General

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

Last Update
21 Sep 2017 02:18:05

<table>
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<th>Park or Trail Name</th>
<th>District</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soo Line Trail</td>
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Location Description
This trail begins at the Stearns/Morrison County line located 3 miles southwest of Bowlus. The facility continues as a paved (non-motorized) trail in a North Easterly direction traversing the City of Bowlus, crossing the Mississippi River at Blanchard Dam and eventually tying in to the Park and Ride Trail Head at United States Highway Number 10 approximately 3 miles north of the City of Royalton. The trail then continues as a gravel (motorized) facility traversing the small Cities of Genola, Pierz and Hillman and eventually hitting the Morrison/Mille Lacs County line on its way to its termination point at Superior Wisconsin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park/Trail Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>16076 83rd Street</td>
<td>Royalton</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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Map of Park/Trail
Description: Trail Map

Description: 2017 Map of Trail

Facility Website
http://www.co.morrison.mn.us/

Organization
Morrison County
Lead Contact Person
Steven C. Backowski, P.E.

Mailing Address
213 SE 1st Ave

City
Little Falls

State
Minnesota

Zip
56345

Phone
320-632-0121

Email
steveb@co.morrison.mn.us

Title
County Engineer

Joint Applicants

Joint Applicant #1
City of Bowlus

Joint Applicant #2
City of Hillman

Joint Applicant #3
City of Pierz

Joint Applicant #4

Other project supporters
The Camp Ripley Veterans State Trail is a legislatively mandated trail requiring the connection of the Soo Line Trail with the Paul Bunyan Trail at Crow Wing State Park.

Description

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

Regional Significance Statement
Traversing the county from the Stearns County line to Mille Lacs County, the trail provides recreational opportunity to the surrounding communities and connections to other valued regional destinations. Within the State of Minnesota, the SLRT has further connections to the Lake Wobegon Regional Trail in Stearns County, MN, providing passage to Fergus Falls/Central Lakes Trail (63 miles), and has a high potential to provide for east-west connection of the Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail, that when complete will provide a connection between Crow Wing State Park and the SLRT, effectively linking the Central Lakes, Lake Wobegon, SLRT, Paul Bunyan, Heartland and Mi-Gi-Zi Trails into one continuous recreational route. This system would create one of the longest connected trail systems in the country.

Classification
Regional Trail (Motorized and Non-motorized)

Overview/Description of Park or Trail
The Soo Line trail is a Morrison County owned trail built on an abandoned rail road grade. This trail is an extension of the Wobegon Trail extending from Stearns County into Morrison County. The 9 mile paved non-motorized segment begins at the Stearns/Morrison County line and crosses the Mississippi River where users can experience the beauty of the wild and scenic river at the same time viewing the taming of the river with the construction of Blanchard Damn. The paved portion ends at the United States Highway 10 Park and Ride where the 27.5 mile gravel (motorized) portion begins. This portion takes the user through Crane Meadows
National Wildlife Refuge where nature abounds. The trail continues through a variety of terrain and geological formations eventually passing the user on into Mille Lacs County.

The Soo Line Recreational Trailhead is located in a regionally desirable setting within central MN, approximately 8 miles south of Little Falls, MN. The Western segment of the Soo Line Recreational Trail was dedicated in the summer of 2007 becoming one of the most remote and scenic paved non-motorized recreational trails in MN. This location is adjacent to US Highway 10 and is the division between the east and west portions of the trail; the Soo Line Recreational Trail ?? West transverses from US Highway 10 west to the Morrison/Stearns County boundary and is a paved trail that crosses the Mississippi River at the down slope of the Blanchard Dam; the Soo Line Recreational Trail ?? East transverses from US Highway 10 east to the Morrison/Mille Lacs County boundary, with the trail overall, terminating at Superior, WI. The Soo Line Recreational Trail is an important destination as it is the only pure pedestrian bridge (summertime) over the Mississippi River, connecting the east and west portions of the Soo Line Recreational Trail, with further connections to the Lake Wobegon Regional Trail in Stearns County, MN, providing passage to Fergus Falls/Central Lakes Trail (63 miles), and has high potential to provide for the east-west connection of the Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail, that when completed, will provide a connection between Crow Wing State Park and the Soo Line Recreational Trail, effectively linking the Central Lakes, Lake Wobegon, Soo Line, Paul Bunyan, Heartland and Mi-Gi-Zi Trails into one continuous recreational route. Without the trail bridge, these connections would be in jeopardy. The trail bridge is parallel to the Blanchard Dam on the southern side of the dam, and is one of the few locations in the United States that Cross Rocks can be found, a popular way-point and destination for tourists. The trail bridge crosses the Mississippi River at one of the most high quality scenic portions of the river.

**Total Acreage or Mileage**
37

**Acquisition and Development Status**
Existing Park or Trail
Aquired
100

**Development status**

**Facility Listing**

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Facilities</th>
<th>Proposed Facilities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking and picnic shelters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking Trails (paved)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biking Trails (paved)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Biking Trails (natural)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-country Skiing Trails</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Restrooms/sanitation building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads and Parking Areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Existing Facilities Other Information**
Trailhead Information Kiosks
Benches along trail
Disabled Hunting Blind
ATV Trails

General Site Characteristics
The varied landscapes of the SLRT creates a unique and thoroughly enjoyable experience for users. Traveling the trail, one will pass farm fields, wooded corridors, quiet lakes, meandering streams, as well as wetlands and waterfowl areas. Deer, wild turkey, pheasants, songbirds, and grouse are some of the wildlife that can be seen throughout.

Site characteristics upload
Description: Trail Site Characteristics

Site characteristics upload
Description: Image of Site Characterisitics

Site characteristics upload
Description:
http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-014D/fishing at dam_0a9733.JPG

Site characteristics upload
Description:

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:
Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

2017 Master Plan

Additional Supportive Information:

Classification Details

Regional Trail (Motorized and Non-Motorized) Classification

Provides a High-Quality "Destination" Trail Experience
The Soo Line Recreational Trail is located in a regionally desirable setting within central MN, approximately 8 miles south of Little Falls, MN. The Western segment of the Soo Line Recreational Trail was dedicated in the summer of 2007 becoming one of the most remote and scenic paved non-motorized recreational trails in MN. This location is adjacent to

Criteria #1 Images
Mississippi River Image

Criteria #1 Images
Soo Trail at River
http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/
US Highway 10 and is the division between the east and west portions of the trail; the Soo Line Recreational Trail â?? West transverses from US Highway 10 west to the Morrison/Stearns County boundary and is a paved trail that crosses the Mississippi River at the down slope of the Blanchard Dam; the Soo Line Recreational Trail â?? East transverses from US Highway 10 east to the Morrison/Mille Lacs County boundary, with the trail overall, terminating at Superior, WI. The Soo Line Recreational Trail is an important destination as it is the only pure pedestrian bridge (summertime) over the Mississippi River, connecting the east and west portions of the Soo Line Recreational Trail, with further connections to the Lake Wobegon Regional Trail in Stearns County, MN, providing passage to Fergus Falls/Central Lakes Trail (63 miles), and has high potential to provide for the east-west connection of the Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail, that when completed, will provide a connection between Crow Wing State Park and the Soo Line Recreational Trail, effectively linking the Central Lakes, Lake Wobegon, Soo Line, Paul Bunyan, Heartland and Mi-Gi-Zi Trails into one continuous recreational route. The trail bridge is parallel to the Blanchard Dam on the southern side of the dam, and is one of the few locations in the United States that Cross Rocks can be found, a popular way-point and destination for tourists.

Well-located (i.e., Convenience of Access/Adequate Length) to Serve Regional Population and/or Tourist Destination
This trail more than adequately provides at least an hour of outdoor recreation opportunity, and connects to other trails and facilities that can provide at least an hour of recreation in total. While the west portion of the Soo Line Recreational Trail proper extends to the Morrison-Stearns County border, it provides approximately 20 miles round-trip alone, with further connections to the Lake Wobegon Regional Trail in Stearns County, MN. These trails currently provide further passage to Fergus Falls/Central Lakes Trail (100 miles) to the northwest, and 28 additional miles to the southeast to St. Joseph, with a proposed extension to Waite Park and St. Cloud, MN. Additionally, maintaining this connection has high potential to provide for the east-west connection of the Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail, that when completed, will provide a connection between Crow Wing State Park and the Soo Line Recreational Trail, effectively linking the Central Lakes, Lake Wobegon, Soo Line, Paul Bunyan, Heartland and Mi-Gi-Zi Trails into one continuous recreational route.

Criteria #1 Images
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Criteria #1 Images
http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/15-014D/typical gravel section_211c47.JPG

Criteria #1 Images
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Criteria #2 Images
Trail Map

Criteria #2 Images
2017 Trail Map
Enhances Connectivity to Regional Destinations
The Soo Line Recreational Trail â?? West, is a paved trail available to pedestrians, in-line skaters and bicyclers during the spring, summer and fall seasons, and available to non-studded snowmobiles, cross-country skiers, and Fat-Bikers as long as there is adequate snow of 3"+, throughout the winter season. This trail provides the public natural high quality recreational opportunities, attracting regional clientele from multiple communities (communities within Morrison County: 16 cities and 30 Townships), drawing tourists, generating economic impact from outside the local area through visitors from outstate Minnesota. The 14 foot wide quiet, forested trail is mostly through wooded terrain with an occasional farm and wetland. This ten-mile section starts at US Hwy 10 just north of Royalton, where there is a parking lot and trailhead, runs approximately ten miles over the trail bridge which crosses the Mississippi River parallel to the Blanchard Dam, through the City of Bowlus, ending at the connection to the Lake Wobegon Trail between Bowlus and Holdingford at the Morrison and Stearns County line. The City of Bowlus has a restored train depot with bathrooms and parking. Additionally, the trail is also close to the City of Little Falls and Charles Lindbergh State Park. The trail provides a high quality, traffic-free, motorized-vehicle free, recreational opportunity available to pedestrians, in-line skaters and bicyclers during the spring, summer, and fall (available to cross-country skiers, Fat-Bikers and non-studded snowmobiles as long as there is adequate snow of 3"+ during the winter months), not otherwise available within a reasonable distance.

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within a Region
This ten-mile section starts at US Hwy 10 just north of Royalton, where there is a parking lot with restroom facilities and trailhead, runs approximately ten miles over the trail bridge, which crosses the Mississippi River parallel to the Blanchard Dam, through the City of Bowlus, ending at the connection to the Lake Wobegon Trail between Bowlus and Holdingford at the Morrison and Stearns County line. The City of Bowlus has a restored train depot with bathrooms and parking. Additionally, the trail is also close to the City of Little Falls and Charles Lindbergh State Park. The trail provides a high quality, traffic-free, motorized-vehicle free, recreational opportunity available to pedestrians, in-line skaters and bicyclers during the spring, summer, and fall (available to cross-country skiers, Fat-Bikers and non-studded snowmobiles as long as there is adequate snow of 3"+ during the winter months), not otherwise available within a reasonable distance.

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Site Characteristics Upload

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