

6. Cultural and Socioeconomic Resources:

Historical and Archaeological Context

The Upper Mississippi River valley has long been a place of habitation and a crossroads for many peoples, from the indigenous inhabitants to Euro-American explorers, soldiers and settlers. This section discusses the historical and cultural resources of the region, and is organized thematically rather than geographically, according to these broad interpretive themes:

- Presettlement Period
- Exploration and the Fur Trade
- Settlement and logging
- Transportation and power
- Camp Ripley development

Presettlement Period³

The **Woodland Period** (800 B.C. to Historic Contact) brought the beginnings of plant domestication and more intense settlement patterns, especially near stream and lake areas. The development of ceramics and mound construction for burial activities were significant advances in this time period.

The present-day locations of Little Falls and Crow Wing State Park were important centers of trade and occasional conflict prior to European settlement. The falls of the Mississippi were known to the Ojibwe as KaKaBikans (the little squarely cut-off rock). The confluence of the Mississippi and Crow Wing rivers is located along multiple routes of travel and trade. The first evidence of habitation dates to people of the **Woodland Tradition**, sometime after 700 B.C., who left burial mounds and pottery behind.

Both Dakota and Ojibwe people lived in the Crow Wing area in more recent times. Before European settlement, the Ojibwe moving south and west from the shores of Lake Superior began forcing the Dakota out of the region. Ojibwe peoples had largely displaced Dakota in the northeast by the mid-1700s. One of the last battles in this conflict was fought in 1768 within the present boundaries of Crow Wing State Park.

Numerous archaeological sites are found in and around Camp Ripley and throughout the Mississippi River valley, dating from both the presettlement and the historic periods.

Exploration and the Fur Trade

The **Historic Contact** period began in the late 1600s, when French fur traders moved into Minnesota followed in turn by English and American traders. Early explorers traversed the region and described the falls of the Mississippi (present-day Little Falls) in their journals. Lieutenant Zebulon Pike (1805), leading the first official American

³ <http://www.osa.admin.state.mn.us/mnarch/mnoverview.html>

expedition up the Mississippi, called it “a remarkable rapid in the river, opposite a high piney island.” Joseph Nicollet (1837) called it “petite chutes.” Henry Schoolcraft and J.C. Beltrami also noted the falls. The diaries of fur traders and missionaries also gave vivid accounts.

Records indicate several trading stations of fur traders at Crow Wing, beginning in 1826. By the 1840s, the village of Crow Wing had become “the center of Indian trading for all the upper country, the general supply store being located at this place... In 1866, the settlement and village contained seven families of whites, and about twenty-three of half-breeds and Chippewas, with a large transient population... The entire population was, from reliable estimates, about six hundred. Crow Wing, as a business point, has passed away, most of the buildings having been removed to Brainerd, and the remaining ones destroyed.” (*History of the Upper Mississippi Valley*, 1881, pp. 637-38). The village and post became the nucleus of the Crow Wing State Park, established in 1959, and comprise a National Register historic district.

The Chippewa Agency site, located near the confluence of the Gull and Crow Wing rivers, was another important prehistoric habitation and historic trading site. The site, now owned by Minnesota Power, includes earthen mounds and much evidence of Middle and Late Woodland occupation. The Chippewa Agency operated from around 1851 to 1868 when most of the Ojibwe in the area were relocated to the White Earth Reservation.

The major transportation routes of the 19th century were the Red River Trails, developed and used by traders travelling by oxcart between St. Paul and the Selkirk settlements of the upper Red River Valley (near present-day Winnipeg). The Red River carts hauled goods from St. Paul to the settlements and returned loaded with furs. The wooden two-wheeled ox carts, although crudely made and noisy, were efficient – a single ox could pull a cart with a load of up to 900 pounds. The drivers were primarily the Metis people of the Red River valley, descended from early French fur traders and native Cree and Ojibwe women.

Several trail routes were established from Pembina, at the U.S. – Canadian border, to St. Paul. The northernmost, known as the Woods Trail, traversed the Crow Wing area. The village of Crow Wing became a transfer point, where Canadian goods carried south from Pembina were exchanged for American merchandise carted north from St. Paul. A well-preserved fragment of the trail and the old Mississippi River crossing, are found in Crow Wing State Park.

Settlement and logging

The Ojibway Indian treaty of 1847 opened the area around Crow Wing to settlement. In 1849, Fort Ripley was established on the west bank of the Mississippi, within the current boundaries of Camp Ripley. As Minnesota’s second military post, it was constructed to establish a military presence on what was then the frontier of the Minnesota Territory and to serve as a buffer between the Dakota and Ojibwe, as well as a group of Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) being relocated to a nearby reservation. The fort remained in place until 1877, when several of the buildings were destroyed by fire, and it was determined to be no longer needed on the western frontier.

In the mid-1840’s settlers began to arrive in the Little Falls area. The milling power obtainable from the “little falls” in the Mississippi River attracted the attention of entrepreneurs.

CAMP RIPLEY/VETERANS STATE TRAIL

“On October 1, 1849, the Little Falls Mills and Land Company was formed and a dam was built, the first in a succession of four dams, each an improvement over its predecessor... Construction of the 1887 dam brought the boom era. Little Falls was literally “turned on” with electricity for powering the industries that were arriving. The Pine Tree Lumber Company operated by Charles Weyerhaeuser and R.D. Musser, and Hennepin Paper Company were recipients of the logs driven down river from the northern pineries. Immigrants arrived in large numbers, establishing a diverse ethnic community.⁴

Transportation and power

The Fort Ripley Military Road was developed in the 1850s between Point Douglas at the confluence of the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers and the fort. It was one of seven military wagon roads developed in the 1850s, in part to encourage the dissemination of settlers throughout the Minnesota Territory and facilitate trade with the Indians. Several fragments of the road still exist in Morrison County. In 1857, the federal government constructed a new road from Fort Ripley northward through Crow Wing.

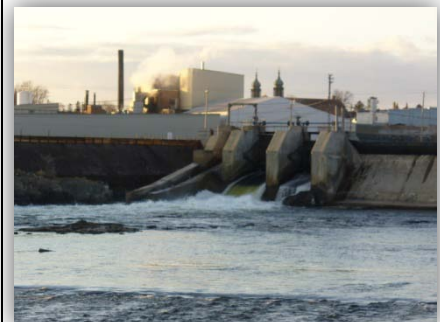
The coming of the railroads brought an end to the use of the Red River Trails. In 1874, the Northern Pacific Railroad bypassed the Village of Crow Wing and located its depot at Brainerd, a few miles upriver. Within a few years, the village was deserted. The Northern Pacific connected Sauk Rapids and points south with Duluth and Moorhead by 1880.

A series of dams and hydroelectric power plants were constructed on the Mississippi River and its tributaries beginning with the first Little Falls Dam in 1849. These include:

- The Blanchard Dam, built in 1911 at the Soo Line (former) railroad bridge, is considered eligible for listing on the National Register because it played an important role in development of Minnesota Power (the company still owns and operates the dam) and is the only state example of outdoor powerhouse design.
- The Sylvan Dam / Hydroelectric Development was developed to supply power for mining and new development on the Cuyuna Iron Range, including the towns of Brainerd, Crosby, Ironton, and Deerwood. The Cuyuna Range Power Co. built the dam and hydroelectric plant in 1912-13. It is considered eligible for National Register listing.
- The Pillager Hydroelectric Plant was built by the Cuyuna Range Power Co. in 1917 to supplement the power produced by the Sylvan Dam.
- The current Little Falls Hydroelectric Plant was used for power generation as early as the 1890s, but extensively modified through the 1930s.

Camp Ripley development

Camp Ripley, now the largest National Guard training base in the nation, was established in 1930 about six miles north of Little Falls, near the site of the former Fort Ripley. Most of the buildings at Camp Ripley were built between 1930 and 1942,



Little Falls Dam and Hydroelectric Plant

⁴ *An Informational Guide to Little Falls, Minnesota*,
http://www.cityoflittlefalls.com/images/pdfdocuments/LittleFalls_ResidentGuide.pdf

CAMP RIPLEY/VETERANS STATE TRAIL

mainly with labor provided by Depression work relief programs. Most of the buildings at the camp were designed by the camp's architect, Philip C. Bettenburg. The camp expanded north through the 1960s, and today encompasses about 53,000 acres.

As part of this phase of development, a new bridge (Bridge 4969) was designed by the Minnesota Department of Highways and constructed in 1930 to carry Trunk Highway 115 and a Great Northern Railroad track spur across the Mississippi River. A series of stone walls around the camp's perimeter were designed by Bettenburg and constructed between 1934 and 1942. The walls were constructed of a black stone known as Little Falls Black Granite, and laid without mortar (mortar was used on the gateposts).

In 1994 the SHPO determined that both the Camp Ripley Entrance Walls and Bridge 4969 were eligible for listing on the National Register. The walls are considered a "distinctive and well-preserved example of the 'National Park Service Rustic Style' with an interesting military motif." The excellent quality of the stonework, the use of indigenous materials and the labor-intensive construction techniques are significant. The bridge is considered significant because of its role in the development of the camp and because of additional stonewalls added to the structure in 1935.

Representative Historic Sites and Districts

As mentioned above, many of the bridges and dams throughout the search corridor are considered eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. However, relatively few sites are officially listed outside of the City of Little Falls. The listed sites and districts within or near the trail search corridor include the following:

Cass County

- The Chippewa Agency Historic District – includes significant cultural resources including building depressions and fields of the agency, remains of a prehistoric village, and several burial mounds. Owned by Minnesota Power.

Crow Wing County

- Crow Wing State Park Historic District – includes Precontact, fur trade and lumbering era resources. The boundary follows the 1970 park statutory boundary and includes 15 cultural resources, mainly archaeological sites.
- Red River Trail – Crow Wing Section (within State Park) – a 10-foot side corridor one and a half miles long, extending through the town site to a ford site on the Mississippi.
- Northern Pacific Railroad Shops Historic District, Brainerd – a large-scale repair and service operation for railroad headquarters, built 1882-1925

Morrison County

- Little Falls Commercial Historic District – commercial buildings (1887-1936) largely of local brick with granite trim, reflecting the city's rise as a lumbering, agricultural and tourism center. Many individual buildings in Little Falls are also listed.
- Charles A. Lindbergh State Park WPA/Rustic Style Historic Resources – includes the log and stone buildings/structures constructed 1938-39 by WPA workers



Camp Ripley entrance walls and gate

on parkland donated in memory of U.S. Congressman Charles A. Lindbergh Sr. by his family, including his son, famed aviator Charles Jr.

- Charles A. Lindbergh House (National Historic Landmark and State Historic Site) – frame summer house built in 1906-07 for U.S. Congressmen Charles A. Lindbergh Sr.; occupied until 1920 by his son Charles Jr.
- Our Lady of Angels Academy – a brick parochial boarding school built in 1911 and enlarged in 1931 to serve elementary students, located on the Mississippi River north of Little Falls.
- Little Elk Heritage Preserve – a 93-acre tract that includes a rich collection of archaeological sites at the confluence of the Little Elk and Mississippi rivers about two miles north of the City of Little Falls. It includes the remains of Fort Duquesne, a French wintering fort probably built ca. 1752 by Joseph Marin to control Mississippi headwaters trade. The preserve also includes an 1800s Ojibwe Mission and a former settlement called Elk City. The preserve is owned by DNR and managed as a satellite unit of Charles A. Lindbergh State Park; it is currently closed to the public.
- Fort Ripley archaeological site on Camp Ripley property.

Socioeconomic Resources:

The table below shows the population changes in the counties and cities in the trail area between 1990 and 2010. All three counties and each city except for Fort Ripley have experienced population increases in the past two decades. The City of Baxter has grown nearly 37% and Crow Wing County has grown over 13%.

As of March 2012, the unemployment rates for the trail area were as follows: Cass County, 11.4%; Crow Wing County, 9.3%; and Morrison County, 9.1%. The statewide unemployment rate for Minnesota during March 2012 was 6.5%. The unemployment rate for Brainerd was higher than the statewide and surrounding county rates at 14.2%. These rates are not seasonally adjusted.

Tourism, service industries, health care and education are the main industries for the trail area. Nearly all of the communities offer opportunities for lodging, shopping and food services. The Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail could provide many new opportunities for increased tourism in the area, bringing in outside money and positive financial impacts to the area.

Table 1: Population Change, 2000-2010

Counties	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
Cass	21,791	27,150	28,567	5.22%
Crow Wing	44,249	55,099	62,500	13.43%
Morrison	29,604	31,604	33,198	5.04%
Cities				

Brainerd	12,353	13,178	13,590	3.13%
Baxter	3,695	5,555	7,610	36.99%
Pillager	306	420	469	11.67%
Randall	571	535	650	21.5%
Fort Ripley	92	74	69	-6.76%
Little Falls	7,232	7,719	8,343	8.08%

Financial Impacts of Trail Development

Communities that support trails and respond to the needs of trail users have seen positive effects on their local economies. DNR trail studies indicate that tourists attracted to the trails use local facilities for eating, shopping and lodging.

The DNR estimates that for five trails surveyed between 2007 and 2009, summer spending totaled nearly \$5 million⁵ Most of that spending (95% in total) comes from users who reside outside the local economy of the trail, and the spending represents “new” dollars to the local economy. Trail users who have traveled a long distance to the trail, not surprisingly, outspend local users by a factor of about 20 on a daily basis, primarily on food, travel, and overnight accommodations.

Trails also appear to increase property values and enhance the quality of life in the communities through which they run. Homes close to trails have become increasingly desirable. A number of studies of existing bike trails have shown that the average value of property near the trails is similar to or slightly above the value of other properties in the area.⁶

Trails also yield significant public health benefits. There is growing interest in the multiple benefits to public health that can result from the use of trails for outdoor recreation. Trail use has been shown to be valuable not only in combating obesity and related public health problems but also in reducing stress, improving mental health, and encouraging healthy lifestyles. To the extent that trail use replaces motor vehicle use, it can also result in monetary savings from lower air pollution, congestion, and oil imports.

⁵ Kelly, Tim. “Status of Summer Trail Use (2007-2009) on Five Paved State Bicycle Trails and Trends Since the 1990s.” Trails surveyed in the 2007-2009 period were the Paul Bunyan, Heartland, Root River, Douglas, and Paul Bunyan – Bemidji State Park segment.

⁶ See “Home Sales Near Two Massachusetts Rail-Trails,” 2005.
<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/dellapennasales.html>

7. Implementation

Chapter 86A.09 of Minnesota Statutes requires that a master plan be prepared for state trails before trail development can begin – although planning, design, and land acquisition can take place before the plan is complete. Trail users and trail advocates need to recognize that the completion of a master plan is only one step in what typically is a long process of implementation.

This section outlines the next steps that need to be accomplished before trail construction. There are four primary task areas that need to be completed before the Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail can be constructed.

- Additional feasibility study and/or alternatives analysis (beyond the initial evaluation of alignment options for each segment/sub-segment outlined in this plan) if needed
- Landowner contact and land acquisition
- Preliminary engineering, environmental approvals, funding
- Final design and construction documents

Overview of the Implementation Process

Throughout the planning process for this trail, local trail advocates have asked for guidance as to how to implement the plan – that is, how to establish feasible alignments, contact landowners, and work with DNR regional staff on land acquisition. The process can be lengthy and complex.

The first generation of state trails in Minnesota were developed primarily on abandoned rail rights-of-way that state or local governments were able to acquire. Since that time, most of the remaining abandoned rail rights-of-way in the state have reverted to private ownership. The next generation of trails must cross a variety of public and private lands, making them much more challenging to develop than the rail-trails of the past.

DNR Parks and Trails staff work with individual landowners to acquire land or easements on a willing seller basis, keeping in mind that a series of acquisitions on adjoining properties will be needed in order to create a trail segment with a logical beginning and end. In other words, a trail segment should begin at an existing park or town center that can serve as a trailhead, preferably with parking and restroom facilities, and end at some type of destination – a city, a park, a wildlife preserve, or a historic site.

In this process, DNR acquisition and development staff frequently work with city and county governments, conservation organizations, and local trail interest groups to assess the feasibility of a particular trail alignment. Acquisition is done on a willing seller basis. The DNR strongly discourages local governments from using other means.

Land can be acquired or otherwise set aside for trail development through a variety of methods:

- A trail may be located on non-DNR public land, such as county or city-owned land, through a cooperative agreement.

- A local government or not-for-profit organization can acquire land from a willing seller and then sell it to the DNR.
- Local interest groups and/or DNR staff may make the initial contact with landowners, then DNR staff will assess the feasibility of a particular trail alignment and complete the land acquisition.

No matter which method is used, advance coordination with DNR staff is essential in order to ensure that the selected trail alignment is feasible to develop.

In the course of trail implementation, it may become apparent that a needed trail alignment will not be obtainable for some time – for example, until a parcel is sold or passed to another family member. In such situations, it may be advisable to assess the feasibility of **interim routes on road shoulders or on lightly-traveled streets**. Street routes may be particularly important in cities where there is little undeveloped or publically-owned land available.

The following is a typical sequence of events in trail planning and development. However, the steps will likely overlap and the process will often require several rounds of feasibility assessment and landowner contacts.

- **Complete the master plan.** The plan identifies a broad search corridor for the trail, within which one or more alternative alignments are identified. The intent of the plan is to provide flexibility while identifying the most feasible alignments, rather than “locking in” a specific route.
- **Explore feasibility of each alignment.** Assess land ownership, road right-of-way width (is there enough room for a trail within the right-of-way?), connectivity, and physical conditions such as slope, wetlands and natural and cultural resources. The alignment must allow state and federal design guidelines and rules to be met, including trail width, shoulders, curvature, accessibility, etc. Therefore, it is important for local governments and trail groups to coordinate their efforts with DNR staff.
- **Initial informal landowner contact.** It is often preferable for landowners to be contacted by local trail supporters rather than DNR staff. Landowner concerns frequently relate to privacy, safety and liability, and there are many information resources available to address these concerns.
- **Formal landowner contact; complete acquisition process.** As mentioned above and with proper coordination, DNR or other entities may take the lead on land acquisition.
- **Trail engineering and design.** The design process offers a final opportunity to assess feasibility, including the need to avoid sensitive natural or cultural resources and address constraints such as wetlands or steep slopes. Trail alignments may shift during the design process. Also note that design standards may differ depending on the funding source for the trail – for example, MnDOT trail standards may differ from DNR standards.
- **Construction** on one or more segments, while the processes of negotiation and design continue on others.
- **Ongoing maintenance and stewardship.** Trail associations often act as “eyes on the trail” to monitor conditions, notify DNR of concerns and volunteer on

BASIC DESIGN STANDARDS FOR PAVED, SHARED-USE STATE TRAILS

The following standards briefly highlight key points from the DNR publication *Trail Planning, Design and Development Guidelines*. See the full document for more details on the design of many types of trails.

- Pavement width: 10 feet is typical; 12 feet an option in high-use areas, 8 feet is an option where limitations exist or lower use is expected.
- Shoulders: 2 to 5 feet, depending on conditions such as side-slopes and hazards
- Maximum grade: 5% except where accessibility exceptions apply.
- 2% maximum cross-slope (the slope from one side of a trail to the other)
- Corners gently curved to meet standards rather than right angles
- 100' wide corridor width where possible to allow for buffers, storm water control and grading.

Trail Planning, Design and Development Guidelines is available through the DNR or Minnesota's Bookstore, http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/publications/trails_waterways/index.html

certain efforts. Local units of government may provide trail maintenance via a cooperative agreement.

- **Orientation and Interpretation.** All trails are developed with traffic safety and directional signs. Some trails provide interpretive signs that highlight notable natural and cultural resources and landscape features. An interpretive plan may be developed to identify themes and features that will be interpreted.

Actions Local Governments Can Take to Support Trail Development:

City and county governments can play an important role in trail development through their planning and development review processes, including the following:

- **Integrate the trail concept into community plans**, including comprehensive and land use plans, park and open space plans, and transportation plans.
- Through the local park and trail plan, **link the state trail corridor to local and regional trails**; integrate it with local parks.
- **Seek opportunities to meet multiple goals through trail development** – i.e., to improve water quality, protect natural areas, provide educational opportunities, or provide additional transportation options.
- **Require park and trail set-asides.** Through their subdivision ordinances, cities and counties may require that developers dedicate a reasonable portion of land within a development to public use for such things as streets, utilities, drainage, and parks, trails and recreational facilities.⁷ (If the set-aside is for a state trail, coordinate with DNR staff in advance.)
- **Work with DNR staff to seek funding for state trail acquisition and development.** State trails are typically funded by the State Legislature via bonding money or special appropriations, or through the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Some federal grants are also eligible to be used in conjunction with state funding for development. Transportation enhancement project grants and other transportation funding sources may also be used for state trails. It is important for local government representatives to work closely with DNR regional staff in any pursuit of state trail funding.

The Division of Parks and Trails is currently developing a State Park and State Trail System Plan which will address priorities for trail acquisition and development in light of current funding realities. In addition, the system plan will include an assessment of the status of existing legislatively authorized state trails. This assessment will determine whether some existing legislatively authorized state trails could be better positioned for Legacy grants and other funding as trails of regional significance. The Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail will be included in this analysis.

⁷ Minn. Stat. §462.358 subd 2b (a) applies to cities; §394.25 subd. 7(c) to counties

- **Seek funding for local and regional trail connections.** Local and regional trails can be funded through a variety of sources, available through DNR and other agencies, including:

Parks and Trails Legacy Grant Program -

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/pt_legacy.html

Local Trail Connections Grant Program -

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_local.html

Federal Recreation Trail Grant Program (also available for state trails) -

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_federal.html

Regional Trail Grant Program

http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/trails_regional.html

Transportation Enhancement Projects awarded by MnDOT with Federal Highway Administration funding (also available for state trails)

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/index.htm>

Safe Routes to School: funding for local trail connections through

MnDOT <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/saferoutes/index.html>

Outstanding Issues for Trail Implementation

This plan presents an initial evaluation of trail alignment options in each segment. Each segment and/or sub-segment will differ in the level of additional feasibility study/alternatives analyses needed, based on the number of potential trail alignment options remaining after the initial evaluation. If several alignment options exist, more work will be needed to narrow the options to a preferred alignment. Every segment or sub-segment will be required to complete the preliminary engineering, environmental approvals and secure funding before final design and construction documents can be prepared.

The CRVST covers a very large study area and it is unlikely that funding for the entire CRVST will become available all at one time. Funding will probably come from a variety of sources at different times throughout the trail development process. Because of this, it is important to identify the outstanding issues in each trail segment, as well as the complexity of these issues, so that when funding is allocated, the trail development and construction process can be implemented efficiently. Table 1 at the end of this section provides a snapshot of the variables that were considered in developing the trail implementation plan.

It is important to note trail implementation initiatives will largely be the responsibility of local trail advocates. Therefore, the identification of the level of outstanding complexity of outstanding issues in this section is merely meant to guide these efforts and is not meant to suggest a certain order of trail segment development. As suggested in the following paragraphs, each segment of the study area has differing levels of outstanding issues; however, local initiatives will drive the ultimate development of the CRVST.

As shown in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 25, the complexity of outstanding issues for trail implementation for each segment of the proposed CRVST was identified. Below is a summary of each segment and a review of the outstanding issues related to trail development, which should be used to guide local trail advocates on where to focus implementation efforts.

Low Complexity of Outstanding Issues

CRVST segments with little or no additional feasibility studies/alternative analyses required were identified as having low complexity of outstanding issues. Segment 2 (2A, 2B and 2C), Segment 4 (4A and 4B) and Segment 6 fall into this category for the following reasons:

- **Segment 2** - The willingness of Camp Ripley to work with local trail advocates in the development of the CRVST on a portion of property (both on-post and off-post) is a significant factor streamlining implementation of portions of Segment 2. In addition, the topography and natural features of this area (wetlands, lakes, etc.) make deviation from the CSAH 1 roadway alignment difficult. Therefore, trail alignment options were able to be narrowed to the corridor as shown in Figures 7-9.

If all of Segment 2 were built at the same time, a connection between Pillager and Randall would be provided. Although this would provide a useful connection between two communities, the function of the state trail would be somewhat limited until it can connect to other segments of the CRVST. One issue that will need to be resolved in Segment 2A is how to cross the Crow Wing River in Pillager. Additional study is needed to determine if the existing CSAH 1 bridge could be widened to accommodate trail users or if a separate bridge to accommodate trail users would be required. The existing CSAH 1 bridge is planned to be re-decked in the next few years. Cass and Morrison Counties should work together to investigate the feasibility of widening the deck for trail use.

The implementation of the CRVST will need to take place in phases and construction of segments like Segment 2 that have two logical endpoints (Randall and Pillager) and few issues standing in the way of trail development should be actively pursued.

- **Segment 4** – Similar to Segment 2, there are few trail alignment options for the CRVST between the Camp Ripley entrance and Crow Wing State Park. Lands adjacent to the Mississippi River are largely under private ownership and trail development through this area would be challenging. Therefore, it is likely that the development of the CRVST will occur within the MN 371 corridor. An existing ATV trail is already designated in the right-of-way along the east side of MN 371. The implementation of Segment 4 provides two logical endpoints with a location for a rest area/interpretive site at the Fort Ripley/Nokasippi Historic Monument approximately mid-way between Camp Ripley and the state park. Access to the Fort Ripley ATV trails east of MN 371 would also be provided for ATV trail users in this segment.
- **Segment 6** – Although, two trail alignment options exist for Segment 6, it is not anticipated that significant additional alternatives analyses will be required. The main issue that needs to be resolved is which side of the river the CRVST will be located on. The City of Little Falls has expressed preference to keep the trail on the west side of the Mississippi River south of MN 27 so that it provides access to the Charles A. Lindberg State Park and utilizes the CSAH 52 (Great River Road). This trail alignment on the west side of the river also provides direct access to the Soo Line Regional Trail at the Blanchard Dam. Several motorized trail alignments also exist for Segment 6. However, it is anticipated

that additional discussions with trail advocates could result in the identification of a preferred alignment for motorized uses as well.

Although the function of the state trail will again be somewhat limited until all segments are constructed, the lack of major issues in Segment 6 suggests trail advocates could focus implementation efforts here. Once Segment 6 is completed, it will create a link for non-motorized uses between the Charles A. Lindbergh State Park and the Soo Line Trail, and for motorized uses between the Soo Line Regional Trail and Camp Ripley (if US 10 right-of-way is used).

When complete, the segments listed above will provide a link between Pillager and Randall, Crow Wing State Park to the Camp Ripley entrance, and from southern Little Falls to the Soo Line Regional Trail.

Medium Complexity of Outstanding Issues

Segment 3B and Segment 5 require some additional alternatives analyses and have a few issues needing to be addressed prior to construction, so they were categorized as having a medium complexity of outstanding issues for the following reasons:

- **Segment 3B** – This segment could be built prior to completing Segment 3A because it does not require the construction of a new bridge and would connect Camp Ripley to the City of Little Falls. It is categorized as of medium complexity because it does have several viable trail alignment options for consideration. Therefore, some additional analysis of alternatives will be required. The main outstanding issue in this segment is to determine which side of the river the CRVST trail should be located on and whether or not motorized and nonmotorized trail uses should be on parallel treadways or on separate alignments. However, these remaining issues are not significant and through additional coordination with the City of Little Falls and trail advocacy and other interest groups, could be resolved without major delay.
- **Segment 5** – This segment covers the City of Little Falls. The city offers many destinations, connections, and points of interest which has led to the development of several trail alignment options through the city. Segment 5 is categorized as having a medium complexity of outstanding issues because it does have several viable alignment options still on the table. Additionally, the City needs additional time for consideration of their policies on motorized trail uses through town. As a result, some additional analysis of alternatives will be required. The main issue yet to be resolved is which side of the Mississippi River the trail would be located and what if any river crossings would be required. The City has expressed a preference to locate the trail across the MN 27 Bridge. Since this bridge is programmed for improvements in MnDOT's 10-year plan, the need for additional width to accommodate the CRVST on the bridge was not identified as a highly complex issue. Close coordination with MnDOT to discuss bridge improvement plans will be required.

When complete, the construction of Segments 3B and Segment 5 will provide a direct connection between the Soo Line Regional Trail and the Crow Wing State Park (assuming the "low complexity" segments have previously been constructed).

High Complexity of Outstanding Issues

Segments that still have multiple viable trail alignment options due to several complex outstanding issues that need to be studied further were categorized as having high complexity of outstanding issues. This also includes segments that require either existing highway bridge reconstruction (to widen it) or construction of a separate bridge to accommodate trail traffic, if the bridge is not currently programmed for improvements. Segment 1 (1A and 1B) and Segment 3A were placed in this category for the following reasons:

- **Segment 1** – This segment is comprised of two sub-segments with differing levels of outstanding issues. Segment 1A runs from Crow Wing State Park to approximately CSAH 36 (near the connection of the potential Cass CSAH 18 trail to the Gull Lake trail system). Several viable alignment options exist for this segment and require further analysis before a preferred alignment can be chosen. The outstanding issues in this segment include the feasibility of a bridge over the Mississippi River in Crow Wing State Park and the feasibility of using Minnesota Power land surrounding the Gull River and Crow Wing River.

The resolution of these outstanding issues will require additional coordination with Minnesota Power and DNR natural and cultural resource managers. Additionally, if Minnesota Power land can be utilized, the need for another trail bridge (over the Gull River) will need to be considered. Bridges add time and cost to a trail project but may be at the same time unavoidable or on the positive side, could significantly add to the functionality and attractiveness of a trail.

Segment 1A was categorized as having a high complexity of outstanding issues because it will require additional work and coordination before funding can be sought and applied to this segment. Trail advocates should continue pursuing and working through these issues so this segment is ready to move forward.

Segment 1B runs from CSAH 36/MN 210 to and through the City of Pillager. Constraints such as the proximity of existing development to the Crow Wing River, railroad and state highway in this segment resulted in the identification of one primary trail alignment option in this area. However, additional design work will be necessary to determine the ultimate location of the trail alignment within this area in proximity to the highway and railroad. Because of the multiple agencies and landowners as well as the railroad that will need to be involved in these discussions, this segment was classified as having high complexity of outstanding issues.

- **Segment 3A** – This segment connects Randall to the Camp Ripley entrance and MN 371. Segment 3A was identified as having a high complexity of outstanding issues due to the need to construct a separate bridge for trail users over the Mississippi River. The existing MN 115 Bridge is considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, and reconstruction to widen the bridge is not feasible. The historic eligibility of the MN 115 Bridge may have an impact on the location of a new trail bridge in this area due to visibility impacts to the historic structure. Because of these issues, additional studies of how to connect the trail through this area and across the river will be needed. Trail advocates should continue pursuing and working through these issues to ensure this segment is ready to move forward when the opportunity arises.

When complete, these segments will provide the final missing link in the overall CRVST, filling the gap between Crow Wing State Park and Pillager and from Randall to the Camp Ripley entrance.

Key Steps for Trail Implementation

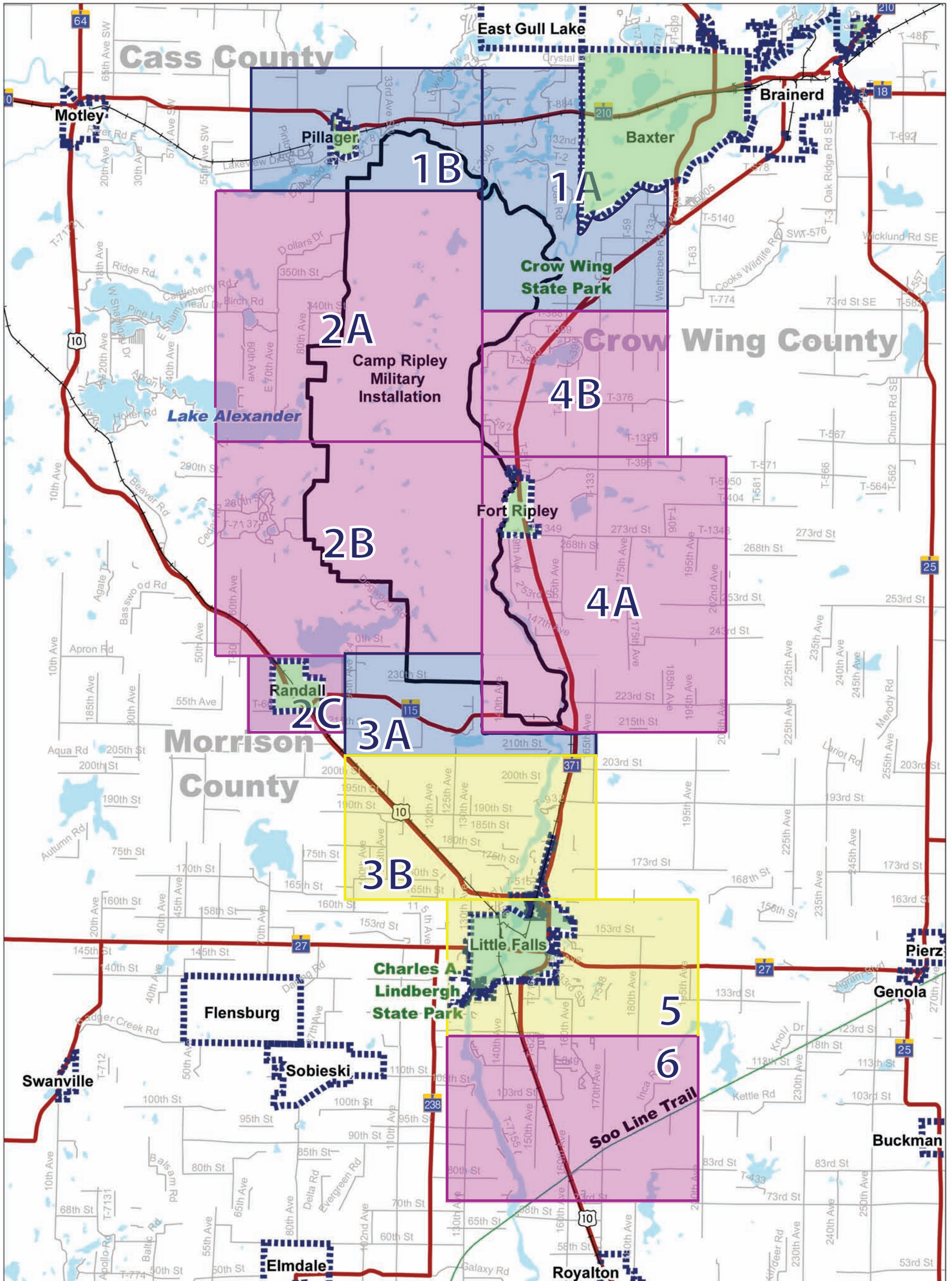
Trail implementation will involve multiple cities, townships, and counties, as well as several interest groups (i.e., trail user advocates/clubs, etc.) and state and national agencies (DNR, MnDOT, National Park Service, etc.). Since each of these agencies and key stakeholders has different interests and priorities, it is recommended that a CRVST Committee be established to ensure representation by the different interests and agencies and to organize trail development efforts. The committee's mission should be to continue communication and advocacy efforts for trail development. It should serve as a resource to guide the efforts of interested groups and advocates and to ensure these individual trail development efforts are organized and work towards the ultimate development of the entire CRVST corridor.

It is recommended that the CRVST Committee include representation from the following agencies/stakeholders at a minimum: Region 5 Development Commission, Cass County, Crow Wing County, Morrison County, DNR, MnDOT, the National Park Service, and the Cities of Baxter, Brainerd, Pillager, Randall, Little Falls and Fort Ripley, as well as local trail advocates/interest groups. Other local agencies and stakeholders should be invited to participate in this committee as desired.

TABLE 1 – Implementation Variables

Segment	Segment Length (miles)		Number of Alignment Options		Additional Alternatives Analysis Required	Provides a logical trail connection (if built independently)?	Comments	Complexity of Outstanding Issues
	Multi-Use	ATV Only	Multi-Use	ATV Only				
Crow Wing State Park to Pillager								
1A	12	*	4	*	Yes	Yes	Bridge over Mississippi River in Crow Wing State Park? Ability to cross Gull River south of MN 210?	High
1B	6	*	1	*	No	Yes	Location of trail in relation to MN 210, railroad and platted properties.	High
Pillager to Randall								
2A	9	*	1	*	No	Yes	Function of trail better if these segments were built at the same time - connect Pillager to Randall. CSAH 1 Bridge expansion for trail or new bridge in Segment 2A?	Low
2B	8	*	1	*	No	Yes		Low
2C	3	*	2	*	No	No		Low
Randall to Camp Ripley and Camp Ripley to Little Falls								
3A	10	*	2	*	Yes	Yes	Requires new bridge over Mississippi River (existing bridge is eligible for National Register). Ability to use MN 115 corridor?	High
3B	6	10	3	2	Yes	No	Many trail options. Need to decide which side of river. Function of trail best if this segment was constructed at the same time as Segment 5 - connect Camp Ripley area to Little Falls (without new bridge over Mississippi River)	Medium
Camp Ripley to Crow Wing State Park								
4A	9	9	2	1	No	Yes	Function of trail better if these segments were built at the same time - connect Camp Ripley to Crow Wing State Park.	Low
4B	11	11	2	1	No	Yes		Low
Little Falls Area								
5	4	6	4	3	Yes	Yes	Many trail options. Need to decide which side of river. Function of trail best if built with Segment 6 - connect Little Falls to the Soo Line Trail.	Medium
Little Falls to Soo Line Trail								
6	8	8	3	2	Yes	Yes	Function of trail best if built with Segment 5 - connect Little Falls to the Soo Line Trail.	Low

* In many segments, the alignment options have been identified as multi-use at this point. Further study is needed to determine how motorized and non-motorized uses can be accommodated. In other segments, some alignment options have been identified as motorized only. These options are identified particularly in areas where there are known constraints to congruent motorized and non-motorized uses.

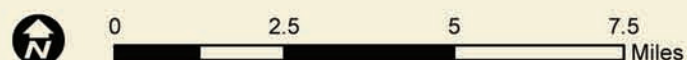


Complexity of Outstanding Issues for Trail Implementation

Camp Ripley/Veterans State Trail Corridor Study

Figure 26

September 2012



Legend

- State Highways
- Railroad
- Camp Ripley Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Low Complexity of Outstanding Issues
- Medium Complexity of Outstanding Issues
- High Complexity of Outstanding Issues
- Local Community Initiative Required



Source: MnDNR, MnDOT, MPCA