

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **CUYUNA CONNECTION AND CUYUNA HILLS TRAILS PROJECT**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
1.	Delaney, Jon	August 19, 2019
2.	Etzel, Jim	August 19, 2019
3.	Rouda, Ben	August 20, 2019
4.	Schachtele, Bryan	August 21, 2019
5.	Seamens, Michael	August 21, 2019
6.	Blackstock, Frank	August 21, 2019
7.	Engelstad, Scott	August 22, 2019
8.	Gujer, Traci	August 22, 2019
9.	Gujer, Mark	August 22, 2019
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12.	Krajcovic, David	August 22, 2019
13.	DeBoer, Denice	August 22, 2019
14.	Hagen, Sean	August 22, 2019
15.	Berg, John	August 22, 2019
16.	Drayton, Thomas	August 22, 2019
17.	Ford, Jess	August 22, 2019
18.	Kent, Jay	August 22, 2019

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
19.	Schumacher, Michael Rex	August 22, 2019
20.	Clausen, Ted	August 22, 2019
21.	Schroeder, Marcia	August 22, 2019
22.	Babler, Austin	August 23, 2019
23.	Manlick, Mary L.	August 23, 2019
24.	Sedlacek, Andrea	August 23, 2019
25.	Stealy, Belinda	August 23, 2019
26.	Anderson, Ryan	August 23, 2019
27.	Opsal, Greg	August 24, 2019
28.	Freese, Steve	August 25, 2019
29.	Browning, Charlie	August 25, 2019
30.	Snyder, Travis	August 26, 2019
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32.	Beer, Mike	August 26, 2019
33.	Harwell, William	August 26, 2019
34.	Ziegler Kelly	August 26, 2019
35.	Bladow, Steven	August 27, 2019
36.	Risnes, Barb	August 27, 2019

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
37.	Meller, Laurie	August 29, 2019
38.	Meller, Greg	August 29, 2019
39.	Ouska, Mark	August 29, 2019
40.	Abfalter, Tyler	August 30, 2019
41.	Goodsell, Lori	August 30, 2019
42.	Peterson, Chris	August 30, 2019
43.	Johnson, Jennifer	August 30, 2019
44.	Loose, Alan	August 30, 2019
45.	Hakes, John	August 31, 2019
46.	Heinen, Korrine	September 1, 2019
47.	Swoboda, Alison	September 2, 2019
48.	Bergren, Paul	September 2, 2019
49.	Martone, Luke	September 3, 2019
50.	Burns, John	September 4, 2019
51.	Schmieg, Jeffrey	September 4, 2019
52.	McCarvill, Jim	September 4, 2019
53.	Marko, Bobby	September 4, 2019
54.	O'Reilly, William	September 4, 2019

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
55.	Nord, Annie	September 5, 2019
56.	Brown, Todd	September 5, 2019
57.	Severson, Johnny	September 5, 2019
58.	Nord, Steve	September 5, 2019
59.	Weis, Dustin	September 5, 2019
60.	Irvine, Bob	September 8, 2019
61.	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Kromar, Karen	September 10, 2019
62.	Vosacek, Lora	September 10, 2019
63.	Holznagel, Clayton and Danette	September 10, 2019
64.	Holmvig, Jessica	September 10, 2019
65.	Nelson, Aaron	September 11, 2019
66.	Young, Justin	September 11, 2019
67.	Lewis, Vern	September 11, 2019
68.	Bajek, Jeffrey	September 11, 2019
69.	Ruttger, Chris	September 11, 2019
70.	Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors - Larson, Matt	September 11, 2019
71.	Monda, Tyler	September 12, 2019

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
72.	Rider, Red	September 12, 2019
73.	Linn, John	September 12, 2019
74.	Kirkman, Paul	September 12, 2019
75.	Koop, Anthony	September 13, 2019
76.	Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corporation and Cuyuna Range Economic Development Incorporated - Rehbein, Megan	September 13, 2019
77.	Dallas, Julie	September 13, 2019
78.	Swanson, Bruce	September 14, 2019
79.	Nelson, Sarah	September 16, 2019
80.	Carlson, Chuck	September 17, 2019
81.	Yerg, Mark and Jerri	September 17, 2019
82.	Rost, Amy	September 17, 2019
83.	Opsahl, Suzzane	September 17, 2019
84.	Curtis, Cristina	September 17, 2019
85.	McCunn, Julia and Zachmann, Maria	September 17, 2019
86.	Huisinga, Laura	September 17, 2019
87.	Thompson, Michael	September 17, 2019
88.	Thomas, Dylan	September 17, 2019

<b>Commenter</b>	<b>Organization/Name</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
89.	Miller, Nikki and Brian	September 18, 2019
90.	Ingersoll, Brad	September 18, 2019
91.	McGee, Sarah	September 18, 2019
92.	Calder, Walt	September 18, 2019
93.	Sova, Lisa - City of Crosby	September 18, 2019
94.	Sellner, Jim	September 18, 2019
95.	State Historic Preservation Office - Beimers, Sarah	September 19, 2019
96.	Derks, Jackie	September 19, 2019
97.	Miller, Sean	September 19, 2019
98.	Browning, Charlie	September 20, 2019

## Commenter 1

**From:** Jon Delaney  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 19, 2019 2:22:16 PM

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Hello,

I'm very excited by this proposal! We drive at the moment from up by Rabbit lake, so it'll be nice to be able to ride trails starting from the city! Convenient for us!

Jon

**Jon Delaney** Financial Analyst, Physician and APP Services, Integrated Healthcare Strategies

Direct: 612.337.1142

[Jon\\_Delaney@ajg.com](mailto:Jon_Delaney@ajg.com)

[www.IntegratedHealthcareStrategies.com](http://www.IntegratedHealthcareStrategies.com)

[www.ajg.com](http://www.ajg.com)



901 Marquette Avenue South, Suite 1900, Minneapolis, MN 55402



**From:** Jim Etzel Karlene Plante  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 19, 2019 5:31:26 PM

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Why is it you will do an EAW on a bike trail system but won't even consider doing one on the Pineland sands area where RDO is destroying thousands of acres of forest lands, spraying deadly chemicals and destroying the aquifer. Please enlighten me.

Jim Etzel  
Hackensack,MN

### Commenter 3

**From:** Ben Rouda  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2019 9:42:04 AM

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My comment is just that I really support the below idea!

"Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Crew proposes to construct a total of 11.40 miles of recreational trails, consisting of the Cuyuna Connection Trail Loop and the Cuyuna Hills Trail Loop. The trails are designed to be used for non-motorized recreation access including mountain biking, hiking, trail running, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the Cuyuna area."

## Commenter 4

**From:** Bryan Schachtele  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Trail Expansion Support  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2019 7:52:59 PM

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The Cuyuna Trail system is an absolute blast to ride on a Mountain Bike!

I am really hoping that you will support the expansion of this trail system. The economic impact this trail system has had on the city of Crosby has been substantial! My family has a cabin on mission lake in Merrifield and we come up to the area to ride the trails on a regular basis.

Thank you for supporting this important improvement to the Cuyuna Trail System.

Bryan Schachtele  
3517 Skycroft Drive  
Saint Anthony, MN 55418  
612-716-9874

## Commenter 5

**From:** Cuyuga Adams  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2019 8:19:42 PM

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Hi I support this trail expansion! My name is Michael Seamans and my address is 506 5th ave ne, crosby, mn 56441

## Commenter 6

**From:** Frank Blackstock  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** "Cuyuna Connection EAW"  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2019 10:33:32 PM

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I fully support this project. It is vital for the region and initial phases have shown tremendous success.

Thank you.

Frank Blackstock  
19260 Lakewood Dr  
Deerwood MN 55444

## Commenter 7

**From:** Scott Engelstad  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 6:38:03 AM

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My family and I moved to the Brainerd Lakes Area in 2010. One of the reasons for moving to the area was the creation of the Cuyuna Mountain Bike trails. I did not know much about the trails other than they were going to be purpose built for mountain biking. What I have seen happen in Crosby over the past 9 years has blown away my expectations. One just needs to go to the Rally Center on any summer weekend to see what a draw these trails have become for local businesses. Continue growth of the trail system will put Crosby and the surrounding communities at the forefront of the mountain biking travel industry. In addition, with the increased sales of e-bikes you will also see a whole new group of riders that will be joining the ranks of mountain bikers at Cuyuna.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Scott Engelstad  
15311 Riverside Dr  
Brainerd, MN 56401

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Scott Engelstad

C: 218-839-5108

[www.roundhousebrew.com](http://www.roundhousebrew.com)

## Commenter 8

**From:** Traci Gujer  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 7:11:43 AM

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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Cynthia,

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Just take a snapshot of Crosby 3 years ago. Downtown was quiet, why come there with no places to eat or shop. Now, I am amazed at the fact we have choices of restaurants, I can have ice cream or fancy cheese now, or purchase supplies for my bike.

I have contributed hundreds of hours as a ride leader for our local high school mountain bike team. These lucky kids have strong and healthy minds partially because they have had the amazing opportunity to participate in this amazing sport that is now one of the fastest growing

high school sports. They run into our local bike shops prior to practice where the local bike mechanics stop what they are doing just to fix a flat, replace a chain, or make an adjustment just so these kids can ride. Without these amazing bike trails we would have a difficult time finding qualified folks to work in town. You see, they are so much more than bike trails to the casual observer, they have brought life back to our area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Traci Gujer

tracigujer@gmail.com

45711 tame fish lake road

Aitkin Minnesota 56431



**From:** Mark Gujer  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna MTB  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 7:20:26 AM

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As a part of the Cuyuna Lakes High school MTB Team, I take great pride in the training grounds the have been provided to our student athletes. Our repeated awards as state champions is in part due to the magnificent opportunities that the rec center offers.

I have lived in Crosby for 14 years now and remember what downtown Crosby looked like and what it looks like today. It is undeniable that the MTB tourism has transformed this community. To continue that growth, the trails must grow. I have talked to many tourists that have bike every inch of the trails and thirst for more. If they get bored, they will bring their \$ to the next new thing. We have to continue to evolve.

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Thank you

Mark W Gujer  
Deerwood MN

## Commenter 10

**From:** Anthony Severt  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 7:34:58 AM

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To Whom it May Concern:

My grandparents lived on Blackhoof Lake outside of Ironton, across the lake from what is now Cuyuna Country. My mother grew up watching her mother contend with the red dust of the mines as she hung the wash on the clothes line. Our family had a cabin on that same lake, and my brother and I grew up canoeing into the pits and later 4 wheeling the mine roads. I grew up in Cuyuna before it was Cuyuna. It's my childhood playground.

Now as an adult, I take my friends and neighbors out into Cuyuna Country to mountain bike. The response is uniformly positive. These people get to experience a slice of what childhood in Cuyuna meant. They go back. They rent bicycles. They stay in local hotels and campgrounds. As their guide, I can tell them that there is a lot more Cuyuna out there that has not been improved with mountain bike trails. The thought of expansion is met with the same childlike glee.

The Cuyuna Hills Expansion means more trails. It means a rider will spend another day in Crosby in order to experience the entirety of the complex. It means increased tourism.

Every time I return to Crosby, I find a new business. Most of these are bicycle related in some way, or have a bicycle mural painted on the outside wall to entice the mountain bike crowd. The rejuvenation of this community and its downtown is palpable and can be witnessed on a month by month basis. People are moving back to the old mining town. It's a new biking town. Expanding this biking area now and continuing to expand it is simply a no brainer. Let's get this done!

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Dr. Anthony Severt

2105 Humboldt Avenue South

Minneapolis MN 555405

**From:** Mari Kivisto  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 8:19:31 AM

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To whom it may concern:

My name is Mari Kivisto, and I am a resident and business owner directly affected by the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails. A 2004 graduate of Crosby-Ironton High School, there very little appeal to residing in my hometown. There were few recreation opportunities and few places to eat, drink, and shop.

Much has changed in 15 years. Trails have not only used the landscape left by mining, they've changed the landscape of our economy and the quality of our lives in the Cuyuna Lakes area. As a coach of the Cuyuna Lakes High School Mountain Bike Team, I see first hand the positive impact being outside and on trails has for not only student athletes, but their whole families. It's more than just physical fitness. Mountain biking is building confidence, leadership, and teamwork in those who participate. It's building a sense of community.

Adding additional trail to our existing system ensures that Cuyuna Lakes can stay on the map as a world-class destination for cyclists, and it ensures existing and new businesses can thrive in our community. The proposal of trail addition will connect our towns within the Cuyuna Lakes and create opportunities for greater economic benefits through connection. I wholeheartedly support the expansion of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails with the proposed addition of the Cuyuna Connector and Cuyuna Hills Trails.

Respectfully,

Mari Kivisto

--

Mari Kivisto  
PO Box 15  
23624 Cross Drive  
Deerwood, MN  
(218) 851-6861

**From:** David P. Krajcovic  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 8:29:41 AM

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Dear Minnesota DNR,

My name is David Krajcovic and I am a resident of Missouri. My family has been vacationing in the Brainerd lakes area since the late 70's and we typically make 3-4 trips to the area from June thru October. A rough estimate on the tourism dollars we spent annually is \$10,000.00 + and this ranges from money spent in Crosby, Nisswa, Baxter and East Gull Lake.

I am an avid mountain biker rider and frequent many trail systems in the midwestern part of the country. I have to say that Cuyuna is by far my favorite trail system to ride and visit and a definite draw for my choosing to vacation in the area.

I can only see continued positive gains that Cuyuna and surrounding areas would benefit from by adding more trails to the current system. Cuyuna is a destination trail that riders seek out, The more trail offered the longer their stay. The longer the stay the more revenue generate for the area and this is a year round use facility. For reference please review the positive benefits trails have brought to towns such as Bentonville, AR and Fruita, CO. The economic impacts are incredible.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my support for the trail expansion in Cuyuna.

Sincerely,

David Krajcovic  
Kirkwood, MO 63122

## Commenter 13

**From:** Denise DeBoer  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** "Cuyuna Connection EAW"  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 9:04:28 AM

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Hello All

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

We live in the cities but have a cabin near this trail. We are constantly introducing new people to the beauty that abounds riding bike, hiking, fishing, dining, etc. This is truly a gem and would love to see it continue to grow. We also love all the new amenities it has brought to the area and look forward to visiting each of them.

Please! ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Thanks for your time!

Denise DeBoer-Stutelberg  
3423 Moorland Rd  
Minnetonka, MN 55345  
612-670-1013

**From:** Sean Hagen  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 9:44:51 AM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

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Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

- Sean Hagen

## Commenter 15

**From:** John Berg  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 10:04:17 AM

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I remain a steadfast supporter of Cuyuna Lakes mountain biking and the planned expansion!

Thank you

John Berg

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Drayton, Thomas  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 1:05:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)

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TWIMC:

I typically make the 3 hour drive from the Minneapolis area to ride the Cuyuna trails 2-3 times per year. Unfortunately I've come to be so familiar with 20-25 miles of trail that I have less desire to make the trip and this year have gone only once.

Each year I also donate at least \$50 directly to the Cuyuna Lakes MTB group via their website:  
<http://www.cuyunalakesmtb.com/donate.html>

If there is an additional 25 or 50 miles of trail built as the plan suggests then I would definitely be inclined to make the trip more often and instead of drive up and back the same day as I sometimes do, I would stay overnight to be able to ride as much as possible.

This will definitely see me spending money on lodging, food, gas and probably entertainment and I will be happy to do it!

Thanks,

**Thomas Drayton**

Enterprise IT Service Desk US Regional Supervisor  
[Donaldson Company Inc.](#)  
Phone: 952-887-3822  
Cell: 612-364-5104

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Chat



**From:** Jess Ford  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 2:05:43 PM

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**to: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025**

**Re: Support for Cuyuna Lakes MTB trail expansion**

**I live in the TC metro area and have a summer cabin a few miles east of the Cuyuna Lakes recreation area. I am an avid user of the mountain bike trail system nearly every weekend from spring until fall and when I can during the winter fat bike season. I must commend and applaud the DNR for the support and expenditure of resources that have gone into the creation and maintenance of these trails. It is an absolute treasure! I can't begin to explain how much enjoyment I have gotten from riding there since it opened.**

**Since then I've had the pleasure of introducing many many riders and friends to the area. In my experience the people that visit really love it and are amazed by it but, in my opinion it is just the beginning. The positive impact the trails have had on the surrounding area is truly astonishing for such a short period of time. The locals and transplants I know certainly agree.**

**Continued expansion of the trails is a logical and frankly a critical next step in the ongoing economic transformation of the area. Many experienced riders have covered the trails so many times and they are starting to look for alternative places to ride for more variety. It's only natural but, more miles of trails will make a huge difference in that regard. Adding whole new sections every few years will keep people coming back to ride the new sections and re-ride the older. Not unlike how amusement parks add a huge new rollercoasters every 2-3 years, or ski area's open up new terrain, it just makes sense in terms of ongoing growth and vitality.**

**Also, in no way are bikes the only thing that is important in this destination building effort. Other activities that are natural to the area such as gravel/road biking, paddle sports, scuba diving, fishing, hunting, nordic skiing, snow shoeing, snowmobiling, should also be rigorously supported. It's about developing a tourism destination, and the close proximity to the Metro area is significant.**

**My only problem right now is how do I cut loose my ties in the city and move up there to start a business!.**

**Thank you for your time and effort on this matter**

**Jess Ford  
3116 Salem Ave S.  
St Louis Park MN 55416**

**P.S. I was alerted to the public feedback opportunity by the CLMTB crew, and I agree with the content of the form letter they created and I'm sure many supporters have or will be submitting. (below)**

**The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.**

**Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.**

**Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.**

**From:** Jay Kent  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 2:19:33 PM

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To Whom it may concern,

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

It has been exciting to watch the growing interest in the area because of the Cuyuna Lake trail system. Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Jay E. Kent

[jaykent@me.com](mailto:jaykent@me.com)

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Michael Rex Schumacher  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 2:56:26 PM

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As an avid biker and MTB team coach, anything you can do to expand mountain biking in this state would be greatly appreciated. The Cuyuna MTB trails have been a boon to this area and I fully support this project and look forward to using the trails!

Michael Schumacher  
1068 S Finn St, St Paul, MN 55116

651.271.0019

**From:** Ted Clausen  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 3:02:41 PM

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While I support the expansion of the mountain bike trails currently in the area I would encourage any state approval be contingent on pre-funding future maintenance needs. The use of the land will be relatively low impact and creates economic, as well as recreational benefits for the area. However, mountain biking like many sports is cyclical in nature and is currently at or near a peak. While I believe that trails as proposed will continue to be used enough to justify their approval and build even during a decline in the sport, I do not believe the current funding means and maintenance process would be. As such while the trail association has ample funds and fund raising power a reserve fund should be built to sustain the trails long term. While the resurrection of the area, in part due to the mountain bike trails, is a great story creating another boom/bust cycle when planning now could avoid it doesn't seem prudent.

Ted Clausen

**From:** Emily  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2019 9:47:14 PM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Marcia Schroeder  
21682 Tower Rd  
Emily, MN 56447

**From:** Austin Babler  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2019 9:26:08 AM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

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Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Austin Babler

31189 Seemont Rd

Crosby MN 56441

**From:** Mary L Manlick  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2019 11:00:44 AM

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Dear DNR Officials,

I have enclosed the form letter below that was suggested that we use, but I would like to add my own personal outlook on the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails. I have now worked in Crosby for over 30 years. I drive back and forth from Brainerd most every day. Before the trails opened I would go to work and then go home, never spending any more time in Crosby. Now, in the summer, I spend almost every night after work either riding the trails or helping maintain the trails for other riders that come to visit. I have watched Crosby flourish with new businesses. I see people parked up and down the streets and walking to the open businesses in the evenings after my rides. I notice the bicycles on the backs of most of the vehicles. Many nights I stop and chat with people of all age groups that are here visiting. They either need to know where a trail is or how to get back to a local campground. They mention they are heading uptown for a pizza or a beer, where they are staying and that they plan to ride more the next day. I also have many thank me for maintaining the trails so they can ride. It is a sense of pride for me being a part of this great outdoor adventure. I see families out riding together, instead of the kids at home on their phones or playing video games. All enjoying the fresh air and the beauty that surrounds us when we are riding. I see the health benefits for myself and look forward to the expansion of the trails. For me it is a fun way to get exercise instead of going to work out inside a gym, which I would not do in the summertime. Also by being a member of the Cuyuna Mountain Bike Trail Crew I have met so many good people that feel the same as I do. We work hard, side by side, keeping the trails groomed. We volunteer for many bike race events that are held that bring hundreds of new people to the Crosby area. It is all truly amazing how many people come to ride. Expanded trails can only make the area better. I also would like to mention the school mountain bike riding team. They are an amazing group of young people that are very dedicated to this sport. They are always out training and eat healthy when training. Hopefully they think about being healthy year round. It is a sport where no one "sits on the bench".

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Thank you for the trails we have now and the enjoyment so many of us experience every time we ride.

Best Regards,

Mary L Manlick  
902 12<sup>TH</sup> AVE NE  
BRAINERD, MN 56401



**From:** Andrea Sedlacek  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2019 3:35:34 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I fully support the Cuyuna Connection EAW project! The Cuyuna trails have given a rejuvenation to city of Crosby while providing world class recreation to the entire Midwest. I use the trails several times a week, both winter and summer, and love to see new additions to the system! The trails are beautifully maintained and I hope they inspire more people to get out and bike.

Please approve this project!

Andrea Snyder  
9575 Ostrowski Way  
Brainerd, Minnesota, 56401

## Commenter 25

**From:** Belinda Stealy  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Bike Trail  
**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2019 5:04:12 PM

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We lived at 115 Irene Ave Ironton for 20 plus years. The trail ruined our wanting to live there anymore we sold our home and moved out of the area.

Belinda Stealy  
MCGregor, MN

**From:** Ryan Anderson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** The more the merrier  
**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2019 10:22:17 PM

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To much of a good thing is never bad. All good things bring out the bad in things. Goods will always out do the bads.

Locals who don't like bikers. But I've never met a person who can't ride a bike.

Bikers with bad etiquette giving me a bad reputation. But I have trails to ride minutes from my house.

Bikes and bikers everywhere. But new business and opportunities for all.

More trails. But more friends more trails more fun more smiles more miles. Things can get better not worse.

Ryan Anderson

Crosby MN

## Commenter 27

**From:** Greg Opsal  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Saturday, August 24, 2019 8:28:32 AM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it

Greg Opsal  
19791 Evensong Ave  
Farmington MN 55024

**From:** Steve Freese  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Sunday, August 25, 2019 11:40:15 AM

---

Hello,

I'm writing to show my support for the expansion of the Cuyuna area mountain bike trails.

I support this for the following:

1. Economic impact to the area. Just ask the residents of Crosby...
2. Access to recreation that doesn't cost a lot to maintain or use.
3. Being in nature is good for people and we don't get enough. This gives all an opportunity to be outside.

Steve Freese

**From:** Charlie's Angles LLC  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** suyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Sunday, August 25, 2019 1:48:41 PM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Charlie Browning  
117 Maple Hill Rd  
Hopkins MN 55343  
612-986-0453

**From:** Travis Snyder  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 26, 2019 6:47:57 AM

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To whom it may concern,

I support the Cuyuna Connection EAW, and any work done in Cuyuna. The trails are fantastically maintained and provide recreation for everyone! Please allow them to continue this project!

Travis William Snyder  
9575 Ostrowski Way  
Brainerd, MN 56401

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Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

**From:** Robert Dumas  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 26, 2019 2:07:19 PM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image007.png](#)

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As you well know, the riding in the Cuyuna area is the best in MN and for that matter all of the Midwest in my opinion. Anything that will enhance and improve the riding experience up there even more has my full support. I may not be from the area at this time, but it is a yearly trip I very much look forward to taking.

Thanks



**Rob Dumas** | Business Packaging Manager - CBG  
**3M Packaging Solutions**  
3M Center, 216-2N-08 | St. Paul, MN 55144-1000 | United States  
Office: +1 651-737-4300  
[rdumas04@mmm.com](mailto:rdumas04@mmm.com)





**From:** Mike Beer  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 26, 2019 4:22:16 PM

---

I fully support the planned Cuyuna Trail Expansion.

The Cuyuna Trail system enhances the joy, health and well being of thousands of riders annually. Additionally the trail system has breathed new economic life into the former mining towns of Crosby and Ironton, drawing riders from all around the nation. All of these benefits have been delivered with minimal environmental impact.

The Cuyuna State Recreation Area and associated mountain bike trails are true environmental assets and are worthy of further investment and expansion.

Mike Beer  
Minneapolis

**From:** William Harwell  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 26, 2019 4:51:13 PM

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I and my family including 9 grandchildren would use the proposed trails project- it enhances the opportunities to get involved in northern Minnesota - especially for the next generation.

Bill Harwell 763 760 4223

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

**From:** Kelly Ziegler  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection UAW  
**Date:** Monday, August 26, 2019 9:06:53 PM

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I fully support the new trails. I think it is very important to the community for these trails to added.

Kelly Ziegler  
21479 Rabbit Lake Dr  
Crosby, MN 56441  
218-838-9641

**From:** Steven Bladow  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 27, 2019 5:00:05 PM

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To whom it may concern,

I wanted convey my support for this project. Since riding the trails for the first time in 2016, we have since built a cabin, and have now moved to live in Crosby/Rabbit Lake full time. This summer, we have had 26 individual friends or family visit us for at least 2 days and up to 5 days, who all have eaten or stopped at local businesses. We have also used local banks, builders, and services. The trails are the highlight of our location, and increasing the diversity and quantity of trails will help to grow interest in the area.

Thanks,

Steven Bladow  
21694 N Raider Ct  
Crosby, MN 56441

**From:** brisnes@charter.net  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 27, 2019 5:09:53 PM

---

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's economic growth. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's tourism economy. The proposed expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce.

Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that all generations are looking for. This will benefit people now and in the future.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Thanks,

Barb Risnes

Resident of Ironton, MN

**From:** Laurie Meller  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 29, 2019 8:56:21 AM

---

I totally approve and support the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills trail work/expansion.

Sincerely,

Laurie Meller

15954 1<sup>st</sup> Street

Riverton MN 56455

**From:** Greg Meller  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 29, 2019 8:56:40 AM

---

Hi,  
I fully support and approve the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills trails.

Thank you!  
Greg Meller  
15954 1st st  
Riverton Mn. 56455

*GREG MELLER*

*THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING*

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**From:** mark@thoughtmagic.com  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, August 29, 2019 10:28:57 PM

---

Dear Cynthia Novak-Krebs,

I am writing in support of the proposed Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Project. I frequent the area because of the excellent mountain biking facilities currently in place. The proposed trails will greatly enhance the mountain biking in the area and are certain to continue supporting the local community and the financial stability of the area in general. Mountain biking is a non-motorized, silent sport which makes it a very low impact activity on the environment.

I look forward to seeing this project move forward for all the benefits it will provide to the local area, the people who will be enjoying the trails, and the State of Minnesota as our reputation as a mountain biking destination grows.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark Ouska



**From:** Tyler Abfalter  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2019 10:55:13 AM

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Hello,

After reviewing the Environmental Assessment Worksheet, I am IN FAVOR of the trail expansion. These mountain bike trails are world class.

The mountain biking community rides with respect to nature. I always try to minimize my wear on the trails themselves and ride only when dry, and follow all rules. I leave no trace (besides tire tracks) and clean up any litter I encounter.

These trails are a great use of the Minnesota wilderness and the more we embrace our land with these quality trails, the more we will encourage people to respect our natural resources in general.

Thank you,  
Tyler Abfalter

**From:** Lori Goodsell  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2019 11:32:53 AM

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Please support the expansion of the Cuyuna mountain bike connection and trails. Best recreational opportunity in Minnesota and so great to see the Crosby Ironton area come back to life! Thank you!

Dr Lori Goodsell  
2206 Watertown Road  
Long Lake, MN 55356

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This email and its attachments may contain privileged and confidential information and/or protected health information (PHI) intended solely for the use of Dr. Lori Goodsell and the recipient(s) named above. If you are not the recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, dissemination, distribution, printing or copying of this email message and/or any attachments is strictly prohibited. If you have received this transmission in error, please notify the sender immediately at 763-553-0387 and permanently delete this email and any attachments.

**From:** Chris Peterson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2019 12:31:08 PM

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My name is Chris Peterson and I fully support the expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills trails.

Signed,  
Chris Peterson  
22790 Thompson Pt. Rd.  
Deerwood, MN 56444

**From:** Jennifer Johnson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2019 1:24:37 PM

---

To whom it may concern:

I am all for the proposed expansion of Cuyuna's trails. Our family has found this park and trails to be a joy and we have used them extensively, and eagerly look forward to additional trails.

Jennifer Johnson  
918 Carter Cir SE  
Bemidji MN 56601

**From:** Alan Nancy Loose  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2019 2:36:34 PM

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My wife and I have been part-year residents, along with our daughter and son-in-law, on Rabbit Lake near Crosby since 2017. We have enjoyed both the existing and newly developed(ing) trail system. I purchased a mountain bike from a local dealer that my son-in-law and I both use. Meanwhile, my wife and daughter are not mountain bikers; but we all have made extensive use of the paved Cuyuna State Trail (MRT) between Crosby and Riverton.

While we fully support the ongoing development of the mountain biking trail system, we want to register a strong voice in favor of more fully developing paved trails in the area at the same time. Clearly mountain biking trail development has been a boost for the local economy, and is attracting a key demographic. For the overall appeal of the area, however, additional miles of paved trails would add an important amenity for those who, by virtue of age, or physical capacity or simply by preference would make use of paved trails. It need not be an either or (I enjoy both mountain biking and paved trail riding - so do many others). But to put all the eggs in the mountain biking trail basket is to ignore another key (generally older?) demographic - one that, one might guess, has resources that would continue to grow the area as they are encouraged by investments geared also to their recreational preferences. How about a renewed effort to extend the Cuyuna State Trail from Riverton on through to the Paul Bunyan Trail!!

We love this area and are excited to see its continued growth. We are happy to see our tax dollars invested in ways that will ensure broad value for the ALL the residents and visitors here.

Alan Loose

**From:** JOHN HAKES  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Saturday, August 31, 2019 3:09:51 PM

---

Dear DNR Representative:

I'm writing in support of the possible trail expansion of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails.

Currently, I am a 54-year-old man who most recently enjoyed biking at Cuyuna as recently as last month. When I first learned of this facility a few years ago, I initially hoped it would provide a productive form of father-son time, that would have me riding very conservatively, if at all.

Once there, however, I enjoyed a more wonderful-than-expected experience, as I was able to have a robust ride through the former mining area north of Crosby. Far from being a niche sport for the young adult or teen, the mountain biking opportunity at Cuyuna provides a welcome option to the outdoor enthusiast who doesn't hunt or fish much.

Besides the already brilliantly-designed and maintained trail system there in place, for some mysterious reason (that you may know the answer to but I don't) there has been nary a bug or mosquito to land on me at Cuyuna, despite going there in different months throughout the spring and summer.

Because the Cuyuna system seems like one that will only grow in popularity (e.g. the many wonderful camping options will help ensure it's not a 'flash in the pan' amenity), that it is a year-round facility on which fat tire biking and snowshoeing can help keep in fixed in the consciousness of the outdoor endurance athlete, and seeing as club/school mountain biking participation could find Cuyuna indispensable to their programs in the years ahead--- I believe it would be a sound decision were the DNR to approve the expansion of this trail system.

Thank you for taking this feedback into account, and I look forward to future visits to partaking in the exciting and beautiful mountain biking experience available at Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Biking Trails.

Sincerely,  
John Hakes  
245 Lilac Lane Shoreview, MN  
55126  
Phone: 651-338-2845

**From:** Korrine Heinen  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Sunday, September 1, 2019 10:11:00 AM

---

I am writing to give my support for the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Project in Crow Wing County. As a property owner in Crow Wing County, I feel the development of the trails has had a positive impact on the community. I hope to see more trails in the future!

Korrine Heinen  
23216 Cedar Spring Lane  
Aitkin, MN 56431

**From:** Alison Swoboda  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW, support  
**Date:** Monday, September 2, 2019 9:17:12 AM

---

This letter is in support of expansion of the CCSRA Trail system. Cuyuna trails are an integral component as to why I, a professional young adult with many employment prospects, have chosen to reside in central Minnesota, contribute to its rural economy, and provide medical care to veterans at the VA Health Care System.

The Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area mountain biking trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. CCSRA has helped diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed 50-mile trail network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. CCSRA contributes to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the expansion of the world-renown trails system at CCSRA goes forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Sincerely,  
Alison Swoboda, PA-C  
VA Medical Center  
[4801 Veterans Drive](#)  
[St. Cloud, MN 56303](#)

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** Paul Bergren  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, September 2, 2019 4:46:39 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Paul Bergren and I reside at 640 Windemere Curve, Plymouth, MN 55441. In addition to that, my family has owned a cabin at 23015 Clearwater Point Road, Brainerd, MN 56401 since 1991. I have been using the mountain bike trails at Cuyuna since they were first constructed. I have witnessed how they have brought in visitors to enjoy and have allowed existing businesses to flourish and new ones to open up. I have heard from locals how it has improved their quality of life.

The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails will entice visitors to stay longer and spend more money.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward.

Cheers,

Paul Bergren  
[pbergren@gmail.com](mailto:pbergren@gmail.com)

## Commenter 49

**From:** Luke Martone  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 3, 2019 9:52:26 AM

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Good morning - Very general comment here. I support the proposed project. However, I urge the developer to take the recommended actions to minimize any adverse affects to the ecosystem. Thank you.

Luke Martone

**From:** John Burns  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2019 8:54:02 AM

---

Hello all,

I would just like add that this project will help continue to allow the economic recovery to the area. More importantly, it will help the health of the community and allow us to grow.

thank you

John Burns  
Beach Road, Deerwood

**From:** Jeffrey Schmieg  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2019 9:35:13 AM

---

Writing to express strong support for the Cuyuna Connector and Cuyuna Hills Trail Expansion. The trails that the DNR along with the Cuyuna mountain biking community have created are amazing, really creating some world class recreation that cyclist of skill levels and even non-bikers can truly enjoy for generations to come. The proposed trail expansion would be a wonderful addition to current trails and I highly encourage its approval. Our family loves visiting the Cuyuna area to ride the trails a few times a year.

Thank you,

Jeffrey Schmieg  
427 Wooddale Ave South  
St. Louis Park, Mn 55416

**From:** Jim McCarvill  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2019 10:37:38 AM

---

**As a resident of Deerwood I am 100% for trail expansion in the areas proposed. The economic benefits have been astounding in the last few years and trail expansion will keep them coming.**

**Respectfully-**

**Jim McCarvill**  
**PO Box 22**  
**23523 Forest Road**  
**Deerwood MN 56444**  
[\*\*james.patrick.mccarvill@gmail.com\*\*](mailto:james.patrick.mccarvill@gmail.com)

**From:** Bobby Marko  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2019 12:46:46 PM

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I am writing to express my support for the expansion of trails at Cuyuna. My family loves traveling to Cuyuna to ride the trails as they are some of the best in our state. Having even more trails to ride will encourage us to visit more often to spend money to support the local economy.

Bobby Marko  
6225 Cardinal Ave  
Excelsior MN 55331

**From:** William O'Reilly  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2019 1:41:17 PM

---

I have no other reason to come up to the area except to ride the Cuyuna off road cycling trails. It is a great asset to the State and cyclists from all over the country. I would very much like to request that the proposed extension of the trails go forward.

Thank you,  
Bill O'Reilly  
290 Market Street #508  
Minneapolis, MN 55405  
612.839.7361  
williamoreilly@me.com

**From:** Annie Nord  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 5, 2019 7:00:04 AM

---

Dear Dnr,

I am supporting the expansion of the trails in Cuyuna. We have been coming to northern MN for 40 years. Crosby has transformed economically from a depressed environment to a thriving community. The mountain biking trails have breathed new life into the area.

As the word spreads, so do the number of people visiting the area. Expansion is crucial to keep Cyuna a destination.

On any given weekend there are multitudes of people enjoying the trails. It is a very family friendly area. We see entire families on the trails.

Thank you,  
Annie Nord  
40528 South Bay Drive  
Emily Mn 56447

--

Annie



**From:** Todd Brown  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [tbrown323@aol.com](mailto:tbrown323@aol.com)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 5, 2019 7:08:48 AM

---

Please include me as a supporter of the new trails being added as part of the **Cuyuna Connection EAW**.

Todd Brown  
3722 Spring Valley Place NE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52411

Sent from my iPad

**From:** Johnny Severson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 5, 2019 7:51:40 AM

---

My name is Jonathan Severson and I live on 26 2nd NW, Crosby MN 56441, and I am in full support of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills trail expansion.

Thank you,

Jonathan Severson

**From:** Steve Nord  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna State Recreation Area  
**Date:** Thursday, September 5, 2019 8:16:57 AM

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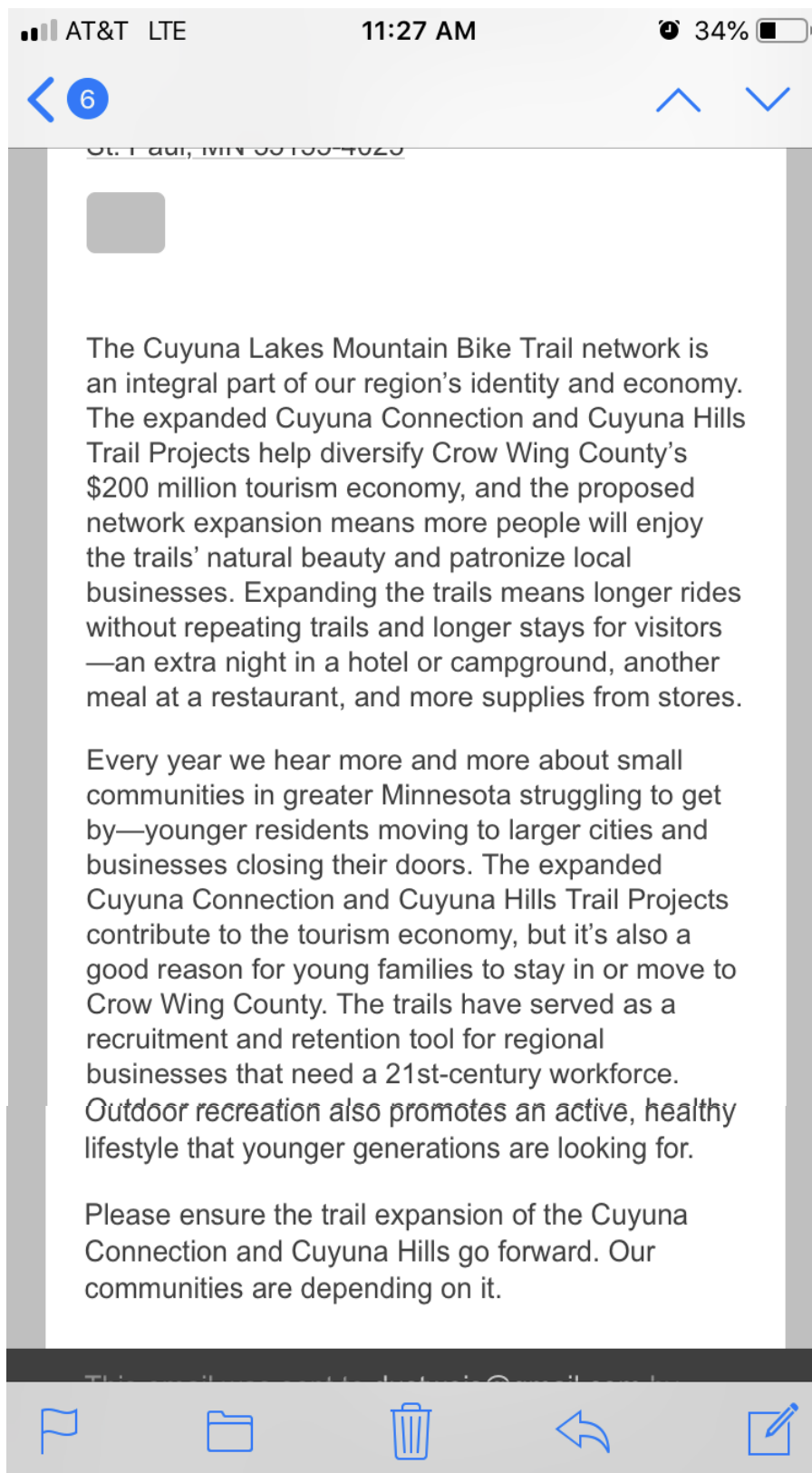
Dear DNR,

I am a big supporter of expanding the bike trails at CSRA. They have provided a great way to experience the best of Minnesota and have boosted the local economy tremendously. People come from around the country and the world to ride the trails.

Sincerely,  
Steve Nord  
345 Glen Iris Dr NE #18  
Atlanta, GA 30312

Sent from my iPad

From: Dustin  
To: [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
Subject: Cuyuna connection EAW  
Date: Thursday, September 5, 2019 11:28:38 AM  
Attachments: [image1.png](#)



Thanks  
Dustin Weis

**From:** Irvine, Bob  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Sunday, September 8, 2019 7:24:14 AM

---

I support this Cuyuna trail expansion.

Thank you  
Bob Irvine  
22215 Semmler Rd  
Nisswa, MN. 56468

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**From:** [Tegdesch, Elizabeth \(MPCA\)](#)  
**To:** [MN\\_Review\\_Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Kromar, Karen \(MPCA\)](#); [Card, Dan \(MPCA\)](#); [Getman, Roberta \(MPCA\)](#); [Niemela, Scott \(MPCA\)](#)  
**Subject:** MPCA Comment Letter - Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 1:11:11 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Comment Ltr.pdf](#)

---

Attached are the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's comments on the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Environmental Assessment Worksheet. A paper copy will follow by U.S. mail.

**Please acknowledge receipt of this comment letter to Karen Kromar at [Karen.kromar@state.mn.us](mailto:Karen.kromar@state.mn.us)**

Thank you.

***Elizabeth Tegdesch***  
***Environmental Review and EQB Support***  
***651-757-2100***  
***[Elizabeth.tegdesch@state.mn.us](mailto:Elizabeth.tegdesch@state.mn.us)***

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Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
EAW Project Manager  
Environmental Review Unit  
DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

008 H4C5A5B 55155



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September 10, 2019

Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
EAW Project Manager  
Environmental Review Unit  
DNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources, Box 25  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Re: Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Environmental Assessment Worksheet

Dear Cynthia Novak-Krebs:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail project (Project) in Crow Wing County, Minnesota. The Project consists of construction of 11 miles of recreational trails. Regarding matters for which the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has regulatory responsibility or other interests, the MPCA staff has the following comments for your consideration.

**Water Resources (Item 11)**

- The EAW states the total project is 409 acres, but does not specify if this is the total disturbed area. The Project also lists numerous water bodies within 1 mile, but does not list impairments or special water designations of any of the water bodies. Based on MPCA's special water search, Portsmouth and Manuel Mine Lakes are listed as trout lakes and are therefore considered special waters requiring additional best management practices (BMPs) specified in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System/State Disposal System General Construction Stormwater Permit (CSW Permit). The additional BMPs that are required should be included in the EAW. **A**
  - Also, projects with land disturbances totaling 50 acres or more that have the ability to discharge stormwater to the special waters within 1 mile of the site, must submit the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan to MPCA for review and approval prior to obtaining CSW Permit coverage. **B**
  - The EAW is not clear on the amount of new impervious surfaces created by the Project. The gravel parking areas are considered new impervious surfaces and the EAW also mentions construction of an access road which would also be an impervious surface. Both areas should be included in the amount of new impervious surfaces listed in the EAW. If the total is 1 acre or more, then a stormwater management method should be described in the plans. Any boardwalks or other hard surface constructed over water bodies, depending on how constructed, will also be considered impervious surfaces. **C**
  - It is also important to include plans for redundant sediment controls wherever 50 feet of existing buffers to the wetlands will be encroached by the construction. **D**
- E**

We appreciate the opportunity to review this Project. Please provide your specific responses to our comments and notice of decision on the need for an Environmental Impact Statement. Please be aware that this letter does not constitute approval by the MPCA of any or all elements of the Project for the



Cynthia Novak-Krebs

Page 2

September 10, 2019

purpose of pending or future permit action(s) by the MPCA. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the Project proposer to secure any required permits and to comply with any requisite permit conditions. If you have any questions concerning our review of this EAW, please contact me by email at [Karen.kromar@state.mn.us](mailto:Karen.kromar@state.mn.us) or by telephone at 651-757-2508.

Sincerely,



Karen Kromar  
Project Manager  
Environmental Review Unit  
Resource Management and Assistance Division

cc: Dan Card, MPCA, St. Paul  
Roberta Getman, MPCA, Rochester  
Scott Niemala, MPCA, Brainerd

**From:** Lori Vosacek  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 4:05:50 PM

---

Hello,  
My name is Lora Vosacek and I live at 23894 County Road 31  
Deerwood, MN 56444. I am writing in support of the Cuyuna  
Connection Trail between the Cuyuna State Recreation Area trails  
and the Cuyuna Hills trails.  
Thank you,  
Lora Vosacek

**From:** Buzz and Danette Holznagel  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Buzz Holznagel](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 9:27:10 PM

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Department of Natural Resources

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region’s identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County’s \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails’ natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it’s also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

As local business owners still in our first year of hosting guests at our Airbnb, “Velocipede Cottage” we have enjoyed meeting and hearing the stories of our guests. They have come to the Cuyuna area from as far away as Naples, Italy and as close as a family ‘staycation’ from Crosby. Guest from Nebraska, Oklahoma, California, Arizona, MPLS/St. Paul, Wisconsin share that they come to ride the trails, fish, take in the Brainerd International Raceway events, golf, or just coming to enjoy a small town community with an atmosphere big on welcome.

We would encourage the DNR to ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Gratefully,

*Clayton and Danette Holznagel*



*Business Owners, Velocipede Cottage LLC*  
*[www.velcipedecottage.com](http://www.velcipedecottage.com)*

**From:** Jessica Holmwig  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** "Cuyuna Connection EAW"  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 10, 2019 9:55:39 PM

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To whom it may concern,

**I support the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trails Project.**

I reside at 21561 Edwards Dr, Ironton, MN.

If you need any further statements or information from me, please let me know.

Thank you,  
Jessica Vukelich  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Aaron Nelson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 8:25:27 AM

---

I support this.

Aaron Nelson  
213 4th street north  
Delano MN, 55328

**From:** Justin Young  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 8:42:04 AM

---

I support this.

Justin Young  
112 Farmdale Rd E, Hopkins MN 55343

**From:** Vern Lewis  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 9:37:46 AM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Vern Lewis

18577 State Hwy 210  
Ironton, MN 56455

**From:** Jeffrey Bajek  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Dan Jurek](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 9:52:50 AM  
**Attachments:** [Cuyuna Connection EAW.pdf](#)

---

Please see the attached letter of support for the Cuyuna Connection.

Jeff Bajek  
True North Basecamp  
612-325-1660





# TRUE NORTH BASECAMP

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Cynthia Novak-Krebs:

I am an owner of True North Basecamp (“TNBC”), a lodging facility located in Crosby just off the Cuyuna mountain bike trail. I am writing in support of the expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Project. Fulfilling this expansion request will ensure the continued economic activity for the Cuyuna Lakes Region.

As the first outside private investment in Crosby related directly to the mountain bike trails, we have been fortunate to witness the economic growth and revitalization in the area. We can see firsthand the economic impact the trails have done for our small business and the small businesses in the area. We are employing people in the area and driving tourism dollars back into this community. Funding the expansion will help with keeping that economic momentum going in the area.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Sincerely,

*Jeffrey M Bajek*

Jeffrey M. Bajek  
Co-Founder  
True North Basecamp  
[Jeff.bajek@truenorthbasecamp.com](mailto:Jeff.bajek@truenorthbasecamp.com)  
622-325-1660

**From:** Dave McMillan  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 1:51:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cuyuna Mtn. Bike Expansion Support Letter.docx](#)

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Ms. Novak-Krebs:

As a resort that directly benefits from the growth and expansion of the Cuyuna State Recreation Area, Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge wholeheartedly stands in support of the proposed Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects.

It's no secret that the biking, hiking and walking trail system is a major reason for the growth of the Cuyuna Lakes area and is a significant and growing part of Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy. Though Ruttger's is somewhat removed from the heart of the economic boon, our resort has benefited and will continue to benefit from the tourism dollars attracted by the robust outdoor recreation area. The proposed Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail projects would impact more and more businesses, creating jobs and generally invigorating the economy.

People from far and wide trek to the region to enjoy an outdoor adventure on the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails. For this reason, Ruttger's has stood and will continue to stand in support of all trail expansion and improvement projects. However, we feel strongly about the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail projects in particular because they fundamentally improve and reshape the trail experience. This expansion will mean longer rides without repeating trails, leading to longer stays and more opportunities for overnight stays at Ruttger's and other lodging establishments - not to mention additional meals and shopping.

In an era where small, rural communities struggle with sustainable jobs, we in the Cuyuna Lakes region have bucked that trend. This is almost entirely thanks to the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails. We need to continue to forge this path. That's why, on behalf of Ruttger's staff and our nearly 300 seasonal employees, I ask that you please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward.

Sincerely,

Chris Ruttger  
President  
Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge  
25039 Tame Fish Lake Rd.,  
Deerwood, MN 56444

**From:** Erin Mahoney  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Matt Larson](#); [Ted Abear](#); [Amy Swensen](#); [Cathe Picek](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2019 3:45:55 PM  
**Attachments:** [Letter of Support MN DNR - MTB Trail Expansion.pdf](#)

---

Ms. Novak-Krebs –

Please see the attached letter from the Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce President and Board of Directors in support of the Cuyuna Connection bike trail expansion.

Regards,  
Erin Mahoney, Cuyuna Lakes Chamber Board Secretary

Erin M. Mahoney, Executive Assistant  
**Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge**  
P.O. Box 400  
25039 Tame Fish Lake Rd  
Deerwood, MN 56444  
218.678.4696  
FAX: 218.678.4686  
[erin.mahoney@ruttgers.com](mailto:erin.mahoney@ruttgers.com)

[Rate us on TripAdvisor!](#)



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025  
[environmentalrev.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:environmentalrev.dnr@state.mn.us)

Dear Ms. Novak-Krebs:

The Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is writing in support of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills trail expansion of The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail.

As a voice of business for the Cuyuna Lakes, the Chamber of Commerce seeks to enhance economic growth through partnerships with businesses, community organizations and government agencies to better ensure the region is a vibrant, prosperous, and safe place to work, live, and play. The trail network has become an integral part of the Cuyuna Lakes area's identity and economy. The proposed expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize businesses within the Cuyuna Lakes and surrounding areas, increasing revenue for existing and new businesses.

The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects will contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay or move to the Cuyuna Lakes. The bike trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Expanding the trails will maintain that trend so that our businesses and communities continue to grow and thrive.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills moves forward.

Sincerely,

Matt Larson, Board President  
Cuyuna Lakes Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors  
117 West Main Street  
Crosby, MN 56441  
218-546-8131

**From:** Tyler Monda  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2019 10:26:00 AM

---

Good morning,

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Tyler Monda  
[tyler.h.monda@gmail.com](mailto:tyler.h.monda@gmail.com)  
218-838-9195

**From:** Red Rider  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2019 10:32:00 AM

---

The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects are important to us, our friends and family because it's a destination for sharing fun and an active lifestyle. I enjoy seeing birds and wildlife while biking up Mucker Mountain or pedaling the ridges of Bobsled, Manual Drive or Rolly Poly trails.

We drive up to the Crosby-Cuyuna-Ironton area two to three times a month all year. We stay at True North Basecamp, motels in Deerwood, and AirBnBs. Each of our stays would be longer if there were more mtb trails to bike because we now can bike every existing trail in one day. We eat at the local Iron Range restaurants and coffee shops every day during our visits.

As ride leaders for the Twin Cities Bicycling Club, my husband and I promote and lead rides on the Cuyuna trail system. A large group of hungry cyclists means more dollars spent on food and beer. If you build it, we'll bike it.

In winter we ride our fat tire bikes on the groomed snow-covered trails. The trail crews do an amazing job at keeping the trails groomed and making us cyclists happy all winter even on the coldest days. There is no better way to get through a Minnesota winter than biking on snowy trails.

A blizzard doesn't keep us away. We snowshoe the bike trails when the snow gets too deep. Even folks who aren't off-road cyclists are out snowshoeing and maintaining the bike trails. We meet wonderful people on the trails and again later at the local establishments.

The Cuyuna Hills trails are a magnificent paradise for this region. I find peace and tranquility like nowhere else. Please support this worthy endeavor to expand the trail system. Thank you.

**From:** John Linn  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2019 12:15:11 PM

---

Hello. My family and I are enjoying the Cuyuna MTB trail system. It's changed our way of life for the better, and we can see first hand how it is affecting the economy for the Crosby area and even over to where we live in Brainerd nearly 30 miles away. Without question the expansion for the trails would have HUGE positive impact on this area's wellbeing.

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

**John Linn** | Adventure Studios | Direct: 218-330-9630 | [john@adventurestudios.com](mailto:john@adventurestudios.com)

16177 Ashmun Rd

Brainerd, MN . 56401

**From:** paul.k@shopvictual.com  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Strategic importance of the Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2019 1:59:22 PM  
**Attachments:** [sigimg1](#)

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To whom it may concern:

In 2018, my spouse and I decided that we were going to open a new retail store in Crosby MN -- one that radically diversified the type of retail currently found in the area. Our decision to locate in Crosby was multi-faceted -- but the reality is that the rapidly expanding eco-tourism associated with the mountain bike trail system was among the biggest factors influencing our decision. We, along with several other new establishments in Crosby, are absolute testament to the power and importance of the trail system on the region's local economy and quality of life of Crosby's residents and visitors. There's a new energy, enthusiasm and optimism in the area that has been missing for literally decades. In fact, all three buildings we purchased for our endeavor had been vacant -- some for more than 30 years.

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's second identity (first being mining) and new economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects will further diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the expanded trail system means more visitors to the area enjoying the natural beauty of the area without fears of overuse and pollution of our lakes. Those visitors will have more to do, enjoy longer trail rides, spend more time in the community, and spend additional funds for food, lodging, supplies, and entertainment.

For years, we've observed smaller communities in outstate areas lose their younger residents to larger cities upon graduation from high school or college; with that brain-drain, the next-generation talent leaves, the area stagnates, and businesses close. Interestingly, since opening Victual in Crosby, I've personally talked to numerous younger professional families that have opted to move *into* the Crosby area because of the trail system and the growing optimism and rebirth that the trail system has brought with it. The turnaround in the past four years has been remarkable.

The purpose of my correspondence is simply to ask that the DNR ensures that the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills goes forward. Our communities are depending on it and we'll all benefit from it. Many entrepreneurs (old and new) have invested significant capital into the area and we'll do everything we can do to ensure the momentum continues in its current trajectory.

Best regards,

Paul Kirkman

**Paul Kirkman**  
Victual  
President



**From:** Anthony Koop  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, September 13, 2019 9:33:44 AM

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The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region’s identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County’s \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails’ natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by—younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it’s also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.

Thank you for your time.

**Anthony S. Koop** Real Estate Agent, Jacobs Realty

---

photo



Phone: 218-546-8346  
Mobile: 218-833-2117  
Fax: 218-546-8347  
Email: [jacobsrealtymn@gmail.com](mailto:jacobsrealtymn@gmail.com)  
Website: <http://www.jacobsrealtymn.com>  
Address: P. O. Box 70, 2-3rd Ave NW, Crosby, MN 56441  
-: REALTOR®, MRP, PSA  
-: "Local Expertise, Big City Reach" :-

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**From:** Megan Rehbein  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Eric Charpentier](#); [Sheila Haverkamp](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, September 13, 2019 2:49:44 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[image005.png](#)  
[image006.png](#)  
[2019.09 Cuyuna Connection EAW Letter of Support - BLAEDC.pdf](#)  
[2019.09 Cuyuna Connection EAW Letter of Support - CREDI.pdf](#)

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Hello,

On behalf of both BLAEDC and CREDI, I would like to submit two letters of support for the Cuyuna Connector and Cuyuna Hills trail expansion.

Please let me know if you need anything else from me.

Thank you!

**Megan Rehbein, Office Administrator**

Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corporation

224 West Washington Street Brainerd, MN 56401

Office: (218) 828-0096

[www.growbrainerdlakes.org](http://www.growbrainerdlakes.org)



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**From:** Edward & Julie Dallas  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, September 13, 2019 2:57:27 PM

---

I wish to comment on the trails to be built in the Cuyuna Hills. It's a wonderful idea and an excellent use of that property. I do not believe the trails would do any environmental harm to that land.

My husband and I have lived near the Cuyuna Hills for over 40 years and have walked, biked and cross country skied back there over the years. My dad told stories of skiing in the Cuyuna Hills back when he was a boy! It is excellent property for recreational use.

Julie Dallas  
23177 Black Lake Road  
Deerwood, MN 56444

**From:** Bruce Swanson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW.  
**Date:** Saturday, September 14, 2019 1:15:37 PM

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Please note my support for the proposed trails in the area around Cuyuna MN.

Thank you

Bruce Swanson  
24631 Anne Lake Road  
Deerwood MN 56444-8786

--

Sent from my Android phone with [mail.com](#) Mail. Please excuse my brevity.

**From:** Sarah Nelson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Monday, September 16, 2019 9:23:51 PM

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Hello,

I just wanted to express my support and encouragement for the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Project. The continued growth of the Cuyuna Trail system has brought a stagnate economy and a dying community back to life. They have created a new sense of purpose and provided a huge draw to potential residents and businesses alike. The trails are the lifeblood of the Cuyuna lakes region and their continued expansion will provide better access, bring more opportunity, more jobs, more community health and more soul back to the region. Please consider the incredible impact the continued trail expansion will mean for the Cuyuna Lakes area.

Best,  
Sarah Nelson-Katzenberger  
9153 County Road 23  
Brainerd, Minnesota 56401  
916-548-3406

**From:** Chuck Carlson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 11:17:42 AM

---

I would like to offer a letter of support for the expansion and approval of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails.

It is easy to see the positive economic effect the trail system has had in the Cuyuna Region. It is also great to see the effect of improved personal health and wellness the trail system has had with residents of the area. Many people who were formerly less active have become active cyclists with many physical and mental health benefits for those people. Mountain biking can certainly be a positive addiction for many of us and it leads to healthier lifestyles in general.

Most importantly for this portion of the EAW process however, I would like to address the affect, or lack thereof, the mountain bike trails have on the environment in the proposed trail building site.

First, the mountain bike trails are natural surface. They are designed and built to protect the environment from erosion. The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Crew has dedicated volunteers who are trained in trail maintenance techniques for making sure rainwater runoff will not create erosion problems. The trails are purpose built for sustainability and maintained to that standard as well.

Second, the footprint of the trail is very narrow and limits the impact on the forest floor. Trees become outlines to wind around rather than something to cut out of the way.

Third, water quality is always a consideration of the trail design and maintenance. Proper distance is kept on sloped surfaces to ensure that no erosion concerns develop. Proper designs leave a natural buffer between trails and waterways.

Fourth, mountain biking is a very quiet, non intrusive sport. I have found that wildlife numbers and behavior remain very natural in areas where mountain biking is allowed. I pass by deer, turkeys, grouse, all types of birds, turtles, snakes, etc. who all seem to continue to use the land around the mountain bike trails just the same as those wooded areas that do not contain mountain bike trails. Generally speaking mountain bikers are very environmentally conscious and they appreciate keeping wild areas wild. For many of us, it is this aspect that is one of the major draws that mountain biking has for us. We love to see wildlife and nature in a natural setting. We are concerned with the well being of wildlife and the environment. It is not a sport that is all about us at the expense of the environment and wildlife. The "X Game" type images you see of mountain bikes is far different than the type of mountain biking done in Cuyuna. These are cross country mountain bike trails designed

with enough features to keep things fun but not at the expense of the environment or wildlife. The cycling community is very good about policing the behavior of our own group and we also work to educate new riders to the standards of how to keep our trails sustainable and environmentally positive. We teach things such as braking without skidding tires, not riding on wet trails which can cause ruts and erosion, and we teach riders to respect wildlife and nature.

For these reasons I fully support the use of our public lands for the expansion of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trails!

Respectfully,  
Chuck Carlson  
9025 Lone Oak Dr  
Brainerd, MN 56401

**From:** Nikki (Moore) Miller  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [Nikki Miller](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW - Public Letter of Support  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 10:05:41 AM

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Date: September 18, 2019

To: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Re: Cuyuna Connection Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) - Public letter of support

To Whom it May Concern,

This letter is to express our strong support of the Cuyuna Connector and Cuyuna Hills mountain bike trail expansion project. We view this project as another excellent step in investing in the Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area and the local community.

Expanding investment in recreational activities in the area is not only beneficial for the local economy, but it will also ensure that visitors continue to be introduced to the joys of nature and the health benefits of outdoor activity. An increased appreciation of nature encourages care and stewardship of natural habitats, and propagates conservation efforts. This is critical to the sustainability of our environment.

As Minneapolis residents and an active family of three (myself, husband, and 10-year old son), we have followed and been impressed by the transformation of the Cuyuna lakes area over recent years. We are frequent visitors to all parts of northern Minnesota, always in search of outdoor adventure. But in more recent years, we found ourselves increasingly gravitating to Crosby/Ironton during the summer and fall seasons for mountain biking, kayaking, and (to be honest) eating!

We enjoy the area so much that we recently purchased property in Ironton and plan to retire there someday. The area is well suited for our young family and will continue to provide activities we can enjoy for years to come (e.g., paved biking and walking trails, cross-country skiing, kayaking, more eating ;-)). We see the Cuyuna area as a place where people of all ages and levels of physical abilities can enjoy the serenity of the area in myriad ways.

We look forward to this and future investment in the area's bike trails and other projects that are making the Cuyuna state park an attraction for anyone who desires adventure and a connection with the outdoors.

Sincerely,

Nikki and Brian Miller

21818 Iverson Road Ironton, MN 56455

15265 Elm Road

Minneapolis, MN 55311

Phone: 612-964-7898

Email: [nikkilmoore@yahoo.com](mailto:nikkilmoore@yahoo.com)



## Commenter 82

**From:** Amy Dennis  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Letter of support  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 1:38:58 PM

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I am in support of the addition of the 11.4 miles of trail in cuyuna.

Amy Rost

Sent from my iPhone

## Commenter 83

**From:** suzanne opsahl  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 3:08:18 PM

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I support the expansion. These trails have revitalized the area of the old mining area.  
Sue Opsahl

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Tina C  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 3:35:33 PM

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Dear DNR,

I enthusiastically support any and all proposed expansion of the Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail System. Those trails brought my family, friends, and me many hours of joy over the years. As interest in mountain biking grows, it is essential that the trails grow, too, both to prevent trail crowding and to provide new challenges to keep riders coming back.

- Cristina Curtis

## Commenter 85

**From:** Julia McCunn  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [maria zachmann](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 4:03:26 PM

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Cynthia Novak-Krebs, and MN DNR,

We are writing to express our full support of the planned expansion of the Cuyuna Recreation Area mountain bike trails, including the Cuyuna Connector and Cuyuna Hills projects.

About 6 years ago we began looking for a get-away property to invest in. We live in the cities, but our hearts are in the woods. The Crosby area made the short-list of search areas because of the abundance of recreational opportunities in the area. In the end, the world-class trail system tipped the scales for us and we purchased our property 5 years ago this November outside of Riverton. In 5 years we have seen the area change so much - reinvigorated by the rec area and amenities surrounding it. Crosby is coming back to life, the economy is strong, and new businesses are opening up every month, it seems.

This is a story of an area reinventing itself by leveraging what was left behind to become a tourist magnet. The expansion of the trail system keeps Cuyuna relevant and continues to build on the amazing growth that has taken place. We are excited to ride new trails, as well as help maintain them. Count us in!

Thank you,

Julia McCunn & Maria Zachmann  
5013 Crown St  
Minnetonka, MN 55345

---

22176 Blue Gill Road  
Ironton, MN 56455

**From:** Laura Huisinga  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 4:40:18 PM

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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Laura Huisinga and I am a resident in Crosby MN at 207 1st St NE, Crosby. Not only am I resident, but I am also a business owner in the community. My husband, Nick, and I own and manage Cuyuna Brewing Company on Main Street in Crosby. At this time I am writing to show my support for the expanded Cuyuna Connector and the Cuyuna Hills Trails. It has been amazing to see the transformation that has happened in Crosby over the past few years and much of that can be attributed to the expansion of the state recreation area. We wholeheartedly support this continued expansion.

Thank you,

Laura Huisinga  
Crosby Resident  
320-894-7775

**From:** Micheal Thompson  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 4:48:05 PM

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As a native of Crow Wing County, I offer this strong letter of support for the expansion of the Cuyuna Trails system as detailed in the Cuyuna Connection EAW. This expansion will enhance the experience of thousands of trail users and broaden the already significantly positive economic impact of the trail system on Crosby and Ironton to Cuyuna.

I support this expansion without reservation and with eagerness to be in the trail in the near future.

Yours,

Micheal Thompson  
Nisswa

[micheal.j.thompson@gmail.com](mailto:micheal.j.thompson@gmail.com)

**From:** Dylan Thomas  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 7:33:27 PM

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Hello my name is Dylan Thomas from Sauk Rapids MN, I have been coming up to Cuyuna to ride the mountain bike trails since they opened in 2011. I am completely amazed at the transformation of the mine area with the new trails how clean it is and how much less riff raff there is compared to what it used to be back in the 90s and early 2000s also what it has done for the economy in Ironton, Crosby Cuyuna. I see many families and young people getting into the sport of mountain biking and how much it has grown just in Minnesota alone and I think it would be very smart for the DNR to invest into more of this type of activity for people. This summer alone I have been up there mountain biking at least 8 times if not more and absolutely love it! If you look at what Duluth has done with the Duluth Traverse with their nearly 100 miles of trails in their system and the draw that brings it's a no brainier to add more trails. So to keep it short yes 110% allow more amazing mountain bike trails to be built at Cuyuna and elsewhere in Minnesota!♂

Get [Outlook for Android](#)

## Commenter 81

**From:** Midco  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connector EAW  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2019 7:02:11 PM

---

We support the additional mountain bike trail connector.

Mark & Jerri Yerg  
12940 283rd Ave NW  
Zimmerman Mn

*Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Droid*



**From:** Brad Ingersoll  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 8:49:35 AM

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I am writing this letter to show my support for the proposed development of the mountain biking trails in the Cuyuna area including the Cuyuna Hills and Cuyuna Connections proposals.

I recently moved to the area and love it here, with one of the main attractions being the access to great mountain biking trails (and the paved trails too). I'm 63 years old, retired and relatively new to this type of biking. That said, I get out to ride as often as I can and see the growth that is happening in Crosby and the area because of the current trail system. This new connection to Cuyuna can only help make the area more attractive to both local and visiting bikers. More options for riding are always welcome. Also, my experience so far is that the folks out biking tend to be respectful toward the environment around them. There is very little trash left out on the trails and traffic appears to be limited to the official trails - people are not out cutting trees, making a mess etc.

So - again, I would like to add my voice to those who would like to see this expansion take place.

Thanks for listening.  
Sincerely, Brad

--

\*\*\*\*\*

Brad Ingersoll  
22868 Thompson Pt Rd  
Deerwood, MN 56444

218-590-3360

**From:** Sarah McGee  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 10:16:59 AM

---

I support the Cuyuna expansion!

Sarah McGee  
St. Paul, MN 55114

**From:** walter calder  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 12:28:13 PM

---

I support new the mountain bike trails proposal.  
I base my travels on these types of trail systems, I believe they benefit the area.

Walt Calder

**From:** Lisa Sova  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 12:59:35 PM  
**Attachments:** [0273\\_001.pdf](#)

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Attached please find a letter of support for the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and the Cuyuna Hills submitted by the City of Crosby.

*Lisa Sova*

City Administrator

City of Crosby

2-2<sup>nd</sup> St SW

Crosby, MN 56441

218-546-5021

[lisa.sova@cityofcrosby.com](mailto:lisa.sova@cityofcrosby.com)

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# City of Crosby

2 Second Street SW  
Crosby, Minnesota 56441

September 18, 2019

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

Dear Ms. Novak-Krebs,

The Cuyuna Lakes Mountain Bike Trail network is an integral part of our region's identity and economy. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects help diversify Crow Wing County's \$200 million tourism economy, and the proposed network expansion means more people will enjoy the trails' natural beauty and patronize local businesses. Expanding the trails means longer rides without repeating trails and longer stays for visitors—an extra night in a hotel or campground, another meal at a restaurant, and more supplies from stores.

Every year we hear more and more about small communities in greater Minnesota struggling to get by— younger residents moving to larger cities and businesses closing their doors. The expanded Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trail Projects contribute to the tourism economy, but it's also a good reason for young families to stay in or move to Crow Wing County. The trails have served as a recruitment and retention tool for regional businesses that need a 21st-century workforce. Outdoor recreation also promotes an active, healthy lifestyle that younger generations are looking for.

Please ensure the trail expansion of the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills go forward. Our communities are depending on it.



Lisa Sova  
City Administrator

## Commenter 94

**From:** Jim Sellner  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Cc:** [David Meineke](#); [Kate Paul](#); [Richard Ruhanen](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 4:02:01 PM  
**Attachments:** [Cuyuna Country SRA establishment Session Law.pdf](#)  
[Comments for Cuyuna bike trails expansion EAW 2019 from GME.doc](#)

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Ms. Novak-Krebs:

Please see attached documents regarding comments for the Cuyuna Connection EAW. Could you please confirm receipt? Thanks for considering our input!

R\

J. Sellner  
218-403-1221



# Global Minerals Engineering

Date: September 18, 2019

To: MNDNR Environmental Review

Attn: Cynthia Novak-Krebs

Subject: Cuyuna Connection EAW

Global Minerals Engineering is hereby submitting the following comments regarding the Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Hills Trails Project.

As this proposed recreational bike trail system “connects” to the Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area (CCSRA) with its boundary defined in MN statute, it would be helpful to remind the public that the CCSRA would not be there if iron mining on the Cuyuna Range (1911-1984) had not taken place.

There are still major iron and manganese resources that are owned by the state and private interests on the Cuyuna Range. In fact, the legislation that created the CCSRA, Session Law 1993, Chapter 172, Section 34 states in Sec. 34 Subd. 3 **MINING**: “The commissioner shall recognize the possibility that mining may be conducted in the future within the Cuyuna country state recreation area, and that the use of portions of the surface estate and control of the flowage of water may be necessary for future mining operations.”

Also, all portions of the public land being considered for these bike trails should not hinder in any way the state’s and other mineral owner’s right to lease, explore for, and collect royalty from future mining. It’s the state’s fiduciary responsibility to generate revenue on behalf of the School Trust and generate revenue on behalf of the taxing districts (County, et al.). This includes mineral royalty revenue. Over 90% of the revenue generated for the School Trust has come from mineral royalties (1892 to date). This proposed bike trail area has high mineral potential for not only iron, manganese but a whole suite of other metallic minerals.

Thank You!

Sincerely,

J. M. Sellner. PE, PG

Mining and Geological Engineer

Global Minerals Engineering, LLC

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~~amount may be paid in either fiscal year of the biennium. Total payments to any producer in each fiscal year may not exceed \$3,000,000.~~

(4) The total payments from the account to all producers may not exceed 000,000 in any fiscal year during the period beginning July 1, 1993, and ending June 30, 2000. Total payments from the account to any producer in any 1 year may not exceed \$3,000,000.

By the last day of October, January, April, and July, each producer shall file an application for payment for production during the preceding three calendar months. The volume of production must be verified by a certified financial audit performed by an independent certified public accountant using generally accepted auditing procedures.

Payments shall be made November 15, February 15, May 15, and August 15.

Sec. 32. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 84.027, is amended by adding a subdivision to read:

Subd. 11. FEDERAL CONSERVATION GRANTS. The commissioner of natural resources shall receive and administer grants under the Land and Water Conservation Grant Program authorized by Congress in the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended.

Sec. 33. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 84B.11, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

Subdivision 1. The governor shall appoint, except for the legislative member of a citizen's council on Voyageurs National Park, consisting of 17 members as follows:

Four residents of Koochiching county;

Four residents of St. Louis county;

Five residents of the state at large from outside Koochiching and St. Louis counties;

Two members of the state senate to be appointed by the committee on committees;

Two members of the state house of representatives to be appointed by the speaker of the house.

The governor shall designate one of the appointees to serve as chair and the committee may elect such other officers as it deems necessary. Members shall be elected so as to represent differing viewpoints and interest groups on the issues included in and around the park. Legislator members shall serve for the term of the legislative office to which they were elected. The terms, compensa-

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tion and removal of nonlegislator members, and expiration of the council shall be as provided in section 15.059. Notwithstanding section 15.059, subdivision 5, the council shall continue to exist.

**Sec. 34. CUYUNA COUNTRY STATE RECREATION AREA.**

Subdivision 1. [85.013] [Subd. 5c.] CUYUNA COUNTRY STATE RECREATION AREA. Cuyuna county state recreation area is established in Crow Wing county.

Subd. 2. ACQUISITION. The commissioner of natural resources is authorized to acquire by gift or purchase the lands for Cuyuna county state recreation area. The commissioner must manage the area for multiple recreational use, including allowance of hunting, and provide for limited timber harvesting.

Subd. 3. MINING. The commissioner shall recognize the possibility that mining may be conducted in the future within the Cuyuna county state recreation area, and that use of portions of the surface estate and control of the flowage of water may be necessary for future mining operations.

Subd. 4. ADVISORY COMMITTEE. (a) A local area advisory committee is established to provide direction on the establishment, planning, development, and operation of the Cuyuna county state recreation area.

(b) Membership on the advisory committee shall include:

(1) a representative of the Cuyuna range mineland recreation area joint powers board;

(2) a representative of the Croft Mine historical park joint powers board;

(3) a designee of the Cuyuna range mineland reclamation committee who has worked as a miner in the local area;

(4) a representative of the Crow Wing county board;

(5) a state representative appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(6) a state senator appointed by the senate committee on committees;

(7) a representative of the Brainerd regional office of the department of natural resources;

(8) a designee of the Iron Range resources and rehabilitation board;

(9) a designee of the local business community selected by the area chambers of commerce;

(10) a designee of the local environmental community selected by the Cuyuna county conservation club;



(11) a designee of a local education organization selected by the school board, and

(12) a designee of the local tourism community selected by the Cuyuna county tourism group.

(c) The advisory committee shall elect its own chair and meetings shall be at the call of the chair.

(d) The advisory committee shall serve as volunteers and accept no per diem.

Subd. 5. MANAGEMENT PLAN. The commissioner and local area advisory committee must cooperatively develop a comprehensive management plan that provides for multiple use recreation, protection of natural resources, allowance of hunting, snowmobiling, horse trails and forest management, interpretation of cultural and historic resources, land acquisition needs, fee structure, and road and facility development. The completed management plan shall serve as the master plan for purposes of Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.09.

Subd. 6. BOUNDARIES. The following described lands are located within the boundaries of Cuyuna county state recreation area:

That part of Crow Wing county, Minnesota, lying within:

Section 1, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT that part of the Northwest Quarter lying west of the easterly right-of-way line of the Soo Line Railroad.

EXCEPT the South Half of the Southeast Quarter.

EXCEPT that part of the SE1/4 of the SW1/4 lying east of the easterly line of the Croft Mine Tract.

The Southeast Quarter of Section 2, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

All of Sections 3 and 4, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT Government Lot 2, Section 4, Township 46, Range 29.

That part of Section 5, Township 46 North, Range 29 West, lying southeasterly of the existing Township Road running through said Section 5.

Section 8, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT the Southwest Quarter.

EXCEPT the South Half of the Northwest Quarter.

EXCEPT that part of the North Half of the Northwest Quarter, lying west of an existing Township Road thereof.

New language is indicated by underlining, deletions by strikethrough.

## Commenter 94

All of Section 9, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

Section 10, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT the East Half of the Southeast Quarter.

EXCEPT the SW1/4 of the SE1/4.

EXCEPT the SE1/4 of the SW1/4 thereof.

Section 11, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT the South Half.

EXCEPT the South Half of the Northeast Quarter.

EXCEPT the SE1/4 of the NW1/4.

EXCEPT the North Half of the North Half of the Northwest Quarter.

EXCEPT that part of the NE1/4 of the NE1/4 lying southeasterly of the easterly right-of-way line of the railroad thereof.

That part of Section 16, Township 46 North, Range 29 West, lying northwest of Black Hoof Lake.

Section 19, Township 46 North, Range 29 West.

EXCEPT that part of the Southeast Quarter, lying southerly of the northerly right-of-way line of an existing Township Road.

That part of Section 34, Township 47 North, Range 29 West, bounded as follows:

On the North by the southerly right-of-way line of County State-Aid Highway No. 30.

On the West by the easterly right-of-way line of County State-Aid Highway No. 34.

On the East by the east line of said Section 34.

On the South by the south line of said Section 34.

That part of Section 33, Township 47 North, Range 29 West, lying southeasterly of the easterly right-of-way line of County State-Aid Highway No. 34.

Subject to easements of record for the following County Roads. An easement for C.S.A.H. No. 31 right-of-way purposes over, under and across the east line of said Section 1, also C.S.A.H. No. 30 easement for right-of-way purposes over, under and across the West Half of the Northwest Quarter and the Section line between said Sections 2 and 3, Township 46 North, Range 29 West and the Section line between Sections 34 and 35, Township 47 North, Range 29 West.

New language is indicated by underlining, deletions by strikethrough.

also for County Road No. 128 right-of-way purposes over, under and across the Section line between said Sections 16 and 17 and between Sections 8 and 17, also C.S.A.H. No. 34 right-of-way purposes over, under and across the Section line between said Sections 4 of Township 46 North, Range 29 West and Section 33 of Township 47 North, Range 29 West; subject to an easement of record for State Highway No. 6 right-of-way purposes over, under and across the East Half of the Southwest Quarter of said Section 1 and the Section line between said Sections 1 and 2; subject to any other easements, reservations and restrictions of record; subject to an easement for City of Ironton Street right-of-way purposes over, under and across the SW 1/4 of the NW 1/4 in Section 11, Township 46 North, Range 29 West, according to the recorded plat thereof.

Subject to easements of record for the following state roads, all Trunk Highway 6 and Trunk Highway 210 rights-of-way, in fee or easement, in the described land are exempted.

Subd. 7. FEE. Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, section 85.053, subdivision 2, no fee may be charged by the commissioner for use of the Cuyuna country state recreation area before May 1, 1994.

Subd. 8. ADOPT-A-RECREATION AREA. The commissioner must utilize Minnesota Statutes, section 85.045, as much as possible in development and operation of the Cuyuna country state recreation area.

Sec. 35. [85.019] GRANTS-IN-AID FOR RECREATIONAL BETTERMENT.

Subdivision 1. DEFINITIONS. (a) For purposes of this section, the terms in this subdivision have the meanings given, except as otherwise expressly provided or indicated by the context.

(b) "Athletic courts" means special surface area and supporting equipment or structures, such as nets, hoops, and walls, that can be used for active games that have definite boundaries and are played on a marked surface, limited to basketball, volleyball, handball, and tennis.

(c) "Metropolitan council" and "metropolitan area" have the meanings given in section 473.121.

(d) "Unit of government" means a county, city and home rule charter city, town, school district, public post-secondary educational institution, special park district or an elected park and recreation board having control over parks, parkways, playgrounds, and trees in a city of the first class.

Subd. 2. GRANTS FOR PARKS AND TRAILS. The commissioner shall administer a program to provide grants to units of government located within standard metropolitan statistical areas, as designated by the United States Office of Management and Budget, but outside of the metropolitan area defined in section 473.121. The grants shall be for acquisition and betterment by units of gov-

New language is indicated by underline, deletions by strikethrough.

ernment of public land and improvements needed for parks, trails, conservancies, zoos, and other special use facilities having recreational significance for the entire population of the particular standard metropolitan statistical area. Appropriations made for this purpose shall be expended with the approval of the governor after consultation with the legislative advisory commission. The legislative commission on Minnesota resources shall make recommendations to the legislative advisory commission regarding the expenditures. The local contributing required shall be not less than ten percent. The program shall be administered so as to ensure the maximum possible use of available federal money.

Subd. 3. GRANTS FOR TRAILS IN LOCAL PARKS. The commissioner shall administer a program to provide grants to units of government for the betterment of public land and improvements needed for recreational trails in parks owned and operated by units of government. A grant shall not exceed 40 percent of the costs of the betterment of the trail. To be eligible for a grant, a unit of government must provide at least ten percent of the cost of the betterment of the trail.

Subd. 4. GRANTS FOR LOCAL OUTDOOR ATHLETIC COURTS. The commissioner shall administer a program to provide grants to units of government for the betterment of public land and improvements needed for local athletic courts. A grant may not exceed 50 percent of the costs of the betterment of the athletic court. To be eligible for a grant, a unit of government must provide at least 50 percent of the costs of the betterment of the athletic court. In making grants the commissioner shall consider, among other factors, evidence of cooperation between units of government, local need and available financial resources, and court locations that encourage maximum use, patronage, and availability.

Subd. 5. POWERS; RULES. The commissioner has all powers necessary and convenient to establish programs for recreational betterment grants-in-aid for parks, trails, and athletic courts under this section, including the authority to adopt rules for the program under chapter 14.

Sec. 36. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 85.045, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

Subd. 2. PURPOSE. The purpose of the program is to encourage business and civic groups or individuals to assist, on a volunteer basis, in improving and maintaining state parks, state recreation areas, monuments, historic sites, and trails.

Sec. 37. Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 85.22, subdivision 2a, is amended to read:

Subd. 2a. RECEIPTS, APPROPRIATION. All receipts derived from the rental or sale of state park items and operation of Douglas Lodge shall be deposited in the state treasury and be credited to the state parks working capital account. Receipts and expenses from Douglas Lodge shall be tracked separately within the account. Money in the account is annually appropriated for the purchase and payment of expenses attributable to items for resale or rental and operation of Douglas Lodge. Any excess receipts in this account are annually appropriated for state park management and interpretive programs.

New language is indicated by underline, deletions by strikethrough.



**DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATION**  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

September 19, 2019

Cynthia Vonak-Krebs  
MN Dept of Natural Resources  
Division of Ecological and Water Resources  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4025

RE: EAW – Cuyuna Connection and Cuyuna Trails Project  
Cuyuna, Crow Wing County  
SHPO Number: 2018-2374

Dear Ms. Vonak-Krebs:

Thank you for providing this office with a copy of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the above-referenced project.

We have reviewed the EAW and the cultural resources survey report titled *Phase IA Cultural Resources Survey, Cuyuna Mountain Bike Trail Expansion Project, Cuyuna, Crow Wing County, Minnesota* (June 3, 2019, Terracon) that was prepared for this project. One archaeological site was identified as a result of the investigations, site 21CW0347. This site has not been evaluated to determine its eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, we agree with the recommendation stated in both the EAW and the report that the site be avoided by all construction-related activities. If impacts to this site cannot be avoided, Phase II evaluation of the site will be needed. The report also references evidence of maple sugaring in the project area. We also recommend that this area be avoided by all construction-related activities.

A

For your information, the proposed trails project is partially located within the boundaries of the Cuyuna Iron Range Historic Mining Landscape District, which has previously been determined eligible for listing in the NRHP. Based on the description of the proposed trail construction methods, we have determined that through the utilization of low-impact sustainable trail design, that this project will have minimal effects on any intact mining features and that the historic district will not be adversely affected by this project.

B

Please note that this comment letter does not address the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and 36CFR800, Procedures of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for the protection of historic properties. If this project is considered for federal assistance, or requires a federal permit or license, it should be submitted to our office by the responsible federal agency.

C

Please contact Kelly Gragg-Johnson, Environmental Review Specialist, at (651) 201-3285 or [kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us](mailto:kelly.graggjohnson@state.mn.us) if you have any questions regarding our review of this project.

Sincerely,

Sarah J. Beimers  
Environmental Review Program Manager

**From:** Jackie Derks  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Trails Need More Signs !!  
**Date:** Thursday, September 19, 2019 11:59:14 AM

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Hi!

My husband & I rode on some of the Cuyuna Bike Trails last year, but we often could not tell exactly what trail we were on due to a lack of signs. It's not that you need lots of signs but just a few to know what trail to pick when there is a crossroads and two or more choices to make. We only ever saw 2 signs that showed "You are Here" after we had followed a trail for quite a distance. We would appreciate you adding a few more signs.

Thank You!

J. Derks

**From:** Sean Miller  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna Connection EAW  
**Date:** Thursday, September 19, 2019 1:50:55 PM

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I hope you consider approving additional mountain bike trails for the Cuyuna region to keep new and old cyclists coming back to town!

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sean | [mill3239@umn.edu](mailto:mill3239@umn.edu)

**NOTE: Received one day  
past public comment  
period**

**From:** Charlie Browning  
**To:** [MN Review, Environmental \(DNR\)](#)  
**Subject:** Cuyuna connection EAW  
**Date:** Friday, September 20, 2019 7:13:45 AM

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I fully support the addition of more trails in that awesome community.

Charlie Browning  
612-986-0453  
117 maple hill rd  
Hopkins Mn 55343