



General

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

Last Update

11 Jul 2017 08:14:47

Park or Trail Name

Irving & John Anderson County Park

District

4

Location Description

Irving & John Anderson County Park is located in the SE corner of Isanti County off of Co Rd 18. It is the only county park and one of only three parcels of public land located east of state highway 65 in Isanti County. The park is located within the Twin Lakes Complex, which according to the County Biological Survey, has one of the largest remnants of critical native vegetation in the county. It is in close proximity to the regional centers of North Branch and Cambridge along with Anoka and Chisago Counties falling just outside of the 7-county metro area. Anderson Park is easily accessed by Interstate 35 and the Sunrise Prairie Trail each located 4.5 miles east of the park.

Park/Trail Address

City

Park/Trail State

Zip

Minnesota

Latitude

45.46335136

Longitude

-93.05716038

Map of Park/Trail

Description: Anderson Park Map Aerial

[Anderson Park Map_fd3515.JPG](#)

Description: Existing & Future Plans

[Existing and Concept Plan_bb8ec6.jpg](#)

Facility Website

Organization

Isanti County

Lead Contact Person

Title

Barry Wendorf

Mailing Address

555 18th Ave SW

City

Cambridge

State

Minnesota

Zip

55008

Phone

763-689-8220

Email

barry.wendorf@co.isanti.mn.us

Joint Applicants

Joint Applicant #1

A Resolution will be sent in after July 1, 2015

Joint Applicant #2

Joint Applicant #3

Joint Applicant #4

Other project supporters

The Friends of Anderson Park is a group of community members who are dedicated to the stewardship of the park through preservation of the wildlife and diverse vegetation found there. Oxford Township has supported the park through donations for acquisition and development. The National Audubon Society's Wild River Chapter has supported the park through programming along with other various birding projects. The Isanti County Soil & Water Conservation District has supported the establishment of native prairie within the park. The MN Department of Natural Resources has supported this park through grant awards from Metro Greenways, Remediation Fund, Regional Parks Program, and prior Park Legacy Funding.

Description

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Regional Significance Statement

Classification

Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Irving & John Anderson County Park consists of 174 acres and was added to the Isanti County Park system in 2007. Acquisition was made possible when funding was allocated through the state Remediation Grant Program, the state Regional Parks Grant Program, the Metro Greenways Grant Program along with donations from the Trust for Public Land, Oxford Township and the Anderson Family.

Being located within the Anoka Sandplain, the park provides a significant contribution for regional wildlife habitat with diverse plant communities present. The park offers a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities within its natural areas consisting of remnant and restored native prairies, two lakes (Horseshoe & Horseleg Lakes), wetlands, and hardwood forests. The 3.5 mile mowed trail system serves as one of the Park's largest assets open to hiking, biking, horseback riding, along with snowshoeing and groomed cross country skiing

during the winter months. Other attractions include canoeing or kayaking on Horseleg Lake, a large log picnic shelter available for small or larger group gatherings, a series of 3 boardwalks allow ADA accessibility across wetlands providing visitors with a unique up close experience, an elevated viewing platform overlooking Horseleg Lake, geocaching, and a "Nature Themed" interactive natural play area.

The Friends of Anderson Park coordinate the programming of six events throughout the year ranging from Bird Walks to an annual Fall Festival to help interpret and educate the public on their natural surroundings. Interpretive signs describing the history of the Anderson Family as well as the function of the Anoka Sandplain are located along ADA accessible routes within the park.

The County is currently pursuing the acquisition of three additional properties totaling 98 acres adjacent to the park. Once acquired potential opportunities for a swimming beach along with various types of camping would be available. Acquisition of additional properties is identified as a goal within the Park's Master Plan.

Total Acreage or Mileage

Acquisition and Development Status

New Park or Trail (no land acquired or developed)

3 separate parcels with willing sellers - additional 98 acres possible

65%

Development status

Facility Listing

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

Existing Facilities

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

Proposed Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Electric/water/sewer RV sites
- Electric/water campsites
- Electric campsites
- Non-electric campsites
- Group campsites
- Tent only sites
- Camper Cabins

- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Horseback Riding Trails (natural)
- Swimming
- Canoeing Facilities
- Nature Center/Interpretation Trails
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Restrooms/sanitation building
- Roads and Parking Areas

Existing Facilities Other Information

Three Boardwalks

Elevated Observation Platform
Geocaches

General Site Characteristics

Site characteristics upload

Description: Sandhill Crane Sculptures

[IMG_1675_56f678.JPG](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Compass Plant in Prairie

[Anderson Prairie 3_5580fd.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: View of Horseleg Lake from Observation Deck

[Anderson Park.9_3eaca4.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Interpretive Program in Log Shelter

[Anderson Park.1_b6302c.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Nature Based Play Area

[NPLD 11_2ee291.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Observation Deck

[Anderson Park.4_27388e.jpg](#)

Site characteristics upload

Description: Play Hill Area

[Play Hill_f0df8e.jpg](#)

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:

Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

[Anderson Park Master Plan 9.21.13_216117.pdf](#)

Upload Existing Master Plan

Additional Supportive Information:

Classification Details

Natural Resource Based Regional Park Classification.

Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

A broad range of recreational activities are available for people of all ages at Anderson Park; nearly all attract individuals and groups of people interested in experiencing the outdoors for the natural beauty of the place and the connection to the landscape and wildlife.

Recreational activities provided at Anderson Park include:

- World-class bird-watching (Audubon Society involvement, annual birdwalks hosted by the Friends Group), including an elevated observation platform overlooking Horseleg Lake and emergent marsh, and man-made bird habitats, such as the chimney swift tower. These were built through partnerships between the Friends of Anderson Park, the Isanti County Parks Department, Wild River Audubon Chapter, and Audubon Minnesota.
- Unique and well-maintained prairie plantings and diversity throughout. Hiking is pleasurable and, because of the flat terrain, the Park has the potential to attract elderly/handicapped visitors.
- Labeled raingarden plantings help to identify prairie plants in the field, in order to enhance experience for those interested in plant identification.
- Public access to Horseleg Lake, facilitating canoeing or kayaking.
- Horseback riding and groomed cross country ski trails are maintained.
- A large picnic shelter, which allows larger group gatherings to occur within the Park's beautiful setting.
- A nature-based interactive playground area which provides opportunities for children to create their own unique experience through building, digging, and arranging objects from

Criteria #1 Images

Bird Watching

[Anderson Park Bird Watching_1f8f0a.jpg](#)

Criteria #1 Images

Fall Festival Event

[16 FF 6_85c398.jpg](#)

Criteria #1 Images

Kids Canoeing

[18 FF 9_dce954.jpg](#)

Criteria #1 Images

Reptile Amphibian Program

[100_0749_de3ff1.jpg](#)

Criteria #1 Images

Ski Trails

[20160206_133925_ac70b5.jpg](#)

the Park
within the play area.

-The County is currently pursuing the acquisition of three additional properties totaling 98 acres adjacent to the park. Once acquired potential opportunities for a swimming beach along with various types of camping would be available.

Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse Natural or Historic Landscape

Prairies are vitally important to the history and function of Minnesota's landscape. At the time of European settlement, tallgrass prairie covered approximately one-third of Minnesota. The grass and sedge species with deep root systems cultivated the rich soil which served as the foundation of agricultural use across the state. Today, less than 2% of the original prairie exists within the state. Within Anderson Park, there are approximately 13 acres of remnant prairie, containing species such as little bluestem, stiff goldenrod, wild strawberry, pussytoes, hoary puccoon, round-headed bushclover, spiderwort, Indian grass, and prairie sage. Restored prairies cover over (68) acres within the park. Species seeded in these areas include big bluestem, indiangrass, little bluestem, sideoats grama, and prairie dropseed, to name a few. The prairie areas overlap the valuable oak savanna areas, which provide additional habitat and contribute to the diversity of flora and fauna within the Park.

Within the wetland areas, there are approximately 30 acres of emergent marsh, adjacent to Horseshoe and Horseleg Lakes. Red-osier dogwood, willow, alder, lake sedge, softstem bulrush, broad-leaved cattails, broadleaved arrowhead, and cranberry can be found in this area. This is the critical habitat for the threatened Blandings turtle, often spotted within the park. Horseshoe and Horseleg Lakes provide staging areas for migratory waterfowl and the nearby shrub swamps serve as habitat for songbirds and frogs. The two lakes and adjacent wetlands provide nesting areas for loons, trumpeter swans, ducks, shorebirds, and other birds such as warblers, wrens, and lark sparrows.

Most vestiges of the original Anderson Family farm do not exist within the park boundaries, as the emphasis has been to preserve the natural setting and revert the land back to pre-settlement native plant communities. This landscape stands in contrast to the surrounding land cover, which is primarily dedicated to agricultural and residential use.

Well-located and Connected to Serve a Regional

Criteria #2 Images

Horseleg Lake

[Anderson Park.9_225614.jpg](#)

Criteria #2 Images

Penstemon

[Anderson Prairie 6_ad231b.jpg](#)

Criteria #2 Images

Diverse Prairie

[Anderson Prairie 8 \(1\)_2cfa13.JPG](#)

Criteria #2 Images

Blandings Turtle

[blandings 3_e5bc0e.jpg](#)

Criteria #2 Images

Parula Warbler

[parula warbler_7f1822.jpg](#)

Criteria #2 Images

Red Headed Woodpecker

[Red Headed Woodpecker_c2aaec.jpg](#)

Population and/or Tourist Destination

Anderson Park is located in the southeast corner of Isanti County, with close proximity to Anoka and Chisago Counties. Isanti County falls just outside of the 7-county Twin Cities metropolitan area; Anderson Park is easily accessed by Interstate 35 from both Minneapolis (45 miles) and St. Paul (43 miles), and also accessed by Hwy 95 from St. Cloud (65 miles). The park is located six miles south west of the regional center of North Branch and 16 miles south east of the regional center of Cambridge.

Projections indicate that by 2035, the Central region will grow in population by 74.4 percent, with Isanti County listed within the top three counties in the region projected to grow significantly, by 94.8 percent. (An Inventory of Recreation Experience Opportunities in Minnesota: Central Region Profile, 5).

Visitors travel to this part of the Central Region of Minnesota to enjoy the rural character of the landscape and to utilize the many lakes, rivers, and outdoor recreational areas.

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Trail-hiking, birdwatching, picnicking, horseback-riding and geo-caching are currently the most popular recreational offerings at Anderson Park. While many of these activities are allowed and encouraged at parks throughout Isanti, Chisago, and Anoka counties, Anderson Park is able to offer a unique experience for recreational users.

Anderson Park is the only county park and one of only three parcels of publicly-owned land east of Hwy 65 in Isanti County. The park boundaries lie within the Twin Lakes Complex, an area identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey as having one of the largest remnants of critical native vegetation in the county. Unique and interesting plant and animal species that are found within the Twin Lakes Complex include Blanding's turtles, red-shouldered hawks, black bears, beavers, otters, sandhill cranes, redheaded woodpeckers, orchids, yellow birch, cranberries, pitcher plants, leatherleaf, waterwillow, white pine, white cedar, wild rice, mink frogs, warblers, loons, black terns and trumpeter swans.

Within the Park, there is a convergence of a variety of ecosystems: lakes, marshes/wetlands, oak savanna, tallgrass prairie, and hardwood forests exist within the property. The trails have been intentionally placed to

border the edges of adjacent ecosystems. Because of this, viewing nature, and especially birdwatching are premium activities that are provided by the Park's setting.

In 2012, Anderson Park was the recipient of Legacy Funding, further supporting the notion that this park has regional value and contributes greatly to the variety of recreational offerings that the Central Region has to provide.

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Location Map	Location map added from general tab	1432650525698-Location Map Anderson Park.pdf
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab	1432659180308-Anderson Park Master Plan 9.21.13.pdf
Other	Existing and Proposed Acreage	1435260026433-Pagel keen kozy oaks.JPG
Other	Park Map	1435260263898-Anderson jpg.JPG
Photo	Park Entrance	1435260848810-IMG_0317.jpg
Photo	Restored Prairie	1435260872869-IMG_0466.jpg
Photo	Birders on Platform	1435260936201- MG_4915.jpg
Photo	Elevated Observation Platform	1435260962549-100_0703.jpg
Photo	Log Picnic Shelter	1435260996303-Anderson Park Shelter.JPG
Photo	Nature Themed Play Area	1435261041675-Anderson Park Play Area.jpg
Photo	Play Area	1435261153469-Anderson Playground view.jpg
Resolution		1436799203168-Resolution Anderson.jpg
Location Map	Location map added from general tab	1432650525698-Location Map Anderson Park.pdf
Master Plan	Master plan added from master plan tab	1432659180308-Anderson Park Master Plan 9.21.13.pdf
Other	Park Map	1435260263898-Anderson jpg.JPG
Photo	Park Entrance	1435260848810-IMG_0317.jpg
Photo	Birders on Platform	1435260936201- MG_4915.jpg

Photo	Log Picnic Shelter	1435260996303-Anderson Park Shelter.JPG
Photo	Restored Prairie	1435260872869-IMG_0466.jpg
Photo	Elevated Observation Platform	1435260962549-100_0703.jpg
Photo	Play Area	1435261153469-Anderson Playground view.jpg
Other	Existing and Proposed Acreage	1435260026433-Pagel keen kozy oaks.JPG
Photo	Nature Themed Play Area	1435261041675-Anderson Park Play Area.jpg
Resolution		1436799203168-Resolution Anderson.jpg
Resolution	Joint Applicant #1 Organization added from general tab	1444830616279-Resolution Anderson.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Existing / Concept Map	Existing and Concept Plan_d2f6ac.jpg
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Community Feedback	Community Feedback Anderson Park_190920_sm_c7a01f.pdf
Regional Map Uploads	Regional Map	Location map_0f7050.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Sandhill Crane Sculptures	IMG_1675_56f678.JPG
Site Characteristics Upload	Compass Plant in Prairie	Anderson Prairie 3_5580fd.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	View of Horseleg Lake from Observation Deck	Anderson Park.9_3eaca4.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Interpretive Program in Log Shelter	Anderson Park.1_b6302c.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Nature Based Play Area	NPLD 11_2ee291.jpg
Site Characteristics Upload	Observation Deck	Anderson Park.4_27388e.jpg
Existing Master Plan		Anderson Park Master Plan 9.21.13_216117.pdf
Existing Master Plan		
Acquisition Plan Overview Upload	Potential Acquisitions	potential park land_88d883.jpg
Acquisition Plan Overview Upload	Photo File	
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Natural Resource Mgt Plan	Anderson Park NR Mgt Plan_a4626c.pdf
Ecological Land ResPlan Upload	Attachments	
Site Characteristics Upload	Play Hill Area	Play Hill_f0df8e.jpg
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Public Input Flyer	Flyer_bf9d1a.jpg
Park Trail Map	Anderson Park Map Aerial	Anderson Park Map_fd3515.JPG

Park Trail Map	Existing & Future Plans	Existing and Concept Plan bb8ec6.jpg
Public Involvement Summ Upload	County Fair Booth	Fair Booth 3a28da.JPG
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Cambridge Day Out Booth	IMG 1756 ad3e1d.JPG
Public Involvement Summ Upload	Fall Festival Booth	Pop Up Event 5d3c3a.jpg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Bird Watching	Anderson Park Bird Watching 1f8f0a.jpg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Fall Festival Event	16 FF 6 85c398.jpg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Kids Canoeing	18 FF 9 dce954.jpg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Reptile Amphibian Program	100 0749 de3ff1.jpg
Natural Resource Based1 Upload	Ski Trails	20160206 133925 ac70b5.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Horseleg Lake	Anderson Park.9 225614.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Penstemon	Anderson Prairie 6 ad231b.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Diverse Prairie	Anderson Prairie 8 (1) 2cfa13.JPG
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Blandings Turtle	blandings 3 e5bc0e.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Parula Warbler	parula warbler 7f1822.jpg
Natural Resource Based2 Upload	Red Headed Woodpecker	Red Headed Woodpecker c2aaec.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Nature Center	Barn Nature Center f4fcd7.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Camper Cabin	Camper Cabins a3b318.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Dog Park	Off Leash Dog Park 64197c.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Bicycle Track	Pump Track 336764.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Lake Access	Walk in Access 0d2d8a.jpg
Development Acquisition Plan Upload	Natural Play Areas	Adventure Play Areas 295a1c.jpg
AcqDev Cost Projections Upload	Development Cost Estimates	Cost Estimates afa5a5.pdf
Maintenance Operations Plan Upload	M/O Budget	Operations & Maintenance Budget bf8dc4.pdf
