

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Designation Application

General Section

Designation Application #: 14-004D Date Submitted: 07/31/2015

Park or Trail Name: Kensington Park

District #: 3 Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 45.8140 Longitude: -95.6667

Location Description:

15 miles west of Alexandria on Trunk Highway 27

Lead Applicant Organization: Douglas County

Lead Contact First Name: Brad Last Name: Bonk

Mailing Address: 526 Willow Drive

City: Alexandria State: MN Zip: 56308

Phone: 320-762-2966 Email: bbonk@co.douglas.mn.us

Joint Applicant #1 Organization:

Joint Applicant #2 Organization:

Joint Applicant #3 Organization:

Joint Applicant #4 Organization:

Describe other project supporters:

Description Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Total proposed acreage:

Overview/Description of Park or Trail:

Douglas County has owned and operated Kensington Rune Stone Park since 1972. The 388-acre park was purchased and developed as an outdoor recreation area with significant participation from the Land & Water Conservation Fund and the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund. The parkland is the former homestead farm of Olof Ohman and the discovery site of the remarkable Kensington Rune Stone. From the beginning, there has been a clientele who travel to the park because of an interest in the story of the Stone. The guest registration books contain entries from 21 countries and 50 states. The Park also serves as a outdoor recreational hub to Douglas County and West Central MN.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
 - Land Acquisition
 - Status:
 - Percentage of Land Acquired:
 - Development Status
 - No Development
 - Some Development, but more Proposed
 - New Facilities Proposed
 - Existing Facilities to be Upgraded
 - Fully Development

Facility Listing Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park	
Existing Facility List	Proposed Facility List
Picknicking and picnic shelters, Walking Trails (paved), Hiking Trails (natural), Biking Trails (paved), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Horseback Riding Trails (natural), Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Play areas, Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas	Mountain Biking Trails (natural), Canoeing Facilities, Visitor Center, Nature Center/Interpretation Trails

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: Existing Master Plan is Available (but needs to be updated to meet strategic plan)

Describe Other Supportive Information:

Master plan is attached. An updated plan is currently taking place and will be finished in November.

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: 15 miles of cross country ski trails, connections to the 400 mile D.A.T.A snowmobile trail system, and tobogganing form the basis for winter outdoor recreation. Multiple picnic areas, game fields, interpretive displays and the wooded hills

surrounding two lakes provide natural attraction for 15 to 20 thousand summer visitors. (2012 survey) Activities observed include geo-caching, exploring the historic discovery site, hunting, fishing, trapping on the adjacent lands, hiking, natural food source scouting and gathering, softball volleyball, disc throwing and other outdoor games. The visitor center is used as a central place for family and company picnics, community meetings, 4-H, boy and girl scout groups, school based activities and other functions.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: The 380 acre park contains over two hundred acres of oak, maple, basswood forest, two lakes, and large rolling hills with many glorious views of Minnesota’s transition zone landscape. The park adjoins 140 acres owned by the USFW Service managed as a Waterfowl Production Area on the south border. The north border adjoins the 165 acre Sabolik wetland, a wetland mitigation area managed by Douglas County

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Alexandria is the regional center for Douglas County’s 30,000 residents. The Alexandria lakes region is an historic tourist destination due to the presence of dozens of high quality lakes, resorts, parks, hotels, and the retail center. The 10 lake chain of lakes surrounding Alexandria is the primary attraction. Douglas County experiences an over 10% rate of population growth. (State Demographers’s projection, current census)

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: The southwest quarter of Douglas County is a farming region with small towns. The presence of this large well-known park is a driver for economic activity in this area due to the influx of visitors to the park. The park registration booklet contains entries from all 50 state and 21 nations. This source of economic activity is vital to the small towns in the immediate area including, Kensington, Hoffman, Holmes City and Farwell. The cultural identity of the Scandinavian immigrant population of the region is closely tied to the folklore surrounding the famous Kensington Rune Stone and its many stories. While there is no comparable facility within many miles, the closest state park, Lake Carlos State Park, is located approximately 30 miles north east of Kensington Rune Stone Park.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

Type	Description
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab
