



# PHILPOTT LAKE

## Strategic Planning Guide

**A partnership between the Dan River Basin Association and the Army Corp of Engineers to protect and promote Philpott Lake and its surrounding parks.**



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This Strategic Planning Guide is meant to be a flexible document that will serve as a helpful guide for enhancing, protecting and promoting Philpott Lake and its parks. This document does not obligate the Army Corp of Engineers, Dan River Basin Association or local government to fund or implement any of the proposed projects.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## History of Philpott Lake

In 1944, due to severe flooding for many years, Congress authorized the construction of Philpott Dam to tame the Smith River. The Smith River is part of the Roanoke River Basin that eventually empties into the Atlantic Ocean at the Albemarle Sound in North Carolina. Five other dams and reservoir systems in the basin, John H. Kerr, Leesville, Smith Mountain, Gaston, and Roanoke Rapids join with Philpott to provide flood control and hydroelectric power generation. The Corps of Engineers began construction of Philpott Dam in 1948 and started protecting the downstream towns from devastating floods in 1951.

With the completion of the dam, 3,000 acres of mountain valleys in the counties of Henry, Patrick, and Franklin were flooded to create today's Philpott Lake with its 100 miles of pristine undeveloped shoreline. The lake is surrounded by 7,000 acres of forested land owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Adjoining Philpott Lake is Fairy Stone State Park with nearly 5,000 acres of predominately forested land and another 5,500 acres of Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) forest. With all of its water and forests, the Philpott area offers a variety of recreational opportunities for every sportsman and outdoor recreational enthusiast.

## Partnering to Protect and Promote

In 2013 the Army Corp of Engineers and the Dan River Basin Association(DRBA) entered into a first-of-its-kind partnership to involve the community in enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities, protecting water quality and promoting the lake as a major attraction to the area. Through this partnership, DRBA absorbed the "Friends of Philpott" organization, a non-profit group of volunteers that had been working to help protect the parks at Philpott Lake for several years.

## Calendar of Events

~April 13	Environmental Education Expo @ Visitor's Center
~May 11	Safety Fun Day @ Visitor's Center
~June 8	Kid's Day @ Jamison Mill Park
~September	Lake Clean-up for National Public Lands Day

# Volunteer Opportunities

**Trail Building** - There are plans to connect and improve trails around Philpott Lake and volunteers will be needed! No experience necessary.

**Beach Safety Watch** - The rangers at Philpott Lake have many important duties, these include making sure that visitors have fun safely. You can help them out by signing up for safety watch at one of the beaches. Training provided.

**Water Quality Testing** - Help us protect your waterways by monitoring the status of water quality in Philpott Lake and its tributaries. Training is provided.

**Outings** - Assist in organizing and guiding group outings at Philpott; use your knowledge of the Lake and it's Parks to encourage others to appreciate it as much as you do.

**Trash Pickup** - Help keep Philpott Lake and its parks clean and healthy by picking up litter or helping to organize clean-ups.

**Fundraising** - Play a major role in implementing projects to improve Philpott's parks, camping areas, playgrounds, trails, signage and access points by helping to raise the necessary funds.

**Interpretive Programs/Presentations** - Pass along your knowledge of the environment and culture surrounding Philpott Lake by presenting to groups of visitors.

**Events & Festivals** - Get involved with events that celebrate everything Philpott has to offer. Volunteers can help by assisting in the planning, promoting, set-up and clean-up of events as well as attending booths and displays.

*If you're interested in helping to protect and promote Philpott Lake and everything it has to offer, please visit the Dan River Basin Association website and fill out the volunteer application form - [danriver.org/forms/volunteer](http://danriver.org/forms/volunteer) - or call 336-627-6270. If applicable, indicate which park(s) at which you'd like to volunteer:*

- Philpott Lake Park/Visitor's Center
- Ryan's Branch
- Jamison Mill
- Horseshoe Point
- Twin Ridge
- Goose Point
- Salthouse Branch
- Deer Island
- Bowen's Creek
- Runnet Bag

Please consider joining or helping to create a "Friends" group  
for your favorite Philpott Lake park!

# Opportunities for Outdoor Recreation at Philpott Lake

## Hiking & Biking Trails

- **Dogwood Glen Trails**

Description: The trail starts off from the dam with a moderate climb for approximately 2/10 of a mile where it intersects a fire road. The trail runs along the fire road for approximately 1.3 miles. Then the trail separates from the fire road and continues to Salthouse Branch Park through beautiful hardwood forest. There are some tough climbs and a few short downhill segments. Various stretches of the trail run along the shoreline of Philpott Lake. The approximately 7-foot wide trail can be accessed from Philpott Dam (Franklin County side) or Salthouse Branch Park. Parking is limited at Salthouse Branch Park (\$4 day-use fee) and not accessible for equestrians at that location.

- **Jamison Mill Trails**

Description: 6.25 miles of inter-connected loops offering a variety of experiences from narrow, single-track trails to wider, fire-road type trails that meander through a variety of landscapes, including mixed pine and hardwood stands. Trail features include stretches along the shoreline of Philpott Lake and beautiful ridge top vistas. Most trails follow the contour, keeping the average grade to a minimum. There are a few short, steep segments with several switchbacks in places.

- **Philpott Park Trail System**

Description: One trail starts to the left of the Visitor Center. It goes down to the top of Philpott Dam, runs along the road a short distance, continues to the bottom of the dam, goes through the parking lot, then along the Smith River a short distance, totaling 0.5 miles. This trail is steep with a bench situated midway on the hill for resting. Another trail starts behind the restrooms near the overlook. It intersects with boat ramp 2, continues to the intersection of boat ramp 1, goes through the parking lot, then continues to the group camp area, and then to the government boat dock, totaling 0.5 miles. Most of the trail is wooded but some follows the road and other parts follow the lake.

- **Philpott F.I.T.**

Description: A half-mile one-way interpretive fitness trail within Philpott Park near the Philpott Lake Visitor Center and Overlook. There are 26 points of interest identified by numbered markers along the trail which correspond to interpretive information in the trail guide available at the trailhead. Exercises are offered at 20 fitness stations along the trail. Not only can you learn a lot about nature and your environment, but you can also get in shape and stay fit on this unique trail.

- **Salthouse Branch Nature Trail**

Description: A narrow half-mile loop trail within Salthouse Branch Park at Philpott Lake that runs along Salthouse Branch on one side, intersects with Dogwood Glen, a 4.5 mile (one way) trail that leads to Philpott Dam, then continues back to the trailhead through forested foothills.

- **Roland Branch Interpretive Trail**

Description: A 4/10 mile one-way interpretive trail within Salthouse Branch Park at Philpott Lake. The trail runs along the shoreline of the lake with 25 points of interest along the trail identified with numbered markers which correspond to interpretive information in the trail guide found at the trailhead.

- **Goose's Roost Interpretive Walkway**

Description: The Goose's Roost Interpretive Walkway is a 2/10 mile one-way trail within Goose Point Park at Philpott Lake. The first half of the trail consists of a concrete walkway. You will continue your walk along a natural surface trail beyond the fishing pier and amphitheater. There are 21 points of interest along the trail identified with numbered markers which correspond to interpretive information in the trail guide available at the trailhead.

## **Boating**

Philpott Lake has 10 public boat ramps. Ramps are conveniently located to serve visitors coming from any direction. A canoe launch is located just below the dam on the Smith River for the white water enthusiasts. Vessels that are allowed on the lake include, but are not limited to, motor and manually powered boats, canoes, kayaks, and personal water crafts. All vessels MUST be operated in accordance with Federal and State laws. The waterway marking system at Philpott Lake includes mileage markers along the shoreline and buoys. Rules and regulations are enforced by Corps of Engineers' Rangers, Conservation Police Officers with VDGIF, and local Sheriff's Deputies. Copies of the rules and regulations governing boat operation may be obtained at our Visitor Center or by contacting the VDGIF at (804) 387-1000. For on-line information regarding boating requirements go to [www.dgif.virginia.gov](http://www.dgif.virginia.gov)

## **Swimming**

Swimming, wading, snorkeling, scuba diving, and water skiing are all permitted at Philpott Lake, except at launching sites, public docks, or other areas restricted by the District Commander. We strongly encourage all swimmers to use the designated swim areas to ensure their safety. Philpott Lake has six designated swim-beach areas to serve our visitors.

## **Hunting**

Whether hunting with a camera or with a firearm, the three county area around Philpott Lake supports an abundance of deer, turkey, and small game. By employing sound cooperative management techniques with VDGIF, the deer and turkey populations have dramatically increased resulting in extended seasons and liberal bag limits. Because regulations, licensing requirements, and seasons may vary, it is recommended that you contact the VDGIF at their Richmond, Virginia office when planning your hunt.

## **Fishing**

Fishermen at Philpott Lake enjoy pursuing a variety of species including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, crappie, sunfish, walleye, catfish, and carp. Below the Dam in the Smith River, fishing enthusiasts will find stocked rainbow and wild brown trout. From the child with a cane pole, a hook, and a can of worms, to the fly fisherman with sophisticated, expensive equipment, everyone will find peace and enjoyment while fishing the waters of Philpott Lake and the Smith River. Fishing regulations vary, such as those governing special regulation and stocked trout waters, so we recommend that you contact the VDGIF

when planning your trip. In addition, Smith River fishermen are encouraged to check the TENTATIVE power generation schedule by calling the recording at (276) 629-2432 before going fishing. During periods of power generation, Smith River waters rise and become swift and turbulent.

## **Interpretive Programs**

Our Rangers are well versed on subjects such as forestry, plant and wildlife, local culture, and water safety. Visitors enjoy interpretive programs throughout the summer at our park amphitheaters and at the Visitor Center auditorium. Our programs are designed to promote environmental education and awareness and to promote water safety. In addition, our Rangers participate in outreach programs at various schools within our geographical area. Youth organizations such as the Scouts, 4-H clubs, or church groups may request a special program to assist their members in accomplishing a specific outdoor need.

## **General Proposed Projects**

- Continued marina development
- Replace the bridge at Jamison Mill Park
- Form volunteer groups for each park to help with stewardship events and safety beach watch
- Lakeside Signage to
- Improved signage for parks and trails
- Trail development
- Infrastructure improvements at all parks
- Complete ADA compliance for Bowen's Creek and other parks
- Visitor's Center- explore possibilities of gift shop, adventure center etc. in partnership with DRBA



## 2 PHILPOTT LAKE PARK & VISITOR'S CENTER

### Location

1058 Philpott Dam Road, Bassett, VA 24055

### Amenities

Camping - Non-electric Campsites, Group Camping

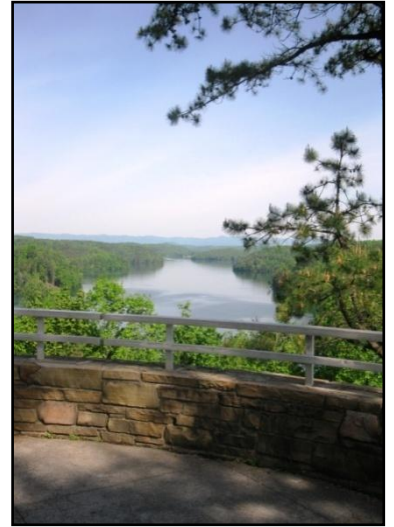
Boat Ramp

Picnic Shelter, Group Picnic Areas, Grills

Playground

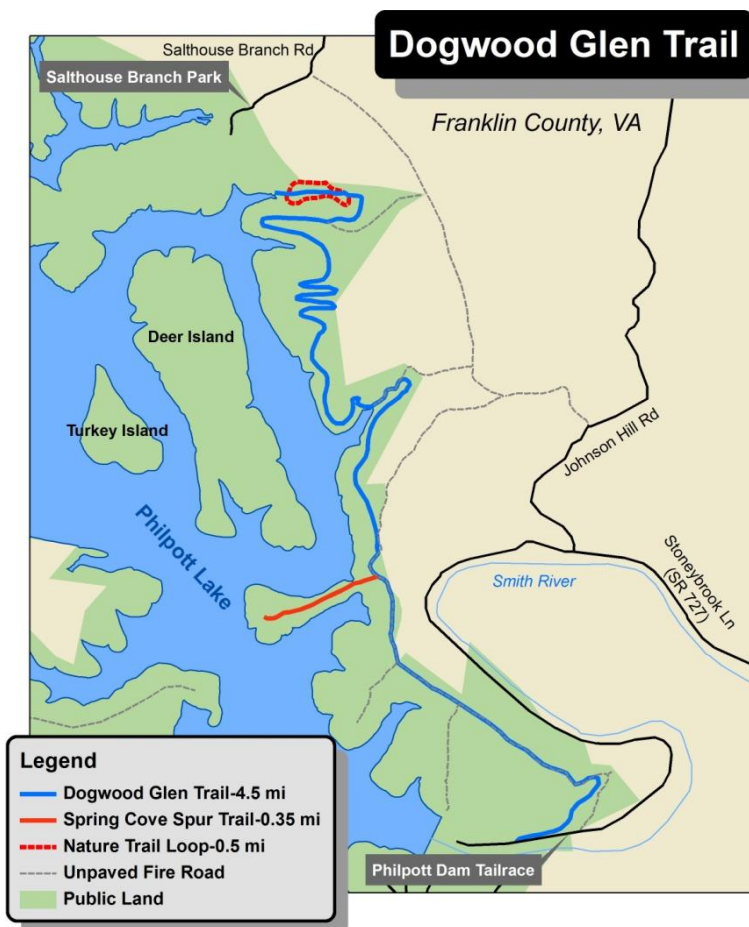
Trails - Hiking Trails, Interpretive

Overlook



### Proposed Projects for Philpott Lake Park and Visitor's Center

- Get coin-operated viewers/binoculars at Visitor's Center Overlook.
- Build an amphitheatre for interpretive programs, outdoor dramas, events etc.
- Visitor's Center - gift shop and/or adventure center in partnership with DRBA





# 3 JAMISON MILL PARK

## Location

2000 Jameson Mill Road, Henry, VA 24102

## Amenities

Camping - Electric & Non-electric Campsites, Dump station

Showers

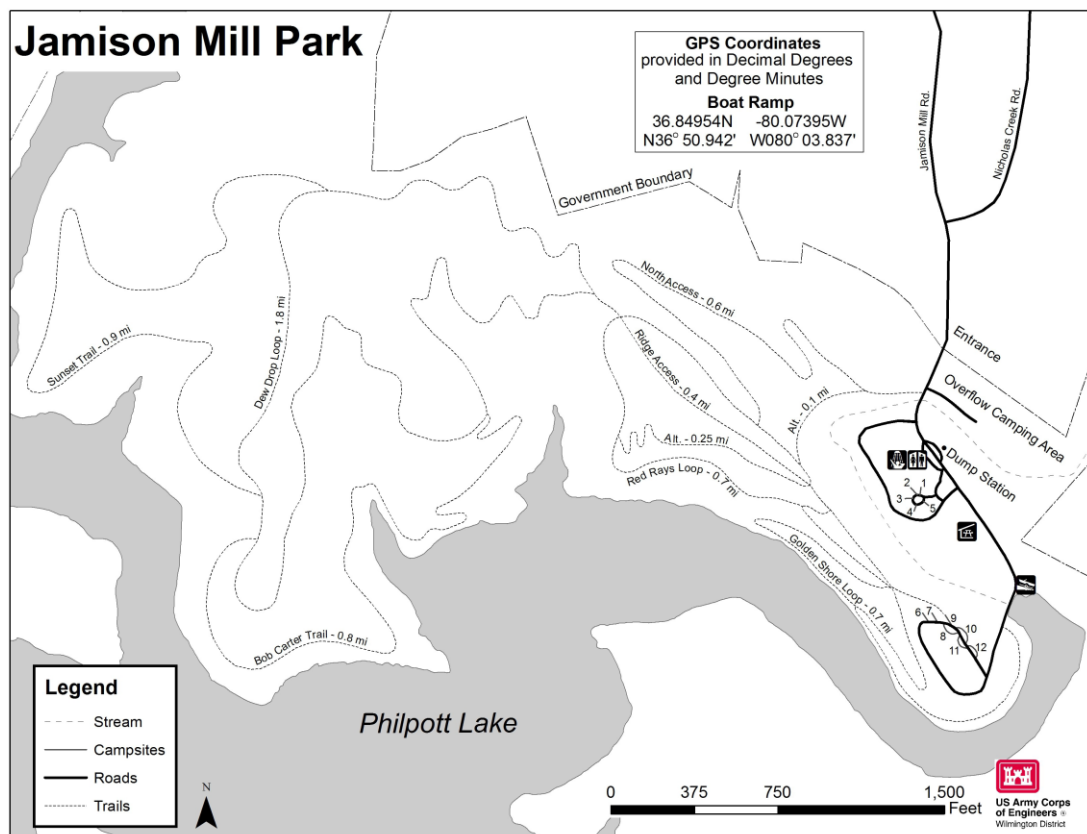
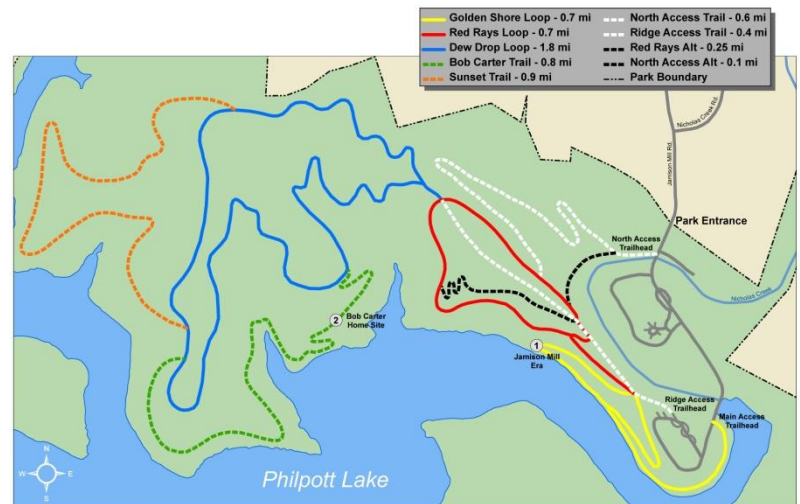
Picnic Area, Group Picnic Area, Group Picnic

Shelter

Hiking Trails

## Proposed Projects for Jameson Mill Park

- Replace the low water bridge and entrance bridge
- Conservation dams construction
- Improved signage at Homestead and Mill
- Develop picnic/day-use site
- Get power to the overflow site before the bridge
- Restroom and playground improvements/development
- Butterfly Garden
- Kid's bike-riding loop near campground



# 4 BOWEN'S CREEK PARK

## Location

605 Bowens Creek Road, Bassett, VA 24055

## Amenities

Boat Ramp

Picnic Area

Swimming Area/Beach

Hiking Trails

ADA Playground and Restroom

## Proposed Projects for Bowen's Creek Park

- Continue ADA Handicapped Accessibility developments



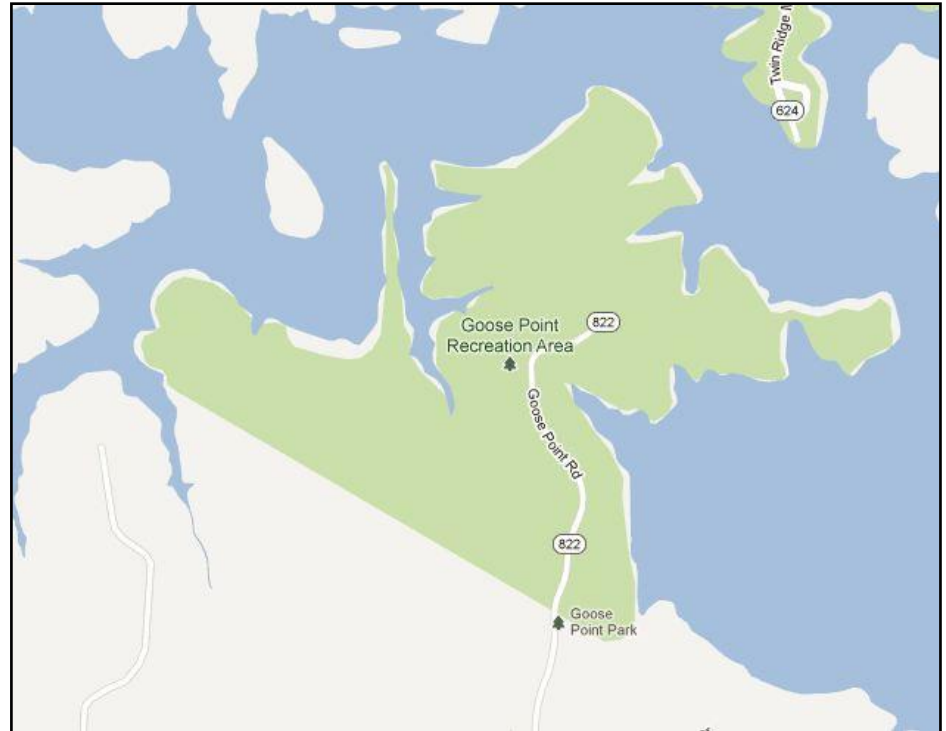
# 5 GOOSE POINT PARK

## Location

4780 Goose Point Road, Bassett, VA 24055

## Amenities

Amphitheatre  
Boat Ramp  
Boating  
Dock  
Drinking Water  
Dump Station  
Entrance Station  
Fishing Pier  
Flush Toilets  
Hiking  
Host  
Parking Area  
Playground  
Showers  
Swimming



## Proposed Projects for Goose Point Park

- ADA Beach Access



# 6 RYAN'S BRANCH PARK

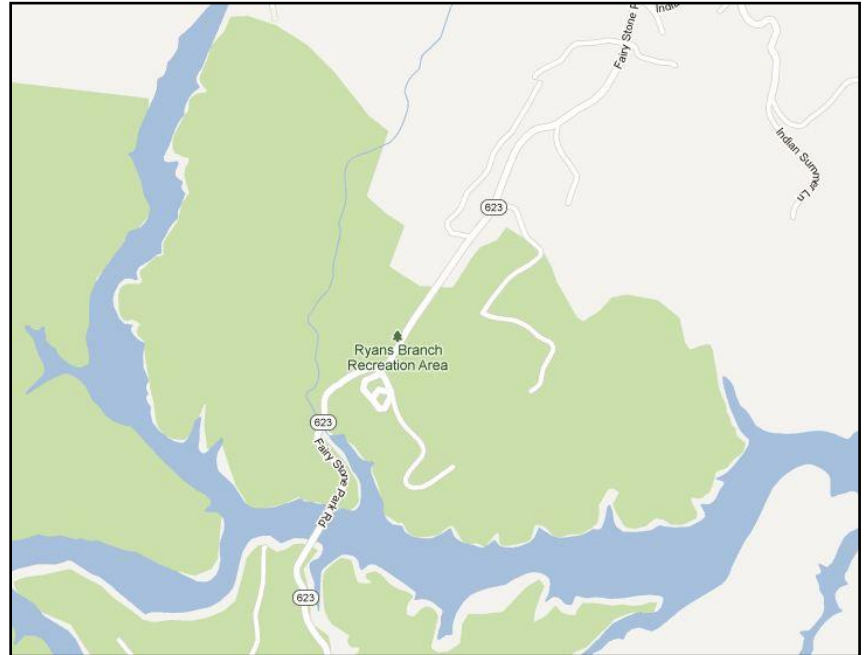
## Location

Fairstone Park Road, Ferrum, VA24088

## Amenities

Boat Ramp  
Dock  
Picnic Tables  
Vault Toilet

**There are currently no proposed projects for this park.**



# 7 HORSESHOE POINT PARK

## Location

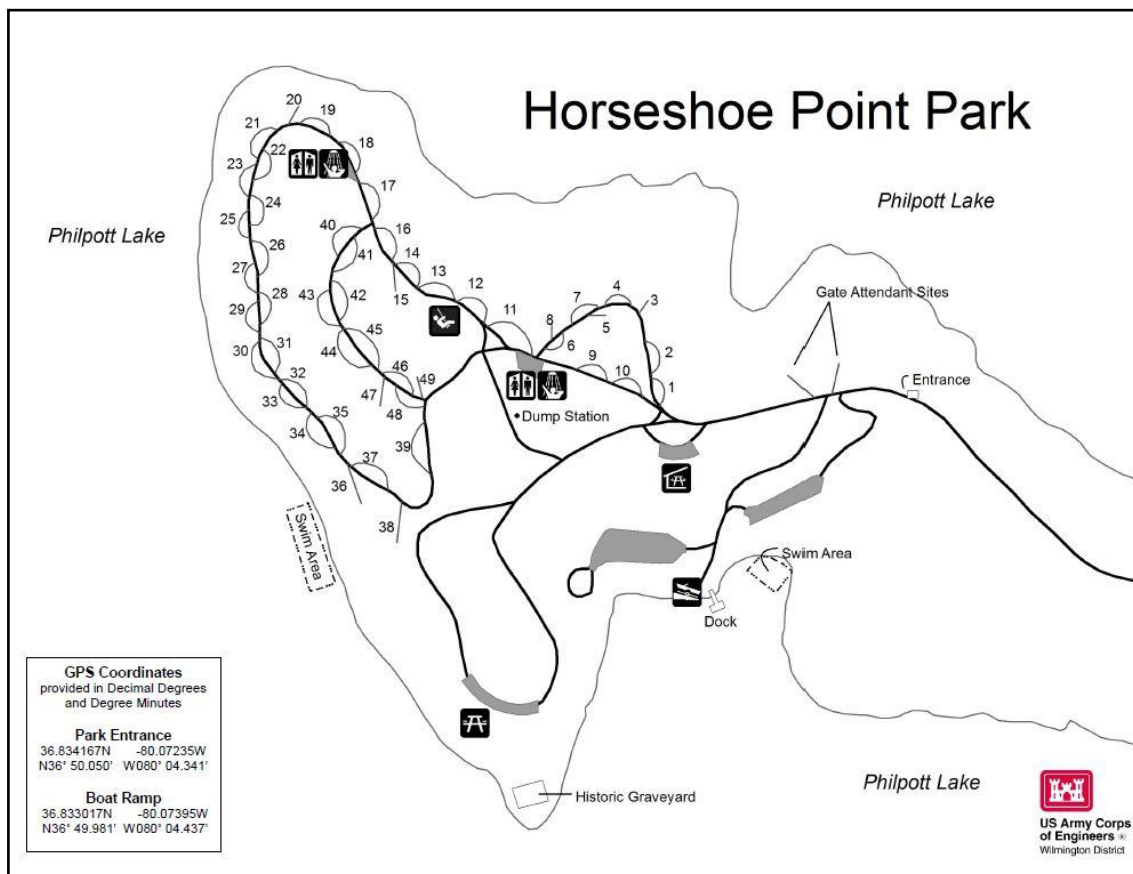
3950 Horseshoe Point Road, Henry, VA 24102

## Amenities

Boat Ramp  
Boating  
Camping  
Dump Station  
Dock  
Entrance Station  
Flush Toilets  
Picnic Area  
Playground  
Drinking Water  
Showers  
Swimming



There are currently no proposed projects for this park.



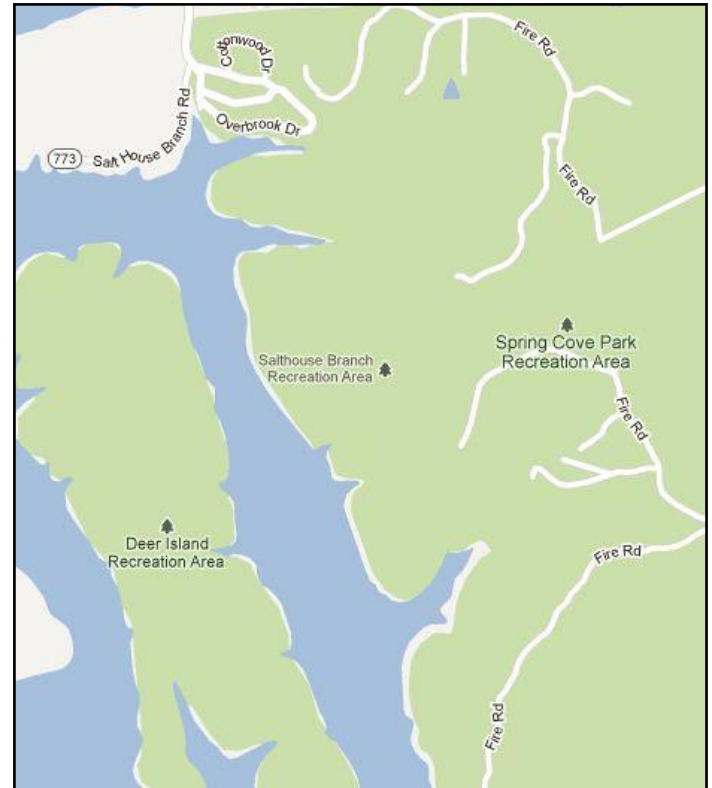
# 8 SALTHOUSE BRANCH PARK

## Location

620 Salthouse Branch Road, Henry, VA 24102

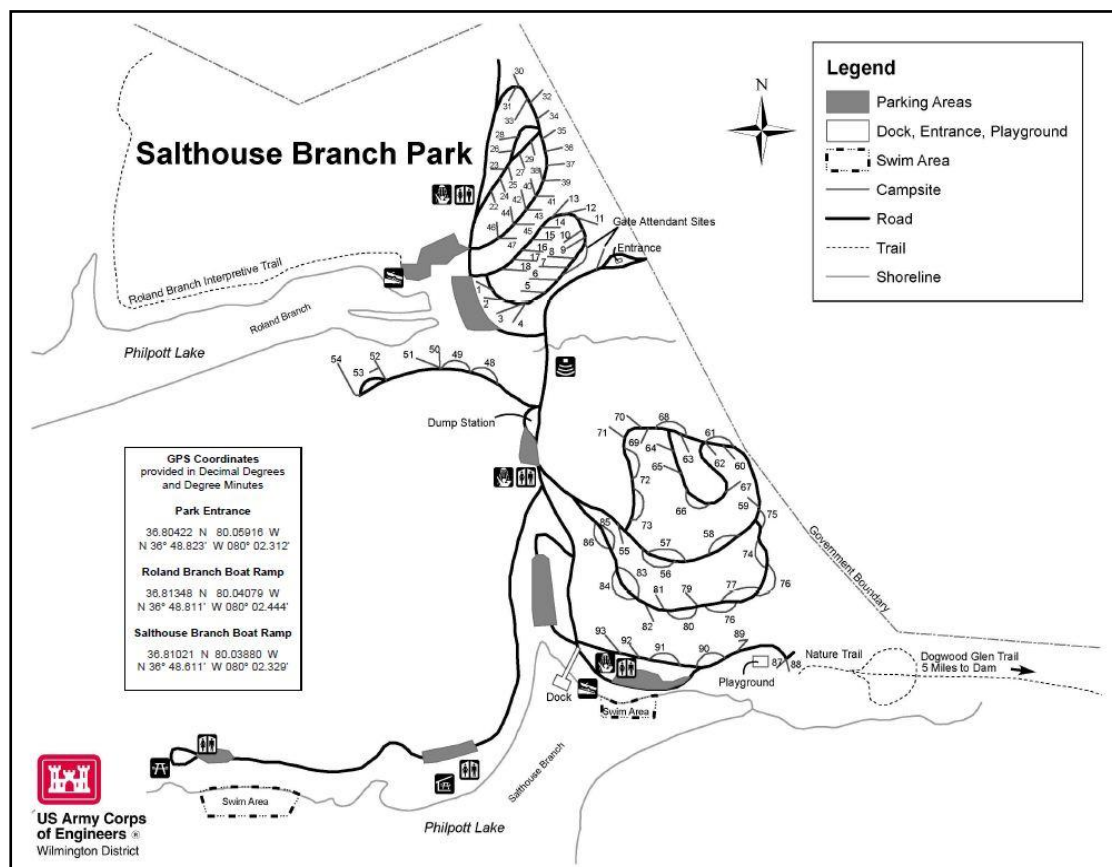
## Amenities

Flush & Vault Toilets  
Amphitheatre  
Boat Ramp  
Dock  
Drinking Water  
Dump Station  
Entrance Station  
Hiking/Interpretive Trails  
Host  
Parking Area  
Playground  
Showers  
Swimming



## Proposed Projects for Salthouse Branch Park

- Plant trees behind campsites 1-18





# 9 DEER ISLAND PARK

## Location

via Boat Access Only

Bowen's Creek Park

605 Bowen's Creek Road, Bassett VA or

Salthouse Branch Park

620 Salthouse Branch Road, Henry, VA 24102

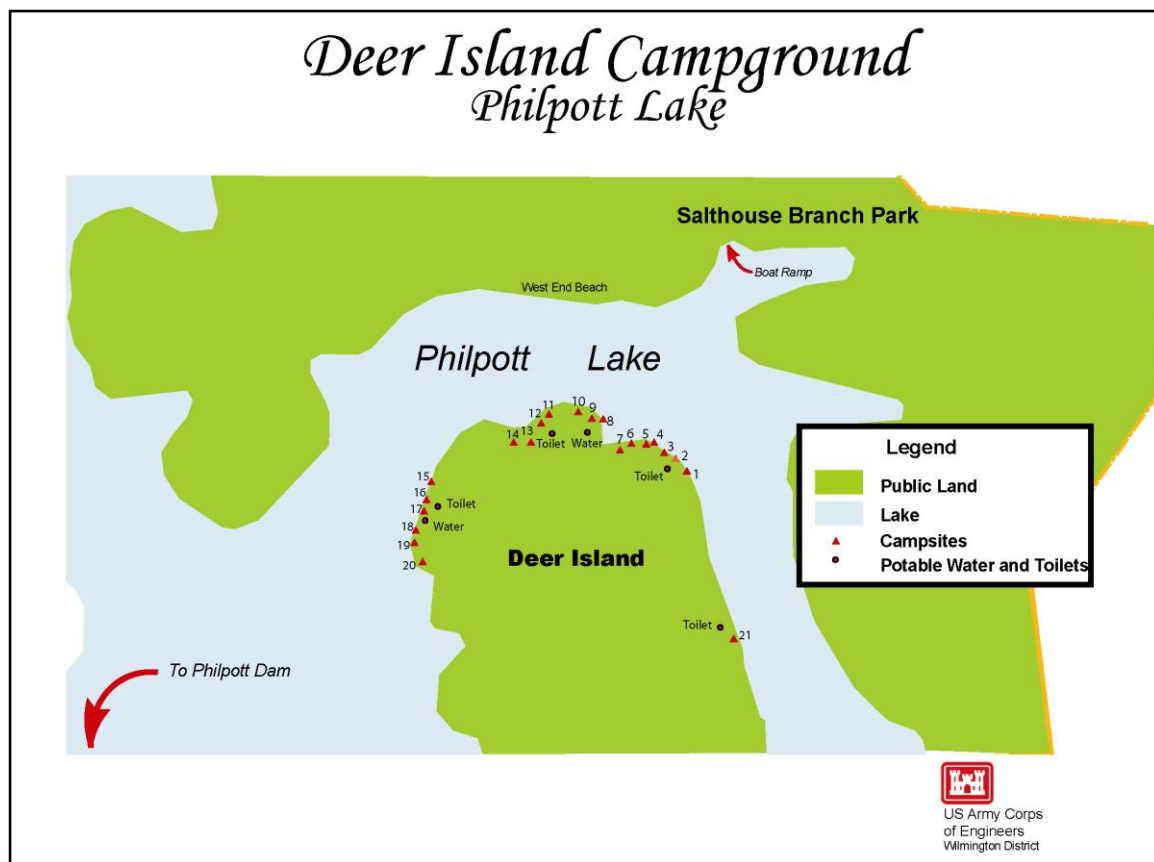
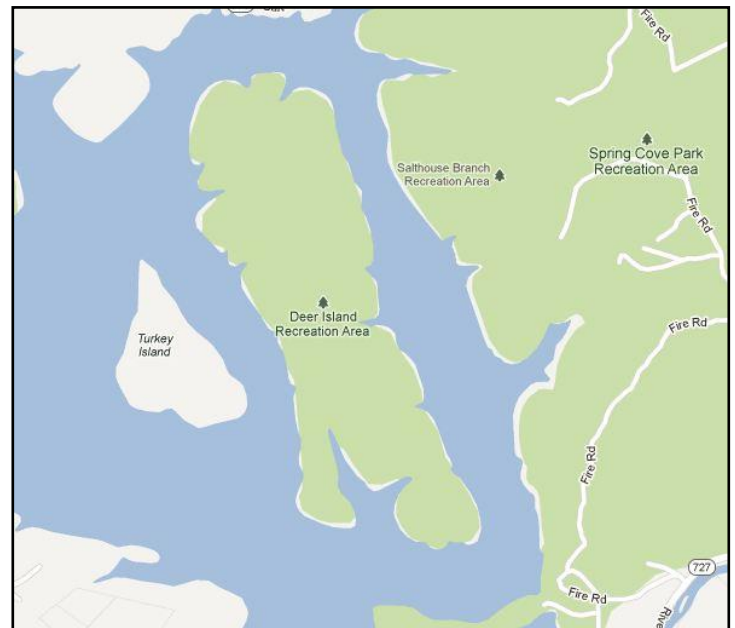
## Amenities

Tent camping sites

Toilets

Drinking Water

There are currently no proposed projects for this park.





# 10 TWIN RIDGE PARK

## Location

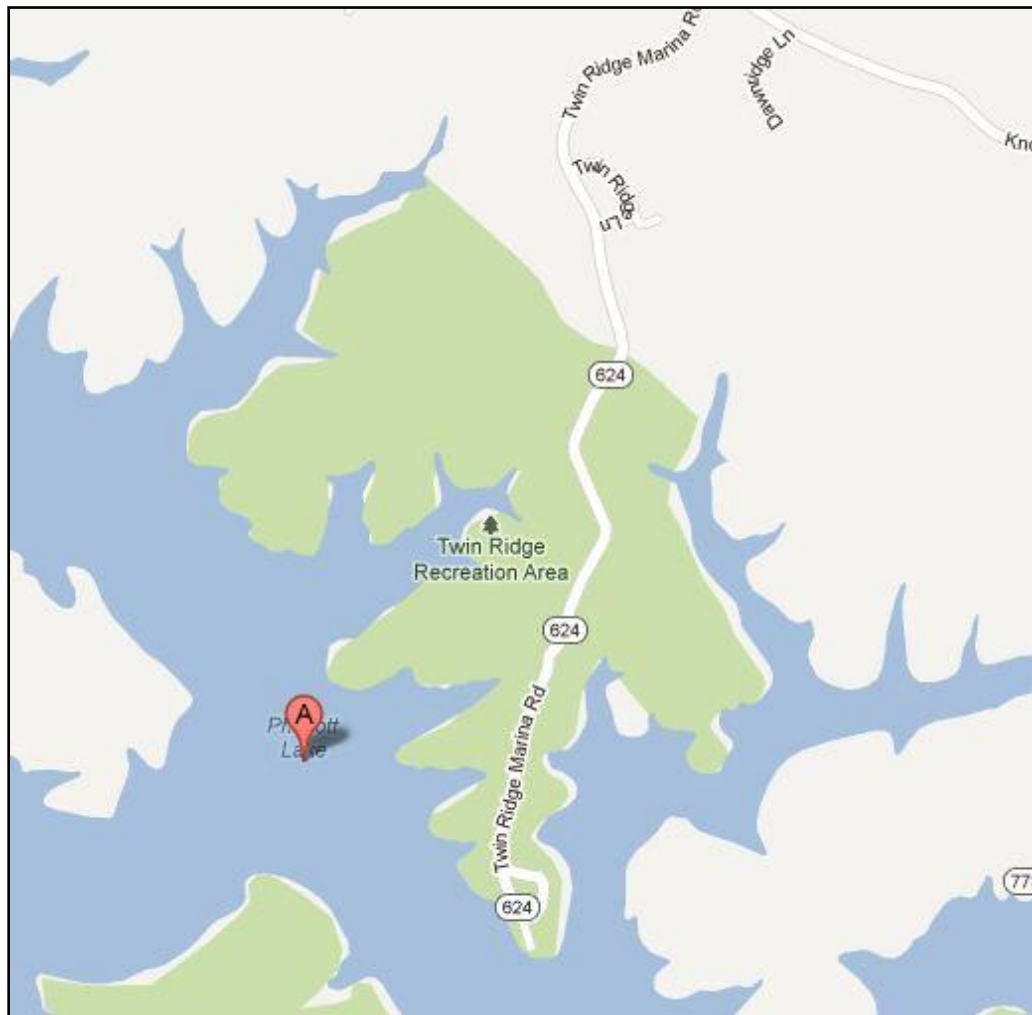
Twin Ridge Marina Road, Henry, VA 24102

## Amenities

Boat Ramp

Picnic Area

There are currently no proposed projects for this park.



# 11 RUNNET BAG PARK

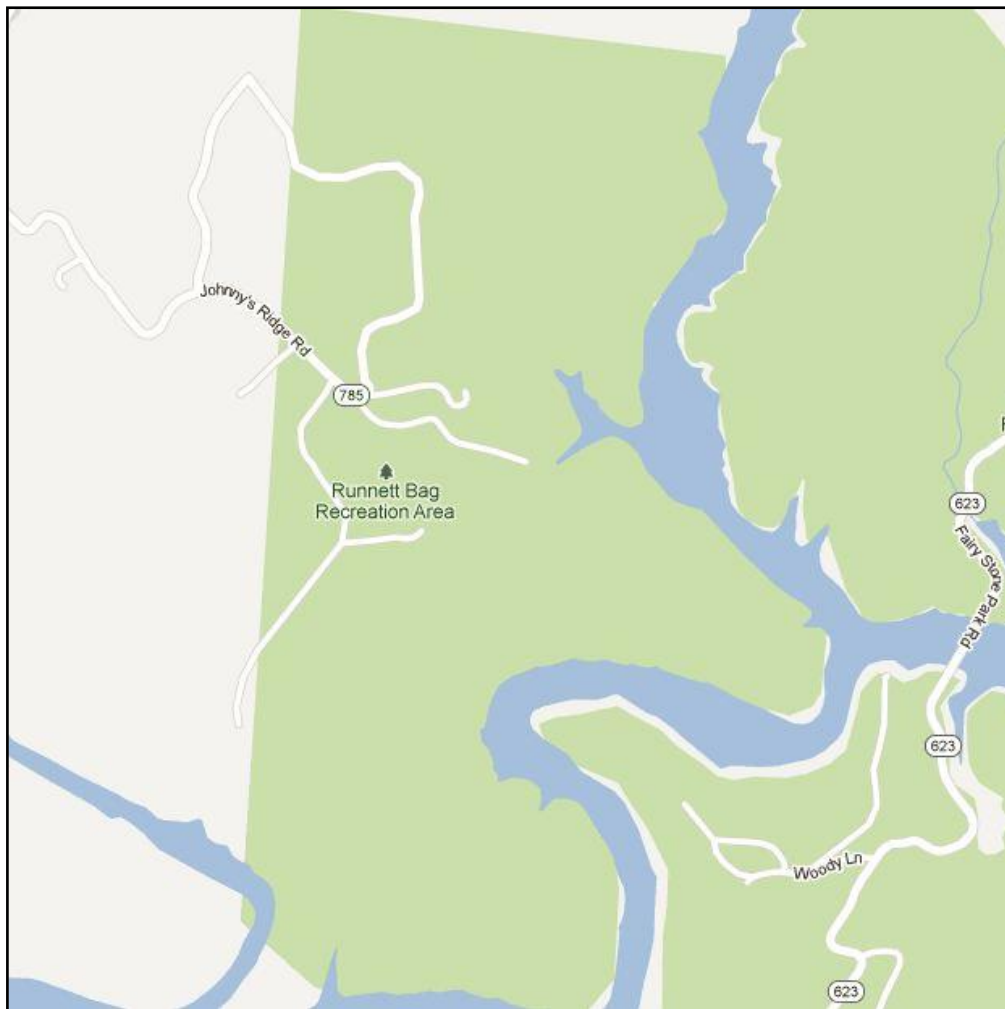
## Location

Johnny's Ridge Road, Ferrum, VA 24088

## Amenities

Boat Ramp  
Parking Area

There are currently no proposed projects for this park.



# 12 TURKEY ISLAND PARK

## Location

Boat access only. Adjacent to Deer Island.

## Amenities

Picnic area

**There are currently no proposed projects for this park.**

