



# Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet



## 2012-2013 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET

### Parks and Trails - Investing in our State Parks and Trails Legacy

Expenditures: \$16,201,000 FY 2012 / \$16,201,000 FY 2013

(Parks and Trails Fund)

#### **It is needed because**

Passage of the 2008 Clean Water, Land, and Legacy amendment established new funds to protect and enhance Minnesota's unique natural, cultural, and historical resources. Of these new funds, 14.25 percent is dedicated to support parks and trails of regional or statewide significance through the parks and trails fund. Under this budget proposal, the available funds will be used by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to advance the strategic directions as identified in the Parks and Trails Strategic Plan. DNR will renew and rehabilitate state parks and state trails; provide visitor services, outreach, facility maintenance, and resource protection; and assist with strategic high priority acquisition and development efforts.

DNR manages an outdoor recreation system that provides for the public use, enjoyment, and stewardship of the state's unique resources. DNR promotes the state park and trail system as a gateway to the outdoors by ensuring high quality, easy-to-access, safe recreational opportunities, especially for families and new participants. This is critical due to recent research that indicates broad-based participation declines in outdoor recreation due to reduced participation by young adults (20 to 40 year olds) and their children.

DNR is establishing a 21<sup>st</sup>-century state park and trail system that attracts future generations to experience the magic of Minnesota's outdoors while supporting the economic vitality of surrounding communities and ensuring the protection of the state's unique resources.

#### **Major program elements**

This proposal will help the state park and trail system provide high-quality, easy-to-access, and safe recreational opportunities to the public. This would be accomplished by building on the four strategic directions as identified in the 10/25 Year Park and Trail Strategic Plan.

- Connect people and the outdoors;
- Provide opportunities through acquisition, development, and redevelopment;
- Take care of what we have; and
- Coordinate among partners.

#### **Priority-setting**

Project priorities target strategic investments in the state park and trail system to optimize:

- Public safety;
- Outdoor recreation participation;
- Protection of existing investments;
- Renewal to state-of-the-art standards, including enhancing facility accessibility, increasing energy efficiency, and improving stormwater management;
- Public interest and opportunities for partnerships;
- Native landscape restoration and protection;
- Historical and cultural resource connections; and
- Acquisition and development of priority projects.

#### **Project locations**

Projects are located statewide in state parks, state trails, state recreation areas, and state forests.

#### **Key measures and outcomes**

- Ensure safe and high quality outdoor recreational opportunities through infrastructure renewal and by providing greater accessibility for people of all abilities;
- Carry out connection strategies that promote innovative programs, provide education, interpretation, outdoor skills training, and special events to engage the target market in outdoor activities and encourage natural resource stewardship;
- Use social media and technology as tools to connect with new users;
- Conduct ongoing market research and user surveys;

- Expand trail experiences that motivate new customers to visit;
- Manage and restore natural landscapes within the state park and trails system;
- Identify and provide rapid response to terrestrial and aquatic invasive species detections and infestations in state parks, recreation areas and along trails;
- High priority acquisitions that provide important connections, preserve high quality natural or cultural resources, or provide key recreational resources and complete a financial gap, are acquired;
- High priority development projects that complete significant projects or systems, utilize other funding before it expires, protect or enhance natural or cultural resources, are completed;
- Outdoor recreation information across all systems is jointly shared with the public; and
- Interested stakeholders are involved in recreation planning, or significant changes regarding operation and maintenance initiatives.

**Financial Implications (if appropriate)**

This one-time appropriation provides \$16.201 million in FY2012 and \$16.201 million in FY2013 from the parks and trails fund for state parks and state trails.

**For further information contact:**

Courtland Nelson, Director  
Division of Parks and Trails  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
500 Lafayette Rd., St. Paul, MN 55155  
651-259-5591  
[Courtland.Nelson@state.mn.us](mailto:Courtland.Nelson@state.mn.us)