

# Rooted & Resilient

Eco-Smart Design for Next-Gen Campground Development

# **EDG Speakers**

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**Stefanie Smith**

Architect  
Technical Director



**Jeremy Ousley, PE**

Associate Director of  
Site Development

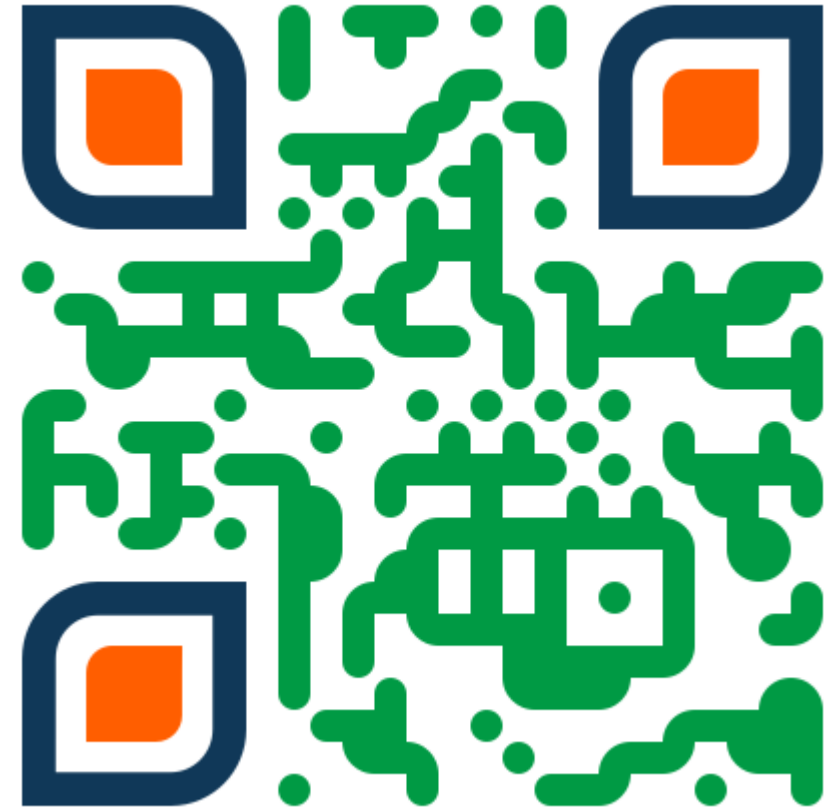


**Caitlin Russell**

Urban Designer

# Overview

- Why go Green?
- Key Strategies
- Resources
- Law of Large Numbers



**Presentation Slides**

The background features a dark green field with several stylized green plants. On the left, there are orange arrows indicating a flow or movement, some pointing upwards and others in a circular pattern.

# Why go Green?

- Reduce Operation Costs
- Enhance Guest Experience
- Be a Leader in Eco-Friendly Practices



## Consumer Behaviors

72%

of Global consumers willing to pay more for sustainable products

environmental responsibility is very/extremely important when choosing a brand

55%

78%

of US consumers feel better when buying sustainable products

projected compound annual grow rate for Eco-Tourism

12%

## Guest Preference

83%

Want to make more sustainable travel choices

3 in 10

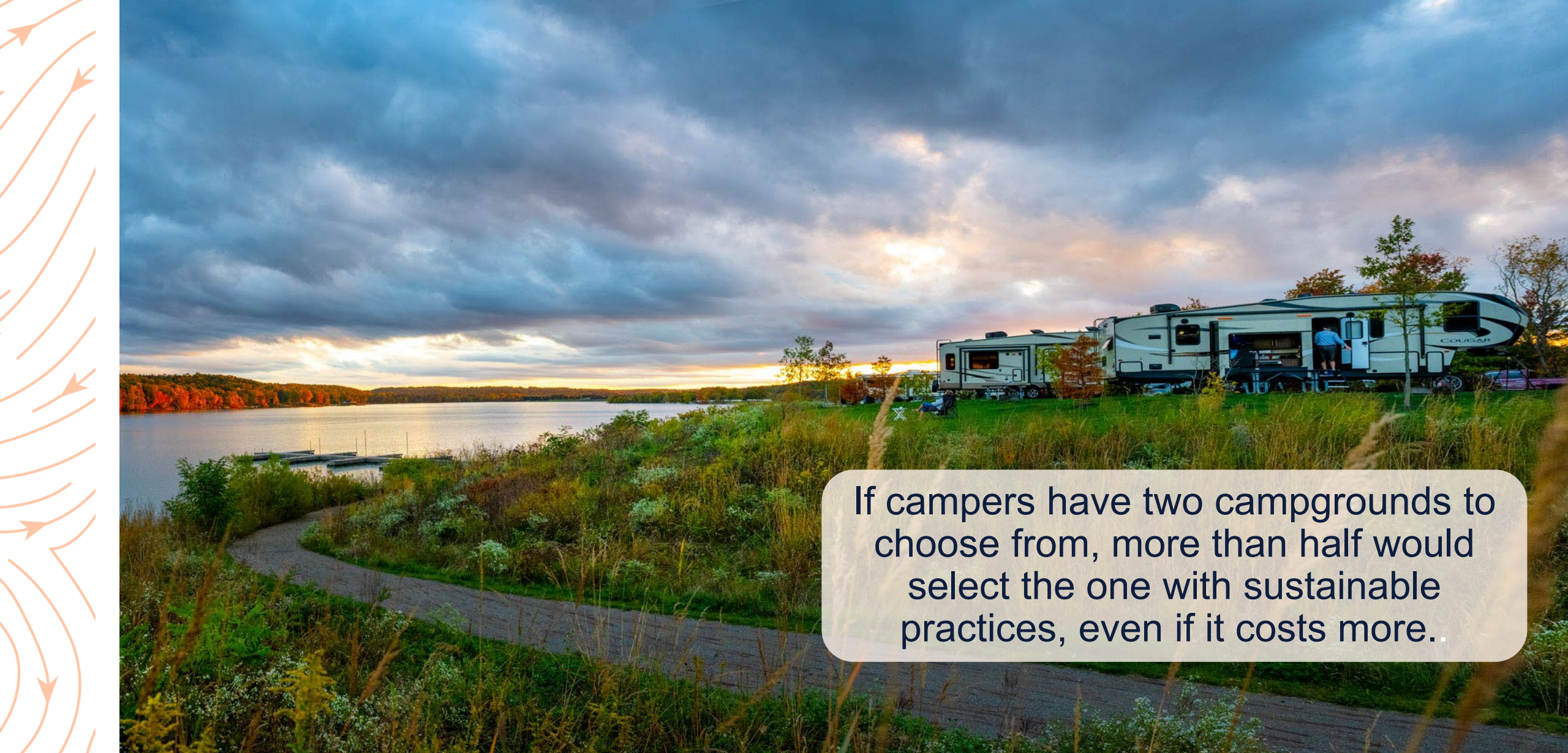
Campers say sustainable practices greatly enhance their experience

## Considerations

28%

Of travelers report they are tired of hearing about climate change all the time

# Trends



If campers have two campgrounds to choose from, more than half would select the one with sustainable practices, even if it costs more..

# Differentiation

Photo Credit: MWCD Atwood Lake Park  
Reference: KOA 2025 Camping & Outdoor Hospitality Report



## Equity Lifestyle Properties

- Corporate Sustainability Policy
- Annual Sustainability Report
- 2023/2024 Report Environmental Metrics
  - Invested about \$24 million in sustainability initiatives
  - Maintains approximately 10,200 acres of forests
  - Produced over 2 million kWh of renewable energy from on-site solar systems
  - Reduced GHG emissions by 15% from 2019 (scope 1 and 2 emissions)
  - Planted 100,000 trees through American Forests Resilient Forest Program
- Integrated WaterWise, an educational Campaign across all Encore RV Resorts. In 2022, guests at over 90 Encore parks made the pledge.



## Sun Outdoors



- ALL parks must meet 9 of 16 eco-criteria established in OHI's Plan-It-Green program.
- Striving for **carbon neutrality by 2035** with zero emissions by 2045.
- National Parks Foundation, Outdoor Exploration Supporting Partner

## KOA

- Kamp Green Program with almost 40% participation
- Funding to "Go Green": Campground of the Future grant
- KOA Headquarters is **LEED Gold Certified**
- **Partnerships** - KOA foundation donates to conservation efforts and is establishing relationships with organizations that support outdoor responsible recreation



# Proof | Case Study

Adventure and Environmental Stewardship go Hand-In-Hand

# Key Strategies

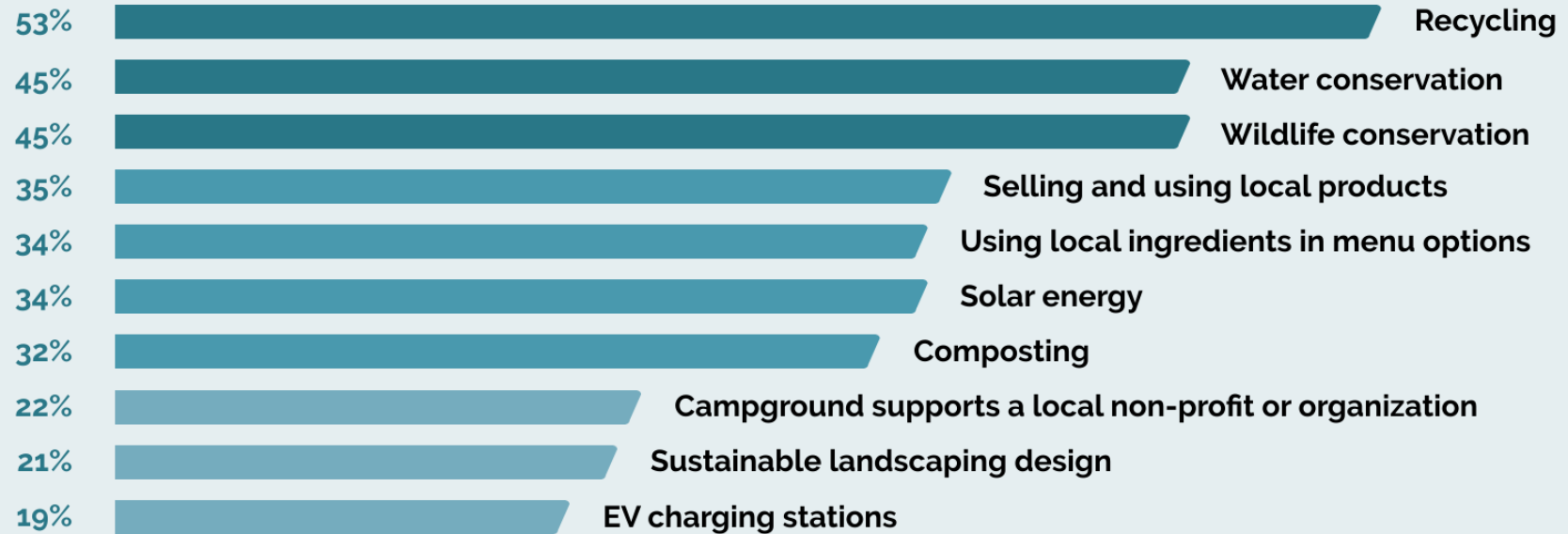
Moving from Challenge  
to Opportunity





# Key Strategies

## Top Most Important Sustainable Practices





# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

4.9lb

of trash per person, per day

1.57lb

of trash recycled per person,  
per day

National recycling rate

32%

80%

Of waste is plastic in  
U.S. national Parks

Landfill Space is limited!

Landfills risk  
contamination of the  
surrounding environment.

## Marketing Benefits

Cleaner campgrounds = positive guest experience



**Waste management is one of the largest  
areas of sustainability that is directly  
within a campground's control.**

# Why It Matters

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

References: EPA, SEVENSEAS Media



## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

Eliminate single-use plastic (bottles, utensils, straws, limit shopping bags...)

Install water refill stations & sell reusable bottles

Reduce paper usage (paperless reservations, digital maps...)

Compost organic waste (food scraps, paper, coffee grounds, leaves...)

Restore and repurpose existing buildings

Salvage and reuse materials (crushed concrete/asphalt, wood, masonry...)



## Challenges

- No Recycling Program in the area
- Contaminated Waste Streams

## Solutions

- Make it Easy for Campers!
- Provide clear, simple instructions with incentive programs
- Place bins in high-traffic areas



# Actions & Strategies

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

# Jellystone Park – Wisconsin Dells

## Practices

- Recycling and Compost Program
- Reduced landfill waste by 25%
- Guests are given blue bag for recycling and green bag for composting upon arrival. Pictures provided with the bags indicate what items can be disposed of.
- Numerous recycling stations throughout the campground.
- Yogi Bear, Boo Boo, Cindy Bear, and Ranger Smith actively promote the recycling program to guests.



## Case Study

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



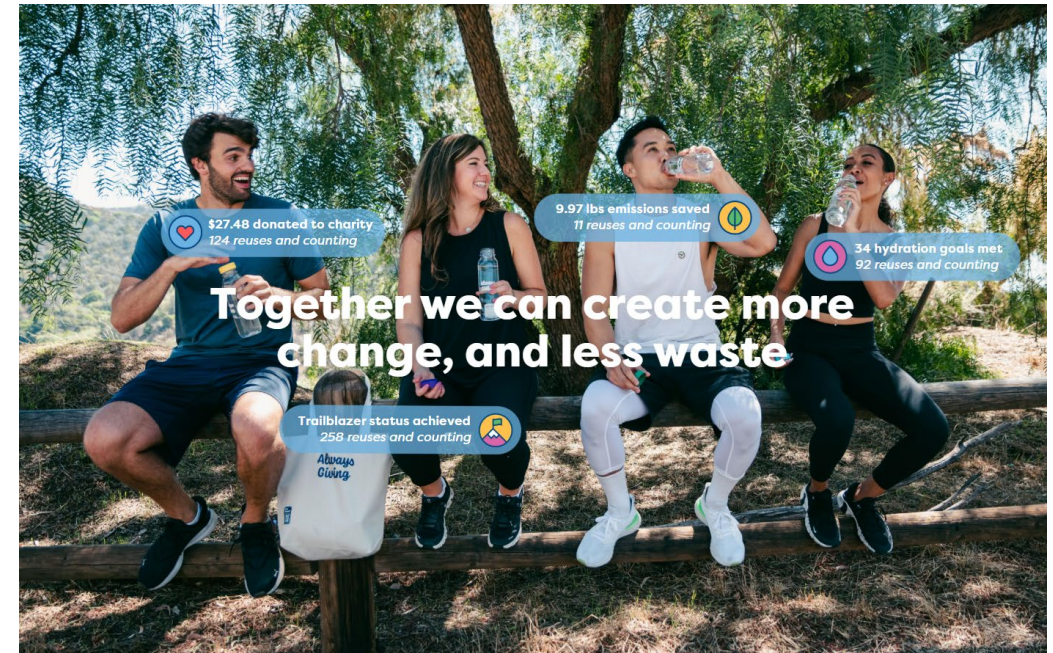
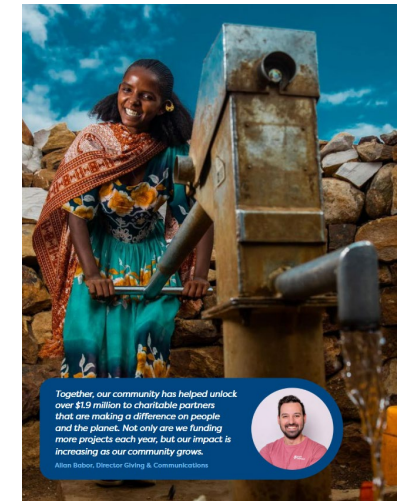
# KOA & Fill it Forward

## Practices

- Partnership with Fill it Forward
- Reduce wasteful swag - replace plastic with reusable bottles, cups, bags, and containers.
- Fill it Forward provides water bottles with a scannable QR code, and every time you fill the bottle and scan, money is donated to a water conservation project.

## Fill it Forward Program Benefits

- Unlocked over \$1.9m in charitable donations
- Diverted 9+ million single-use items



# Case Study

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Bottles, Cups, Bags & More - Fill it Forward



# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- **Low Impact Campground Design**
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Low Impact Campground Design





***“The first rule of sustainability is to align with natural forces, or at least not try to defy them.”*** Paul Hawken

# Why It Matters

Low Impact Campground Design

MWCD Atwood Lake Park



30%

of global greenhouse gas emissions come from the construction industry

Buildings alone account for 36% of energy consumption in the US

36%

68%

of electricity consumption accounted for by buildings

Buildings alone account for 38% of carbon dioxide emissions in the US

38%

## Benefits

Optimize Site Potential

Optimize Energy Use

Protect & Conserve Water

Optimize Building Space & Material Use

Healthier Indoor Environments

Reduce Environmental Impact during Construction and post-Construction

Improved Resiliency

Cost Effective

Guest Experience

# Why It Matters

Low Impact Campground Design

References: Whole Building Design Guide, US EPA, LEED Green Building Program, SITES Sustainable Landscapes



# Site Selection

## Practices

- Prioritize Previously Developed Land
- Geography / Developable Land
  - Topography
  - Climate
  - Soil Conditions
  - Natural Features
  - Regulatory Requirements
  - Availability of Utilities
- Proximity
  - Transportation Networks
  - Utilities

## Impacts

- Project Cost
- Guest Experience



*Campground Site outside Sturgis, South Dakota*

# Actions & Strategies

Low Impact Campground Design - Site Selection



# Site Design

## Practices

- Conserve & Highlight Natural Features & Habitats
- Use the Land to Inform the Design
  - Visitor Experience
  - Special Locations
  - Integrate Roadways, Facilities, & Campsites into the Landscape
  - Natural Buffers
- Clear Paths of Circulation
  - Limit Congestion
  - Define Paths to protect the landscape
- Consolidate Land Use
  - Destination Hubs
  - Neighborhoods



*Campground Site outside Zebulon, North Carolina*

# Actions & Strategies

Low Impact Campground Design – Site Design

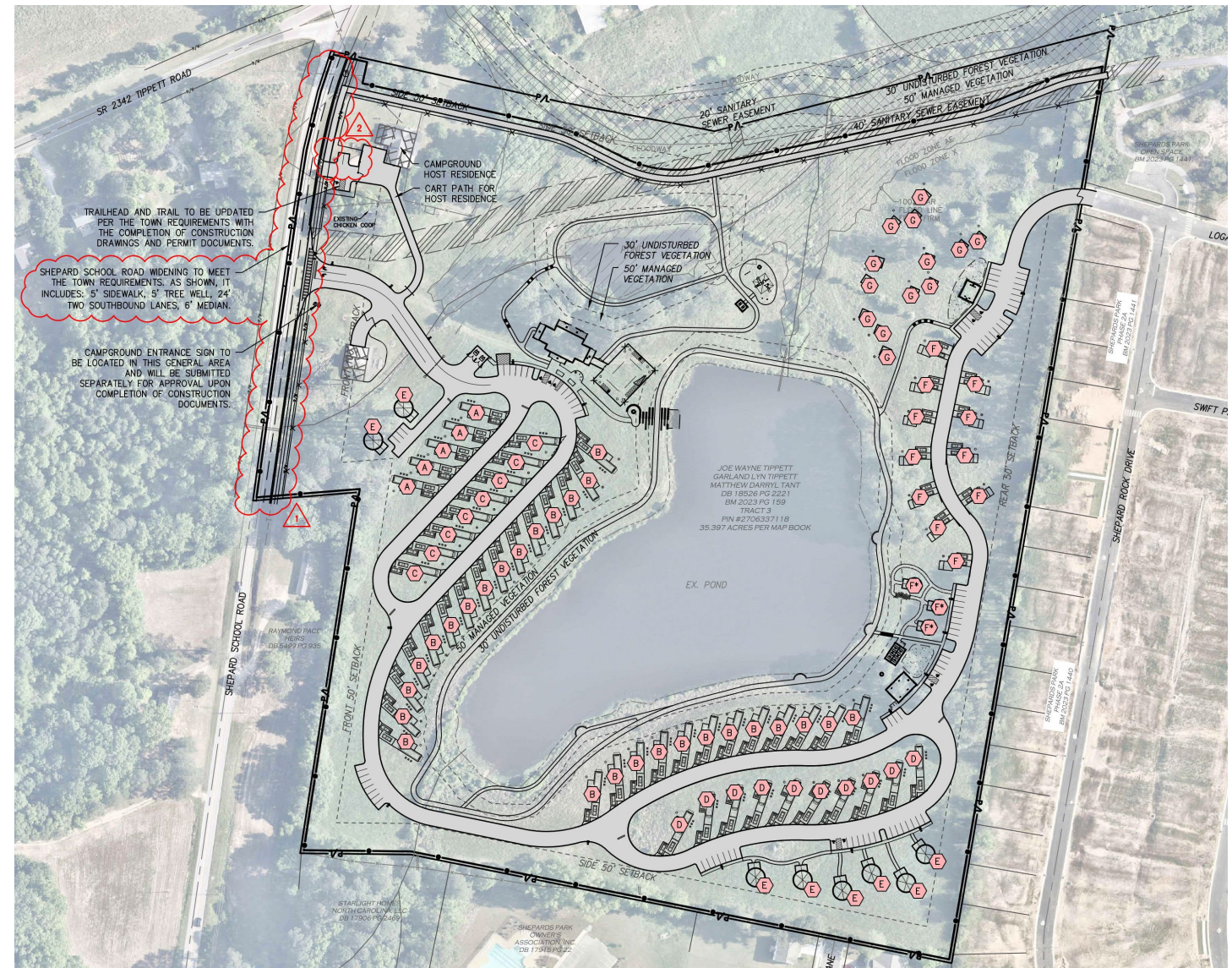
**Work WITH the Land!**



# Zebulon, NC RV Park

## Practices

- Adjacent to Developed Areas
- Conserve & Highlight Natural Features & Habitats
- Integrate Roadways, Facilities, & Campsites into the Landscape
- Maintain Natural Landscape
- Destination Hubs
- Neighborhoods



## Case Study

Low Impact Campground Design – Site Selection & Design



# Stormwater Management

## Practices

- Traditional Retention/Detention Basins
- Rain Gardens
- Bioretention Basins/Swales
- Dry Streambed

## Opportunities

- Can be used as a water feature and recreation amenity.
- Can provide a decorative aesthetic to the campground
- Reduction of erosion and maintenance



*The Ubuntu Gathering Place, Cleveland, OH*

# Actions & Strategies

Low Impact Campground Design – Stormwater Management



# Camp Ledgewood STEM Center of Excellence

- Girl Scouts of Northeast Ohio
- Integrated stormwater management into the landscape to create an entrance experience



## Case Study

Low Impact Campground Design – Stormwater Management



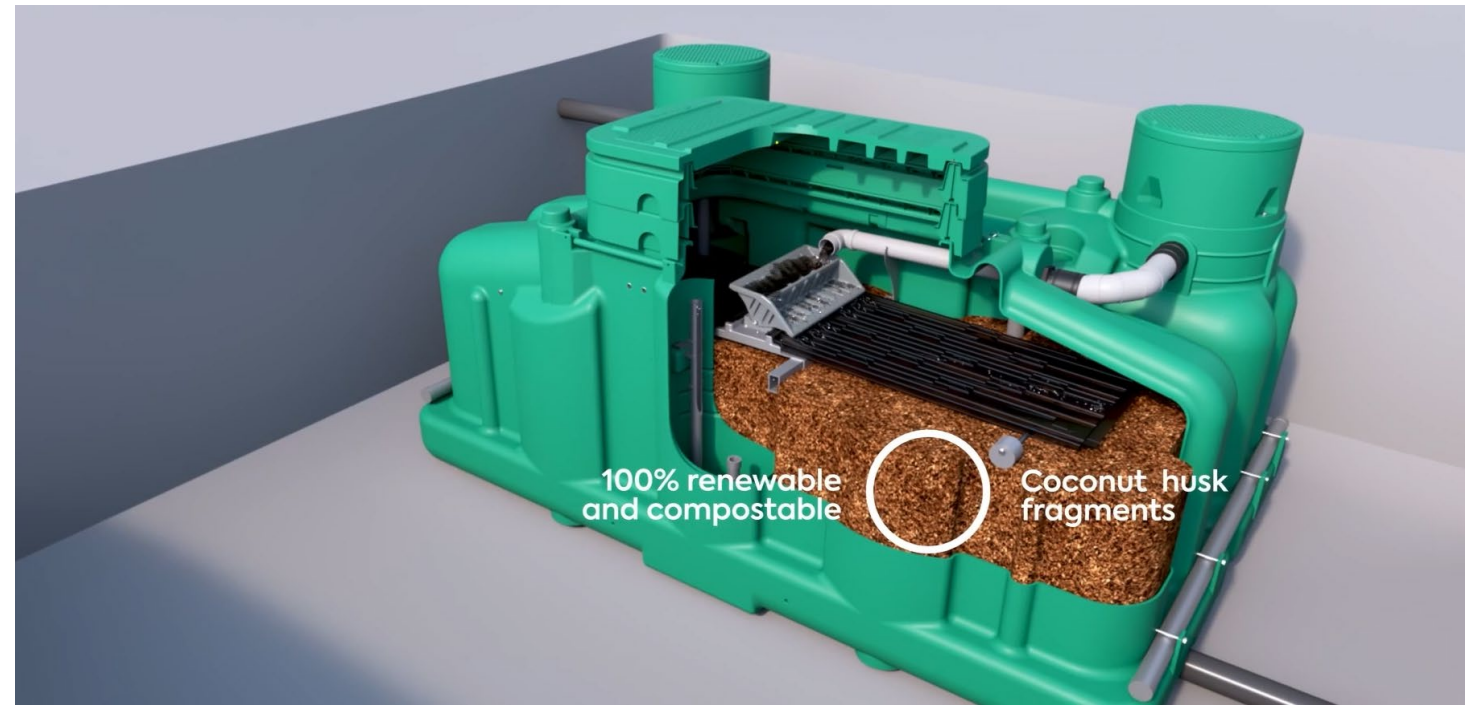
# Wastewater Treatment

## Practices

- Premanufactured Ecological Systems
  - Example: Premier Tech Ecoflow system
  - Systems use recycled materials like coconut husks as a filtration system.

## Opportunities

- Can take up a smaller footprint
- Can be energy free on smaller systems
- Extended life with the filtration system protecting the leach field



# Actions & Strategies

Low Impact Campground Design – Wastewater Design

Photos Courtesy of [www.premiertechaqua.com](http://www.premiertechaqua.com), accessed 10/01/2025

## Green Buildings

- Passive Design
  - Building Orientation
  - Construction Details (Insulation, Shading)
- Resource Efficiency
  - Modular / Factory Built
  - Renewable / Recycled / Reused Content
  - Regional Materials (<500 miles)
- Energy Efficiency
  - LED Lighting
  - Energy Efficient Equipment & Systems
  - Solar Panels
- Water Efficiency
  - Low Flow Fixtures
- Indoor Air Quality
  - Low VOC / Non-Emitting Products
  - Zero or Minimal Carpet



*Natchez Trace RV Campground, Hohenwald, TN  
Tiny Houses are Green Certified by TRA Certification*

# Actions & Strategies & Case Study

Low Impact Campground Design – Green Buildings



# KOA HQ

## LEED Gold Certification

- Minimized Waste and Impacts
- Reduced Water Consumption
- Optimize Interiors
- Maximize Energy Efficiency
- Product Life-Cycle Analysis



## Case Study

Low Impact Campground Design – Green Buildings

[LEED rating system](#) | [U.S. Green Building Council](#)





# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- **Protect & Enhance Natural Environment**
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment

campers value natural  
surroundings and  
scenic views

campers miss thrill of  
discovering nature like  
they did as kids

A decorative graphic consisting of several stylized green leaves and stems of varying heights, arranged in a cluster on the right side of the page.

plant and wildlife  
identification is a top skill  
campers want to pass to  
their children

Pollinators enable the reproduction of 35% of the world's food crops

# #1

reason  
WHY people  
camp...



# Value of Trees

- Clean Air
- Filter Water
- Slow Flooding
- Cool our Cities
- Capture Carbon
- Provide Critical Wildlife Habitat
- Provide Shade/Privacy
- Reduce Stress
- Improve Health
- Improve Childhood Development
- Encourage Physical Activity

*Trees INCREASE the VALUE of your property!*

# Why It Matters

## Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment

REF: Campspot 2025 Camping Trends, Arbor Day Foundation

# Passive Approach

## Practices

- Green Space Naturalization
- Create Natural Stream Buffers
- Create Wildlife-Friendly Zones
- Plant Native Flowers, Trees & Vegetation
- Protect Threatened or Endangered Species
- Create Quiet Hours

## Opportunities

- Create opportunities for meaningful connections with nature.
- Enhances the campground experience.
- Reduces maintenance costs
  - Less mowing, fertilizer use, natural pest control



# Actions & Strategies

Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment



# Active Approaches

## Practices

- Stream Restoration Project
- Construct Wetlands
- Construct or Install Habitats
  - Examples – butterfly gardens, beehives, birdhouses, bat caves, etc.
- Provide Observation Points
  - Examples - overlooks, benches, look-outs, wildlife blinds, access to water, etc.
- Limit Artificial Light at Night (Dark Skies)
  - Use Cut-Off Light Fixtures, Motion Sensors
- Implement Wildlife Programs

## Opportunities

- Education programs are marketable and enhance the guest experience.



# Actions & Strategies

Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment



# MWCD Campgrounds Central Ohio

## Practices

- Naturalize and protect streams
- Native vegetation

## Benefits

- “Green” construction practices throughout campground portfolio reflect MWCD mission.

## MWCD Mission Statement

Responsible stewards dedicated to providing the benefits of flood reduction, conservation and recreation in the Muskingum River Watershed.



*MWCD Campgrounds, OH*

# Case Study

Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment



# Maple Lakes Campground Seville, Ohio

## Practices

- Naturalized 8 acres of open lawn to native grasses with 3 acres of wildflowers
- Full establishment took approximately 3 years

## Benefits

- Saves nearly 3 hours of mowing per week.
- Owners and campers have seen a noticeable increase in birds and butterfly activity.



## Case Study

Protect & Enhance Natural Environment



## Emberglow Outdoor Resort, NC

*"We have little to no pavement in the park, opting for the use of woodchips and gravel. We have an obligation to minimize our impact."*

*These practices ultimately benefit the environment by protecting resources, reducing waste, and increasing the likelihood of our delicate ecosystems surviving. Moreover, this not only elevates your camping adventure by creating a cleaner, more natural experience, but it also helps you tread lightly on the planet for future generations to enjoy."*

Nainsi McKinney, Manager



[www.emberglowoutdoorresort.com](http://www.emberglowoutdoorresort.com)

## Case Study

Protect & Enhance Natural Environment

Designed in Nature



# Design the Experience → Earn the Return

Before: Conventional Bed



Thirsty plant mix, frequent replacements, high resource demand



Maintenance hours (converted beds)



Irrigation/inputs

After: Native Cluster



Drought-tolerant, habitat value, distinct sense-of-place



NPS keywords (nature/wildlife/stars)

Small, intentional changes scale across loops and hubs.



VIREO





### Native planting as infrastructure

Swap thirsty décor beds for region-native perennials and shrubs to cut water, fertilizer, and replacements—while boosting pollinators and place-identity.

Payoff: Enjoy sustained cost savings and enhanced natural beauty that resonates with guests.

### Wayfinding + micro-stops

Signed paths and trimmed corridors reduce risk and increase confidence. Add 2–3 pocket parks (bench + native cluster) along loops for guest engagement.

Payoff: Guests experience greater satisfaction and explore more of the property with ease.

### 4-Phase Quick Guide: Survey → Install → Activate → Optimize (8-week cadence)

1. **Survey:** Assess current site conditions, guest preferences, and ecological opportunities.
2. **Install:** Implement selected eco-smart upgrades efficiently, minimizing disruption.
3. **Activate:** Launch new features and integrate them seamlessly into the guest experience.
4. **Optimize:** Monitor performance, gather feedback, and refine for maximum ROI and guest delight.



# KOA Terramor Resort

## Practices

- Native Plantings – Over 90% of vegetation is native
- Recycle organic matter - 100% of vegetation trimmings remain on site
- Multi-Modal Transportation – Free employee and guest shuttle bus, bike racks, EV charging
- Recycling - plastic, aluminum, and cardboard
- Reduce Waste - eliminated plastic bottles from store, use food scraps for neighboring farm animals
- Integrated Pest Management Plan – minimal use of fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides.
- Education & Program - Bee apiary and “Bee Keeping Experience”, Partner with Friends of Acadia for on-site programming, online booking donations, hosting Pints with Purpose
- Energy Efficiency - Reduced irrigation, Energy efficient lighting and appliances, Monitor utility bills

## Benefits

- Significant Cost Savings – Water and energy bills, long-term maintenance, operations, and utility costs

What's Important to You, Is Important to Us.

A LOVE OF NATURE, A SPIRIT FOR ADVENTURE, A DESIRE TO GIVE BACK.



# Case Study

Protect & Enhance Natural Environment

[Terramor Case Study - SITES for Existing Landscapes - Terramor Outdoor Resorts](#)



## Every campground should...

1. **Remove plastic water bottles** from gift stores and sell boxed water.
2. **Install water filler stations** throughout the property.
3. **Limit water usage** by incorporating natural plants and foliage into the landscaping
4. **Work with local producers, purveyors and manufacturers.** Guests are wanting to find local, authentic food and merchandise, so tap into those local artisans in the store and within food and beverage.
5. **Recycle** - even if it's just cans and cardboard.

~Jenny McCullough, Director of Brand & Operations,  
Terramor Outdoor Resort



# Case Study

Protect & Enhance Natural Environment

Small Changes = Big Impact





# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- **Conserve Water**
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Conserve Water

3%

of the planet's water is freshwater... only 1.2% can be used for drinking water

HALF of the world's largest cities already experience water scarcity.

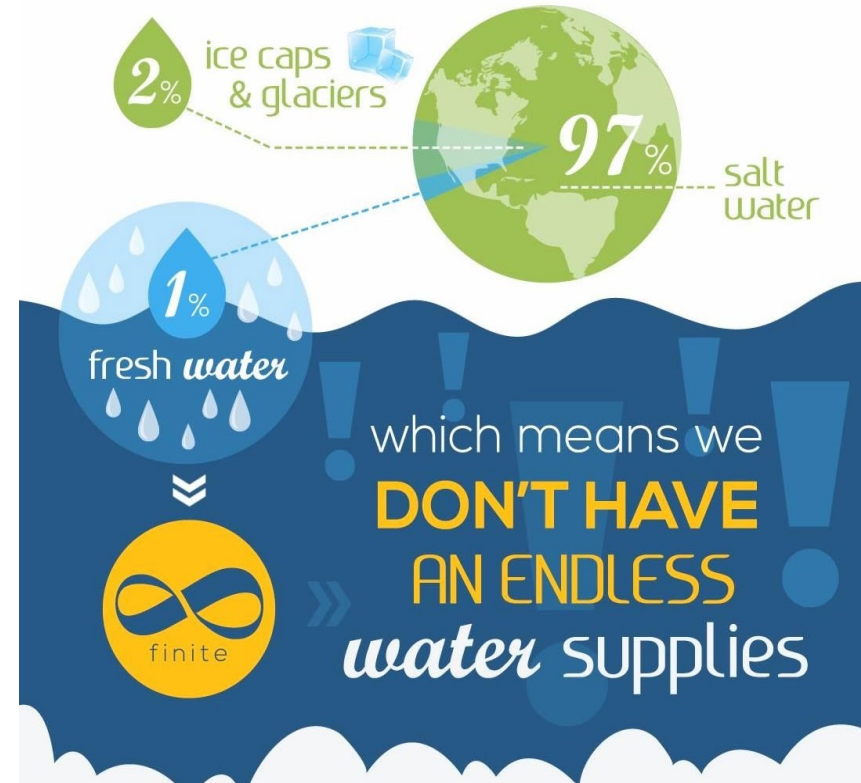
HALF

2  
BILLION

2 Billion people lack safe drinking water – today.

85% of wetlands are estimated to have been lost in the last century.

85%



By 2030, humanity will be demanding **40% more water** than the Earth can supply.

# Why it Matters

## Water Conservation

References: US EPA, Population Matters.org, IPBES 2019, World Economic Forum



## Interior

### Practices

- Stop the Leaks!
- Use Water Sense Labeled (Low-Flow) Plumbing Fixtures
- On-Demand Water Heater
  - Use a timer device though!

A faucet that drips just once per second loses 3,000 gallons of water per year

**3,000**  
gallons

**33%**

Money saved by installing water efficient plumbing fixtures

### % of water saved w/Low-Flow Fixtures

**50%**

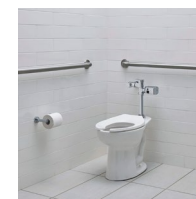
Showerheads,  
Faucets, &  
Washing Machines

**90%**

Toilets

**30%**

Dishwashers



# Actions & Strategies

Water Conservation - Interior

References: US EPA

# Exterior

## Practices

- Fix the Leaks!
- Irrigation
  - Drip Irrigation
  - Smart Irrigation Systems
  - Rain Barrels
  - Graywater Reuse
- Metering & Monitoring
  - Track Water Usage
  - Meter Campsite Use
- Ban or Limit Car / RV Washing on Site



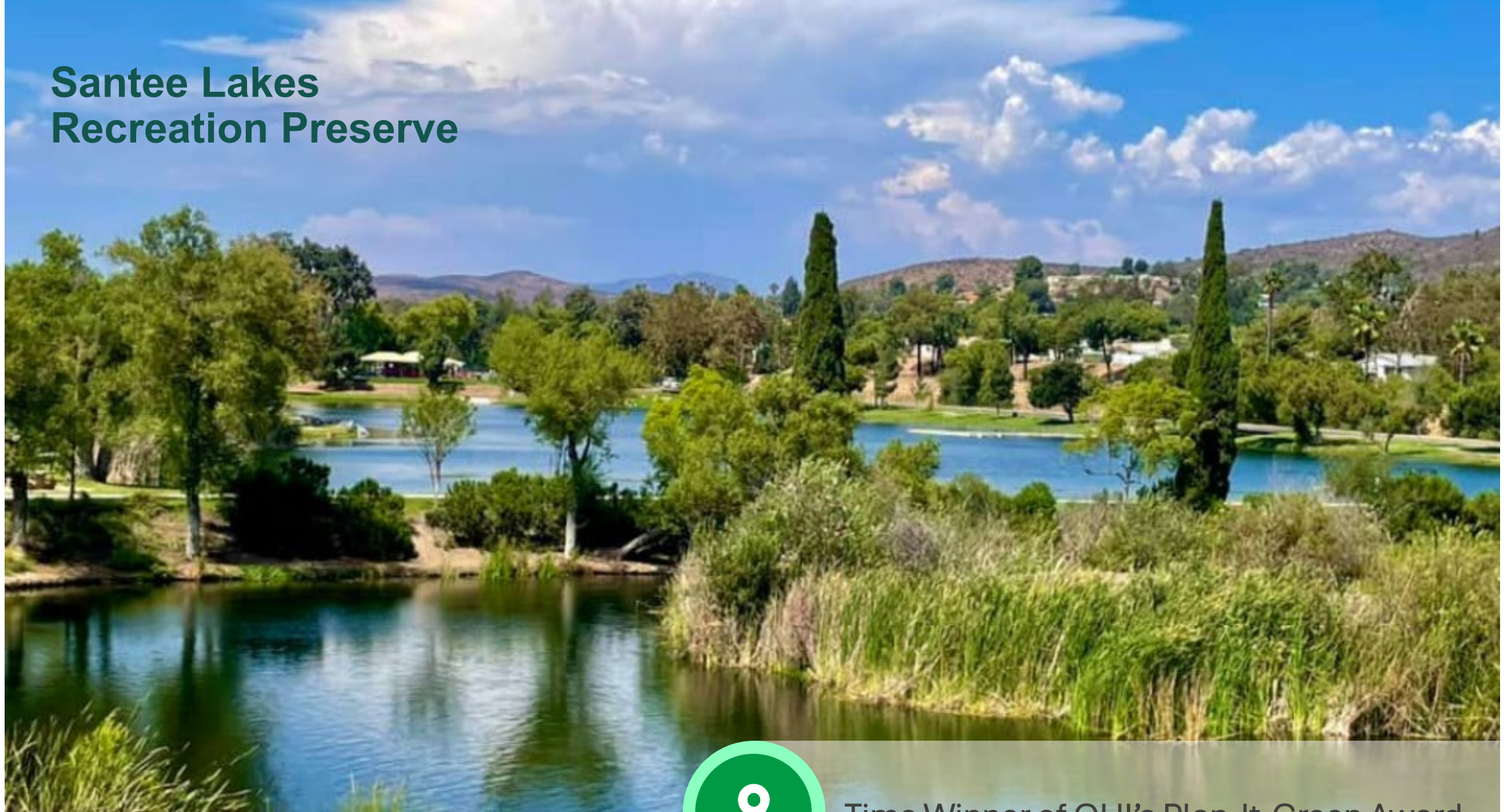
# Actions & Strategies

## Water Conservation

IMAGES: [www.completeplumbingoffsharbour.com](http://www.completeplumbingoffsharbour.com),  
[www.ifewithdj.com](http://www.ifewithdj.com), [www.gardenstylesanantonio.com](http://www.gardenstylesanantonio.com)



# Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve



9

Time Winner of OHI's Plan-It-Green Award

## Case Study

Water Conservation

[www.santeelakes.com](http://www.santeelakes.com)



# Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve

## Practices

- 7 recreational lakes, divert 2 million gallons of partially treated water from the Water Reclamation Facility
- More than 4 acres of solar panels provide enough power to meet almost 50% of the entire Park and Campground needs.
- Water-efficient landscaping, ALL vegetation watered with recycled water, over 2,000 trees on site
- Education is a core program including programs, annual tree-planting events, etc.
- New structures utilize recycled materials.
- Adopt a Wood Duck Box program.



## Case Study

### Water Conservation

[www.santeelakes.com](http://www.santeelakes.com)

Winning Big While Staying Green – OHI

SANTEE LAKES RECREATION PRESERVE WINS NATIONAL AWARDS | East County Magazine



# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- **Energy Efficiency**
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local

Energy Efficiency

## Goals

- Use less energy to deliver same level of service
- Reduce operating costs and environmental impact
- Increase resiliency during power outages or emergencies

www.earthreminder.com

# Why Energy Efficiency Matters?



# Why it Matters

Energy Efficiency





## Building Practices

- Lighting
  - LEDs use 90% less energy
  - Motion-sensing & Time-based lighting
  - Remind staff to power down lights and computers
- Smart Thermostats
- Energy-Star Appliances
- Install Energy-efficient Windows
- Add Building Insulation
- Seal Leaks (at openings, attic, foundation, etc...)
- Use Heat Pumps
- Change Filters
- And... much, much, more!

90%

15 bulbs =  
**\$1k**  
(10 yrs)

2° change =  
**8%**  
(annually)

10% to  
**50%**  
(less energy)

Add  
insulation  
**15%**  
(saving)



# Actions & Strategies

Energy Efficiency

Energy Star  
[www.earthreminder.com](http://www.earthreminder.com)  
[www.thisoldhouse.com](http://www.thisoldhouse.com)



## Site Installation Practices

- Solar
  - Panels
  - Site/Pathway Lighting
  - Heating & Pool Heaters
- Wind Turbines
- EV infrastructure Pedestals

1 in 5

campers say having an EV charging station is important to them while camping ( KOA 2025 Report)



# Actions & Strategies

Energy Efficiency



## Thousand Trails Wilderness Lakes, CA

- 3500 Solar panels coving a premium RV storage facility
- 2.4 million KW/hours per year
- 50% total energy used across the campground of over 500 sites



RV Park	Annual Energy Cost	Annual Savings with Solar Power	Payback Time (Years)
Happy Trails RV Park	\$35,000	\$20,000	2.25
Green Acres RV Resort	\$50,000	\$30,000	2.13
Camp Wildwood	\$75,000	\$45,000	2.40

## Thor Industries Hybrid Class A Motorhome



20%

More aerodynamic  
than similar RVs

**“Electric car sales in 2025 are expected to exceed 20 million worldwide to represent more than one-quarter of cars sold worldwide.”**

Sales were up 35% year-on-year in the first three months of 2025, with record first-quarter sales in all major markets.

- Roof top solar panels also feed batteries
- 500 miles of range (electric & gasoline extender)
- Commercially available in 2025
- Near-Zero Emission Vehicles (NZEV)

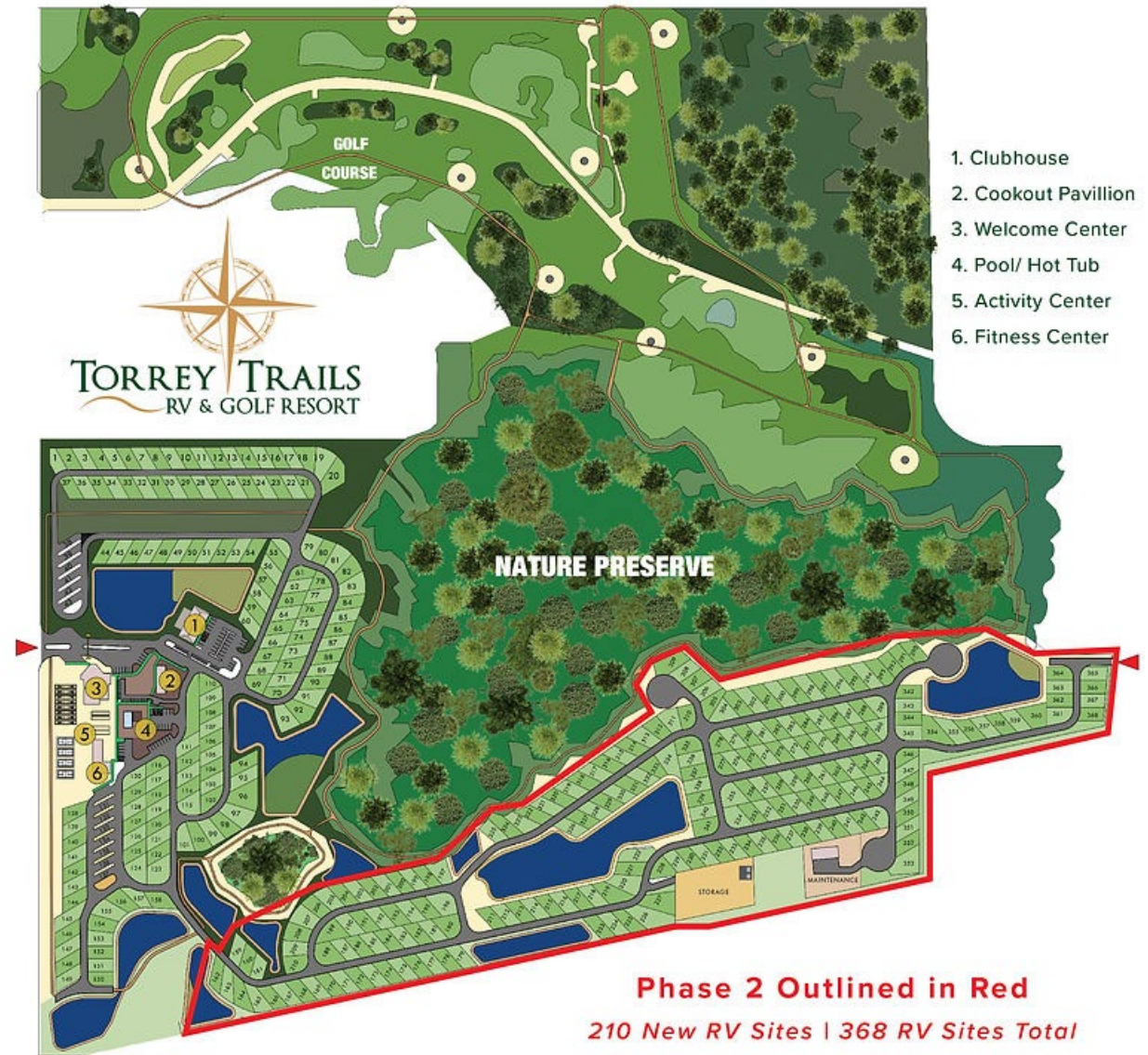
# Case Study

Energy Efficiency



## Torrey Trails RV & Golf Resort

- Each with a second pedestal for EV charging purposes.
  - Expanded by adding 210 new campsites



## Case Study

Energy Efficiency

<https://www.torreytrailsrv.com/rates>  
jamestownadvanced



# Kellogg RV Park

## Practices

### Iowa's only solar-powered RV park

With 8 banks of solar panels, the system provides enough power to serve 30- and 50-amp service to 38 RV sites, power Iowa's Best Burgers, and Phillips 66 gas station.



## Case Study

Energy Efficiency



# Oz Farm & Retreat Center, CA

## Practices

- 100% 'off-the-grid', using solar and wind power for ALL its operations
- Low-flow plumbing fixtures
- Greywater Recycling System
- Native Landscaping

100%



[OZ Farm – www.ozfarm.com](http://www.ozfarm.com)

## Case Study

Energy Efficiency



# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- **Green Housekeeping & Maintenance**
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Green Housekeeping & Maintenance



# Infrastructure Maintenance

- Control I & I...and I
  - Inflow – Surface stormwater runoff that drains into broken sanitary manhole/cleanout lids.
  - Infiltration - Infiltration of stormwater runoff into broken sewer collection pipe systems.
  - Illegal – Direct storm connections (downspouts/surface drains) into sewage systems.

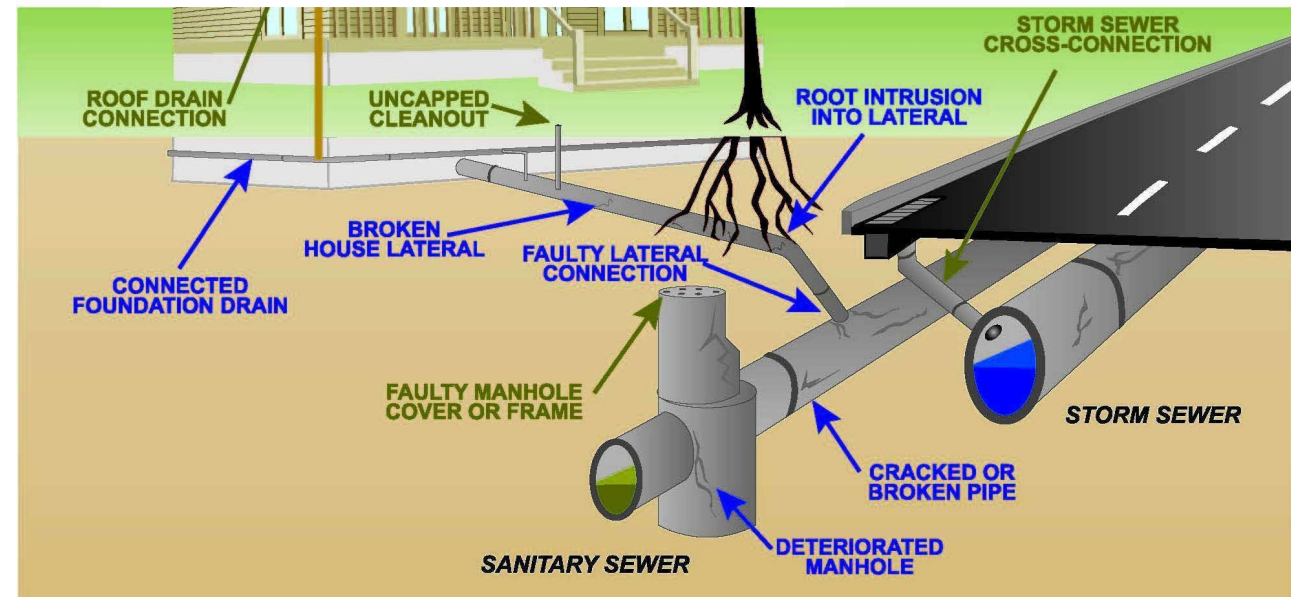
## Consequences

- Storm runoff in a wastewater system can strain and overload the system.
  - Leaky sewer systems also indicate sewage flow into the environment.
- Regular Maintenance of WWTP Systems
    - Prevents unexpected failures of the system and untreated discharges into the environment.



**INFLOW SOURCES**

**INFILTRATION SOURCES**



# Actions & Strategies

Green Housekeeping & Maintenance

# Green Housekeeping

## Practices

- Non-toxic cleaning supplies (low-VOC, no PFAS, biodegradable products )
- Consider ionized water cleaning systems or steam cleaning
- Avoid chemical pesticides – both inside and outside
- Maintain systems and equipment in good working order

## Benefits

- Reduces risk and exposure to hazardous chemicals.
- Reduced cost.
- Reduce environmental impact.

## Green Seal Certified Products



Laundry



Cleaning Products



Personal Care



Paints, Coatings & Adhesives



Sanitary Paper Products



Plastic Trash Bags

# Actions & Strategies

Green Housekeeping & Maintenance



# Jellystone Park New Brunswick

## Practices

- Uses ionized water for cleaning and sanitation to replace chemical s.
- Utilizes a cleaning machine from Tersano that electrifies water without chemicals, helps protects the environment, and saves money.

70%

Reduction of chemicals

Average ROI cost savings

25%



SAO has been certified safe by the top regulatory bodies around the world and is safe for use in the most sensitive environments. From governmental bodies to independent test laboratories and sustainability organizations, **stabilized aqueous ozone** is a safe, sustainable alternative to traditional chemical cleaners and disinfectants.

[www.tersano.com](http://www.tersano.com)

## Case Study

Green Housekeeping & Maintenance

IMAGE: [www.jellystoneparknb.com](http://www.jellystoneparknb.com)

# Rotating Tool Library

## Benefits

- Slash supply costs
- Boost occupancy
- Spark a community vibe

## Practices

- Guests sign items out, use them, and bring them back for the next RV'er.
- Everything is cataloged, inspected, and rotated across properties.
- Tag each tool with the replacement cost.
- Host a “DIY” Happy Hour for common fixes (it’s social, educational, marketable)

~ Brian Searl, Insider Perks

## Typical Starter Kit

- sewer-hose extensions
- spare adapters
- cable-rounding tools
- leveling blocks

No power tools!

Cost: \$250 - \$400



## Case Study

Green Housekeeping & Maintenance

Use this link to learn more about the program details:

[Rotating Tool Library: Boost Sustainability and Bookings at RV Resorts - Insider Perks](#)



# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- **Educate the Community**
- Stay Local

Educate the Community

67%

Of travelers say seeing sustainable practices inspire them at home (Booking.com 2024)

## Campgrounds are perfectly positioned to lead by example!

- Direct connection to nature
- High Volume of Visitors
- Controlled Environment with an Opportunity to Educate
- Alignment with Guest Expectations
- Gateway to Broader Sustainability

Over 60% of campers with children believe sustainable practices are important.

60%



# Why it Matters

## Educate and Inspire!



## Practices

- Camp Store
  - Reusable, recyclable, biodegradable products
  - Non-toxic supplies & renewable energy chargers
- Amenities
  - Trails & wildlife-spotting guides
  - Nature Play & Obstacle courses
  - Overlooks & community gardens
  - Install bird houses & bat houses
- Events & Programs
  - Nature walks, kids' activities
  - Volunteer opportunities (trail cleanup, habitat restoration)
  - Earth Day/Arbor Day, farmers markets, zero-waste events

27%

27% of Gen Z and Millennial customers are more likely to purchase sustainable brands



# Actions & Strategies

Educate and Inspire!



## Inspire by Example

### Practices

- Guests love a hands-on, memorable experiences
- Try: Foraging hikes, zero-waste challenges, local expert talks
- KOA Kamp Green model:
  - Support conservation groups
  - Volunteer in local communities
  - Host sustainability events



## Educate & Inspire through Information

### Practices

- Interpretive Signage
- Webpages, brochures, resources
- Small actions: biodegradable pet waste bags
- Programs for kids
- Workshops for adults



# Actions & Strategies

Educate and Inspire!



## Butte KOA Journey (MT) – Kamp Green Program

- **Energy Conservation:** Use LED lighting, Energy-Star appliances, planning solar shade shelters
- **Waste diversion:** working with local Scout troops to recycle cans/bottles, reusing linens for cleaning, eliminating single-use plastic bags and water bottles
- **Water conservation:** refill stations, low-flow fixtures, native landscaping, no sprinkler irrigation
- **Guest education:** the talk opening with guests about sustainability actions, host environmental programs and volunteer cleanups.



# Case Study

Educate and Inspire!



# KC RV Park

## Practices

- Adopt various green initiatives: solar panels, composting, recycling etc.
- Importantly, they involve guests in that experience: showing how much compost has been generated, sharing data like energy saved from LEDs, etc.
- Staff training is part of it, so employees can explain practices to guests and keep systems working.



## Case Study

Educate and Inspire!





# Key Strategies

- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle
- Low Impact Campground Design
- Protect & Enhance Natural Environment
- Conserve Water
- Energy Efficiency
- Green Housekeeping & Maintenance
- Educate the Community
- Stay Local



Stay Local

Staying local means engaging with and supporting the communities and ecosystems where your campground operates.

- **Boosts local economies:** Keeps money circulating within the community.
- **Protects the environment:** Encourages stewardship of local natural resources.
- **Strengthens community ties:** Builds trust and relationships between campgrounds and surrounding areas.
- **Creates a sense of place:** Enhances guest experience through authentic local connections.



# Why it Matters

Stay Local!



## Build Partnerships

- Collaborate with:
  - Soil & Water Conservation Districts
  - Departments of Natural Resources/Environmental Protection
  - Watershed Groups
  - National Organizations with local chapters: *Sierra Club, Audubon Society, National Park Foundation*
  - Support Local Organizations: *Boy/Girl Scouts, Park or Wildlife sanctuary preservation*
  - Keep an active membership with conservation organizations
  - Volunteer in local communities
  - Beehive Partnership

## Purchase Local Products

- Highlight local vendors, farms, and artisans.
  - Example: *Campground Beer Festivals* featuring local breweries (*Insider Perks*).

## Voluntourism

- Offer guests the chance to volunteer with environmental and community projects.

## Support and donate to:

- Local funds, preservation programs, and wildlife sanctuaries
- Join and stay active in conservation groups
- Beehive Partnerships – Adopt pollinators to protect biodiversity (*Insider Perks*)

# Stay Local



# Resources





### **Campground Specific Programs**

- Plan-it-Green Friendly Park, OH
- Kamp Green, KOA
- TRA Green Certification for RV Manufacturers
- Camp-Right Campgrounds, Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
- Leave No Trace, Center for Outdoor Ethics

### **Outdoor Hospitality**

- Green Key
- Florida Green Lodging Program
- Audobon International Green Lodging Certification
- Green Hotels Association

### **Regional Programs**

- WildSafeBC
- Vancouver Island Eco Star Awards
- Ocean Friendly Business
- Local Green Business Certifications

### **National Programs**

- LEED Green Building Rating System
- SITES

# **Recognition | Certification**

## Plan-it-Green Friendly Park

\*Must meet 9 of the 16 eco-friendly criteria:

1. **Demonstrates and communicates** conservation, recycling practices to employees, guests.
2. Park provides **recycle bins** for cans, paper, glass and plastic
3. Park uses **energy-saving** products and appliances
4. Park uses **motion sensors** or other lighting control devices
5. Park uses **non-toxic biodegradable cleaning** products
6. Park invests in landscaping practices and techniques that **minimize water usage**
7. **Park landscaping** consists of wood chip, pebble, paved, or grass paths
1. Park uses **post-consumer recycled products**
2. Park participates in **on-site organic composting**
3. Park utilizes **energy efficient lighting** products and solutions
4. Park uses for thermostats and/or **programmable devices and/or timers** sprinkler systems
5. Park utilizes **renewable energy** power sources
6. Park uses **low voltage lighting kits** to light walkways, patios, decks, etc.
7. Park uses **water-saving** faucets, toilets, shower heads, water heaters and/or laundry
8. Park utilizes **recycled water systems**
9. Park **recycles hazardous waste materials** (i.e.: batteries, electronics, toxic chemicals)

# OHI's "Plan-It-Green"



## Kamp Green

\*Campgrounds must complete at least one action in each category:

1. Save Energy
2. Conserve Water
3. Divert Waste
4. Educate the Community



# KOA's Kamp Green



SMALL ACTIONS  
× LOTS OF PEOPLE  
= BIG CHANGE

Final Words...

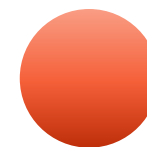


The background features a series of light blue curved lines with arrows on the left side, suggesting a flow or movement. At the bottom, there is a row of stylized green plants with multiple leaves, growing upwards. The main text is centered in a bold, dark green font.

**Small acts,  
when multiplied  
by millions of people,  
can transform the world.**

Howard Zinn

**Final Words...**



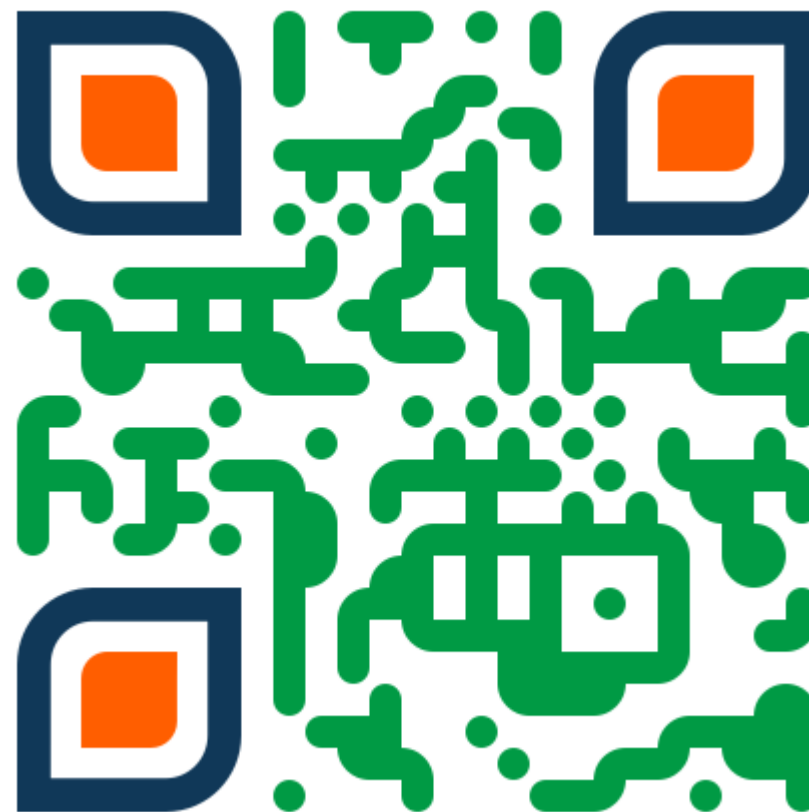
**Do ONE Thing!**

Final Words...

IMAGE: Muskingum Watershed Conservation District



# Thank You!



Presentation Slides

Native Plant Starter

— Quick Wins for Campgrounds

Pilot Zones: Strategic Native Plant Placements

<div>Hub/Core Areas</div> <div>Where: Welcome island, camp store edges, pool approach</div> <div>Goal: Tidy, low-profile plantings with high seasonal color for strong first impressions.</div>	<div>Loops/Edges</div> <div>Where: Between sites, corners, bathhouse edges</div> <div>Goal: Layered shrubs + perennials for visual screening, privacy, and habitat.</div>	<div>Waterfront/Riparian</div> <div>Where: Lake edges, stream banks, pond margins</div> <div>Goal: Stabilize soil, frame views, prevent erosion. Avoid invasive species.</div>
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Starter Palette (Match your ecoregion; source locally)

<div>Structure Shrubs (3 – 5 species)</div> <div><div><div>• Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier</i>)</div><div>• Viburnum (native species)</div><div>• Ninebark (<i>Physocarpus</i>)</div><div>• Inkberry holly (<i>Ilex glabra</i>)</div><div>• Red-twig dogwood (<i>Cornus sericea</i>)</div></div></div>	<div>Perennial Drifts (6 – 10 species)</div> <div><div><div>• Purple coneflower (<i>Echinacea</i>)</div><div>• Black-eyed Susan (<i>Rudbeckia</i>)</div><div>• Bee balm (<i>Monarda</i>)</div><div>• Goldenrod—short cultivars (<i>Solidago</i>)</div><div>• Aster (native species)</div><div>• Mountain mint (<i>Pycnanthemum</i>)</div><div>• Little bluestem (<i>Schizachyrium</i>)</div></div></div>
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Repeatable Bed Recipe (5 -Step Process)

1	<div>Clear &amp; Edge Bed</div> <div>Remove existing plants, define borders.</div>
2	<div>Amend Lightly</div> <div>Add compost only if soil is very poor.</div>
3	<div>Plant in Groups</div> <div>Odd numbers (3, 5, 7) create natural drifts.</div>
4	<div>Mulch 2 – 3"</div> <div>Keep mulch away from plant stems.</div>
5	<div>Water Deeply</div> <div>2–3× weekly for first month to establish.</div>

Light -Touch Maintenance

- ✓ Spring cutback (late winter/early spring)

✓ Spot-weed as needed (decreases after year 1)

✓ Top-up mulch in year 2

✓ **No fertilizer required**

✓ Supplemental water only during drought

Budget Guides: Plant Counts by Size

<div>Pocket Park (5 × 10')</div> <div>± 3 shrubs, 12–15 perennials</div>	<div>Entry Island (8 × 12')</div> <div>± 5 shrubs, 20–24 perennials</div>	<div>Loop Edge (3 × 30')</div> <div>± 7 shrubs, 24–30 perennials</div>
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Your Quick Checklist

01 Pick your pilot zone	02 Sketch plant clusters on paper
03 Order plants from local sources	04 Prep bed & plant in drifts
05 Photo before & after results	06 Train staff on simple care routine

Resources

<div>1</div> <div>Homegrown National Park — Get Started Planting Native</div> <div>Short, step-by-step how-to for choosing, planting, and caring for natives; links to keystone plants and a national resource directory.</div> <div><a href="https://homegrownnationalpark.org/get-started-planting-native/">homegrownnationalpark.org/get-started-planting-native/</a></div>	<div>2</div> <div>Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center — Native Plant Information Network (NPIN)</div> <div>North America-wide plant database with profiles, images, and supplier finder; solid basics on selection and maintenance.</div> <div><a href="https://wildflower.org/plants/">wildflower.org/plants/</a></div>	<div>3</div> <div>Xerces Society — Habitat Assessment &amp; Installation Guides</div> <div>Clear, practical checklists and step-by-step methods to plan, install, and maintain pollinator-friendly native plantings.</div> <div><a href="https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/habitat-assessment-guides">xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/habitat-assessment-guides</a></div>
<div>4</div> <div>USDA Forest Service — Celebrating Wildflowers: Native Gardening</div> <div>National guidance on why and how to garden with natives, plus maintenance realities and ethics.</div> <div><a href="https://fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/Native_Plant_Materials/Native_Gardening/">fs.usda.gov/wildflowers/Native_Plant_Materials/Native_Gardening/</a></div>	<div>5</div> <div>National Wildlife Federation — Garden for Wildlife: Tips, Tools &amp; Videos</div> <div>Bite-size tutorials and tip sheets for starting, caring for, and enhancing native gardens anywhere.</div> <div><a href="https://nwf.org/Native-Plant-Habitats/Resources/Tips-Tools-and-Videos">nwf.org/Native-Plant-Habitats/Resources/Tips-Tools-and-Videos</a></div>	



Sustainability isn't a trend—it's a strategySee what's possible with Vireo at [growwithvireo.com](https://growwithvireo.com)

Greg EmmertFounder & Principal



Made with GAMMA