

**Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Request for Information**

**A. Introduction to Alabama State Parks**

The Alabama State Parks (ASP) system, a division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR), manages 21 state parks spanning nearly 50,000 acres of land and water across the state. These parks showcase diverse landscapes, from the stunning Gulf Coast beaches to the scenic Appalachian Mountains.

To enhance the visitor experience, ASP offers a wide range of recreational and professional opportunities, including day-use activities, camping, resort-style lodging, restaurants, marinas, and golf courses. Alabama's State Parks attract over five million visitors annually, with a record 6.2 million guest occurrences in Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

**B. Overview, Purpose, and Scope**

ASP is considering issuing a Request for Qualifications in relation to operational support for the new Cheaha State Park Lodge and the Lodge and chalets at Lake Guntersville. Prior to finalizing an RFQ, this RFI is issued to gather insight into whether to include within the RFQ the cabins, chalets, and Bald Rock Lodge at Cheaha and the cabins at Lake Guntersville. The intent of this RFI is to gather insight, industry expertise, and innovative approaches through Vendor submissions for the benefit of ADCNR, to determine if inclusion of these assets into the potential RFQ is desired by qualified vendors. Our goal is to optimize operations while maintaining the high standards and exceptional guest experiences associated with Alabama State Parks.

ADCNR and ASP will conduct a review of written submissions received from Vendors and anticipate deciding on inclusion from the same. The initial scope of consideration includes the following designations, and may be expanded to other services and additional state parks at ADCNR's discretion:

- 1) **Cheaha State Park** (Lodge, Cabins, Chalets, and Bald Rock Lodge) – Oversight and management of the Lodge, Chalets, Cabins, and Bald Rock Lodge, food and beverage services, banquet operations, housekeeping, and retail – SEE EXHIBIT A; and
- 2) **Lake Guntersville State Park** (Lodge, Chalets, and Cabins) – Oversight and management of the Lodge, Chalets, and Cabins, food and beverage services, banquet operations, housekeeping, and retail – SEE EXHIBIT A.

In their written submissions, Vendors may focus on a single State Park location or all locations.

**C. RFI Process**

ADCNR's Request for Information (RFI) seeks written submissions from qualified Vendors showcasing their vision. Based on the submissions, ADCNR may select a vendor(s) for a Q&A session with ADCNR representatives. ADCNR emphasizes the importance of substantive content over formalities in submissions. Vendors are encouraged to focus on the quality and depth of their proposed solutions.

This RFI is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a procurement or a solicitation for proposals, nor does it constitute an obligation for ADCNR to proceed with any formal procurement. Participation in this RFI does not guarantee inclusion in any future solicitations. ADCNR reserves the right to cancel or modify this RFI. ADCNR further reserves the right not to proceed with any procurement process.

**D. Initial Eligibility**

Eligible entities may include qualified governmental entities, public, or private organizations, and individuals who:

- 1) Are legally authorized to conduct business in the United States and within the State of Alabama;
- 2) Possess a high degree of professional skill in the areas outlined herein and have actual experience in the operation of a similar facility(ies) or services;
- 3) Meet other qualities that ADCNR may identify.

## **E. Objectives**

The primary objectives of this RFI include:

- 1) Exploring innovative solutions and business models to enhance operational efficiencies of guest lodging and guest experience.
- 2) Identify ways Vendors that can provide economic development, sustainability, and superior customer service.

## **F. Service Delivery Approach**

A Vendor's submission and demonstration should, at a minimum, cover the following areas:

### **1. Management and Operations**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the on-site management and daily operations and ensure smooth functioning, including check-in/check-out processes and efficient guest service operations.
- 2) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the management of all aspects of housekeeping, including cleaning schedules, laundry services, and room preparation.

### **2. Staffing**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to employ and train qualified staff, including front desk personnel, housekeeping, maintenance, and management teams.

### **3. Guest Experience**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to address guest inquiries, concerns, and feedback promptly and professionally.
- 2) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to organize activities, events, or experiences to enhance guest enjoyment (e.g., guided tours, dining experiences, family activities, etc).

### **4. Facility Maintenance**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to maintain lodging facilities, equipment, and infrastructure to high standards, including regular inspections and repairs.

### **5. Financial Management**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to offer competitive pricing and promotions while ensuring financial feasibility.
- 2) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to maintain detailed and auditable records of operational costs, occupancy rates, and financial performance.

### **6. Marketing and Promotions**

- 1) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to develop marketing strategies to attract local, regional, national, and international guests.
- 2) How inclusion of these properties would enhance the ability to maintain social media and establish local partnerships to enhance visibility.

Interested qualified Vendors should submit their responses no later than **Wednesday, April 23, 2025**. Please mail response to:

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Attn: Sarah Wood, Alabama State Parks Division  
64. North Union Street, Suite 538  
Montgomery, AL 36130

Please direct any questions to Sarah Wood at [Sarah.Wood@DCNR.Alabama.gov](mailto:Sarah.Wood@DCNR.Alabama.gov).

## Exhibit A

### Additional Information for Parks

- 1) Lake Guntersville State Park Lodge:** Lake Guntersville State Park Lodge features 112 lodge rooms, offering breathtaking views of Lake Guntersville. The lodge maintains an average annual occupancy rate of approximately 33%.

For more information: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/lake-guntersville-state-park>

*There are links to the Lodge, banquet business, and more on the right-hand side of the website.*

- 2) Lake Guntersville State Park Cabins and Chalets:** Adjacent to the lodge, 20 Chalets, renovated in 2023, provide additional accommodations. Nearby, 16 lakeside cabins, located close to the campground, are undergoing various stages of renovation. Together, the cabins and chalets have an average annual occupancy rate of 48%.

For more information on cabins: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/lake-guntersville-state-park/cabins>

For more information on chalets: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/lake-guntersville-state-park/chalets>

- 3) Cheaha State Park Lodge:** Currently undergoing a complete renovation, Cheaha State Park Lodge is being rebuilt on the bluff to provide all 32 rooms with stunning views of the Talladega National Forest. The redesigned lodge will feature a small conference center, wedding venue, bistro area in the lobby, and rooftop lounge. Before renovations, the lodge maintained an annual occupancy rate of approximately 37%.

For more information about the Lodge: <https://www.outdooralabama.com/articles/new-lodge-coming-cheaha-state-park>

- 4) Cheaha Cabins and Chalets:** Located in the upper section of the park near the lodge, Cheaha offers 11 historic cabins and 5 A-frame chalets:

- The cabins, originally built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in the 1930s, were renovated in 2020.
- The five A-frame chalets, featuring two-bedroom layouts, were not built by the CCC.

Together, the cabins and chalets maintain an average annual occupancy rate of 65%.

For more information: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/cheaha-state-park>

*There are links to the Chalets, Cabins, and more on the right-hand side of the website.*

- 5) Cheaha Bald Rock Lodge:** Built by the CCC, Bald Rock Lodge originally served as the park's first hotel and restaurant. Today, it is available exclusively for group rentals, making it ideal for weddings, meetings, family reunions, and retreats. Bald Rock Lodge has an average annual occupancy rate of 27%.

Amenities include 12 rooms accommodating up to 32 overnight guests, a full-service kitchen, a large banquet/conference hall seating 100+ guests, a cozy lounge with a gas rock fireplace, a stone patio, and a small conference room for 12 guests.

For more information: <https://www.alapark.com/parks/cheaha-state-park/bald-rock-group-lodge>