

Magistrate receives response from Commissioner of Parks Assistance for Kingdom Come State Park in the works

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“We are trying to push tourism and develop tourism, [...] it is a bad time to let the park go to ruin,” said David Kennedy, District 3 Magistrate in Harlan County. Kennedy approached the Harlan County Fiscal Court at last month’s regular meeting asking Judge Dan Mosely to seek assistance from the Commissioner of the State Parks Department.

The letter was sent and a response from Commissioner Elaine Walker was received June 12. In her letter, Walker thanked the Fiscal Court for expressing concern for the condition of Kingdom Come State Park. Walker said in the letter, “We are moving aggressively to address [...] issues that have been identified in the past few months.”

“Our Assistant Regional Director is working with the Park manager to resolve several issues,” stated Walker. She also reported the following progress and plans:

- With regard to restroom facilities, new partitions have been installed at one facility and an order is being placed for new partitions for the other restroom.
- Repainting the roofs on both shelter houses will be addressed in the upcoming fiscal year.
- Restroom gift shop has been closed due to damage to the lift station, no plans for completion at this time.
- Some playground equipment is in acceptable condition. We are working to find a solution to bring mulch to complement the equipment.

Recently, community members rallied on social media to fundraise swings and playground equipment for the park. The park playground isn’t furnished with swings like it has been in the past, equipment is damaged or broken, the shelter houses need painting, and the bathrooms need attention.

“The playground doesn’t even have swings for the children,” Kennedy said at the May meeting. Unless equipment has been changed out or brought out for the season, Walker’s letter sounded as if what the park has will have to suffice.

Kennedy also brought up that the park has two maintenance positions that have not been filled and the disrepair has happened over the course of a few years. Walker responded to these positions and said that “full-time staff has been reduced over 30 percent department wide [and] many smaller parks are operating with one or two full-time staff.”