



"Forward to the Future"

MOVING BEYOND SUBSTANTIAL CHALLENGES TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE CHANGE



CHALLENGES

- There are many challenges which threaten the health and prosperity of the lands, lakes, and communities which surround Land Between the Lakes.
- Likewise, there are unprecedented challenges which impact Land Between the Lakes' ability to provide quality recreation, environmental education, and habitat.
- Both sets of challenges put human health, economic prosperity, and the protection of natural and cultural resources at risk and must be met with a strong sense of urgency. The potential costs for not meeting these challenges are great.



OPPORTUNITIES

- Fortunately, while the challenges we face are great, so is the enthusiasm to overcome these challenges. We live in a time where there is strong leadership recognition, alignment and energy around the value of natural lands to the American public.



- Public land managers, non-profit organizations, private industry, and citizen stewards are coming together to identify joint interests and seek "win-win" solutions.
- There is opportunity to overcome the challenges we face if there is a willingness, desire, and the capacity to do so.



STRATEGIES

- The growing challenges require a clear collective vision and a bold strategy to meet the environmental, social, and economic needs of present and future generations.
- We need to do things differently, to adapt to the changing world. We must develop a strategy that seeks new and creative solutions extending beyond "business as usual."
- Any path forward cannot depend solely on our knowledge, understanding and capabilities. Both out of necessity, and because it makes good business and public service sense, we need to engage our fellow land management agencies, our partners, our stakeholders, our communities, and establish plans around common objectives and areas of interest.



COMMITMENT

- Big goals take big commitment. We cannot do this work alone. Declining budgets and shrinking staffs make this an even harder task.
- Through working together, understanding each other better and building relationships and trust, we can then deliver the broadest array of services and opportunities to the public.



BENEFITS

- There are many benefits to connecting people to the outdoors. Studies show that people are happier, more productive, and enjoy improved mental health when they can disconnect from everyday pressures and enjoy outdoor activities in natural settings. Public lands also draw millions of visitors to rural communities and help rural economies. National forests and other public lands are the primary places people can learn about the natural world and begin to understand the delicate, natural, interdependent systems that we must care for, nurture and steward for future generations.

BOTTOM LINE:

We can overcome big challenges by identifying the best opportunities to come together to meet common goals. Through working together and committing to bold strategies we can make a bigger impact to the community by expanding the environmental, social, and economic benefits to present and future generations.



The Basis for the Strategic Goal

MAKING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE GOAL& THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

STRATEGIC GOAL #3 – Inspire youth in neighboring counties and states to connect with their natural lands and cultural heritage.

CHALLENGES

- **SCREEN TIME** - Kids up to age 8 spend an average of 2 hours and 19 minutes every day on screen media. For kids 8 to 12, it's 4 hours and 36 minutes every day. (Common Sense Media Inc., 2017). Other studies show this average to be as high as 7 hours per day.
- **OUTDOOR TIME** - Children today spend less time outdoors than any other generation, devoting only four to seven minutes to unstructured outdoor play per day. (National Recreation and Park Association) Children are following the patterns of their parents with over half of American adults reporting they spend 5 hours or less outside in nature each week.
- **FUTURE STEWARDS** - Studies suggest that childhood experiences in nature are linked to adult environmental attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, those who do not spend time in nature are less likely to

TABLE A. Screen Media Use, by Device and Age, 2017

Average time spent daily (hours:minutes)

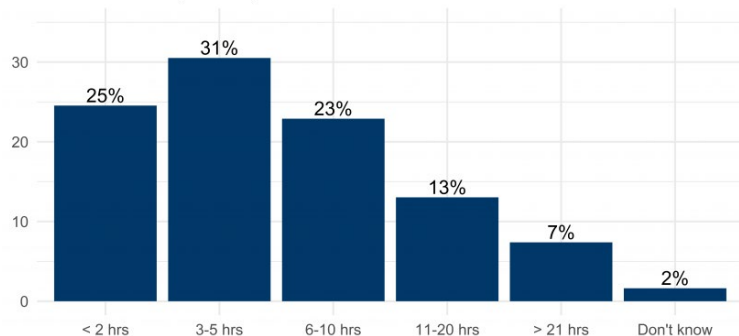
| Device | All | Child's age | | |
|--------------------|--------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 0 to 8 | Under 2 | 2 to 4 | 5 to 8 |
| Television set | :58 | :29 ^a | 1:09 ^b | 1:04 ^b |
| DVD/videotape | :17 | :06 ^a | :23 ^b | :18 ^b |
| Mobile device | :48 | :07 ^a | :58 ^b | 1:02 ^b |
| Computer | :10 | * ^a | :05 ^b | :20 ^c |
| Video game device | :06 | * ^a | :04 ^b | :12 ^c |
| Total screen media | 2:19 | :42 ^a | 2:39 ^b | 2:56 ^b |

*Less than one minute but more than zero.

Note: Only those items with different superscripts differ significantly ($p < .05$). Significance should be read across rows.

American Adults Report Spending Little Time Outside Each Week

Over half of American adults report spending 5 hours or fewer outside in nature each week. Over three-quarters spend 10 or fewer hours.



"In a typical week, when weather allows, about how many hours do you spend outside in nature?" Adults 18+. N = 5,550. Source: NatureofAmericans.org

protect it.

- **FUNDING** – Between 2015 and 2018, Land Between the Lakes' facilities budget has decreased by more than half and between 2015 and 2019 its recreation operations budget has gone down by 30%. Greater fiscal pressures on recreational facilities and program development will come with rising energy and operating costs. The condition of recreation and heritage assets has steadily diminished, resulting in a ballooning backlog of maintenance needs in the amount of \$7.8M. Investing in innovative and sustainable recreation planning, programs, and infrastructure requires funding beyond traditional government sources.

STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS & CONCERNS

Public Comments Received July-August 2018

- *"The kids are the future..."*
- *"...maintain and preserve the beauty and nature of the lbl so that our children and grandchildren and their children can enjoy the simple things of life in the way we all have had the opportunity to do..."*
- *"Our youth are crucial in sustainability plans, because who will carry on when we're gone?"*
- *"Kids will get more out of getting down and dirty, in trail work or conservation projects than any classroom activity can ever muster."*
- *"As times goes on, we are losing more and more of our young people's connection to the out of doors....and they are our future. If we don't find a way to get into the schools and connect with those kids that have at least an interest in the out of doors.....we are going to become the dinosaurs of our time."*
- *"So many kids nowadays are disconnected and have no reference to the outdoors, growing up in very controlled environments..."*
- *"Go into your surrounding schools where kids sit..."*

Common Themes from the December 2018 Community Visioning Session

