

**PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT,
EXTENSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE
STATE PARK SYSTEM,
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA**

The following set of principles, which govern the establishment, extension and development of the state park system of North Carolina, was prepared and published by the Committee on State Parks of the North Carolina Board of Conservation and Development, and Thomas W. Morse, Superintendent of State Parks.

Purpose of the State Park System

The purpose of the North Carolina State Park System shall be **TO SERVE THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA AND THEIR VISITORS BY:**

1. Preserving and protecting natural areas of unique or exceptional scenic value not only for the inspiration and benefit of the present generation, but, also, for generations to come.
2. Establishing and operating state parks that provide recreational use of natural resources and outdoor recreation in natural surroundings.
3. Portraying and interpreting plant and animal life, geology, and all other natural features and processes included in the various state parks.
4. Preserving, protecting and portraying historic and scientific sites of state-wide importance.

General Principles

● **Types of State Park Sites**

To assure the accomplishment of this basic purpose in accordance with the best standards, state park sites of the North Carolina State Park System shall be limited to:

1. **SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL STATE PARKS.**

a. **STATE PARKS** which, evaluated on a state-wide basis, possess unique or exceptional scenic value.

By exceptional scenic value is meant rare natural scenery, which is unlikely to be preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of the public in this and future generations if the property remains in private ownership, and which is sufficiently distinctive to attract and interest people from distant parts of the State as well as local people.

b. **STATE PARKS** which possess distinctive scenic values and excellent opportunities for the development of facilities for active recreational use of natural resources and excellent opportunities for the study of natural history. It is highly important that these areas have distinctive scenic character because the final test of such areas is the possession of a natural appeal which will make park users eager to return. Areas lacking such natural appeal are not justifiable as units of the State Park System.

2. STATE HISTORIC AND SCIENTIFIC SITES.

a. STATE HISTORIC SITES which possess state-wide historic, prehistoric or archaeological importance because they are: (1) sites of events of state-wide historical importance; or (2) sites closely connected with a person who was of outstanding importance in the history of the State; or (3) sites containing man-made features of state-wide historical importance.

b. STATE SCIENTIFIC SITES which, evaluated on a state-wide basis, have unique natural scientific features.

A state park site (other than historic or scientific sites) should possess both scenic and recreational values. In some sites exceptional scenic values may be sufficient to overcome the lack of recreational possibilities, and in other sites unusual recreational possibilities may make up for a lack of scenic values. By unusual recreational value is meant features such as topography, trees, vegetation, streams, lakes or ocean shore offering recreational possibilities which would attract and interest people of a wide surrounding area and would not be available to the public if the property remained in private ownership.

An even geographical distribution of state parks at arbitrary distances, for example every fifty miles, or state parks for every county, is manifestly impossible on any reasonable theory of scenic and recreational standards, because it is fundamentally unscientific, and because it would be unnecessary and prohibitively expensive.

● State Parks Required

The state parks should be sufficient in number, size, development, operation and maintenance to adequately serve the needs of all of the people of the State over and above the facilities which are or should be provided by local city, town and county parks.

● Priority of Development

Generally speaking, existing state parks should be adequately developed before additional state parks are acquired, but it is recognized that the state park system is far from complete and opportunities to overcome deficiencies should not be neglected.

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