

# Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

## Designation Application

### General Section

Designation Application #: 14-011D      Date Submitted: 08/20/2015

Park or Trail Name: Robert Ney Park

District #: 4      Map Coordinates (Latitude and Longitude): Latitude: 45.2558 Longitude: -94.0004

#### Location Description:

Robert Ney Memorial Park is centrally located in Wright County, 1.5 miles north of the city of Maple Lake. 5212 73rd St. NW, Maple Lake, MN 55358

Lead Applicant Organization: Wright County

Lead Contact First Name: Marc      Last Name: Mattice

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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:

Robert Ney Memorial Park was first established in August of 1970. Albert Ney arranged to have land in Maple Lake Township deeded to Wright County upon his death, along with a trust fund. This land was and is used as a natural resource based park, and the trust fund was used to purchase lands adjoining the original donated land. As part of Albert Ney's wishes, a small chapel was erected in 1973 in honor of his son Robert Ney, who died in World War II. Between 1973 and 1991, the park grew to 360 acres, in 1996, an Environmental Education Center was constructed, and today this facility hosts a variety of programs throughout the year for families, adults, and children. Between 2001 and 2011

Wright County showed their commitment to this park and the need for Natural Resource based recreational opportunities, expanding the park from 360 acres to 866 acres. Also during this time the Wright County Parks Department completed native plant community and wetland restorations on approximately 237 acres. Expansion of the trail system during this time allowed more diverse uses within the park, as well as increased programming. Recreational opportunities for trail users at this park now included hiking, dog sledding, ski joring, cross country skiing ski (traditional and skate), equine, and a self guided interpretive trail. Robert Ney Memorial Regional Park Reserve is 866 acres in size and is the third largest park in Wright County, the largest being Lake Maria State Park, the second being Stanley Eddy Regional Park. Ney Park also adjoins a 245-acre State Wildlife Management Area on its south border, thus creating a 1091-acre open space area. The nearest municipality is the City of Maple Lake. During the 2002 TEA 21 application process, the City of Maple Lake was awarded funds to construct a trail from the city to Robert Ney Memorial Regional Park; this trail is a well-used connection for city residents to access the regional park.

What is the Acquisition and Development Status?

New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)

Existing Park or Trail

Land Acquisition

Status: Only certain parcels of importance will be added if they become available.

Percentage of Land Acquired: 99.9

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
Picnicking and picnic shelters, Hiking Trails (natural), Cross-country Skiing Trails, Horseback Riding Trails (natural), Lake Access for power boats, Visitor Center, Nature Center/Interpretation Trails, Restrooms/sanitation building, Roads and Parking Areas, Dog Sledding Trails, Nature/Wildlife Observation	

## Master Plan Status Section

Master Plan Status: No Master Plan is Available

Describe Other Supportive Information:

Wright County will work towards Master Planning of This Park. At Which Time Funding IS Necessary.

## Classification Details Section

Classification: Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Criteria #1 Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience: People visit the park for numerous reasons. Some come to hike, ride horses, dog sledding (5 miles in length and the only trails for this use in Wright County), and cross country ski the trails, and others enjoy wildlife viewing, while some come for a relaxing picnic or to find solitude in the midst of a hectic life. The park offers over 10 miles of hiking, equine, and cross country ski trails, a self-guided interpretive trail, and an aquatic observation station. An assortment of environmental educational programs offered to the general public include: Outdoor Survival, Birds of Prey, Wood Working for Wildlife, Animal Identification, Candlelight Cross Country Ski, and Dog Sledding, to name a few. This facility also offers school group programs as well as an annual fifth grade environmental field day, which enrolls approximately 1,500 children. These are unique opportunities for residents and visitors of the area, and Robert Ney Park boasts the only Environmental Education Center within the Wright County Parks Department System.

Criteria #2 Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape: Robert Ney Memorial Park Reserve is located one and one-half miles (1.5) north of the City of Maple Lake in central Wright County. Robert Ney also borders a 245-acre State Wildlife Management Area on its south boundary, thus creating a 1091-acre open space area and the second largest preserved area in Wright County when combining governmental jurisdictions. The park also includes near 1 mile of shoreline on Lake Mary, as well as some significant wetlands, forest and prairie communities. Wright County Parks Department has completed native plant community and wetland restorations on approximately 237 acres, these include Native Prairie, Direct Hardwood Seeding, and restoring significant wetlands that provide for quality wildlife viewing and water quality enhancements for Lake Mary.

Criteria #3 Well-located and Connected to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination: Robert Ney Regional Park draws visitors from around Wright County as well as from Meeker, Sherburne, and McLeod Counties. Program sign-up sheets include participants from the following cities: St. Michael, Albertville, Otsego, Monticello, Big Lake, Becker, Clearwater, Annandale, South Haven, Buffalo, Cokato, Delano, Rockford, Waverly, Howard Lake, Maple Lake, Hutchinson, and Zimmerman. The park also offers a Minnesota Master Naturalist program, which draws participants from the region including the St. Cloud Metro area.

Criteria #4 Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region: Robert Ney Park Reserve offers several opportunities that are currently not available nearby. These include Environmental Education programming, skate ski trails, equine trails, and dog sledding/ski joring trails.

Attachment List Section (only lists up to 10 documents)

<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Location Map	Location map added from general tab
Location Map	Location map added from general tab
Resolution	Joint Applicant #1 Organization added from general tab
Other	Signed Resolution for Funding Application from Wright County Board of Commissioners
Other	Information for Quarry Park from Stearns County including Programming Plan.