



General

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

Last Update

17 Apr 2017 07:27:16

Park or Trail Name

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park

District

4

Location Description

Address:

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park
29709 Kipper Rd.
St. Joseph, MN 56374

Directions: Take the St. Joseph exit (exit #160) off I-94, turn south onto County Rd. 2. Take a right onto County Rd. 51. Go approximately 2 miles on 51; the park entrance is on the left.

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park is located near St. Joseph, MN in St. Joseph Township and it is also situated in the Central Minnesota County of Stearns. The location of Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park is a short 15 minute drive from downtown St. Cloud. The greater St. Cloud area has a population base of 100,000+ and is rapidly growing. This park is also located about 1 hour and 15 minutes northwest of the Twin Cities area and thus this location makes for an easy day trip for the residents of the Metro area and people who live along the Interstate I-94 road corridor. Once developed it may also serve as a nice destination stopping point for those traveling long distances via Interstate 94.

Park/Trail Address

City

Park/Trail State

Zip

Latitude

45.55279572

Longitude

-94.37045574

Map of Park/Trail

Facility Website

Organization

Stearns County Parks Department

Lead Contact Person

Ben Anderson

Title

Mailing Address

1802 County Road 137

City

Waite Park

State

Minnesota

Zip

56387

Phone

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Joint Applicants

Joint Applicant #1

Joint Applicant #2

Joint Applicant #3

Joint Applicant #4

Other project supporters

Other project supporters include: the City of Saint Joseph, St. Joseph Township, and the Stearns County Park Commission and the Stearns County Board of Commissioners, Lake Wobegon Trail Association and the Central MN Nordic Ski Club.

Description

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

Regional Significance Statement

Classification

Natural Resource Based Regional Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Kraemer Lake ?? Wildwood County Park (Wildwood) consists of 265 acres along 1/2 mile of minimally developed lake frontage. Over half of this site was identified in the Minnesota County Biological Survey as significant remnant natural community with some of the trees being over 300 years old. Wildwood is located in an area that was proposed for a state park in the 1960s. This property is also unique because it encompasses a mosaic of rolling hills, wetlands, bogs and ephemeral streams.

Wildwood is regionally significant for multiple reasons. It is over 100 acres in size and the park is a short 1.5 miles from Interstate 94 in which travelers often stop to eat, stretch their legs, burn off kid??s energy and walk their dogs. Wildwood is also located within 20 minutes of the St. Cloud Area, which resides 100,000+ residents. What is most attractive is that a short one hour drive from the Twin Cities serves as a day trip destination. The park is also located near two colleges which may intrigue some prospective students to

commit their educational needs to these schools. In a 2014 survey, visitors traveled from: Minneapolis, Plymouth, Little Falls, North Carolina, Chicago, Hawaii, Glenwood, Wisconsin, Annandale, Hillman and many from the local area.

The user groups served by Wildwood County Park are people who enjoy hiking, swimming, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding, biking, cross country skiing, observing nature, camping, picnicking, and learning about the natural environment. The park provides opportunities for a multitude of people regardless of age, race, and ability. Overall, added amenities will only appeal more to all age groups throughout the region.

The type of amenities that are currently available/or future ideas for Wildwood County Park include: a large sand swimming beach, a picnic pavilion, camping, designated biking trails, observation decks, restrooms/changing rooms, drinking fountain, a building for a maple syrup operation, a fishing dock, a wetland board walk, and a parking lot. Programs to be offered include a self-guided nature walk, hands on education about maple syruping and naturalist hikes, such as birding, flowers, and butterflies.

Wildwood is located 9 miles from Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. These two Parks complement each other nicely. Wildwood will have a sandy beach on a lake and thus the swimming will be friendlier for young families. Right now the swimming facilities at Quarry Park are not kid friendly because there are sharp drop offs, tall rocks to jump off, potential underwater hazards, and deep water that make this better for the teenage plus age group. The gradual change in water depth at Wildwood will offer a friendlier kids/family environment. The parks differ in that one is an old granite quarrying industrial site and therefore secondary vegetation is present whereas Wildwood contains remnant old growth forest with some trees aging 300 plus years old. Currently, there are no State Parks located in Stearns County and thus Wildwood would provide similar amenities. A long range plan connects the Lake Wobegon Trail to Wildwood.

Total Acreage or Mileage

Acquisition and Development Status

All property is owned and operated by Stearns County.

100

Development status

Facility Listing

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

Existing Facilities

- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails

Proposed Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Picnicking and picnic shelters
- Hiking Trails (natural)
- Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
- Cross-country Skiing Trails
- Swimming
- Canoeing Facilities
- Fishing Piers
- Nature Center/Interpretation Trails
- Play areas, with an outdoor theme
- Restrooms/sanitation building
- Roads and Parking Areas

Existing Facilities Other Information

Maple Syruping Operation in which the public is encouraged to partake in.

General Site Characteristics

Master Plan

Additional Supportive Information:

Classification Details

Natural Resource Based Regional Park Classification.

Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood is located on a highly scenic and natural setting that appeals to visitors because of the interspersed rolling hills, prairies, wetlands, bogs, and ephemeral streams. This rolling hill topography is what draws people to the park for hiking, biking and cross country skiing. The addition of a swimming beach, board walks, observation points, a picnic shelter, picnic tables, informational signage, camping, educational activities, excreta, will only make the park more relevant to a variety of user groups and also broaden the appeal of outdoor recreation to new and expanding populations.

Even though Kramer Lake - Wildwood County Park is minimally developed, with their only being recreational trails available, this park is still a destination unto itself. This has been proven from the variety of visitors that have signed in on the 2014 survey sheet. This leads the Stearns County Parks Department to believe that with the previously mention additions, that Kraemer Lake - Wildwood is only going to become more popular and an even more sought out destination.

The Stearns County Parks Department strives to provide top notch facilities that keep visitors wanting to come back time and time again. Educational opportunities, a multitude of trails and trail uses, the landscape, and the beach will encourage and entice visitors to return time and time again. The idea is to provide an experience to which the visitors are always learning or finding something new within the park.

Preserves a Regionally-Significant and Diverse

Natural or Historic Landscape

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park is a regionally important landscape because it consists of 265 acres and contains the unique features of rolling hills, wetlands, lake access, bogs, prairies and ephemeral streams. This area was also identified in the Minnesota County Biological Survey as a significant remnant natural community and only 2% of the land area, within Stearns County, remains in a natural state. This site also contains about 7.5 acres of restored prairie and another approximately 10 acres that can be restored into prairie habitat. Thus this area exhibits ecological diversity, unique plant communities and high quality wildlife habitat.

This park will offer an opportunity for people to enjoy one of Minnesotans favorite past times; swimming at a lake and other water activities. But this is not the only water feature that is present at Kraemer Lake - Wildwood; it also contains a unique mosaic of wetlands, bogs and ephemeral streams. One of the wetlands has been restored by placing a man-made dike with a water control structure which maintains a water level suitable for waterfowl and other water dependent species. With Stearns County being Minnesota's largest dairy producer, preservation and protection of our lake shores, wetlands, bogs, streams, remnant forests and prairie habitats is all that more important.

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

Kraemer Lake - Wildwood County Park is located within 20 minutes of the greater St. Cloud Area that consists of a population of over 100,000 and is continuously growing. In fact the whole Interstate 94 corridor has been identified as a population growth center for the State of Minnesota and Kraemer Lake - Wildwood falls in a very appealing and accessible location for both the local and regional populations. The site is located approximately 10 miles from St. Cloud; less than 2 miles from Interstate 94 (St. Joseph exit); 1 hour from the Twin Cities; 3 miles from the college of St. Benedict; and approximately a 1/2 mile from St. Johns University. Future plans have the Park connecting to the Lake Wobegon Trail and the City of St. Joseph has already constructed part of this trail.

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

Currently, there are no State Parks located within Stearns County and thus Kraemer Lake - Wildwood will fulfill the need that these facilities provide for a high quality outdoor recreation

opportunity for both local and regional residents. The number of public beaches located within Stearns County is lacking. The addition of the swimming beach in a serene natural setting would complement and not duplicate Quarry Park and Nature Preserve. The swimming facilities at Quarry Park are not very family friendly and appeal almost exclusively to the teen aged crowd. Whereas the facilities at Kraemer Lake -???? Wildwood would consists of a family friendly environment by having a gradually sloping sandy beach and not rock ledges to jump off of to enter the water. Also, the location of the beach at Kraemer Lake -???? Wildwood would be much closer to parking facilities in comparison to the ??? mile hike to the two swim quarries at Quarry Park.

Both Parks have hiking, skiing and biking opportunities. However these two facilities complement each other nicely because at Quarry Park the trails wind through heavily disturbed remnant industrial areas with rock outcrops and thus secondary vegetation is predominantly seen. Whereas at Kraemer Lake - ????Wildwood the trail winds through rolling hills, along/through old growth forest canopy, open prairie, wetlands which represents what a minimally undisturbed landscape looks like. Also, there is not a rentable shelter at Quarry Park and Nature Preserve in which large family or group gatherings can occur. It is proposed that Kraemer Lake -???? Wildwood would contain such facilities.

Attachments

Doc Name	Description	Url
Location Map	Location map added from general tab	1431531331235-Kraemer Lake Wildwood Location Map.pdf
Letters Of Support		1434990631236-LWTA Letter of Support.pdf
Letters Of Support		1434990652067-N Ski Club Letter of Support.pdf
Resolution		1435585969597-Resolution.pdf
Regional Map		1482503747127-Regional Map.JPG
Site Characteristic Images		1482503875969-Existing Buildings.JPG
Site Characteristic Images		1482503982715-Existing Trails.JPG
Site Characteristic Images		1482503993055-Existing Land Cover.JPG

Public Involvement Photos	1482505300056-Public Engagement Dates.JPG
Regional Demographic Photos	1482505882412-Demographics.JPG
Public Health Photos	1482505967486-Public Health Values.JPG
Economic Development Photos	1482506026523-Economic Benefits.JPG
Development Plan Overview Uploads	1482507078623-Development Plan.JPG
Development Plan Overview Uploads	1482507087762-Development Plan Overhead.JPG
Feature Uploader 361	1482507127506-Kipper Road.JPG
Feature Uploader 402	1482507577457-Parking.JPG
Public Involvement Photos	1482508397498-Open House Graphics.pdf
Public Involvement Photos	1482508413271-On-line Questionnaire.pdf
Feature Uploader 403	1482509091308-Future Picnic Shelter.JPG
Feature Uploader 404	1482509286305-Play Area.JPG
Feature Uploader 405	1482509343181-Beach Section.JPG
Feature Uploader 405	1482509407843-Water Access.JPG
Feature Uploader 406	1482509460608-Small Picnic Shelters.JPG
Feature Uploader 407	1482509535475-Caretakers Garage on Left.JPG
Feature Uploader 408	1482509590507-Prairie Resto Site.JPG
Feature Uploader 410	1482509644813-Proposed Trail Network Additions.JPG
Feature Uploader 411	1482509687187-Trail Head Parking.JPG
Ecological Land Resources Photos	1482509921842-Ecological Restoration & Management Plan.pdf
Programming Support Material	1482510251373-Maple Syrup.JPG
Programming Support Material	1482510304050-Pervious Pavers and Rentals.JPG

Ad Cost Projections Photos	1482511511409-Estimates.pdf
Site Characteristic Images	1482855620599-Maple Syrup Operation.JPG
Site Characteristic Images	1482855679835-Ecology.JPG
Recreational Trends Photos	1482856299458-Public Beaches.JPG
Recreational Trends Photos	1482856438522-Park Visitors.JPG
Recreational Trends Photos	1482856540963-What People Want.JPG
Recreational Trends Photos	1482856552173-Beach Distances.JPG
Criteria 1 Photos	1482856752486-Aerial View.JPG
Criteria 2 Photos	1482856802793-Existing Land Cover.JPG
Criteria 2 Photos	1482856816683-Ecology.JPG
Criteria 3 Photos	1482856842924-Regional Map.JPG
Feature Uploader 405	1482857419974-Water Access (Canoe).JPG
Ad Phasing Plan Photos	1482858949432-Development Phasing.JPG
Mo Plan Description Photos	1482864685799-Operational Costs Estimates.pdf
Ecological Land Resources Photos	1482865100750-Present Future Land Cover.JPG
Mo Plan Description Photos	1482866082273-2015 Estimated Operational Cost.JPG
User Metrics Photos	1482866390705-Visitor Use Survey.pdf
Outreach Marketing Photos	1482867386274-MapleSyrup16.pdf
Outreach Marketing Photos	1482867427544-kraemer_winter_ben_2016.pdf
Outreach Marketing Photos	1482867445143-kraemer_summer_ben_2015.pdf
Site Map Uploads 2	1485290038364-kraemer_summer_ben_2015.pdf
Site Map Uploads 2	1485290046405-kraemer_winter_ben_2016.pdf
Criteria 4 Photos	1485290237961-Regional Map.JPG
