

Department of Conservation & Recreation

Briefing for the Senate Finance Committee

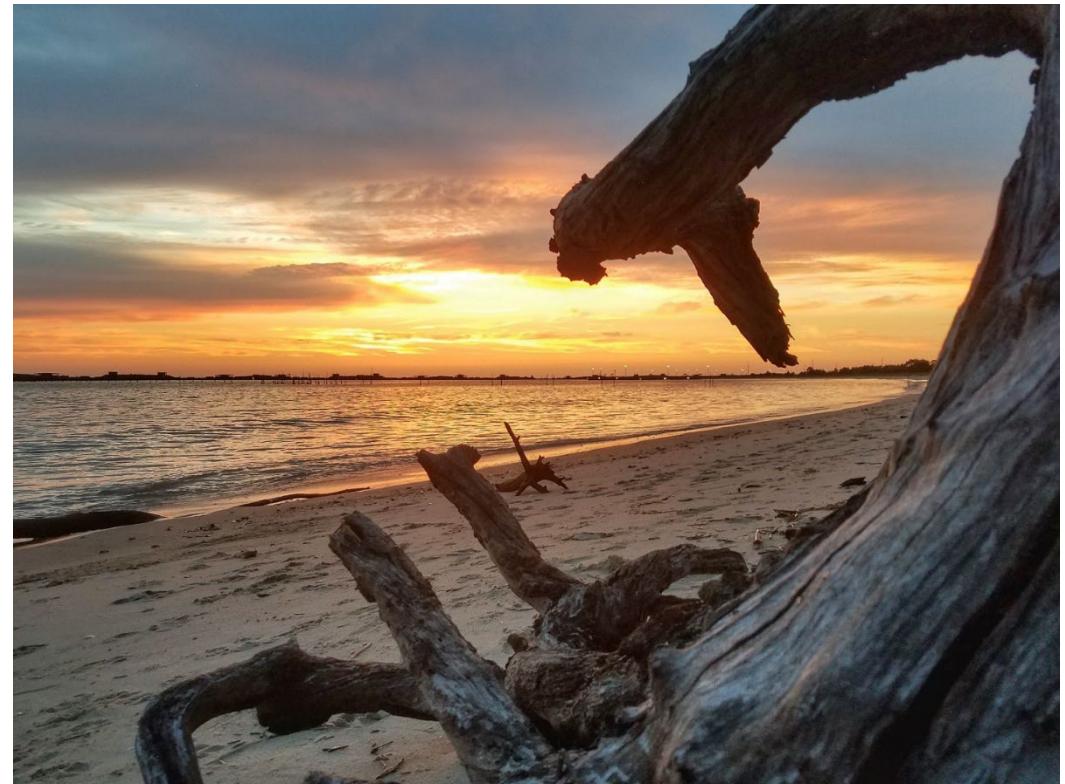
Frank Stovall

Deputy Director for Operations



Overview of Today's Briefing

1. DCR Organization
2. Key Recent Achievements
3. Key Issues
 1. Current Capital Projects
 2. Deferred Maintenance in State Parks
 3. ARPA Capital Projects
 4. State Park Revenue and Revenue Optimization Study
 5. Soil & Water District Dam Projects



Organization



Administration & Finance

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Procurement
- Risk Management
- Information Technology

Operations

- State Parks
- Natural Heritage / Natural Area Preserves
- Planning and Recreation Resources
- Office of Land Conservation
- Real Property Office

Dam Safety, Soil & Water, Floodplain Management

- Dam Safety
- Floodplain Management
- Coastal Resilience
- Soil and Water

Key Recent Achievements

Conserve

- **Agricultural Cost-Share Program**
 - Largest state-funded agricultural conservation program in the U.S.
 - FY2025: **48,000 BMPs, 2,497 producers**, \$125.6M in cost-share funding.
- **Public Lands**
 - Two new Natural Area Preserves: **Eastern Divide** and **Brocks Gap**.
 - Expanded **Caledon State Park**
- **Land Conservation Grants**
 - **\$15.5M awarded** by Virginia Land Conservation Foundation.
 - Key projects: Rappahannock Tribe ancestral lands, James River Park expansion, Caledon State Park addition.
- **Clean Water Farm Awards**
 - **10 farms honored** for outstanding conservation practices.

Key Recent Achievements

Protect

- **Dam Safety**
 - Continued reduction of dams with unknown hazard classification and condition.
- **Flood Resilience**
 - **5,700 sq. miles** added to flood vulnerability maps using Fathom data.
 - **Virginia Flood Protection Master Plan** developed with 400+ engagements from 100 organizations.
- **Flood Resilience Assistance**
 - **Round 5:** \$67M in grants and loans awarded
 - **Round 6:** \$110M available
 - **Resilient Virginia Loan Fund:** \$10M for Southwest Virginia



Key Recent Achievements

Protect

- **Special Biological Areas**
 - **Good Neighbor Agreement** with U.S. Forest Service: \$5M over 10 years for biological inventories and NEPA support.
- **Coastal Conservation Planning**
 - New **GIS layer** identifies unconserved lands adjacent to protected areas to guide future inventory efforts.



Key Recent Achievements

Enjoy

- **New State Park**
 - **Hayfields State Park** opened Oct. 20, expanding the system to **44 parks**.
 - 1,034 acres preserved for future generations;
- **Increasing Public Access**
 - Culpeper Battlefields Phase 2 acquisition underway.
 - Natural Bridge Caverns added to **Natural Bridge State Park**.
 - **High Bridge Station visitor center** opened at High Bridge Trail State Park.
 - New canoe/kayak launch for **Clinch River State Park**; trail building at multiple preserves.



Key Recent Achievements

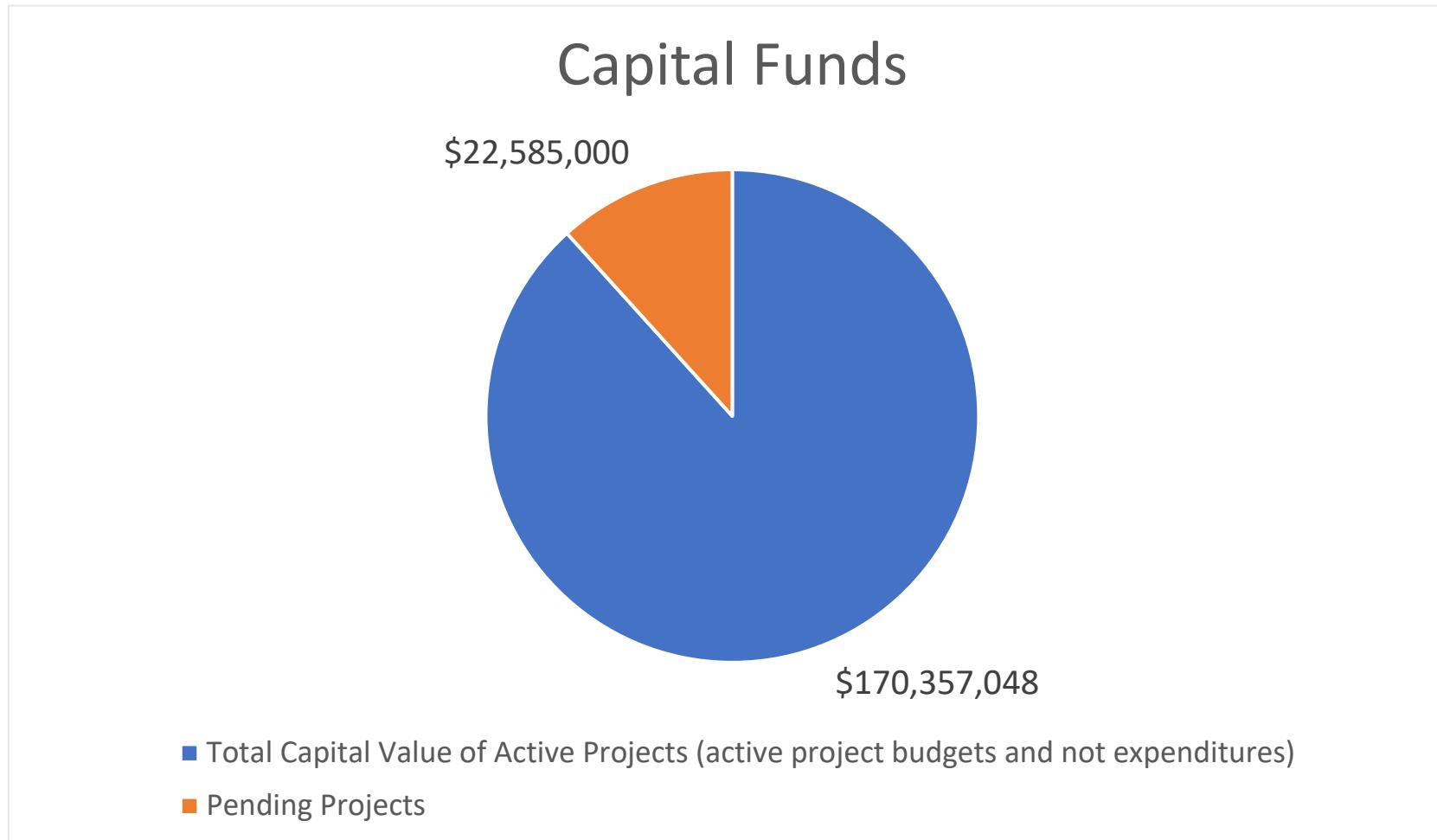
Enjoy

- **Preserving History & Updating Amenities**
 - Renovated **CCC-era Douthat Lodge**; construction started on 30+ cabins at Westmoreland & First Landing.
 - **Lake Anna State Park master plan** approved; Machicomoco State Park to be submitted next week for review.
- **Other Achievements**
 - **Environmental Education:** Launched **iseeVA** resource; hosted 3 K-12 educator trainings.
 - **Virginia PR Award:** Recognized for nationwide promotion of **EnChroma viewfinders** at state parks.



Current Capital Projects

Capital Funds



Current Capital Projects

Areas of Investment - Overnight

What have we done?

- Completed renovation of 25 cabins at Fairystone State Park
- Completed renovation of 30 cabins at Douthat State Park
- Completed restoration of historic Douthat Lodge at Douthat State Park
- Completed campground improvements at Claytor Lake and Westmoreland State Parks

What are we doing?

- Improving utilities, improving campground facilities, and improving ADA access at Bear Creek Lake, Fairystone, First Landing, Westmoreland, and Grayson Highlands State Park.
- Renovation of 26 cabins at Westmoreland State Park
- Renovation of 10 cabins at First Landing State Park

What is needed?

- Restoration of cabins at Hungry Mother State Park
- Continued campground improvements

Current Capital Projects

Areas of Investment – Key Maintenance

Critical System and Building Maintenance

- \$7.1 M in roof replacements in five contracts impacting nearly every park in the system.
- Multiple HVAC (\$1M) and paving (\$1.8) projects.
- \$6.5 M in housing replacements.
- \$3.1M in utility infrastructure repairs.

Shoreline Stabilization and Resilience

- \$14.8M at Westmoreland State Park
- \$1M at Widewater State Park
- \$2.2M at Belle Isle State Park in a joint project with USACE

Current Capital Projects

Areas of Investment – Historic Preservation & Visitor Services

Historic Site Improvements

- \$4M in repairs and restoration at the historic pre-1800 Belle Isle Manor (joint NPS / DCR funding)

Visitor Facilities

- \$4 M in repairs to the pool at Natural Tunnel State Park
- \$6M in Visitor Center Upgrades (EDA Grant)
- Replacement of the Boat Ramp at Kiptopeke State Park
- Design and development of a Visitor Center at Twin Lakes State Park

Current Capital Projects

Pending Projects - \$22.6M

Repair Lake Edmonds Dam
Staunton River State Park
\$1.9M

Restoration and
Improvements at Green
Pastures Recreation Area
Douthat State Park
\$5M

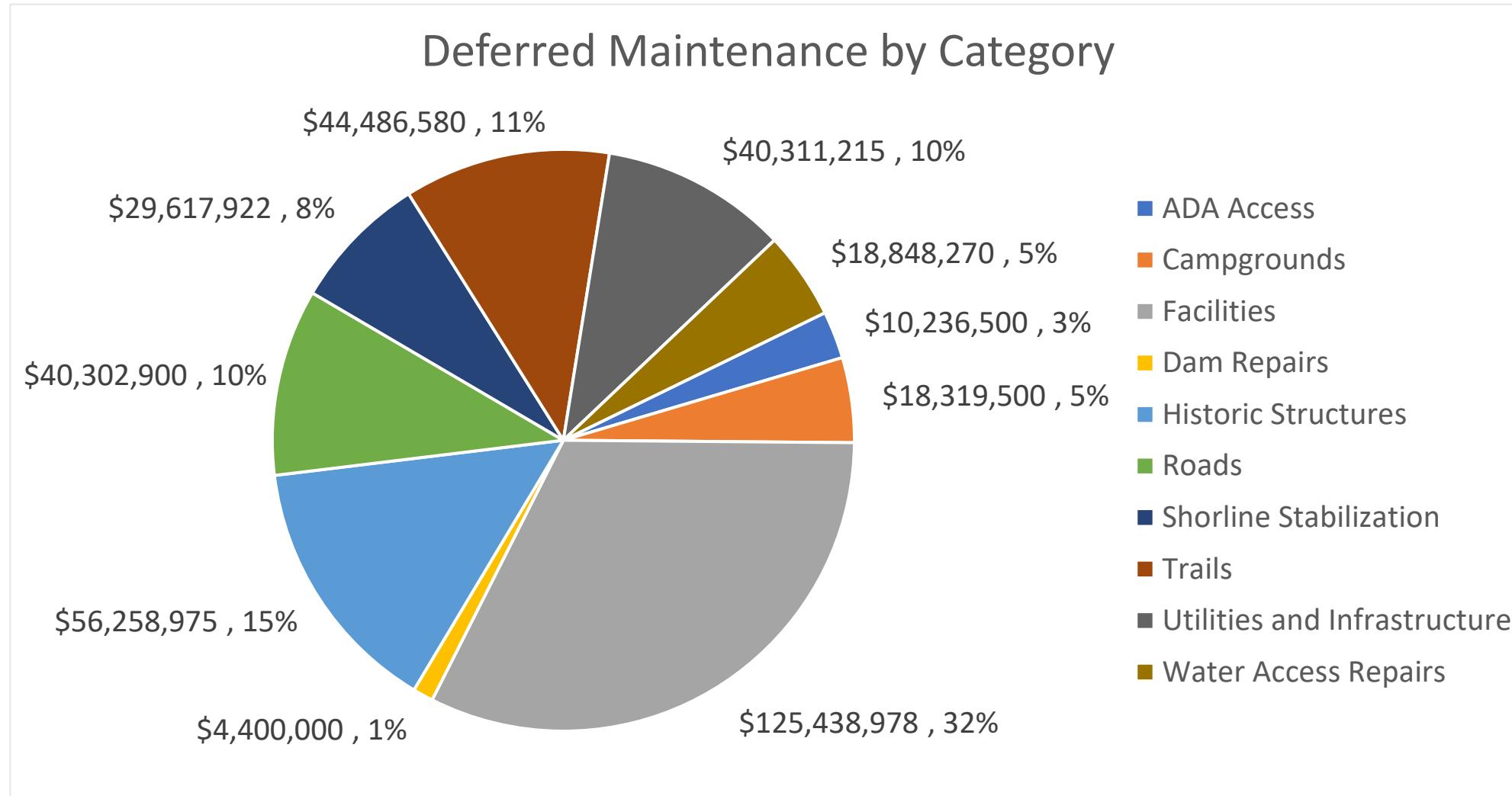
Maintenance Facility,
Residential Repairs, Paving,
and other Improvements
Machicomico State Park
\$2.66M

Replace Underground
Storage Tanks - Phase I
Multiple Parks
\$3M

Phase II Development
Widewater State Park
\$10M

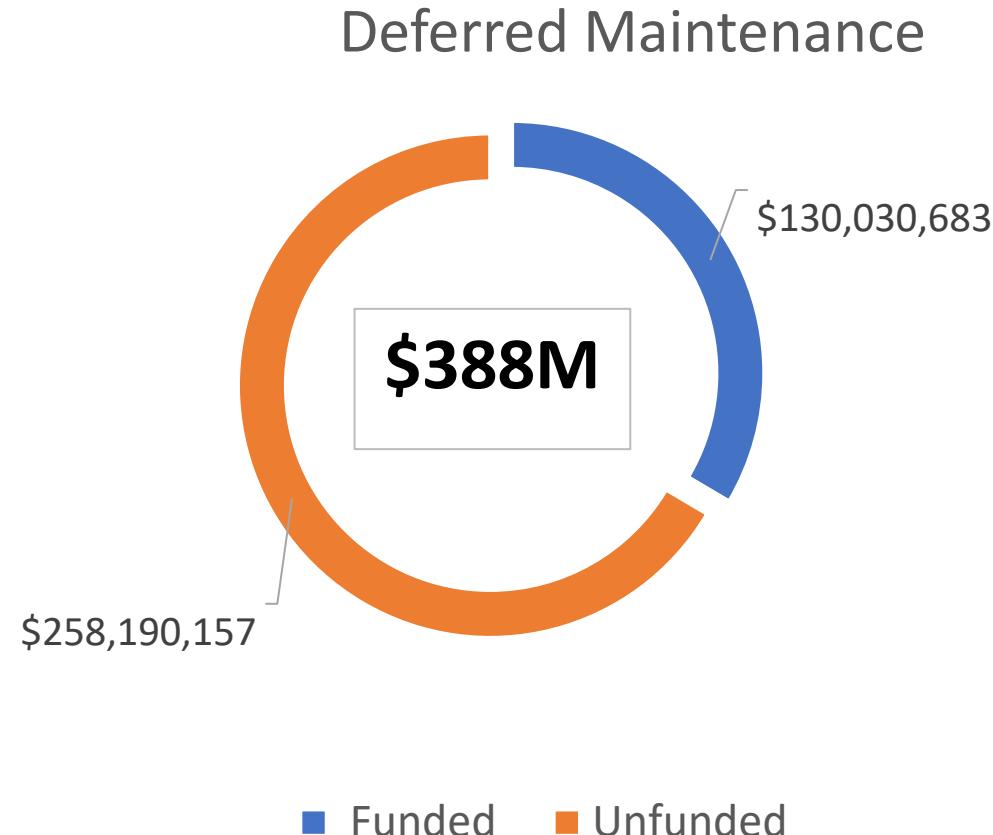
Deferred Maintenance

Known Needs



Deferred Maintenance

Addressing Needs



Funding Allocations

Capital Project 18490	\$16,158,000
FY23 Budget	\$96,061,350
FY25 Budget	\$ 7,200,000
FY25 MR	\$ 9,761,333

Note: FY23 includes a pool fund estimate

Note: Not all MR is allocated to the DML

Deferred Maintenance

Addressing Needs

Making Progress

- \$45M either expended or obligated
- 5 key projects to complete in 2027 - \$23M

Limiting Factors

- The capital process can be lengthy
- DCR projects are often smaller and geographically spread out
- DCR has limited project management staff

ARPA Capital Projects

State Parks Supplemental - \$18.1M

- Trail Bridge Rehabilitation - New River Trail SP
- Cabin renovation - Douthat SP and Fairystone SP
- Lodge restoration - Douthat SP
- Pool demolition - Westmoreland SP
- Campground improvements - Bear Creek Lake SP, Claytor Lake SP, Fairystone SP, First Landing SP, Garyson Highlands SP, and Westmoreland SP.
- Visitor Center - High Bridge Trail SP

Natural Area Preserve Access - \$6.9M

- New trails and parking - Crow's Nest NAP* and Bald Knob NAP
- New public access -The Cedars NAP*
- Restoration of public access -North Landing River NAP*

ARPA Capital Projects

New River Trail State Park



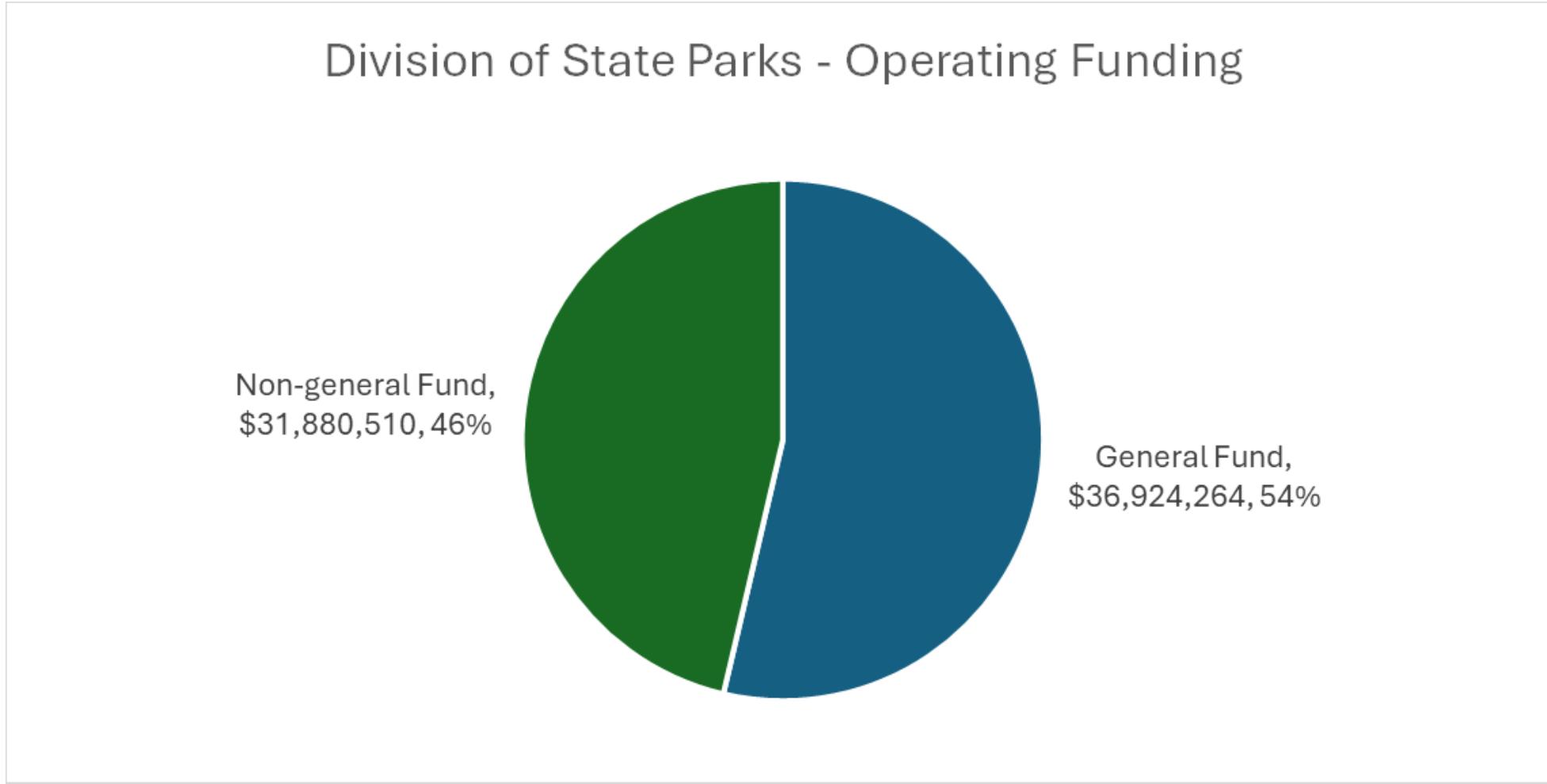
ARPA Capital Projects

High Bridge Trail Visitors Center



State Park Revenue & Revenue Optimization

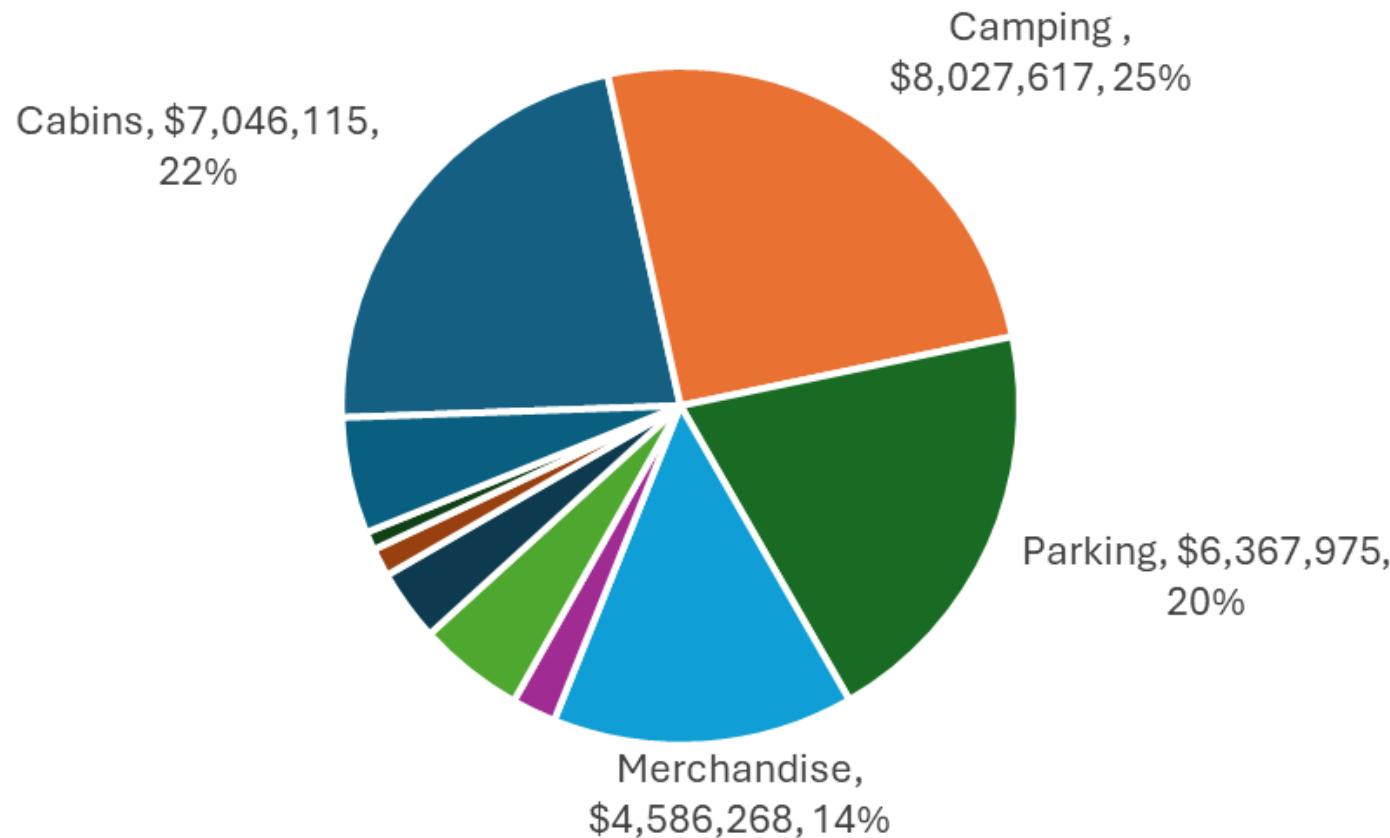
Funding Sources



State Park Revenue & Revenue Optimization

NGF Sources

Division of State Parks - Operating Funding



State Park Revenue & Revenue Optimization

NGF Sources

General Fund	Amount	% of Total Budget	% of GF Budget
	\$36,924,264	54%	100%

Non-general Funds	Amount	% of Total Budget	% of GF Budget
Cabins	\$7,046,115	10%	22%
Camping	\$8,027,617	12%	25%
Parking	\$6,367,975	9%	20%
Merchandise	\$4,586,268	7%	14%
Swimming	\$669,918	1%	2%
Admission	\$1,614,516	2%	5%
Reservation Fees	\$1,090,341	2%	3%
Food & Bev	\$430,572	1%	1%
Rentals	\$281,597	0%	1%
Other	\$1,765,591	3%	6%
Total NGF	\$31,880,510	46%	100%

Total Budget	\$68,804,774
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State Park Revenue and Revenue Optimization

Merchandise Maximization



- **60 Retail Establishments in 44 State Parks**
- **\$4.6M in retail sales**
 - covers 7% of the state parks operating budget
- **Retail Goals:**
 - Maximize revenue generation from retail sales
 - Appropriate operation to balance customer need and regional impact
 - Utilize retail sales to support educational mission components

State Park Revenue and Revenue Optimization

Merchandise Maximization

- **Planograms & Merchandising:** Visual merchandising training (March 17, 2026) will include KPMG recommendations; planograms for each park will be developed with Retail Coordinator support.
- **Optimized SKUs:** Eliminating low sellers and reinvesting in top performers improves results; process will expand systemwide use KPMG insights
- **Online Store:** Planned 2026 launch with shirts, stickers, ornaments, and gift cards; QR code signage will direct visitors.
- **Dashboards & Training:** Inventory and sales dashboards created; additional district-wide training planned for Winter / Spring 2026
- **Tiered Procurement:** Moving towards centralized purchasing to expand statewide merchandise lines, leverage discounts, and reduce ranger workload.

Soil & Water Maintenance Projects

Priority Ranking	Dam Name	District	Estimated Cost for Rehabilitation	Current stage
1	South River Dam #19	Headwaters	\$2,900,000.00	Substantial completed
2	Leatherwood Creek Dam #5	Blue Ridge	\$14,000,000.00	Construction (summer of 2026)
3	Johns Creek Dam # 1	Mountain Castles	\$9,400,000.00	Design
4	Johns Creek Dam # 2	Mountain Castles	\$7,400,000.00	Planning
5	Leatherwood Creek Dam #2A	Blue Ridge	\$6,300,000.00	Planning (nearly complete)
6	Leatherwood Creek Dam #3	Blue Ridge	\$8,300,000.00	Planning (nearly complete)
7	Buffalo Creek Dam # 4	Piedmont	\$7,700,000.00	
8	Bush River Dam # 4B	Piedmont	\$7,500,000.00	
<i>Subtotal</i>			\$63,500,000.00	



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