

# B.W. Wells Park

**Wake County Board of Commissioners  
Work Session  
March 11, 2024**



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# Today's Discussion

- Introduction
- Mission Statements and Goals
- Facility Development Process – Concept Plan
- Project Introduction
- Site History and Analysis
- Concept Plan Details
- Preliminary Costs
- Funding Considerations
- Next Steps

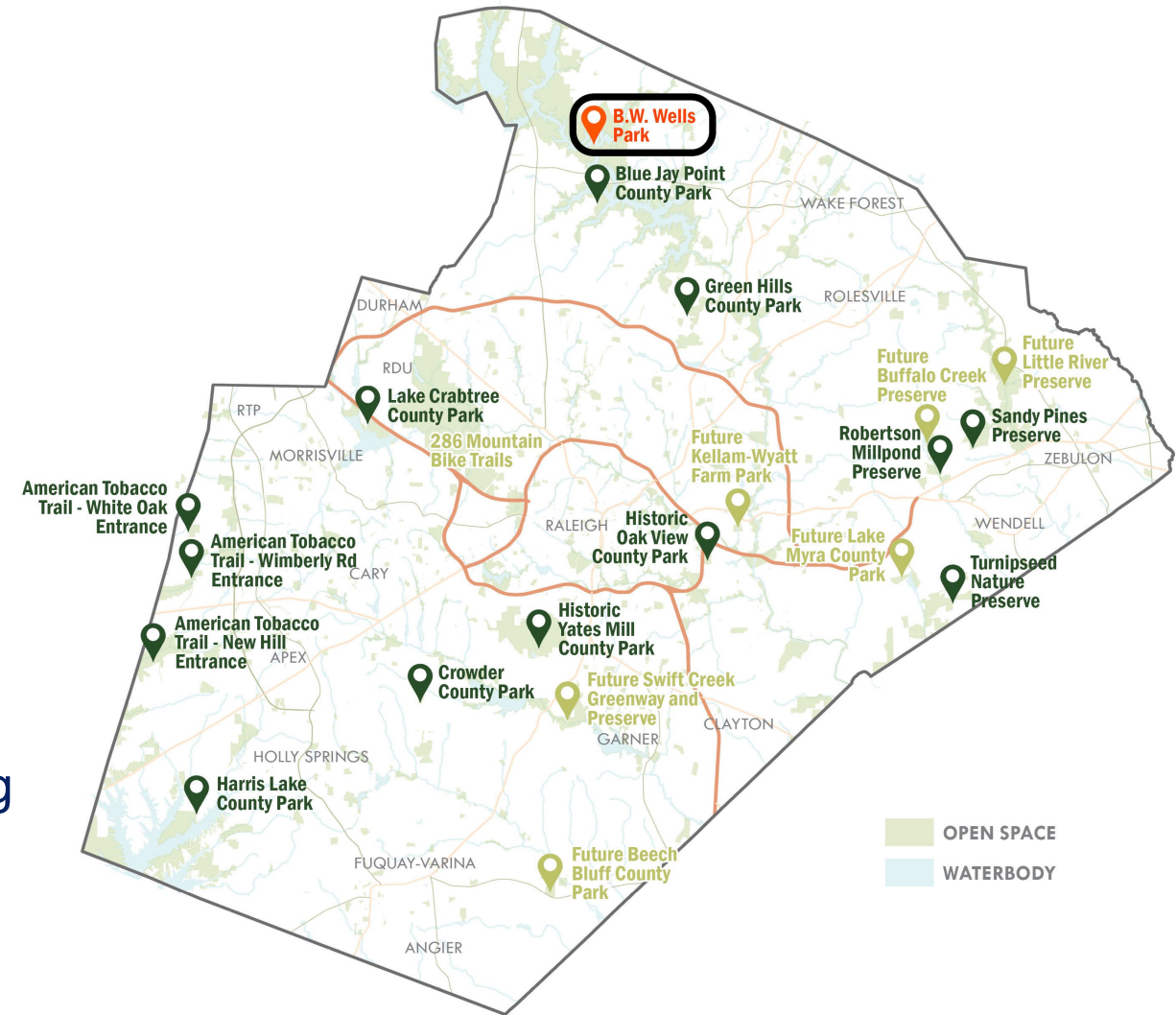
# Commissioner Goals, Resolutions and Design Guidelines

- BOC Growth and Sustainability Goal GS4
  - **Preserve open space and expand access to parks, preserves, recreation resources and greenways**
- Renewable Energy Resolution
- Native Plants Resolution
- Public Art Policy
- Wake County Design Guidelines & Standards
- Energy Design and Management Guidelines



# PROS System – Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- Natural Resource Based
- 8 Existing County Parks
- 3 Existing Nature Preserves
- Construction/Planning/Design
  - One New Park under construction
  - Two New Parks in planning/design
  - One New Greenway/Preserve in design
  - Three Existing Parks in design
  - Two New Park Facilities in concept planning





# Facility Development Process

- Site Identification
- Consultant selection
- ✓ **Concept Plan**
- ✓ **Master Plan**
- ✓ **Schematic Design**
- Construction Documents and permitting
- ✓ **Bidding / Construction Contract Award**
- Construction
- Opening

**Concept plan** is a less detailed illustration of the core ideas to incorporate on the site, and the opportunities that might exist to facilitate these ideas.

# Project Team and Stakeholders

## Project Team

- Wake County
- Design Workshop (Design)
- Lynch Mykins (Structural)
- Palacio Collaborative (Estimator)

## Stakeholders

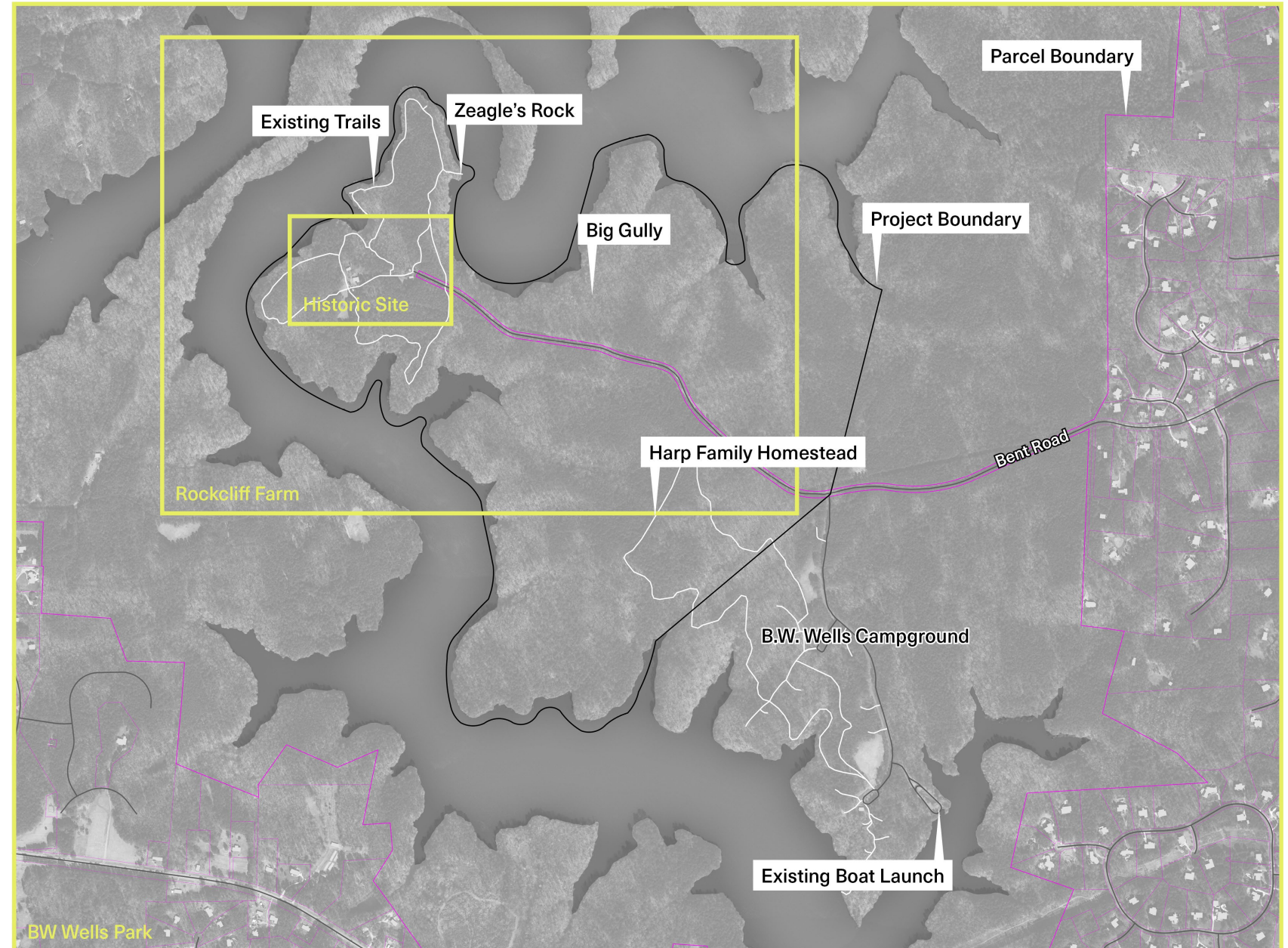
- State of North Carolina
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- B.W. Wells Association





# About the Site

- Owned by US Army Corp of Engineers, leased to the State of North Carolina for Falls Lake State Park
- Adjacent Campground not considered





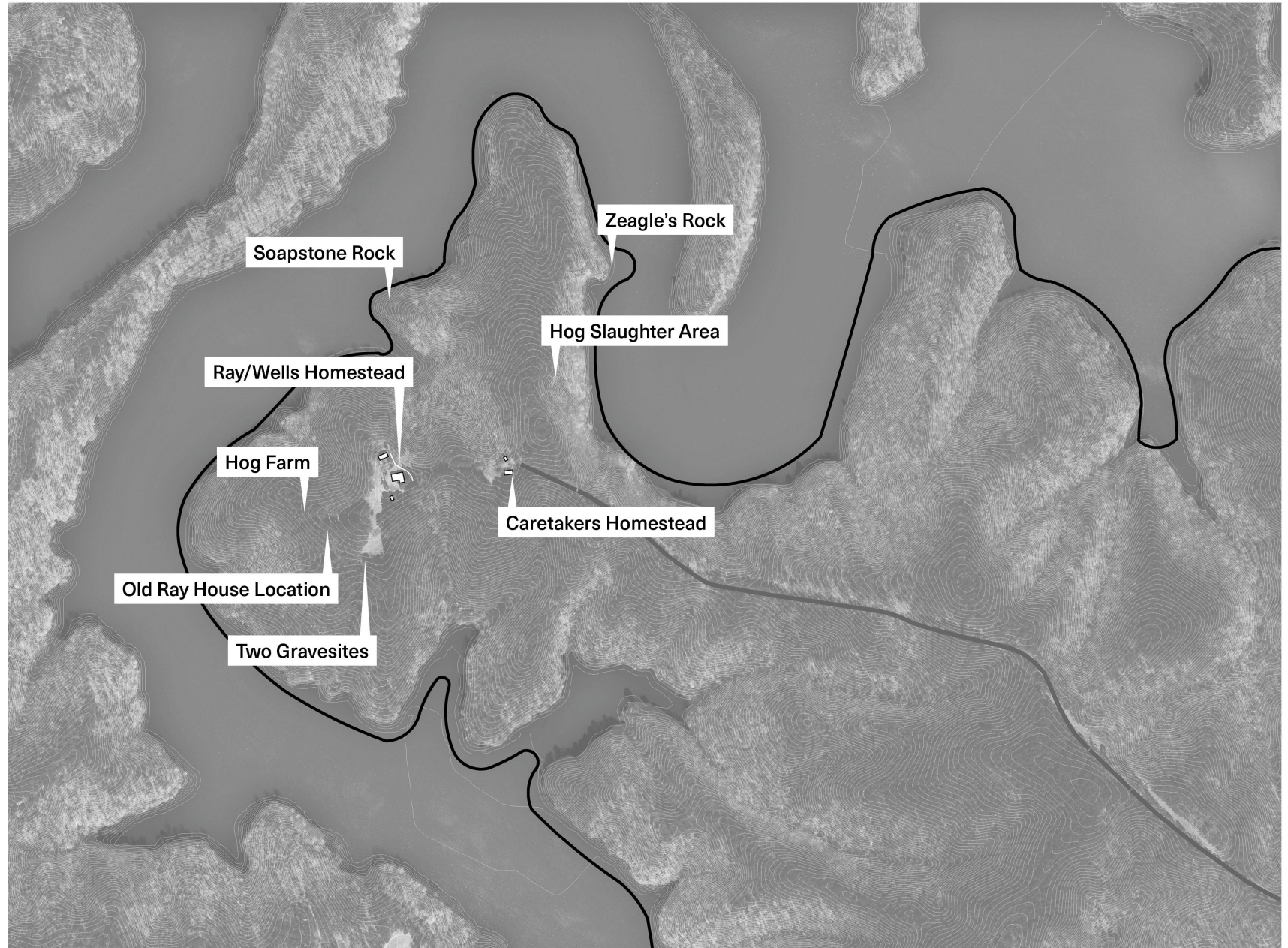
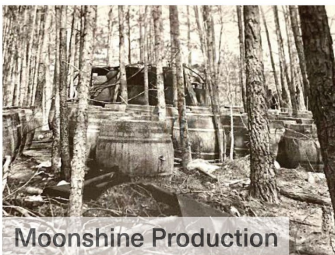
# About B.W Wells

- Chair at NC State Botany Department for 30 years
- Identified eleven different plant communities across the state
- Developed new field of ecological botany
- Author of “The Natural Gardens of North Carolina”
- Retired at Rockcliff Farm in 1954





# About Rockcliff Farm





# Historic Structures



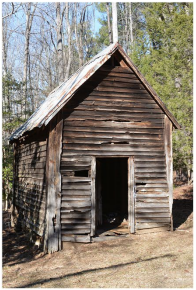
**1** Ray/Wells House



**2** Studio



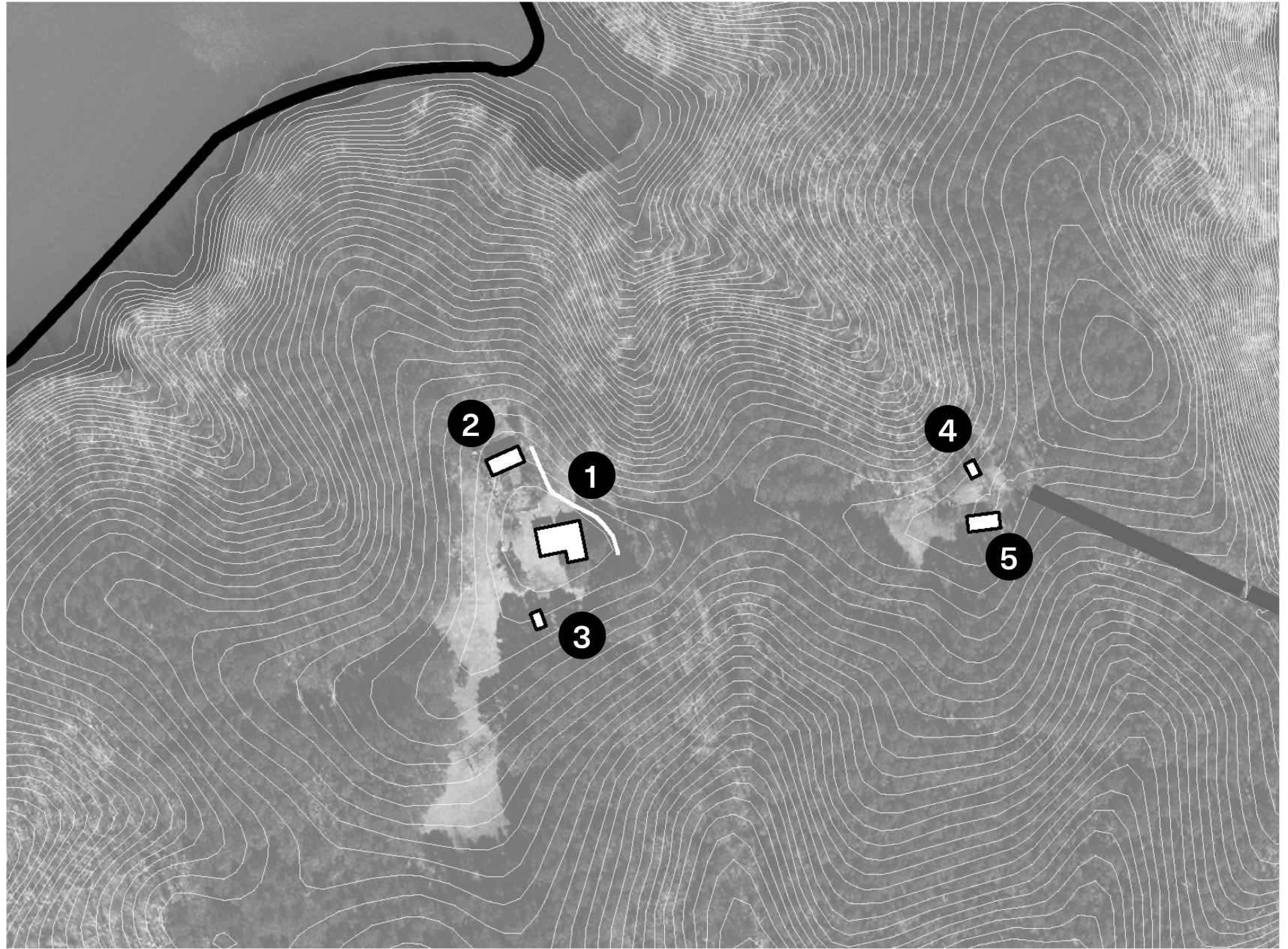
**3** Smokehouse



**4** Ray House Outbuilding

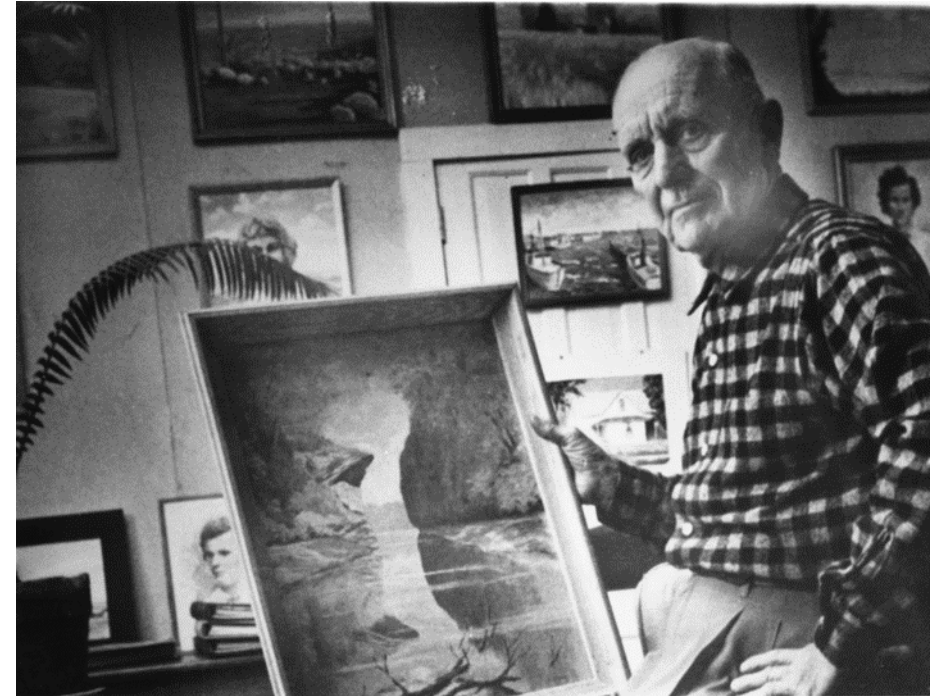


**5** Ray House



# Project Goals

- Honor B.W. Wells's legacy
- Preserve the natural and cultural landscape
- Craft an executable plan
- Improve public access
- Provide learning opportunities for all ages





# Activity Zones

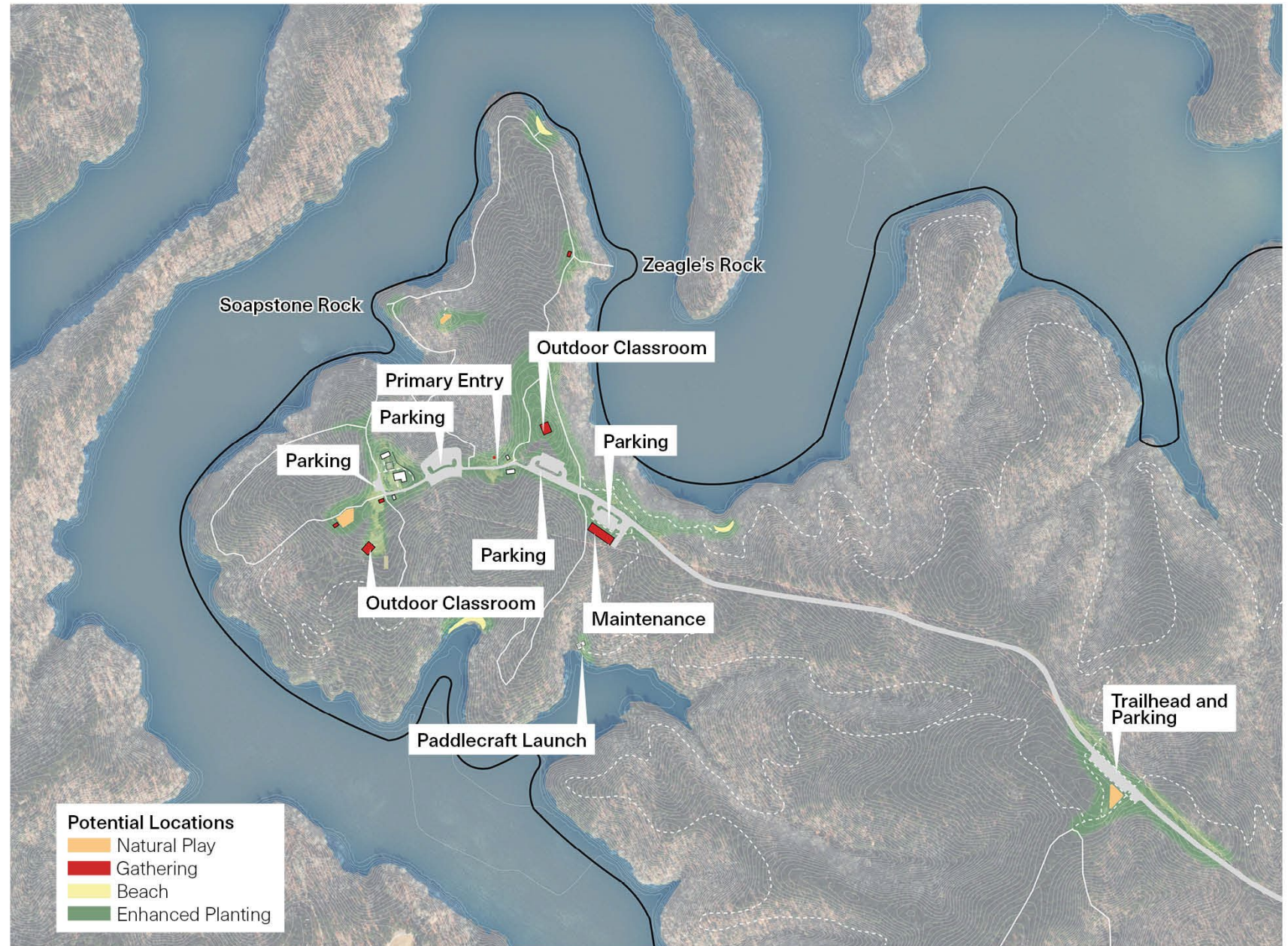
- Historic Core
- Education Hub
- Land Stewardship and Research
- Park Trail Hub





# Concept Plan

- Historic preservation of structures and landscape
- New gathering and teaching areas
- Supporting infrastructure
- Expanded trail system and amenities
- Improved interpretive elements
- Improved water access
- Habitat restoration and demonstration gardens
- Maintenance and operations



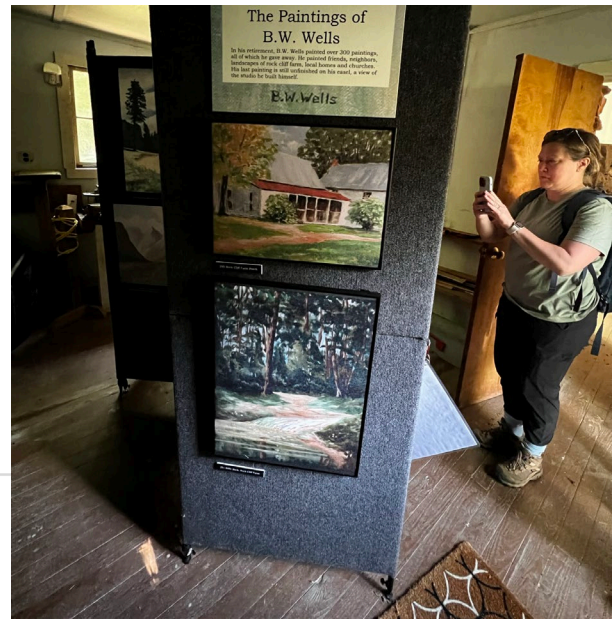


# Historic Core

- Ray/Wells House
  - Artist in Residence
  - Office
  - Welcome
- Studio
  - Art Gallery
  - Interpretive Center
- Smokehouse
  - Interpretive
- Ray House Outbuilding
  - Require Reconstruction
  - Maintenance/Storag
- Ray/ Caretaker House
  - Office and Operations



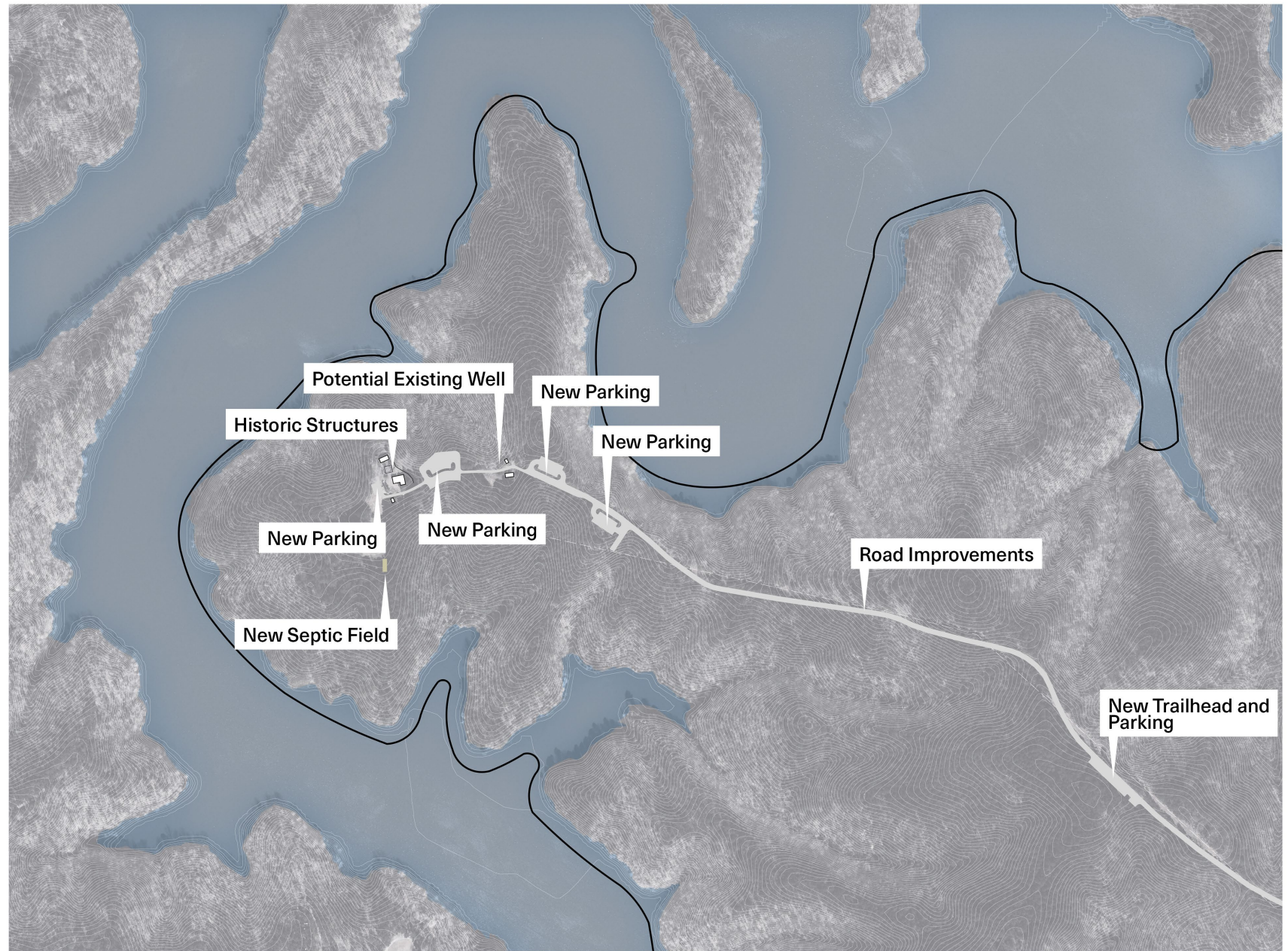






# Infrastructure Improvements

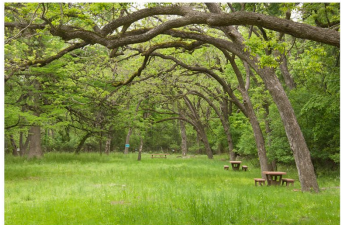
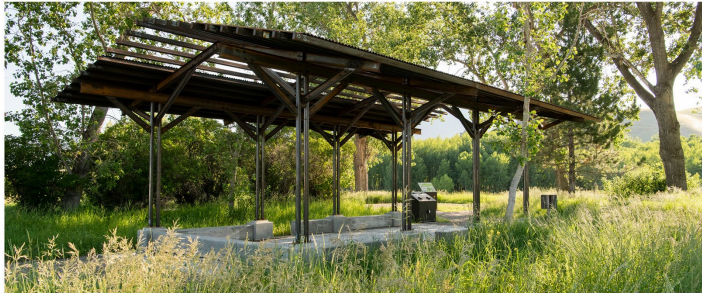
- Entry road improvements
- Parking and trailhead
- Septic drain field
- Well
- Maintenance facility
- Structural reinforcement
- Power connections





# Gathering Spaces

- Outdoor Classroom
  - 2000-2500 sf





# Nature Play





# Demonstration Gardens and Maintenance

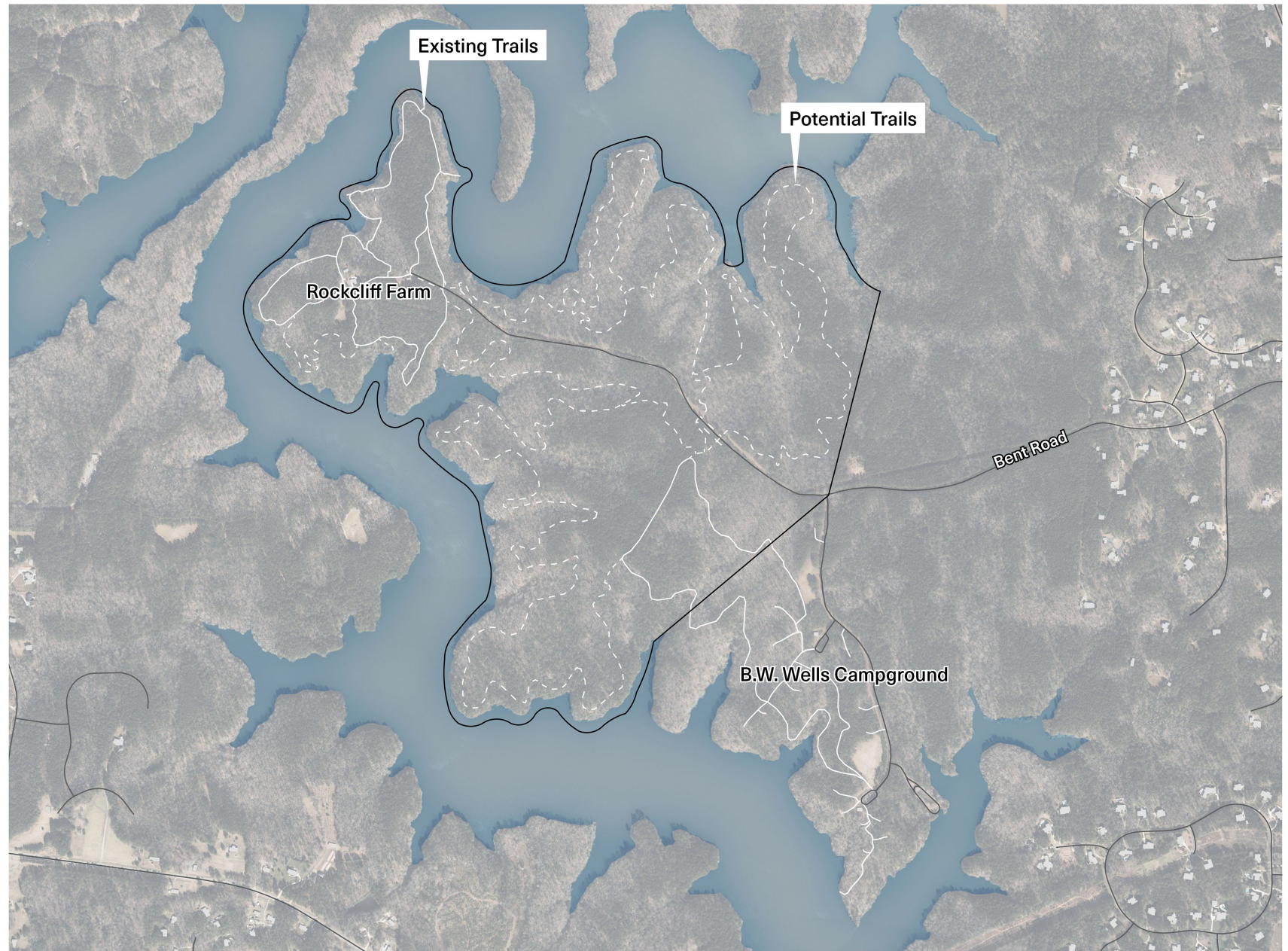
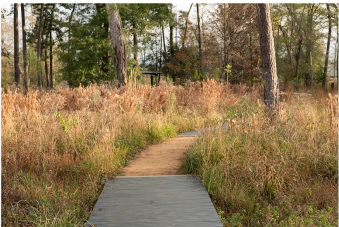
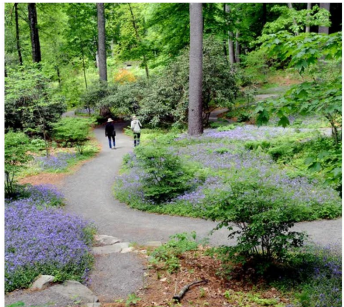




# Site Circulation

## 13 Total Miles of Trails

- 5 miles of Existing Trails
- Potential for 8 miles of additional trails





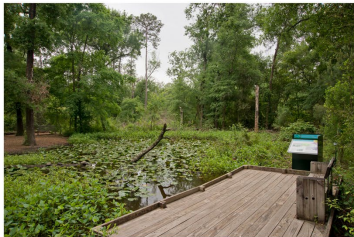
# Site Circulation

## Trail Amenities





# Water Access



# Project Strategies and Opportunities

- Education—K-12, University and Cooperative Extension Partnerships
- Passive Recreation and Nature Play
- Community and Seasonal Events
- Open Space Preservation and Restoration
- Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- Community Gardens, Display Gardens and Food System Education
- Native Plants, Food Forest and Pollinator Landscaping
- Public Art
- Sustainability



# Recap

## Currently

- Rockcliff Farm is protected open space as a part of the Falls Lake State Recreation Area
- Open to the public:
  - BW Wells Association events
  - Guided Group Tours upon request

## Proposed

- Rockcliff Farm is protected open space managed as a part of Wake County Parks Recreation & Open Space
- Open to the public:
  - 361 days per year; 8:00AM - Sunset
- Expanded programmatic opportunities
  - Historical
  - Environmental
  - Recreational
- Unique programmatic opportunities
  - Native plant propagation

# Estimated Costs For B.W. Wells

## **Capital Improvements = \$12.8 million**

- Facility renovations and new facility development

## **Operating = \$1.4 million**

- One-time = \$260,000
- Ongoing = \$1,140,000

# Anticipated Shortfalls For Project Funding

## **Kellam-Wyatt County Park**

- Currently budgeted at \$5,490,000
- Design Cost Estimate \$8,800,000
- Estimated Shortfall \$3,300,000 - \$3,700,000
- Start bidding June 2024

## **RDUAA - 286**

- Currently developing concept plan
- No funds budgeted for construction

## **Lake Myra County Park**

- Currently budgeted at \$16,000,000

# 2018 PGROS Bond Funding

Goals	Identified In Bond	Expenditures To Date (03/05/2024)	Funds Planned for Bond Sale #3	Unallocated Funds from Bond Sale #1 & #2
Acquire Open Space	\$20,500,000	\$18,251,633	\$2,248,367	\$0
Develop Greenways	\$20,000,000	\$12,889,686	\$0	\$7,110,314
Build New Parks & Preserves	\$36,900,000	\$25,311,347	\$11,588,653	\$0
Improve/Expand Existing Parks	\$42,600,000	\$732,871	\$41,867,129	\$0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$120,000,000</b>	<b>\$57,185,537</b>	<b>\$55,704,149</b>	<b>\$7,110,314</b>

BNP&P includes actual expenditures, commitments & Pending for BBCP, K-W, LMCP, RDU-286 & BW Wells

# 2018 PGROS Bond Funding

Kellam-Wyatt County Park	\$5.5M
Lake Myra County Park	\$16.0M
Blue Jay Point County Park Renovations	\$5.7M
Harris Lake County Park Renovations	\$5.7M
Historic Oak View County Park Renovations	\$3.5M
Crowder County Park Renovations	\$4.9M
Lake Crabtree County Park Renovations	\$6.3M
Historic Yates Mill County Park Renovations	\$4.7M
Green Hills County Park Renovations	\$3.4M
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$55.7M</b>



# Next Steps

- Determine the project boundary and level of development
- Determine source of funding

If the Board of Commissioners moves the project forward:

- Develop agreement with the State of North Carolina and the BW Wells Association
- Programming
- Design
- Bidding
- Construction

# Discussion

