

CHAPTER VII - PARKS AND TRAILS

SUMMARY

Scott County’s 2030 Parks and Trails Plan marks the first major update to the County’s Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, which was adopted by the County Board in 2004. Since 2004, the County has taken aggressive steps in acquiring land and planning for development of parks and trails that will serve current and future residents and guests.

The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan reflects these efforts, as well as major new initiatives established in other parts of the County’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan update, including land use, natural resources, and transportation.

The primary intent of the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan is to fulfill the requirements for the County’s park and open space comprehensive plan chapter. However, the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan also incorporates system and management planning principles.

This Plan is intended to serve as a primary guide for park and trail planning and decision making until such time as a major update is directed, or further definition is provided through other, more detailed plans.



Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park

A. Guiding Principles

The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan is based on several guiding principles...

County Vision **Scott County is the best public service provider and employer in the business.**

County Mission **To deliver quality public services to all citizens in an effective, professional and efficient manner.**

County 2030 Vision **In 2030, Scott County is a well-planned, safe, prosperous and fiscally responsible community built by citizens and businesses who value neighborhoods, education, families, health, and public safety, and who enjoy its natural beauty, rural character, and location in the region. In 2030, Scott County is recognized metro-wide as one of the best places to live, work, shop, and play in the Twin Cities because we have:**

- prospered with a diversity of urban and rural lifestyle choices;
- respected and managed our natural and environmental resources;
- developed and maintained a safe, efficient, and comprehensive transportation and trail system;
- met the human and social service needs of our most important resource...our citizens and neighbors;
- diversified our economy; and
- secured a high quality of life for our citizens through leadership at the local, regional, state, and federal level.

Metropolitan Council
Regional Parks Policies

- Identify and protect, forever, lands with high quality natural resources that are desirable for regional parks system activities.
- Provide adequate and equitable funding to acquire, develop and rehabilitate regional parks and trails.
- Provide a regional system of recreation opportunities for all residents while maintaining the integrity of the natural resource base.
- Promote master planning and integrated resource planning across jurisdictions.
- Protect the public investment in the regional parks system.

County Board Strategies*

- Develop funding plan for acquisition of land within park boundaries.
- Pursue acquisitions as available within park boundaries and search areas, as defined by Metro Council, from willing sellers.
- Manage County owned lands within existing parks (Doyle-Kennefick/including homestead, Spring Lake/including completing encroachment process, Cedar Lake and Scott Regional Trail).
- Public Works continues maintenance with direction from Parks staff and develop options and plan for long-term maintenance.
- Enhance partnerships with other park providers and other governmental units to identify opportunities and to achieve greater efficiency.
- Discuss and define a future Three Rivers Park District relationship.
- Explore creative natural resource planning and policy development as part of 2030 Comprehensive Plan for public/private partnerships.
- Prepare Master Plan for Doyle-Kennefick 2007-2008 to qualify for Regional and State funding.

- **Develop Acquisition Master Plan for Blakeley Bluffs 2008 – 2009 to qualify for Regional and State funding.**
- **Prepare Cedar Lake Acquisition Master Plan to qualify for Regional and State funding.**
- **Prepare a development and operation timetable for Spring Lake Regional Park.**
- **Prepare long-term development and operation budget needs and define sources to address those needs.**
- **Compete for Regional and State funding for Park operations, acquisition and development.**

*For 2006-2009, Adopted September 2006

B. Parks and Trails Program Mission

In developing the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, the County adopted a detailed mission statement for the system. This Plan proposes an updated mission statement that is more concise and more closely represents the core principles of health, sustainability, and nature that are fundamental elements of this Plan:

The mission for Scott County parks and trails is to enhance the health and spirit of our residents and guests by creating a sustainable system that connects people to the natural world.

C. Primary 2030 Parks and Trails Plan Outcomes

The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan continues the primary objectives established in the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, and establishes new outcomes that help further define the system. This Plan continues to:



Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park

- Provide the County and its residents and guests with an inventory of existing regional recreational opportunities, the natural resource base and distribution, and anticipated needs for future generations.
- Guide County priorities for a system of parks and trails within the county including location, development, and connectivity.
- Serve as a resource in reviewing plans, land use applications, environmental review documents, and other matters referred to the County to encourage their compatibility with the overall parks and trails system.
- Proposes strategies to be successful at meeting the mission.

New outcomes established in this Plan are as follows:

- General
 - Drops “**Open Space**” from plan name to differentiate from “Natural Areas Program”, which is a new initiative established in the County’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update
 - Follows **2030 Regional Park Policy Plan** for park and trail siting
 - **Allows flexibility** for future decisions about who should be the implementing agency (Scott County, Three Rivers, other)
 - Encourages **collaboration and partnerships**, including the opportunity to examine **alternative organizational structures**
 - Focuses **equal importance** on trails and parks
 - Updates and clarifies trail policies and planned corridors
 - Identifies a need to **engage outdoor recreation advocacy groups** in further work
 - Integrates **Active Living** concepts
 - Establishes **sustainability** as a primary component of acquisition, development, operation, and funding
 - Recognizes that the system will **continue to transition** between now and beyond 2030

 - Parks
 - Retains existing parks and proposed **Blakely Bluff’s Regional Park Reserve** search area identified in 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan
 - Identifies **two study areas** for future consideration (could be city facilities)
 - Removes “county park” designation – replaces with “**special use facilities**”
 - Recognizes other **federal, state, regional, and local facilities** that can or will serve County residents and guests
 - Recognizes **potential to partner** with other agencies, including Ney Nature Center, a non-profit environmental learning center located directly across the County border in LeSueur County
 - Acknowledges impact of permanent **rural development** on cities
- 
- Spring Lake Regional Park
- Trails
 - Incorporates regional trail corridors established in 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan
 - Identifies **additional trail corridors** and connections for which the County will seek regional status.
 - Continues to focus on regional trails being developed through the **development process**
 - Attempts to create **loops**
 - Clarifies County **trail policies**:
 - Identifies detached road trail corridors
 - Other County roads in rural areas would be studied on a case-by-case basis for on-road bikeway
 - Urbanizing County roads would have trails installed during construction
 - Identifies need for **detailed trail planning**
 - Identifies need for additional study on **alternative trail uses** (snowmobile, equestrian, etc.)

D. 2030 Parks and Trails Program Strategies

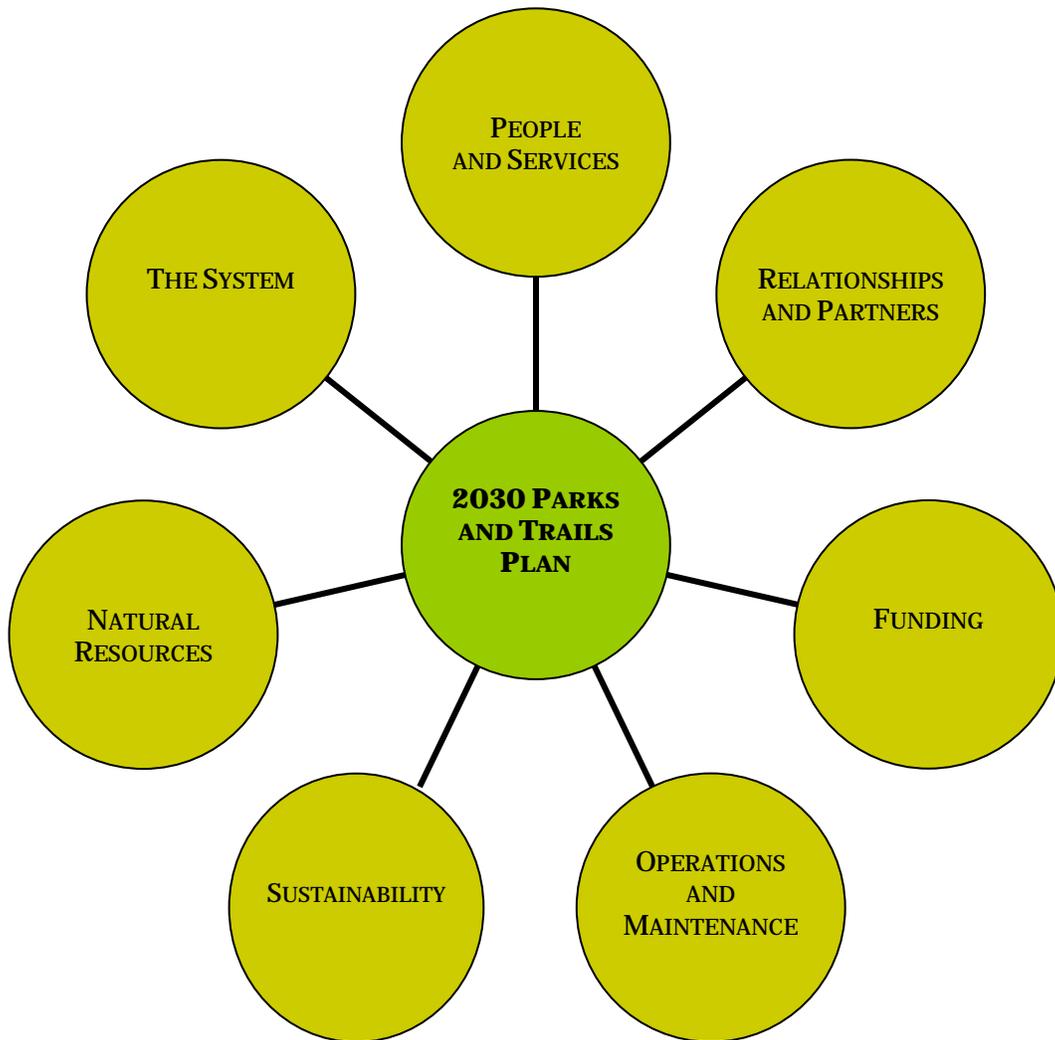
As a result of the input into the Plan and the outcomes listed above, the following strategies were developed to guide the program over the next two decades:

- Engage outdoor recreation users and advocacy groups
- Facilitate long-term planning for snowmobile routes
- Participate in long-term planning for special use facilities (ATV's, OHV, etc.)
- Participate in detailed area planning and policy development
- Build relationships and partnerships
- Establish innovative funding methods that leverage other funding sources
- Incorporate sustainable design concepts into system and services
- Actively manage natural resources
- Incorporate active living concepts into system and services
- Connect people to nature through education and recreation
- Provide high-quality, responsive operations
 - Planning
 - Acquisition
 - Development
 - Maintenance
 - Communication/Information/Promotion
 - Public Safety

E. Plan Structure

The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan is structured around the following themes:

**Figure VII-1
Parks and Trails Plan Structure**



F. Plan Development Process and Acknowledgements

The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan was developed internally by Scott County staff under the guidance of a Technical Advisory Committee. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee included:

Kathy Gerlach	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission
Mike Metz	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission
Susan Shroyer	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission
Brad Davis	Scott County Planning Department
Craig Jenson	Scott County Highway Department
Paul Nelson	Scott County Natural Resources Department

Staff authors/administrative included:

Andrea Bortness	Scott County Community Development
Patricia Freeman	Scott County Parks Department
Andy Hingeveld	Scott County Planning Department
Mark Themig	Scott County Parks Department

Work on the update initially started in the 2006, but was placed on hold during staffing changes. Major work resumed in late-summer 2007:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
August 2007	Kick Off Meeting with Technical Advisory Committee
September	Work Sessions with Township Boards Presentations and discussion with the seven Scott County city park commissions
October	Interface Agency Focus Group Meeting 2030 Public Open House
November	Technical Advisory Committee
December	Technical Advisory Committee
January –April, 2008	Parks Advisory Commission Review
March 2008	Planning Commission Review

Final plan adoption was granted by the Scott County Board of Commissioners on March 24, 2009, following Metropolitan Council approval in February 2009.

G. 2030 Parks and Trails Plan Map

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY --

**PLACEHOLDER FOR FIGURE VII-2
SCOTT COUNTY REGIONAL PARK AND TRAIL SYSTEM MAP**

Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update



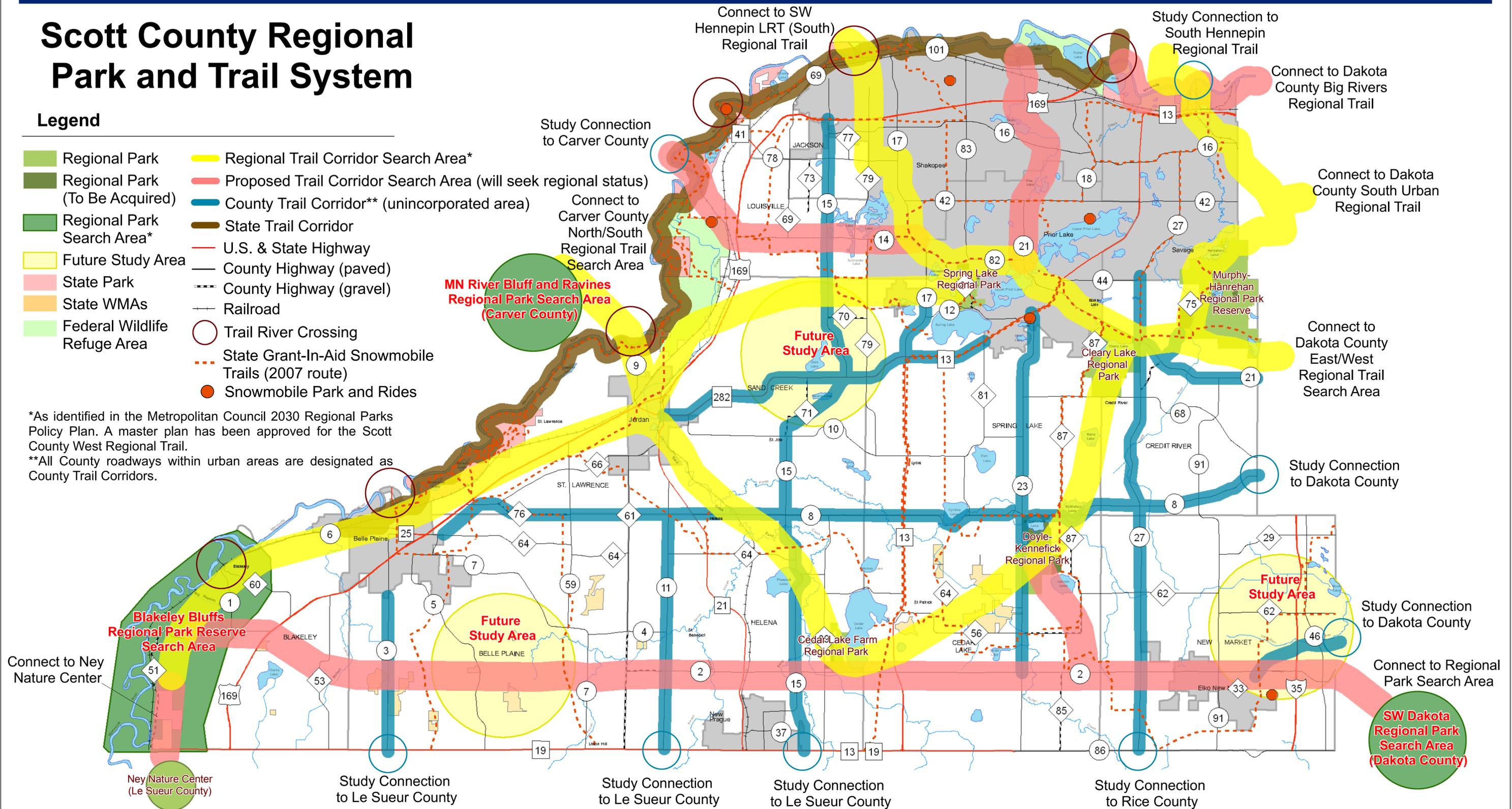
Scott County Regional Park and Trail System

Legend

- Regional Park
- Regional Park (To Be Acquired)
- Regional Park Search Area*
- Future Study Area
- State Park
- State WMAs
- Federal Wildlife Refuge Area
- Regional Trail Corridor Search Area*
- Proposed Trail Corridor Search Area (will seek regional status)
- County Trail Corridor** (unincorporated area)
- State Trail Corridor
- U.S. & State Highway
- County Highway (paved)
- County Highway (gravel)
- Railroad
- Trail River Crossing
- State Grant-In-Aid Snowmobile Trails (2007 route)
- Snowmobile Park and Rides

*As identified in the Metropolitan Council 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan. A master plan has been approved for the Scott County West Regional Trail.

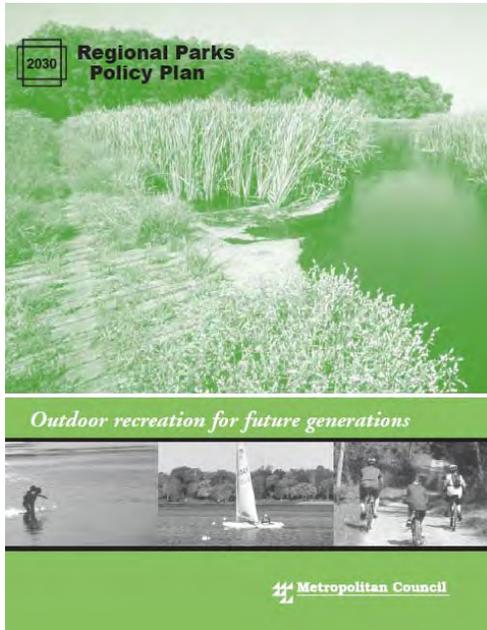
**All County roadways within urban areas are designated as County Trail Corridors.



THE SYSTEM

A. Regional Designation

Scott County's Parks and Trails system is part of the Regional Recreation Open Space System. This system (now commonly referred to as the Metropolitan Regional Park System or simply the Regional Park System) was created by the State Legislature in 1975 by State Statute 473.147. This statute identifies Metropolitan Council's role in establishing and updating a policy plan for a metropolitan park system, while placing ownership and operations of the system in local city and county control by creating regional park "Implementing Agencies".



As of 2008, the Regional Park System is comprised of:

- 52,000 acres of land
- 47 regional parks and park reserves
- Six special recreation features
- 22 Regional Trails with approximately 170 miles open to the public
- 33.1 million visitors (2006 estimate)

Other Implementing Agencies include:

- Anoka County
- Carver County
- Dakota County
- Ramsey County
- Three Rivers Park District
- Washington County
- Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- City of St. Paul
- City of Bloomington

Scott County is unique in that the County is also served by Three Rivers Park District as an Implementing Agency, and as of 2008, the County provides funding for Three Rivers' operations within Scott County.

B. History

Initial Efforts

Scott County park planning efforts began as early as the 1960's. In 1967, the County Board asked the Planning Commission to conduct a tour of the county to study sites for potential use as parks. The Planning Commission identified 12 locations:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. O'Dowd Lake Area | 7. McMahon Lake |
| 2. Sand Creek | 8. Cynthia Lake |
| 3. Pleasant Lake | 9. Fish Lake |
| 4. Cedar Lake | 10. Mud Bay on Prior Lake |
| 5. Pexa Lake | 11. Boiling Springs |
| 6. St. Catherine's Lake | 12. Eagle Creek |

In 1968, the County Board formed a Parks and Recreation sub-committee and viewed the sites that the Planning Commission recommended. The Board ultimately selected the Greenwald Property, a 143-acre parcel in the Spring Lake-Prior Lake Area that had lakeshore on both lakes,

as a priority site and negotiated a five-year purchase option at a price of \$1,000 per acre. (This site is now Spring Lake Regional Park.)

Continuing with the successful acquisition of the Greenwald property, the County Board established the Scott County Parks Advisory Board on January 13, 1970 to help guide future planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, and operation of a county parks and recreation system. Founding members of the advisory board included Donald Busse, Donovan Streed, George Muenchow (Chair), Philip Bradley, and Fred Keup.

In 1971, Scott County requested the assistance of the Hennepin County Park Reserve District (subsequently known as Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and now known as Three Rivers Park District) in the acquisition and preservation of the Murphy Lake and Hanrehan Lake area. In 1973, Scott County and Hennepin County Park Reserve District established a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) for the purpose of preserving the Murphy-Hanrehan Lakes area. In conjunction with the 1973 JPA, Scott County and Hennepin County Park Reserve District governing boards created the Murphy-Hanrehan Park Board to acquire, develop, and maintain the Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve.

SCOTT COUNTY, MINNESOTA		529				
First DAY	Special	SESSION 1970, January 13, 19 70				
<p>Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the County Board of Commissioners in and for the County of Scott, Minnesota, duly met in Special Session at the Courthouse in the City of Shakopee on Tuesday, January 13, 1970, at 10:00 A.M. with all members present.</p> <p>On motion by Commissioner Lang, seconded by Worm, the minutes of the Regular Annual Session held on January 6, 1970, were approved as corrected and ordered published and filed in accordance with law. Motion carried.</p> <p>Pursuant to notice duly published, bids were opened for the leasing or outright purchase of a new Electronic Accounting System and were received as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Lease - Annual Rate</th> <th>Purchase Price</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Burroughs Corporation, Minneapolis Burroughs #4203 Electronic Accounting Machine</td> <td>\$3,946.60 \$18,110.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Thereupon, Commissioner Lang, moved, seconded by Mingo to accept the lease bid of the Burroughs Corporation at the annual rate of \$3,946.60, with maintenance agreement as set forth in said bid, and the County Board Chairman and the County Auditor were authorized to enter into such a lease and maintenance agreement for said accounting machine in behalf of the County of Scott. Motion carried.</p> <p>Commissioner Mingo offered the following resolution and moved its adoption, seconded by Oldenburg, to-wit:</p> <p>BE IT RESOLVED by the County Board of Commissioners of the County of Scott, Minnesota, that a County Park Advisory Board comprised of five members, with one member to be appointed from each Commissioner's District, be and hereby is established.</p> <p>BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that appointments to said Board and terms of same be designated by the County Board at the Special Session of the Board scheduled for January 27, 1970.</p> <p>Resolution adopted unanimously.</p>			Lease - Annual Rate	Purchase Price	Burroughs Corporation, Minneapolis Burroughs #4203 Electronic Accounting Machine	\$3,946.60 \$18,110.00
Lease - Annual Rate	Purchase Price					
Burroughs Corporation, Minneapolis Burroughs #4203 Electronic Accounting Machine	\$3,946.60 \$18,110.00					

The Scott County Parks Advisory Board continued work on planning for Scott County's parks and trail system. In 1975 the Advisory Board developed the County's first park system master plan and negotiated purchase agreement for a major park in the Blakely Bluff's area. (The County's acquisition of land in the Blakely area was ultimately defeated by a local referendum, but the purchase was transferred to The Nature Conservancy for acquisition, and ultimately transferred to the DNR.) Also in 1975, the Parks Advisory Board and the County Board explored an expanded role for the Suburban Hennepin Park District in Scott County.



Spring Lake Regional Park

By 1976, Scott County park issues had expanded beyond Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve. The County subsequently requested assistance from the Hennepin County Park Reserve District to add 1,185 acres known as Comanche Park (now known as Cleary Lake Regional Park) to the regional recreational open space system. In order to do so, the 1973 JPA and Murphy-Hanrehan Park Board were expanded to encompass the entire Scott County park system, and the County's own Park Board was dissolved.

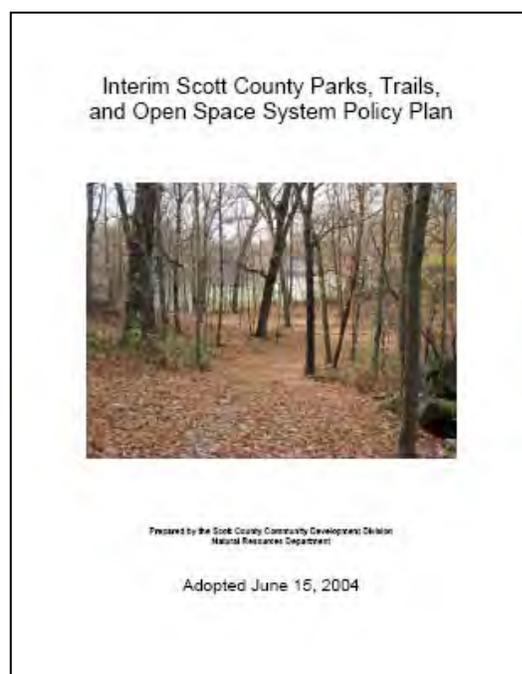
The Scott-Hennepin Parks Advisory Board was comprised of six members, three members from Scott County and three members were from the

Park District. The purpose of this Board was to develop recommendations for joint projects in the acquisition, development, operations, and maintenance of parks and open space in Scott County.

The JPA was updated again in 1991 and outlined a commitment to intergovernmental cooperation for the planning and acquisition of regional parks, park reserves and regional trails in Scott County. The updated JPA defined the duties of both the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and Scott County in achieving these objectives. The 1991 JPA continued the Scott-Hennepin Parks Advisory Board.

Throughout its history, Scott County's JPA with the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District was successful in facilitating the acquisition, development, operations and maintenance of regional parks and park reserves within Scott County. This cooperative arrangement provided high quality facilities in a fiscally responsible manner through shared costs and effective management.

County Growth Initiates Change in Relationship with Three Rivers Park District



In 2004, Scott County was ranked as the fifteenth fastest growing county in the United States, the fastest in the nation's northern tier, with a rate of increase that was not expected to abate over the next few decades. With this population change in both size and diversity, the demand for once abundant (but increasingly limited) regional assets such as parks, trails, and open spaces rose commensurately.

A 2001 Scott County Citizens' Survey statistically documented significant support – 74 percent of the sampled respondents -- for the acquisition and maintenance of such natural resources and recreational amenities, and indicated that many residents feel that the existence of such are the “best things” about living in the area. This response rate was repeated in the 2004 Scott County Citizens Survey when 76 percent of those sampled responded favorably to a similar set of questions.

The rapid growth and an increasing demand for park services provided the impetus for the County Board to make a larger commitment to parks, trails and open space within the County. In 2004, the County Board commissioned the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan. This plan established the importance of providing parks, trails, and open spaces for current and future residents and guests.

The County Board and Three Rivers Park District Board agreed to initiate a process to amend the JPA that would reflect the County's desire to plan for the future, as well as reflect Three Rivers' concerns about funding the system. However, as a result of both political and practical issues, the JPA was formally dissolved in 2005 and replaced with an annual memorandum of understanding outlining services that Three Rivers would provide in Scott County, and what Scott County would pay for those services. The memo of understanding provided the following structure:

- Three Rivers Park District would continue to own and provide basic services (trails, general picnic areas, natural resource management, etc.) for Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and Cleary Lake Regional Park.
- Scott County would pay Three Rivers Park District for value-added services at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and Cleary Lake Regional Park, such as group picnic rentals, golf operations, cross country skiing, and recreation/education programs.
- Scott County would be responsible for Spring Lake Regional Park, the Scott County Regional Trail, and Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park, as well as future regional parks and trails. This includes development, operations, and maintenance responsibilities, in addition to management of future park acquisitions.

With the adoption of the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan and the dissolution of the JPA, the County Board moved forward, on its own, in aggressive acquisition of lands that would be lost forever to development. From 2004-2007, the County Board authorized \$9.5 million in acquisitions for approximately 700 acres of land that would form Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. Of the \$9.5 million invested, approximately \$7.1 million was direct County funding, with the remainder coming from grants provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Metropolitan Council.



Doyle Homestead (circa 1850)

Future Organizational Models

When this Plan was drafted in late 2007, Scott County had initiated a process to further define its relationship with Three Rivers Park District, and study other organizational structure models.. Whatever the outcome of this process, this plan should guide future park and trail efforts, regardless of the organizational structure. However, the Plan also acknowledges flexibility for future decisions regarding roles and responsibilities for Scott County, Three Rivers Park District, and other collaborative opportunities.

C. Regional Park and Trail System Inventory

Overview

This system inventory reflects parks and trails located within Scott County that provide service to county residents and guests. Although the inventory primarily focuses on regional parks and trails, other agencies provide services, including:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| - Cities | - US Fish and Wildlife |
| - Townships | - Private Sector |
| - Minnesota DNR | |

It is the intent of Scott County to work closely with a multitude of partners to ensure that public resources needed to provide a quality park system are maximized. In this regard it will be important to work with other agencies as partners to carry out the acquisition, development, operation and maintenance of the park and trail system within Scott County and adjacent jurisdictions.

County Role

As the Twin Cities area, and Scott County in particular, becomes more urbanized, opportunities to protect natural areas decrease. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update acknowledges this in both the Land Use and Growth Management (Chapter V) and Natural and Water Resources (Chapter VIII) by establishing initiatives that promote preservation of natural resources. Many believe that natural areas contribute toward improved health, economic vitality through higher land values, and overall quality of life.



Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park

The 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan established that **the role of the county is to provide a diversity of natural resource based outdoor recreational opportunities.** There are numerous government and private organizations providing a wide diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities in Scott County. A significant role that the County plays is to facilitate coordination of the federal, state, county, city and township entities to enable resource sharing, avoid duplication of services, and identify gaps in services that should be addressed proactively.

The County's focus is to create opportunities and facilities that compliment rather than duplicate the efforts of other outdoor recreation providers. Creating a trail system that helps link multiple federal, state, regional, city, and township trails would be an example of an appropriate County function.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY --

**PLACEHOLDER FOR FIGURE VII-3
EXISTING PARK INVENTORY MAP**

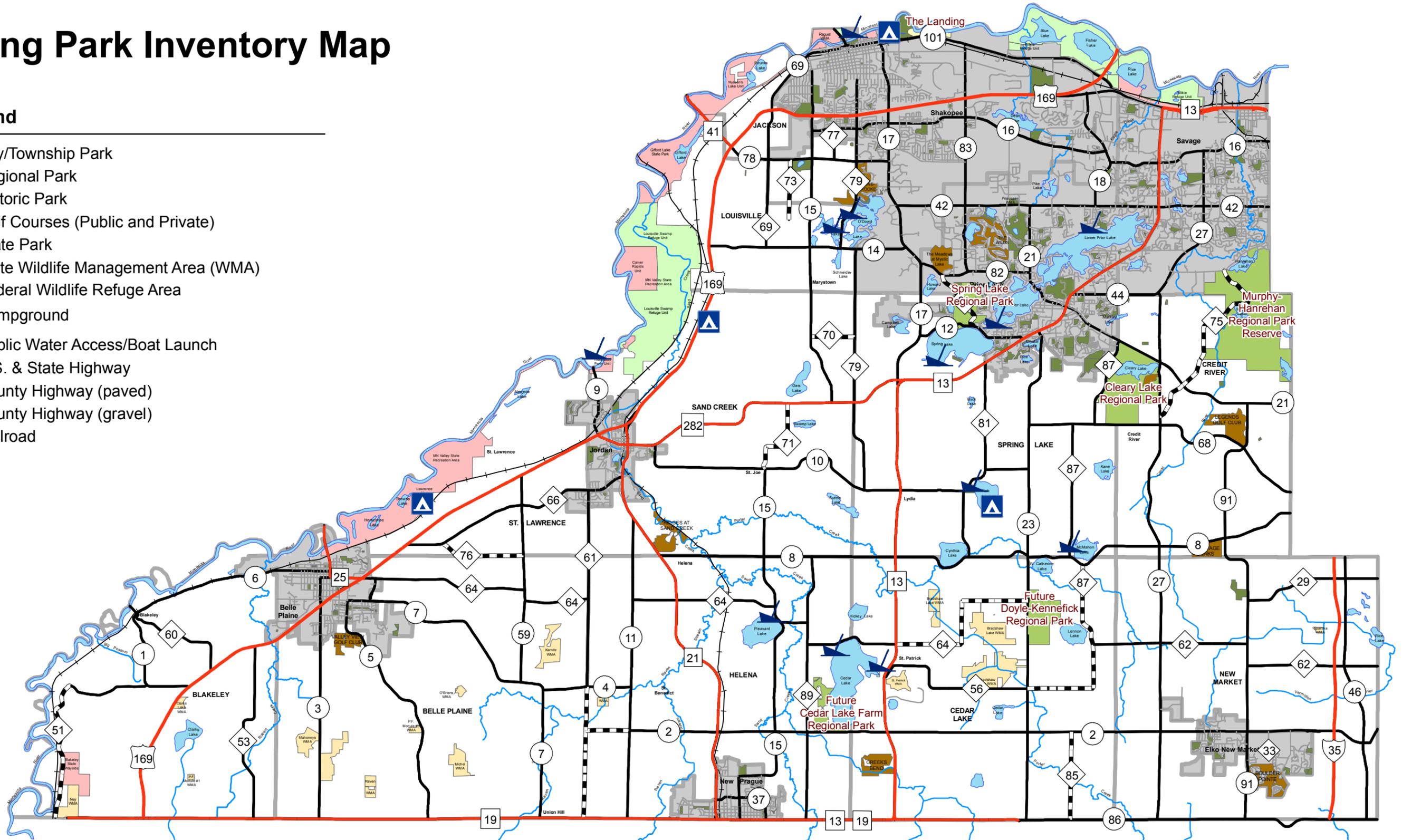
Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update



Existing Park Inventory Map

Legend

- City/Township Park
- Regional Park
- Historic Park
- Golf Courses (Public and Private)
- State Park
- State Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
- Federal Wildlife Refuge Area
- Campground
- Public Water Access/Boat Launch
- U.S. & State Highway
- County Highway (paved)
- County Highway (gravel)
- Railroad



Regional Parks

With the County's role defined as providing natural resource based parks, the following inventory focuses on park reserves and regional parks currently established for Scott County:

- Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve
- Cleary Lake Regional Park
- Spring Lake Regional Park (undeveloped)
- Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park (undeveloped)
- Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park (undeveloped)

Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve (Three Rivers Park District)

The 2,482-acre Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve is the only park reserve in Scott County, and the park is owned and operated by Three Rivers Park District. It is located along the eastern county line in Savage, Credit River Township and Burnsville. The park consists of regionally significant mesic oak forests and large prairie/wetland complexes.

Regional park reserves are large blocks of land that have the primary purpose of protecting and preserving native plant communities, and they are the largest units in the park system. Like regional parks, park reserves provide diverse outdoor recreation opportunities that are both compatible with and sensitive to natural landscapes. By Regional Park System policy, park reserves are generally over 1000 acres and are to remain 80 percent undeveloped.

Existing amenities include an extensive network of trails for horseback riding, hiking, cross country skiing, mountain biking, and dog-walking trails. There is a boat launch on Murphy Lake, horse trailer parking lot, group camp, and cross-country ski trailhead. The park reserve is an important birding area that attracts visitors from throughout the region.

Three Rivers Park District has acquired 2,482 acres of land within the park boundary. The updated master plan identifies an additional 28.7 acres in four "critical benefit" parcels with an estimated cost of \$1,209,000. An additional two "significant benefit" parcels are identified, 2.5 acres and 100 acres, with a strategy to acquire as much as possible. If successful, Murphy-Hanrehan would contain 2,614 acres when fully acquired.

Natural resource management has been identified as a priority for maintaining the important resources. As part of this, natural resource management plans include:

- Regeneration of existing high-quality oak forests
- Enhancement of woods
- Oak wilt management
- Improvements to existing low-quality forests
- Reforestation of old fields
- Prairie/wetland complex improvements

The recreation development master plan, updated in 2007, calls for the park to remain semi-primitive. Development plans include:

- Four backpacking campsites and two canoe campsites
- Improved fishing opportunities (new pier on Murphy Lake and a new ADA accessible fishing pier with access route and aeration system on Minnregs Lake)
- Expanded trail head building and related improvements (50 space parking lot, indoor restrooms, education staging classroom)
- New small trailhead for parking and picnic use adjacent to Minnregs Lake
- New trailhead for equestrian parking in the southwestern corner of the park

Total estimated cost for these developments is \$4,065,000 in 2007 dollars.

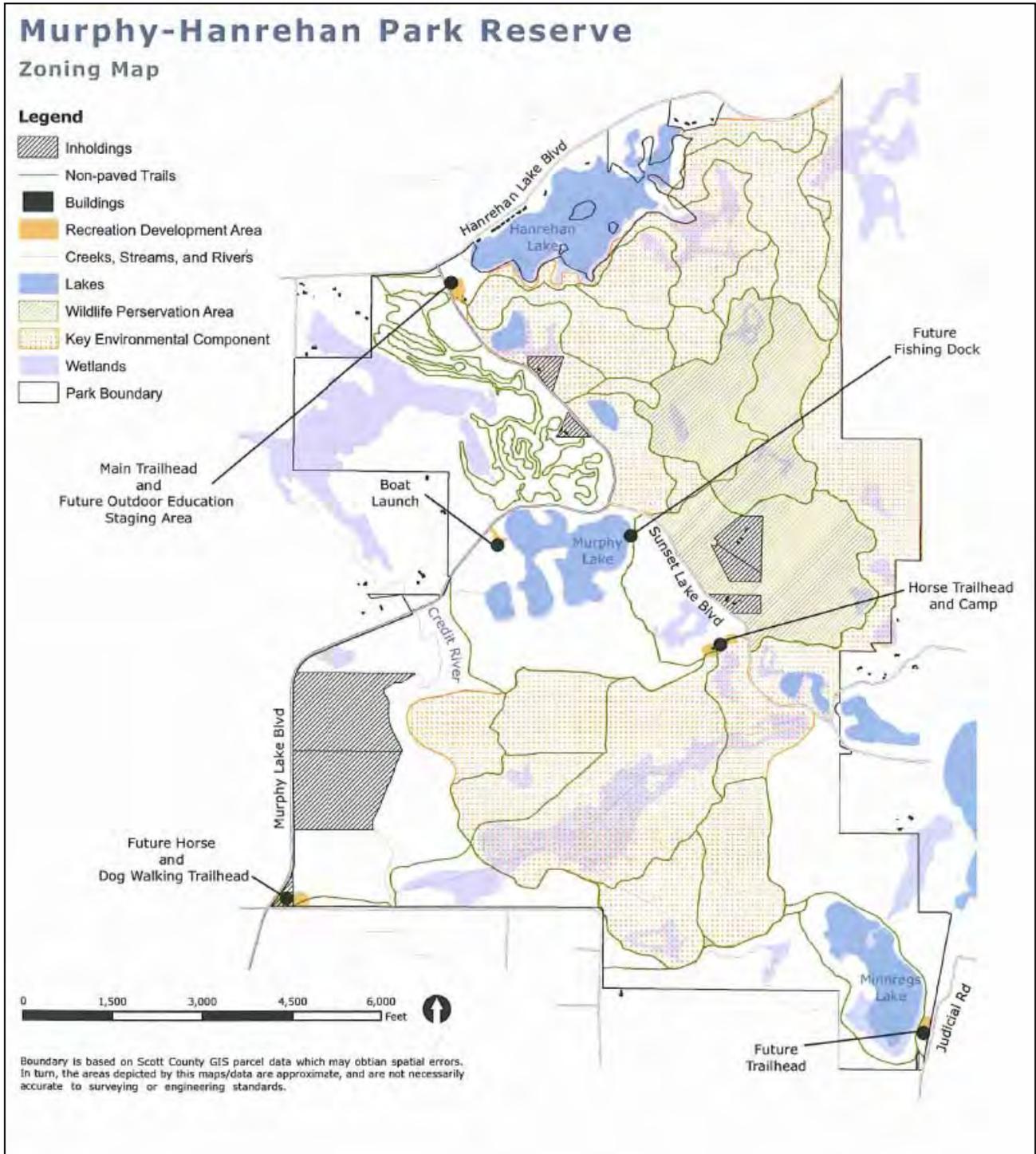
The Natural Resources development plan identifies five projects:

- Erect and maintain deer exclosure fences to protect portions of the planned 474 acres of planting sites over 15 years
- Prairie/wetland complex enhancements
- Forest research on the long-term health of forests, wetlands, and prairie within the park
- Improvements to 164 acres of existing low-quality forests
- Disturbed site restoration

Total estimated cost of natural resource development projects is \$798,000 in 2007 dollars.

Total Size:	2,614 acres
Acquired:	2,482 acres
To be acquired:	132 acres

**Figure VII-4
Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve**



Cleary Lake Regional Park (Three Rivers Park District)

Cleary Lake Regional Park consists of 1,046 acres surrounding Cleary Lake and is owned by Three Rivers Park District. The park has the size and suitability to accommodate a substantial amount of outdoor recreation.

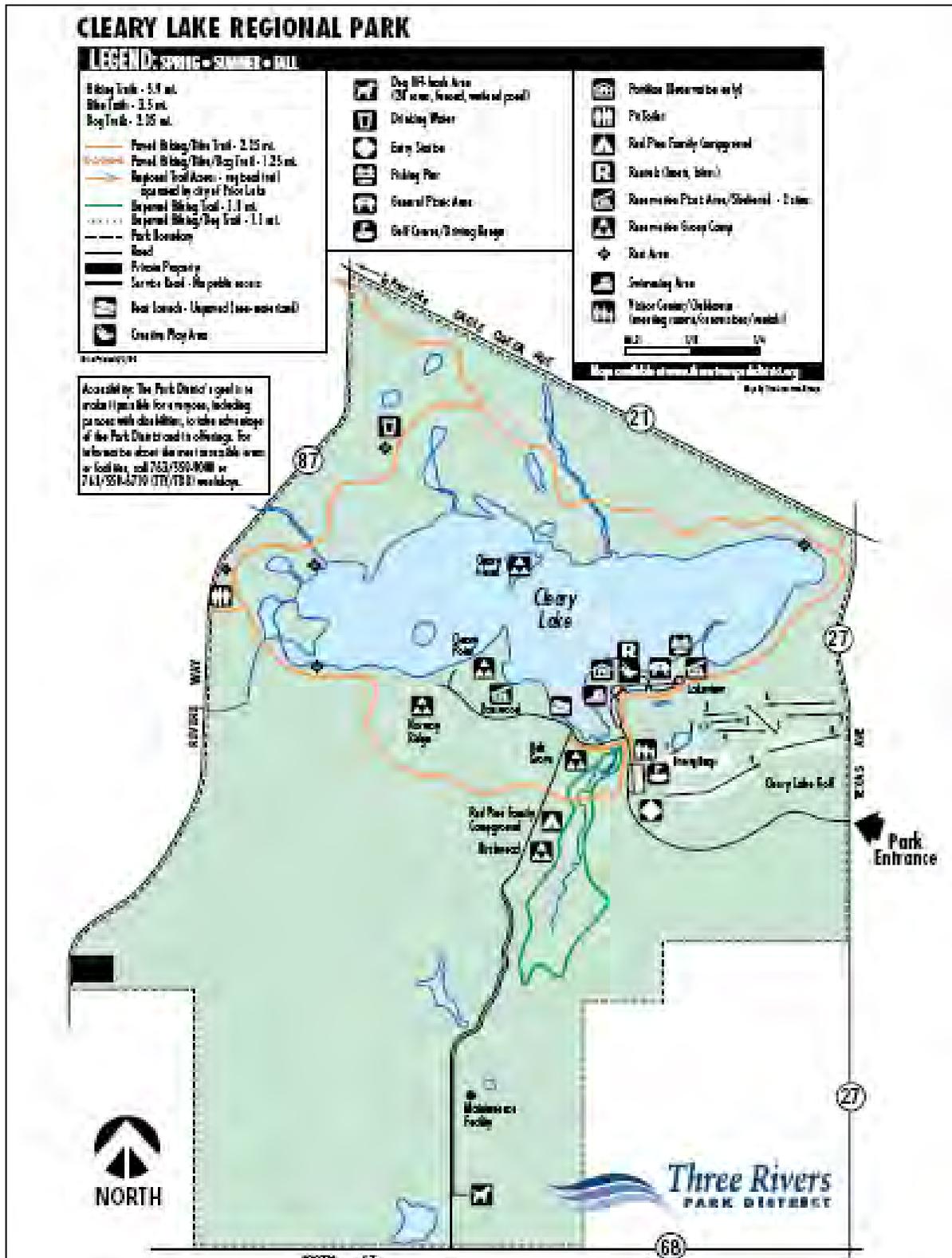
Current recreation facilities include a clubhouse/visitor center, golf course, picnic areas, swimming beach, boat launch for non-motorized boats, group campsites, hike in camp sites, and an extensive network of trails including lighted cross country ski trails. Improvements to the beach and picnic areas are planned. A segment of the Scott Regional Trail that will connect Cleary Lake and Murphy-Hanrehan is in the planning stages.

Cleary Lake is hypereutrophic and has poor water quality for recreational use; furthermore, the lake is choked with aquatic vegetation, particularly curly leaf pondweed. As a result of these conditions an outlet channel was constructed during the winter of 2002. During the winter of 2003 the lake was completely drawn down in an attempt to control aquatic vegetation and consolidate the muck bottom.

In addition to the lake there are scattered wetlands consisting of primarily type 3 and 4 wetlands with some type 6. There is an 80 acre MCBS ranked Oak Woodland-Brushland woods and extensive old field areas which are undergoing successional changes towards woods. The golf course with its manicured grounds occupies approximately 50 acres.

Total Size:	1,049 acres
Acquired:	1,046 acres
To be acquired:	3 acres

Figure VII-5
Cleary Lake Regional Park



Spring Lake Regional Park (Scott County - undeveloped)

Spring Lake Regional Park is located in Prior Lake with lake shore on both Spring Lake and Prior Lake. The park contains a diversity of natural habitats from lakeshore to Maple-Basswood forests. There is a small creek that winds through the park’s diverse wetland complex that includes open water wetlands, cattail marshes and even a tamarack swamp. Existing old fields provide opportunities for siting the park’s future infrastructure.

The park boundary contains 392 acres. The boundary was adjusted in 2005 following an agreement with the City of Prior Lake to sell land to the City for a future city park, in exchange for cash that was used to acquire land at Doyle-Kennefick, as well as additional wetland areas adjacent to Spring Lake Regional Park to be acquired by the City as part of development and transferred to the County. Approximately 373 acres has been acquired, with an additional 18.5 acres under agreement with the City of Prior Lake. When complete, the park will total 392 acres.

The park is currently undeveloped with a few natural surface grass trails and minimal signing. The development master plan represents a balance between recreational and educational uses and preserves the site’s ecological values. While providing a cross-section of recreational and educational opportunities within the park is a fundamental goal; showing restraint in the size of the built footprint was also identified as a public value. Determining the most appropriate location for development relative to ecological resources was an important planning consideration that significantly affected planning outcomes.

The overall concept plan is to create recreational facilities with access to both Spring and Prior Lakes. Proposed future improvements include nature trails, trailheads, overlooks, and group camping related facilities – each of which requiring a certain natural setting to be successful. Larger scale features such as the multi-use facility, 4-season pavilion, park drives, and paved trails are located in less sensitive areas or on the edges of the park where fragmentation of the nature systems is less of an issue.

Estimated development costs are approximately \$6.3 million if fully developed. However, phasing is possible. At full build-out, initial start up costs for operations and maintenance are estimated to be \$150,000, with an annual operations and maintenance budget of approximately \$350,000. If the project is phased, costs would be reduced significantly.

Total Size:	392 acres
Acquired:	373 acres
To be acquired:	19 acres

**Figure VII-6
Spring Lake Regional Park**



Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park (Scott County - undeveloped)

Scott County has acquired approximately 440 acres of Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park in Cedar Lake Township. This is the first step in acquiring what will ultimately be a 900-acre Regional Park that is bordered by St. Catherine's Lake on the north and Lennon Lake on the south. On March 24th, 2004 the Metropolitan Council approved the Acquisition Master Plan and inclusion of the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park into the Regional Park system.

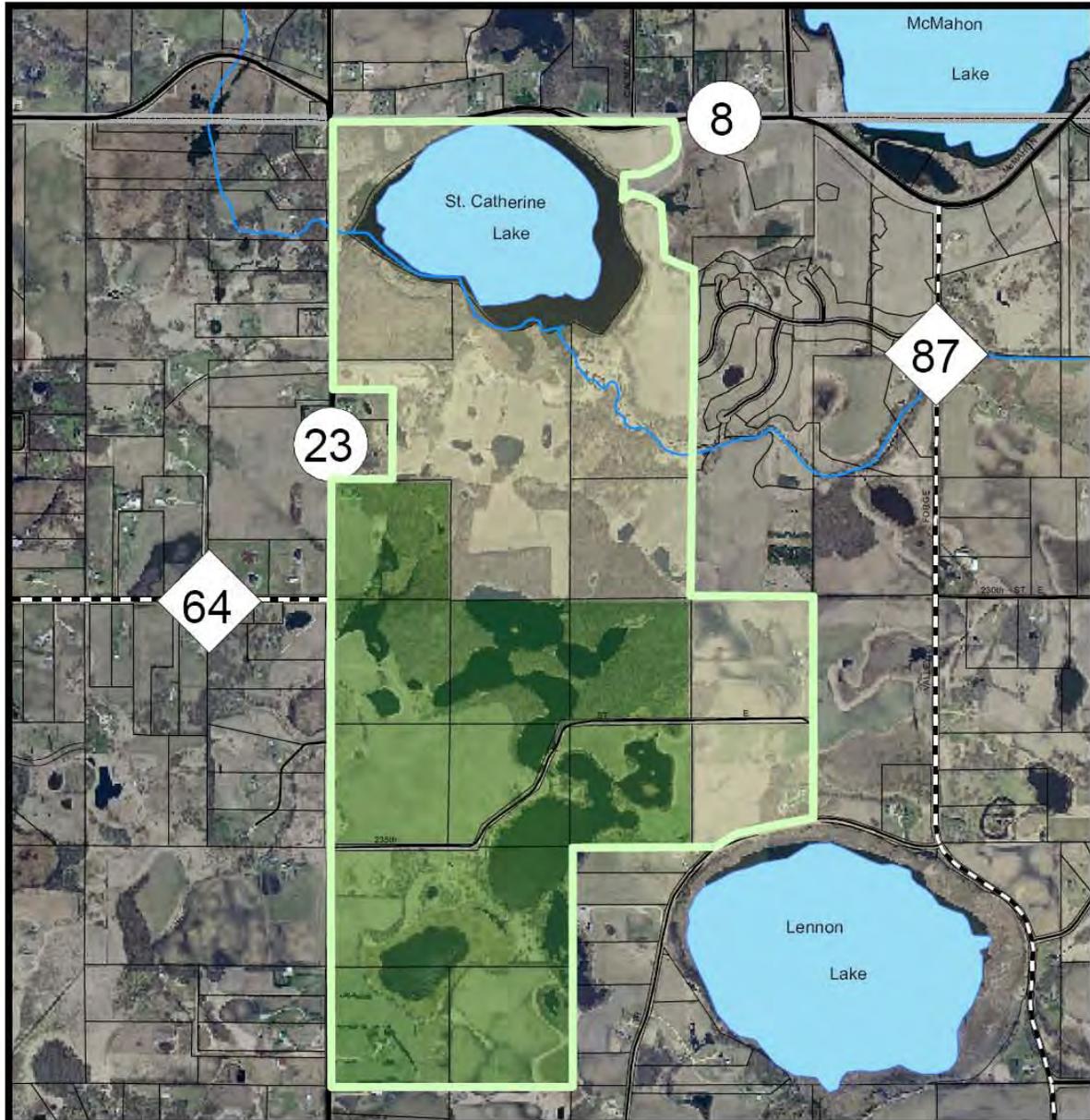
The park is eligible to receive potential funding towards acquisition from the Metropolitan Council. The County is also pursuing other sources of funding at this time including possible park dedication from private developments near the park boundary. It will likely take many years before the entire park is acquired, as land within the park boundaries will be purchased as it becomes available.

More detailed plans for development of the park will be defined after the Doyle-Kennefick acquisition has been completed. A future development master plan will guide development of the park.

Total size:	914 (acres including 136 acres of St. Catherine's Lake)
Acquired:	490 acres
To be acquired:	288 acres

**Figure VII-7
Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park**

Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park General Site Map



Legend

- Planned Future Park Boundary
- County Tax Database
- Potential Future Acquisitions
- County Owned - Future Park Land

SCOTT COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Parks and Trails Department
200 Fourth Avenue West, Shakopee, Minnesota 55379-1220
(952)496-8745 - FAX (952) 496-8496 - Web: www.co.scott.mn.us



March 6, 2008

Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park (Scott County - undeveloped)

Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park is identified in the Metropolitan Council’s 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan as One of the Last Best Places to acquire now for development beyond the year 2030. It is located within an area of southern Scott County that is experiencing development pressure, which is expected to continue. The park is located on Cedar Lake, which has a surface area of 780 acres. It is the largest lake in southern Scott County and a popular fishery. The park is entirely within the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Metro Conservation Corridors area and contains approximately 4,150 feet of shoreland on Cedar Lake.

The area was previously included in the Regional Recreation Open Space System. It was removed from the System based on the sites inability to support a quality public swimming facility due to poor water quality conditions of Cedar Lake. However, due to actions taken to address the water quality, a recent analysis of water quality data collected from 1979 through 2005 shows evidence of improvement due to phosphorus reductions. Although Cedar Lake remains on the State list of Impaired Waters, the negative trend in its water quality appears to be turning around.

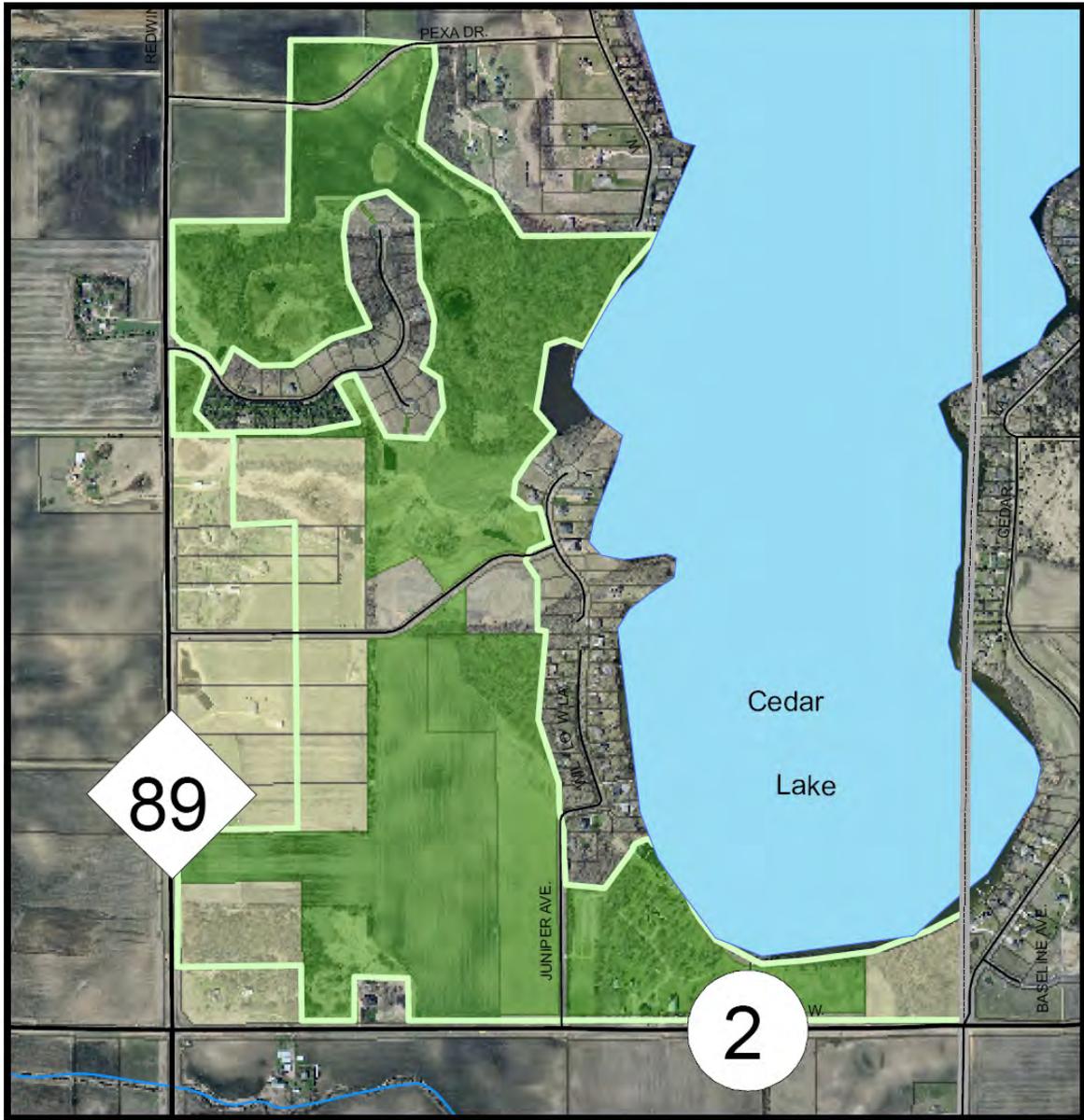
The Acquisition Master Plan identifies the desired ultimate boundaries for the future regional park, including the Cedar Lake Farm “Fun on the Farm” day resort property, which was acquired in 2006. The remainder of the park exhibits significant natural resources in addition to the ability to provide active and passive recreation areas. The County has acquired 173 acres as park dedication through development and purchased 61 acres as part of the Fun on the Farm acquisition. Total park acreage is identified at 297 acres.

Although the Acquisition Master Plan recognizes Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park as a need beyond 2030, the County could operate the park for public use prior to that time. In many ways the lands and facilities of the Cedar Lake Farm property as currently developed offer the County an opportunity to begin park operations at a modest level, assisting the County in ramping up capacity to operate public park lands. Once public park operations begin, a large area of land characterized by scenic views of rolling land with significant natural resources on the shores of Cedar Lake would be open for public enjoyment.

Total size:	297 acres
Acquired:	234 acres
To be acquired:	63 acres

**Figure VII-8
Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park**

Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park General Site Map



Legend

- Planned Future Park Boundary
- Potential Future Park Acquisitions (w/in planned boundary)
- County Owned - Future Park Land
- County Tax Database

SCOTT COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Parks and Trails Department
200 Fourth Avenue West, Shakopee, Minnesota 55379-1220
(952)496-8745 - FAX (952) 496-8496 - Web: www.co.scott.mn.us



March 6, 2008

Regional Trails

Trails serve multiple functions: transportation corridors, recreation, and active living. Trails can also provide the opportunity to enjoy nature at a quiet pace in a beautiful setting. Like trails designed for cardiovascular workouts there also can be significant health benefits associated with a peaceful walk in the woods.

The County is involved in two types of trails: regional trails and transportation trails. The regional trail system is part of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space System, is guided by the 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan, and would be implemented through the parks program. Transportation trails are county initiatives guided by county policies and programs and is implemented through the transportation system. However, both trail types will require collaboration between both parks and transportation for effective long-term planning and implementation.

Since the focus of the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan was to identify and protect park sites under threat of development through acquisition, trails have not received as much attention. However, the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan attempts to focus equal importance on trails and parks.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY --

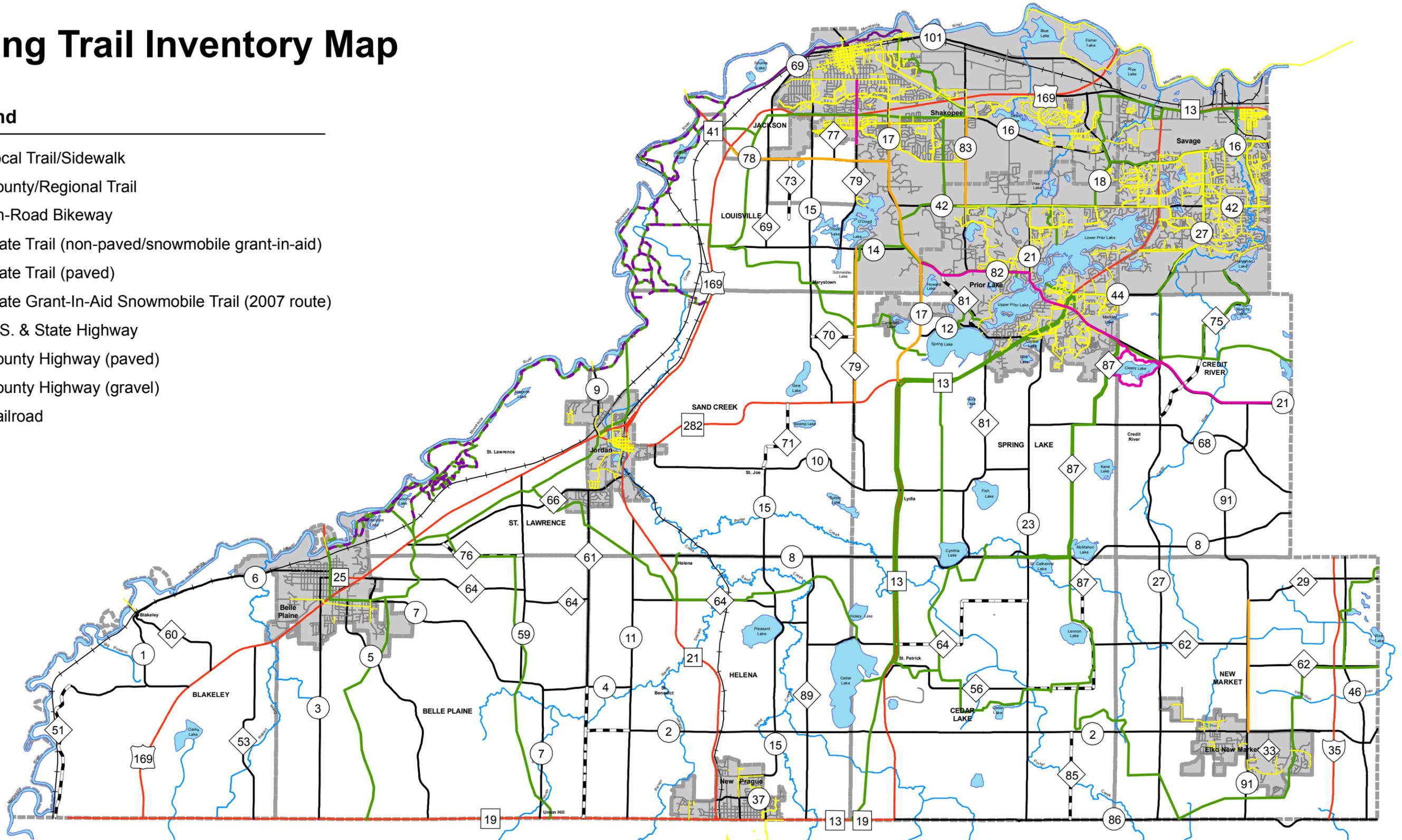
**PLACEHOLDER FOR FIGURE VII-9
EXISTING TRAIL INVENTORY MAP**



Existing Trail Inventory Map

Legend

- Local Trail/Sidewalk
- County/Regional Trail
- On-Road Bikeway
- State Trail (non-paved/snowmobile grant-in-aid)
- State Trail (paved)
- State Grant-In-Aid Snowmobile Trail (2007 route)
- U.S. & State Highway
- County Highway (paved)
- County Highway (gravel)
- + Railroad



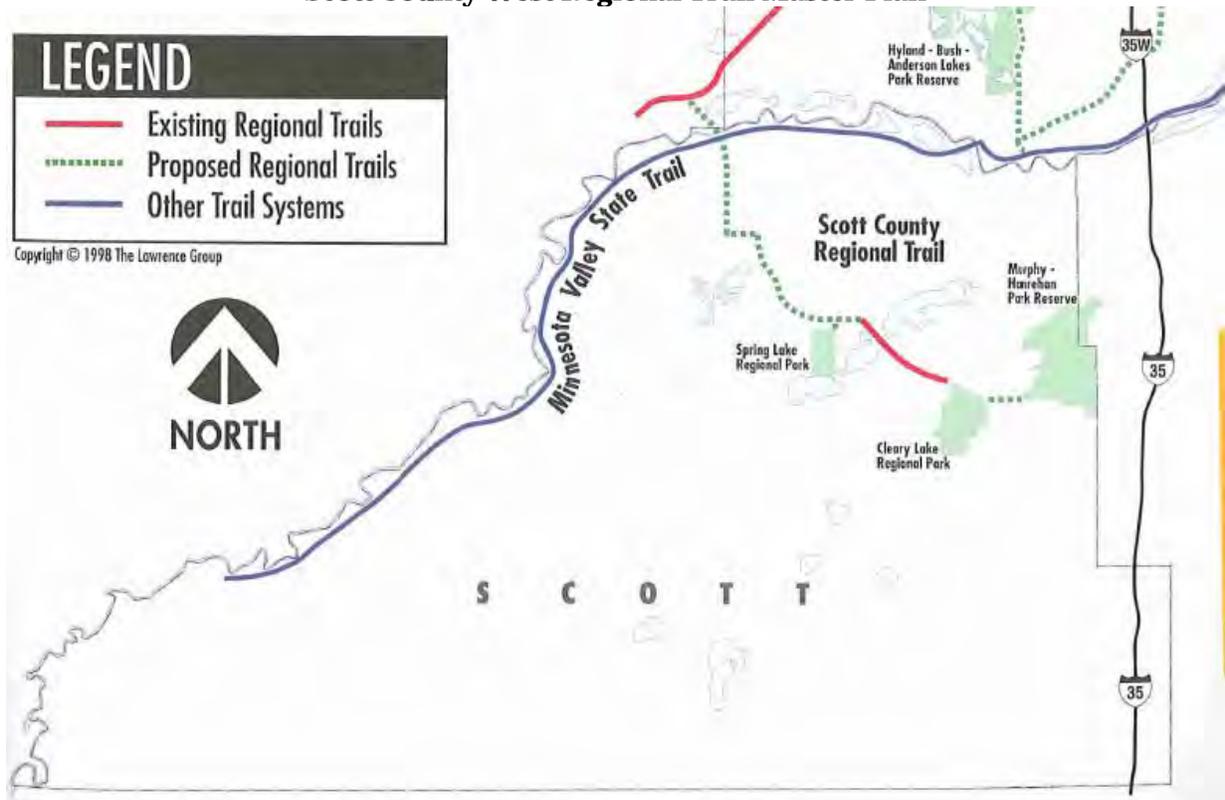
Scott County West Regional Trail

Early Metropolitan Parks and Open Space System plans designated a 12-mile corridor for a regional trail running from Murphy-Hanrehan to Cleary Lake then to Prior Lake and finally connecting to the Minnesota Valley State Trail in Shakopee. The trail alignment identified in the master plan from 1998 identified the trail as primarily following roadways, including CR 21, CR 17, and CR 79. Once in the older portions of Shakopee, the exact route was proposed to follow city streets, although exactly how was not identified.

Currently approximately 6.5 miles are complete, with approximately 5 miles along CR21 in Prior Lake and Credit River Township, and a short section along CR79 in Shakopee. The majority of trail construction was completed with roadway construction. Currently the cities of Prior Lake and Shakopee are operating and maintaining the Scott County Regional trail.

The master plan for this trail was fairly brief and did not provide clear direction on alignments and routes. The plan should be updated.

**Figure VII-10
Scott County West Regional Trail Master Plan**



Source: Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District Master Plan For a System of Parks, Adopted July, 23 1998

County Trails

Only recently has the County taken a more proactive role in providing County trails through transportation projects. As proposed in the 2030 Transportation Plan, trails would become an integral part of the transportation system, and would complement state, regional, and local trail systems for transportation, recreation, and active living.

D. Other Systems and Amenities

Cities and Towns

There are approximately 200 city parks and sixteen township parks in Scott County. These facilities provide recreational opportunities that are primarily of city/township importance, and include athletic complexes, team sports facilities, neighborhood parks, play equipment, and special use facilities like skate parks. Township parks generally have only minimal development of facilities such as picnic areas and small play structures. Cities generally have an established recreation and transportation trail system that consists of sidewalks and trails.

Scott County will work pro-actively with the cities and townships to integrate the County's Parks and Trails Plan with those of the cities and townships. It is the intention of the County to develop partnerships with interested cities and townships for the operations and maintenance of County and Regional trails and work towards tying together municipal facilities into an integrated county-wide network of recreational opportunities. System integration will be accomplished, in part, through implementation of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update process where all parties will continue to discuss common issues and identify opportunities to work together.

State Facilities

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources provides facilities through its Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area state park unit. This facility is located along the Minnesota River and consists of 9 units totaling 4805 acres in Scott County. The park is primarily located in the floodplain forest of the river and features an extensive trail system which, when taken together with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge lands, provides trail access along approximately 80 percent of the Minnesota River valley in Scott County. There are 25 campsites and 1 group camp with an additional 8 hike-in and 4 horse campsites. There are 47 miles of hiking trails, portions of which are open to horses, bikes, snowmobiles and cross country skiing in season.

There are 18 state Wildlife Management Areas totaling approximately 1677 acres scattered across the southern third of the county. These areas are managed by the DNR primarily for hunting.

The Savage Fen Scientific and Natural Area is comprised of 2 parcels totaling approximately 55 acres. Scientific and Natural Areas are managed as preserves and have limited public use. The Eagle Creek Aquatic Management Area, approximately 100 acres in size, runs along both the east and west branches of Eagle Creek and protects the Boiling Springs as well as provides hiking and fishing opportunities along one of the last naturally reproducing trout streams in the metropolitan area.

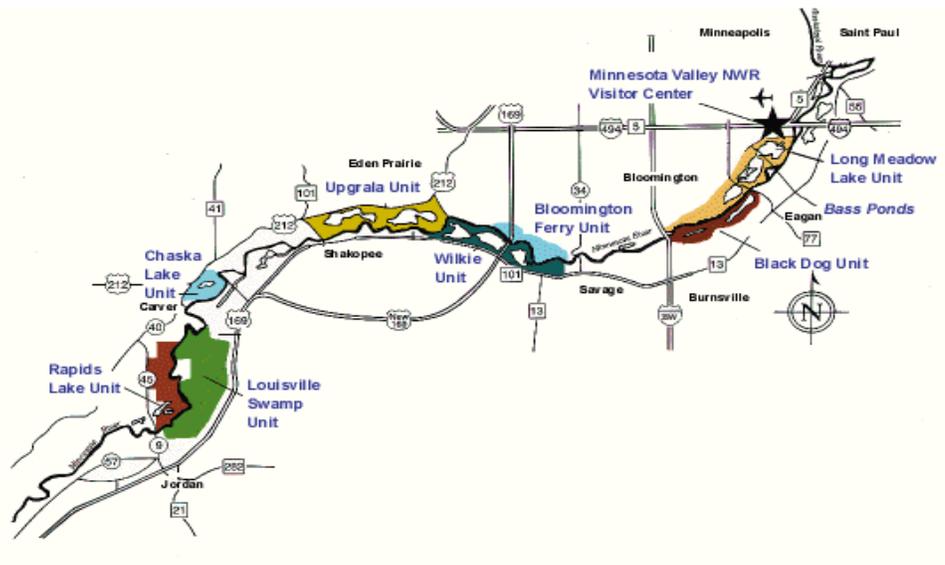
Federal Facilities

There is one Waterfowl Production Area (WPA) in Scott County located on the Scott-Dakota County line in Credit River Township. The Soberg WPA is 113 acres and open to public hunting.

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1976 to provide habitat for a large number of migratory waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife species threatened by commercial and industrial development. Today, the Refuge comprises 14,000 authorized acres, stretching for 34 miles from Fort Snelling State Park to Jordan. Approximately 4700 acres of the Refuge lies within Scott County. The Refuge has eight units, four of which have trails and interpretive signs. The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge is well known for bird watching. Annual

migrations funnel hundreds of thousands of waterfowl, songbirds, and raptors through the valley. Other wildlife-dependent recreation uses on the Refuge include: wildlife observation, wildlife photography, hunting, fishing, environmental education, and interpretation.

Figure VII-11
Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Lands

Private Facilities

In addition to public recreational facilities there are also a number of private outdoor-based recreational providers within the county. As part of the implementation of this Plan, it is the intent of the County to include these facilities in the overall assessment of recreational opportunities and be compatible with services provided by private enterprise. Private facilities include:

- Campgrounds and RV Parks
 - Dakotah Meadows Campground (Mystic Lake)
 - Fish Lake Acres (Spring Lake Township)
 - Jordan KOA (Louisville Township)
 - Shakopee Valley RV Park (Shakopee)
 - Town and Country Campground (Savage)
 - Will's Riverview RV Park (Jackson Township)

- Golf Courses
 - Boulder Pointe (Elko New Market)
 - Cleary Lake operated by Three Rivers Park District (Credit River Township)
 - Creeks Bend (Cedar Lake Township)
 - Heritage Links (Credit River Township)
 - Legends (Credit River Township)
 - The Meadows (Mystic Lake)
 - Ridges at Sand Creek (Jordan)
 - Stonebrooke (Shakopee)
 - Valley View (Belle Plaine)
 - The Wilds (Prior Lake)

- Valley Fair Amusement Park (Shakopee)
Valley Fair is a 90-acre amusement park bordering the Minnesota River. It is the Upper Midwest's largest family amusement park, featuring more than 75 rides and attractions.
- Renaissance Festival (Jackson Township)
The Renaissance Festival is a seasonal private theme park which recreates the scenery, crafts, foods, and entertainment of 16th century Europe. The festival runs on weekends from mid-August through the end of September.
- Canterbury Park Horse Track (Shakopee)
Canterbury Park is located in the City of Shakopee. With live horse racing as its centerpiece from May through August, races are held Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. Canterbury also simulcasts racing from other racetracks around the country 364 days a year. Total racing attendance is 360,000 annually.
- Elko Speedway (Elko New Market)
The Elko Speedway has been affiliated with the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing or NASCAR for 18 years. Elko Speedway has experienced tremendous growth in the past 12 years. Since 1991 the speedway has seen spectator counts almost triple and competitor car count increase 5 times. The Elko Speedway is one of only a handful of 3/8 mile NASCAR tracks in the country.
- Minnesota Horse and Hunt Club (Spring Lake Township)
The Minnesota Horse and Hunt Club is a private shooting preserve. The Horse and Hunt Club also has facilities for shooting sports.
- Minneapolis Gun Club (Credit River Township)
The Minneapolis Gun Club located in Credit River Township has trap, skeet, and 5 stand facilities that are open to the public.
- Motokazie Motocross Track (Elko New Market)
The Motokazie Motocross Track at Elko Speedway will close after the 2012 racing season, as per agreement with the Elko Speedway.

Special Use Facilities

The Landing (Three Rivers)

Located on the scenic Minnesota River, the Landing (formerly known as Historic Murphy's Landing) depicts Minnesota life as it was during the "Good Ol' Days" of 1840-1890. This era of profound change and challenge was marked by numerous historic events including European settlement, the displacement of Native Americans, Minnesota's statehood in 1858, the Civil War, and the 1862 Dakota War.

During a tour, visitors can see more than 40 historical buildings and meet face-to-face with interpreters who portray the folks who might have lived in the Minnesota River Valley during this volatile period. The interpreters dress in period clothing and speak about their daily lives, fears and aspirations in first-person modified speech, coming out of character only to answer questions.

Scott County Fairground

In addition to the annual fair the Scott County Fairground hosts various events throughout the year including Supercross, organized picnics, animal shows, etc. The Scott County Fairground is located in St. Lawrence Township.

Boat Launches

There are 11 public boat launches in Scott County, 2 each on the Minnesota River, Prior Lake, O'Dowd Lake, and Cedar Lake. Spring Lake, Fish Lake and McMahon Lake each have one. Most of these facilities are owned and operated by the Department of Natural Resources. There are no boat accesses to the Minnesota River south of Belle Plaine. When the County Road 1 bridge is replaced in Blakeley there may be an opportunity to create a public launch as there is sufficient right of way to accommodate the facility. There are however, maintenance issues with locating a launch on the Scott County side of the river as it is a deposition zone for river sediments.

E. Building the System

Regional Parks

Siting and Acquisition

Regional Park Policies

The Regional Park System policies assist with siting park areas:

1. Identify lands with high-quality natural resources that are desirable for regional parks system activities and to put these lands in a protected status so they will be available for recreational uses and conservation purposes in perpetuity.
 - a. Strategy 1(a): Siting criteria for units of the regional parks system
Future Metropolitan Council designation of lands for the regional parks system should primarily stress lands with important natural resource features, lands that include or provide access to water bodies and lands with natural resource features that enhance outdoor recreation. Geographic balance or proportionate distribution tied to population distribution patterns can be given weight when natural resource features can be provided through restoration.

Regional recreation open space is defined as “...land and water areas, or interests therein, and facilities determined by the Metropolitan Council to be of regional importance in providing for a balanced system of public outdoor recreation for the metropolitan area including but not limited to park reserves, major linear parks and trails, large recreation parks, and conservatories, zoos, and other special use facilities”. (Minn. Stat. 473.121, subd. 14)

Water is a major attraction in almost every unit of the regional parks system and is an amenity along many of the regional trails. Since most surface water is public, with the bed of those water bodies owned by the state, it is appropriate to provide access to these water bodies through the regional parks system.

Major considerations that vie for contention in deciding which lands should be acquired for the regional parks system are (1) acquiring lands that have natural qualities most desirable for the outdoor recreational activities; (2) acquiring lands to assure that regional park facilities are evenly distributed around the metropolitan area or distributed in proportion to the existing and forecasted urban development; or (3) acquiring lands that protect an important natural resource feature. Examples of important natural resource features include lands that link other natural resource areas or water bodies together, which in turn provide a larger natural habitat opportunity; lands that help protect or could be used to improve water quality; or other lands that serve as habitat for protected or endangered species.

Although these considerations vie for contention, the legislative directive is clear that the land should be of “regional importance.” Regional importance is not directly defined in the law. But the legislative directive requires that the regional parklands plus state facilities should reasonably meet the outdoor recreation needs of the people of the metropolitan area. Consequently, lands of “regional importance” would be comparable in size, draw users from rather large geographic areas and contain natural resources.

County Guidelines

In addition to Regional Park System policies, other considerations include:

- **Geographic Distribution**

Many models for determining park distribution have been developed. None are perfect. Most are based upon population numbers within a certain distance of a park. In Scott County the following guidelines apply to Regional/county park site selection and acquisition:

- (1) Regional/county park facilities should serve the needs of current and future Scott County residents.
- (2) Regional/county parks should be at least 100 acres, however, 250+ acres is seen as being desirable. There are instances when smaller parks may be acceptable, for example, parks which are small in size but provide public access to lakeshore or facilitate for some special use which would not be available otherwise.
- (3) Regional/county parks should have a diversity of resources, either natural or man-made that contribute to the outdoor recreation experience. Access to a recreation-quality water body is desirable.
- (4) The siting of Regional/county park facilities will consider the proximity of similar Federal, State or locally owned facilities to avoid duplication.

- **Parcel Size**

Parcel size is an important factor in determining priorities. Buying one or a few large parcels to assemble a park is generally much easier and more cost effective than acquiring numerous small parcels from many owners. Efficiencies are obtained from reduced costs associated with acquisition such as appraisals, boundary surveys, legal agreements, recording fees, etc.

- **Critical Nature**

Another important factor is determining whether a parcel contains significant natural resources or is a “must have” parcel (due to location or function) or can another parcel of land meet the same needs. Parcels that make vital connections (e.g. the last section of a trail) or contain very high quality natural resources that cannot be found elsewhere may be the factors that determine if a parcel is of a critical nature or not. Likewise geographic location/distribution may also increase the priority of a given parcel.

- **Level of Threat**

Assessing the level of threat is an important part of prioritizing acquisitions and allocation of financial resources. If a parcel that has been identified for a future park or trail corridor is in imminent threat of having its land use changed to be incompatible with future park needs (e.g. from agricultural to residential), the parcel may need to be moved up in the acquisition priority list. Land use changes are generally triggered by a change in ownership. For instance, a farm that contains an ecologically valuable woodlot is sold to a developer. Once the sale has been completed the opportunity to acquire the parcel in its entirety for park purposes has been permanently lost. Conversely, park land dedication may make a portion of the site available for park uses at low cost to the county.

It is important to identify potential parks and trail corridors before the threat becomes imminent. With a well-planned and targeted growth plan landowners can be approached early on by the County and be made aware of the future opportunity to sell (or donate) their land for park purposes. Landowners should view being located in a future park or corridor as a potential asset since there is one more potential buyer (the County) when they are ready to sell.

Areas that have been identified for future park lands but have a low level of threat, due to remoteness from development pressures or a landowner who is simply not willing to sell, can be placed further down the priority list. Priority lists need to have built in flexibility as the level of threat can change rapidly. For this reason it is important to have a process in place for regular assessment, review and updating of the priority list. Many times this is done on a five year cycle as part of the Capital Improvement Program but in rapidly growing areas it may require more frequent review.

- **Leveraging**

There are multiple ways in which the County can leverage resources. Acquisitions grants, cost share programs, donations and multiple partners should be explored. Additional leveraging can be accomplished by sharing facilities, equipment and staff. Substantial land masses can be assembled by clustering parks and wildlife lands adjacent to or near one another. Clustering also facilitates management efficiencies.

Potential financial partners for acquisition includes: Metropolitan Council, cities and townships, Metro Greenways, LCCMR projects such as Metro Wildlife Corridors, Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and non-profit organizations such as The Trust for Public Land.

- **Ecological Connections**

Although public access is a primary goal of any parks and trails system, there may be situations where public access is not possible but public benefit can be derived by instituting permanent land use restrictions on a parcel of land. This is particularly true when an ecological corridor connects significant patches of public open space but cannot be obtained for public access. In this scenario the County may need to obtain a Conservation Easement or institute permanent dedication when the land is subdivided. In these situations the public cannot walk directly on the land but still benefits because the ecological connection that allows plant and animal populations to survive on public lands is maintained.

Major utility corridors also can function as ecological corridors. The County will explore opportunities to work with utility companies to encourage management of their rights-of-way (ROW) in an ecologically sensitive fashion. ROW's that run through, adjacent to or near public parks, trails and other significant natural resource areas would be given priority. Utilities on the eastern seaboard have found this to be a cost effective management approach within their ROWs using selective cutting and subtle vegetation manipulation while at the same time providing thousands of acres of wildlife habitat.

Park Land Function Analysis

The function or role of a property within the County's planned park boundaries will ultimately be determined through master planning processes; however, prior to formal planning it is useful to have a preliminary understanding of how a parcel or area of land may contribute to a park. Such information is valuable during land acquisition processes and in making land management and policy decisions.

A framework to understand possible function was created and used to analyze all in-holdings and Scott County-owned park lands within planned park boundaries. The goals of this exercise were to 1) develop a common language for understanding how a parcel of land may benefit the Scott County parks and trails system and what its possible role could be to the park and to the system; 2) summarize and make available information on the character of the lands –natural

resources, topography, possible development potential, etc.; and, 3) to apply the framework to the County's defined park areas to highlight possible functions.

Nine function themes were identified for the purpose of analyzing and describing park lands. Each parcel within Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park was analyzed and described within this framework. Parcels were not examined for Spring Lake Regional Park, which has a recent master plan guiding the types of use and development - or function - of the lands within the park, nor an analysis for Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve because at this time it is still a search area without an identified boundary.

Figure VII-12 Land Function Themes	
Function	Examples/Description
1. Development and Circulation	-Park entrances -Park roads -Trail connections and trailheads -Parking -Hardscape infrastructure
2. Natural Resource Value	-Habitat and native plant community (NPC) -Unique or Rare Natural Features & Threatened or Endangered Species -Natural Area Corridors (ecological/wildlife purposes) -Water resources -Restoration potential
3. Culturally Important Features	-Old Structures -Rare or interesting architecture -Way of life; rural feel
4. Open Space	-Passive open space, non-programmed, no structures, open views -Lands that provide feeling of space
5. Cultural Buffering (noise, sightlines)	-Between private property and park -Between roadways and park -Between residential/commercial and park -Between park activities
6. Viewshed and Scenic View Preservation	-Preservation of view sheds from surrounding areas and within park -Scenic -Historic landscape -Natural
7. Recreation: Passive	-Natural resource based -Light footprint -Minor landscape modification/degradation -Birding/animal watching, lake fishing, walking/hiking/skiing/biking on natural surfaces
8. Recreation: Active	-Based on hardscapes and major land manipulation -Interpretive/visitor center, pavilion, picnic shelter, playgrounds, human-made water features
9. Ease of Development by Landowner for Residential Housing	-Considered a cursory review of zoning, access and adjacent lands

Following is a summary of the findings from the Land Function Analysis for in-holdings and County owned park lands.

Figure VII-13 Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park: In-holding Properties	
Function Theme	Analysis Summary
Development and Circulation	Inholdings at Doyle will contribute a high value in terms of park development and circulation opportunities, offering direct access to County Roads 23 and 8 for possible park road entrances and regional and county trail connections. Cultivated lands and residential areas present opportunities for placing hardscape park infrastructure, such as parking, trail heads, roadways and picnic areas, away from higher quality lands, i.e. land with native plant communities or other significant resource value, thereby avoiding degradation of these important park areas.
Natural Resources and Unique or Rare Features	Overall, in-holdings at Doyle offer very high value, containing native plant communities and/or large stretches of shoreland on St. Catherine's Lake. One parcel also has a creek traversing the property and connecting to the lake. Several properties contain lower quality natural lands that offer buffering to the higher quality lands and the potential for restoration. A very significant role of the in-holdings is their capacity to buffer very high quality areas already owned by the county. Together, the in-holdings and existing park lands create a contiguous 650-acre natural land habitat hub that connects outside of the park to important habitat areas.
Culturally Important Features	The primary culturally important features associated with the in-holdings include views from within the park of St. Catherine's church, and ties to farming activities (barns and associated out-buildings).
Open Space	In-holdings at Doyle offer high value related to open space, contributing to flexibility in designing circulation and development and contributing to an open pastoral and feeling in the park.
Cultural Buffering	In-holdings at Doyle have a high cultural buffering value, functioning to buffer between the park and residential areas as well as the park and roadways.
Viewshed and Scenic View Preservation	The value of in-holdings for viewshed and scenic view preservation is high. The location of in-holdings will preserve several significant scenic viewsheds from both within the park and into the park from the surrounding neighborhoods and roadways.
Recreation Passive	Overall in-holdings at Doyle have a high value related to passive recreation opportunities. Due to their location near St. Catherine and Lennon Lakes and high quality oak forest areas, in-holdings will provide opportunities for hiking, biking, wildlife observation and other natural history focused recreation.
Recreation Active	Overall the in-holdings will offer significant opportunities for active recreation areas such as camping and large picnic areas. Properties that appear to offer high value are large, have areas of diminished natural resource value, while being near or in view of highly desirable natural resource features. Such areas may be opportunities for camping, picnic areas, pavilions, etc...
Ability/Potential of Inholding to Develop (residential)	The development potential/threat is deemed moderate for the remaining in-holdings.

**Figure VII-14
Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park: County Owned Park Land**

Function Theme	Analysis Summary
Development and Circulation	In terms of development and circulation function County owned property offers a very high value. The properties have opportunities for: a major park entrance road and paved trail connections to/from CR 23; possibly a park road from the south; space and buildings for a maintenance facility and interpretive building/center; parking areas; segments of a paved trail loop and natural surface trails; and existing homestead buildings for possible future use or interpretation.
Natural Resources and Unique or Rare Features	The natural resource value of these properties is extremely high. The properties consist of 350 acres of natural lands including 235 of high quality native plant communities ranging from oak forest to water-lily wetlands. These areas offer substantial wildlife habitat and biodiversity value.
Culturally Important Features	The properties offer low to high value, with one parcel containing culturally important features, such as a circa 1880 farmstead, farmhouse and outbuildings.
Open Space	The properties offer a substantial amount of open space providing flexibility in design and circulation and offering pastoral views from within and looking into the park.
Cultural Buffering	The cultural buffering value of these properties is quite high, protecting the park user experience from road way disturbance and residential developments and protecting residential properties from active park areas.
Viewshed and Scenic View Preservation	To a high degree, historic landscapes and scenic and natural views are protected from within the park as well as looking into the park from surrounding areas.
Recreation Passive	Many opportunities for passive recreation, such as biking, hiking, picnicking, are possible within the County owned future park properties, both within or near the high quality natural resource areas and within lower quality natural resource areas.
Recreation Active	Many opportunities for active recreation, such as camping or building-based activities are possible within the property; however some are not suitable for active recreation due to the presence of important natural resources.
Ability/Potential of Inholding to Develop (residential)	None. Property is County owned as park land.

**Figure VII-15
Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park: In-holding Properties**

Function Theme	Analysis Summary
Development and Circulation	In-holding's at Cedar provide a moderate to high value for development and circulation, primarily related to creating a paved trail loop through the park, buffering potential entrance roads, and creating space in a constricted part of the park.
Natural Resources and Unique or Rare Features	The overall value natural resource value of the in-holding properties ranges from low to high, with two properties having native plant communities and water quality buffering capacity. Other in-holding properties are cultivated or residential with vegetative cover consisting of lawn.
Culturally Important Features	In-holding's at Cedar hold low value in terms of culturally important features. One property is deemed as having high value offering a historic landscape viewing opportunity from the water, due to its vegetative cover of Maple-basswood forest.
Open Space	Open space value is moderate.
Cultural Buffering	In-holdings at Cedar offer from low to high cultural buffering value. The higher value properties buffer between residential areas/homes and park activities and buffer between roadway and park activities.
Viewshed and Scenic View Preservation	The viewshed and scenic view preservation value of Cedar inholdings is moderate. Properties with high value preserve viewsheds from the lake, from within the park, from neighborhoods and from roadways.
Recreation Passive	Passive recreation value of the in-holdings is moderate, with the value primarily related to bringing flexibility to trail system connections and for wildlife observation opportunities.
Recreation Active	Passive recreation value of the in-holdings is low. The properties are small in size and located on the perimeter of the park, adjacent to residential areas, making their use for active recreation less desirable than other areas. One property has medium value for a possible trail head and trail connection to an adjacent neighborhood.
Ability/Potential of Inholding to Develop (residential)	The potential for in-holdings at Cedar to develop ranges from low to moderate.

**Figure VII-16
Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park: County Owned Park Land**

Function Theme	Analysis Summary
Development and Circulation	These properties offer high value for park development and circulation. Several of the properties are large in size and have low natural resource value offering many opportunities for park infrastructure. A couple of areas are of significantly high natural resource value (Maple-basswood Forest, lakeshore) and while these areas offer value for circulation of trails or the placement of infrastructure near their edges, they offer limited value for roadway circulation and major infrastructure development.
Natural Resources and Unique or Rare Features	The county owned lands range from low to high value. Higher value properties contain 61-acres of Maple-basswood Forest, much of it adjacent to Cedar Lake and 3500 feet of shoreland on Cedar Lake. Lower value properties consist of cultivated lands.
Culturally Important Features	The value of these properties in terms of culturally important features ranges from low to high, with the high value property preserving a well-known recreation area (Cedar Lake Farm and Day Resort) with potential of preserving a way of life.
Open Space	The open space value of these properties is high. Their size and location offer direct exposure to open lands from adjacent roadways, neighborhoods and homes.
Cultural Buffering	The value in terms of cultural buffering is moderate. The properties offering higher value provide a buffer between the park and residential areas and the lake from County Road 2.
Viewshed and Scenic View Preservation	The value is moderate. Properties with high value in terms of viewshed and scenic view preservation contribute to preserving wide sweeping views of Cedar Lake, from the uplands, and a pastoral view of the uplands from the lake. They also contribute to preserving views of natural shoreland from the lake.
Recreation Passive	The passive recreation value of the properties is moderate to high, with many opportunities associated with the shoreland and forested areas. The large, cultivated tracks of land will also contribute to passive recreation activities.
Recreation Active	The active recreation value of the properties is high. The large amount of cultivated lands offers a blank slate for park infrastructure and the property formally operated as a day resort offers a large park-like area in view of the lake.
Ability/Potential of Inholding to Develop (residential)	None; already owned as parkland.

Metropolitan Council Identified Regional Park Search Areas

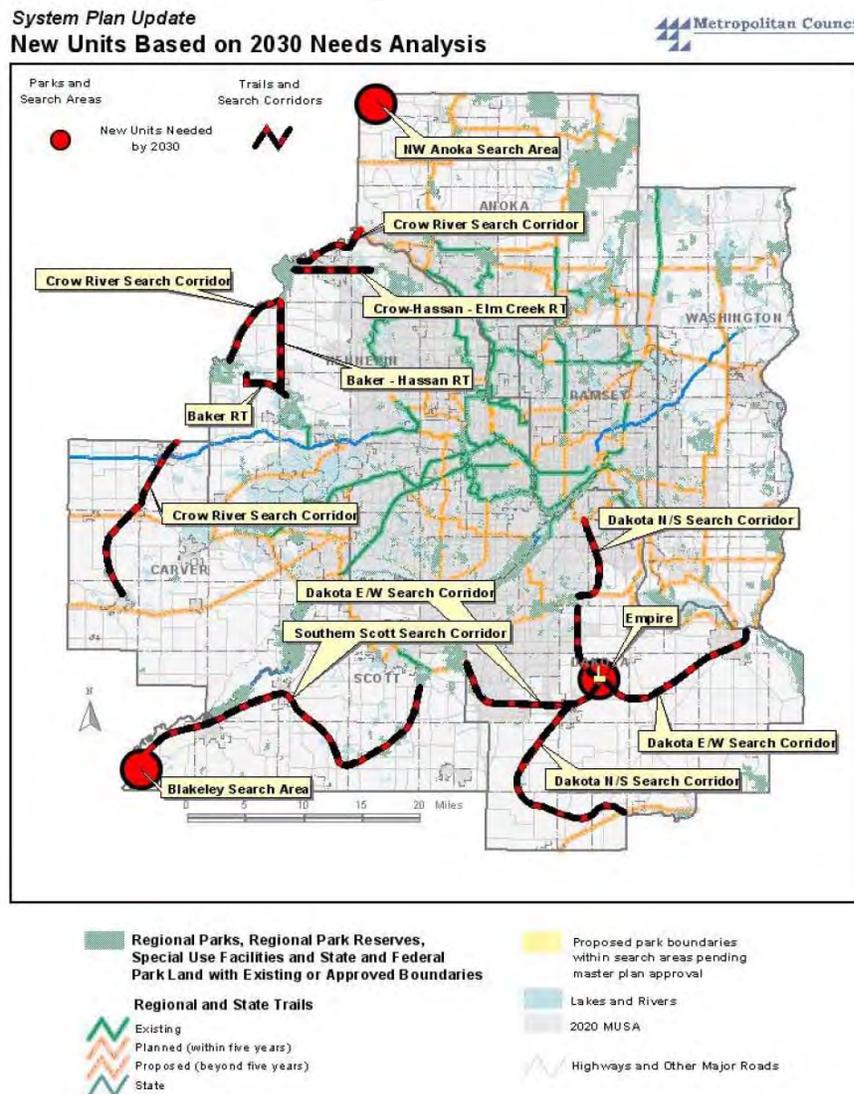
New Units Based on 2030 Need

- Blakeley Bluffs

The Blakeley bluffs area has been identified as a search area for a future Regional Park Reserve by Metropolitan Council based upon its high quality natural resources and stunning views. To meet the requirements for park reserve status the park must be at least 1000 acres. There is not a sufficiently large enough population in the area to create a demand for such a park reserve at this time.

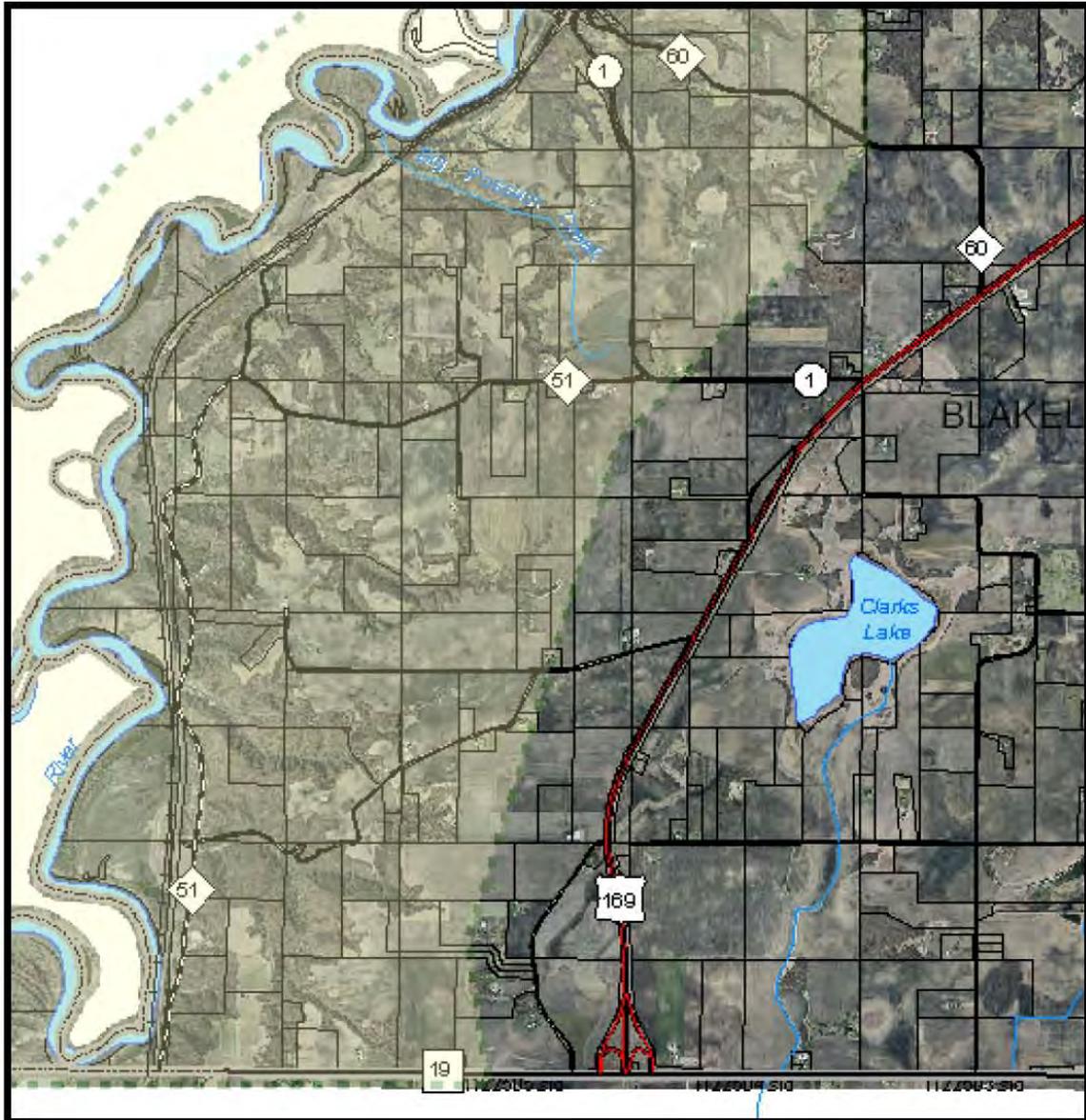
Metropolitan Council has long proposed to acquire land in the Blakely bluffs area for a regional park reserve and in fact proposed to acquire almost 6000 acres in the early 1960's. It is almost a certainty that any future park reserve will be much more modest in size than the 1960's proposal. The County will begin to refine the search area and begin landowner discussions in the future when resources are available. However, for planning purposes a theoretical 1,950-acre park that runs from the DNR's Blakeley Wayside to the town of Blakeley and encompasses much of the bluffs and ravines in the area was identified.

Figure VII-17



**Figure VII-18
Blakely Bluffs Regional Park Reserve**

Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve Search Area Map



Legend

-  Search Area - Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve
-  County Tax Database

SCOTT COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
Parks and Trails Department
200 Fourth Avenue West, Shakopee, Minnesota 55379-1220
(952)496-8745 - FAX (952) 496-8496 - Web: www.co.scott.mn.us



March 6, 2008

Saving the Last Best Places – Completing the System

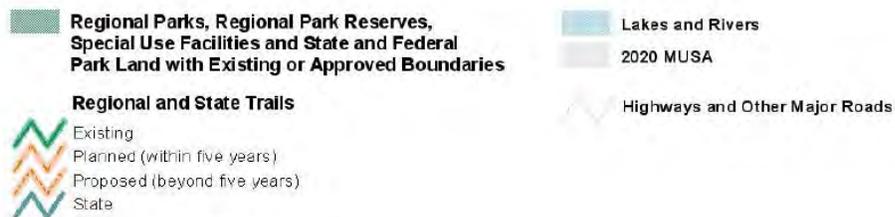
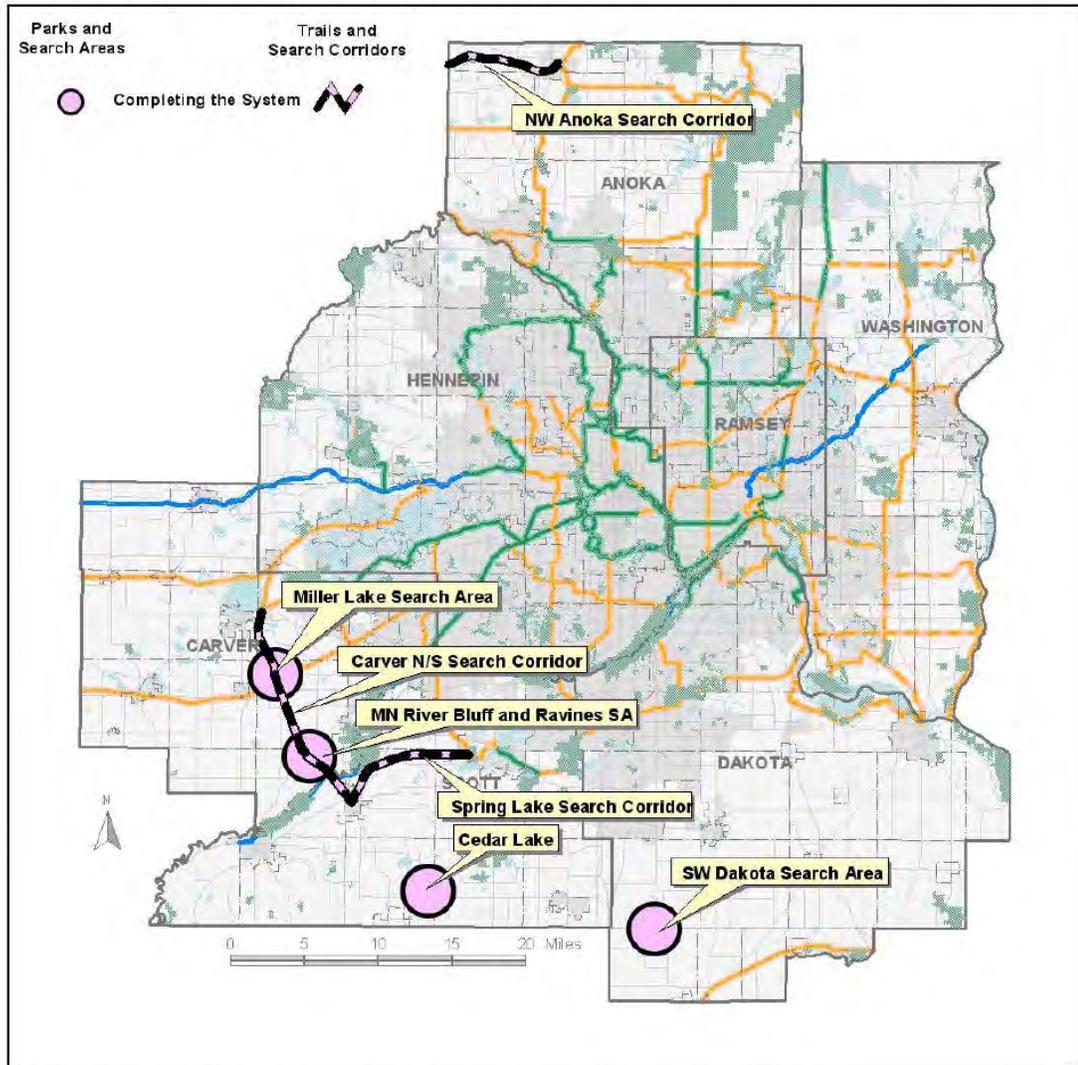
- Cedar Lake Area

Cedar Lake Farm was identified by Metropolitan Council as one of the “Last Best Places”, and a site that would be acquired for post 2030. Since the opportunity arose, the County moved forward with acquisition before it was lost to development.

Figure VII-19

System Plan Update

**The Last Best Places -
Completing Acquisition of the System**



County Study Areas

Two areas in the western part of the county have been identified as future “study areas”. With the proposed changes in 2030 Land Use Plan, the population in this part of the County is anticipated to grow in an urban style. Whether or not there is adequate park land to serve this future population needs further study in subsequent updates to this Plan. A third study area has been identified for the southeastern portion of the county. This study area generally correlates to the Vermillion River corridor area, and could provide corridor connections to Dakota County.

These study areas may also serve alternative recreation uses, such as OHV, or if provided by the cities, sports complexes. At this point, they are simply placeholders that will trigger further review in future updates.

Other Regional Parks

Metropolitan Council’s 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan identifies future regional facilities in both southwest Dakota County and eastern Carver County. These facilities will serve future residents of Scott County.

In addition, the Ney Nature Center, located across the border in Le Sueur County, is a wonderful facility that through partnerships, can serve Scott County residents.

Development

Development of the park system is integrated into all sections of the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan:

- **People and Services:** How parks will serve current and future residents.
- **Relationships and Partners:** Identifies partnerships as being critical to the success of establishing the system.
- **Natural Resources:** Identifies how natural resources should be incorporated, protected, and enhanced in development the system.
- **Operations and Maintenance:** Identifies strategies for long-term efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Sustainability:** Stress the importance of looking at ways to minimize impact.
- **System Costs and Funding:** Establishes costs and funding scenarios for acquisition and development of the system.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY --
PLACEHOLDER FOR FIGURE VII-20
SCOTT COUNTY REGIONAL PARK SYSTEM MAP

Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update

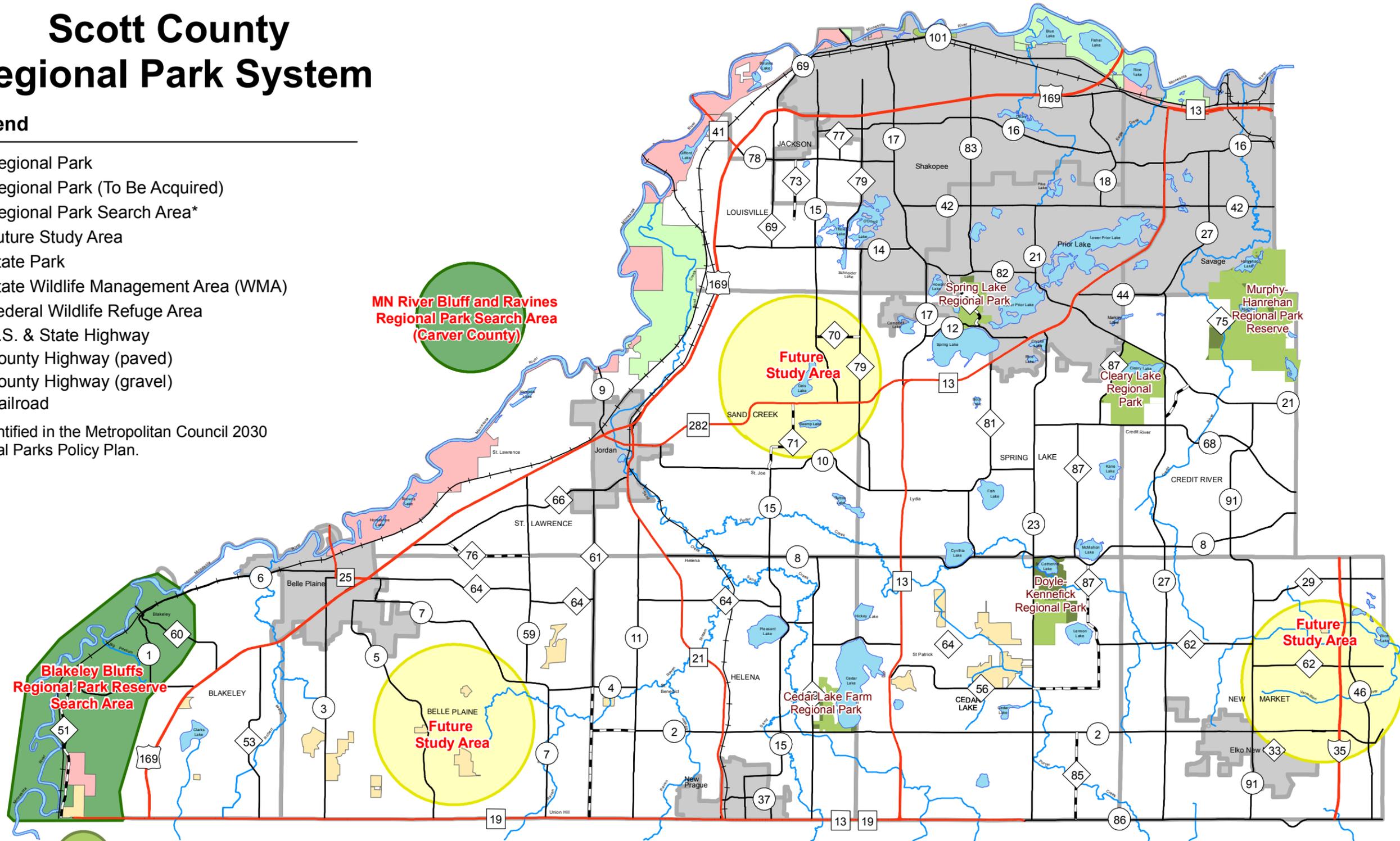


Scott County Regional Park System

Legend

- Regional Park
- Regional Park (To Be Acquired)
- Regional Park Search Area*
- Future Study Area
- State Park
- State Wildlife Management Area (WMA)
- Federal Wildlife Refuge Area
- U.S. & State Highway
- County Highway (paved)
- County Highway (gravel)
- Railroad

*As identified in the Metropolitan Council 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan.



SW Dakota Regional Park Search Area (Dakota County)

Regional Trails

Siting and Acquisition

Regional Trail Policies

The Regional Park System policies assist with siting regional trails. To qualify for regional trail status, an existing or proposed trail must meet the following criteria:

1. The trail should not duplicate an existing trail. The trail may include a portion of an existing county or local trail if the trail serves one of the following functions:
 - (A) Destination Regional Trail. Be a destination itself, providing a high-quality recreation experience that traverses significant natural resource areas where the trail treadway will have no adverse impact on the natural resource base;
 - (B) Linking Regional Trail. Link two or more units of the regional recreation open space system.
2. The trail must serve a regional audience based on visitor origin and service-area research on regional trails.

New Linking Regional Trails should be located within the developing or developed area of the region. For Linking Regional Trails, any two trails running parallel to each other and not separated by natural or human-built barriers should be at least 1.5 miles apart so as not to overlap the localized service area of those trails. For Destination Regional Trails, there should be no spacing minimums or maximums; instead, the decision to locate the trail should be based on the availability of existing high-quality natural resources or the opportunity for natural resources restoration, enhancement and protection. Areas within the urban and urbanizing portion of the metropolitan area that are not within 3 miles of a regional trail should be identified as search sites for new regional trails.

Destination Regional Trails should be located to reasonably maximize the amount of high-quality natural resources within the trail corridor boundaries. Whenever possible, Linking Regional Trails should be located to reasonably maximize inclusion of high quality natural resources and connections to local trails, areas of lifecycle and affordable housing, and areas of infill and redevelopment.

County Guidelines

Whenever possible trails should serve multiple functions such as providing combined transportation and recreational corridors. Likewise, wider corridors which create ecological links can be matched with recreational trails to maintain ecological integrity as well as improve the recreational experience. Trail standards will be developed in the future and it is likely that the standards will vary based on the purpose, function and anticipated use of the trail.

Current trail opportunities within the county consist primarily of constructing trails within county road right-of-way at the time of roadway upgrade or reconstruction. This can adequately serve transportation and recreational needs but does not (in most cases) provide ecological corridors or an aesthetically pleasing experience.

The County should explore options for locating off-roadway trails. These could be along railroad rights-of-way that may be abandoned in the future (there are not many opportunities for this in Scott County), large utility rights-of-way (major transmission lines and pipelines), or overland with the corridor obtained by park dedication/ acquisition at the time of development. The latter will require that trail corridors be identified now and careful review of proposed plats occurs in

the future. Purchasing significant lengths of trail right-of-way is generally not feasible due to the many landowners involved. However, there may be opportunities to purchase short lengths that fill in gaps from willing sellers.

The cities in Scott County have trail plans that are in various stages of implementation. Scott County will work with the Cities and Townships to facilitate connections to County trails and parks.

Trails, like roads or any other hard infrastructure, can have significant environmental impacts. Efforts should be made to avoid these impacts whenever possible and mitigate the effects when avoidance is not possible.

The County's proposed trail system should integrate city/township and regional trails into a cohesive system that links destinations together. It is likely that the County will be the major trail provider in the rural areas and a loop system should be developed which ties Jordan, Belle Plaine and New Prague together. If a park reserve is located in the Blakeley bluffs area a trail corridor running along the river from Belle Plaine to the park should be developed. Likewise a County trail from New Prague to the Northeast via Cedar Lake, Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park, and on to Spring Lake Regional Park and eventually tying into the Scott Regional Trail should be considered. A loop running from Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park to Elko/ New Market and then north into Credit River Township, eventually tying into the County Road 21 trail could also be developed. A connection from the Louisville Swamp trail head following the bluff line and then on to Spring Lake Regional Park should be explored.

The corridors shown are conceptual in nature and show desired connections rather than specific alignments. For instance a need to connect Jordan to New Prague has been identified and is shown. However, the exact alignment will not be determined until opportunities to begin making the connection emerge. These opportunities could be linked to road improvements, subdivision of large parcels, abandonment of the rail line or interested parties who wish to sell a corridor through their property.

Although it is likely that many of the county/regional trails in Scott County will need to be constructed along roadways, opportunities to move the trails away from roads should be capitalized upon whenever possible. For example, development of large parcels of land offers the opportunity to create trail corridors away from busy roads and enhance the recreational experience of the trail users.

Trails can be part of ecological corridors linking significant areas of natural resources. Ecological corridors provide pathways for animals and plants to move from one habitat to another. Animals have three basic requirements for survival; food, shelter, and water. The specifics of these requirements may change depending upon the time of the year or the age of the animal. Different habitats meet different needs at different times, thus animals must move to attain the three basic requirements. Distance of movement varies by species and the distribution of the required natural resources. For example, a turtle living in high quality habitat that provides suitable feeding, nesting, and over wintering areas may not move more than several hundred yards in a year. The same turtle, in less than optimal habitat, may move several miles in a year. Providing safe corridors for animal movement helps to protect and maintain animal populations. Combining ecological corridors and trail corridors when possible creates an aesthetically pleasing experience for the trail user and provides critical links for wildlife.

Priority should be given to trails that connect the most frequently used destinations and trails that connect existing federal, state, regional or county parks and park reserves. Efforts should be made to connect county trails with city/township trails where appropriate. Close coordination and cooperation with the cities will be required. Economic efficiencies may be obtained by constructing trails associated with roads at the time of roadway construction or upgrades.

Several agencies, including Metropolitan Council and DNR, have trail construction grant programs to assist with the financial burden associated with trail construction. The County should pursue these opportunities whenever they are available. Leveraging may affect trail prioritization and construction timing; however, efforts should be made to ensure continuity of the county trail system.

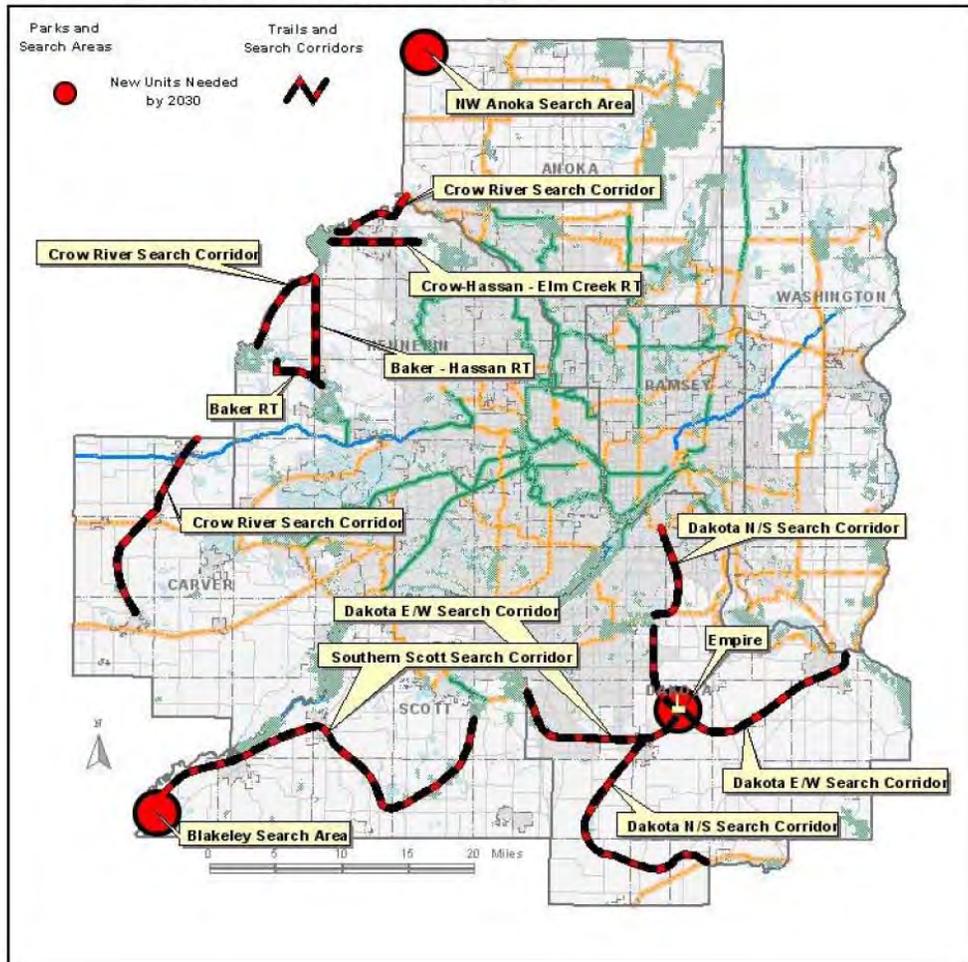
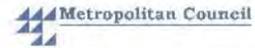
Metropolitan Council Identified Regional Trail Corridors

New Units Based on 2030 Need

- Southern Scott County Regional Trail Corridor
Metropolitan Council has identified a regional trail corridor that would run generally from Cleary Lake Regional Park southwest to Cedar Lake Farm, northwest to the City of Jordan, and southwest again through Belle Plaine to the Blakeley Regional Park Reserve search area.

Figure VII-21

**System Plan Update
New Units Based on 2030 Needs Analysis**

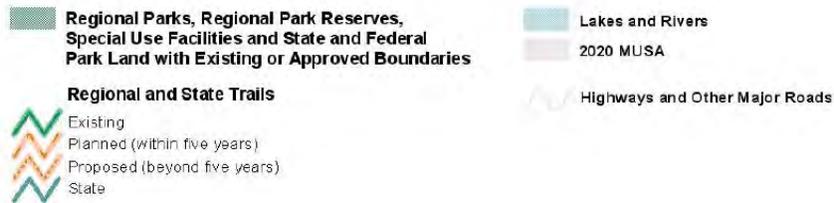
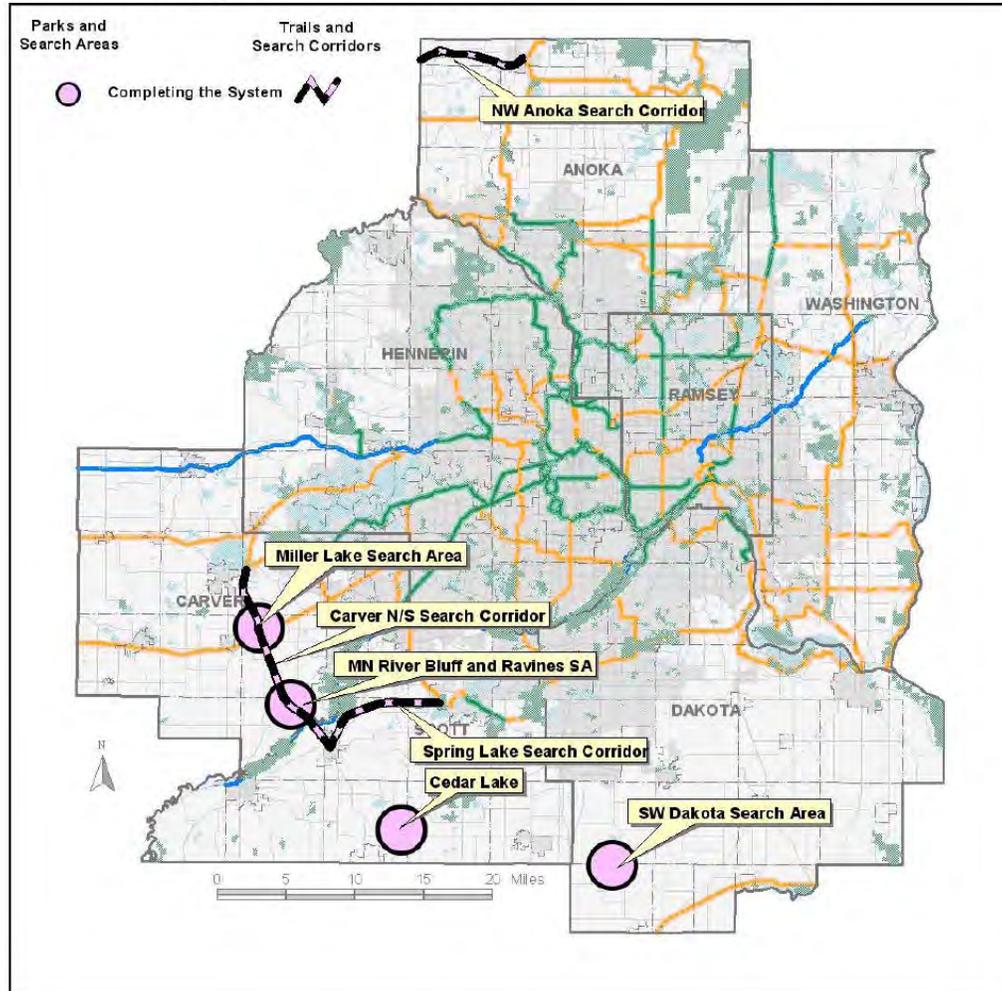


Saving the Last Best Places – Completing the System

- Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor
Metropolitan Council has identified a regional trail corridor that would run from Spring Lake Regional Park west to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Area, then south to the City of Jordan, then northwest across the river to the future Minnesota River Bluff and Ravines search area in Carver County.

Figure VII-22

**System Plan Update
The Last Best Places -
Completing Acquisition of the System**



Scott County Proposed Trail Corridors (will seek regional status)

In addition to the trail corridors identified by Metropolitan Council, Scott County has identified additional trail corridor search areas. The County will seek regional status for these corridors as part of the next update of the *Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

- Elko New Market-Blakely Regional Trail Corridor
With the proposed development of a regional park in southwest Dakota County, the Blakeley Bluffs search area, acquisition of Cedar Lake Farm, there appears to be a need to identify a

regional trail corridor that would connect these regionally important facilities. In addition, under the 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan, the communities of Elko New Market and New Prague are not connected by regional trails. This proposed trail would accomplish this connection.

- **Prior Lake Outlet Trail Corridor Search Area**
This search area follows the general alignment of the Prior Lake channel, connecting the Minnesota River to Lower Prior Lake. The search area meets regional trail spacing guidelines, provides loops and connections to the Scott County West Regional Trail, and would provide additional regional park opportunities for Shakopee and Prior Lake residents.
- **Louisville Trail Corridor**
The potential trail search area connects the Scott County West Regional Trail to the abandoned Union Pacific rail line river crossing at the city of Carver (Carver County). Scott County is currently working with Metropolitan Council, Carver County, and the cities of Carver, Chaska, and Shakopee to acquire this abandoned rail line. The proposed trail would provide a great river connection and connect to Carver County's proposed regional trail system.
- **Blakely Bluff's Regional Trail Extension**
The proposed relationship with Ney Nature Center would benefit by extending the proposed Southern Scott County Regional Trail Corridor to the border of Scott County where it would connect to the Ney Nature Center in Le Sueur County.
- **Big Rivers Regional Trail Connection**
With the proposed expansion master plan boundary adjustment for the Big Rivers Regional Trail in Dakota County, continuing this regional trail west to connect with the Minnesota Valley State Trail seems to be worthy of additional study. One major obstacle is the Port of Savage area due to the heavy industrial uses.

County Transportation Trails

In addition to the regional trail system, the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update makes a significant investment in providing other County trails. The Parks and Trails Plan and the Transportation Plan both incorporate a transportation trail network that connects the system. These transportation trails would consist of:

- Detached trails or trail/sidewalk on all County highways in urban areas, when feasible to construct.
- Detached trails following designated County highways in rural areas, when feasible to construct.
- On-road bikeways on all other County highways in rural areas, when feasible to construct.

Trail Connections

The 2030 Plan Update also identifies a significant number of trail connections that will require further study. Along the Minnesota River, recent and proposed bridge constructions incorporated trail river crossings at:

- Blakeley to Sibley County (CR 1)
- Belle Plaine to Sibley County (Hwy 25)
- Jordan to Carver County (CR 9)
- Jackson Township to Chaska (Hwy 41)
- Shakopee to Chanhassen (CR 101)
- Savage to Bloomington (Minnesota Valley State Trail)

In addition, the County is working with the Carver County, Metropolitan Council, and the cities of Carver and Chaska to acquire the Union Pacific Railroad “Chaska Spur” line that is in the process of being abandoned. If successful, this corridor could serve as an additional trail crossing into the City of Carver.

Non-river trail connections that warrant additional study include transportation and regional trail connections to Dakota County, and transportation trail connections to Rice and Le Sueur Counties.

Development

Development of the trail system is integrated into all sections of the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan:

- **People and Services:** How trails will serve current and future residents.
- **Relationships and Partners:** Identifies partnerships as being critical to the success of establishing the system.
- **Natural Resources:** Identifies how natural resources should be incorporated, protected, and enhanced in development the system.
- **Operations and Maintenance:** Identifies strategies for long-term efficiency and effectiveness.
- **Sustainability:** Stress the importance of looking at ways to minimize impact.
- **System Costs and Funding:** Establishes costs and funding scenarios for acquisition and development of the system.

THIS PAGE LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY --

**PLACEHOLDER FOR FIGURE VII-23
SCOTT COUNTY REGIONAL TRAIL SYSTEM MAP**

Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update

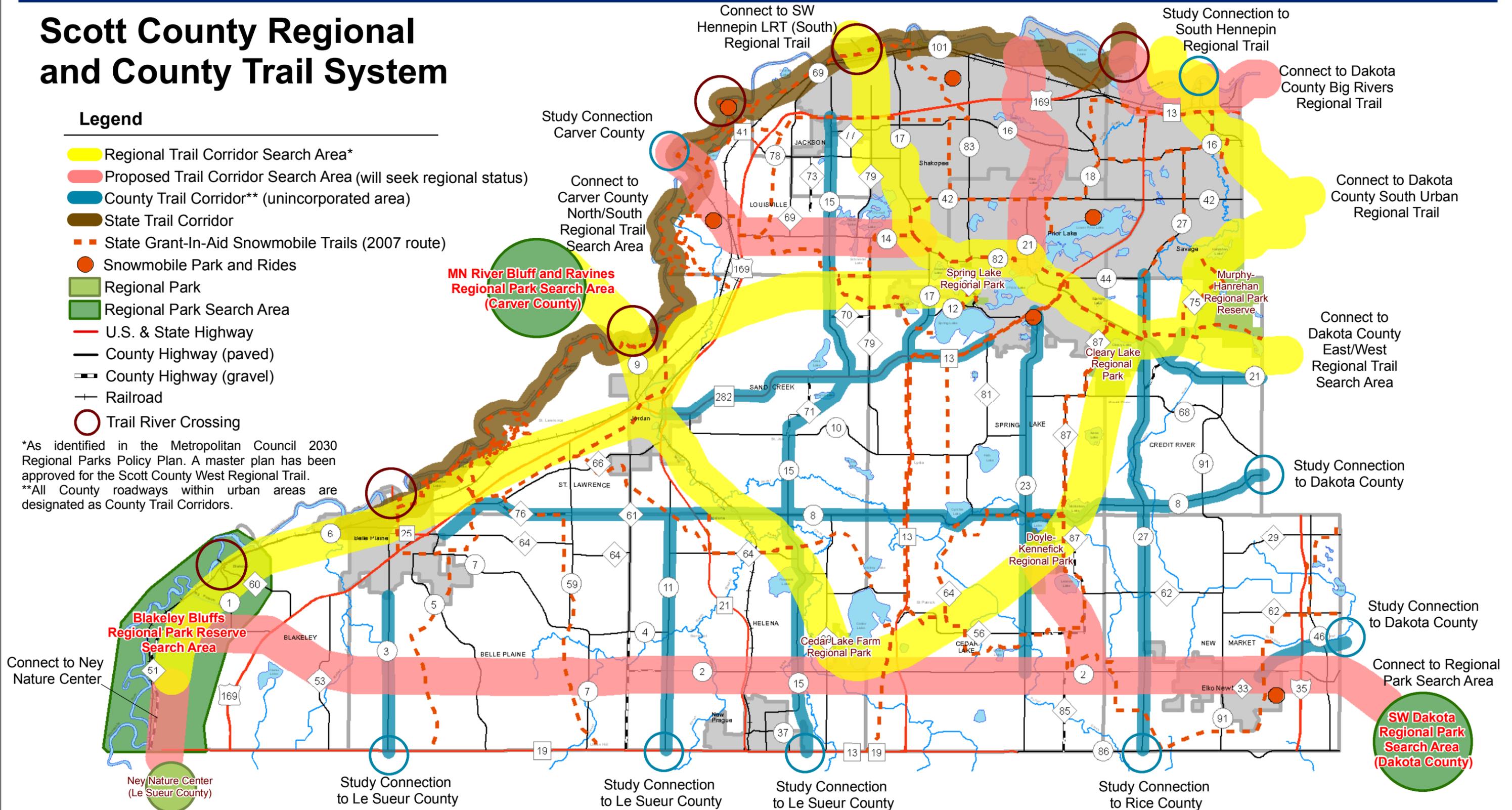


Scott County Regional and County Trail System

Legend

- Regional Trail Corridor Search Area*
- Proposed Trail Corridor Search Area (will seek regional status)
- County Trail Corridor** (unincorporated area)
- State Trail Corridor
- State Grant-In-Aid Snowmobile Trails (2007 route)
- Snowmobile Park and Rides
- Regional Park
- Regional Park Search Area
- U.S. & State Highway
- County Highway (paved)
- County Highway (gravel)
- Railroad
- Trail River Crossing

*As identified in the Metropolitan Council 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan. A master plan has been approved for the Scott County West Regional Trail.
 **All County roadways within urban areas are designated as County Trail Corridors.



F. Governance/Organizational Structure

Scott County has had a long-term relationship with the Three Rivers Park District to operate and maintain regional facilities in Scott County. Although this relationship has worked well in the past, Scott County recognized in the early 2000's that it must take a more active role in managing, leading, and supporting parks, trails, and open space opportunities as development continues throughout the County.

What will the future hold for governance of Scott County's parks? The answer to that question is being investigated. Several options have been identified, including:

- Scott County assuming the role as the sole Implementing Agency for Scott County, and asking Three Rivers Park District to divest in their interests in Scott County.
- Three Rivers assuming the role as the sole Implementing Agency for Scott County, with Scott County supporting legislative changes that expand Three Rivers district boundaries into Scott County, along with representation on their Board.
- Some combination of the two preceding scenarios.
- Collaboration with cities in Scott County or our neighboring counties.

The outcome of this work will be decided after the completion of this plan, but the plan should be part of the analysis in determining the most effective governance/organizational structure for Scott County parks and trails and our residents.

PEOPLE AND SERVICES

Although the Regional Park System is **built around natural resources**, the system exists in order to **serve people**.

A. Recreational Use

Regional Park Policies

As a natural resource based system, Metropolitan Council has adopted policies that guide the services that can ultimately be offered within the regional system:

Strategy: Appropriate regional parks system activities

Minn. Stat. 473.147 requires the Metropolitan Council to prepare a policy plan that "...shall identify generally the areas which should be acquired by a public agency to provide a system of regional recreation open space comprising park district, county and municipal facilities, which together with state facilities, reasonably will meet the outdoor recreation needs of the people of the metropolitan area and shall establish priorities for acquisition and development."

Minn. Stat. 473.121, subd. 14 defines regional recreation open space as "...land and water areas, or interests therein, and facilities determined by the Metropolitan Council to be of regional importance in providing for a balanced system of public outdoor recreation for the metropolitan area, including but not limited to park reserves, major linear parks and trails, large recreation parks, and conservatories, zoos, and other special use facilities."

Based on the legislative directive and definition of "regional recreation open space," recreational activities to be accommodated by the regional parks system should meet the following criteria:

1. Be strongly tied to high-quality natural resources and to the distribution of these resources around the area.
2. Require a land supply and acquisition effort generally found at the regional level.
3. Be reasonably, feasibly and safely accommodated without detriment to existing uses as determined through master plans for facility improvements to accommodate the use, or through Regional Park Implementing Agency policy board decisions on park/trail use management issues.
4. Be protective of the environment/ecology of the site and not negatively impact its natural resources.

Early in the regional recreation and open space planning effort, Metropolitan Council defined the outdoor recreational activities selected as prime candidates for accommodation by the system as picnicking, camping, swimming, conservation, nature interpretation, fishing, boating and trail uses such as ski touring, hiking/walking, bicycling, equestrian and in some cases, snowmobiling. Land is acquired at the regional level for inclusion in the system with the intent that it may eventually be developed in a way that provides for the recreational activities listed above. Adherence to this basic list of activities has helped to fend off efforts to acquire and develop regional parks system lands for other ventures.

Relatively new activities have been incorporated into the regional park system, where appropriate. These include mountain biking, inline skating, night trail use (particularly for cross country skiing), off-leash dog areas, archery, and challenge courses. As new activities evolve over time, the appropriateness within the regional system should be reviewed.

Alternative Outdoor Recreation Activities

While the outdoor recreation activities identified by Metropolitan Council serve as useful guide for the entire system, Scott County's rural character provides opportunities to consider other alternative activities that could be incorporated into the overall County system. Although some activities may not be permissible within regional park and trail lands, opportunities to plan, assist with planning, and/or provide alternative outdoor recreation may exist. These opportunities could benefit users by providing and promoting their activity while gaining support for the overall park system.

Snowmobiling

Scott County serves as the grant-in-aid sponsor for the county snowmobile trail system that is paid for by grants from DNR and implemented by snowmobile clubs on private lands and public right-of-way. In 2008, there were an estimated 6,000 snowmobiles registered to Scott County residents, and a reported 7,000 that ride primarily in Scott County. The long-term rural character of Scott County and the interest to preserve snowmobiling by some municipalities in Scott County provides indication that snowmobiling is likely to remain strong in Scott County through 2030 and beyond.

Like many alternative outdoor recreation activities, snowmobiling does, at times, create conflicts. However, the County can help to prevent these conflicts by taking an active role in long-term planning of routes, anticipating potential conflicts, and incorporating information on snowmobile routes in public infrastructure projects such as road and bridge planning.

Given the use policies for the regional park system, creating significant snowmobiling opportunities within regional parks is not proposed in this Plan. However, perimeter trails that provide connections to other trails should be considered.

ATV/OHV

All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) and Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) create a unique set of circumstances that need to be addressed. OHVs are very popular in Scott County but opportunities to legally ride them are virtually non-existent. Scott County may have the unique opportunity to facilitate a public/ private partnership that proactively addresses the emerging issues but has little to no cost for the County.

While it is not likely that the County would undertake ownership of a facility, the County's role in land use planning and environmental oversight offers opportunities to look at long-term ATV/OHV use potentials. For example, end use plans for gravel quarry operations could consider OHV/ATV opportunities through a public/private partnership. In addition, the County can serve as the grant-in-aid sponsor for designated trails, similar to its role with snowmobiles.

Hunting

Hunting is also a popular outdoor recreation activity in Scott County. A significant number of wildlife management areas, refuges, and farm land provide vast opportunities. Part of the County's natural resource management activities includes controlled hunts in more urban park areas. By providing safe hunting opportunities on regional park lands, even if in a controlled setting, offers the opportunity to build relationships with the hunting enthusiasts.

B. Active Living/Connecting with Nature

Obesity and inactive lifestyles is contributing to significant long-term health issues. Parks and trails can play an integral role in improving health and lowering long-term health care related costs. In 2008, there were several initiatives underway to connect active living concepts with parks and trails. In addition, there are opportunities to reconnect youth and adult with nature. The County's system can be a part of these initiatives.

C. Education

Environmental education provides a unique means for individuals and families to explore a park system and can open the door to nature for individuals or families disconnected from the living and breathing outdoor world. Early childhood experiences with wildlife and nature as opposed to indoor activities such as television viewing and computer games are thought to reduce attention deficit problems and hyperactivity in children. It appears that time spent outdoors, especially observing wildlife, may reduce aggressiveness and risky behavior in teens.

Environmental education is a wide field and can be implemented in a variety of methods and according to community needs. Over the coming years as the parks and trails system matures, a comprehensive environmental education program will be developed. A primary focus will be to develop a program that meets the needs of the community and is complimentary to the existing programs in the area. In the interim, the County parks and trails system can contribute to providing natural world learning by providing information on the County web-site and helping to connect residents to activities and programs offered by partners and many other providers in the County.

D. Representation and Public Involvement

In order to fully represent the people that the Parks and Trails System serve, representation in decision and policy making is important. In 2006, the County Board created the Parks Advisory Commission. The role of the Parks Advisory Commission is to provide recommendations to the County Board on park and trail programs, policies, and development. Although the County Board has the ultimate responsibility for representing the public, the Parks Advisory Commission plays an important role in providing recommendations.

In addition, the public involvement process is critical to ensure that issues and opportunities are fully explored during any acquisition, development, or major programming process. The County will always use a public process for developing acquisition and development master plans. In addition, the County will look for input on major programmatic changes.

E. Outreach and Communications

Informing, educating, and promoting the parks and trails system is an integral part of ongoing operations. The internet, County publications, and newspapers all provide outlets for disseminating information. As the system develops, additional marketing efforts may be needed to fully capitalize use of the system.

As a starting point, consistent branding of the system is essential in developing recognition. The County's logo should serve as focal point of branding, and all signage, publications, and materials should carry this logo.

F. Volunteerism

The County has an established volunteer program. As resources allow, the Parks and Trails program should work together with the County's volunteer coordinator to explore and develop volunteer opportunities.

G. Inclusion

Scott County's system should remove or reduce the deterrents to use of the system by special populations – that is, safety problems, costs, transportation barriers and inadequate dissemination of information. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1990. This act resulted in very specific requirements for development and rehabilitation projects in the regional parks system.

All new projects and updated master plans for the regional system now require extensive ADA review. Consequently, barriers to persons with disabilities have been reduced since the original 1989 study. Additionally, implementing agencies are encouraged to provide physically challenged participants with similar park/trail experiences through adaptive programs.

H. Ordinances and Use Policies

The County should develop ordinances and use policies to govern use, in cooperating with the Sherriff's Office and local law enforcement authorities.

RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERS

If this plan is to become a reality, it will not occur without **relationships and partners**. The relationships and partnerships will need to cross **political, geographic, generational, and socio-economic lines**, and will involve **funding, political decision making, and public support**.

A. System Users

Scott County Residents

Scott County Parks and Trail system's primary stakeholders are County residents. Although it is part of a regional system, the primary focus and the reason to invest in the system is County residents.

Non-Scott County Resident System Users

Being part of a regional system, there is an acknowledgement that the system exists for residents of the region.

Outdoor Recreation Advocacy Groups

Although natural resource and recreation based outdoor recreation advocacy groups have been integral Regional Park System users, there appears to be opportunities for other non-traditional outdoor recreation advocacy groups to be engaged. Since Scott County will remain relatively rural for the 2030 Planning Period, hunters, anglers, snowmobilers, and OHV/ATV users will likely continue a strong presence in the County. The County should undertake opportunities to engage and partner with these groups in ways that result in mutual benefit.

B. County Divisions and Departments

The success of operating and developing the system is contingent on building relationships with other Scott County divisions and departments. Public Works, Facilities, Planning, Natural Resources, and Administration have a primary role in maintaining and building the system. The Sheriff's Office assists with law enforcement, and Community Services can look to the park system for healthy living initiatives.

C. Interface Agencies

Interface agencies are those agencies that the County would interact and coordinate with in the provision of a regional park system. Sharing planning, development, and operations are opportunities that should be explored with:

- Scott County Cities
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Adjoining counties of Sibley, Carver, Hennepin, Dakota, Rice, and Le Seurer
- Three Rivers Park District

D. Intergovernmental Relations

As a Regional Park Implementing Agency, Scott County's Parks and Trails system requires relations with a variety of governmental agencies and officials:

County Elected and Appointed Officials

The County's Board of Commissioners provides the ultimate authority for Scott County's Parks and Trails system. The County Board will provide vision, establish strategies, and implement planning, development, and operation of the system.

Metropolitan Council

Metropolitan Council's role is to prepare and update long-range system policy plans for the Metropolitan Regional Park System, which Implementing Agencies are required to follow. Metropolitan Council is also responsible for seeking funding for development and operation of the system.

Three Rivers Park District

Three Rivers Park District owns and operates facilities within Scott County. In exchange, Scott County provides financial support to help off-set Three Rivers' operating costs within Scott County. The County's relationship with Three Rivers is being reviewed and further defined.

Implementing Agencies

Other Regional Park Implementing Agencies will be important partners in fulfilling the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan. These agencies currently serve as information resources, allies in the legislative process, and partners in planning for the system. In the future, these agencies could serve a more active role by partnering with Scott County in the development and operation of the County's system.

Legislature

The State Legislature is a critical source of funding for development of the system, and to a lesser extent, operations. Funding through the legislative process comes by way of bonding proceeds to Metropolitan Council, direct bond proceeds for targeted projects, and general fund appropriations for operations and maintenance.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Throughout the planning process several themes emerged as being significant to the County's ability to create a successful natural resource-based park system. Chief among them was the idea of **building the system around the natural resources**. Fundamental to doing this, it was noted, is the capacity and commitment **to document and evaluate the condition of natural resources**, such as land cover and water resources and **to monitor, protect and enhance sensitive and unique resources**. The theme of 'building the system around natural resources' encompasses buildings, hardscapes and the design of recreational programs and activities. Key to creating a sustainable system is **providing recreational opportunities that do not adversely impact natural resources, designing facilities that are compatible long-term with the important resource character of the site, and a commitment to mitigate impacts**.

Natural resources are the foundation of the Scott County park system— quality wildlife habitat, mature forests, lakes and wetland complexes. This isn't by accident, but rather by choice and by design of the citizens and leaders residing in Scott County over the past five decades. The decisions to acquire Murphy-Hanrehan, Cleary Lake, and Spring Lake Regional Parks in the 1960's and 1970's were made largely based on the presence of the sites exquisite natural features. With this new Plan and since the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails and Open Space Plan, the County continues to build on this foundation, expanding the system based on a commitment to protect significant natural features for the enjoyment of generations to come, for their inherent ecological value and for what they contribute to the local community and environment.

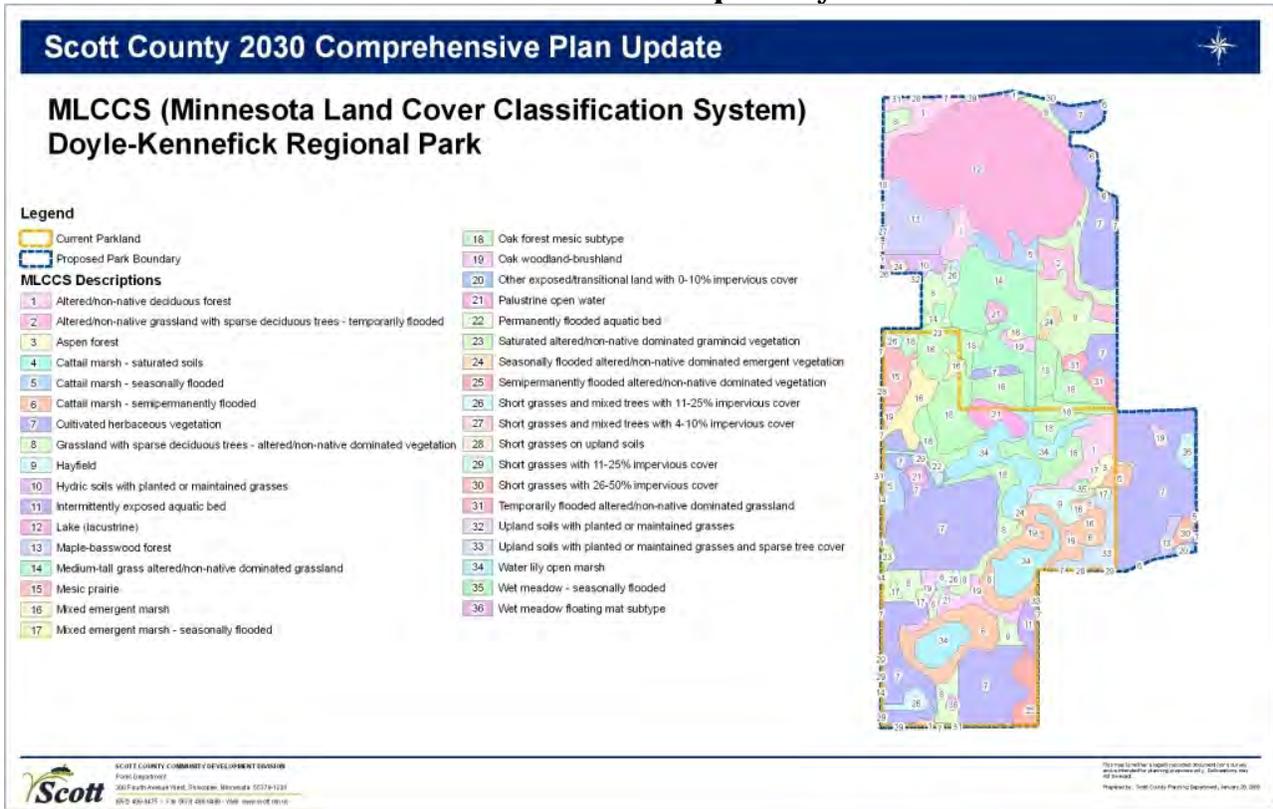


A key challenge for any organization responsible for a system of natural resource based parks and trails is balancing the dual role of caretaker to sensitive landscapes and provider of quality recreation based on those resources. Being effective and responsible in this role requires a commitment and adeptness in key management areas. Another challenge is dramatically inadequate funding levels for natural resource management. During recent research into the cost of operating and maintaining regional park systems, each regional park agency interviewed identified natural resource management as the one area that stands out as receiving inadequate funding levels. This is a trend Scott County, having a new and undeveloped system, can reverse within its own jurisdiction. Given the value placed on the park systems natural resources, this is one important area for the County to commit equitable funding and attention.

A. Natural Resource Character and Rare Features of Park Lands

The natural resource character and presence of rare features in the county's park lands is documented in two datasets, the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) and the MnDNR's Natural Heritage Database. The Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS) is a natural resource inventory classification system to accurately map all land cover types. The MLCCS has many ecological applications and is frequently used in park planning and design, land acquisition and to inform policy and management decisions. All of Scott County, with the exception of the City of Prior Lake and a portion of the City of Savage has an MLCCS inventory completed. MLCCS data can be used to show detailed land cover (Figure VII-24) or generalized coverage (Figures VII-25 and VII-26).

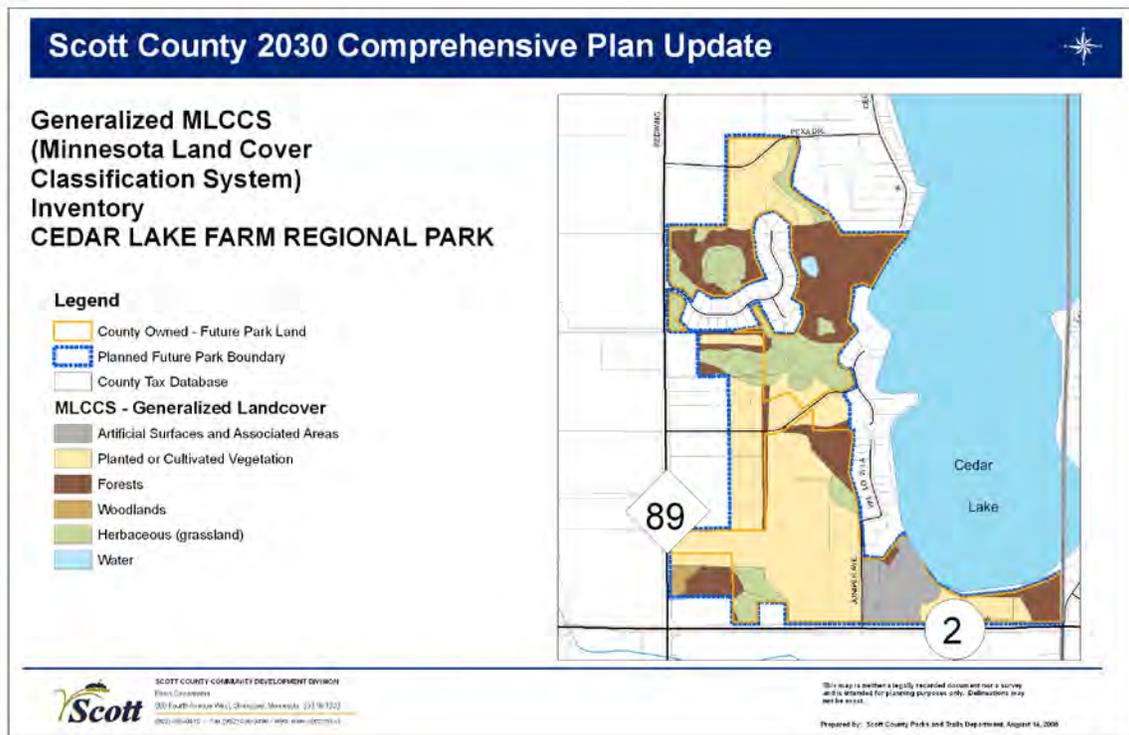
**Figure VII-24
Detailed MLCCS Land Cover Example - Doyle-Kennefick**



Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park: Land Cover and Rare and Significant Features

Based on MLCCS inventory, Cedar Lake Farm consists of 301 acres of a mix of natural/semi natural and cultural landscape types (Figure VII-25). Generalized landcover of the park consists primarily of planted or cultivated vegetation (147 acres or 49%), forest (78 acres or 26%), and herbaceous (grassland) cover (51 acres or 17%). At a more detailed level, the landscape consists of native plant communities including 62 acres of Maple-basswood forest, 7 acres of Cattail marsh and three acres of Oak woodland brushland. The park also has 3500 feet of shoreland on Cedar Lake. To date, no wildlife surveys have been conducted and therefore it is unknown what species are in habiting the park.

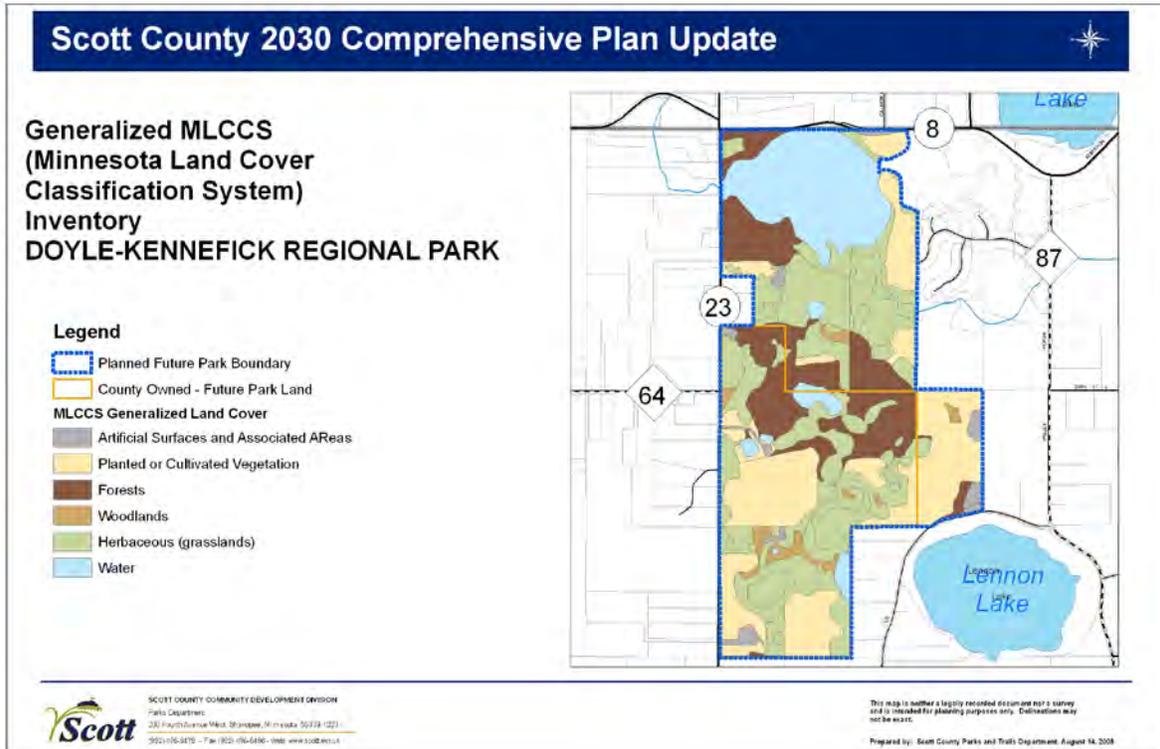
**Figure VII-25
Generalized MLCCS Land Cover Example – Cedar Lake Farm**



Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park: Land Cover and Rare and Significant Features

Based on the MLCCS inventory, land cover within Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park consists of 922 acres of a mix of natural/semi natural and cultural landscapes (Figure VII-26). Generalized cover consists primarily of cultivated areas (251 acres or 27%), forested areas (168 acres or 18%), herbaceous (upland and lowland grasslands) areas (311 acres or 33%) and to a lesser extent woodlands (20 acres or 2%), and open water (149 acres or 16%) Less than 2.5% of the land cover is comprised of artificial surfaces and associated areas.

**Figure VII-26
Generalized MLCCS Land Cover Example - Doyle-Kennefick**



At a more detailed level, native plant community landscapes cover almost 34% or 306 acres of the land (Figure VII-27). If open water is included, this percentage is almost 50%.

**Figure VII-27
MLCCS Native Plant Community Coverage:
Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park**

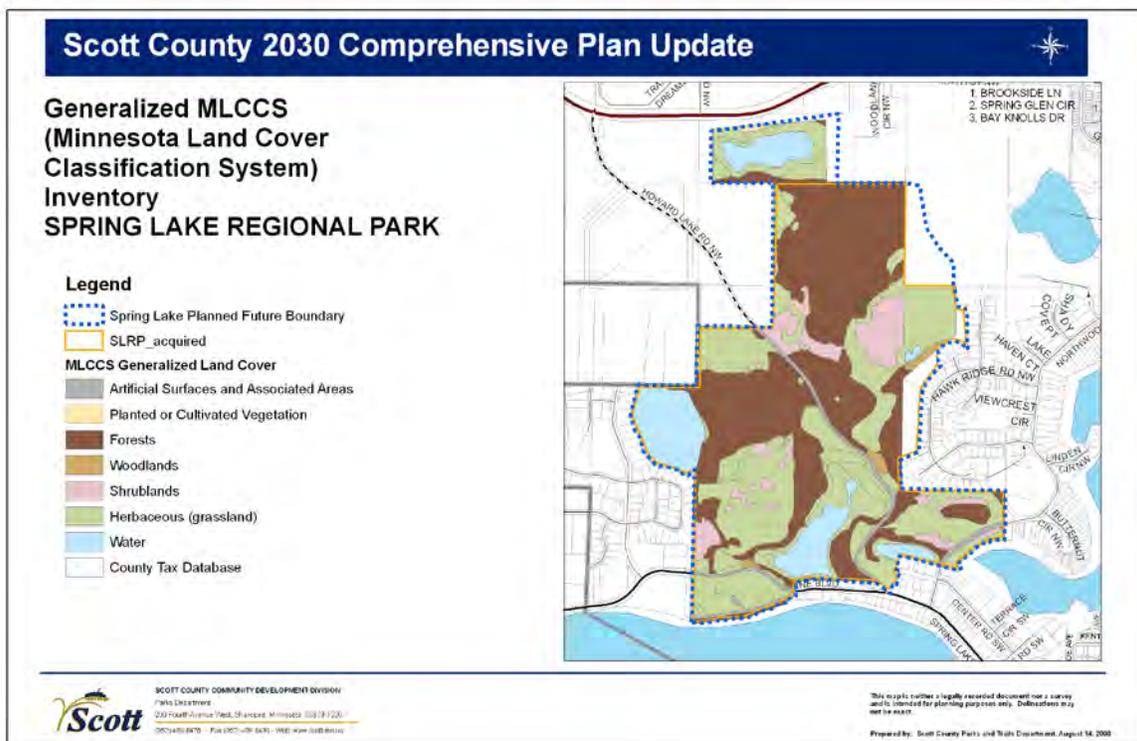
Native Plant Community	Acres
Oak forest mesic subtype	101.2613
Maple-basswood forest	28.7109
Aspen forest	2.9066
Oak woodland-brushland	19.5325
Mesic prairie	9.8719
Cattail marsh - saturated soils	0.0481
Cattail marsh - seasonally flooded	16.6200
Mixed emergent marsh - seasonally flooded	2.8515
Wet meadow - seasonally flooded	1.2531
Cattail marsh - semipermanently flooded	52.9520
Mixed emergent marsh	16.2507
Wet meadow floating mat subtype	0.9397
Water lily open marsh	52.9500
	306.1483

Doyle-Kennefick has significant wildlife habitat value with 650 acres of natural lands, 300 of which are native plant communities. This wildlife habitat hub is adjacent to or buffers, three Regionally Significant Ecological Areas (RSEA) and is near to five RSEA's and a Wildlife Management Area. A Regionally Significant Terrestrial Species route traverses the park area, connecting two of the RSEA's. Several significant features are documented by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources as occurring within or near the park, including Minnesota County Biological Survey sites (mesic oak forest), Blanding's Turtles, Sand Hill Cranes, and Bald Eagles. Preliminary breeding and migratory bird surveys, waterfowl surveys and casual observations conducted by the County indicate a minimum of 104 bird species using the park, with highlights including Cerulean Warblers, Sand Hill Cranes and Bald Eagles.

Spring Lake Regional Park: Land Cover and Rare and Significant Features

Based on the MLCCS inventory, land cover within Spring Lake Regional Park consists of 366 acres of a mix of natural/semi natural and cultural landscape types (Figure VII-28). Generalized landcover of the park consists of forested areas (40% or 147 acres), herbaceous or grassland areas (39% or 141 acres), shrublands (7% or 26 acres) and open water (11% or 41 acres). Artificial surfaces and associated areas and planted/cultivated areas make up less than 3%.

**Figure VII-28
Generalized MLCCS Land Cover Example – Spring Lake**



Thirty-eight percent of the parks natural lands are native plant communities, including an area identified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) as a Minnesota County Biological site. Shoreland areas at Spring Lake Regional Park, approximately 800 feet of shoreland on Prior Lake and 1400 on Spring Lake, add to the significant wildlife habitat value offered by the diversity of natural lands within the park. Other rare features include Big Tick-trefoil, as a species of special concern, within the park and a Blanding's Turtle nearby, both documented in the MnDNR's Natural Heritage Database.

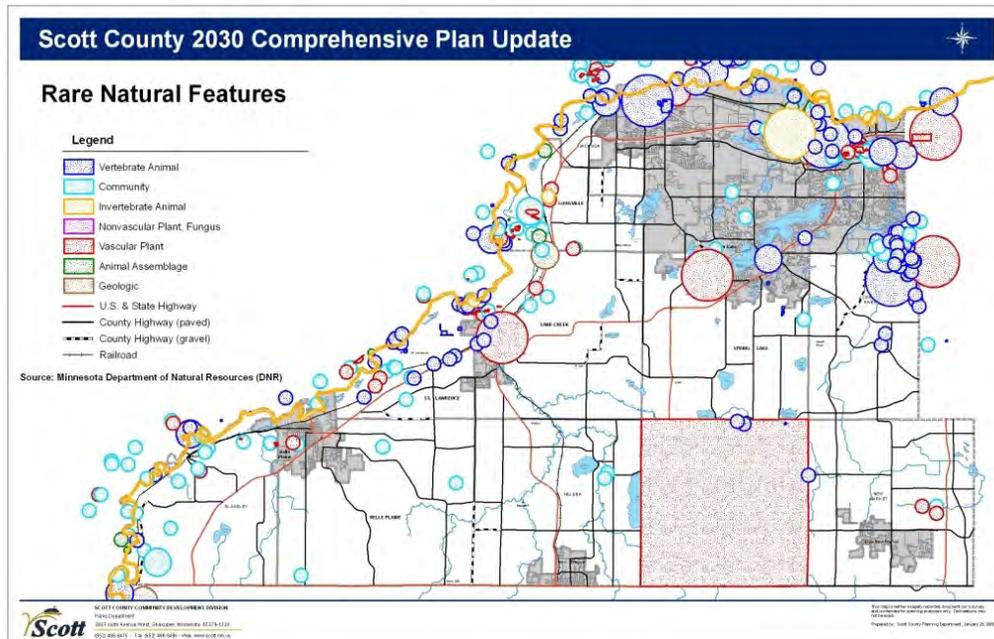
Figure VII-29
MLCCS Native Plant Community: Spring Lake Regional Park

Native Plant Community	Acres
Maple-basswood forest	117.2400
Aspen forest - temporarily flooded	0.1950
Oak woodland-brushland	2.7759
Willow swamp - saturated soils	9.4763
Wet prairie	0.0721
Wet meadow	0.4752
Cattail marsh - seasonally flooded	0.3187
Cattail marsh - semipermanently flooded	7.2858
Wet meadow floating mat subtype	2.5111
Total	140.3501

Preliminary breeding, migratory, and waterfowl surveys confirmed at least 95 bird species, including grassland species such as Grasshopper Sparrow and Clay-colored Sparrow and a forest species such as Wood Thrush, Pileated Woodpecker and Broad-winged Hawk.

The MnDNR's Natural Heritage Database is a second database commonly used in making park planning, development and natural resource management decisions. This database contains geographically based, electronic information on rare feature locations (endangered, threatened, and special concern plants and animals, native plant communities, animal aggregation sites, geological features and processes and sites of biological diversity significance). Scott County maintains an up-to-date copy of this information via a license agreement with the MnDNR, at no cost to the County. The database provides important information that is referenced on a regular basis for park planning and management purposes. A limitation of this dataset is that it does not represent a comprehensive review of all lands. It does not replace the need for site specific inventories but provides a documented set of information of confirmed rare species. The lands surveyed for the database included a small subset chosen for review based on strict criteria by ecologists with the MnDNR's Minnesota County Biological Survey (MCBS). It also represents documentation of rare species or features submitted to the Minnesota County Biological Survey by members of the public. These sitings are subsequently verified by the MCBS.

**Figure VII-30
Rare Natural Features**



Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

B. Existing Stewardship Programs and Needs

Several natural resource stewardship programs are part of the annual work plan for the park system. Due to inadequate funding, these programs are quite limited. If the extent of stewardship continues at its current level, the natural resource quality of the county park lands will degrade. Ultimately this will result in much larger expense later on as the focus necessarily changes from enhancement to remediation. Some of the needed programs and activities unavailable at this time due to a lack of resources include disease tree management; native plant community management and restoration; rare wildlife habitat management; comprehensive invasive plant management and shoreland restoration.

Programs and activities currently included in the parks work plan include annual noxious/invasive weed control, annual deer control, and breeding bird surveys.

Noxious/Invasive Plant Management

Noxious and invasive plants are monitored at select locations within Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park and to a lesser extent in Spring Lake Regional Park. Regular control of noxious and invasive plants is done in these areas, primarily through manual (mowing) and chemical (spray) means. There is a need to expand the management of noxious and invasive plants to include survey and regular monitoring of all lands. Control expansion needs to follow, with focus on areas of highest quality first, a standard best management practice. The range of tools used also must be expanded to include prescribed burning, manual cutting/pulling of invasive woody plants and the use of volunteer groups.

Bird Surveys

Migratory and breeding bird surveys have been conducted at Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park and Spring Lake Regional Park. First time surveys are needed at Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park and follow up surveys are needed at both Spring Lake Regional Park and Doyle-Kennefick.

White-tailed Deer Management

Deer are controlled at Spring Lake Regional Park, where a volunteer hunt program in partnership with the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base has taken place for over 15 years. Control of white-tail deer is a standard practice in areas where high concentration of deer results in over browsing of natural lands, deer-car collisions and damage to private landscaping.

C. Natural Resource Management Strategies

Key management strategies to achieve a sustainable system:

Operate the system through inclusion and partnerships

– The inclusion of stakeholders, the public, experts and others into planning and stewardship is a specific interest of the parks and trails department. Partnerships, especially across jurisdictional lines and organization focus, encourage ingenuity and can leverage capacity through the sharing of resources, through grant partnerships and simply by working together on common goals. For example some of the key groups and organizations to partner with include watershed management organizations/districts, sportsperson clubs, the Shakopee Mdewankanton Dakota Sioux Community, the DNR (state parks, WMA's, Fishing in the Neighborhood program), schools, and community groups, Pheasants Forever and Trout Unlimited, MnDNR Metro Greenways Program, Embrace Open Space, Great River Greening and Minnesota Valley Audubon.



Maintain a foundation of up to date natural resource and ecological information

– The County will be a leader in the pursuit of maintaining a regularly updated county-wide landcover data set based on the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, building partnerships with the cities and townships, sharing in the costs and pursuing grant funding. Building on the base level of information, the County will develop comprehensive ecological plans, including plans for stewardship and remediation, for each of its parks units and will make this a requirement of the development process. The County will continue to maintain access to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Database, tracking documentation of rare species and natural resource features within County parks.

Establish natural resources as the core starting place from which planning of the system stems and integrating natural resources into the operational system

– The County will require as a condition of master plans, a review of land cover data and a overview of the ecological condition of the site. The County will require a comprehensive ecological review and the development of an ecological plan in conjunction with park development. Design of park facilities will start with an understanding of the natural resource character of the site, and will avoid degrading of native plant communities and significant or rare features. Site development will include natural resource protection, management and enhancement (stewardship) activities as core site operational functions to build into the project budget and operating plan.

Provide adequate resources – Working through partnerships, doing good planning and creating priorities are practices that will assist the County in providing adequate resources for natural resources stewardship. The County will create cost estimates for stewardship and will give high priority to fulfilling the funding needs.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

Throughout the planning process several recurring themes emerged related to operations and maintenance. Each of the themes ties into to one often mentioned - **sustainable management**. Under a philosophy of sustainable management programs such as **preventative maintenance** and **standards based funding** are developed to create efficiencies in operations and resulting in **clean, safe, and attractive facilities**. **Collaborative opportunities**, amongst regional park implementing agencies and with cities and townships was highlighted as a theme to diligently explore now and into the future.

A cornerstone of a successful parks and trails system is the implementation of an effective maintenance and operations program. Patrons expect a safe and aesthetically pleasing environment and protection of the public infrastructure. A poorly operated and maintained system deters use, degrades the public investment, and justifiably causes a lack of promotion and support from citizens and patrons. The operation of a park and trail system should ensure its long term protection and sustainability. Maintenance should be performed in a manner that enhances the use of the land, maintains its appearance, and promotes the enjoyment and positive aspects of recreational activity. It takes a substantial amount of effort and financial resources to create a parks and trails system as called for in the Plan, and Scott County should ensure that efforts to create the system are not wasted. Careful thought and consideration must be given to developing a system of ordinances, policies and regulations that prevent the system from being degraded from overuse, abuse or benign neglect.



There may be occasional proposals to construct non-park related infrastructure such as cell towers or wind turbines within public parks, trails and open spaces. These may come from private interests or governmental agencies. In some instances it may make sense to allow such activities. Activities that diminish the recreational experience, negatively impact natural resources, or are inconsistent with Metropolitan Council regional park policies should not be allowed. Furthermore, in cases where non-park related infrastructure is allowed revenue should be generated from such activities. These funds should be re-invested back into the Parks and Trails System. Clear policies should be developed which outline when such activities are allowable and the process for conversion should be specified. Using parkland, especially high quality natural resource areas, for private utilities should be strongly discouraged.

Adjacent land use may significantly affect natural resources or recreational amenities in parks, trails and open spaces. When land use changes, proposed subdivisions, plats, conditional use permits, etc., should be reviewed to assess the potential for negative effects. Buffer zones, lower impact uses, and compatible land management should be encouraged to act as buffers or to minimize potential impacts. In some cases it may be possible to improve both parkland and adjacent use through smart design that creates a synergy between uses. For example, residential subdivisions adjacent to public lands can be reviewed to determine if easements or buffers can protect the public land and increase lot values.

A. Sustainable Management

Core to operating a sustainable system are several interconnected practices common in any Sustainable Management Program. As the parks and trails system enters into the facility development and public use stage, it is imperative that a sustainable management program be developed. Important practices to include are: development of mechanisms to ensure the availability of adequate resources to meet established maintenance standards and mechanisms to revise those standards in the event of inadequate funds; ensuring new facilities are developed to maximize their life expectancy; capital repairs and renovations are undertaken in a timely manner so as to sustain effective operations over the planned life cycle of park facilities and infrastructure; stringent review of development proposals that may affect park lands that due to the character of their resources, are particularly sensitive to impacts of off-site development, or to ensure proper buffering of sight lines and scenic views; and practices which protect park lands from encroachments, vandalism and other unauthorized uses of parklands including the removal of, or damage to, vegetation or animal species, cultural or archaeological artifacts; and dumping of debris or use of parkland for private purposes.

B. Stewardship

Once a system of parks and trails has been created steps should be taken to insure the integrity of natural resources and recreational amenities are protected into the future. It takes a substantial amount of effort and financial resources to create such a system and Scott County should ensure that these efforts are not wasted. Careful thought and consideration must be given to developing a system of ordinances and regulations that prevent parks and trails from being degraded from overuse, abuse or benign neglect. Furthermore, as development progresses there will be increasing pressures placed upon the natural resources within public ownership. As these areas become islands of habitat invasion by exotic species, catastrophic events such as disease or fire, and insufficient space to maintain plant and animal populations will become increasingly likely to significantly diminish or destroy the natural resource base which the parks, trails, and open space, system was designed around. Careful planning, intensive natural resource management, and continuous monitoring will be required to safeguard these important resources.

The Scott County parks system will include significant areas of natural resources. These high quality areas should be protected into perpetuity as they can never be reclaimed once lost. The public dollars being expended will likely be dollars that are dedicated for park, trail, and open space uses and obtained through levies or grant programs specifically for these purposes. The County should pursue a policy of placing Conservation Easements on those high quality areas within parks that protect the intrinsic natural resource values of the land and limit future conversion to non-park uses. High quality areas will be determined by analyzing data such as the Regionally Significant Ecological Areas, Minnesota County Biological Survey, habitat for rare plants and animals Minnesota Land Cover Classification System, and other ecological information available at the time of acquisition. There may be cases when a portion of a park or trail is needed for some other public purpose. Easements can be constructed which would require that a functionally equivalent piece of property be provided elsewhere in exchange for such a conversion.

When water bodies are located within public parks and open spaces upstream activities can have significant effects on the receiving waters within the parks. Poor land management can result in significantly degraded water quality or a reduction in surface water levels through over use of groundwater. For these reasons the strategies identified in the Comprehensive Water Resource

Management Plan and the Groundwater Protection Plan (Scott County, 1999) should be carefully and stringently applied both within and adjacent to public lands. Particular attention should be given to incoming water.

C. Public Safety

As the Scott County parks system opens to the public, a public safety program will need to be developed. Through cooperative planning and thoughtful design, crime can be deterred, and park and trails can be a safe environment. Using the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED), the county will work with law enforcement, environmental designers, land managers and community groups in the facility development planning process. The principles of CPTED include using natural surveillance, access control, and natural territorial reinforcement, and through specific maintenance practices and program and activity support.



D. Operation and Maintenance Strategies

Strategies to achieve a sustainable system include:

Immediately apply principles of sustainable management to the current parks and trails operations, developing practices and programs that can grow as the system enters the next stage.

Further explore and establish opportunities for interim-partnerships to care for Doyle-Kennefick, Cedar Lake Farms and Spring Lake Regional Parks, while exploring the long-term structure for the county parks and trails system.

Continue exploring long-term partnership and collaborative opportunities. Continue to discuss facility sharing at Spring Lake Regional Park with the City of Prior Lake and the Shakopee Mdewankanton Dakota Sioux Community and collaborative planning and possible program sharing at the future Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve with the Ney Nature Center. Identify and explore other opportunities such as with the City of New Prague at Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park.

Develop maintenance standards that can be operationally tied to funding.

SUSTAINABILITY

The concept of **sustainable design** has come to the forefront in the last 20 years. It is a concept that recognizes that **human civilization is an integral part of the natural world** and that nature must be preserved and perpetuated if the human community itself is to survive. Sustainable design articulates this idea through developments that exemplify the **principles of conservation** and encourage the application of those principles in our daily lives. Sustainable design, sustainable development, design with nature, environmentally sensitive design, holistic resource management - regardless of what it's called - "sustainability," the capability of natural and cultural systems being continued over time, is key.

Sustainability does not require a loss in the quality of life, but does require a change in mind-set, a change in values toward less consumptive approaches. These changes embrace global interdependence, environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and economic viability. Sustainable design uses an **alternative approach to traditional design** that incorporates these changes in mind-set. The new design approach recognizes the impacts of every design choice on the natural and cultural resources of the local, regional, and global environments.

A. Principles of Sustainability

Key principles of sustainability include:

- **Low-impact materials:** choose non-toxic, sustainably-produced or recycled materials which require little energy to process
- **Energy efficiency:** use manufacturing processes and products which require less energy
- **Quality and durability:** longer-lasting and better-functioning products will have to be replaced less frequently, reducing the impacts of producing replacements
- **Design for reuse and recycling:** Products, processes, and systems should be designed for performance in a commercial 'afterlife'.
- **Service substitution:** shifting the mode of consumption from personal ownership of products to provision of services which provide similar functions, e.g. from a private automobile to a car sharing service. Such a system promotes minimal resource use per unit of consumption (e.g., per trip driven).
- **Renewability:** materials should come from nearby (local or bioregional), sustainably-managed renewable sources that can be composted (or fed to livestock) when their usefulness has been exhausted.
- **Healthy Buildings:** sustainable building design aims to create buildings that are not harmful to their occupants nor to the larger environment. An important emphasis is on indoor environmental quality, especially indoor air quality.

B. Incorporating Sustainable Concepts

Sustainable Site Design

Site design tends to be the foundation for park development, and sustainability begins with the following approaches:

- Promote spiritual harmony with, and embody an ethical responsibility to, the native landscape and its resources.
- Plan landscape development according to the surrounding context rather than by overlaying familiar patterns and solutions.
- Do not sacrifice ecological integrity or economic viability in a sustainable development; both are equally important factors in the development process.

- Understand the site as an integrated ecosystem with changes occurring over time in dynamic balance; the impacts of development must be confined within these natural changes.
- Allow simplicity of functions to prevail, while respecting basic human needs of comfort and safety.
- Recognize there is no such thing as waste, only resources out of place.
- Assess feasibility of development in long-term social and environmental costs, not just short-term construction costs.
- Analyze and model water and nutrient cycles prior to development intervention - "First, do no harm."
- Minimize areas of vegetation disturbance, earth grading, and water channel alternation.
- Locate structures to take maximum advantage of passive energy technologies to provide for human comfort.
- Provide space for processing all wastes created onsite (collection/recycling facilities, digesters, lagoons, etc.) so that no hazardous or destructive wastes will be released into the environment.
- Determine environmentally safe means of onsite energy production and storage in the early stages of site planning.
- Phase development to allow for the monitoring of cumulative environmental impacts of development.
- Allow the natural ecosystem to be self-maintaining to the greatest extent possible.
- Develop facilities to integrate selected maintenance functions such as energy conservation, waste reduction, recycling, and resource conservation into the visitor experience.
- Incorporate indigenous materials and crafts into structures, native plants into landscaping, and local customs into programs and operations.

Sustainable Building Design (Green Building)

Green building is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use resources — energy, water, and materials — while reducing building impacts on human health and the environment, through better siting, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal — the complete building life cycle. A similar concept is natural building, which is usually on a smaller scale and tends to focus on the use of natural materials that are available locally.

Effective green building can lead to:

- 1) reduced operating costs by increasing productivity and using less energy and water,
- 2) improved public and occupant health due to improved indoor air quality, and
- 3) reduced environmental impacts by, for example, lessening storm water runoff and the heat island effect.

Green buildings often seek to achieve not only ecological but aesthetic harmony between a structure and its surrounding natural and built environment, although the appearance and style of sustainable buildings is not necessarily distinguishable from their less sustainable counterparts. On the aesthetic side of green architecture or sustainable design is the philosophy of designing a building that is in harmony with the natural features and resources surrounding the site.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building rating system developed by the U.S. Green Building Council that provides standards for environmentally sustainable construction. There are several key steps in designing sustainable buildings: specify 'green' building materials from local sources, reduce loads, optimize systems, and generate on-site renewable energy:

- Incorporate building materials typically considered to be 'green'. These include rapidly renewable plant materials like bamboo and straw, lumber from forests certified to be sustainably managed, dimension stone, recycled stone, recycled metal, and other products that are non-toxic, reusable, renewable, and/or recyclable. Building materials should be extracted and manufactured locally to the building site to minimize the energy embedded in their transportation.
- Incorporate low-impact building materials wherever feasible. Insulation may be made from low VOC (volatile organic compound)-emitting materials such as recycled denim or cellulose insulation, rather than the building insulation materials that may contain carcinogenic or toxic materials such as formaldehyde. To discourage insect damage, these alternate insulation materials may be treated with boric acid. Organic or milk-based paints may be used.
- Use architectural salvage and reclaimed materials when appropriate. When older buildings are demolished, frequently any good wood is reclaimed, renewed, and sold as flooring. Any good dimension stone is similarly reclaimed. Many other parts are reused as well, such as doors, windows, mantels, and hardware, thus reducing the consumption of new goods.
- When new materials are employed, look for materials that are rapidly replenished, such as bamboo, which can be harvested for commercial use after only 6 years of growth, or cork oak, in which only the outer bark is removed for use, thus preserving the tree.
- When possible, use building materials from the site itself. If a new structure is being constructed in a wooded area, consider using wood from the trees which were cut to make room for the building.
- Minimize the energy loads within and on the structure. Orient the building to take advantage of cooling breezes and sunlight. Daylighting with ample windows will eliminate the need to turn on electric lights during the day (and provide great views outside too). Passive Solar can warm a building in the winter — but care needs to be taken to provide shade in the summer time to prevent overheating. Prevailing breezes and convection currents can passively cool the building in the summer. Thermal mass stores heat gained during the day and releases it at night minimizing the swings in temperature. Thermal mass can both heat the building in winter and cool it during the summer. Insulation is the final step to optimizing the structure. Well-insulated windows, doors, and ceilings and walls help reduce energy loss, thereby reducing energy usage. These design features don't cost much money to construct and significantly reduce the energy needed to make the building comfortable.
- Optimize the heating and cooling systems through installing energy efficient machinery, commissioning, and heat recovery. Compared to optimizing the passive heating and cooling features through design, the gains made by engineering are relatively expensive and can add significantly to the project's cost. However, integrated design can reduce costs — for example, once a building has been designed to be more energy-efficient, it may be possible to downsize heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) equipment, leading to substantial savings. To further address energy loss hot water heat recycling is used to reduce energy usage for domestic water heating. Ground source heat pumps are more energy efficient than other forms of heating and cooling.

- Use onsite generation of renewable energy through solar power, wind power, hydro power, or biomass to reduce the environmental impact of the building.
Power generation is the most expensive feature to add to a building.
- Reduce waste, energy, water and materials.
During the construction phase, reduce the amount of material going to landfills. Well-designed buildings also help reduce the amount of waste generated by the occupants as well, by providing onsite solutions such as compost bins to reduce matter going to landfills.
- Reduce the impact on wells or water treatment plants.
"Greywater", wastewater from sources such as dishwashing or washing machines, can be used for subsurface irrigation, or if treated, for non-potable purposes, e.g., to flush toilets and wash cars. Rainwater collectors are used for similar purposes.
- Take advantage of renewable resources.
Use sunlight through passive solar, active solar, and photovoltaic techniques. Use plants and trees through green roofs, rain gardens, and for reduction of rainwater run-off. Consider unpacked gravel, pervious pavement, and open cell blocks for parking lots, trails, and roadways.

Sustainable Operations

Although sustainable design and construction helps conserve resources, operations will have a long-term impact on resources. Therefore, it is important to consider steps that can be implemented to help make operations more sustainable.

At this time, information on sustainable operations is not as readily available as design, development, and construction. Since the County's system is not fully operational, the following principles should be explored further with operational analysis and development:

- Energy
Reduce consumption of non-renewable fuels and increase renewable energy production.
- Water
Reduce water consumption.
- Air Quality
Improve air quality by reducing emissions of CO₂, NO_x, SO_x.
- Materials
Reduce amount of solid waste generated, increase recycling, increase procurement of recycled materials.

In the current stewardship period, one key sustainable initiative could be pursued: require farming agreements of existing park land to incorporate sustainable techniques.

Partnerships on Sustainability Demonstration Projects

Partnership opportunities are available for demonstration projects. The Scott WMO, other WMO's in Scott County, the Scott County Soil and Water Conservation District, and other agencies have funding available for demonstration projects. These opportunities should be explored further when opportunities arise.

SYSTEM COSTS AND FUNDING

Key themes emerging throughout the planning process related to financing of the park and trail system included:

The idea that the County, as a small parks and trails organization, has a striking opportunity to create a **transparent, accountable and practical** system for financing the parks and trails system was a recurring theme. Given current economic outlooks, this was found to be prudent not only to encourage efficiencies, but to facilitate public awareness and input in the development of the parks and trails system during a time when balancing priorities will be one of the County's toughest challenges.

The idea of ensuring that parks and trails as a service to the community receive an **equitable allocation of county dollars** emerged amidst acknowledgement of a disconnect between current funding levels, the system being planned, and the value placed on parks and trails service by the citizens of Scott County. Allocating **adequate funding for environmental stewardship** was defined as a key opportunity open to Scott County as a new agency. Given awareness today of the importance of proactive stewardship this was stressed as an opportunity for the County to be a leader.

There was recognition of the progress made towards **accurate-long term planning**, with the creation of a first ever capital improvement plan for parks and trails. A primary need identified is the expansion of **accurate-long term planning** in the area of trail development costs. **Leveraging traditional funding in innovative ways and developing creative funding strategies** emerged as significant immediate strategy needs in order for the County to be successful in implementing the parks and trails system as presented out in this Plan. It was recognized that chief to being successful in both strategies is to create **solid partnerships** and to explore **cost-sharing** with other organizations. Together, these concepts, some of them strategies themselves, provide a framework for an overarching financing strategy.

A. Regional Park System Financing and Trends

Regional park systems are funded through a combination of federal, state and local government sources as well as through user fees, and donations from the private sector. Cost off-sets are often accomplished through resource sharing with other organizations. In terms of direct funding, the sources remain the same; however the *dollar amount* per source over time may vary dramatically. In some cases funding has decreased significantly over the past 30 years and in others stagnated, as the Metro Regional Park System has grown, greatly diminishing the "purchasing power" of the regional park implementing agencies.

Capital Funding Trends

The amount of non-local capital funds available today for the parks, trails and natural land protection in Minnesota is far less than it was 20 and even 40 years ago. This is exemplified in the 40-year funding history of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCON), the primary federal source of capital dollars for state and local parks and trails and natural lands protection.

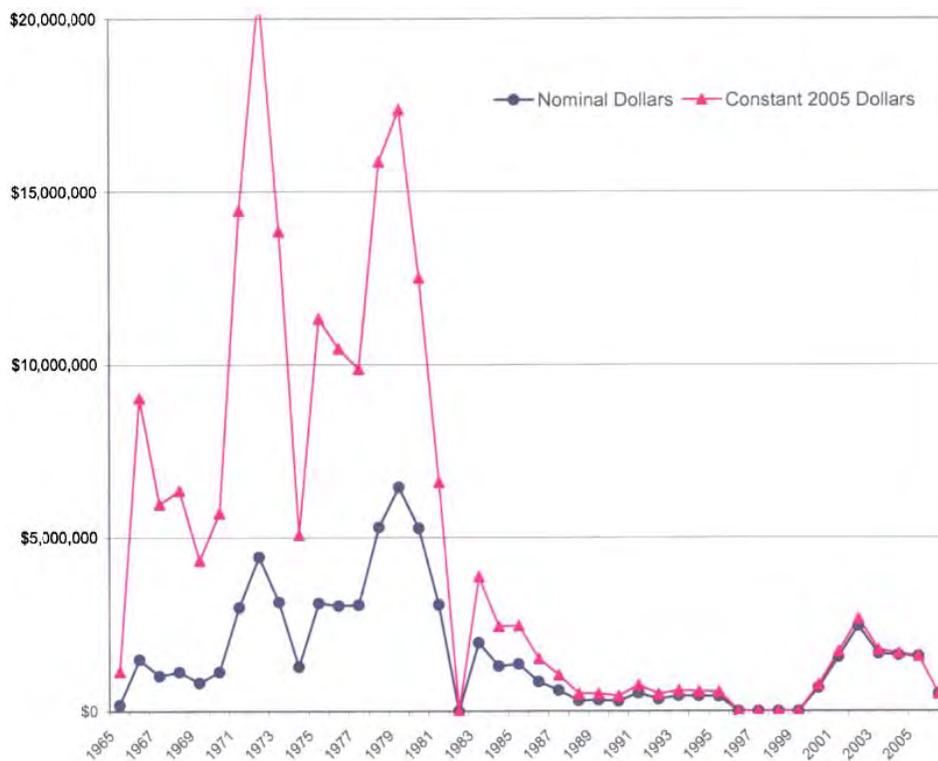
From the 1980's to today several state and federal capital funding sources that had been a traditional source of funding for the metro regional park system have declined substantially or have been abolished. L&WCON became unavailable to the system in the 1980's. Non-local capital funding is now provided primarily through the Metropolitan Council through Council

bonds and matching state bonds as well as individual state bond requests made by individual park agencies. Contributions from these sources are on an upward trend over the past ten years; however it's important to note that the amounts shown in the graph are actual dollars, with no inflation factor, and the amount allocated in recent years is the same as that in the 1970's. Thus, there has been a significant decline in non-locally derived "purchasing power" for metro regional park agencies since the early 1970's.

Of particular importance to local government is the shift over the past several decades from capital allocations for parks, trails and natural lands capital projects being largely provided by the federal government - with matches by state and local governments - to that of being provided primarily by local governments - with matches from state government, and in the case of regional park implementing agencies, with matches also from the Metropolitan Council.

The premise for dedicating a portion of a new sales tax for the environment is due to the decline in funding over the years as a percent of the State's total spending. Efforts towards such as tax have been tried over the past decade. Just recently, the legislature passed a bill authorizing a constitutional amendment to allow a portion of the sales tax to be dedicated to the environment and cultural heritage, be put before the voters in the 2008 general election. The group leading the effort, Minnesota Heritage 08, includes representatives from hunters and fisher groups, habitat groups, arts and cultural groups as well as local, regional park state park supporters.

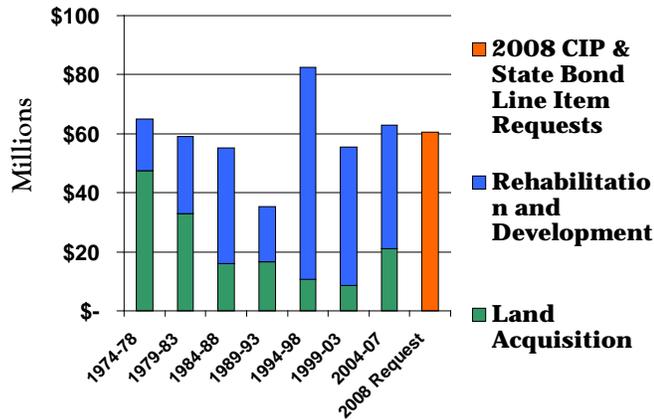
Figure VII-31
Land and Water Conservation Fund (federal)
Apportionments to Minnesota, 1965-2006



Source: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Local Grants Program

Figure VII-32
Metro Regional Parks
Capital Appropriations
 (CIP & Line Item)

1974-2007 actual 2008 request

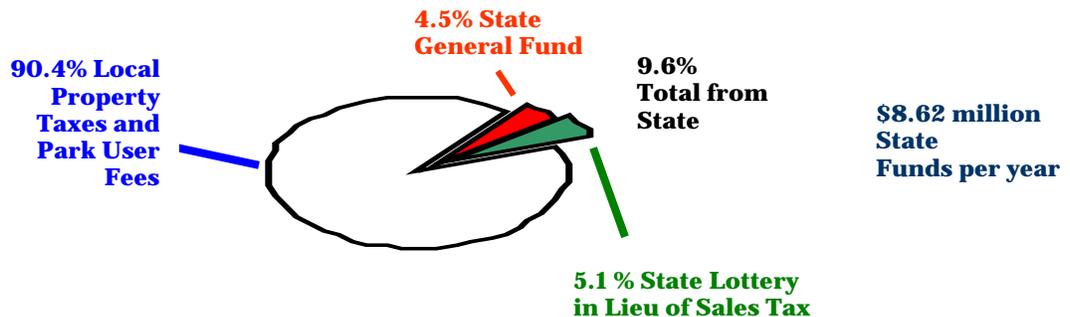


Source: Metropolitan Council – Staff Report; November, 2007

Operations and Maintenance Funding Trends

Prior to 1985 the state provided no funding for the regional park system. In 1985, Minn. Stat. 473.351 was enacted, calling for state appropriations to finance 40 percent of the costs to operate and maintain the Metropolitan Regional Parks System. What has actually been provided by the state on average since 1985, is approximately 9.29 percent of the annual operations and maintenance costs for the entire regional system. The majority of operations and maintenance funding is contributed by local governments through local property taxes and park user fees.

Figure VII-33
Revenue Sources for Metro Regional Parks O&M
FY 2008-09



Source: Metropolitan Council Staff Analysis and presentation

B. System Costs

Park Land Acquisition Cost

Land acquisition cost estimates have been prepared by staff for each of the planned parks and the proposed Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve, to be used for long-term planning purposes. These costs provide the Board of Commissioners and county staff a starting point for planning the financial aspects of implementing the Plan. Cost figures have not been reviewed by a professional appraiser, nor has an appraiser completed reviews of the properties (with the exception of one parcel at Doyle-Kennefick which had an appraisal for a right-of-way purchase negotiation). As part of any purchase consideration the County Board may make in the future, a professional appraisal will be sought. The numbers used were generated by Scott County staff's knowledge of land values or extrapolated from sales of similar lands.

The numbers appearing here provide a general sense of cost and allow the County to do long-term planning and have meaningful discussion regarding financing strategies. Estimated costs for acquiring the remaining private property within the planned and proposed park areas, in 2005 dollars, are approximately, \$1.8 million for Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park; \$7.8 million for Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park; \$30,000 for Spring Lake Regional Park; and \$11.7 million for the proposed Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve.

Park Development Costs

Costs related to the development of Scott County's four regional park facilities are based on a review of recent master plans completed for regional parks and park reserves in other jurisdictions, and in the case of Spring Lake Regional Park, cost estimates are available from a development master plan prepared for that park in 2005. The development master plan for Spring Lake Regional Park provides a recent estimate of costs associated with development of the amenities and infrastructure planned for the park.

Estimated development costs presented here for Doyle-Kennefick, Cedar Lake Farm and Blakely Bluffs, are intended to provide the County with a general idea of the possible cost related to the development of these parks, solely for long-term planning purposes. Site specific estimates as is available for Spring Lake, will be prepared as a part of future development master plans for those park facilities. Development costs for Spring Lake Regional Park are estimated at \$6,300,000. The general estimates for the other park units at this time are: Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park - \$6,000,000; Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park - \$10,000,000; and Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve are -\$10,000,000.

Park Name	Estimated Remaining Acquisition Costs	Estimated Development Costs	Total
Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park	\$1,800,000	\$6,000,000	\$7,800,000
Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park	\$7,800,000	\$10,000,000	\$17,800,000
Spring Lake Regional Park	\$30,000	\$6,300,000	\$6,330,000
Proposed Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve Search Area	\$11,700,000	\$10,000,000	\$21,700,000
Total	\$21,330,000	\$32,300,000	\$53,630,000

Regional and County Trail Acquisition and Development Costs

At this time, the County has limited information on cost estimates for the acquisition and development of trails; this is a goal area to focus on over the next 1-2 years. The preparation of sound cost information related to both trail acquisition and development is a complex endeavor given the lack of master plans for trail corridors and the multiple possible mechanisms to acquire and develop trail facilities. The County’s strategy to leverage the sub-division process to acquire trail facilities will stretch County dollars significantly; however the sub-division process in terms of project timing, location and extent is out of the control of the county. Additionally, in the absence of master plans, trail routes are unknown, and therefore the length of the trails and complexity construction are unknown. Thus, further planning is required before general estimates can be established for the cost of the planned trail corridors.

Based on recent projects by the County Highway Department and other regional park implementing agencies, the estimate of general per mile construction costs for various types of trails range from \$80,000/mile for grade-separated trails developed as a part of a road project, and up to \$300,000 - 400,000/mile for trails cutting through “raw” land.

The following table provides an overview of the estimated costs for both regional and rural road trails:

Figure VII-35 Cost Estimates for Regional Trail System			
Trail System	Estimated Number of Miles	Estimated Development Costs*	Total
Metropolitan Council Identified Regional Trail System	70 miles	\$220,000/mile	\$15,400,000
Proposed Additions to Regional System	38 miles	\$220,000/mile	\$8,360,000
County Rural Road Trails	87.96	\$220,000/mile	\$19,351,200
Total	108 miles	\$220,000/mile	\$43,111,200
*Metropolitan Council regional trail estimate			

Operation Costs

The 2007 operating expenses for the Scott County parks and trails system, including the County’s contribution to Three Rivers of \$581,941 for Cleary Lake Regional Park and Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve was \$976,287. As the system is developed, operating needs and therefore costs will grow. The County does not yet have facilities developed or widely open and available to public use, and therefore costs today are not reflective of what they will be in the future with a developed system.

In 2006, staff worked with a consultant to prepare general estimates for potential costs at full build out to use for planning purposes. Full build out includes each of our planned parks at full development, the timing of which is likely 30 or more years into the future. To arrive at a cost meaningful to our situation in Scott County, “like” regional park systems were reviewed, or systems of a size and scale most similar to Scott County’s planned system. An average per acre cost was determined for six agencies (see following table), and the average per acre cost for the six agencies is \$997.

Anoka County	Carver County	Dakota County	Ramsey County	Washington County	Three Rivers Park District	Total Average Per Acre Cost
\$864	\$1272	\$1365	\$1055	\$796	\$630	\$997

Trail operating costs are also factored into this number, since regional agencies surveyed included trail costs in the numbers reported for their systems

Applying the \$997 average annual per acre cost for full build-out of Scott County parks and trails system based on entirely active uses equates to an estimated \$3,500,000 in annual operating costs. However, build out is not likely to occur until more than 30 years into the future. In addition, Scott County system costs could be less than this, due to the fact that reserves are typically less expensive as compared to parks.

Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Reserve will make up almost two thirds of the County's regional park acreage, which will likely translate to operating costs less than the estimated \$997/acre. Factoring in an annual contribution of \$600,000 to Three Rivers Park District, the total estimated operating costs are \$4,100,000.

Park Name	Anticipated Full Acreage	Total Estimated Annual Operations Costs
Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park	300	\$300,000
Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park	900	\$900,000
Spring Lake Regional Park	300	\$300,000
Proposed Blakeley Bluffs Regional Park Preserve Search Area	2,000	\$2,000,000
Total	3,500	\$3,500,000
Three Rivers Park District Operations	3,500	\$600,000*
Total with Three Rivers Park District	7,000	\$4,100,000

*Only reflects Scott County contribution toward Three Rivers operations in Scott County. Total costs for Three Rivers' Scott County operations is approximately \$1,700,000. (2008 data)

C. Financing Sources

There are many potential financing sources available to the County for the acquisition, development, operations and maintenance of parks and trails. Most sources have both benefits and limitations and no single source will provide adequate resources to entirely fund the parks and trails system in Scott County. Below is an identification of known and potential funding sources along with an identification of the type of activities (maintenance, land acquisition and development) typically eligible under those sources.

**Figure VII-38
Regional Park Financing Sources and Eligible Functions**

Financing Source	Maintenance	Acquisition	Development
<p>General Levy The County Board has legal authority to collect property taxes and may choose to fund county parks, trails and open space acquisition, development, operations and maintenance through this mechanism.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p>Municipal Bonds Municipal bonds are bonds issued by any municipal organization including cities, counties, states, and school districts. The purpose of these bonds is for general expenditures or to fund specific projects such as highways, new schools, or new park facilities. There are two types of municipal bonds – Revenue and General Obligation Bonds.</p> <p>Revenue Bond These bonds are used to fund projects that will eventually create revenue directly, such as a water park or golf course. The revenues from the projects are used to pay off the bonds. The County Board may choose to bond for individual acquisition and capital improvement projects for facilities that generate income (i.e. a water park). This is a straightforward process but is generally used only for special projects and not for operations and maintenance.</p> <p>General Obligation Bond These bonds are unsecured municipal bonds that are simply backed by the full faith and credit of the municipality. Generally, these bonds have maturities of at least 10 years and are paid off with funds from taxes or other fees.</p>		✓	✓
<p>Bond Referendum The County Board may choose to place a bond referendum for parks, trails and open space before the voters in a general election. This option allows voters to have a direct impact on deciding how much money should be allocated to parks, trails and open space. This strategy is generally used only to fund very large projects or a suite of projects bundled together. In November of 2001 Dakota County voters passed a \$20,000,000 bond referendum to protect natural areas and farmland.</p>		✓	✓
<p>Park Dedication Scott County and Town Boards collect park dedication fees for residential development and commercial/industrial development based on final plats in the unincorporated areas of the county. Cities also collect park dedication fees for final plats within their jurisdiction. The county will encourage partnerships between cities, townships and the county to fund appropriate park and trail improvements using park dedication and other sources of funding. The current park dedication requirement in Scott County is 7% of the land or \$1,000.</p>		✓	✓
<p>State Bonding Request The County may make a direct request for capital funds directly to the legislature. Regional Park implementing agencies such as the Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul routinely make bonding requests and have over the decades received millions of capital dollars for their parks systems using this technique. In recent years Dakota County has also successfully utilized this potential source of capital funds.</p>		✓	✓
<p>Metropolitan Council Acquisition Opportunity Fund (Formerly the Emergency Acquisition Grant Fund) This grant program is open to regional park implementing agencies. The primary eligibility criteria are that the park or trail facility identified must be identified as an element of the regional system and must have an acquisition master plan approved by the Metropolitan Council. The funds provided through this fund originate from Met Council bonds and the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.</p>		✓	

**Figure VII-38
Regional Park Financing Sources and Eligible Functions**

Financing Source	Maintenance	Acquisition	Development
<p><u>Metropolitan Council's Capital Improvement Program</u> The Metropolitan Council secures bond funds through the Legislative process for the Regional Park System, which it matches with Metropolitan Council bonds. These funds are allocated to the implementing agencies for acquisition, development, and reimbursement for prior projects. The funds are available on a biennium basis and vary depending on the Legislature's bonding amount.</p>		✓	✓
<p><u>Metropolitan Council's Operations and Maintenance Funding</u> Minnesota Statutes 473.351 requires that the Metropolitan Council distribute operation and maintenance grants to the regional park implementing agencies according to the following formula: 40% based on each agencies proportion of total regional system use or visits; 40% based on each agency's proportion of total regional system operation and maintenance expenditures in the previous calendar year; and 20% based on each agency's proportion of total regional system acreage, with park reserve management land divided by four.</p>	✓		
<p><u>Regional Parks Foundation of the Twin Cities</u> This is a new initiative recently started by the Metropolitan Council. The mission of the foundation will be to raise private funds to supplement public acquisition dollars and to promote the regional parks system.</p>		✓	✓
<p><u>Revenue from Revenue Generating Enterprises</u> Revenue generating enterprises create revenue above and beyond what is required to operate and maintain the enterprise. Profit is reinvested back into other parts of the parks, trails and open space system. Many park agencies use facilities such as golf courses for these purposes. This option may sometimes be controversial due to philosophical opposition to government competing with private enterprise. There also is doubt that these are truly sources of revenue for other parts of a system, but rather a means to fund re-development of the enterprise.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><u>State Grants</u> The County may seek grants from various sources. Generally grant programs cover acquisition and development only. There are virtually no grant programs which provide money for operations and maintenance. Most grants come with a restriction or long term obligations intended to prevent future conversion to non-park or trail uses. Examples of available grants in Minnesota for metro regional parks at this time include; Metro Greenways Program for acquisition and DNR Grant in Aid programs for trail development.</p>		✓	✓
<p><u>Federal Grants</u> There are opportunities at the federal level for trail projects related to transportation that have regional impact. Federal funding for metro regional parks is non-existent at this time.</p>		✓	✓

**Figure VII-38
Regional Park Financing Sources and Eligible Functions**

Financing Source	Maintenance	Acquisition	Development
<p><u>User Fees</u> The County may choose to charge user fees (generally entrance fees) for using park facilities. This requires that a process be established for collection of fees and enforcement. User fees may be appropriate for some facilities such as on OHV park where operations and maintenance is high and only a small segment of the general public directly benefits.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><u>Non-profit Partnerships</u> There are various non-profit organizations that assist in acquiring land for parks, trails and open space. These organizations can bring expertise in fund raising, negotiations and sometimes revolving loan accounts. The Trust For Public Land, Conservation Fund, and Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota are examples of organizations active in Minnesota. At times this is a source of direct dollars, but this is quite rare, especially in the case of local and regional parks.</p>		✓	✓
<p><u>Private Donations/Partnerships</u> The county could seek donations from private individuals and corporations or develop partnerships with private enterprise which generates revenue for parks, trails and open space. These potentially can be used for operations and maintenance; however, typically individuals and organizations limit the use to capital expenditures.</p>	✓	✓	✓
<p><u>Partnerships and Resource Sharing with Park Providers/Private Business/other governmental units</u> There is potential to create partnerships through which County costs are reduced in the area of operations and maintenance or capital projects and expenditures.</p>	✓	✓	✓

D. Finance Management Strategies

Key management strategies to achieve a sustainable system:

Explore new partnerships and nurture existing partnerships. Specific actions include exploring cost-sharing by co-locating facilities, sharing programs, etc.... Understand the goals of other parks and trails organizations as well as natural resource agencies, and work together on areas of overlapping need or goals.

Complete long-term planning for all elements of the parks and trails system, and regularly update.

Work with partners and long-term plans to pursue large-scale, multi-jurisdictional grant proposals for federal transportation funding, and for other funding opportunities. There are grant opportunities for trail development related to transportation projects that could help achieve Scott County’s goals as well as those of multiple counties, cities and townships. Early dialog is needed amongst a suite of partners to develop solid projects for the future.

Explore opportunities with Scott County cities to **collect park dedication fees** for regional facilities within the cities.

Leverage every county dollar spent and increase levels and sources of non-local capital funds. In order to leverage, non-county funding streams need to be increased from existing levels or newly created. Specific actions include supporting the passage of the constitutional amendment/sales tax legislation for the environment ; supporting an increase in state bond funding of capital projects; supporting an increase in land acquisition funding for regional parks through the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR); supporting the Regional Parks Foundation of the Twin Cities to increase private contributions.

Explore increasing local county dollars for parks and trails capital projects. Local capacity to cost share on projects enables the County to be more competitive in its pursuit of state bonding appropriations.

E. Financing Plan

The acquisition, development, and operation of the system are contingent on securing capital and operating funding. With the combined cost of the entire park and trail system (including rural road trails) at approximately \$96.7 million, it will take creativity and decades to complete. Given the inconsistency of funding sources and amounts, it is difficult to assemble a financing plan. However, the following is a concept that can be further defined as part of the County's annual CIP process:

**Figure VII-39
Parks and Trails System Financing Plan**

Funding Source and Allocation	Funding Required	Funding Source
Park Acquisition	21,330,000	
General Levy (CIP)		
Bond Referendum		5,000,000
Park Dedication		100,000
Legislative Bonding Request		0
Regional Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund		300,000
Legacy Amendment Funding		4,430,000
Regional Park CIP		1,500,000
Regional Park Foundation		10,000,000
State Grants		0
Federal Highway Funding		0
Sub-Total		21,330,000
Park Development	32,300,000	
General Levy (CIP)		
Bond Referendum		15,000,000
Park Dedication		2,300,000
Legislative Bonding Request		0
Regional Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund		0
Legacy Amendment Funding		11,500,000
Regional Park CIP		3,500,000
Regional Park Foundation		0
State Grants		0
Federal Highway Funding		0
Sub-Total		32,300,000
Trails (Regional and Rural Road)	43,111,200	
General Levy (CIP)		
Bond Referendum		20,000,000
Park Dedication		1,500,000
Legislative Bonding Request		0
Regional Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund		0
Legacy Amendment Funding		9,111,200
Regional Park CIP		1,500,000
Regional Park Foundation		5,000,000
State Grants		0
Federal Highway Funding		6,000,000
Sub-Total		43,111,200
Total	96,741,200	96,741,200

PARKS AND TRAILS PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals: These are broad statements that express general public priorities about how the County should approach growth and development over the next 25 years.

Policies: These are rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation and to accomplish the goals.

A. The System

Goal #VII-1: Acquire and develop a parks system that meets the natural resource based parks and trails needs of current and future residents.

- a. Following the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan, ecological information, distribution of natural resources, land availability, and threat of loss, shall be the guiding criteria for siting parks.
- b. Acquisition of land shall take precedence over development of facilities until sufficient land under imminent threat of subdivision has been acquired to meet present and future needs or until immediate demand requires an investment in infrastructure. Due to the nature of various funding sources there may be instances when development of certain parks and trails occurs before acquisition of the entire system is complete.
- c. Acquisitions will be prioritized based upon a number of factors including: availability (willing seller), parcel size (larger is better), connectivity, level of threat of imminent development, quality of natural resources, available financial resources, opportunities to leverage financial resources, and geographic distribution.
- d. Policies identified in The Scott County 2030 Plan, the Scott Watershed Management Organization Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan, and other federal, state, and local plans should be used as guide and a tool for park land acquisition and development.
- e. Utilize park dedication and the County's Public Value Incentive program to acquire and develop planned regional and county trails in the unincorporated area through the development process.
- f. Park development shall minimize impacts upon adjoining properties by considering the following provisions:
 - Appropriate roadway access;
 - Adequate supply of parking;
 - Internal and external trail connections;
 - Appropriate setback, orientation and location to activity areas and structures from adjoining properties; and
 - Screening, buffering, and landscaping.

Goal #VII-2: Provide a combination of regional and county trails that connect population centers to parks and provide a variety of user experiences.

- a. Following the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Park Policy Plan, regional trails shall provide a natural resource-based destination experience or connect significant regional facilities.
- b. The County's Transportation Plan provides recreation and transportation trails that connect city and township trails, major destinations within the County, and each of the seven cities and adjacent counties. Both the Regional Trail and the County Trail plans shall work together to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.
- c. Policies identified in The Scott County 2030 Plan, the Scott Watershed Management Organization Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan, and other federal, state, and local plans should be used as guide and a tool for trail acquisition and implementation.
- d. Include trails as part of the Parks Improvement Program.
- e. Develop trail design guidelines which determine trail locations (one or both sides of the road or cross country), type (paved, crushed limestone, etc.), trail standards, typical cross sections, and typical right-of-way widths.
- f. Ensure new developments connect to existing or future public trail systems.
- g. Develop policies that consider alternative trail uses, such as snowmobile and equestrian, in planning and developing the regional trail system, as well as other County infrastructure improvements such as highways, bridges, and utility projects.
- h. Utilize park dedication and the County's Public Value Incentive program to acquire and develop planned regional and county trails in the unincorporated area through the development process.
- i. Pursue the acquisition of abandoned railroad right-of-way for future overland trails as opportunities arise.
- j. In instances where it is appropriate or necessary to locate a regional trail within or along road right-of-way, design the trail based on anticipated uses and providing an appropriate separation between the trail and road traffic.
- k. Develop a cost share approach for trail system development and seek partnerships with the cities.

B. People and Services

Goal #VII-3: Be progressive and responsive in the provision of parks, trails, and open space recreational opportunities.

- a. Maintain a permanent County Parks Advisory Commission operated under the County's standard procedures for maintaining Commissions.
- b. Conduct periodic surveys and stakeholder or interest group discussions to understand the needs and expectation of residents in a comprehensive County and Regional parks, trails, and open space system.
- c. Evaluate the ability of the system to support desired programs and services.
- d. Support the extension of the Minnesota River Scenic Byway designation through Scott County from Belle Plaine to Fort Snelling.
- e. Coordinate with the Metropolitan Council as a means of promoting additional Regional Park and open space investment in Scott County.
- f. Provide the opportunity for city, township and citizen input during the planning process for the development of each regional/county park.
- g. In considering enterprise facilities, the County will not compete with existing private services.

Goal #VII-4: Promote awareness and use of all park and trail facilities in the county, including County-owned facilities and those of other jurisdictions (city, regional, state, federal).

- a. Develop and implement a diverse marketing program, utilizing the Scott County website, signage, maps, customer service, etc.
- b. Coordinate marketing of the Federal, State and Regional/County park system through the use of maps, brochures, newspaper articles, and other forms of public communication.
- c. Partner with other agencies in promoting awareness and community interest in regional parks and the ecological corridors that connect them.

Goal #VII-5: Provide a diversity of natural resource based outdoor education and recreational opportunities accessible and affordable to all residents.

- a. In the creation of a comprehensive park and trail system, provide quality interpretive and recreational programming focusing on natural resources, water resources, cultural history, geology, and archaeology.
- b. Strive to keep public park, trail, and open space facilities affordable for all residents of Scott County.

- c. Ensure regional/county park facilities are accessible to the disabled in accordance with local, state and federal law.
- d. Appropriate recreational activities for County/ Regional parks and trails will be determined through the master planning process.
- e. Consider multi-use and multi-seasonal concepts and practices in the development of regional/county parks.
- f. Promoting park experiences that interact with the aquatic environment is a priority. Water based recreation (swimming, fishing, boating) is an important component of a well rounded natural resources based recreational program.
- g. Horseback riding, mountain biking, snowmobiling and responsible use of ATVs and ORMs will be encouraged in appropriate locations.
- h. Cross-country OHV trails are not encouraged because of the ecological impacts and potential for conflicts between riders and landowners.
- i. Scott County will explore the possibility of facilitating the creation of an off-road park facility jointly with private enterprise and other governmental units as a means to reduce OHV impacts in inappropriate locations. Minimizing environmental impacts, social impacts and financial impacts will be guiding principles.
- j. Promote active living and healthy lifestyles.

C. Relationships and Partners

Goal #VII-6: Create a County park and trail system which is coordinated with and complimentary to the facilities of other park providers in Scott County and the region, which optimizes cost sharing, partnerships and collaboration, and avoids duplication.

- a. Seek opportunities to share physical and financial resources with other governmental units and special districts (cities, townships, Three Rivers, school districts, adjacent counties, Metropolitan Council, State, and Federal) to provide and maintain an integrated parks and trails system with linkages between neighboring communities and publicly owned parkland.
- b. Active recreational facilities (e.g. athletic complexes) are recognized as local needs that should be provided by the cities and townships, and therefore, will not be included as part of the County and Regional parks system.
- c. The provision of neighborhood and community parks and recreational facilities shall be the responsibility of the cities and townships. Where appropriate, encourage cities and townships to collaborate in ownership or cost sharing of park facilities and/or services.

- d. Investigate cooperative efforts with Federal and State agencies to promote the greater utilization of existing Federal and State parks, trails, and open space facilities within the County.
- e. Work with Three Rivers Park District in Regional park and trail planning and the operation of Murphy-Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve and Cleary Lake Regional Park.
- f. Encourage the private sector to partner with the County in the provision of parks and trails.
- g. Coordinate with various federal, state, city, and township agencies regarding land use planning in proximity to regional/county parks.

D. Natural Resources

Goal #VII-7: Protect and conserve natural resources and preserve and maintain ecological integrity in creating, developing and maintaining the system of parks and trails.

- a. The natural resource character of the park system, including landcover type, occurrence of important wildlife habitat, occurrence of rare species and features, will be documented, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis, utilizing accurate, up to date and accepted measurement tools, i.e. the Minnesota Land Cover Classification, MnDNR Natural Heritage Database, standardized inventories and ecological evaluations.
- b. Standard inventories will be conducted on a regular basis for the purpose of informing basic natural resource stewardship, such as management of noxious and invasive plant control and diseased trees and habitat enhancement.
- c. As part of each master planning process, conduct an ecological review including an identification of landcover types, an identification of target plant communities, a preliminary review of ecological condition, and an overview of management and restoration opportunities and challenges.
- d. In conjunction with park development a comprehensive site, site level ecological evaluation will be completed.
- e. The system of parks and trails will be planned and designed to incorporate and showcase examples of important natural communities and wildlife populations, and will protect and enhance biological diversity, particularly rare and unique plants and animals.
- f. The planning and implementation of park and trail facilities, recreation programs, and maintenance activities, will begin with an understanding of natural resource character and the presence of rare or significant features and will focus on the long term sustainability of each site's natural resources, avoiding immediate impact and long-term degradation of native plant communities and rare or significant features.

- g. Policies identified in The Scott Watershed Management Organization *Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan* to protect and preserve surface and groundwater resources will be considered during park and trail planning and development activities.
- h. An effort will be made to co-locate ecological and recreational corridors whenever possible, in particular within or adjacent to the Natural Area Corridors. However, not all ecological corridors can accommodate recreation, especially when corridor opportunities are very narrow or the natural resources are very sensitive to disturbance.
- i. Development activities within parks will be designed to avoid completely or minimize to the greatest extent possible impacts on natural communities.
- j. Sustainable design elements will be a priority consideration for each capital project, program activity and maintenance program.
- k. Retaining storm-water runoff on site through the use of Best Management Practices will be required for every capital or maintenance project whenever feasible.
- l. Restore, enhance and maintain natural lands for their intrinsic ecological qualities, according to the principles of conservation and ecological restoration and using Best Management Practices.
- m. Preserve and enhance existing pre-settlement (circa 1855) landscape communities.
- n. Preserve and enhance native wildlife populations through wildlife management programs. Management techniques may be used for the purpose of restoring, maintaining and in some cases controlling selected wildlife populations, such as white-tailed deer.
- o. Partner with professional and technical natural resource experts from local and regional governmental units, such as the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District the Scott Watershed Management Organization and together organizations to achieve mutual resource preservation and restoration goals through grant partnerships, resource sharing and innovative collaborations.
- p. In planning and managing the system, look beyond jurisdictional lines and organizational domain.
- q. Work with private landowners to promote sound stewardship of private lands that buffer or ecologically connect public lands.
- r. Work cooperatively with landowners to monitor and minimize potentially negative effects of adjacent land uses on parks, trails, and open spaces.

- s. Involve and partner with volunteers and community groups to implement natural resource management activities, to promote awareness and education and to build connections to the natural world.

Goal #VII-8: Preserve unique historical, archeological, and geologic sites within the County Parks System, as determined through the master planning process.

- a. Work with Scott Historical Society and other groups to preserve non-park related sites.
- b. Require as a part of the development master planning process an analysis for significant historical, archeological and geologic sites.

E. Operations and Maintenance

Goal #VII-9: Endeavor to provide efficient maintenance and operation of clean, orderly, controlled, safe and attractive parks and trails.

- a. Consider a variety of options, including contracting with a vendor, for the operation and management of a quality regional/county parks and trails system in a cost-effective manner.
- b. Ensure safety for park and trail users and maintenance staff by incorporating Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the development and landscaping of park and trail facilities.
- c. Develop and utilize design criteria for parks and trails that facilitate the efficient maintenance and operation of clean, orderly, controlled, safe, and attractive parks and trails.
- d. Park and trail maintenance and operation shall safeguard the physical condition of infrastructure and natural systems from deterioration or damage due to weather, vandalism, or other natural or human causes.
- e. Ensure proactive maintenance by performing routine repairs and periodic renovations and upgrades.

F. Sustainability

Goal #VII-10 Be leaders in developing and maintaining a sustainable parks and trails system.

- a. Design and institute maintenance programs that facilitate as much as feasible, the recycling, re-use and reduction of materials generated through the development and operation of the park system.
- b. In conjunction with the first park facility development project, develop the following programs:
 - Preventative maintenance program including guidelines and operating procedures with the goal of maximizing the life-cycle of all building systems.

- Energy management program including guidelines and operating procedures with the goal of integrating responsible energy use in operations and maintenance.
- c. Develop sustainable management practices to protect the public investment and ensure the safety, quality and sustainable operations of parklands, facilities and infrastructure through long-term management.
- d. Utilize “green building” and energy/resource conservation techniques in park development.

G. System Costs and Funding

Goal #VII-11: Provide adequate and equitable funding for the acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of the County parks and trails in a manner that provides the greatest possible benefits to the citizens.

- a. Develop a stable long-term funding program for acquisition, development, natural resource management, and operations and maintenance.
- b. Leverage county capital contributions by supporting increases in and new sources of state capital funding.
- c. Create new and sustain existing partnerships based on cost-sharing and resource sharing, working with partners to identify overlapping needs and goals.
- d. Allocate appropriate funding for natural resources stewardship.
- e. Annually update and incorporate the ten-year parks capital improvement plan into the County capital program.
- f. Consider and research the feasibility of the following options for funding the development and operation of the parks and trails system:
 - Cost off-sets through sharing of resources or facilities;
 - Aggressively pursue regional, state, and federal funding;
 - Increase in the general levy (one time or gradual increase over time);
 - Bond referendum;
 - Increase park dedication fees (funds park and trail development only);
 - Create revenue generating programs (e.g., water park, golf course); and
 - Charge user fees for specific uses or programs.
- g. Evaluate and plan for the financial impact on the operation and maintenance budget before undertaking park development projects.
- h. Provide support to Three Rivers Park District with funds to operate and maintain Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserve and Cleary Lake Regional Park. Monetary contributions for operating and capital dollars plus any in-kind contributions will be determined on an annual basis and will be considered as a

component of budget discussions that will take place between representatives of both entities.

- i. Study the feasibility of working with the cities and townships to partner on the collection and equitable distribution of park dedication fees.
- j. Study the issue of creating revenue generating programs that could help to offset parks, trails and open space acquisition, development, operations and maintenance costs.
- k. When appropriate charge user fees for special facilities, activities, and rental equipment.
- l. Aggressively pursue regional, state, and federal funding for the acquisition, development, operations, and maintenance of regional/County parks, trails, and recreational facilities.
- m. Explore opportunities with Scott County cities to collect park dedication fees for regional facilities within the cities.