CAMPING

connect... Taking in the beauty of Lake Superior on the Lakewalk Trail, City of Duluth.

develop... Bikers enjoy the Dakota Rail Regional Trail, Carver County.

take care... Visitors interact and learn at the Eastman Nature Center – Three Rivers Park District.

acquire... Land acquired for the Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve, Scott County.

acquire... The Central Lakes State Trail bisects this 140-acre Legacy project – Lake Brophy Park, Douglas County.

connect... Dogsledding in Robert Ney Park, Wright County.

4.5% average annual increase in visits to Metro Regional Parks and Trails Systems over 5 years.

more than 7.3 million additional visits!

37% increase in State Park interpretive program participation since 2008

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The Parks and Trails Fund appropriated a total of $92,520,000 to the DNR’s Parks and Trails Division on a biennial basis (FY2010-11, 2012-13 and 2014-15) to implement the strategic directions of the Parks and Trails Legacy Plan.

**Allocation of Legacy funds to implement 25 Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan:**

- **Connect People to the Outdoors:** 17%  People who engage with nature are more likely to have an appreciation of the natural world and to want to support and maintain it for future generations. The DNR is therefore working to attract young families with Legacy-funded skill-building programs such as “I Can Camp” and with expanded programming made possible through the Minnesota Naturalist Corps. Interactive touch-screen displays and new social and digital media are also helping the DNR increase awareness about Minnesota state parks and trails among the tech-savvy next generation. Since 2008, annual permit sales have increased 18 percent, daily permit sales have increased 16 percent, overnight stays have increased 9 percent and program participation has increased 37 percent, indicating that Legacy dollars are having real impact.

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – Acquisition:** 9% The DNR is acquiring high-priority state parks in historic and new segments of state trails, Illinois Valley Trail in the statewide system.

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – New Development:** 20%. Just over half of Minnesotans visit parks near their homes each year, and just over two-thirds use paved trails. Yet those who use these parks and trails often say they have too few options available to them near their homes. Because of Legacy funds, Minnesotans are getting brand new places to recreate, such as the Brownie’s Creek segment of the Gateway State Trail, La Salle Lake State Recreation Area, and Lake Vermilion State Park. Legacy funds are also being used to develop camper cabins and improve campgrounds to meet the needs of the next generation.

- **Take Care of What We Have:** 53%. Regular investment is needed to ensure safe, high-quality experiences for current and future visitors. Over the years, a lack of funding, aging infrastructure, and intensive use have led to a backlog of maintenance and renewal needs. Legacy funding the DNR is making old trails and buildings “like new” again, installing solar panels and other energy-saving features, and making public gathering places as inviting as they should be. A priority of the Legacy Amendment is to accelerate natural resource management work at state trails. Since the initiation of Legacy funding, the pace of native plant restoration has increased 59 percent, prescribed burning has increased 34 percent, and control of invasive plants has increased by more than 90 percent.

- **Coordinate With Partners:** 1%. The DNR takes a leadership role to coordinate among partners, currently convening the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee. This committee is made up of representatives from across the state who have a stake in each component of our state and regional park and trail system. Guided by the 25-Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan, the work accomplished by this group will help ensure that the goals the public developed for the use of Legacy funds are achieved.

**Allocation of Legacy funds to implement 25 Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan:**

- **Connect People to the Outdoors:** 3%. Through environmental education programs, increased use of volunteer resources, and enhanced access and information about parks and the natural environment, people are connected to regional parks and trails. For example, Anoka County, Ramsey County, and the City of Saint Paul hired environmental education coordinators and volunteer coordinators. From 2010 to 2012, a total of 3,114 volunteers contributed 34,514 hours of nature education programming and natural resource management activities for those agencies.

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – Acquisition:** 13%. To date, 676 acres encompassing 27 properties for 15 parks or trails has been acquired.

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – New Development:** 49%. New recreational facilities have been developed — primarily for trail construction projects that extend trail mileage, create grade-separate crossings of busy highways, or provide trailhead access. Examples include extending the Dakota Rail Regional Trail 12 miles through Carver County, and constructing a winter recreation area visitor center and lighted hiking/cross-country ski trails at Lake Elmo Park Reserve in Washington County.

- **Take Care of What We Have:** 33%. Natural resource restoration and replacement of park and trail infrastructure have been completed by Conservation Corps of Minnesota crews at regional parks and trails in Anoka County, Ramsey County, and Dakota County; for projects including renovation of the historic Lily Pond at Como Regional Park in St. Paul; reconstruction of paved trails and parking lots at Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve in Bloomington; renovation and improvements to Wirth Lake Beach at Theodore Wirth Regional Park (Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board); and renovation/expansion of the Eastman Nature Center at Elm Creek Park Reserve (Three Rivers Park District).

- **Coordinate With Partners:** 10%. Funds have been awarded for preparing updated or new master plans for 15 parks or trails has been acquired.

**State Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Allocations**

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<thead>
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**Minnesota State Parks & Trails**

The Minnesota state parks and trails system is comprised of 67 state parks, 9 state recreation areas, and 8 state waystations. The state trail system comprises 25 state trails with 620 paved and hardened miles and 818 natural surface trails mile.

**State Parks and Trails Legacy Fund Allocations**

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**Metro Regional Parks & Trails**

The Metropolitan Regional Parks System is comprised of 39 regional parks, 12 park reserves, 8 special recreation features (e.g., Como Zoo, Como Conservatory, Gale Woods Farm), and 326 miles of linking regional trails that encompass a total of 54,580 acres. Ten regional park implementing agencies own and manage a portion of the park system within their jurisdiction.

**Parks and Trails Legacy Fund appropriations to the Metropolitan Regional Parks System are disbursed by the Metropolitan Council under a formula in Minnesota Statute 85.53, Subd. 3. The chart below illustrates how a total of $93,459,000 has been allocated since 2010.**

**Allocation of Legacy funds to implement 25 Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan:**

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – Acquisition:** 25%. Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park in Wright County will include 4 undeveloped lakes with 6 miles of shoreline and 1.5 miles of steam when complete. Other projects include 35 acres for River Bluffs Regional Park in St Cloud, 53 acres for Sucker Creek Preserve in Detroit Lakes, and 84 acres for Kensington Rune Stone Park in Douglas County. Freeborn County will acquire 13 miles of abandoned railway connecting to the Blazing Star State Trail.

- **Acquire Land and Create Opportunities – New Development:** 61%. Quarry Park and Nature Preserve in Stearns County was able to add a second swimming area to its hugely popular facility located in Waseca Park. Another grant allowed Marshall County to develop shelters and shower facilities along with Americans with Disabilities Act compliant access improvements at County Park near Stephen, MN.

- **Take Care of What We Have:** 13%. Local governments still bear the lion’s share of maintenance costs throughout the Greater Minnesota network of parks and trails however, grants have advanced rehabilitation of several trails including the Soo Line Trail in Pine County and the Mesabi-Itasca Trail. Several parks have also benefited including Alexander Ramsey Park in Redwood Falls and Memorial Park in Red Wing.

- **Coordinate with Partners:** 13%. The establishment of the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission “created to undertake system plan and provide recommendations to the legislature for grants funded by the parks and trails fund to counties and cities outside of the seven-county metropolitan area” (Minnesota Statute 85.536) is ground-breaking legislation enabling statewide regional parks and trails planning for the first time in the history of our state.