

Business Item 2021-68

# **Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment**

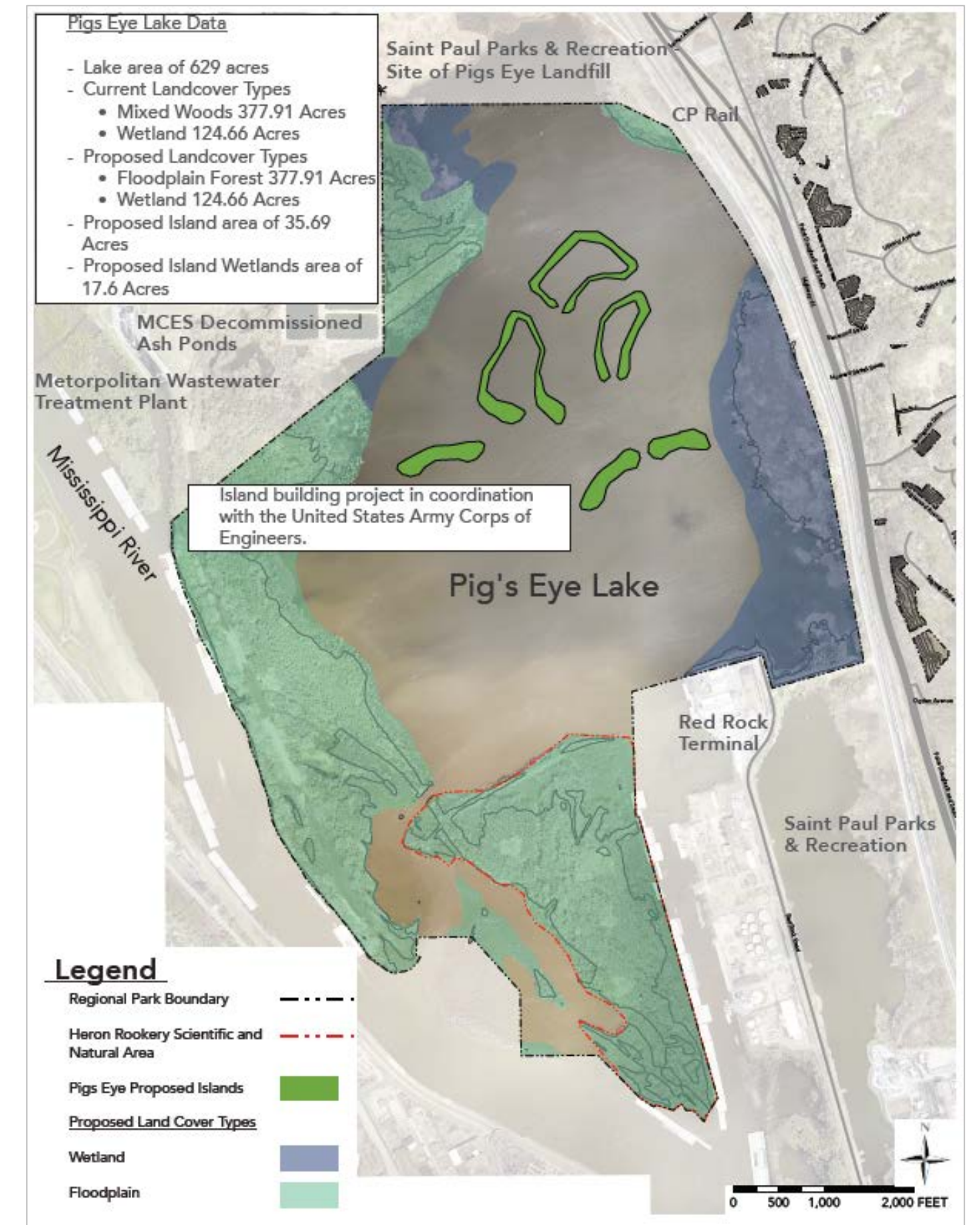
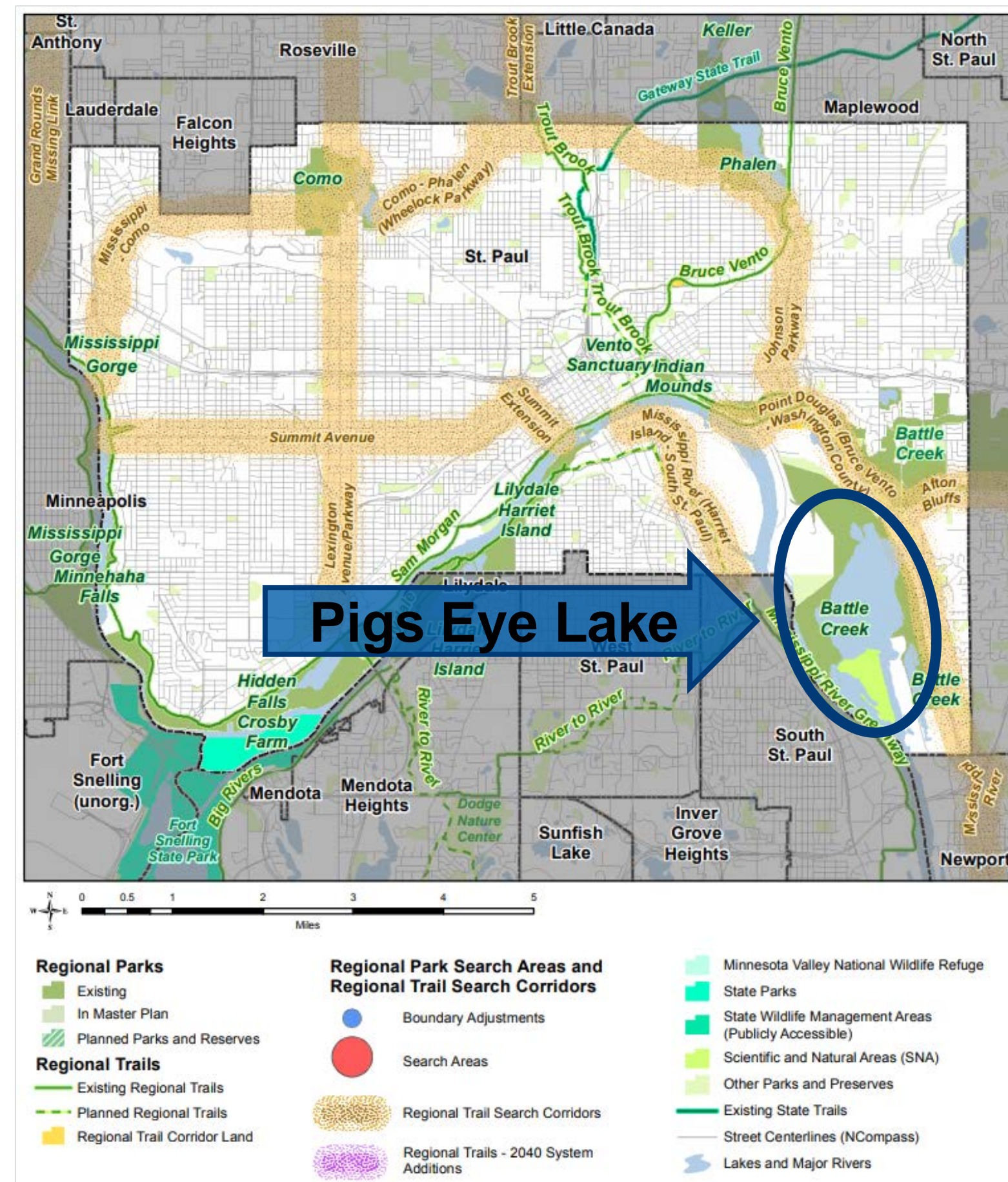
Ramsey County

April 1, 2021

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



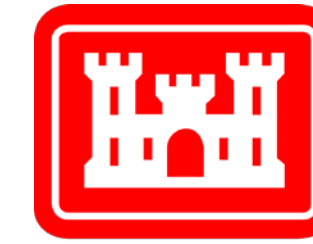
# Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye Lake



# Partner Engagement

## Examples of who was engaged

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- National Park Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council
- Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- University of Minnesota
- Friends of the Mississippi River
- Metropolitan Council
- Friends of Pool 2
- Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District
- Ramsey County
- Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey Co.
- City of Saint Paul



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®



RAMSEY-WASHINGTON  
METRO WATERSHED DISTRICT



RAMSEY  
COUNTY

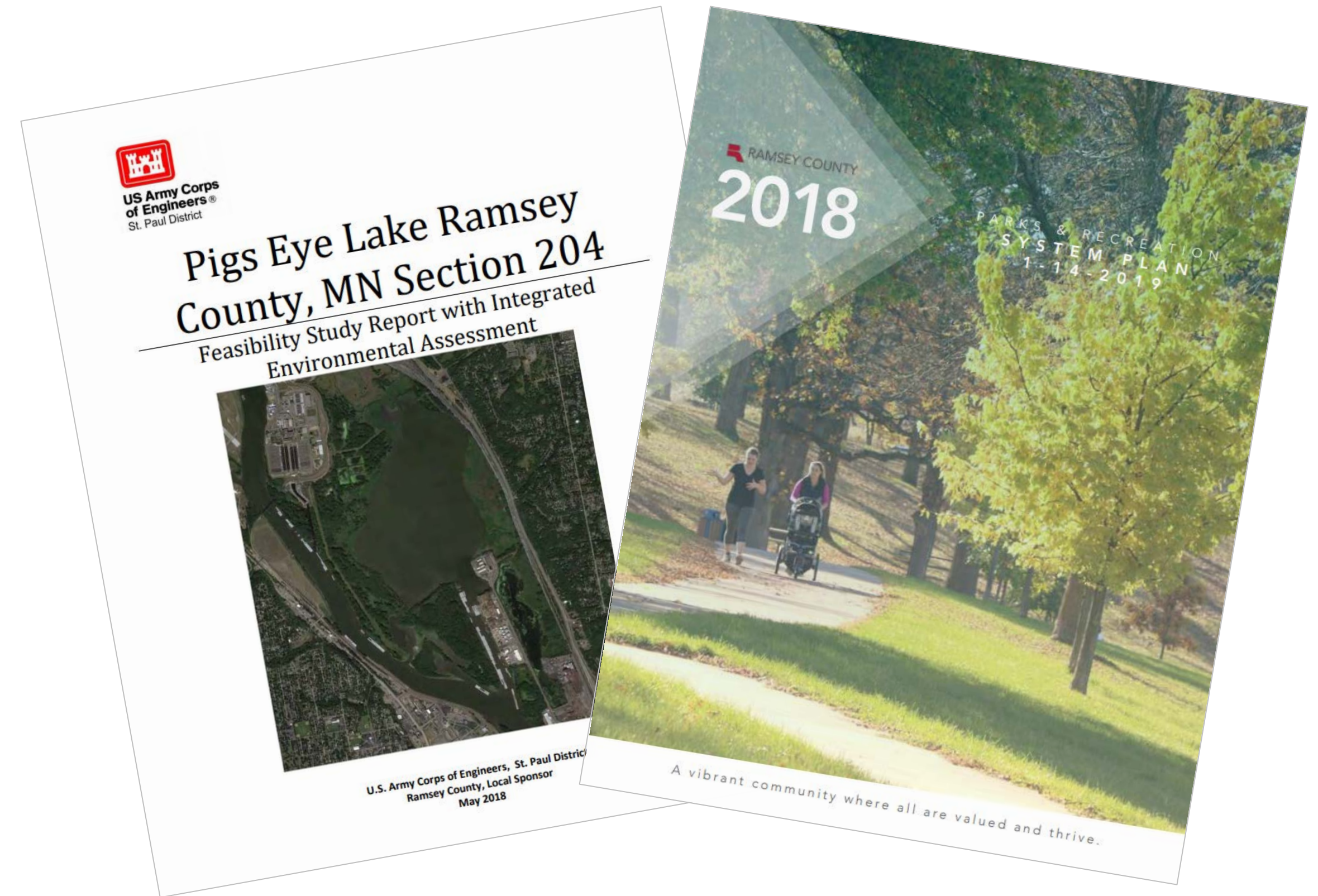


METROPOLITAN  
COUNCIL

# Public Engagement and Participation

## Major phases

- Corps Feasibility Study (2015-2018)
  - 30-day public review per NEPA, MEPA requirements
- Ramsey County Parks and Recreation System Plan (2018)
  - Pop-up meetings
  - Online survey
- Overall Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan (2019-2021)
  - Pop-up meetings
  - Community forums
  - Design workshop
  - Online survey
  - 30-day public review



# Public Engagement and Participation continued

## Major phases continued

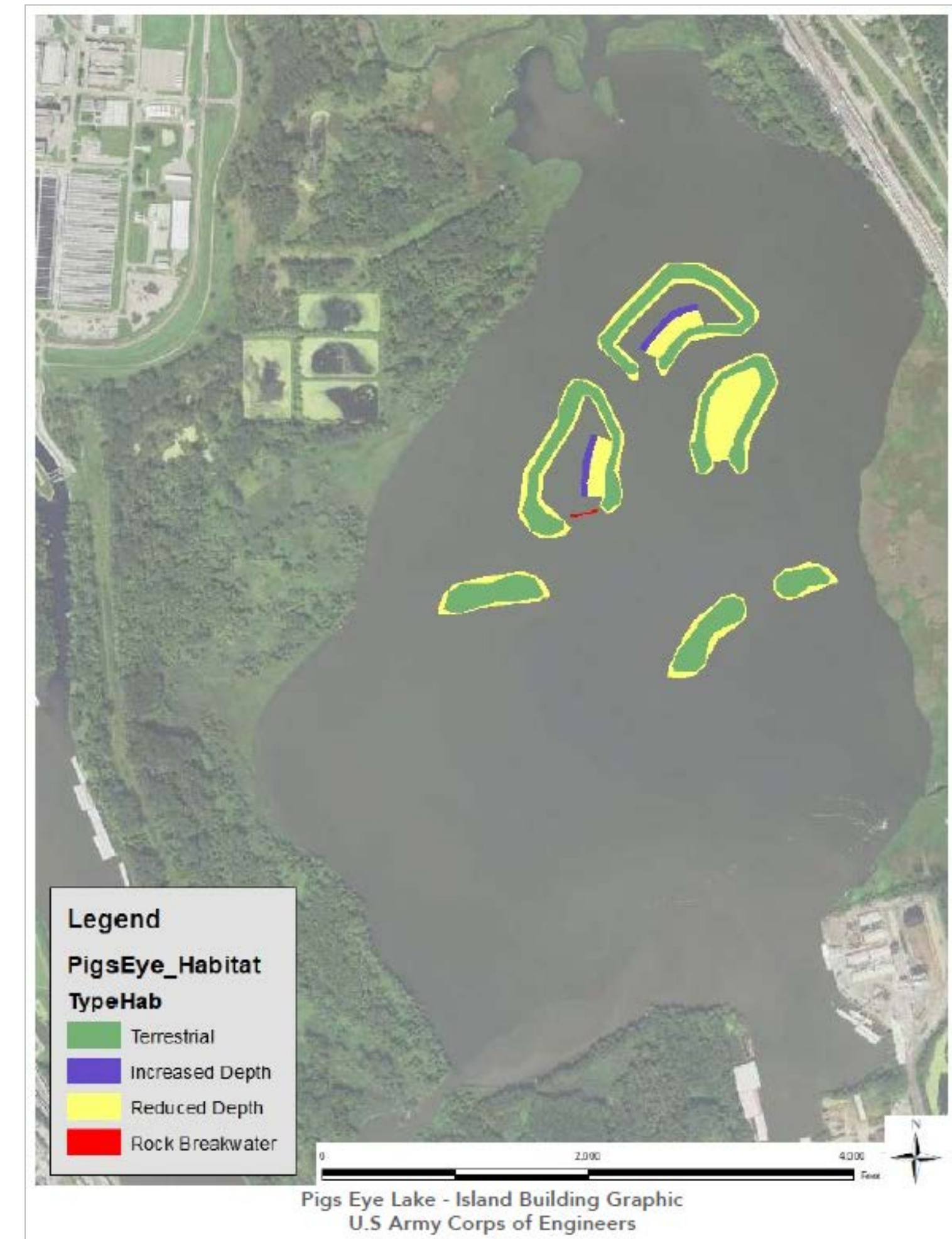
- Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment (2020)
  - 45-day public review
  - Virtual public meeting
- Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment (*future*)
  - Public access
  - Possible recreational or infrastructure improvements
  - Local residents and community members will be engaged

## Outcomes of MPA engagement

- Mixed support
  - Pollution concerns should be addressed first
  - Public participation opportunities during Feasibility Study were not well communicated
  - Opportunity to study different plant species in context of changing climate
  - Support project

# Development Concept

- Plan amendment addresses natural resource improvements, not park access or possible recreational improvements.
- Objectives
  1. Improve aquatic habitat
  2. Improve the quantity and quality of habitat for migratory bird species
  3. Maintain or enhance the quantity of shoreline habitat
- Design includes six islands
- Sand and topsoil will consist primarily of material dredged from the southern portion of Pool 2.
- Anticipated completion in fall 2024



# Stewardship Plan, Public Protection

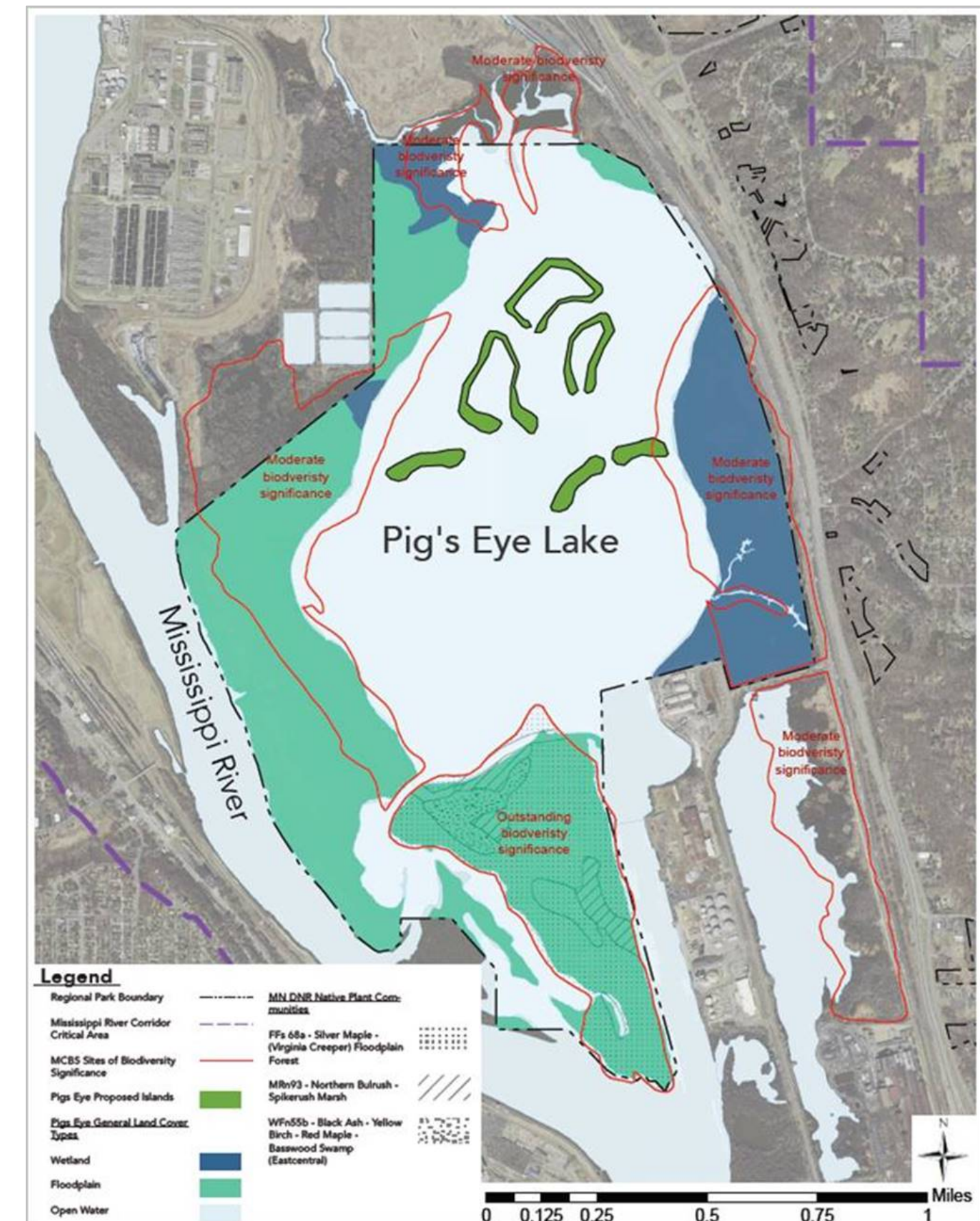
- Natural resources will be restored and managed according to 2018 System Plan.
- Ramsey County acknowledges the need to address public health protection due to surrounding land uses, existing land conditions, and contamination.
- Additional planning and agency coordination required to develop a plan for long-term environmental cleanup.

## Next steps

- Secure funding for planning activities
- Initiate an agency-wide planning team
- Initiate an agency and public engagement process
- Initiate additional site assessments
- Develop agency wide monitoring and stewardship plan
- Secure funding for remediation

# Natural Resources

- Land cover consists of mixed woods to the west and wetlands to the east and northwest of the lake.
- Unit contains one of the largest heron rookeries in the state and is designated a Scientific and Natural Area.
- Additional natural resource surveys will include plant, wildlife, and shoreline surveys and will focus on determining restoration needs.
- Natural resource projects will be implemented in accordance with Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regulations.





# Estimated Project Costs

- Total estimated cost for the island building project is \$15.6 million.
- To offset the approximately \$4.3 million in local share costs, Ramsey County applied for and was awarded a Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council grant.
- Additional habitat restoration efforts have an estimated cost of \$380,000 and ongoing maintenance cost of \$90,000 every three years.
- The Corps is responsible for monitoring and determining ecological success for the ecosystem restoration projects it constructs for up to 10 years following project completion, including financial responsibility.
- No acquisition is proposed.
- Approval of master plan does not commit the Council to any funding at this time.

# Rationale for Proposed Action

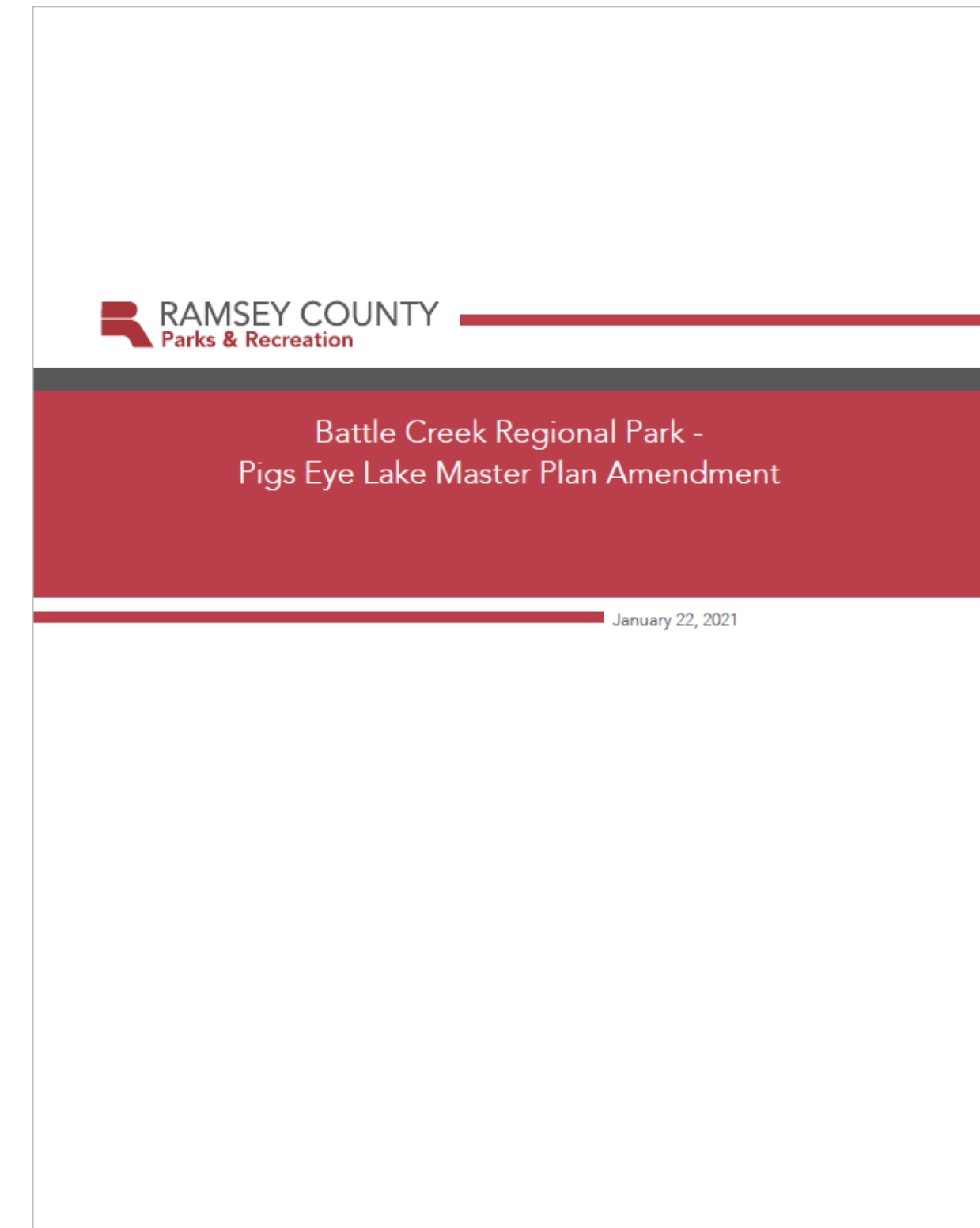
- The Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment is consistent with the requirements of the:
  - *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan*
    - Planning Strategy 1
  - Other Council policies



# Proposed Action

## That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve Ramsey County's Battle Creek Regional Park – Pigs Eye Lake Master Plan Amendment.
2. Require Ramsey County to continue to coordinate with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Metropolitan Council during the development and implementation of the island monitoring plan.
3. As represented by Ramsey County, acknowledge the Corps' responsibility for monitoring and determining ecological success for the restoration projects it constructs for up to 10 years following project completion, including financial responsibility.
4. Require Ramsey County, prior to initiating any development of the regional park, to send preliminary plans to the Environmental Services Assistant Manager at the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Division.



# Thank you

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