

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Designation Application

General Section

Designation Application #: 14-009D Date Submitted: 07/30/2015

Park or Trail Name: Warner Lake Park

District #: 4 Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 45.4195 Longitude: -94.0800

Location Description:

Address: Warner Lake County Park 1485 County Road 143 Clearwater, MN 55320 Warner Lake County Park is located approximately 15 minutes from downtown St. Cloud. It is located near Clearwater, MN in Stearns County.

Lead Applicant Organization: Stearns County

Lead Contact First Name: Ben Last Name: Anderson

Mailing Address: 1802 County Road 137

City: Waite Park State: MN Zip: 56387

Phone: 320-654-4725 Email: benjamin.anderson@co.stearns.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:

Warner Lake County Park is a 241 acre site surrounding the 30 surface acres of Warner Lake. The initial establishment of this site occurred in 1973 when the Campfire Girls Inc. donated the 33 acres known as Camp Suima to Stearns County for public recreation purposes. Stearns County's Comprehensive Plan has some land acquisition occurring to the southeast of the park to buffer the existing swimming beach and woodland from potential development. Warner Lake County Park is regionally significant because it is one of only five public swimming beaches in Stearns County and because the land

surrounding the lake is largely undeveloped because it is owned by Stearns County. There is no private property along the shoreline. Warner Lake is located close the greater St. Cloud area, 10 minutes from downtown St. Cloud, and thus 100,000 plus people are within 20 minutes of the park. Warner Lake is also located about one hour northwest of the Twin Cities and is only five minutes from Interstate 94. Besides swimming, Warner Lake offers hiking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and biking opportunities. Future development of the Beaver Island Trail will connect Warner Lake County Park to both the city of St. Cloud and the City of Clearwater via biking, hiking and snowmobile trail. The estimated cost of operations, maintenance and programming for Warner Lake County Park is \$126,000.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

- New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)
- Existing Park or Trail
 - Land Acquisition
 - Status: Evaluate as it becomes available
 - Percentage of Land Acquired: 99
 - 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
<p>Group campsites, Non-profit youth groups and people traveling via bicycles. , Picknicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Mountain Biking Trails (natural), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Swimming, Lake Access for power boats, Fishing Piers, Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Play areas, Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas, Boats can only be powered by an electric motor.</p>	

Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: No Master Plan is Available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

A master plan may be completed at a later date.

Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: Warner Lake County Park provides a high-quality recreational experience because it offers a swimming beach, a fishing pier, hiking trails, cross country ski trails, group camping for youth non-profit organizations, and it is appealing for many other outdoor recreational activities. The current park facilities and amenities serve to attract both local and regional visitors. Warner Lake County Park offers both summer and winter shelters that are used for family reunions, weddings, professional meetings, etcetera. During the summer months Stearns County Parks employs seasonal workers to maintain the grounds. The continuous grounds maintenance provides a quality experience which encourages visitors to return time and time again. During the winter months, cross country ski trails are meticulously maintained to also provide a quality experience.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: Warner Lake County Park completely surrounds the 30 acre lake and therefore no further development, other than the park amenities, will occur along the shoreline. Besides the lake, Warner Lake County Park offers a variety of unique and critical habitats for wildlife. It provides old growth hardwood forests and also roughly 25 acres of restored prairie habitat. There is less than 1% of remaining prairie habitat in Minnesota. This site also contains areas that were once oak savannas and thus habitat restoration is planned. For historical purposes the initial establishment of Warner Lake County Park occurred in 1973 when the Campfire Girls Inc. donated the 33 acres known as Camp Suima to Stearns County for public recreation purposes.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Warner Lake County Park is located within 20 minutes of the greater St. Cloud area. The St. Cloud area has seen tremendous growth over the past few years. Thus, as St. Cloud and surrounding cities expand, outdoor recreational opportunities are going to become more popular and serve more people. Warner Lake located just south of St. Cloud and is within 5 minutes of both The City of Clearwater and the City of St. Augusta. The location of this site is also just minutes away from Interstate 94 and thus is an easy stop for travelers. Also, Warner Lake County Park is located about 1 hour and 15 minutes northwest of the Twin Cities making this a possibility for a day trip. Finally, this site is located just 10 minutes from St. Cloud State University making it a popular spot for college students in the spring and fall. Future plans call for the extension of the Beaver Island Trail from southeastern St. Cloud to the City of Clearwater. When this trail extension occurs it is planned to have a branch that extends roughly one mile so the bikers and hikers could have access to Warner Lake County Park via the Beaver Island Trail. The Cities of Clearwater and St. Cloud have already established paved trail connections for the Beaver

Island Trail.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: Warner Lake County Park has one of five public swimming beaches in Stearns County. Warner Lake Park serves the residents of the overall greater St. Cloud areas needs for outdoor recreation by providing a public swimming beach, rentable shelters for picnics, weddings, etc., and also areas for running, hiking, biking and cross country skiing. There are currently no state parks located in Stearns County.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

Type	Description
Location Map	Location map added from general tab
Location Map	Location map added from general tab