



First Landing State Park
2500 Shore Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

First Landing State Park MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2010 UPDATE



Department of Conservation & Recreation
CONSERVING VIRGINIA'S NATURAL & RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

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(Reviewed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation Board on June 15, 2010 and adopted by DCR Director David A. Johnson on June 16, 2010.)

On April 26, 1607, over one hundred weary English settlers landed at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, erected a wooden cross, named the area Cape Henry, and established the first elected government in the New World. This was the first landing of the settlers in the New World, before they sailed up the James River to settle permanently at Jamestown. Even before the Englishmen arrived, the Chesapeake Indians and their predecessors, the Algonquians, used the Cape Henry headlands for hunting and fishing grounds.

In 1933, the General Assembly authorized the acquisition of lands for a park at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay. The park, originally named Seashore State Park, was opened in 1936 as one of six original parks in the Virginia State Parks System. Since 1991, estimated park attendance has exceeded one million visitors per year. People come from all over the United States, as well as other countries, to explore the unique environments of the dunes, cypress swamps, and live oak stands. Visitors take part in the environmental education program, use the almost 20 miles of trails, picnic, boat, fish, camp near the Chesapeake Bay, sunbathe on the beautiful beach, and swim in waters of the Bay.

Officially renamed First Landing State Park on April 26, 1999, to commemorate the April 1607 landing, the park consists of some 2,888 acres of beaches, dunes, maritime forests, salt marshes, and fresh water wetlands located at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The park is in the Hampton Roads Planning District, Region 23; this area is home to more than 1.4 million people. Access to the park is provided off of U.S. Route 60 (Shore Drive) in Virginia Beach.

Since First Landing State Park first opened it has been recognized as a destination area, enticing visitors from throughout the Commonwealth to come and enjoy its unique resources. The park was developed as a cooperative effort between the National Park Service and the state. The initial design and most of the original construction projects were implemented by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) before World War II. After the war, the park was a popular place to go, and during the late 1940s and early 1950s, it was being "loved to death." The entire Virginia State Park System was closed from 1954 until 1961 due to unrest related to integration, and during those years, many of the natural resources that make up the park had a chance to recover from the overuse of earlier years. The park's natural significance became widely known, and about 1500 acres of the park's natural area were designated a National Natural Landmark in 1965 because of its unique and diverse habitats and the presence of some forty

species of flora and fauna that are rare, threatened, or endangered.

Between the late 1960s and the early 1990s, some facilities were added and some use policies were altered, but basically, the park "stayed the course" established by the first master plan written over 60 years ago. The 1992 Virginia Park and Recreation Facilities Bond Act funds were used to upgrade facilities, including underground electric service, city sewer system connection, new water lines, a new restroom in the campground, a new maintenance facility, and a new residence. The Visitor Center was expanded, and the Chesapeake Bay Center, formerly known as "Big H," was created from existing buildings to provide additional administrative, concession, visitor information, and environmental education space. Most of the improvements were accomplished in existing developed areas, so there was actually no substantial expansion of the park's infrastructure.

In 1998, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) initiated a process to update the park master plan in accordance with §10.1-200.1 of the Code of Virginia. In order to ensure that the planning process included public involvement, the DCR Director invited about twenty local citizens and representatives of local government to serve on a State Park Master Plan Advisory Committee to assist in formulating recommendations for the park's future direction. Two public meetings were also held in the area to solicit public input on future park development and receive feedback on the draft proposals. After much discussion, there was general agreement that the unique natural, cultural, and historic significance of First Landing State Park should be protected and that additional development should be limited in scope.

Since adoption of the master plan in 1999, several projects have been completed. The Visitor Center was replaced in 2010, bathhouses A and B were replaced in the campground, the beach boardwalk at the Chesapeake Bay Center was replaced. In 2010, the master plan was re-visited in keeping with the requirement for five year reviews and the phased development plan updated to reflect the completion of some projects and the revised order of priorities for remaining projects.

The estimated total cost to bring First Landing State Park to the desired future condition is \$ 20,675,585.

Phased Development Plan for First Landing State Park.

Phase 1:

-Chesapeake Bay Center: Add a public restroom, appropriate night lighting and about 60 additional parking spaces west of the Center. Reconfigure the existing parking for the complex by adding an additional row of parking on the southeast side of the lot.

-Existing Campground C, G, and H dune cross-over board walks need to be either

completely renovated or replaced.

- Replace park residence number 4 with new prototype park housing.
- Repair/upgrade Cape Henry Trail from Kendall St. to the New Visitor Center.
- Reconfigure, repair and upgrade internal road network within the campground. This should include appropriate modification of park entrance to accommodate two lanes of traffic in each direction at contact station.
- Redesign and replace dump station in campground.

The total cost of Phase I: \$7,149,168

Phase 2:

- Add bollard lighting and additional landscaping around the Chesapeake Bay Center Complex.
- Construct up to five new cabins, 1-lodge, 4- three bedroom, within existing cabin area, careful site selection will be necessary.
- Renovate the 14 cinder block cabin interiors, replace porches, and add external lighting.
- Mark and fence as required approximately 3.5 miles of the Atlantic Ave. park boundary.
- Replace the 64th street restroom.
- Repair road and modify drainage structures for 64th street boat ramp. Also repair parking lot, dock, and ramp.
- Expand the meeting room in the Trail Center to a capacity of 175 persons.

Total cost of Phase II: \$12,431,016

Phase 3:

- Replace restroom in picnic area.
- Add two small 4-table picnic shelters in the picnic area proposed for location near the Chesapeake Bay Center. This will provide picnic space for people, groups visiting the center.
- Repair or replace the park's main contact station. Include a restroom in the building.
- Add a small picnic shelter in vicinity of new visitor center to enhance interpretive programs.

-Repair or replace the 64th street contact station.

Total cost of Phase III: \$1,095,401

Staffing and Operations Plan

First Landing State Park is the District I home park. As identified as part of the re-benchmarking efforts, district level staffing should include 9 positions, which would be located primarily at the home park. Presently, there is a district manager, resource specialist, and visitor services specialist. The positions yet to be established include a business manager, maintenance specialist, program support technician, programs coordinator, trail coordinator and grant coordinator. As these positions have district wide responsibilities, the only costs presented are the salaries for the existing and proposed positions. Staff support and district operational costs are either incorporated into the overall home park budget or dispersed between all the district parks.

Presently, the staffing associated with the operation and maintenance of only the park includes eight positions, a park manager, 2 chief rangers, 4 park rangers, and an office manager. One park ranger position is vacant. As part of the ongoing re-benchmarking efforts, and the strong interest in expanding the existing interpretive and educational components of the park, chief ranger–interpreter and park ranger–interpreter positions were identified as a need for the site, along with 2 additional park rangers. These positions are critical to the park operation as it exists. As the proposed phased development is completed, these positions will be even more necessary in maintaining the existing and new facilities, and in enhanced program development.

The park’s FY2010 budget is \$1,042,000 including salaries. At full build out and fully staffed to properly manage and operate the park, the budget will need to be approximately \$1,450,000, an overall increase of about 28%. (See next page)

EXISTING (FY 10)	BUDGET SHORTFALL*	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	FULL BUILD OUT
DIST STAFFING	VACANT				DIST STAFFING
District Park Mgr					District Park Mgr
Visitor Serv. Spec					Visitor Serv. Spec.
Resource Spec.					Resource Spec.
	Maintenance Spec				Maintenance Spec
	Business Manager				Business Manager
	Program Support Tech.				Program Support Tech.
	Programs Coord.				Programs Coord.
	Trail Coordinator				Trail Coordinator
	Grant Coordinator				Grant Coordinator
DIST SALARY TOTAL					DIST SALARY TOTAL
\$208,000	\$293,000				\$501,000
PARK STAFFING	VACANT				PARK STAFFING
Park Manager					Park Manager
Chief Ranger (2)					Chief Ranger (2)
	Chief Ranger – Interp.				Chief Ranger – Interp.
Park Ranger (4)	Park Ranger (3)				Park Ranger (7)
Office Manager					Office Manager
	Park Ranger – Interp.				Park Ranger – Interp.
SALARY TOTAL					SALARY TOTAL
\$409,000	\$210,000				\$619,000
WAGE TOTAL	REDUCTION				WAGE TOTAL
\$374,000	--	\$3,000	\$40,000	\$21,000	\$438,000
OTPS TOTAL					OTPS TOTAL
\$259,000	\$83,000	\$1,000	\$40,000	\$10,000	\$393,000
TOTAL BUDGET** (FY10 dollars)					TOTAL BUDGET** (FY10 dollars)
\$1,042,000	\$293,000	\$4,000	\$80,000	\$31,000	\$1,450,000

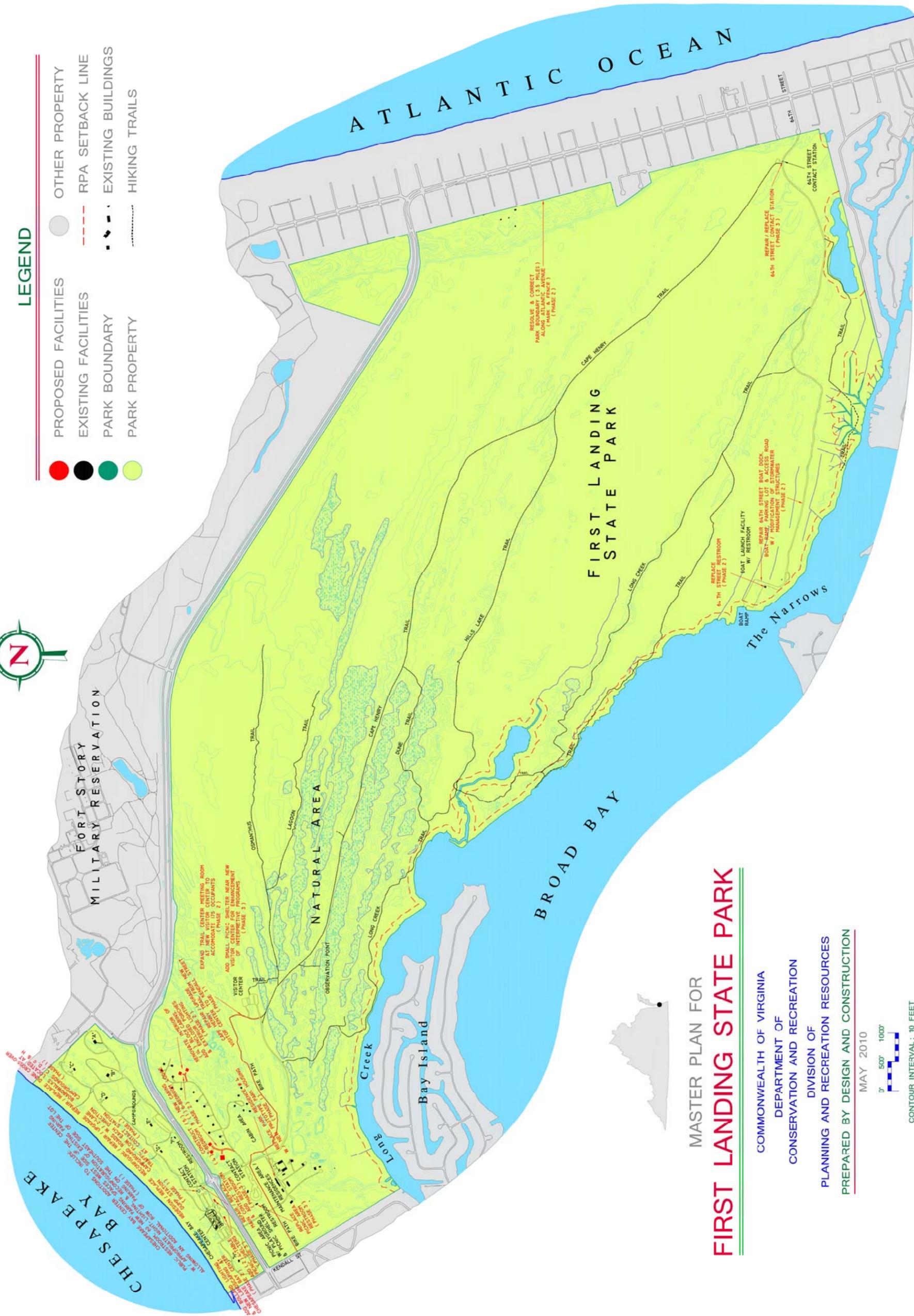
NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY10 budget projections.

* Budget Shortfall represents positions that were frozen or needed as part of the re-benchmarking effort, and operating costs reduced due to state wide budget reductions.

**Total Budget amount does not include salaries specific to district positions.



- LEGEND**
- PROPOSED FACILITIES
 - EXISTING FACILITIES
 - PARK BOUNDARY
 - PARK PROPERTY
 - OTHER PROPERTY
 - RPA SETBACK LINE
 - EXISTING BUILDINGS
 - HIKING TRAILS



MASTER PLAN FOR
FIRST LANDING STATE PARK

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
DIVISION OF
PLANNING AND RECREATION RESOURCES
PREPARED BY DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

MAY 2010
0' 500' 1000'
CONTOUR INTERVAL: 10 FEET