



# Land Between the Lakes: Forward to the Future

DRAFT VISION AND GOALS

Comments Due: March 31, 2019

## Introduction

**Forward to the Future** is an ongoing strategic planning initiative which focuses on the future of recreation and environmental education at Land Between the Lakes National Recreation Area. The purpose of this effort is to develop the organization's first *Strategic Sustainability Plan for the Future of Recreation and Environmental Education at Land Between the Lakes*. The Plan will identify:

1. Key strategic plan components (vision, priority areas of focus, and set of goals and objectives) that will guide management of recreation and environmental education programs for the next 10-15 years;
2. Strategies which will help Land Between the Lakes, as an organization, to be more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable; and
3. Ways in which Land Between the Lakes can help to cultivate regional sustainability through collaboration and partnership.

## Public Engagement

Public engagement is an essential piece to the development of the ***Strategic Sustainability Plan for the Future of Recreation and Environmental Education at Land Between the Lakes***. As part of this process there have been and continue to be several opportunities for public input, comment and dialogue. These opportunities correspond to the three phases of the strategic planning process: Assessment, Visioning, and Strategic Development.



To date, public input has been collected from approximately 700 participants as part of the Assessment and Visioning phases via one of the following methods: through an online engagement platform ([landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com](http://landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com)), two open house sessions, facility open houses and a community visioning session. The following is a brief summary of what we heard from the public. If you would like to know more about the methods and results of these public engagement opportunities, which serve as the foundation for the draft vision and goals, please visit [landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com/about-this-site](http://landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com/about-this-site) or visit <https://www.landbetweenthelakes.us/> and scroll to the Sustainable Recreation Planning section near the bottom of the webpage.

## Definition of Strategic Planning Terms

Plan Element	Definition
VISION	<i>An image or understanding of what the strategic plan should accomplish; It articulates a shared sense of direction as to where an organization is going and what it aims to accomplish when it gets there.</i>
AREA OF FOCUS	<i>An area or matter in which an organization concentrates its resources</i>
STRATEGIC GOAL	<i>Desired outcomes that support the vision</i>

## Draft Vision, Areas of Focus, and Goals

The development of the **vision, areas of focus and goals** for the future is a key step in the strategic planning process. These key components are essential for the next steps to identify specific objectives and actions necessary to achieve the desired future. Input collected from the public has been reviewed to synthesize a draft vision, draft areas of focus and draft set of goals. These are listed below for your review. We are asking that you provide comments regarding these three key components.

VISION		
<i>Working together with the communities of Western Kentucky and Tennessee to bring positive, sustainable change through exceptional nature-based experiences that reach all generations.</i>		
STRATEGIC GOALS - AREAS OF FOCUS		
Be Responsive to Change	Sustain Thriving Habitats	Inspire Youth
GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
Anticipate changing recreation needs, demonstrate innovative management practices, and sustainably transform to meet 21 <sup>st</sup> century expectations.	Restore and sustain healthy habitats to be a destination for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing of abundant and diverse species.	Inspire youth in neighboring counties and states to connect with their natural lands and cultural heritage.
RATIONALE		
<u>Community interests:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity of environmental education and recreation opportunities to draw people to the area</li> <li>Expanding and creating new markets</li> <li>Economic prosperity</li> </ul> <u>Community concerns:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low off-season visitation</li> <li>Condition of roads &amp; facilities</li> <li>Out-dated offerings</li> </ul>	<u>Community interests:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hunting, fishing &amp; wildlife viewing</li> <li>Nature-based tourism</li> <li>Preservation of natural lands</li> <li>Abundant wildlife</li> </ul> <u>Community concerns:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of natural lands and wildlife habitat for game and non-game species</li> <li>Reduced population of wildlife</li> <li>Invasive species</li> </ul>	<u>Community interests:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth education and well-being</li> <li>Community health &amp; wellness</li> <li>Preservation/Appreciation of local heritage</li> </ul> <u>Community concerns:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of youth interest in spending time outdoors</li> <li>Sedentary lifestyles</li> <li>Youth Flight - Limited career opportunities for college grads</li> <li>Diminishing appreciation for the history of the area</li> </ul>

<b>MANAGEMENT GOAL - AREA OF FOCUS</b>
Create a Culture of Innovation
<b>GOAL 4</b>
Respect the past and innovate for the future.

### Your Comments

Land Between the Lakes seeks your input on the draft Goals, Areas of Focus and Vision by **March 31, 2019**. Comments can be submitted through the MindMixer website:

[landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com](http://landbetweenthelakes.mindmixer.com), or by sending them directly to Jeff Laird, Customer Service Manager at [jlaird@fs.fed.us](mailto:jlaird@fs.fed.us). If you have any questions they can also be addressed to Jeff Laird at [jlaird@fs.fed.us](mailto:jlaird@fs.fed.us).

### Next Steps

Your input will help determine whether the draft vision, areas of focus and goals best define our desired path forward to the future. The next step will be to review all public comments and refine these components based upon what we have heard. Our goal is to identify and move towards a desired future that represents both the priorities of Land Between the Lakes and its surrounding communities. Once these components have been finalized, Land Between the Lakes will seek to form community working groups to help define specific objectives for meeting the goals. Working groups will be composed of individuals and organizations that share these goals and want to explore partnership opportunities for advancing change.