

# Fort Yargo State Park Business & Management Plan

---

October 2014



## Table of Contents

**Executive Summary.....3-6**

**Site and Operations Assessment..... 7-18**

**Business and Management Plan ..... 19-29**

**Action Plan ..... 30-31**

## Executive Summary

The Parks, Recreation and Historic Sites Division (PRHSD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is transitioning the management of Fort Yargo State Park to operate more like a business, reflecting the Sustainable Business Planning initiative to improve the fiscal performance and management of the state parks and historic sites system. This business and management plan is designed to help the site recover more operating expenses through earned revenues, productive partnerships, and innovative programs.

### Site Fact Sheet

Site Name	Fort Yargo State Park
Site Manager	Doug Chambers
Region Manager	Robert Emery
Date of Business Plan completion	October 2014
Site size (acres)	1,816
Total number of visitors (FY 2014)	417,307
Total operating budget (FY 2014)	\$716,067
Total earned revenues (FY 2014)	\$530,478
Operational cost recovery (FY 2014)	74%
Average operating cost per visitor (FY 2014)	\$1.72
Average earned revenue per visitor (FY 2014)	\$1.27
Average cost recovery <sup>[1]</sup> (FY 2012 – 2014)	80%
Target cost recovery (FY 2019)	100%
Total full-time employees	6
Total part-time employees	15
Primary service markets	Winder, Gwinnett County, Athens, Atlanta
Primary attractors/visitor appeal factors	Overnight accommodations, day use areas, mountain biking & hiking trails, and Camp Twin Lakes
Leading opportunities for improved site performance	Camper cabins, premium campsites, improved day use facilities

## Site Summary and Key Attractions

The 1,816-acre site of Fort Yargo State Park is located in a city setting in Winder, roughly 25 miles from major population centers in Georgia like Athens and Gainesville, 10 miles from Gwinnett County and 50 miles from Atlanta. It is roughly 10 miles from Interstate 85 and 30 miles from Interstate 20. Due to the site being located in close proximity to Atlanta it has become a premier location to host triathlons, bike races and disc golf tournaments. The location of the site near a major interstate is one of the greatest advantages in meeting the cost recovery goal.

### Key Attractions

The amenities or features listed below are those that seem to be most popular for visitors.

- 12.5 Miles of Mountain Biking Trails
- Camping - 40 RV Campsites, 12 walk-in campsites
- 260-acre lake with beach and 2 boat ramps
- Boat Rentals (Pedal Boats, Canoes, Kayaks, Aqua Cycles, Paddleboards and Jon Boats)
- 6 Yurts
- 3 Cottages
- Pioneer Campsite
- 5 Picnic Shelters
- 7 miles of Hiking Trail
- 2 Group Shelters
- Tennis and Basketball Courts
- Day use/picnic areas
- Colonial Fort
- Miniature Golf
- Disc Golf
- 4 Playgrounds
- Fishing
- Geocaching
- Coming Soon (June 2015) - 13 Camper Cabins
- Camp Twin Lakes (concession operation)

## Financial Targets

The table below details the total operating expenses and earned revenues for Fort Yargo State Park over the last three years (2012 - 2014). This table also calculates total cost per visitor and revenues per visitor during these operating years, and details the target financial performance goals in the context of achieving at least 100% cost recovery. This table also calculates the necessary change from 2014 operating expenses and revenues.

<b>Fort Yargo State Park</b>	<b>Target Visitation Growth from FY-2014</b>	<b>Target Change in Visitation</b>		
<b>Visitation Assumptions</b>	6%	25,038		
	<b>FY-2012</b>	<b>FY-2013</b>	<b>FY-2014</b>	<b>FY-2019 Target</b>
<b>Visitors</b>	439,618	421,790	417,307	442,345
<b>Total Operational Expenses</b>	\$515,553	\$589,980	\$716,067	\$837,545
<b>Total Earned Revenues</b>	\$434,573	\$488,754	\$530,478	\$840,990
<b>Cost per Visitor</b>	\$1.17	\$1.40	\$1.72	\$1.89
<b>Revenue per Visitor</b>	\$0.99	\$1.16	\$1.27	\$1.90
<b>State Financial Support per Visitor</b>	(\$0.18)	(\$0.24)	(\$0.44)	\$0.01
<b>Total Cost Recovery</b>	84.3%	82.8%	74.1%	100.4%
<b>Change in Expenses between 2012 &amp; 2019</b>				\$121,478
<b>Percent Change in Expenses between 2012 &amp; 2019</b>				17.0%
<b>Change in Revenues between 2012 &amp; 2019</b>				\$310,512
<b>Percent Change in Revenues between 2012 &amp; 2019</b>				58.5%

## Key Recommendations

1. Develop a management plan for staffing and maintenance of new camper cabin area, including the need for an additional laundry facility.
2. Evaluate park policies for special events, especially races, to include fee structures, impact of facilities, and impact on the rest of the operation.
3. Evaluate occupancy on a weekly basis and offer specials on a regular basis for vacant facilities.
4. Replace Comfort Station at Campground #1.
5. Build mountain bike rest station at mountain bike trail head
6. Enlarge the current beach area or consider a beach area at picnic area #2.
7. Evaluate resource management issues including deer hunt, invasive species and control burns.
8. Either repair roof on the beach pavilion or possibly raze the pavilion and rebuild a new facility.
9. Replace boat rental house. Increase the rental boat fleet.
10. Renovate 25% of campsites to include sewage and 50 amp service to make the non-water- front sites more marketable.
11. Construct a picnic shelter at Campground # 1 to encourage RV group camping.
12. Replace the canvas on 5 yurts.
13. Repave campground road.
14. Replace rest station in picnic area #2.

## Site and Operations Assessment

This site and operations assessment is a culmination of analyses and findings from a review of the condition of facilities, infrastructure, and operations at Fort Yargo State Park. The findings and observations are not intended to be an exhaustive review of all issues present, but provide a basic understanding of the predominant issues that contribute to the site’s current operating conditions. The assessment includes the following:

1. Site Inventory and Facility Assessment
2. Operational Assessment
3. Financial Assessment

### Site Inventory and Facility Assessment

Facility and asset conditions are rated using a differential scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor.

#### Inventory and Assessment

The table below is an inventory of facilities and amenities at Fort Yargo State Park and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in 2014.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Group Shelters	2	Good
Picnic Shelters	5	1,2,3,& 5-Good
Total Acreage	1816	Good
Park Office	1	Fair
Walk-in Campsites	9	Excellent
RV Campsites	40	Good
Fishing Docks	6	Fair
Pioneer Campsite	1	Good/ Fair
Boat Docks	2	Good
Beach	1	Good
Maintenance Buildings	3	Good
Birdberry Trail	1	Good
Disc Golf	1	Good

**Prioritized Facility Needs**

Based on the facility inventory and assessment, these prioritized needs have been identified. Each need has been aligned with a priority category of high, moderate, or low to support future decision-making regarding project sequencing, investment of public resources, and meeting community expectations. **The priority assignment for each need is not a measure of importance.** Rather, these recommended priorities reflect a phased implementation approach over the next several years.

Facility Need	Priority Assignment
Replace Canvas on Yurts x5	High
Repaving Campground Road	High
Picnic Area 2 Rest Station Replacement	High
Repair roof on beach pavilion	High
Replace Campground Comfort Station #1	High
Increase beach area	High
Build mountain bike rest station at the mountain bike trail head	High
Remodel Nature Center to include Bathrooms	Moderate
Resurface or repurpose Tennis/Basketball Courts	Moderate
Remodel campground to include sewage and 50 amp at 25% non-water front sites	Moderate
Replace or renovate cottages	Moderate
Replace roof to Shelter #4. Consider re-locating shelter	Moderate
Replace boat ramps	Low
Replace roof at the Birdberry Gazebo	Low
Renovate Maintenance Building/Office	Low



## Operational Assessment

The Operational Assessment includes:

1. An inventory and classification of programs and services being provided at the site
2. A review of staffing at the site
3. A review of concessionaires and partners operating at the site
4. Visitation and customer satisfaction

### Inventory and Classification of Programs and Services

Programs and services are classified into one of three major categories:

#### 1) Core or Essential Services

#### 2) Important Services

#### 3) Visitor Supported Services

Programs and services at the site are classified into these categories based in part on the mission and public mandates for both the site and the agency. For the programs and services in each of these categories, there are financial performance expectations that will define how services are funded and evaluated.

#### **CATEGORY 1 – CORE SERVICES** *[Largely supported by tax funds]*

Core programs, services and facilities are those the agency must provide and/or are essential in order to capably govern and meet statutory requirements. The failure of the agency to provide Category 1 services at adequate levels could result in significant negative consequences for the public and the resources under protection. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as core or essential are:

- The services are mandated by the agency's law or charter or are contractually obligated by agreement to provide the services.
- The services are essential to protecting and supporting the public's health and safety.
- The services protect and maintain valuable assets and infrastructure.
- The services would generally and reasonably be expected and supported by residents, businesses, customers and partners.
- The services are those that cannot or should not be provided by the private sector.
- The services provide a sound investment of public funds.

The following programs and services offered at Fort Yargo State Park have been identified as **core services**:

- **Active management of the natural and cultural resources of the site in order to protect their integrity**
- **Open and public access to the site and its resources**
- **Site appropriate education, interpretation, and recreational opportunities**

- **Effectively manage the Marbury Creek Watershed**
- **Public safety to protect visitors and the natural resources**
- **Maintenance of grounds, facilities and infrastructure**
- **Self-guided interpretation and education programs**

**CATEGORY 2 – IMPORTANT SERVICES** *[Supported by a balance of tax funds and earned revenues]*

Important programs, services and facilities are those the agency should provide, and are important to governing and effectively serving residents, businesses, customers and partners. Providing Category 2 services expands or enhances the agency's ability to provide and sustain its core services. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as important are:

- The services expand, enhance or support identified core services.
- The services are broadly supported and utilized by the community, and are considered an appropriate, important, and valuable public good. Public support may be conditional upon the manner by which the services are paid for or funded.
- The services generate income or revenue that offsets some or all of the operating cost and/or are deemed to provide economic, social or environmental outcomes or results.

The following programs and services offered at Fort Yargo State Park have been identified as **important services**:

- **Day use facilities such as mountain bike trails and access to the lake for recreational use.**

**CATEGORY 3 – VISITOR SUPPORTED SERVICES** *[Almost exclusively supported by earned revenue]*

Visitor supported programs; services and facilities are those discretionary services that the agency may provide when additional funding or revenue exists to offset the cost of providing those services. Category 3 services provide added value above and beyond what is required or expected. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as visitor supported are:

- The services expand, enhance or support core services or important services and the quality of life of the visitors, community or stakeholders.
- The services are supported, valued and well utilized and provide an appropriate and valuable public benefit.
- The services generate income or funding from sponsorships, grants, user fees or other sources that offset some or all of their cost and/or provides a meaningful return on investment.
- The services can possibly be provided through outsourcing or use of concessionaires, providing opportunities for community enterprises that may not otherwise be provided by the agency.
- Camping, Yurts, Cottages, Pioneer Sites to be used for overnight facilities at the site.

The following programs and services offered at Fort Yargo State park have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

## Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

---

- **Camping, yurt, and cottage rentals**
- **Gift Shop**
- **Mountain bike races**
- **Ranger guided interpretation**
- **Special events / programs related to the mission of the site**
- **Special events / programs not related to the mission of the site or outside the normal programing standards (e.g. wedding receptions, etc.)**
- **Mini golf rentals**
- **Day use facilities such as picnic shelters and group shelters.**
- **Day use and boat rentals at the beach**

**Staffing Assessment**

Labor costs at Fort Yargo State park represent the largest area of budgetary expense at an average of 53% of the total operating budget each year for the last three complete years, which is lower than the target of total labor costs (including benefits) not exceeding 65% of the site’s total operating expenditures. The tables below and on the following page provide a basic review of the current staffing at the site.

**Full Time Equivalent Employees**

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Vacancies	Annual Hours
Park Manager III	1	0	2500
Assistant Park Manager II	1	0	2500
Law Enforcement Ranger	1	0	2080
Senior Ranger	1	0	2500
Office Clerk: Secretary	1	0	2080
General Trades Craftsman	1	0	2080
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,740</b>

**Part Time Employees**

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Vacancies	Hours
PSW (Clerk)	8	0	12000
PSW (Maintenance Worker)	5	0	7500
PSW (Housekeeper)	1	0	1508
Seasonal Naturalist	1	0	1508
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22,516</b>

**Labor Support**

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	10000
Community Service Workers	18000
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28,000</b>

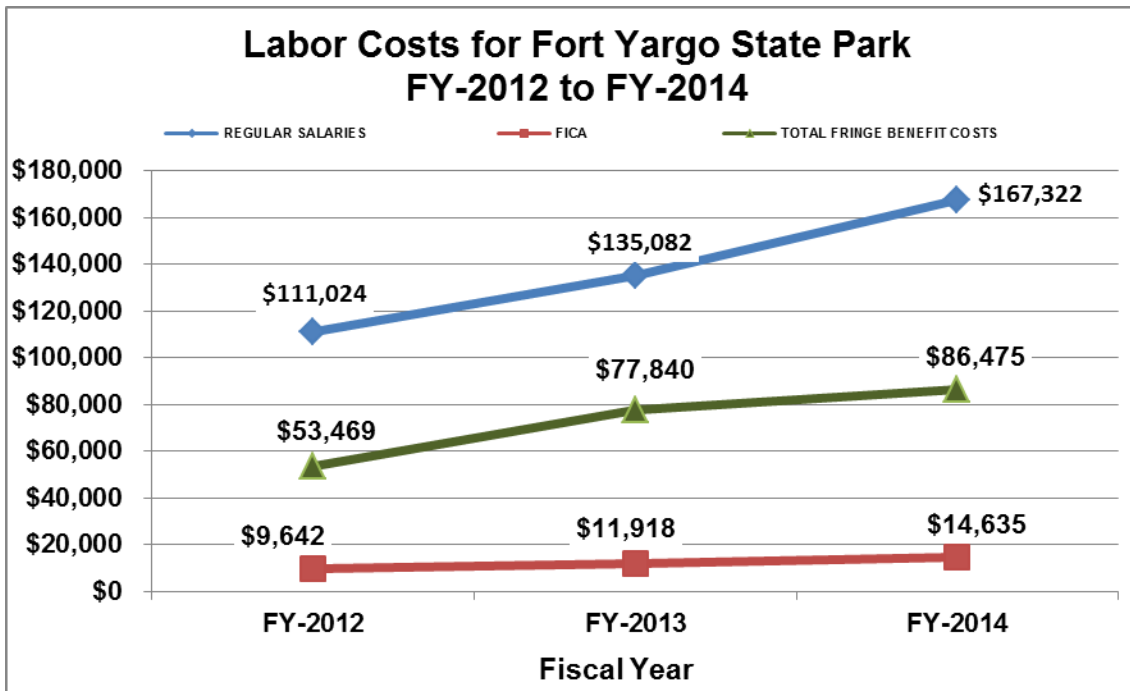
**Total Labor Hours**

Labor Type	Annual Hours
Full Time Equivalent Employees	13,740
Part Time Employees	22,516
Labor Support	28,000
<b>TOTAL Annual Labor Hours</b>	<b>64,256</b>

Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

LABOR BUDGET SUMMARY

<b>Fort Yargo State Park</b>				
<b>Account Code and Sub-Class Expenditure Descriptions</b>	<b>FY-2012</b>	<b>FY-2013</b>	<b>FY-2014</b>	<b>% change between FY-2012 &amp; FY-2014</b>
REGULAR SALARIES	\$111,024	\$135,082	\$167,322	50.7%
ANNUAL LEAVE PAYOUT	\$2,620	\$8,657	\$0	-100.0%
OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL	\$4,115	\$4,956	\$4,025	-2.2%
TEMPORARY/CASUAL LABOR	\$87,655	\$117,749	\$135,497	54.6%
FICA	\$9,642	\$11,918	\$14,635	51.8%
RETIREMENT	\$14,809	\$22,830	\$32,694	120.8%
HEALTH INSURANCE	\$35,460	\$45,089	\$52,695	48.6%
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$580	\$1,265	\$1,086	87.3%
MERIT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT	\$961	\$515	\$365	-62.0%
OVERTIME	\$33	\$17	\$17	-47.1%
<b>TOTAL FRINGE BENEFIT COSTS</b>	<b>\$53,469</b>	<b>\$77,840</b>	<b>\$86,475</b>	<b>61.7%</b>
<b>PERSONAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$266,900</b>	<b>\$348,078</b>	<b>\$408,335</b>	<b>53.0%</b>



**Visitation and Occupancy**

Overall annual visitation to the site has trended downward from 2012 to 2014, decreasing by 5% or 22,303 visitors.

	FY12	FY13	FY14
<b>Camping Occupancy</b>	38%	44%	52%
<b>Cottage Occupancy</b>	45%	51%	50%
<b>Yurt Occupancy</b>	59%	54%	52%
<b>Visitation</b>	439,618	421,790	417,307

Occupancy for the overnight accommodations at Fort Yargo State Park the last three years is detailed in the table above. Overall camping and cottage occupancy has trended upward from 2012 to 2014, increasing by 14% and 5%, respectively. Yurt occupancy has seen a decline, although the rate has not increased.

**Customer Service and Satisfaction**

Site	Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
<b>Fort Yargo State Park</b>	2012	94%
	2013	95%

Website	Year	Rating
<b>Trip Advisor</b>	2014	#1 out of 3 Attractions in Winder; 4 out of 5 Stars
	2014	63 Reviews – 29 Excellent; 22 Very Good; 10 Average; 2 Terrible

Financial Performance Assessment

Operational Expenses

A summary of total operating expenses at Fort Yargo State Park from 2012 to 2014, as well as their percent change from 2012 are provided in the table below. Operating expenses increased \$198,000 in 2 years. This is due to vacant salary positions being filled and part-time expenses increasing because the site began operating the beach/boat concession. Regular operating expenses increased \$56,000, \$35,000 of supplies and materials and approximately \$19,000 in increased energy.

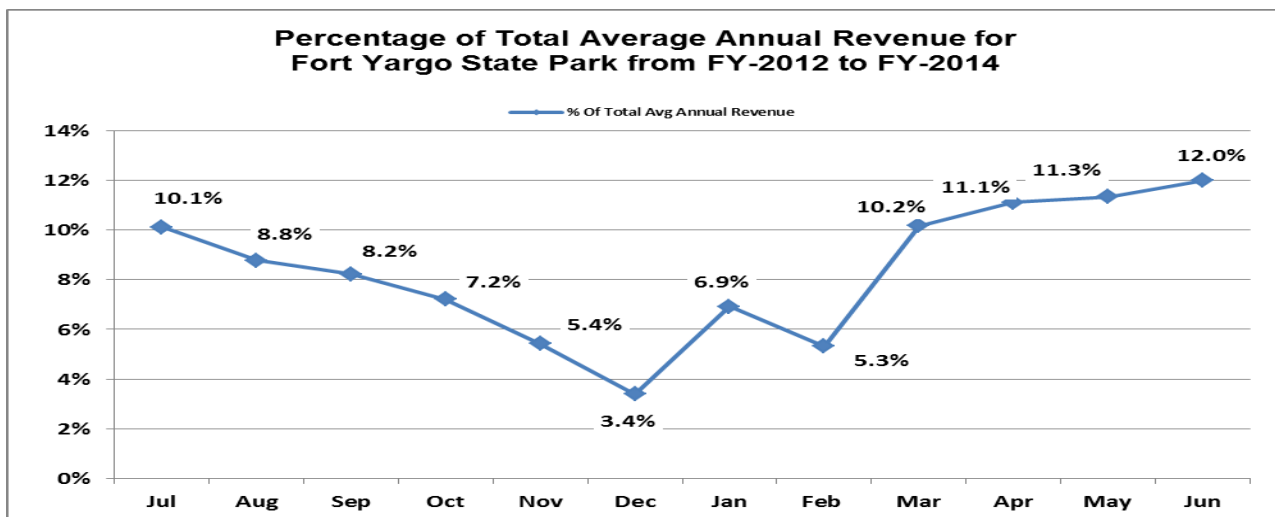
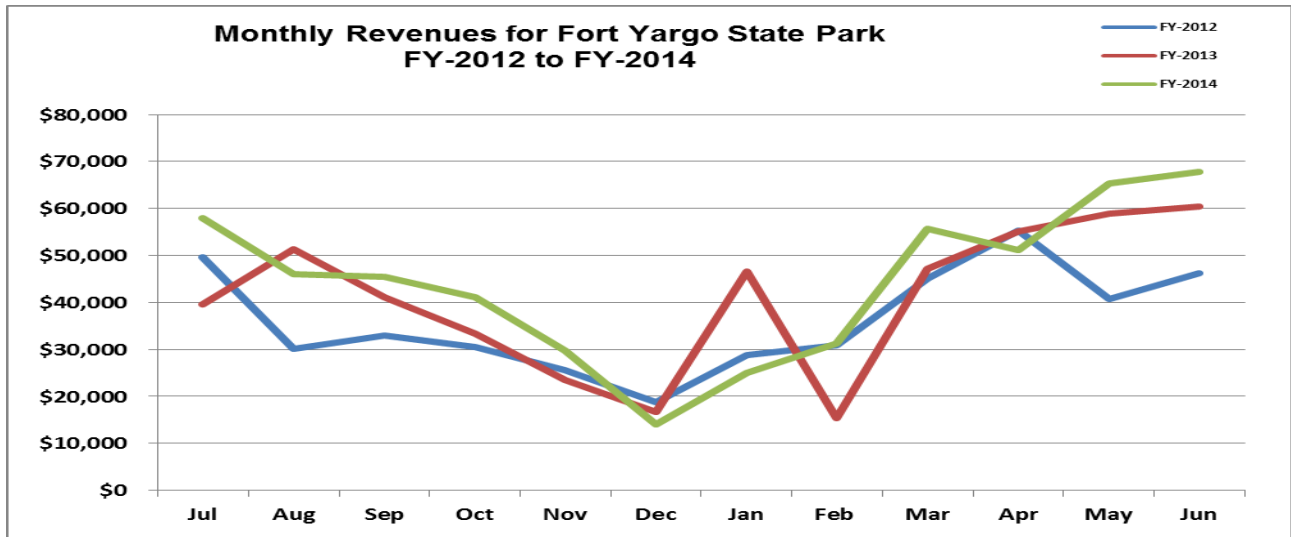
<b>Fort Yargo State Park</b>				
<b>Operational Expenses</b>	<b>FY-2012</b>	<b>FY-2013</b>	<b>FY-2014</b>	<b>% change between FY-2012 &amp; FY-2014</b>
REGULAR SALARIES	\$111,024	\$135,082	\$167,322	50.7%
ANNUAL LEAVE PAYOUT	\$2,620	\$8,657		
OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL	\$4,115	\$4,956	\$4,025	-2.2%
TEMPORARY/CASUAL LABOR	\$87,655	\$117,749	\$135,497	54.6%
FICA	\$9,642	\$11,918	\$14,635	51.8%
RETIREMENT	\$14,809	\$22,830	\$32,694	120.8%
HEALTH INSURANCE	\$35,460	\$45,089	\$52,695	48.6%
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$580	\$1,265	\$1,086	87.3%
MERIT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT	\$961	\$515	\$365	-62.0%
OVERTIME	\$33	\$17	\$17	-47.1%
<b>TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES</b>	\$266,900	\$348,078	\$408,335	53.0%
POSTAGE	\$55	\$621	\$421	661.1%
MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES	\$47,804	\$40,758	\$53,597	12.1%
PRINTING & PUBLICATION				
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$65,323	\$65,008	\$100,408	53.7%
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$5,298	\$15,860	\$8,230	55.3%
EQUIPMENT >\$1000< \$5,000				
WATER & SEWAGE		\$5,865	\$9,737	
ENERGY	\$82,992	\$83,203	\$101,237	22.0%
RENTS	\$2,745	\$1,893	\$2,142	-21.9%
INSURANCE & BONDING	\$15,142	\$12,301	\$5,089	-66.4%
FREIGHT			\$55	
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	\$15,866	\$9,742	\$9,991	-37.0%
CLAIMS & BONDS & INTEREST			\$100	
TRAVEL	\$206		\$355	72.5%
<b>TOTAL REGULAR EXPENSES</b>	\$235,432	\$235,251	\$291,361	23.8%
EQUIPMENT PURCHASES >5000				
CAPITAL LEASE Prin & Int				
<b>TOTAL EQUIPMENT</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0	
SALES TAX - TRANSFER OUT			\$1,936	
VOICE/DATA COMMUNICATIONS	\$736	\$756	\$2,372	222.3%
CONTRACTS/PER DIEM				
COMPUTER SUPPLIES		\$127	\$574	
RESALE	\$12,485	\$5,769	\$11,489	-8.0%
<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURES</b>	\$13,221	\$6,651	\$16,371	23.8%
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$515,553</b>	<b>\$589,980</b>	<b>\$716,067</b>	<b>38.9%</b>
<b>Earned Revenues</b>	<b>\$434,573</b>	<b>\$488,754</b>	<b>\$530,478</b>	<b>22.1%</b>
<b>% Cost Recovery</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>-10.2%</b>

**Earned Revenues**

Monthly earned revenues for Fort Yargo State Park for the last three years (see table below) indicate that the total annual revenue increased 22% or \$95,905 from 2012 to 2014. This increase is due to the site assuming the beach/boat rental concessions. The largest **increases** in monthly revenues are in May (60%) and August (53%), etc., and the largest **decrease** is in the month of December (-26%).

Fort Yargo State Park													
FY-2012 to FY-2014 Monthly Revenue													
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
FY-2012	\$49,652	\$30,161	\$32,913	\$30,454	\$25,554	\$18,758	\$28,860	\$30,785	\$45,031	\$55,366	\$40,756	\$46,283	\$434,573
FY-2013	\$39,513	\$51,370	\$41,072	\$33,299	\$23,484	\$16,710	\$46,630	\$15,298	\$47,139	\$55,084	\$58,818	\$60,337	\$488,754
FY-2014	\$58,015	\$45,998	\$45,513	\$41,006	\$29,685	\$13,954	\$25,009	\$31,236	\$55,766	\$51,133	\$65,293	\$67,871	\$530,478
Average Revenues	\$49,060	\$42,510	\$39,832	\$34,920	\$26,241	\$16,474	\$33,500	\$25,773	\$49,312	\$53,861	\$54,956	\$58,164	\$484,602
% Of Total Avg Annual Revenue	10.1%	8.8%	8.2%	7.2%	5.4%	3.4%	6.9%	5.3%	10.2%	11.1%	11.3%	12.0%	
% change btwn FY-2012 & FY-2014	16.8%	52.5%	38.3%	34.6%	16.2%	-25.6%	-13.3%	1.5%	23.8%	-7.6%	60.2%	46.6%	22.1%

The graphs below illustrate the monthly revenue trends each year and the average percent of total annual revenue earned each month.

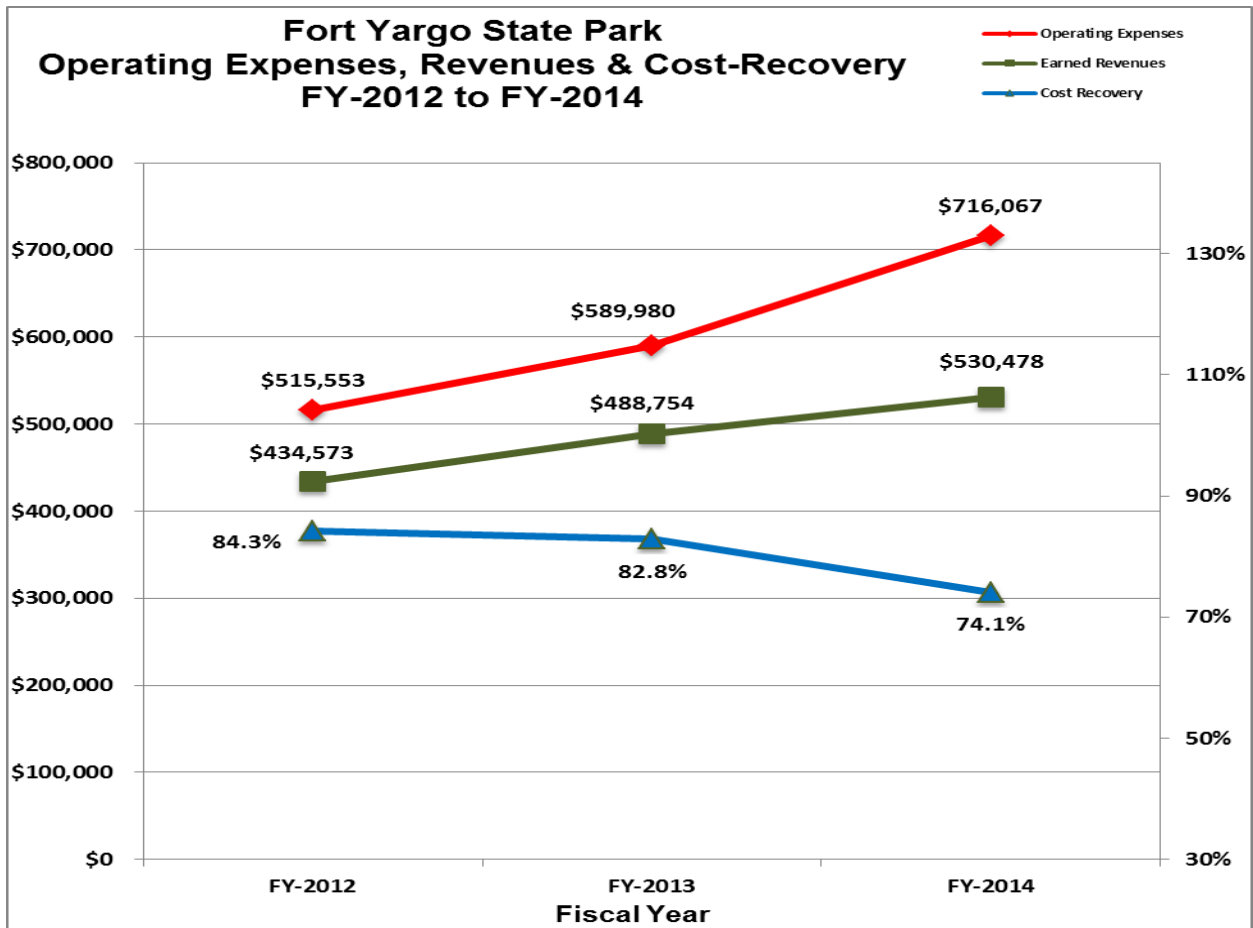




Cost Recovery Trends

Fort Yargo State Park has achieved an average cost recovery of 80% of annual operational expenses through earned revenues from FY 2012 to FY 2014. This is detailed and illustrated in the table and graph below. Although revenues have increased each FY, operating expenses have increased at a higher rate, thus decreasing the percentage of cost recovery.

Fiscal Year	Operational Expenses	Earned Revenues	Percent Cost Recovery
FY-2012	\$515,553	\$434,573	84.3%
FY-2013	\$589,980	\$488,754	82.8%
FY-2014	\$716,067	\$530,478	74.1%



**Review of Pricing**

The last five years of rates are evaluated. There has been notable growth in fees charged at Fort Yargo State Park since 2010, with the largest increase being the beach pavilion. A table detailing the rates for Fort Yargo State Park is provided below.

<b>FORT YARGO</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Picnic Shelter</b>	\$45	\$45	\$50	\$50	\$60
<b>Picnic Shelter/Nature Center Pav (capacity)</b>	\$85(75)	\$85(75)	\$85 (75)	\$85 (75)	\$85 (75)
<b>Beach Pavilion (capacity)</b>	\$95(100)	\$95(100)	\$100 (100)	\$100 (100)	\$150 (150)
<b>Group Shelter A (capacity)</b>	\$105(80)	\$105(80)	\$105 (80)	\$105 (80)	\$105 (80)
<b>Group Shelter B (capacity)</b>	\$155(100)	\$155(100)	\$160 (100)	\$160 (100)	\$160 (100)
<b>Camping RV/Tent</b>	\$28/25	\$28/25	\$29/25	\$30/25	\$30/28
<b>Camping (Walk)</b>	\$23	\$23	\$23	\$24	\$24
<b>Yurts (capacity)</b>	\$65 (6)	\$65 (6)	\$70 (6)	\$70 (6)	\$70 (6)
<b>Cottage (2 BR)</b>	\$130	\$130	\$120	\$120	\$135
<b>Pet Fees</b>			\$40	\$45	\$45
<b>Pioneer Campsite</b>	\$55	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75

## Business and Management Plan

### Business Goals

The following goals serve as the foundation for the key recommendations and strategies in this business plan for Fort Yargo State Park.

#### **Enhance Cost Recovery of Site Operations**

Control employee's hours, increase site visitation, occupancy and reduce operations cost.

#### **Enhance Revenue Generation Strategies**

- Increase retail return on investment and total sales through economical redesign of office resale area.
- Increase visitation and occupancy in the off-season by offering competitive seasonal discounts.
- Yearly, offer competitive deals for facilities with significant vacancies on the weekends: for example, 25-30% off no minimum stay on last minute deals (2-3 days upon arriving).
- Implement aggressive fee for service programs and events that adds value to guest experience and increases park revenue.

#### **Expand Special Events at the Site**

Increase programming and special event efforts by having a seasonal programmer and concessionaires.

#### **Improve the Diversity and Innovation of Recreational and Interpretive Programs**

Add / improve interpretation of site through improved signage.

#### **Improve the Effectiveness of Marketing and Sales**

Advertise winter discounts to improve occupancy during off-season.

#### **Establish Greater Consistency of Managing and Monitoring Customer Service & Satisfaction**

Encourage all guests to go on-line and fill out a customer satisfaction survey to rate their experience at Fort Yargo State Park.

#### **Expand Partnership Opportunities**

Reach out to local community services such as REI, YMCA or Anytime Fitness to create an outdoor exercise program.

## Classification of Programs and Services

The tables below summarize the classifications of programs and services at Fort Yargo State Park as either core, important, or visitor supported and projects a range of cost recovery percentages that might be achieved for each. These classifications establish financial performance goals for each category of services that are linked to the recommendations and strategies of this business plan.

<b>Core Services</b>	
<b>Program / Service</b>	<b>Target Cost Recovery</b>
Active management of the natural and cultural resources of the site in order to protect their integrity	0%
Open and public access to the site and its resources	5%
Site appropriate education, interpretation, and recreational opportunities	150%
Effectively manage the Marbury Creek Watershed	0%
Public safety to protect visitors and the natural resources	0%
Maintenance of grounds, facilities and infrastructure	0%
Self-guided interpretation and education programs	0%

<b>Important Services</b>	
<b>Program / Service</b>	<b>Target Cost Recovery</b>
Day use facilities such as mountain bike trails, tennis and basketball courts and access to the lake for recreational use.	5%-15%

<b>Visitor Supported</b>	
<b>Program / Service</b>	<b>Target Cost Recovery</b>
Gift Shop	200%
Mountain bike races	125%
Ranger guided interpretation	150%
Special events / programs related to the mission of the site	150%
Special events / programs not related to the mission of the site or outside the normal programming standards (e.g., wedding receptions, etc.)	150%
Mini Golf Rentals	120%
Camping, Yurts, Cottages, Pioneer Sites to be used for overnight facilities at the site.	150% - 200%
Day use facilities such as Picnic Shelters and Group Shelters.	100%
Day use and boat rentals at the beach	200%

## Partnership Development Plan

The table below summarizes existing partners and targeted partnerships by classification (operational, vendor, service, co-branding, funding partners) and by organizational type.

	<b>Public Partners</b>	<b>Not-for-profit Partners</b>	<b>Private / Enterprise Partners</b>
<b>Operational Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Winder Police &amp; EMS</li> <li>• Barrow County Sheriff Department and EMS</li> <li>• LED</li> <li>• DOC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camp Twin Lakes</li> </ul>	
<b>Vendor Partners</b>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coca Cola</li> <li>• Georgia Power</li> </ul>
<b>Service Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Winder</li> <li>• Georgia Power</li> <li>• Jackson EMC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barrow County Chambers of Commerce</li> <li>• Yargo Area Biking Association</li> <li>• Fort Yargo Living History Society</li> </ul>	
<b>Co-branding Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard Labor Creek State Park</li> <li>• Victoria Bryant State Park</li> <li>• Barrow County Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chateau Elan</li> </ul>
<b>Funding Resource Development Partner</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends of Fort Yargo State Park</li> </ul>	

## Marketing and Sales Plan

### Marketing and Sales Goals

Marketing and sales goals for Fort Yargo State Park are based on the following desired outcomes:

1. Increase Yurt rentals by 2-5% by 2019 through marketing the experience and rarity of Yurt Camping.
2. Increase Cottage rentals by 2-5% by 2019 through advertising of special discounts offered during off peak seasons.

In order to meet these goals, examples of specific target outcomes were identified in the areas detailed in the table below.

Area of Focus	Current Performance	Goal by 2015	Goal by 2018	Goal by 2019
Yurt Rentals	52%	54%	57%	58%
Campsite	52%	53%	55%	57%
Cottage Rentals	50%	51%	53%	55%

### Marketing and Promotion Strategies

#### PUBLICITY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Fort Yargo State Park will approach marketing and publicity planning using the following guidelines and themes:

#### 1. Event publicity

Major events benefit by having short stories in local, regional, and statewide newspapers and online social media hooks planted that run three to four weeks in advance of the event up to the date of the event itself. Stories and media need to be cultivated with contacts and online sales channels several weeks in advance of the time the stories need to run. Special interest interviews on morning, noon, and evening television news programs, radio interviews on popular rush-hour programs, and blogs on known affinity online sites should also be included.

#### 2. Program publicity

Special and unique programs should have feature stories in magazines, local and regional weekly newspapers, and statewide daily newspapers that are aimed at placements as front-page or sectional front-page stories. These stories are most effective if they run shortly before the season that the featured program begins. This will likely require several weeks of advanced planning with media contacts. Similar coverage on television and radio should also be considered. If pre-publicity cannot be generated, post-publicity can help promote future programs.

#### 3. Site Publicity

Site publicity focusing on a single site or sub-set of sites requires more intense planning efforts to attract multiple writers and editors from target publications. Each site could host several seasonal media familiarization tours (with 10 to 15 writers or editors) to familiarize them with the site and its benefits and amenities. Stories and features resulting from such tours typically

## Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

take between two and six months to materialize so the tours should focus on experiences, benefits, and programs that would be available when the stories are expected to run.

Examples and suggested opportunities for events, programs and related publicity efforts based on the themes described above at Fort Yargo State Park are provided in the table below.

Event Publicity	Program Publicity	Site Publicity
Labor Day Fireworks	Bluegrass Festival	Old Fort Colonial Market Fair
Bass Tournament	Autumn Nights	Controlled Burning
Community Customer Appreciation Cookout	Mountain Bike Races and Concession Events	Special Winter Discounts

### PACKAGING

Examples and suggested packages for Fort Yargo State Park are provided in the table below.

Package	Package Details
Yurt Package	Stay 2 nights and get 3 <sup>rd</sup> night 50% off or Stay 3 nights and get the fourth night free
Cottage Package	Stay 2 nights and get 3 <sup>rd</sup> night 50% off or Stay 3 nights and get the fourth night free
Campsite	Stay 2 nights and get 3 <sup>rd</sup> night 50% off or Stay 3 nights and get the fourth night free

### GROUP SALES

Types of groups within which specific target customers can be identified for Fort Yargo State Park are listed below:

- Travelers on Interstate 85
- Extended Stay Workers
- Families

### INCENTIVIZING NEW AND REPEAT VISITATION

Fort Yargo State Park will continue utilizing the following strategies and/or incentives to encourage new and repeat visitation starting in FY 2015:

- Fort Yargo State Park will offer discounts for extended stay guest working in the local area.
- Fort Yargo State Park will offer special fun play packages to include a free round of disc golf, miniature golf, and the rental of a jon boat, pedal boat or canoe.
- Fort Yargo State Park will offer discounts on wedding packages to capture more visitation, visibility and revenue.

### Marketing and Sales Metric Goals

The following marketing and sales metric goals and/or others will be monitored and progress reported at Fort Yargo State Park:

1. Loyalty and repeat customers = 60% of those staying overnight.
2. Brand confidence & customers-recruiting-customers = 30% of those returning to the park; especially for day use.

## Revenue Generation Plan

### Revenue / Cost Recovery Goals

Fort Yargo State Park has set a financial goal of increasing annual revenues 2% - 42% annually between 2015 and 2019. The largest revenue growth opportunity is projected in FY2016, due to the estimated opening of the 13 camper cabins by the summer of FY2016. The table below details projected revenue growth leading up to 2019, based upon a nominal growth of revenues each year.

Fort Yargo State Park														
Year	% Growth from Previous Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
FY-2014	Base Year	\$58,015	\$45,998	\$45,513	\$41,006	\$29,685	\$13,954	\$25,009	\$31,236	\$55,766	\$51,133	\$65,293	\$67,871	\$530,478
FY-2015	2%	\$58,885	\$46,688	\$46,195	\$41,621	\$30,131	\$14,164	\$25,384	\$31,705	\$56,603	\$51,900	\$66,272	\$68,889	\$538,435
FY-2016	42%	\$83,793	\$66,437	\$65,736	\$59,227	\$42,876	\$20,155	\$36,121	\$45,116	\$80,546	\$73,853	\$94,305	\$98,029	\$766,193
FY-2017	6%	\$88,402	\$70,091	\$69,352	\$62,484	\$45,234	\$21,263	\$38,108	\$47,597	\$84,976	\$77,915	\$99,492	\$103,420	\$808,334
FY-2018	2%	\$90,170	\$71,493	\$70,739	\$63,734	\$46,139	\$21,688	\$38,870	\$48,549	\$86,675	\$79,473	\$101,482	\$105,488	\$824,500
FY-2019	2%	\$91,973	\$72,922	\$72,153	\$65,009	\$47,061	\$22,122	\$39,647	\$49,520	\$88,409	\$81,063	\$103,511	\$107,598	\$840,990

These projections would result in a total of 58% cumulative growth in total annual revenues between FY2014 and FY2019. If operational expenses can be managed at the projected rates, then the overall cost recovery of the site will be approximately 100% in FY 2019 at these projected revenue levels, making this site 100% operational self-sustainable. This is higher than the annual financial performance of the site in FY 2014, which was operated at 74% cost recovery in that year.

### PRICING PLAN

#### Revenue Generation Strategies

FORT YARGO	2014	2015	2016
Picnic Shelter	\$60	\$60	
Picnic Shelter/Nature Center Pav (capacity)	\$85 (75)	\$85 (75)	
Beach Pavilion (capacity)	\$150 (150)	\$150 (150)	
Group Shelter A (capacity)	\$105 (80)	\$105 (80)	
Group Shelter B (capacity)	\$160 (100)	\$160 (100)	
Camping RV/Tent	\$30/28	\$32/28	
Camping (Walk)	\$24	\$25	
Yurts (capacity)	\$70 (6)	\$85 (6)	
Cottage (2 BR)	\$135	\$165	
Camper Cabins			\$135
Pet Fees	\$45	\$45	
Pioneer Campsite	\$75	\$75	



## Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

### Innovative Programming and Special Events Plan

Program / Event	Theme / Purpose	Scheduled Date/Season	Frequency	Target Participation	Target User Fee	Target Cost Recovery
Mountain Bike Festival	Recreation/Volunteers	May 2015	Annual	Youth, Adult, Senior, Family	\$5 per person	200%
Bluegrass Festival	Cultural/Recreation	December 2014	Annual	Family	\$3 per person	150%
Disc Golf Tournament	Disc Golf enthusiasts/Recreation	June 2015	Annual	Youth/Adult	\$25	200%
Living History Events	History/Cultural/Educational	March and June of 2015	Twice a year	Family	\$3 per person	150%
Mountain Bike Race	Recreation	February-May, 2015 (Approximately 25 walk/run/bike races yearly)	Annual	Youth/Adult	\$4/per person	150%
Mountain Bike/Kayak Beginner Lessons	Education/Recreation	Year round with REI/ Some staff programs too.	4-6 times yearly	Adult	15% from each class/ \$10.00 per person.	150%
Georgia Geo Caching	Get Outdoors/Recreation	Year round with Georgia Geo Caching	3 – 4 times yearly	Family	15% from each class.	150%
Junior Ranger Camp	Educational	Yearly Program	Annual	Youth	\$80.00 per child	100%

### PARTNERSHIPS AND CONCESSIONS PLAN

Service / Partnership	Term of Service	Financial Objective	Contract Manager
Mountain bike races	1 year	\$5 per racer or \$20 per team	Park Manager

## Expense Management Plan

### Personnel Assignments

The following actions will be taken to proactively manage labor costs via personnel assignments and classifications.

Action	Timeline	Outcome
Utilize campground hosts to supplement maintenance and housekeeping staff.	Ongoing	Save \$10,000 in salaries

### Management Techniques

The following actions will be taken to proactively manage labor costs via management techniques.

Action	Timeline	Outcome
Continue to use seasonal maintenance and park office staff during peak periods and reduce use during off peak periods.	As needed	Save money on salaries and benefits packages
Management has been directed to stay within the allotted supplies and materials budget.	FY2015	Reduction of \$40,000 expenses

### Adjusted Levels of Service

The following actions will be taken to proactively manage labor costs via reduced levels of service.

Action	Timeline	Outcome
Close Picnic Area 2, Public Fishing & Area B (Picnic Shelter #4, Group Shelter B, Fishing Boat Ramp and Pioneer Camping) during the non-peak season (winter)	On-going, annually	Reduce operating expenditures of supplies, fuel/patrol and maintenance
Reduce landscaped areas to be maintained and the frequency of cutting	On-going	Reduce operating expenditures of equipment maintenance and fuel cost

Financial Pro Forma

The following five-year financial pro forma projects operating expenses, earned revenues and cost recovery through FY 2019. These pro forma are based on the strategies and desired outcomes identified in this business plan, especially the revenue generation and expense management plans, and are linked to corresponding performance goals.

Expense Pro Forma

Fort Yargo State Park						
Operational Expenses	FY-2014 (Actual)	FY-2015	FY-2016	FY-2017	FY-2018	FY-2019
REGULAR SALARIES	\$167,322	\$185,508	\$189,218	\$193,003	\$196,863	\$200,800
ANNUAL LEAVE PAYOUT	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
OTHER SUPPLEMENTAL	\$4,025	\$4,075	\$4,156	\$4,240	\$4,324	\$4,411
TEMPORARY/CASUAL LABOR	\$135,497	\$148,957	\$199,852	\$203,849	\$207,926	\$212,085
FICA	\$14,635	\$16,366	\$17,430	\$17,779	\$18,135	\$18,497
RETIREMENT	\$32,694	\$40,738	\$41,553	\$42,384	\$43,231	\$44,096
HEALTH INSURANCE	\$52,695	\$56,494	\$57,624	\$58,776	\$59,952	\$61,151
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE	\$1,086	\$1,099	\$1,121	\$1,144	\$1,167	\$1,190
MERIT SYSTEM ASSESSMENT	\$365	\$370	\$377	\$384	\$392	\$400
OVERTIME	\$17	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL PERSONAL SERVICES</b>	<b>\$408,335</b>	<b>\$453,607</b>	<b>\$511,332</b>	<b>\$521,558</b>	<b>\$531,989</b>	<b>\$542,629</b>
POSTAGE	\$421	\$426	\$435	\$443	\$452	\$461
MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES	\$53,597	\$40,000	\$40,800	\$41,616	\$42,448	\$43,297
PRINTING & PUBLICATION	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$100,408	\$60,000	\$65,500	\$66,810	\$68,146	\$69,509
REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$8,230	\$8,332	\$13,300	\$13,566	\$13,837	\$14,114
EQUIPMENT >\$1000< \$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
WATER & SEWAGE	\$9,737	\$9,858	\$12,000	\$12,240	\$12,485	\$12,734
ENERGY	\$101,237	\$102,493	\$112,000	\$114,240	\$116,525	\$118,855
RENTS	\$2,142	\$2,169	\$2,212	\$2,256	\$2,302	\$2,348
INSURANCE & BONDING	\$5,089	\$5,152	\$5,700	\$5,814	\$5,930	\$6,049
FREIGHT	\$55	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES	\$9,991	\$10,115	\$10,317	\$10,523	\$10,734	\$10,948
CLAIMS & BONDS & INTEREST	\$100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TRAVEL	\$355	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL REGULAR EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$291,361</b>	<b>\$238,544</b>	<b>\$262,264</b>	<b>\$267,509</b>	<b>\$272,859</b>	<b>\$278,317</b>
SALES TAX - TRANSFER OUT	\$1,936	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
VOICE/DATA COMMUNICATIONS	\$2,372	\$2,402	\$2,450	\$2,499	\$2,549	\$2,600
CONTRACTS/PER DIEM	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
COMPUTER SUPPLIES	\$574	\$581	\$592	\$604	\$616	\$629
RESALE	\$11,489	\$11,631	\$12,600	\$12,852	\$13,109	\$13,371
<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$16,371</b>	<b>\$14,614</b>	<b>\$15,642</b>	<b>\$15,955</b>	<b>\$16,274</b>	<b>\$16,600</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$716,067</b>	<b>\$706,764</b>	<b>\$789,238</b>	<b>\$805,022</b>	<b>\$821,123</b>	<b>\$837,545</b>

Revenue Pro Forma

Fort Yargo State Park						
Revenue Pro Forma						
Revenue Sources Description	FY-2014 (Actual)	FY-2015	FY-2016	FY-2017	FY-2018	FY-2019
Concession	\$32,297	\$34,100	\$38,000	\$39,231	\$40,000	\$41,200
Cottages	\$65,181	\$67,000	\$68,000	\$69,000	\$70,300	\$71,940
Campsites	\$202,060	\$204,200	\$208,200	\$211,500	\$213,735	\$218,200
Boats	\$36,885	\$38,800	\$41,500	\$43,000	\$43,850	\$44,200
Mini Golf	\$5,686	\$6,150	\$7,000	\$7,400	\$7,550	\$7,750
Dog Fees	\$535	\$585	\$585	\$615	\$650	\$695
Grp Shelter	\$35,520	\$36,300	\$37,000	\$38,000	\$38,760	\$39,500
Wash&Dry	\$525	\$535	\$1,500	\$2,000	\$2,125	\$2,175
H & F	\$370					
Short/Over	(\$652)					
Bikes	\$12,192	\$12,500	\$14,000	\$14,600	\$14,890	\$15,200
Pioneer Camp	\$5,675	\$6,100	\$6,400	\$6,500	\$6,650	\$6,780
Picnic Shelter	\$15,220	\$16,100	\$16,500	\$16,950	\$17,190	\$17,500
Program Fee	\$1,551	\$2,500	\$3,500	\$3,650	\$3,730	\$3,800
Misc Park Rcpts	\$2,805					
Frisbee Golf	\$3,041	\$3,250	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,320	\$4,400
H&F -NL	\$9,727					
Special Park Clubs(Field)	\$70	\$70				
Cr Card Chgbacks-Parks	(\$266)					
Bad Checks	(\$105)					
Sales Tax	\$2,348					
Yurts	\$74,850	\$76,500	\$77,750	\$79,000	\$80,250	\$81,100
Volunteer Insurance	\$5					
Camper Cabins			\$207,558	\$237,000	\$244,000	\$249,300
Misc Concession Agreements	\$4,314	\$4,500	\$4,700	\$4,888	\$5,000	\$5,150
Surplus Property Sales	\$854					
Pedal Boats	\$27,585	\$29,245	\$30,000	\$30,800	\$31,500	\$32,100
Cancellation Fees	\$260					
Overpmt	(\$8,055)					
<b>TOTAL EARNED REVENUES</b>	<b>\$530,478</b>	<b>\$538,435</b>	<b>\$766,193</b>	<b>\$808,334</b>	<b>\$824,500</b>	<b>\$840,990</b>
Revenue Projection Goal		\$ 538,435	\$ 766,193	\$ 808,334	\$ 824,500	\$ 840,990

Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites

Total / Cost Recovery Pro Forma

Fort Yargo State Park						
TOTAL PRO FORMA	FY-2014 (Actual)	FY-2015	FY-2016	FY-2017	FY-2018	FY-2019
Visitation	417,307	420,000	430,000	435,000	440,000	442,345
Operational Expenses	\$716,067	\$706,764	\$789,238	\$805,022	\$821,123	\$837,545
Earned Revenues	\$530,478	\$538,435	\$766,193	\$808,334	\$824,500	\$840,990
% Cost Recovery	74.1%	76.2%	97.1%	100.4%	100.4%	100.4%

## Action Plan

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>					
Site: Fort Yargo State Park		Site Manager:			Date:
Month:					
Strategy	Tasks	Costs / Funding	Revenues / ROI	Responsibilities	Metrics

ACTION PLAN					
Site: Fort Yargo State Park		Site Manager:			Date:
Month:					
Strategy	Tasks	Costs / Funding	Revenues / ROI	Responsibilities	Metrics