

2023

Go Green With Us Guidelines



T E N N E S S E E
State Parks

GO GREEN WITH US

Go Green
Steering Committee
January 2023

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Go Green With Us to protect and preserve our State Parks through resource conservation, sustainable operations, and recycling.

January 2023

GoGreen With Us Overview

The Go Green With Us Program is a partnership between TN State Parks and citizens to help protect and preserve our State Parks through resource conservation, sustainable operations, and recycling. This program helps incorporate sustainable operations throughout our TN State Park system and provide more earth friendly options for park guests such as recycling, water bottle filling stations, earth-friendly merchandise, and environmentally friendly lodging and recreational opportunities. The Go Green With Us program helps every Tennessee State Park take positive steps to preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, protect land and water resources, and reduce waste. Go Green With Us began in January 2015 as a recycling initiative for Tennessee State Parks. In 2017, members of the Go Green With Us Committee (including representatives from TN State Parks, Office of Policy & Sustainable Practices, and other TDEC programs) compiled this guide to outline the many actions staff and visitors can take to effectively incorporate environmental sustainability into all aspects of park management.

The 9 sustainability categories in this guide include: **Education and Outreach, Energy Efficiency, Green Offices, Habitat and Resource Protection, Guest Services, Maintenance Procedures, Recycling and Waste, Transportation and Water Conservation.**

In the first year the TSP Go Green Guidelines were launched (2017-18), it was expected that all parks would begin to implement the guidelines as they were able. Each park's Go Green representative is responsible to help coordinate the park's implementation of the guidelines and for reporting those actions. However, improvements in sustainability should continue to be a park-wide effort and these efforts should be included in the monthly park manager's report.

We have reviewed the guidelines to make them more concise, to incorporate feedback from park staff, and to ensure that the prerequisites are feasible for parks. For prerequisites that do not apply because the facility or operation literally does not exist, those points will be automatically applied and not be held against those parks. The only exception to this is the Guest Services category in which parks will only be awarded points in applicable categories. In general, the guidelines are very inclusive and provide opportunities for all parks to excel in their preservation and conservation initiatives.

We have made some exciting updates to the program this year. These include:

1. In the Guest Services category, sustainability efforts for groups using park facilities have been broken down into individual guidelines so the parks have more opportunities to earn points.

2. For the Habitat and Resource Protection category, we have removed honeybee keeping as a standalone Go Green activity. However, there are additional opportunities to earn points for stewarding our native pollinators. We have also added a guideline regarding helping improve bat habitat.
3. Lastly, several additions were made in the Recycling and Waste category. These additions include reduced use of single use plastic within the parks and promotion of zero waste purchasing practices.

Parks are required to implement the basic prerequisites in each category that are applicable to the park. For questions or assistance regarding this initiative please contact TSP.GoGreen@tn.gov.

Together, we can become a greener and more environmentally responsible park system and stewards of natural resources. It takes cooperation from all staff members and stakeholders to make this plan a success and to reach our Go Green goal of protecting and preserving our State Parks through resource conservation, sustainable operations, and recycling. Thank you for your support of this initiative.

Go Green With Us Recognition

The annual digital Go Green checklist to be used as parks' application tool will be released in late December or early January. The Go Green With Us Committee will review points for all submitted documentation and conduct on-site audits to confirm the acquired recognition level. Parks must complete the application annually to assess activities for each calendar year. As parks implement more Go Green Guidelines over time, they climb the tiers of sustainability.

Upon reaching a level of sustainability recognition as part of the Go Green With Us program, parks will receive a Go Green With Us certificate each year to display inside the park office. The certificate will display the park's current level of achievement on its sustainability journey. Please display the certificate at the park office so the public can view it. This information is also shared on each park's Go Green webpage and the TSP Go Green With Us webpage at <https://tnstateparks.com/about/go-green-with-us>.

There are four tiers of sustainability recognition:

1. Bronze (prerequisite level)
2. Silver
3. Gold
4. Platinum (highest level)

Go Green With Us Points Breakdown

Because there are different types and sizes of parks with different levels of opportunities to improve sustainability, a sliding scale has been created for the sustainability tiers.

	Type A	Type B	Type C
Bronze	90	110	130
Silver	150	170	205
Gold	210	240	280
Platinum	270	310	355

Go Green With Us Park Categories

Type A

Bicentennial Capitol Mall
 Big Cypress Tree
 Burgess Falls
 Cordell Hull Birthplace
 Cumberland Trail
 Cummins Falls
 Dunbar Cave
 Fort Loudoun
 Harpeth River
 Johnsonville
 Long Hunter
 Port Royal
 Radnor Lake
 Red Clay
 Rocky Fork
 Sgt. Alvin C. York
 Seven Islands
 Sycamore Shoals

Type B

Big Ridge
 Bledsoe Creek
 Big Hill Pond
 Booker T. Washington
 Cedars of Lebanon
 Chickasaw
 Cove Lake
 David Crockett Birthplace
 Edgar Evins
 Fort Pillow
 Frozen Head
 Hiwassee-Ocoee Rivers
 Indian Mountain
 Meeman Shelby Forest
 Mousetail Landing
 Nathan Bedford Forrest
 Norris Dam
 Old Stone Fort
 Panther Creek
 Pickett
 Pinson Mounds
 Reelfoot Lake
 Rock Island
 Roan Mountain
 South Cumberland
 Standing Stone
 T.O. Fuller

Type C

Cumberland Mountain
 David Crockett
 Fall Creek Falls
 Harrison Bay
 Henry Horton
 Montgomery Bell
 Natchez Trace
 Paris Landing
 Pickwick Landing
 Tims Ford
 Warriors' Path

Go Green With Us Longevity

The Tennessee State Parks Go Green With Us program grows each year and adapts to changes in trends, technology, and best practices. The Go Green park representatives, park staff, and management have the opportunity to help to improve the program as we review the guidelines annually and accept feedback. Annual review and update begin after the Recognition Awards in April.

Many thanks to everyone in the parks who implement these guidelines and work every day to make our parks more environmentally friendly and sustainable. Without your efforts, we would not be able to reach our core mission of resource protection.

Abundant thanks to the many people on the Go Green Steering Committee who helped create and compile the Go Green Guidelines for Tennessee State Parks. Thank you to everyone who helped to make Go Green With Us a reality.

In 2023, a Go Green Executive Committee is being instituted to further guide the program and assist to incorporate guidance from the following divisions within TN State Parks and the Division of Parks and Conservation: Park Operations, Hospitality, Interpretive Programs & Education, Administration, Facilities Management, GIS, Marketing, and Natural Areas.

Go Green With Us is a joint initiative within the TN Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) between TN State Parks and the Office of Sustainable Practices. Tennessee State Parks is appreciative of support from all divisions within TDEC including the Commissioner's Office, the Office of External Affairs, the Office of Energy Programs, the Division of Solid Waste Management, as well as external groups including the TN Recycling Coalition, and others.



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TN State Parks - Go Green With Us Category 1: **Education and Outreach**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Increased visitors through promotion of ecotourism at the park
- Labor cost decreased through litter education/less pickup required
- Decrease waste disposal fees by diversion to recycling
- Increased opportunity for partnerships/sponsorships in the community

Benefits:

- Environmentally conscious park staff/visitors will promote healthy lifestyles and reduced environmental footprint
- Visitors' assistance with the Go Green activities inside the park and in their homes
- Increased recycling results and reduction in waste
- Increased awareness of sustainable lifestyles reduces demand on county and municipal services statewide

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

1. Post current Go Green With Us recognition level framed certificate in park visitor's center where easily visible to the public. (1 pt)*
2. Find two strategic locations within the park such as kiosks or bulletin boards to place the Go Green informational sign. (2 pts)*
3. Have a standing item to discuss *Go Green* activities at all routine staff meetings. (1 pt)*
4. Refer to the Go Green With Us Newsletter for monthly Go Green topics during staff meetings. Provide a copy of a Go Green topic outline presented at 1 staff meeting during the year. (2 pts)
5. Create a new interpretive program focusing on a *Go Green/sustainability/conservation* topic for the general public. (1 pt)* Provide 1 program outline to TSP GoGreen/ Auditor (2 pts)
6. Utilize existing Go Green projects (such as recycling efforts, composting, community/pollinator gardens, etc.) as tangibles supporting sustainability themes/TSP mission statement in relevant interpretive programming. (1 pt)*
7. Maintain a well-organized and regularly inventoried programming supply closet to encourage re-use of supplies and avoid unnecessary re-purchases. (1 pt)*
8. Repurpose existing materials for programming projects (i.e. scrap lumber for bird feeder/bird box craft programs, old office binders for nature journal or make-your-own field guide projects, etc.) (1 pt)

9. Promote Cycling, EVs, or Alternative Transportation options in the park through Social Media, Virtual Programs, and/or in-person Park Programs. For example, bike safety program with Go Green message. (2 pts)
10. Offer a historic preservation-themed program. This could include a specialized tour or informational visit that focuses on one of the park's historic resources and the way(s) in which that resource's preservation aligns with ongoing sustainability efforts. This will help convey to the public that TSP system is a steward of the state's natural and historic assets, and that sustainability and preservation often align. (1 pt)
11. Develop a partnership with a local group, entity, or community organization and partner with them to host a *Go Green*, sustainable, or environmental event or program. (1 pt)
12. Partner with the park Friends Group, Friends of State Parks or the TN State Parks Conservancy to host a Go Green, sustainable, or environmental event or program. (1 pt)
13. Generate a monthly Facebook post highlighting a Go Green/sustainability/historic preservation activity or achievement in the park. (1 point per month: 12 totalmax)
14. Participate in a *Go Green* SIGNATURE RECOGNITION DAY. This highly recommended programming occurs once per quarter. (2 points per program, up to 8 pts total; participation in 1 GG Signature Recognition Day is required annually) *

14.1 **March** – Earth Hour – last Saturday of March

14.2 **April** – Earth Day – April 22

14.3 **June** – National Pollinator Week – last full week of June

14.4 **November** – America Recycles Day – Nov. 15

15. Support the recommended themed day/week/month identified with a program or awareness activity (other than the GG Signature events). (1 point per program, up to 16 pts total).

15.1 **January**: Radon Action Month, National Bird Day – January 5

15.2 **February**: World Wetlands Day - Feb. 2

15.3 **March**: Great American Cleanup, Tennessee Arbor Day – 1st Friday in March

15.4 **April**: International Dark Sky Week – April 17-23

15.5 **May**: International Migratory Bird Day – 2nd Saturday in May, Endangered Species Day – 3rd Friday in May, Historic Preservation Month

15.6 **June**: National Trails Day- First Saturday in June

15.7 **July**: River/Lake/Stream Clean-Up Month

15.8 **August**: National Honey Bee Day – 3rd Saturday in August

15.9 **September**: National Public Lands Day – 4th Saturday of Sept., World Rivers Day – 4th Sunday of Sept.

15.10 **October**: National Butterfly and Hummingbird Day - Oct. 3, Zero Waste Day TN – Oct. 27

15.11 **December:** Wildlife Conservation Day - Dec 9th

16. Host an environmental education workshop for formal or informal educators using Project Learning Tree, Project WET, or Project Wild curriculums. (2 pts)
17. Teach an environmental education workshop for families/children/general public which model how to implement sustainable practices at home. (2 pts)
18. Partner with the Office of Sustainable Practices or a local organization to host an event or provide interpretive or informational programming about food insecurity. Examples include being a Summer Feeding location, hosting a non-perishable food drive, or providing an educational awareness demonstration. (2 pts)
19. Create and maintain an active community or partnership garden. Garden can be pollinator garden or corridor, kitchen or herb garden, xeriscape garden, and/or native plant garden. (3 pts)
20. Maintain log of hours for volunteer and community sustainability work in the park. This can be for cleanups, invasive plant removal, species monitoring, etc. (25 hours – 1 pt, 50 hours – 2 pts, 75 hours – 3 pts, 100 hours or greater – 4 pts)
21. Incorporate a park stewardship project into Junior Ranger Camp. Project(s) should incorporate messaging that will promote a more sustainable way of living once the Junior Rangers go back home. (1 pt)
22. Re-use “trash” materials for kid’s craft programs (i.e. soda bottles, coffee canisters, paper towel rolls, etc.) and incorporate a recycling/sustainability message in the program theme statement and goals (1 pt)
23. Incorporate stream clean-up activities in all stream ecology/water quality programs and include sustainability messaging in program theme statements and goals (1 pt)
24. Offer “Don’t Move Firewood” educational programs in park campgrounds as part of enforcement of TSP firewood policy (1 pt)
25. Create a Go Green Corner at one contact location within the park (Visitor Center, Lodge, Nature Center, Museum, etc.). Include information regarding environmental stewardship, conservation (past/present/future), and calls to action that are park specific. (3 pts)
26. Wildcard Activity – any sustainability action related to this Education and Outreach category that is not listed above. (2 pts)

(9 Points Required. Up to 71 Points.)

* Prerequisite - must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Category 2: **Energy Efficiency**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Park utility bills lowered due to decreased electricity usage
- New lighting technologies such as light-emitting diodes (LEDs) can reduce the energy use required for lighting by 50 to 75 percent
- Energy Cap software provides tracking of energy use to document savings
- Streamlined planning for historic resources that incorporates sustainability and preservation into the same action(s) and helps prevent costly mistakes

Benefits:

In addition to cost savings, energy efficiency provides the following:

- Psychological benefits from using natural lighting sources
- Healthier, better-ventilated buildings with consistent temperature control
- Fresh and safe food in more efficient refrigerators
- Many sustainability actions have dual benefits of energy efficiency and preservation of historic asset. For example, repairing historic windows instead of replacing them with vinyl protects a historic feature and thus the resource's authenticity; preserves the building's "embedded energy"; repair vs. vinyl replacement largely eliminates waste disposal burden in the short and long term; and saves energy needed to manufacture new window
- Noise reduction in newer motors (equipment). A study by Rocky Mountain Institute showed that in efficient buildings, labor productivity rises by 6-16% due to the office being quieter, more comfortable, and with better ventilation and lighting

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Lighting (Up to 23 points)

1. Install energy saving LEDs with appropriate light output, especially in high-traffic areas to save the most on energy costs. (1 pt)*
2. Place Turn Off/Save Energy light switch stickers or mini signs by all light switches in offices, meeting rooms, common rooms, public spaces and work spaces. (2 pts)*
3. Turn off lights when not needed. (1 pt)*
4. Turn off exhibit lights when they are not needed to help protect artifacts and historic interiors from fading, preserve the artifact/interior finish, decrease maintenance/repair costs, and save energy. (1 pt)*
5. Ensure all outdoor lighting is off during daylight hours. (1 pt)*
6. Take advantage of natural light when possible and don't turn on lighting. (1 pt)
7. Use occupancy / motion sensors when possible for indoor lighting. These should be located in appropriate areas per need. (1 pt)
8. Use photocell sensors and/or timers for outdoor lights when possible. These should be located in appropriate areas per need. (1 pt)

9. Evaluate facility outdoor lighting annually for dark sky compliance and energy savings. Update, replace, or eliminate lighting fixtures where appropriate. Apply the “5 Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting.” (2 pts)*
10. When selecting outdoor lighting throughout the park, consider light pollution and energy waste, and choose lighting fixtures that cast light downward only. Consult the International Dark-Sky Association for lighting recommendations. <http://darksky.org/lighting/lighting-basics/> (2 pts)
11. Install solar-powered lights or other solar-powered mechanisms in appropriate areas. (2 pts)
12. Install a 2+ kW solar installation in the park. (5 pts)
13. Install solar powered LED lighting and motion sensors in public restroom and remove building from the electrical grid. (2 pts)
14. Adjust hanging height of suspended fixtures closer to floor level to gain the most efficient lighting in work areas such as maintenance shops and office spaces. (1 pt)

Heating and Cooling (Up to 14 points)

15. Up to 50% of parks’ utility bills are inclusive of heating and cooling. Perform a monthly review of electricity and/or gas bill using EnergyCAP software. These reviews will assist with detecting spikes and anomalies and their associated costs. It will also confirm that the park is being billed correctly for its electricity usage. (1 pt)*
16. For ceiling fans, direct the blades to go clockwise in the winter and counterclockwise in the summer to improve air flow and temperature seasonally. For more info go to: <https://www.thesimpledollar.com/ceiling-fan-hacks-save-big-on-energy-use/> (1 pt)*
17. Turn down the thermostat to 68 degrees during the day and 58-60 degrees at night during cooler months. (If you have a heat pump, turn the thermostat down no more than three degrees at night.) In warm weather, set your heat pump or air conditioning thermostat to 75 degrees in occupied areas, and 80 degrees in unoccupied areas. Maintaining a constant temperature rather than fluctuations is also ideal for historic artifacts and interiors. <http://energy.gov/energysaver/thermostats> (1 pt)*
18. Install smart / programmable thermostats that will adjust the temperature automatically for occupied versus unoccupied areas. (3 pt)
19. Plant trees to provide shade on the sunniest sides of buildings—especially on windows that face west or south. (1 pt)
20. Heat the building in winter with help from the sun by leaving window shades or blinds open during the day and close window coverings at night to help keep the heat in. (1 pt)
21. Install insulated curtains and shades to help regulate temperature. (1 pt)
22. Install energy efficient window film on south and west facing windows to improve building envelop and energy efficiency. (2 pts)
23. Restore and repair operable windows/transoms, etc. to encourage airflow in appropriate months or in buildings with no HVAC. (1 pt)
24. Conduct evaluation of rooms that are being conditioned to determine need of air conditioning. Either close off rooms that are not in use and adjust the temperature in those rooms, and/or,

where possible, do not condition rooms that do not need to be conditioned, thereby reducing the thermal envelope. (2 pts)

Appliances and Electronics (Up to 10 points)

25. When upgrading or replacing appliances, make sure to use EnergySTAR rated or equally energy efficient models. (1 pt)*
26. Set domestic hot water heater temperatures at 120° F unless medical, instructional, research, or other special requirements necessitate the use of other temperatures. (1 pt)*
27. Unplug battery chargers for power tools, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, and other devices when not in use (they use energy even when they're not actively charging anything). (1 pt)*
28. Group printers, monitors, speakers and other computer accessories on easily accessible power strips that can be switched off when away from the desk overnight. (1 pt)*
29. Add items to the staff freezer and refrigerator if they're nearly empty to help them stay cold – full units perform better than empty ones. An easy way to fill empty space is to add plastic containers filled with water. (1 pt)*
30. Check to make sure freezer and refrigerator seals are tight. To test the seals, close the door on a dollar bill and try to pull it out – it should be difficult to remove if the seals are as tight as they should be. (1 pt)*
31. Evaluate each point of use for hot water needs and determine if an alternative water heater can be installed including CO2, tank-less, and solar thermal for lowest life cycle cost. (1 pt)
32. Use laptop computers where possible since they consume 80% less energy than desktop computers. (1 pt)
33. Recycle older, unused fridges or freezers which are not energy efficient and can cost more money than expected to keep running. (1 pt)
34. Remove and properly dispose of all miniature refrigerators if possible. Mini refrigerators are highly inefficient. If not possible to dispose of, keep unplugged when not in use for long periods of time, or turn temperature setting down in between uses. (1 pt)

Weatherization (Up to 6 points)

35. Install insulation behind outlets and switch plates on exterior wall switches to prevent air loss and infiltration. (1 pt)*
36. Add weather stripping to drafty doors and windows. On historic structures use appropriate material. (1 pt)*
37. Professionally seal and caulk small holes and cracks around windows, ducts, pipes, exhaust fans, vents, sink and bathtub drains, fireplace and under countertops. (2 pts)
38. Close exterior storm windows during colder months or install simple interior storm window kits if none are present. (1 pt)
39. Restore and repair wooden window sashes and loose glazing to prevent energy loss. (1 pt)

40. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainability action related to this Energy Efficiency category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(19 Points Required. Up to 53 Points.)

* Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Category 3: **Green Offices**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Fewer purchases by more efficient use of supplies (paper, ink, file storage)
- Cost savings through reduced energy use

Benefits:

- Supports TDEC's mission to be better environmental stewards
- Promotes wise and efficient use of resources
- Encourages clean and organized workspace for staff and visitors

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Energy Efficiency (Up to 7 Points)

1. Use power saving settings on computers (1 pt)*
2. Unplug devices that you can when not in use to reduce phantom power use (1 pt)*
3. Keep the temperature in the office appropriate for the season. The optimum temperature for summer is about 75 degrees. The optimum temperature for winter is about 68 degrees. Dress appropriately to be comfortable in the office while remaining dress code compliant. (1 pt)*
4. Always purchase Energy Star or equally energy efficient appliances (1 pt)*
5. Place Turn Off/Save Energy light switch stickers on switches for staff and guest reminders to turn off lights (1 pt)*
6. Install and use timers or occupancy sensors on lights (1 pt)
7. Use energy efficient LED bulbs (1 pt)

Supplies (Up to 3 Points)

8. When purchasing office paper and other paper supplies, choose recycled products. Always look for office paper with post-consumer recycled content (2 pts)
9. When purchasing cleaning supplies, choose environmentally friendly supplies that are biodegradable and have safe ingredients (1 pt)

Miscellaneous (Up to 9 points)

11. When printing, use both sides of paper (1 pt)*
12. Go digital as much as possible by avoiding printing documents that can be stored or distributed digitally. Use e-mail instead of sending paper memos and faxing documents. (1 pt)*
13. Bring your own mug to work or invest in permanent dishes and cutlery for the office. Avoid using disposable items (1 pt)
14. Add green plants to your office environment. Plants can boost morale and help to improve indoor air quality (1 pt)

15. Instead of throwing scrap paper away, use it for taking notes (1 pt)
16. Use reusable paper clips instead of staples (1 pt)
17. Maintain or install a butterfly or pollinator garden adjacent to your office (1 pt)
18. Add a staff compost pile outside the office for compostable kitchen or garden waste (2 pts)

Water Use (Up to 7 Points)

19. Report drips in toilets, sinks, and water fountains immediately (1 pt)*
20. Use low flow toilets (2 pts)
21. Add a water bottle filling station for your office (3 pts)

Office Recycling (Up to 12 Points)

22. Provide recycling for office paper, and other items that are recyclable in your area (such as plastic, paper, cardboard, glass, aluminum, and steel) (1 pt)*
23. Recycle used ink cartridges (Staples, Office Depot, other office stores or mail in) (2 pts)*
24. Provide reuse/recycling for used batteries, chargers, and electronics (2 pts)
25. Provide recycling for used plastic bags. Wal-Mart, Kroger, and many other grocery stores accept used plastic bags. Please determine a drop-off location near your park. Avoid plastic bags when possible by using reusable bags instead (1 pt)
26. Provide a "Green Cube" or recycling collection area in the office to collect infrequent items that are recyclable, re-useable, or able to be donated. Such items include: batteries, hangers, clothing, office supplies, etc. (3 pts)
27. Remove individual trash cans from desks. Locate trash and recycling bins in a central location.(1 pt)
28. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainable action related to the Green Offices category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(11 Points Required. Up to 35 Points.)

* Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned

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Category 4: **Guest Services**

This expansive guideline covers: Lodges, Cabins, Campgrounds, Group Camps, Conference Centers, Meeting Spaces, Gift Shops, Golf Courses, and Marinas. Please implement items that are applicable to your park. Do not worry about guidelines that do not apply. This is the only category that parks can receive points in each area without achieving all prerequisites.

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Increased occupancy due to an improved public image
- Decreased waste costs through waste diversion (fewer dumpsters) and recycling
- Reduced utility bills as a result of energy and water conservation efforts
- Trash costs will decrease as diverting and composting food waste will result in less trash and fewer dumpster pick-ups
- Supply costs will decrease due to fewer wasted supplies by guests such as straws, napkins, lemons, etc.
- Better menu planning and portioning will help control monthly food costs

Benefits:

- Promote environmentally conscious park staff and visitors who lead healthy lifestyles and have smaller environmental footprints
- Increased community involvement in Go Green topics outside the park
- Attracting new parks visitors and partners through ecotourism
- Increased recycling while reducing waste
- Reduction of waste discarded to municipal solid waste. Food waste comprises 21% of all discarded municipal waste
- Production of compost which is a valuable product that can be used on the park to supplement garden and other soils

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

General Guest Services (Up to 50 Points)

1. Develop and actively promote a "Green Events Package" for guests renting any type of amenity such as conference rooms, restaurant space, picnic area, etc. Green Events Package" should include waste-free and eco-friendly options for guests (2 pts)
2. Develop and implement a Green Purchasing Policy where park actively pursues and purchases from providers that produce, package, and provide zero waste, recycled-content, or locally produced sustainable products (2 pts)
3. Practice "green cleaning" throughout hospitality operations. Use chemical-free, refillable, and non-toxic cleaning materials. Use reusable cloths instead of disposable towels where able to reduce waste. (2 pts)
4. Utilize EnergyCAP program to monitor energy and water usage and track savings from equipment upgrades. (1 pt)

5. Include park-specific Go Green information in confirmation emails of cabin and lodge room rentals, conference room bookings, restaurant events, group camp, picnic shelter, weddings, and any other amenity rental. Go Green information should include recycling availability and information for proper sorting and disposal, refillable water station locations, green laundering options, sustainable restaurant options, etc. (2 pts)
6. Maintain the [Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program](#) certification. (2 pts)*
7. Maintain the [Groundwater Guardian Green Program](#) certification. (2 pts)*
8. Earn and maintain the [TVA Clean Marina](#) certification. (2 pts)*
9. Review guest facilities' outdoor lighting annually for dark sky compliance and energy savings. Apply the "5 Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting." (2 pts)*
10. When selecting outdoor lighting throughout guest facilities, consider light pollution and energy waste, and choose lighting fixtures that cast light downward only. Consult the International Dark-Sky Association for lighting recommendations. <http://darksky.org/lighting/lighting-basics/> (2 pts)
11. Ensure soap and shampoo products are made in U.S.A. and are sustainably produced and packaged. (1 pt)*
12. Provide refillable soap, shampoo, and other toiletry options instead of single use disposable options in lodge rooms. (2 pts)
13. Provide easily accessible recycling for guests at all lodges, conference centers and meeting spaces. It is only necessary to provide recycling for what your county currently accepts. (2 pts)*
14. Provide general recycling locations for available recycling options to cabin guests. (1 pt)*
15. Provide recycling bins for available recycling options inside cabins. (2pt)
16. Have recycling bins available on each floor of Lodges if multiple floors. (1pt)*
17. Display proper signage in a visible location inside Cabin and Lodge rooms to inform guests on accepted recyclables and to direct guests to the closest recycling areas in the park. (1pt)*
18. Limit trash can placement in cabins and Lodge rooms to kitchen and bathrooms to minimize plastic waste and staff maintenance time. (1pt)
19. Utilize 'optional linen programs' to minimize the replacement and laundering of linens. (1 pt)*
20. Dry two or more loads in a row when doing laundry to take advantage of the heat that's still in the dryer from previous loads. (1pt)
21. Clean lint filters after drying each load of clothes. (1 pt)*
22. Implement temperature guidelines (68 in winter, 75 in summer) within all rentable facilities to minimize excess energy usage through HVAC use. (1 pt)*
23. Group Lodge guests on to central floors to minimize HVAC use during 'off season' and slower volume times. (1 pt)
24. Adjust conference and meeting space lighting and temperature settings to minimize energy usage when not in use while maintaining an ambient temperature that will not require a sustained energy spike to bring it to user comfort levels. Suggested temperature: 68 degrees in winter, 75 in summer (1pt)

25. Set cabin refrigerators to lowest energy settings during off season. (1 pt)
26. Group electronics on easily accessible power strips that can be switched off when facility is not in use or when the electronics are not in use. (1 pt)
27. Install motion sensor lighting in all areas that consistently have 'down time' such as restrooms, linen closets, storage areas, etc. (2 pts)
28. For hospitality operations of lodges, marinas, restaurants, and golf courses only: Replace old, larger fixtures with low-volume or pressurized toilets, urinals, faucets, and showerheads that are rated with flow rates at least as stringent as:
 - a) Toilets – 1.28 gpf maximum- consider dual flush
 - b) Urinals – 0.125 gpf maximum
 - c) Bathroom Faucets – 0.5 gpm maximum
 - d) Kitchen Faucets – 1.8 gpm maximum
 - e) Showers – 1.5 gpm maximum
 - f) Pre-rinse kitchen spray valves – 1.6 gpm maximum
 (1 pt per category when majority of fixtures meet low-volume standard. Up to 6 pts total)
29. Close fireplace and wood stove dampers when not in use, after waiting until several hours after the fire is out and the ashes are cold. (1 pt)
30. Educate all park staff in operations (Golf, Marina, Restaurant, Lodge, etc.) on proper recycling methods, refreshing their knowledge with a Go Green annual training. (1 pt)*
31. Provide recycling to boaters and guests at Marinas. (1 pt)*
32. Provide recycling at cart drop-off area and club house at Golf Courses. (1 pt)*

Sustainable Restaurant and Snack Bar Practices (Up to 24 Points)

33. Source local foods as much as possible. (2 pt)*
34. Only turn on lights and equipment in areas that are occupied. (1 pt)*
35. Install occupancy/sensor lights in freezers and storerooms, where possible. (1 pt)*
36. Do not serve complimentary straws with drinks, but instead verbally offer them to guests and provide upon request. (1 pt)*
37. Verbally offer additional items, such as lemons, extra napkins, individually packaged condiments, etc., to guests before placing them on the table. (1 pt)*
38. Train hospitality staff to ask guest if they would like water while dining instead of automatically bringing it to tables as well as at catered events. (1 pt)*
39. Consider adding dimmable bulbs to dining rooms when transitioning to new lighting. (2 pts)
40. Recycle all metal cans, cardboard, and recyclable packaging at the restaurant. (2 pts)*
41. Participate in the EPA's Food Recovery Challenge through diversion, donation and composting. (Up to total of 15 Pts)

Divert

- Use all methods described in the Food Recovery Challenge to divert food waste through methods of repurposing and proper preparations (5 pts)

Donate

- Strive for all edible food waste to be consumed by partnering with local food banks, churches, farms, or other non-profit entities, when deemed appropriate by management (3 pts)

Compost

- Find a place to compost appropriate food waste (food scraps, coffee grounds and tea bags) on site and maintain composting program (less than two yd³ piles receives 3 pts, two yd³ piles or larger receives 5 pts)
- Accept compostable materials from trusted outside sources (2 pts)

Gift Shops (Up to 6 pts)

42. Use paper bags (not plastic) for gift shop purchases. Always ask customer if they need a bag, and only provide one if needed. (1 pt)*
43. Offer locally sourced or made items for sale. (1 pt)*
44. Offer environmentally preferred and reusable products for sale (such as shopping bags, utensil sets, mess kits, straws, water bottles, garments made with organic or recycled materials, etc.) (1 pt)
45. Offer electronic receipt instead of paper receipt. (1 pt)
46. Develop and implement a Green Purchasing *Policy* where park gift shop actively pursues and purchases from providers that provide minimal packaging, zero waste, recycled content, or locally produced sustainable products. (Show policy to auditor) (2 pts)

Campgrounds (Up to 15 Pts) SPECIAL NOTE: Campground Parks that achieve campground guidelines 1- 8 below will receive the TSP Green Campground Recognition

47. Place educational signs at campgrounds to alert campers about law to not burn trash in fire rings and the environmental consequences. Actively educate guests during rounds. (2pts)
48. Remove individual trash cans from each campsite to make park campground trash can- free to cut down on plastic bag use and make more efficient use of staff time. Instead of individual trashcans, place centralized dumpsters or waste receptacles. (2 pts)*
49. Utilize reusable campsite markers instead of printed ones. (1 pt)
50. Provide clearly labeled and easily accessible recycling receptacles in the campground for campers. (1 pt)*
51. Recycling bags are offered and available for guests. (1 pt)
52. Sell certified heat-treated firewood (or other approved firewood) at campground. (1 pt)*
53. Water bottle filling station is available in campground. (1 pt)
54. Camp store sells reusable items such as plates, cups, cutlery, instead of disposables.(1 pt)
55. Offer locally sourced or made items for sale at camp store. (1 pt)
56. Place Pet Waste educational flyers at campgrounds to educate guests about the importance of picking up after pets. (1 pt)
57. Earn and maintain TVA Camp-Right designation. (3 pts)

Group Camps (Up to 8 Pts)

58. Place proper signage in group camp areas to inform guests how to properly sort and dispose of recyclables and trash and where to place them when they leave if necessary. (1 pt)
59. Place educational energy efficiency signage in group camps to remind guests to turn off lights and use appliances wisely. (1 pt)
60. Put up educational signs at group camps to alert group campers about law to not burn trash in fire rings and the environmental consequences. (1 pt)
61. Designate centralized trash and waste locations to cut down on plastic bag use and make more efficient use of staff time. (1 pt)
62. Recycling bins are available and easily accessible for guests at the group camps. (1 pt)*
63. Park sells certified heat-treated firewood (or other approved firewood) for group camp guests. (1 pt)
64. Water bottle filling station is available to group camp guests. (1 pt)

65. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainable action related to the Guest Services category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(35 Points Required. Up to 105 Points.)

Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

TN State Parks - Go Green With Us

Category 5: **Habitat and Resource Protection**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Thorough proactive protection and management of rare, threatened, and endangered species will help prevent costs generated by fines or mitigation related to species imperilment
- Increased occupancy due to growing popularity as a wildlife and biodiversity attraction
- Increased marketing potential for ecotourism

Benefits:

- Protection of park natural resources will support the ongoing mission of preserving habitat of the native species of animals and plants
- The park and its visitors will enjoy the overall intrinsic values related to healthy native species biodiversity
- Removal of non-native species populations in state parks and natural areas improves habitat quality for native species, protects the natural heritage of Tennessee, and creates a better environment for public recreation
- Fostering pollinators will help to maintain healthy native plant communities and fruit and vegetable pollination, both locally and regionally

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Species and Habitat Conservation (Up to 51 points)

1. Be aware of the occurrence of rare, threatened, and endangered (RTE) species within the park and perform an ongoing review of the state rare plant and animal species lists that are listed on the Tennessee Division of Natural Areas website. <https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/natural-areas.html> Be aware of the occurrence of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) within the park and perform an ongoing review of the state SGCN species lists on the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) website. <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra/wildlife/action-plan.html> or <https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/twra/wildlife/action-plan/tennessee-wildlife-action-plan.html> Work with DNA to maintain knowledge of exact RTE species locations and have a plan in place for habitat protection of any RTE and SGCN species that occur on the park and implement accordingly. (2 pts)*
2. Have a plan in place to identify and remove non-native invasive species throughout their parks and implement accordingly. Share this plan with auditor. (1 pt)*
3. Implement an Iris Fund Project to re-establish native wildlife habitat, control erosion and stabilize stream banks, plant native plants and grasses to cut down on areas that need to be mowed, remove invasive exotic plants, teach park visitors about the natural history of the area, or to beautify unattractive areas with native species. (2 pts)

4. Implement and enforce TSP Firewood Policy to protect forest resources through correct signage, rack cards, and visitor contact. (1 pt)*
5. Parks with caves manage caves as outlined in the TDEC and TSP Caves Policy which includes a permitting process, waivers, clean caving documents, and adherence to the cave closure schedule. This is in place to protect caves and vulnerable cave ecosystems. (1 pt)*
6. Create or improve bat habitat in parks by any combination of these methods: leave trees with shaggy bark for bat habitat, girdle trees near appropriate foraging areas to create bark flake and habitat, cut some trees to create solar radiation on known maternity roosts, and/or install Brandenbark roosts. (2 pt)
7. Ensure herbicide, insecticide, fungicide or other pesticides are 1) used strictly in compliance with manufacturer recommendations and 2) not used near pollinator gardens, apiaries or wildlife sanctuaries. Pesticide is one of the primary threats to native species. Spot treatment as opposed to broadcast application can be used to minimize undesired impacts. Or try a natural salt-vinegar solution as an alternative <https://youtu.be/FJewFBmdQ2Q>. (1 pt)*
8. Provide an activity sheet or wildlife checklist of trees, butterflies, birds, flowers, etc. for guests to utilize as they explore the park. (1 point for each species checklist, up to 5 pts)
9. When upgrading or adding landscaping, plant native, drought-tolerant species instead of non-native species. All landscaping in TN State Parks should follow the Tennessee State Parks Design Guide – Landscaping Best Practices. (1 pt)
10. Maintain or install a pollinator or butterfly garden or meadow habitat using native plants. (1 pt)
11. Where feasible, decrease the frequency of mowing and the number of mowed areas, and adjust the timing of mowing to benefit the habitats supporting pollinators. (2 pts)
12. Use goats, sheep, or other grazing animals to control or eradicate grass and/or invasive plant species. (3 pts)
13. Have a plan in place to replace mowed areas with native plant communities or maintain former mowed areas with native plant communities and implement accordingly. This may require continued work to remove non-native invasive plants from the area. (2 pts)
14. Install and maintain Monarch Waystation (<http://monarchwatch.org/waystations/>). (2 pts)
15. Certify parts of the park as a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat areas (<http://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Certify.aspx>). (2 pts)
16. Certify gardens and spaces within the park as a TN Smart Yard ([Tennessee Smart Yards | Tennessee Smart Yards \(utk.edu\)](https://www.tn.gov/SmartYards/)). (2 pts)
17. Encourage presence of blue birds, purple martins, swifts, bats, wood ducks or other species by providing habitat boxes. (1 point per type, up to 5 pts)
18. Practice native bee stewardship on the park. Foster the protection of native bees and other pollinators through the reduced use of pesticides, fungicides, herbicides and insecticides, through the installation of bee “hotels” (<https://www.almanac.com/content/bee-houses->

[solitary-bees](#)) the planned care and release of solitary bees, and/or the restoration and maintenance of native flower gardens or meadows for spring, summer and fall blooming periods. For more native bee resources start here: <https://xerces.org/endangered-species/wild-bees> and <https://extension.psu.edu/what-can-we-do-to-encourage-native-bees> (3 pts)

19. Implement forest edge improvement for nesting, feeding, and traveling of various species of wildlife. Forest edge improvement can increase available food and cover along a forest edge by providing a variety of vegetation types and layers by allowing natural succession to occur. Adding brush piles, nest boxes, and wildlife corridors will also add habitat components along an edge resulting in a wider edge habitat providing food and cover for a variety of wildlife species. (2 pts)
20. Work with burn specialists to develop and strategically implement prescribed fire as a management tool to restore health to ecosystems that depend on fire. Prescribed burns can help minimize the spread of pest insects and disease, remove unwanted species that threaten species native to an ecosystem; and improve habitat for threatened and endangered species. (2 pts)
21. Enhance healthy waterways. This is applicable for natural and manmade bodies of water. Conduct at least one environmental cleanup along the shorelines of the water source using staff, partners, and/or volunteers. This will help to reduce pollution and its long-term impacts to aquatic plant life and all animals that use these ecosystems. (1 pt)
22. In order to protect all natural resources (water, plants, and wildlife and humans), post flyers on kiosks and bulletin boards requiring the pickup of dog feces and leashing of pets within the park. Email TSP.GoGreen@tn.gov for flyer to print. (1pt)*
23. Install dog waste removal station(s). (1 pt per station, up to 4 pts)
24. Work with researchers to foster and support approved biological or botanical projects that will support the mission of the park and the agency. Information for gaining research permits is here – <https://www.tn.gov/environment/permit-permits/permit-natural-resources/tennessee-state-parks-scientific-research-and-collecting-permit.html> (2 pts)
25. Review outdoor lighting adjacent to natural habitats annually for dark sky compliance and ecological impacts. Apply the “5 Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting.”(1pt)*

Historic Preservation (Up to 14 pts) – *this section applicable to parks with historic structures and/or historic and cultural landscapes.*

26. Windows should be inspected annually and repaired on case-by-case basis. Historic window replacement should be a last resort. If replacement is necessary, replace with similar materials, as new vinyl windows introduce an unsustainable cycle of replacement every 10 to 20 years and pose a toxic disposal burden. If maintained properly, historic, or even similarly styled new wooden windows will last much longer and can often be repaired more easily than vinyl windows, saving money in the long term and reducing future waste. (2pts)
27. Develop a preservation and/or maintenance plan for historic structures or landscapes. This must be developed in partnership with IPE Cultural Resource Management, or an outside

agency such as the Center for Historic Preservation (MTSU), or the Tennessee Historical Commission. This plan should identify historic structures and landscapes in the park, and then identify preservation needs that overlap with sustainability. These should be achievable areas of action. (4 pts)

28. Complete defined projects in the preservation plan mentioned above. Each completed project will be awarded 2 points. 4 projects max per calendar year. (2 pts each, up to 4 projects, max 8 points)

29. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainability action related to the Habitat and Resource Protection category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(8 Points Required. Up to 67 Points.)

Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

TN State Parks - Go Green With Us

Category 6: **Maintenance Procedures**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Preventative care of park tools and equipment compared to early replacement with new tools will provide tremendous cost savings
- Proper maintenance of equipment results in extended life expectancy and improved function which can reduce electricity and fuel cost
- HVAC systems typically require significant energy use but improving control and efficiency can result in big savings
- Combined effect of equipment age and dirt accumulation can reduce a facility's lighting system luminance by 25% to 50% or more

Benefits:

- Sustainable practices in daily maintenance procedures benefit both environmental and economic concerns in park operations
- Cost savings to the park along with reinforcement of the shared goal of conservation
- Support mission statement to be good stewards of our natural environment
- Maintenance staff are key partners in making Go Green With Us successful throughout the State Parks system
- Parks modeling sustainable maintenance behaviors through use of eco-friendly products and practices may positively impact guests' personal behaviors and purchasing habits

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Vehicles (Up to 3 points)

1. Develop a schedule in HIPPO to follow the recommended preventative maintenance procedures for each vehicle to ensure its efficiency and longevity. This includes changing oil at the proper intervals, ensuring tires are properly inflated and regularly rotated, performing timely engine tune ups, etc. (1 pt)*
2. Recycle used tires, oil, and other recyclable fluids from vehicles. If recycling is not an option, dispose of fluids in an approved manner. (1 pt)*
3. Follow environmentally friendly guidelines for vehicle cleaning, including: (1 pt)
 - Utilizing "green" cleaning products
 - Using low flow spray nozzles for vehicle cleaning
 - Reusable cloths for drying vehicles
 - Wash vehicles no more than once per month, or as needed
 - Wash vehicles on a permeable surface like grass or gravel. The grass or gravel will act as a natural filter, breaking down the compounds in your wash water. This will also prevent any run-off from entering the storm drains or nearby water bodies

Equipment (Up to 5 points)

4. Develop a preventative maintenance schedule in HIPPO for all equipment (mowers, trimmers, chainsaws, etc.) to ensure optimum efficiency and longevity. (2 pt)*

5. Recycle all oils and fluids from equipment. (1 pt)*
6. Evaluate usage to avoid overuse of equipment by selecting proper tools and equipment to complete tasks. Examples: Do not use a bobcat when a shovel will do the job. Do not use a mower when a hand trimmer will do the job. (1 pt)*
7. Evaluate and implement the use of equipment that utilizes alternative fuels including propane, ethanol, biodiesel, electricity and natural gas. (1 pt)

Janitorial (Up to 12 points)

8. Provide and utilize recycling for maintenance shop and janitorial staff. (1 pt)*
9. Surplus or recycle unneeded equipment and materials. (1 pt)*
10. Properly collect, store, and dispose of household hazardous waste such as fluorescent tubes, compact fluorescent bulbs, fuel additives, adhesives, pesticides, mercury thermostats, and pool chemicals. (1 pt)*
11. Provide training for facilities managers, building occupants, and maintenance staff in sustainability principles and methods. (2 pts)*
12. Purchase concentrated cleaners and utilize refillable containers to reduce plastic and packaging waste. (2 pts)
13. Utilize Green Seal certified cleaning products throughout park facilities. (1 pt)*
14. Always use the appropriate waste liner size in each can in order to reduce plastic waste. (1 pt)*
15. Use recycled content plastic liners for waste liners. These are available in both the current Grainger and Office Depot state contact. (1 pt)
16. Use HEPA filter upright vacuums. (1 pt)
17. Utilize reusable cloths for cleaning that can be laundered as needed. (1 pt)

Grounds Maintenance and Landscaping (Up to 11 points)

18. Mow turf areas at 3 to 3.5" or more. Mowing turf areas at this height results in larger, healthier root systems, which improves drought tolerance and helps suppress weeds, resulting in less water, pesticide, and fertilizer usage. Aim for a mowing height that requires mowing no more than once a week, ideally less.. (1 pt)*
19. Reduce the frequency of mowing in the lesser visited areas of the park. (1 pt)*
20. Closely monitor herbicide and pesticide use and strictly follow product guidelines. Do not spray if area is close to water, if there is a warning, or if rain is expected within 24 hours. (1 pt)*
21. Eliminate chemical herbicides and either physically remove unwanted vegetation or use environmentally friendly herbicides. (3pts)
22. Concrete washout of equipment must be conducted in designated and approved area. If there is no designated area, a washout area must be created to contain concrete which can then be disposed of properly. (1 pt)* For more info refer to:

https://tnepsc.org/TDEC_EandS_Handbook_2012_Edition4/TDEC%20EandS%20Handb

[ook%204th%20Edition.pdf](#) (Concrete washouts pg. 142.)

23. Supply wood chips and grass clippings from mowing to the park's composting effort. (1 pt)
24. To avoid over-fertilization, conduct annual soil testing to determine the need for fertility programs and amend soils with mulch and compost in place of synthetic fertilizers. (2 pts)
25. Utilize locally sourced or repurposed wood from trees that have been removed due to hazard, reused materials or recycled products for park projects such as fencing, furniture, benches, etc. (1 pt)

Building Maintenance (Up to 17 points)

26. Ensure that all building and related system maintenance and preventative maintenance is scheduled and recorded within Hippo. (2 pts)*
27. Ensure proper insulation is in place to meet Energy Star insulation recommendations. For EPA guidance on insulation:
https://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_insulation_table (1 pt)*
28. Ensure that hazardous chemicals, excess fertilizers, and waste do not run into storm drainage system, indoor drains, or plumbing. (1 pt)*
29. Routinely inspect exterior windows and doors for physical damage and proper seals. (1 pt)*
30. Weather-strip doors and windows with noticeable air/moisture leakage and ensure they close properly. (1 pt)*
31. Ensure crawl space vents are properly opened or closed in the appropriate season. (1 pt)*
32. Avoid using solvent or acid-based cleaning products and instead use a high-pressure water spray or steam to remove dirt and stains from exterior walls. (1 pt)
33. Inspect roof annually to identify and address vulnerabilities to heat, moisture, or air flows within the roof. (1 pt)
34. Make sure that corners of mechanically joined frames are caulked to prevent moisture penetration. (1 pt)
35. Use of low volatile organic compounds (VOCs) products when possible. Make sure to specify in contracts when needed. (1 pt)
36. Inspect and clean roofs, gutters, scuppers, and roof drains monthly to prevent damage to the roof and structure. (2 pts)
37. Inspect and clean all grease filters, vents, and traps at least quarterly. (1 pt)
38. Develop a winterization preventative maintenance schedule and task list in Hippo for all appropriate buildings and equipment. (1 pt)
39. Ensure termite treatment is conducted and entered into Hippo every five years. (1 pt)
40. Inspect all electrical panelboards quarterly to ensure that nothing is stored within 36- inches in front of the panel and that the panel is not overloaded. Enter into Hippo. (1 pt.)

HVAC (Up to 9 points)

41. Clean coils and replace filters monthly to help the furnace, heat pump and air conditioner work at peak efficiency. (2 pts)*
42. Vacuum registers regularly and avoid blocking them with furniture and other objects to keep air flowing freely. (1 pt)*
43. Schedule semi-annual reminders for HVAC inspections within the HIPPO system (typically early spring and late fall). Including coil inspection, ductwork inspection, drain pan inspection, and refrigerant system inspection. (2 pts)*
44. Inspect and clean all condensate pans and drain lines semi-annually. Apply proper treatment to condensate pan to prevent algae growth and block drains. (2 pts)
45. Inspect ventilation systems semi-annually to prevent mold growth and maintain indoor air quality. (1 pt)
46. Check annually to ensure HVAC duct work is properly insulated. (1 pt)

Plumbing (Up to 10 points)

47. Identify and fix leaks and drips within 24 hours. (1 pt)*
48. Clean aerators in faucets if the flow appears restricted or irregular and inspect showerheads for deposits, debris, or build-up. (1 pt)*
49. Implement inspection procedures for all water delivery devices: drinking fountains, sinks, showerheads, emergency wash stations, toilets, urinals and kitchens to ensure no damage, cracks, or leaks are present. (1 pt)*
50. Perform routine water heater tank flushes to remove mineral deposits and extend the life of water tanks. (2 pts)
51. Locate and map all water control devices throughout the park and enter them into Hippo. Set up preventative maintenance schedule for lubricating and exercising these valves quarterly. (2 pts).
52. Inspect and test All sewer lift pumps monthly to ensure proper operation. (1 pt)
53. Ensure septic fields are operating properly and free of trees. Inspect annually. (1 pt)
54. Inspect backflow preventers are free of leaks, inspected, and operating properly on an annual basis. (1 pt)

Lighting (Up to 4 points)

55. Clean tubes and/or bulbs twice a year and clean light fixtures when changing bulbs. (1 pt)*
56. Inform maintenance staff of the ballast type during replacement in order to determine the proper disposal method. Maintenance staff should never disassemble ballasts for disposal. Old ballasts must be properly disposed, due to heavy metals and toxins concerns. (1 pt)*
1. Modify the building cleaning schedule to reduce after-hours lighting required. (1 pt)
2. Review Outdoor Lighting annually to apply the "5 Lighting Principles for Responsible Outdoor Lighting." (Credit is given within Guest Services and Energy Efficiency for dark sky lighting installation). (1 pt)*

3. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainability action related to this Maintenance Procedures category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(35 Points Required. Up to 73 Points.)

Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Category 7: **Recycling and Waste Reduction**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Renegotiating solid waste contract due to the need for fewer pickups or dumpsters can result in large cost savings
- Profits from recyclables can go to the Park Donation Account
- Expenses, as well as time and labor, can be saved on trash liners once converted to trash can free campgrounds
- Reduce the amount of waste being placed in landfills
- Support county government recycling efforts
- Support businesses using recycled materials
- Reduce energy needed to produce new materials
- Protect natural resources used to provide virgin material for new products
- Improve community awareness of the importance of recycling
- Encourage recycling at all levels; state, local, and personal
- Foster working relationships with county government

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Placement of Bins (Up to 14 points)

1. Place recycling bins near all major gathering and high traffic locations throughout the park such as: (1 pt per facility type. Up to 5 pts total. *If you have these in all applicable locations, you will get 5 points*)*
 - Visitor Center
 - Bath houses
 - Busy trail heads
 - Public dumpster areas
 - Public buildings/pavilions
2. Set up temporary recycling stations for special events. (2 pts)*
3. Locate paper recycling bins at all printers, scanners, copiers, etc. (1 pt)*
4. Have centralized recycling bins in workspaces for employees' personal and office recycling instead of individual bins at each desk. (1 pt)*
5. Place recycling bins within 2 feet of all indoor trash cans throughout the park. (3 pts)
6. Place trash cans within 2 feet of all exterior recycling bins throughout the park. (3 pts)
7. Provide recycling bags or bins for guests who have rented or reserved shelters. (1 pt)
8. Provide recycling bags upon request to campers when they check in. (1 pt)
9. Work with the community and county solid waste director to provide community recycling bins within the park. (1 pt)

Signage and Labeling (Up to 6 Points)

10. Post Go Green With Us recycling info flyers in all park kiosks and bulletin boards to help guests determine what can be recycled and where. (2 pts)*
11. Clearly label what recyclables are accepted on all recycling bins. (1 pt)*
12. Include recycling information on available recycling in the park in all email confirmations for reservations or bookings from guests. (2 pts)

Recycling Program Maintenance (Up to 11 Points)

13. Maintain recycling stations throughout the park and keep bins and labels clean (1pt)*
14. Meet at least annually with county recycling officials to review best practices to ensure recycling methods are efficient and accurate (1pt)*
15. Locate and use the closest convenience center or state contract vendor that accepts light bulbs, propane tanks, scrap metal, electronics, and other miscellaneous recyclables (1 pt)*
16. Promptly empty both trash and recycling bins to ensure proper material is placed in each (1 pt)
17. Purchase recycled-content trash and recycling can liners (2 pts)
18. Conduct an annual waste audit on material collected in the park to set benchmarks and determine areas of improvement. Share audit results with Go Green program managers and track audit progress (2 pts)
19. Review solid waste contract to look for opportunities to renegotiate due to the amount of pickups needed and percentage of full bins, and ensuring the most cost efficient and effective pickup schedule (2 pts)
20. Install air hand dryers as upgrading or replacing paper-towel dispensers to reduce waste. Consider cold air dryers for most efficient drying. (1 pt)

Program Reporting (Up to 14 points)

21. Report your park's monthly waste and recycling data on the Survey123 Go Green platform. (1 pt per month)*
22. Monitor and track your park's diversion data using the Survey123 Go Green platform Dashboard. Set goals and develop a plan to increase your park's diversion rate and recycling performance. (2 pts)

Waste Reduction (Up to 6 points)

23. Actively promote and choose waste reduction purchasing options such as:
 - Purchase items in bulk to reduce packaging
 - Do not purchase individually wrapped items
 - When using delivery services such as Amazon, opt for as few boxes as possible and request plastic free packaging (1 pt)
24. Reuse discarded materials at the park to make repairs or complete needed projects. (1 pt)
25. Do not purchase or use single-use disposables (such as utensils, straws, and plates) at the park for staff or guest use. Invest in and use reusable serveware. (1 pt)

26. Opt for renting or sharing an item between parks versus purchasing new if the item is only needed once or seldom. (1 pt)
27. When purchasing items for park staff or guests, consider the recyclability of the materials used in that item and show preference to items with a beneficial end use. For example: Choose aluminum can drinks over plastic bottles. (1 pt)
28. Actively choose high-quality, durable, and reusable items purchased. Look for items that are designed to last and are repairable. Compare the price over the lifetime of the product to make a smart purchasing decision. (1 pt)
29. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainable action related to the Recycling and Waste Reduction category that is not listed above. (2 pts)

(27 Points Required. Up to 53 Points.)

* Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Category 8: **Transportation**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Decreased fuel costs through increased carpooling, implementation of no idle policy, alternative transportation, and use of most efficient vehicles when possible
- Increased revenue and visitors resulting from cyclist attractions and marketing, and increased revenue from sale of active transportation related items, like bike parts/accessories, helmets, etc. Statistics show touring cyclists to be some of the wealthiest travelers spending 20% more per day than other tourists

Benefits:

- Reduction of automobile traffic should result in fewer accidents, infractions, reduction in noise pollution, and tailpipe emissions
- Improved visitor and employee health and better overall experience of the park with increased bicycling and walking
- Improved local air quality

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

Park Vehicles and Fleets (Up to 9 Points)

1. Parks will enforce a "No Idling" rule throughout the park, including state vehicles (exception for running of blue lights). (1 pt)*
2. Implement a plan to boost the use of fuel-efficient vehicles and reserve the use of more powerful and larger vehicles for necessary trips. (1 pt)*
3. Encourage all staff to carpool and reach out to neighboring parks to carpool to statewide events. (1 pt)*
4. Seek opportunities for alternative patrol transportation including: motorized bikes, electric golf carts (or similar), EVs, bicycles, horses, segways, etc. (3 pts)
5. Use alternative fuels such as E85 (or flex fuel) in your Flex Fuel vehicles when available. Transition to biodiesel for equipment requiring diesel fuel. (2 pts)
6. When choosing new fleet vehicles, choose and maintain electric vehicle(s) as part of park fleet. (1 pt)

Cycling and Connectability (Up to 26 Points)

7. For parks with electric car chargers (as they are added), monitor those parking spots and enforce for electric vehicle use only. (1 pt)*
8. Provide a map of cycling routes and bicycle trails to visitors. (1 pt)
9. Provide Air Quality Index (AQI data) to visitors on poor Air Quality Days (AQI values above 100) to help determine whether it's healthy/advisable to use active transportation that day. (1 pt)
10. Display road signage in high traffic areas to identify bicycle and pedestrian routes and areas where cars must share the road. (1 pt)

11. Design and develop park areas to encourage active transport and connectability by strategically creating walkways and bikeways to connect major areas of the park together. (2 pts)
12. Provide helmets through a rental or loan program for cyclists under 16, who are all required by law to wear a helmet. (2 pts)
13. Develop strategies to move bicycling and walking traffic away from the main roads. (2pts)
14. Add bicycle gear to the gift shop and/or camp store to encourage and support cycling in the park. (2 pts)
15. Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections between heavily visited facilities within the park and with surrounding community infrastructure outside of the park. (3 pts)
16. Create new biking trails within the park. (2 pts)
17. Implement a bike or pedestrian-only area of the park road system for designated time period (example: closing a scenic loop road or out-and-back route). (3 pts)
18. Provide a bicycle station where cyclists can stop by to get air, fill water bottles, have a snack, make small repairs, or charge cell phones. (3 pts) Example of bike station: Dero Fixit | Public Bike Repair Station
19. Use granulated recycled scrap tires, such as Flexi-Pave, for any new trails and/or sidewalks in the park, or to replace old ones. (3 pts)
20. Wildcard Activity – any sustainability action related to this Transportation category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(4 Points Required. Up to 37 Points.)

Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Category 9: **Water Conservation**

Cost Savings/Revenue Generation:

- Water bill cost reduction through:
 - Conservation efforts at facilities
 - Facility maintenance (leaks, drips)
 - Monthly utility bill review using EnergyCap software
 - Hospitality practices
 - Irrigation techniques
 - Drought resistant native planting
- Reduction of turf grass areas Labor cost reduction through:
 - Decreased mowing
 - Decreased maintenance with native plants

Benefits:

- Improved lawn and landscape health without excessive watering
- Reduced irrigation schedules
- Reduced herbicides increases viability of soil
- Reduced harmful air emissions and noise pollution from mowing equipment
- Reduced water loss through improved leak detection
- Reduced water use for hospitality operations

Prerequisites and Suggested Guidelines:

1. Perform a monthly review of the water bill using EnergyCap software. These reviews will assist with reducing the amount of time it can take to detect underground waterline leaks and their associated costs. It will also confirm that the park is being billed correctly for its water usage (1pt)* Tip: when reviewing usage, look at the previous year's usage and the previous month—this will provide context for goal setting.
 2. Audit irrigation systems for performance (functioning valves, timers, and leaks) annually, and use best timing practices to reduce water usage (1pt)*
 3. Install low flow aerators (see rates below) on faucets and other spigots (1pt)*
 4. Replace old, larger fixtures with low-volume or pressurized toilets, urinals, faucets, and showerheads that are rated with flow rates at least as stringent as:
 - i. Toilets – 1.28 gpf maximum- consider dual flush
 - ii. Urinals – 0.125 gpf maximum
 - iii. Bathroom Faucets – 0.5 gpm maximum
 - iv. Kitchen Faucets – 1.8 gpm maximum
 - v. Showers – 1.5 gpm maximum
 - vi. Pre-rinse kitchen spray valves – 1.6 gpm maximum
- (1 pt per category when majority of fixtures meet low-volume standard. Up to 6 pts total)

5. Check flow rates to ensure they are within manufacturers' recommendations, and for maximum water savings the flow rate should be near the minimum allowed by the manufacturer (1pt)
6. Add motion sensors or mechanical auto shutoff sink valves to public bathroom sinks (3 pts)
7. Water landscape areas that require irrigation utilizing water-efficient irrigation systems (low-flow sprinkler heads, rain sensors, efficient system design and layout, and optimized irrigation schedules and controls) to minimize water use and maximize plant health (3 pts)
8. Install rainwater catchment systems for irrigation, aviary, or other productive use (5 pts)
9. Provide conveniently located water bottle filling stations for guests (2 pts per station, up to 8 pts total) or water fountains (1 pt per fountain up to 4 pts) (*excluding park office/visitor center, group camps, or campgrounds due to duplicate entry in Guest Services and Green Offices*)
10. Install a water conservation flyer for campground bathhouses, cabins, and inn rooms with conservation tips such as turning off faucets while brushing teeth and shaving, etc. (2pts)
11. Develop a log to document weekly checks for water leaks. Including indoor and outdoor faucets, spigots, and hoses (2 pts)
12. Insulate water pipes with pre-slit foam pipe insulation. Insulated pipes will ensure quicker warm water to the faucet avoiding wasted water (2 pts)
13. Replace old washing machines with high efficiency (HE), front loading models (1pt)
14. When remodeling, replace bathtubs with stand-up showers when appropriate (1pt)
15. *Wildcard Activity* – any sustainability action related to this Water Conservation category that is not listed above (2 pts)

(3 Points Required. Up to 39 Points.)

* Prerequisite must be accomplished before any other points can be earned.

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Appendix A. **Resources**

Grant Links

<http://www.cnm.org/>

<http://www.npexcellence.org/>

<http://www.cnpchatt.org/www>

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/americorps>

<http://www.grants.gov/>

<http://tnartscommission.org/>

<https://www.arts.gov/>

<http://www.humanitiestennessee.org/programs/grants-and-awards>

<http://eeintennessee.org/>

<https://www.neefusa.org/>

<http://www.playcore.com/programs/funding-resources.aspx>

<http://outdoornation.org/>

<http://www.kidstoconservation.org/funding.htm>

Links for Education and Outreach Events:

Radon <https://www.epa.gov/radon>

World Wetlands Day <http://www.worldwetlandsday.org/>

Great American Cleanup <https://www.kab.org/great-american-cleanup/about-great-american-cleanup>

Tennessee Arbor Day <https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/forests/urban/arbor-day.html>

National Wildlife Week <https://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlifeweek>

Earth Hour <https://www.earthhour.org/>

Earth Day <https://www.earthday.org/>

National Arbor Day <https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/>

International Migratory Bird Day <http://www.birdday.org/>

Endangered Species Day <https://www.fws.gov/endangered/esday/index.html>

Preservation Month <https://savingplaces.org/stories/history-of-preservation-month#.X71VYzbsaUm>

World Environment Day <http://worldenvironmentday.global/>

National Pollinator Month <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-for-Wildlife/About/National-Initiatives/Pollinator-Month>

National Honey Bee Day <https://honeylove.org/national-honey-bee-day/>

Car Free Day <http://www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd/>

World Rivers Day <http://worldriversday.com/>

America Recycles Day <https://americarecyclesday.org/>

International Mountain Day <https://www.un.org/en/events/mountainday/>

Other Sustainability Links:

International Dark-Sky Association <http://darksky.org/>

Dark Sky Lighting Recommendations <http://darksky.org/our-work/lighting/lighting-basics/>

5 Principles of Dark Sky Lighting <https://www.darksky.org/our-work/lighting/lighting-principles/>

Energy Star insulation recommendations

https://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=home_sealing.hm_improvement_insulation_table

Ceiling Fan energy savings <https://www.thesimpledollar.com/ceiling-fan-hacks-save-big-on-energy-use/>

Thermostat settings <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/thermostats>

Recycling resources and locations <https://recyclenation.com/>

Recycling resources and locations <https://earth911.com/>

Monarch Waystations <https://monarchwatch.org/waystations/>

NWF Certified Wildlife Habitat <https://www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/Certify.aspx>

TN Natural Areas Website – contains information on rare, threatened and endangered species

<https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/na-natural-areas.html>

Beekeeping <http://www.tnbeekeepers.org/>

Native Beekeeping [Habitat Restoration | Xerces Society, https://extension.psu.edu/what-can-we-do-to-encourage-native-bees](https://extension.psu.edu/what-can-we-do-to-encourage-native-bees)

Green Cleaning https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/environment/sustainable-practices/business-team/tennessee-sustainable-hospitality/opsp_tsh_green-cleaning-resource-guide_pdf.pdf

Additional Recycling Info:

- Note: Always follow guidelines to surplus state equipment
- LOWES - The permanent recycling centers, located at the store entrance, offer a free, convenient and easy way for customers to recycle rechargeable batteries, cell phones, compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) and plastic shopping bags
- OFFICE DEPOT – Office Depot now has our state contract for office supplies. They offer free ink cartridge recycling for all brands, from all stores by store drop off or free mail in. For more info go to www.officedepot.com/cm/services/ink-and-toner-cartridge-recycling
- STAPLES - Staples offers responsible, free and convenient recycling solutions for technology, ink and toner cartridges, and rechargeable batteries at all retail stores in the U.S. BEST BUY – Every U.S. Best Buy store has kiosks, just inside the front doors, to drop off rechargeable batteries, wires, cords, cables and plastic bags. They also have an extensive in house recycling program – to learn more go to <http://www.bestbuy.com/site/Global-Promotions/Recycling-Electronics/pcmcat149900050025.c?id=pcmcat149900050025>
- For any other items needing recycling, such as used non- rechargeable batteries go to <http://recyclenation.com/> or <http://earth911.com/> to find a location near you

HELPFUL CONTACTS:

Energy CAP – Office of Energy Programs, State Facility Utilities Management, You can update with my contact info Natalie.Dallriva@tn.gov and Jeremy McBride Jeremy.McBride@tn.gov. Hotline at 615-741-5524 or 1-800-342-1340.

Recycling Questions – Division of Solid Waste Management, Recovered Materials, Christina Perez Christina.Perez@tn.gov 615-532-0814

Food Recovery Challenge - Office of Sustainable Practices, Environmental Consultant & GGWU Coordinator, Kelsey Davis, Kelsey.Davis@tn.gov 615-532-0079

Composting/Organics Management – Division of Solid Waste Management, Problem Waste, Robert Wadley, Robert.Wadley@tn.gov 615-741-4907 OR Kelsey.Davis@tn.gov 615-532-0079

Education and Outreach - Office of Sustainable Practices, Environmental Education Initiative Coordinator, Alle Crampton, Alle.Crampton@tn.gov 615-253-1729

Sustainable Hospitality Operations - Kelsey.Davis@tn.gov 615-532-0079

Go Green With Us – general email TSP.GoGreen@tn.gov

- Robin Peeler – TN State Parks, Area 6 Manager & TSP GGWU Coordinator Robin.Peeler@tn.gov 931-239-0065
- Kelsey Davis – TDEC Office of Sustainable Practices, Environmental Consultant & GGWU Coordinator Kelsey.Davis@tn.gov 615-532-0079

TENNESSEE STATE PARKS GO GREEN GUIDELINES

2023

Greer Tidwell

Date: Jan 3, 2023

**Greer Tidwell, Deputy Commissioner
Bureau of Parks and Conservation**

Mike Robertson

Mike Robertson (Dec 19, 2022 09:07 CST)

Date: Dec 19, 2022

**Mike Robertson, Director of Operations
Bureau of Parks and Conservation**

Shannon R. Bowles

Date: Dec 22, 2022

**Shannon Bowles, Director of Hospitality
Bureau of Parks and Conservation**

Matthew Taylor

Matthew Taylor (Dec 21, 2022 13:17 CST)

Date: Dec 21, 2022

**Matthew Taylor, Deputy Director
Office of Sustainable Practices**

Last Revision Date: December 2022