

**Mark Twain National Forest**

**Recreation & Administrative**

**Facilities Master Plan**

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# **I. Executive Summary**

## **A. Introduction and Purpose**

The purpose of this Facilities Master Plan (FMP) is to guide the continued use, maintenance, improvements and disposal of Forest Service FA&O and recreation facilities on the Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF) in support of its administrative needs and functions and its recreation goals and objectives. The plan does NOT address administrative facilities owned and managed by the North Central Research Station Sinkin Experimental Forest, or the Mingo Job Corps Center, nor does it address recreation trails or Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs) within the General Forest Area (GFA). The future of buildings located on acquired lands that are not associated with administrative or recreation sites, and historical structures not associated with administrative or recreation sites is being determined through a separate planning process, and is not included in this Facilities Master Plan.

This FMP is a programmatic document; it is not intended to be a decisional document. Final project decisions will be made at the project level, and will be accompanied by appropriate project level analysis, including any necessary National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA) documentation.

The FMP tiers to the Mark Twain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan), providing implementation strategies for carrying out the goals and objectives of the Forest Plan to help fulfill the Forest Niche.

National attention to facilities master planning has resulted from an identified \$2.8 billion backlog in facility deferred maintenance. Implementation of a Facilities Maintenance Fund (FMF) for facility maintenance is being proposed in an attempt to allow facility managers an effective means of providing and maintaining safe, suitable and efficient facilities for the public and employees; this plan will help us to use that effort more effectively.

## **B. The Management Situation**

### **1. Administrative Sites**

The primary administrative sites on the Forest are District Offices for each of the six Ranger Districts. They are: Ava/Cassville/Willow Springs located at Ava; Eleven Point located at Doniphan; Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek located at Houston; Poplar Bluff located at Poplar Bluff; Potosi/Fredericktown located at Potosi; and Salem located at Salem, with a Forest Supervisor's/Headquarters Office located at Rolla. There are also four work centers located at Roby, Williamsville, Marcoot, and Czar; and numerous other buildings or structures currently providing storage and/or fire detection. The significant Aviation and Fire Management sites on the Forest are:

- Missouri-Iowa Coordination Center at Rolla, MO, (providing fire support and coordination for all of the Federal and state agencies in Missouri and Iowa),
- Helibase facilities leased in Rolla, MO (providing Regional support), and
- Dispatch facilities located at the Salem and Ava Ranger District offices.

The Forest currently has almost the same number of sites it had before consolidating from 13 Ranger Districts to the current 6 administrative units. There are currently 104 administrative buildings on the Forest, totaling 169,537 sq. ft.

## **2. Recreation Sites**

According to use estimates from the National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) conducted on the Forest in FY2002, 65% of our Forest recreation visitors visit developed recreation sites, and 45% of recreation visitors' time is spent in developed sites. The Forest has 53 developed recreation sites or complexes, including campgrounds, picnic areas, boating accesses and trailheads that offer a variety of facilities to enhance recreation opportunities. At almost all developed sites, these facilities include defined parking, toilets, picnic tables, fire rings and signing. Most sites that offer camping also include drinking water, lantern posts, and other amenities. Sites along rivers or lakes also provide boat launches, and some feature docks and/or fishing piers. Most facilities were constructed in the 1960s through the early 1980s, and even though we have replaced or retrofitted toilets, tables and other facilities as budget and other resources allow, many of them are past their design lives, and do not meet current standards. We currently have 186 recreation buildings, totaling 54,699 square feet. In addition to the developed sites, there are numerous Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs) within the General Forest Area that have little or no recreational development.

## **3. General Forest Area Facilities**

The MTNF manages 28 buildings (11,639 square feet) that are not in designated administrative sites or developed recreation sites, but are just within the General Forest Area. These include 10 fire towers, 5 barns, 2 garages, 5 other storage structures, and 6 radio/telecommunication buildings.

## **C. Management Direction, Process & Criteria**

The primary management direction is to provide safe, clean, efficient, sustainable and accessible facilities for a projected workforce of about 200 permanent employees (does not include personnel at Sinkin Experimental Forest or Mingo JCC), an average of 35 temporary employees and 122 SCSEP enrollees while reducing fixed costs through consolidation and disposal of surplus buildings.

The Forest will meet this direction by reducing the total square footage in virtually all facility categories. We will replace facilities that have high deferred maintenance costs due to their age, to provide more easily maintainable space that meets the stated goals for providing safe, healthy, and sustainable facilities.

The Forest evaluated all existing and needed facilities, and assigned a future prescription to each:

- Retain
- Decommission
- Develop for Alternate use
- Acquire

Criteria used to evaluate each **administrative facility** included:

- Employee Impacts
  - Health and Safety
  - Working Environment
  - Accessibility
- Community Impacts
- Travel Time & Impact on Workforce Efficiency
- Cost – sustainability and age of the facilities
  - Reduce excess sq. ft.
  - Eliminate Deferred Maintenance
  - Minimize Annual Facility Operation and Maintenance Costs
  - Co-Location Opportunities

Criteria used to evaluate each **recreation facility** included:

- Fulfillment of the Recreation Niche
- Benefit/Cost – sustainability of the facilities, and use they receive
  - Reduce facilities **to minimum needed** for desired purpose
  - Eliminate Deferred Maintenance
  - Minimize Annual Facility Operation and Maintenance Costs

The **Recreation Niche** of the MTNF is to provide quality recreation opportunities that emphasize the unique features of the Ozark Mountains eco-systems, especially those that involve:

- clear, spring-fed, rivers that are floatable year-round; including the Eleven Point Scenic River, or
- a large land base and trail system that supports day-long and multi-day horseback, mountain bike and motorized trail riding; as well as hiking, backpacking, hunting & fishing.

#### **D. Future Facilities**

The long range plan proposes reducing the number of administrative site buildings by 55, recreation site buildings by 59, and GFA buildings by 14, for a total reduction of 128 buildings (40%) and 156,511 sq. ft. (34%). See Tables 1 and 2, and Appendices A, B, and C for details.

**Table 1: Summary of Current and Planned Sites, by Type**

<b>Administrative Sites &amp; Recreation Areas by Type</b>			
<b>Type of Area</b>	<b>Existing No.</b>	<b>Future No.</b>	<b>% Reduction</b>
Supervisor's Office	1	1	0%
District Offices	6	6	0%
Work centers	4	2	50%
Recreation Areas or Complexes *	53	30	44%
Campgrounds	36	22	38%
Picnic Areas	41	25	39%
Boating Accesses	31	27	13%
Trailheads	51	38	25%

\* Each of the recreation areas may contain one or more campgrounds, picnic areas, boating accesses or trailheads. These figures are all included in the Recreation Area figures. See Appendix B for details.

We will complete a major temporary renovation to the existing office on Ava RD, replace the entire administrative complex at four administrative sites on the Forest (Ava, Houston, Poplar Bluff and Salem), and dispose of 5 sites or complexes that are no longer needed for administrative use. These are the Cassville Ranger Station, Fredericktown Ranger Station, Winona Ranger Station, Marcoot Work Center and Williamsville Work Center. Two additional administrative sites will be substantially reduced in size by disposing of a number of structures at Roby and Czar. Several barns that are used for storage will be disposed of.

The 53 developed recreation areas or recreation complexes on the Mark Twain National Forest have been prioritized, and plans are being made to eliminate Forest Service expenditures at the 23 lowest priority sites in order to operate and maintain the higher priority sites to a higher standard. These low priority sites will have facilities removed from them and be converted to CUAs, closed, or operational and maintenance responsibility will be transferred to partners within the next three years. Facilities, services, and operation and maintenance costs will be reduced in at least 6 of the 30 developed sites that will remain open.

Table 2 is a summary of the numbers and square footage of buildings by type and recreation areas and administrative sites, by type, that will be eliminated within the next three years, pending funding.

**Table 2: Existing and Planned Buildings, by Building Type**

Type of Space	Number & Square Footage By Building Type					
	Existing Number	Existing Sq Ft	Planned Number	% Reduction by Number	Planned Sq Ft	% Reduction by Sq Ft
Office and Conference	23*	81,231	11	52%	55,997	31%
Warehouse, Shop & Storage	91	101,968	40	56%	60,891	40%
Quarters	5	8,944	1	80%	2,501	72%
Fire Towers	20	1,280	12	40%	768	40%
Toilets	132	13,008	89	33%	9,870	24%
Pavilions & Bath houses	21	25,646	18	14%	22,722	11%
Utility & Telecom	31	4,949	24	23%	3,762	16%
	323**	236,571**	195**	40%	156,511**	34%

\*one leased, 22 owned by the Forest

\*\*Does not include Rolla Visitor Center

Table 3 is a summary of the numbers of buildings by site type and their disposition.

**Table 3: Disposition of Buildings by Site Type**

	Current Number	Number to be Decommissioned	Number to be Dev for Alt Use	Number to be Retained, for current use
Admin Site Buildings	104	55	11	38
Dev Rec Buildings	191	59	8	124
GFA Buildings	28	14	1	13
Total Buildings	323	128	20	175

Implementation of the plan will be dependant upon availability of adequate funding for removal (or replacement) of facilities.

## II. Introduction

The Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF) continues to refine and strengthen strategies to effectively manage its facilities in support of the many programs and publics that we serve. This comprehensive Facility Master Plan (FMP) covers all administrative, fire, recreation and other facilities on the forest. Public needs, transportation, communication systems and communities have changed since many of our recreation and administrative facilities were developed. This FMP articulates facilities management strategies and actions the MTNF will take to respond to visitor and budget trends and influences affecting the forest. The purpose of this FMP is to guide the acquisition, continued use, maintenance, modification, and disposal of facilities on the MTNF in support of its administrative needs and functions and its recreation goals and objectives.

Our facilities management goals are:

1. to provide quality, sustainable recreation facilities that will best serve our public and fulfill our desired recreation niche, and
2. to provide a sustainable group of administrative facilities that will provide safe and efficient work and storage spaces to our employees that will facilitate their efficiently managing the forest to fulfill our niche.

The FMP provides us with a strategic approach to reach our objectives to:

1. Serve the Public
2. Manage the Land and Resources (consistent with Forest Plans)
3. Recruit and Retain Quality Employees

Forest Service facilities provide resource program support and public service by providing work and meeting space, storage and repair areas, visitor information, operational bases, communications sites, utility support, and employee housing. The benefits of adequate facilities include: job satisfaction (productivity, recruitment, and overall employee well-being), a healthy and safe environment for employees and the visiting public, effective use of space, service to the public, interpretation and preservation of significant historic buildings, protection of investments, and ability to meet key administrative initiatives.

This FMP is a programmatic document; it is not intended to be a decisional document. Final project decisions will be made at the project level and will be accompanied by appropriate project level analysis, including any necessary National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA) documentation.

**Nationally**, the Forest Service owns over 40,000 buildings. About 60% of these structures are over 30 years old, which is the recognized life for buildings, and thus have served the normal life of a building. On the Mark Twain, there are 103 owned and one leased FA&O Buildings. 78% (or 80 buildings) are over 30 years old, with almost 69% (or 72 buildings) over 60 years old.

## **A. Issues**

The three main issues considered in this facilities master planning process are:

### **1. Changing Public Demand & Forest Roles:**

Activities such as RV camping, ATV use, and horseback riding are significantly more popular today than when existing facilities were constructed (Cordell, 2000 and others). Site locations, facility design, and features provided may not meet current or future demands. Our existing recreation and administrative facilities don't meet today's needs, and have high operation and maintenance and/or deferred maintenance costs (USFS Infra data). Additional facilities are needed for fighting wildland fires and other resource management activities (USFS Fire Plan). We can no longer afford to provide a wide array of facilities, and need to focus limited monetary and personnel resources where they support our defined recreation niche and our current and future resource management activities.

### **2. Location of Facilities:**

Facilities built in the 1930s through the 1960s no longer meet the needs of our workforce, or the publics we serve. Communities in and around MTNF have seen significant changes in demographics, technology, transportation and environmental awareness (US Census Data). Our methods of doing business and employee needs have changed drastically. Cooperation, shared employees and consolidation opportunities can improve employee effectiveness and reduce overall operation and maintenance costs, within travel constraints. We are striving to assure that our facilities are located in "the right place" over the long run.

### **3. Occupancy and Condition of Facilities:**

Current and projected funding is not adequate to maintain and operate all facilities to standard, so deferred maintenance costs continue to accrue each year. (USFS INFRA and Financial Management data). Reducing the administrative and recreation infrastructure to a viable/sustainable level that is in balance with occupancy levels and available funds/resources, will allow us to reduce deferred maintenance while providing quality recreation opportunities.

## **B. About the Mark Twain National Forest:**

The Mark Twain, as all national forests, is managed for a variety of interests, including outdoor recreation, range, timber, wilderness, minerals, watershed and habitat for fish and wildlife. The main values of the Mark Twain National

Forest focus on ecology, aesthetics, wildlife and recreation, in that order. The overriding goals of the Forest are to:

1. Promote Ecosystem Health and Sustainability, and to
2. Provide a Variety of Uses, Values, Products, and Services.

## **1. Geographical Context**

The Mark Twain National Forest (MTNF) consists of approximately 1,485,800 acres. This constitutes approximately 3.4% of the total land, 10% of the forested land and 84% of the publicly owned forested land in Missouri (Resource Bulletin NC-139). The Forest extends from the St. Francois Mountains in southeast Missouri across the foothills and plateaus of the Ozarks to more rugged mountains in the southwest.

The Forest is composed of nine separate geographic units in 29 counties which span the state 200 miles east to west and 175 miles north to south. These nine geographic units have previously been administratively and formally divided into 12 Ranger District units. These have since been consolidated for administrative purposes into six Ranger Districts, each managed by a District Ranger and staff. Each ranger is ultimately responsible for administration of lands ranging from a portion of one of the geographic units up to lands making up three distinct geographic land units. Private land parcels are scattered throughout the Forest boundaries. On average, Federal ownership within the boundaries of the National Forest is about 49%, and ranges from a low of 24% at Cedar Creek unit to a high of 71% at Doniphan/Eleven Point unit. (MTNF DEIS).

## **2. Ecological Context**

The Mark Twain lies mostly within the Ozark Highlands, a region known for extraordinary geological, hydrological and ecological diversity. Signature features include crystal-clear springs, over 5,000 caves, rocky barren glades, ancient volcanic mountains and nationally recognized streams. The Ozarks have been continuously available for plant and animal life since the late Paleozoic period, constituting perhaps the oldest continuously exposed landmass in North America (Yatskievych 1999).

Eastern oak hardwood and southern pine woodlands meet tallgrass prairie, in a mosaic of woodlands, glades and savannas, interspersed with cultivated fields and other development. The high level of habitat diversity, influx of life from adjacent regions, effects of past glaciation to the north, and long-term availability of the landscape have combined to support relict populations and allow for development of at least 160 endemic species. The Mark Twain has thousands of acres of timberland, lush grazing lands, active commercial mines and over 300 species of wildlife.

The Mark Twain National Forest includes portions of eleven primary streams and rivers which flow through five of the seven major river basins in the Missouri portion of the Ozark Highlands. Because of the region's karst topography, the Ozarks are home to the world's largest collection of first magnitude springs (those with over 65 million gallons of water flow daily.) Clear lakes and free-flowing streams have healthy populations of fish.

### 3. Social and Economic Context

The Mark Twain National Forest, with unique ecosystems, clear-flowing streams and rivers, and a mixture of eastern upland oak hardwood and southern pine woodlands, provides the backdrop for a number of growing communities. Population has grown rapidly in recent decades within the 29 counties with National Forest land, with the strongest growth associated with counties near metropolitan areas. Overall, the population of the Mark Twain NF area grew an average of 19% from 1990 to 2000, but the Forest counties continue to be the least densely populated areas of the state. The Economic Research Service classifies 15 of the 26 non-metropolitan counties that contain national forest lands as persistent poverty counties, (high rates of poverty in 1960, 1970, 1980, and 1990). (MTNF DEIS).

The primary market area for the Forest includes the following urban areas within a 3 hour drive of one or more of the available recreation areas:

CITY	POPULATION
Kansas City, MO	(435,000 in city, 633,000 in county)
St. Louis, MO	(400,000 in city, 994,000 in county)
Wichita, KS	(304,000 in city, 404,000 in county)
Springfield, MO	(140,000 in city, 208,000 in county)
Columbia, MO	(69,000 in city, 112,000 in county)
Joplin, MO	(41,000 in city, 91,000 in county)

Major metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Cincinnati, Columbus, Memphis, Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Little Rock are a leisurely day's drive away. In fact, nearly one quarter of the nation's population lives within a day's drive of the Forest.

The market area for the recreation sites covers a broad area encompassing southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. The Recreation Areas provide a variety of outdoor recreation experiences within the scenic Ozarks Region from hiking and fishing to swimming and boating.

#### **4. Access to the Forest**

A network of three major interstate highways funnels people into the Forest. These include: I-44, passing through the Forest in a northeast/southwest direction, I-55 carries north-south traffic just east of the Forest, and I-70, a major east-west route just north of the Forest. The nearest full service airports are located in St. Louis, MO and Springfield, MO.

#### **5. Historical Context**

From the 1870s through the 1920s, timber mills flourished in Missouri as the citizens used natural resources to make a profit. Vast forests of pine and oak were leveled as the wood was sawn and shipped, and dynamite became a new fishing tool. In 1939, most of the lumber mills were gone, and the Forest Service began restoration of the heavily harvested woodlands, bare hillsides, and streams full of gravel that made up southern Missouri as the Mark Twain (west) and the Clark National Forests (east) (DEIS – Mark Twain National Forest Plan). The Forests were consolidated in 1952, separated in 1962, and again joined in 1973, with a single Supervisor's Office in Rolla. Many of the roads, buildings, and recreation areas on the Forest were constructed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Others were built in the 1970s as part of a plan to provide flatwater recreation opportunities in Missouri that would provide close fishing opportunities to area residents and offer an alternative to recreation on the designated Scenic Rivers.

### **III. Workforce**

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, there has been considerable consolidation at the Forest level, going from two National Forests with 13 Ranger Districts to one National Forest administered by six District Rangers. The workforce has gone from almost 400 employees in the late 1980s and early 1990s to about 160 employees in the mid-1990s, to the current workforce of almost 200 employees. In response to demands for more and better information, more in-depth analysis and better documentation, as well as the introduction of better technology, a large percentage of the employees spend more time in the office than in the field; and most employees have a need for their own desk space with computer access.

The Forest currently has 192 Permanent employees with a target organization of approximately 200 employees. There are also approximately 33 to 35 seasonal or temporary employees on the Forest, including YCC enrollees, and 122 Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) enrollees. These numbers will likely fluctuate somewhat, but have remained fairly constant the past few years. Following are the approximate number of permanent employees at each District and Supervisor's Office:

- Supervisor's Office: 53 Permanent Employees; also includes the following employees, which are not in this number:
  - 2 permanent MOCC employees and 2 permanent Helitack employees
  - 2 Western Operations Center (WOC) employees
  - 3 LE Agents, 1 SLEO, and 1 LE Support employee
  - 3 Information Solutions Organization (ISO) employees
- Ava/Cassville/Willow Springs District: 23 Permanent Employees, plus 2 zone employees, and 2 SO Public Services employees. Also includes 1 LEO & 2 Public Services employees, not in this number.
- Eleven Point District: 9 Permanent Employees, plus 23 permanent and 1 NTE zone employees. Also includes 2 LEO and 1 LE Agent, not in this number.
- Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek District: 20 Permanent Employees, plus 5 zone employees, and 1 SO Integrated Resources employee. Also, 1 LEO not in this number.
- Poplar Bluff District: 9 Permanent Employees, plus 4 zone employees, 2 trainees, and 1 SO Public Services employee. Includes 1 LEO not in this number
- Potosi/Fredericktown District: 19 Permanent Employees, plus 6 zone employees Includes 1 LEO not in this number
- Salem District: 17 Permanent Employees, plus 7 zone employees Includes 1 LEO not in this number.
- Forest-Wide Temporaries or Seasonals: 33 - 35

#### **IV. Existing Administrative Sites and Facilities**

**Ava Ranger Station:** The original facilities were constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930's and consist of the original Ranger Dwelling now used as an office, the original office, a warehouse, a garage, an oil-house, and a pole-barn. A modular building was placed in 2003 and serves as a fire-dispatch building. Generally, the facilities are in poor condition and will require substantial repairs to eliminate the safety, health, and overcrowding concerns, and to eliminate the deferred maintenance back-log. The site is registered on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Cassville Administrative Site:** The original facilities were constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and consist of two offices, a garage, a warehouse and an oil-house. Currently, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) occupies one office and shares the warehouse. The facilities are considered to be in good condition. The site is registered on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Willow Springs Administrative Site:** The MTNF is currently occupying one office and a garage owned by the Willow Springs School District. The occupancy expires in April of 2006. The functions currently located at this site will be re-located to the Ava Ranger Station.

**Potosi Ranger Station:** The office was constructed in 1980 and the CCC constructed many of the other buildings in the 1930's. The inventory of buildings includes two dwellings, an office, two warehouses, a chemical storage building, a fire equipment garage, and an air-monitoring building. The facilities are considered to be in good condition.

**Fredericktown Administrative Site:** The site was constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and consists of two offices, a warehouse, an oil-house, a root-cellar, a fire-cache, and dozer storage. The site currently has only one permanent FS employee and is occupied extensively by the MDC and NRCS.

**Salem Ranger Station:** The site was originally constructed in the 1930's by the CCC. In addition, an office was constructed in 1964. In total, the site consists of two offices, a garage, two warehouses, an oil house and a fire dispatch building installed in 2003. The location of the site is considered to be excellent and the condition generally good. However, both offices are considered to be in good condition.

**Poplar Bluff Ranger Station:** The original site was constructed in the 1930's with the office constructed in 1971. The site consists of an office, a warehouse, a garage, an oil house and two storage buildings. The overall condition of the facilities is considered poor. However, the site is not considered advantageous to the Forest Service. The site is considered an attractive candidate for conveyance by selling due to the proximity to the school district and general location in Poplar Bluff.

**Doniphan Ranger Station:** The site was constructed in 2004 and consists of an office, a pole-barn, a warehouse and a chemical storage building.

**Winona Administrative Site:** The site was originally constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and consists of an office, two dwellings, a garage, two storage buildings, a warehouse and an oil-house. The condition of the facilities is considered fair. The site is registered on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Houston Ranger Station:** The site was constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The facilities include two offices, a garage, an oil-house, and a warehouse. The facilities are considered to be in fair condition and no longer meet the staffing requirements for the station. The site is considered to be limited for possible reconstruction.

**Cedar Creek Administrative Site:** The administrative site currently consists of leased office and shop space that is co-located with other USDA agencies in the USDA Service Center in Fulton. It is considered adequate for the staffing levels.

**Supervisor's Office:** The site was originally constructed in the 1930's by the CCC but is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The office was extensively remodeled in 2003-2005 to meet safety, health, and accessibility requirements. It is considered adequate for staffing levels for the foreseeable future. The office provides space for some of the Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek employees. The additional buildings

include a chemical storage building, a warehouse and a warehouse/fire cache that is shared between SO and District staffs. These facilities are also considered adequate for the foreseeable future.

**Rolla Administrative Site:** The site is currently under special use permit to the Rolla City Chamber of Commerce and consists of a dwelling, an office, a warehouse, a garage, an oil-house, and a Visitor Center constructed by the Chamber in 1997. The site was constructed in the 1930's and is on the National Register of Historic Places. It is considered in fair condition.

**Williamsville Work Center:** The site was originally constructed in the 1930's and consists of a warehouse and oil-house. The condition and location of the facilities is considered inadequate. Site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Czar Work Center:** The site was constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and consists of a garage, a storage building, a dwelling, an oil-house, and a fire tower. The facilities are considered to be in fair to good condition. The site is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Marcoot Work Center:** The site was constructed in the 1930's by the CCC, and the facilities are generally in good condition.

**Roby Work Center:** The site was constructed in the 1930's by the CCC and is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Site consists of a fire tower, two warehouses, a garage, a storage building, a radio building, and a dwelling. The warehouse and the radio building are considered to be in good condition. All other facilities are in poor condition.

## V. Existing Recreation Sites and Facilities

The Forest has 53 developed recreation sites or complexes, including campgrounds, picnic areas, boating accesses and trailheads that offer a variety of facilities to enhance recreation opportunities. At almost all developed sites, these facilities include defined parking, toilets, picnic tables, fire rings and signing; most sites that offer camping also include drinking water, lantern posts, and other amenities. Sites along rivers or lakes also provide boat launches, and some feature docks and/or fishing piers. Most facilities were constructed in the 1960s through the early 1980s, and even though we have replaced or retrofitted toilets, tables and other facilities as budget and other resources allow, many of them are past their design lives, and do not meet current standards. We currently have 186 recreation buildings, with 54,699 square feet. In addition to the developed sites, there are numerous concentrated use areas (CUAs) within the General Forest Area that have little or no recreational development.

See Appendix B for a complete listing of the recreation sites.

According to use estimates from the National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) conducted on the Forest in FY2002, 65% of our forest recreation visitors visit

developed recreation sites, and 45% of recreation visitors' time is spent in developed sites.

MTNF Recreation Use Estimates by Site Type, in 1000s of visits					
	DUDs	ODUs	Wldns	GFA	Total
No. of visits (1,000s)	373.2	64.7	22.8	228.9	689.6
% Use by # of visits	54.12%	9.38%	3.31%	33.19%	100.00%
Length of visit (hrs)	1.8	30.7	33.4	11.9	8.6
RVDs use (1,000s)	56	166	63	227	494
% Use by RVDs	11.3%	33.6%	12.8%	46.0%	100.0%

DUDS = Day Use Developed sites

ODUs = Overnight Use Developed Sites

GFA = General Forest Areas

WILD = Wilderness

RVD = Recreation Visitor Day: 12 hours of recreation use (at the site or on the forest). This can be 12 hours of use by one person, or one hour of use by each of 12 people, or a similar combination.

## VI. Facilities Maintenance Costs

MTNF Facilities Maintenance Needs					
Feature Type	Recreation Operations Needs	Annual Maint.	Deferred Maint.	Capital Improvements	Total Needs
Buildings	N/A	\$181,041	\$2,487,968	\$7,909,687	\$10,578,696
Dams	N/A	\$20,100	\$816,630	\$0	\$836,730
Dev Rec Sites	\$480,458	\$122,599	\$654,817	\$70,655	\$848,071
GFA Rec Features*	N/A	\$19,903	\$44,953	\$1,200	\$66,056
Heritage	N/A	N/A	\$12,000	N/A	\$12,000
Wastewater	N/A	\$5,100	\$60,951	\$0	\$66,051
Water Systems	N/A	\$14,050	\$392,830	\$0	\$406,880
Total	\$480,458	\$362,793	\$4,470,149	\$7,981,542	\$13,294,942

\* Does not include Forest entrance signs

<b>MTNF Facilities Maintenance Needs</b>	
The Mark Twain National Forest has completed Deferred and Annual maintenance surveys for all owned FA&O facilities from FY99 through FY04. Following are the results of these surveys.	
\$4,470,000	Deferred Maintenance Needed
\$354,000	Annual Maintenance Needed
\$207,000	FY05 \$\$ Available for Maintenance

**Water and Wastewater Systems:** Typically, the water and wastewater systems for the MTNF were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's. Due to their age many of these facilities are beginning to fail or have been used past their useful life, i.e., the deferred maintenance costs are becoming excessive. As failure occurs or recreation sites are renovated, water and wastewater systems will be evaluated to determine if they should be replaced or eliminated to reduce deferred maintenance costs. In addition, some of these facilities are currently located on Recreation sites that are candidates for closure. Facilities no longer needed will be removed.

**Dams:** The Forest has 31 dams in our inventory with only one dam considered as a high hazard. There is a considerable amount of deferred maintenance due to limited funding. The items that require maintenance are typically either correction of erosion and/or removal of unwanted vegetation. At this time it is recommended to prepare and execute an annual maintenance plan for each dam and to place emphasis on correction of erosion and removal of unwanted vegetation.

## **VII. Administrative Facilities Planning Process**

The Forest Facilities Engineer met individually with each District Ranger to develop a recommendation for the disposition of each of the administrative sites and buildings. These results were presented to the Forest Leadership Team for concurrence.

The Mark Twain National Forest recognizes the significance of the historic buildings in the administrative and recreation sites on the Forest, many of which may be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). However, because of declining budgets, the Forest is no longer able to maintain many of the buildings, and must look for alternative uses or dispose of them.

### **A. Decision Criteria**

The Forest evaluated all existing and needed facilities, and assigned a future prescription to each:

- Retain

- Decommission
- Develop for Alternate use
- Acquire

Criteria used to evaluate each **administrative facility** included:

- Employee Impacts
  - Health and Safety
  - Working Environment
  - Accessibility
- Community Impacts
- Travel Time & Impact on Workforce Efficiency
- Cost – sustainability and age of the facilities
  - Reduce excess square feet
  - Eliminate Deferred Maintenance
  - Minimize Annual Facility Operation and Maintenance Costs
  - Co-Location Opportunities

Completion of this FMP is the first phase of facilities planning. The next phase would be for the forest to use the Preliminary Project Analysis (PPA) process to address a specific administrative site in detail and finalize a decision on how to best achieve the disposition of individual facilities. Decisions about the final disposition of historic buildings need to follow Section 106 of the NHPA, and compliance will occur at the PPA level. Appropriate NEPA and CRIA will be part of this process prior to final decision.

## **B. Administrative Facility Strategy**

### **1. Investment Strategy**

Concentrate future project funding on remediation of safety, health, and accessibility deficiencies. These projects include both replacement and maintenance of existing facilities, and will be identified from existing and future INFRA data. Develop an objective process for prioritizing the specific projects.

### **2. Location Strategy**

Examine location of existing facilities that need replacement to determine if opportunities exist for consolidation with other agencies or forest units and evaluate opportunities to relocate to different communities.

### **3. Operation and Maintenance Strategy**

Establish a comprehensive annual maintenance plan for the Forest to include minimum maintenance requirements. Fund these minimum maintenance requirements prior to any project funding.

## **C. Administrative Site Priorities and Projects**

### **1. General Administrative Site Projects**

- Replace Ava Administrative Site Facilities
- Replace Houston Administrative Site Facilities
- Replace Poplar Bluff Administrative Site Facilities at new location
- Replace Salem office and auxiliary office.
- Develop plan for remediation of health and safety deficiencies
- Develop comprehensive Annual Maintenance Plan
- Decommission inventoried structures not viable or replaced by other structures.

### **2. Specific Administrative Site Projects**

#### ***Ava/Cassville/Willow Springs Administrative Unit***

- Convey Cassville Administrative Site while maintaining USFS presence
- Relocate staff to Ava when we have to vacate Willow Springs (5/06)
- Construct Administrative Site for Ava/Cassville/Willow Springs Administrative Unit at Ava

#### ***Eleven Point Administrative Unit***

- Convey old Doniphan Administrative Site
- Convey Winona Administrative Site with staff relocated to Doniphan

#### ***Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek Administrative Unit***

- Convey Houston Ranger District
- Study location of administrative site for Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek Administrative Unit
- Construct Administrative Site for Houston/Rolla/Cedar Creek Administrative Unit
- Continue leasing facilities at Cedar Creek

#### ***Potosi/Fredericktown Administrative Unit***

- Convey Assistant Ranger Dwelling
- Convey Ranger Dwelling (dwelling only retain land)
- Convey Fredericktown Administrative Site

#### ***Salem Ranger District***

- Construct office at current administrative site
- Demolish both existing offices with functions relocated in new office
- Renovate existing warehouses

***Poplar Bluff District***

- Convey Poplar Bluff Administrative Site
- Construct Administrative Site at new location

**3. Work Centers**

- Williamsville Work Center will be conveyed
- Remove facilities at Czar Work Center except the fire tower and storage building
- Convey Marcoot Work Center - Offer to North Central Research Station
- Remove facilities at Roby Work Center except the new warehouse, old warehouse and fire tower

**4. General Forest Area (GFA) Facilities**

- Decommission existing buildings located in GFAs that are not in use or that have been replaced

**5. Space Commitments to Other Agencies or Organizations**

MTNF currently provides space for the following other Agency employees/storage. Agreements need to be modified so that these organizations can be assessed for square footage of space their agency uses:

- Cassville - MDC
- Ava - FWS
- Fredericktown - MDC & NRCS
- Salem Office & Marcoot Tower - Sinkin Creek Experimental Forest

## **VIII. Recreation Facilities Planning Process**

### **A. Background**

The Mark Twain National Forest has a long history of periodically reviewing and evaluating its developed recreation sites as part of an effort to prioritize sites and focus its limited financial and human resources on the most important sites. An abundance of outdoor recreation facilities were constructed on the Mark Twain in the 1960s and early 1970s, including dozens of small campgrounds and picnic. Even though these sites were popular with specific local publics, the vast acreage of the MTNF and the long travel distances between these sites made them very costly to maintain.

As priorities changed, and recreation budgets were reduced, fewer resources could be devoted to operation and maintenance of recreation facilities. Around 1980, the Forest began the first of a number of recreation facility reviews that resulted in removal of some recreation facilities. Services were reduced at some developed recreation sites, and other sites were closed to improve our efficiency and focus our limited resources on fewer sites, so we could continue to offer quality recreation

opportunities. The 1982 “Kline Report” objective was to “improve the cost effectiveness of the program while still satisfying public demands and protecting resources.” As a result of recommendations in that report, several recreation areas were closed and services and facilities were reduced in others, but not all recommendations were implemented.

In 1993-1995, the “Recreation Mission Team” completed another review of the recreation program on the Forest that included a detailed marketing analysis and review of public and private recreation opportunities throughout the MTNF region. They validated the Kline report recommended closures and also recommended additional closures, some operational changes, and a few expansions or changes in facilities and services. Many, but not all, of these recommendations were implemented in 1996 - 1997. The recommendations and implementation were reviewed in 1999, and again in 2003.

In 1999-2001, the Eastern Region initiated an effort to encourage the forests to review and focus their recreation programs so that they would be able to more efficiently and effectively serve the public's recreation demands with dwindling recreation and maintenance resources. The development of the MTNF Recreation Niche Statement focused the role that the MTNF plays in providing recreation opportunities to the public without duplicating opportunities of other recreation providers in the state. We also defined and prioritized our “Critical Recreation Infrastructure” categories, and identified the sites that fit into each of those categories. In this process, we considered a variety of criteria, including demand for the facility as evidenced by the amount of use it received, availability of similar facilities within an hour's drive, whether or not the facility supported other recreation uses and whether or not those uses were increasing, in addition to how well the facilities fit the forest's defined niche. These documents were used internally for development of annual work planning and for long-range investment planning, but were not formally published or shared with the public.

Recognizing that we do not have the resources to maintain and operate all of our recreation areas to standard even with the help of volunteer partners, concessionaires, SCSEPs and others, we have prioritized recreation sites on the Forest in preparation for additional closures and disinvestments. In addition to the above criteria, we also considered factors such as costs of operation and maintenance, deferred maintenance needs, revenue, and viability for concession operations. This was not a complete or formal process, but generally just staffing and pre-work for the Facilities Master Planning and work planning in the past few years.

## B. Current Planning Process

In March 2005, the Facilities Master Planning Team met and prepared the pre-work for the charette, including a spreadsheet of all of the recreation sites divided into initial prioritization categories, based generally on the criteria noted above. Some sites were combined into complexes, to make the process run more smoothly. Each district ranger received a packet containing:

- Spreadsheets displaying INFRA data for recreation sites on MTNF that will be considered in the Master Planning Project, including costs, use, capacity and other information needed for determining the benefits/costs of each site.
- Site sheets for each of the recreation and administrative sites **on their district** that should be addressed in this process
- Copy of the 2001 MTNF Recreation Niche Statement, and listing of Critical Recreation Infrastructure
- Definition of Recreation Site Priority Categories
- Recreation Site Prioritized Spreadsheet
- MTNF Building Status Spreadsheet

Each District reviewed the tentative priority category rankings, as well as the comments and questions, assigned a “future status” to each recreation site based upon how well the site rated against the criteria listed below, added other notes as desired, and returned it to the team. They also completed or confirmed the “planning status” of each building.

## C. Decision Criteria

The Forest evaluated all existing and needed facilities, and assigned a future prescription to each:

- Retain
- Decommission
- Develop for Alternate use
- Acquire

Criteria used to evaluate each **recreation facility** included:

- Fulfillment of the Recreation Niche
- Benefit/Cost – sustainability of the facilities, and use they receive
  - Reduce facilities to minimum needed for desired purpose
  - Eliminate Deferred Maintenance
  - Minimize Annual Facility Operation and Maintenance Costs

The Facilities Master Planning Charette was held as one day of a Forest Leadership Team Meeting on April 5, 2005. At that meeting, Leadership Team members, district and forest recreation and engineering staff, and others met to review the initial prioritizations by category, to prioritize the sites within the categories, and to

finalize the future plans for each recreation site and building on the forest. The recreation site goal of the meeting was to identify the “signature recreation sites” on the forest, create a single prioritized listing of all developed recreation sites on the forest, and to determine the future management of each of those sites. We also finalized the future of almost all of the buildings within those recreation sites. The results of that meeting are listed below in VI. B. Recreation Site Priorities and Recommendations, and in Appendix B.

## **D. Recreation Strategies**

### **1. Operation and maintenance strategy**

- Improve maintenance and services by providing fewer developed sites and focus on those sites that fit the defined recreation niche. Decommission or remove facilities from sites that do not meet our niche, have low use, and/or have such high maintenance needs that we cannot afford to bring them up to standard.
- Reduce facilities and services at developed sites to those that are critical to the featured opportunities and sustainable for the projected use.
  - Replace flush toilets with vault toilets except at high use sites. Minimize total number of toilets.
  - Close camping facilities and maintain only picnicking, trailhead or river access facilities where use does not justify offering the full range of activities.
  - Phase out water systems at day-use sites.
- Manage other sites that the public continues to use as Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs).
- Actively seek and nurture partnerships that will assist in any and all aspects of the O&M defined for that site, especially those that enhance visitor services and/or reduce our costs.
- Complete updated O&M plans that include each of the developed recreation sites to be retained within 2 years.
- Accessibility Transition Plan – the Forest Accessibility Transition Plan will be amended to incorporate the decisions and strategies in the Facility Master Plan.

### **2. Marketing Strategy**

A marketing analysis was completed in the 1990s, and continues to be refined through monitoring and surveys as resources permit. Our marketing strategies are based on our customer knowledge. Those strategies include:

- Utilizing technology, such as internet web site, to improve availability of information about our recreation opportunities
- Work with partners and neighbors to provide desired opportunities, even beyond our management, (concessionaires, outfitters and others)
- Promote Forest Service identity. Help the public know that they are on Forest Service land and utilizing Forest Service facilities. This is accomplished by using the following methods:

- Uniformed employees (Forest Service presence)
- Signage – providing quality Forest Service signs, and assuring that concessionaires and partners utilize professional appearing signs that acknowledge the Forest.
- Built Environmental Image Guide - All new and renovated buildings and facilities on the MTNF shall follow the guidelines provided in “The Built Environment Image Guide” (BEIG) For the National Forests and Grasslands, FS-710, December 2001.

### 3. Location Strategy

The MTNF offers a variety of developed recreation opportunities that are regularly utilized by only a small number of local recreationists, and others that are utilized by a larger number of recreationists coming from the local area and from larger population centers. Some of our developed recreation opportunities are competing with newer, more highly developed sites within a 45 minute drive, and use levels are low.

- Reduce the total number of developed recreation sites. Continue to operate and maintain those sites that meet our desired recreation niche, have public support and use, and are sustainable.
- Decommission or remove facilities from sites that do not meet our niche, are not receiving a lot of use due to competition with other sites, are significant to only a small number of the public, and/or have such high maintenance needs that we cannot afford to bring them up to standard.
- Continue to monitor use of these areas and manage them as CUAs, if appropriate.
- Only develop new sites that have support from a large group of potential users, or where there is documented public demand that is not being met by other providers, and keep facilities and services at those sites to the minimum needed to fulfill that demand.

## E. Recreation Site Priorities and Recommendations

The **Recreation Niche** of the MTNF is to provide quality recreation opportunities that emphasize the unique features of the Ozark Mountains ecosystems, especially those that involve:

- clear, spring-fed, rivers that are floatable year-round; including the Eleven Point Scenic River, or
- a large land base and trail system that supports day-long and multi-day horseback, mountain bike and motorized trail riding; as well as hiking, backpacking, hunting & fishing.

Since 65% of our forest recreation visitors visit developed recreation sites, and 45% of recreation visitors’ time is spent in developed sites, the developed sites that serve

as a base for activities that take place in the GFA are a critical part of the Forest’s recreation opportunities.

1. **Signature Sites:** Signature sites are the areas of developed recreation that best fit our defined niche, and are those sites that we will continue to operate under any foreseen scenario. Current level of services would continue, and opportunities to improve would be considered.

Eleven Point National Scenic River Complex	Oregon County
Current River Complex	Carter and Ripley Co
Chadwick Complex	Christian County
Sutton Bluff Complex	Reynolds County
North Fork Recreation Area	Ozark County
Council Bluff Complex	Iron County

2. **Priority Recreation Sites:** The next set of Recreation sites fit the desired niche, and is important developed recreation sites for the forest.

Red Bluff Recreation Area	Crawford County
Silver Mines Recreation Area	Madison County
Berryman Recreation Area	Washington County
Lane Spring Recreation Area	Phelps County
Hercules Tower Trailhead	Taney County
Noblett Lake Complex	Douglas County
Bar-K Recreation Area	Christian County
Glade Top Scenic Byway Complex	Ozark and Taney Co
Hendrickson Recreation Area	Butler County
Markham Springs Recreation Area	Wayne County
Loggers Lake Recreation Area	Shannon County
Pine Ridge Recreation Area	Callaway County
Dry Fork Recreation Area	Callaway County
Carrington Pits Recreation Area	Callaway County

3. **Alternate Use Sites:** Alter the type of use at these sites by reducing facilities and services, but continue to maintain and operate as developed recreation sites.

Falling Spring	Oregon County
Mill Creek	Phelps County
Paddy Creek Recreation Area	Texas County
Hazel Creek Recreation Area	Washington County
Big Bay Recreation Area	Stone County
Hercules Wilderness – Coy Bald Trailhead	Taney County
Roby Lake Recreation Area	Texas County
Pineview Trailhead	Barry County
Ripley Lake Recreation Area	Ripley County

4. **Partnership Sites:** These recreation sites will be decommissioned if the partnership ceases to exist.

Stone Mill Spring Trout Park (partnership w/FLW)	Pulaski County
Shell Knob City Park (partnership w/Lions Club)	Barry County
Pinewoods Lake (partnership w/City of Ellsinore)	Butler County

5. **Sites to Convert to CUAs:** Decommission these developed recreation sites and manage as Concentrated Use Areas (CUAs).

Crane Lake Recreation Area	Iron County
Marble Creek Recreation Area	Madison County
Camp Five Pond	Oregon County
Huzzah Ponds	Dent County
Big Piney Trail Camp	Texas County
Brazil Creek Recreation Area	Washington County
Little Scotia Pond Recreation Area	Dent County
Slabtown Recreation Area	Texas County
Rock Pile Trailhead	Madison County
Long Creek Trailhead	Taney County

6. **Sites to Decommission:** Decommission these sites and manage as part of the GFA. They may or may not be CUAs in the future:

McCormack Lake Recreation Area	Oregon County
Fourche Lake Recreation Area	Ripley County
Onyx Cave Recreation Area	Barry County
Dewitt Pond Recreation Area	Phelps County
Big Spring Recreation Area	Ozark County
Cook Spring Recreation Area	Reynolds County
Wolf Junction	Taney County
Corbitt Potter	Ozark County
Lewis Lake Recreation Area	Oregon County

Tables showing the disposition of all Administrative & Recreation Sites, and all buildings are located in Appendices A, B, and C.