

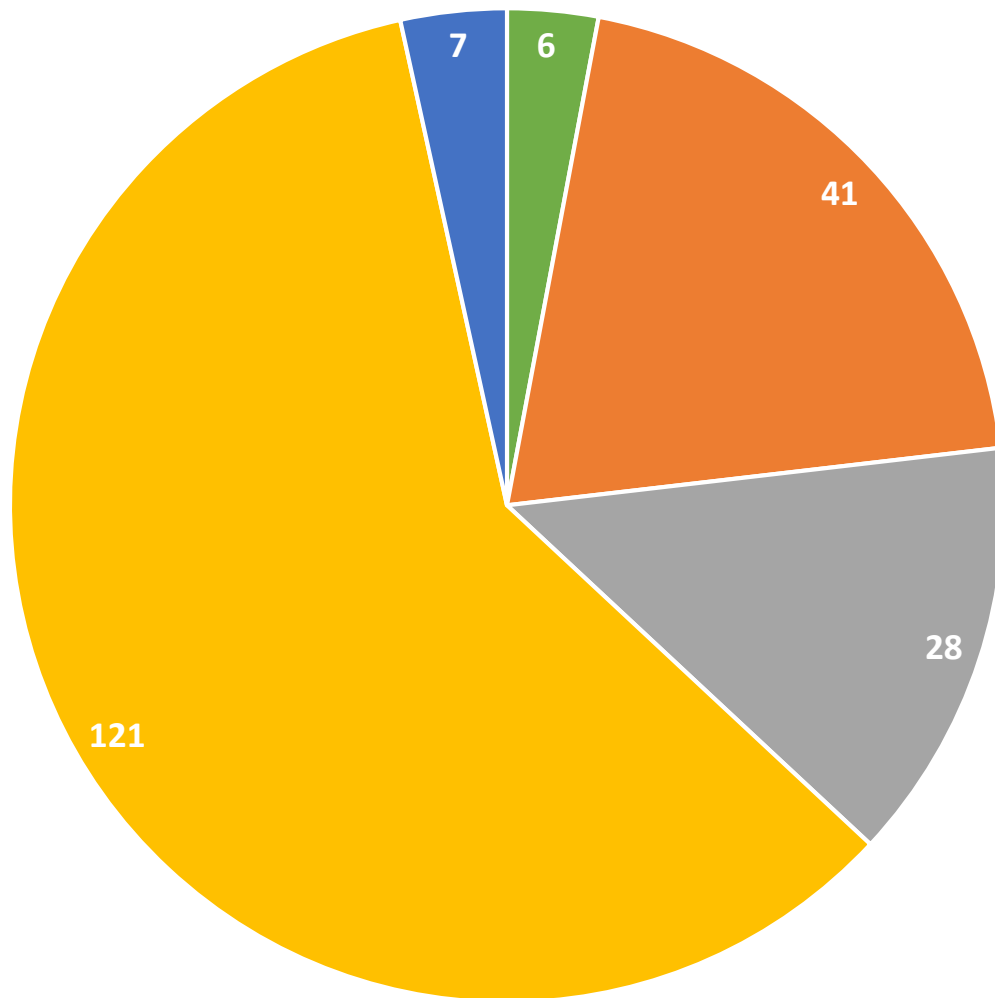
**WATKINS WOOLEN MILL
STATE PARK AND HISTORIC
SITE
CDP SURVEY #1 RESPONSES**

June 2025 – July 2025

Number of Responses: 203

QUESTION #1

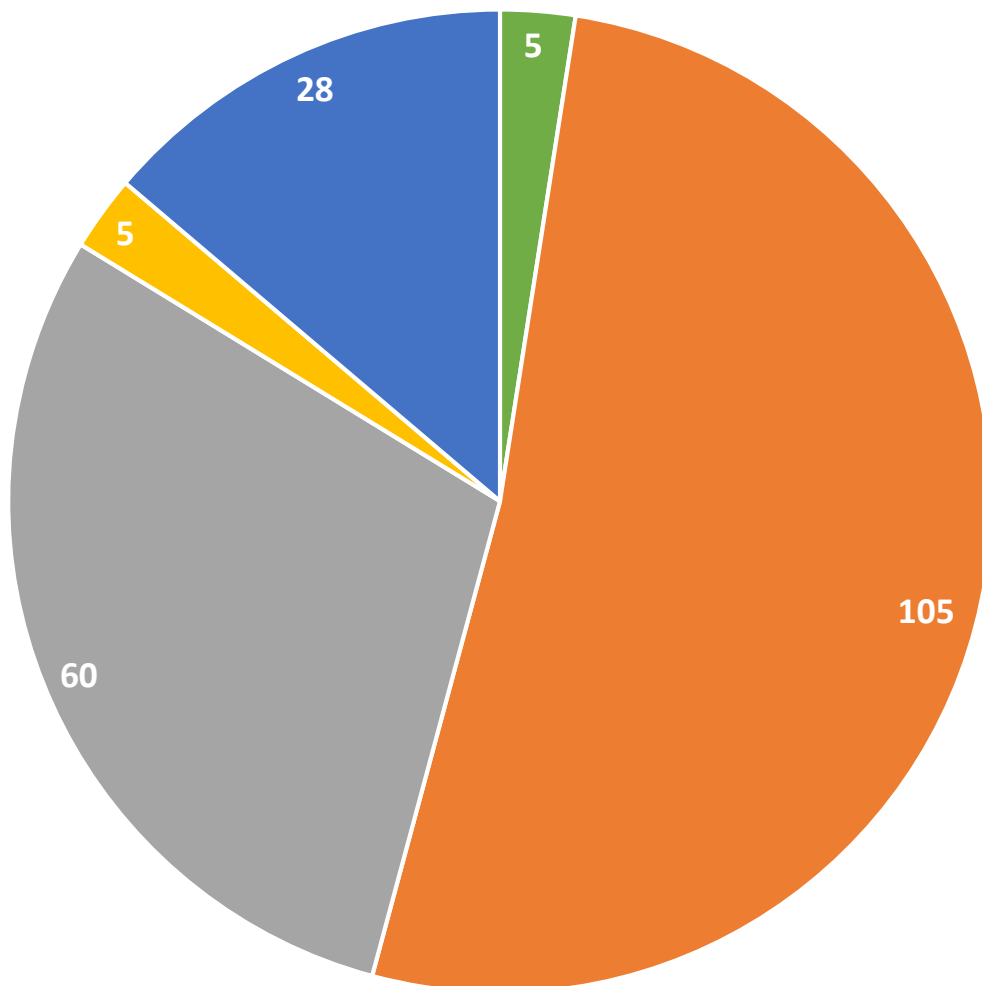
HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT THIS STATE
PARK?



■ Daily ■ Monthly ■ Weekly ■ Occasionally ■ Never

QUESTION #2

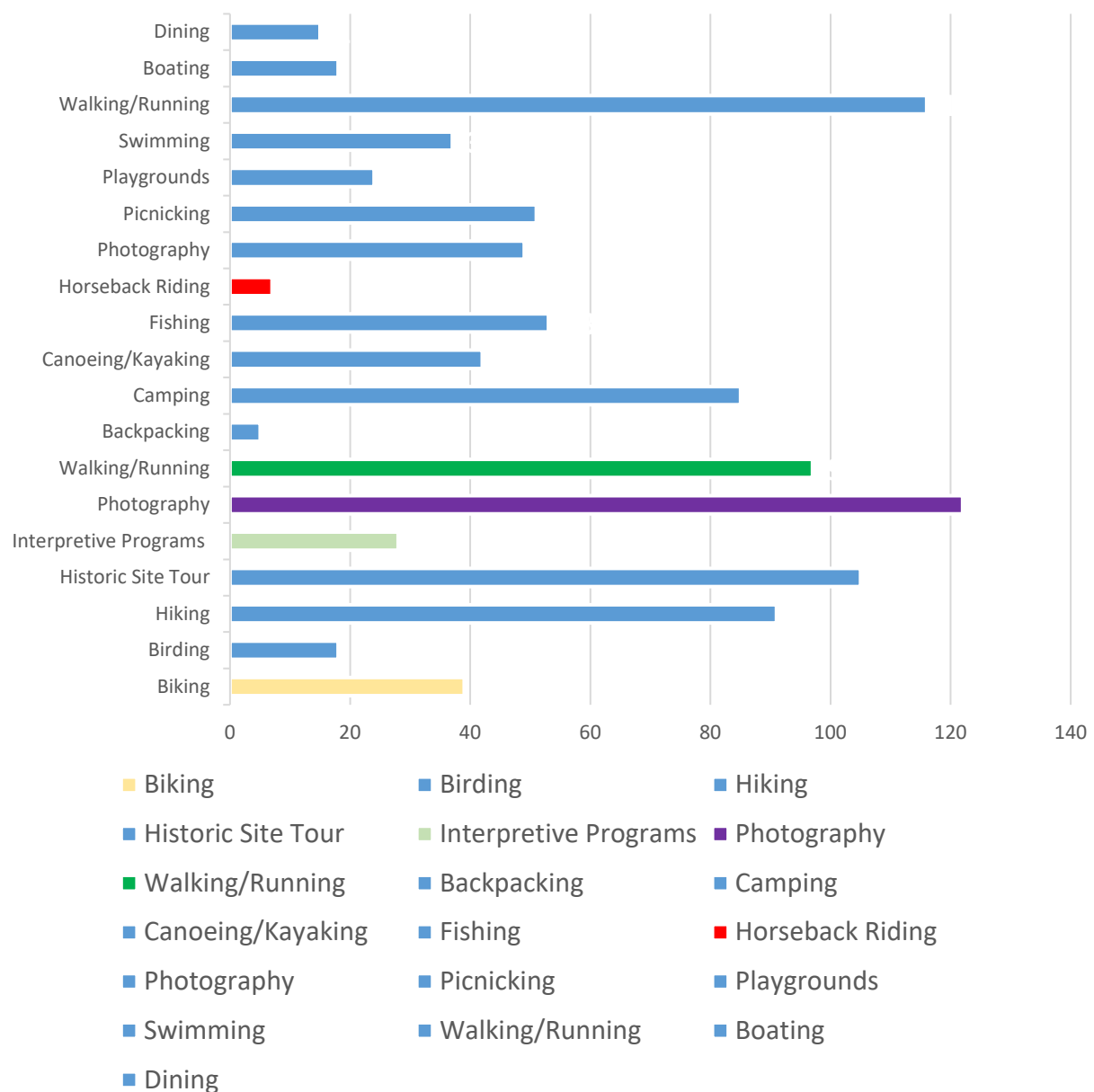
WHEN YOU VISIT THIS STATE PARK, WHO
USUALLY JOINS YOU?



■ Club or Organized Group ■ Family ■ Family and Friends ■ Friends ■ Self

QUESTION #3

WHICH RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES ARE
YOU ENGAGING IN DURING YOUR
VISIT(S)?

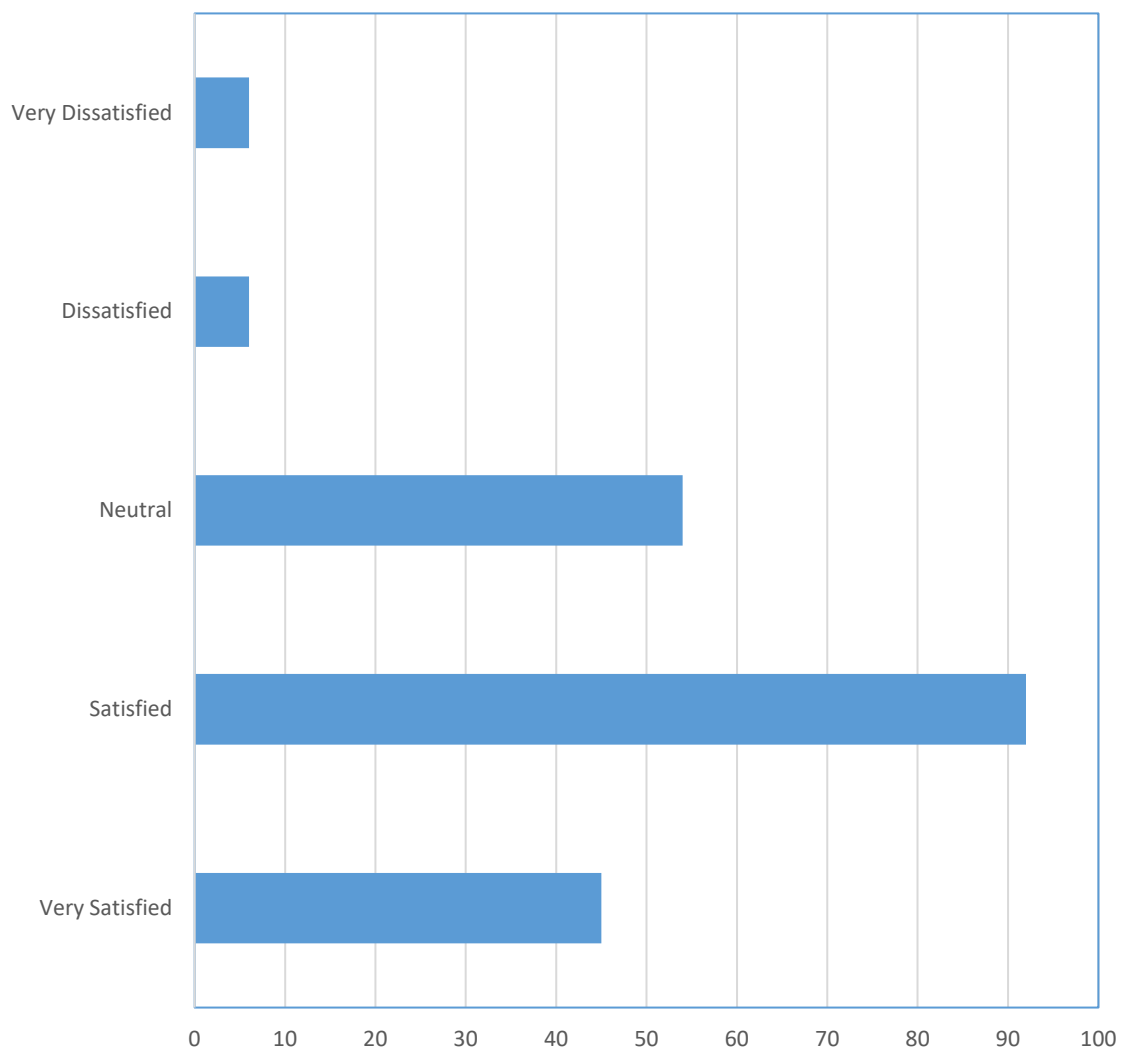


OTHER ACTIVITIES:

1. Walking the dog
2. Volunteer
3. The gardens at the Watkins house
4. Photography
5. Meetings
6. meeting
7. Living History volunteer
8. General relaxing
9. Gardening
10. Driving through to see a different area

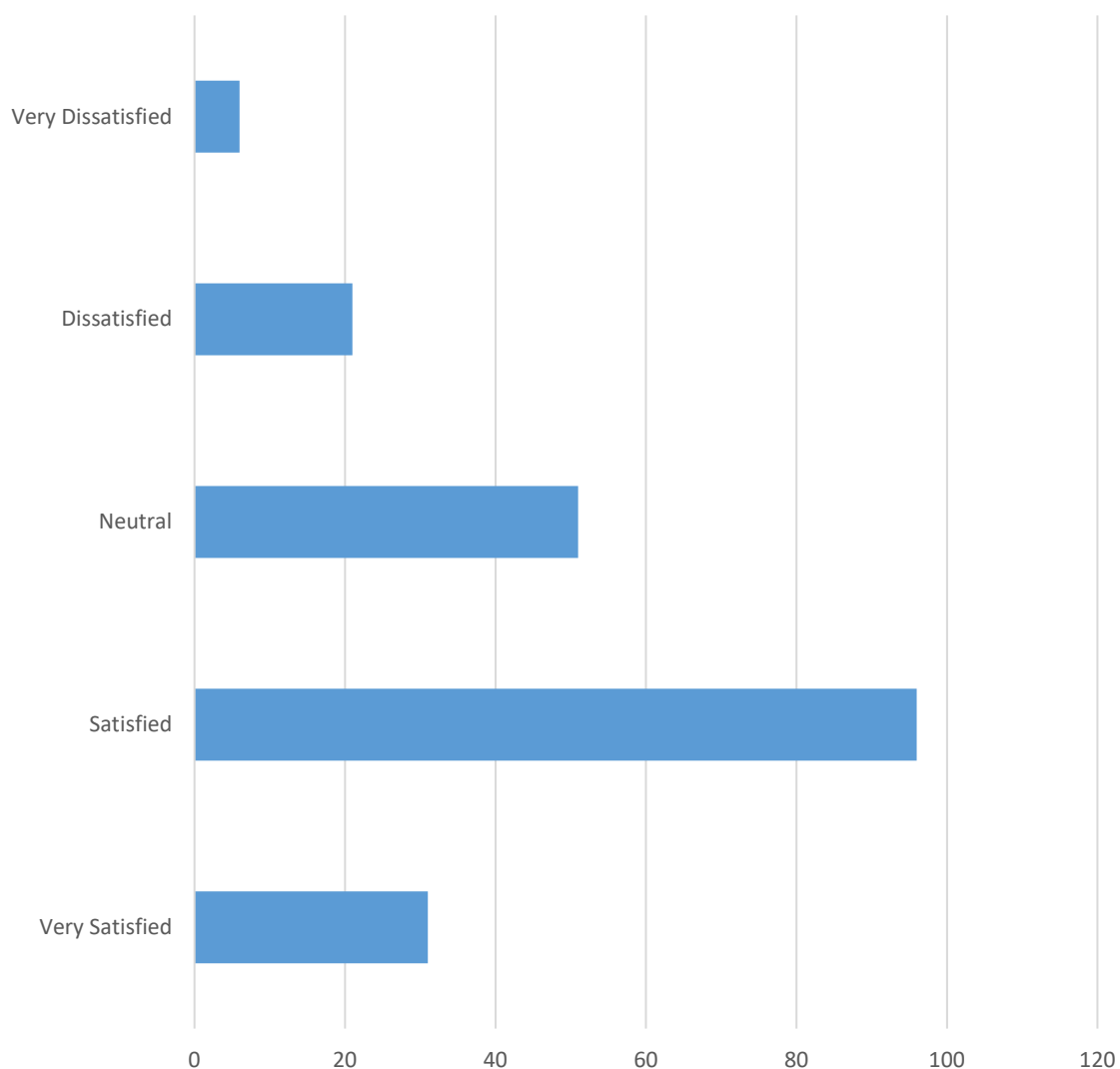
QUESTION #4

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES THIS STATE
PARK OFFERS?



QUESTION #6

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE
INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITIES THIS
STATE PARK OFFERS?



OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

QUESTION #5:

WHAT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY, IF ANY,
DO YOU FEEL IS MISSING AND SHOULD BE
ADDED TO THIS STATE PARK TO ENHANCE
THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE?



1. We used to go out way more but the trailer, areas, beach haven't been maintained well
2. We always wish there was more information about the historic buildings (including the school) and more opportunities to go inside and/or hear people explain their history.
3. volleyball and croquet "courts"
4. Trail needs work.
5. They need to fix the bridge that went out over a year ago so that the bike trail makes a continuous loop.
6. The swimming area needs work. It needs the weeds cleaned out.
7. The mill working
8. The historic enactment like the Christmas on the Farm has become a valued tradition. I would like to see more events similar to this.
9. Rework the trails around the lake
10. Repave the bike trail.
11. Repair the bridges that are out. Keep horse trails mowed and add more trails. The more you mow less ticks will be there.
12. Ranger programs/interpretative programs
13. Pool
14. Playgrounds for kids
15. Playground
16. Perhaps some of the buildings and homes that were originally on the site.
17. Perhaps allow creation of a few more horse trails in same areas. Thanks
18. Off-road mountain bike trails
19. Offering bike rentals on-site would allow more visitors to explore the park without needing to bring their own equipment. It would also make the site more accessible to families and tourists.
20. Nothing. I love this park!
21. No suggestions
22. Mountain biking trails
23. Mountain biking
24. Mountain bike trails and trail running
25. More spaces/programming geared towards youth and fitness. I see so many families out there, more play spaces would be a welcome addition. Maybe some "natural" playgrounds and obstacle courses, like they advertise online for "forest school"
26. More interpretation
27. More hiking trails Frisbee golf course
28. More hiking trails
29. More guided hikes.
30. More camping spots!!
31. Mountain bike trails
32. Maybe building or something with live entertainment
33. Love the living history
34. Kayak rentals
35. Kayak rental
36. It's a shame that due to bridge problems the period school and church are not accessible. They are an important part of the story of the Watkins Mill community.
37. Interpretive programs
38. I wish there were some trails to walk — unpaved trails.

39. I prefer the historical side of things so anything added to that area should in my opinion, reflect the timeframe and history of that site. As for other activities in the area I have no opinion....other than to say I commend the thoughtful planning to preserve the historical without taking away from other areas of the park.
40. I have been excited to see more activities offered at the Historical Sites and Museum this year. We haven't been able to attend many yet due to family member who has been in a bad farming accident. Watkins Mill has been one of our families favorite places since my kids were little. Now my Grandkids are bringing their kids.
41. I feel offering paddle boards and boats would be great for this size lake and could bring income. An archery range would be good but not sure about liability Historic site and park scavenger hunts (like Pokémon go)
42. It would be amazing to have a restaurant!
43. Hiking trails in the woods. Walk in camp sites. If enough acreage some backpacking trails with camp sites would be great. We need more backpacking on the west side of the state.
44. Ghost Tour
45. geocache
46. Frisbee golf
47. Easier access to tours or info of the old woolen mill and mill buildings.
48. Dogs on leashes
49. Delighted with all offerings maintenance and staff
50. Cleaner pond, better trails
51. Clean up the swimming area
52. Canoe/kayak rental
53. Canoe rental
54. cabins, canvas tent, or a yurt like other SPs
55. Bow-hunting
56. Better playgrounds for kids
57. Alpine trails through the woods would be very nice as well as more camping locations that are off the beaten path a little.
58. A children's playground that is not solely part of the camping area
59. A better swim beach and shorter nature trails

QUESTION #7:

WHAT INFRASTRUCTURE OR AMENITY, IF ANY, DO YOU FEEL IS MISSING AND SHOULD BE ADDED TO THIS STATE PARK TO ENHANCE THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE?



1. You need to fix the bridge on the walking trail that's been closed for years.
2. Would love to see more live activities on the farm. Please keep investing into its preservation.
3. Watkins Mill is one of the most historically significant and recreationally well-rounded parks in the system, and it would benefit from broader promotion through Missouri State Parks channels. If Wi-Fi could be brought into the property, it would be beneficial for visitors that are working while traveling.
4. washer/dryer for campers
5. Walking trail updates
6. Walking trail is really rough to ride bikes on. needs repaired
7. Unpaved trails
8. Trail Maintenance: Several sections of the lake trail are in poor condition. Resurfacing and repaving are needed to ensure that visitors of all ages and abilities, including those using mobility aids, strollers, or bikes, can safely and comfortably enjoy the trail. Staffing Needs: The current team does a fantastic job, but it's clear the park is understaffed for the level of programming, interpretation, and maintenance that the local community would like to see. Increasing staffing would help the site meet demand and expand offerings for visitors. Increased Programming: Additional events and guided tours could help attract more families, school groups, and heritage tourists year-round.
9. This park seems underused / understaffed compared to other nearby state parks (Weston etc)
10. This park is one in the Missouri system that offers everything from a recreational standpoint. That's wonderful. The sad part is the reduced staff in the historic site part. Lovers of Watkins Mill miss the special events and interpretive programming that was once offered when the paid and volunteer staff were larger. It was a gem in the historic community that has become tarnished.
11. They need to fix the bridge that went out over a year ago so that the bike trail makes a continuous loop.
12. There needs to be more and better shower houses. And, there needs to be more water spigots available.
13. The walking/bike trail is in absolutely terrible condition. The trees have rooted through the path, gravel in some places, it's not the safest trail for bike riding. It needs to be repaved.
14. The walking trail is used heavily. I'm not sure if it has been repaved but it would be nice if the upkeep on the asphalt and or bridges would be more regular.
15. The trail really needs to be resurfaced and bridges need to be repaired. There are places on the trail and bridges that are getting to the point where they could cause injuries by tripping and falling.
16. The picnic areas could stand to be better maintained. People end up picnicking at the tables along the trail because the intended picnic spots are unusable much of the time.
17. The Lake Trail needs resurfacing.
18. The campsites need a lot of work: Unleveled, muddy sites. Full hookups would be nice.
19. The bridge up the hill needs to be replaced
20. Store with camping needs food restaurant
21. Start to get further assistance w maintaining machinery and would love to see rebuilding some of other buildings and maintenance for Bethany Plantation It would be nice to have food vending so families could eat at the historic site
22. Some sites need improvements and attention with how the site is setup for trailer camping, once we had a drop off right as you stepped out the camper door, and it would be nice if there were spots with all amenities.
23. Reservations at more areas
24. Repair the bridges so you can get up to the church there's no way to drive up to school and church wasted parking area.

25. Re pave bike trail
26. Please have more living history events.
27. Perhaps other buildings or businesses or homes that were originally on the property
28. Nothing
29. No suggestions
30. Need at least water cooler in the mill. Dangerously hot at times.
31. Mountain biking trails/single track running trails
32. More tree trimming on trails.
33. More trails, other than around the lake
34. More public relations for festivals and such.
35. More camping spots with electric
36. More camp grounds
37. More bathrooms
38. Modern bathrooms on the trail.
39. Lack of Wi-Fi connection, also to support self-guided tours and exhibit QR stations
40. Just making sure the history is kept alive
41. It's all good!
42. I'm satisfied
43. I wouldn't like to see some more disability friendly options.
44. I would love to see the big bridge on the walking trail fixed, as it has been closed for almost 2 years now. If there is no money to do so, can a crowd funding be done? The trail could also use a good repaving, and there is a lot of poison ivy and brush very close to the trail lately.
45. Haven't been to this park for a few years but really like it there. Maybe add full hookups for the camp sites if there haven't been any added.
46. Frisbee
47. Fix the trail and bridge around the park. Clean up the geese poop everywhere
48. Easier ADA access
49. Dogs on leashes
50. Definitely need to concentrate on the walking trail!!!! It used to be awesome, now its dangerous
51. Clean bathrooms. There needs to be a bathroom on the walking trail.
52. campgrounds with shower house near the historic site area
53. Build out some nice concrete and level, full hookup camper spots.
54. Bridge
55. Bike repair stand. Wider boat launch for two boats.
56. Bigger dump station at campground. Full hook ups at campsites.
57. Better walking trails so handicapped people can participate.
58. Better entrance road off MM and some areas of the trail around lake resurfaced. Fix the broken bridge on the trail around the lake.
59. Bathroom with running water near the trail.
60. An eloquent restaurant decorated and staffed, that would bring us back to that historical era.
61. Adding a kayak launch near the boat ramp would be nice
62. A vending machine with first aid essentials and other odds and ends people may forget like sunscreen or cream for bee stings
63. A small laundry house would be handy, movie night area, dog park area

DO YOU HAVE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
OR SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THIS STATE
PARK?



1. Your campgrounds host was [overbearing/strict]. We have never gone back because of their attitude
2. You need to spend major funds on the historic preservation of the historic buildings. Also an updated interpretation plan.

3. Would love to see it maintained with a more accessible walking area (rocks and roots), more docks not on the same side of the lake (more area).
4. Would like the bridge on the north end of the trail around the lake fixed.
5. Wi-Fi
6. We absolutely cherish this park and want to see it continue to thrive. It is the perfect balance of recreation and education, and is a wonderful community center for local residents.
7. Walking trail needs work, upgraded.
8. Waking trail is beginning to need work
9. Update trails and make all bridges safe again
10. This is not a large park and I hope it's not cluttered or over developed.
11. This is a state park that has been mismanaged regarding the timber and wilderness. You used to be able to see in the woods but all timber management has gone away and all of the park not mowed is grown up in brush. Not desirable trees.
12. They need to fix the bridge that went out over a year ago so that the bike trail makes a continuous loop. As a state park, that is beyond embarrassing that it has been a "construction zone" for that long.
13. The walking trail needs repaved.
14. The walking / bike trail is getting very rough and worn down and the bridge needs to be fixed.
15. The trails need repair
16. The trails along the lake need repaved. Other than that love this park
17. The tours are excellent.
18. The site would benefit from additional staff to help with programming, interpretation, and park maintenance.
19. The path needs some attention to make it safer.
20. The equestrian trails could be expanded and improved maintenance on existing trails
21. The back bridge has been closed for far too long. The house property and gravel hill is also closed way too often.
22. Seems that it's only known to outsiders as a campground. Locals know more about the history of the farm and mill.
23. Repave the walking/bike trail. Are they ever going to put in more campsites near the entrance to the campground? There was talk of that at one time.
24. Please repave the walking trail
25. Paved trail needs to be fixed. New mile markers would be nice - maybe each starting point has a different color associated with it and around the trail. Horse trails need to be kept up weekly or bi-weekly to prevent overgrowth.
26. Overall, I love this park. The trail around the lake is beautiful and I enjoy walking there often. The restrooms are always well stocked and clean. I have also enjoyed visiting the historic sites and tours in the past.
27. Needs the sides of roadways mowed back. Other MO state parks are Mowed back and looks much nicer
28. Need to fix or replace the bridge on the paved trail to get it back to normal. The paved trail also needs some places smoothed or replaced to make them safer for walkers and bikers.
29. Need more security. Have felt unsafe there on several occasions
30. More history
31. More hiking and walking trails.
32. MORE events that allow visitors to dress and/or interact with the historic buildings and old ways
33. More camping with electric

34. Maybe bigger / more frequent "park days," with buildings open & historical interpreters etc.? Guided hikes with history info? Fishing derby's?
35. Love the park, would like to see more education offerings with rangers maybe?
36. Love the area
37. Love it
38. Keep it mowed so much wasted land that has been taken over by weeds and invasive trees.
39. It's well kept. The park maintenance crew does a good job.
40. It would be great if they opened the house more often.
41. It would be awesome if the mill was working again. I also wish I could have attended the hearing the speaker whom I believe spoke about slavery that had occurred there, I believe.
42. It is a remarkable combination of recreation facilities with a unique and largely intact open air and indoor museum combining farm, industry, and period living.
43. It is a great place to visit and learn about Missouri's history.
44. Improve pathways
45. I would love to see Christmas on the farm come back it was a tradition for our family and we have missed it. I was so excited to see fall on the farm was returning
46. I love this park. It is a jewel.
47. I love going to Watkins Mill! It's our favorite campground! They have a very nice campground, swing sets for the Grandkids and it's always a refreshing walk to see the Mill and house.
48. I enjoy the tour and the walking trail
49. I am aware there are fewer staff and more work in the past 10 years. I believe more funds for more staffing would improve the overall maintenance and efficiency of the park as a whole.
50. I absolutely love the historic mill and home. Such a treasure.
51. Great fishing until the moss over runs the lake in summer.
52. Fixing the bridge
53. Fix the trail
54. Fix the bridges and existing trails so all of them are usable.
55. Excellent Park and historic site.
56. Clay County is where I grew up, mainly Liberty from 12 years on... Watkins Mill is a historical gem.
57. Clay county heath is tough but would love to offer meals to public which they purchase ahead and charge so extra \$ to aite as well as bring back lost arts festival (homesteading event) and lamplight Christmas tours
58. Christmas on the Farm has been one our families favorite holiday activities to get into the true Christmas spirit as a break from mass commercialism and reminiscing of a simpler time.
59. Be more aggressive in making water is safe in which to swim.
60. An expansion of the research about the Watkins family and the mill community would be so appreciated by the history community. An updated orientation film would be so welcome.
61. Allow Milkweed to grow on the lake dam for monarch butterfly.
62. Access to the mill and church to see the inside
63. A better social media presence would go a long way to hype up the public for this space. There are Missouri backpacking and hiking and kayaking groups who suggest Watkins as a destination frequently. Keep that momentum building! It is a beautiful place. More trails. I used to live in KS near Shawnee Mission Park and I think the lake at Watkins Mill gets used similarly to there. They even had an off leash dog park where people could let their dogs wade around. It was very popular all year round. Something similar could work here and perhaps scare off some of the geese?

64. They need to mow the horse trail more than 1 time a year. It would help with the tick problem. I understand that it may be difficult to mow some parts of the trail, but they could do a lot better. It grows up so high sometimes, that if you don't know where the trail goes, you can't find the trail. Also walking trail around the lake is in need for some resurfacing.

QUESTION #9:

DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR
SUGGESTIONS REGARDING MISSOURI
STATE PARKS AND HISTORIC SITES?



1. Yes bow-hunting
2. Would be nice to have Spring on the Farm again every other year or so. We love to take in MDC and MDNR events when we can. My husband and I each have degrees in Natural Resource Management and love the amenities that MO State Parks offer.
3. With FIFA coming in 2026, advertise Watkins to get visitors to come see what it has to offer.
4. Website is hard to navigate

5. We love them SO MUCH. Thank you for all you do.
6. We love our state parks and hope moving forward there will be more attention to details such as the camping sites. We grew up camping at Missouri state parks for the last 50 years and enjoy spending time outdoors with our families making memories.
7. Try timber management and make it look like it's supposed to be
8. These parks and historical sites are a great asset to Missouri
9. Thank you for your continued stewardship of this incredible park. We're excited to see what's next for Watkins Mill.
10. Thank you for the work that goes into maintaining and preserving history!
11. Take every opportunity to put in backpacking sites and trails (10+miles) closer to Kansas City.
12. Take care of the actual trails and infrastructure.
13. Spend some time on upgrading Lewis and Clark State park. Need more camping/RV sites.
14. Seems like the state parks system could do more to advertise the unique history and various amenities the park offers.
15. Please don't overcrowd camping sites in other places like you have at Watkins Mill.
16. Please don't change the historical significance of Watkins Mill
17. Please do not allow electric bikes on the trails. They go way to fast and people do not respect others doing traditional walking or biking.
18. Perhaps a pool.
19. Overall, you do very well!
20. My husband and I try to visit many of these sites as much as possible.
21. More public parks and camping!
22. more interpretive programs
23. More handicap accessible
24. Missouri has every right to be proud of her parks and historic sites. The great tragedy is the lack of funding and staffing to enrich them and bring them into the 21st century.
25. Love the state park and historic site system!
26. Love the parks
27. Keep up the good work that you do.
28. Keep them open. Keep them inclusive. Share them with everyone!
29. Increased support for educational and community events could expand visitor engagement.
30. I visit many parks & feel they are so important for all Missouri residents.
31. I love them. Thank you.
32. I love all the parks.
33. Glad they are free to get in other states charge Want to see them preserved for generations to come
34. Fix what you have.
35. Campground bathrooms need better showers and actual warm water.

QUESTION #10:

WHAT IS YOUR 5-DIGIT ZIP CODE?

