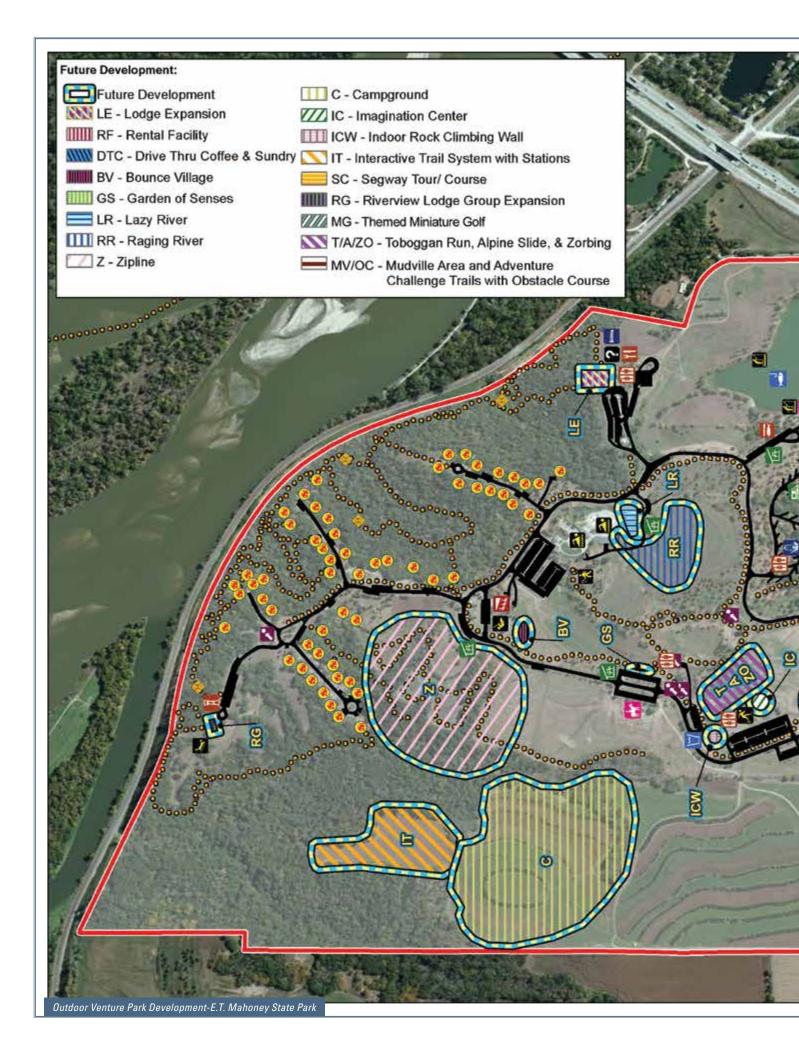
BOUNCE VILLAGE

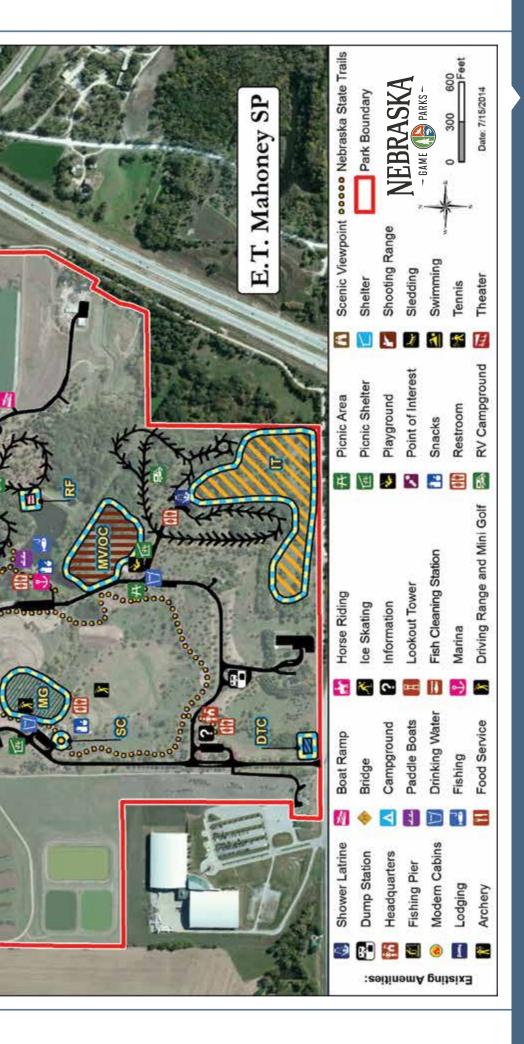
Get a different view and jump into vacation fun!



ZIPLINE

Soar through the trees, across ravines and above the grasslands of Mahoney. A thrilling new perspective of the park!





Nebraska Game and Parks would like to introduce new features at Mahoney State Park.

Visitors will unleash the adventure when they participate in these new activities:

- Lazy River
- Raging River (Large slide with tubes)
- Toboggan Run with Tower (Includes an Alpine Slide and Zorbing Area for spring/summer/fall/winter)
- Ziplines
 (2 systems—1 large system, 1 smaller, youth system)
- Interactive Trail System with Stations such as Treehouse Village, Fort Building, Rock Roll, King of the Hill, etc.
- Imagination Center (Activity Center to include arts and crafts and naturalist programming/staff)
- Riverview Lodge Group Expansion
- Bounce Village (Trampoline Complex to include Bounce Houses)
- Mudville Area (Includes Slide and Shower Facility)
- Indoor/Outdoor Rock Climbing Feature
- Segway Tour/Course
- Adventure Challenge
 Trails/Obstacle Course
- Garden of Senses
- Themed Miniature Golf Course

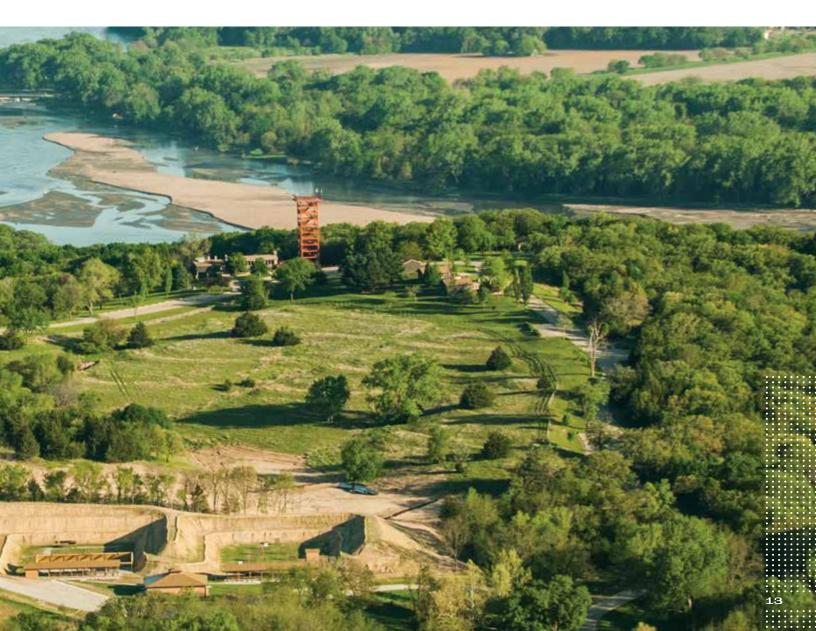
PLATTE RIVER STATE PARK

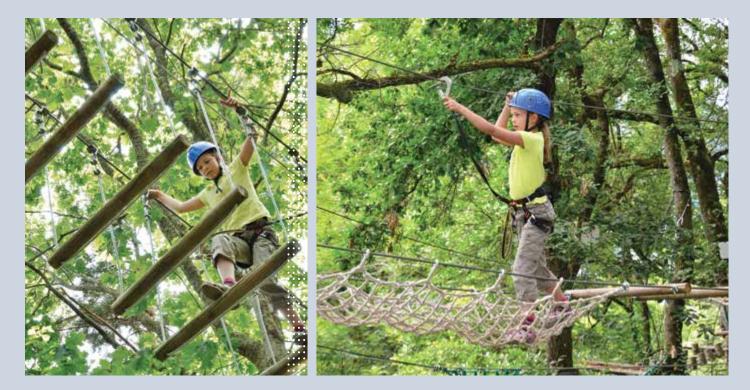


FIND YOUR WILD SIDE

Picturesque Platte River State Park already provides some awesome experiences for visitors. Its award-winning Outdoor Heritage Park is a fantastic complex for public shooting and outdoor education. There are superb mountain bike trails, a large tower for climbing, catch-and-release family fishing and much more. Platte River boasts 31 camper cabins, 21 modern cabins and 4 tepees for overnight guests.

The new developments at Platte River State Park will allow visitors to find their wild side. New features would also fall in line with the existing topography and focus of the park.





UP AND OVER CLIMBING FEATURES (ROPES COURSE)

Confront your fears! A confidence-building experience that promotes personal growth while swinging through the trees is a must! Team and family building opportunities to develop trust, cooperation, communication and problem solving skills will be available.



NATURAL PLAYGROUND & ROCK WALL

Kids of all ages will enjoy these natural playgrounds that engage their senses. They can also develop their climbing skills on a rock wall with opportunities for a variety of skill levels.



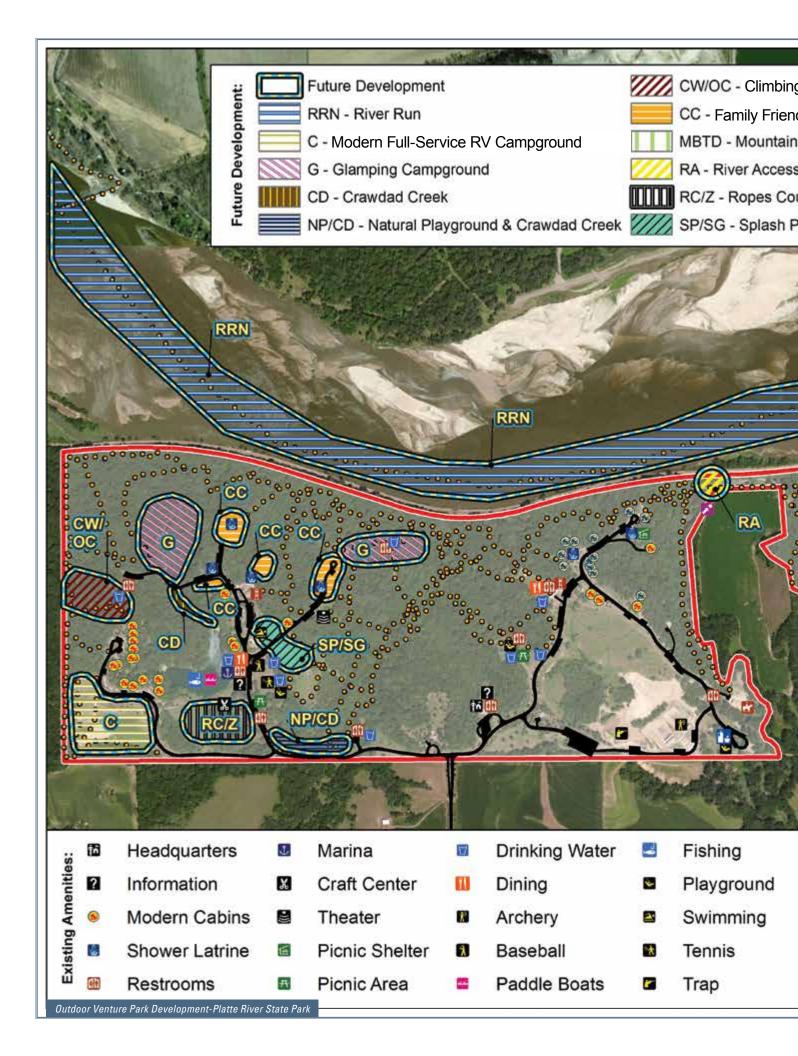
GLAMPING CAMPGROUND (GLAMOROUS CAMPING)

Some visitors prefer a little bit of luxury in the outdoors...



SPLASH PAD/SQUIRT GUN CENTER

Cool off in the water and enjoy a friendly water fight with friends and family.

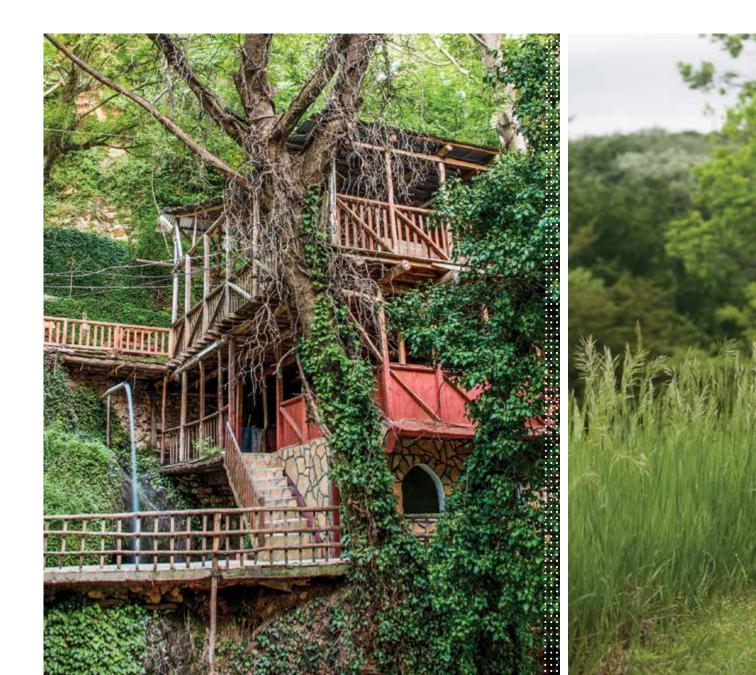




The new developments at Platte River State Park will allow visitors to find their wild sides in these new activities:

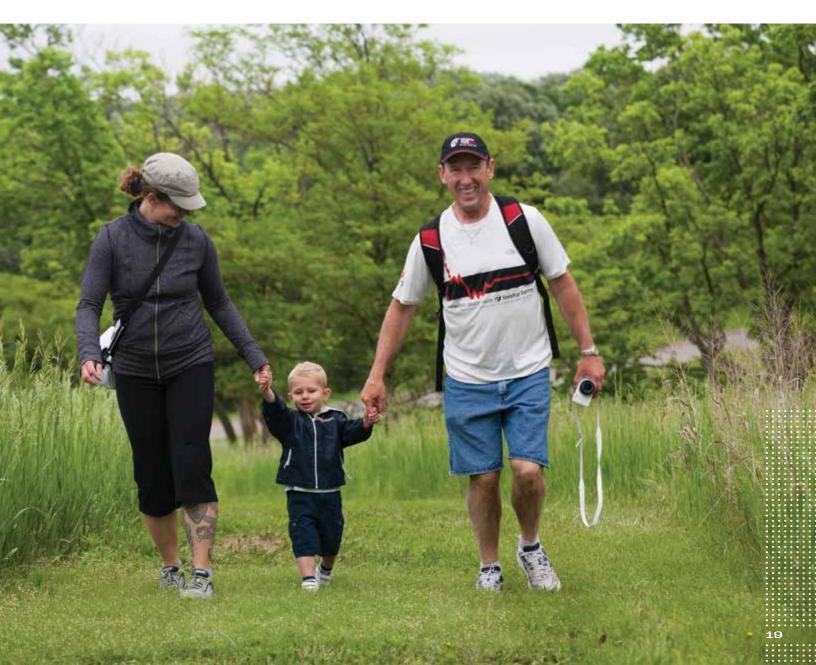
- Additional Mountain Bike and Other Trails (including interpretation)
- Up and Over Climbing Features (Ropes Course)
- Small Zipline
- Natural Playground
- River Access for Canoes/Kayaks
- Glamping Campground
- Modern Full-Service RV Campground
- Family Friendly Cabins
- Naturalist Programs
- Splash Pad and Squirt Gun Center
- Crawdad Creek (Stone Creek development)
- Obstacle Course
- Rock Climbing and Rappelling Wall

SCHRAMM STATE RECREATION AREA



AN EXCITING "EDVENTURE"

Schramm State Recreation Area is the birthplace of Nebraska Game and Parks and is home to the exceptional Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium. It is a day use area that provides spectacular views of the countryside, nature hiking trails, a playground and some excellent birding opportunities. Plans call for Schramm to be converted to the ecological and natural educational center of the Venture Parks. There will be many options for unique, hands-on activities at the premier learning center in Southeast Nebraska. Access to the Platte River will provide another educational opportunity for visitors to experience the beauty of the area.





SCHRAMM INTERACTIVE EXPLORATION CENTER

Guests of all ages can experience the water and natural worlds in a unique and new way. Ak-Sar-Ben Aquarium improvements will inspire awe and wonder.



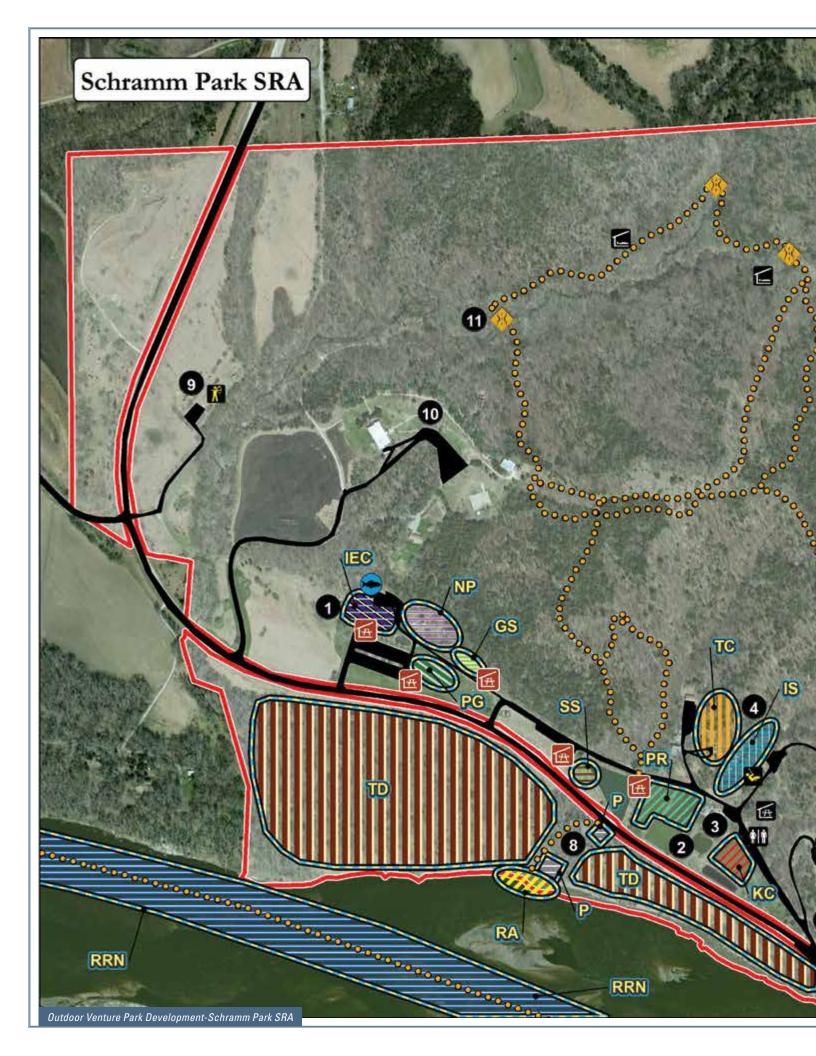
INTERACTIVE STREAM

The existing Canyon Ponds will be repurposed to create a phenomenal interactive stream where visitors can get in, get wet and learn!

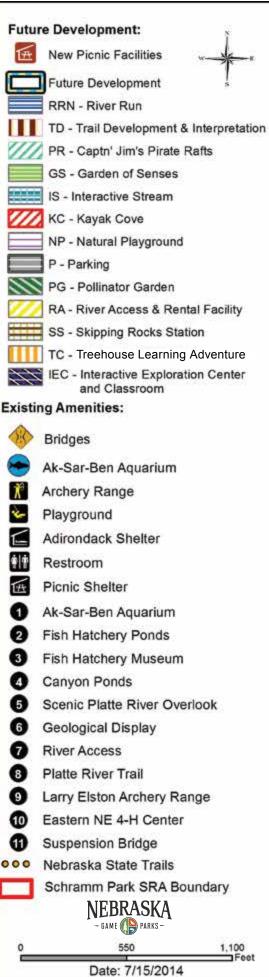


TREEHOUSE CLASSROOM

Learn about the natural environment while sitting in a treehouse classroom! This provides an inspiring way to learn about the ecology of the area!







Experience the exciting Edventure for hands-on activities at the premier learning center in Southeast Nebraska that includes:

- Schramm Interactive Exploration Center
- New Classroom Attached to Center with Restrooms
- Interactive Stream
- Kayak Cove (on existing pond)
- Captn' Jim's Pirate Rafts (on existing pond)
- Natural Playground
- Trail Interpretation and Additional Trail Development
- River Access for Canoes/Kayaks
- Naturalist Programs
- Treehouse Learning Adventure
- Garden of Senses
- Skipping Rocks Station

LOUISVILLE STATE RECREATION AREA



A NATURAL PLACE TO GET AWAY

Situated on the south bank of the Platte River, Louisville SRA is an ideal spot for camping and water enthusiasts. There are 223 electrical camping pads, 13 camping pads without electricity and 47 primitive camping sites. This SRA also offers five fantastic sandpit lakes for visitors to fish, boat and swim. Top-notch picnic facilities and playground equipment are available as well. Visitors to Louisville SRA can find their way back to the sand and water.

Enhancements will provide additional water-based activities in the lakes and take advantage of the Platte River. Focus will be given to the lakes and especially the River. Access to the River is a high priority for family fun at this location.





WATERCYCLES

Get out on the lake on a bike and pedal to shore. A new way to use Louisville lakes!



PADDLEBOARDS

Rent a paddleboard and try a new activity quickly gaining in popularity!



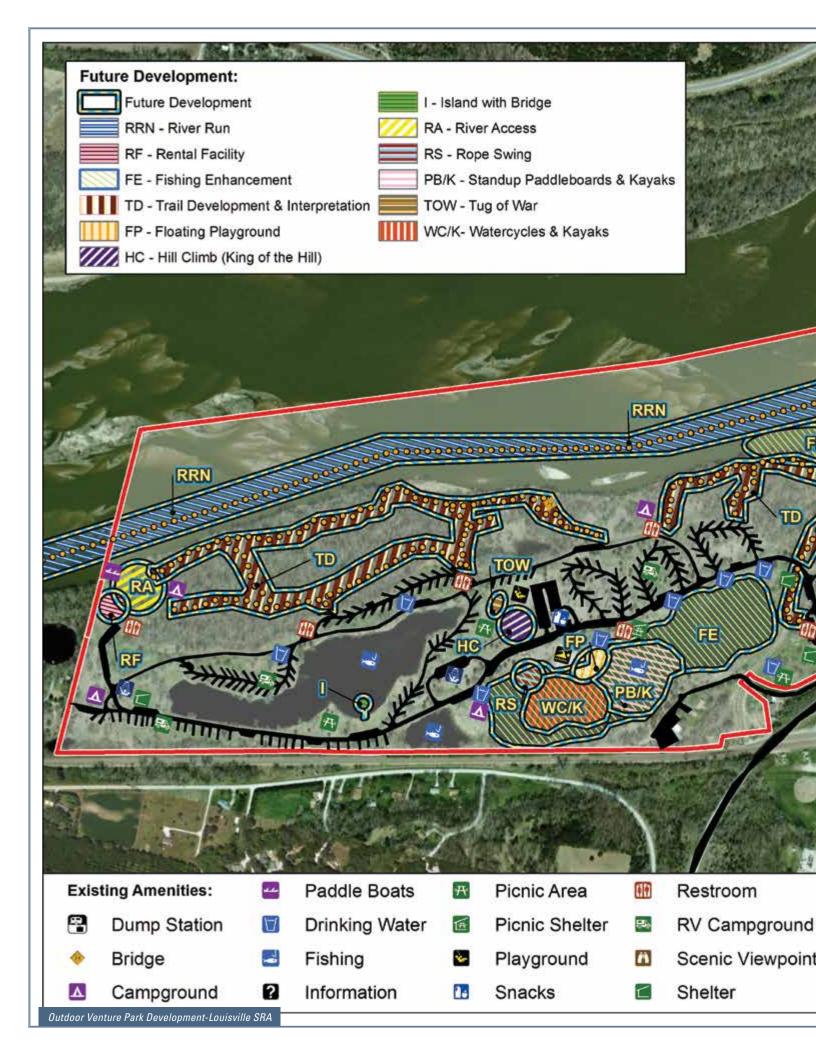
ROPE SWINGS

Swing off an old Cottonwood and into the lake to cool off.



FLOATING PLAYGROUND

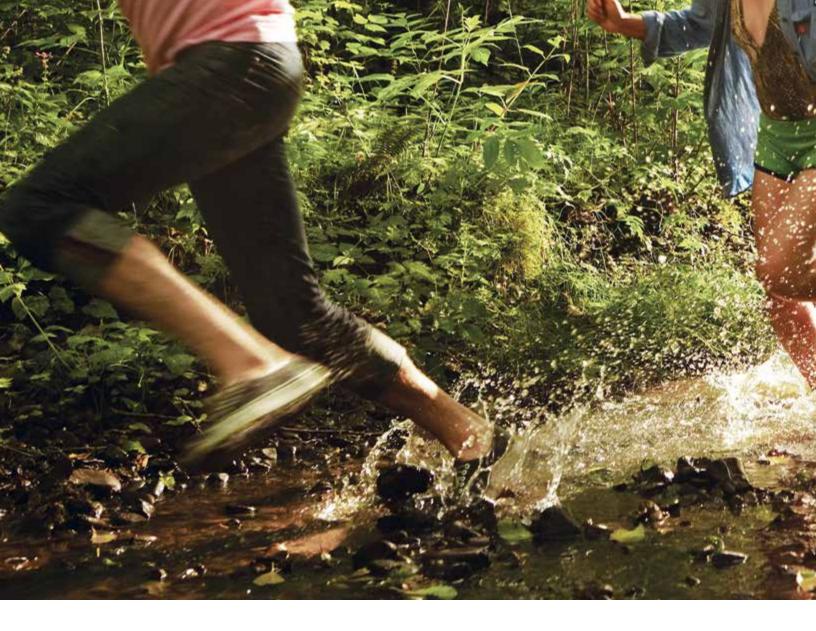
Tired of playing on the playground on land? Try it on water!





Visitors to Louisville can find their way back to the sand and water with these activities:

- Watercycles
- Standup Paddleboards
- Rope Swing into Lake
- Build an Island in Lake #3 with Bridge
- Kayaking
- River Access (canoe/kayak and airboat)
- King of the Hill
- Naturalist Programs
- Trail Development and Interpretation
- Fishing Enhancements
- Tug-of-War
- Floating Playground



ACTIVITIES AT ALL PARKS



Several other amenities and activities will be included at each area including:

- Comfort features such as unique shelters and benches
- Additional picnic facilities
- Geocaching
- Treasure quests (potentially with metal detectors)
- Fishing, including equipment check out
- Zebra bikes (free usage of bikes to get around each park)
- Bird watching
- Mobile vendors
- River run corridor activities
- Special events

Each area will have different naturalist programs available. These could include:

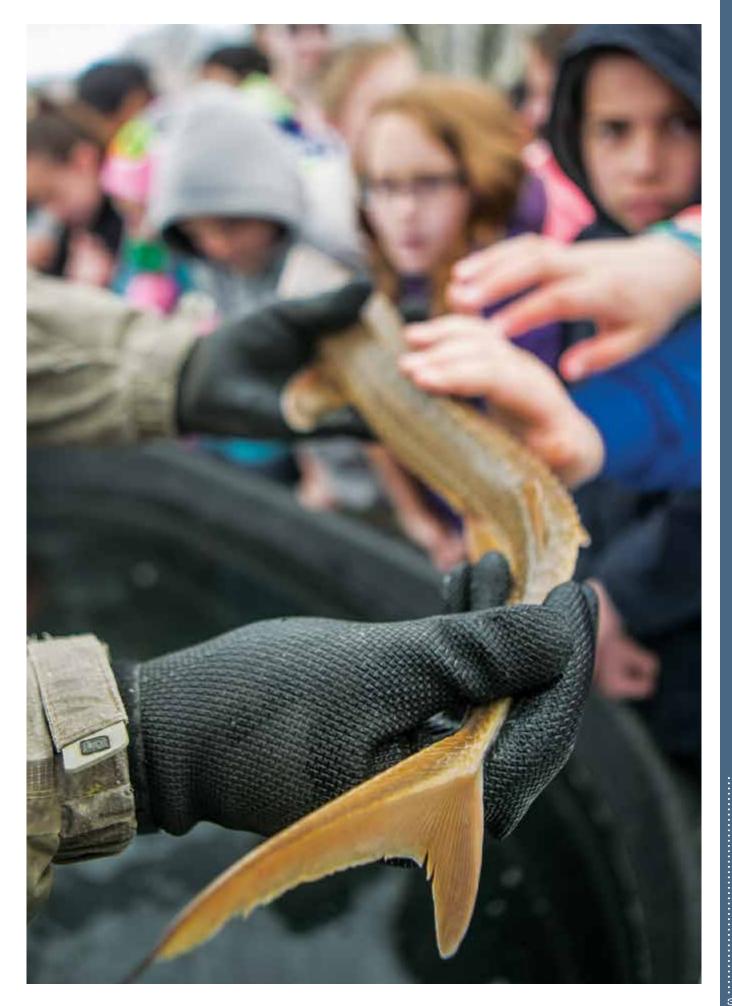
- Critter encounters
- Touch tanks
- Wildlife spotting
- Nature hikes (including night hikes)
- Bird watching and calling

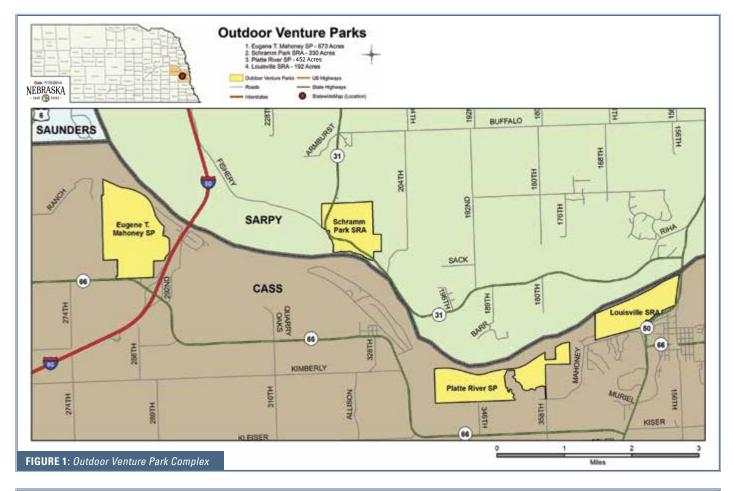
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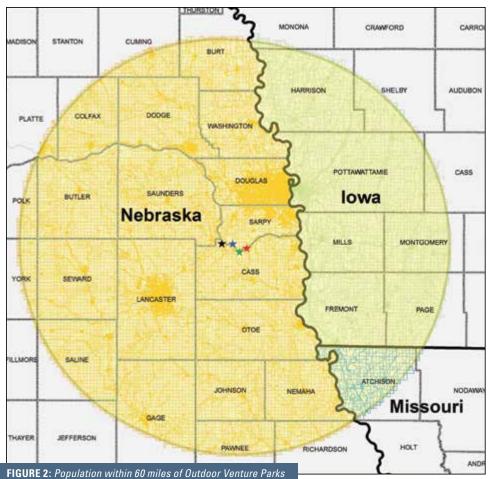
- Butterfly walks
- Senses in nature













OPERATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE NEEDS

A project of this magnitude will require additional operation and maintenance needs at these parks. Nebraska Game and Parks must also be mindful of the existing infrastructure and see that it continues to meet the high standard desired at these parks.

STAFFING

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Additional staff and reprioritization of existing staff will need to occur to fulfill the needs of guests when offering these activities. It will be of utmost importance to have activity coordinators working together to ensure efficiency.

MARKETING

To make this venture successful, Nebraska Game and Parks must implement strategic marketing and public relations campaigns to highlight the opportunities across the four parks and recreation areas. We need to build and sustain the venture park destinations excitement that attracts people to think outside and visit the outdoors.

TRANSPORTATION

Some visitors will want to jump in their own car and come and go to the parks as they please. Others may desire public transportation among the parks. A feasibility study will be done to determine if it is cost effective to offer a shuttle service throughout the complex of parks.

ENTRANCE FEES

It is important that visitors do not have a burdensome process when trying to enjoy the facilities, so Nebraska Game and Parks is researching the best way to allow visitors to take advantage of all of the activities at all of the parks. A pass system or wristband system, along with easier credit card sales points are among the ideas being considered.

SUSTAINABILITY

Venture parks will be economically self-sufficient and be one economic unit within the park system. The goal is to generate enough revenue to meet the needs of the long-term maintenance and replacement of these new features.

ACTIVITIES BY PARKS

E.T. MAHONEY STATE PARK

| ITEM |
|--|
| Lazy River |
| Raging River |
| Toboggan Run |
| Alpine Slide |
| Zorbing |
| Ziplines (2 Systems-Large & Small) |
| Interactive Trail System with Stations |
| Imagination Center |
| Riverview Lodge Group Expansion |
| Bounce Village |
| Mudville Area |
| Indoor Rock Climbing Wall (Activites Center Addition Needed) |
| Segway Tour/Course |
| Adventure Challenge Trails/Obstacle Course |
| Garden Of Senses |
| Themed Miniature Golf Course |
| Comfort Features |
| Picnic Facilities |
| New Restrooms |
| Naturalist Activities |

PLATTE RIVER STATE PARK

| ITEM |
|--|
| Mountain Biking and Other Trail Development |
| Up and Over Climbing Features (Ropes Course) |
| Small Zipline |
| Natural Playground |
| River Access for Canoes/Kayaks |
| Glamping Campground |
| Campground - Modern Full-Service RV |
| Cabins - Family Friendly |
| Naturalist Programs/Activities |
| Splash Pad & Squirt Gun Center |
| Crawdad Creek |
| Natural Obstacle Course |
| Outdoor Climbing Structure |
| Comfort Features |
| Picnic Facilities |
| New Restrooms |
| Showerhouse |

SCHRAMM STATE RECREATION AREA

| ITEM |
|------------------------------------|
| Interactive Exploration Center |
| Classroom Attached to Center |
| Interactive Stream |
| Kayak Cove |
| Captn' Jim's Pirate Rafts |
| Natural Playground |
| Trail Development & Interpretation |
| River Access for Canoes/Kayaks |
| Naturalist Programs/Activities |
| Treehouse Learning Adventure |
| Garden of Senses |
| Skipping Rocks Station |
| Comfort Features |
| Picnic Facilities |
| New Restrooms |
| Mountain Biking Trails |

LOUISVILLE STATE RECREATION AREA

| ITEM |
|------------------------------------|
| Watercycles |
| Standup Paddleboards |
| Rope Swing into Lake |
| Island w/ Bridge at Lake #3 |
| Kayaking |
| River Access |
| Naturalist Programs/Activities |
| Trail Development & Interpretation |
| Fishing Enhancements |
| Floating Playground |
| King of the Hill |
| Comfort Features |
| Picnic Facilities |
| New Restrooms |

VENTURE PARKS SUPPORT FACILITIES

| ITEM | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Internet Connectivity | |
| Parking Improvements | s |



VENTURE PARKS ZONES

Five Venture Park Zones offer activities for every type of park-goer to create a memorable experience. The Discover Zone will feature a treehouse, nature trails with interpretive signage, and activities for people to learn and play. The Explore Zone encourages active participation such as kayaking, playing in the interactive stream and working together on obstacle courses. The Excitement Zone provides opportunities for people to find their wild slide, riding the raging river and zipping down the alpine slide. Park-goers will have fun zorbing, using the zip line, trying the ropes course and jumping at bounce village. The Serenity Zone provides people a relaxed atmosphere to rest and recharge. It has ample places to unwind and relax such as the lazy river, garden of senses, glamping campground and picnicking facilities. In the Imagination Zone, youth and adults can create and play. They can build a fort, play in crawdad creek, take a pirate raft ride, and learn about Nebraska's wildlife and conservation at the Interactive Exploration Center. Venture Parks experiences will bring people back again and again.

DISCOVERY ZONE - LEARN AND PLAY

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|---|--------------|
| Naturalist Activities | ET Mahoney |
| Riverview Lodge Classroom and Meeting Areas | ET Mahoney |
| Natural Playground | Platte River |
| Naturalist Activities | Platte River |
| Classroom | Schramm |
| Natural Playground | Schramm |
| Treehouse Learning Adventure | Schramm |
| Naturalist Activities | Schramm |
| Island with bridge | Louisville |
| Naturalist Activities | Louisville |

EXPLORE ZONE - ENCOUNTER AND PLAY

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|--|--------------|
| Adventure Challenge Trails/Obstacle Course | ET Mahoney |
| Interactive Trail System with stations | ET Mahoney |
| River Access | Platte River |
| Interactive Stream | Schramm |
| Kayak Cove | Schramm |
| River Access | Schramm |
| Skipping Rocks Station | Schramm |
| Trail Development & Interpretation | Schramm |
| Kayaks | Louisville |
| River Access | Louisville |
| Rope Swing | Louisville |
| Trail Development and Interpretation | Louisville |

IMAGINATION ZONE - BECOME A KID AGAIN

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Imagination Center | ET Mahoney |
| Mudville Area & Tug-of-War | ET Mahoney |
| Crawdad Creek | Platte River |
| King of the Hill | Louisville |
| Interactive Exploration Center | Schramm |
| Pirate Raft Rides | Schramm |

EXCITEMENT ZONE - A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|---|--------------|
| Raging River | ET Mahoney |
| Toboggan Run | ET Mahoney |
| Alpine Slide | ET Mahoney |
| Zorbing | ET Mahoney |
| Ziplines | ET Mahoney |
| Bounce Village | ET Mahoney |
| Indoor Rock Climbing Wall (Activities Center Addition Needed) | ET Mahoney |
| Segway Tour/Course | ET Mahoney |
| Themed Mini Golf Course | ET Mahoney |
| Mountain Biking Trails & Other Trail Development | Platte River |
| Ropes Course | Platte River |
| Splash Pad & Squirt Gun Center | Platte River |
| Outdoor Climbing Structure | Platte River |
| Outdoor Climbing Structure | Platte River |
| Natural Obstacle Course | Platte River |
| Small Zipline | Platte River |
| Watercycles | Louisville |
| Paddleboards | Louisville |
| Floating Playground | Louisville |
| Mountain Biking Trails | Schramm |

SERENITY ZONE - REST AND RECHARGE

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|----------------------|--------------|
| Lazy River | ET Mahoney |
| Garden of Senses | ET Mahoney |
| Comfort Features | ET Mahoney |
| Picnic Facilities | ET Mahoney |
| Comfort Features | Platte River |
| Picnic Facilities | Platte River |
| Glamping Campground | Platte River |
| Comfort Features | Schramm |
| Picnic Facilities | Schramm |
| Garden of Senses | Schramm |
| Fishing Enhancements | Louisville |
| Comfort Features | Louisville |
| Picnic Facilities | Louisville |

INFASTRUCTURE

| PROJECT NAME | PARK AREA |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| New Restrooms | ET Mahoney |
| New Restrooms | Platte River |
| Modern Full-Service RV Campground | Platte River |
| Family Friendly Cabins | Platte River |
| New Showerhouse | Platte River |
| New Restrooms | Schramm |
| New Restrooms | Louisville |
| Internet Connectivity | All Parks |
| Parking Improvements | All Parks |

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NEBRASKA'S OUTDOOR VENTURE PARKS

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