



General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Last Update

21 Sep 2017 03:06:10

Park or Trail Name

Belle Prairie County Park

District

4

Location Description

Belle Prairie County Park is located just outside the north city limits of Little Falls along County State Aid Highway 76 on the east bank of the mighty Mississippi River.

Park/Trail Address

19169 Haven Road

City

Little Falls

Park/Trail State

Minnesota

Zip

56345

Latitude

46.03707555

Longitude

-94.34367657

Map of Park/Trail

Description: 2017 Belle Prairie Park

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Description: Existing Park Facilities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Existing Park Facilities_47256c.pdf

Facility Website

<http://www.co.morrison.mn.us/>

Organization

Morrison County

Lead Contact Person

Steven C. Backowski, P.E.

Title

County Engineer

Mailing Address

213 SE 1st Ave

City

Little Falls

State

Minnesota

Zip

56345

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Joint Applicants**Joint Applicant #1****Joint Applicant #2****Joint Applicant #3****Joint Applicant #4****Other project supporters**

Description

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Regional Significance Statement

Located centrally in the county and just five miles north of Little Falls - the county seat - the park is a proven, outstanding venue to draw regional clientele.

Access to the park is multi-modal. The Mississippi River through this area is designated as wild and is part of the Department of Natural Resources State Water Trail. The park is promoted by the DNR for water trail users and is easily accessed by a landing along the river. In addition, Belle Prairie Park is also adjacent to the Mississippi River Trail (MRT, U.S. Bicycle Route 45)

Classification

Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Belle Prairie County Park is a 145 acre parcel of property owned and managed by Morrison County. The property is bounded by the mighty Mississippi River on its west side. It is accessed and bounded by County State Aid Highway 76 formerly State Highway 371 on its east side. The Mississippi River through this area is designated as wild and is part of the Department of Natural Resources State Water Trail. The park is promoted by the DNR for water trail users and is easily accessed by a landing along the river. CSAH 76 is also designated as part of the Mississippi River Bicycle Trail and is signed and promoted for its use. The park offers a variety of natural resource based venue and a range of activities in its natural setting nestled up against the Mississippi River. The facilities consist of a covered picnic shelter, playground equipment, primitive restrooms and sites for individual groups to grill and relax. A nine hole disc golf course is an added feature that draws users to the park. Fishermen, canoeist and kayakers have easy access to the river from the paved and concrete plank landing. The park has several trail routes both natural and paved for walkers and bikers to utilize while enjoying the park.

Since taking possession of the property, Morrison County has focused on preserving the majority of the park for its high biological diversity along with its geological, historical and archaeological significance. Belle Prairie Park is a convergence of native prairie, virgin white pine stand and oak savanna woodland. Projects that

control undesirable and invasive species utilizing Prairie Restoration have been ongoing for many years. Restoration of the Oak Savanna began in 2013 with Great River Greening conducting outreach to provide the community opportunity to learn more about the park and participate in thinning the woodland and removal of the undesirable species. National Register site MO ?? 17 sits inside Belle Prairie County Park along the Mississippi River and is a significant prehistoric cultural resource.

Belle Prairie Park provides a wide variety of activities and uses for the regional area it serves. The parks diverse arrangement has something for everyone who wishes to experience the great outdoors.

This park has been used for family, community, educational, government, and business activities, relating to a broad spectrum of events from outdoor, educational, sporting and social activities. It is also a waypoint for many ??rock hounds?, biking enthusiasts, motorists, and tourists that consistently generate economic impact from outside the local area while seeking nearby historical settlement areas, historical churches and cemeteries, historical markers, as well as geocaches. The park is open in the winter as well, in a limited scope, with the main road open and plowed to allow for access to ice fishing, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing activities within the park. While there is a consistent demand for winter activities, there are no groomed trails. Invariably, BPCP is a proven, outstanding venue to draw regional clientele.

Total Acreage or Mileage

145

Acquisition and Development Status

Existing Park or Trail

complete

100%

Development status

Facility Listing

This section provides an overview of existing and proposed site facilities and general site characteristics .

Existing Facilities

Proposed Facilities

- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Walking Trails (paved)
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Biking Trails (paved)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Restrooms/sanitation building
- Roads and Parking Areas

Existing Facilities Other Information

Disk Golf Course

Historic Cemetery Site

Mississippi River public water access

General Site Characteristics

Belle Prairie County Park is unique in its balance between the natural landscape and the man-made areas of play (as listed in Existing Site Facilities). It has been a priority of the County, as well as previous land owners, to maintain and protect these distinct ecological features. BPCP is a convergence of native prairie, virgin

white pine stand, oak savanna woodland, and floodplain terrace (black ash-silver maple). Since taking possession of the property, Morrison County has focused on preserving the majority of the park for its high biological diversity along with its geological, historical and archaeological significance. Projects that control undesirable and invasive species utilizing prairie restoration have been ongoing for many years. Restoration of the Oak Savanna began in 2013 with Great River Greening conducting outreach to provide the community opportunity to learn more about the park and participate in thinning the woodland and removal of the undesirable species.

Located within the floodplain terrace is a site designated as an area of high cultural-resource sensitivity with what looks to have been a Native American tool workshop (National Register site 21MO0017). Many stone fragments of what appear to be from the Archaic Period were found on this significant prehistoric cultural resource.

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Dry Prairie

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0001_0405d8.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: Hamilton-Farrand Cemetery

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0002_54ba69.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Parkway

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0004_e60b58.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Picnic Area & Pine/Oak Stands

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0005_d421c3.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: Mississippi River Scenic Overview

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0006_601c6b.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Pine Stand

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0010_7edb8d.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: Mississippi River Scenic Overview

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0011_00d63a.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: Mississippi River Scenic Overview

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0012_de2234.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Disk Golf Course Area

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0013_28ef19.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Picnic & Activity Area

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0015_86eaae.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Boat Landing View

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0016_0eff9b.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Site characteristics upload

Description: BPP Disk Golf Course Area

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0017_1ea424.JPG

Site characteristics upload

Description:

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:

Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

Belle Prairie Park

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/>

Additional Supportive Information:

Classification Details

Natural Resource Based Regional Park Classification.

Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

The Belle Prairie Park offers an area with opportunity for many who may want to explore its natural wonders and beauties. The park offers a relaxing atmosphere and surroundings that many visitors have enjoyed and return for more. Belle Prairie County Park (BPCP) provides a natural resource based venue and a range of activities in a natural setting nestled up against the Mississippi River just north of Little Falls, MN, offering outdoor recreation activities and facilities that are primarily natural resource based. These facilities and activities include picnicking, hiking trails, boating, biking, canoeing, fishing, rock hunting and nature study, as well as a 9-hole Disk Golf• course. Activities are accommodated within the park via a childrens playground, picnic shelter/gazebo, primitive restrooms, parking areas, boat and canoe launch, and the aforementioned Disk Golf• course. This park has been used for family, community, educational, government, and business activities, relating to a broad spectrum of

events from outdoor, educational, sporting and social activities. The latest example of Bell Prairie County Park being used for a large social gathering in a natural setting was as an outdoor wedding venue. It is also a waypoint for many rock hounds, biking enthusiasts, motorists, and tourists that consistently generate economic impact from outside the local area while seeking nearby historical settlement areas, historical churches and cemeteries, historical markers, as well as geocaches. The park is open in the winter as well, in a limited scope, with the main road open and plowed to allow for access to ice fishing, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing activities within the park. While there is a consistent demand for winter activities, there are no groomed trails. Invariably, BPCP is a proven, outstanding venue to draw regional clientele.

Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape

The park is a place of high biological diversity and important historical value. Located within a statewide site of high biodiversity significance, this park contains fragments of formerly vast and rich plant communities, which today are rare and vanishing. It lies in the Anoka Sand plain. The landscape is composed of sandy terraces formed from the outwash from Glacial River Warren, the predecessor to the Mississippi River. Located within a statewide site of high biodiversity significance, found here are remnants of dry sand-gravel prairie, oak woodland, and black ash-silver maple terrace forest, and the once widespread oak savanna. Populations of three rare plant species occur in the park, and can be found living in the savanna and prairie remnants. Located on the floodplain terrace forest near the riverbank is a significant historical archaeological site containing ancient Native American artifacts. Many lithic (stone fragments) of what appears to be the Archaic Period were found at a site designated MO-17 on the historic record. This site is designated an area of high cultural-resource sensitivity and must be protected. Burial mounds were not found inside the park boundaries, although two were located just outside the park, one each on its north and south sides. Additionally, there is a small, historic family cemetery (the Hamilton-Farrand cemetery) located within the park, where stone markers still designate where family graves rest. BPCP was one of the first sites where Euro-American families settled in the area. Beyond those markers that exist within the park, Historical Landmarks (Father Pierz & Ripley Esker Historical Markers) are also within very close proximity of the park. Other historic resources (remnants of the Red River Ox-Cart Trail)

were likely to have been found on the east side of the park.

Well-located and Connected to Serve a Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination

Located on the north edge of Little Falls, MN in Morrison County and being adjacent to US Route 371, this park is easily accessible to those who may want to explore its wonders and beauties. The Mississippi River Trail is located on the east boundary and is directly connected to the park road entrance. Located approximately 3 miles north of the junction of State Highway 371 and US Highway 10, and being adjacent to both County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 76 and State Highway 371, the park serves a regional clientele (multiple communities - 16 cities and 30 Townships within Morrison County). This is the only County Park within a 30-40 mile radius of multiple communities, providing hiking trails, boat landing and parking, picnic areas with fire rings and/or grills, picnic shelter, playground, restrooms, scenic overlooks, as well as a 9-Hole Disc Golf Course, all within one complex. This is a no cost site that attracts a regional clientele to the park from communities within this radius and beyond.

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

This park provides public natural resource based recreational opportunities that are not otherwise available of this nature, in one location, within a reasonable distance. The park serves a regional clientele (multiple communities within Morrison County - 16 cities and 30 Townships), as well as visitors from outstate Minnesota. This is the only County Park within a 30-40 mile radius of multiple communities, providing hiking trails, boat landing and parking, picnic areas with fire rings and/or grills, picnic shelter, playground, restrooms, scenic overlooks, as well as a 9-Hole Disc Golf Course, all within one public complex. This is a no cost site that attracts a regional clientele to the park from communities within this radius and beyond. This park has been used for family, community, educational, government, and business activities, relating to a broad spectrum of events from outdoor, educational, sporting and social activities. It is also a waypoint for many rock hounds, biking enthusiasts, motorists, and tourists that consistently generate economic impact from outside the local area while seeking nearby historical settlement areas, historical churches and cemeteries, historical markers, as well as goecaches. The park is open in the winter as well, in a limited scope, to allow for access to ice fishing, snowshoeing and cross-

country skiing activities within the park. The park compliments Lindbergh State Park by offering a unique destination for relaxation and enjoyment without the camping and canoeing opportunities.

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Location Map	Location map added from general tab	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/1435076479700-mapbelleprairiepark.png
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/1435077682858- Belle Prairie County Park NRMP FINAL 20100107-bookmarked.pdf
Park Trail Map	2017 Belle Prairie Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Maintenance Operations Plan Upload	Table 7.1 and 7.2	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Belle Prairie Park Operational Plan_12ec31.pdf
Existing Master Plan	Belle Prairie Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Additional Attachment	2017 Approved Master Plan	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Belle Prairie Master Plan Updated_10-12-17_159a70.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Regional Context	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/2017 ParkRegionalMap_c88f98.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Belle Prairie Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Maintenance Operations Plan Upload	Park Operational Plan	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Regional Demographic Upload	Morrison County	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/2017 Park Demographics_6f8ac0.pdf
Regional Demographic Upload	2010 Census Estimates	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Ad Phasing Plan Upload	Development Plan	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/2017 Park Improvements_03ca48.pdf
Ad Phasing Plan Upload	Belle Prairie Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/

Park Trail Map	Existing Park Facilities	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Existing Park Facilities_47256c.pdf
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Savanna Restoration	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Savanna Restoration Management Plan_d6b02c.pdf
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Management Plan	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Long-Term Conifer	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Long-Term Conifer Management Plan_edd08a.pdf
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Management Plan	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Proposed Improvements	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Proposed Improvement Map_132c83.pdf
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Belle Prairie Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Additional Attachment	Belle Prairie County Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Additional Attachment	Ox Cart Trail Brochure	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/Ox Cart Park_342f86.pdf
Additional Attachment	Belle Prairie County Park	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Map Upload	Belle Prairie County Park Site Map	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/BPP Site Map_d4c38c.pdf
Site Map Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Additional Attachment	MC Park Designation Resolution 2018-040	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/MC Park Designation Resolution 2018-040.pdf
Additional Attachment		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Dry Prairie	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0001_0405d8.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/

Site Characteristics Upload	Hamilton-Farrand Cemetery	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0002_54ba69.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Parkway	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0004_e60b58.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Picnic Area & Pine/Oak Stands	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0005_d421c3.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	Mississippi River Scenic Overview	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0006_601c6b.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Pine Stand	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0010_7edb8d.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	Mississippi River Scenic Overview	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0011_00d63a.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	Mississippi River Scenic Overview	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0012_de2234.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Disk Golf Course Area	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0013_28ef19.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Picnic & Activity Area	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0015_86eaae.JPG

Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Boat Landing View	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0016_0eff9b.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/
Site Characteristics Upload	BPP Disk Golf Course Area	http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/IMG_0017_1ea424.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload		http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-094D/