

Vision and Goals Email Input

3/31/19

This is a report of all input received from emails regarding the Draft Vision and Goals starting Mar 11 and ending Mar 30, 2019

The basic goals look good to me but I remain concerned about how your very limited resources will be applied toward addressing the stated goals. Again, the goals seem very good but I have also worked with some of your staff and been to some public meetings where I have become increasingly concerned about your lack of ability to focus resources on key tasks. I understand that a large part of the challenge is that the people making the most noise at your meetings are older community residents that are still very upset about old LBL history. However, I respectfully suggest their requests are not reflective of what the LBL needs for longer term stability and growth. So, my biggest recommendation would be to continue expanding community connections like the mindmixer that is more likely to expand input from younger people / future frequent visitors. I suspect most of your team members really want to focus on the future needs of the LBL but are being held back by the numbers of negative comments asking them to spend more time on things like upkeep of roads that only go to very old cemeteries that are very rarely visited by anyone. An additional example of my concerns about implementation of action plans is based on my current work with some of your staff. My focus as a volunteer is control of invasive species. This is mentioned as a concern, but this is not a new concern and very little horsepower appears to have been applied to the process so far. As I say this please keep in mind that I have great respect for Curtis Fowler and Elizabeth Raikes who I have had the pleasure of working with as a volunteer over the past year. However, a key invader, the tree of heaven, has advanced mostly unchallenged until I volunteered to take on the task. Further, as Curtis kindly supplied me with chemicals to address the challenge he ran out of funds early this year leading me to purchase some more on my own instead of waiting past the key winter spraying window for more funding to become available. I have sprayed a lot of trees with their support but I am getting slowed down by restrictions on where I can spray, the lack of ability to use my chainsaw to reduce potential issues as the trees die, etc...

	<p>For sure some of this is part of the package in working for the federal government. However, I suspect that the same limited resources that are forcing Curtis to try and address a long task list with interns and volunteers are also impacting those who are trying to improve year around visits to the LBL. An example in this area would be the Hooker lake trail. Earlier this week I brought 3 area residence to my favorite hiking trail only to find that maintenance had fallen way behind. Again, I understand that the team working on the trails is most likely volunteers that can not use chainsaws, plus the water has been high for an extended period. Still, the message being sent is basically do not visit until after late spring when trail work has started. On the up side I think everyone still enjoyed the hike. FYI, I spent 30 years in the private sector working for large corporations as a plant geneticist. For sure the funding for selected tasks was better than what is available to federal employees. However, I respectfully suggest that the targeted application of available resources was also better in the private sector. So, I urge you to fully accept that you are not going to make everyone happy but you will get more done in addressing top priority issues if you focus everyone's attention on the most critical tasks in accordance with your stated goals. Thanks very much for all your time and efforts.</p>
2	<p>Sorry I let something this important slip under the radar so long. It looks really good. The only question I have is about the concentration on local communities. Should we put more emphasis on working with our users. I think we have plenty of visitors that don't come from Western KY or TN. In fact Stewart county is considered to be in Middle TN (semantics). Could the Vision say something like: Working with local (or regional) communities and visitors to bring positive..... In the Rationale section everything is based on local communities. Most of the rationales can go either way I think. But it really doesn't specifically say anything about the users wants and desires. There's my 2 cents.</p>
3	<p>I really like the draft vision and goals and I think it is written very well. Looks great!</p>
4	<p>I would like to see the OHV area increased in size and maintained This is a place where families can enjoy and get people in the outdoors</p>
5	<p>I have rode horses and enjoyed LBL wrangler campground for years and plan to continue. While I enjoy the serenity and quiet I think culturally there have been changes that we all must adjust to. Many campers do not cook and a restaurant I think would be a drawing point. You might consider visiting seven springs Alabama campground. They have a restaurant that serves food and a band on weekends. It has become a drawing point for locals and surrounding counties. Even though isolated they have a sizable crowd nightly. My grandkids have camped with me . I think we do need to develop activities and events to draw more young. Maybe a wagon ride to see areas that are remote with a tour guide to discuss plants and wildlife in area. I think young and old would enjoy. I cannot say enough good things about LBL. Its beautiful and the staff there are hospitable and responsive. It's truly a national treasure.</p>

6	<p>I like the vision statement, goals, and rationale. They are clean, concise, and would appear manageable. I await the plan of implementation components and the metrics to measure success. I would like to find a place to include a plan for the handicapped/aged hunter and fisherman. Our society is living longer. Maybe somewhere between "Expanding and creating new markets", or Goal 2, and even it could be a chance for grandchildren to help "Paw-Paw" hunt giving the young special access to different areas or dates or opportunities, Goal 3. A hunt for under 16 and over 65....That sounds good. Maybe an area during the youth hunt where both participants could be hunters.....</p>
7	<p>Looks good to me.</p>
8	<p>Thanks for all you guys do for our region. I understand there is a delicate balance in preserving the heritage of LBL and providing recreational opportunities for visitors. In my opinion, Kentucky and Barkley lakes are struggling with an Asian carp reputation. We also face demographic challenges with the younger generation. So I applaud your efforts in developing goals that are youth-oriented. Personally, there are two general things I would like to see in Land Between The Lakes that would appeal to many visitors while maintaining the balance and keeping with the vision of sustainable recreation in LBL. Developing a lake-access area on the north side of US 868 at Eggners Ferry with parking, restrooms, a trail connecting the existing paved trail, picnic tables, and a access point down to the water might be a viable option. We used to swim down there all the time, and now access has been cut off. Additionally, a historical interpretive area showing Fenton (similar to what is located at Golden Pond) would help preserve the heritage there. A similar area could be developed on the south side of the US 8 bridge on Lake Barkley where the trail is now. Secondly, and I really don't have any concrete ideas on this one – but another Nature Station or Homeplace-like attraction inside LBL somewhere would help keep visitors in the park longer and potentially give our local tourism a boost. I don't really know what that could be, but something that fits with the overall vision of LBL. Just wanted to share these things with you. Thanks for you time!</p>
9	<p>It is nice to see these efforts and your challenges are well stated. I live a couple hours north and would love to help. My parents (deceased) retired on the eastern shore of Lake Barkley and all of us kids come down that way for vacations. I happen to enjoy the back trails with the ADV Rider motorcycle group. If it is of any interest, I have worked as a photographer and social media helper with several state parks in FL, GA, IL and the Bureau of Land Management at El Mirage Dry Lake in Barstow CA. Most of this was while working as a camp host, although the assignment in Barstow was funded by a grant for 60 days. They needed photos of people having fun for their future marketing efforts. If something like that would be of use to you I'm not far away and (retired) have plenty of time on my hands. Let me know if I can assist!</p>
10	<p>This looks pretty concise and to the point to me.</p>

Many thanks to you and your staff for the process you have undertaken to plan out the future for LBL. This area is a special place to my family. My ancestors were some of the original farmers in the area before Kentucky Lake was created, and our family history is very much connected to this land. My husband and I have always maintained a connection to the lake (both sentimentally and financially) even though our professional careers have required us to live in bigger cities much further away. We have a vested interest in what happens in the area and at LBL, and we take seriously the work that you and your colleagues do and appreciate all of the efforts you make to be good stewards of this land. Please see the attached file for my input regarding the various issues addressed in the Mind Mixer surveys. Thank you for allowing those of us in the community to share our thoughts and offer our input.

The region of Western Kentucky and Western Tennessee has within its boundaries a gem of a resource. That is, an environmentally rich stretch of land that displays the best of all that nature has to offer including beautiful scenery, abundant wildlife, endless recreational opportunities, and a natural classroom for all things related to nature. We have new roads, new bridges, high speed internet, and new hiking & biking trails. The challenge, in my opinion, is (1) how to introduce it to people and (2) how to make them understand why they need to experience it.

I believe the key to securing the future sustainability of LBL is to introduce it to as many young people as possible for these reasons: 1) to lay the foundation for future utilization - exposing children to a fun experience in nature may well create a lifelong love of the outdoors, resulting in future patrons and supporters. 2) to improve health (mentally & physically) - break the cycle of negative consequences from lack of exercise, video gaming and tv overindulgences, childhood obesity, social media pressures, etc. 3) to inspire a future work force in related fields of study.

The goals of the strategic mission could possibly be achieved by the creation, and subsequent marketing and promotion of, an extensive program of summer camps. This has never been widely available in our geographic region, but sending children to “away camp” is very popular in larger metropolitan areas and there are very few places that have as much to offer as LBL. It is the perfect location to undertake such an initiative. Parents actively seek opportunities to have their children engaged and occupied during the summer months, and they are willing to consider camps in other geographic regions if within a reasonable drive (probably 3-5 hours for most people). Metropolitan communities such as St. Louis, Nashville, Memphis, Louisville, and points in between would likely be willing to consider it as long as the quality of the camps are perceived to be worth the effort. Murray State does currently offer golf camps and basketball camps, and the Boy & Girl Scouts offer camps, but I don’t believe there are many other options and what could be offered at LBL could be more broad and diverse. For example: 1) environmental education such as forestry, river/water management, horticulture, biology, botany, ecology, veterinary sciences, etc. 2) recreational activities such as fishing, hunting, boating, sailing, hiking, biking, swimming, horse riding, etc. 3) other topics such as cooking, organic farming, painting, theatre/performance, dance, musical instruments, computer coding, etc.

Potential benefits for LBL and the region as a whole might include: 1) an increase in first time visitors to the area that might not otherwise have a reason to visit LBL; 2) an increase in revenue generation from camp tuition; 3) an increase in tourism spending from camper families at local hotels & restaurants; 4) the creation of summer jobs and internships for local young adults such as camp counselors, instructors, administrative/registration, housekeeping, maintenance, etc.; 5) an opportunity to partner with local organizations across the region to develop camp curriculum (Murray State University, Forestry, Coast Guard, Fish & Wildlife, TVA, Army Corp of Engineers, local fishing & hunting guides, etc.);

Increasing the existing 100 - mile radius limitation of the school field trip assistance program to 300 miles should be considered. This would allow more exposure of LBL to larger metropolitan areas such as St. Louis, Nashville, Memphis, etc. resulting in a broader appeal to a larger number of potential patrons. Also, a speaker's bureau could be organized to give presentations to schools within this boundary to introduce LBL, encourage consideration as an option for field trips, and to distribute information on summer camp programs. Another idea would be to have a naturalist from the Nature Station accompany the speaker and bring an animal resident to the presentation to engage the audience.

Regarding the draft of the Vision & Goals as submitted for input, my only comment is that I noticed much focus on the word "change" but with less focus on the purpose or the desired outcome of "change". The vision statement reads in part to "bring positive, sustainable change". The number 1 goal, as listed, is to "be responsive to change". In my honest opinion, this reads as being very vague and nondescript.