



Parks and Trails Legacy Report

-The first year

This report focuses on key outcomes and expenditures to date from the Parks and Trails portion of Minnesota’s Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment appropriated to the Department of Natural Resources (directed by Chapter 172, Art. 3, Sec. 2, 2009 Session Laws).

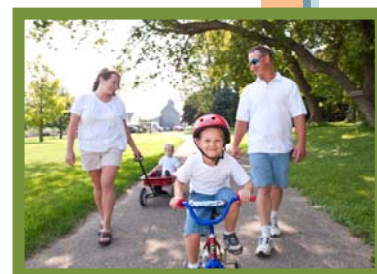
The Legislature and the people of Minnesota have charged DNR Parks and Trails with a number of key strategic objectives in the Outdoor and Cultural Heritage Law. These objectives include: connecting people to the outdoors, accelerating natural resource management and accelerating facility maintenance and rehabilitation. Many projects and initiatives were implemented immediately, while others required strategic prioritization, planning and design. On-the-ground construction, maintenance, natural resource work, and activities for visitors will accelerate dramatically in the spring. The Division has established measurable outcomes and transparent reporting processes for all Parks and Trails Legacy efforts.

Supporting Local Communities -Parks & Trails of Regional Significance

- Provided \$7,875,750 in grants to 38 local units of government for acquisition, development, restoration, and maintenance of park and trail facilities of regional or statewide significance.
- Provided \$957,500 in grants to 22 local units of government for solar energy projects within parks or on trails of regional significance.

FY10 Grants Budget \$3,870,750
FY11 Grants Budget \$4,662,500
FY11 Grants Admin \$99,250

FY 10 Grants Awarded: \$3,870,750
FY 11 Grants Awarded: \$4,663,135
FY 11 Expended Admin: \$98,642



Connecting people to the outdoors

- New outdoor programs started in June of 2010 such as “I Can Camp!” and “Outdoors Extra” resulting in 20 workshops and special programs with 1,500 participants the first month alone.
- Thirty Naturalist Corps positions and 4 seasonal naturalists were hired; providing seasonal assistance to naturalist programs around the state, reaching 137,000 participants.
- Minnesota State Parks and Trails’ advertising messages were seen/heard nearly 9 million times in 2010.
- Interpretive planning and signage has begun for the Harmony/Preston and Root River state trails; including orientation, way-finding and natural and cultural interpretation.
- Website improvements including new features such as a Kids Web page and virtual tours have been added that motivate families and children to get outdoors.
- Re-established cross-country ski trails in Pillsbury, George Washington, Dorer Memorial, and St. Croix state forests and extended cross-country ski seasons in state parks across the state.
- Annual major visitor center exhibit upgrades have begun. The division has completed an upgrade at Sibley State Park focusing on educational delivery methods and new technologies.
- All parks, including those without naturalists, now have activities to help connect people to the outdoors including new **free** recreational equipment and educational kits like fishing poles, binoculars, GPS units for geocaching, and “Kids Exploration Kits.”
- Six touch-screen kiosks provide state park and trail trip-planning assistance in non-traditional settings resulting in hundreds of new requests for publications and information. Two kiosks are installed at the IDS Center and the Minnesota Zoo, and one will be installed at the Minneapolis airport near baggage claim. The DNR is negotiating for space at two other metro area retail locations. The sixth kiosk was installed in the DNR building at the State Fair and will travel to special events throughout the year.

FY10 Budget: \$2,324,000

Funds Encumbered as of 10/13/2010: \$422,130
Funds Expended as of 10/13/2010: \$1,544,424



Accelerating natural resource management

- Restored native plant communities on 1,383 acres of state park land, 71% increase over average.
- Conducted invasive species detection, prevention & response on 9,431 acres of state park lands and have re-established native vegetation, a 52% increase above the yearly average.
- Conducted prescribed burns on 7,241 acres of state park land, a 36% increase over average.
- Restored & managed 175 acres of native prairies and woodlands along state trails.

FY10 Budget: \$1,920,000

Funds Encumbered as of 10/13/2010: \$616,626
Funds Expended as of 10/13/2010: \$1,080,925



Accelerating facility maintenance and rehabilitation

- Photovoltaic or passive solar systems have been installed at Lake Shetek, Big Bog, Glendalough, Great River Bluffs, and St. Croix state parks and the Iron Range Off Highway Vehicle State Recreation Area.
- State Trail Renewal Projects are nearly complete on 13 miles of: the Heartland State Trail, the Paul Bunyan State Trail, and the Munger State Trail within the City of Duluth.
- State park and recreation area facility renewal projects are completed at Buffalo River, Cuyuna, and Soudan Mine state parks. Under construction are major campground renewal projects at Lake Shetek, and a remodeling project for the historic River Inn at Jay Cooke.
- Accessible trail and walkway projects have been completed at Temperance River and Cuyuna State Parks. Nearly 300 accessible picnic tables and 300 fire rings are being installed.
- Bridge rehabilitation on two Heartland State Trail and one Glacial Lakes State Trail bridges is nearly complete. One bridge replacement on the Heartland State Trail in Akeley is nearly complete and a second has begun on the Glacial lakes State Trail in Richmond.

FY10 Budget: \$8,247,000

Funds Encumbered as of 10/13/2010: \$3,645,602

Funds Expended as of 10/13/2010: \$2,923,286



Planning for a Parks and Trails Legacy

- **Parks and Trails 10-Year Strategic Plan** (*FY10/11 appropriation)
 - This plan focuses on our state trail, state park and state water recreation responsibilities of the DNR Division of Parks and Trails between 2011 and 2021.
 - Three strategic directions have been developed, illustrating the division's priorities over the next ten years. A public review will take place this fall, with a completed plan in December.
 - Planning efforts have been coordinated with the "10/25 Legacy Plan" and the University of Minnesota's Inventory and Framework.
- **Parks and Trails 10/25-Year, Long-Term Plan** (*FY10/11 appropriation)
 - A collaborative planning process has produced 23 regional and targeted workshops obtaining input from over 1000 citizens; including minorities and youth. These workshops and online discussion resources were carried out through a contract with The Citizens League (report summary is available). This joint effort produced a definition for parks and trails of regional significance.
 - A project website is available at www.patl.intergov.mn.gov
- **Parks and Trails Budget Analysis** (*Budgeted with Parks and Trails existing funding)

The Department submitted a **Parks and Trails Budget Analysis**, examining the adequacy of funding sources and appropriations that the DNR receives to acquire, develop, operate and maintain Minnesota's state park and trails system (*ML 2009, Chap. 172, Art. 3, Sec. 6, Subd. 3*).



FY10 Budget*: \$400,000

Funds Encumbered as of 10/13/2010: \$30,015

Funds Expended as of 10/13/2010: \$358,830



Conservation Corps of Minnesota

The State of Minnesota and the Conservation Corps of Minnesota completed a Master Joint Powers Agreement that runs from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011. The Conservation Corps is providing services for: natural resource management, restoration, and protection; facility development, maintenance and rehabilitation, outreach, and other activities that assist our ability to reach Legacy Fund goals. Through this enhanced partnership the Conservation Corps has:

- Completed 36,828 crew hours towards Parks and Trails Legacy projects.
- More than doubled in size, increasing capacity to reach increased demand for services, starting over 150 new corpsmembers in February 2010.
- Exceeded the legislative requirement of spending **at least \$600,000** for services in excess of \$121,000.

Totals: FY10 Budget
\$16,861,000

FY10 Expended/Encumbered
Funds Encumbered: \$4,714,373
Funds Expended/Grants Awarded: \$9,877,492
Total: \$14,591,865