



# *Department of Natural Resources Fact Sheet*



## **2010-2011 BIENNIAL BUDGET FACT SHEET Parks and Trails - Parks and Trails Fund Grants \$4,128,000 FY 2010 / \$8,616,000 FY 2011**

### **It is needed because**

The passage of the 2008 Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment created the Parks and Trails Fund, an important new funding source for regional parks and trails statewide. Of the total dollars generated by the Amendment, 14.5 percent will be dedicated to this fund to support parks and trails of regional or statewide significance. Of this amount, 24 percent will be used for grants for regional parks and trails statewide.

Regional parks and trails are essential for providing close to home outdoor recreation opportunities. Yet we are not meeting existing needs. A recent study by the University of Minnesota identified a need for more than 26,000 acres of additional regional parkland in greater Minnesota. Governments often lack sufficient resources to acquire these lands and to develop adequate recreational facilities to meet the needs of the regional area. In addition, opportunities for governments to acquire and protect larger parcels are rapidly diminishing as larger landholdings are broken into smaller parcels for development. The Regional Park Grant and Regional Trail Grant programs help governments fund the acquisition of regional parks and trails. These regional facilities provide opportunities for people of all ages to enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation while protecting important habitat for fish, wildlife and native plant communities.

Since 1997, the DNR has awarded 25 Regional Park Grants and 59 Regional Trail Grants to communities throughout Minnesota. In 2008, DNR's Regional Park Grants Program (M.S. 85.019, subd. 2b) and

Regional Trail Grants Program (M.S. 85.019, subd. 4b) provided \$850,000 in available funds.

By providing state grants to leverage local investments, we can accelerate the protection and restoration of Minnesota's natural resources and maintain a sustainable and resilient outdoor recreation infrastructure. This funding recommendation represents a significant change to address the need for acquisition and development of parks and trails of regional significance.

### **Major program elements**

Grants will be made for acquisition and development of regional parks and trails through an annual competitive grant application process. A local match will be required. Grants will be made on a reimbursement basis, will conform to state grant management policies and will ensure that state investments in regional parkland are protected for future generations to enjoy. Government recipients are responsible for ongoing operations and maintenance of the facilities.

### **Priority-setting – Regional Park and Trail Grants**

Projects will help address the goals and strategies outlined in the *2008-2012 Minnesota's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* ([mndnr.gov/aboutdnr/reports/scorp/index.html](http://mndnr.gov/aboutdnr/reports/scorp/index.html)). These strategies will help address SCORP's overall goal of increasing participation in outdoor recreation by all Minnesotans. The grant programs are integral to the department's strategy to engage more citizens in nature-based outdoor recreation. These partnership programs are critical components of expanding outreach to government.

### **Project locations**

Project locations are statewide, with parks and trails of regional significance dispersed throughout Minnesota.

### **Key Measures and Outcomes**

- ◆ Help governments acquire sufficient regional park and trail land to meet the needs of present and future generations
- ◆ Help governments develop regional park and trail facilities to meet present and future needs
- ◆ Administer the grant programs in conformance with state grant management policies
- ◆ Leverage significant local funds and resources through match requirements
- ◆ Increase access to natural resource based outdoor recreation opportunities

### **Financial implications**

This proposal requests \$4,128,000 in FY 2010 and \$8,616,000 in FY 2011 for parks and trails fund grants.

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