

# SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK

## FRAMEWORK PLAN



**FINAL REPORT - AUGUST 2024**



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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\*Additional stakeholders that were invited to engage in the planning process are outlined in the "Stakeholder Engagement" section of this document.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY









# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Smokey Bear Historical Park in Capitan, NM, was founded in 1976 to honor Capitan's local celebrity, Smokey Bear. Nearly three decades earlier, Smokey was an orphaned bear cub found in the aftermath of the Capitan Gap wildfire. Smokey Bear rose to fame as an icon for forest fire prevention and lived at Washington, D.C.'s National Zoo for 26 years. When he passed away, the famous black bear was laid to rest in his hometown. His burial site is a special place within the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

The Park is a 3-acre stroll through replicated climate zones of New Mexico, a testament to the local community's dedication to preserving its natural beauty. Visitors can experience exhibits about vegetative life zones and visit several important memorials honoring both Smokey and local service groups, fostering a sense of belonging. Smokey Bear Historical Park has been operated by the New Mexico Forestry Division's Capitan District since 1992, further strengthening its ties to the community.

The site includes five built structures, including the main Museum, which is owned and operated by the Park. A series of raised walkways or "boardwalks" made of composite decking connect the different site programs.

Site features include but are not limited to Smokey's grave and the N.M. Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial which are both located on the northern end of the Park. The Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial is a poignant tribute honoring over 30 wildland firefighters who have lost their lives while fighting wildfires in New Mexico, a testament to the Park's commitment to honoring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Another site feature is the Resting Place of the first Smokey Bear Balloon. The Park also features the seven Life Zones of New Mexico.



This Framework Plan identifies guiding principles and goals for the Smokey Bear Historical Park, a truly unique park in the Village of Capitan. Smokey Bear's mission informs these principles as a symbol of wildfire prevention and wildland fire education. Leading with this primary message, the proposed improvements were informed by the site visits and assessments, visioning sessions, and meetings with the SBHP staff, NM EMNRD project leads, and other project stakeholders. The Smokey Bear Historical Park Framework Plan should be used as a roadmap to improve the existing museum and park site in a pragmatic and systematic way that builds towards the larger vision of SBHP.

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# INTRODUCTION





## INTRODUCTION

### Project Background

#### GOALS

Smokey Bear is a unique New Mexico icon with great potential to increase national attention, attract more visitors, and continue teaching important lessons around Smokey Bear's message of wildfire prevention. To unlock this potential, the goals of this project went beyond the generation of a traditional framework plan. This project focuses on five key goals to achieve a lasting vision for the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

**GOAL 1.** Identify the Vision for the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

**GOAL 2.** Develop the "Smokey Bear Historical Park Framework Plan" that addresses immediate facility needs and plans for short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

**GOAL 3.** Identify opportunities and constraints.

**GOAL 4.** Uncover your vision for Smokey Bear.

**GOAL 5.** Understand program alignments and potential strategies to better build on Smokey's legacy at both local and national levels.

#### SCOPE OF WORK

The scope of work focuses first on organizing larger visioning sessions to identify how to best utilize Smokey Bear's potential at the Smokey Bear Historical Park. This was followed by developing a framework plan to achieve the vision and by architectural services to address some of the most pressing deferred maintenance challenges at the historic site in Capitan, New Mexico.

### Project Planning Process

#### PROJECT TASKS

The project included five project tasks to develop the Framework Plan.

**Task 1: Visioning** - For the larger visioning session, the team invited stakeholders from local, regional, state, and national levels to discuss what Smokey Bear means to New Mexico, identify opportunities and constraints, and help develop a larger vision for Smokey Bear Historical Park. The stakeholder meetings informed a visioning framework and helped determine how the existing Smokey Bear Historical Park could grow in the future.

**Task 2: Public Outreach** - The team facilitated outreach events and meetings with specific stakeholder groups identified in the visioning phase. During these meetings, the team solicited input on the vision and identified any missed opportunities and other elements that emerged in the open discussions. An online survey was also accompanied this phase of work.

**Task 3: Existing Conditions** - The team performed a site assessment of the existing Smokey Bear Historical Park and site. Our assessment related the existing conditions to the vision identified in Task 1 and informed development strategies and action steps to achieve the vision. The assessment considered how to address immediate maintenance needs and what improvements can be made within the site's existing context without limiting the larger vision's future development.

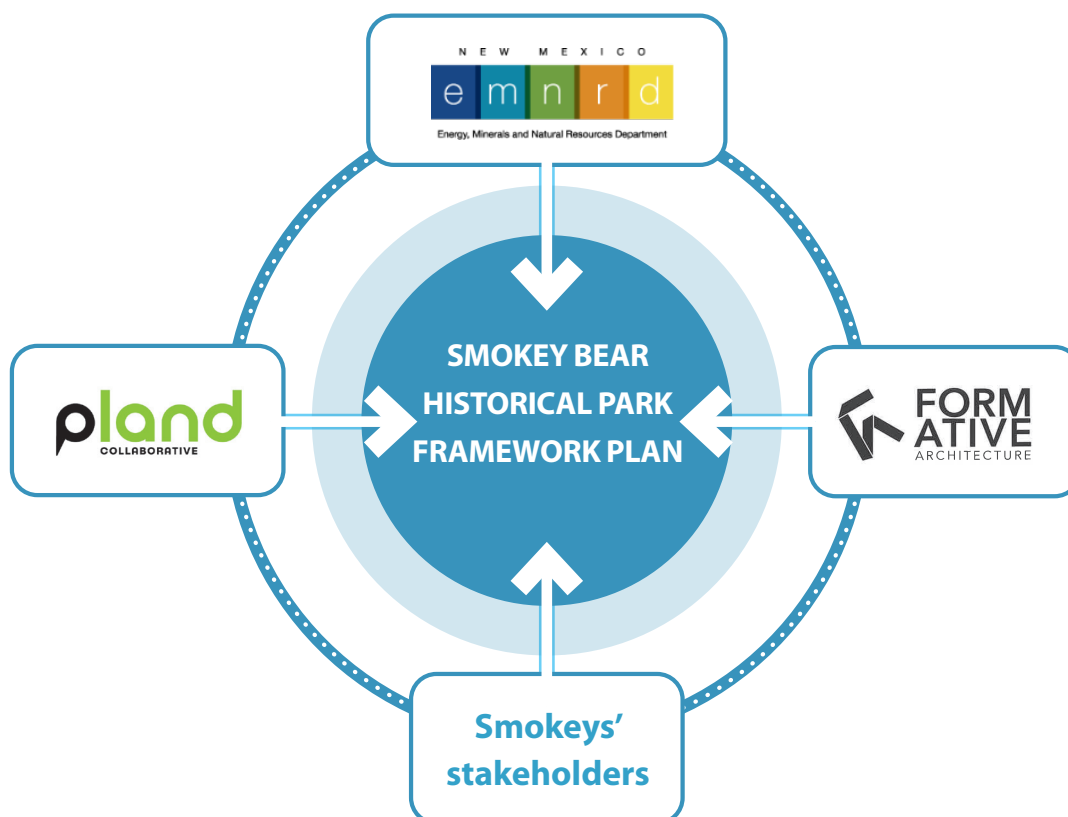
**Task 4: Vision + Action Plan** - The team generated a revised vision and action plan based on the previous tasks above. This vision serves as a

roadmap to improve the existing for improvements of the Smokey Bear Historical Park facilities pragmatically and systematically build towards the larger vision.

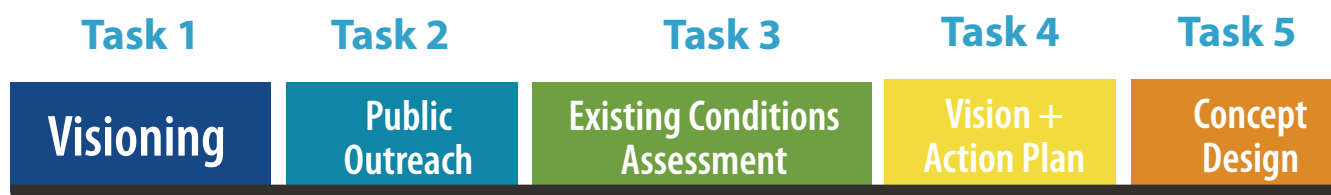
**Task 5: Conceptual Design** - In this final phase, the team developed conceptual designs that

addressed immediate concerns and identified more significant improvements for phasing, all while working towards the larger vision. The team reviewed conceptual options with the project stakeholders and developed an updated conceptual design plan for the complete site.

**FIGURE 1. PROJECT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**



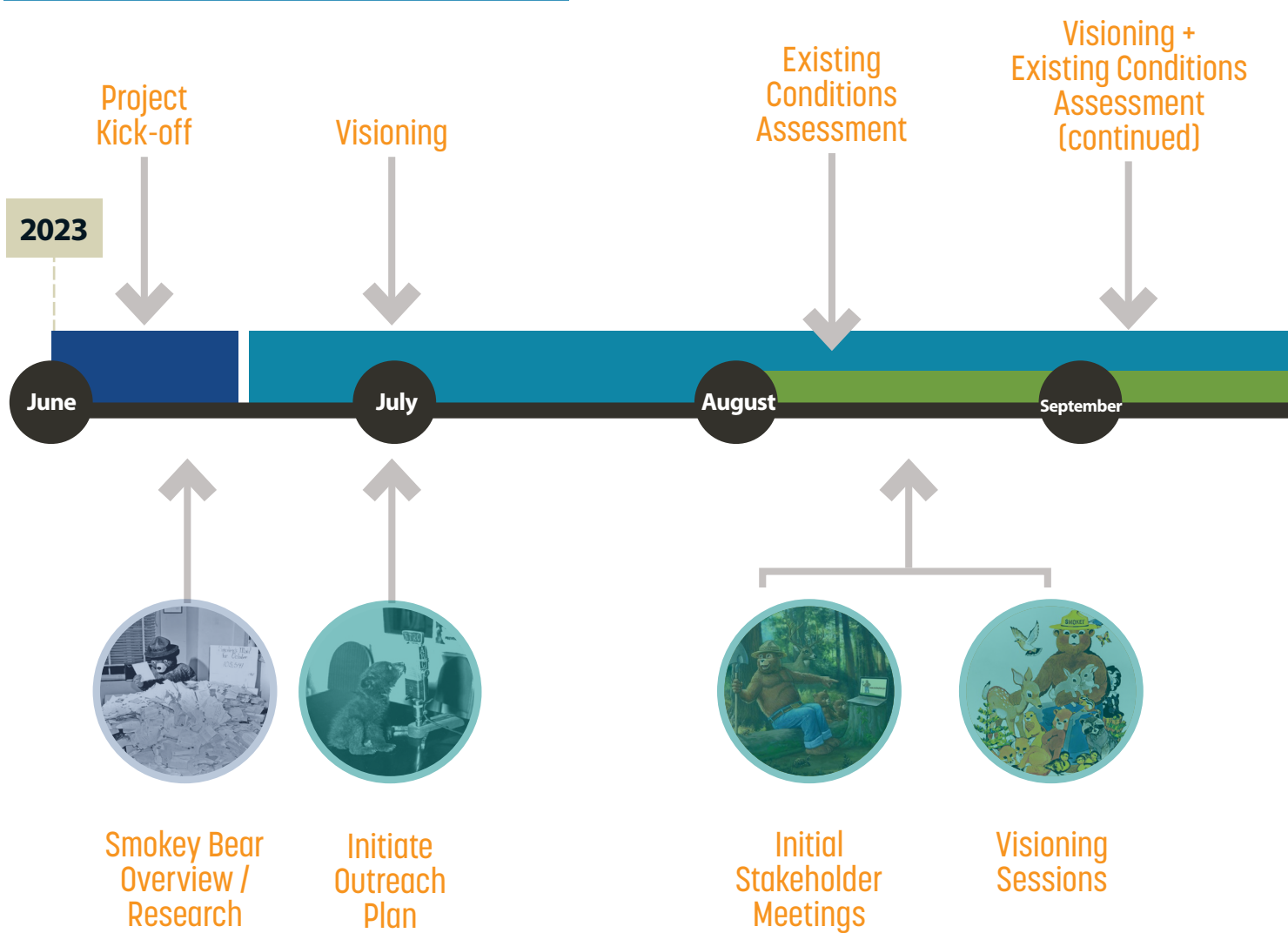
**FIGURE 2. PROJECT TASKS**



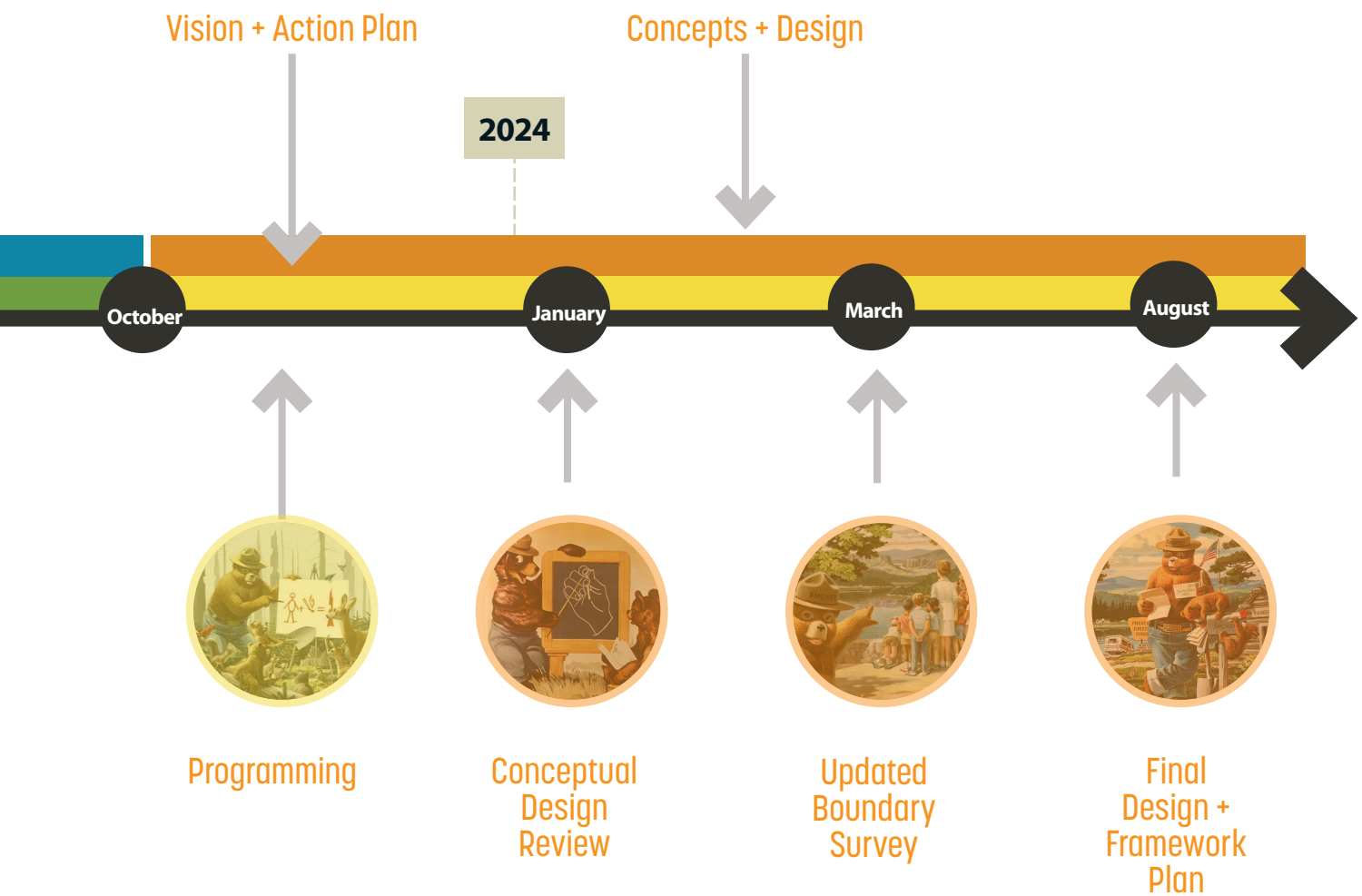
SCHEDULE

The project involved several months of visioning, stakeholder outreach, and site assessment work, followed by programming, conceptual design, survey updates, and design refinement.

FIGURE 3. PROJECT SCHEDULE







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# OVERVIEW


















## OVERVIEW

### Regional Context

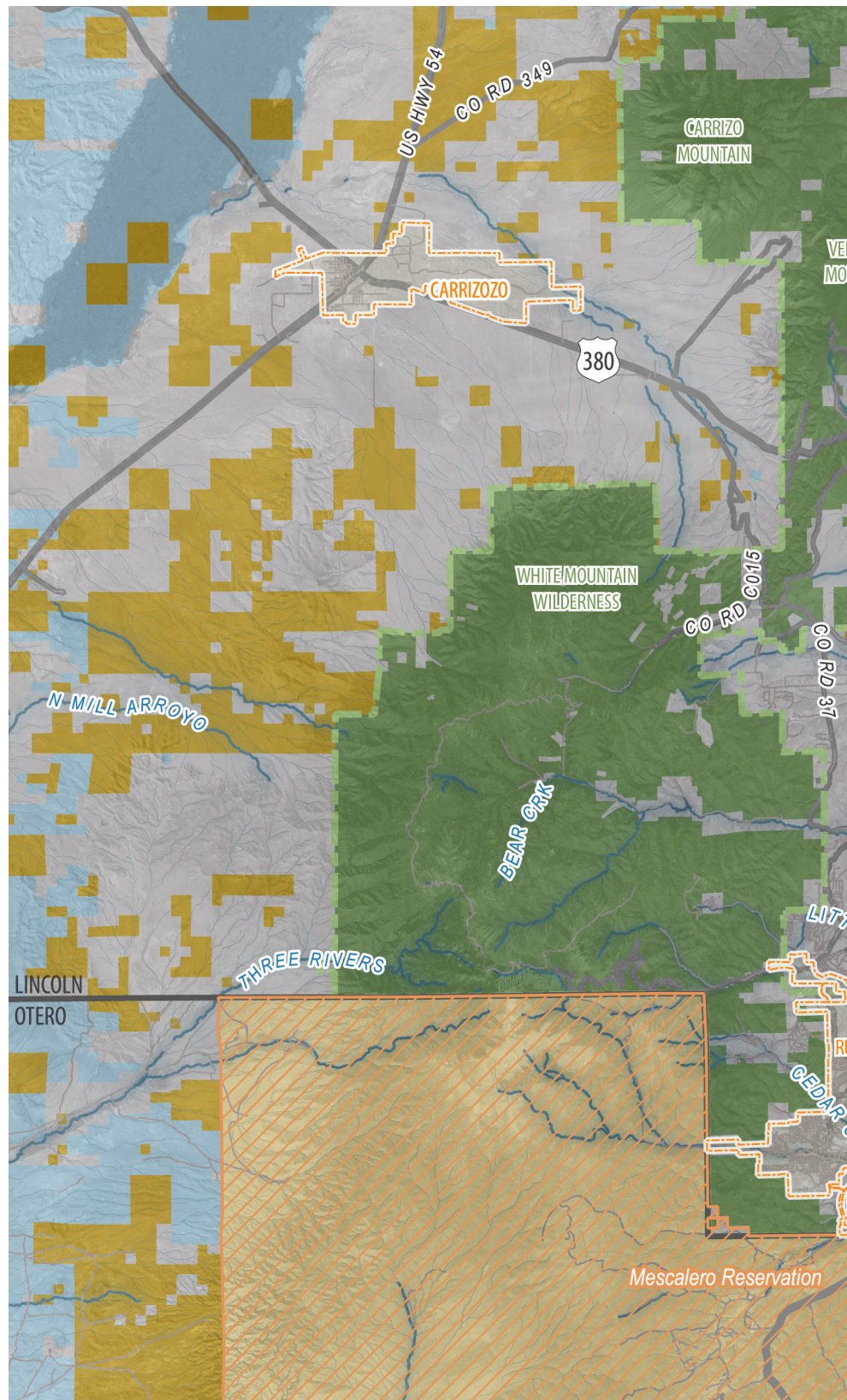
The Smokey Bear Historical Park in Capitan, NM, was founded in 1976 to honor Capitan's local celebrity, Smokey Bear. Nearly three decades earlier, Smokey was an orphaned bear cub found in the aftermath of the Capitan Gap wildfire. Smokey Bear rose to fame as an icon for forest fire prevention and lived at Washington, D.C.'s National Zoo for 26 years. When he passed away, the famous black bear was laid to rest in his hometown. His burial site is a special place within the Smokey Bear Historical Park.

#### Legend

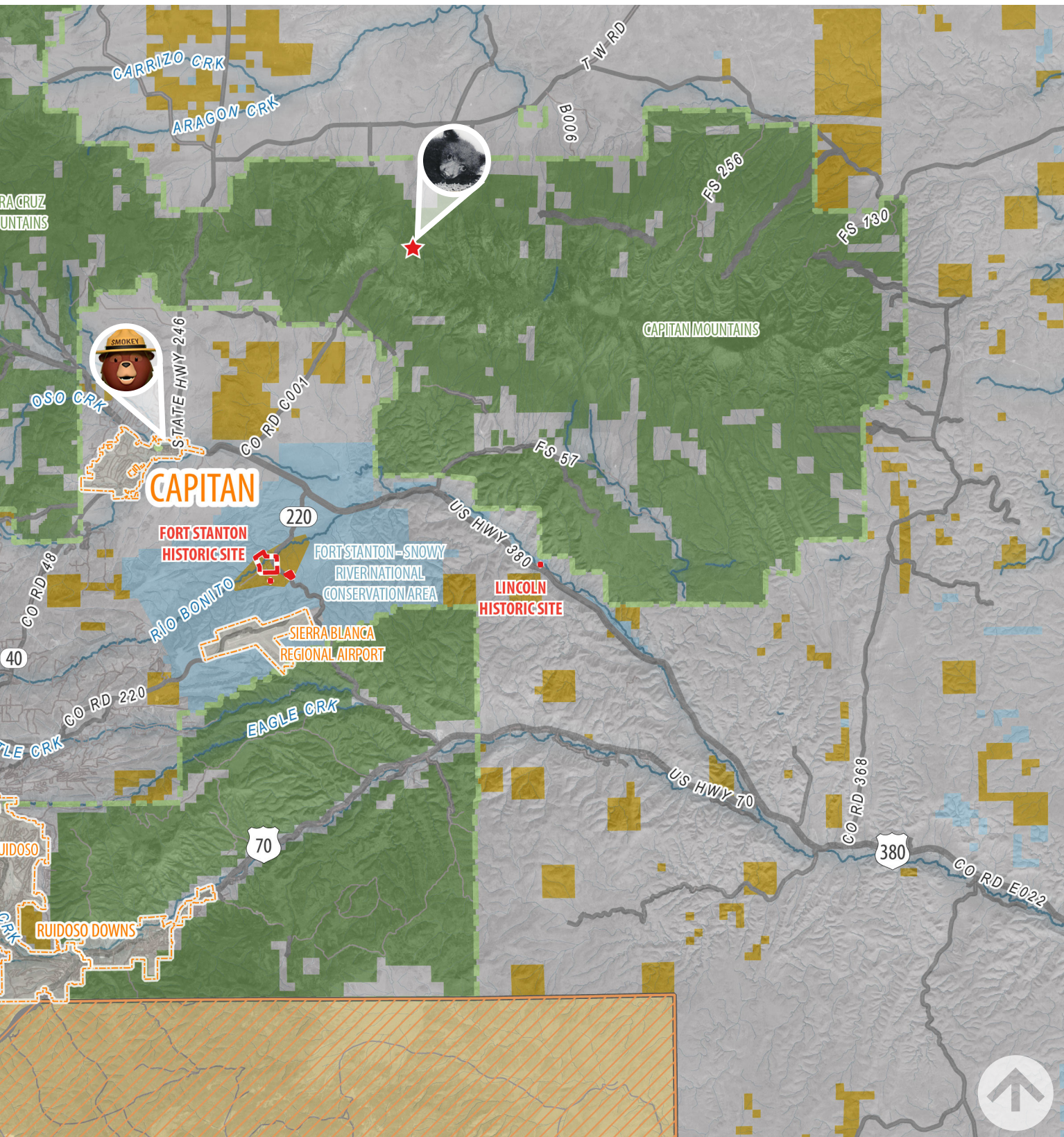
-  Smokey Bear Historic Park
-  Smokey Bear Found Location
-  Roads
-  Linear Water
-  BLM Land
-  Forest Service Land
-  Private Land
-  State Land
-  Tribal Land
-  Lincoln National Forest
-  Populated Places
-  New Mexico Historic Sites
-  County Boundary

0 4mi 8mi

FIGURE 4. CONTEXT MAP









## Park Location + History

The Smokey Bear Historical Park, a site of historical significance, is nestled in the Village of Capitan, NM. The Park is positioned near the center of Capitan and directly accessed off Highway 380.

The Park's origins date back to 1958 when the Capitan Women's Club pushed to establish a museum dedicated to Smokey Bear. By 1960, the Park saw its first log cabin museum built on land donated by Hollis Cummins, using logs from the U.S. Forest Service and salvaged from the Capitan Gap Fire.

The Park expanded in 1978 when the Village of Capitan donated the parkland to the State of New Mexico. This formed the basis for the new Smokey

Bear Historical Park, which officially opened in June 1978, immediately adjacent to the log cabin. The visitor's center has been operational since 1979 and continues to serve visitors and admirers of Smokey Bear today. The adjacent log cabin is currently owned and operated by the Village of Capitan, outside of the Smokey Bear Historical Park and still referred to as the "Smokey Bear Museum."

Initially managed by the State Parks Division, the Park has been overseen by the State Forestry Division since 1992, though the Park and Recreation Commission remains the listed owner as per the Warranty Deed with the Lincoln County Assessor.

**FIGURE 5. PARK LOCATION**





FIGURE 6. PARK LOCATION ENLARGED





## Smokey Bear Overview

The following timeline provides an overview of Smokey Bear's history as a national icon working hard to inspire the public to prevent wildfires. Since the early 1940s, Smokey Bear has impacted wildfire prevention strategies across 80 years and has become a local and national celebrity representing the image of wildfire prevention in Capitan, New Mexico, the U.S., and beyond.



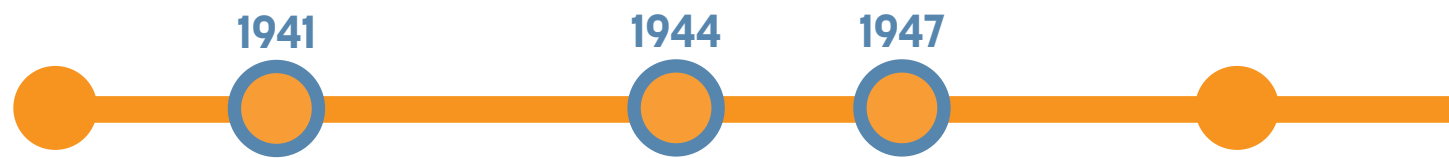
1941: One of the first Forest Fire Prevention Campaign posters.



1944: Smokey's first appearance in Forest Fire Prevention campaign poster. August 9, 1944 is known as Smokey's national birthday.



1950: On May 9, Smokey Bear (originally named "Hotfoot Teddy") was found orphaned in the Lincoln National Forest following the Capitan Gap Wildfire. This day is known as the local "Gotcha Day."



1940

1940s: Used for education and marketing through memorabilia and print, radio and TV messages.



1944: On October 10, Smokey's original catchphrase was "Smokey Says - Care Will Prevent 9 out of 10 Forest Fires."

1944

1947

1947: Smokey's catchphrase changes to "Remember... Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires."



1950

1950s: Smokey is used to educate about fire safety through print, radio and TV messages.







*1950: In July, Smokey Bear was flown to Washington D.C. National Zoo where he took up permanent residence as ambassador for wildfire prevention for the next 26 years.*



*1960s: Smokey is advertised through printed materials and advertisements on the radio and TV.*

**1950**

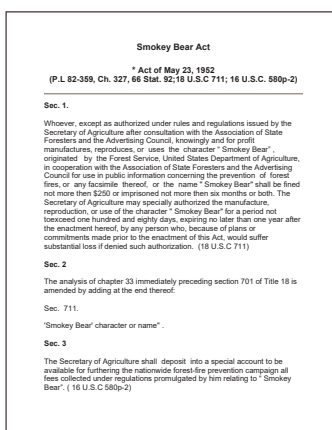
**1952**

**1961**

**1960**

*1952: Smokey Bear Act established and recognizes that "Smokey Bear" originated with the U.S. Forest Service. The use of "Smokey Bear" name and character under control of the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.*

*1961: Smokey Celebrates his 20th Anniversary*



## FUN FACT!

*Many of the burned trees from the Capitan Gap Fire (where Smokey was rescued) were salvaged and used to build the original log cabin museum and gift shop that still stands in Capitan, NM.*

*Image credits: <https://smokeybear.com/en/smokeys-history>*



*1970s: Smokey Bear's message is advertised more through TV.*



*1976: The "real" Smokey Bear passes in November 1976. Smokey was flown home to Capitan and buried at the Smokey Bear Historical Park.*

1975



1976

*1975: The "real" Smokey Bear officially retires.*

1970







1980

1980s: Smokey Bear is advertised more through radio and TV ads.



1984: Smokey's 40th birthday!

1984



1986: A devastating fire season renews importance of Smokey and its message

1986



1985: Smokey Bear radio advertisement series featuring B.B. King, Cheech and Chong, The Grateful Dead, and Spock among others.



### FUN FACT!

Smokey Bear and the U.S. President are the only individuals that have their own Zip Code.

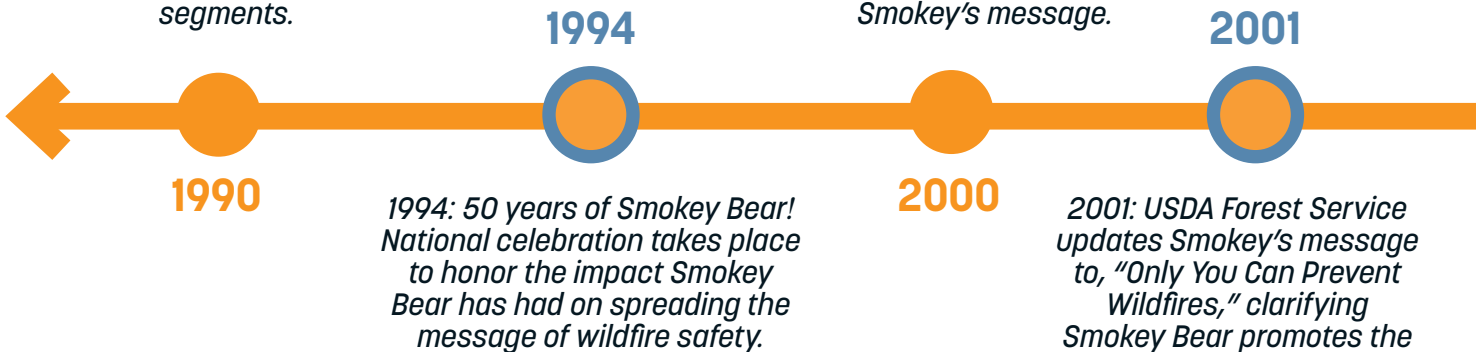
Image credits: <https://smokeybear.com/en/smokeys-history>

# SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK FRAMEWORK PLAN



1990s: Smokey Bear is advertised through the standard mediums, but has seen a large increase in popularity on TV through cartoon segments.

2000s: Printed media posters maintain and few radio ads remain as a popular way to convey Smokey's message.



1994: 50 years of Smokey Bear! National celebration takes place to honor the impact Smokey Bear has had on spreading the message of wildfire safety.

2001: USDA Forest Service updates Smokey's message to, "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires," clarifying Smokey Bear promotes the prevention of unwanted and unplanned wildfires versus prescribed fires.







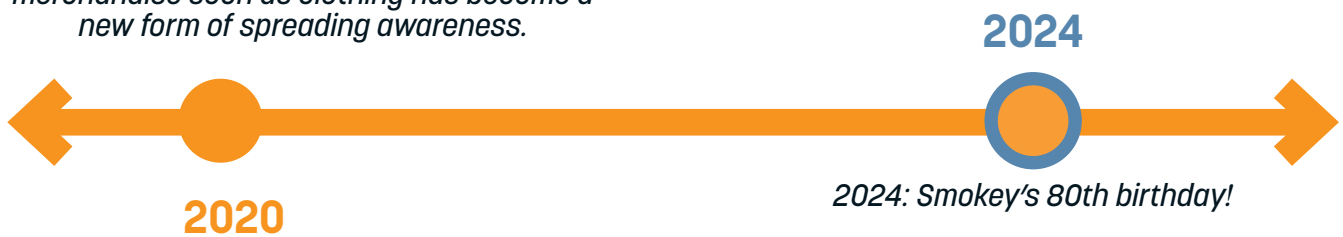
*2010s: Digital and social media become a new way for Smokey's message to be conveyed, allowing the message to reach a younger audience. More printed ads appear on billboards and bus shelters.*



Image credits: <https://smokeybear.com/en/smokeys-history>



*2020s: Smokey Bear employs the assistance of celebrities to bring awareness to fire safety. Social media plays a large role in spreading Smokey Bear's message, and merchandise such as clothing has become a new form of spreading awareness.*



*2020: Smokey Bear TV and radio ads featuring Jeff Foxworthy, Betty White, Stephen Colbert, Al Roker and Isabella Gomez.*







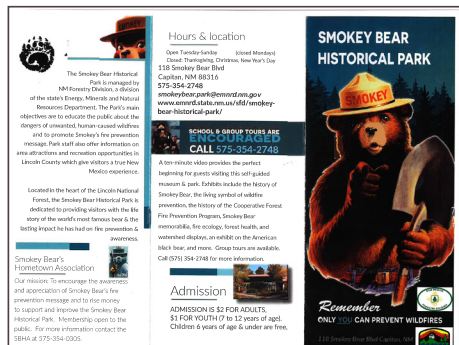
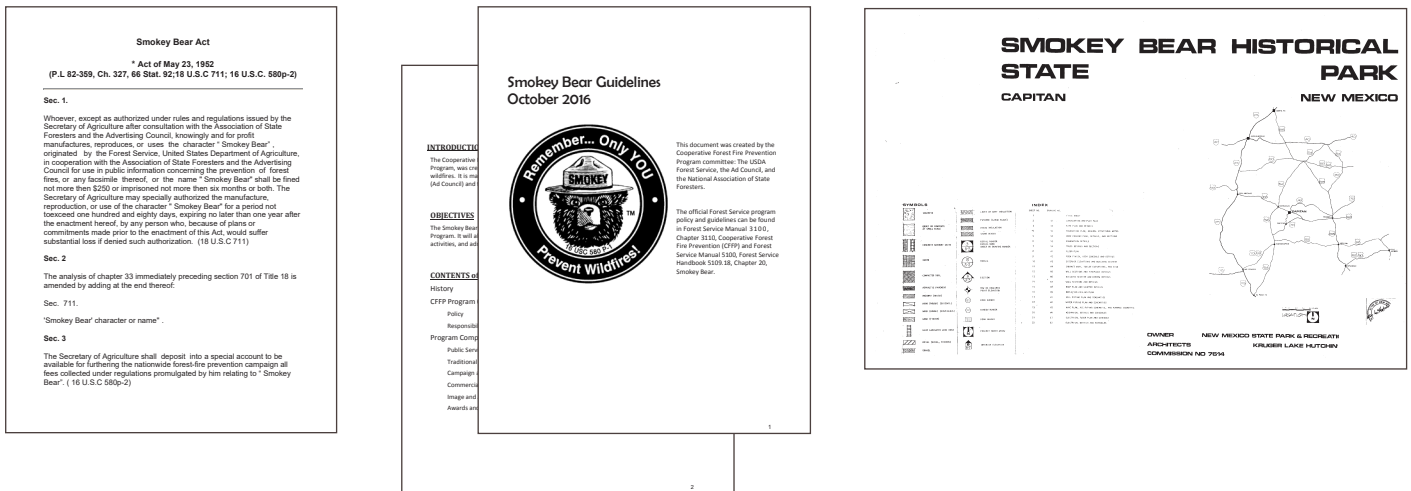
## FUN FACT!

*Smokey was paired with Goldie Bear, originally from the Magdalena Ranger District on the Cibola National Forest in NM, but they did not have any cubs. Consequently, the National Zoo introduced an orphaned cub from the Lincoln National Forest into their enclosure, and named him "Little Smokey." When Smokey retired in 1975, Little Smokey assumed his role and was renamed Smokey II. Little Smokey passed away in 1990.*

Image credits: <https://smokeybear.com/en/smokeys-history>

# Document Research

The Smokey Bear Historical Park and NM EMNRD State Parks Division provided the project team with various documents, plans, plats, brochures, and background materials to inform the development of this Framework Plan. A complete inventory of all documents is provided in the Appendix.



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# EXISTING CONDITIONS





# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Site Analysis Overview

Overall, the Park is well-organized and provides an enjoyable experience for visitors. The day-to-day maintenance is excellent, ensuring a clean and well-cared-for environment. However, ongoing reinvestment seems insufficient, as many features are worn or showing signs of aging. Key elements, such as the pond and irrigation systems, have exceeded their useful life, placing a strain on the limited maintenance staff.

The user experience is generally positive, though strategic interventions could enhance its impact and significance. The boardwalk is narrow and uneven in some areas, limiting circulation and potentially causing congestion. ADA compliance is adequate; however, certain elements, such as the amphitheater, lack accessible routes and accommodations. Negative views could be strategically screened to focus visitors' attention on exhibits better. Enhanced differentiation between ecosystems could be achieved with minor additions and reconfigurations. Smokey's gravesite requires minor upgrades. Seating could be more strategically placed throughout the site, and new rest and reflection areas could be created in transitional spaces to encourage more extended visits. Signage could be improved, with multiple signs of varying visibility scattered along the road frontage. A cohesive aesthetic and clearer indications of the Park's main features are needed for improved navigation.

The most significant opportunity for improving the visitor experience is the renovation of the Fallen Wildland Firefighter memorial. The space is limited, but it holds immense emotional value. The memorial, information signs, and names of the fallen firefighters are currently in too close proximity, hindering visitors from fully absorbing the emotional impact of the space. It's crucial

that all materials used in the renovation are of high quality, as they will help to imbue a sense of permanence and respect for the fallen. The proximity of the balloon resting site, located immediately after the firefighter memorial, is quite jarring. The balloon exhibit must be relocated to a more appropriate space in the park to maintain the solemnity of the memorial.





FIGURE 7. EXISTING SITE

**STRUCTURES**

1. Museum & Visitor Center
2. Gazebo
3. Waterfall
4. Smokey Bear Graveside
5. NM Wildland Fallen Firefighter
6. Balloon
7. Pond
8. Greenhouse
9. Red Shed
10. Large Shed
11. Amphitheater

**LEGEND**

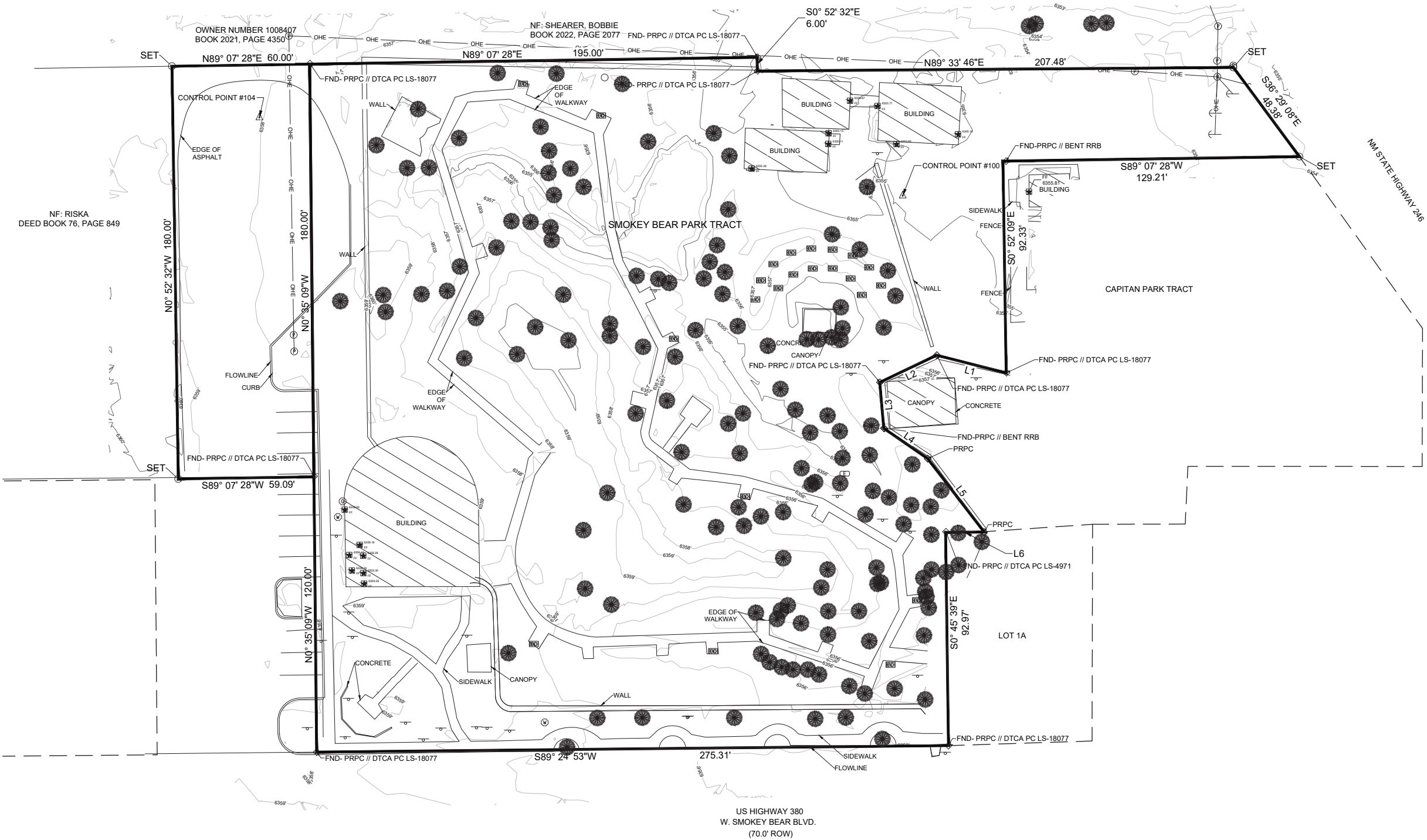
-  Interpretive Walking Path
-  Stone Perimeter Wall
-  SBHP Facilities
-  Outside Facilities
-  Pond





CSTi Surveying completed an updated boundary survey and topographic survey in March 2024. During the existing site document review, the team discovered that the state (NM State Parks) may have additional ownership of the western parcel on the property. The team requested verification of this property ownership. It confirmed the parcel on the northwestern portion of the site (tract 1008407) was part of the Smokey Bear Historical Tract and not another entity. For a complete survey, see the Appendix.

FIGURE 8. BOUNDARY SURVEY





## General Site Overview

The Park spans approximately 3.121 acres and features exhibits, memorials, burial sites, and a boardwalk. A log cabin/gift shop, owned by the Village of Capitan, is located on the site's east side, while the Smokey Bear Museum is on the west side. The log cabin/gift shop is also referred to as the "Smokey Bear Museum" by the Village of Capitan. The primary entrance to the historical Park is from the south, off Highway 380. Salado Creek borders the northern edge of the Park. There are two parking lots: one adjacent to Highway 380 and another on the west side near the museum. The site boasts diverse landscapes, seating areas, informational signage, exhibits, memorials, and scenic views ideal for social media. Visitors can check in at the museum and then explore the various landscapes within the main site.

While the Park is generally well-maintained with no visible litter, there is a pressing need for slope stabilization along the northern edge near the creek. The absence of erosion or drainage issues is a positive sign. However, it's important to note that while day-to-day maintenance is in good hands, the Park's long-term investment and annual maintenance have been less of a priority. The irrigation system's efficiency and functionality may need further improvements to meet the desired standard. The following observations were made during several visits to the Park during the months of September and October 2023:



## PARKING AREAS

Approximately 20-30 standard parking spaces are located along Smokey Bear Blvd., with an additional 10-15 spaces on the west side of the property. Staff have indicated a need for a designated bus and large vehicle drop-off zone to accommodate larger visiting groups. Besides the bus drop-off, the current parking capacity is generally considered adequate. During peak visitation periods, which occur once or twice a year, visitors may need to park further away and walk to the site.

There is one marked accessible parking space, but the current number and types of spaces do not meet code requirements. Additional accessible spaces, including a van-accessible space with proper loading zones, are necessary. Visitors frequently use the south parking area to access the Village of Capitan gift shop, and the current parking capacity is deemed sufficient for current visitation levels. The west parking area is closest to the museum.

Although the asphalt shows signs of wear, it remains in adequate condition. The west parking lot features a couple of tree islands, one of which has a large tree providing shade. The south parking lot lacks tree islands, but cars receive some shade from the existing trees in the Park. Both parking lots have reserved accessible parking spaces, offering convenient access to the museum and gift shop. However, these





spaces require proper striping. Additionally, the west parking lot has grading issues, resulting in stagnant water accumulation in certain areas.

### ACCESSIBILITY

Compliance with current ADA requirements remains insufficient. Although efforts have been made to enhance facility accessibility, the methods employed are outdated, and in some cases, the accessible path does not lead to an accessible feature. Specific ADA access issues include:

- *Accessible parking is available in the west lot leading to the museum. However, while the path to the museum is accessible, the adjacent shade structures with benches present several issues. There is no accessible sidewalk between the parking area and the shade structures.*
- *Additionally, there is inadequate maneuvering space around the structures, and the benches are not designed to accommodate wheelchair users.*
- *Moreover, the overall number of accessible parking spots appears inadequate for the anticipated number of visitors.*
- *A boardwalk is provided through the exhibits and memorials. Although designated as accessible, the boardwalk fails to meet current standards due to an uneven surface and insufficient width. Some site furnishings are not located along accessible routes, further complicating access for individuals with disabilities.*
- *Certain routes made of bark mulch are marked as accessible. However, the use of mulch as the surfacing material does not meet accessibility standards, undermining their effectiveness.*





## BOARDWALK

The Park features an 850-foot boardwalk connecting seven distinct life zones. Initially constructed in 1994 and reconstructed in 2002, the boardwalk utilizes 1" x 6" composite boards supported by 4" x 4" pressure-treated runners.

- Routine wear and tear have led to warped treads and deteriorating runners, resulting in uneven surfaces and potential trip hazards. Additionally, a sprinkler system beneath the boardwalk introduces further complications. Decks adjacent to the boardwalk include wooden handrails that appear well-maintained.
- While the boardwalk is still functional, the uneven surfaces pose significant trip hazards that need immediate attention. The rusted metal edging, showing signs of deterioration in multiple areas, requires urgent replacement to ensure both safety and visual appeal. The discontinuity of the edging along the paths results in gaps, which further contribute to tripping hazards.



## SITE FURNISHINGS & GROUND PLANE

- One of the Park's exit points features a revolving door, which is restrictive and outdated. It is recommended that it be replaced with a modern, more accommodating alternative.
- The Park contains numerous benches, tables, and trash receptacles, generally in good condition. These furnishings are made from various materials, including wood, galvanized metal, and vinyl coating, and are distributed throughout the site. However, most furnishings are placed in grass or bark mulch, complicating mowing and exposing them to damage from irrigation spray and trimming operations. There are also a few furnishings located on the boardwalk.
- Benches around the amphitheater are in various states of repair, with some being





## SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK FRAMEWORK PLAN

*warped and not in optimal condition. Several electric poles are situated around the Park's periphery. Flagstone paths, lined with small boulders and set on a crusher fine base, present potential tripping hazards due to shifting and protruding flagstones, which should be addressed for safety.*

- *Two flagpoles in front of the museum are mounted on concrete bases. These flagpoles, currently deteriorating with noticeable paint chipping, have the potential to enhance the Park's aesthetics if repainted or refurbished.*
- *The Memorial for Fallen Firefighters is illuminated with down lighting, but the Park's interior lacks additional lighting.*

### UTILITIES

- *The village manages water and septic services, while electricity is supplied by the local provider, Otero Electric. The main museum has experienced recurring electrical issues, particularly with the older electrical box at the back of the building, which has suffered*



*multiple blown fuses.*

- *To ensure the smooth operation of the museum, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive survey to identify all utility systems. This will provide a clear understanding of the current situation and guide future actions.*

### SITE WALLS

- *The Park is enclosed by a rock wall constructed in the 1970s using concrete, native flagstone, and river rock. Built by inmate labor crews from Camp Sierra Blanca, the wall varies in height from 32 inches to over 60 inches and is approximately 30 inches wide at the base. The current height of the wall needs to provide adequate visual screening from adjacent activities surrounding the Park. The wall is topped with concrete caps designed for water shedding and repulsion.*
- *Several cracks have developed in the caps and the wall, necessitating repair. Minor repair work is required to maintain the overall condition of the side wall. Additionally, the section of the wall near the amphitheater requires capping.*

### PLANTINGS

The Park's planting design serves as an integral showcase of New Mexico's vegetative life zones, functioning as informative exhibits. While specific life zone displays thrive, others require additional attention to achieve optimal conditions. Key observations on the overall planting condition include:

- *The desert garden exhibits robust growth. The grassland display, with its potential for unique features, and the pine and aspen grove would benefit from additional plantings to enhance visual appeal and thematic representation.*
- *The pond habitat within the riparian life zone, a prominent attraction, is in need of our continued commitment. Enhancing its visual appeal and thematic alignment could*



be achieved by integrating various sizes of cobble and boulders to add depth. Additionally, introducing more riparian shrub plantings along the creek as accents would better convey the intended theme and enrich the visitor experience.

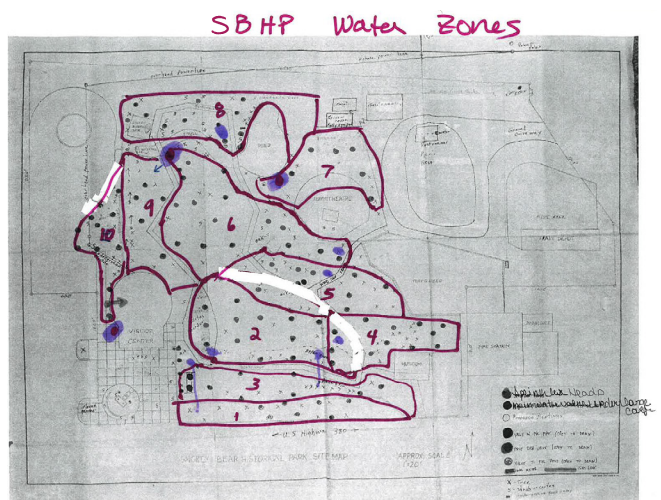
- The Park's tree composition comprises a diverse mix of evergreen and deciduous species, predominantly in good health. However, many trees are mature, with several nearing the end of their natural lifespan. Numerous stumps from previously removed mature trees, one with an adjacent memorial plaque, are present.
- Shrubs in the front landscaping generally appear healthy, although some have declined and require replacement. Replenishing the bark mulch in the area would enhance appearance and support the health of surrounding plants.

## IRRIGATION

- Upon assuming Park management in 1992, the Forestry Division identified the sprinkler system as non-functional due to damage from a prescribed burn in the mid-1980s. Over the years, Park staff have replaced sections of the waterlines. In 2021, the Village of Capitan upgraded the main water line to accommodate Park requirements. Despite repairs conducted by Southwest Landscape in 2018, ongoing waterline leaks persist.
- The irrigation system's efficiency and functionality currently fall below-desired standards, evidenced by dry spots that may necessitate further improvements. According to anecdotal reports from staff, the system is aging, and comprehensive documentation mapping needs to be improved. Park staff rely on a hand-drawn sketch plan to identify water zones.
- Zone 4, adjacent to the Log Cabin, has been out of operation since May 2023. The system primarily consists of schedule 40 PVC, although pipe sizes vary, with some sections

utilizing electrical conduit instead.

- In the greenhouse's vicinity, water and electric lines are housed within the conduit, presenting a potential shock hazard for maintenance personnel. Tree roots have damaged several PVC waterlines.
- A thorough assessment of the waterlines and sprinkler system, including comprehensive mapping for future maintenance planning, is imperative.





## ENTRY SEQUENCE

The brown directional park sign, flagpoles, and landscape in front of the museum along Highway 380 welcome visitors arriving from the west and parking in the west lot. A Smokey Bear fire danger sign is located south of the museum, directing visitors to parking off Highway 380. An additional monument sign marks the Park's entrance at the southeast corner of the Park near the gift shop. A short concrete wall with a flagstone overlay faces the south entry parking lot by the gift shop. It features a small gap that suggests an entrance point is often mistaken for the main entry. Enhancing the circulation pattern could optimize visitor flow, directing them more effectively towards the museum while discouraging entry near the gift shop.

Streamlining and harmonizing the various signage elements is possible for a more cohesive entry experience. The existing short wall effectively guides visitors towards the west or east ends of the Park, providing visual cues into the Park's layout. However, a prominent landmark or clear wayfinding element is needed to ensure intuitive navigation.

Once inside the Park, there is no clear directional signage indicating where to start. The boardwalk leads visitors through exhibits, culminating at Smokey's burial site. While a wooden directional sign provides general guidance, improving upon a more distinct "grand entrance" would enhance the sense of arrival at this unique destination.





In a historical park like this one, the visitor experience is meticulously crafted to foster an emotional connection to the site. This is achieved through deliberate views, diverse spatial arrangements, and the aesthetic and tactile qualities of materials encountered.

Views are strategically planned to evoke a sense of discovery as visitors navigate corners and encounter surprises, whether through captivating architectural elements or well-curated exhibits. Thoughtfully designed vistas can transport visitors to unique settings. Spatial experiences should vary, alternating between expansive open areas and narrower pathways. Selecting appropriate construction materials enhances exhibit storytelling and subtly signals to visitors that they have arrived at a significant destination worth exploring.

Grade changes are leveraged strategically to reveal or conceal views into exhibits, adding an element of intrigue and exploration. These variations in elevation also highlight the distinct life zone exhibits. Transitioning from asphalt paths to brick plazas signifies entry into spaces of particular significance.



#### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AT THE PARK INCLUDE:**

- *The views are predominantly open, with multiple exhibits visible from a distance, diminishing the anticipation of what lies ahead around corners. More screening of maintenance areas needs to be done.*
- *The spatial experience needs more diversity, primarily consisting of a boardwalk with occasional bench bump-outs.*
- *The proximity of Smokey's resting place, the memorial for firefighters, and the Smokey balloon burial site may create overcrowding and detract from the intended contemplative atmosphere. Reevaluating their placement and exploring options for better spacing or separation could enhance the visitor experience.*
- *The existing visitor area materials do not align with the themes of each Interpretive Zone. While benches are available, enhancing these locations with attractions or features could encourage visitors to pause and explore further beyond mere rest. The variety of bench styles lacks thematic coherence across Interpretive Zones and throughout the Park.*



## WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

Signage and wayfinding issues are prevalent throughout the Park, affecting the interior and exterior of various facilities. In 2017, the Village of Capitan assumed control of a portion of the Park, primarily the playground and restrooms located east of the main campus. The Village also owns the original log cabin/gift shop (located east of the Park) and the train depot, which is undergoing extensive renovation and rehabilitation. This transition in ownership has contributed significantly to visitor confusion. The historical marker, positioned adjacent to the cabin, often leads visitors to mistakenly believe it is the museum. The cabin/gift shop operates without regular hours, leaving many guests not knowing when they are open.

The existing signage at the Park can be classified into four categories:

1. **Exhibit Information:** This includes plant identification, explanations of life zones, memorials, fire, and science ecology.
2. **Dedication Plaques:** Smaller plaques mounted on metal.
3. **Wayfinding:** Encompasses identification and directional signs, with signs within the Park mounted on metal and multiple signs on Highway 380 made of wood in varying styles, resulting in visual clutter and inconsistent visibility.
4. **Miscellaneous Signs:** Featuring nostalgic Smokey Bear campaign information. Additionally, there are a couple of wooden Smokey Bear statues on display.

All signage is provided exclusively in English, and QR codes or website links are not available for visitors seeking additional information. Some exhibit signs, printed and mounted on metal structures, are well-maintained and consistent in appearance. Smaller exhibit plaques and



dedication plaques, which are smaller, are also present.

Wayfinding signage within the Park is mounted on metal signs along Highway 380 and exhibits varying styles, leading to visual clutter and inconsistent visibility. To enhance overall Park wayfinding, a comprehensive wayfinding plan and signage update should be considered to create consistency and improve navigability. Smokey Bear's resting place is marked by an elegant plaque affixed to a large boulder and a nostalgic wooden sculpture of Smokey at the burial site.



## EXHIBIT - LIFE ZONES OF NEW MEXICO

The botanical garden exhibits in the Park showcase seven distinct Life Zones present in New Mexico. Each Life Zone is marked by an interpretive sign detailing commonly found trees, vegetation, wildlife, average temperatures, and annual precipitation. The seven Life Zones include the following:

### **LIFE ZONES**

- A. Chihuahuan Desert
- B. Grassland
- C. Piñon-Juniper Woodland
- D. Riparian Area
- E. Ponderosa Pine Forest
- F. Mixed Conifer Forest
- G. Spruce-Fir Subalpine Forest

The **Chihuahuan Desert** garden is thriving. In contrast, the Grassland exhibit lacks distinctive features.

The **Riparian Area** is a major attraction. To enhance its visual appeal, incorporating various sizes of cobble and boulders would add dimensionality. Additionally, introducing more riparian shrub plantings along the creek as accents would better convey the intended theme and enrich the overall experience.

Additional plantings would significantly enhance the **Ponderosa Pine Forest** and **Mixed Conifer Forest** visual appeal and thematic representation. The **Spruce-Fir Subalpine Forest** could be improved with additional shrub plantings and forbs, such as wildflowers, to represent the higher life zone better.

Overall, the Life Zone could be enhanced with visual cues of separation through material transitions or strategic plantings, better-informing visitors of the transitions between each zone.





### SMOKEY'S RESTING PLACE

The Park, established in 1976 to honor the memory of the iconic Smokey Bear, holds significant historical value. The most notable feature of the Park, Smokey's Resting Place, is marked by a large boulder with a plaque, a wooden Smokey Bear cub sculpture climbing a tree trunk, and a larger interpretive panel.

Smokey's grave is encircled by a low rock and cement mortar wall, which is in fair condition but requires minor repairs.

The viewshed behind Smokey's grave lacks visual separation and screening from neighboring activities to the west of the Park. This absence detracts from the intimate experience and quiet moment of reverence and contemplation visitors should have at Smokey's gravesite, highlighting the need for immediate intervention.

The area lacks seating, which would provide visitors with comfortable accommodation to stay longer at the site and encourage reflection.

A small informational plant panel on the lower left rock wall at the grave site also detracts from the visitor's experience after reading the plaque, and a larger interpretive panel honoring Smokey Bear.

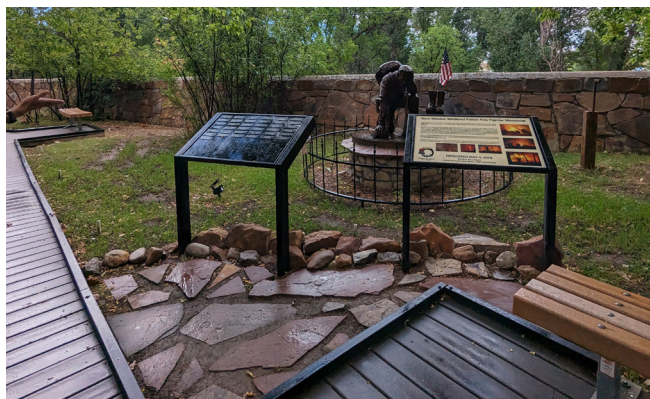




## NEW MEXICO WILDLAND FALLEN FIRE FIGHTER MEMORIAL

Located on the north side of the Park, the New Mexico Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial honors more than 30 wildland firefighters who have lost their lives while fighting wildfires in New Mexico. Matt Glenn, owner of Big Statues, LLC., created the bronze statue in Provo, Utah, and dedicated it on May 4, 2019.

- *The space is limited, and the memorial, information signs, and names of the fallen firefighters are too close together. These elements should be organized sequentially, allowing visitors to better absorb the emotional impact of the space.*
- *Two metal information panels are positioned further away from the boardwalk, creating accessibility issues for visitors with mobility challenges who want to read the panels closely. The most challenging sign to access is the most significant panel with the names of the wildland fallen firefighters.*
- *The bench at the memorial encourages visitors to walk in the direction opposite the memorial, which can detract from the experience. The existing materials at the memorial are in good condition, a testament to their quality and durability. As we consider future improvements, it is crucial that any new materials added match this standard. High-quality materials not only ensure the longevity of the memorial but also imbue a sense of permanence, a fitting tribute to the fallen firefighters.*
- *The balloon's resting site, located immediately after the firefighter memorial, is quite jarring. This close proximity between Smokey's resting place, the memorial, and the burial site of the Smokey balloon can create a sense of overcrowding and detract from the intended contemplative atmosphere of these areas. It may be beneficial to reevaluate their placement and consider options for better spacing or separation to enhance the overall visitor experience.*
- *One notable absence at the memorial is a*



*permanent, lighted flagpole. Such a feature would allow for a flag to be posted at half-staff, a solemn gesture of respect and remembrance for the fallen firefighters. This addition would further enhance the reverence and significance of the memorial.*



## RESTING PLACE OF THE FIRST SMOKEY BEAR BALLOON

The Smokey Bear balloon burial site is immediately east of and adjacent to the NM Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial. Currently, no designated path leads to the Smokey Bear balloon burial site. Staff have suggested relocating the interpretive sign regarding the Smokey Bear balloon near the wrought-iron fence at the Park's rear. A designated path or walkway to the Smokey Bear balloon burial site is also lacking. Consideration should be given to relocating the balloon to a less crowded area of the Park, away from the prominent Fallen Firefighter Memorial and Smokey Bear Gravesite, to improve spatial organization and visitor experience.

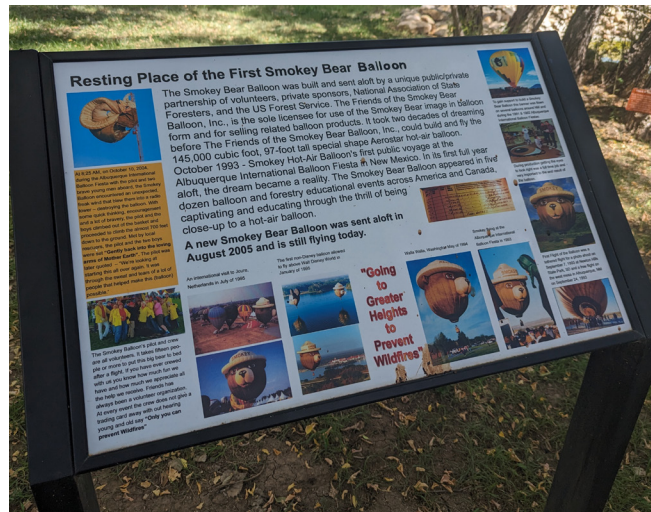
## POND & STREAM

The riparian zone has an artificial aquatic feature consisting of a 20' x 60' pond, a waterfall, and a 100' streambed. A 6" pump facilitates water recirculation from the pond to the waterfall and through the streambed. This large pond, central to the site, is home to over 100 fish but suffers from significant algae growth.

According to staff, YCC crews replaced the pond and streambed liners in 2012. However, the pond's 60 mil rubber Firestone liner has incurred multiple tears, exacerbating water loss and further intensified by high summer and warm season evaporation rates.



Waterfall feature



Balloon resting place



Pond



## AMPHITHEATER & SHADE STRUCTURE

The amphitheater is an outdoor gathering place located south of the greenhouse and east of the pond. It was constructed in 1997 as part of an Eagle Scout project. It can seat roughly 70 people.

The location is not fully accessible and lacks access pathways or site lighting, which the staff expressed has limited them to daytime activities. The stage in the amphitheater is a 10' x 14' concrete slab covered by a metal roof.

The shade structure, which serves as a stage, is currently in good condition. However, there is potential for it to be expanded and enhanced with integrated lighting, sound, and access to electricity. The acoustics are acceptable, but the site could greatly benefit from an acoustic study, paving the way for a more immersive experience for the audience.

A small gazebo is located at the museum's south entrance within the xeriscape/butterfly gardens in the front.

The gazebo, primarily constructed of wood with a metal covering on the northern side of the gabled roof, is a charming addition to the museum's xeriscape/butterfly gardens. While there are some signs of wear on the wood in several locations,

the gazebo is structurally sound and fully usable, providing a peaceful retreat for visitors.

There are two benches under the gazebo shade structure, both in working condition. The flagstone paving on the ground under the gazebo presents an accessibility challenge.



*Amphitheater Seating*



*Amphitheater Stage*



*Front Gazebo Looking East*



*Amphitheater Looking South*



## Architectural Overview

### ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

The site encompasses five structures, including the main museum, owned and operated by the Park. A series of raised walkways, or “boardwalks,” constructed from composite decking, connect the various site programs. Key built site features include Smokey’s grave and the NM Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial, both at the park’s northern end. These memorials are well-maintained and offer adequate shade and accessibility. The Wildland Fallen Firefighter Memorial, dedicated on May 4, 2019, honors more than 30 wildland firefighters who have lost their lives fighting wildfires in New Mexico. This memorial includes a bronze statue created by Matt Glenn, owner of Big Statues, LLC., in Provo, Utah.

Notably, the site also houses a unique Smokey balloon memorial, located slightly off the main path. Although currently unmarked, this memorial is a significant addition to the park’s unique features.

### BUILDING ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is another issue park wide. While guests are offered a comfortable, safe experience, many portions (i.e. restrooms, walkways, parking, etc. ) do not meet current standards. Other structures on site are meant to serve school groups and other public events but, again, are not up to code when it comes to accessibility. All walkways are not accessible, the greenhouse is not accessible, the amphitheater is not accessible, etc.



Accessibility remains a significant issue throughout the park. Although guests are provided a generally comfortable and safe experience, many areas, such as restrooms, walkways, and parking facilities, do not meet current accessibility standards. Additionally, structures intended for school groups and public events are not up to code regarding accessibility. Several areas, including specific walkways, the greenhouse, and the amphitheater, are not accessible.

Regarding maintenance and utilities, the park is functional, but staff have raised concerns about several ongoing issues:

- *Insufficient storage for archived artifacts,*
- *Inadequate maintenance vehicle storage,*
- *Poor thermal comfort in maintenance buildings,*
- *Obstructed access for exiting and entering the museum back-of-house/offices.*

Some improvements have been made, such as installing a new roof and a roof ladder on the main museum. Staff report that all upgrades thus far have been successful.



## OVERALL COMMENTS

The current Smokey Bear campus comprises five structures that are currently operational but require extensive upgrades to meet current code and safety standards. While each building functions independently, there is a need for improved connectivity and organizational relationships among them. One advantage of the site is its ample space, allowing for reorganization and substantial upgrades.

Maintaining operational continuity during proposed improvements is crucial for visitor and staff safety. Therefore, careful logistical phasing is essential to ensure the facility remains functional throughout construction. Implementing a strategic phasing plan is imperative to facilitate safe and efficient upgrades while the campus continues to operate.

## A&E CHALLENGES

Significant challenges for the Architecture & Engineering (A&E) team include but are not limited to the following:

- *Phasing within the existing, active campus,*
- *Navigating the various jurisdictions and stakeholders involved in the site and its adjacent amenities (i.e., parking),*
- *Respecting the history and nostalgia felt by the community is a core commitment of the A&E team, while simultaneously modernizing the facility to attract the next generation,*
- *Collaborating the existing and proposed structures with the overall site/landscape to create a seamless campus plan.*





Museum Conditions

MUSEUM EXTERIOR

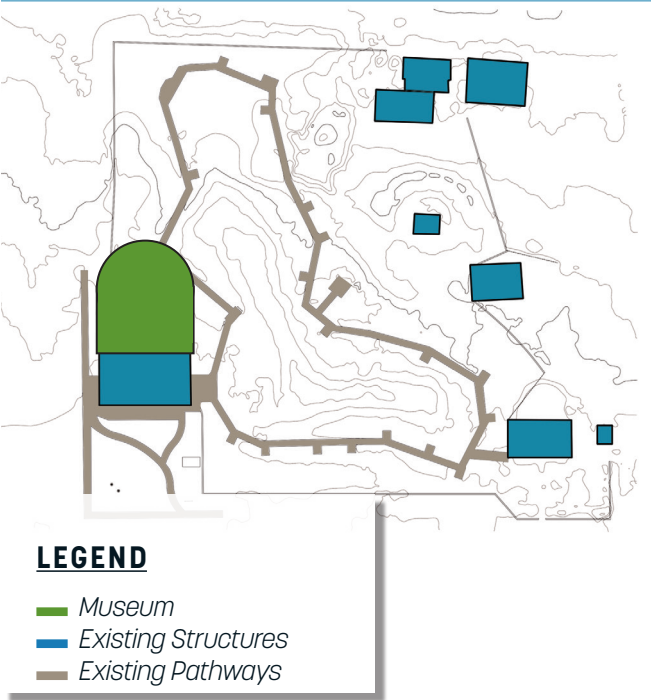
The Smokey Bear campus was acquired through community donations, consolidating multiple pre-existing properties. The current challenge lies in ensuring effective signage due to diverse ownership and insufficient wayfinding, which leads to visitor disorientation. Installing clear building signage at the museum’s main entrance is essential. The historical marker is positioned eastward, outside the cabin/gift shop. Visitors often unintentionally enter the museum from its east side or bypass it altogether to access the Park via the eastern gate, attributed to its symmetrical layout and lack of directional signage.

Despite stucco overlaying the original wood cladding, the structure remains satisfactory. Recent improvements include a new roof installation, a fresh coping cap, overflow



drain lines, and a roof access ladder. Facade penetrations are minimal, restricted to the primary storefronts at the east and west entrances and the southern glazed wall, without additional openings. Perimeter drainage functions adequately without any apparent damage, except for leakage observed in the glass solar wall at the entry/south elevation.

FIGURE 9. LOCATION





## MUSEUM INTERIOR

The museum interior is functional but outdated, lacking compliance with current accessibility and safety standards. The floor plan requires optimization for efficiency and modern museum requirements, including necessary upgrades to the lighting system.

Upon entry, visitors encounter an open-air vestibule leading to a temporary exhibit wall that redirects them to the main reception/check-in desk. Initially, the main lobby was devoid of exhibitry. It featured expansive masonry walls and columns functioning as a Trombe wall, capturing heat from large south-facing glass walls and radiating it into the space. Modifications have included the removal of an existing fireplace and recessed seating pit to accommodate new exhibit installations. The south-facing glazing wall, now blocked by a significant exhibit partition, no longer serves its original purpose and has been repurposed for displays despite ongoing leakage issues.

Security throughout the facility relies solely on lock and key mechanisms without access controls. The indoor theater room is in satisfactory condition but would benefit from updated finishes and improved acoustic isolation from adjacent spaces. Its size may render the secondary hall/entry optional.

The main exhibit hall, curving around the museum's rear, is compact and requires enhancements to accommodate the existing collection. While the curved layout is conducive to museum exhibitry, protrusions of some exhibits exceeding 4" into circulation paths pose a potential concern. Additional miscellaneous deficiencies include:

- *No walk-off mats'*
- *The reception counter is 36" AFF (too tall to meet accessibility standards),*
- *Lack of room signage,*

- *Lack of exit signage,*
- *No panic hardware,*
- *Unknown where the Sanitary Sewer clean-outs are located,*
- *Janitor Closet - The shut-off to the women's restroom needs to be replaced,*
- *The Janitor Closet needs several drywall repairs,*
- *Offices are cold,*
- *Not sprinklered (would need a full code analysis),*
- *No railings in the theater room,*
- *No tamper-proof outlets,*
- *No ADA-accommodated seating in the theater.*



*South, Glass Wall*



*Main Exhibit Space*



*Lobby / Exhibit Space*



## ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility presents significant challenges as many paths and spaces within the facility currently do not comply with prevailing codes. Accessible parking provisions are insufficient, and while the entry pathway appears to be accessible, issues arise at the main welcome desk, where the counter lacks accessibility features. The museum features ample clear pathways without stairs or ramps, characteristic of its single-story design.

While a water fountain is available, it does not meet accessibility standards due to mounting height issues. Additionally, the restroom facilities fail to meet various accessibility code requirements, including mounting heights, stall dimensions, door hardware functionality, grab bar placements, and clearance standards. A comprehensive code analysis is necessary to assess compliance regarding fixture quantities.

## LIFE SAFETY / FIRE

Several critical life safety issues have been identified, with the primary concern being inadequate exiting signage. The current painted signage is ambiguous and could pose a safety hazard during emergencies.

Additional issues relate to obstructed floor areas in work zones. The office layout is congested, with equipment obstructing exit paths.

Furthermore, the facility lacks sprinkler systems. Although several smoke detectors are in place, a thorough code analysis is required to ascertain whether additional detectors are required to meet compliance standards.

## SYSTEMS

Structurally, all buildings on the campus are in sound condition, with no immediate life safety



*Typical Restroom*



*Existing Exit Signage*



*Reception / Check-In Desk*

issues identified. However, it is recommended that a licensed structural engineer perform a thorough analysis before any renovation or construction activities commence.

The HVAC systems, replaced in 2011, are generally in good working order. The museum's unconventional layout has resulted in operational challenges, particularly concerning access to the



Mechanical Room, where the furnace, electrical panels, and water heater are located. Staff must pass through the Men's restroom, which complicates maintenance and access. In addition to the previously mentioned electrical concerns, the mechanical room, which is also utilized for storage, does not meet the required electrical clearances. Furthermore, tamper-proof outlets are absent throughout the facility, posing a safety risk.

While the facility is relatively new and asbestos concerns are minimized, a comprehensive investigation should precede any renovation or construction to assess the need for asbestos abatement.

## Museum Recommendations

Structurally, the building is in good, working condition following recent roof replacement and drainage upgrades, ensuring its durability for another 20+ years. However, the current floor plan presents logistical inefficiencies and falls short of modern safety and accessibility standards.

### To address immediate needs and enhance visitor experience:

- Upgrade exit signage, exiting hardware, restroom accessories, finishes, and lighting.
- Conduct a circulation and wayfinding study to optimize signage placement and guide visitors through the park effectively, ensuring clear paths and sequencing of experiences.

### Specific recommendations for the main museum building:

- Install building and directional signage to clearly mark the entry point.
- Direct visitors from the reception desk to a theater for a 15-minute introductory video on the site's history and future plans.
- Guide visitors through the gallery to explore current museum collections.
- Facilitate seamless transitions as visitors exit



Furnace



Electrical Panel in Mechanical Room

*the museum to explore outdoor attractions such as Smokey's grave via well-defined walking paths.*

### Longer-term strategies should include:

- Consider a comprehensive remodel or potential replacement of the museum building to better align with future goals and operational needs.
- Address current deficiencies in public spaces, including educational areas and accessible restrooms, to expand outreach and educational capabilities.
- Improve private, back-of-house facilities such as additional office space, work areas, storage for collections, and a break room to enhance operational efficiency and support staff needs.
- Solicit a comprehensive exhibit study to integrate the NM Forestry Division's mission with more interactive exhibits as well as the updated typical static display panels.

A phased long-term plan is recommended to integrate these enhancements systematically and enhance the overall functionality of the campus.



## Out-Buildings Conditions

### GREENHOUSE

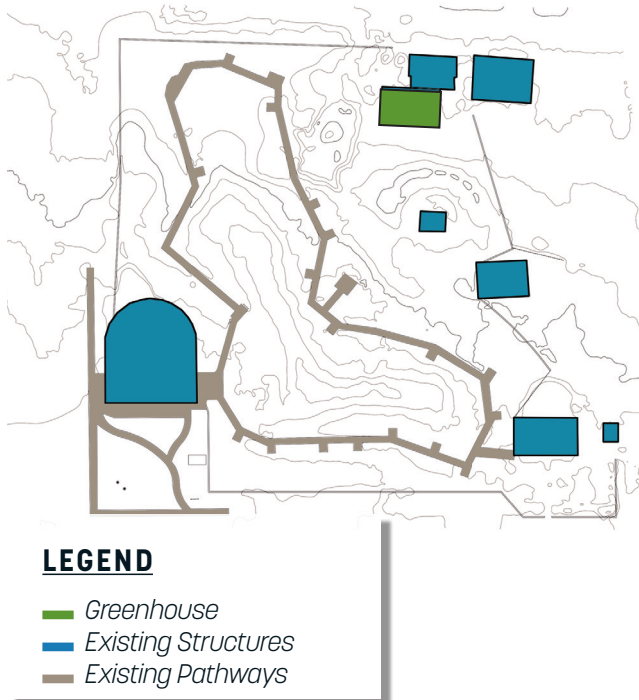
The existing greenhouse building is situated on the northeast corner of the campus, adjacent to the shop, garage, and pond, and was erected in 2016 to support seeding and reforestation programs, emphasizing outreach and propagation efforts. However, its utility has been limited by the absence of a refrigerator for seedling propagation, relegating it primarily to educational purposes. Plans prioritize further development as an educational center, deemed adequate in size by current staff assessments.

Accessibility issues are prominent, as there is no designated accessible route to the greenhouse, rendering the facility inaccessible. While a small, accessible concrete pathway exists within, approximately 80% of the flooring comprises loose gravel, failing to meet code standards. Additionally, proper storage for chemicals and tools is lacking, necessitating a compliant, lockable storage solution to safeguard potentially

hazardous materials in proximity to children. Recent upgrades to the heating and evaporative cooling systems have enhanced interior comfort. However, concerns persist with the exterior structure, which remains in good condition and is composed of steel poles and plexiglass panels. Operable openings for swamp coolers pose safety risks due to their placement below allowable head height and sharp metal edges, warranting attention to mitigate potential hazards.



**FIGURE 10. LOCATION**





## SHOP BUILDING

The shop building, situated north of the greenhouse, is a shed structure that serves dual roles as a workshop and storage facility for maintenance equipment and tools. Staff indicated that it meets current size requirements, though additional space would accommodate storage of larger equipment, such as mowers.

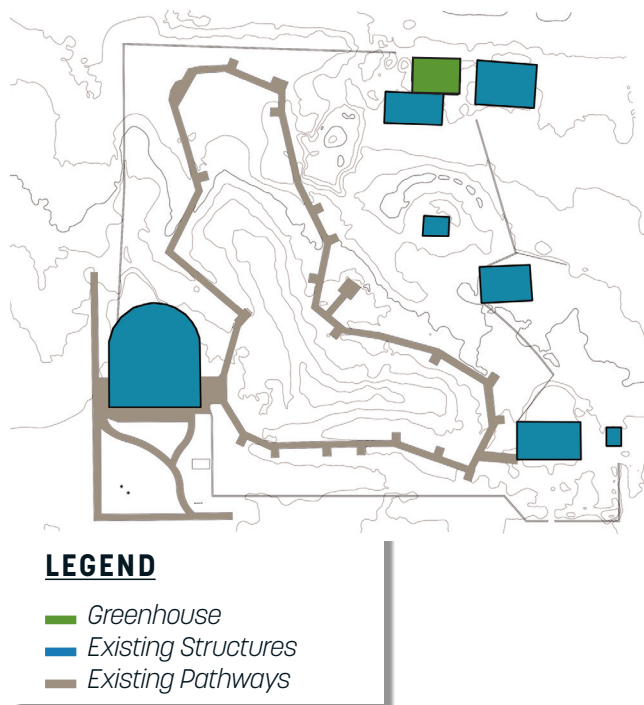
Maintenance operations rely on push mowers due to raised "boardwalks" and inadequate storage for more efficient machinery like a Gater. This setup limits operational efficiency.

During winter, the shop's lack of insulation or active HVAC results in uncomfortably cool temperatures, impacting usability.

Its central placement within the campus layout facilitates convenient access for staff to both the site and the adjacent garage, optimizing operational efficiency.



**FIGURE 11. SHOP LOCATION**





## GARAGE| "TAN SHED"

The garage, known as the "tan shed," currently serves as a general storage facility for the entire campus, accommodating various items but not vehicles or equipment. Due to the volume of stored materials and the limited size of the garage door opening, the staff's Ford truck cannot be housed inside.

The main Smokey Museum lacks sufficient space for the entire collection, necessitating the use of the "tan shed" for back-of-house archival storage. However, the building lacks insulation and is unsuitable for storing archival or museum items, exposing them to potential damage from extreme temperatures—heat in summer and low winter temperatures.

Furthermore, the garage suffers from a significant roof leak, which threatens stored materials, exhibits, and equipment and could lead to damage or deterioration.

**FIGURE 12. LOCATION**



### LEGEND

- Tan Shed
- Existing Structures
- Existing Pathways



*Garage - Northwest Corner*



*Garage - Interior / Storage*



*Garage - Southeast Corner*



## Out-Buildings Recommendations

Structurally, all out-buildings on the campus are in good working condition, showing no signs of failure or damage. They are well-maintained and functioning correctly, without the immediate need to expand or renovate.

As part of the museum's long-term strategy, there is an opportunity to enhance storage and archival capacities within the main building, potentially relocating archives from the Garage to free up space for tool and vehicle storage, addressing noted deficiencies highlighted by staff. Specific considerations for each building include:

- **Garage:** *Currently used for general storage due to housing vehicles or equipment limitations like the staff's Ford truck. Plans may involve relocating archives to optimize space for improved tool and vehicle storage. The building lacks insulation and suffers from a significant roof leak, impacting its suitability for archival storage.*
- **Shop:** *Despite being undersized, there are no immediate plans for expansion. However, utilizing additional space from the Garage could alleviate storage constraints. Consideration should also be given to installing a mini-split or alternative heating/cooling unit to enhance year-round comfort for staff.*
- **Greenhouse:** *Functioning adequately, with recommended adjustments including securing sharp swamp cooler coverings, installing a lockable storage cabinet for chemicals and hazardous materials, and incorporating a refrigerator unit to support ongoing reforestation efforts.*

These adjustments align with enhancing operational efficiencies and maintaining functional integrity across campus buildings.





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# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT





# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

## Outreach Summary

Throughout the project, Pland Collaborative facilitated outreach with tiered stakeholder groups. The Smokey Bear Historical Park staff, New Mexico State Parks staff, New Mexico Forestry Division staff, and project stakeholders participated and provided input on programming needs for the Framework Plan. The engagement included stakeholder meetings, visioning sessions, and a survey. Feedback revealed new insights into the existing challenges and potential opportunities for future development and improvements. Details on the tiered stakeholder groups and outcomes from the meetings are outlined in the following sections.

## Stakeholders Tiers

Throughout the project duration, the design team engaged with Smokey Bear Historical Park staff, NM State Parks Division personnel, and various tiers of public stakeholders. During the initial planning stages, the SBHP Project Manager and design team collaborated to compile a

stakeholder list and categorized them into three (3) tiers to streamline outreach efforts.

**Tier 1** stakeholders were identified as active partners involved in the daily and long-term planning, operations, events, and activities of the Park. This tier also encompassed local-level stakeholders and public interest groups closely associated with Smokey Bear Historical Park or located in the Park's regional vicinity. Outreach efforts for Tier 1 included engagement with staff from NM EMNRD Forestry Division and State Parks Division, local governing bodies from the Village of Capitan and Lincoln County, as well as stakeholders from Smokey Bear Ranger District, Lincoln National Forest, Upper Hondo Soil & Water Conservation District, Ruidoso Tourism Agency, and Smokey Bear's Hometown Association.

**Tier 2** stakeholders comprised public interest groups at the state and tribal levels, such as the Mescalero Apache Tribe, Pueblo of Taos, Bureau of Land Management, NM Game and Fish, NM Department of Tourism, NM Outdoor Recreation Division, NM Historic Sites, NM Department of



*Visioning Session held at Capitan Village Hall in August 2023.*

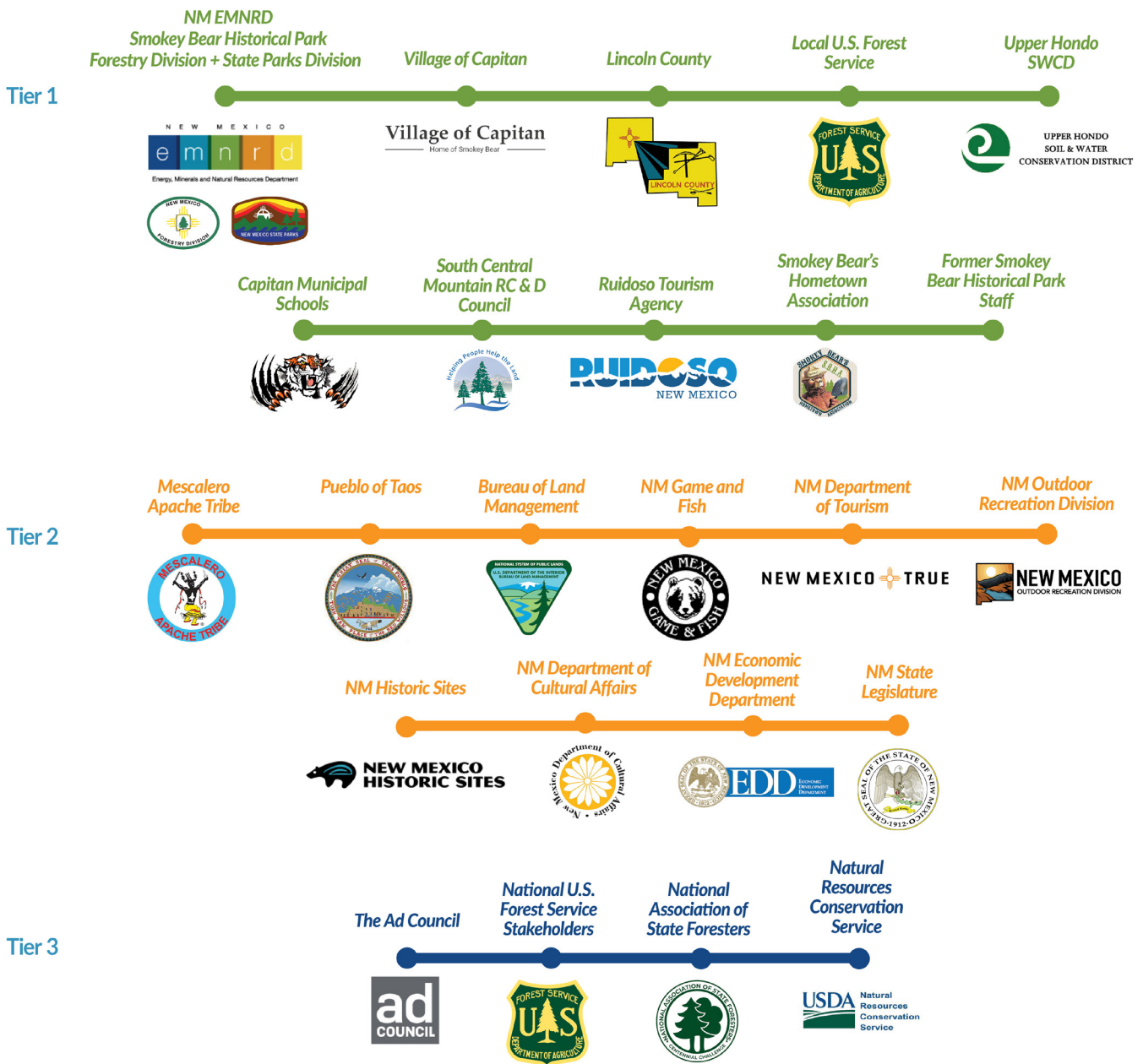


Cultural Affairs, NM Economic Development Department, and the NM State Legislature, among others.

**Tier 3** stakeholders included individuals and organizations at the national level, including

The Ad Council, National U.S. Forest Service stakeholders, National Association of State Foresters, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Complete lists for each tier of stakeholders are provided in the subsequent sections.

## STAKEHOLDER TIERS





**FIGURE 13. TIERED STAKEHOLDER LISTS**

## Smokey Bear Stakeholders List Tier #1

Tier	Organization	Department	Name	Type
1	Smokey Bear Historic Park	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	Mary Lavin, SBHP Manager	Client
1	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	Nick Smokovich, Capitan District Forester	Client
1	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	Lindsey Quam, Division Deputy Director	Client
1	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	NM EMNRD Forestry Division	George Ducker, PIO	Client
1	NM EMNRD State Parks Division	Design and Development	Colleen Baker, Bureau Chief, Design and Development	Client
1	NM EMNRD State Parks Division	Design and Development	Joseph (Joey) Fleming, Parks Planner	Client
1	NM EMNRD State Parks Division	Cabinet Secretary	Sarah Cottrell Propst, Cabinet Secretary	Client
1	Village of Capitan	Administration Office	Ron Lowrance, Mayor	Public
1	Village of Capitan	Administration Office	Al Cavazos, Village Clerk	Public
1	Village of Capitan	Village Fire Department / Parks and Rec Dept.	Kevin Kennedy, Capitan VFD Chief	Public
1	Lincoln County	Board of County Commissioners	Todd F Proctor, Chairman	County
1	Lincoln County	Board of County Commissioners	Jon F Crunk, Vice-Chairman	County
1	U.S. Forest Service	Smokey Bear Ranger District	Jennifer Thomas, District Ranger	Federal
1	U.S. Forest Service	Smokey Bear Ranger District	Joseph (Joe) Lara, Fire Prevention Technician	Federal
1	U.S. Forest Service	Lincoln National Forest	Amanda Fry, PIO	Federal
1	U.S. Forest Service	Lincoln National Forest	Ericka Luna, Supervisor's Office, Acting Forest Supervisor	Federal
1	Mescalero Apache Tribe	Division of Resource Management & Protection	Thora Padilla, Director	Tribe
1	Upper Hondo SWCD	-	Wanda Schmidt	Public
1	Upper Hondo SWCD	-	Judy Bock	Public
1	Capitan Municipal Schools	-	Vance Lee, Superintendent	Public
1	South Central Mt. RC & D	-	Laura Doth, Executive Director	Public
1	Ruidoso Tourism Agency	-	Kerry Gladden	Public
1	Smokey Bear's Hometown Association	Other Public Interest Stakeholders	Shirley Pavlovic	NPO
1	Former Capitan District Forester	Other Public Interest Stakeholders	Lynn Lovelace	Resident
1	Former SBHP Ranger	Other Public Interest Stakeholders	Rebecca Judd	Resident
1	Former SBHP Manager	Other Public Interest Stakeholders	Bennie Long	Resident
1	Former SBHP Manager	Other Public Interest Stakeholders	David Cunningham	Resident

## Smokey Bear Stakeholders List Tier #2

Tier	Organization	Department	Name	Type
2	NM Department of Cultural Affairs	Historic Sites Division	Kari M. Richards, MA, Regional Manager, Lincoln/Ft. Stanton Historic Sites	State
2	Bureau of Land Management	NM State Office	Jesse Vinson, Recreation Manager	Federal
2	NM Game and Fish	-	Andrew Gray, District Manager	Public
2	NM Tourism Department	Cabinet Secretary for Tourism Department	Jen Schroer, Cabinet Secretary for Tourism Department	State
2	NM Tourism Department	Tourism Development Division	Lancing Adams, Tourism Development Director	State
2	NM Tourism Department	Advertising/Marketing Division	Erin Ladd, Marketing Director	State
2	NM Outdoor Recreation Department	Outdoor Recreation Department	Carl Colonius, Outdoor Recreation Planner	State
2	NM Economic Development Department	Office of the Secretary	Jon Clark, Deputy Cabinet Secretary	State
2	State Senators	District 33 - Chaves, Lincoln, Otero Counties	William F. Burt, Senator	State
2	Advertising Partner	Lindmark Outdoor Media	Trent Lindmark	Other
2	NM Department of Transportation (DOT)	NM Department of Transportation (DOT)	Candace Barela	State



### Smokey Bear Stakeholders List Tier #2 Tribal Partners

Tier	Tribe	Department	Name	Type
2	Comanche Nation of Oklahoma	Administration	Chairman Mark Woommavovah	Tribe
2	Comanche Nation of Oklahoma	THPO	THPO: Ms. Martina Minthorn	Tribe
2	Comanche Nation of Oklahoma	Administration	NAGPRA Director: Mrs. Margie Murrow	Tribe
2	Pueblo of Isleta	Governor's Office	Governor Max Zuni	Tribe
2	Pueblo of Isleta	THPO	THPO: Dr. Henry Walt	Tribe
2	Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma	Administration	Chairman Lawrence SpottedBird	Tribe
2	Mescalero Apache Tribe	Administration	President Eddy Martinez	Tribe
2	Mescalero Apache Tribe	THPO	THPO: Ms. Holly Houghton	Tribe
2	White Mountain Apache Tribe	Administration	Chairman Kasey Velasquez	Tribe
2	White Mountain Apache Tribe	THPO	THPO: Mr. Mark Altaha	Tribe
2	Ysleta del Sur Pueblo	Governor's Office	Governor E. Michael Silvas, Silvas	Tribe
2	Taos Pueblo	Governor's Office	Governor Gary Lujan	Tribe

### Smokey Bear Stakeholders List Tier #3

Tier	Organization	Department	Name	Type
3	U.S. Forest Service	Wildfire Prevention and Community Mitigation	Maureen Brooks, Branch Chief	Federal
3	The Ad Council	The Ad Council	Amanda Kwong, Campaign Director	Federal
3	National Association of State Foresters	National Association of State Foresters	Sheridan Davis, Communications Director	Federal
3	Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)	USDA Federal conservation agency	Amanda Albright	Federal
3	Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)	USDA Federal conservation agency	Cutter Miles	Federal

## Meetings & Visioning Sessions

In the early stages of the project, Pland Collaborative conducted a series of stakeholder meetings and visioning sessions to gather feedback on the Framework Plan. Figure 13 shows all stakeholders who received personal invitations to participate in these sessions.

**Tier 1 Visioning Sessions** were held in person on August 2, 2023, at Capitan Village Hall and virtually on August 3, 2023. **Tier 2 Visioning Sessions** took place virtually on September 13, 2023, and September 18, 2023. The final **Tier 3 Visioning Sessions** were conducted on November 2, 2023. Attendees completed comment cards, provided feedback, and engaged in various programming workshops and visioning exercises at these sessions.

Additionally, the NM EMNRD State Parks Division Tribal Liaison engaged tribal stakeholders through formal letters sent on August 25,

2023. These letters invited Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations interested in projects in Lincoln County to participate in Tier 2 Visioning Sessions and contribute feedback via an online survey. Responses and outcomes from these meetings and surveys were pivotal in shaping the planning and design of proposed improvements detailed in the "Vision + Action Plan" within the Framework Plan. Detailed summaries for each session are available in subsequent sections.



## Survey Results

An online survey was open from early August through late October 2023. The survey was shared with stakeholders that were unable to attend a Visioning Session or virtual meeting. The survey received 10 total responses from different tiers of stakeholders. Questions asked respondents about their first Smokey Bear memory, program alignments related to the Smokey Bear "Compass," what challenges exist with the Park, and what opportunities could be included in the Framework Plan. The results for each of the questions are shown in the following pages.



## TIER 1 VISIONING SESSIONS

The Tier 1 Visioning Sessions revealed opportunities and constraints for the existing Smokey Bear Historical Park. **Note: The following are stakeholder recommendations and comments.**

**OPPORTUNITIES:** What are the most significant opportunities for the Smokey Bear Historic Park? What do you see as a unique opportunity for Smokey Bear?

### FACILITIES

- **Expansion for Museum and Archives:** Double the museum's footprint to address the need for additional space and ensure adequate storage and archive facilities.
- **Accessible Fire Tower:** Install a working fire tower in the Park's center that is ADA accessible to enhance the visitor experience and educational opportunities.
- **Enhanced Visibility and Building Expansion:** Increase the building's size and improve visibility from the road by expanding the structure, potentially adding a basement for additional working space. Utilize the space between flagpoles for this expansion.
- **Garden Redesign:** Revise the garden layout to mitigate outside noise and create a serene and peaceful atmosphere for visitors.
- **Weather Station Enhancement:** Upgrade with a weather station with heat infrared cameras to improve data collection and analysis capabilities. (Note: Stakeholder recommended adding a new weather station into the Park.)
- **Collaboration Opportunities:** Explore collaboration opportunities with fire tower enthusiasts, the Forest Service, Parks, and DCA to bring an old fire tower to the site, fostering partnerships and enhancing the Park's offerings.
- **Walking Trail Creation:** Develop a walking trail along Solado Arroyo, connecting the Park to the nearby school and providing recreational opportunities for visitors.

- **Prime Location:** Leverage the Park's prime location on Highway 380 to attract more visitors and increase visibility for educational and conservation initiatives.

### WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

- Opportunity for collaborative signage with NPS and memorial.

### PROGRAMMING

- **Emphasize Educational Signage:** Utilize informative signage to guide visitors through the Park and provide detailed information about wildfire prevention, property mitigation, and Smokey Bear's association with ecology and climate change.
- **Clarify Park Identity and Goals:** Determine whether the Park is primarily a "Smokey Bear Museum," a center for "Conservation," or focused on "Education/Outreach." Streamline programming accordingly to clarify the Park's mission.
- **Focus on Wildfire Prevention:** Prioritize efforts to prevent human-caused wildfires by incorporating Smokey Bear's story into youth camping programs and ensuring that all Forest Service staff know his message.
- **Update Technology:** Consider adding a Smokey Bear cam into the mountains near areas where wildfires are more prevalent to increase relevance. (Note: Stakeholder recommended adding a live wildlife camera feed at the Park.)
- **Create Multi-Generational Experiences:** Provide opportunities for multi-generational visits, such as maintaining a visitor book of past relatives and offering packages for hiking to Smokey Bear's gravesite and origin site.
- **Connect Habitat Needs to Narrative:** Tie exhibit narratives back to the story of Smokey Bear's Habitat needs to underscore the importance of wildfire prevention and conservation efforts. Consider Name Change: Explore renaming the Park "Smokey Bear Historical Park and Conservation Learning Center" to better reflect its focus on Smokey Bear's legacy and environmental education.

- **Family Experience:** provide a more factual history and representation of fire education and offer families a more holistic visitor experience as a unique educational destination.
- **Bookstore:** Consider integrating a bookstore or other retail component to allow visitors to obtain more knowledge through the available books at the front.

## **COLLECTIONS**

- **Extensive Collections:** art, history, memorabilia, a large volume of collections. Consider rotating exhibits with new collections.
- **Enhance Exhibits with Online Resources:** Create exhibits with clean messaging that encourage deeper exploration through QR codes linking to online resources. Ensure that exhibits cover various topics beyond just the science of fires.
- **Moving away from focusing on a “museum,”** we should consider creating a separate Smokey Bear Collections Museum.

## **SMOKEY IMAGE**

- **Unique Connection to New Mexico:** Smokey Bear’s Land of Enchantment

## **STAFFING**

- **Youth Collaboration:** Consider collaboration with local courts and re-establish youth program to invite younger volunteers.

## **RECREATIONAL CONNECTIONS**

- **Day Package Offer:** Consider offering a day package that includes safe and acceptable trails near the Park. Explore nearby trails, such as those at Fort Lone Tree, and collaborate on interpretive trails if there’s sufficient public interest.
- **Recreation Opportunities:** Explore pony recreation opportunities and connect trails to nearby recreational destinations like Fort Stanton, enhancing visitor experiences.
- **Smokey Bear Ranger Station:** To attract visitors and further promote awareness of wildfire prevention efforts, highlight the Smokey Bear

Ranger Station’s proximity, located a 20-30 minute drive away at Cedar Creek.

- **Trail Connectivity and Marketing:** Focus on connecting trails to nearby attractions and market them effectively to attract hikers, bikers, and other outdoor enthusiasts. Consider marketing efforts targeting motorcycle and classic car groups passing through the area during specific seasons.
- **Diverse Recreational Activities:** Promote a range of recreational activities available in the area, including equestrian activities at BLM land, nearby mountain biking trails, and lakes suitable for various outdoor pursuits.
- **Positioning as a Destination:** Leverage Ruidoso’s reputation as a destination to highlight the Park as a must-stop attraction, attracting travelers and tourists to the area.
- **Collaboration with Bus Tours:** Explore opportunities to collaborate with bus tour operators, particularly those touring Capitan on Sundays, to expand the Park’s visibility and potentially incorporate it into their tour programs.

## **WATER**

- **Water Restoration Opportunity:** At the base of the Capitan Mountains is the private Fort Lone Tree and two camps for youth. Consider a program collaboration with these recreational entities to highlight water restoration practices and reciprocal benefits from wildfire prevention strategies.



Comment board from Visioning Session #1



## MEMORIAL

- **Build Connection:** Strengthen the connection with the National Firefighter Memorial to enhance significance and recognition.
- **Promote:** Emphasize its role as a memorial, promoting its importance for honoring firefighters and others.
- **Destination:** Highlight that it is the sole memorial of its kind within the state, positioning it as a destination for families and visitors seeking to pay respects.

**CONSTRAINTS:** What are the biggest challenges with the Smokey Bear Historic Park? What are the constraints and limitations with Smokey Bear?

## FACILITIES

- **Office Space Constraints:** Address the Park's need for additional office space.
- **Limited Expansion Options:** Recognize that the Park has no room for expansion, necessitating creative solutions for facility improvements.
- **Acoustic and Circulation Issues:** Address poor acoustics within the museum and consider redesigning the obstructive wall in the front entry to improve circulation and modernize the space.

## COLLECTIONS:

- **Storage Facilities Needed:** Establish proper storage facilities for Park collections and consider hiring a Smokey Bear archivist and collections specialist to manage them effectively.
- Consider shifting to a Forestry Division program focus without the Museum.

## WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE:

- **Enhanced Signage:** Implement signage for the Wildland Firefighter Memorial and improve visibility during winter months to attract more visitors.
- **Improvement of Signage:** Revise and improve signage to reduce visitor confusion and misdirection, particularly regarding distinguishing the log cabin from the actual Park.

## STAFFING:

- **Recruitment Challenges:** Recognize difficulties recruiting staff due to housing issues and the high cost of living in Capitan.
- **Seasonal Staff and Housing:** Address the lack of seasonal Park staff and insufficient housing options.

## PROGRAMMING:

- **Ecological Education:** Focus programming on the habitat needs of black bears and relate it to Smokey Bear's story, emphasizing wildlife conservation and environmental education.
- **Adaptation to Current Issues:** Address the paradox of referencing Smokey Bear during the wildfire crisis and consider promoting messaging about wildlife issues in urban areas in collaboration with Game and Fish authorities.
- **Improved Information Sharing:** Implement strategies such as snapshots and signage to facilitate self-guided learning experiences for visitors.

## LOCATION:

- **Remote Location Challenges:** Recognize the challenges of the Park's remote location, including limited pass-through traffic and noise issues from nearby Mainstreet.

## MEMORIAL:

- **Underutilized Memorial:** Encourage the village to promote better and advertise the Firefighter Memorial and its connection to the Park. Establish a more distinct connection with the National Firefighter Memorial, as this is the only memorial within the State – a destination point for families and others.

## VISITORS:

- **Visitor Direction:** Address issues of directing visitors to other tourist locations instead of the Park, potentially through improved signage and promotional efforts.





## TIER 2 VISIONING SESSIONS

The Tier 2 Visioning Sessions revealed opportunities and constraints for Smokey Bear Historical Park, using a broader state-level lens to envision potential developments, connections, and improvements. **Note: The following are stakeholder recommendations and comments.**

**OPPORTUNITIES:** What are the most significant opportunities for the Smokey Bear Historic Park? What do you see as a unique opportunity for Smokey Bear?

### FACILITIES

- **Leverage Natural Landscape:** Capitalize on the Park's natural habitat to enhance landscaping and create a botanical garden-like atmosphere, emphasizing its uniqueness in the area.
- **Consider Fire Tower:** Explore the possibility of adding a fire tower or observation station to enhance visitor experiences and offer panoramic views of the surrounding landscape.
- **Enhance Visitor Experience:** Provide dining options, especially when the Park is not busy, and ensure clear directions to amenities like playgrounds and the log cabin.
- **Improved Accessibility:** Enhance accessibility by adding access points to attractions like the log cabin to accommodate all visitors.

### PROGRAMMING:

- **Family-Friendly Experience:** Offer a holistic experience that combines factual history with fire education, catering to families and providing a memorable visit.
- **Education and Destination:** The Park should continue to serve as an educational opportunity and establish itself as a must-visit destination, possibly by offering a bookstore with educational materials at the front.
- **Education Outreach:** Maintain engagement with school programs, revamp programs affected by COVID-19, and offer environmental education initiatives, including virtual tours accessible to schools anywhere.

- **Youth Engagement:** Establish a Junior Ranger station or youth engagement program, including a treasure hunt program with prizes, to encourage participation and learning among children.
- **Partnerships with Educational Institutions:** Foster partnerships with educational institutions like ENMU for programs such as the Kids College program.
- **Enhanced Connectivity:** Consider installing a live connection to the Park or a webcam to improve visitor experiences and provide virtual access.

### STAFFING:

- **Technical Support and Expansion:** Invest in technical support to expand outreach efforts and raise awareness of the Park's existence, potentially bringing in more visitors and supporters.

### RECREATIONAL CONNECTIONS:

- **Accommodate Recreational Activities:** To attract more visitors, consider accommodating popular recreational activities like biking, hiking, and disc golf at or near the Park.
- **Promote Nearby Attractions:** Promote nearby attractions and amenities like restaurants and observation decks to enhance visitors' overall experience.
- **Trail Connections:** Explore opportunities to connect with recreational trails in Ruidoso and Carrizozo, potentially through grant applications, to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities for visitors.

### LOCATION:

- **Capture Traffic to Ruidoso:** Explore ways to capture traffic heading to Ruidoso by promoting the Park as a stopover and linking it to nearby attractions like Ft Stanton and Lincoln.

### MARKETING:

- **Utilize Various Channels:** Use various marketing channels, including social media influencers

and partnerships with local tourism websites, to reach a broader audience and increase awareness of the Park.

- **Multi-State Advertising:** Advertise the SBHP on all Lindmark Outdoor Media digital billboards across five states, targeting travelers through Capitan and other destinations, increasing awareness, and attracting visitors.

### **VISITATION:**

- **Senior Visitor Day Trips:** Cater to senior visitors by offering day trips and experiences tailored to their interests and needs.

### **FUNDING**

- **Seeking Funding Opportunities:** Pursue funding opportunities such as the Outdoor Equity Fund and state funds through EMNRD to support Park operations and development.
- **Gift Shop:** Recognize the gift shop as a significant opportunity for revenue generation and funding capture, potentially through strategic partnerships or marketing initiatives.

### **WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE:**

- **Utilize Digital Billboards:** Leverage Lindmark Outdoor Media digital billboards to advertise upcoming events and promote the Smokey Bear Historical Park (SBHP).
- **Advertising Opportunities:** Explore options for printing ads and messages on digital billboards, potentially reaching a broad audience across multiple states.
- **Donated Billboard Space:** Consider utilizing Lindmark Outdoor Media's donated billboard space on 70 digital billboards across all states, enhancing visibility and engagement.
- **Event Promotion:** Utilize digital billboards to create countdown options and update them with upcoming events, maximizing promotional opportunities and visitor engagement.
- **Promotional Strategies:** Keep a static board up for a year and add smaller digital billboards in front of the Park to promote upcoming events, potentially at a reduced cost through donations.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

- **Local Partnerships:** Collaborate with non-profits or entities to support Park initiatives and engage with other regional destinations and attractions.
- **Media Engagement:** Utilize partnerships with news outlets to promote the Park and collaborate with organizations like the BLM Valley of Fire, Petroglyphs, and Fort Stanton to enhance visibility.
- **Chamber of Commerce Engagement:** Establish connections with local chambers of commerce, such as those in Carrizozo, and explore partnership opportunities with organizations like the Inspire Organization and Explora Museum for mutual benefit and promotion.

**CONSTRAINTS: What are the most significant challenges with the Smokey Bear Historic Park? What are the constraints and limitations of Smokey Bear?**

### **FACILITIES**

- **Boundary Limitations:** SBHP does not own the rear Park property, which leads to constraints and changes in Park development plans.
- **Limited Connectivity:** The Park recognizes the challenge of poor cell service, which hinders its ability to provide WiFi access to visitors.  
*Size Limitations:* Recognize the constraints imposed by the Park's size, which may impact development and expansion plans.
- **Ownership of Gift Shop:** Acknowledge that the gift shop is not owned by the SBHP, which may impact operations and revenue distribution.

### **COLLECTIONS & EXHIBITS**

- **Update Exhibits:** Address the need for updated exhibits by potentially incorporating technology like cell phones connected to exhibits for a more interactive experience.
- **Technical Outreach:** Increase technical outreach efforts to enhance educational opportunities and engage visitors effectively.



## **STAFFING:**

- **Limited Capacity:** Understand that the Park has limited staffing capacity, which may affect the scope of operations and programs offered.

## **PROGRAMMING:**

- **Historical Evolution of Smokey:** Offer educational programs on how Smokey Bear has evolved, including his influences from social media, Hollywood, and other sources.
- **Focus on Education:** Emphasize the need to tailor education programs to children seven and older, recognizing this age group's critical learning period and potential impact on conservation awareness.
- **Diversification of Visitor Population:** Aim to diversify the visitor population, with a particular emphasis on attracting and engaging youth, who could comprise up to 50% of visitors. This may involve developing programs and activities that appeal to younger audiences and promote conservation values.

## **RECREATIONAL CONNECTIONS:**

- **Space Limitations:** Recognize that the Park's size may limit the inclusion of popular activities like mountain biking and disc golf, potentially requiring creative solutions or alternative locations.

## **LOCATION:**

- **Limited Transportation Options:** Note the lack of direct connections to the Park via train or plane, which may affect visitor accessibility.

## **MARKETING:**

- **Shift from Print Materials:** Adapt marketing strategies to reflect the diminishing reach of print materials, exploring more effective digital channels to reach a broader audience.

## **WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE:**

- **Graphic Approval Process:** Note the lengthy approval process for signage graphics, which takes 3-4 months, according to Trent Lindmark

(Lindmark Outdoor Media). This delay can affect the timely implementation of signage and may require streamlining or revising the approval process for efficiency.

## **SMOKEY IMAGE:**

- **Modernization Opportunities:** Consider modernizing the Park's image and offerings to reflect Smokey Bear's status as a national and international symbol, potentially incorporating more interactive elements to engage visitors.
- **Fire Suppression History:** Acknowledge the historical context of fire suppression and its implications for the local forest, potentially informing educational programming and conservation efforts.

## TIER 3 VISIONING SESSIONS

The Tier 3 Visioning Sessions revealed opportunities and constraints for the Smokey Bear Historical Park while focusing on a national-level lens to envision potential connections and program improvements for the Park. **Note: The following are stakeholder recommendations and comments.**

### What is your vision for Smokey Bear?

## **THE AD COUNCIL**

- Smokey Bear is the longest-running PSA campaign. Smokey's message has stayed consistent, and that is what is special about him. Hold this same vision for the next 30 years.
- Research who needs to hear his message, and through research, identify how this message needs to be delivered.
- The perfect messenger is Smokey; people trust him.
- He is staying true to his legacy, staying consistent, and keeping his message current. His voice is consistent.
- The audience is becoming more diverse, and keeping that in mind.

## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS**

- **Smokey's Image:** *Smokey should be everyone's household name. That is not the case for some people, so he should increase his reach. It speaks to his success; consistency has kept him as a public image.*
- **Website Marketing:** *The website is a perfect location to maintain continuity.*
- **Accessibility:** *Consider meeting people where they are at with language or enhancing accessibility. I want to keep him "hip and cool" now.*
- **Regional Language Connections:** *SBHP is located 2-3 hours from the Mexico border. Consider having visitors from Mexico come to the Park. They have recently translated their SBHP brochure into Spanish. Smokeybear.com is in both languages.*
- **Other Accessibility:** *Provide resources for the visually impaired and blind – consider looking into having signs be tactical.*

**OPPORTUNITIES: What are the biggest opportunities for the Smokey Bear Historic Park? What do you see as a unique opportunity for Smokey Bear?**

### **MESSAGING**

- *Reinforce the message by applying situations in everyday life (e.g., mowing the lawn)*
- *Smokey is within us all. If we act accordingly,*
- *Smokey will be within us.*
- *Smokey is only about human fire prevention – and what you can do about it.*

### **MARKETING**

- **Live Streaming:** *Provide the ability to let people broadcast and share when they are at the Park so visitors can share on their social media to help spread the word.*
- **Social Media Sharing:** *Enable visitors to broadcast their experiences and memories at the Park on social media platforms, encouraging them to share their stories and*

*reinforce the fire prevention message.*

- **Virtual Memory Sharing:** *Provide opportunities for visitors to share their memories virtually, fostering a sense of community and connection among visitors.*

### **REVISE PROGRAMMING TIPS**

- **Promote Simple Actions:** *Encourage actions like lawn mowing and safe car parking to prevent wildfires, stressing individual contributions to fire prevention.*
- **Unexpected Tips:** *Provide surprising and enjoyable tips to engage visitors in fire prevention efforts.*
- **Personal Connection:** *Utilize Smokey Bear's appeal to foster personal connections with visitors, encouraging them to share Park experiences.*
- **Interactive Learning for Kids:** *Develop interactive "scene stages" where children can practice fire prevention tips, enhancing learning and engagement.*
- **Empowerment through Voice:** *Enable visitors to use their voices in promoting fire prevention, emphasizing their impact on wildfire prevention efforts.*
- **Emotional Connection:** *Leverage Smokey Bear's emotional appeal to underscore the benefits of wildfire prevention, emphasizing loss prevention.*
- **Visitor Rewards:** *Establish ways for visitors to feel proud of their fire prevention actions, such as awards or recognition for participation.*
- **Highlight Cultural Stories:** *Share narratives about traditional fire uses and practices, enriching understanding of fire management and cultural heritage.*

By addressing these key takeaways from the stakeholder visioning sessions, the Park can effectively enhance its educational impact and promote wildfire prevention. The "Vision + Action Plan" section of this Framework Plan provides more guidance on proposed actions for the Smokey Bear Historical Park that incorporate this stakeholder feedback.



# SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK FRAMEWORK PLAN

## MEMORY CARDS

Stakeholders were asked, "What is your first Smokey Bear memory?" The stakeholders provided their personal responses on memory cards. The majority of stakeholders recalled

seeing a Smokey Bear mascot at a public appearance or personal visit to their school through an outreach campaign. The feedback from this exercise revealed that Smokey Bear has far-reaching impacts and has continued to remain a national symbol through generations.



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I remember driving down the road and seeing billboards. Also TV advertisements with Smokey saying, "Only YOU Can Prevent Forest Fires. Only YOU."*

*-LeAnne*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*Animated commercial on T.V. when I was youth! Didn't know about actual Smokey Bear story until I moved here a year and a half ago.*  
*-Al*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*Television Ads on local channel back in 1970's...  
and the comic book story around the same time.*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I remember going to Smokey Bear Museum as a little girl. The animated statue of Smokey would talk to you if you pushed the button. Also finding out he is actually buried next to the Museum.*  
*-Janiece*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*When I was 5 years old, he came on the TV + was talking to all the animals about the dangers of Forest Fires. I was fascinated.*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*There is a giant "billboard" style sign off of Highway 395 in CA where I grew up, and I remember passing it heading up the mountain.*

SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I am from Ruidoso and my first memories of Smokey are from school visits for fire awareness, visits to the Museum, and Smokey being in local parades.  
-Bay, Village of Ruidoso*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I remember being in 1st grade at White Mountain Elementary in Ruidoso and Smokey Bear came to visit and talk to us about fire prevention.*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I'm not sure if you mean the real life animal or the prevention campaign. The animal would be seeing a picture of the real Smokey at a game and fish presentation. The prevention would be a cartoon of Smokey protecting the forest by putting out a camp fire.*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*Coming to Smokey Bear Historical Park as a middle school kid. On my trips from the East to Ruidoso, NM.*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*First memory: Learning about him in elementary school/Favorite memory: Getting to work my first Smokey Bear event on the Lincoln National Forest!*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*In my youth, Smokey Bear animated commercial*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*Learning about him in elementary school and finding out his character was not fake but based off a real bear. Growing up I thought Smokey the Bear was just a NM thing, but it's National.*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



### MY PERSONAL SMOKEY BEAR STORY

*What is your first Smokey Bear memory?*

*I was three or four and got a hug from Smokey during a local parade.*

**SMOKEY BEAR HISTORIC PARK**  
FRAMEWORK PLAN



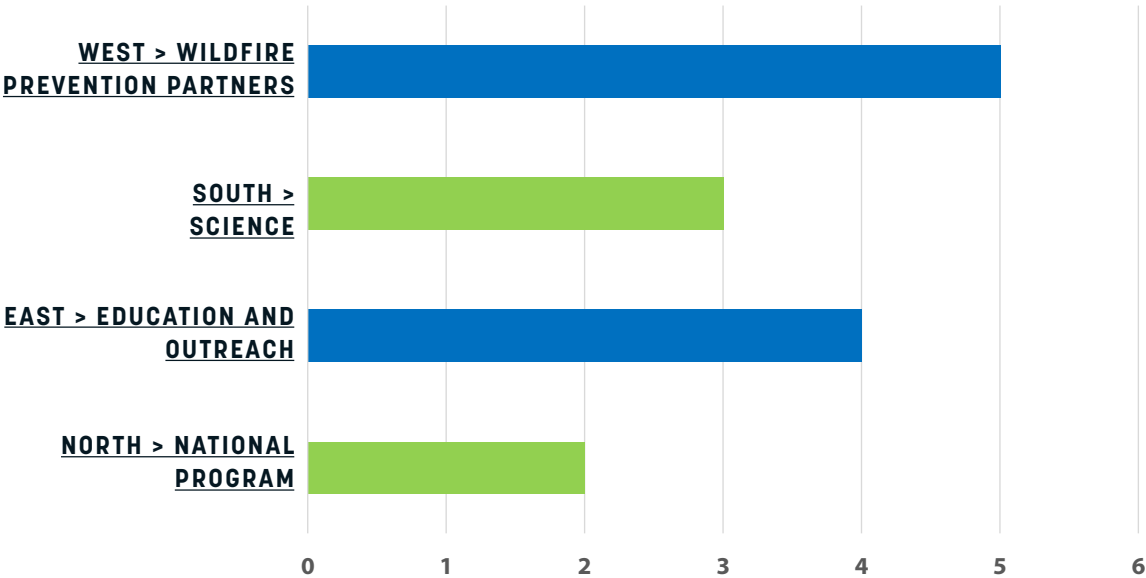
SMOKEY BEAR COMPASS

Mary Lavin, SBHP Park Manager, developed a Smokey Bear “Compass” to orient the framework plan, program direction, and stakeholder visioning. Two iterations of the compass were devised during the planning phases. The initial iteration, known as the Smokey Bear “Compass Hub,” guided program discussions during early visioning sessions. A revised version was later crafted in consultation with the National Smokey Bear Fire Prevention program in August 2023. Both versions are displayed on the following page.

Stakeholders were tasked with aligning their programs with specific topic areas or cardinal directions. The majority identified alignment with the West (Wildfire Prevention Partners) and East

- (Education and Outreach) directions. Respondents were also asked if any topics and categories were missing from the Smokey Bear “Compass.” A few respondents identified the following:
- *Integration of these programs on ecosystem management and public education related to more than just wildfires. More education needs to be focused on the benefits of fire and why fire prevention is NOT the answer to solving current and future problems.*
  - *A message, culture, and education shift from prevention to promoting beneficial fire.*
  - *The most important topic is education and outreach.*

What Cardinal Direction do you fall under?



**FIGURE 14. SMOKEY BEAR “COMPASS HUB”**

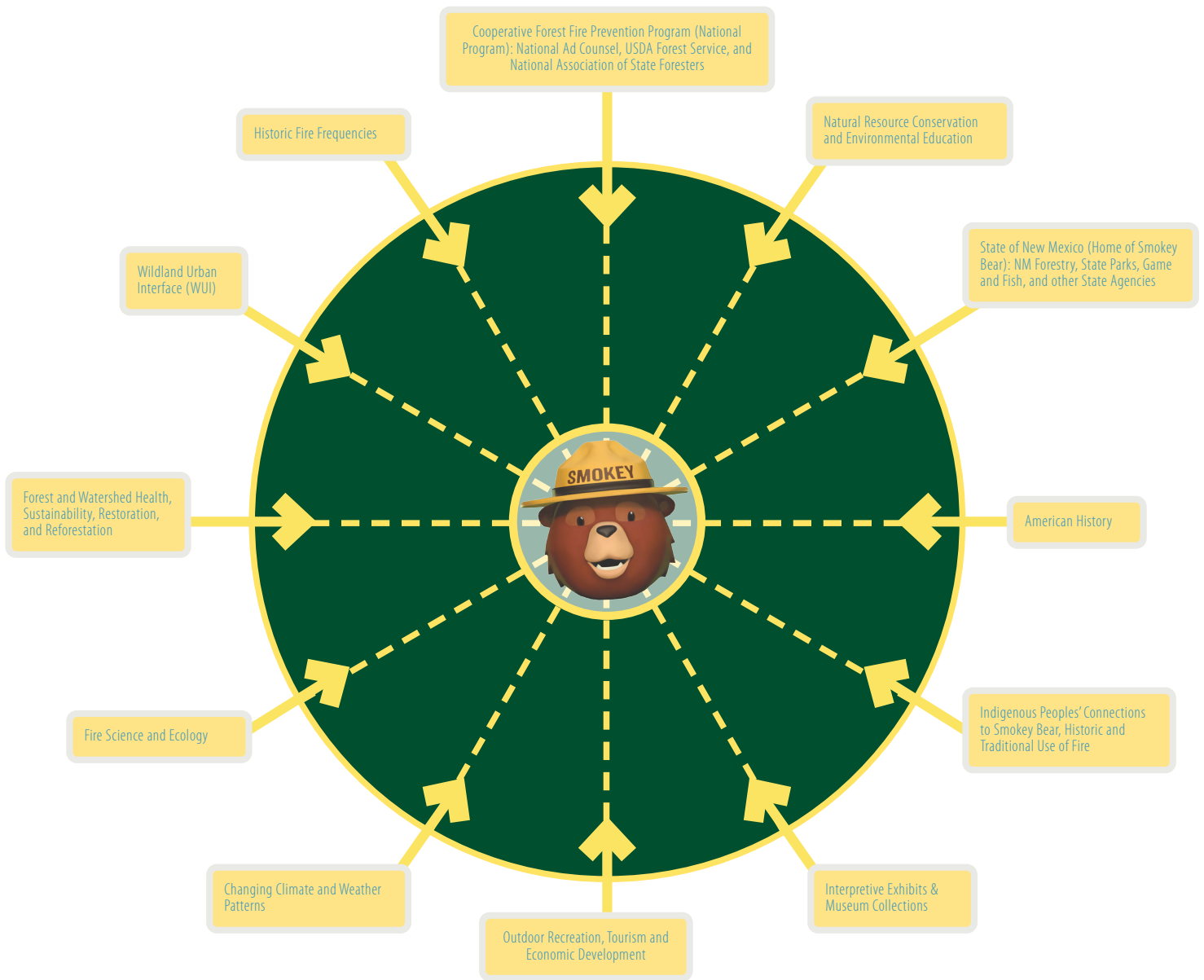
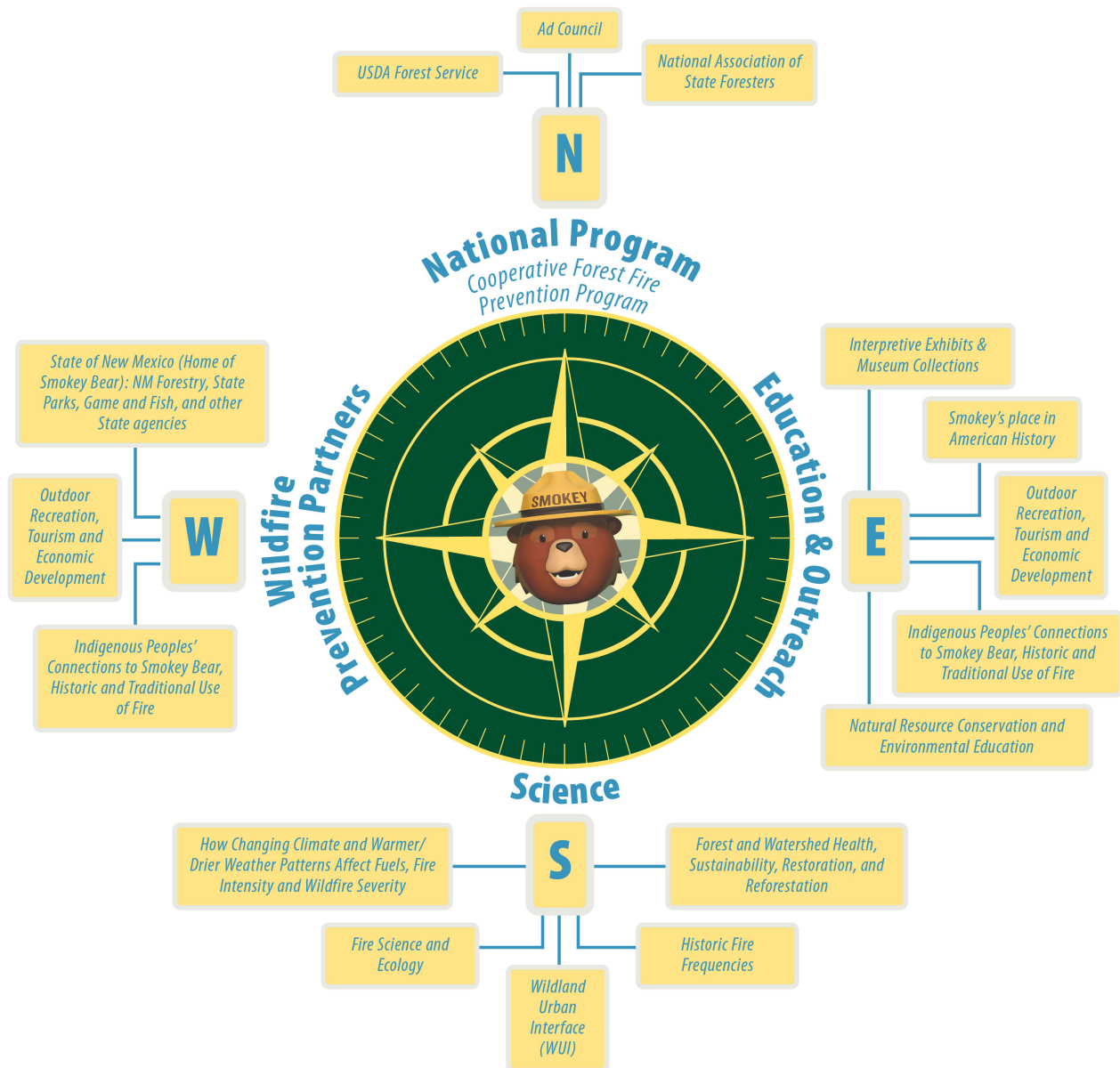




FIGURE 15. SMOKEY BEAR “COMPASS”



## OPPORTUNITIES (Survey Responses)

Stakeholders were asked to identify the most significant opportunities for the Smokey Bear Historical Park. The survey respondents provided the following feedback.

### FACILITIES

- **Visitor Experience Enhancement:** There's a significant opportunity to improve the visitor experience at the Park.

- **Museum Expansion:** There are plans to expand the museum, potentially including more education on Smokey Bear's history.

### MARKETING

- **Promotion of Smokey Bear:** Despite being associated with one of the most famous New Mexicans, Smokey Bear is not well-known. There's potential to increase awareness and recognition.
- **Forestry Division Initiatives:** The Park can

*promote forestry division initiatives and educate the public about fire management in forests.*

- **Outdoor Educational Opportunities:** *Utilizing the outdoor amphitheater for educational purposes, possibly focusing on Smokey Bear's message.*
- **Broadening Smokey Bear's Message:** *Expanding the reach of Smokey Bear's message to a broader audience.*

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

- **Outreach and Partnerships:** *Initiatives include outreach, forming partnerships, and educational programs, particularly for Smokey Bear's 80th birthday next year.*

## **PROGRAMMING**

- **Guided Tours:** *Considering guided tours with a focus on Q&A sessions about Smokey Bear.*
- **Reintroducing Smokey Bear to Schools:** *There's an opportunity to reintroduce Smokey Bear to elementary and middle schools with updated educational materials.*

The feedback suggests leveraging Smokey's iconic status and historical significance to enhance educational outreach and visitor engagement, potentially through innovative programs and partnerships.

## **UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY (Survey Responses)**

**Stakeholders were also asked to identify the most unique opportunity the icon of Smokey Bear. The survey respondents provided the following feedback.**

## **CLIMATE CHANGE FOCUS**

- **Climate Change and Wildfire Messaging:** *Smokey Bear can be pivotal in wildfire prevention messaging amidst climate change concerns.*

## **CULTURAL FOCUS**

- **Cultural Symbolism:** *Associating the Smokey Bear with the Zia symbol on the state flag of New Mexico can enhance its cultural significance and relevance.*
- **Utilizing Cultural Practices:** *There's potential to integrate Smokey Bear's message with traditional New Mexican cultural practices for effective ecosystem management.*

## **MARKETING**

- **Increased Advertising:** *More advertising is needed to raise awareness about wildfire prevention, mainly targeting urban and novice visitors to public lands.*
- **Promotion for 80th Birthday:** *Smokey Bear's 80th birthday provides a significant opportunity to promote his brand and emphasize the importance of forest management practices like prescribed burns and fuel management*
- **Tourist Exposure:** *Increasing exposure of Smokey Bear's message to the general public, including tourists, to promote wildfire prevention.*

## **YOUTH FOCUS**

- **Appealing to Younger Generations:** *Capitalizing on the retro appeal of Smokey Bear to engage younger audiences through merchandise and educational initiatives.*

## **MESSAGING**

- **Educational Initiatives:** *Emphasizing education on prevention and responsible enjoyment of public lands, especially for urban and novice visitors.*
- **Unity in Messaging:** *Leveraging Smokey Bear's wide recognition and support to unite diverse groups of people in spreading his message of wildfire prevention.*

These takeaways highlight opportunities to strengthen Smokey Bear's impact on wildfire prevention and education, utilizing cultural symbolism and modern promotional strategies.



## CHALLENGES *[Survey Responses]*

Stakeholders were also asked to identify additional challenges for the Smokey Bear Historical Park and Site. The survey respondents provided the following feedback.

### **FACILITIES**

- **Space Utilization:** *Despite being remote, the Park has significant space for potential development and extensions.*
- **Facelift and Expansion:** *There's a clear need for a complete facelift and expansion of facilities to convey a new message and improve visitor satisfaction.*

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

- **Accessibility Concerns:** *The outdoor "boardwalk" and visitor center experience are difficult to navigate, especially for those with mobility challenges, indicating a need for improved accessibility.*
- **Limited Exposure:** *The Park lacks exposure; it's not well-known, which limits its visitor numbers and impact.*

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

- **Infrastructure Issues:** *The Park faces challenges such as a lack of budget, outdated equipment, and aged infrastructure, which hinder its ability to deliver a compelling visitor experience and messaging.*

These takeaways highlight critical areas where improvements in infrastructure, accessibility, and promotion can significantly enhance the Park's visitor experience and outreach effectiveness.

## CONSTRAINTS + LIMITATIONS *[Survey Responses]*

Stakeholders provided feedback on the constraints and limitations of the icon of Smokey Bear.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

- *The multitude of technology platforms makes it difficult to find the best channels for getting Smokey Bear's message out clearly and concisely.*

### **AWARENESS**

- **Lack of Awareness and Ownership:** *There's a lack of awareness about Smokey Bear, and uncertainty persists regarding who owns the living symbol.*
- **Public Outreach:** *There's a significant need to effectively disseminate information about Smokey Bear to the broader public.*

### **REGULATIONS**

- **Federal Regulations:** *Compliance with federal regulations, including branding and copyright laws, is crucial due to Smokey Bear's status as a protected Congressional trademark. Permission to use his image is required. His image is to be used to promote wildfire prevention.*
- **Budget Constraints:** *Despite the importance of promoting Smokey Bear, budget limitations pose a challenge to undertaking promotional activities.*

These takeaways highlight the complexities and challenging frameworks influencing disseminating Smokey Bear's wildfire prevention message. For the complete survey responses, see the Appendix.



# VISION + ACTION PLAN





# VISION & ACTION PLAN

## Goals & Strategies

**The Smokey Bear Historical Park Framework Plan should be used as a roadmap to improve the existing museum and park site pragmatically and systematically, building towards SBHP's larger vision.**

### SMOKEY BEAR COMPASS

The Smokey Bear "Compass" helps guide this Framework Plan, provides programming direction moving forward, upholds the vision for the Smokey Bear Historical Park, and reveals Smokey Bear's far-reaching and impactful connection points across local and national programs.

#### **NORTH > NATIONAL PROGRAM**

Keeping Smokey's message simple and straightforward, the compass starts in the North direction, representing the National Program (Cooperative Forest Fire Prevention Program). This northern direction also represents the USDA Forest Service, the Ad Council, and the National Association of State Foresters.

#### **EAST > EDUCATION AND OUTREACH**

The East direction represents Education and Outreach programs. This includes interpretive exhibits and museum collections, Smokey's place in American History, Outdoor recreation,

tourism, and economic development, Indigenous peoples' connections to Smokey Bear, Historical and traditional use of fire, and Natural Resource Conservation and Environmental Education.

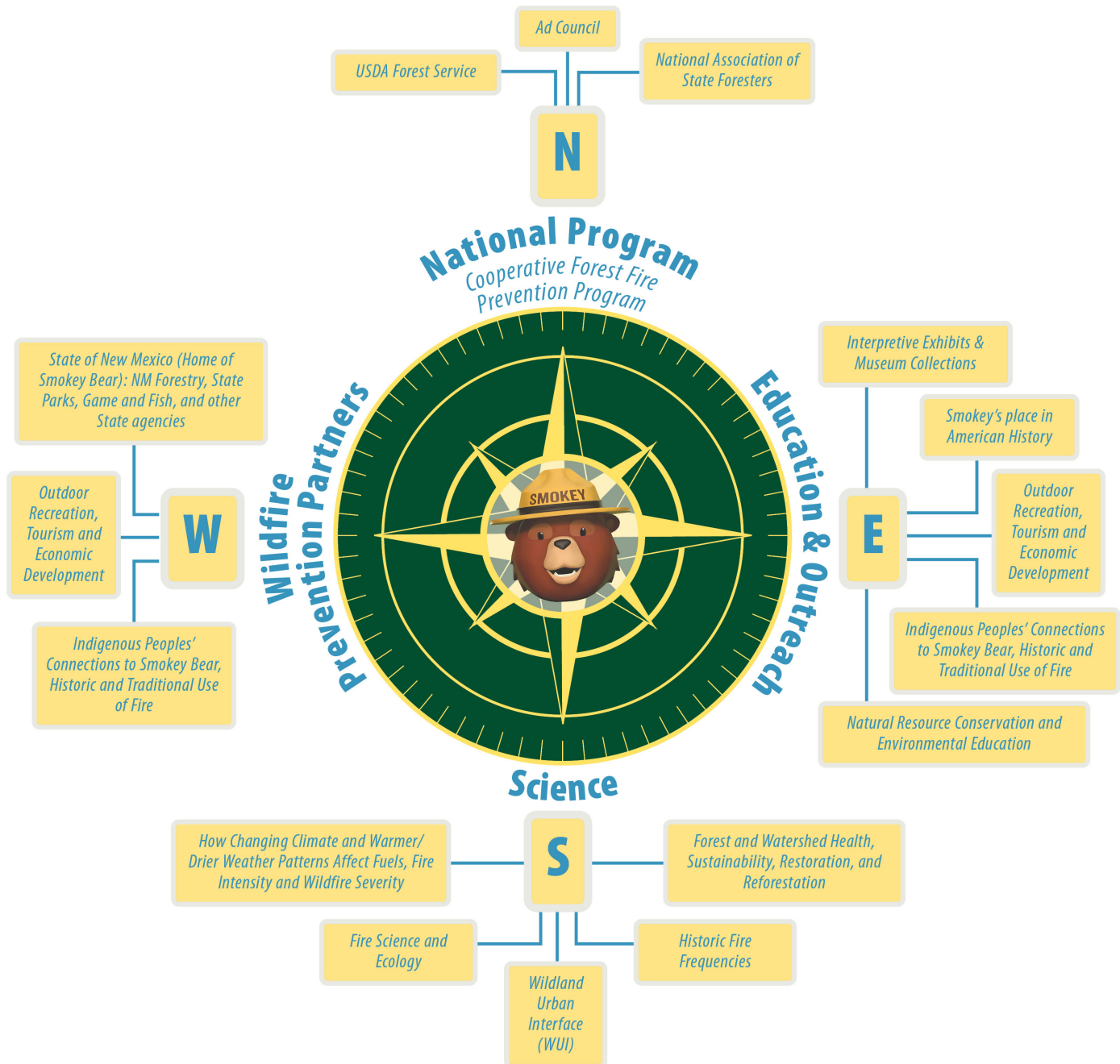
#### **SOUTH > SCIENCE**

The South direction represents Science programs, including Forest and Watershed Health, Sustainability, Restoration, and Reforestation, Historic Fire Frequencies, Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), Fire Science and Ecology, How changing climate and warmer/drier weather patterns affect fuels, fire intensity, and wildfire severity.

#### **WEST > WILDFIRE PREVENTION PARTNERS**

The West direction represents Wildfire Prevention Partners. These include the State of New Mexico (Home of Smokey Bear), NM Forestry, State Parks, Game and Fish, and other state agencies, Outdoor Recreation, Tourism and economic development, and Indigenous Peoples' connections to Smokey Bear through historic and traditional use of fire.







## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This Framework Plan identifies seven guiding principles and goals for the Smokey Bear Historical Park. These principles reinforce Smokey Bear as a symbol of wildfire prevention and wildland fire education. Additionally, Smokey Bear symbolizes fire ecology, encompassing conservation and forest health. Leading with this primary message, the following principles and program goals were derived from the site visit and assessment, visioning sessions, and meetings with the SBHP staff, NM EMNRD project leads, and other project stakeholders.

### PRINCIPLE 1. Preserve Smokey Bear's Legacy, Impact, and Message.

**Goal:** Recognize and honor Smokey Bear's legacy as the local and national symbol of wildfire prevention and wildland fire education while adapting his message to resonate with contemporary audiences and climate challenges. Maintain consistency in Smokey Bear's message while highlighting his historical impact and continued relevance within the education of fire ecology under conservation and forest health messaging.

### PRINCIPLE 2. Enhance Visitor Experience and Accessibility.

**Goal:** Enhance the visitor experience and accessibility by improving existing facilities, expanding the visitor center, enhancing the site, and providing resources for diverse audiences to learn Smokey's message.

### PRINCIPLE 3. Develop Interactive and Engaging Programming for Multiple Generations.

**Goal:** Develop interactive and engaging programming that educates visitors on wildfire prevention and fosters a personal connection with Smokey Bear.

### PRINCIPLE 4. Focus on Wildfire Prevention Education and Outreach.

**Goal:** Clarify the park's mission and focus programming on education and outreach initiatives related to wildfire prevention, wildland fire education and Smokey Bear's legacy.

### PRINCIPLE 5. Expand Smokey's Reach through Marketing and Technology.

**Goal:** Utilize marketing diverse platforms and technology to expand the park's reach and engage multiple audiences to promote the park and Smokey's message.

### PRINCIPLE 6. Foster Community Engagement and Partnership Opportunities.

**Goal:** Foster community engagement and develop partnerships with local, state and national organizations to support park initiatives, promote wildfire prevention efforts, increase awareness of the park, and attract new visitors.

### PRINCIPLE 7. Build Efficient Operations and Seek Funding Strategies.

**Goal:** Improve operational efficiency and identify sustainable funding strategies to support park staff, park maintenance, new programming, and expansion efforts.

By adhering to these guiding principles and goals, the Smokey Bear Historical Park can fulfill its mission of educating visitors about wildfire prevention and wildland fire education, informing the public on fire ecology as it relates to conservation and forest health, and preserving Smokey Bear's legacy for future generations. These guiding principles are reinforced by the proposed Park improvements outlined in the following Tiers.







# PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

## Framework Plan Overview

This section outlines proposed improvements to the Smokey Bear Historical Park Site and Facilities. Conceptual designs for the site and Museum/Visitor Center are provided with a detailed improvement list to be implemented in the short, near, and long term. The conceptual designs attempt to accommodate the guiding principles while allowing for a phased approach to development.

The team has divided this long-term plan for Smokey Bear Historical Park into three distinct Tiers to help guide its execution.

### TIER 1 (SHORT TERM UPGRADES)

**Tier 1 (1-3 years)** prioritizes smaller, cost-effective goals. These are essential upgrades that can be accomplished soon and make the existing facility function for the on-site staff in the short term. These small changes give the team valuable time pursuing funding for larger projects.

### TIER 2 IMPROVEMENTS (MID-TERM)

**Tier 2 (3-6 years)** sets mid-term goals for the team with projects that utilize the existing bones of the museum. The existing floor plan is unique but outdated and needs to support the growing and shifting functions of the campus. By analyzing the floor plan and making efficiency upgrades, the team will allow the staff to grow within the existing envelope while maintaining the feel and history of the 1970s architecture. Relocating interior walls, flipping programs, and re-directing circulation paths are some of the proposed Tier 2 moves.

### TIER 3 IMPROVEMENTS (LONG-TERM)

**Tier 3 (6-15 years)** explores the long-term goals for the facility. It explores expanding the educational aspect of the site, increasing the technological features, and modernizing the museum with appropriate programs and spaces, adequate storage, office and workspace, and interactive exhibits. **The ultimate goal: How do we attract the next generation of Smokey Bear fans and better educate the public on the importance of wildfire prevention, restoration, and reforestation while remaining true to the history and nostalgia of the site and its iconic mascot?**

These proposed improvements should be combined with the Smokey Bear Historical Park Management Plan. These conceptual designs are intended to be used as a roadmap to improve the existing Smokey Bear Historical Park museum and site pragmatically and systematically, building towards the larger vision of SBHP. Each improvement will require in-depth analysis, detailed studies, and complete design efforts before implementation. An Implementation Matrix with rough cost estimates is provided at the end of this section to assist in the future planning for these phased projects.

# TIER 1 - SHORT-TERM

## Architectural Improvements

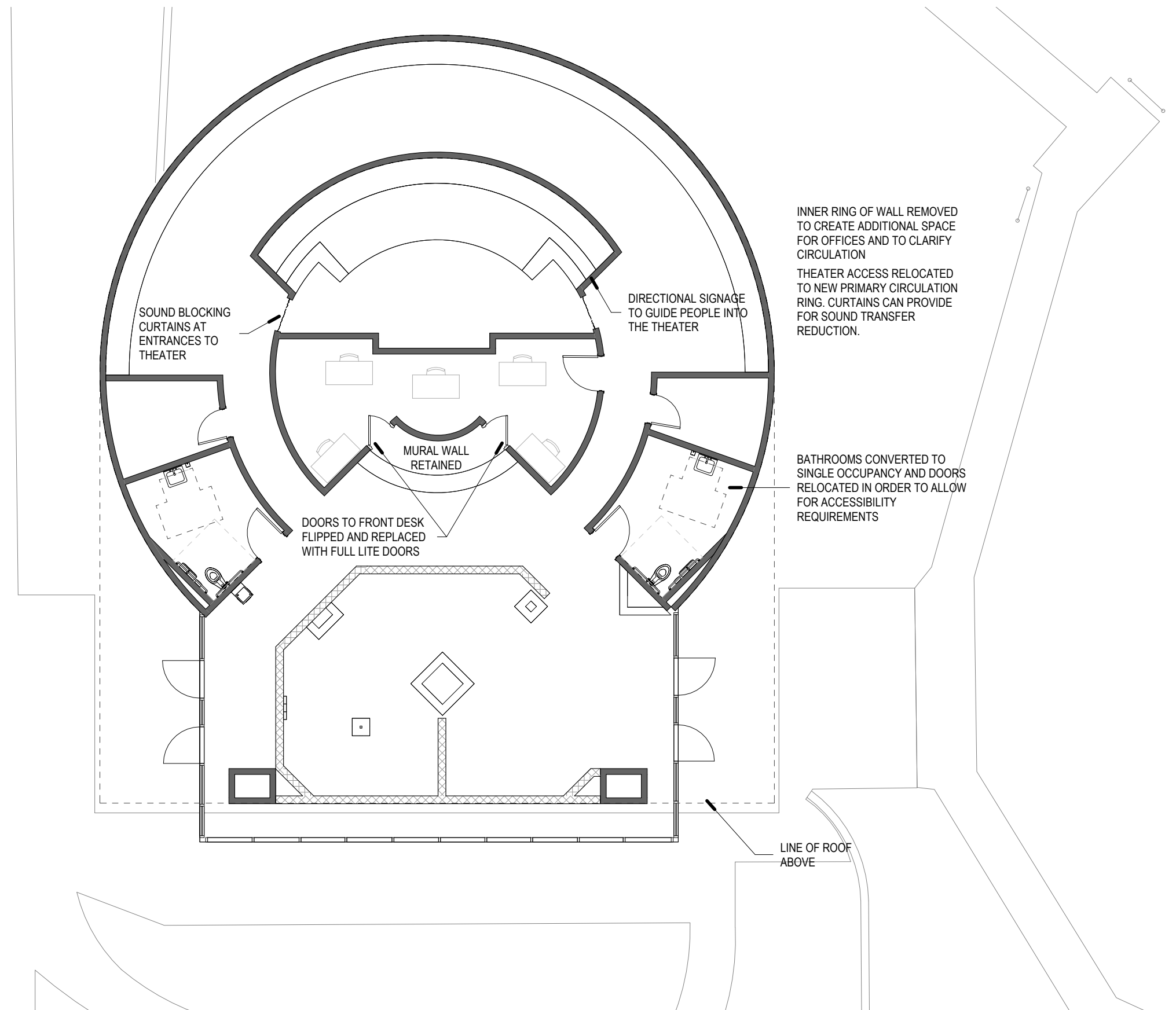
*[Short term, Low-cost]*

The Tier 1 recommendations for the Smokey Bear Historic Park Visitor Center and Museum aim to address staff concerns about accessibility and circulation through simple, cost-effective measures. The goal is to implement these changes quickly, improving museum usage and access without significant investment or prolonged closure.

The existing museum floor plan includes two concentric interior ring walls. The inner ring directs visitors to the theater, while the outer ring leads to the stationary exhibits. Staff have reported that these separate paths need to be clarified for visitors, causing them to miss parts of the exhibits. The proposed design removes the inner ring hallway, creating a singular path directing guests to the exhibits and the theater. After checking in at the front desk, visitors will follow a clearly defined path with signage directing them to the theater on one side and the exhibit loop on the other.

Removing the inner ring wall also expands the office space behind the front desk from 130 square feet to 240 square feet, addressing staff concerns about cramped conditions. This additional space allows for more room in existing workspaces and the potential addition of new workstations as needed. Additional changes improve bathroom accessibility. The door to the mechanical room is relocated, allowing staff to access it from the main hallway instead of through the men's restroom. Both bathrooms are converted to single occupancy to meet the 2017 ICC A117.1 guidelines for Accessible and Usable Buildings. A code review confirms that one bathroom per gender is sufficient for a building of this size.

The galleries and theater space remain unchanged in this phase, minimizing costs and avoiding the need for extended closures. While the changes are relatively minor, the design team believes they will significantly improve the museum's functionality for staff and visitors.





TIER 1

Site Improvements

(Short-Term)

The Tier 1 improvements focus on low-cost improvements to the site that could be implemented in the short-term. The improvements focus on areas west of the property nearest the Museum and Visitor Center.

- 1.1. Begin phased update of Interpretive Life Zones to distinguish areas better. Stonework, screening, variation of ground plane materials, and plant material may be considered. Irrigation renovation included. Begin phased replacement of pedestrian paths and irrigation system after accurately mapping waterlines (sprinklers) and providing accessibility for maintenance under the walkway.
- 1.2. Renovate Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial. Renovation shall include additional design study considering a relocation of the Fallen Wildland Firefighter Memorial to the reduced water feature space outlined in Project 2.6.
- 1.3. Renovate Smokey Bear’s grave site.
- 1.4. Relocate the hot air balloon site.
- 1.5. Repair/replace the front gazebo and upgrade the pollinator garden (depending on the building expansion footprint).
- 1.6. Develop a wayfinding plan with a family of signs for the facility.
- 1.7. Install strategic screening throughout the Park.
- 1.8. Architectural Improvements (interior renovations). See previous page for details.





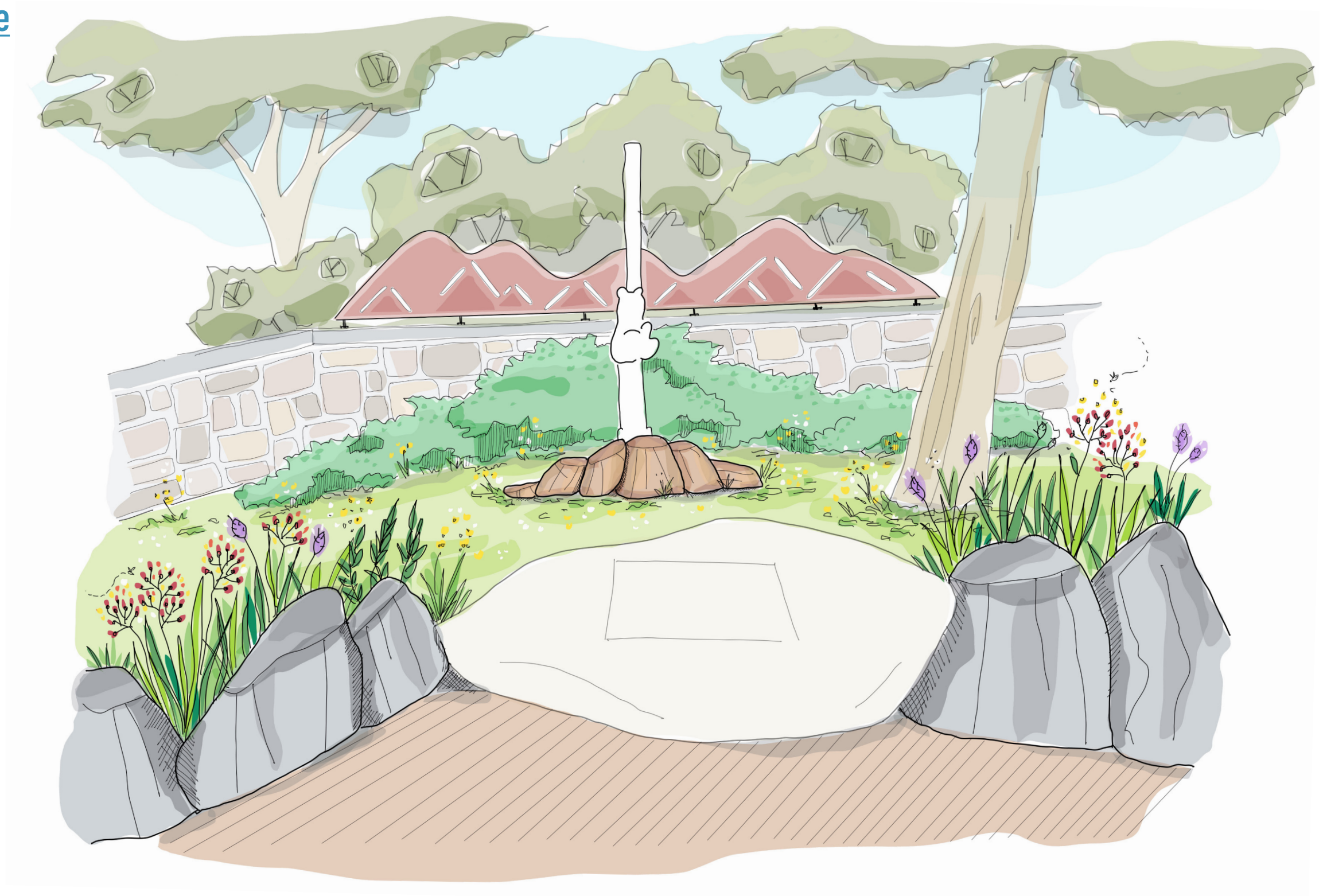
## Fallen Wildland Fire Fighter Memorial

The most significant opportunity for improving the visitor experience is the Fallen Wildland Firefighter Memorial renovation. The space is limited, and the memorial, information signs, and names of the fallen firefighters are too close. These elements should be organized sequentially, allowing visitors to absorb the emotional impact of the space better. All materials should be of high quality and imbue a sense of permanence. The proximity of the balloon resting site is quite jarring, as it is located immediately after the firefighter memorial. The balloon exhibit must be relocated to a more appropriate space in the park. The renovation of the Fallen Wildland Fire Fighter Memorial should include an additional design and cost analysis study considering a possible relocation of the memorial to a reduced footprint area of the water feature recommended under Project 2.6.





## Smokey Bear Gravesite



## TIER 2 - MID-TERM

### Architectural Improvements

*(includes all items from Tier 1 + an improved entry sequence)*

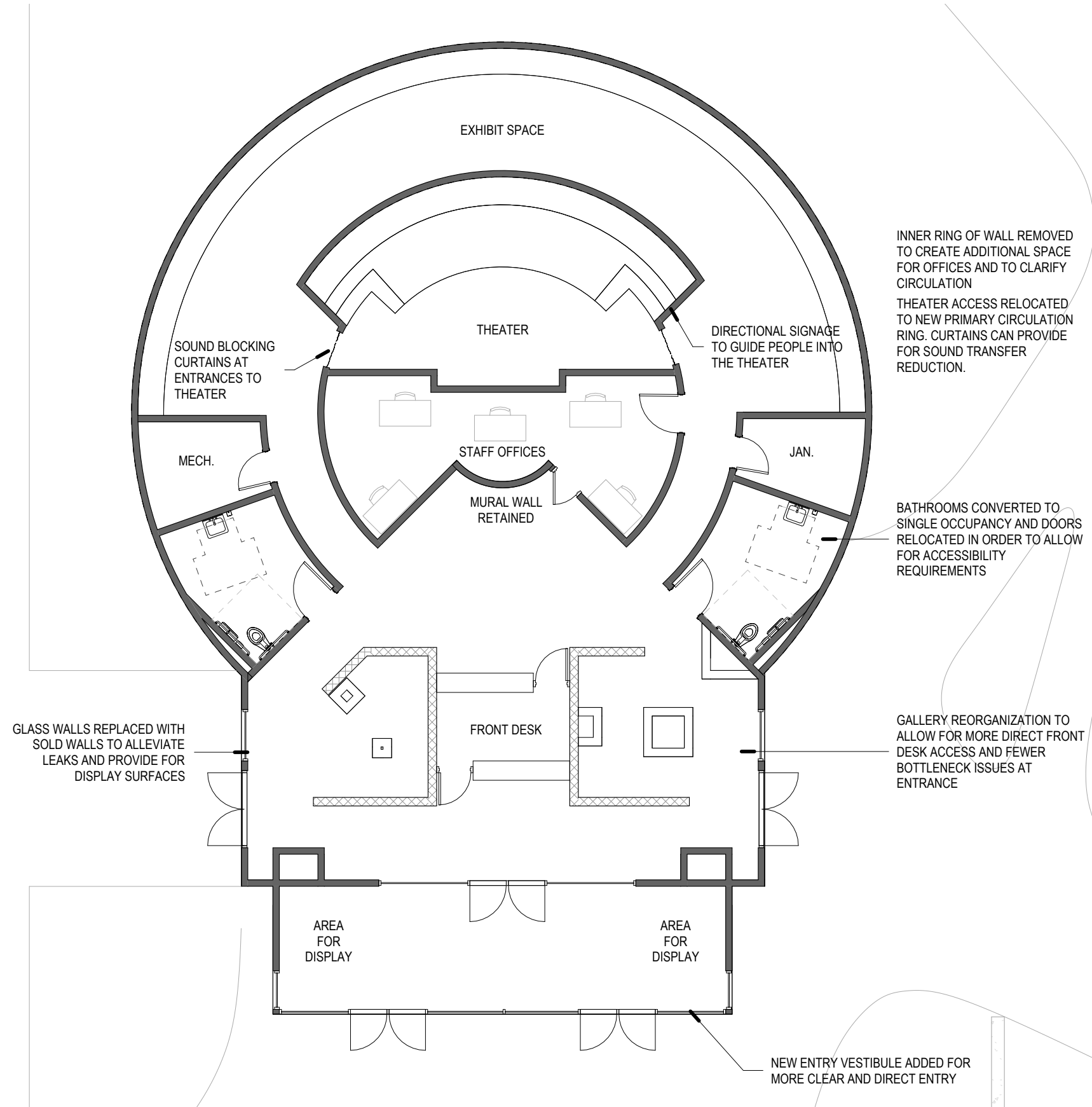
The Tier 2 recommendations for Smokey Bear Historical Park build upon the Tier I improvements, further addressing staff concerns about the current space. All Tier I changes are retained: removing the internal circulation wall, expanding the office, and maintaining bathroom code compliance. Additionally, Tier II aims to enhance the entry sequence.

In the current layout, staff noted the entrance needs to be visible from the street, leading some visitors to miss the museum entirely. The compact area inside the entrance needs help to accommodate multiple visitors or school groups, causing navigation issues. The front desk location and the side entrance and exhibit layout exacerbate these problems. The glass walls surrounding the front desk and exhibit area have leakage issues, and the solar wall no longer functions as intended.

To address these issues, the design team proposes relocating the entrance to the south, street-facing facade. This involves removing the south, east, and west glass walls and adding a small, glazed lobby extension. This lobby includes a vestibule to control gusts and accommodate exhibits in the solarium, eliminating leakage concerns and moderating sun exposure. The front-facing entrance will reduce confusion and encourage visitors to enter the museum.

From the new vestibule, guests will enter a vast central space leading to a new front desk in the center. This layout provides more space for circulation and queuing. The exhibit walls will be moved east and west, replacing the glass walls with solid walls featuring punched openings for additional exhibit space. The original front desk will be removed, improving access to the Smokey mural. The new design offers comparable exhibit space with improved functionality and navigation.

Tier 1 and Tier 2 recommendations address staff concerns about usability, navigation, functionality, and visitor experience. These focused interventions minimize disruption while enhancing the museum for staff and visitors.





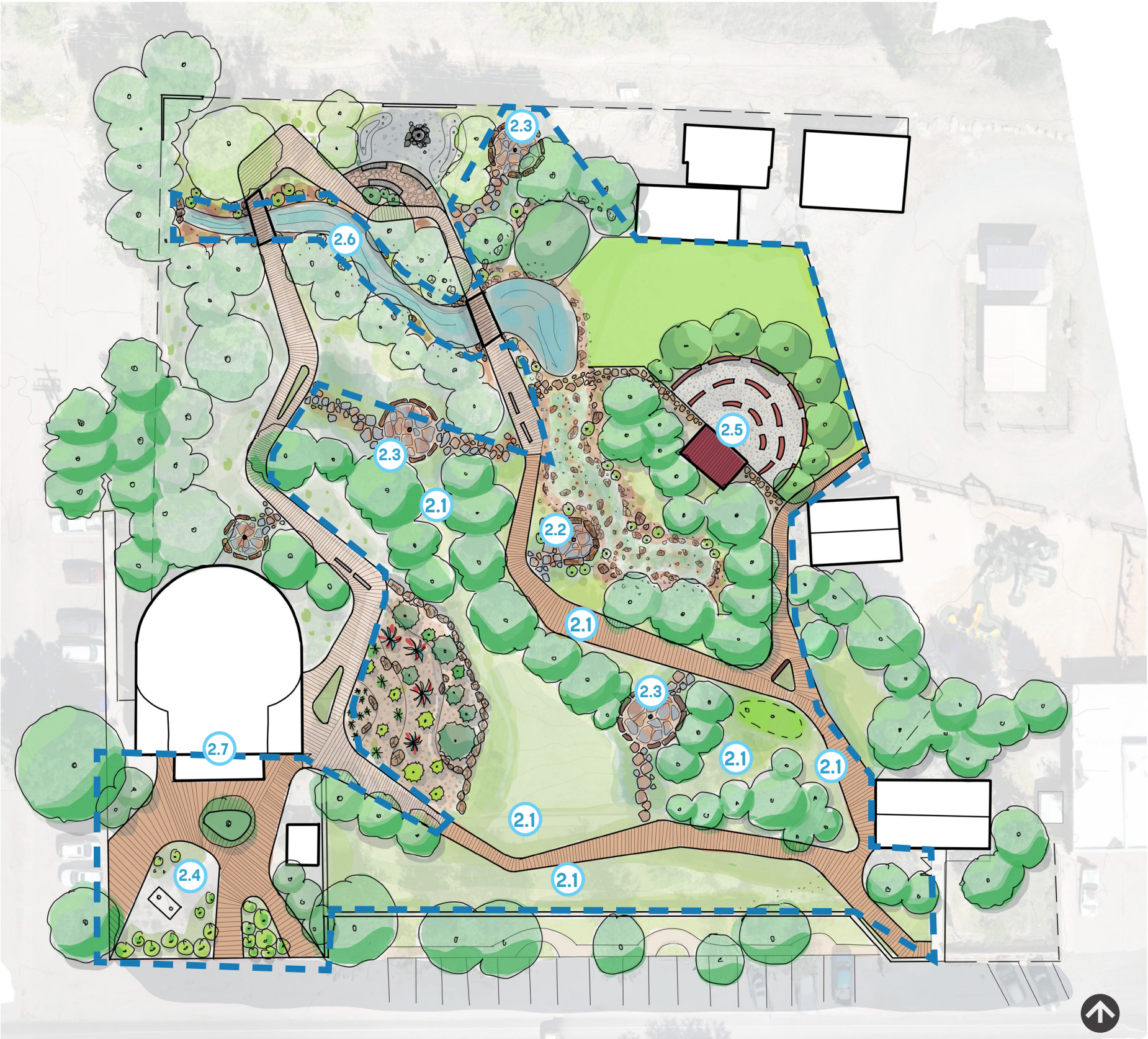
# TIER 2

## Tier Two Site Improvements

*[medium projects]*

The Tier 2 improvements focus on medium-cost enhancements to the site that could be implemented mid-term. The improvements focus on areas central to the park and near the Museum and Visitor Center entry.

- 2.1. Continue the phased update on Interpretive Life Zones/Irrigation. Continue phased replacement of pedestrian paths.
- 2.2. Renovate the scenic “overlook” feature.
- 2.3. Create seating node/maintenance pass-through.
- 2.4. Create a new entry through the pollinator garden.
- 2.5. Renovate and re-orient amphitheater.
- 2.6. Update the water feature and stream feature, reducing the overall footprint. The update shall maintain the ambiance that water provides fitting within the riparian life zone and eliminate the large pond footprint to better address concerns about safety and maintenance. Update shall consider relocating the Fallen Wildland Firefighter Memorial to the reduced water feature space.
- 2.7. Architectural Improvements (includes all architectural items from Tier 1 and improved entry sequence). See previous page for details.



**LEGEND**  
Tier 2 Improvements



# TIER 3A - LONG-TERM

## Tier 3A Architectural Improvements

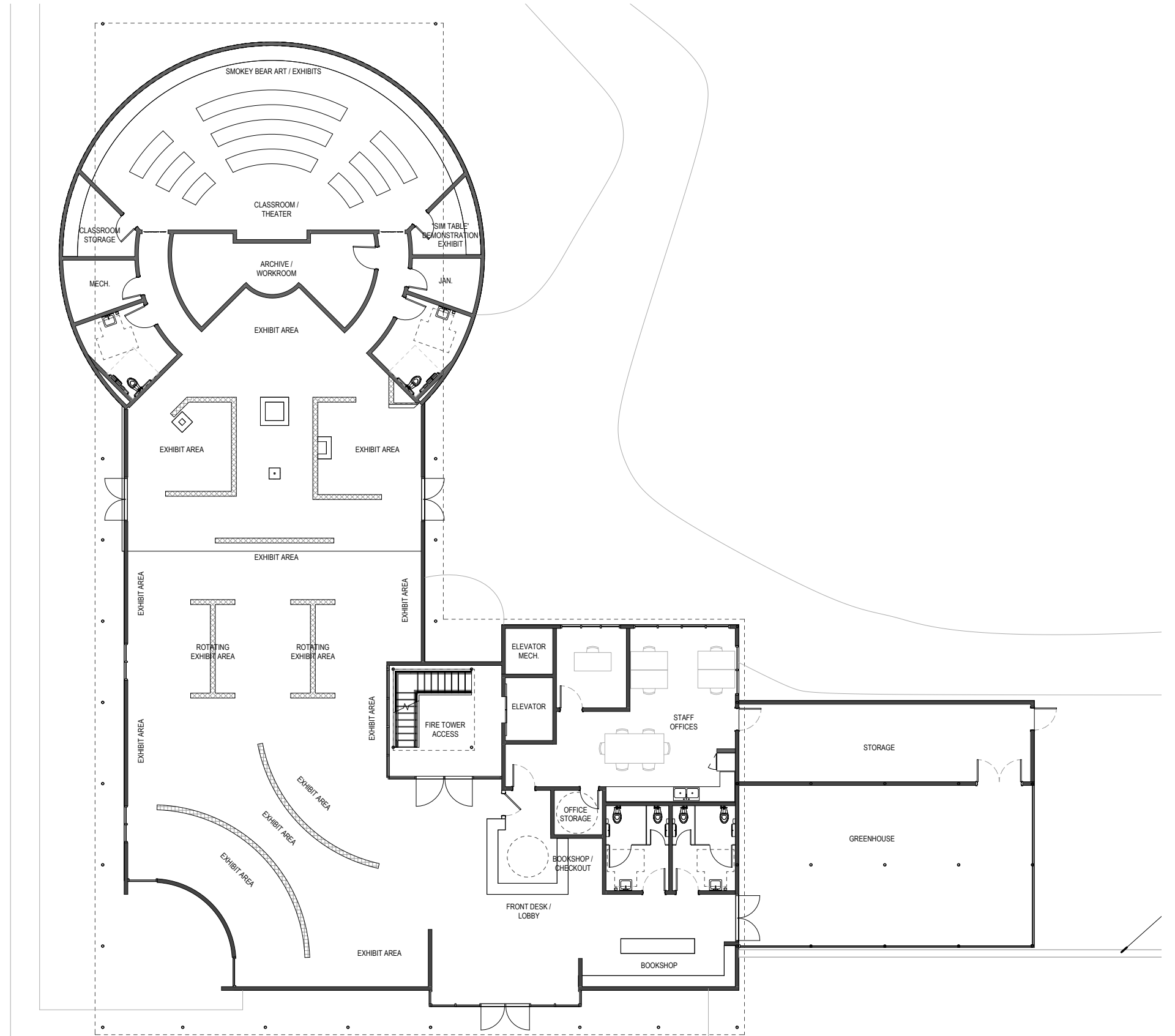
### *[Museum Expansion]*

The Tier 3 renovation of Smokey Bear Historic Park proposes an expansion to the building, initially sketched by staff, filling the site's southwestern corner. This extension makes the museum a more prominent park component, enhancing its visibility and appeal to visitors along Smokey Bear Boulevard. The expanded area will create a large, open space that can be divided into smaller, interactive exhibits focused on forestry and forest fire prevention/protection. The original museum section will be transformed into a larger, interactive theater space with exhibits along the exterior walls.

Visitors will enter the museum from a new main entrance directly off Smokey Bear Boulevard into a lobby housing the front desk and ticketing area. Visitors will find a bookshop and public restrooms to the left, while they will access the museum exhibits to the right. An adjacent greenhouse extending east of the museum will provide 800 square feet of south and east-facing space, with an additional 400 square feet for storage. The staff office and conference/break areas will be behind the front desk, facing the park landscape.

The most prominent feature of the new museum space is the fire tower, positioned at the corner of the L-shaped expansion. The classic fire tower design includes a light, steel-framed structure with stairs circling up to a landing 50 feet above the museum, culminating in a room with panoramic windows. Exhibits will be featured along the stairway and at the top, offering views of Capitan and the surrounding forests.

Architecturally, the exterior will integrate the local landscape and adhere to the National Forest Service Regional guidelines for the Mexican Highlands' southwest and desert mountain landscapes. These guidelines emphasize long vistas, strong horizontal lines, the dominance of landforms over vegetation, and an ecosystem-wide dependence on water and shade. The design will feature a robust horizontal base inspired by nearby mountains, topped with a contrasting folded roof structure abstracting mountain lines. The expansive roof will incorporate solar and water collection systems, making the building itself an exhibit. Overhanging the building, the roof will create prominent shade lines supported by slender timber columns reminiscent of the sparse trees in the desert mountain landscape. Above all, the fire tower will extend into the sky, serving as a recognizable landmark and a narrative element for the museum's goals.





# TIER 3A

## Tier 3A Site Improvements *(larger projects)*

The Tier 3A improvements focus on medium-cost improvements to the site that could be implemented in the long term. They focus on improving the entry sequence to the Museum and Visitor Center to accommodate the expansion.

- 3A.1. Renovate entry to accommodate building expansion. Install new flagpoles near renovated entry.
- 3A.2. Evaluate acquiring additional parking spaces and property for the park.
- 3A.3. Evaluate NMDOT Right of Way for development along the street. Confirm ownership of parking spaces and extent of ROW.
- 3A.4. Architectural Improvements (Museum Expansion). See previous page for details.
- 3A.5. Evaluate acquiring the log cabin museum and gift shop back from the Village of Capitan.



**LEGEND**

— Tier 3A Improvements



Tier 3A





Tier 3A





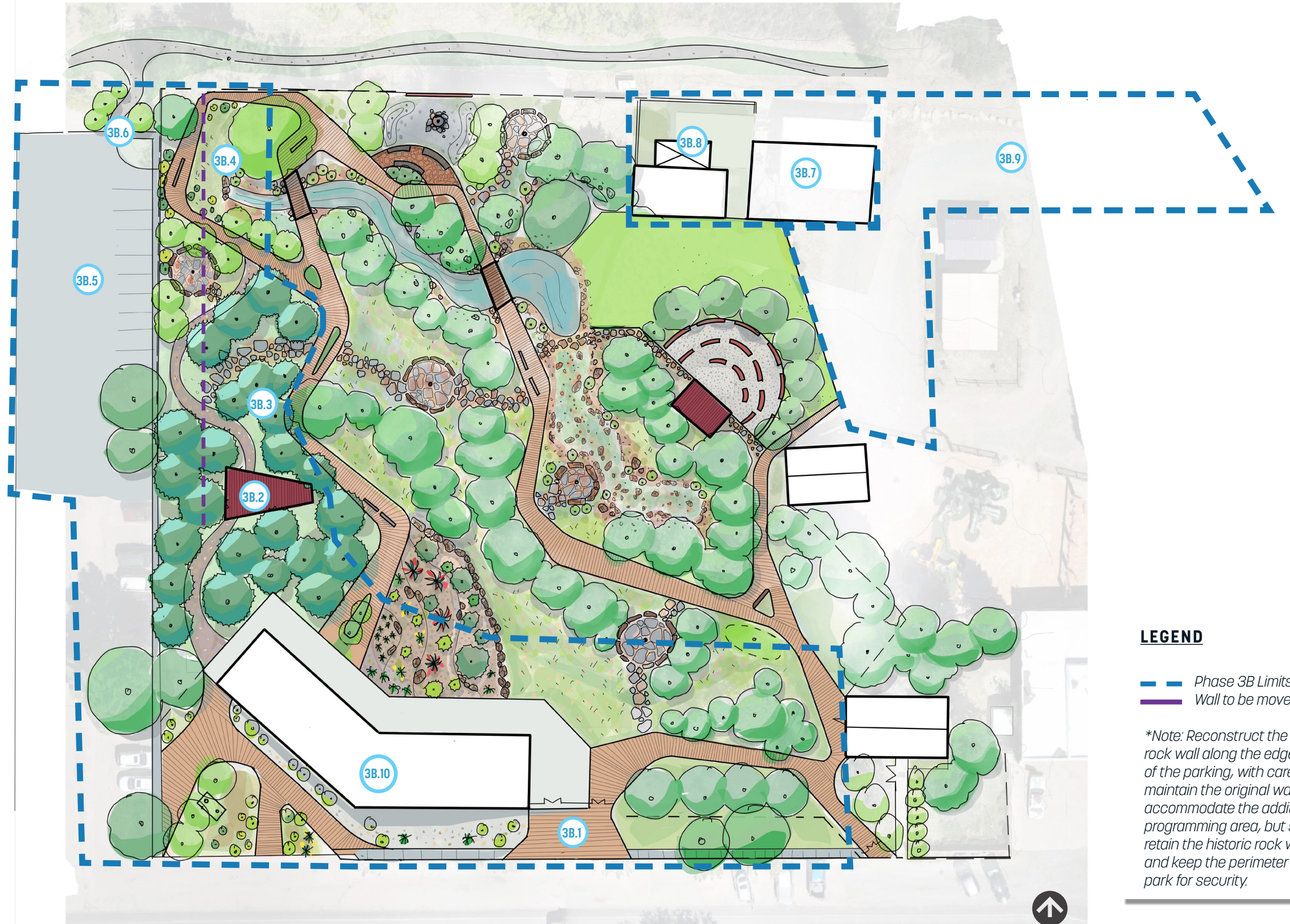
# TIER 3B

## Tier 3B Site Improvements

*(larger projects)*

The Tier 3B site improvements focus on large-cost enhancements to the site that could be implemented in the long term. They also focus on accommodating the landscape around the new Museum and Visitor Center and expanding into the west parking area.

- 3B.1. Renovate entry, pedestrian walk, and landscape to accommodate new Visitor's Center. Install new flagpoles near new entry.
- 3B.2. New pavilion as outdoor classroom.
- 3B.3. Expanded landscape area with informal paths.
- 3B.4. New "360" Smokey grave site feature.
- 3B.5. Expanded parking and evaluate for Electric Vehicle Parking/Charging Stations.
- 3B.6. Establish connection to planned future public trail.
- 3B.7. New expanded maintenance building.
- 3B.8. New maintenance yard with enhanced security improvements (taller fencing, lighting, lockable gates).
- 3B.9. Explore Village of Capitan's interest in acquiring NE property for expansion of Community Park. Explore opportunities for alternate property uses including access for park staff and maintenance vehicles or a Camp Host Site.
- 3B.10. Architectural Improvements (New Building). See next page for details.



### LEGEND

- Phase 3B Limits
- Wall to be moved.\*

\*Note: Reconstruct the rock wall along the edge of the parking, with care to maintain the original wall, to accommodate the additional programming area, but still retain the historic rock wall and keep the perimeter of the park for security.



# TIER 3B - LONG-TERM

## Tier 3B Architectural Improvements (New Building)

Tier 3b (New Building) represents a long-term plan proposing a comprehensive redevelopment of the campus, including a new museum, greenhouse, shop, garage, and fire tower. The primary objective of this final tier is to refocus the park’s mission and reimagine site utilization. The current conditions of the museum and the presence of unrelated facilities on the site have caused confusion regarding visitor entry and interaction with the facilities. Key issues in the existing campus plan include wayfinding, circulation, entry, and signage, all of which this plan aims to address.

By making the museum the predominant structure on campus, it will attract more attention and enhance its presence along Smokey Bear Boulevard. The main entry is proposed to be in a similar location to the existing museum to maintain familiarity for returning visitors and to keep the museum in close proximity to parking. Clear, large graphics and building signage will further enhance clarity.

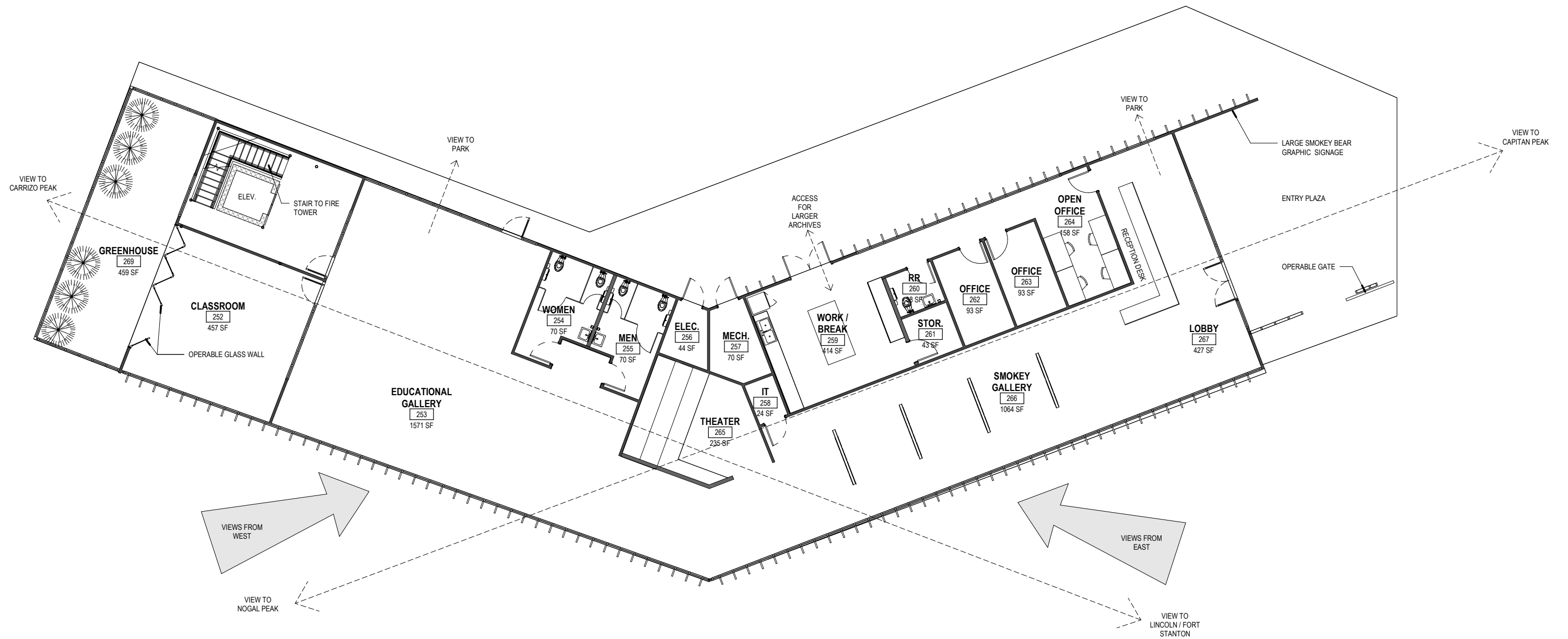
The overall form of the museum is reminiscent of a greenhouse, featuring a large sloping roof, expanses of shaded glass, and durable materials. While final materials will be determined later, the design team envisions wood shade fins and a primarily wood interior to bring warmth and comfort, casting forest-like shadows throughout the interior. The integrated fire tower will serve as a community beacon, accessible to visitors and functional as an active watchtower during wildfires, providing 360-degree views of the surrounding areas.

The floor plan of the new museum is kinked at the center, creating two “front faces” to welcome travelers from both the east and west. The two wings also allow for a clear delineation of programs. The east wing, housing Smokey memorabilia and historic artifacts, is located closest to the lobby/reception desk. This design enables visitors to peruse the expansive collection of Smokey artifacts and then proceed to the remainder of the park without disrupting other exhibits.

At the center or “knuckle” of the plan, support spaces (mechanical room, IT closet, etc.) and a new theater are located. The theater, not requiring daylight and serving as a natural transition between galleries, will present the history and future educational goals of the park. This leads to the second gallery in the west wing, which houses the forestry education portion of the program. With a large classroom, access to the fire tower, and greenhouse, this section focuses on wildfire education and prevention.

By relocating and enlarging the greenhouse, making it an integral part of the museum, it becomes a significant educational opportunity. The classroom and gallery feature large windows, allowing students to visually engage with the greenhouse, while large doors enable easy access and direct interaction with the reforestation process.

The overall goal of Tier 3b is to provide a fresh perspective to the site while retaining the importance of its message. A new facility that functions efficiently and stands as an iconic landmark within the New Mexico community will better engage younger generations and allow staff to expand reforestation education. Its larger size will also accommodate more exhibit space for the existing collection.



A1

N-W-FP

1/8" = 1'-0"



Tier 3B



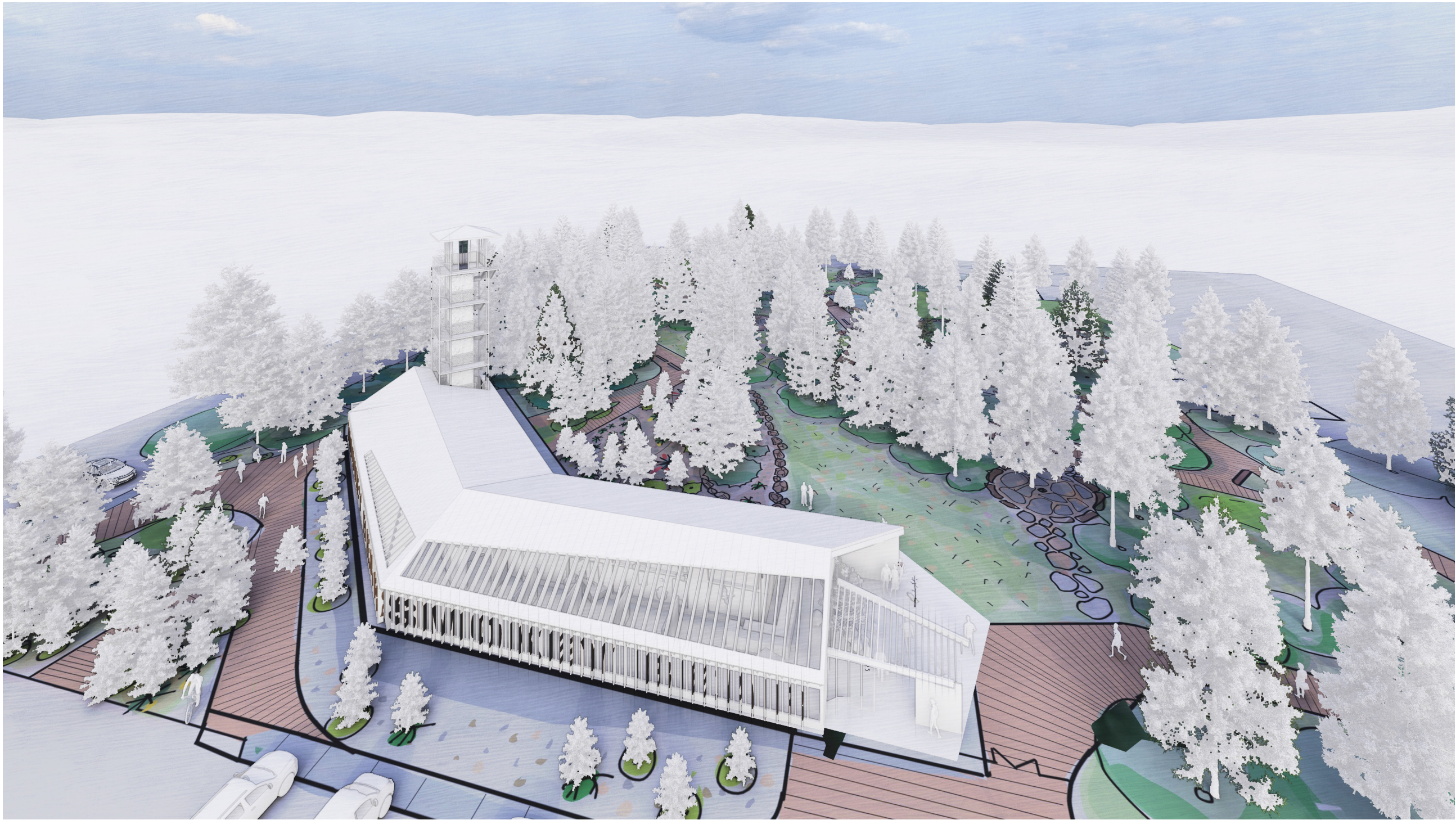


Tier 3B



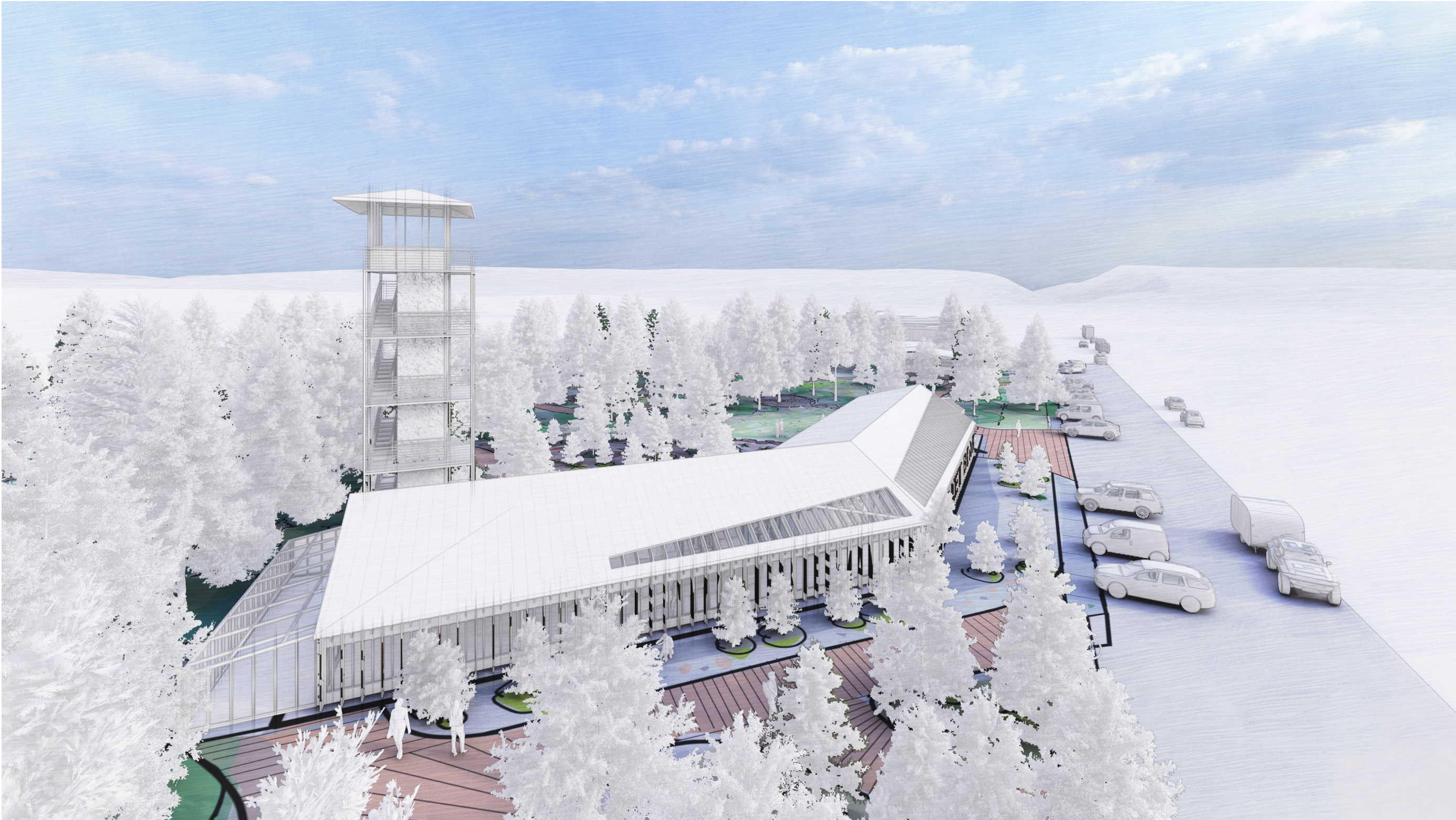


Tier 3B





Tier 3B





IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following cost estimate was prepared in July 2024 for the Framework Plan. Design fees are not included and should be calculated on a project by project basis depending on scope, complexity and other factors. Design fees could assume an additional 10% contingency per project for future budgeting. These costs include contractor general requirements, overhead & profit, performance & payment bond, New Mexico Gross Receipts Tax, and 20% contingency. Cost escalation is included assuming 3-8% per year.

#	Project Description	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Select FY	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2032	2034
1	Tier One Improvements (smaller projects)			0%	3%	6%	12%	24%	32%	40%	50%	60%
1.1	Begin phased update of Interpretive Life Zones to better distinguish areas. Stonework, screening, variation of ground plane materials and plant material may be considered. Irrigation renovation included.  Begin phased replacement of pedestrian paths and irrigation system after accurately mapping waterlines (sprinklers) and providing accessibility for maintenance under the walkway. Walkway materials and systems to be appropriate for the local climate.	\$ 530,599	2025	\$0	\$546,517	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.2	Renovate Fallen Fire Fighter Memorial.	\$ 178,620	2025	\$0	\$183,979	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.3	Renovate Smokey Bear grave site.	\$ 65,484	2025	\$0	\$67,448	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.4	Relocate hot air balloon site.	\$ 31,683	2025	\$0	\$32,634	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.5	Repair/replace front gazebo and upgrade pollinator garden (depending on building expansion footprint).	\$ 110,850	2025	\$0	\$114,175	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.6	Develop a wayfinding plan with a family of signs for the facility.	\$ 69,053	2024	\$69,053	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.7	Install strategic screening throughout park.	\$ 49,445	2024	\$49,445	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
1.8	Architectural Improvements (interior renovation and electrical grounding for greenhouse and garage)	\$ 1,506,368	2026	\$0	\$0	\$1,596,750	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Cost for Tier 1		\$ 2,542,101		\$ 118,498	\$ 944,753	\$ 1,596,750	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2	Tier Two Improvements (medium projects)											
2.1	Continue phased update of Interpretive Life Zones/Irrigation. Continue phased replacement of pedestrian paths.	\$ 707,298	2027	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$792,174	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.2	Renovate scenic “overlook” feature.	\$ 40,483	2028	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$50,199	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.3	Create seating node/maintenance pass-through.	\$ 146,249	2028	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$181,349	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.4	Create new entry through pollinator garden.	\$ 258,126	2029	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$340,726	\$0	\$0	\$0
2.5	Renovate and re-orient amphitheater.	\$ 429,090	2030	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$429,902	\$0	\$0
2.6	Update the water feature and stream feature, reducing the overall footprint. The update shall maintain the ambiance that water provides fitting within the riparian life zone and eliminate the large pond footprint to better address concerns about safety and maintenance.	\$ 231,773	2030	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$232,585	\$0	\$0
2.7	Architectural Improvements (includes all architectural items from Tier 1 and improved entry sequence)	\$ 3,062,280	2029	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$4,042,210	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Cost for Tiers 2		\$ 4,875,300		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 792,174	\$ 231,548	\$ 4,382,936	\$ 662,487	\$ -	\$ -

#	Project Description	Planning Level Cost Estimate	Select FY	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2032	2034
3A	Tier Three Improvements (Museum Expansion)											
3A.1	Renovate entry to accommodate building expansion.	\$ 242,506	2034	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$243,726
3A.2	Evaluate acquiring additional parking spaces and property for the park.	\$ 19,181	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,197	\$0
3A.3	Evaluate NMDOT Right of Way for development along the street. Confirm ownership of parking spaces and extent of ROW.	\$ 9,591	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,607	\$0
3A.4	Architectural Improvements (Museum Expansion)	\$ 11,322,480	2034	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$11,323,700
3A.5	Evaluate acquiring the log cabin museum and gift shop back from the Village of Capitan.	\$ 9,591	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,607	\$0
Total Cost for Tier 3A		\$ 11,593,758		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,804	\$ 11,567,427
3B	Tier Three Improvements (New Building)											
3B.1	Renovate entry, pedestrian walk, and landscape to accommodate new Visitor's Center.	\$ 561,181	2034	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$562,402
3B.2	New pavilion as outdoor classroom.	\$ 120,011	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$121,027	\$0
3B.3	Expanded landscape area with informal paths. Reconstruct the rock wall along the edge of the parking.	\$ 583,358	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$584,374	\$0
3B.4	New "360" Smokey grave site feature.	\$ 77,258	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$78,274	\$0
3B.5	Expanded parking and evaluate for Electric Vehicle Parking/Charging Stations.	\$ 25,575	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$26,591	\$0
3B.6	Establish connection to planned future public trail.	\$ 77,258	2030	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$78,070	\$0	\$0
3B.7	New expanded maintenance building.	\$ 792,279	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$793,295	\$0
3B.8	New maintenance yard with enhanced security improvements (taller fencing, lighting, lockable gates).	\$ 171,512	2032	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$172,528	\$0
3B.9	Explore Village of Capitan's interest in acquiring NE property for expansion of Community Park. Explore opportunities for alternate property uses including access for park staff and maintenance vehicles or a Camp Host Site.	\$ 9,591	2030	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,403	\$0	\$0
3B.10	Architectural Improvements (New Building)	\$ 10,810,644	2034	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$10,811,864
Total Cost for Tier 3B		\$ 13,228,667		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 88,472	\$ 1,776,089	\$ 11,374,266
Total Cost for Tier 1 + 2 + 3A		\$ 16,469,058		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 792,174	\$ 231,548	\$ 4,382,936	\$ 662,487	\$ 30,804	\$ 11,567,427
Total Cost for Tier 1 + 2 + 3B		\$ 18,103,967		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 792,174	\$ 231,548	\$ 4,382,936	\$ 750,960	\$ 1,776,089	\$ 11,374,266



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# APPENDIX

The Appendix is provided in a separate Attachment. The Appendix includes the following materials.

[Document Research Inventory](#)  
[CSTi Boundary Survey \(March 2024\)](#)  
[Stakeholder Survey Responses](#)  
[Smokey Bear Compass](#)  
[Draft Design Concepts \(January 2024\)](#)



NEW MEXICO



Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

# SMOKEY BEAR HISTORICAL PARK

## FRAMEWORK PLAN



**FINAL REPORT - AUGUST 2024**

**pland**  
COLLABORATIVE

**FORM**  
**ATIVE**  
ARCHITECTURE