



# Lake Byllesby Regional Park

# **MASTER PLAN**

Adopted by the Dakota County Board January 23, 2018



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# LAKE BYLLESBY REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN

Adopted by the Dakota County Board January 23, 2018

## OVERVIEW

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is located on the southern border of Dakota County, Minnesota, adjacent to Lake Byllesby, a 1,300 acre reservoir of the Cannon River. The park, established in 1970, is 620 acres along the north side of Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River. The park is generally divided into a western unit that is located on the northwest side of the lake and along the Cannon River and an eastern unit on the northeast side of the lake adjacent to the Lake Byllesby Dam. The Lake Byllesby Dam, owned and managed by Dakota County, was constructed in 1910 to bring electricity to the rural area and is still in operation today as a hydropower dam. The park provides public access to the largest recreational lake in the southern Twin Cities metro area, links to the Mill Towns State Trail, and is situated along the Cannon River Water Trail. Across the lake, Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park provides boat access, trails, picnic shelters, and play areas to local residents. The two county parks are connected by a pedestrian and bicycle trail bridge. This document presents the master plan for Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park with consideration of complementary facilities at Goodhue County's park.

### Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park (2 parts) and Goodhue County's Byllesby Park



## EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS

### East Park

The eastern portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park, which contains 254 acres, has been developed for recreation. Current attractions include the campground, beach, boat launch, and lakeside picnic shelter. Visitors use the park for boating, camping, canoeing/kayaking/paddle boarding, fishing, geocaching, hiking, horseshoes, picnicking, playgrounds, swimming, dogsledding/skijoring, and ice fishing.

### West Park

The west side of the park has 366 acres, most of which is undeveloped and lacks basic access and signage. Much of the land within the west park boundary is privately owned and includes homes and farmsteads. The landscape consists of agricultural fields, former agricultural fields, wooded areas, river floodplain, restored prairie, and mudflats delta. Water features include Lake Byllesby, The Cannon River, Oxbow Lake, and Chub Creek.

*This Master Plan was developed in coordination with Goodhue County as a Master Plan for its Byllesby County Park was developed. The program elements within each park have been designed to complement each other and provide recreation for users as if they were one combined park.*

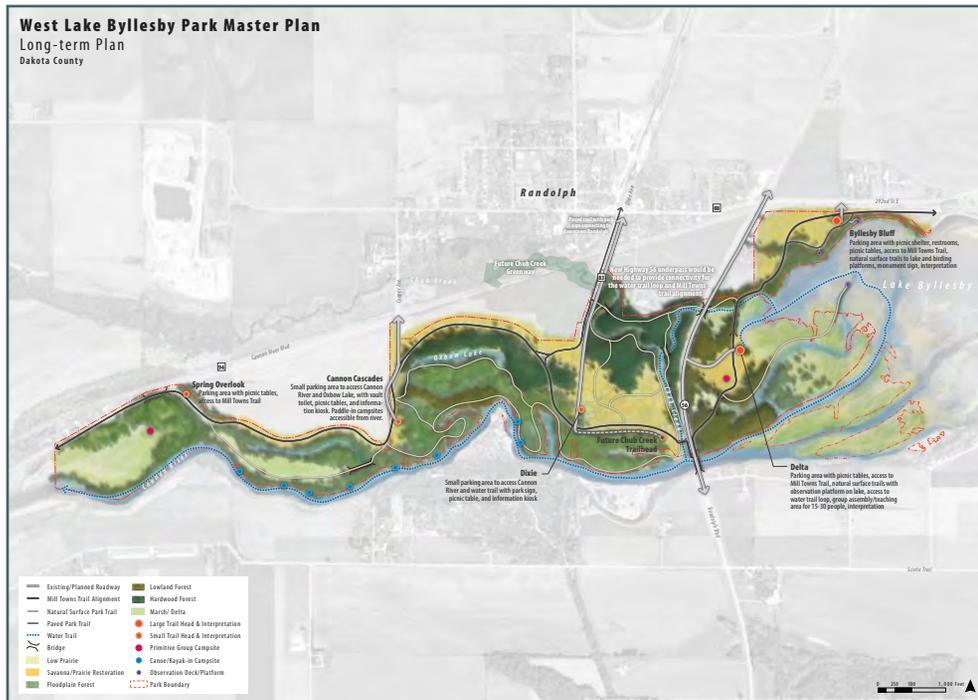
## MASTER PLAN GOALS

- » Create a visionary and strategic document
- » Review the current state of Lake Byllesby Regional Park
- » Address hills changes that have occurred since the 2005 Master Plan
- » Incorporate direction from 2008 Dakota County Park System Plan
- » Represent current community values, recreation needs, and desires
- » Address recreation, interpretation, and natural resource management in an integrated process
- » Guide future investment in the park
- » Meet Metropolitan Council requirements for Regional Park Master Plans



## Lake Byllesby Regional Park West: Long-term Plan

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park East: Long-term Plan



# LAKE BYLLESBY REGIONAL PARK DEVELOPMENT LONG-TERM PLAN

The Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan focuses on improvements prioritized for the next 10 years within the framework of the long-term vision for the park. The long-term plan above shows the park at full recreation development, while the subsequent 10-year plan shows improvements that are reasonably expected to be accomplished during the life of this master plan document based on historic funding levels. The long-term plan is important to understanding 10-year phasing and allows for flexibility. Elements from the long-term plan that are not currently included in the 10-year plan may be accomplished sooner based on changing priorities or unforeseen funding opportunities.

For both the long-term and the 10-year plans, the development concept has been organized into separate plan graphics for the east side and the west side of the park. The east side shows the Goodhue County Byllesby Park concept to illustrate the vision for the combined park.

## VISION STATEMENT

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is the natural-resources based park where people can explore the Cannon River Valley. Individuals, families, and groups from around the region visit the park to enjoy the lake, river, and regional trails; to play outdoors and participate in educational activities; to gather with others; and to support the stewardship of the area's wealth of natural resources.



## **EAST PARK: 10-YEAR PLAN**

The concept for the east side of Byllesby Park focuses on expanding overnight accommodations, adding recreation and picnicking options, and incorporating natural resources restoration. These improvements will occur within the east park's current roadway network. An overview of proposed improvements in each park area is provided below.

### **Sunset Beach**

The existing beach area will be enhanced through the addition of sand volleyball courts, a stone fire pit, and sand/water play equipment, and will include ADA accessible amenities. In addition to a beach plaza, an improved picnic area and play lawn will be defined south of the beach to accommodate small and larger group picnicking.

North of the beach, Lakeside cottages will provide overnight options with a view. The existing non-motorized boat launch will be improved with paved road access and better lake entry.

### **Echo Point**

The views of the water and bluffs from Echo Point will be a large draw to park users. Echo Point will be more clearly established as a picnic and gathering area through the development of two sun shelters and fire pits. A fishing pier and informal shoreline fishing area with boulders for standing on will be accessible from a paved loop trail that will extend through Echo Point and back to the Sunset Beach area and campground.

Savanna plant restoration will encompass the central area of the point, and the shoreline will be restored with a 20-25 foot wide buffer of native lake edge plants.

### **Byllesby Bay Campground**

The 10-year plan will retain the 34 existing sites at the lake's edge. In order to provide a more pleasant camping experience, the campground will be expanded and organized to meet current demand for camping and to improve the tent camping experience. The 10-year plan will include 22 sites without water/electric hook ups and 72 water and electric sites. A restroom building with toilets and showers will be located in the center of the campground. All camp sites will be similar to state park camp sites, with trees surrounding and in between the sites for shade and privacy, a gravel parking pad, a picnic table, a tent pad, and a fire pit. To support RVs and pop-up campers, the water and electric sites will have larger parking pads than the sites without water/electric hook up. Some of these sites will be ADA accessible.

Ten boat slips on the lake will be a short 300-foot walk from the campground and will provide space for campers or day boaters to tie up their boats while camping overnight or walking on the park trails.

### **North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area**

In the 10-year plan, the existing playground will be renovated to add elements that interpret the unique natural and historical elements of the park, and the existing storage building will be removed.

### **Cannon River**

Providing access to the Cannon River is one of the intents of the master plan. A trailhead parking lot and picnic tables will be constructed to the southeast of the maintenance facility. A paved trail will lead from the Mill Towns State Trail down the slope to the edge of the Cannon River. A formalized, paved kayak and canoe launch will be at the water's edge to facilitate safe entry to the river. Carts will be provided to portage canoes

and kayaks from the lake to the river launch. Space will be provided near the kayak and canoe launch for shoreline fishing and water viewing.

Two yurts will be constructed along the slope, accessible by soft surface trails. These will provide a rustic, overnight experience in the forest with the sound of the rushing water below.

### **Echo Channel**

The existing year-round natural surface trails and parking area will remain. Improvements will be focused on restoring the wetland communities.

### **Oak Savanna**

The Oak Savanna area will be a primary site for natural resources improvements, native landscape plantings, and wetland restorations. The Oak Savanna is an area of the park reserved for passive recreation, where there is minimal planned development.

### **Lilac Landing**

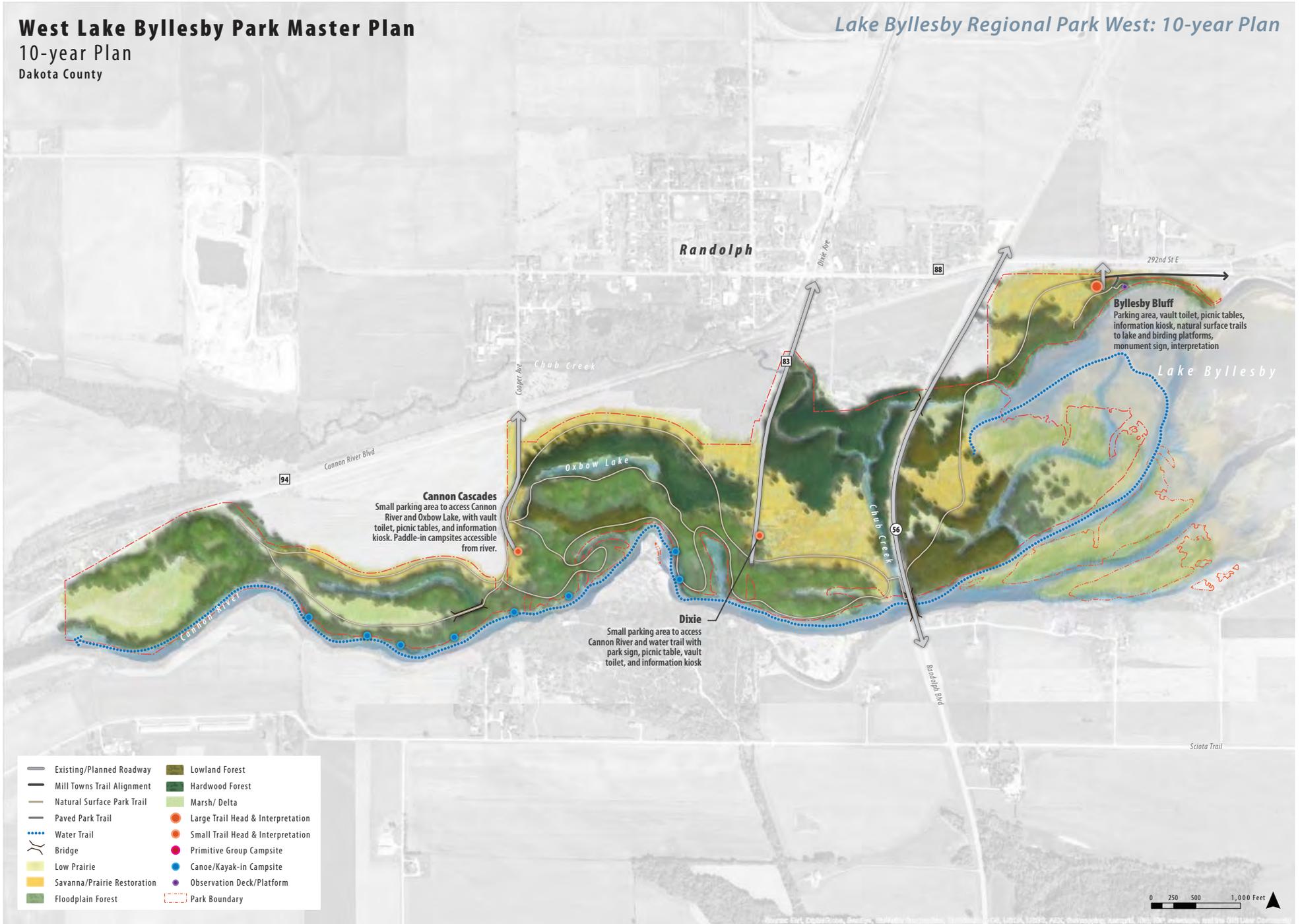
Lilac Landing primarily serves as a non-motorized boat launch in the summer and a lake access point during portions of the winter. It is intended that the site continue to be the location of a non-motorized boat launch, and that parking will remain unpaved.

# West Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan

## 10-year Plan

Dakota County

# Lake Byllesby Regional Park West: 10-year Plan



## WEST PARK: 10-YEAR PLAN

The west side of Lake Byllesby Regional Park is an undeveloped, floodplain landscape surrounded by agricultural fields and rural residential properties. It is intended that West Byllesby retain its natural resource focus. New entry signage, trailheads, and soft surface trails will be constructed to facilitate visitors' access to the park. In addition to the physical improvements, it will be necessary to build awareness of this park land through online marketing and communication methods in the east park.

### Byllesby Bluff Trailhead

One of the primary public access points for the west part of Lake Byllesby Regional Park will be the Byllesby Bluff Trailhead. The trailhead will be constructed at the location of what is today a small gravel vehicle turnaround. Improvements in the 10-year Plan are geared to basic access: park signage, a small parking area for 20 cars, picnic tables, a vault toilet, and a bird blind/lake observation platform.

### Dixie Trailhead

The Dixie trailhead will facilitate access to the river hiking and paddling trails. The Dixie Trailhead will be a rustic site with a 10-car gravel parking lot, a vault toilet, picnic tables, a park sign, and access to the river along a natural surface trail.

### Cannon Cascades

The Cannon Cascades Trailhead will include a small gravel parking lot for about 10 cars to provide access to Oxbow Lake and the Cannon River with a vault toilet, picnic tables, and soft surface trails. Signage will provide trail information. Canoe and kayak campsites can be accessed from the river or from soft surface trails.

## Greenway between East and West Byllesby/ Mill Towns State Trail



### Trail Connection Between East and West Byllesby / Mill Towns State Trail

A greenway connection between the Mill Towns State Trail bridge in the east park unit and the west park unit is desired. In the future, the trail may become part of the Mill Towns State Trail, linking Northfield to the Cannon Valley Trail. The Mill Towns State Trail Master Plan has identified several possible alignments between Northfield and Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Dakota County supports a Mill Towns State Trail alignment on the north side of the Cannon River with opportunities for routing within the park, connecting the east and west park units, and connecting to the City of Randolph.

The master plan shows a generalized alignment. It is anticipated that additional planning and design will occur before the trail will be constructed.

## PARKWIDE FOCUS AREAS

### Winter Use

The long-term plan seeks to provide facilities that would increase winter usage of the park, including a building for indoor programming and rentals, rentable ice houses, and yurts for overnight stays. The location

of the non-motorized boat launch is maintained in its current location, in part, because of the winter access it provides. It is anticipated that most of the winter activities will occur in the East Park; however, parking areas in the West Unit will be plowed during the winter months to provide access for snowshoeing and winter walking. The phasing of the East Park was designed to allow the continuation of the use of the natural surface trails around Echo Channel and to the north for dog sledding, though the potential Mill Towns Trail alignment will affect the location of existing and future trails in the north area of the East Park.

### Motorized Boating (Mn DNR Guidelines)

The state's Department of Natural Resources (Mn DNR) manages surface water usage and motorized boating in Minnesota. To ensure the safety of motorized and non-motorized lake users, this master plan recommends that boat trailers be required to park on designated, paved surfaces. Coordination between East Dakota County and Goodhue County will be needed to ensure that the maximum number of boat trailer spots available is maintained. No changes to the existing distribution of boat parking are proposed.

## ELEMENTS PROPOSED IN 10-YEAR PLAN



*Paddle-in campsites*



*Lakeside cottages*



*Rustic trailhead parking and signage*



*Small picnic shelter / sun shelter*



*Playground with interpretive elements*



*Splash pad with natural play features*



*Shoreline restoration*



*Camp sites*



*Canoe/kayak portage*



*Natural surface trail*



*Bird observation/blind*



*Fat tire biking*

## INTERPRETATION PLAN

The interpretive plan provides recommendations for enhancing the visitor experience. Interpretive signage and art will be located throughout the park, along trails, and at facilities and amenities. The interpretive theme for Lake Byllesby Regional Park was developed through research, on-site resource survey, a planning team workshop, and collaboration between the consulting team and County staff.

***Lake Byllesby Regional Park and its surrounds have been a gathering place along the Cannon River over time. Although the landscape has radically changed, people continue to be drawn to the distinctive waterways, landscapes, and vistas found here.***

Interpretation methods and representative examples are included in the master plan for inspiration; but as park development is undertaken, the interpretation may evolve. Potential partners for Dakota County as it develops its outdoor education programming include Randolph and Cannon Falls Schools, Scouting Groups, Audubon Society, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists, the Cannon River Watershed, and others.

### Interpretive Sub-themes

#### Powering Minnesota

In response to a growing need for electricity to power homes, businesses, and industries in the area, in the early 1900s, Henry Byllesby harnessed the river to generate hydroelectric power. The dam still provides power and attracts people to the park's engineering history.

#### The Power of Attraction

This area has been a gathering place across time, attracting people to its bounty and beauty. Flowing water and diverse landscapes once provided sustenance, now people come to enjoy outdoor recreation and distinctive vistas.

#### From River to Reservoir

When the Byllesby Dam was constructed, the valley was flooded, creating a reservoir and transforming the river landscape. Today, the dam controls the river flow and reservoir water level and exposes upstream mudflats.

#### Fragmented Landscape

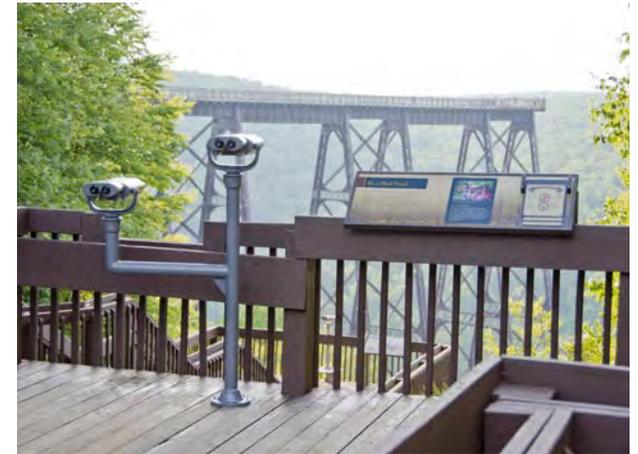
Visitors can experience remnants of habitats and landscapes—prairie, floodplain forest, oak savanna, pine tree bluff—throughout the park. The west end of the park offers a rustic exploration opportunity, while the east end has a more defined outdoor experience.

#### Linked to the Region

This area is a connected and continuous place linked to the region and watershed. Upstream activities can influence the park, just as park activities can reach into regional communities.

#### Implementation

The priority for implementation of interpretive elements is based on park development by area or structure. For example, as Dakota County Parks improves Echo Point, the interpretive elements located there should also be developed. As an alternative approach, implementation could be staged to build support and increase visitorship before all development is realized. For example, developing the mobile app and trailheads would raise awareness of park amenities and opportunities and link the park to regional trails.



*Binoculars and outdoor book*



*On-site audio*



*Augmented reality app*

# NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP PLAN

## Natural Resources Inventory

The area around Lake Byllesby Regional Park has drastically changed since European settlement. Information from various sources such as soils, geology, original public land surveys, and historical aerial photography help us formulate a picture of what the site would have been like before. Presettlement, the park's landscape was likely dominated by prairie, with river bottom forest along the Cannon River and small areas of oak openings and barrens. The Cannon River of old was a highly sinuous channel, and a small cascade called Big Falls was located near what is the dam today. However, little remains of the pre-European settlement landscape today. Plowing and intensive grazing by domestic livestock have significantly altered ecological processes and the construction of the hydroelectric dam in 1910 created Lake Byllesby.

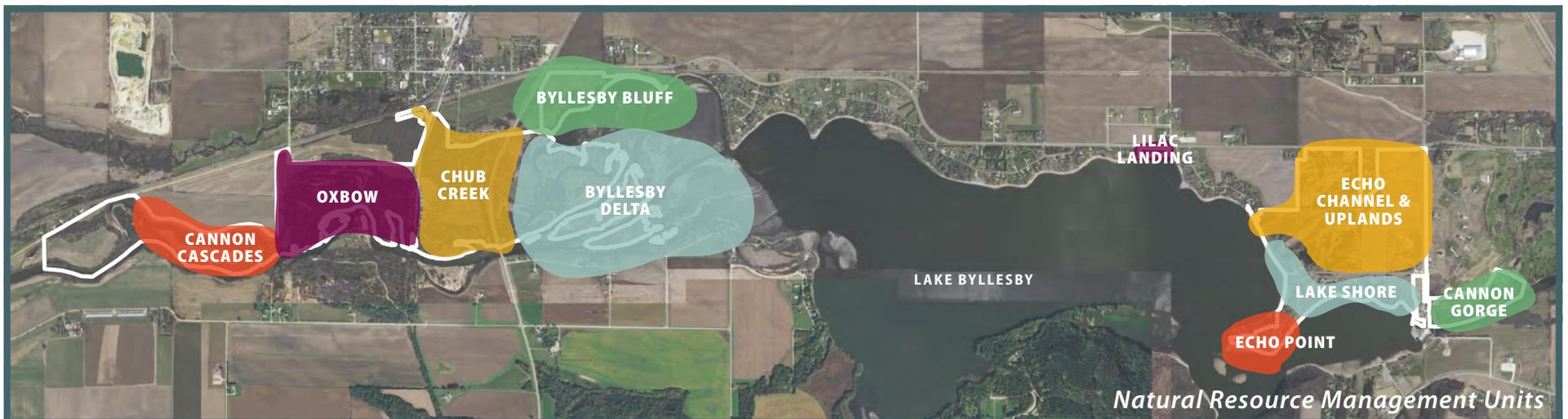
Surveys and field visits to the site, conducted by Emmons and Olivier Resources (EOR) in 2016, identified

a diversity of natural and disturbed/developed vegetative communities within the park including grassland, prairie, savanna-brushland, woodland-brushland, deciduous forest, wet forest-swamp, floodplain forest, emergent marsh, lake-pond, river-stream, an abandoned nursery, developed parkland, abandoned gravel pits, and cropland. The majority of the vegetative communities identified within the Park were considered disturbed or low vegetative diversity but have the potential to be restored. Only a few forested and wetland areas were identified as habitat of good or fair quality.

The Lake Byllesby Regional Park Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) that was developed in tandem with this development master plan includes detailed descriptions of natural resources, existing conditions, desired improvements, and action items. Natural resource improvements throughout the park will provide layers of function even beyond the ecological, from improving the overall setting to creating transitions between uses, providing demonstration opportunities, and modeling stewardship for educational and interpretive purposes. Natural resource improvements

will include the conversion of lawn to prairie, naturalization of shoreland, management of invasive species, and restoration of natural communities.

The primary issues identified for Lake Byllesby Park are a lack of high quality and connected natural areas. Specific concerns within these overarching issues include invasive species; habitat fragmentation due to infrastructure, amenities, and agricultural areas; pests; stormwater management; and anthropogenic pollution. Management efforts should focus on efforts to mitigate the aforementioned issues. Specifically, intensive effort to manage prolific invasive species like buckthorn will be important to restoring a more native vegetation community within the park. Furthermore, vegetative restoration efforts should include areas of oak savanna, native prairie and grasslands, non-forested wetlands, and stream habitats as these communities are essential for rare and sensitive wildlife species and pollinators. Habitat restorations will help decrease the fragmented nature of the park and foster an ecosystem more resilient to pests and non-native species invasions. Priority effort should also include the naturalization of the reservoir shoreline. Reducing embankment and



revegetating shoreline areas will help improve fish habitat and also mitigate stormwater. As the Park moves forward with infrastructure additions and improvements, stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) should be included to offset any potential increases in stormwater runoff and pollution.

For ease of management, the park was divided into natural resource management units. Each unit is described in terms of existing conditions, issues, opportunities, and recommendations.

### **Natural Resource Vision Statement**

The following vision statement for Lake Byllesby Park is built on the principals and vision outlined in the county-wide NRMSP and also on an understanding of the Park conditions and uses:

**Management of Lake Byllesby Regional Park will focus on maintaining, restoring, and enhancing the quality and resilience of natural resources in order to provide a variety of ecosystem services and an outstanding setting for nature-based outdoor recreation.**

### **Natural Resource Management Goals**

Overarching management goals for Lake Byllesby Park natural resources management include:

#### **Vegetation**

- » Focus on invasive species control especially in high quality areas.
- » Perpetually maintain restored areas by sufficiently installing native seed and using appropriate invasive species management techniques.
- » Identify and prioritize high quality areas where use and management is focused on natural resource integrity, higher connectivity.
- » Monitor progress and facilitate adaptive management based on best management practices

and scientific methods.

### **Water Resources**

- » Focus on management of aquatic invasive species within wetlands and other water features, especially in areas with potential to spread invasion to adjacent waterbodies.
- » Utilize stormwater best management practices to improve water management and address listed impairments.
- » Develop educational signage and programing to inform visitors of invasive species and water protection efforts.

### **Wildlife**

- » Restore and maintain vegetative communities to attract insects and wildlife associated with native plant communities.
- » Conduct surveys to monitor indicator species and inform adaptive management.
- » Consider strategies to mitigate the impact of overabundant wildlife to protect native vegetation and wildlife (e.g. ex-closures, removal)

### **Natural Resource Recommendations**

Long-term goals for the park include restoration of 400 acres to native vegetative communities. The focus of the remainder of natural resource efforts will be on promoting native vegetation, controlling invasive species, and managing existing restored prairie areas.

Near-term park projects over the next 10 years include restoration of 160 acres of native vegetation, controlling invasive species on 136 acres, and restoring shoreline. See maps of proposed natural resource project recommendations on the following pages.

Mitigation, restoration, and other management activities should be continuously monitored and assessed. Furthermore, the NRMP will be reviewed and updated every five years or as needed to maintain its relevancy.

Through the recommended efforts, Lake Byllesby Park should become both a regional recreation hub for exploring and observing nature and also a place of great habitat diversity and value to a variety of wildlife.

### **Landscape Buffers to Improve Park Setting**

The master plan recommends that sense of setting and aesthetics are considered in park development design and natural resource management. Views from roads, trails, and other developed areas will affect park users' feelings and perceptions of the park. Improvements to the setting through framing iconic views, buffering views to and from adjacent residential areas, creating unique park areas with plantings and landform, and enhancing the park with a more natural signature are envisioned. Native landscape buffers are integral to shaping people's perceptions of the park as an immersive, natural landscape and can be constructed as part of natural resource improvement projects.

### **Water Quality and Sedimentation**

An ongoing issue for the park and local residents is the water quality and sedimentation of the Byllesby Reservoir and the Cannon River. Community concern was expressed repeatedly during the public engagement process for this Plan. These are watershed scale issues that may require state financial assistance.

Since the watershed encompasses more than 900,000 acres across nine counties, a regional plan to meet state requirements called "One Watershed One Plan" is currently underway. Though the Cannon River and Lake Byllesby water quality and sedimentation are largely related to upstream land use, Dakota County is a participating partner in the One Watershed One Plan planning process and has an interest in improved water quality and a reduction of sediment deposition within the reservoir. Sedimentation in Lake Byllesby's East Bay, while unlikely to occur in the near future, is of

## East Park Recommendations

- A. Establish oak savanna and shrub species within existing restored prairie to provide screening along Harry Avenue.
- B. Establish native dry prairie with bur oaks in existing cropland. Consider landform changes to provide screening and habitat diversity.
- C. Control invasive species, establish patches of native dry prairie with native trees, and establish buffer along Harry Ave.
- D. Restore wetland with native wet meadow and emergent plant communities.
- E. Control invasive species and restore woodland habitat.
- F. Restore dry savanna. Create and fortify buffers along private homes and roadway.
- G. Restore shoreline.
- H. Establish oak savanna. Fortify buffers adjacent to homes as needed.
- I. Incorporate native plantings throughout campground and future campground area.
- J. Remove Siberian elm and establish buffer with native vegetation.
- K. Maintain existing tall grass prairie and buffer adjacent homes and road as needed.
- L. Restore oak woodland and seepage meadow.
- M. Restore river shore.

## East Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan Natural Resources



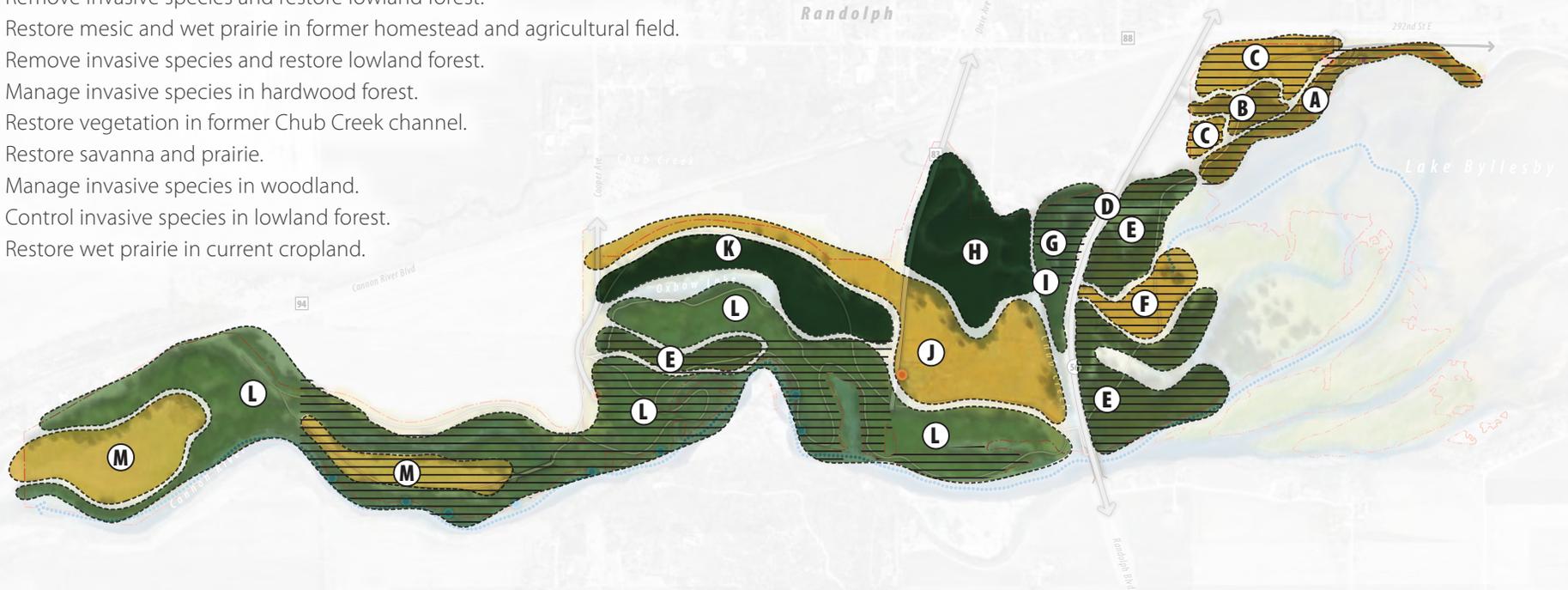
# West Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan

## Natural Resources

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park West: Natural Resources

#### West Park Recommendations

- A. Control woody invasive species and restore savanna along lake shore.
- B. Control woody invasive species and restore mesic prairie.
- C. Manage existing short grass and tall grass prairies.
- D. Construct wildlife passage at Highway 56.
- E. Remove invasive species and restore lowland forest.
- F. Restore mesic and wet prairie in former homestead and agricultural field.
- G. Remove invasive species and restore lowland forest.
- H. Manage invasive species in hardwood forest.
- I. Restore vegetation in former Chub Creek channel.
- J. Restore savanna and prairie.
- K. Manage invasive species in woodland.
- L. Control invasive species in lowland forest.
- M. Restore wet prairie in current cropland.



#### NATURAL RESOURCE LEGEND

##### Plant Community

- Savanna/Prairie
- Floodplain/Lowland Forest
- Hardwood Forest

##### Phasing

- 10-year Plan Natural Resource Effort Areas



particular interest to Dakota County, as it could affect dam operations and recreation (boating, swimming, fishing, and visual quality). Excess sediment is currently a factor in the west portion of the reservoir, forming a delta that functions as an Important Birding Area where the Cannon River runs into Lake Byllesby. The mud flats exposed by seasonal reservoir draw downs are heavily used by migrating waterfowl & shorebirds.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Boundary and Acquisition

There are 22 parcels identified in the boundary and acquisition plan. The impact of these boundary changes on the size of the park is shown in the table to the right. In the east park, two parcels are identified for removal from the park boundary, while one is being proposed to be added. It is recommended that in the West Park the boundary be expanded to incorporate more lands for natural resource protection along the Cannon River, to provide land for an upland trail alignment to connect use areas in the west park, provide maintenance access, and potentially serve as the Mill Towns State Trail alignment. In both the East and West Park, parcels will be acquired as opportunities arise from willing sellers.

### Cost Estimate

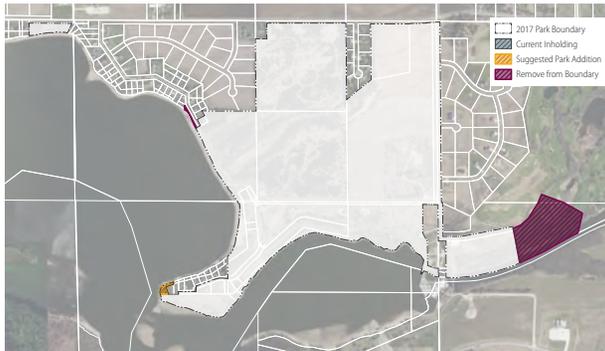
The five-year Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) provides for acquisition, greenway and parks improvements and planning. Capital improvements at Lake Byllesby Regional Park will be budgeted for within the CIP process. As shown in the upper right table, the 10-year Plan for recreation development and natural resources restoration is estimated to cost \$10.99 million.

The Long-term recreation plan is estimated to cost an additional \$23 million. Natural resources management costs will be further evaluated as the 10-year Plan is implemented and impacts are able to be measured.

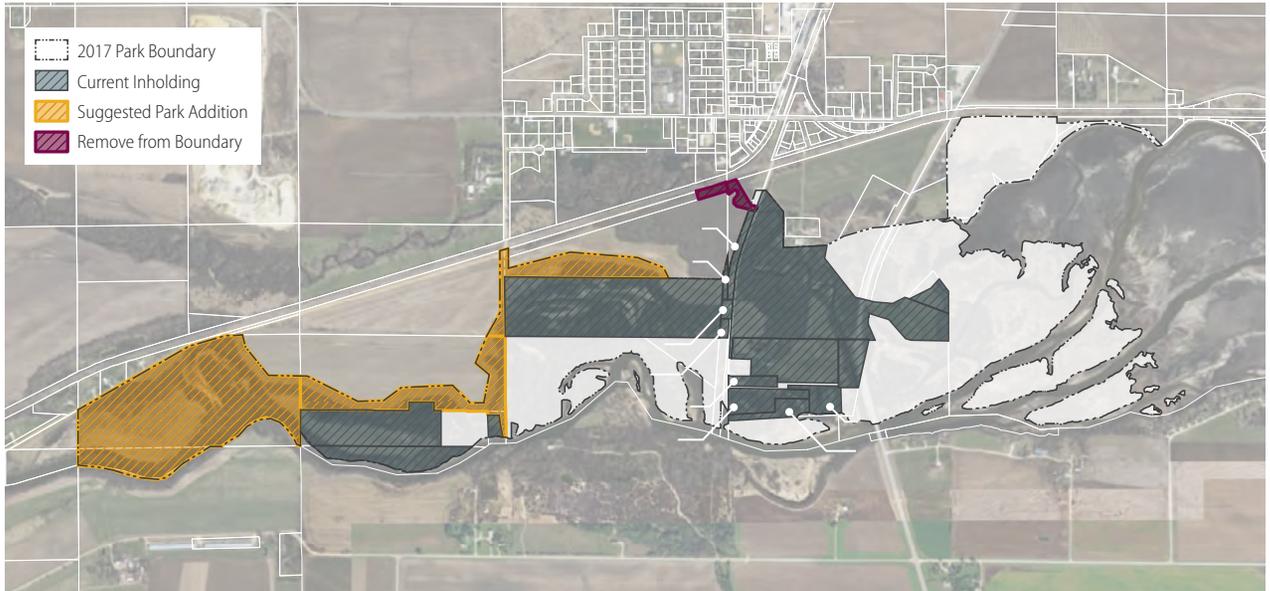
### Summary of Park Boundary Changes

<b>Existing Inholdings</b>	151.59 acres
<b>New Inholdings</b>	94.27 acres
<b>Removals</b>	14.90 acres
<b>Net Gain</b>	79.37 acres added to park boundary

### East Park Boundary Adjustment / Acquisition Sites



### West Park Boundary Adjustment / Acquisition Sites



### Master Plan Cost Estimate

<b>Acquisition</b> <i>(from willing seller over long-term)</i>	<b>\$3,710,200</b>
<b>East Byllesby 10-year Plan</b>	<b>\$8,919,300</b>
Recreation Development	\$8,372,800
Natural Resources Restoration	\$546,500
<b>West Byllesby 10-year Plan</b>	<b>\$2,070,250</b>
Recreation Development	\$1,776,250
Natural Resources Restoration	\$294,000
<b>Total 10-year Plan</b>	<b>\$10,989,550</b>



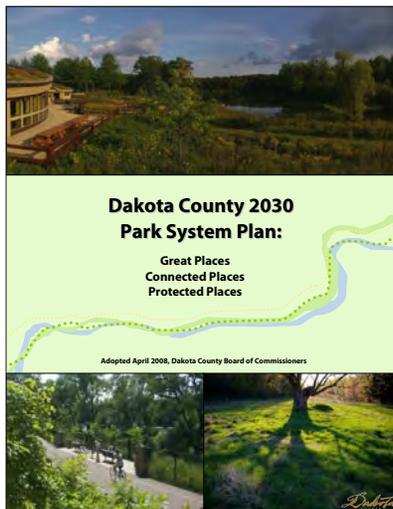
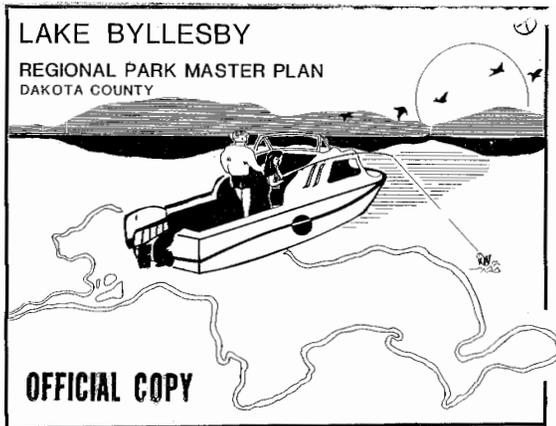
# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is located on the southern border of Dakota County, Minnesota, adjacent to Lake Byllesby, a reservoir of the Cannon River. The park, established in 1970, is 620 acres along the north side of Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River. The lake recreation and the size of the park led to its gaining regional status in the metropolitan region. The park is generally divided into a western unit that is located on the northwest side of the lake and along the Cannon River and an eastern unit on the northeast side of the lake adjacent to the Lake Byllesby Dam. The Lake Byllesby Dam, owned and managed by Dakota County, was constructed in 1910 to bring electricity to the rural area and is still in operation today as a hydropower dam. The park provides public access to the largest recreational lake in the southern Twin Cities metro area, links to the Mill Towns State Trail, and is situated along the Cannon River Water Trail. Across the lake, Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park provides boat access, trails, picnic shelters, and play areas to local residents. The two county parks are connected by a pedestrian and bicycle trail bridge that was constructed in 2015-2016. This document presents the master plan for Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park with consideration of complementary facilities at Goodhue County's park.



Figure 1.1 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park Location within Dakota County



**The goals of this master plan are:**

- » Create a visionary and strategic document.
- » Review the current state of Lake Byllesby Regional Park.
- » Address changes that have occurred since the 2005 Master Plan (connection to Goodhue County, new trends and demographics, and closing of private campground).
- » Incorporate direction from the 2008 Parks System Plan.
- » Represent current community values, recreation needs, and desires.
- » Address recreation, interpretation, and natural resource management in an integrated process.
- » Guide future investment in the park.
- » Meet Metropolitan Council requirements for Regional Park Master Plans.

**ROLE IN THE REGION**

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is part of the Metropolitan Regional Park System. It was included as part of the regional system due to its lake recreation and size. Dakota County is a regional park implementing agency governed by the Metropolitan Council. Together, both agencies strive to address the following directives from the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan:

- » Expand the Regional Parks System to conserve, maintain, and connect natural resources identified as being of high quality or having regional importance, as identified in the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- » Provide a comprehensive regional park and trail system that preserves high-quality natural resources, increases climate resilience, fosters healthy outcomes, connects communities, and enhances quality of life in the region.

- » Promote expanded multimodal access to regional parks, regional trails, and the transit network, where appropriate.
- » Strengthen equitable usage of regional parks and trails by all our region’s residents, such as across age, race, ethnicity, income, national origin, and ability.

Within the Dakota County Parks System, Lake Byllesby Regional Park provides the following unique qualities:

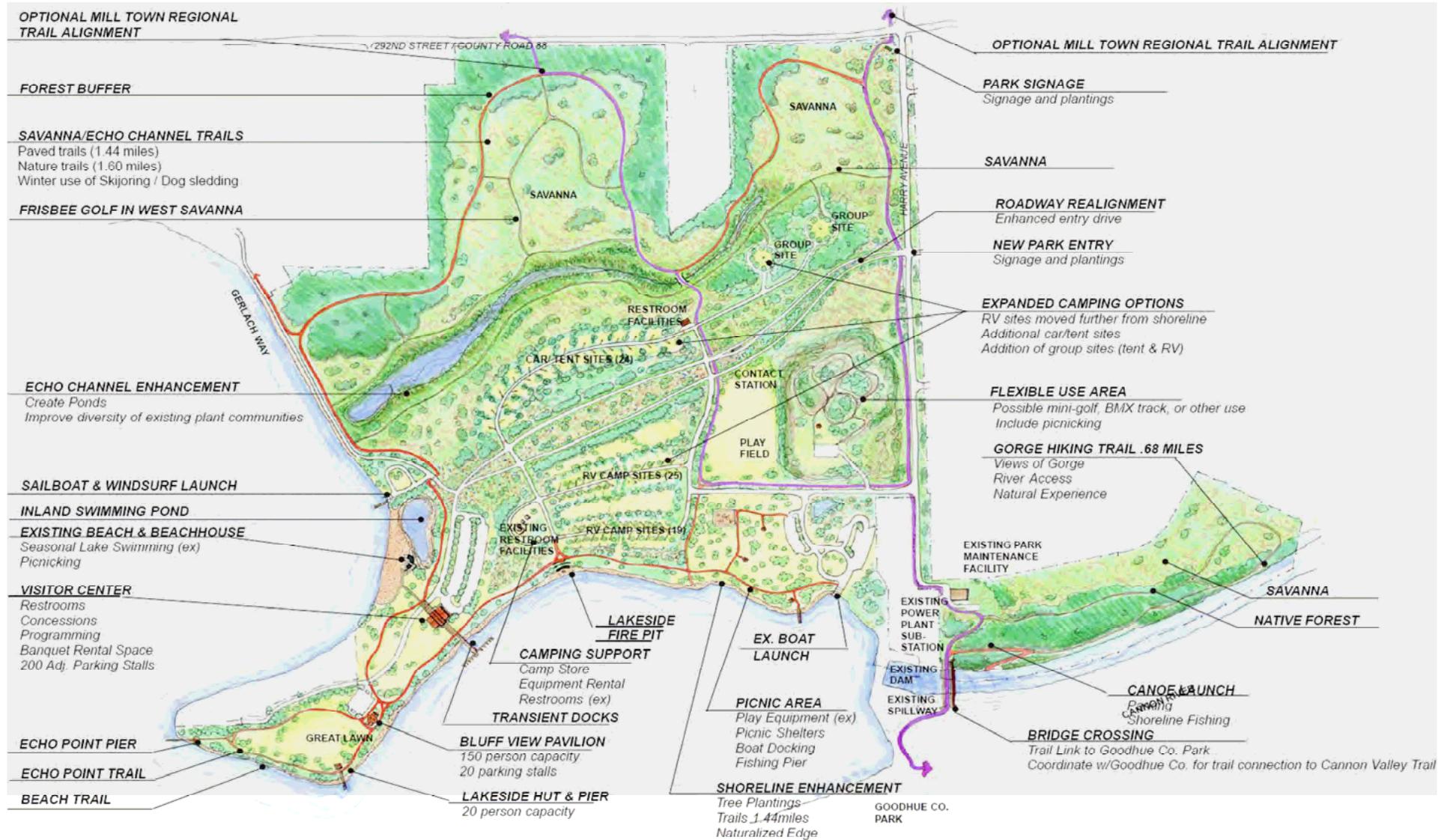
- » Its location in the far southern part of Dakota County and the metro area serves rural residents with convenient park access.
- » The 1,200+ acre lake is the largest recreational lake in Dakota County.
- » The 60-foot tall bluffs on the Goodhue County side of the lake provide strikingly beautiful scenery viewed from the Dakota County lake shore.
- » The popular campground provides a close overnight experience for Metro and southern Minnesota residents.
- » Connections to the Cannon Valley Trail and future Mill Towns State Trail expand the park users’ recreational opportunities.
- » The park provides access to the Cannon River.

**Dakota County Parks’ Mission**

The Dakota County Parks Department’s mission statement is “To enrich lives by providing high-quality recreation and education opportunities in harmony with natural resource preservation and stewardship.”

Dakota County’s parks tradition emphasizes protection of large tracts of high-quality resource lands and providing nature-based recreation and outdoor education.

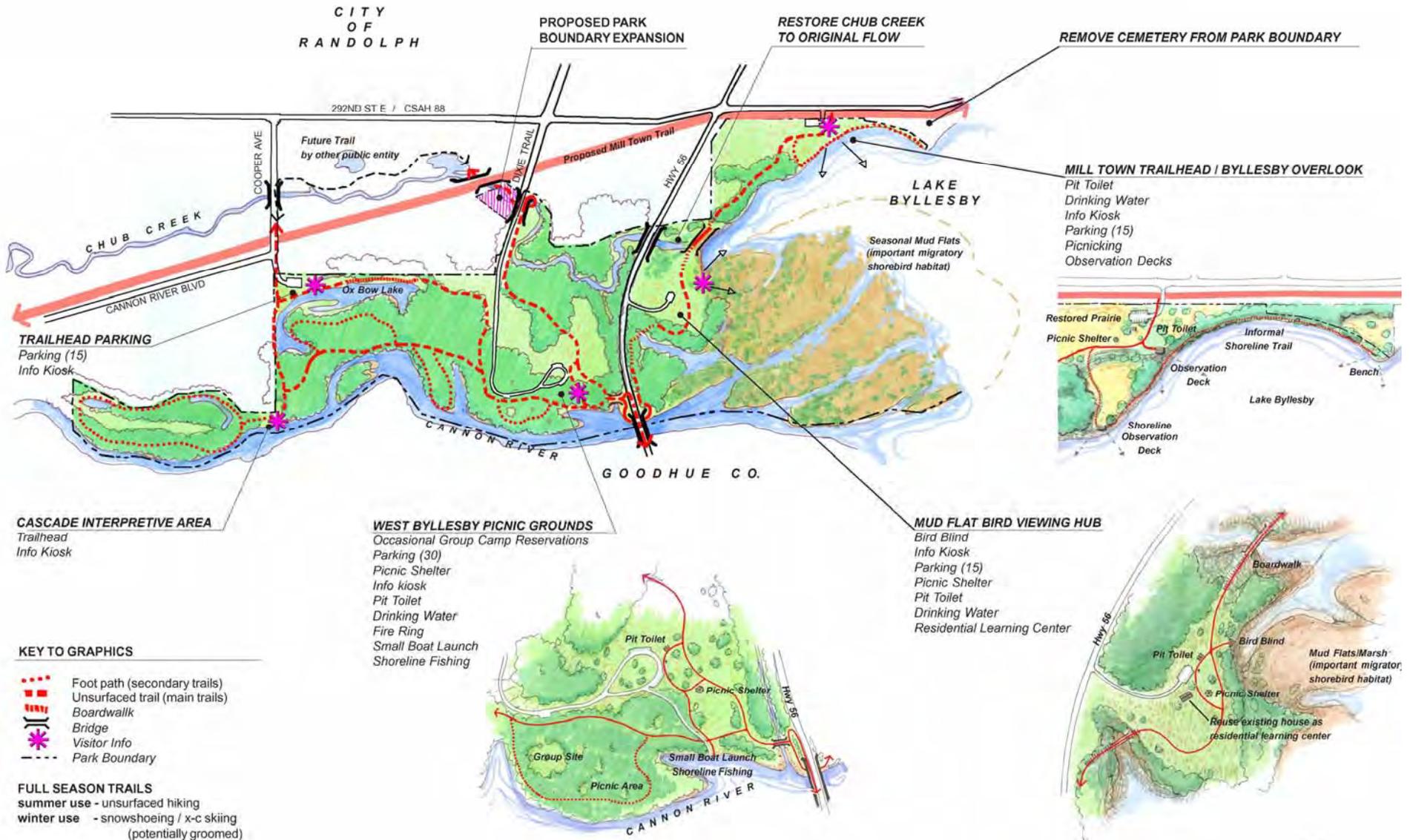
Figure 1.2 | Lake Byllesby East - 2005 Development Master Plan



**EAST BYLLESBY:** The master plan for the eastern park (above) builds on existing uses in a highly developed park. Camping is expanded and improved to include car and tent campsites and group sites in a more natural landscaped environment. An inland swimming pond is located next to the existing natural

beach. To expand the gathering function in the park, a Visitor Center is proposed that would offer lake views, all seasons programming and rental for community celebrations. The lakeshore experience is further improved by providing opportunities to walk along the shoreline, naturalizing the edge, and providing much-desired piers and boat docking.

Figure 1.3 | Lake Byllesby West - 2005 Development Master Plan



**WEST BYLLESBY:** The master plan for the western park focuses on nodes for bird viewing, trailhead parking, picnicking, Cannon River access and interpretive opportunities for the former City of Cascade historic area. These nodes are

connected through a series of trails, allowing visitors to be engaged in their environment between nodes.

## PLANNING CONTEXT

Several past planning efforts have set the stage for this master plan document. The most important plans are summarized below.

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Planning, 1987 and 2005

The 1987 *Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan* laid the groundwork for the park. It states that the objective for Lake Byllesby Park is to provide active recreational use with a water recreation focus and limited habitat restoration.

The 2005 *Master Plan* built upon the 1987 plan and recommended several park development improvements, some of which have been constructed. Many of the ideas have not been realized.

Elements that have been implemented since 2005 are:

- » Forty-two acres of prairie restoration
- » Planting of trees and shrubs for a “future campground”
- » Mill Towns State Trail link to Goodhue County Lake Byllesby Park, Cannon Falls, and the Cannon Valley Trail link to Cannon Valley Trail
- » Lakeside trail and an interpretive sign

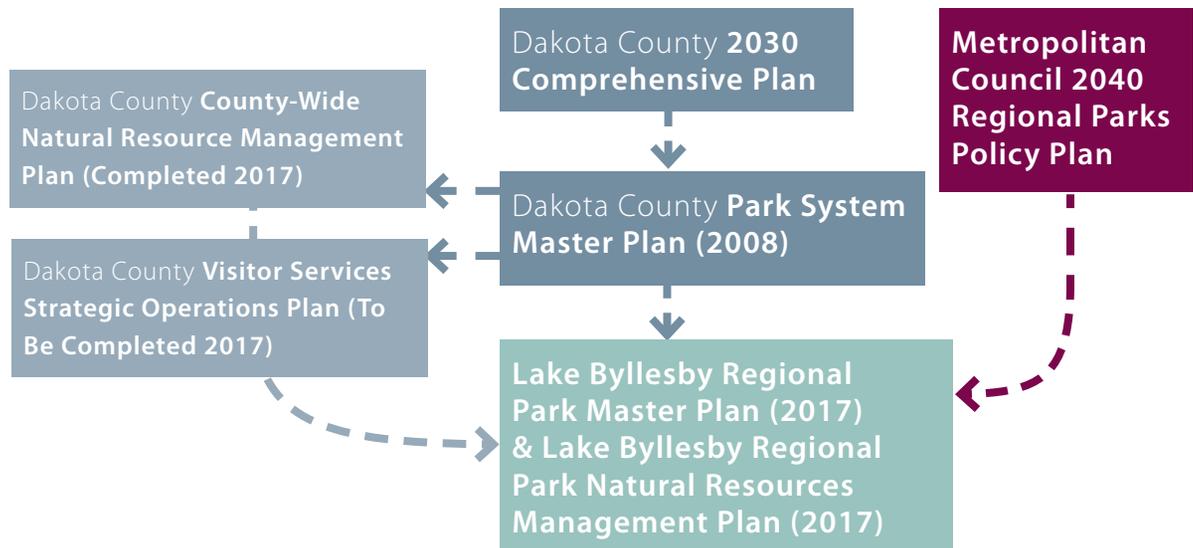
### 2005 Vision for Lake Byllesby Regional Park:

A group recreation destination that offers a diverse range of day activities and overnight camping, with emphasis on water-based recreational activities.

### 2005 Overarching Concept for the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan:

A home-base for recreation in the Cannon River Valley.

Figure 1.4 | Relationship of Existing Planning Documents



### 2005 Development Recommendations

#### » East Park:

- » Rebuild park entry and road
- » Expand and relocate RV campsites
- » Build new tent and group campsites, roads, and restrooms
- » Create Echo Point trails and enhance picnic area
- » Add disc golf and an active recreation area in the quarry (BMX or other)
- » Construct a Cannon River bridge below the dam
- » Add a canoe launch below the dam
- » Add an ADA accessible, paved shoreline trail
- » Add park wayfinding signage
- » Landscape and beautify the park

#### » West Park:

- » Create a Mill Towns Trailhead
- » Add a mud flat birding hub with blinds, a residential learning center, shelter, and entrance
- » Construct a boardwalk system

## Dakota County Park System Plan

As part of its 2030 Comprehensive Plan update, the Dakota County Park System Plan was updated in 2008.

### The vision for the park system is for:

- » **Great Places:** Enhance Dakota County's parks by ensuring that they include the basic popular amenities that the public expects as well as innovative, thought-provoking, or singular activities that relate to each park as a unique place.
- » **Connected Places:** Establish a countywide network of city and regional greenways for recreation, transportation, habitat, and water quality.
- » **Protected Places:** Strategically protect resource areas to preserve natural processes and system function.

Lake Byllesby is one of three regional parks in the Dakota County system. The others are Lebanon Hills and Whitetail Woods. Other park facilities include: park reserves, regional county parks, and regional trails or greenways. Lake Byllesby is identified as a "destination park," as it is distant from County high population areas.

Initiatives from the Dakota County Park System Plan related to Lake Byllesby include:

- » Restore landscape near visitor areas, where people will see it.
- » Complete paved trail segments identified in the park master plan.
- » Acquire inholdings.
- » Add mini golf.
- » Add sailing.
- » Renaturalize xeric trees, shrubs, and grasses at east Lake Byllesby Park.
- » Add picnicking areas.
- » Add ADA accessible loop trails.
- » Expand opportunities at the park for lake and water activities (view, boat, swim, wade), camping, biking (link to Cannon Valley Trail), and picnicking on Echo Point.

## 2017 Dakota County Park Visitor Services Plan

The plan is a 10-year strategic vision plan as well as a five-year business and implementation plan to improve park visitor services.

The service areas addressed include:

- » Awareness and marketing
- » Events and food
- » Outdoor Education
- » Facility and equipment rentals
- » Customer service
- » Volunteerism

The vision for visitor services is to "ensure the visitor experience is meaningful and relevant to more people through quality nature-based environmental, recreation and cultural education opportunities that inspire understanding, awareness and stewardship."

Goals for Lake Byllesby Regional Park are to facilitate exploration of Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River Valley. Recommendations include:

- » Equipment rentals, including watercraft, bicycle, and other miscellaneous recreation equipment rental
- » Occasional special events
- » Non-led, self-guided cultural, historical, and natural resource interpretation
- » Rentable facilities including campsite and picnic shelter
- » Food, including camp concessions and food trucks during peak use times

## Dakota County County-Wide Natural Resource Management Plan (2017)

The Natural Resource Management System Plan guides systemwide natural resources management of Dakota County parks, conservation easements, and greenways for the next 20 years. The plan provides systemwide context for the natural resources of Lake Byllesby

Regional Park and for the specific Natural Resource Management Plan for the park.

## The Cannon Valley Trail 2017 Comprehensive Plan

The Cannon Valley Trail is a paved, multi-use, regional trail managed by a Joint Powers Board made up of representatives from Goodhue County, the City of Cannon Falls, and local citizens. The Cannon Valley Trail 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update was adopted by the Cannon Valley Trail Joint Powers Board on May 23, 2017. The trail is almost 20 miles long and connects the cities of Red Wing, Welch Village, and Cannon Falls. Open year round, the trail hosts more than 100,000 cyclists, inline skaters, skateboarders, walkers, hikers, and crosscountry skiers. Trail users over 18 must have a valid Wheel Pass between April and November or a Great Minnesota Ski Pass for cross-country skiing.

## Mill Towns State Trail Master Plan

The Mill Towns State Trail is a legislatively authorized state trail, managed and planned by the MN DNR. The most recent master plan for the trail was completed in 2005 and identifies alignment options from Faribault to Cannon Falls. Portions of the trail have been constructed, but the full trail will not be realized for years to come.

The 2005 *Mill Towns State Trail Master Plan* identifies plans for trailheads in both the west and east portions of Lake Byllesby Park. It also states that a trail alignment through the park will be planned in the future in coordination with Dakota County.

## Cannon River Wild & Scenic River Designation

The Cannon River was designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 1980. It is one of six in Minnesota. West of Lake Byllesby, it is classified as a Recreational River Area,

which is defined as rivers that are accessible by vehicle and contain some shoreline development. East of the dam, it is classified as a Scenic River Area, which is defined as rivers that are free of impoundments and contain largely undeveloped shorelines. The Cannon River is also a State Water Trail extending more than 80 river miles from Waterville to Red Wing.

The following factors apply to Wild and Scenic River Designations:

- » Being designated a Wild and Scenic River does not restrict boating access. Motorized and non-motorized watercraft are allowed on the Cannon River, as well as tubing and swimming. Hunting and fishing are regulated under state laws.
- » Designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property.
- » Recreation, agricultural practices, residential development, and other uses may continue.
- » Protection of the river is provided through voluntary stewardship by landowners and river users and through regulation and programs of federal, state, local, or tribal governments.

## 2017 MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

Dakota County updated the 2005 Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan and created a new Natural Resource Management Plan for the park. The County hired a park planning consultant, Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. along with EOR and 106 Group, to develop the master plan.

### The goals of the planning process:

- » Cultural Interpretation Planning: Dakota County is actively planning cultural resource interpretation programs and displays at several of their parks, greenways, and other facilities. Interpretation can take on many forms, including audio, tours, special events, educational classes, signs, artistic objects, designed landscapes, interactive exhibits, and more. This planning process includes an in-depth look at possibilities for interpretation.
- » Natural Resources Planning: A separate, but coordinated, effort with this master plan document is the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP). The NRMP was developed using a detailed inventory of existing natural resources conditions. The inventory and analysis from the NRMP were used to inform the recreation concepts for the master plan. The NRMP is the companion to the master plan as it provides specific strategies, priorities, and cost estimates for how to manage and improve the natural resources at Lake Byllesby Regional Park for the next 10 years.
- » Engage with the Dakota County Board, Planning Commission, staff, and public.
- » Coordinate with Goodhue County's Lake Byllesby Park planning process.

## Project process

### Phase 1: Project Organization

Tasks in this phase included: Collect and organize background information; tour the park and observe issues and opportunities; and meet with staff and the Advisory Group to kick off the project.

### Phase 2: Inventory and Research

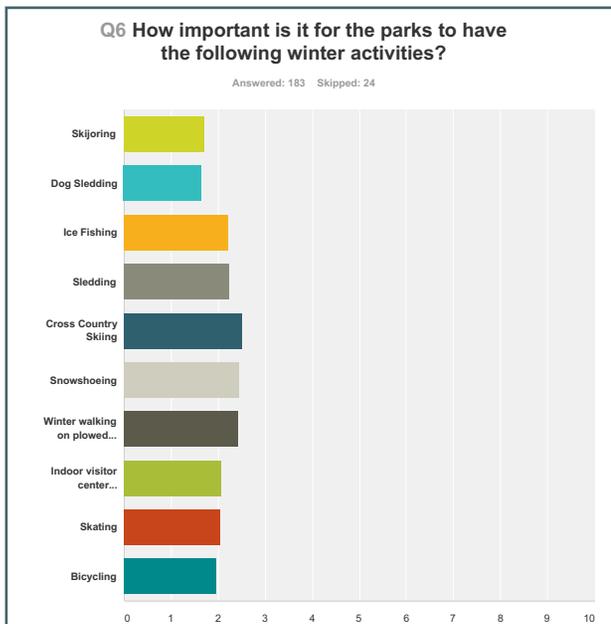
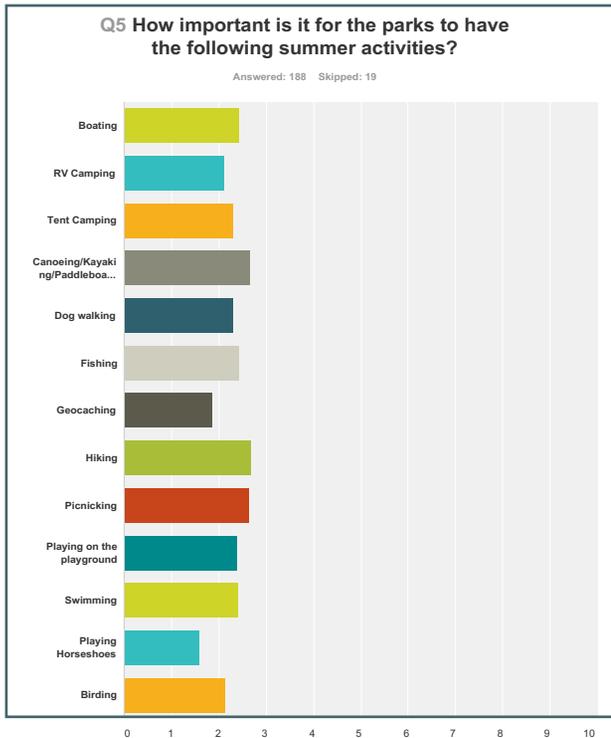
The Inventory and Research phase consisted of community engagement activities to gather input on park issues and opportunities; compilation and analysis of background data, site observations, and community input; and preparation of the Inventory and Research Report.

### Phase 3: Park Concepts

The Park Concepts phase allowed the project team to explore ideas, options, and recommendations for the future of the park. Community engagement activities sought input from the public on potential concepts to help aid in the development of a preferred concept. Meetings were held with the Advisory Group, Dakota County staff, and the Dakota County Board.

### Phase 4: Plan Development, Review, & Approvals

The assembly of the master plan document occurred during this phase of the project, during which several revisions were made as a result of a multi-agency review, before approval was sought from Dakota County staff and elected officials.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Community engagement involved the Dakota County Board, Planning Commission, Dakota County staff, stakeholders, and the general public. Community engagement for Goodhue County's Lake Byllesby County Park was conducted with a complementary and overlapping process. A summary is presented here: see Appendix B for the Community Engagement Plan and community input.

### Under Represented Audiences

During 2016, as part of the County's Visitor Park Services Plan process, dialogues were held with Hispanic/Latino, Somali, Vietnamese, Indian/South Asian, and African American community members, youth, seniors, and persons living with disabilities. Key findings included:

- » There is a lack of awareness among under-represented populations about the Dakota County Park system.
- » Under-represented populations have interest in new and additional types of amenities and activities.
- » Safety and signage improvements would be helpful.

- » Many feel that accessibility improvements would increase use.
- » There is an interest in making the rental of park facilities more affordable.

The County also met with Randolph High School teachers and students and Dakota County Community Services in order to get input relevant to youth, educational opportunities, and under-represented communities.

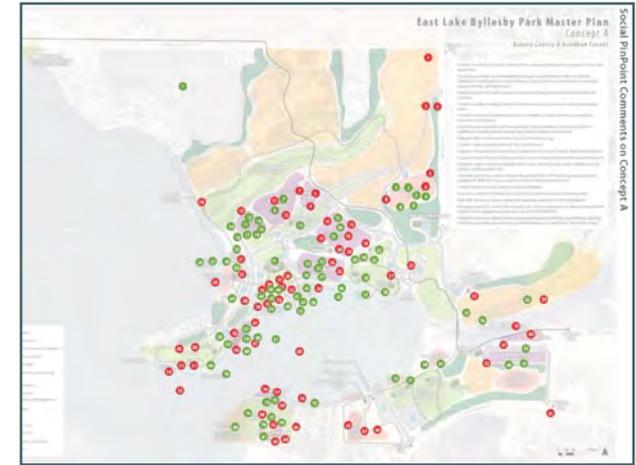
### Promotion and Outreach

A variety of marketing and outreach methods were employed to contact potential park users and interested parties. The County's website hosted a page with information about the park master plan; flyers were posted and sent out; press releases included opportunities for public engagement; and social media and email were used to alert Dakota County residents about the planning process.

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park Advisory Group

A joint Dakota County and Goodhue County advisory group was assembled for this master plan. Members included representatives from the Dakota Planning

Excerpts from the first online questionnaire



Images of some of the comments collected at community open houses and via online engagement

Commission, the Goodhue County Park Board, and key stakeholders. The Advisory Group will meet five times throughout the planning process in order to guide staff and consultants on important decisions, offer input on park recommendations, and represent constituents.

### Dakota County Board of Commissioners

The Physical Development Committee of the Dakota County Board will be updated five times throughout the master planning project. These updates will include summaries of project materials, public input, and requests for approval of master plan content.

### Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings were held in September 2016. The meetings were held jointly with Goodhue County in order to gain insight into the issues and opportunities for both Counties' parks.

The following groups were engaged:

- » Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Districts, Army Corps of Engineers
- » City of Cannon Falls

- » Dakota County and Goodhue County Park Operations staff
- » Dakota County Lake Byllesby Campground Hosts
- » Department of Natural Resources
- » History and Interpretation Organizations
- » Lake Byllesby Improvement Association
- » Park User Groups – e.g. cross country skiers, dog sledders, and boaters
- » Regional Recreation Providers

Stakeholder Meetings were also held in March of 2017 to solicit feedback on the concepts.

### Community Open Houses

Community engagement included two held and one planned open house meetings promoted to the general public. The meetings included display boards of project findings in the form of text and graphics. Meeting attendees were invited to view the materials and provide input to the project team regarding park issues and opportunities, ideas for future investments, and personal experiences in the park.

### Online Questionnaire

This community engagement effort featured two online opportunities coordinated to complement public and stakeholder meetings and gain input from multiple sources at the same time. The first opportunity used an online questionnaire, while the second opportunity used Social Pinpoint, a website where the concepts could be posted and users could make comments about specific locations.

## Phase 1 Community Engagement: Issues and Opportunities

The first phase of community engagement was aimed at understanding the existing conditions and user satisfaction at Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Throughout this phase, 207 people responded to an online questionnaire; 35 people attended a Community Open House; a booth and display boards were posted at the Dakota County Fair in August of 2016; and nine different groups were engaged in stakeholder meetings.

### Influence of Community Input in the Master Plan

- » Regional connectivity and collaboration opportunities explored
- » Exploration of additional and improved camping experience and recreational facilities
- » Consideration of water quality issues in development of summer facilities and natural resources management plan
- » Exploration of additional winter opportunities

### Key Findings

- » The Mill Towns State Trail and Cannon Valley Trail connections are essential to enhancing Lake Byllesby Regional Park as a significant Cannon River Valley destination. Wayfinding within and marketing of the park should highlight nearby attractions and distances to them, essentially expanding the park's offerings outside of the park boundary. Lake Byllesby Regional Park should partner with other attractions in the Cannon River Valley to promote regional tourism.
- » Tourists do not see borders. Programming and facilities at Lake Byllesby Regional Park should complement and not compete with those at Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park. The two parks should offer a coherent set of recreational experiences and function as a single destination in the Cannon River Valley.

- » The park's campground and lakeside environment make it a natural destination for multi-day visitors to the Cannon Valley. Camping needs to be improved, and park activities need to complement regional offerings so that visitors have recreational opportunities within the park as well as outside of it. Camping should include quality RV and tent sites along with camper cabins.
  - » RV Camping would benefit from being reconfigured with better circulation, improved amenities, and potential expansion.
  - » Tent Camping needs to be reconfigured to feel more private and should be expanded into other areas of the park. Platforms for tent camping in the west may open that area for primitive options.
  - » Camper cabins and a group campsite should be explored to expand offerings.
  - » Additional facilities that would be beneficial include storm shelter and bathrooms and showers nearer to tent camping area.
  - » The park would benefit from a group gathering area/programming space/fire pit and relocation/updates to existing amenities like the playground.
- » Summer use of the park is centered on lake recreation, but concerns about water quality and a lack of support facilities limit lake usage from reaching its full potential.
  - » Rental facilities and storage racks for canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, paddle boards, roller blades, and bikes are desired.
  - » A portage route around the dam needs to be defined, with water access downstream of the dam.
  - » A fish cleaning table would support shore fishing.
  - » Wind and algae reduce the beach's popularity. A lagoon/splash pad could offer a popular attraction that allows visitors to engage with water.
  - » The existing beach house is underutilized, especially its concessions capabilities.

- » The quality of motorized boating use of the lake, particularly on the west, has been diminished due to siltation.
- » Concerns exist about safety related to numbers of boaters on the lake.
- » Day visitors and campers all desire boat slips.
- » Winter park use is lackluster, currently.
  - » Significant use is unlikely unless an enclosed park building can be constructed and staffed year round for restrooms, a warming house, and a rental center.
  - » If only minimal investment is desired, Dakota County could focus just on skijoring/dogsledding, cross-country skiing, and ice fishing, as weather allows, with minimal investment (just porta potties and dog hitches). Cannon Valley Trail will be groomed for cross-country skiing.
  - » Despite snow being increasingly unreliable, winter fat tire biking has increased in popularity, and does not rely on snowy conditions the same way that cross-country skiing does.
- » Investments should be made in natural resources to improve habitat and implement best management practices for water quality.
  - » Native shoreline restoration where feasible.
  - » Management of riparian woodlands, especially in the western portion of the park.
  - » Prairie/Savanna/Meadow expansion and turf replacement wherever active uses are not present.
  - » Multiple interests have preferences for water levels in the reservoir, making its management challenging to balance. While residents and boaters would prefer higher water levels and dredging of sediments from the west delta, the mud flats are the primary reason the west side of the lake is an Important Birding Area (IBA), and drawdown of water levels aids nearby farmers in the spring by ensuring their fields remain dry.

- » Interpretation of natural, historic, and cultural resources would greatly enhance park programming.
  - » Self-guided interpretation with well-promoted walking tours/ on-demand podcast episodes could function as a sort of “choose your own adventure” way to explore the park.
  - » Improved signage with QR codes and audio stations for storytelling/sharing could offer additional information to visitors.
  - » Interpretation should be incorporated into park features (new play area), programming, and special event offerings.
- » Expanded programming should be focused primarily in areas of existing development (in the east side of the park), with minor infrastructure investments on the west side of the park, including natural surface and water trails, a trailhead with parking and a basic restroom facility, the potential for rustic paddle-in campsites, and low impact, digitally based programming like geo/bio caching, orienteering, birding, and self-guided interpretation. Preserving and enhancing the quality of the Important Birding Area (IBA) along the mud flats in the western portion of the park is of primary importance.

## Phase 2 Community Engagement: Exploring Options

The purpose of the second phase of community engagement was community evaluation of ideas for future park improvements. Throughout this phase, 42 people attended a Community Open House; three stakeholder meetings were held; over 600 people visited online Social PinPoint maps for East and West Byllesby; meetings were held with the City of Randolph, Randolph Schools, Randolph Township, and Randolph High School Students; consultants attended the Lake Byllesby Improvement Association General Meeting; and the public provided individual comments.

## Key Findings

- » Seek to consolidate activity areas, limit significant expansion of impervious surfaces, and enhance natural resource management to maintain the park as “forever wild” as possible.
- » Take water quality into consideration when siting active use areas and planning for natural resource management.
- » Arrange park amenities to capitalize on views of the bluffs and lake, since those are the reason visitors come to the park.
- » Balance accommodations along the lake with the conversion of the lakeshore for public uses. If lakeside accommodations are maintained, the preference is to include both RVs and tents. There is interest in the creation of some unique and year-round accommodations in the form of cottages or yurts. There was interest in houseboat cabins if waves could be reduced.
- » Prioritize new water play options (e.g. splash pad, swim lagoon) over improvements to the existing Dakota County beach. There is concern that a new Goodhue County beach would be in conflict with the boat launch.
- » Pursue additional activities, like the family mountain biking skills course, art walk, and nature play loop. The inclusion of an off-leash dog area somewhere on the site would be appreciated by campers.
- » Set proposed gathering areas at Echo Point into naturalized habitat– native prairie with gathering pockets are preferred over the expansive great lawn concept to reduce maintenance costs and impacts on water quality.
- » Activate the Cannon River with programming.
- » Provide centrally-located restrooms, and site other amenities near accommodations in order to serve as many users as possible.
- » Buffer adjacent neighborhoods with native vegetation and topography where possible. There

- are concerns about both vehicular and boat traffic with all the added accommodations and activities.
- » Create access points into the west park and trails throughout it (both land and water) in order to allow people to experience this under-utilized area.
- » Ensure the mudflats remain an important birding area. While allowing unobtrusive human access for natural resource-based and birding-related recreation is desired, development should be low-impact and preserve or enhance birding habitat. Bird blinds are desired.
- » Monitor sediment buildup in the delta so that it does not encroach on active boating in the eastern portion of the reservoir.
- » Include paddle-in campsites to provide a unique experience.

## Influence of Community Input on the Master Plan

- » Pursued opportunities to consolidate activity areas in order to retain more natural areas
- » Included water play options that do not focus on the reservoir
- » Balanced continued camping access along the lake with new access for the general public
- » Buffered adjacent neighborhoods
- » Improved access and movement through the west park

## Phase 3 Community Engagement: Draft Plan Review

### Process

- » The draft plan was posted on the Dakota County website at the end of September of 2017 and was also emailed to project stakeholders. Feedback could be submitted on the website or emailed directly to County staff. See Appendix B for detailed comments.
- » An open house was held on October 11, 2017 at City Hall in Cannon Falls, MN. More than 20 people attended.
- » The Master Plan was reviewed by members of the MnDNR, Metropolitan Council, Dakota County Planning Commission, Dakota County Physical Development Committee, Goodhue County Public Works Department, Randolph Area Historical Society, Randolph Township, City of Randolph, and Sciota Township.

### Key Findings

- » Overall support for level of park development shown on the 10-year plan
- » Concern from some adjacent homeowners about conflicts that may arise with increased park use
- » Support for buffers and other efforts to minimize conflicts between park uses and neighboring properties
- » Support for habitat restoration and preservation
- » Concern about efforts to improve water quality versus prioritizing other projects
- » Overall support for the trail through and between the east and west park units (possible Mill Towns State Trail)
  - » Desire to connect to Randolph and the Randolph Historical Society
  - » Concern from some homeowners about locating the trail along CR 88
  - » Desire to retain snowmobile use along CR 88
  - » Concern about potential ped-bike use along Harry Avenue/desire for a safe trail connection to the Cannon Greens neighborhood
- » Desire for additional signage and wayfinding to coordinate with existing related efforts

**Table 1.1 | Influence of Community Input on the Master Plan**

Community Input	Master Plan
Poor Lake Byllesby water quality negatively impacts the park experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Expanded park boundary to include protection of additional Cannon River shoreline</li> <li>» Added shoreline restoration and naturalization within the park boundary</li> <li>» Utilized storm water management best practices within the park</li> <li>» Incorporated a splash pad for dependable water play within the park</li> <li>» Participating in watershed scale efforts (Cannon River Watershed One Watershed One Plan)</li> </ul>
More diversity in camping options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improved tent camping experiences</li> <li>» Introduced lakeshore cabins, yurts, houseboat cabins, and canoe-in camping</li> </ul>
Desire from some to retain lakeside camping and from others for more common areas to enjoy the lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Retained lakeside camping in the 10-year plan</li> <li>» Created a great lawn area in the Long-term plan</li> </ul>
Access to the Cannon River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provided parking and a non-motorized boat launch below the dam</li> <li>» Added paddle-in camping in the West park</li> </ul>
More to do in the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Added a mountain biking skills course, expanded picnicking, fishing piers, improved play opportunities, and additional interpretation</li> </ul>
Too much recreation development in concepts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Scaled back recreation development in the 10-year plan</li> </ul>
Complimentary activities in Goodhue County and Dakota County Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Included nature play and a fenced dog park on the Goodhue County side</li> </ul>
Provide regional connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Added a future trail between the East and West park</li> <li>» Coordinated wayfinding and signage with the Mill Towns and Cannon Valley Trails</li> <li>» Provided information areas in both parks that advertise regional destinations</li> </ul>
Natural resource restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Added 60.1 acres of natural areas</li> <li>» Restored 193 acres of natural resources</li> </ul>
Concern about expansion of public boat parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Maintained the current number of public boat parking spaces (meets MnDNR guidelines)</li> </ul>
Buffering the surrounding neighborhoods from the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Included natural buffers between park use areas and neighborhoods</li> </ul>
Safe connections between Cannon Greens development and the park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provided a trail connection between the park and neighborhood</li> </ul>



## CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT

### OVERVIEW

Located in the southeast corner of the seven-county Minneapolis-St. Paul area, the Dakota County Park System serves the state's third most populous county. With more than 5,000 acres and a fast growing network of greenways, Dakota County Parks form a nature-based system that exists to help meet the needs of over 400,000 county residents.

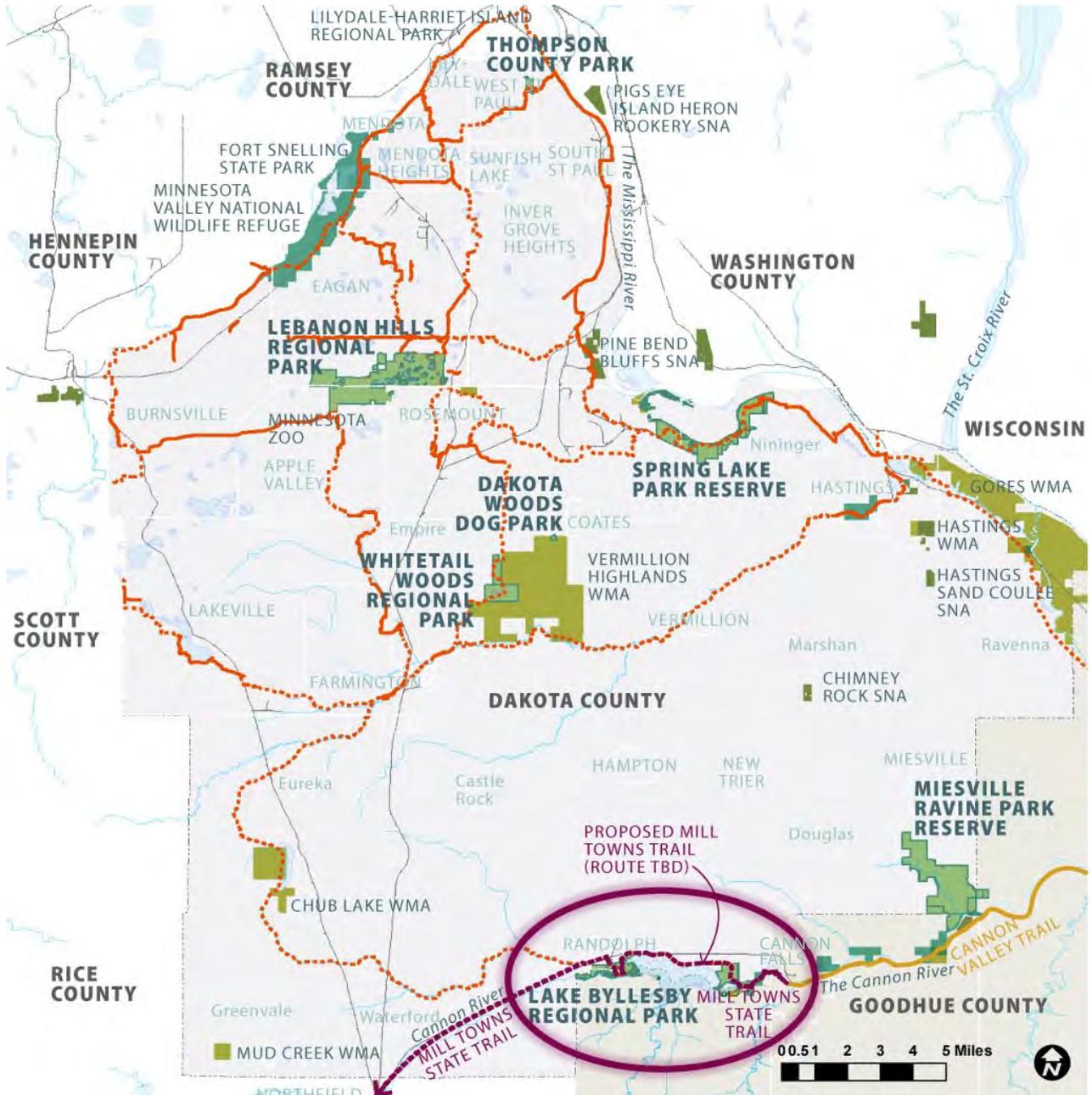
This chapter explores Lake Byllesby Regional Park's location within the region and describes some of the broader demographics and trends that will help to shape its future. The sections below represent a summary of the park's regional context:

- » **Park Context:** reviews the location and importance of the park within the region.
- » **Demographics and Trends:** summarizes some of the forces at work within the region.
- » **Demand Forecasting and Needs:** outlines how the surrounding demographics and trends may influence visitor preferences and desired programming at Lake Byllesby Regional Park.



*The Cannon Valley Trail will connect Lake Byllesby Regional Park all the way to Red Wing.*

Figure 2.1 | Dakota County Park System Context: Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces



## PARK CONTEXT

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is located on the southern border of Dakota County. The park is 620 acres and is divided into two units: the eastern, developed section is 254 acres, and the western, undeveloped section is 366 acres. Dakota County owns and operates a hydroelectric dam on the park's east end, which impounds the Cannon River to create Lake Byllesby, the largest recreational lake in the far southern metro area.

The park is situated just west of the city of Cannon Falls and southeast of Randolph, and is easily accessed from Hwy 52. The lake is popular for boating, fishing, and swimming in the region.

The Mill Towns State Trail bridge, located just below the dam, connects Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park to Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park. The Mill Towns State Trail connects the park to the Cannon Valley Trail, which travels from Cannon Falls east to Red Wing.

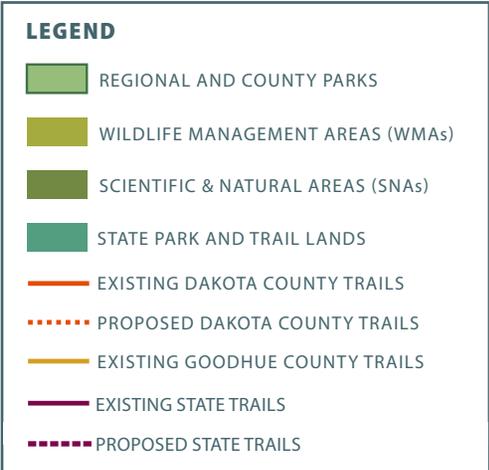
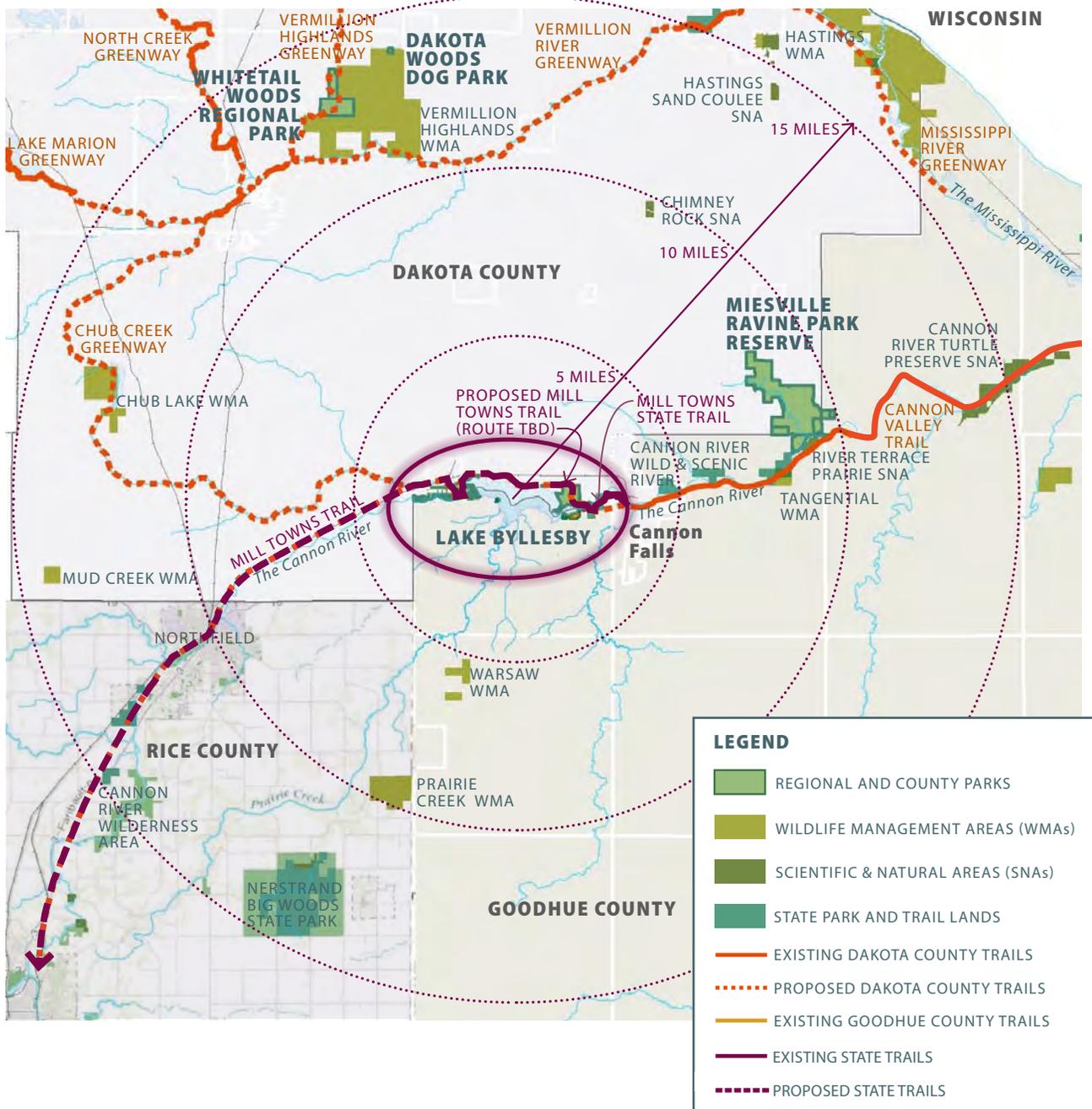


Figure 2.2 | Project Area Context: Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces within a 15-mile Radius



## Recreational Context

Lake Byllesby Regional Park provides unique recreational opportunities in the region--camping, boating, beaches--and complements surrounding recreation facilities.

Minnesota's State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) indicates that two-thirds of all recreation occurs within a half hour drive from home. Within a 15-mile radius of Lake Byllesby, approximately a 20-30 minute drive from the park, there are several other recreational facilities but no other large recreational lakes. Cannon Falls city parks, the Cannon River, Dakota Woods Dog Park, Whitetail Woods Regional Park, Miesville Ravine Park Reserve, Nerstrand Big Woods State Park, and DNR managed Wildlife Management Areas and Scientific and Natural Areas all provide a variety of recreational activities and programming. The Cannon Valley Trail and planned Mill Towns State Trail also traverse this area and connect to Lake Byllesby. While large population growth is not expected for the region, the Cannon Valley's combination of recreational opportunities makes the area a destination for active outdoor enthusiasts, and Lake Byllesby Regional Park provides some of the only camping available.

Table 2.1 | Project Area Context: Recreation Types, Activities, and Programming within a 15-mile Radius

	Activity	Cannon Falls Parks	Dakota Woods Dog Park	Lake Byllesby Parks	Whitetail Woods	Miesville Ravine	Nerstrand Big Woods State Park	Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs)	Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs)
	Type	Local	County	Regional	Regional	Park Reserve	State	State DNR	State DNR
	Acres	varies	16 acres	620 acres/ 60 Acres	445 + 4,000 Acre Vermillion Highlands WMA	1,667 acres	2,884 acres	varies	varies
<b>Passive Recreation</b>	Nature Observation	X			X	X	X	X	X
	Geocaching			X	X	X	X		
	Picnicking	X		X	X	X	X		X
	Paddle Sports	X		X		X			
	Fishing	X		X		X		X	X
	Hunting				X	X		X	X
<b>Trails</b>	Hiking/Walking	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Cross-country Skiing				X		X		X
	Skijoring/ Dogsledding			X					
	Snowshoeing				X	X	X		X
	Horseback Riding				X				
<b>Lodging</b>	Tent Camping			X			X		
	RV Camping			X			X		
	Camper Cabins				X				
<b>Active Recreation</b>	Swimming	X		X					
	Playground	X		X	X		X		
	Sledding				X				
	Archery								
	Mountain Biking								
	Disc Golf	X							
	Horseshoes			X			X		
	Volleyball	X		X			X		
Athletic Fields & Courts	X								



# DEMOGRAPHICS

## Regional Demographics

Thrive MSP 2040 projects that the Twin Cities Metro will grow by 824,000 residents between 2010 and 2040. More than one in five residents will be 65 or older by that time, as compared to one in nine in 2010. The percentage of people of color is projected to grow from 24 percent to over 40 percent.

## Dakota County Demographics

Dakota County is projected to experience population growth over the next 25 years. The US Census Bureau predicts the county's population will expand from nearly 415,000 in 2015 to over 500,000 people by 2040. As the population grows, recreation services must expand commensurate to the population. Additionally, as new development occurs over the next 25 years, the parks and recreation system will need to strategically invest in, create, and maintain facilities.

### Local demographics findings:

- » Lake Byllesby is close to populations that are older, on average, than the general population.
- » Compared to the rest of Dakota County, Lake Byllesby is closest to nearby populations with the least amount of racial diversity.
- » Lake Byllesby Regional Park is close to populations that are more affluent than the general population.

These findings mean that, in order for Lake Byllesby to attract a more diverse set of park users, it will need to market its day long and overnight activities to residents who live in other parts of the county.

## Racial and Ethnic Distribution

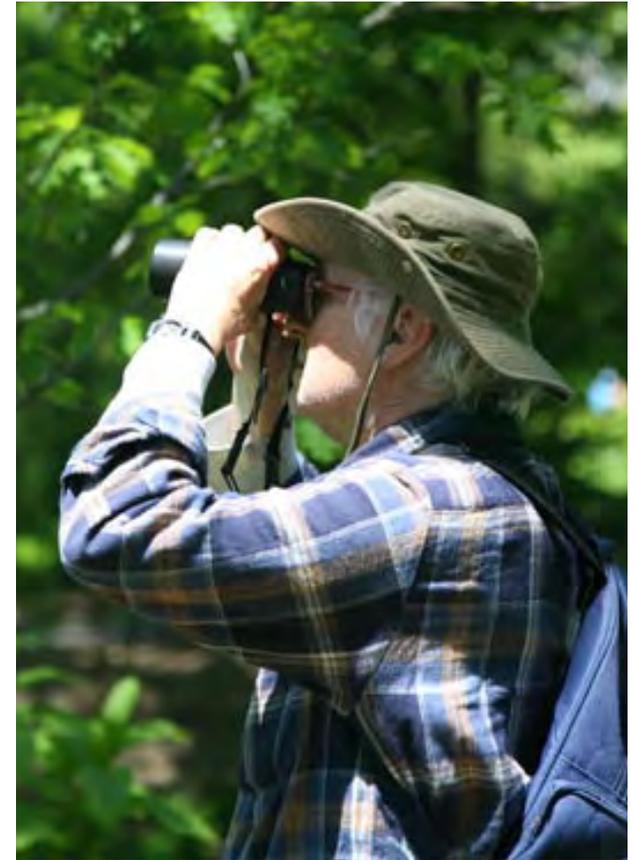
Dakota County's population is continuing to get more diverse. Currently, people of color make up about 19 percent of the population. The State of Minnesota Demographer's Office predicts an 80 percent increase in the population of people of color in Dakota County by 2030. As the population grows more diverse, the needs of Dakota County parks programming and visitor services will need to adapt.

According to the Metropolitan Council's report, *Regional Park Use Among Select Communities of Color*, non-white focus group participants indicated the following typical park use trends and perceptions that may have implications on park design and elements:

- » Walking and picnicking are top park activities.
- » Use of parks most often occurs in groups.
- » Concerns exist about safety and security in parks.
- » There is a lack of awareness of the County's park system.

Dakota County outreach to under represented populations indicated similar findings:

- » Lack of awareness about the Dakota County park system
- » Interest in new and additional types of amenities and activities, such as more tables in picnic areas; more play equipment near picnic areas; soccer and cricket fields, more cultural events and celebrations
- » Desire for safety and signage improvements
- » Improvements to accessibility that would increase use
- » Need for more affordable rental facilities



## Aging Actively

Baby Boomers already represent a large portion of the Dakota County population. Like the rest of the state, Dakota County anticipates large growth in Baby Boomer residents over the next couple of decades. The Minnesota State Demographic Center projects that the number of Dakota County residents older than 65 will triple between 2005 and 2035.



*Lake Byllesby Regional Park has all of the characteristics people associate with a "Park," but in order to attract the County's increasingly diverse population, it will have to address perceived safety as a potential barrier to visitors.*

## RECREATION TRENDS

Changes in the way people recreate impact the types of improvements needed throughout the park system. The following are general trends that may influence the future of Lake Byllesby Regional Park.

### National Recreation Trends

The Outdoor Foundation's 2015 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report showed several activities increasing in popularity that would be applicable at Lake Byllesby Regional Park:

#### Paddle Sports and Windsurfing

"Paddle sports are a bright spot in outdoor participation. Stand up paddling continued to be the top outdoor activity for growth, increasing participation by 38 percent from 2013 to 2014."

Participation in stand up paddling and kayak fishing have both grown more than 20 percent since 2011.

Boardsailing/windsurfing is also on the rise, growing 28 percent from 2013-2014.

#### Adventure Racing

Adventure Racing was the top activity for growth between 2011-2014, increasing in popularity by 38percent. In 2014, Running USA's annual report estimated that adventure racing participants across the country numbered nearly 4 million in 2013. The sport is highly flexible and easily catered to available space/activities, but usually involves a combination of biking, running, paddling, and navigation of obstacles. Courses often require orienteering and teamwork in order to successfully navigate and complete. Races range from 5Ks to multi-day treks and vary in difficulty, providing a fun way to challenge people of any age or ability.

### Statewide Trends

The goal of Minnesota's 2014-2018 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is to increase participation in outdoor recreation by all Minnesotans and visitors. The document identified several trends that are relevant to park and recreation planning at Lake Byllesby, including:

#### Desire for Near-home Recreation Opportunities

High population growth in the Twin Cities Metro will fuel demands for near-home recreation opportunities in these areas. Lake Byllesby is at the edge of the Metro but is removed enough to feel like an excursion worthy of a weekend trip.

#### Decline in Traditional Outdoor Recreation

There has been a decline in per-capita participation in traditional nature-based outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife watching, and wilderness use). Statewide demographic changes may be "producing new users who enjoy outdoor recreation in different ways than traditional users." The main decline in participation is among young adults and their children. It is unclear whether participation in other non-traditional outdoor recreational activities is partially responsible for the reduction in participation in traditional activities.

#### Parks' Role in Health

The nation as a whole is experiencing a public health crisis. In 2013, 60 percent of adults in Dakota County are considered either overweight or obese, and less than half meet recommended levels of physical activity. Prevalence of obesity among children ages six to 19 has more than tripled since the 1970s. The parks system has an opportunity to provide outdoor recreational activities that encourage active living and healthy lifestyles.

# DEMAND FORECASTING AND NEEDS

## Adapting to Changing Park Users

Based on Twin Cities Metro and Dakota County demographic projections and recreation trends, future visitors to Lake Byllesby Regional Park are likely to be older, more diverse, and more in need of healthy lifestyle offerings than ever before. Catering to these populations will require some adjustments in the way that the park programs and markets itself.

- » As Baby Boomers age, their recreation needs change. Baby Boomers will require facilities and equipment that meet their mobility needs as they age, as well as programming that caters to their interests, capabilities, and activity level.
- » People of color tend to participate in nature based recreation less than white and/or non-Hispanic populations, so introducing these populations to outdoor recreational activities and encouraging continued participation will be essential to maintaining use of our regional parks and trails system in the future. Dakota County's Visitor Services Plan indicates that it will be important to overcome people's perceptions of park safety, and promote awareness of the park system and its offerings.
- » Dakota County is no exception to nationwide and state trends in obesity. In 2012, over 25 percent of Dakota County adults were considered obese. As a result of this change, more and more people are looking for ways to integrate exercise into their daily routines. Lake Byllesby Regional Park can help satisfy this demand for active living by offering low cost recreational opportunities within close proximity to visitors.
- » Lake Byllesby's 2016 Visitation Estimate, according to the Met Council, was 114,800 visits. While this is about one-sixth of the Lebanon Hills Regional Park visitation estimate of 635,200 visits, Lake Byllesby

Regional Park is the second most visited park in the system. Overall, Dakota County Regional Parks and Trails were estimated to have nearly 1.3 million visits in 2016.

## Providing a Growing Twin Cities Metro with Connections to the Outdoors

With Minnesota becoming increasingly urban, access to places like Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River Valley that offer nature-based outdoor recreation in such close proximity to the Twin Cities Metro is an advantage.

It is more important than ever to find ways to introduce new populations to nature-based recreation and to incorporate new activities that offer exposure to the outdoors.

Participation in nature-based activities helps create citizens who have appreciation for the natural world which in turn raises social and political support for resource conservation activities. It is important to maintain provisions for nature-based activities to maintain this support. Fortunately, Lake Byllesby Regional Park is well positioned to connect people to the outdoors, which can help to maintain the relevancy and longevity of the park system for future generations.

### In order to connect people to the outdoors, the SCORP recommends that parks:

1. "Redevelop camping facilities so that there are more campsites for larger groups, more separation and privacy between sites, and higher quality natural surroundings to meet expectations of current and future users. Separate tent camping and RV camping."
2. "Design facilities that support numerous activities and proactively adapt to new and emerging nature-based recreation activities (e.g. geocaching, skijoring, pet-friendly parks and trails, archery, and shooting sports)."
3. "Develop group-based opportunities such as group campsites, picnic areas, and gathering spaces."



4. Utilize marketing and cross-promoting to brand nearby outdoor recreational opportunities as a “collective network.”
5. Emphasize programming and special events, including “expanding programs featuring new and emerging forms of outdoor recreation (e.g. geocaching, kayaking, zip lines).”

## Incorporating New and Emerging Recreational Activities

The 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan has expanded its list of activities that could be considered appropriate for inclusion in the Regional Parks System to include:

- » Mountain Biking
- » Night Trail Use
- » Adventure Racing
- » Kayaking
- » Stand Up Paddle Boarding
- » Boardsailing
- » Triathlons

Strategic implementation of any of these new recreational uses at Lake Byllesby Regional Park could improve visitorship and park experience.

- » Uses like mountain biking tend to draw participants from larger geographic areas due to limited availability, which would expand the park’s visitor service area.
- » Offering events like adventure races or triathlons could expose new visitors to Lake Byllesby Regional Park, introducing people to the park and its other offerings and breaking perceptions of distance from places like the Twin Cities Metro.
- » Night trail use makes sense in an area that already offers overnight camping opportunities, as more people surrounding and overlooking the trails help to provide safety.

- » Lake Byllesby, as the only large recreational lake in the region, could capitalize on this by providing rentals of stand up paddle boards, canoes, kayaks, and boardsailing equipment.

## Responding to Existing User Desires

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is very popular today with campground visitors. Respondents to the questionnaire, conducted as part of this master plan, indicated that camping is the most common reason for visiting the park. Campers are allowed a maximum stay of 14 days, and most weekends are booked through the summer at the water and electrical sites. Demand for these sites is high, and RV offerings could be expanded. Group campsites and spaces for large gatherings were cited as desires throughout the public engagement process. Tent campers are not currently a large user group, as the tent camping areas lack privacy and a diverse landscape. If tent camp areas were improved, the park would likely see an increase in tent camping demand.

Recreational boaters, fishers, picnickers, and swimmers indicated that their experience could be improved by investments in water quality and other natural resource based endeavors. The park’s natural setting was listed by survey respondents as the second most popular reason for visiting the park, so efforts to maintain and enhance the park’s setting are essential to retaining visitorship.

In the winter, there has been limited use of the trails on the northern side of the east park by cross-country skiers, skijorers, and dogsledders. Desired additions to winter uses include expanded ice fishing amenities and potential new offerings like fat bike rental.

The new trail bridge across the Cannon River is expected to bring more people to the park. Byllesby County Park visitors and Cannon Valley Trail and Mill Towns State Trail users will now have easy access to Dakota County’s Lake Byllesby Regional Park. By branding and promoting

the Cannon Valley as an active outdoor recreation destination, trail users planning multi-day trips can take advantage of Lake Byllesby Regional Park’s lodging offerings. Expanded outdoor education programs, improved campground amenities, new facilities such as a visitor center, water equipment rental, bicycle rental, and unique recreational offerings could further attract visitors.





# CHAPTER 3: EXISTING CONDITIONS

## OVERVIEW

The current state of Lake Byllesby Regional Park in 2017 is described in this chapter. The sections below represent a summary of existing conditions:

- » **Existing Park Conditions:** a description of existing recreational facilities within the park today
- » **Existing Outdoor Education:** a list of park programming and available facilities
- » **Existing Cultural Resources:** a summary of existing cultural resources in the park, including a list of historical resources that are known to be significant to the area
- » **The Lake Byllesby Story (Post-contact Period):** a historical summary of the area since the mid-1800s
- » **Natural Resources Inventory:** a summary of existing natural resources in the park, including lake, wetland, river, and habitat types, and the condition of each
- » **Assessment:** a summary of important park issues and opportunities -- from Dakota County staff, key stakeholders, and the public -- to be addressed in this master plan
- » **Key Considerations:** a list of key points to consider during the development of concepts and recommendations for the master plan



*Historic photo of the Byllesby Dam*

## EXISTING PARK CONDITIONS

Lake Byllesby Regional Park has been a Dakota County recreational facility since 1970. Various land acquisition and boundary additions have been made over time. As the park boundary has been expanded by the County, inholdings have been added to the park. Today much of the land within the western park boundary is privately owned.

The eastern portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park is developed for recreation. Current attractions include the campground, beach, boat launch, and lakeside picnic shelter. Activities include boating, camping, canoeing/kayaking/paddle boarding, fishing, geocaching, hiking, horseshoes, picnicking, playgrounds, swimming, dogsledding/skijoring, and ice fishing. Recreation facilities are oriented to the lake, surrounded by turf grass and non-native vegetation. The park's shoreline is mostly rip-rap with weedy vegetation.

The lake is what draws people to the park. Poor water quality affects the recreational experience. Boating and use of the beach are popular activities until about August, when blue green algae blooms often occur in the swimming area. Because it is more protected from wind, the Goodhue County beach along the southeast side of Lake Byllesby does not experience as much algae. This offers the potential for coordination between the two parks to provide quality beach access throughout the season.

Camping is a popular activity, open and busy from early May to mid-October. The campground is well-maintained, and the water and electric sites are full almost every weekend with some stays extending into the week. The maximum stay is 14 days. The check-in/restroom building is open 24 hours a day in case of inclement weather. The tent camping area also fills most weekends but lacks privacy. Campsites are in an open lawn area with a few scattered shade trees. Parking is provided in one lot rather than adjacent to each site.

There is a 100-person picnic shelter near the boat launch. In 2014, it was reserved for 15 events, which is lower than reservations at other Dakota County Parks. Feedback from picnic shelter customers indicates they are looking for a higher level of service and function from the shelter (e.g., serving counters, kitchen, updated architecture).

The west side of the park is undeveloped and lacks basic signage and access. Much of the land within the west park boundary is privately owned and includes homes and farmsteads. The landscape consists of agricultural fields, former agricultural fields, wooded areas, river floodplain, restored prairie, and delta mud flats. Water features include Lake Byllesby, The Cannon River, Oxbow Lake, and Chub Creek.

## LAKE BYLLESBY REGIONAL PARK

### General Information

Park Size: 620 acres

*East Byllesby: 254 acres*

*West Byllesby: 366 acres*

*Dakota County owned land: 165 acres*

*Inholdings (privately owned land within official park boundary): 455 acres*

Lake Byllesby water surface area: 1,300 acres

Lake Byllesby average depth: 8 feet

Topographic change: 230 feet

Access points: Cannon River Blvd, 292nd Street E, 295th Street E, Harry Ave, Gaylord Ave, Cannon River Trail Bridge

Land Area Developed for Recreational Use: 7% (47 acres)

**Figure 3.1 | Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park (2 parts) and Goodhue County's Byllesby Park**





*Picnic area and shelter*



*A kayak and canoe launch*



*Boaters on Lake Byllesby*



*The Mill Towns State Trail bridge overlooks the dam and links Goodhue and Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Parks.*



*Paved lakeside path along the RV camping area*



*The beach*



*Nearby Cannon Falls has a vibrant downtown with a winery, market, shops, and eateries.*

**Table 3.1 | Facility Inventory - Lake Byllesby Regional Park**

Park Area	Visitor Facility	Description	Year Built
East Park	Picnic Grounds	100-person capacity shelter with portolets	1980s
East Park	General Use Picnic Area	Picnic area with grills and tables located near the swimming beach	
East Park	Parking complex	43-stall parking lot near picnic. Additional parking lots near beach, camp areas, and boat launch (with turnaround loop)	1980s
East Park	Boat Launch	Boat ramp and parking upstream of Byllesby Dam	
East Park	Non-Motorized Boat Launch	Designated for non-motorized boat access for canoes, kayaks, sailboards, etc.	
East Park	Cannon Valley Trail Link	Trail and bridge over Cannon River (below the dam), linking the park to Goodhue County park and Cannon Valley Trail	2016
East Park	Beach Building	Restroom-shower-changing area on beach	
East Park	Beach	Sand beach on the Byllesby Reservoir, the largest “lake” in southern Dakota County. Often closed in late summer due to algae blooms or other water quality issues	
East Park	Camp Office	Seasonally-staffed office with small camp store	
East Park	Campground	35 RV sites laid out along the lakeshore with electric, water, and sewer. 22 walk-in tent sites are east of the RV sites. Area includes a playground and restroom building.	
East Park	Trails	3.28 miles of hiking trails exist now. With connection to two significant trails, Cannon Valley and Mill Towns State Trail, a paved trail connection will be provided in the park to expand recreational opportunities for park visitors. Winter trails include 2.6 miles of dog sledding and skijoring trails.	
East Park	Playground	Traditional playground located in the middle of the tent camping area	
West Park	Undeveloped	Most of the west park is undeveloped as the County is acquiring inholdings. A prior acquisition includes a house that had been considered for a potential residential learning center.	
<b>Other Assets</b>			
West Park	Cascade	Ghost town from 1800s, mill ruins, floodplain forest	
West Park	Mud Flats	Audubon Important Birding Area (IBA) good for shorebirds and wading birds. Deposition from upstream ag erosion	
Reservoir	Lake Byllesby	Largest water body in Dakota County, boating, swimming, fishing	
East Park	Byllesby Dam	110+ year old operating hydroelectric dam, historic feature	



*Campground office, shop, and bathhouse*



*Beach Building*

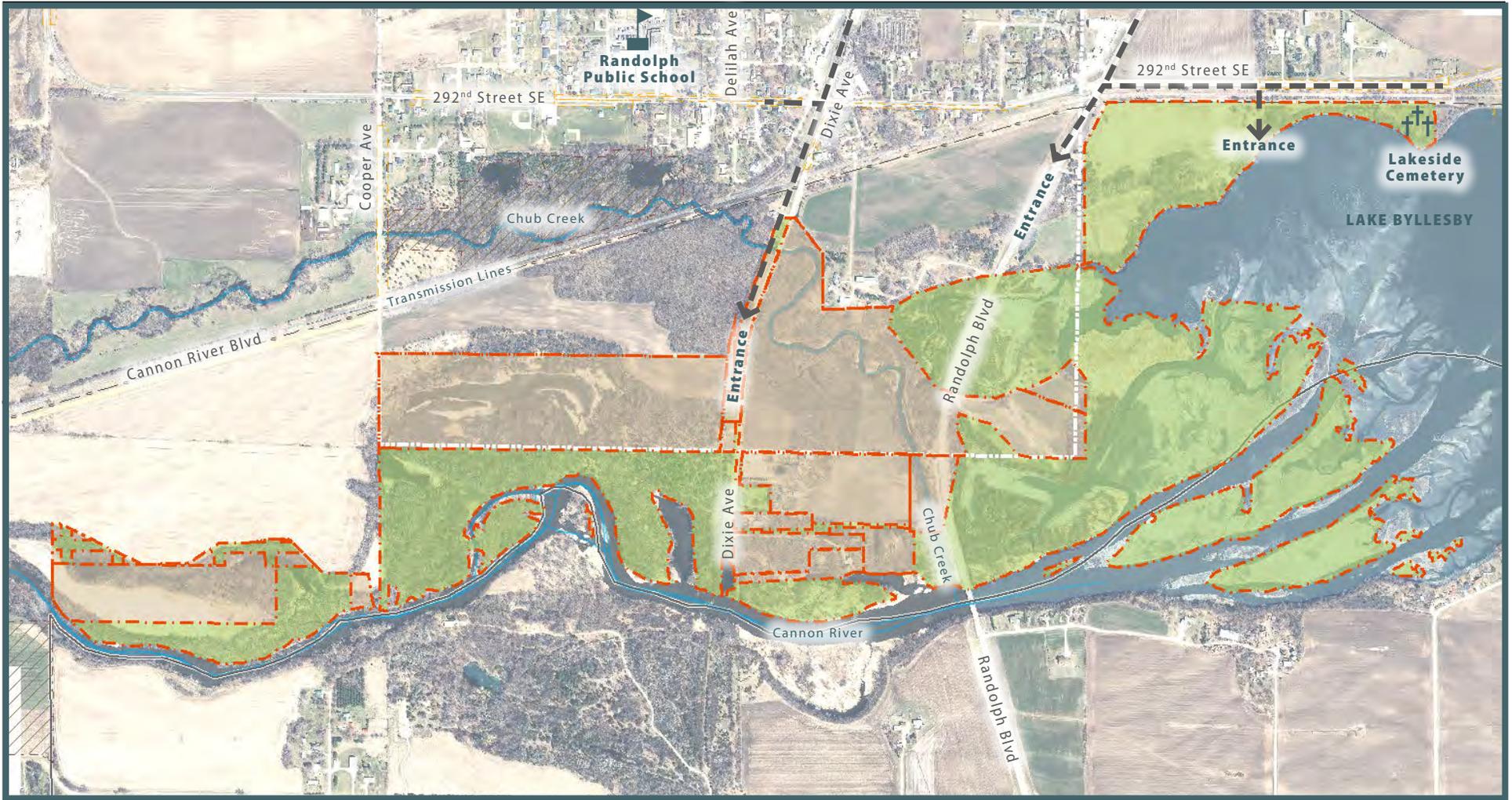
**EXISTING OUTDOOR EDUCATION**

Currently there are very few programs offered at Lake Byllesby. Birding programs in the Important Birding Area (IBA) mud flats are offered by Dakota County naturalist staff occasionally during the bird migration. The Lakeside Picnic Shelter is available to rent for programs and events. The swimming beach and associated building have also occasionally featured events.

Winter events have taken place at the park in the past but, because of undependable winter conditions, have not been held for several years. Inconsistent winter conditions have also limited scheduling for activities such as ice fishing and snowshoeing.



Figure 3.2 | Existing Conditions: Lake Byllesby Regional Park East



- Legend**
- Lake Byllesby Park Boundary
  - Land Conservation Easements
  - Right-of-Way Easements
  - Transmission Lines
  - Lake Byllesby Regional Park
  - Private Property (Park Inholdings)
  - Stream

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



**Figure 3.3 | Existing Conditions: Lake Byllesby Regional Park West**



Historic photos of the dam's construction and operation

## EXISTING CULTURAL RESOURCES

The Lake Byllesby area has a rich and extensive history, stretching back over 10,000 years. American Indian tribes have a strong connection to this area, from the time their ancestors made their home in the region at least 12,000 years ago, to the continuation of tribal traditions and practices today. The Lake Byllesby area also has a fascinating history of diverse settlement over the past couple hundred years, including the rise of towns and industries in Randolph Township, the arrival of the railroads in the late 1900s, and, in 1910, the construction of the Lake Byllesby hydroelectric dam, which provided power to the region for decades. Continuing American Indian connections to the area and, in more recent times, the development of recreational opportunities such as those found at Lake Byllesby Regional Park speak to the enduring importance of the area to both local residents and visitors.

This chapter provides an overview of park area history, including cultural resources that have been identified within the portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park located in Dakota County. Additional information about cultural resources in the park can be found in Appendix A, including applicable legislative requirements in regards to cultural resource preservation and an assessment of the park's potential to contain unrecorded archaeological resources. Recommendations for the planning and management of the park's cultural resources can be found in the Implementation and Management chapter. The cultural resources of the site and the stories they evoke informed the interpretive theme and subthemes (see the Development Master Plan chapter) as one way of engaging visitors with a meaningful park experience.

## Area History Overview

The earliest American Indian tribes in what is now Dakota County, ancestors of many tribes with strong connections to this same area today, lived in this region following the retreat of glaciers during the early Holocene Epoch at least 12,000 years ago. They lived in mobile groups and were skilled hunters and knowledgeable regarding the plants and animals that flourished in the Upper Midwest in the wake of the glaciers. In 2015, an archaeological site with components dating back nearly 10,000 years was found within a half mile of Lake Byllesby Regional Park, helping to shed light on this early history of the Park. American Indian oral histories are also an important source of information about the early communities that called this area home.

Around 5,000 years ago, the climate of southern Minnesota, including Dakota County, gradually became moister and cooler, resulting in the extinction of the big game animals, such as mammoths, that had been abundant during the Holocene. During this time, American Indian tribes began utilizing copper deposits in the Upper Midwest for the creation of tools, clothing, and ceremonial items. Hunting of big game animals continued, with focus now on the bison and other large grazing animals that lived on the Plains. The invention of the bow and arrow was soon added to hunters' arsenal, which also included spears and atlatls (a spear thrower). Gradually, communities increased in size and as they moved around less, they began to create ceramics, which would have been less practical for their more mobile ancestors, due to the weight of fired clay vessels. The pottery that American Indians fashioned was excellent for cooking and storage, and exhibited a variety of decorations that varied among the communities.

Within southeastern Minnesota, American Indian communities began growing corn approximately 2,000 years ago, in addition to the harvest and cultivation of a plethora of local plants. Corn soon became an important part of their diet, along with wild rice, bison, and other native flora and fauna. Ceramic technology continued to evolve, with ground shells being utilized for temper in addition to grit, and new designs were incorporated into local ceramic symbology. In the mid-1600s, the first Europeans arrived in the area around Dakota County. They included French missionaries and fur traders during the mid-to-late 1600s, followed by British, and later American, traders and explorers in the early 1800s.

Tribes living in southeastern Minnesota during the early 1600s include the Ioway, Ojibwe, and Dakota. The former two tribes eventually moved south and west into Iowa and Nebraska. The Dakota maintained a strong presence in their homeland in this region of Minnesota until treaties, war, disease, and forced removal diminished their numbers in the mid-to-late 1800s. Following forced removal of Dakota populations to reservations in South Dakota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and Canada in the mid-1850s and then again in the 1860s during the aftermath of the U.S.-Dakota War, settlement of the Lake Byllesby area by Euro-American immigrants increased rapidly (Curtiss-Wedge 1910, Anfinson 2003).



*Corn was an important part of the American Indian diet*



*Sketches of the flintknapping process used to create lithics (Courtesy of the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center)*

The first Euro-American settlers arrived in the area that would become Randolph Township in 1854 and 1855. These early settlers included John Richmond; D.B. Hulbert; Levi, William, and H.H. Velie; Richard and D.H. Morrill; George H. Brookes; James Hassan; and Reverend Charles Curran. These first arrivals were followed soon after by the first internments in Lakeside Cemetery in 1857, and the town of Randolph was organized in 1858. Early industry centered around milling, including lumber, flour, flax, and feed milling, with the first sawmill built on Chub Creek in 1859. Additional infrastructure, such as a cooperage, school, general store, blacksmith, and hotel soon followed, and the arrival of railroads through Randolph beginning in the 1880s led to the development of a restaurant industry that made the town a popular stopover.

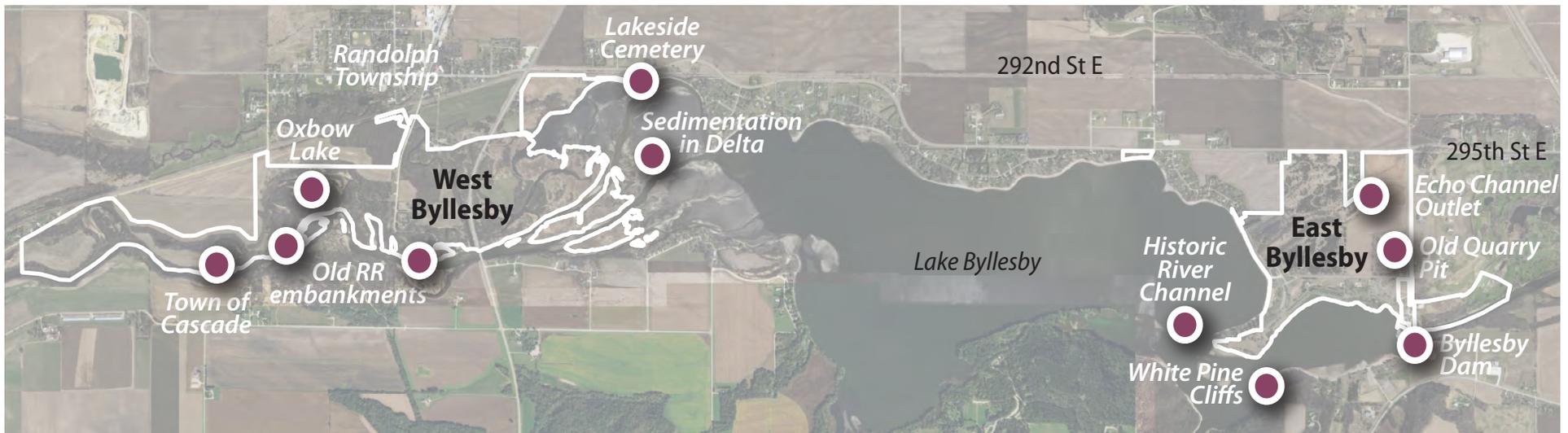
While the town of Cascade just south of Randolph across the Cannon River was not platted until 1883, the village originated in the 1860s with the construction of a flour mill along the Cannon River in Stanton Township, Goodhue County (Curtiss-Wedge 1910, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association 2016).

Following the construction of Byllesby Dam in 1910, hydropower dominated at Lake Byllesby until 1967, when then-owner Northern States Power announced the closure of the dam. The Lake Byllesby Area Improvement Association formed in response to this announcement to ensure the ongoing presence of the Lake, which had by then become a popular recreation spot. In 1971, the Lake Byllesby Park Commission was formed for the creation of the Park.

By 1983, Dakota and Goodhue Counties, which had assumed ownership from Northern States Power, granted management of the dam to North American Hydro, Inc., and hydropower has been in production at Lake Byllesby since that time. Today, the city of Randolph continues to thrive, while Cascade, which declined following a fire that destroyed the mill and cooper shop in the 1890s, and the bypassing of the town by the railroads, consists only of ruins of the original settlement (Curtiss-Wedge 1910, Lake Byllesby Area Improvement Association 2016). The construction of the Byllesby Dam in 1910 submerged some early structures associated with the towns of Cascade and Randolph, although other historic infrastructure still survives.

Cultural resources identified in Lake Byllesby Regional Park include historical bridges (one bridge at Minnesota Highway 56 and Randolph Boulevard, remnants of two bridges at the west end of the park, and a Chicago Great Western Railroad bridge), archaeological sites submerged beneath Lake Byllesby by the building of the dam, and the Lake Byllesby dam. No traditional cultural properties have yet been formally recorded within the park. Although it is not recorded as a cultural resource, an important resource with a rich history adjacent to the park is the Lakeside Cemetery, located northeast of the west portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. The land for the cemetery was donated by D.H. Morrill and J.W. Penniman, and the first burials were in 1857, one year prior to the establishment of Randolph Township in Dakota County and Stanton Township in Goodhue County (Curtiss-Wedge 1910:432, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association 2016). The cemetery is currently active and is managed by the Lakeside Cemetery Association of Cannon Falls.

**Figure 3.4 | Potential interpretive features based on area history**

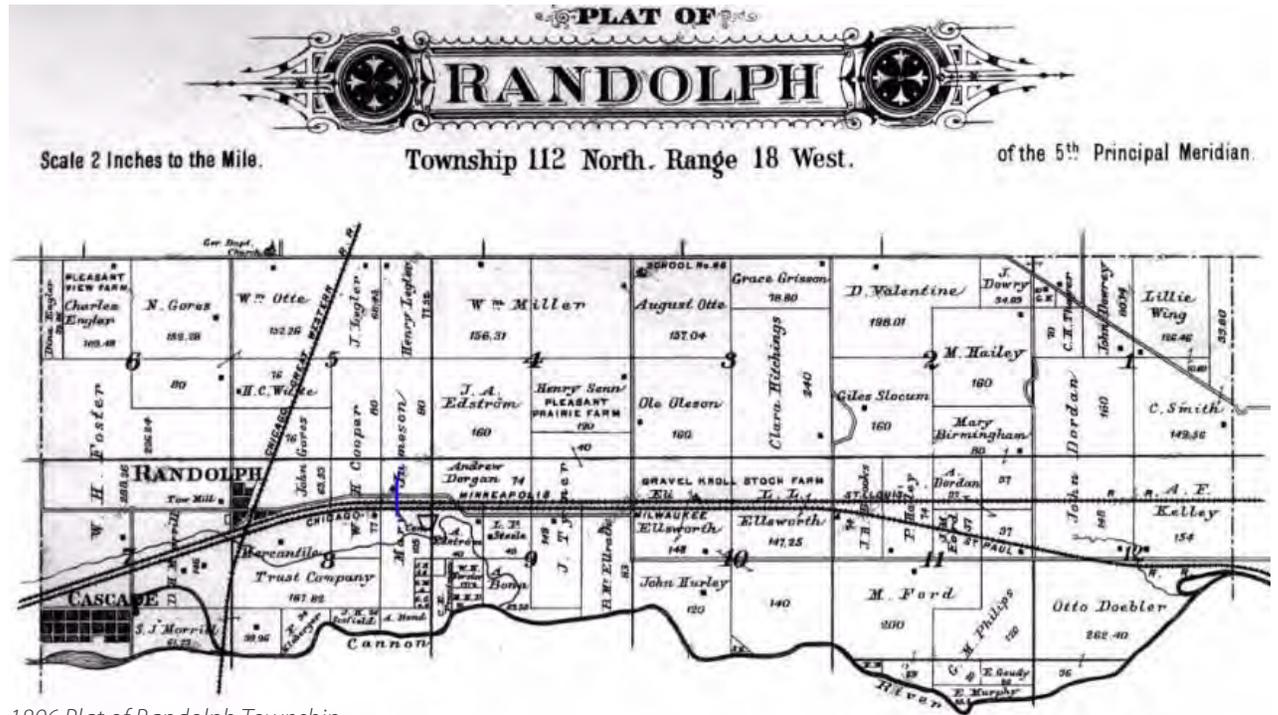


# THE LAKE BYLLESBY STORY (POST-CONTACT PERIOD)

## Early Settlers and Water-Powered Industries

The first Euro-American settlers of the location that would eventually be known as Randolph Township arrived in 1854. Within five years, the Velie brothers constructed the first sawmill in town along Chub Creek, a tributary of the Cannon River, and they operated it until they went into the Army in 1862. The frame building that housed the mill was subsequently moved to the property of D. H. Morrill in Section 7, and he used it as a barn. Over the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Randolph continued to be involved in both lumber milling and grist milling, with operations run by citizens such as Walbridge J. Tyner, William McElrath, Al Otte, Frank Held, and Alton Hosfield. Beginning in 1885, Louis and Henry Miller established a general store that they ran until 1930. According to local historians, for five years during the operation of the store, the brothers concurrently ran a feed mill and a tow mill (for processing flax) until both were destroyed by fire. Fire also destroyed the two grain elevators present in Randolph around the turn of the century. One of these was replaced after it burned in 1916 and continued to be operational until at least 1976. The other was never replaced. The last lumber business in Randolph closed its doors in 1947.

Though Cascade was not platted until 1883, the village originated with the 1860s construction of a flour mill along the Cannon River in Stanton Township (Goodhue County). This flour mill economically supported people such as John Whitson and Thomas Byrnes, who operated the mill; William Whitson and Herman Metz, who manufactured barrels for the mill; and John Keyes, a blacksmith who served residents of the area.



1896 Plat of Randolph Township

In the early 1880s, the men who would file for the incorporation of Cascade purchased the mill, and, in 1883, they platted the village with the north half in Dakota County and the south half in Goodhue County. At this time, a grain elevator was located on the north side of the river. A post office had been established for Cascade a few months prior; and, in addition to the mill and cooper shop, the village would eventually also be home to a store, a hotel, and a schoolhouse/church/social center. Just over a decade after Cascade was platted, however, fire took the mill and the cooper shop, initiating the demise of the village.



Birds-eye View of Randolph Looking South toward the Cannon River, 1915

## Railroads Through Randolph

While milling along the Cannon River had already attracted people to the area of Lake Byllesby Regional Park, the introduction of the railroads led to the development of the village of Randolph near the park's west end. In 1882, an east-west line from Red Wing to Waterville was constructed by the Minnesota Central Railroad Company, which had merged with the Cannon River Improvement Company in 1878. This line, which skirts along the north edge of the park, eventually became part of the Chicago Great Western Railway Company. In 1886, shortly after the completion of the east-west line, a north-south line from St. Paul to the Iowa-Minnesota border was completed by the Minnesota & North Western Railroad Company. This line, which crosses through the west end of Lake Byllesby Regional Park, was later subsumed into the Chicago Great Western Railway Company. The development of these lines created a crossroads of two major rail lines to the northwest of the park. Though the villages of Randolph and Cascade were both near the junction of these transportation routes, with Randolph to the north of Chub Creek and Cascade to the south, it was the village of Randolph that benefited from them. Cascade, having already lost its economic foundation in the fire at the flour mill in 1894 and facing the rise of steam power over water power, would see the location of the crossroads nearer to Randolph seal its fate.



*Randolph Depot and Grain Elevator*

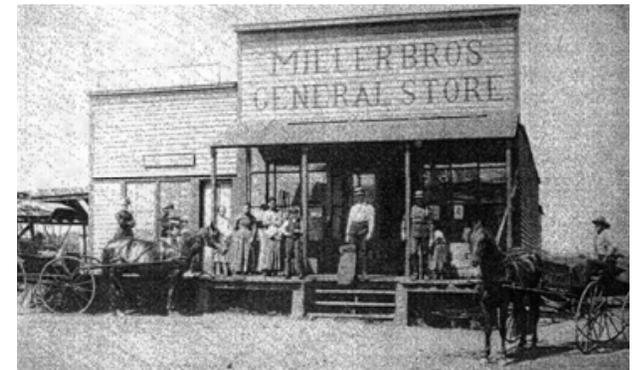
## Henry Byllesby and the Northern States Power Company

Beginning in 1881, Henry Byllesby, then 22 years old, served as a draftsman for Thomas Edison as the latter designed the Pearl Street generating station in New York and power plants for such distant lands as Chile and Montreal. Four years later, Byllesby left Edison to work for his competitor, George Westinghouse. He continued this pattern of movement from company to company until he gained the experience, know-how, and colleagues to start his own engineering firm. His firm was an empire-building enterprise, established with the goal of purchasing struggling utility companies in Minnesota, the Dakotas, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, California, and Alabama and their lines; refinancing, reviving, and enhancing them; and adding them to his network. Though many found this enterprise to be risky, Byllesby foresaw the future of electricity, and it eventually paid off.

In 1909, Byllesby, then living in Chicago, visited the state of Minnesota, where he organized Washington Light and Power Company. In that same year, the company was renamed Consumers Power Company. It was under this name that Byllesby began the construction of new power plants to replace the obsolete ones operated by the companies he had bought. Byllesby would soon create a network of transmission and distribution lines to link cities throughout Minnesota, the Dakotas, and Wisconsin. By 1916, the successful Henry Byllesby settled on the name Northern States Power Company. This company became a major supplier of power to the Midwestern United States. Later, Northern States Power merged with Denver-based New Century Energies to become Xcel Energy, now the fourth-largest combination electricity and natural gas energy company in the country.



*Butler Brothers Stone Crusher*



*Miller Brothers General Store*



*1916 Randolph Grain Elevator Fire*



*Pasture along the Cannon River before it was flooded*



*Pasture (now Lake Byllesby) after it was flooded by the dam*



*Bluffs on the Cannon River before the dam was built*

## Lake Byllesby Dam

Early in Henry Byllesby's electrical empire-building conquest, he selected the Cannon River through Randolph and Cannon Falls as the site of a hydropower dam. Byllesby hired the Ambursen Hydraulic Construction Company of Boston to construct the dam in 1910, and excavation began on April 9th of that year. Ambursen pioneered the construction of hollow reinforced concrete dams, which they began building in 1904, and the Lake Byllesby Dam is of this type of construction. Nearly 17,000 yards of earth and 21,500 cubic yards of rock had to be excavated to make way for the dam, then 23,500 barrels of cement and 750,000 pounds of reinforcing steel were used in its construction. When the dam was completed in January of the following year, Lake Byllesby, a three-and-a-half-mile long, 14,800-acre reservoir and one of the largest bodies of water in Dakota County, was created. While quite the feat of engineering, Byllesby's venture submerged the southernmost portion of Randolph Township and the sites of Native American and Euro-American settlement alike. The presence of the lake prevented further settlement in that portion of the township; however, the dam encouraged it in the surrounding area by providing power to area residents and creating a recreational amenity.

## The Decline of Hydropower

During the Great Depression, hydroelectric plants, once the most economical source of power in the country, began their shift to becoming one of the least cost-effective methods of producing power. The power supplied by many rivers and streams was becoming unpredictable as their water levels diminished, whether by natural or artificial alterations to the landscape, and the costs of maintaining hydroelectric plants rapidly escalated during this period. Many of these plants, therefore, were shut down during the 1930s.

Hydroelectric power got a brief reprieve when the U.S. entered World War II as materials and manpower had to be diverted to the war effort, putting new power plant construction on the back burner. When the war ended, however, hydroelectric power's downward slide continued. By 1948, for example, hydroelectric plants were responsible for only approximately 20 percent of Northern States Power Company's total output, and this percentage continued to drop significantly over the next two decades. By the 1960s, Northern States Power found that, in many cases, it was more cost effective to dismantle the dams and deed surrounding lands to townships or counties for use as public parks, rather than continue operations.

## Lake Byllesby Park and the Return of Hydropower

In 1967, with the move away from hydropower in full effect, Northern States Power Company announced its intention to drain Lake Byllesby and abandon the dam. In response, area citizens formed the Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, a group established with the goal of ensuring the transfer of the dam and the lake to public ownership. The group was successful in its endeavor; and, in 1969, the dam was sold to Dakota and Goodhue Counties for one dollar in order to off-load several major repair projects at the end of the dam's life. The counties were dedicated to operating the dam in order to maintain the level of Lake Byllesby for the recreation of their residents. On the Dakota County, or north, side of the lake, the recreational experience was enhanced by the creation of Lake Byllesby Regional Park.

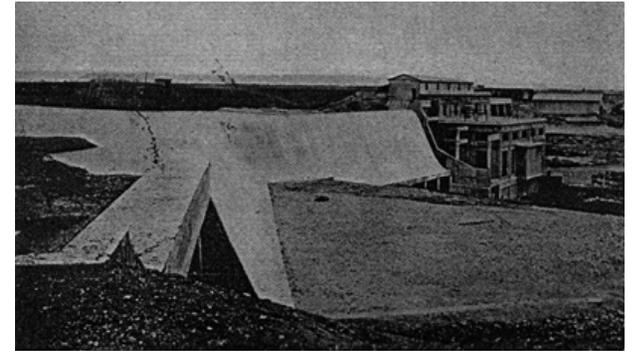
In 1978, a relationship was developed between the counties and a company by the name of North American Hydro, whereupon the dam was redeveloped to meet safety standards and continue hydropower operation.

In 2007, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission required both counties to meet standards for 100 percent of the Probable Maximum Flood, the most severe possible flood calculated by combining information about precipitation, geology, and water management strategies. Improvements included repairing some bedrock, repairing the existing concrete face of the dam, adding piers and a bridge over the overflow structure, and repairing the existing gate and intake systems. In 2016, Dakota County completed the upgrade to Byllesby Dam by adding two new hydraulically operated crest gates, 65 feet wide by 14 feet tall, to provide flood control.

North American Hydro has since been purchased by a company named Eagle Creek, and the agreement with them was renegotiated to an operating agreement instead of the original lease agreement. Goodhue County sold their portion back to Dakota County, making Dakota County the sole owners of the dam and responsible for its operations and maintenance. Dakota County is currently working through the process to upgrade the existing powerhouse facility and original generating equipment inside the dam. The tentative completion date for this project is 2021, with the hope to increase hydropower production from 2.2 megawatts to 4.0 megawatts. The tentative project budget is approximately \$14 million dollars.

Today, the dam generates enough power to serve approximately 2,400 homes. Because Byllesby is a high hazard dam, Dakota County takes dam safety very seriously and has a robust inspection, operations, and maintenance program to ensure that the public is safe upstream and downstream.

With Lake Byllesby Dam once again generating power, visitors to the park can experience pieces of the park's history throughout time. The natural portions of the landscape provide a sense of what Native American and early Euro-American settlers of the area may have seen as they approached the land surrounding the Cannon River. The picnics, swimming, fishing, and other recreational activities being carried out by families and friends who visit the park today are reminiscent of the human interactions that have occurred along the shores of the Cannon River and, later, of Lake Byllesby throughout history. Finally, the Lake Byllesby Dam recalls the days when water was the primary source of power in Dakota County and in the nation.



*Lake Byllesby Dam circa 1912*

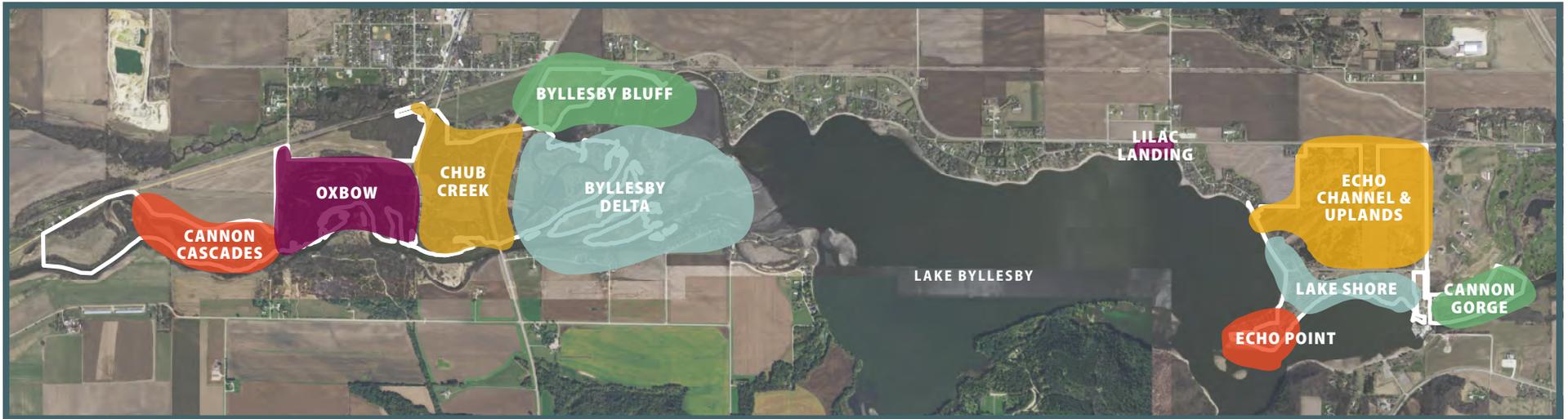


*Lake Byllesby Dam during repair, 1978*



*Lake Byllesby Dam, 1983*

Figure 3.5 | Natural Resource Management Units



Canoeing Byllesby Delta



Byllesby Delta

## NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

The area around Lake Byllesby Regional Park has drastically changed with European settlement. Pre-settlement, the park's landscape was likely dominated by prairie, with river bottom forest along the Cannon River, white pines on the adjacent cliffs, and small areas of oak openings and barrens. The Cannon River of old was a highly sinuous channel, and a small cascade called Big Falls was located near what is the dam today. However, little remains of the pre-European settlement landscape today. Plowing and intensive grazing by domestic livestock have significantly altered ecological processes, and the construction of the hydroelectric dam in 1910 created Lake Byllesby.

Although much of the surrounding area is developed or utilized for agriculture, the park provides important ecological functions. It provides habitat for wildlife and is a connector between surrounding regionally significant ecological areas in a highly fragmented landscape. In addition, park land along the Cannon

River provides an important buffer to help mitigate water and habitat quality along the river and reservoir.

### Geology

The valley that Lake Byllesby is situated in was created 8,000 years ago when glacial Lake Agassiz began to drain, causing the Mississippi River to swell with floodwater. The Mississippi River became so swollen that it backed up flow from the Cannon River, forming a large lake that covered all of present-day Randolph Township, Sciota Township, and portions of Hampton Township. Due to the slow-flowing water, sand and sediment were deposited, forming a large sand and gravel area that is referred to as the Randolph Flat. When the Mississippi River eventually drained down, the Cannon River flood waters were released carving the valley in the Randolph Flats in which Lake Byllesby is now situated. Echo Point is a remnant of the erosion of the Randolph Flats as it was shaped by a channel of the Cannon River.



*Byllesby Bluff*



*Echo Channel*



*Echo Channel and Uplands*

## Land Cover Classification

After reviewing the MLCCS data around Lake Byllesby, multiple onsite surveys of the natural resources present within the Park were conducted in the summer of 2016. This effort was completed in order to verify existing plant communities, assess their quality, and develop an understanding of how existing park best management practices (e.g. prairie restorations), natural succession, and the arrival of new invasive species have changed the Park's plant communities since they were last surveyed in 2005. The vegetative communities that follow were categorized based on the community types outlined in Dakota County's 2017 Natural Resource Management System Plan.

### The Park contains a diversity of natural and disturbed/developed vegetative communities including:

- » Grassland-prairie: active prairie restorations and old field areas dominated by grasses and forbs
- » Savanna-brushland: areas of grassland/prairie with intermittent (<50% cover) occurrences of shrubs and/or small trees including eastern red cedar and honey locust
- » Woodland-brushland: areas transitioning from agricultural use to woodland dominated by dense shrub cover and abundant tree cover
- » Deciduous forest: areas with high canopy cover
- » Lowland and floodplain forests: areas with high canopy cover but differentiated by increasingly wet hydrologic regime
- » Planted trees: a former nursery
- » Emergent marsh: wetland areas with high abundance of emergent plants, including the delta area.
- » Pond/lake: open water areas of lentic waters.
- » River/stream: lotic waters
- » Cropland: areas currently being cultivated

- » Homes, old homestead, gravel pit, developed parkland, utility area: developed and disturbed areas within the park. This includes areas with high infrastructure and impervious surfaces, manicured and abandoned lawns and gardens, and excavated areas.

The majority of existing natural areas are low quality and affected by invasive species but have the potential to be restored in many areas. The list of terrestrial invasive species includes several, like buckthorn, that have troubled the region for many years, along with some newer invasives such as wild parsnip. With the exception of the floodplain forests on the west end of the park, buckthorn is the most prevalent threat to the forested communities. Threats to the grassland and prairie communities in the park include Siberian elm, amur maple, and wild parsnip to name a few. With proper management and continued maintenance and restoration efforts, the Park has great potential to develop diverse native plant communities. The Lake Byllesby Regional Park Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP) contains a more detailed inventory and analysis of existing features on the site.

## Surface Water and Groundwater

Over time, most of the park's surface water has become significantly degraded due to agricultural and municipal stormwater runoff. Over 70 percent of the Cannon River watershed is agricultural, which makes improving water quality in Lake Byllesby an effort beyond the scope of the park. Entire wetland complexes that were important for filtering and retaining water and recharging the groundwater have been lost. The lake and other surrounding surface water bodies are considered impaired by the MPCA. Pollution often includes excess bacteria, sediment, and nutrients (especially nitrogen and phosphorous from fertilizer), causing lower levels of dissolved oxygen that limits reproduction and

survival of fish populations and other aquatic organisms. Although state and federal regulations and voluntary efforts have improved water conditions, protection and management of natural areas, especially those adjacent to water bodies, is an important strategy for achieving water quality goals. Ground and surficial water resources have profound impacts on plant communities and wildlife, providing both a habitat resource and a mechanism of disturbance.

The Prairie du Chien and Jordan aquifers represent the primary groundwater supplies for the Cannon River Watershed. While groundwater quantity appears to be stable, or even rising in the areas surrounding the Park, recent concerns about the supply and quality of groundwater have been voiced in Dakota County, especially where sandy soils drive the use of irrigation for agricultural purposes. The groundwater resources in areas adjacent to the Park have been identified as “very highly sensitive” to surface contamination, meaning that it takes only hours to months for contaminants to reach the aquifer. Pesticides, fertilizers, and phosphorous from nearby septic systems are the primary concerns. Given its importance and vulnerability, every effort should be made to prevent groundwater contamination. Best management practices should be employed within the park wherever possible, including:

- » Proper siting and maintenance of septic and wastewater systems
- » Reduction in use of fertilizers
- » Limiting the use of salt and deicing materials
- » Training and outreach programs for visitors and surrounding landowners on ways to prevent groundwater contamination

## The Cannon River

The Cannon River Watershed drains approximately 1,460 square miles and flows for 112 miles between



*The Cannon River from the Cascades*



*Cannon Cascades*



*Lake Byllesby*



*Lakeshore*



*Mown trails through prairie at the Cannon Gorge*



*View of the Cannon Gorge from the Mill Towns Trail Bridge*



*A monarch butterfly on vervain in the Cannon Gorge*

Shields Lake and the Mississippi River. The reach of the Cannon River from Faribault to the Mississippi River is designated as Wild and Scenic by the MN DNR. This designation protects rivers with “outstanding natural, scenic, geographic, historic, cultural, and recreational values (MN DNR 2017).” The Middle Cannon River (from Faribault to Lake Byllesby) is classified as a recreational river. Historically, the Cannon River was teeming with fish, wildlife, and birds and is home to at least 36 mammal species. Twenty-six species of amphibians and reptiles are known to occur along the Cannon River, including the rare Wood, Map, and Blanding’s turtles. The river is home to water, shore, and game birds, and is habitat for colonial bird breeding colonies. In addition, walleye, catfish, northern pike, smallmouth bass, crappies, and striped bass are all also known to occur in the Cannon River.

The Cannon River Watershed has lost fifty to one-hundred percent of its historical wetland acreage to agricultural operation and urbanization. This has had a negative impact on the health of the Cannon River; the MPCA has identified the River as impaired for aquatic recreation and aquatic life throughout most of its reach. Near the Park, the river suffers from fecal coliform, PCB in fish tissue, a lack of fish biodiversity, and poor invertebrate biodiversity. Increased land protection along the Cannon River is listed as a priority management strategy for the Middle Cannon River to help mitigate the noted impairments.

### **Lake Byllesby Reservoir**

Lake Byllesby is a large reservoir on the Cannon River with a surface area of 1,365 acres and an average depth of nine feet. Nearly 50 percent of the reservoir is less than 10 feet deep with two-thirds of the reservoir less than 15 feet deep. A 50-foot deep hole located near the north end of the dam is the deepest spot in the

reservoir. Lake Byllesby meets the State of Minnesota’s definition of a reservoir and a shallow lake.

Sedimentation and water quality, including annual nuisance algae blooms, continue to be issues for Lake Byllesby. Excessive nutrient and sediment loads from the Cannon River Watershed are the principal cause of these issues.

Sediment loads from the Cannon River watershed form mudflats on the west end of the Reservoir as the Cannon River waters slow. A review of historical aerial imagery from 1938 to present shows considerable advancement of the sediment delta into the western most portion of the reservoir. Although non-native invasive species, including reed canary grass, purple loosestrife, and hybrid cattail, thrive on these nutrient-rich mudflats. The mudflats also provide valuable habitat for shorebirds and migratory waterfowl that attract bird watchers from across the state.

Lake Byllesby is currently on Minnesota’s 2016 303d List of Impaired Waterbodies. The reservoir is hypereutrophic due to high phosphorus concentrations which result in high levels of algae growth. Model results from the 2013 Lake Byllesby Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) study found that the Cannon River contributed 85 percent of the Total Phosphorus (TP) load; Chub Creek and Prairie River together contributed 14 percent of the TP load. Direct overland flow from the immediate watershed and other nearshore sources (septic) comprised the remaining one percent of the external TP load to the system. Significant reductions in both point and non-point sources of pollution would be required to reduce the frequency and severity of nuisance algae blooms. The 2013 Lake Byllesby Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) outlines a general implementation strategy including the adoption of best management practices targeted at reducing non-point source pollution from agricultural and urban land uses as well as the

implementation of Waste Water Treatment Facility permits to achieve point source reductions. The City of Randolph is currently working on developing a new sewer system to connect residents currently on septic systems to a city sewer line.

The west end of the reservoir contains a mosaic of shallow wetlands and mudflats created by inflow from the Cannon River. The north side of the reservoir is primarily developed areas while the southern edge is predominantly agriculture and wooded areas. A portion of the reservoir’s shoreline, from the dam to Echo Point, is currently riprapped to prevent shoreline erosion. Unfortunately, riprapped shoreline is a barrier to wildlife and also restricts access to park users. Furthermore, the transitional areas adjacent to the riprapped areas are maintained as turf grass. Consequently there is little buffer stormwater runoff from the nearby parking lots and developed spaces.

Manual operation of the Reservoir’s water level plays a heavy role in influencing the Park’s landscape by creating unique habitats (e.g., mudflats, wetlands, and floodplains) that are regionally important to wildlife. Existing reservoir operating plans require reservoir water levels to be lowered until May 15th to draw down groundwater levels to support agricultural production in the surrounding uplands. After May 15th, summer water levels are maintained at 856.7 feet until October 1st in accordance with permit requirements from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Water levels are drawn down in the fall by three feet to a winter pool elevation of 853.7 feet where they are maintained until the following spring exposing the mudflats on the west end.

### **Chub Creek**

Chub Creek originates in Chub Lake and drains a 90-square mile area comprised of farmland and

marshland before entering the Cannon River just west of Highway 56 near Byllesby Marsh. Most of Chub Creek is well buffered by marshes that filter out nutrients and suspended solids from the agricultural portions of the watershed. Landowners in this watershed have historically employed conservation practices aimed at reducing soil loss from agricultural fields. As a result, Chub Creek water clarity and quality has historically been much better than the Cannon River. While much of the lower portion of Chub Creek is considered high quality habitat, re-channelization of Chub Creek following construction of Highway 56 has resulted in well-documented erosion concerns dating back to the 1987 Byllesby Lake Management Plan. Current planning efforts are underway with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Minnesota DNR to restore Chub Creek to its original channel. This plan would include a bridge beneath Highway 56 that would make a wildlife passageway possible under the road. Historically, the wetlands and backwaters associated with the outlet of Chub Creek provided excellent spawning habitat for northern pike and other gamefish (North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization, 2013).

## Wetlands

Wetlands perform a variety of important functions including flood abatement, nutrient retention, pollution filtration, and habitat for fish and wildlife. A total of 219 acres National Wetland Inventory (NWI) mapped wetlands are present within the Park. Most of the wetlands on the western portion of the Park are forested/shrub and emergent wetlands associated with riverine deposits from the Cannon River as water slows upon entering the lake. In the eastern portion of the Park, wetlands include a linear shaped shallow marsh (Echo Channel) associated with a former channel of the Cannon River.

**Table 3.2 | Wildlife observed by vegetative community**

Vegetation Type	Wildlife Observed
Grassland/Prairie	Monarch and Monarch Caterpillar, Orb spiders, Gray Catbird, Rock Pigeon, Clay-collared Sparrow, Wild Turkey
Savanna-Brushland	Eastern Cottontail, Brown Thrasher, Eastern Bluebird, Blue Jay, Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Oriole, White-breasted Nuthatch, Wood Duck, American Pelican, Chipping Sparrow, Black-capped Chickadee, Eastern Kingbird, Eastern Bluebird, Field Sparrow, Tree Swallow, Red Squirrel, Chorus Frog, American Toad
Woodland-Brushland	Blue jay, Song sparrow, Cerulean warbler
Deciduous Forest	Yellow-rumped Warbler, Eastern Wood Peewee, Gray Catbird, Wild Turkey, Northern Cardinal
Wet Forest/Swamp	Gray Catbird, Canada Goose
Floodplain Forest	Garter snake, Green Frog, Painted Turtle, Red squirrel, White-tailed Deer
Emergent Marsh	Tree frogs, Tadpoles, American Pelican, Green Heron, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret
Lake/Pond	Diverse Fish Assemblage
River/Stream	Diverse Mussel Species
Abandoned Nursery	Common Yellowthroat
Developed Parkland	13-lined Ground Squirrel, American robin, American Crow, Eastern Kingbird, House Wren, House Sparrow, Mourning Dove, Chipping sparrow, Purple Martin, Eastern Phoebe, Downy Woodpecker, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Indigo Bunting
Gravel Pit	Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, American Robin, White-tailed Deer
Cropland	None

## Wildlife

Despite poor water quality and the ecological barrier created by the dam, the reservoir supports a robust fish and native mussel population. The mudflats at the west end of the reservoir attract scores of migrating shorebirds during periods when the lake is drawn down (typically fall through spring). Lake Byllesby is situated along a route used by numerous bird species migrating to and from their breeding grounds and functions as a vital stopover for resting and replenishing energy reserves. As such, the Audubon has classified it as an Import Bird Area (IBA) and it is considered one of the

best places in Minnesota to view shorebirds, ducks, geese, swans, and herons, amongst others. Seventy-eight percent of Minnesota's shorebird species and 70 percent of Minnesota's recorded waterfowl species have been identified in Byllesby reservoir. Regionally important species observed here include Caspian Tern, Black Tern, American White Pelican, White-fronted Geese, Piping Plover (Federally Endangered), Wilson's phalarope, Common Tern, Canvasbacks, American Avocet, Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, and others (<http://mn.audubon.org/conservation/minnesotaimportant-bird-areas>).

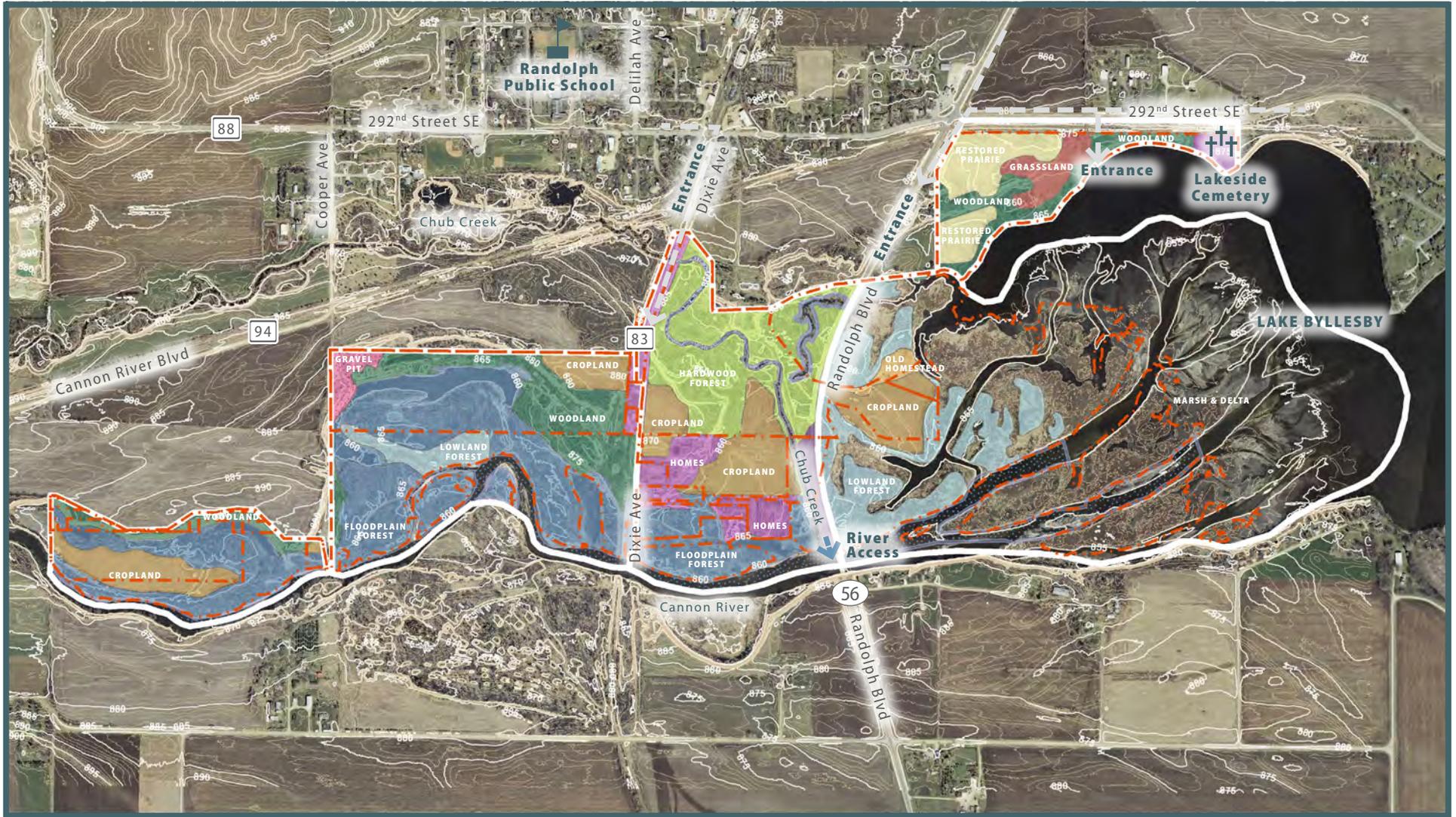


Figure 3.6 | Natural Resources Inventory: Lake Byllesby Regional Park East

Land Cover Legend (based on MLCCS mapping and additional Field Surveys)

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Boundary	River	Gravel Pit	Cropland	Planted Trees	Woodland
Park Trails	Wetland	Utility Area	Developed Parkland	Juniper Savanna	
Restored Prairie	Savanna				

\* See Lake Byllesby Natural Resource Management Plan for additional information



**Figure 3.7 | Natural Resources Inventory: Lake Byllesby Regional Park West**  
**Land Cover Legend (based on MLCCS mapping and additional Field Surveys)**



Lake Byllesby Regional Park Boundary	Floodplain Forest	River	Homes	Old Homestead
Restored Prairie	Lowland Forest	Cemetery	River Access	Hardwood Forest
Grassland	Marsh & Delta	Gravel Pit	Cropland	Woodland

\* See Lake Byllesby Natural Resource Management Plan for additional information

## Rare Species

The MN DNR identifies 113 species of plants, fungus, invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals as endangered, threatened, or of special concern within Dakota County. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Database was searched for rare natural feature records within one mile of the Park boundary.

Other than American white pelicans (state-listed special concern), no other state- or federally listed species were observed during 2016 field visits. Sandhill cranes were observed within the park in 2003 (Dakota County 2017). In addition, the Audubon Society has compiled all available data and reported that 114 bird species have been recorded at the Lake Byllesby IBA, many of which are Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

**Table 3.3 | Rare natural features found within one-mile of the park, according to the Natural Heritage Database**

Common Name	Scientific Name	State/Federal Status	Last Date Observed
<b>Vertebrate Animal</b>			
Blanding's Turtle	<i>Emydoidea blandingii</i>	THR/None	7/19/1989
North American Racer (Snake)	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>	SPC/None	7/8/1993
Paddlefish	<i>Polyodon spathula</i>	THR	2/21/2010
Plains Pocket Mouse	<i>Perognathus flavescens</i>	SPC/None	4/?/1972
Prairie Vole	<i>Microtus ochrogaster</i>	SPC/None	10/?/1971
Western Harvest Mouse	<i>Reithrodontomys megalotis</i>	SPC/None	10/?/1971
<b>Invertebrate Animal</b>			
Black Sandshell (Mussel)	<i>Ligumia recta</i>	SPC/None	8/9/2007
Creek Heelsplitter (Mussel)	<i>Lasmigona compressa</i>	SPC/None	7/30/2007
Fluted-shell (Mussel)	<i>Lasmigona costata</i>	THR/None	8/3/2007
Mucket (Mussel)	<i>Actinonaias ligamentina</i>	THR/None	8/3/2007
Regal Fritillary (Butterfly)	<i>Speyeria idalia</i>	SPC/None	8/18/2011
<b>Vascular Plant</b>			
Kitten-tails	<i>Besseyia bullii</i>	THR/None	7/7/2015
Prairie Bush Clover	<i>Lespedeza leptostachya</i>	THR/THR	8/?/2006



Blanding's Turtle



Kitten-tails



Paddlefish

**Table 3.4 | Quality Ranking Guidelines for Vegetative Communities**

Rank (General Quality)	Guidelines for Assigning Ranks
A (Excellent)	No evidence of ecologically disruptive disturbance or evidence of appropriate disturbance (e.g., single tree death, fire in fire-requiring ecosystem). Species richness is high for the type of ecosystem and species of mature vegetation conditions are present (e.g., uncommon species). Wetland systems experience little increase or drop in water level regardless of rainfall amount; generally the watershed has less than ten percent agricultural plus developed lands, or runoff is controlled to pre-development levels.
B (Good)	Some evidence of ecologically disruptive disturbance or some indication of appropriate disturbance. Species richness may be high for the type of ecosystem, but some weedy and invasive species are present and expected uncommon species are absent. Wetland systems experience some increase in water levels with less than 1 inch of rainfall; generally the watershed has 10-20 percent agricultural plus developed lands, or runoff is mostly controlled to pre- development levels.
C (Fair)	Evidence of ecologically disruptive disturbance is obvious, or little evidence of appropriate disturbance is seen. Species richness is moderate to low for the type, few uncommon species are present. Weedy and invasive plants are evident, but do not dominate any vegetation layer. Wetland systems experience a noticeable increase in water levels after less than 1 inch of rainfall; generally the watershed has more than 20 percent agricultural plus developed lands, or runoff is partially controlled to pre-development levels.
D (Poor)	Severely altered by ecologically disruptive disturbance or no evidence of appropriate disturbance. Species richness is low for the type of ecosystem and uncommon species are absent. Weedy and invasive species are a large part of the biomass in one or more vegetation layers (e.g., complete buckthorn coverage in the shrub layer). Wetland systems experience large rises and falls in water levels with less than one inch of rainfall; the watershed has more than 25 percent agricultural plus developed lands and runoff not controlled to pre- development levels.
NR (Not Ranked)	No rank is needed because the land cover is cultural (agricultural land, cool-season hay meadow and/or developed)

Note: Intermediate ranks can be assigned for a range of quality, e.g., A/B, C/D. Sourced from Dakota County NRMSP (2017)

Table 3.5 | Vegetative Communities and Characteristics Observed During 2016 Field Assessment

Vegetative Community Category	Community Classification	Management Units	Invasive, Non-Native, and Weedy Plants	Native plants	Important Notes	Condition Rank
Grassland/ Prairie	Grassland	Byllesby Bluff	Thistle, burdock, smooth brome, buckthorn	Milkweed	Smooth brome dominated old field with scattered trees.	D
	Restored Prairie	Byllesby Bluff - north restoration	Smooth brome, thistle,	Diverse prairie species	Restored short grass prairie	B
		Byllesby Bluff - south restoration	Thistle, burdock	Diverse prairie species	Diverse tall grass prairie	B
		Cannon Gorge	Buckthorn, Siberian elm, smooth brome	Native tall grass prairie species	The restored prairie portion of this area is very diverse and in very good condition.	B
		Echo Channel & Uplands	Canada thistle, woody species	Very diverse grasses and forbs	Restored Tall Grass Prairie	A/B
Savanna- Brushland	Savanna	Lakeside	Amur maple, smooth brome, buckthorn, Siberian pea shrub, Siberian elm	Bur oak, northern pin oak, American basswood	Unmaintained grassland with planted and volunteer trees. Bur Oak and prairie remnants scattered throughout	D
	Juniper Savanna	Echo Channel & Uplands	Blue spruce, Canada thistle, smooth brome, common juniper, honey locust	Black-eyed Susan's, tway blade, rose, figwort, primrose, heath aster, goldenrod, pussytoes, germander	Smooth brome dominated field with common juniper found scattered and in dense thickets. Random planted trees such as river birch, ash and spruce also present.	B/C
	Old Homestead	Byllesby Delta	Smooth brome, spruce, lilac, cultivars	Basswood, bur oaks, silver maple	Old farmstead, remnant planted trees and garden plants	D
Woodland- Brushland	Woodland	Cannon Gorge	Buckthorn, Siberian elm, garlic mustard, reed canary grass	Oak, Hackberry, Cherry,	Bur oak savanna transitioning downslope to mesic woodland, many active seeps along slope	C
Deciduous Forest	Hardwood Forest	Chub Creek	Limited cover of buckthorn, reed canary grass	Walnut, snake root, golden gow, monarda, blue lobelia, snakeroot	Snowmobile trail and barbed wire fence parallel highway 56	B/C
	Woodland	Byllesby Bluff	Buckthorn	Cottonwoods, boxelder	Very poor quality woodland, seepage wetland	D
		Oxbow	Buckthorn	Bur oak, green ash	None Noted	D
		Cannon Cascades	Buckthorn	Bur oak, hackberry, green ash	Steep wooded slopes with soybeans planted in fields	D



Restored Prairie at Byllesby Bluff



Lakeside Savanna



Cannon Cascades Woodland

Vegetative Community Category	Community Classification	Management Units	Invasive, Non-Native, and Weedy Plants	Native plants	Important Notes	Condition Rank
Wet Forest/ Swamp	Lowland Forest	Byllesby Delta	Buckthorn, queen Anne's, wild parsnip, reed canary	Green ash, walnut, cup plant, sedges, burreed, arrowhead, bluejoint, cottonwood, black willow	Low forest and marshes, heavy buckthorn in forested areas.	C
		Oxbow	None Noted	Green Ash, wood nettle	Area slightly less flood prone than floodplain forest	B
Floodplain Forest	Floodplain Forest	Chub Creek	Buckthorn	Green ash, cottonwood	Hardwood lowland forest/swamp	C
		Oxbow	Buckthorn	Green ash, cottonwood, silver maple	Floodplain forest with open water wetlands in former river channels	C
		Cannon Cascades	Buckthorn	Green ash, cottonwood, silver maple	Floodplain forest	C
Emergent Marsh	Wetland	Echo Channel & Uplands	Reed canary grass, stinging nettle	Jewelweed, sedges, duckweed	Old river channel that flows NE and dead ends. Water flows at a quick pace and disappears in pond on NE end. Possible recharge area for seeps in Cannon Gorge.	C
	Abandoned Chub Creek	Chub Creek	Reed canary grass, cattail	Arrowhead	Former Chub Creek channel is now a wetland	C
	Marsh & Delta	Byllesby Delta	Purple loosestrife, cattail, reed canary grass, carp	Sandbar willow, arrowhead,	River delta with multiple channels and floodplain wetlands	C
Lake/Pond	Shoreline	Lilac Landing	Smooth brome, locust, buckthorn, honeysuckle, ground ivy	Walnut, boxelder, cottonwood	Mowed grass parking area with small boat access, disturbed woodlot, wooded shoreline	D
		Lakeside	High % of Siberian elm in NE portion of shoreline (immediately W of boat ramp)	None Noted	Entire campground shoreline is rocky (contiguous ~2,700' west of boat landing)	D
		Lake Byllesby	Carp, flowering rush	Diverse fish assemblage	Reservoir	D
River/Stream	River Access	Chub Creek	None Noted	None Noted	Public access point along highway, excavated Chub Creek Channel, heavily degraded	D
	River Channel	Cannon Cascades	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted	D
		Oxbow	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted	D
Abandoned Nursery	Planted Trees	Echo Channel & Uplands	Amur maple, buckthorn, wild parsnip, locust, Norway maple, cultivars & ornamentals	Northern pin oak, walnut, white pine, cottonwood, green ash, cherry, bur oak, dogwood	Diverse mix of native & nonnative trees and shrubs in plantations and scattered throughout woodlands and openings.	D



Lowland Forest at the Oxbow



Floodplain Forest at the Cannon Cascades



Emergent Marsh at the Byllesby Delta

Vegetative Community Category	Community Classification	Management Units	Invasive, Non-Native, and Weedy Plants	Native plants	Important Notes	Condition Rank
Developed Parkland	Utility Area	Lakeside	Buckthorn, Siberian elm, alfalfa, honeysuckle	Bur Oak	Disturbed area adjacent to bridge trail and maintenance building.	D
	Developed		Smooth brome, spotted knapweed, thistle	Side oats grama, little blue stem, leadplant, ash trees	Parking lot area with mowed turf, un-mowed grasses & forbs, scattered planted trees	NR
	Cemetery	Byllesby Bluff	Turf grass	None Noted	Existing cemetery	NR
	Powerline and Railroad Corridor		Thistle, wild parsnip, buckthorn, tansy, Siberian elm	None Noted	Utility and RR right-of-way extremely infested with invasive species.	D
Gravel Pits	Gravel Pit	Oxbow	Buckthorn	Bur Oak	Dry gravel area with planted pines, bur oak and prairie species	D
		Echo Channel & Uplands	Buckthorn, Siberian elm, smooth brome, bird's foot trefoil	Cottonwoods, porcupine grass, sky blue aster, silky dogwood	Former gravel mine now used for soil and woody debris dumping. Groundwater close to surface in some areas, likely recharge area for seeps in Cannon Gorge MU	D
Cropland	Cropland	Byllesby Delta	Alfalfa	None Noted	None Noted	NR
		Cannon Cascades	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted	NR
		Echo Channel & Uplands	Soybeans	None Noted	None Noted	NR
		Chub Creek	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted	NR



*Developed Parkland Lakeside*



*Gravel Pit at the Echo Channel & Uplands*



*Cropland at Byllesby Delta*

# ASSESSMENT

The following list of issues and opportunities was assembled from a variety of sources, including the community engagement process, demographic and recreation trends, inventory and assessment of existing conditions, Dakota County staff, elected officials, key stakeholders, and the general public.

## Recreational Offerings & Programming

### Issues

- » There is an overall lack of things to do besides lake-focused activities (swimming/boating/fishing).
- » Poor water quality affects visitors' desire to swim.
- » Currently there is no pier/dock fishing. The Park only offers shoreline fishing, which is hampered by the rip-rap.
- » The growing sediment delta impacts boat access for some homeowners. Over time, sedimentation's impacts on lake recreation will increase.
- » Echo Point is underutilized, but promoting recreation there may conflict with existing residential land use.
- » Park use in the winter is low.
- » The only winter activity is a one to two-mile skijoring and dog sledding trail.

### Opportunities

- » Potential for regional marketing, cross-promotion, & branding of broader recreation opportunities within the Cannon Valley as part of the Park's offerings.
- » Support watershed level initiatives that maintain and improve lake recreation.
- » Potential to add lagoon and splash pad to expand swimming and water play options.
- » Echo Point offers a good fishing location.
- » The Cannon Valley Trail is groomed for skiing (could provide rental).
- » Expand winter offerings to include activities not reliant on snow (e.g. fat tire biking or ice fishing).

## Facilities

### Issues

- » The tent camping area is very open and removed from vehicular parking. Campers would like a more private camping experience, similar to state parks.
- » There is high demand for picnicking amenities like shelters/tables.
- » The existing picnic shelter does not meet service standards of the park system's more contemporary shelters.
- » The beach can be very windy.
- » There is no boat pull up or docking area.
- » The boat launch parking area fills up on nice weekends.
- » The play area could use updates.
- » The beach house building is underutilized.



*Current tent campsite near the playground*

### Opportunities

- » Provide a diverse array of camping experiences near the metro in a resort-like destination.
- » Space to add 4-season camper cabins in the park.
- » Primitive paddle-in campsites in the west park.
- » Space for group camping.
- » More "state park-like" electric and non-electric campsites with individual vehicle access.
- » Echo Point offers a more secluded place for tent camping close to the lakeshore.
- » If car campers parked on individual campsites, there would be more lot space for boaters/others.
- » There are open areas, land, and parking available to stage large events such as adventure races or festivals.
- » There is space for expanded boating/fishing amenities such as a dock/pier and fish cleaning table.
- » Accessibility upgrades to the play area could also include natural or water play elements that relate to the Park's setting and offer interpretive education.
- » Complementary picnicking facilities could include upgraded/additional shelters, more seating, and activities like sand volleyball or horseshoes.
- » The beach house's concession space could be used to expand food offerings at the park.



*Existing concessions building and plaza at the beach*

## Connectivity & Circulation

### Issues

- » There is a lack of awareness of and connection to west park.
- » West park boundaries are difficult to decipher and there is no sense of arrival.
- » There is not a portage around Lake Byllesby for paddlers.
- » The lake is the draw at the park, but the lakeside trail is adjacent to the RV campground, which takes away from the natural experience.
- » Vehicular circulation, specifically around the RV campground, is difficult for people to navigate.

### Opportunities

- » The future Mill Towns State Trail will be routed through and between the west and east parks.
- » Build trailhead facilities to serve the new Mill Towns State Trail and Cannon Valley Trail connections.
- » The lake makes a water trail paddle route between the east and west park possible, even if a land trail is not.
- » Create a formal entry/orientation area for the west park with well marked trails and park boundaries.
- » Adjacent land and water trails provide “Peddling & Paddling” day-trip possibilities.
- » Well-located for trail and water based rentals, including tubes, bikes, skis, canoes, kayaks, and stand up paddle boards.
- » Grades along the north side of the Cannon River downstream of the dam at Lake Byllesby Regional Park are less severe than those on the Goodhue County Side, and would be more amenable to canoe/kayak access and a portage route.
- » Re-configure RV camping for improved circulation, location, and ease of use.

## Water Quality & Natural Resources

### Issues

- » Birders want access to the Important Bird Area (IBA), but design interventions must be sensitive.
- » Sediment accumulation is filling in the west side of the lake.
- » Large swaths of turf are maintenance intensive and do not contribute ecologically or to sense of place.
- » Invasive species reduce habitat quality.
- » Randolph Blvd. cuts off Chub Creek hydrologically.
- » Groundwater is a sensitive resource.
- » Water quality is an issue, and improvements should be a top priority.

### Opportunities

- » Improve park character and ecological function using landscape design, restoration, and strategic maintenance (reduce lawn, plant drought resistant habitat, limit chemical and fertilizer use).
- » Renaturalize Chub Creek and its entry into Lake Byllesby.
- » Restore the savanna on Echo Point– good quality oaks exist there.
- » Expand and connect natural areas in West Park to improve habitat value.
- » Work with owners of private in-holdings within park boundaries, and in periphery outside of park, to employ BMPs and manage their natural resources in harmony with County park management.
- » Increase native plant communities.
- » Increase habitat connectivity.
- » Provide habitat for pollinators.
- » Protect against potential pests.
- » Improve stormwater management.
- » Reduce noise pollution and disturbance (for animals).
- » Collaborate with One Watershed One Plan initiatives.

## Interpretation/Education

### Issues

- » Very little interpretation exists, even after being outlined in the last master plan.

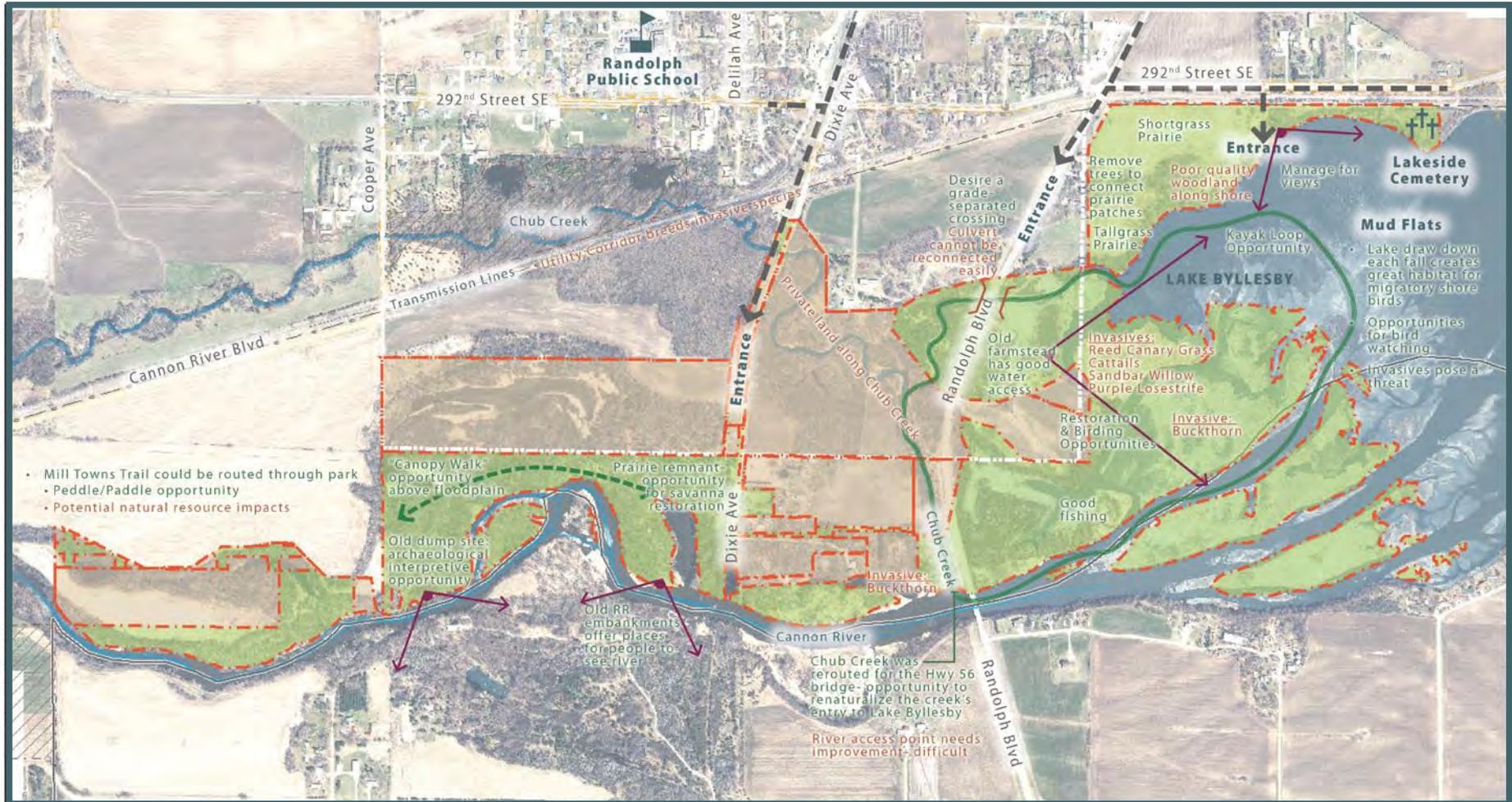
### Opportunities

- » The dam provides a great historical focal point and could potentially offer tours.
- » Self-guided interpretation is low-impact and flexible.
- » Play area upgrades could include interpretation.
- » Space for natural resource-based recreation and education like apiaries, pollinator plantings, food forests, and restoration.
- » Flexible group gathering space could double as outdoor classroom or programming space.
- » Incorporate new and innovative interpretive applications and techniques like temporary art exhibits or interactive displays.
- » Potential interpretation opportunity: pine logging cleared most of the forests in the area, but the steep cliffs contain native pine trees, which were too difficult to access and clear.
- » Historical interpretation: Talk about what the area was like prior to the dam. Extol its virtues and scenic qualities. Describe the native American history of the site, artifacts, etc.
- » Coordinate park interpretive content and design style with interpretive efforts along the Mill Towns State Trail and in Cannon Falls.

Figure 3.8 | Issues & Opportunities: Lake Byllesby Regional Park East



Figure 3.9 | Issues & Opportunities: Lake Byllesby Regional Park West



- Legend**
- Lake Byllesby Park Boundary
  - Land Conservation Easements
  - Right-of-Way Easements
  - Transmission Lines
  - Lake Byllesby Regional Park
  - Private Property (Park Inholdings)
  - Stream

## Issues & Opportunities: Lake Byllesby Regional Park West

### Issues:

- No gateway or sense of arrival. Needs destinations.
- No wayfinding or demarcation of park boundaries
- Unmanaged habitats are degrading
- Access and circulation needs to be defined & orchestrated

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



### Opportunities:

- Historic/Natural Resources interpretation
- Multiple habitat types in close proximity
- Birding/wildlife observation
- Geocaching/orienteering and other nature-based exploration
- Paddle-in "wilderness" camping

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a list of key considerations formulated from the issues and opportunities. These statements inform the vision, guiding principles, and development concepts that follow in the next chapters of this master plan:

- » Create a connected and complementary park system around Lake Byllesby.
- » Enhance connections to Cannon Falls and Randolph, building upon the Cannon Valley Trail and Mill Towns State Trail.
- » Define the park's role in the context of other regional attractions in the Cannon Valley from Red Wing to Northfield.
- » Improve park entry experiences including those from the Mill Towns State Trail Bridge, the main entry off of Harry Avenue, and access to the west park.
- » Diversify and enhance activities available at the park.
- » Create an inviting environment rich with activities for both campers and day users.
- » Manage natural resources in a thoughtful, environmentally sensitive, and efficient way. Once restored, maintain in perpetuity.
- » Support watershed level initiatives to preserve and improve lake recreation at the park.
- » Address outdoor education at the park with a list of program ideas and logistics for how they will work.
- » Improve swimming and water play experiences.
- » Incorporate hands on, understandable, and enticing methods of interpretation throughout the park. Locate places for interpretation programs, temporary exhibits, and permanent installations.
- » Create a cohesive, welcoming entry environment with potential for an all-season visitor center facility.
- » Expand and improve camping experiences and amenities.
- » Address downstream access to the river for kayaking/ canoeing and fishing.
- » Balance access to and organization of the west park with enhancement of its natural resources to ensure preservation of the Important Bird Area's ecological function.
- » Adjust the park boundary to reflect recreation and natural resource goals.
- » Diversify winter recreation offerings to encourage use.
- » Address the condition of Lake Byllesby's shoreline by incorporating vegetative reinforcement with native species where possible.
- » Consider adding several access points to the lake for fishing.
- » Consider removing the riprap.
- » Evaluate how to best incorporate priorities resulting from the visitor services plan, including programming and infrastructure needs (e.g. facility upgrades, equipment rental, food, outdoor education, etc.).
- » Inventory wildlife in the park. Develop goals and strategies for protecting and conserving species identified as important. For instance, 13-lined ground squirrels should receive attention in the East Park.



## CHAPTER 4: VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

The Vision Statement and Guiding Principles set the stage for the plan concept and initiatives. Dakota County and Goodhue County park planning staff, with input from the public, stakeholders, and Advisory Committee representatives, agreed upon an overall vision statement for the combined extent of Byllesby Park in both counties. The vision says what the park will be in the future ten to twenty years, while the guiding principles suggest how the park will achieve that vision.

### VISION STATEMENT

**Lake Byllesby Regional Park is the natural-resources based park where people can explore the Cannon River Valley. Individuals, families, and groups from around the region visit the park to enjoy the lake, river, and regional trails; to play outdoors and participate in educational activities; to gather with others; and to support the stewardship of the area's wealth of natural resources.**





## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **Build regional connections and partnerships.** Connect Lake Byllesby to the greater Cannon Valley Region by enhancing Cannon River access points, establishing a trailhead for the Mill Towns State Trail, and providing access to the Cannon Valley Trail. Promote regional tourism by partnering with other attractions in the Cannon River Valley, improving county and regional awareness of the parks, and adding wayfinding within and to the park. Continue the park's contribution to local and regional economic development through collaborations with Cannon Falls and Randolph governments and businesses.
2. **Create a cohesive, multi-county, regional park.** Programming and facilities at each park should complement, rather than compete with, one another by taking advantage of the unique and/or best available opportunities at each park. The two parks should offer a coherent set of recreational experiences and be operated cooperatively to function as a single destination in the Cannon River Valley.
3. **Invest in natural resources.** Implement a range of techniques to preserve, restore, and enhance existing natural areas, improve habitat, preserve scenic views, address invasive species, and support regional water quality initiatives.
4. **Be a full-service, year-round destination.** Develop facilities, activities, and services in a flexible, welcoming manner that supports increased lake and river recreation, enables visitors to enjoy all that Minnesota seasons offer, and provides recreational, educational, and volunteer opportunities for visitors of all ages and abilities. Strive to develop in a manner that reduces impacts and buffers adjacent residential neighborhoods. Ensure safe and enjoyable use of water resources by both motorized and non-motorized users.
5. **Offer a diversity of overnight accommodations.** The park's lakeside and natural environment make it a desirable location for multi-day visitors to the Cannon River Valley. Overnight opportunities should include a variety of RV, tent, group, and camper cabin sites that appeal to a wide range of users while being sensitively located in relationship to the natural environment and surrounding neighborhoods.
6. **Broaden visitors' understanding and depth of experience.** Create dynamic and interactive interpretive installations and programming plans to educate and inform park visitors of the natural, historic, and cultural resources in the park and surrounding area. Include self-guided interpretation, stewardship opportunities, events, artistic exhibits, and small group activities.
7. **Focus facilities and activities in the East.** Seek to balance natural resource and user needs by concentrating user facilities and activities in the east unit. Investments in the west should strive to preserve, restore, and enhance natural resources while providing opportunities for public access and enjoyment.



# CHAPTER 5: MASTER PLAN

## OVERVIEW

This chapter contains the development concept, outlining the specific physical and programming improvements that will be implemented at Lake Byllesby Regional Park. A graphic, along with a narrative description and precedent imagery, will describe the desired improvements to the park. Improvements and developments related to the visitor services, natural resources, and interpretation will also be described in detail in this chapter.

## PARK DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT PLAN

This chapter focuses on improvements prioritized for the next 10 years within the framework of the long-term vision for the park. The long-term concept plan shows the park at full recreation development. The 10-year priorities graphic shows improvements that are reasonably expected to be accomplished during the life of this master plan document, based on historic funding levels. The long-term plan is important to understanding 10-year phasing and allows for flexibility. Elements from the long-term plan that are not currently included in the 10-year plan may be accomplished sooner based on changing priorities or unforeseen funding opportunities.

The development concept for the park has been organized into separate plan graphics for the east side and the west side of the park. The east side includes the Goodhue County Byllesby Park concept to show the vision for the combined park. Following the overview maps, more detailed graphics are paired with a summary sidebar to illustrate the 10-year and long-term priorities in each park use area.

### Chapter Outline

The Master Plan chapter includes the following sections:

- » Park Development Concept Plan
  - » East Park Plan
  - » West Park Plan
  - » Parkwide Focus Areas
- » Natural Resources Stewardship Plan
- » Park Setting
- » Interpretation Plan
- » Park Facilities, Amenities, and Signage

Figure 5.1 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park East Master Plan: Long-term Concept



Figure 5.2 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park East Master Plan: 10-Year Plan



## EAST PARK PLAN

The long-term concept for the east side of Byllesby Park includes approximately 140 acres of developed park land (including the campground, picnic areas, biking skills course, beach, and Cannon River area) and nearly 95 acres of natural, passive park land with trails and restoration.

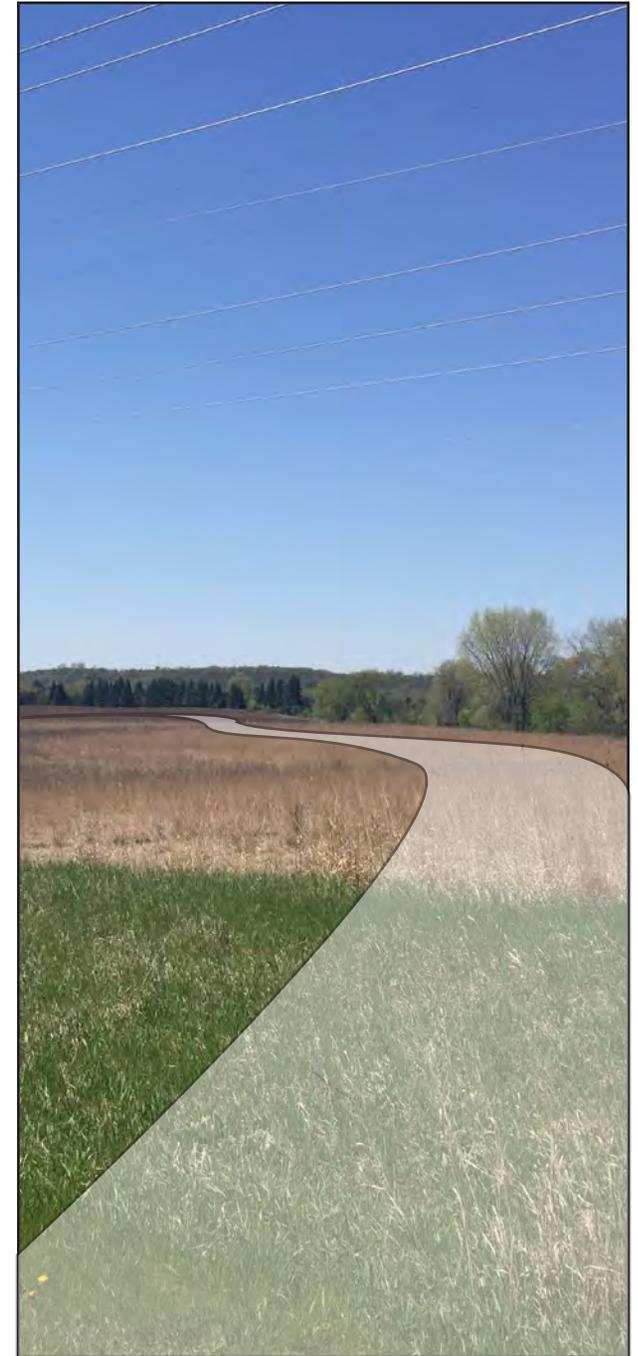
Major improvements include the addition of camping and overnight options, indoor recreation space and basic visitor services, expanded water play opportunities, formal picnic spaces and shelters, and access to the Cannon River. There are several key concept plan moves that facilitate the overall design and consistency of park circulation and character:

- » A new park entrance road from Harry Avenue leads vehicles along Echo Channel and north of the new campground.
- » The Mill Towns State Trail will traverse the park from the northern boundary along 295th Street East, across Echo Channel, and down to the recently constructed trail bridge downstream from the dam.
- » Interpretive signage and art will be located throughout the park, along trails, and at facilities and amenities.
- » Naturalization and landscaping will occur at park edges and as transitions between uses; they will occur throughout the park to improve the overall setting, provide demonstration plantings, and model stewardship opportunities for educational and interpretive purposes.
- » Natural resource improvements will include the conversion of lawn to prairie, naturalization of shoreland, and restoration of natural communities.

Subsequent pages include summary sidebars along with graphics that zoom in on the details of each use area.

## Goodhue County Coordination

Dakota County's East Byllesby Park is joined to Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park by the pedestrian bridge across the Cannon River. A master plan for Goodhue County's park has been developed in collaboration with Dakota County's East Park plan. The program elements within each park have been designed to complement each other and provide recreation for park users at both parks as if they were one combined park. Each County will develop its park separately.



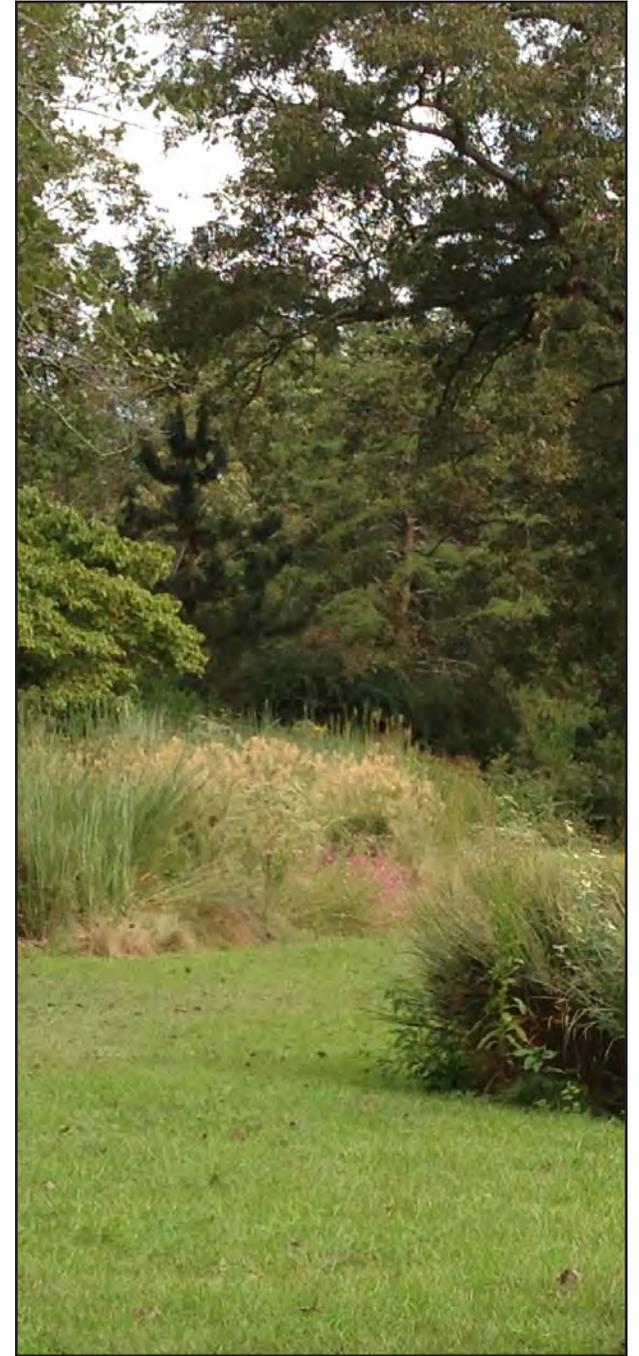
**New Park Entrance Road through Prairie**



Mill Towns State Trail through East Park



Interpretive Signage throughout Park



Naturalization and Landscaping

## SUNSET BEACH SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Splash pad
- » Sand play equipment
- » Beach improvements
- » Volleyball courts
- » Fire pit
- » Picnic lawn
- » Expanded parking lot (20 additional spaces)
- » 3 - 5 Lakeside cottages
- » Beach plaza revitalization

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Swimming Pond

### Natural Resources:

- » Stormwater management around parking lot
- » Shoreline restoration in front of Lakeside cottages
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in the lakeside cottages and the splash pad
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

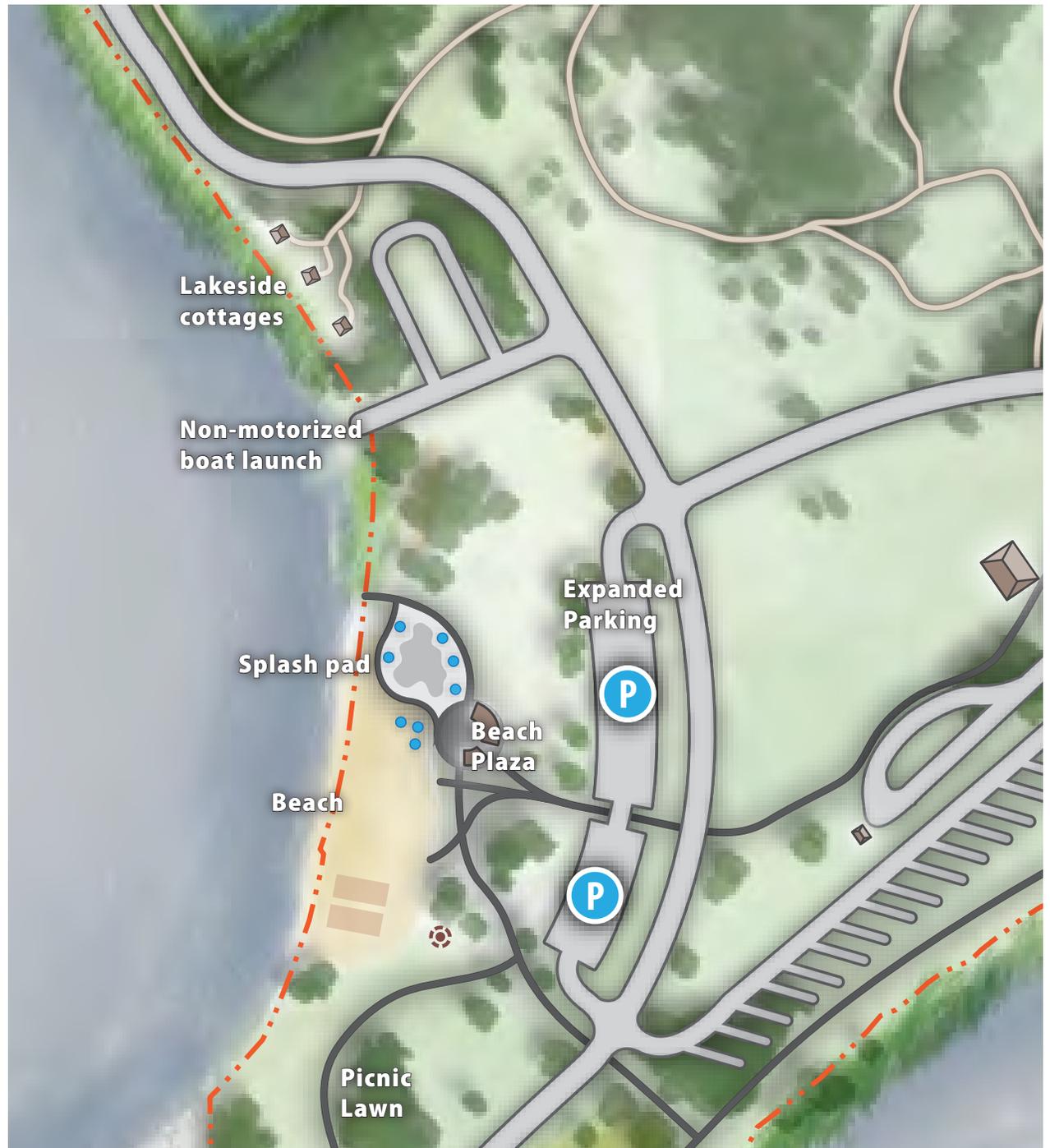


Figure 5.3 | Sunset Beach: 10-year Plan

## Sunset Beach

The existing beach area will be enhanced through the addition of sand volleyball courts, a stone fire pit, and sand/water play equipment, and will include ADA-accessible amenities. The beach will be reduced in size in order to accommodate new water play options. This will include a splash pad on the north side of the existing beach that provides views of the lake, water play jets and fountains, and a plaza area with benches and sun shades. An improved picnic area and play lawn will be defined south of the beach to accommodate small and larger group picnicking.

The existing beach building will be remodeled to include rentals of canoes, kayaks, paddle boards, and bikes. A revitalized beach plaza will include an improved hardscape with informational signage and landscaping around the beach building and parking lots. The parking lot will be expanded to incorporate stormwater treatment and accommodate the additional use from water play options.

North of the beach, three to five lakeside cottages will provide overnight options with a view. The cottages will be designed with porches for sunset views over the lake and soft surface paths that connect to park trails. Each cottage will be approximately 250 square feet with electric lighting and rustic bunk beds. Restrooms and showers to serve the cottages will be at the beach building, the lodge, or the campground.

The existing non-motorized boat launch will be improved with paved road access and better lake entry.

The long-term vision will include a sandy bottom swimming pond built adjacent to the splash pad. The pond will be approximately one-third of an acre in size and about six to eight feet deep in the middle. Zero entry depth around the edges will provide a beach-like experience in a safer and cleaner environment than swimming in the lake. Sun shades and benches will surround the swimming pond.



*Sun shade*



*Sand play*



*Lakeside cottages*



*Lakeside cottages*



*Splash pad with natural play features*



## ECHO POINT SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Paved trail loop
- » Shore fishing area
- » Fishing pier
- » Fishing dock on point
- » 2 sun shelters with picnic tables and fire pits
- » Potential park boundary addition

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Large fire pit and gathering space on point
- » Fishing dock - ADA accessible

### Natural Resources:

- » Savanna restoration
- » Buffers: Establish screening along park boundary to buffer private homes on Echo Point
- » Shoreline restoration
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in picnic shelters and on the fishing pier
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information



Figure 5.4 | Echo Point: 10-year Plan

## Echo Point

The views of the water and bluffs from Echo Point will be a large draw to park users. A paved loop trail will connect bikers and walkers from the fishing dock, fishing pier, sun shelters, parking lot, and houseboat cabins to the Sunset Beach area and the campground.

Echo Point will be more clearly established as a picnic and gathering area through the development of two sun shelters and fire pits. The sun shelters will be open air shelters on concrete pads, one with two picnic tables and the other with six picnic tables, to hold approximately 12 people and 30 people, respectively.

Savanna plant restoration will encompass the central area of the point, and the shoreline will be restored with a 20 to 25-foot wide buffer of native vegetation. A fishing pier and informal shoreline fishing area with boulders for standing on will be accessed from the paved trail on the southeastern side of Echo Point. These trails will also connect visitors to an ADA-accessible fishing dock, and a viewing platform will be located on the southwest side of Echo Point.

A 32-stall paved parking lot will serve the Echo Point sun shelters and fire pits, as well as the houseboat cabins, which will be located along the shore between the Lodge and Echo Point.

In the long-term vision, a park boundary addition is identified on the western point of the peninsula. If acquired, this will be the location of a large group fire pit and gathering area, which will include a paved surface with a stone fire pit with benches surrounding it. This site could be used for outdoor educational and interpretive program for 15-30 people. There are century-old oaks on the property, which make it a valuable natural resource area as well. If acquisition does not occur, the proposed recreation improvements may be included in another area of Echo Point.



*Council Ring / Large Group Fire Pit*



*Small picnic shelter / sun shelter*



*Council Ring / Large Group Fire Pit*



*Shoreline restoration*

## BYLLESBY BAY CAMPGROUND & LODGE SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » 22 sites without water/electric hook up on southeastern loop
- » Improved water and electric sites on the east side of the campground (72 total)
- » 10 boat slips
- » Restroom building
- » Fishing Pier

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Lodge building, parking, and landscape improvements
- » 18 sites without water or electric hook up, 12 new sites with water and electric, and 20 new sites with electric on the northern loop
- » Boat trailer parking lot and dump station
- » 10 more boat slips
- » 3-5 Houseboat cabins

### Natural Resources:

- » Tree planting and native plants throughout campground
- » Buffers: Establish permeable vegetative buffers throughout and around campground
- » Shoreline restoration
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in the lodge, the fishing pier, the campground, and the restroom/shower house
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

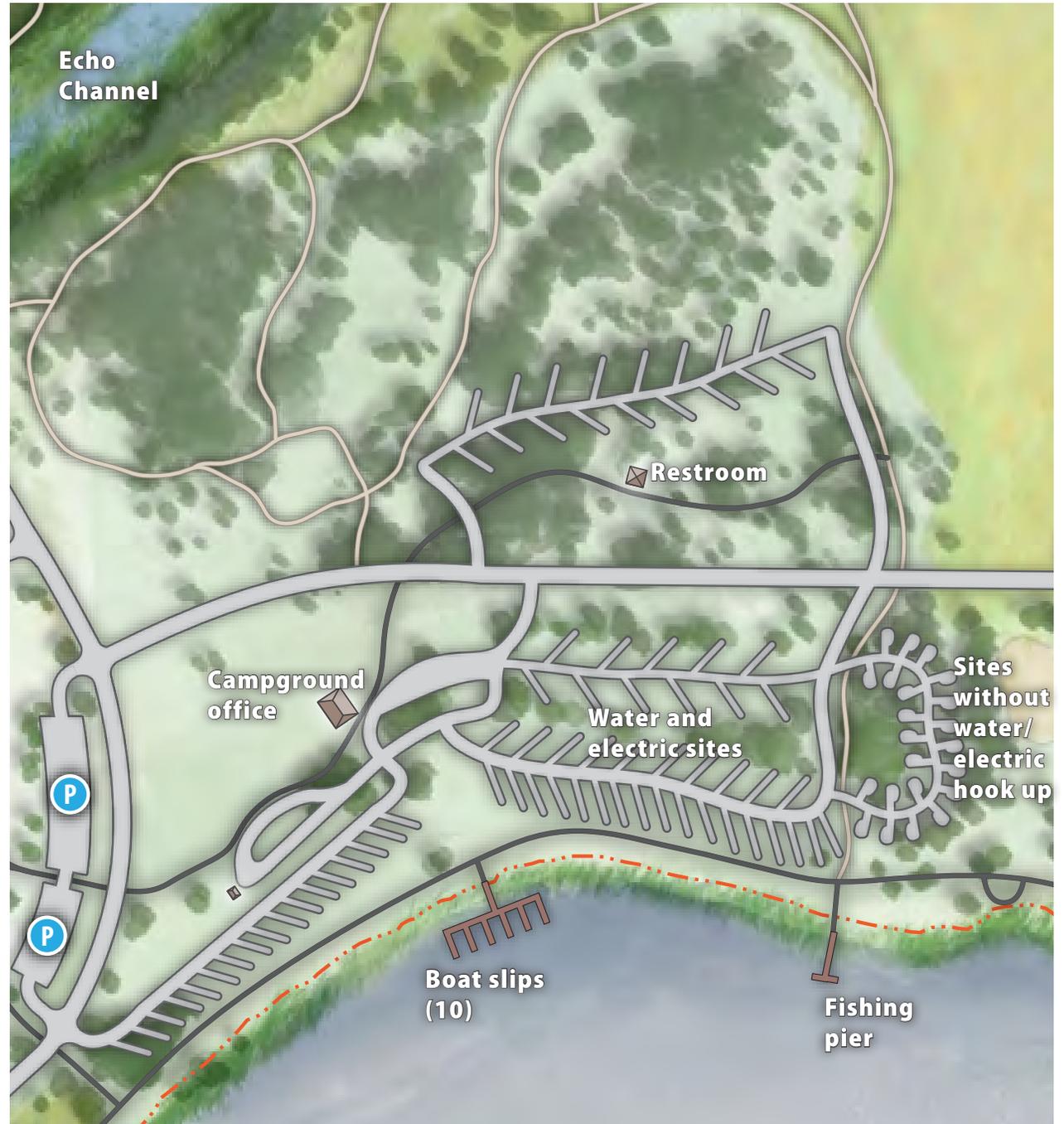


Figure 5.5 | Byllesby Bay Campground & Lodge Area: 10-year Plan

## Byllesby Bay Campground

In order to provide a more pleasant camping experience, the existing camp sites at Lake Byllesby Regional Park will be reorganized and improved with a more spacious and private campground. The 10-year plan campground will include 22 sites without water/electric hook up and 72 water and electric sites. A restroom building with toilets and showers will be located in the center of the campground, accessible by a paved trail. This will also serve as an emergency shelter in case of inclement weather in the near term. Long-term, the lodge building will be the storm shelter.

All camp sites will be similar to state park campsites, with trees surrounding and in-between the sites for shade and privacy, a gravel parking pad, a picnic table, tent pad, and fire pit. To support RVs and pop-up campers, the water and electric sites will have larger parking pads than the sites without water/electric hook up. Some of these sites will be ADA-accessible.

The campground roads will be 24-foot wide paved bituminous surfaces without curb and gutter. An eight-foot wide gravel walking path will run adjacent to the main campground roadway. This will provide a safe route for campers to access the lake shore, fishing pier, lodge, and other paved trails in the park. The trails will be designed to offer a vista as campers near the lake connect to the lakeside trail.

Ten boat slips on the lake will be a short walk from the campsites and will provide space for campers or day boaters to tie up their boats while camping overnight or walking on the park trails.

In the long-term plan, the western lakefront water and electric sites will be replaced by 12 new water and electric sites and 20 new electric sites. An additional 18 sites without water/electric hookup will be constructed to the northwest. A boat trailer parking lot for campers will include space for 10 to 13 boat trailers

available through reservation. A dump station will be conveniently located near the boat trailer parking for RVs exiting the campground.

### Camping Phasing

Camping will be phased to expand types of camping experiences available and to meet demand. The 10-year plan suggests increasing the number of water/electric hook-up sites, improving the tent camping experience, and adding secluded paddle-in sites to the west park. These improvements are expected to meet existing unmet demand. The ten-year plan also introduces camper-cabin type accommodations: lakeside cottages and yurts. Near-term phasing will involve flexible structures such as yurts and mobile “tiny cabins” that can be moved to other Dakota County Parks in the future as more permanent structures, like lakeside cottages are added.

### Lodge

The long-term vision for East Byllesby includes a lodge area, which contains a 6,500-square-foot building that provides camper check-in, restrooms and showers to serve campers, emergency shelter for campers and park users, space for programs and room rental, rental of park equipment, a camp store, and winter warming amenities. The building may be designed with efficient technologies, such as a green roof, solar panels, and geothermal heating.

A great lawn area adjacent to the lodge will provide views of Byllesby Bay and have space for park events and informal play. A small gathering space with stone benches, a fire pit, and an outdoor oven will be a great space for outdoor education programs, winter fires, and summer pizza dinners. There will also be 10 boat slips added adjacent to the 10-year plan slips.

The landscaping around the lodge will include a showcase of native plants, shade trees, and rain gardens.

A parking lot serving the lodge will have space for 60 cars, curb and gutter, and innovative stormwater treatment areas with native landscaping. A pull-up / drop-off area will be in front of the lodge’s main entrance for buses, camper check-in, and for park visitors who may need assistance.

A small number of houseboat cabins will be a short walk along the lake shore toward Echo Point. These cabins will be moored to offer campers a chance to sleep on the lake but not travel on it.



*Water/electric camp site*



*Lodge*



*Houseboat cabin*

## NORTH BYLLESBY BAY PICNIC AREA SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Interpretive playground improvements

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » 75-person Picnic Shelter near the playground
- » 150-person Picnic Shelter with permanent restrooms
- » Parking lot expansion to serve expanded picnic area
- » Quarry Biking Skills Course and parking lot

### Natural Resources:

- » Tree planting and landscaping along with new roads, parking lots, and structures
- » Shoreline restoration
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in the interpretive playground and the picnic shelters
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information



Figure 5.6 | North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area: 10-year Plan

## North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area

The existing playground will be renovated to add elements that interpret the unique natural and historical elements of the park.

Long-term, the existing picnic shelter near the motorized boat launch will be removed and replaced with an improved and expanded picnic shelter to accommodate 150 people. The open-air shelter will include water and permanent restrooms. A second picnic shelter will also be added near the playground. This will be an open-air shelter that will accommodate 75 people. The parking lot will be expanded to accommodate the increased capacity of the picnic shelters.

Also, in a later phase, the entry road to the park will be relocated to the north, and a new road will be extended to the main entrance of the picnic areas and the boat launch. No significant changes to the boat launch are anticipated.

### Quarry Biking Skills Course

The area north of the boat launch and parking areas is a hummocky space that is a former gravel mine. The area contains gravel piles and pits and scrubby vegetation. The long-term vision plan for this site is to grade and compact the soils to create a mountain biking skills course with small hills and jumps. A parking lot for 20 cars will be constructed on the site for direct access to the bike course. The quarry may receive grading and landscape remediation within the ten-year plan to assure public safety and enhance the visual quality of the space.



*Interpretive playground*



*Interpretive playground*



*Mountain biking skills course*



*Picnic Shelter*



*Picnic Shelter*



*Picnic Shelter*

## CANNON RIVER SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Trailhead parking lot with port-a-potties
- » Paved trail to river
- » 2 Yurts
- » Boat launch and shore fishing at the river
- » Canoe portage equipment and signage

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Relocated maintenance building
- » Expanded parking lot, if needed

### Natural Resources:

- » Slope restoration, shoreline erosion control
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in the picnic shelter and the yurts
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information



Figure 5.7 | Cannon River: 10-year Plan

## Cannon River

Providing access to the Cannon River is one of the intents of the master plan.

Access will be improved with a trailhead parking lot for 12 cars. The parking lot will have curb and gutter and innovative stormwater management adjacent to it.

A paved trail will lead from the Mill Towns State Trail down the slope to the edge of the Cannon River. The trail will be constructed to have minimal steep slopes for carrying canoes and kayaks from the parking lot to the river. Retaining walls may be necessary in some locations along the trail.

A formalized, paved kayak and canoe launch will be at the water's edge to facilitate safe entry into the river. Carts will be provided to portage canoes and kayaks from the lake to the river launch. Signage will explain usage of the carts and display a map of the portage route. Space will be provided near the kayak and canoe launch for shoreline fishing and water viewing.

Two yurts will be constructed along the slope, accessible by paved trails. These will provide a rustic, overnight experience in the forest with the sound of the rushing water below.

In the long-term, the existing maintenance building, located near the recently constructed trail bridge, will be moved to a new location to create space for additional parking, accommodations, and river access. An open air picnic shelter for 30 to 40 people and with permanent restrooms will be constructed. To expand use of the Cannon River below the dam, consideration will be given to whether and how features to support whitewater rafting could be constructed.



*Canoe/Kayak Rental*



*Yurts in the woods*



*Canoe/Kayak Portage*



*Canoe/Kayak Launch*

## OAK SAVANNA & ECHO CHANNEL SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Paved trail connecting the East and West Park Units
- » Soft surface trails
- » Echo Channel interpretive nature play loop

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Maintenance building relocation
- » Park entry road

### Natural Resources:

- » Prairie and savanna restoration plantings
- » Buffers: Establish dense buffers along main roadways and private homes
- » Echo Channel wetland restoration
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated in the nature play loop and throughout the trails
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

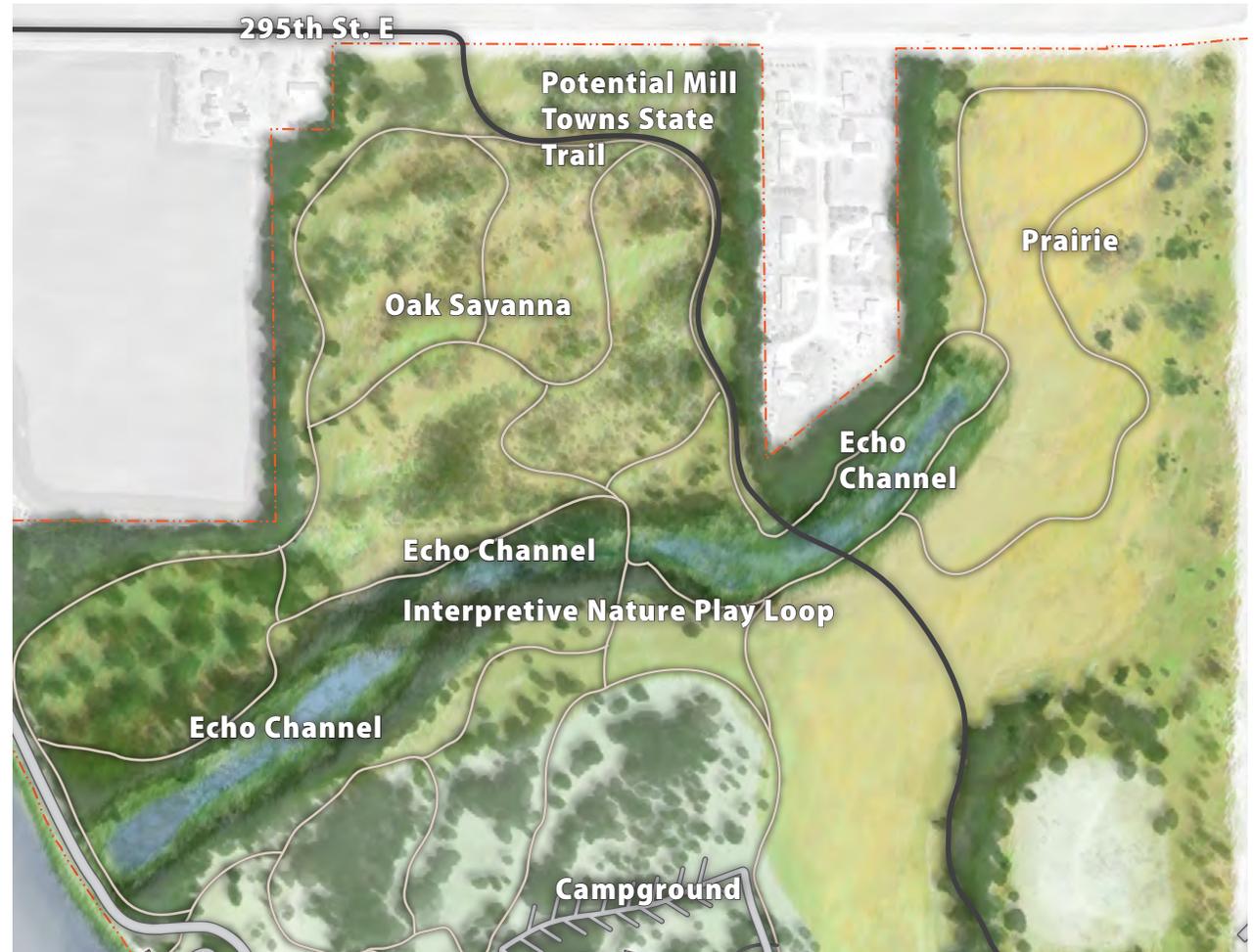


Figure 5.8 | Oak Savanna & Echo Channel: 10-year Plan



Natural Surface Trail



Nature Play Loop

## Echo Channel

The Echo Channel is a naturally wet area that funnels water from Lake Byllesby into natural underground drainage ways. The plan for this area is to restore the wetlands on the surface of the Echo Channel to make it a high functioning drainage way and habitat area. Other improvements include a Nature Play Loop and a parking lot to accommodate 20 cars. The Nature Play Loop will include natural feature play installations along the soft surface trail surrounding Echo Channel.

## Oak Savanna

The Oak Savanna area will be a primary site for natural resources improvements, native landscape plantings, and wetland restorations. The Oak Savanna is a passive area of the park where there is minimal physical development.

The existing natural surface trails in this area of the park will be expanded to include more trail mileage and to incorporate a paved trail connecting the east and west park units. Walking and bicycling will be permitted on the soft surface trails in this section of the park.

## Park Entry

In the long-term park vision, the new park entry road will be sited to take advantage of viewsheds of the lake, along Echo Channel, and of natural features for an aesthetically pleasing drive into the park. The road will include curves and landscaping to slow traffic as it enters the park.

## Maintenance Building

Also in future phases, a new maintenance building will be constructed off of Harry Ave and will be buffered from view of the park's recreation areas. The maintenance building will be more centrally located and removed from the more recreationally valuable Cannon River site that it occupies today. The new facility will



**Figure 5.9 | Greenway between East and West Byllesby / Mill Towns State Trail**

serve as a replacement for the building that currently stands near the Cannon River and will provide storage for park equipment.

## Greenway Between East and West Byllesby / Mill Towns State Trail

The master plan recommends a greenway connection between the Mill Towns State Trail bridge in the East Park unit and the West Park unit. In keeping with all Dakota County Greenways, the connection will include a paved non-motorized multi-use trail designed for ADA accessibility. The Long-term Plan also includes a paved trail linking the Byllesby Bluff Trailhead and the Spring Overlook in the West Park unit. This trail is recommended for recreation within the park and to provide access for park maintenance and natural resource management.

In the future, the trail may become part of the MnDNR Mill Towns State Trail, linking Northfield to the Cannon Valley Trail. The Mill Towns State Trail Master Plan has identified several possible alignments between Northfield and Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Dakota County supports a Mill Towns State Trail alignment on the north side of the Cannon River with opportunities for routing within the park, connecting the east and west park units, and connecting to the City of Randolph.

The master plan shows a generalized alignment. It is anticipated that additional planning and design will occur before the trail will be constructed. As part of the design process, the following are recommended to be considered:

## Within Lake Byllesby Regional Park

- » Minimizing the number of parking lot and road crossings in the east park unit by routing to the east of the Byllesby Bay parking area and staying to the east of the proposed internal park roads (long-term)
- » Maintaining a route to the east side of the park north of Echo Channel. This will allow a larger winter trail network that will not have to cross a paved surface
- » Buffering of the trail adjacent to the Quarry Bike Skills Course
- » Conducting a feasibility assessment for alignment options in the West Park unit between Byllesby Bluff Trailhead and just west of Dixie Avenue in advance of implementation; issues for further consideration include crossing Highway 56 at the Cannon River, constructing a trail under Highway 56 along with potential Chub Creek restoration, coordination with MnDNR and MnDOT, and status of private inholdings within the park
- » Including wayfinding to encourage trail users to be aware of the park and park users and vice versa

- » Coordinating with the Randolph Historical Society and the MnDNR on natural and cultural resource interpretation

**Between the East and West Park Units**

- » Designing the greenway in accordance with the 2010 Dakota County Greenway Guidebook
- » Connecting to the City of Randolph
- » Working with the MnDNR and the Dakota Trails Snowmobile Association to maintain overall snowmobile system connectivity, if the alignment affects existing snowmobile trails
- » Coordination with the MnDNR regarding possible future Mill Towns State Trail designation



Figure 5.10 | Lilac Landing: 10-year Plan

**LILAC LANDING SUMMARY**

**10-year Plan Development:**

- » None

**Long-term Development (10+ years):**

- » Parking and Picnic Area

**Natural Resources:**

- » Shoreline restoration
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

**Lilac Landing**

Lilac Landing will continue to serve as a non-motorized boat launch in the summer and a lake access point during portions of the winter.

In the long-term, Lilac Landing will be improved to be a more inviting part of the park through landscaping, signage, and maintenance. It is intended that the site continue to be the location of a non-motorized boat launch and that the parking remain unpaved.

# West Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan

## Long-term Plan

Dakota County

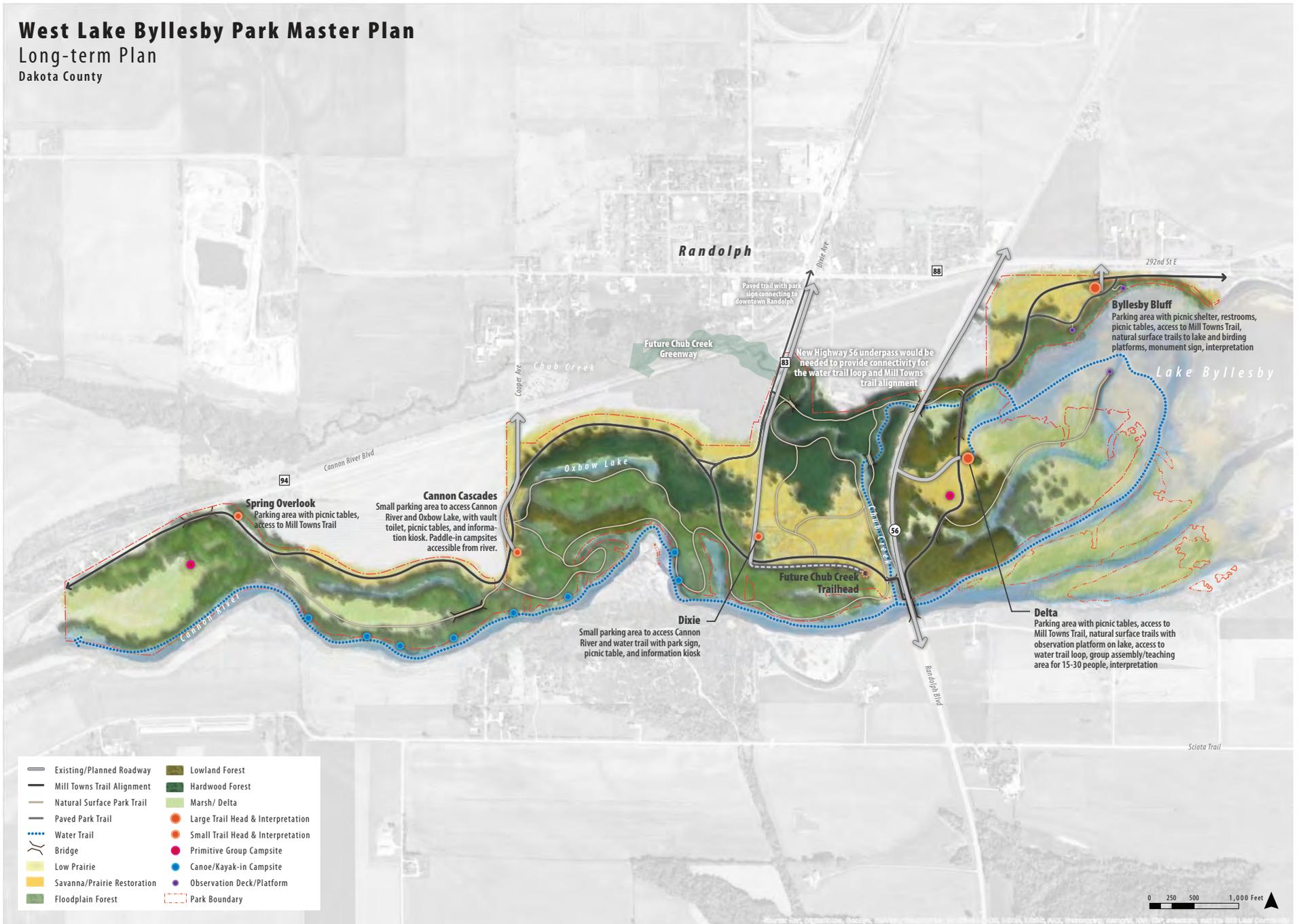


Figure 5.11 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park West Master Plan: Long-term Plan

**West Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan**  
 10-year Plan  
 Dakota County

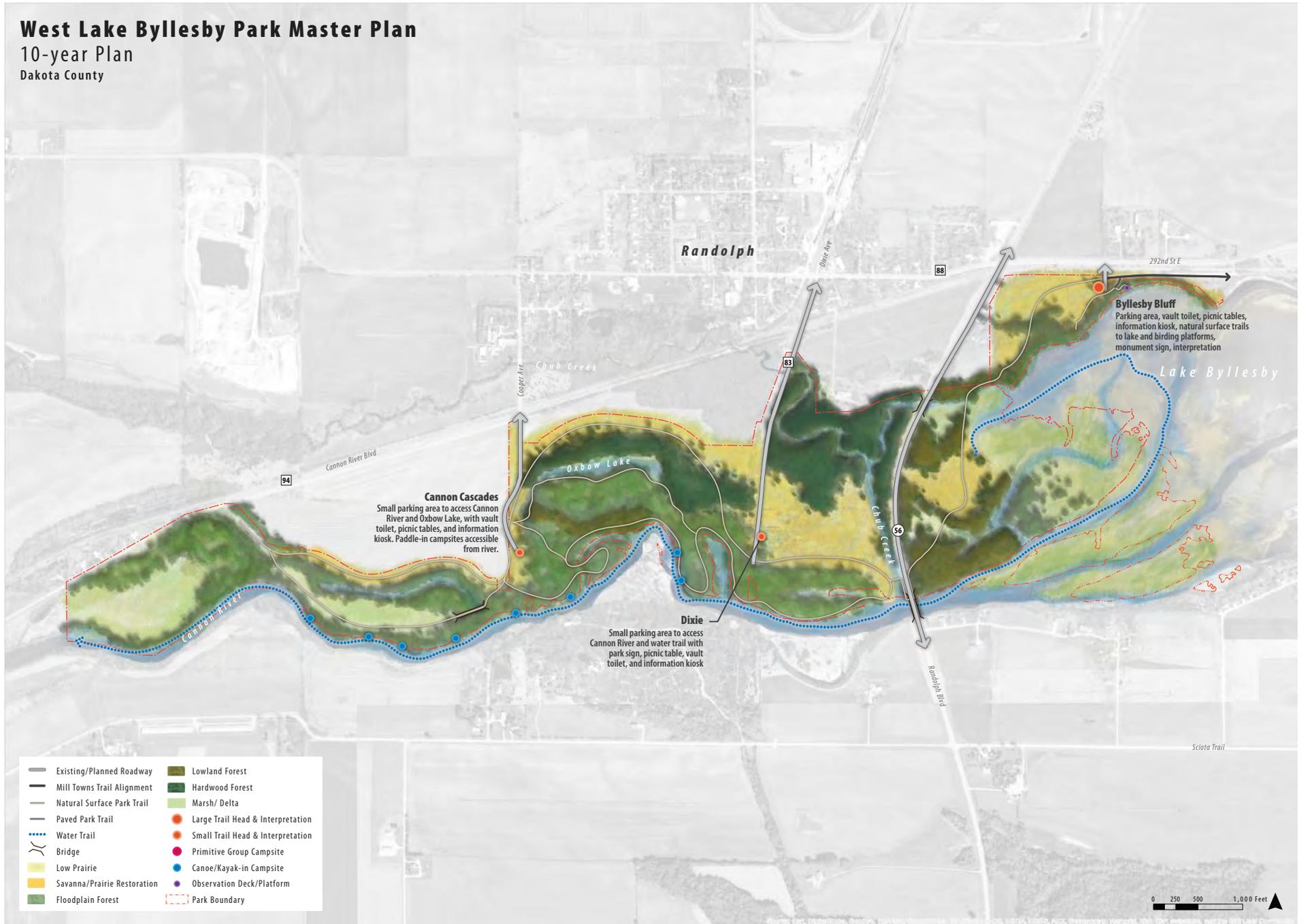


Figure 5.12 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park West Master Plan: 10-year Plan

## WEST PARK PLAN

The west side of Lake Byllesby Regional Park is an undeveloped, floodplain landscape surrounded by agricultural fields and rural residential properties. It is physically connected to the east side of the park only by water. Because the west park lacks basic signage and parking, many are unaware that it is public park land.

It is intended that West Byllesby retain its natural resource focus. New entry signage, trailheads, and soft surface trails will be constructed to facilitate visitors' access to the park. In addition to the physical improvements, it will be necessary to build awareness of this park land through online marketing and communication methods in the east park.

### Water Trail

One big idea in the West Park concept plan is a water trail, which would designate a route for non-motorized watercraft to paddle a loop through the Delta, Cannon River, and Chub Creek. When complete, the loop trail would be approximately two miles long and have access points at the Delta Trailhead and the Future Chub Creek Trailhead. Long-term, an underpass at Hwy 56 would need to be established to restore the creek to its original channel and allow for non-motorized boats and a paved trail. This water trail would provide park users with a new way to explore the area and facilitate access to a variety of ecosystem types. Outdoor education could use the water trail as an organizing tool for programs and tours. In the short term, the water trail can be explored without the Chub Creek/Hwy 56 underpass connection that will realize the long-term concept's vision for a loop.

### Long-term Vision

- » The park focuses on passive recreation in a natural setting.
- » Byllesby Bluff and Delta trailheads serve as primary access and interpretation areas, while Cannon Cascades, Dixie, Chub Creek, and Spring Overlook trailheads serve as secondary accesses.
- » Byllesby Bluff bird platforms enhance birder access and experience.
- » Delta natural surface trails to observation tower support exploration of the delta.
- » Cannon Cascades trailhead provides access to Cannon River and Oxbow Lake.
- » Dixie, and later Chub Creek trailheads provide river access.
- » Canoe/kayak-in campsites can be accessed from Cannon River.
- » Winter uses include cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- » A water trail loop is made possible with construction of a new underpass at Highway 56.
- » Natural resource management focuses on maintaining and enhancing current biotic communities, addressing current issues, and restoring inholdings as property is acquired.
- » The proposed alignment of the Mill Towns Trail runs through park.
- » A paved trail along County Road 83 provides access from Randolph/Randolph connection to the Mill Towns Trail.
- » Each trailhead provides access to the Mill Towns Trail.

## **BYLLESBY BLUFF & DELTA SUMMARY**

### **10-year Plan Development:**

- » Byllesby Bluff gravel parking lot, observation deck, interpretative signage related to the delta/bird habitat, picnic table, vault toilet, kiosk

### **Long-term Development (10+ years):**

- » Delta trailhead with gravel parking lot, boardwalk trails, observation deck and interpretation signage
- » Byllesby Bluff picnic shelter and restrooms with paved parking area
- » Outdoor classroom
- » Soft surface trails and non-motorized boating connection
- » Boardwalk and mud flats overlook from the Delta trailhead
- » Paved park trail connecting East and West Byllesby, potential Mill Towns State Trail alignment
- » Paved trail linking use areas
- » Primitive group campsite

### **Natural Resources:**

- » Slope restoration, shoreline erosion control
- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### **Interpretation:**

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated at the trailheads and on the observation platforms
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

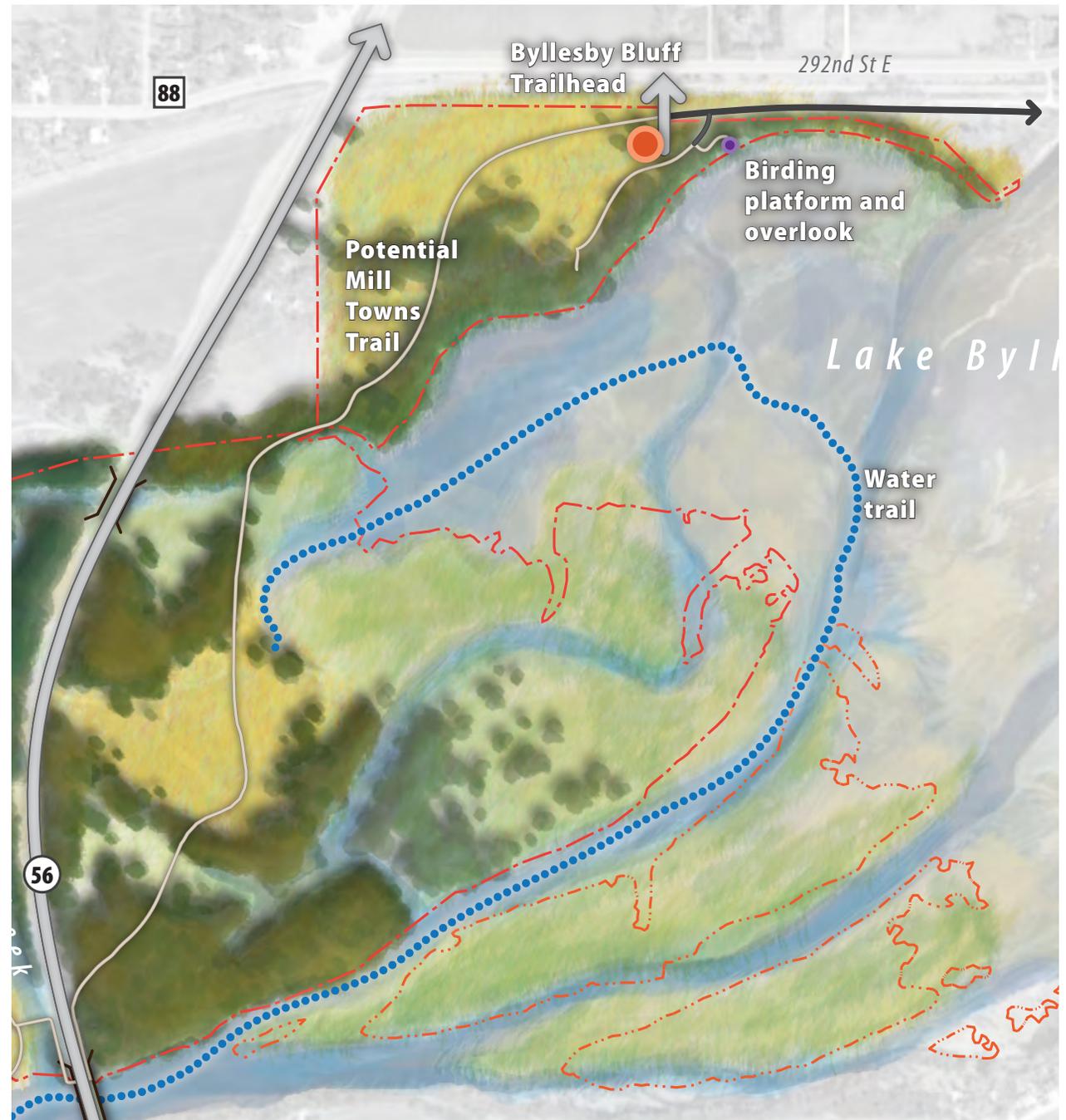


Figure 5.13 | Byllesby Bluff & Delta: 10-year Plan

## Byllesby Bluff Trailhead

One of the primary public access points for the west part of Lake Byllesby Regional Park will be the Byllesby Bluff Trailhead. The trailhead will be constructed at the location of what is today a small gravel vehicle turnaround.

Near-term (10-year) improvements are geared to basic access: park signage, a small gravel parking area, picnic table, vault toilet, kiosk, and a bird blind/lake observation platform with interpretation.

The long-term vision for the trailhead includes a small picnic shelter building with permanent restrooms to accommodate approximately 30-40 people, a paved parking lot for about 20 cars, and new soft surface trails leading to accessible bird blinds.



*Artistic, Corten steel bird blinds*



*Boardwalk and observation platform*

## Delta Trailhead

Development of the Delta Trailhead is part of the long-term vision for the park. The Delta Trailhead will be constructed on the site of a former farmstead. The trailhead features will include a paved parking lot for 20 cars, a boardwalk, observation deck, and interpretation signage. It also will include an informal, rustic outdoor classroom with benches, a roof structure, and crushed limestone surface. A primitive group campsite will be available.

The Delta site will be a central programming space for the west park. The outdoor classroom, access to the water, and physical facilities will provide Dakota County and partner organizations with the needed flexibility to host small events, classes, and tours.



*Elevated bird blind with bridge walkway*



*Outdoor classroom*

## DIXIE & CHUB CREEK SUMMARY

### 10-year Plan Development:

- » Park sign
- » Gravel parking lot at Dixie trailhead with picnic table and kiosk
- » Natural surface riverfront trail
- » Canoe access

### Long-term Development (10+ years):

- » Chub Creek trailhead
- » Paved park trail, potential Mill Towns State Trail alignment

### Natural Resources:

- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### Interpretation:

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated at the trailheads
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

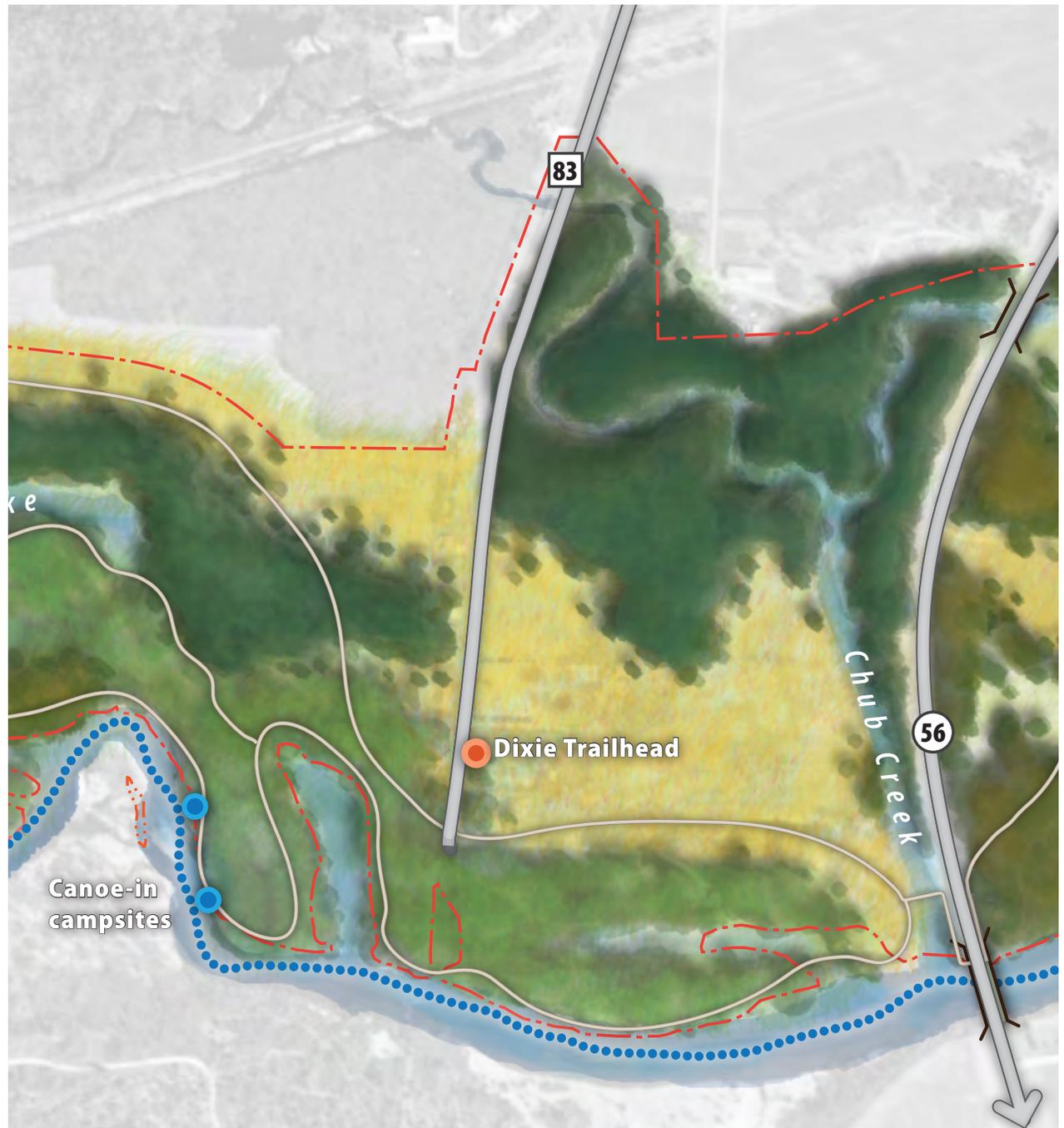


Figure 5.14 | Dixie & Chub Creek: 10-year Plan

## Dixie Trailhead & Chub Creek Trailhead

The Dixie and Chub Creek trailheads will facilitate access to the river hiking and paddling trails. The Dixie Trailhead will be a rustic site with a 10-car gravel parking lot, park sign, and access to the river along a natural surface trail. The Dixie Trailhead will be constructed in the near term with picnic tables, with the Chub Creek Trailhead as a long-term extension getting people to the popular fishing area at the confluence of Chub Creek and the Cannon River.



*Canoe in campsite*



*Rustic trailhead parking and signage*



*Rustic trailhead parking and signage*



*Rustic trailhead parking and signage*



Figure 5.15 | Cannon Cascades & Spring Overlook: 10-year Plan



Canoe in campsites



Canoe in campsites

## **CANNON CASCADES & SPRING OVERLOOK SUMMARY**

### **10-year Plan Development:**

- » Rustic trailhead with gravel parking lot, picnic table, kiosk, and vault toilet
- » Park sign and trail access
- » Paddle-in or hike-in campsites

### **Long-term Development (10+ years):**

- » Spring Overlook
- » Rustic group campsite
- » Paved park trail, potential Mill Towns State Trail alignment

### **Natural Resources:**

- » Refer to pages 82-89 for more information

### **Interpretation:**

- » Interpretive elements will be incorporated at the trailheads
- » Refer to pages 90-96 for more information

### **Cannon Cascades & Spring Overlook**

The Cannon Cascades Trailhead will include a small gravel parking lot for about 10 cars to provide access to Oxbow Lake and the Cannon River, a picnic table, and a vault toilet. Signage will provide trail information. Soft surface trails will connect to the trailhead, as well as the future Mill Towns Trail. The Spring Overlook will be a similar rustic trailhead with access to the Mill Towns Trail and a primitive group campsite. Canoe and kayak campsites can be accessed from the river or from soft surface trails.

## PARKWIDE FOCUS AREAS

### Winter Use

Today winter use at Lake Byllesby Regional Park is limited to dog sledding and skjoring on the Oak Savanna trails and ice fishing on the lake. The long-term vision identifies future facilities that would increase winter usage, including the Lodge building with indoor programming space, a fire place, and rental of outdoor equipment such as snowshoes; yurts; rentable ice houses for winter camping/fishing on the lake; and promotion of outdoor activities such as skjoring, ice fishing, ice surfing, winter walking, and fat tire biking. The future Mill Towns State Trail will be paved and plowed for winter walking in both the East and West Parks. The location of the non-motorized boat launch is maintained in its current location, in part, because of the winter access it provides.

It is anticipated that most of the winter activities will occur in the East Park, however parking areas in the West Unit will be plowed during the winter months to provide access for snowshoeing and winter walking.

The East Park's phasing was designed to allow the natural surface trails around Echo Channel and, to the north, to continue to be used for dog sledding. The potential Mill Towns Trail alignment shown in the master plan will affect the location of existing and future trails in the north area of the East Park. Once the trail has been extended through the park and the new entrance road is constructed, the natural surface trails for winter dog sledding will need to be reevaluated, as routing will need to avoid the crossing of paved surfaces and turn radii will need to be reworked.



*Dogsledding*



*Fat tire biking*



*Ice surfing*



*Snowshoeing*



*Skjoring*



*Ice fishing*

## Motorized Boating (Mn DNR Guidelines)

The state's Department of Natural Resources (Mn DNR) manages surface water usage and motorized boating in Minnesota. Their recommendation is to have one "public motorized watercraft" per 20 acres of surface water, which equates to the number of parking places at public launching facilities (note that a separate calculation exists for private uses). According to state information, Lake Byllesby has a surface area of 1,368 acres, which equates to a maximum of 68 public parking spaces in total for the boat launches across the lake.

To ensure the safety of motorized and non-motorized lake users, this master plan recommends that boat trailers be required to park on designated, paved surfaces. Coordination between Dakota County and Goodhue County will be needed to ensure that the maximum number of boat trailer spots available is maintained. No changes to the existing distribution of boat parking are proposed. The following is the distribution of boat trailer parking:

- » 27 spots at Dakota County Byllesby Bay Boat Launch
- » 10 to 13 spots at Dakota County Campground Parking
- » 22 spots at Goodhue County Byllesby Bay Boat Launch
- » 5 spots at Goodhue County Upper Lake Boat Launch (not shown on map)

There is public concern about increased lake use and maintaining safety to avoid conflicts of motorized boats, swimmers, canoes/kayaks, and paddle boards.



Figure 5.16 | Designated Boat Trailer Parking Areas

# NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP PLAN

The Lake Byllesby Regional Park Natural Resources Master Plan (NRMP) that was developed in tandem with this development master plan includes detailed descriptions of natural resources existing conditions, desired improvements, and action items. Brief summaries of the planned natural resource improvements at the East Park and the West Park are included on the following pages.

## Natural Resources Planning and Public Value

Preservation of and connection to the natural world is of increasing importance in our modern age. For centuries, people have looked to the wild and untamed frontier for adventure or to escape the masses and start anew. The American landscape has had profound effects on people, some of whom became famous conservationists and champions of the environment. Our national parks system was born out of this regard, and a myriad of state and county park systems followed. As economic development progressed and cities grew, so too did people's desire for access to open space and outdoor recreation. Today, the need for solitude, inspiration, adventure, and peace are just a few reasons why people visit parks and natural areas. As Sigurd Olson from the Wilderness Society put it, "wilderness to the people of America is a spiritual necessity, an antidote to the high pressure of modern life, a means of regaining serenity and equilibrium."

The vast majority of respondents to a questionnaire conducted during the master planning process shared a desire for improved lake water quality and aquatic recreation. There was also strong support for invasive species management and habitat restoration. Improvements in these areas will improve Lake Byllesby

Regional Park's ability to function ecologically as well as provide a restorative natural area for park users.

## Long-term Park Management Goals

Over arching management goals for Lake Byllesby Park natural resources management are listed below.

### *Plant Communities*

- » Focus on invasive species control, especially in high quality areas.
- » Perpetually maintain restored areas by sufficiently installing native seed and using appropriate invasive species management techniques.
- » Identify and prioritize high quality areas where use and management is focused on natural resource integrity and higher connectivity.
- » Monitor progress and facilitate adaptive management based on best management practices and scientific methods.

### *Surface Water and Groundwater*

- » Focus on management of aquatic invasive species within wetlands and other water features, especially in areas with the potential to spread invasion to adjacent water bodies.
- » Utilize stormwater best management practices to improve water management and address listed impairments.
- » Develop educational signage and programming to inform visitors of invasive species, water protection efforts, and best management practices.

### *Wildlife*

- » Restore and maintain vegetative communities to attract insects and wildlife associated with native plant communities.
- » Conduct surveys to monitor indicator species and inform adaptive management.
- » Consider strategies to mitigate impact of over-abundant wildlife to protect native vegetation and wildlife (i.e., ex-closures, removal).

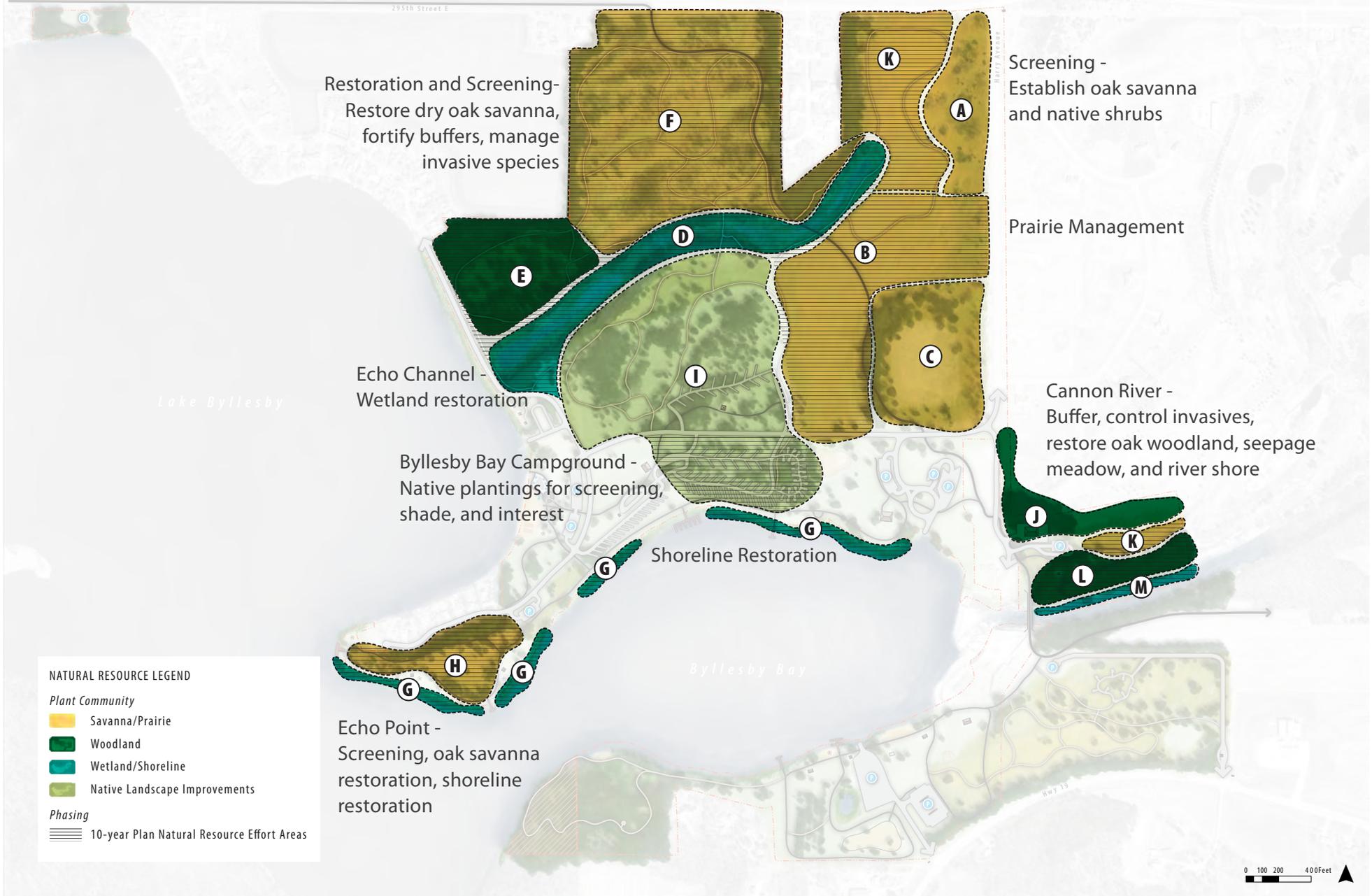
## East Park Recommendations

The following recommendations are displayed on the map on page 83.

- A. Establish oak savanna and shrub species within existing restored prairie to provide screening from roadway, homes, and power lines.
- B. Manage existing prairie. Convert the 24-acre agricultural area that is currently farmed to native dry prairie (provides \$2,500 annual revenue in the meantime). Plant specimen bur oaks at key focal locations. Consider subtle landform changes to improve habitat diversity and some screening.
- C. Invasive species management. Establish patches of native dry prairie mixed with savanna tree species. Establish dense buffer along main roadways.
- D. Restore wetland with diverse wet meadow and emergent plant communities. Control invasive species such as reed canary grass.
- E. Restore woodland habitat. Remove and manage invasive species such as buckthorn and Amur maple.
- F. Dry savanna oak savanna restoration. Manage invasive species and reestablish native vegetation. Create and fortify buffers along private homes and roadway.
- G. Shoreline restoration. Reshape bank, install habitat logs along the lake edge, and manage vegetation.
- H. Prairie restoration, including specimen oak trees. Manage invasive species. Fortify buffers adjacent to homes as needed.
- I. Incorporate natural plantings throughout campground to provide screening and create focal points as well as approachable/permeable buffers to draw people into the buffer.
- J. Remove Siberian elm and reestablish a natural dense buffer.
- K. Tall grass prairie management. Control invasive Siberian elm.
- L. Oak woodland and seepage meadow restoration
- M. River shore restoration

Figure 5.17 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park East: Natural Resources

**East Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan**  
Natural Resources



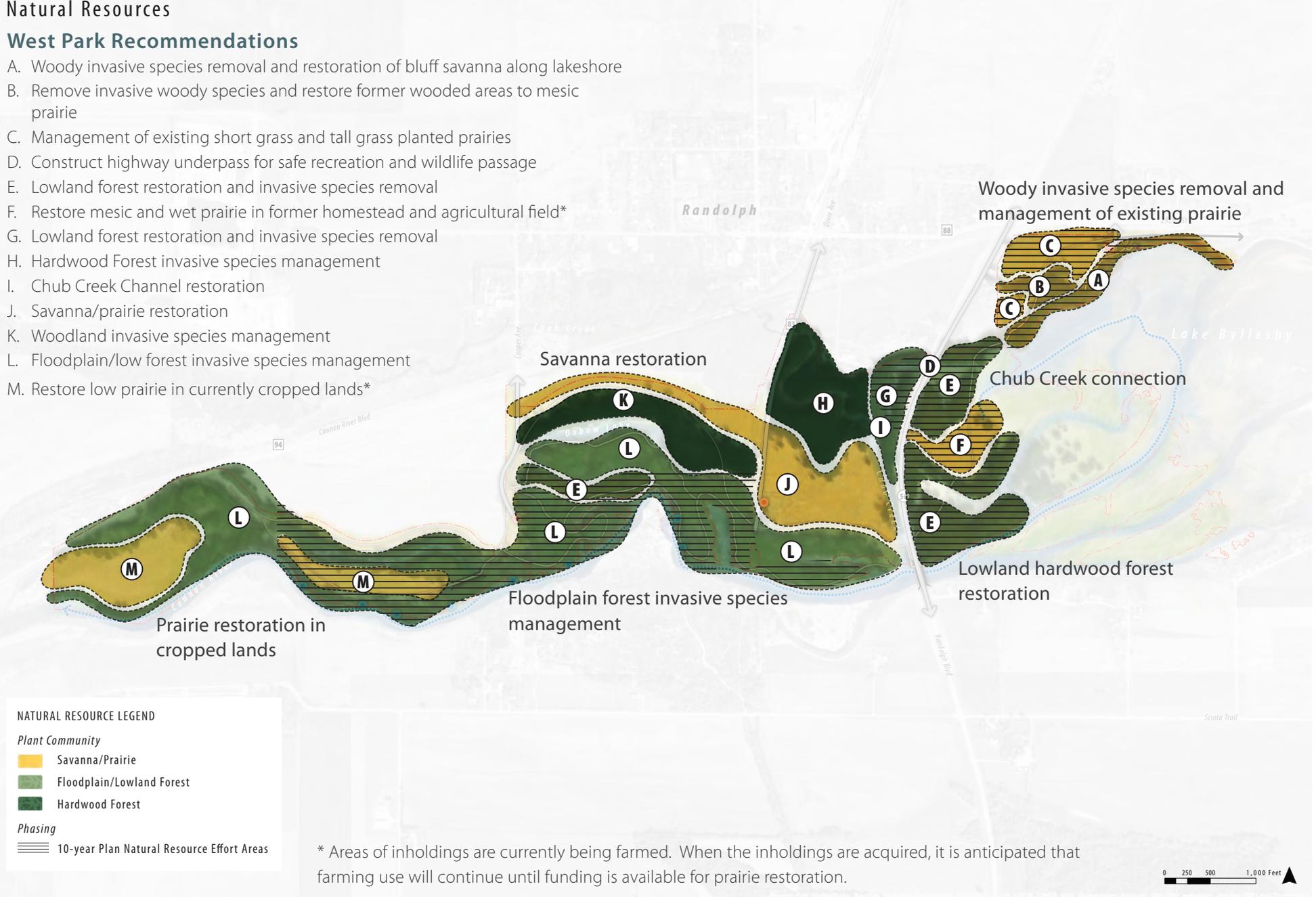
# West Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan

## Natural Resources

### West Park Recommendations

- A. Woody invasive species removal and restoration of bluff savanna along lakeshore
- B. Remove invasive woody species and restore former wooded areas to mesic prairie
- C. Management of existing short grass and tall grass planted prairies
- D. Construct highway underpass for safe recreation and wildlife passage
- E. Lowland forest restoration and invasive species removal
- F. Restore mesic and wet prairie in former homestead and agricultural field\*
- G. Lowland forest restoration and invasive species removal
- H. Hardwood Forest invasive species management
- I. Chub Creek Channel restoration
- J. Savanna/prairie restoration
- K. Woodland invasive species management
- L. Floodplain/low forest invasive species management
- M. Restore low prairie in currently cropped lands\*

Figure 5.18 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park West: Natural Resources



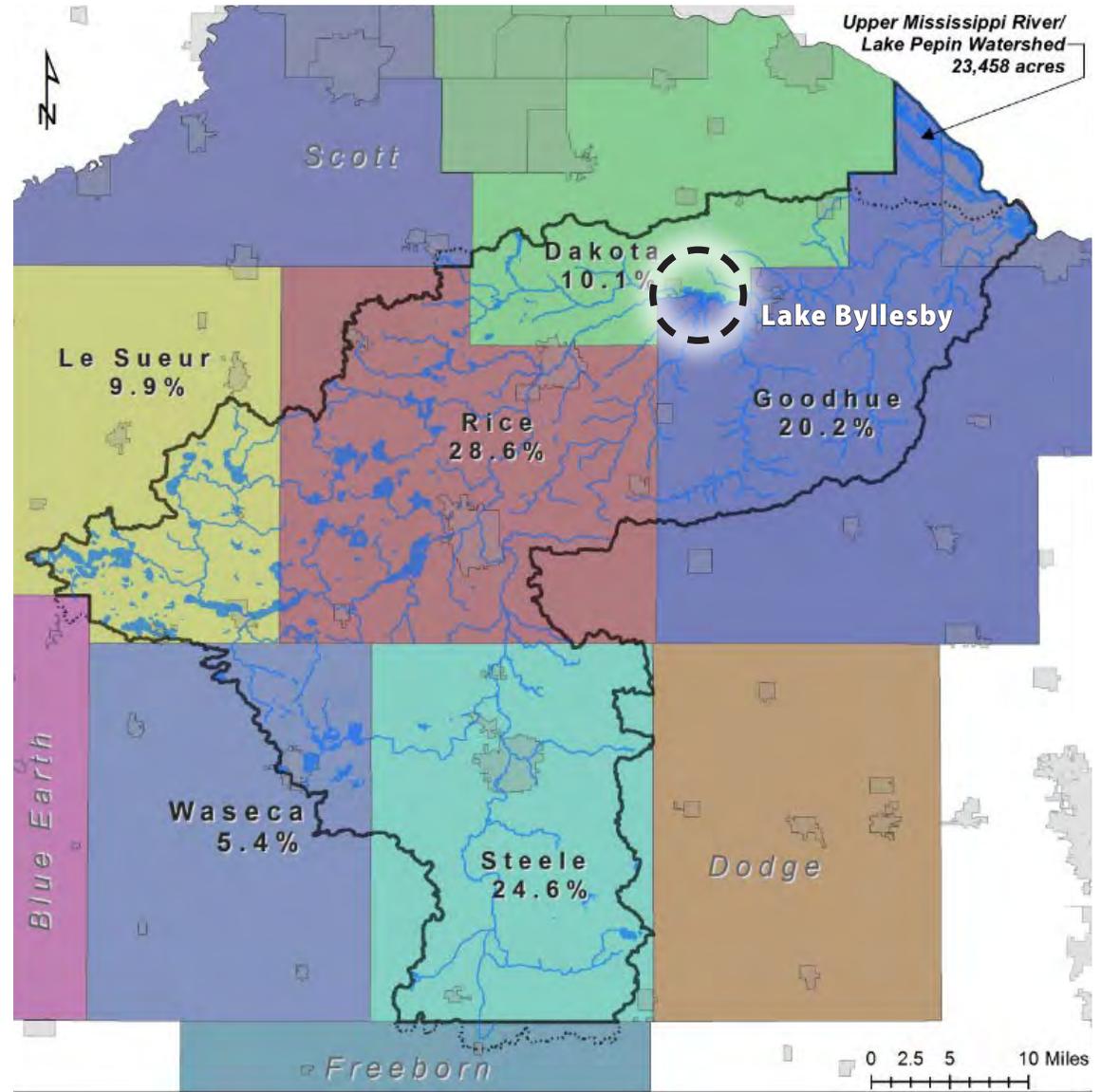
## Water Quality and Sedimentation

An ongoing issue for the park and local residents is the water quality and sedimentation of Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River. Community concern was expressed repeatedly during the public engagement process for this Plan. These are watershed scale issues that may require state financial assistance.

The counties, local planning bodies, and watershed districts are currently working on the One Watershed One Plan for the Cannon River Watershed to meet state requirements. The watershed encompasses more than 900,000 acres across nine counties. Though the Cannon River and Lake Byllesby water quality and sedimentation are largely related to upstream land use, Dakota County is a participating partner in the One Watershed One Plan planning process and has an interest in improved water quality and sediment reduction in the reservoir. Sedimentation in Lake Byllesby's East Bay, while unlikely to occur in the near future, is of particular interest to Dakota County, as it could affect dam operations and recreation (boating, swimming, fishing, and visual quality). Excess sediment is currently a factor in the west portion of the reservoir, forming a delta that functions as an Important Birding Area where the Cannon River runs into Lake Byllesby. The mud flats exposed by seasonal reservoir draw downs are heavily used by migrating waterfowl and shorebirds.

The development and implementation of a Natural Resource Management Plan seeks to reduce the park's impact on the lake and river. Dakota County Parks maintain as a goal that water leaving their parks is as good or of better quality than when it entered. To ensure this, BMPs including pervious or permeable pavement and pavers, rain gardens, cisterns, bioswales, treatment trains, iron enhanced sand filters, water reuse systems, and buffer plantings will be assessed for inclusion in the park as projects are undertaken. It is recommended that educational and interpretive materials inform park users about the effects of stormwater and how BMPs are utilized within the park to improve water quality.

Figure 5.19 | Cannon River One Watershed One Plan Planning Area



## Examples of Best Management Practices to Improve Water Quality



*Shoreline Buffer Planting*



*Stormwater Treatment Train*



*Bioswale*



*Stormwater Basin*

## PARK SETTING

The master plan recommends that sense of setting and aesthetics are considered in park development design and natural resource management. The views from the roads and trails and developed areas will affect park users' feelings and perceptions of the park. Improvements to the setting through framing iconic views, buffering views to and from adjacent residential areas, creating unique park areas with plantings and landform, and enhancing the park with a more natural signature are envisioned.

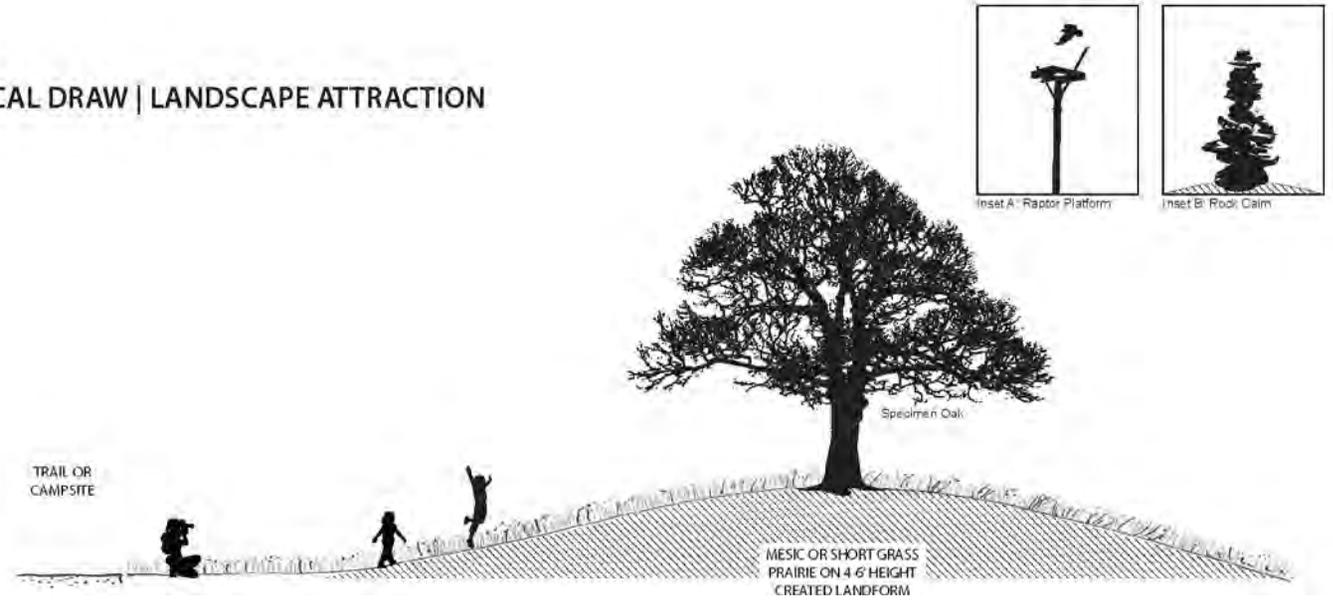
### Buffers

Several landscape buffer conditions and recommendations have been identified for the various situations within the park. The following pages include diagrams that describe what the buffers will look like.

### Landscape Attraction

The landscape attraction buffer uses landform as well as vegetation (or other landscape features) to create focal points that attract interest. One way this can be done is to transplant a large, unique specimen tree on top of a short berm a few dozen yards away from a trail or campsite. The tree will provide visual interest from afar and will draw visitors to it, across the prairie, for further exploration. Other elements that could be used as a focal draw include a raptor platform, rock cairn, art installation, large boulder, or even a downed tree.

### FOCAL DRAW | LANDSCAPE ATTRACTION



### Dense Buffer

The dense buffer provides an opaque visual barrier between the park and adjacent land uses such as residential neighborhoods and roads or highways. A variety of planting types are used in succession to provide a smooth height transition between a short prairie area and tall evergreen buffer trees that are either existing prior to park development or planted for this purpose.

### DENSE BUFFER

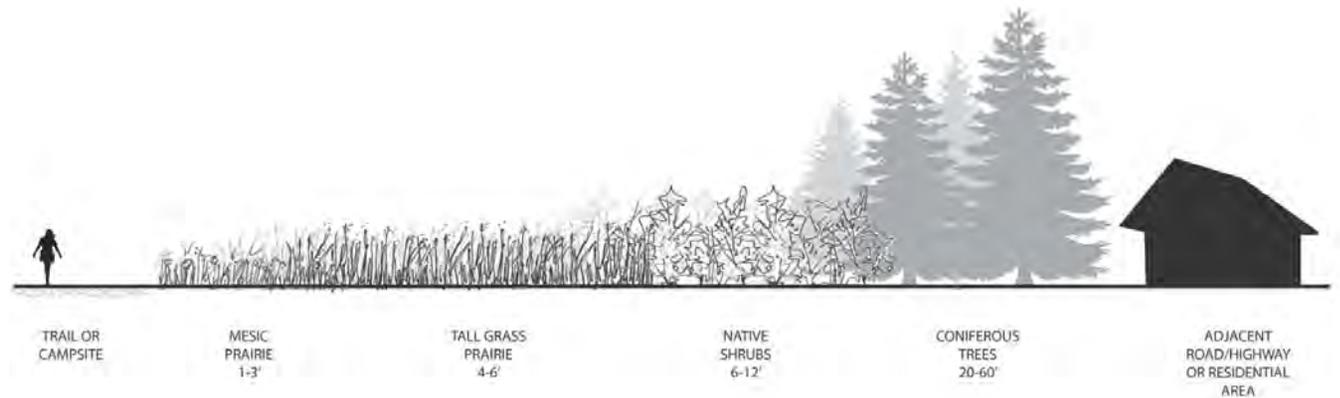


Figure 5.20 | Suggested Landscape Buffers

## FORMAL BUFFER



## Formal Buffers

The formal buffer provides a spatial barrier between active park programs using naturalized prairie restoration areas interspersed with trees. The buffer area is bordered by mowed turf grass, which reduces the number of insects in human-occupied areas and reduces the incidence of prairie plants creeping into maintained park areas. It also provides a psychological separation of park programs for campers and hikers. A physical edging material delineates the break between mowed and naturalized areas which helps ensure maintenance of a consistent edge.

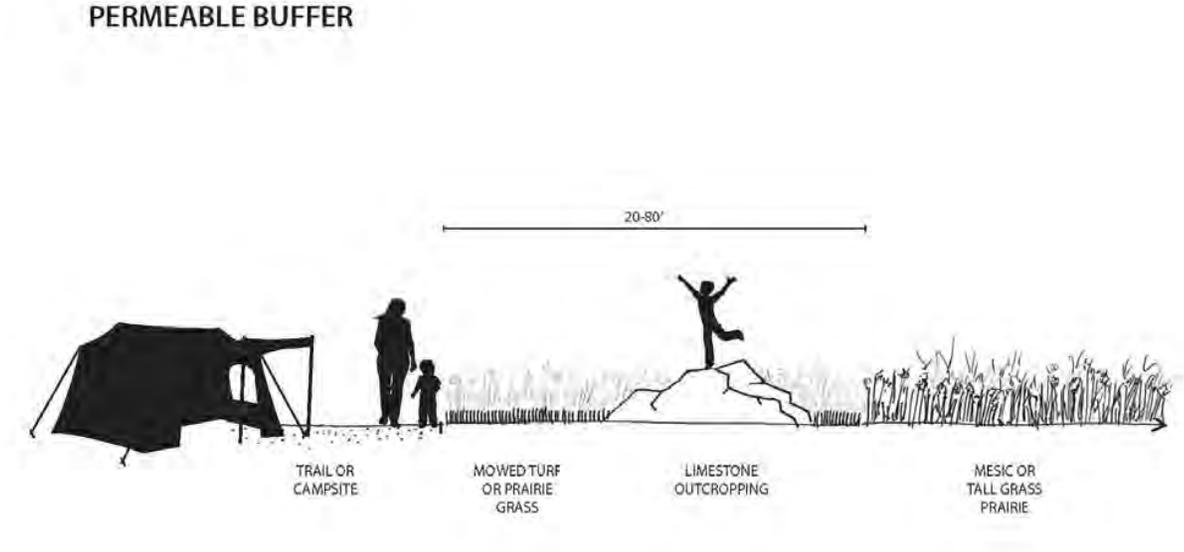
## FORMAL BUFFER | LANDFORM



Figure 5.21 | Suggested Landscape Buffers

### ***Permeable Buffers***

The permeable buffer provides specific opportunities for park visitors to enter the prairie setting, without stepping off mowed/maintained areas that are easily accessible. Special points of interest (such as rock outcroppings or downed tree trunks) should be framed or placed within this landscape to draw visitors' attention.



***Figure 5.22 | Suggested Landscape Buffers***



Interactive interpretation



Binoculars and outdoor book



Integrated element



Tactile map



On-site audio



Folded sign



Interactive graphic panel



Augmented reality app

## INTERPRETATION PLAN

Interpretation is more than a sign; it is an experience. More than information, it seeks to connect visitors to a place or a resource. Interpretation answers the questions: “So what?” and “Why should I care?”

In *Interpreting Our Heritage*, Freeman Tilden, the grandfather of the interpretation profession, describes interpretation as “an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.” The National Association for Interpretation (NAI) defines interpretation as “a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource.”

People visit Lake Byllesby Regional Park for a variety of reasons: scenic beauty, recreational opportunities, and the chance to relax and unwind. Through interpretation, a connection is forged to a place, a story, or a resource. Interpretation adds depth to an already enjoyable park experience.

Layers of interpretation connect people to the site and each other in a variety of ways. Exploring the park, visitors discover stories hidden in plain view or in the reservoir’s depths. Events and programs bring people with shared interests together. Guided and self-guided experiences provide opportunities to keep the park experience fresh for repeat visitors and to encourage others to come back. An engaging, meaningful, and personal park experience allows visitors to formulate their own answers for why they care about this particular place.

For the park and community, interpretation is an integral part of fostering park stewardship—from awareness to action. Interpretation creates opportunities for resource awareness, encouraging interest, developing understanding, and, finally, providing a call to action.

Interpretation encourages positive park experiences and can discourage negative ones. It forges connections and provides opportunities for visitors to learn about the world around them. It may not be the initial draw to the park, but it can be the reason that people return again and again.

### Outdoor Education

Dakota County Parks’ outdoor education program interprets the natural, recreational, and cultural resources of the parks system and broader community through engaging, relevant, and equitable experiences, both guided and self-guided, to inspire future generations and create stewards of our parks and resources.

This interpretation plan describes key resources, whether they are natural, recreational, or cultural, identifies key locations, and suggests methods to interpret these resources for park visitors. The County’s outdoor education program will bring resources to life through various methods including guided opportunities, such as programming and events, and self-guided experiences. The methods and representative examples are included for inspiration; but, as park development is undertaken, the interpretation may evolve. Potential partners for Dakota County as it develops its outdoor education programming include Randolph and Cannon Falls Schools, Scouting Groups, the Audubon Society, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists, Cannon River Watershed, and others.

### Organizing the Interpretive Experience

Interpretation helps to organize the visitor experience by identifying a theme and supporting subthemes. A theme is the central, or key, message of all interpretation at a site. It may or may not appear in writing, exhibits, and programming, but all interpretive efforts should fall within the scope of the interpretive theme. A theme provides organizational structure and clarity to the main message that visitors encounter when they visit the park. After their experience, visitors should be able to summarize the main point of interpretation in one sentence—this is the interpretive theme.

A theme is different from a topic in that it expresses a complete idea or message. A topic is a broad general category, such as swimming, dams, or camping. A theme should answer the question, “So what?”. It should tell visitors why a specific topic is important. Supporting subthemes develop the theme and provide further organization for interpretive messaging.

The interpretive theme for Lake Byllesby Regional Park was developed through research, on-site resource survey, a planning team workshop, and collaboration between the consulting team and County staff.

***Lake Byllesby Regional Park and its surrounds have been a gathering place along the Cannon River over time. Although the landscape has radically changed, people continue to be drawn to the distinctive waterways, landscapes, and vistas found here.***

The table on the following pages links the supporting subthemes with potential storylines and methods for guided and self-guided interpretation.

**Table 5.1 | Interpretation Plan Themes and Methods**

SUBTHEME	STORYLINES (Questions Answered)	GUIDED INTERPRETATION (Programs and Events)	SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETATION (Graphic Panels, Elements, Landscape, and Structure Design)
<p><b>1 The Power of Attraction</b></p> <p><i>This area has been a gathering place over time, attracting people to its bounty and beauty. Flowing water and diverse landscapes once provided sustenance. Now people come to enjoy outdoor recreation and distinctive vistas.</i></p>	<p>Stories about settlement and recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is it about this place that has attracted people?</li> <li>• What was happening in this area to gather people here?</li> <li>• Where were the Big Falls on the Cannon River? What happened to them?</li> <li>• How did people recreate in the past? What games did they play? What did they wear?</li> </ul>	<p>Programs about site history</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campfire programs (on varied topics: e.g. astronomy, park history, storytelling, nocturnal wildlife) that continue the tradition of gathering together in this space</li> <li>• Programs that highlight the unique shared features of Dakota and Goodhue Counties (e.g. vista on bluff)</li> <li>• Historic lawn games available at Lodge for checkout</li> </ul>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PICNIC SHELTERS: Graphic panels or integrated elements (e.g. light/shadow or tactile elements) highlight the park origin story and/or park recreational opportunities</li> <li>• COTTAGES/CABINS: Historic recreation images built into the design of cottages</li> </ul> <p><b>WEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OBSERVATION PLATFORM: Outdoor birding book helps visitors identify some of the birds they might see and explains why this is considered an Important Birding Area (IBA) by Audubon Minnesota.</li> </ul> <p><b>PARK WIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOBILE: Audio tour about site history</li> <li>• PARK-WIDE: "Frame-A-View" encourages visitors to notice and reflect on the spectacular views</li> </ul>
<p><b>2 From River to Reservoir</b></p> <p><i>When the Byllesby Dam was constructed, the valley was flooded, creating a reservoir and transforming the river landscape. Today, the dam controls the river flow and reservoir water level, and exposes upstream mud flats.</i></p>	<p>Stories about water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did the area look like before the dam?</li> <li>• What is buried under the reservoir?</li> <li>• Did the dam change the wildlife that lives in and around the reservoir?</li> <li>• How is a reservoir different from a regular lake?</li> <li>• Why do birds like mud flats? What lives on a mud flat?</li> <li>• Why was the dam built here?</li> <li>• Why is the Reservoir water dirty? How quickly is the reservoir filling in?</li> <li>• What is the geology of the area? Why did the lake form the way it did?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Dam Days" event program highlighting the impacts of dam construction on the natural environment (link to subtheme 5: Powering Minnesota)</li> <li>• Birding programs that discuss the opportunities provided by dam operations, such as controlling the water level and periodic draw down</li> </ul>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LODGE: Graphic panels show how water flows through the site</li> <li>• SPLASH PAD PLAY FEATURE: The ground surface of the splash pad shows the historical river landscape</li> </ul> <p><b>WEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRAILHEAD (Delta location): Graphic panel describes the delta formation and sedimentation (the mud flats).</li> <li>• OBSERVATION PLATFORM: Spotting scope.</li> </ul> <p><b>PARK WIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOBILE: Augmented reality shows the historical landscape of the park and surroundings, including what is now under water</li> </ul>
<p><b>3 Fragmented Landscape</b></p> <p><i>Visitors can experience remnants of habitats and landscapes—prairie, floodplain forest, oak savannah, pine tree bluff—throughout the park. The west end of the park offers a rustic exploration opportunity, while the east end has a more defined outdoor experience.</i></p>	<p>Stories about natural resources and wildlife</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did this area look like in the past? 50 years ago, 100 years ago, 1000 years ago?</li> <li>• Why is there a mosaic of pines, prairie, and woodland here? Why is the mosaic unique?</li> <li>• Where can I see remnants of the pine and prairie ecosystems today?</li> <li>• What restoration projects does Dakota County have in store?</li> <li>• What animals lived here? Were there bison, wolves, and deer?</li> <li>• What is habitat fragmentation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What can we do about it?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• How has the hydrology changed? What is the "drain"?</li> <li>• What is an oxbow lake?</li> <li>• Why does a river change course?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seasonal programs showing the changing landscape and the different wildlife visitors might see or hear during different seasons</li> </ul>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NORTH TRAILS: Interpretive walk (with graphic panels) along natural-surface trails, describe historic remnant or restored areas</li> <li>• KIDS WALKING LOOP: Interpretive walk along paved-surface trails feature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tracks of historic animals that roamed this area (or might be spotted today) embedded in the trail surface</i></li> <li>• <i>Trail surface imprints of the circumference of aged oak trees or pine trees to show how big they could be</i></li> <li>• <i>Artistic signposts that are as tall as different prairie species' roots for kids to measure their height against</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• LODGE: Interior walls feature life-size artistic renderings or paintings of what the pre-contact LBRP area landscapes might have looked like before American Indians encountered Europeans</li> <li>• CAMPGROUND: Name trails, road loops, and campground areas after relevant plant and animal species; screening in the sites without water/electric hook up area uses native plant species that have ID tags</li> </ul> <p><b>WEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRAILHEAD: (Byllesby Bluff location) Graphic panel describes the need for landscape restoration and, possibly, Dakota County management activities and opportunities for visitors to be involved in park stewardship activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>PARK WIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOBILE: Audio tours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Describe the seasonally changing landscape and the different wildlife visitors might see or hear at different times of the year</i></li> <li>• <i>Describe the natural resources restoration projects underway and how the landscape will change and benefit from these projects</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• PARK-WIDE: Graphic panels show seasonal changes with interactive elements (e.g. spinner, tactile, or audio) to enliven the story</li> </ul>

SUBTHEME	STORYLINES (Questions Answered)	GUIDED INTERPRETATION (Programs and Events)	SELF-GUIDED INTERPRETATION (Graphic Panels, Elements, Landscape, and Structure Design)
<p><b>4 Linked to the Region</b></p> <p><i>This area is a connected and continuous place linked to the region and watershed. Upstream activities can influence the park, just as park activities can reach into regional communities.</i></p>	<p>Stories about cultural resources and stewardship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where does the water in Lake Byllesby come from and where does it go? What is its journey?</li> <li>• Where does drinking water in this watershed come from?</li> <li>• What can I (park neighbor, metro visitor, camp visitor) do to help improve the water quality?</li> <li>• How does this park connect with other parks or recreational opportunities?</li> <li>• Why does Lake Byllesby have water quality issues?</li> <li>• What types of fish are in Lake Byllesby?</li> <li>• What happened to the white pines?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Park clean-up day (e.g. Earth Day event) with programming linked to Leave No Trace™ and park stewardship opportunities</li> <li>• Biking programs that connect Lake Byllesby Regional Park to the Mill Towns Trail</li> <li>• Paddling programs on Lake Byllesby and below the dam on the Cannon River</li> <li>• “What Can I Do” programs introduce activities that can benefit the watershed, such as rain gardens and buffer zones</li> </ul>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRAILHEAD: Graphic panel at a Mill Towns Trail trailhead (park entrance) shows the park as part of the region and makes connections to distant places</li> <li>• TRAILHEAD: Tactile map of the region</li> <li>• FISHING PIERS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Graphic panels on the piers or near fishing areas feature outlines of fish species found in Lake Byllesby, and explain best practices related to sustainable fishing (e.g., no lead tackle, etc.) and why they are important in preserving the fishery</i></li> <li>• <i>Tactile elements (bronze or other durable material appropriate for the outdoors) built into the fishing pier highlight Lake Byllesby’s fish species</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• PICNIC SHELTER: Map of the watershed on or picnic shelter wall or floor</li> <li>• LANDSCAPE, SHORELINE BUFFER AREAS: Rain gardens near picnic shelters with graphic panels describing the role they play in improving water quality</li> <li>• TRAILHEAD: Graphic panels about the gorge and Cannon River downstream of dam</li> </ul> <p><b>WEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TRAILHEAD: (Cannon Cascades location) Graphic panel describes old infrastructure visitors will see along the trail and describes select historic activities (e.g., milling).</li> <li>• TRAILHEAD: (Dixie location) Graphic panel describes site management efforts to combat invasive species and explains why these efforts important.</li> </ul> <p><b>PARK WIDE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOBILE: Audio tour describes historic and contemporary links to the region</li> <li>• PARK-WIDE: Graphic panels describe what visitors can do at home to improve water quality (support guided program “What Can I Do”) and explain how they can make a difference in their own watershed</li> </ul>
<p><b>5 Powering Minnesota</b></p> <p><i>In response to a growing need for electricity to power homes, businesses, and industries in the area, in the early 1900s, Henry Byllesby harnessed the river to generate hydroelectric power. The dam still provides power and attracts people to the park’s engineering history.</i></p>	<p>Stories about the dam and energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who was Henry Byllesby?</li> <li>• How did Byllesby form NSP, which is now Xcel?</li> <li>• How does the Byllesby dam work?</li> <li>• What are those power lines?</li> <li>• Where does the power go now?</li> <li>• What does the dam look like in different seasons?</li> <li>• How does hydroelectric power fit into the mix among power sources in Minnesota?</li> <li>• Which towns were powered by the dam?</li> <li>• What are the ecological impacts of the dam?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Dam Days” event programs highlighting dam construction and history and hydroelectric power (link to subtheme 2: From River to Reservoir)</li> </ul>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BATHROOMS/SHOWER HOUSES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Candlelight” light demonstrates what it would have been like at night without electricity</i></li> <li>• <i>Electrical grid motif, etched into bathroom, and shower house walls</i></li> <li>• <i>Graphic panels near the showers describe the processes required to provide a hot shower, such as water treatment, pumping to the site, storage and heating, and transport to the shower head</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• PLAY FEATURE: Power-generating- and engineering-themed playground</li> <li>• BRIDGE OR DAM VIEW: Graphic panels about dam history with interactive elements (e.g. spinner or flip doors) show the dam construction process</li> <li>• PLAY FEATURE: Engineered water play shows how water flows through the dam</li> <li>• PLAY FEATURE: Dam geology climbing feature</li> <li>• TRAILHEAD: Graphic panel compares the amount of power generated by human-powered activities such as biking a certain distance on the Mill Towns Trail or walking a defined distance on park trails to other types of power generation (e.g., the dam, wind or solar power)</li> <li>• TRAILHEAD: Graphic panels about power lines near the trailhead</li> </ul>
<p><b>All Subthemes</b></p>	<p><b>EAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A scavenger hunt activity uses embossers for a physical experience and/or geocaching for a virtual experience, throughout the park – “finds” could be fun facts about park or dam history, or images of plants or animals. The scavenger hunt could be associated with a different subtheme in different seasons or for different events</li> <li>• Light-and-shadow elements that convey an interpretive message are integrated into park structures such as picnic shelters, fences, benches, shade structures, and playground components.</li> </ul>		

Figure 5.23 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park East: Interpretation Plan

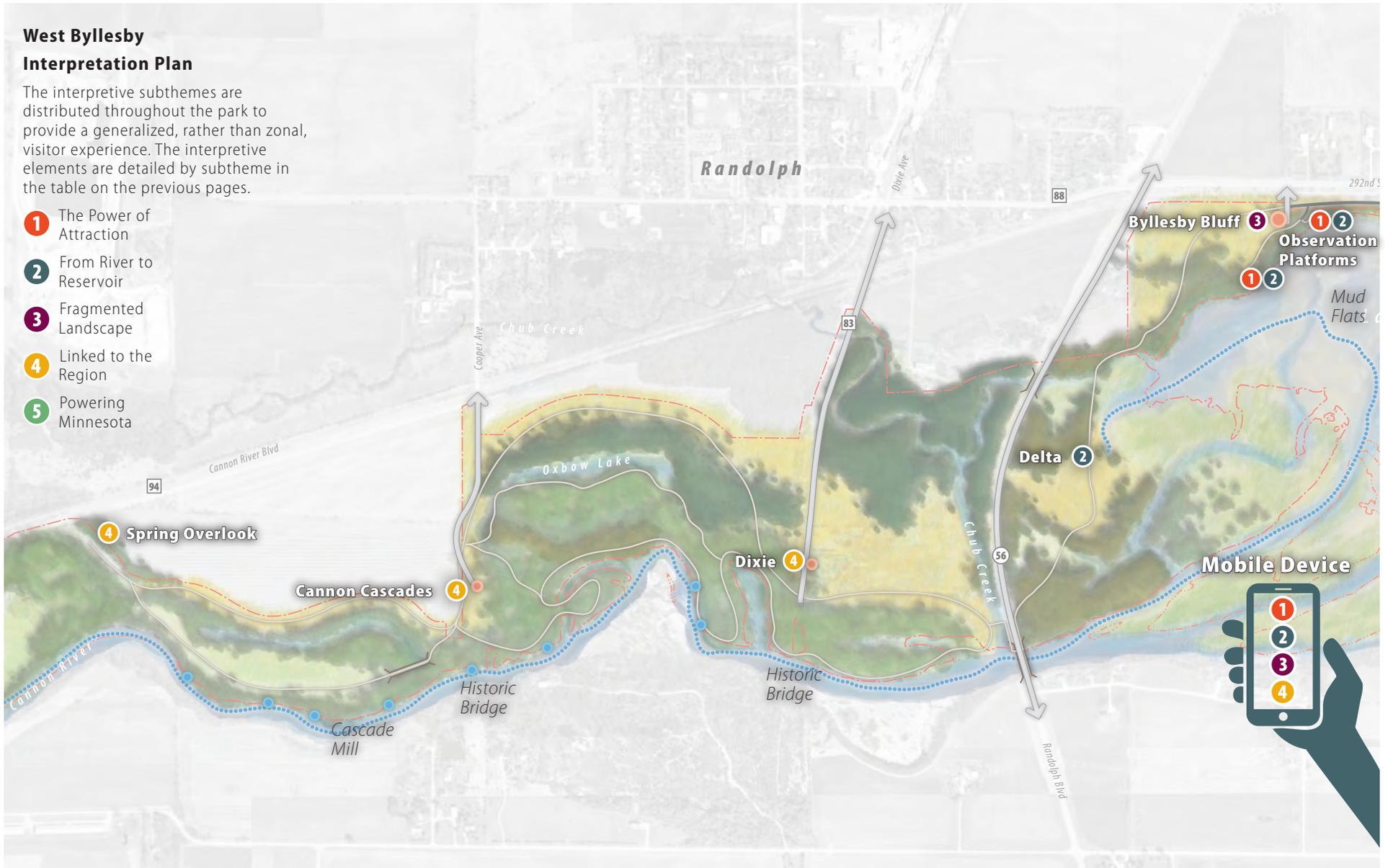


Figure 5.24 | Lake Byllesby Regional Park West: Interpretation Plan

**West Byllesby  
Interpretation Plan**

The interpretive subthemes are distributed throughout the park to provide a generalized, rather than zonal, visitor experience. The interpretive elements are detailed by subtheme in the table on the previous pages.

- 1 The Power of Attraction
- 2 From River to Reservoir
- 3 Fragmented Landscape
- 4 Linked to the Region
- 5 Powering Minnesota



## PARK FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SIGNAGE

The Lodge, picnic shelters, sun shelters, camper cabins, and other park buildings will follow the Dakota County aesthetic that has been developed throughout the park system. The buildings will be built using sustainable construction methods and include high efficiency systems, including green roofs, solar panels, and geothermal heating and cooling.

Park amenities, such as benches, picnic tables, trash receptacles, landscaping, and trails, will be constructed to match the existing Dakota County park and trail system.

### Signage and Wayfinding

Generally, park entry signs will be placed at each vehicular entry point to the park, and pedestrian-oriented signs will be placed at parking lots and at trail intersections. Additional vehicular signage should be placed between the East and West segments of the park. The maps on the following pages show approximate sign locations.

The park signage will match other park entry signs, wayfinding signs, and informational kiosks found in the Dakota County system today. Discussions with Goodhue County should also occur to explore the potential for co-branding between Goodhue County's Byllesby Park and the east side of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Lake Byllesby Regional Park and Byllesby Park should highlight the recreational amenities available at the other park on their signage and in other park information. When facilities on one side of the lake are full, visitors should be directed that they are welcome to use those in the adjacent park (e.g. campsites or boat parking).



*Lebanon Hills Visitor Center*



*Dakota County regional trail amenities*



*Monument Park Entry Sign*



*Internal Park Wayfinding Sign*

In order to promote Lake Byllesby's facilities and amenities to the broader region, partnerships should also be pursued with the Cannon River State Water Trail, Cannon Valley Trail, and Mill Towns State Trail. The park should be listed as a destination on websites and wayfinding signage along each of the trails.

The content and design of signage along the future Mill Towns State Trail route as it relates to Lake Byllesby should be coordinated with existing interpretive signage along the Mill Towns State Trail and in Cannon Falls.



*Trail Marker*



*Informational Kiosk*

Figure 5.25 | East Park Wayfinding Signage Plan



Figure 5.26 | West Park Wayfinding Signage Plan





# CHAPTER 6: IMPLEMENTATION & MANAGEMENT

## OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Implementation and Management chapter is to describe in detail how the master plan will be accomplished. The following sections identify actions and resources that are needed. General Dakota County park system policies and operations directions are included or referenced as they apply to the park.

## PHASING AND PRIORITIES

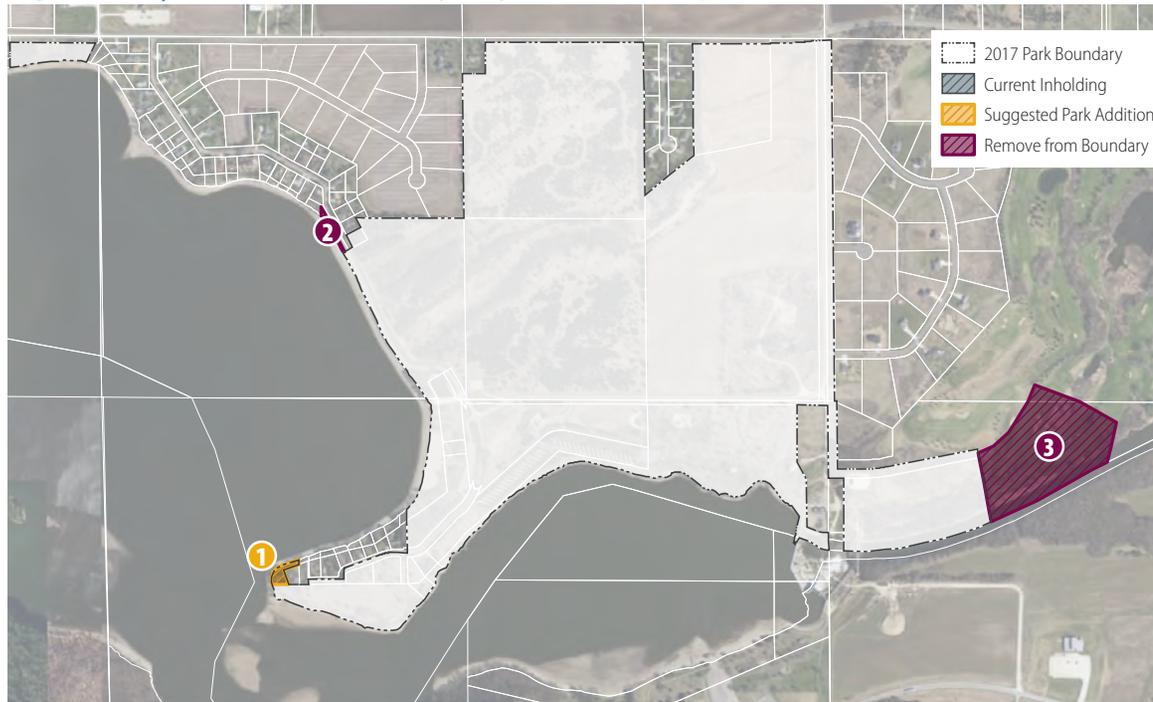
The park improvements will be built according to the 10-year (zero to 10 years) and long-term (10+ years) phasing as shown in the Master Plan Chapter. Park improvements have been organized into action items according to park areas and costs estimated at a planning level in 2017 dollars. Although park improvements have been designated as 10-year or long-term, it is feasible that any park development may be constructed as opportunities or funding become available. It may also be desirable to advance design plans for some capital infrastructure projects identified in the long-term plan in the 10-year planning horizon so future needs for landform shaping and vegetation establishment can be phased with earlier projects. Cost estimates for recreation and natural resource projects are included on pages 110-115.

### Chapter Outline

The Implementation and Management chapter includes the following sections:

- » Phasing and Priorities
- » Boundaries and Acquisition Costs
- » Interpretation Implementation Plan
- » Cultural Resources Stewardship
- » Natural Resources Stewardship
- » Conflicts
- » Public Services, Utilities, and Impacts
- » Visitor Services
- » Public Awareness, Outreach, and Marketing
- » Park Ordinances
- » Accessibility
- » Park Operations and Management
- » Budget, Funding, and Cost Estimates

Figure 6.1 | East Park Boundary Adjustment / Acquisition Sites



## BOUNDARIES AND ACQUISITION COSTS

The East Park includes two parcels that have been identified for removal from the park boundary. Parcel 3, on the far east side of the Park adjacent to the Cannon River, was included in the Park boundary prior to the development of the Cannon Golf Club. The golf club is a compatible adjacent land use, and the land is no longer considered a valuable addition to the Park. Parcel 2 is an existing road/City of Randolph right-of-way, which has limited recreation or natural resource value.

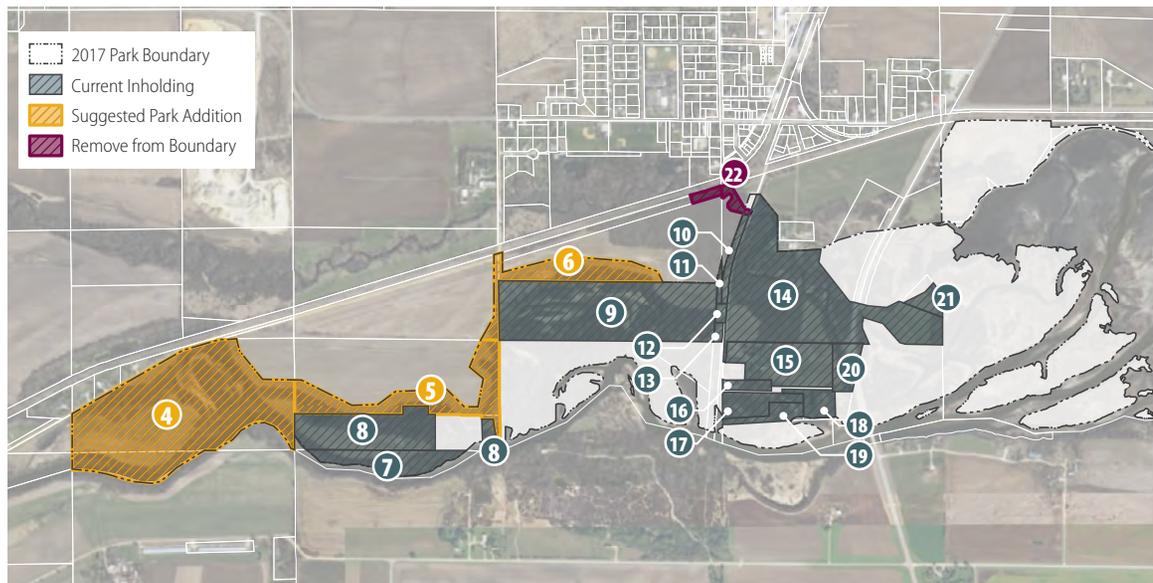
Parcel 1, a residential lot on the northwest point of Echo Point, is a recommended addition to the East Park's boundary. This parcel contains century-old oak trees and 180-degree views of the lake and sandstone bluffs. It would be an exceptional place to preserve. If able to be acquired, this addition would facilitate the development of a gathering area with programming space, fire pit, and dock.

The West Park has several inholdings, which are identified on the graphic in the lower left. It is recommended that the park boundary be expanded as shown. Parcels 4, 5, and 6 are currently agricultural lands in the Green Acres program that would benefit the Park by providing natural resource protection along the Cannon River, land for an upland trail alignment, maintenance access, connections within the West Park, and space to route the future Mill Towns State Trail. Parcel 6 is home to a portion of the old Randolph dump, a Dakota County waste site listed on the MPCA's What's in My Neighborhood inventory. The dump was closed in 1971. Prior to acquisition, the County should pursue additional information from the MPCA about any potential contamination and required cleanup of parcels recommended to expand the Park.

Parcel 22 has limited value to the Park's recreation experience and is recommended to be removed from the Park boundary.

In both the East and West Park, parcels will be acquired as opportunities arise from willing sellers.

Figure 6.2 | West Park Boundary Adjustment / Acquisition Sites



**Table 6.1 | Inholding Parcels and EMV / Acquisition Costs**

	Map ID	Action	Parcel ID (s)	Parcel(s) Description	Acreage Affected
EAST	1	New Inholding	310380000003	1 parcel, .37 total acres	.37 acres
	2	Remove	310110055022, 310110055021	Portions of 2 parcels, .32 total acres	.1 acres
	3	Remove	310130026013, 310120050011	Portions of 2 parcels, 123.61 total acres	12.79 acres
WEST	4	New Inholding	350120080010, 350130003010	Portions 2 parcels, 73.1 total acres	63.2 acres
	5	New Inholding	310070070011	Portions of 1 parcel, 49.29 total acres	18.8 acres
	6	New Inholding	320070075010, 310070050010	Portion of 1 parcel, 147.74 total acres	11.9 acres
	7	Current Inholding	310180025010	Portion of 1 parcel, 11.57 total acres	8.2 acres
	8	Current Inholding	310070070010	1 split parcel, 18.84 total acres	18.84 acres
	9	Current Inholding	320070075010	Portion of 1 parcel, 79.83 total acres	41.3 acres
	10	Current Inholding	320080048040	Portion of 1 parcel, 4.59 total acres	2.1 acres
	11	Current Inholding	320070090041	1 parcel, .53 total acres	.53 acres
	12	Current Inholding	320080048050	1 parcel, .69 total acres	.69 acres
	13	Current Inholding	320070090042	1 parcel, .52 total acres	.52 acres
	14	Current Inholding	320080041015	Portion of 1 parcel, 80.35 total acres	47.3 acres
	15	Current Inholding	310080050012	1 split parcel, 13.54 total acres	13.54 acres
	16	Current Inholding	310080052010	1 parcel, 1.52 total acres	1.52 acres
	17	Current Inholding	310080060015	1 parcel, 4.83 total acres	4.83 acres
	18	Current Inholding	310080060014	1 parcel, 3.34 total acres	3.34 acres
	19	Current Inholding	310080060013	1 parcel, 2.87 total acres	2.87 acres
	20	Current Inholding	310080065010	1 parcel, 3.94 total acres	3.94 acres
	21	Current Inholding	320080041013	1 parcel, 2.07 total acres	2.07 acres
	22	Remove	320080048030, 320070090010	Portions of 2 parcels, 9.6 total acres	2.01 acres

The total estimated market value of all inholding (current and new) parcels is \$3,710,200. Note that this cost includes entire parcels, even when the recommendation would be only to acquire a portion of it. The parcels which this affects are noted in the table under *Parcel(s) Description* as “portions of.” The total acreage of the parcel is identified under *Parcel(s) Description*, while the *Acreage Affected* column shows the number of acreages estimated to be acquired.

**Table 6.2 | Summary of Park Boundary Changes**

<b>Existing Inholdings</b>	151.59 acres
<b>New Inholdings</b>	94.27 acres
<b>Removals</b>	14.90 acres
<b>Net Gain</b>	79.37 acres added to park boundary

## INTERPRETATION IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The interpretive plan section provides recommendations for enhancing the visitor experience and achieving goals for interpretation at Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Successful and sustainable interpretation requires an ongoing process of planning, implementation, and evaluation. The County should evaluate its progress toward achieving its goals annually by identifying what actions were completed related to the interpretive recommendations in this plan and how much time and money were invested to complete the action.

### Implementation Priority by Element Type

The priority for implementation of interpretive elements is based on park development by area or structure. For example, as Dakota County Parks develops Echo Point, the interpretive elements located there should also be developed. As an alternative approach, implementation could be staged to build support and increase visitorship before all development is realized. For example, developing the mobile app and trailheads would raise awareness of park amenities and opportunities and link the park to regional trails.

**Integrated Elements:** Interpretive elements are integrated into structures and other park infrastructure, such as picnic shelters, cottages/cabins, lodge, campground, bathroom/shower houses, and play features. In these instances, interpretation should be an integral part of the structure/infrastructure development.

**Trailheads:** Trailheads and walking loop elements should be developed as part of trail development.

**Mobile:** The mobile tours could be developed immediately to build support for the park and share its stories about cultural and natural history. The mobile elements (i.e., audio tours and augmented reality) are not linked to new physical structures, so they can be developed separately from physical park development.

**Graphic Panels:** Graphic panels and associated other elements, such as tactiles, should be developed as the park area in which they are located is developed

## CULTURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP

Known cultural resources at Lake Byllesby Regional Park include the NRHP-eligible Byllesby Dam complex, one extant bridge, and the remnants of three other bridges. In addition, a cemetery established in 1857 that is still in use is located immediately adjacent to the west park. There are also nine recorded archaeological sites on the bed of Lake Byllesby, that, while not within the boundaries of the Park, are directly adjacent to the Park's boundaries. The histories and stories of the land where the lake sits are also important components of the Park's culture and history. Stewardship of the Park's cultural resources, including those that have not yet been identified, should include compliance with federal and state laws regarding management of cultural resources (see Legislative Requirements, Appendix A), as well as adherence to the recommendations regarding cultural resources outlined below. Stewardship of the Park's histories and stories will involve preserving and expressing these "hidden" histories through interpretation (see above).

## Ground-Disturbing Activities within Lake Byllesby Regional Park

If any ground-disturbing activities are planned within an area of the park that is identified as possessing a medium or high potential for unrecorded intact archaeological resources in Figures 4.1 and 4.2, plans for the proposed activity should be submitted to the OSA and MnHPO for review, and an archaeological reconnaissance survey should be conducted. Areas that are coded as possessing intermixed high and low potential for archaeological resources should follow the same recommendations for areas of medium potential to identify which areas require further investigation. Appropriate survey methodology for medium potential areas may include pedestrian survey and selective sampling of landforms via ground probes and shovel testing, while a more robust shovel testing methodology may be employed in areas of high potential. While a desktop analysis did not reveal the presence of any unidentified architecture/history properties on park-owned land within the Lake Byllesby Regional Park boundaries, if any unrecorded cultural resources, including architecture/history properties, are identified in the course of reconnaissance survey, they should be documented and evaluated by a qualified professional for potential eligibility for listing in the NRHP. If any of the resources are found to be potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP, the OSA and MnHPO should be consulted regarding appropriate next steps regarding the cultural resource.

## The Identification of Previously Unrecorded Cultural Resources

If the presence of any previously unrecorded cultural resources is brought to the attention of park staff, these resources should be documented and evaluated by a qualified professional for potential eligibility for listing in the NRHP. If any of the resources are found to be potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP, the OSA and MnHPO should be consulted regarding appropriate next steps for the cultural resource.

## Periodic Monitoring of Areas with High Potential for Cultural Resources

Areas identified as possessing a medium or high potential for unrecorded archaeological resources in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 should be periodically monitored for unauthorized ground-disturbance to prevent destruction or looting of artifacts. If any unauthorized disturbance is observed, the effects of disturbance should be documented, and the OSA and MnHPO should be consulted.

## NATURAL RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP

In addition to the natural resource goals and recommendations that can be found in this plan's Natural Resources Stewardship section on pages 82-89, this project incorporated a complementary Natural Resource Management Plan (NRMP), which describes a comprehensive natural resource management program. This program will utilize new funding streams and incorporate a greater mix of stewardship approaches to manage the park than have been used previously, in the hopes of building a sense of ownership and attachment to the lake and the land. These include:

- » Contract services
- » Partnerships
- » Volunteerism
- » Public engagement

The 2008 Park System Plan recommended increased funding for stewardship efforts in Dakota County Parks. With the recession, resource management funding was reduced to maintain delivery of higher priority and mandated County services. In 2014, the Parks Department reorganized, resulting in a new natural resources management program which doubled staff and tripled funding toward natural resource stewardship.

Natural resource-based projects are highlighted in green in the cost estimates starting on page 108. Ongoing operations and maintenance tasks and funding for each area of the park are detailed on page 114.

## CONFLICTS

Lake Byllesby Regional Park is bordered by single family homes, agricultural land, and roadways. While residential uses are generally compatible with the park, the master plan recommends landscape buffers at the park edges to provide separation between uses, support the natural setting, and minimize potential conflicts. Dakota County is committed to its residents and will continue to incorporate public involvement as this plan undergoes implementation in order to reduce conflicts between the park use and adjacent neighbors.

The park is accessed by Randolph Township roads, and there are concerns about roadway maintenance needs and safety resulting from park traffic. Park wayfinding and direction signage will help address this issue and are recommended. Continued partnership and cooperation with Randolph Township is also recommended.

There is community concern that increased lake recreation could lead to safety concerns on the lake. If, in the future, conflicts occur, Dakota County will work with other lakeshore homeowners and the Department of Natural Resources to explore lake use restrictions such as slow/no-wake zones and counterclockwise directional travel outside of slow/no-wake zones.

## **PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES, AND IMPACTS**

The following public services exist at the park and may be expanded during future development to serve park users and facilities.

### **Roadways**

Primary access to the east park is from Harry Avenue. Within the park, Gerlach Way and 300th Street currently provide access to the parking areas, campground, and boat launch. In the 10-year plan, access to the east park remains the same.

In the long-term plan, a new access road is constructed from Harry Avenue along Echo Channel to a new intersection with Gerlach Way. An access road to the motorized boat launch, Mill Towns Trail bridge, and Quarry Bike Skills Course also extend south from this access road. This reconfigured access provides an improved entrance experience and prevents the expanded campground from being bisected by a park road.

Access in the west park is provided by multiple local, county, and state roadways rather than an internal park roadway system. The Byllesby Bluff trailhead is accessed from 292nd Street (County Road 88), while the Delta trailhead is accessed from Highway 56. Dixie Avenue (County Road 83) provides access to the Dixie and Chub Creek trailheads. Cannon Cascades trailhead is accessed by Cooper Avenue, and Spring Overlook trailhead is accessed from Cannon River Boulevard (County Road 94).

### **Railway**

An active freight rail line, operated by Progressive Rail, runs east and west immediately north of the West Park. Where existing and new park access roadways cross the rail line, caution signs will be added to alert vehicles of its presence.

### **Pipeline**

The East Park is crossed by a pipeline that extends from north of 295th south across the northernmost piece of park property to the east side of Harry Avenue. It crosses park property again just before extending south across the Cannon River. Depending on the type of line and safety requirements, there can be limitations on the types of park facilities that can cross or be adjacent to the line, and care must be taken in landscape modifications.

### **Power lines**

Elevated power lines run north and south along the eastern boundary line of the park adjacent to Harry Avenue. These same lines run along the south side of 292nd Street East to cross the Byllesby Bluff Trailhead area in the West Park. The power lines are operated by Xcel Energy. An Xcel substation is located just north of the Lake Byllesby Dam. Lake Byllesby Dam is owned and operated by Dakota County.

### **Sanitary sewer**

The campground, campground store and restroom building, and the beach building are served by septic systems. Additional sanitary sewer capacity will be needed with the campground expansion and addition of picnic shelters and restrooms.

### **Water**

Water service at the campground, the beach building, and the picnic shelter is provided by on-site wells.

### **Stormwater**

The 2017 Lake Byllesby Regional Park Natural Resource Management Plan addresses stormwater runoff, water quality, and groundwater recharge within the park watersheds and developed ecologically appropriate actions and engineering solutions to address on-site and off-site water runoff and drainage-related issues. Parts of the park receive surface water drainage from outside of the park. It is important to maintain viable ecological buffers along the park edge to slow down stormwater runoff, capture micro-nutrients, and infiltrate surface water before it reaches park water bodies. It is also important to continue to work cooperatively with cities and the watershed district to address stormwater before it enters the park.

### **Utility service needs**

New utility service needs will be primarily focused on the East Park improvements, including improvements to the campground, the Lodge building, and Sunset Beach improvements. As part of the 2017 Byllesby Dam Turbine Project, the dam will be able to power County parks and facilities. If energy from the dam is utilized to power the park, additional electric distribution infrastructure may be needed.

## VISITOR SERVICES

Visitor Services manages outdoor education, facility and equipment rentals, events and food, customer service, and volunteerism. It also coordinates with Dakota County Communications on park awareness and marketing efforts. The 2017 Dakota County Park Visitor Services Plan provides guidance for the park system.

This master plan includes facility recommendations that support visitor services in Lake Byllesby Regional Park. This includes recommendations for:

- » Facilities to support watercraft and bicycle rentals and use
- » Self-guided interpretation throughout the park
- » Picnic shelters
- » Diverse overnight camping rental options
- » Concessions and rental of small gear at the campground office in the 10-year plan and lodge in the long-term plan
- » Outdoor gathering spaces that can accommodate staff-led outdoor education and recreation programming such as campfire programs
- » Outdoor gathering spaces that can accommodate occasional events

In addition, the following visitor service provisions are envisioned for the park:

- » Limited volunteer opportunities (adopt-a-park, others)
- » Food trucks during peak use times

## PUBLIC AWARENESS, OUTREACH, AND MARKETING

Dakota County publicizes its park system through a semi-annual County newsletter that is mailed to every household in the county, the County's website, a listserv with more than 3,500 subscribers, a Facebook page with over 4,000 likes, limited advertising for fee-based rentals, and news releases. Research conducted for the 2008 Park System Plan found that many County residents were unaware of the park system and its services. In response, Dakota County Communications developed a marketing strategy and brand for parks to raise awareness and recognition of the system. The "Forever Wild" brand distinguishes Dakota County's parks as a unique system. Dakota County prepares an internal parks communications plan each year to ensure that the public has access to timely updates on parks-related topics and major events.

Over the next 10 years, enhanced outreach to Cannon River Valley communities and recreation partners is envisioned to establish the area as a cohesive and unique destination. There may be future opportunities to participate in coordinated marketing among Cannon River Valley Partners. In addition, when Dakota County Parks updates its marketing plan, the idea of co-branding the Goodhue County Byllesby County Park and Lake Byllesby Regional Park should be explored.

## PARK ORDINANCES

Dakota County Ordinance Number 107, the Park Ordinance, controls the public use and enjoyment of the County park system. The ordinance was last revised on June 3, 1997 and incorporates pertinent Minnesota statutes. It addresses the following issues:

- » Regulation of Public Use
- » Regulation of General Conduct
- » Regulations Pertaining to General Parkland Operation
- » Protection of Property, Structures, and Natural Resources
- » Regulation of Recreational Activity
- » Regulation of Motorized Vehicles, Traffic, and Parking

## ACCESSIBILITY

Dakota County recognizes the need to provide accessible facilities and amenities to all park users, regardless of resources, age, or ability, and is committed to Universal Design. The gentle topography in most areas at Lake Byllesby Regional Park enables the development of accessible facilities. Future facilities will be designed to be ADA compliant and to consider new federal rules regarding accessibility.

Dakota County believes that everyone should have the opportunity to benefit from participation in parks programs and services. Dakota County provides access to park facilities, programs, and services regardless of economic situation. Financial needs-based assistance is available to qualifying organizations, families, and individuals.

# PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

## Staffing and Management

Within Dakota County's Physical Development Division, the Parks Department operates and manages the park system with the following business units: Administration, Visitor Services, Maintenance, Facilities and Grounds Management, and Natural Resources. Administration oversees park operations, budgeting, staff, and capital facility development. Visitor Services includes rentals and reservations, outdoor education, recreation programming, events, volunteers, and outreach, awareness, and marketing.

As part of the joint master planning process Dakota County has conducted with Goodhue County, there may be some areas of joint operations. Where there are opportunities for operational partnerships, particularly where the park provides complementary services to Goodhue County's Lake Byllesby Park, Dakota County will enter a mutually acceptable contractual agreement with partner agencies. Potential areas of exploration include camping operations, security, park maintenance, and programming.

Maintenance of the Park is conducted from the maintenance building on the east side of the park, near the dam. Staff are responsible for mowing, snow removal and trail grooming, building services, trash and recyclable materials removal, natural resource management, infrastructure repair and replacement, and other duties as assigned.

Dakota County recognizes that as Lake Byllesby Regional Park is improved, it will need to increase staffing. Based on operations and maintenance staffing for the park today, it is anticipated that when all of the elements in the 10-year plan are achieved, an additional 1.9 park

keepers will be needed. Cost for the increased staff is accounted for in the operations estimate presented in the Budget, Funding, and Cost Estimates section of this chapter.

## Collaboration and Partnerships

Dakota County will seek to collaborate with outside groups and agencies to achieve high quality services and programming.

Many of the issues and opportunities for Lake Byllesby Regional Park are influenced by decisions and activities beyond the park and within the greater Cannon Valley River Valley and Cannon River Watershed. Dakota County will continue to work with current and new partners on water quality, natural resource management, provision of recreation opportunities, outdoor education, marketing, and other issues to achieve high quality services. The County may explore opportunities for cooperative and joint power agreements or development of a diverse advisory committee or an innovative governance model to more effectively address these issues. Potential partners include:

- » Cannon Falls Chamber of Commerce
- » Cannon River Valley recreation providers
- » Cannon River Watershed Partners
- » City of Cannon Falls
- » Goodhue County
- » City of Randolph
- » Lake Byllesby Improvement Association
- » MnDNR
- » Randolph Schools
- » Randolph Township
- » Sciota Township
- » Dakota County Historical Society
- » Randolph Historical Society
- » Cannon Falls Historical Society

## Public Safety and Ordinance Enforcement

Visitors are informed of park rules and regulations through several means. Strategically-located signs and kiosks provide information about park hours, trails, permitted and prohibited activities, fees, and directions. The Dakota County Parks, Lakes, and Trails Unit of the Dakota County Sheriff's Office educates visitors, enforces the Ordinance when necessary, and patrols the park and the lake. Local law enforcement agencies and the Sheriff's Department respond to emergencies and criminal complaints. In the future, Dakota County and Goodhue County may also explore the potential for Dakota County Staff to assist with security through a mutually acceptable contractual agreement.

## Capital Facility Development

With a young and growing park system, Dakota County has invested substantially in land acquisition and facility development over the past several decades. Development has included everything from hiking trails to picnic shelters to visitor and gathering centers. All parks development has been overseen by a Capital Facilities manager, with staff that includes a landscape architect, a civil engineer, and consultant architectural and landscape architectural services, as needed. Facility development usually proceeds from initial planning to design, engineering, and construction. The development manager oversees all phases of project construction.

## Natural Resources

Natural resource management is provided by Parks Department natural resource management staff, working with parks maintenance staff or outside contract assistance. The planning of restoration and resource management projects is overseen by the natural resource manager, who oversees three staff with expertise in restoration and stewardship. Resource management

staff plan and conduct prescribed burns on prairies within the parks system, monitor past restoration work, and plan new restoration and management projects. Additional resource stewardship work is conducted by contracted State work crews.

## **Sustainability, Solid Waste Management, and Energy**

Dakota County has increased the sustainability of its operations, facilities, and services since the 2005 Master Plan was adopted.

### **Design of Visitor Facilities, Trails, and Transportation**

The proposed Lodge building will be modeled after the Lebanon Hills Visitor Center, which is green, high functioning, and energy efficient. The Visitor Center includes energy conservation features, a green roof that reduces stormwater runoff, and recycled materials in building finishes and structural elements.

Dakota County recognizes that most visitors will drive to the park but also promotes non-motorized transportation through the multi-use trail system established on County roads in 1978 and the countywide regional greenway network envisioned in 2008. The greenway network offers recreation and efficient transportation within linear parks.

The County has further supported non-motorized transportation by installing bike racks and lockers at County buildings and venues that can be accessed by bike routes. Non-motorized access from Randolph and Cannon Falls will be supported with the development of the Mill Towns State Trail.

### **Waste Management**

Dakota County's 2012 Solid Waste Master Plan seeks to increase recycling and diversion of organic waste from landfills. The County provides labeled recycling containers in all of its parks and promotes "green events" with compostable materials and service ware to reduce waste. In 2016, Dakota County implemented an organics collection program at the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground. The 2016 season was a resounding success, with campers achieving a 51 percent recycling rate. Low-waste camping is promoted through the County website. Dakota County also uses recycled tear-off shingles in hot-mix asphalt for trail paving projects. In securing waste hauling services for its own facilities, Dakota County has developed and used resource management contracts to promote handling waste at higher levels of the waste management hierarchy.

### **Energy**

Dakota County's 2009 Energy Management Plan adopted the following principles for its own operations:

1. Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions from buildings through design, construction, operations, and user habits.
2. Reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in transportation through transportation fuel alternatives, fleet-related business practices, and transportation system design and use.
3. Manage waste, land, and water to conserve energy and sequester carbon.
4. Increase renewable energy use to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reliance on fossil fuels.
5. Inform, advocate, and anticipate the future with others to collectively conserve energy, transition to renewable resources, and sequester carbon.

## **BUDGET, FUNDING, AND COST ESTIMATES**

### **Capital Improvement Budget**

The five year Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) provides for acquisition, greenway and parks improvements, and planning. The Parks Capital Improvement Budget for 2017 totals \$26,126,262 providing for acquisition, greenway and park improvements, and planning for the entire County Parks and Open Space system. Approximately half is derived from the County, and half comes from outside sources, including grants from the Metropolitan Council and other agencies.

### **Capital Improvement and Natural Resources Restoration Cost Estimates**

Cost estimates are provided for resource stewardship projects and for facilities and are based on a combination of past practice, work done in other park systems, and expert opinion. Costs reflect 2017 pricing. Refined cost estimates will be established with the preparation of the Capital Improvement Program. Several of the master planned projects will require additional evaluation to refine the improvement program. Cost estimates should be considered as preliminary, as many variables can influence the actual cost of projects. Further prioritization of projects for implementation will be considered annually through the County Capital Improvement Program budgeting process.

**Table 6.3 | East Park: 10-year Plan Cost Estimate**

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
Byllesby Bay Campground	Camp sites- water and electric	38	\$760,000	cleared area, tent pad, picnic table, fire pit, electrical and water connections, gravel parking
	Camp sites- non-hook up - South Loop	22	\$264,000	cleared area, tent pad, picnic table, fire pit, gravel parking
	Campground roadway-phase 1	1	\$255,000	southern two rows of pull in sites plus southern tent loop
	Removals - existing roads and parking areas	1	\$130,000	remove roadways, gravel parking area, paved parking area, and restore turf for existing east campsite area
	Campground restroom/shower building*	1	\$420,000	stone/concrete building, emergency shelter building
	New trail to restroom building	1	\$21,000	paved bituminous, 6 ft wide
	Campground roadway-phase 2*	1	\$180,000	new campground road north of existing park road to serve 17 sites
	Campground trees and plantings*	1	\$50,000	~100 trees
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Reconstruct native prairie in former crop field	1	\$61,500	
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Byllesby Bay Campground Subtotal			\$ 2,141,500	
Cannon River	Parking lot for river access	1	\$90,000	space for 12 cars, curb and gutter, stormwater allowance included
	Picnic tables	4	\$12,000	clearing, concrete pad, and table
	ADA-compliant paved trail to river and retaining walls	1	\$442,000	unit cost is higher to allow for some retaining walls and other erosion control measures
	Boat launch and shore fishing	1	\$100,000	
	Canoe portage and carts	1	\$30,000	
	Yurts*	2	\$100,000	
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Restore sandy river shore habitat -Restore oak woodland and seepage meadow	1	\$75,000	
	Interpretive Features: -Bridge/Dam construction interactive panel -Trailhead graphic panel about power lines	1	\$8,000	*Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Cannon River Subtotal			\$ 857,000	
Echo Point	Large group fire pit	1	\$50,000	stone fire pit, paved surface with stone benches surrounding fire pit
	Sun shelter 2*	1	\$70,000	20x20; 6 tables; open air, concrete foundation and footings
	Parking lot	1	\$240,000	new parking for Echo Point and houseboat cabins, 32 spaces
	Shore fishing area	1	\$20,000	add boulders along shore for standing on and fishing
	Fishing dock*	1	\$50,000	fishing dock along shore on west point near parcel to be acquired
	Sun shelter 1*	1	\$42,000	16x16; 12 people, 2-4 tables; open air, concrete foundation and footings
	Small fire pit	2	\$50,000	includes rustic stone fire pit with stone benches
	Fishing pier-ADA accessible*	1	\$50,000	
	Paved trail	1	\$247,500	bituminous trail, 8-10' wide
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Reconstruct dry oak savanna	1	\$21,500	
Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk	
Echo Point Subtotal			\$ 841,000	

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
General-East	Internal park wayfinding signage	1	\$100,000	
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Shoreline restoration - construct lakeshore habitat -Restore wetland community around Echo Channel	1	\$158,500	
	Landscape and screening	1	\$500,000	landscaping improvements including native plantings
	WiFi	1	\$25,000	
	Interpretive Features: -Augmented reality mobile app -Mobile audio tour -Seasonal scavenger hunts (4) -Frame-a-view panels (10)		\$167,000	
General-East Subtotal			\$ 950,500	
Lodge	Boat slips	10	\$100,000	wood dock to tie up boats (approx. 200 SF of boardwalk per boat tie up @ \$40/SF)
Lodge Subtotal			\$ 100,000	
North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area	Playground*	1	\$200,000	includes expansion of playground and addition of interpretation
	Removal of storage building near boat launch	1	\$16,000	removal and restoration
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area Subtotal			\$ 216,000	
Sunset Beach	Parking lot expansion	1	\$150,000	Evaluate parking needs after 5 years and after new facilities have been added; Add approx. 20 spaces to existing parking lot, curb and gutter, stormwater allowance
	Lakeside cottages - no plumbing*	3	\$240,000	approx. 250 SF each, bunks, porch, electric lighting, no heat
	Roadway to access cottages	1	\$75,000	Existing roadway and turnaround are gravel, ~20' wide
	Rain gardens/native landscaping	1	\$60,000	
	Beach plaza	1	\$150,000	improved hardscape and landscaping around parking lot and beach building
	Sand play and adventure water play	1	\$75,000	Sand and water play equipment
	ADA-accessible beach access	1	\$50,000	
	Picnic play lawn	1	\$50,000	Add picnic tables, remove trees, plant trees, define picnic areas
	Fire pit	1	\$25,000	stone fire pit, crushed limestone surround, stone benches
	Sand volleyball courts	2	\$20,000	includes sand, posts, and nets
	Rentals at beach building	1	\$30,000	canoe, kayak, paddle boards, bikes, paddles, life jackets, point of sale improvements
Splash pad*	1	\$400,000		
Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk	
Sunset Beach Subtotal			\$ 1,325,000	
Oak Savanna	Natural Resources Restoration: -Restore oak woodland at old tree farm -Restore dry oak savanna in former juniper savanna	1	\$230,000	
	New hiking trails*	1	\$200,000	soft surface hiking trails
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Oak Savanna Subtotal			\$ 430,000	

East Byllesby Near Term Subtotal

\$6,861,000

10% contingency

\$ 686,100

20% engineering and design

\$ 1,372,200

} **East Byllesby 10-year Total: \$8,919,300**

**Table 6.4 | East Park: Long-term Plan (10+ Years) Cost Estimate**

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
Byllesby Bay Campground	Camp sites-electric	20	\$300,000	most northern rows of camp sites; cleared area, tent pad, picnic table, fire pit, electrical connections, gravel parking
	Camp sites-water and electric	12	\$300,000	third row of camp sites north of water edge; cleared area, tent pad, picnic table, fire pit, water and electrical connections, gravel parking
	Camp sites- non-hook-up - North Loop*	18	\$216,000	cleared area, tent pad, picnic table, fire pit, gravel parking
	Campground roadway-phase 3*	1	\$720,000	rural road section, no curb and gutter, 24' wide
	Boat trailer parking area	1	\$153,600	128' x 48' shown on plan; a typical boat trailer stall is 12' x 45'; space for 10 boat trailers, includes curb and gutter and stormwater allowance
	Dump station	1	\$100,000	
	Walking path	1	\$204,000	soft surface path, crushed limestone, 8' wide
	Campground check-in building	1	\$22,600	
	Existing campsite removal	17	\$42,500	remove gravel parking area, roadway, and restore turf for existing west campsite area
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Byllesby Bay Campground Subtotal			\$ 2,058,700	
Cannon River	Picnic Shelter*	1	\$350,000	25' x 40' with restrooms for 30-40 people
	Existing Maintenance Building	1	\$48,800	demo and replace with new picnic shelter
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Cannon River Subtotal			\$ 398,800	
Echo Channel	Nature Play Loop*	1	\$375,000	unit cost includes improvements to existing soft surface trail and nature play installations
	Parking Lot	1	\$150,000	60' x 100'; paved, 20 cars, curb and gutter, stormwater allowance
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Echo Channel Subtotal			\$ 525,000	
General-East	Maintenance Building	1	\$750,000	relocated maintenance building
	Mill Towns Trail	1	\$277,500	paved section within park boundary
	New Entrance Road	1	\$510,000	rural road section, no curb and gutter, 24' wide, similar to Lebanon Hills Visitor Center entrance road
	Interpretive Features	20	\$200,000	
General-East Subtotal			\$ 1,737,500	
Lilac Landing	Boat launch	1	\$50,000	includes picnic tables, improvements to boat launch, and shore fishing
Lilac Landing Subtotal			\$ 50,000	
Lodge	Boat slips*	10	\$100,000	wood dock to tie up boats
	Lodge building*	1	\$2,925,000	camper check-in, emergency shelter, space for programs rental/camp store, possible winter warming
	Parking lot for lodge	1	\$500,000	60 cars and pull-in parking in front of building, curb and gutter, stormwater allowance
	Fire pit/oven outdoor	1	\$25,000	stone fire pit with oven, includes gathering space, benches
	Landscaping around lodge	1	\$250,000	Includes rain gardens, native showcase landscaping, and trees
	Houseboat cabins*	3	\$255,000	250 SF per houseboat, electric connection, bunk beds, picnic table
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Lodge Subtotal			\$ 4,055,000	

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area	75-person shelter*	1	\$875,000	open air, picnic tables, concrete foundation, and footings
	New roadway to picnic area	1	\$187,500	New roadway from entrance road to picnic area; 24' wide, rural road section, no curb and gutter
	150-person shelter*	1	\$1,470,000	this shelter would replace the existing shelter near the boat launch; includes restrooms
	Parking lot for picnic shelters	1	\$240,000	additional 32 parking spots at picnic area, stormwater allowance, curb and gutter
	Picnic shelter*	1	\$12,000	Demo and replace with new picnic shelter
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
North Byllesby Bay Picnic Area			\$ 2,784,500	
Oak Savanna	Paved trail to beach*	1	\$262,500	paved trail linking Mill Towns Trail at north edge of park to beach
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Oak Savanna Subtotal			\$ 262,500	
Quarry	Quarry biking skills course*	1	\$200,000	grading and compacting of existing soils
	Parking for Quarry skills course	1	\$150,000	parking lot for 20 cars and stormwater allowance included
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Quarry Subtotal			\$ 350,000	
Sunset Beach	Swimming lagoon	1	\$2,500,000	
	Non-motorized boat launch	1	\$40,000	
Sunset Beach Subtotal			\$ 2,540,000	
<b>East Byllesby Long Term Subtotal</b>			<b>\$ 14,762,000</b>	} <b>East Byllesby Long-term Total: \$19,190,600</b>
10% contingency			\$ 1,476,200	
20% engineering and design			\$ 2,952,400	

**Table 6.5 | West Park: 10-year Plan Actions and Cost Estimate**

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
Byllesby Bluff	Parking lot - paved	1	\$90,000	paved parking area for 20 cars, curb and gutter, and stormwater allowance included
	Signage*	1	\$30,000	monument sign, interpretation signage
	Trails and birding facilities*	1	\$35,000	accessible bird blind, soft surface trails
	Vault toilet	1	\$25,000	
	Picnic tables	3	\$12,000	clearing, concrete pad, picnic tables
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Shoreline restoration -Woody invasive plant removal -Restoration of prairie between two existing restored prairies	1	\$83,000	
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Byllesby Bluff Subtotal			\$ 275,000	
Cannon Cascades	Trailhead*	1	\$50,000	includes small parking lot for 8-10 cars and signage
	Vault toilet	1	\$25,000	
	Picnic tables	3	\$12,000	clearing, concrete pad, picnic tables
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Remove invasive woody plants in the floodplain and upland areas at the west end -Reconstruct crop field to dry prairie	1	\$64,000	
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Cannon Cascades Subtotal			\$ 151,000	
Delta	Natural Resources Restoration: -Invasive plant removal in Chub Creek mouth and former mudflat area -Mesic savanna and wet prairie restoration at peninsula	1	\$100,000	
Delta Subtotal			\$100,000	
Dixie	Trailhead*	1	\$50,000	park sign, 10 car gravel parking lot, canoe access, natural surface riverfront trail
	Vault toilet	1	\$25,000	
	Picnic tables	3	\$12,000	clearing, concrete pad, picnic tables
	Natural Resources Restoration: -Invasive plant removal in floodplain and upland areas	1	\$47,000	
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Dixie Subtotal			\$134,000	
General-West	Boundary signage	1	\$50,000	
	Park directional signage	1	\$50,000	signs on Co Rd 83 and Co Rd 56
	Canoe campsites	8	\$ 40,000	cleared area, tent pad, fire pit, picnic table
	Trail development	1	\$387,500	develop soft surface trail segments as inholdings are acquired
	Bridges for natural surface trails	5	\$300,000	assumes 100 foot boardwalk bridges at a cost of \$250 a linear foot; assumes some will later be used for Mill Towns State Trail
	Mill Towns State Trail	1	\$105,000	develop paved trail section between Mill Towns Trail and Byllesby Bluff trailhead
General-West Subtotal			\$ 932,500	
West Byllesby Long Term Subtotal			\$1,592,500	} <b>West Byllesby 10-year Total: \$2,070,250</b>
10% contingency			\$ 159,250	
20% engineering and design			\$ 318,500	

**Table 6.6 | West Park: Long-term Plan (10+ Years) Actions and Cost Estimate**

Park Area	Amenity	Count	Cost	Notes
Byllesby Bluff	Picnic shelter with restrooms and bird blind*	1	\$500,000	25' x 40' with restrooms for approximately 30-40 people
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Byllesby Bluff Subtotal			\$500,000	
Chub Creek	Future trailhead*	1	\$100,000	
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Chub Creek Subtotal			\$100,000	
Delta	Parking lot - paved	1	\$150,000	paved parking lot for 20 cars, curb and gutter, stormwater allowance
	Observation platform and trails*	1	\$100,000	boardwalk, observation deck, interpretation signage
	Group assembly area*	1	\$50,000	informal, rustic outdoor classroom with benches, roof structure, and crushed limestone surface
	Trail connections	1	\$25,000	soft surface trail connections for non-motorized boating
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Delta Subtotal			\$ 325,000	
General-West	Trail development	1	\$464,000	soft surface trail connections as in-holdings acquired
	Mill Towns State Trail	1	\$1,387,500	paving of previous soft surface trails for Mill Towns State Trail
	Bridges for natural surface trails	2	\$70,000	assumes 100 foot boardwalk bridges at \$175 a linear foot
	Bridge for water trail	1	TBD	Retrofit culvert under Hwy 56 into bridge for water trail; need engineer evaluation
General-West Subtotal			\$ 1,921,500	
Spring Overlook	Trailhead*	1	\$100,000	
	Group assembly area	1	\$50,000	informal, rustic outdoor classroom with benches, roof structure, and crushed limestone surface
	Interpretive Features	1	*	Interpretive features are included in the cost of items marked with an asterisk
Spring Overlook Subtotal			\$150,000	
<b>West Byllesby Long Term Subtotal</b>			<b>\$ 2,996,500</b>	} <b>West Byllesby Long-term Total: \$3,895,450</b>
10% contingency			\$ 299,650	
20% engineering and design			\$ 599,300	

## Operations Budget and Estimates

The Dakota County Parks and Open Space operations budget funds visitor services, administration, maintenance, natural resource, and development programs within the parks system. The Parks Department 2017 Operations Budget totals \$2,071,261 for the entire park system. Revenue derived from park fee-based activities is used to offset levy funds to the Parks and Open Space operations budget. Revenues generated from facilities and services at Lake Byllesby Regional Park in 2017 were approximately \$150,000 for campground reservations, picnic shelter rental, and agricultural leases. When the improvements in the 10-year Plan are complete, estimated revenues from the park are estimated to increase to \$250,000 per year (in 2017 dollars) due to campground expansion.

The estimated cost of 2017 annual park operations is approximately \$360,000. As park improvements are made, operating costs will increase. Estimated costs for park operations including park patrol, campground management, regular maintenance, and natural resource stewardship, are \$660,000. A detailed breakdown of ongoing natural resource stewardship costs is detailed below.

**Table 6.7 | Natural Resource Projects: Operations and Maintenance Cost Estimate**

Site	Primary Goal	Acres	O & M Cost (annual)
<b>East Park</b>			
General- East	Construct lakeshore habitat	8.2	\$2,460
	Restore wetland community around Echo Channel	15.7	\$4,710
Cannon River	Restore sandy river shore habitat downstream of dam	0.4	\$120
	Restore oak woodland and seepage meadow downstream of dam	4.6	\$1,380
Byllesby Bay Campground	Reconstruct native prairie in former crop field	24.4	\$6,100
Echo Point	Reconstruct dry oak savanna	5	\$1,250
Oak Savanna	Restore oak woodland	11.2	\$3,360
	Restore dry oak savanna	38.7	\$11,610
<b>West Park</b>			
Byllesby Bluff	Remove invasive woody plants and restore shoreline	8.6	\$2,150
	Remove woody veg between two reconstructed prairies and then restore prairie so that the entire area is one prairie system.	4.9	\$1,225
Delta	Remove invasive woody plants at the mouth of Chub Creek	13.4	\$6,030
	Restore mesic savanna and wet prairie at peninsula	10.2	\$3,060
	Remove invasive woody plants in the former mudflat area	23.6	\$7,080
Dixie	Remove invasive woody plants between Randolph Blvd and Dixie Ave.	7.8	\$3,510
	Remove invasive woody plants West of Dixie Ave.	41.2	\$18,540
Cannon Cascades	Remove invasive woody plants in the floodplain and upland areas at the west end	26.2	\$11,790
	Reconstruct crop field at west end to dry prairie	9	\$2,250
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>253.1</b>	<b>\$86,625</b>



# APPENDIX A: PREVIOUS CULTURAL RESOURCES

## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

There are a number of federal and state laws that apply to management of cultural resources for the Park. In addition, there is a broad range of government agencies that have a role in Park decisions, depending on the nature of the project, the sources of funding, and the need for federal permitting or other agency roles. This plan provides a summary of these regulations to provide a legal context in which the Park must manage its cultural resources.

### Federal

#### National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. §§470a to 470w-6)

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic and cultural resources. A federal undertaking under NHPA is defined as a project, activity, or program funded in whole or in part under the direct or indirect jurisdiction of a federal agency, including those carried out by or on behalf of a federal agency; those carried out with federal financial assistance; those requiring a federal permit, license or approval; and those subject to State or local regulation administered pursuant to a delegation or approval by a federal agency. (42 CFR 137.289).

**Key components of the NHPA include the following:**

- » The establishment of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), the nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation;
- » The establishment of a State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for each state and a Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) for each federally recognized tribe; and
- » Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to consider the effect of their activities on historic properties and to afford the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) the opportunity to comment on those activities.

Under Section 106 of the NHPA, the responsible federal agency must determine whether the undertaking could affect historic properties, identify the appropriate SHPO(s) and THPO(s) to consult with, and involve the public and other potential consulting parties. Once historic properties are identified, the federal agency, in consultation with the above mentioned parties, determines which if any historic properties will be adversely affected. If the undertaking will result in an adverse effect, and the adverse effect cannot be avoided, it must be minimized and mitigated..

An example of a type of Dakota County project that must comply with Section 106 of the NHPA is any project that receives funding through the federal Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which “provides matching grants to state and tribal governments for the acquisition and development of public parks and other outdoor recreation sites.”

**National Environmental Protection Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321- 4347)**

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), was enacted on January 1, 1969 and establishes national environmental policy as well as goals for the protection,

maintenance and enhancement of the environment, and provides a process for implementing these goals within federal agencies. It also established the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). While it is often considered to be primarily an environmental law, one of NEPA’s stated goals is to “preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage.” Under NEPA, federal or federally assisted projects must also take into account effects to historic and cultural resources. The most significant section of NEPA as it pertains to planning is Section 102, which requires federal agencies to incorporate environmental considerations in their planning and decision-making through a systematic interdisciplinary approach. Section 102 specifically requires federal agencies to prepare detailed statements assessing the environmental impact of and alternatives to major federal actions significantly affecting the environment, which are known as environmental impact statements (EISs).

**State**

There are several state statutes that address cultural resources in Minnesota. Several of these laws are found in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 138, including the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act, the Minnesota Historic Sites Act, and the Minnesota Historic Districts Act. Other state laws relating to preservation and cultural resources include: Municipal Heritage Preservation, the Minnesota Private Cemeteries Act, and the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA). The Environmental Quality Board (EQB) also maintains a number of rules pertaining to the protection of cultural resources.

The state laws discussed below specify that MNHS has oversight authority for historic and archaeological sites within the state. Whenever MNHS is mentioned below, it should be understood to refer to MnHPO, which is housed within MNHS and provides oversight of historic and archaeological sites on behalf of MNHS.

**Minnesota Field Archaeology Act (M.S. 138.31 – 138.42), 1963**

This Act creates the Office of the State Archaeologist (OSA); requires licensing to engage in archaeology on non federal public land; establishes ownership, custody, and use of objects and data recovered during survey; and requires state agencies to submit development plans to the State Archaeologist, MNHS and the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council for review when there are known or suspected archaeological sites in the area.

**Minnesota Historic Sites Act (M.S. 138.661 – 138.6691), 1965**

This Act establishes the State Historic Sites Network and the State Register of Historic Places (SRHP), and requires that state agencies consult with MHS before undertaking or licensing projects that may affect properties on the Network, the SRHP, or the NRHP.

**Minnesota Historic Districts Act (M.S. 138.71-138.75), 1971**

The Minnesota Historic Districts Act designates certain historic districts throughout the state and includes enabling legislation that allows local governing bodies to create commissions to maintain architectural design review control over these areas.

**Minnesota Private Cemeteries Act (M.S. 307.08), 1975**

The intent and scope of the Minnesota Private Cemeteries Act is to provide all human burials and human skeletal remains with equal treatment and to respect their human dignity irrespective to their ethnic origins, cultural backgrounds, or religious affiliations. The provisions of this section protect all human burials or human skeletal remains found on or in all public or private lands or waters in Minnesota and makes it a felony to intentionally, willfully, or knowingly destroy,

mutilate, injure, disturb, or remove human skeletal remains or human burial grounds.

### **Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (M.S. 116D.01 – 116D.11), 1973**

The Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) was set forth to protect environmental resources. The development of Environmental Assessment Worksheets (EAW) and Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) were set forth in this act. The EAW is a brief description of the basic facts involved in a proposed action and is used to determine if an EIS is required. In regards to the EIS, the act states, "Where there is potential for significant environmental effects resulting from any major governmental action, the action shall be preceded by a detailed environmental impact statement prepared by the responsible governmental unit." The purpose of the EIS is to describe the proposed action, analyze its significant environmental impacts, discuss appropriate alternatives to the proposed action and their impacts, and it explores methods by which adverse environmental impacts of an action could be mitigated. The act also specifically protects cultural resources as stated in chapter 116D.02 (d).

### **Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (M.S. 166B.02), 1971**

The Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA) declares that each person is entitled by right to the protection, preservation, and enhancement of air, water, land, and other natural resources located within the state and that each person has the responsibility to contribute to the protection, preservation, and enhancement thereof. Within the definitions of this act, historic resources are included in the definition of natural resources. The goal of this law is to create and maintain within the state conditions under which human beings and nature can exist in productive

harmony in order that present and future generations may enjoy clean air and water, productive land, and other natural resources by providing adequate civil remedy to protect these resources from pollution, impairment, or destruction. To accomplish this feat, the act enables residents and entities of Minnesota the right to a civil suit in order to protect the air, water, land, and other natural resources of the state, including historic resources.

## **PREVIOUS CULTURAL RESOURCE INVESTIGATIONS**

Several previous investigations about the cultural resources on or proximate to Park land have been conducted since the late 1970s.

**2016** - A literature review to identify known cultural resources within the Dakota County portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park.

**2015** - A cultural resources investigation was conducted within a half-mile of the park for a proposed 0.63-mile extension of the Mill Towns State Trail - Byllesby to Cannon Falls segment.

**2004** - A windshield survey of the Dakota County portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park to inform the 2005 park master plan.

**2001** - A cultural resources assessment, including a literature review and visual reconnaissance survey, in the southeastern portion of the Dakota County part of the Park for the proposed relocation of a boat launch.

**1987** - During a 1987 draw-down of Lake Byllesby for repairs to the dam, the Institute for Minnesota Archaeology conducted a reconnaissance survey of the newly exposed lake bed.

A literature review was conducted to identify known cultural resources within the Dakota County portions

of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. This literature review consisted of a review of inventory records, reports, and site files at MnHPO and the OSA. For the protection of archaeological resources, no site locations are included in this report.

An archaeological survey had been conducted in 1978 within one mile of Park as part of the Minnesota Statewide Archaeological Survey, in which random sampling and other methodologies were employed to identify previously unrecorded archaeological sites across the state (MNHS 1981). The location data available for the survey is not detailed enough to determine which parts of the survey may have encompassed Park land. As a result of this survey, three precontact sites were located within one mile of the park. In 1997, a literature review and field assessment were conducted for the proposed installation of a boat launch in the Goodhue County portion of the lake (Skaar 1997). As a result of this study, no archaeological resources were identified, and no further work was recommended, based on the observation that Holocene deposits were no longer intact as a result of the construction of the Byllesby Dam in 1910 and later park infrastructure.

During a 1987 draw-down of Lake Byllesby for repairs to the dam, the Institute for Minnesota Archaeology conducted a reconnaissance survey of the newly exposed lake bed. This consisted of a survey of ground which had been dry land until the Byllesby Dam was constructed in 1910, forming the Lake Byllesby reservoir which flooded wide swaths of land along the Cannon River (notes on file at the OSA). This survey resulted in the identification of nine precontact archaeological sites. All sites were resubmerged when the lake levels were again allowed to rise following the repairs to the dam.

In 2001, a cultural resources assessment, including a literature review and visual reconnaissance survey, was conducted in the southeastern portion of the Dakota

County part of the park for the proposed relocation of a boat launch (Litwinionek and Stark 2001). As a result of this study, no cultural resources were identified, and extensive alteration of natural topography in the project area was noted, including fill to provide an even surface for park infrastructure and access to the lake shore and subgrade excavation for the construction of the dam. The project area itself was identified as possessing low potential for intact archaeological resources.

In 2004, a windshield survey of the Dakota County portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park was conducted to inform the 2005 park master plan (Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc., et al 2005). This visual survey resulted in the identification of areas assessed as having either high or low potential to contain intact archaeological resources. An updated assessment is provided in this version of the master plan, which is informed in part by the previous surveys summarized above.

A cultural resources investigation was conducted in 2015 within a half-mile of the park for a proposed 0.63-mile extension of the Mill Towns State Trail - Byllesby to Cannon Falls segment (Van Vleet and Tworzynski 2015). Although the survey did not enter the Park's boundaries, the results of the survey help to inform an understanding of potential resources within the Park. As a result of this literature review and cultural resources survey, five archaeological sites were identified within a mile of the park. One of the sites was multi-component, containing both pre- and post-contact materials, and four were precontact, one of which dated to the Paleoindian tradition.

### **Architecture/History Properties**

There is one previously recorded architecture/history property located within the Dakota County portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park, as well as portions or remnants of four other previously recorded architecture/

history properties (Figures 4.1 and 4.2). The Byllesby Dam (MnHPO inventory number DK-RDT-004/GD-STN-001) is located at the eastern end of Lake Byllesby, near the intersection of Harry Avenue and 300th St./Gerlach Way (Figure 4.1). The dam complex, which includes a powerhouse, fishway, and two spillways, was designed by the Ambursen Hydraulic Construction Company of Boston and constructed by the Consumers Power Company in 1910-1911. Consumers Power Company had been organized in 1909 by Henry Byllesby, for whom the dam and lake are named. The company, which became a major supplier of power to the Midwest, was eventually renamed Northern States Power Company, and merged with Denver-based New Century Energies to become Xcel Energy. As a result of the dam, 3.5-mile long, 14,800-acre reservoir Lake Byllesby was formed, now one of the largest bodies of water in Dakota County. In response to an announcement that Northern States Power would drain the lake and abandon the dam in 1967, the Lake Byllesby Improvement Association was formed, resulting in the 1969 transfer of ownership of the dam to Dakota and Goodhue Counties. Since that time, the lake has provided recreational opportunities to area residences. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, interest in rehabilitating abandoned dams for hydropower use surged, and in 1983, North American Hydro, Inc., was awarded management of the dam for the production of electricity. In addition to its role as a working hydropower dam, Byllesby Dam has been determined eligible for listing in the NRHP by MnHPO (information on file at MnHPO).

Portions or remnants of four other architecture/history properties are located in the western portion of the Dakota County part of the park, along its southern boundary (Figure 4.2). These properties consist of

one extant bridge (Minnesota Highway 56/Randolph Boulevard; MnHPO inventory number DK-RDC-007), the ruins of two highway bridges (GD-STN-004, GD-STN-005) and a Chicago Great Western Railroad bridge (GD-STN-003). Although the geographic coordinates on file at MnHPO for these four bridges/ruins of bridges are all outside of the park boundaries, highway MN 56 and its bridge footings extend into the park as evidenced by current satellite imagery (Google Earth 2015), and there is a high likelihood that portions of the other three bridge ruins exist within the park boundaries. These four properties have not been evaluated for NRHP eligibility.

### **Archaeological Sites**

No archaeological sites have been identified within the boundaries of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Nine sites were located on the bed of Lake Byllesby during a water draw down in 1987, and eight additional sites have been identified during 1978 and 2015 surveys within one mile of the park. Of these 17 sites, 16 are precontact and one is multi-component, containing both pre- and post-contact materials. None have been evaluated for NRHP eligibility. Due to their sensitive nature, archaeological site locations are not depicted in this report.

### **Traditional Cultural Properties**

No traditional cultural properties have been formally recorded within the park. This report does not address potential cultural or sacred sites of significance to Native Americans that may arise during any potential consultation between the federal agency and tribes.

### **Other Cultural Resources**

The Lakeside Cemetery is located in the northeastern corner of the west portion of Lake Byllesby Regional Park's statutory boundaries. The land was donated by D.H. Morrill and J.W. Penniman, and the first burials were in 1857, one year prior to the establishment of Randolph

Township in Dakota County and Stanton Township in Goodhue County (Curtiss-Wedge 1910:432, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association 2016). The cemetery is currently active and is managed by the Lakeside Cemetery Association of Cannon Falls.

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

### Methodology

An archaeological assessment was conducted to identify the potential for unrecorded archaeological resources within the portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park located in Dakota County. This assessment consisted of a review of inventory records, reports, and site files at MnHPO and the OSA, as well as a review of historical maps (Andreas 1874, C.M. Foote & Co 1894, Union Publishing Company 1896, W.W. Hixson & Company 1916, Rhame 1921, Thomas O. Nelson Company 1956, NETR 1976 and 1978), aerial photographs (University of Minnesota 1937, 1938, 1940, 1951, 1957, and 1964), land survey records (Trygg 1966), and an analysis of Mn/Model predictive data for precontact archaeological potential provided by the Minnesota Department of Transportation Cultural Resources Unit (Hudak et al 2002). The assessment also incorporated information from the past reconnaissance surveys in the area, including a windshield survey conducted in 2004 to inform the 2005 Lake Byllesby Regional Park master plan (Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc., et al 2005).

In general, areas of high potential for intact archaeological sites are defined as undisturbed portions of the park:

- » within 500 feet (ft.) of an existing or former water source of 40 acres or greater in extent, or within 500 ft. of a former or existing perennial stream;
- » located on topographically prominent landscape features;

- » located within 300 ft. of a previously reported site; or
- » located within 300 ft. of a former or existing historic structure or feature (such as a building foundation or cellar depression).

Areas defined as having a relatively low potential for containing intact archaeological resources included inundated areas, former or existing wetland areas, poorly drained areas, and areas with a 20 percent or greater slope. Low potential areas and areas in which Holocene (less than 10,000 years old) deposits have been significantly disturbed are defined as having little or no potential for containing intact archaeological resources.

### Results

This discussion offers an assessment of archaeological potential for the Dakota County portions of Lake Byllesby Regional Park. Because the disturbance of certain features such as mounds does not preclude them from retaining significance as a Traditional Cultural Properties (TCP), it is not possible to exclude the potential presence of TCPs in areas of high disturbance. Predictive modeling and archaeological assessments are inadequate to predict the location of TCPs. The identification of their presence must be made in consultation with communities with connections to the area. For the purposes of discussion, Lake Byllesby Regional Park is divided into an east half and a west half, which are discussed separately, below. The east and west halves of the park were further subdivided into areas based on landforms, development history, and current conditions.

#### East Lake Byllesby Regional Park

The east half of Lake Byllesby Regional Park consists of former and existing agricultural fields; wetlands; a former gravel mining area; a wooded area; and park development, including paved roads and pathways, a beach, boat launch, campground, parking areas, and

restrooms. The topography of this half of the park is lightly undulating, but in general, this half is low-lying in relation to the high river terraces of the surrounding area. The east half of the park was divided into sub-areas, which are designated Areas A-K (Figure 4.1). Historical plat maps of the area illustrate no structures within the boundaries of the east half of Lake Byllesby Regional Park except that of the dam complex (MnHPO inventory number DK-RDT-004/GD-STN-001) (Andreas 1874, Union Publishing Company 1896, W.W. Hixson & Company 1916, Thomas O. Nelson Company 1956), where heavy development has been ongoing, thus the entire east half is considered to have low potential for containing post-contact period archaeological resources. The discussion of archaeological potential that follows, therefore, pertains only to pre-contact archaeology.

**Area A:** Area A is a former gravel mining area (NETR 1978). This portion of the park has been heavily disturbed and, therefore, has extremely low potential for containing intact archaeological resources. A pipeline right-of-way which runs parallel to an existing roadway, Harry Avenue, along the eastern boundary of Area A is also considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area B:** The east half of Area B consists of an agricultural field along Harry Avenue, while the west half consists of a fallow agricultural field planted with young pines. Because of this area's distance of greater than 500 feet from both current and former rivers or perennial streams and lack of topographically prominent landscape features, it is considered to have low potential for containing intact archaeological resources. A pipeline right-of-way which extends diagonally through the center of Area B is also considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area C:** Area C consists of lightly undulating agricultural fields, a fallow agricultural field planted with young

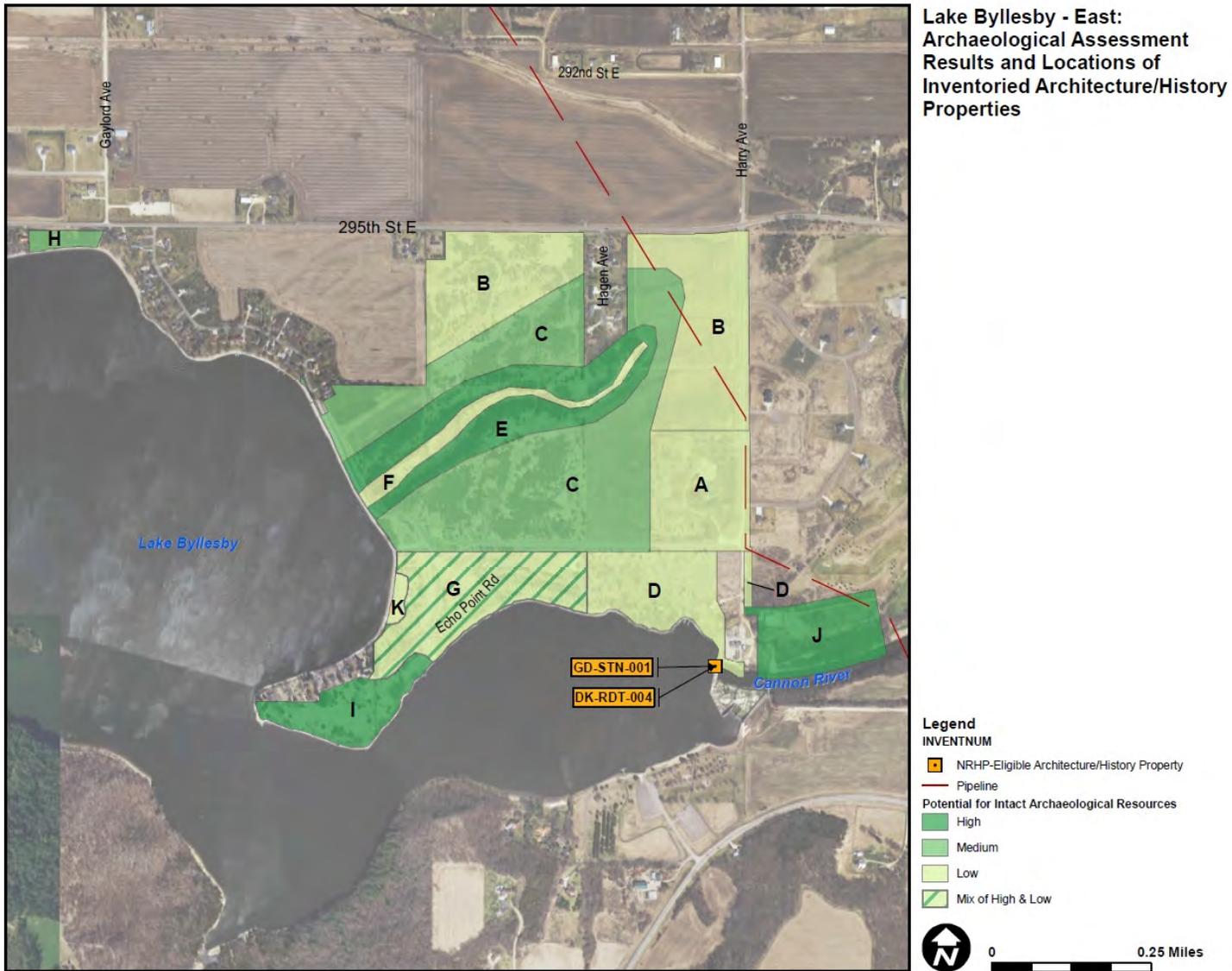


Figure 4.1 Lake Byllesby Regional Park - East: Archaeological Assessment Results and Locations of Inventoried Architecture/History Properties

pinus, and an area more densely planted in pines. Impacts caused by agricultural activities are usually limited to the top approximately 30 cm of soil, and intact archaeological resources can be found beneath the plow zone. Because Area C is within proximity to a small tributary of the historical course of the Cannon River, as well as a probable former course of the Cannon River (as evidenced by the natural terracing south of Area C), and has undergone little disturbance other than agricultural plowing and pine planting, it is considered to have a medium potential for containing intact archaeological resources. The location of a pipeline right-of-way that extends through the far northeastern corner of Area C is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area D:** Area D consists of the east half of the southern portion of east Lake Byllesby Park, which contains paved roads, trails, and structures. This area is one of the closest within the park to the original course of the Cannon River prior to the construction of the dam, and it is within 500 ft. of one previously recorded archaeological site now submerged under Lake Byllesby. The east portion of Area D was visually assessed in 2001 by the 106 Group prior to the relocation of the boat launch and recommended as having low archaeological potential based on the prior construction in the area and landscaping activities related to the dam and the park (Litwinionek and Stark 2001). Therefore, though the proximity of Area D to the Cannon River and to a previously recorded site would normally render it as having high archaeological potential, based on the levels of disturbance and fill in this area, it is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources. As mentioned above, though the NRHP-eligible Byllesby Dam complex is located in this area, the ongoing decades of development around the dam have resulted in a low potential for intact post-contact as well as pre-

contact archaeological resources.

**Area E:** Area E consists of lightly undulating agricultural fields abutting a wetland that, based on historical maps and aerials, appears to be a small tributary of the historical course of the Cannon River (Trygg 1966, Andreas 1874, Union Publishing Company 1896). Because this area lacks disturbance other than agricultural plowing and is located within 500 ft. of a tributary of the Cannon River, it is considered to have high potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area F:** Area F consists of the wetland discussed above in Areas C and E. This wetland appears to follow the course of a tributary of the Cannon River (Trygg 1966, Andreas 1874, Union Publishing Company 1896). While the areas surrounding the wetland are considered to have high archaeological potential, the wetland itself would have been unsuitable for occupation and is, therefore, considered to have low potential for containing archaeological resources.

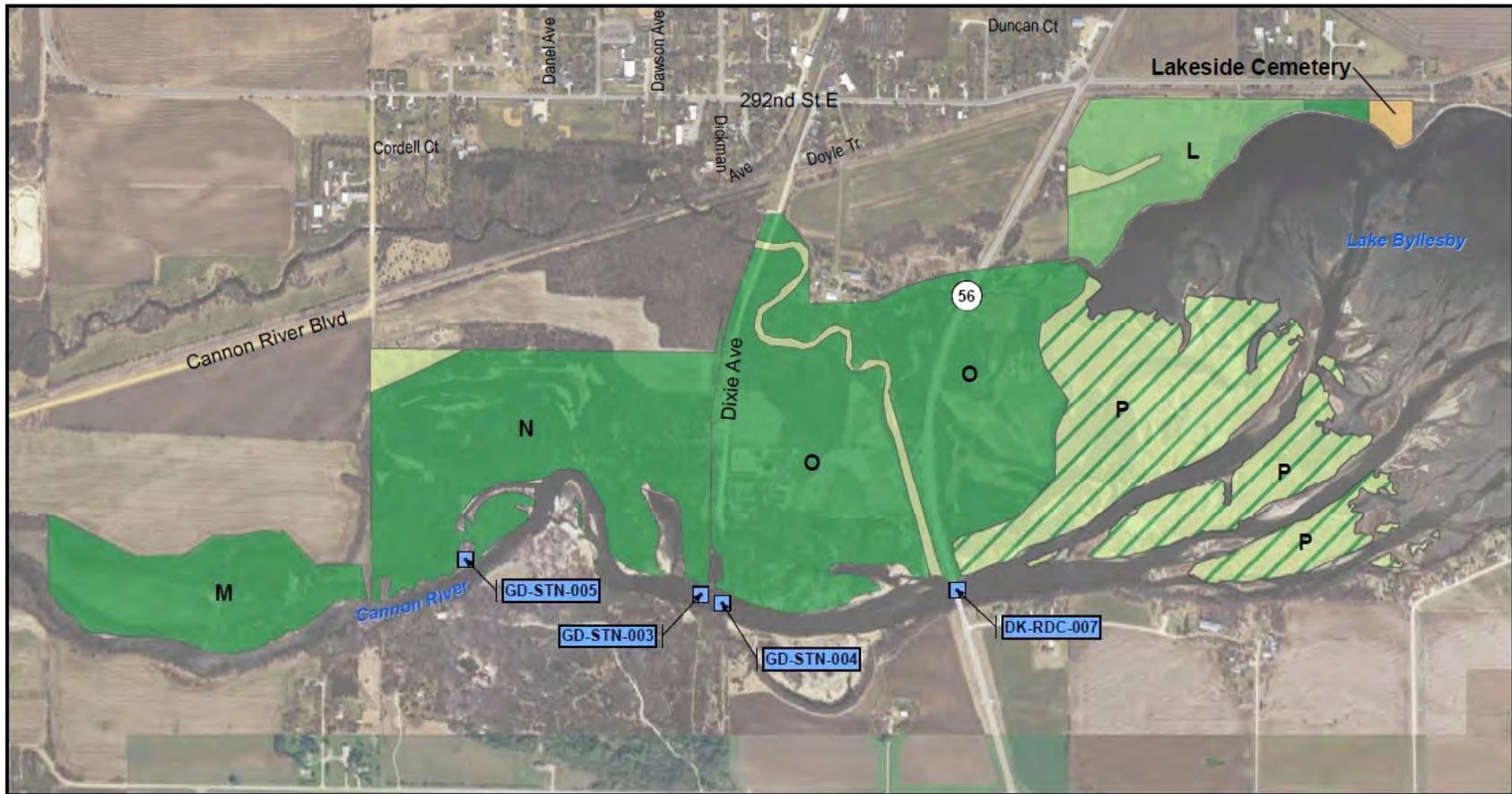
**Area G:** Area G consists of park development interspersed with grass landscaping over original prairie. Although there is a high degree of development in this portion of the park, intact archaeological sites may exist in areas between developments. Due to the proximity of this area to the original course of the Cannon River, the portions of Area G which have not been developed are considered to have a high potential for containing intact archaeological resources; therefore, Area G is keyed as having both high and low potential for intact archaeological resources. A finer resolution analysis conducted by a qualified archaeologist will be necessary to determine which areas should be tested prior to ground disturbance in this area.

**Area H:** Area H is a small portion of the park with some tree cover currently used as an unpaved turnout located along a probable former course of the Cannon River

(as evidenced by the natural terracing of the landscape in this area), and appears to have undergone little disturbance. Therefore, this area is considered to have medium potential for containing intact archaeological resources.

**Area I:** Area I consists of a grassy terrace overlooking Lake Byllesby. This terrace, unlike Areas G or D, has undergone little park development and appears to be largely undisturbed. Historical maps suggest that this area consisted of prairie land along the Cannon River (Trygg 1966). This area is within 300 ft. of three previously recorded archaeological sites. Based, therefore, on its historical proximity to the Cannon River and previously recorded archaeological sites, and on the lack of disturbance to this location, Area I is considered to have high potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area J:** The northwestern most portion of Area J contains a building that appears to be related to the maintenance of the dam. The remainder of Area J consists of woodlands, agricultural fields, and field access roads. Area J is located along the pre-dam course of the Cannon River and its east end is approximately 600 ft. west of a previously recorded site. It is, therefore, considered to have high archaeological potential. It appears that, with the exception of the building in the northwest, most of Area J has been largely undisturbed, undergoing only minimal impacts through agricultural



- Legend**
- Inventoried Architecture/History Property Potential for Intact Archaeological Resources
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low
  - Mix of High & Low
  - Cemetery

**Lake Byllesby - West: Archaeological Assessment Results and Locations of Inventoried Architecture/History Properties**

0 0.5 Miles



Figure 4.2 Lake Byllesby Regional Park - West: Archaeological Assessment Results and Locations of Inventoried Architecture/History Properties

activities. Based, therefore, on this area's proximity to the former course of the Cannon River and the lack of disturbance to most of this area, Area J is considered to have high potential for intact archaeological resources. The only exception is a pipeline right-of-way that extends through the far northeastern corner of Area J, which is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources.

**Area K:** Area K consists of a manmade beach with sand fill along the west side of the eastern half of the park. Though the proximity of Area K to the Cannon River and to previously recorded sites would normally render it as having high archaeological potential, based on the levels of disturbance and fill in this area, it is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources.

### West Lake Byllesby Regional Park

The west half of Lake Byllesby Regional Park consists largely of wooded areas and wetlands interspersed with farmsteads and associated agricultural fields, as well as Lakeside Cemetery. The topography in this half of the park is undulating, with most of the lower areas consisting of wetlands. For ease of reference, the west half of the park was divided into subareas, which are designated Areas L-P (Figure 4.2).

**Area L:** A western portion of Area L consists of former gravel mines (University of Minnesota 1964, NETR 1976); this portion is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources. The easternmost portion of Area L, however, is the location of Lakeside Cemetery, which dates back to 1857 and was not impacted by gravel mining. The family names identified within this cemetery include those of some of the earliest Euroamerican families to settle this area. Due to its long historic usage and the potential for unmarked burials, the area adjacent to the cemetery is considered to have high potential for containing intact post-contact

archaeological resources. Because of its proximity to the former course of the Cannon River (as evidenced by the natural terracing of the landscape in this area), the portion of Area L located between the cemetery and the gravel mines is considered to have medium potential for containing intact archaeological resources.

**Area M:** Area M consists of an agricultural field surrounded by trees and the Cannon River on the south. Trygg's map of the area as it appeared in the 1850s has the location of Area M labeled as "bottoms" (Trygg 1966). This area is located within the floodplain of the Cannon River; therefore, while it has a high potential for precontact archaeological resources, these sites may be deeply buried. Historical maps of this area illustrate the presence of part of the town of Cascade in Area M. This area, therefore, is also considered to have high potential for post-contact period archaeological resources.

**Area N:** The northwestern corner of Area N, which consists of a former gravel mine (NETR 1976), is considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources. The rest of Area N, however, is wooded terrain located within the floodplain of the Cannon River; and is considered to have a high potential for precontact archaeological resources, which may be deeply buried. Because of its proximity to the historical town of Cascade, and the fact that this area encompasses four previously recorded architecture/historic properties – (Minnesota Highway 56/Randolph Boulevard [DK-RDC-007], the ruins of two highway bridges [GD-STN-004, GD-STN-005], and a Chicago Great Western Railroad bridge [GD-STN-003]) – the rest of Area N is also considered to have high potential for post-contact period archaeological resources.

**Area O:** The majority of Area O is wooded and located on a low terrace adjacent to the Cannon River. This area encompasses both dry land and wetlands, depending on elevation and proximity to the Cannon River and

Lake Byllesby. In addition, farmsteads and associated agricultural fields are present within Area O. All of the lands within Area O are proximate to the former course of the Cannon River and Chub Creek. The portions of Area O where farmsteads were previously constructed, where there are agricultural fields, and where transportation corridors exist have undergone various levels of disturbance. In the agricultural fields, this disturbance is likely limited to the plow zone, underneath which intact archaeological resources may exist. In the transportation corridors, such as the railroad grade, and in the locations of buildings, disturbance is likely more significant. The portions of Area O occupied by transportation corridors are, therefore, considered to have low potential for intact precontact archaeological resources. Based on the overall lack of heavy disturbance to the rest of Area O, including the agricultural fields, and proximity to the Cannon River and Chub Creek, the higher, and therefore drier portions of Area O are considered to have high potential for intact pre-contact archaeological resources.

Historical plat maps illustrate only one structure within Area O prior to 1916. This structure was located in the center of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 8 on plat maps dating to 1896 and 1916. In the 1896 plat the owner is identified as S.J. Morrill (Union Publishing Company 1896), and in 1916 as I. Nelson (W.W. Hixson & Company 1916). Due to lack of resolution in early plat maps, it is possible that this farmstead is the one depicted in the northwest quarter of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 8 on the topographic map of the area. According to the Dakota County tax assessors website, the house at this location was constructed in 1890, and is currently located on private property (Dakota County 2016). During a site visit in July 2016 park staff noted

that derelict structures associated with two separate residences, which had belonged to the Walkendorf and Knox families, were removed after the park acquired the property. There is a high potential for intact post-contact period archaeological resources in the vicinity of historical residences. In addition, as mentioned above, one previously surveyed bridge (Minnesota Highway 56/Randolph Boulevard; MnHPO inventory number DK-RDC-007) extends into the project area, and there is a high likelihood that remnants of two highway bridges (GD-STN-004, GD-STN-005) and a Chicago Great Western Railroad bridge (GD-STN-003) are present within the park boundaries in Area O (Figure 4.2).

The lower, inundated portions of Area O are considered to have low potential for intact precontact and post-contact period archaeological resources. Isolating the numerous wetlands throughout Area O was beyond the scope of the assessment; therefore, while much of Area O is keyed as having high pre-contact archaeological potential in Figure 4.2, it should be noted that there are numerous pockets of wetlands considered to have low archaeological potential scattered throughout this location. A helpful resource that may be used to inform fieldwork in this area is the National Wetlands Inventory (US Fish and Wildlife Service 2016).

**Area P:** Area P is the southeastern portion of the west half of the park. It consists of a delta floodplain likely formed over time by both the Cannon River and its tributary Chub Creek. This area has pockets of dry land extensively interwoven with inundated areas, which, based on previous assessments and current vegetation, are likely perennially inundated. Like Area M, Area P is labeled as “bottoms,” on GLO maps, with the Cannon River on its south (Trygg 1966), and a review of historical maps suggests that these areas were frequently inundated prior to the creation of Lake Byllesby. Historical plat maps do not illustrate any structures in

the location of Area P. While the wetland portions of Area P are considered to have low potential for intact archaeological resources, due to the likelihood that they have long been inundated, the dry land portions are considered to have high potential for deeply buried precontact archaeological sites, due to their proximity to both the Cannon River and Chub Creek. As discussed in Area O, isolating the numerous wetlands was beyond the scope of the assessment; therefore, Area P is keyed as having both high and low potential for intact archaeological resources, as it has a greater degree of perennial and seasonal wetlands than Area O. A finer resolution analysis by a qualified archaeologist will be necessary to determine which areas should be tested prior to ground disturbance in this area.

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# APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Highlights from Fall 2016 Community Engagement + Key Findings

- Dakota County
- Goodhue County

## Online Questionnaire (September/October 2016)

- Summary of Input
- All Responses

## Stakeholder Meeting (September 2016) Notes

- Park Neighbors
- Dakota County Township Officers
- Agency Water
- Campground Hosts
- DNR
- History and Interpretation
- Lake Byllesby Improvement Association
- Park Operations
- Park User Groups
- Regional Recreation Providers

## Open House (Sept. 19, 2016) Comments

- Individual Input

## Dakota County State Fair (August 2016) Input

## Spring 2017 Engagement

- Online Social Pinpoint Comments
- March 2017 Open House and Stakeholder Meeting Comments
- Individual Input

## Open House (October 11, 2017) Comments

- Questionnaire Input related to the October 2017 Draft Master Plan

## Fall and Winter 2017 Individual Input

# HIGHLIGHTS FROM FALL 2016 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT + KEY FINDINGS

## Dakota County

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park Plan

#### Highlights from Community Engagement

- 207 people responded to the first online questionnaire
- 35 people attended the first Open House
- A booth and display boards were posted at the Dakota County Fair in August of 2016
- Promotion and outreach included: The County's website hosted a page with information about the park master plan, flyers were posted and sent out, press releases included opportunities for public engagement, and social media and email were used to alert Dakota County residents about the planning process
- 9 different groups were engaged in stakeholder meetings

#### Key Findings

1. The Mill Towns State Trail and Cannon Valley Trail connections are essential to making Lake Byllesby a significant destination along the regional recreation corridor in the Cannon River Valley. Wayfinding within and marketing of the park should highlight nearby attractions and distances to them, essentially expanding the park's offerings outside of the park boundary. Lake Byllesby Regional Park should partner with other attractions in the Cannon River Valley to promote regional tourism.
2. Tourists don't see borders. Programming and facilities at Lake Byllesby Regional Park should complement and not compete with those at Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park. The two parks should offer a coherent set of recreational experiences and function as a single destination in the Cannon River Valley.
3. The park's campground and lakeside environment make it a natural node/gathering hub for multi-day visitors to the Cannon Valley. Camping needs to be improved and park activities need to complement regional offerings so that visitors have recreational opportunities within the park as well as outside of it. Camping should include quality RV and tent sites along with camper cabins
  - a. RV Camping would benefit from being reconfigured with better circulation, improved amenities, and potential expansion
  - b. Tent Camping needs to be reconfigured to feel more private, and should be expanded into other areas of the park. Platforms for tent camping in west may open that area for primitive options
  - c. Camper cabins and a group campsite should be explored to expand offerings
  - d. Additional facilities that would be beneficial include storm shelter and bathrooms and showers nearer to tent camping area
  - e. The park would benefit from a group gathering area/programming space/fire pit, and relocation/updates to existing amenities like the playground
4. Summer use of the park is centered on lake recreation, but concerns about water quality and a lack of support facilities limit lake usage from reaching its full potential.
  - a. Rental facilities and storage racks for canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, paddle boards, rollerblades, and bikes are desired
  - b. A portage route around the dam needs to be defined, with water access downstream of the dam

- c. A fish cleaning table would support shore fishing
  - d. Wind and algae reduce the beach's popularity. A lagoon/splash pad could offer a popular attraction that engages visitors with water without those hindrances
  - e. The existing beach house is underutilized, especially its concessions capabilities
  - f. The quality of motorized boating use of the lake, particularly on the west, has been diminished due to siltation
  - g. Concerns exist about safety related to numbers of boaters on the lake
  - h. Desire for boat slips for day users and campers
5. Winter park use is lackluster, currently.
- a. Significant use is unlikely until an enclosed park building can be constructed and staffed year-round for restrooms, a warming house, and a rental center
  - b. Minimal investment would focus on just on skijoring/dogsledding, xc skiing, and ice fishing as weather allows with minimal investment (just porta potties and dog hitches). Cannon Valley Trail will be groomed for cross country skiing.
  - c. Despite snow being increasingly unreliable, winter fat biking has increased in popularity, and does not rely on snowy conditions the same way that cross country skiing does.
6. Investments should be made in natural resources to improve habitat and implement best management practices for water quality.
- a. Native shoreline restoration where feasible
  - b. Management of riparian woodlands, especially in the western portion of the park
  - c. Prairie/Savanna/Meadow expansion and turf replacement wherever active uses aren't present
  - d. Multiple interests have preferences for water levels in the reservoir, making its management challenging to balance. While residents and boaters would prefer higher water levels and dredging of sediments from the west delta, the mud flats are the primary reason the west side of the lake is an IBA, and drawdown of water levels aids nearby farmers in the spring by ensuring their fields remain dry.
7. Interpretation of natural, historic, and cultural resources would greatly enhance park programming.
- a. Self-guided interpretation with well-promoted walking tours/ on-demand podcast episodes could function as a sort of "choose your own adventure" way to explore the park
  - b. Improved signage with QR codes and audio stations for storytelling/sharing
  - c. Interpretation should be incorporated into park features (new play area) and featured in park programming/ special event offerings
8. Expanded programming should be focused primarily in areas of existing development (in the east side of the park), with minor infrastructure investments on the west side of the park, including natural surface and water trails, a trailhead with parking and a basic restroom facility, the potential for rustic paddle-in campsites, and low impact, digitally based programming like geo/bio caching, orienteering, birding, and self-guided interpretation. Preserving and enhancing the quality of the Important Birding Area (IBA) along the mud flats in the western portion of the park is of primary importance.

## Goodhue County

### Byllesby County Park Plan

## Highlights from Community Engagement

1. The Mill Towns State Trail and Cannon Valley Trail connections are essential to making Lake Byllesby a significant destination along the regional recreation corridor in the Cannon River Valley. Wayfinding within the park should highlight nearby attractions and distances to them, essentially expanding the park's program offerings outside of the park boundary. Byllesby County Park should partner with other attractions in the Cannon River Valley to promote regional tourism.
2. Tourists don't see borders. Programming and facilities at Byllesby County Park should complement and not compete with those at Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park. The two parks should offer a coherent set of recreational experiences and function as a single destination in the Cannon River Valley.
3. Summer use of the park is centered around lake recreation, but concerns about water quality and a lack of support facilities limit lake usage from reaching its full potential.
  - a. Rental facilities and storage racks for canoes, kayaks, paddle boats, paddle boards, rollerblades, and bikes are desired.
  - b. Slopes along the Cannon River downstream of the dam are too steep to support water access from the Goodhue County Side
  - c. Day use tie up slips would be nice, especially since boats just pull up on shore currently
  - d. Fish cleaning station
  - e. The beach is popular (and less apt to experience wind and algae issues than Lake Byllesby Regional Park's beach) and could be improved/expanded
  - f. Parking lots fill up with boaters on weekends and parking overflows onto the grass.
  - g. Concerns exist about safety related to too many boaters on the lake
  - h. Existing pavilions highly used. Additional picnic seating areas would be beneficial.
  - i. Additional support amenities like drinking fountain, trash cans, etc. needed
  - j. Additional seating along the walking trails is desired
4. County park should focus on nature based recreation and community gathering. Athletic needs are being fulfilled by the City of Cannon Falls and additional facilities not needed as part of the regional park.
5. Night uses are not desired by adjacent property owners; however, with camping often full across the lake at Lake Byllesby Regional Park, and multi-day use of trails along the Cannon River Valley increasing, the planning process should explore camping as part of overall development concept.
6. As a nature-based recreation park, investments in natural resource restoration should be made to improve habitat and implement best management practices for water quality.
  - a. Turf replacement with native vegetation/ no-mow meadow wherever active uses aren't present
  - b. Management of the forest stand between the eastern part of the park and the cliffs
  - c. Native shoreline restoration where feasible
  - d. Multiple needs for reservoir challenging to balance – dam, fisheries, birding, fishing, boating, private property owners, etc
7. Winter park use is lackluster currently.
  - a. Cannon Valley Trail may be groomed for cross country skiing, so broader cross country skiing could be considered.
  - b. Despite snow being increasingly unreliable, winter fat biking has increased in popularity, and does not rely on snowy conditions the same way that cross country skiing does.

# ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE (SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016)

## Summary of Input

### Dakota County

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan

### Online Questionnaire Summary

**DRAFT 10.04.2016**

An online questionnaire was open for several weeks in September and October, 2016. The questionnaire asked questions about both Dakota County and Goodhue County Byllesby parks. Questions included asking how often people visited the parks, summer and winter activities in the parks, why they liked or did not like the park, and suggestions for improvements. The following includes a summary of findings:

- 206 total responses; most between the ages of 35 and 74; 98% of respondents identified their race as white;
- When asked **how often users visit the parks**, 54% answered “once a month or less,” 21% answered “2-4 times per month,” 18% answered “not at all,” and 7% answered “two times a week or more. No one responded that they visit the parks “weekly” or “daily.” Of the 18% of people who answered that they don’t visit the park at all, 48% said it was because they were “unaware of park location and/or facilities/programming,” 41% said the parks were “too far away,” and 24% said that “park facilities/programming doesn’t interest them.” No one commented on safety or crowding issues as reasons they did not visit the parks.
- 75% of park users **accessed the parks** with a personal vehicle or camper, 13% visit by bicycle, and 6% visit on foot. Other ways to get to the park included on a charter or school bus or by boat.
- Many **summer activities** were viewed as important to include in the park, with the following activities listed “very important” by the most respondents: walking, enjoying scenic views, hiking, canoeing/kayaking/paddleboarding, picnicking. Other identified important activities include: boating, playing on the playground, fishing, and swimming. Biking was an activity identified by several respondents as an important activity to have in the parks.
- When asked about **winter activities**, cross country skiing was selected as the most important activity to have in the parks. Snowshoeing, winter walking on plowed trails, ice fishing, and sledding were also selected as important activities. Close behind those activities included, indoor visitor center activities, bicycling, skating, followed by dog sledding and skijoring as less important.
- Respondents were asked **how likely they would be to use certain facilities** if they were added to the parks. The following facilities were ranked very likely to be used by the highest number of respondents: hiking to an overlook and along bluffs on the Goodhue County side of the lake, an expanded natural surface trail network, and an expanded paved trail network. Other facilities that were ranked as somewhat likely or very likely to be used by a large number of respondents included: access to the Cannon River below the dam; self-guided nature and history programs; a visitor center; small picnic shelters for 20 people; a larger swimming beach; a natural swimming pool; an improved bathhouse; an improved campground with more shade and privacy; and boat/paddle sport rentals; and a nature playground.
- When asked about **groups or organizations** that participate in activities at Lake Byllesby, the following groups were mentioned: Northfield Senior Bike Club, Lakeville Senior Bike Club, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Cannon Valley Velo Club, Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club, Mill Towns Trail bike group, Northfield Pedalers, HHH Ranch, Minnesota Geocaching Association, CROCT, churches, birding groups, and Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts.
- **Regional recreational activities** that most respondents selected as those in which they participate include: biking or walking the Cannon Valley Trail; biking or walking the Mill Towns State Trail; and

canoeing or kayaking the Cannon River. Other activities listed by the next most number of respondents include: scenic drives/sightseeing, a bike/paddle loop trail experience; tubing the Cannon River; and attending local festivals.

- The following **natural resource improvements** were selected by most respondents as somewhat important or very important, with Lake Byllesby water quality improvements and invasive species removal and management listed as very important by the most respondents: forest management; lake fishery management; prairie/savanna restoration; rip rap shoreline removal and shoreline restoration; stormwater management features like raingardens; buffering views of adjacent development; and enhancement of birding opportunities and bird habitat.
- When asked how they would **rate the parks' scenic quality** as part of experiencing nature, 45% of respondents selected "average quality," while 38% selected "high quality," and 11% selected "very high quality."
- When asked how they would **rate the parks' river, stream, lake, and wetland quality** as part of experiencing nature, the responses were very similar to above: 45% selected "average," 33% selected "high," 8% selected "very high," and 13% selected "low."
- The following threats to natural resource quality and experience at Lake Byllesby were identified by the most respondents as "major:" water pollution, aquatic invasive species, and herbicides/pesticides. Other threats that were identified highly as "minor" or "major" include: terrestrial invasive species, development, extreme weather events, and air pollution.

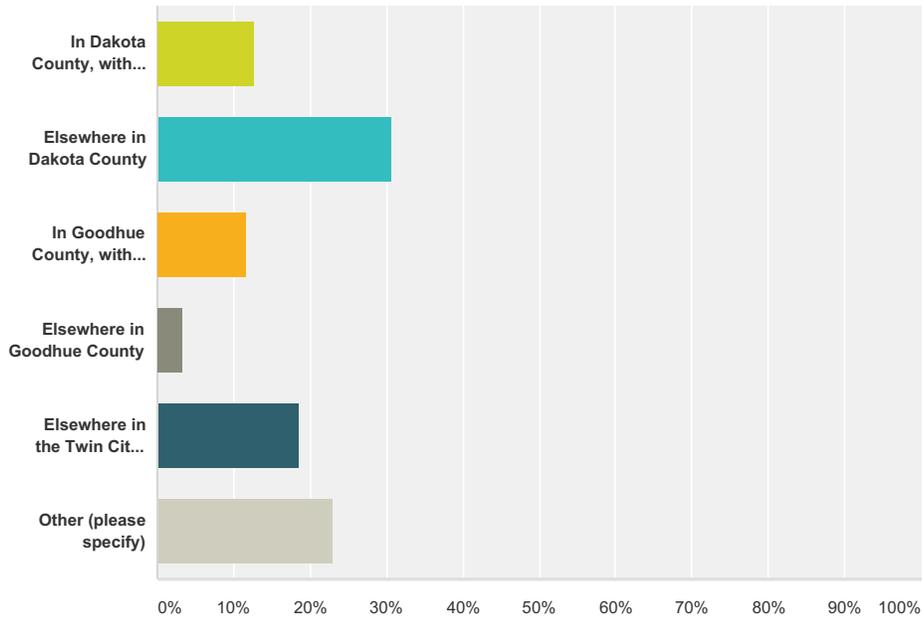
# ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE (SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016)

## All Responses

### Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

#### Q1 Where do you live?

Answered: 205 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
In Dakota County, within 5 miles of Lake Byllesby Regional Park	12.68% 26
Elsewhere in Dakota County	30.73% 63
In Goodhue County, within 5 miles of Byllesby County Park	11.71% 24
Elsewhere in Goodhue County	3.41% 7
Elsewhere in the Twin Cities Metro Area	18.54% 38
Other (please specify)	22.93% 47
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>

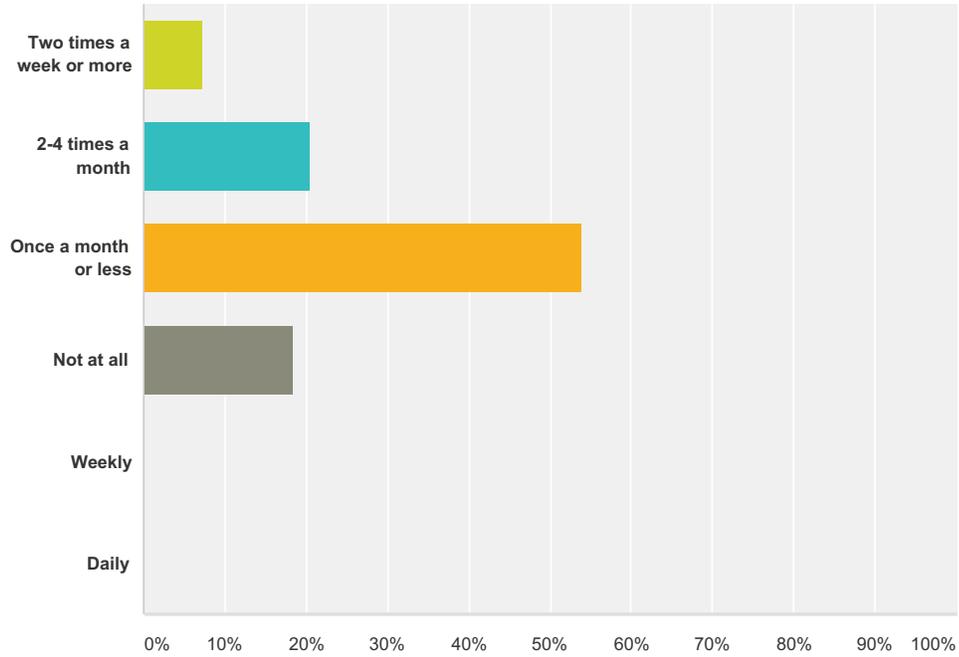
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	mazeppa	10/4/2016 1:23 PM
2	Northfield, Rice County	10/1/2016 10:34 PM
3	Webster, Mn. Rice county	9/29/2016 6:40 PM
4	Rice County	9/28/2016 7:52 PM
5	Dakota county on the lake	9/27/2016 2:11 PM
6	Northfield, Rice County, MN	9/27/2016 8:25 AM
7	Rice County	9/26/2016 2:17 PM
8	Dundas - Rice County	9/26/2016 1:10 PM
9	rice	9/26/2016 11:38 AM

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

10	Faribault	9/26/2016 8:57 AM
11	Northfield	9/25/2016 9:06 PM
12	Northfield. 55057	9/25/2016 6:02 PM
13	Rice County	9/25/2016 4:08 PM
14	rice county	9/25/2016 3:43 PM
15	In Northfield, about 7 mi. from Lake Byllesby west end.	9/25/2016 3:10 PM
16	Rice County	9/24/2016 6:03 PM
17	Rice County, Northfield	9/24/2016 3:58 PM
18	rice county	9/24/2016 2:26 PM
19	rice county	9/24/2016 1:48 PM
20	Northfield, mn	9/24/2016 11:21 AM
21	Rice County	9/24/2016 11:03 AM
22	Rice County	9/24/2016 10:16 AM
23	Rice County, Northfield	9/24/2016 8:22 AM
24	Northfield	9/24/2016 4:23 AM
25	Northfield	9/23/2016 11:18 PM
26	Northfield, Rice County	9/23/2016 8:27 PM
27	Rice county	9/23/2016 8:26 PM
28	Rice County	9/23/2016 7:37 PM
29	Rice cty	9/23/2016 7:14 PM
30	Rice County	9/23/2016 6:44 PM
31	Rice County	9/23/2016 5:26 PM
32	Northfield, MN	9/23/2016 3:57 PM
33	Northfield, Rice County	9/23/2016 3:11 PM
34	Rochester Area	9/23/2016 1:52 PM
35	Rice	9/23/2016 1:30 PM
36	Rice County	9/23/2016 1:21 PM
37	Rice County, Northfield	9/23/2016 12:42 PM
38	Rice	9/23/2016 11:15 AM
39	In Northfield (Rice County)	9/23/2016 10:53 AM
40	Northfield	9/23/2016 10:48 AM
41	Northern MN	9/23/2016 9:16 AM
42	Rice County	9/23/2016 8:11 AM
43	Wisconsin	9/23/2016 7:59 AM
44	Northfield	9/10/2016 8:50 PM
45	Wheeling township, Rice County	9/10/2016 1:06 PM
46	Waconia	9/10/2016 8:47 AM
47	Dodge County	9/9/2016 5:47 PM

## Q2 How often, on average, do you visit Lake Byllesby Regional Park or Byllesby County Park?

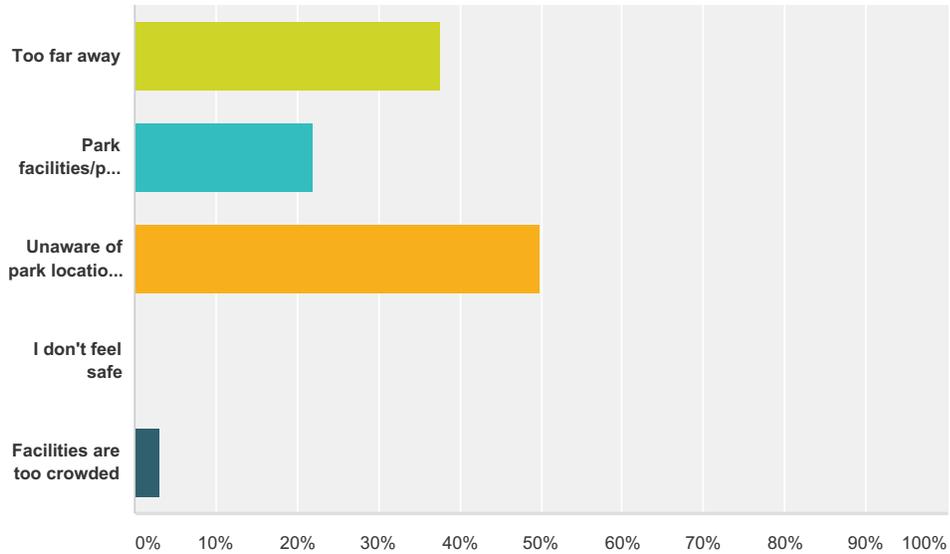
Answered: 206 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Two times a week or more	7.28%	15
2-4 times a month	20.39%	42
Once a month or less	53.88%	111
Not at all	18.45%	38
Weekly	0.00%	0
Daily	0.00%	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>206</b>

### Q3 Why haven't you visited Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 175

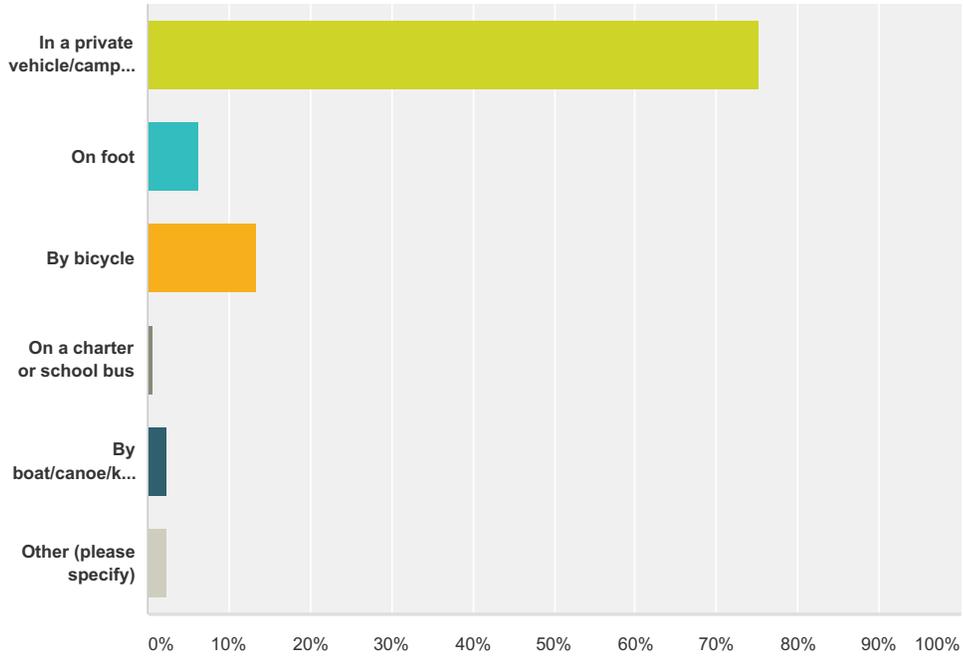


Answer Choices	Responses
Too far away	37.50% 12
Park facilities/programming doesn't interest me	21.88% 7
Unaware of park location and/or facilities/programming	50.00% 16
I don't feel safe	0.00% 0
Facilities are too crowded	3.13% 1
<b>Total Respondents: 32</b>	

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Either too crowded or the lake is green	9/28/2016 7:53 PM
2	I bike ride on the Cannon Valley Trail I live in Northfield so would love to bike from Northfield through Byllesby Park	9/26/2016 5:14 PM
3	Waiting for the Mill Towns State Trail to be completed	9/26/2016 2:18 PM
4	Usually explore parks closer to home initially, Lebanon Hills and Whitetail Woods	9/24/2016 2:13 PM
5	Water too high this year	9/24/2016 10:16 AM
6	I bike several times a week on the cannon valley trail. It would be nice to see the other side of the river	9/24/2016 4:24 AM
7	The bike trail does not yet go all the way there	9/23/2016 8:28 PM
8	I would visit it on my bike if the Mill Town's Bike Trail went past it.	9/23/2016 10:55 AM
9	Bike access to park	9/23/2016 10:49 AM
10	Might go to Byllesby if I find out more about it. May be a good park to promote further to County residents.	9/22/2016 9:20 AM
11	I visit sometimes, like once a year or sometimes twice (for camping).	9/22/2016 9:11 AM

### Q4 How do you typically travel to Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park?

Answered: 173 Skipped: 34

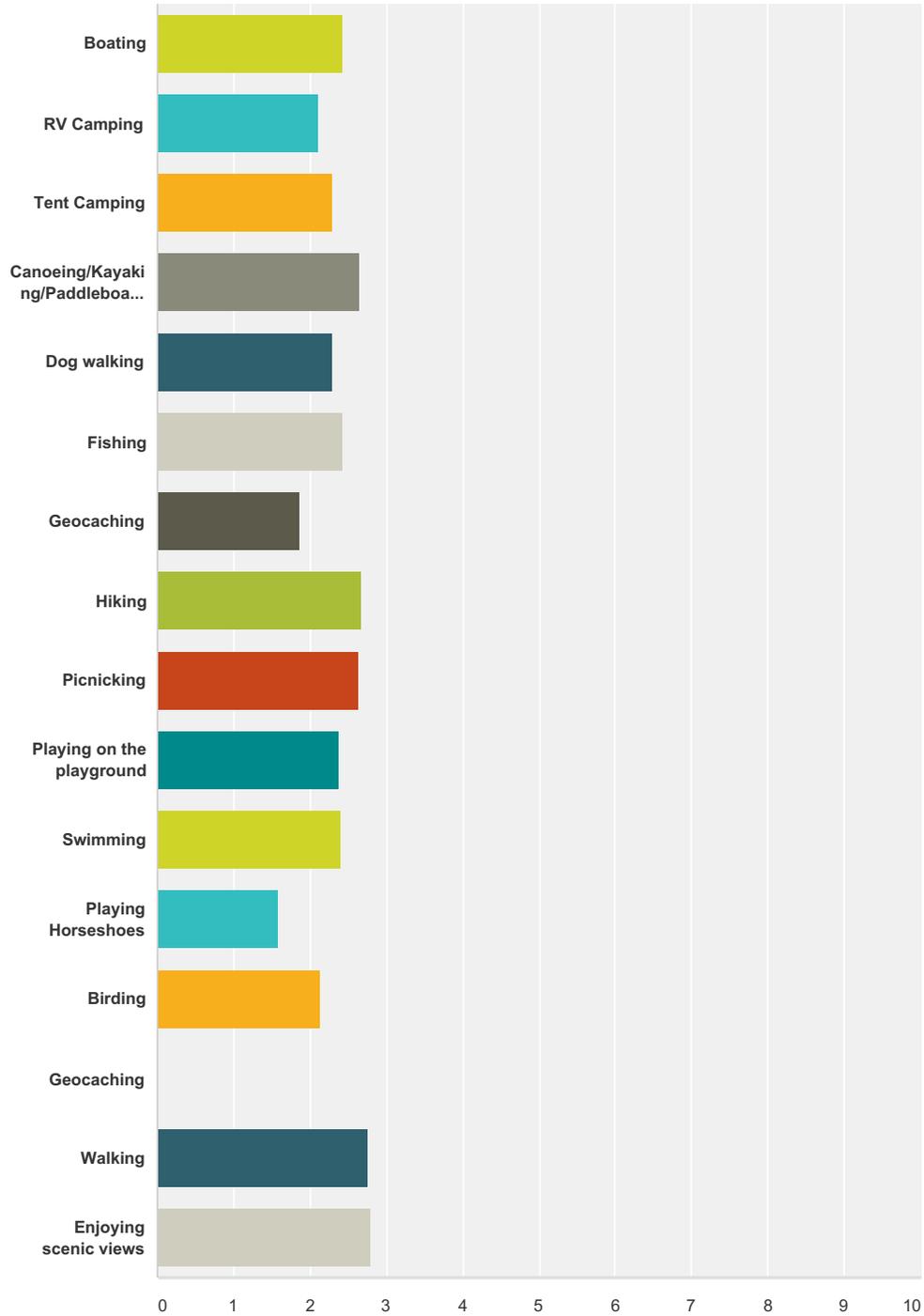


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
In a private vehicle/camper/motorcycle	75.14%	130
On foot	6.36%	11
By bicycle	13.29%	23
On a charter or school bus	0.58%	1
By boat/canoe/kayak	2.31%	4
Other (please specify)	2.31%	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>173</b>

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	By car from Twin Cities, then bike trail	9/23/2016 1:22 PM
2	We live on Lake Byllesby.	9/17/2016 3:38 PM
3	On foot, by bicycle, and by boat/canoe/kayak	9/13/2016 8:07 PM
4	On foot, by bicycle, and by boat/canoe/kayak	9/13/2016 6:30 AM

### Q5 How important is it for the parks to have the following summer activities?

Answered: 188 Skipped: 19



	VeryImportant	SomewhatImportant	NotImportant	Total	Weighted Average
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## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

Boating	<b>56.32%</b> 98	<b>29.31%</b> 51	<b>14.37%</b> 25	174	2.42
RV Camping	<b>39.31%</b> 68	<b>31.21%</b> 54	<b>29.48%</b> 51	173	2.10
Tent Camping	<b>44.57%</b> 78	<b>40.57%</b> 71	<b>14.86%</b> 26	175	2.30
Canoeing/Kayaking/Paddleboarding	<b>71.51%</b> 128	<b>22.35%</b> 40	<b>6.15%</b> 11	179	2.65
Dog walking	<b>47.06%</b> 80	<b>34.71%</b> 59	<b>18.24%</b> 31	170	2.29
Fishing	<b>53.14%</b> 93	<b>35.43%</b> 62	<b>11.43%</b> 20	175	2.42
Geocaching	<b>23.53%</b> 40	<b>37.65%</b> 64	<b>38.82%</b> 66	170	1.85
Hiking	<b>72.53%</b> 132	<b>22.53%</b> 41	<b>4.95%</b> 9	182	2.68
Picnicking	<b>70.11%</b> 129	<b>23.91%</b> 44	<b>5.98%</b> 11	184	2.64
Playing on the playground	<b>53.45%</b> 93	<b>31.03%</b> 54	<b>15.52%</b> 27	174	2.38
Swimming	<b>51.43%</b> 90	<b>37.71%</b> 66	<b>10.86%</b> 19	175	2.41
Playing Horseshoes	<b>9.47%</b> 16	<b>40.24%</b> 68	<b>50.30%</b> 85	169	1.59
Birding	<b>35.88%</b> 61	<b>41.18%</b> 70	<b>22.94%</b> 39	170	2.13
Geocaching	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>0.00%</b> 0	0	0.00
Walking	<b>80.11%</b> 149	<b>16.13%</b> 30	<b>3.76%</b> 7	186	2.76
Enjoying scenic views	<b>81.01%</b> 145	<b>17.32%</b> 31	<b>1.68%</b> 3	179	2.79

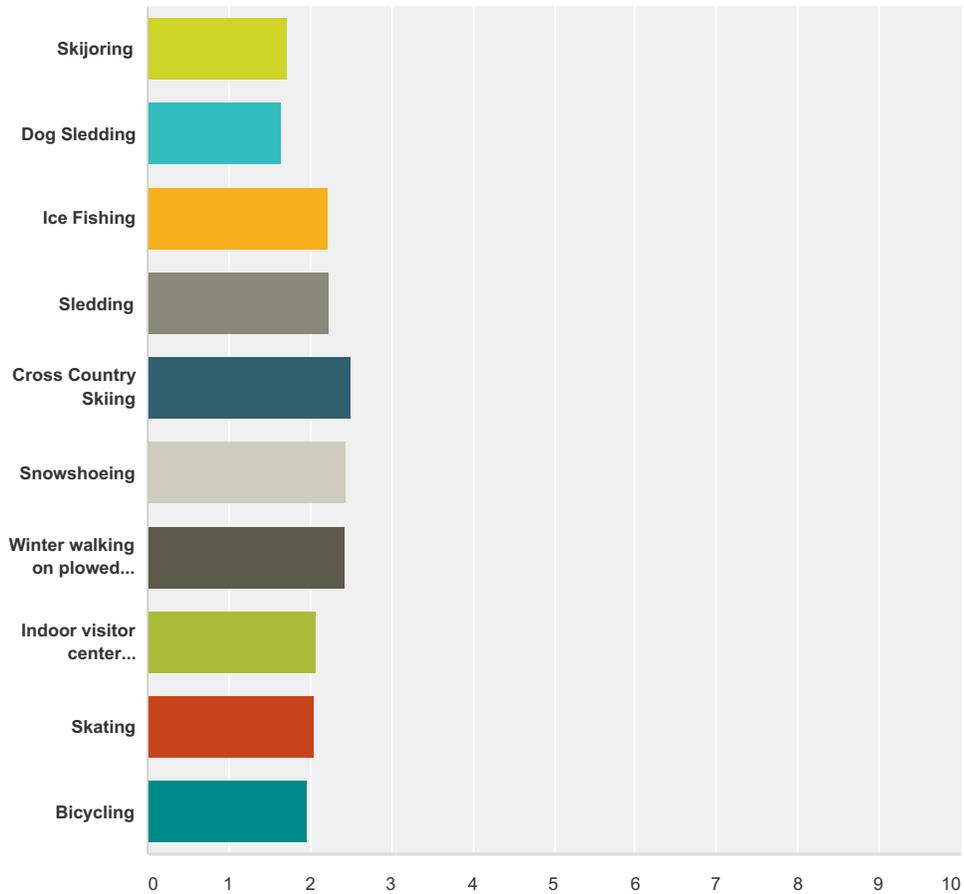
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Biking	10/1/2016 10:36 PM
2	Pickle ball	9/28/2016 7:29 PM
3	I love the walking path!!! However I do work about safety on it walking my children without my husband as it is so very secluded...	9/27/2016 9:20 PM
4	Bicycling start/stop point	9/27/2016 8:27 AM
5	biking	9/26/2016 5:15 PM
6	Biking	9/26/2016 1:13 PM
7	Bicycling	9/26/2016 8:58 AM
8	Bike trail connecting Cannon Valley Trail to Mill Town trail leading to Northfield.	9/25/2016 9:10 PM
9	Biking	9/25/2016 3:46 PM
10	Biking	9/24/2016 12:41 PM
11	Off leash dog areas with access to water	9/24/2016 12:37 PM
12	Biking	9/24/2016 4:26 AM

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

13	Biking, Very important	9/23/2016 8:29 PM
14	Biking	9/23/2016 8:22 PM
15	I am answering this for Byllesby, not for THE parks. This is a confusing ?	9/23/2016 6:31 PM
16	Biking	9/23/2016 5:28 PM
17	Biking - Very Important	9/23/2016 3:59 PM
18	Biking!	9/23/2016 2:14 PM
19	biking	9/23/2016 1:48 PM
20	Bicycling	9/23/2016 12:44 PM
21	Bike trails	9/23/2016 11:12 AM
22	Biking	9/23/2016 11:12 AM
23	Bicycling	9/23/2016 10:56 AM
24	Biking to the park	9/23/2016 10:51 AM
25	Not sure what you consider difference between walking and hiking.	9/22/2016 9:21 AM
26	Biking-very important (road and mountain)	9/22/2016 9:15 AM
27	assume you mean this park-Byllesby	9/21/2016 2:03 PM
28	Bicycling	9/17/2016 3:40 PM
29	croos country skiing, maybe biking	9/16/2016 1:12 PM
30	Dog sled, horse trails	9/10/2016 8:52 PM
31	Planning sewer and water project to serve 500 homes	9/10/2016 1:10 PM
32	Dog sledding, our family Dog sledding, our family has 3 active participants and with MN not including this feature in the state parks unlike states like Michigan, the option to have designated dog sled trails is why this park is so important, it is unihas 3 active participants and with MN not including this feature in the state parks unlike states like Michigan, the option to have designated dog sled trails is why this park is SO important, Plp drive in to use this feature. Please keep it.	9/10/2016 11:09 AM
33	Horse trails	9/10/2016 8:17 AM
34	Enjoying scenic views does that exist in a natural state -- no need for built amenities to enjoy views.	9/3/2016 9:41 AM

### Q6 How important is it for the parks to have the following winter activities?

Answered: 183 Skipped: 24



	VeryImportant	SomewhatImportant	NotImportant	Total	Weighted Average
Skijoring	14.04% 24	43.86% 75	42.11% 72	171	1.72
Dog Sledding	14.12% 24	35.29% 60	50.59% 86	170	1.64
Ice Fishing	39.88% 69	41.04% 71	19.08% 33	173	2.21
Sledding	38.60% 66	45.61% 78	15.79% 27	171	2.23
Cross Country Skiing	57.87% 103	34.27% 61	7.87% 14	178	2.50
Snowshoeing	56.65% 98	31.79% 55	11.56% 20	173	2.45
Winter walking on plowed trails	56.25% 99	29.55% 52	14.20% 25	176	2.42

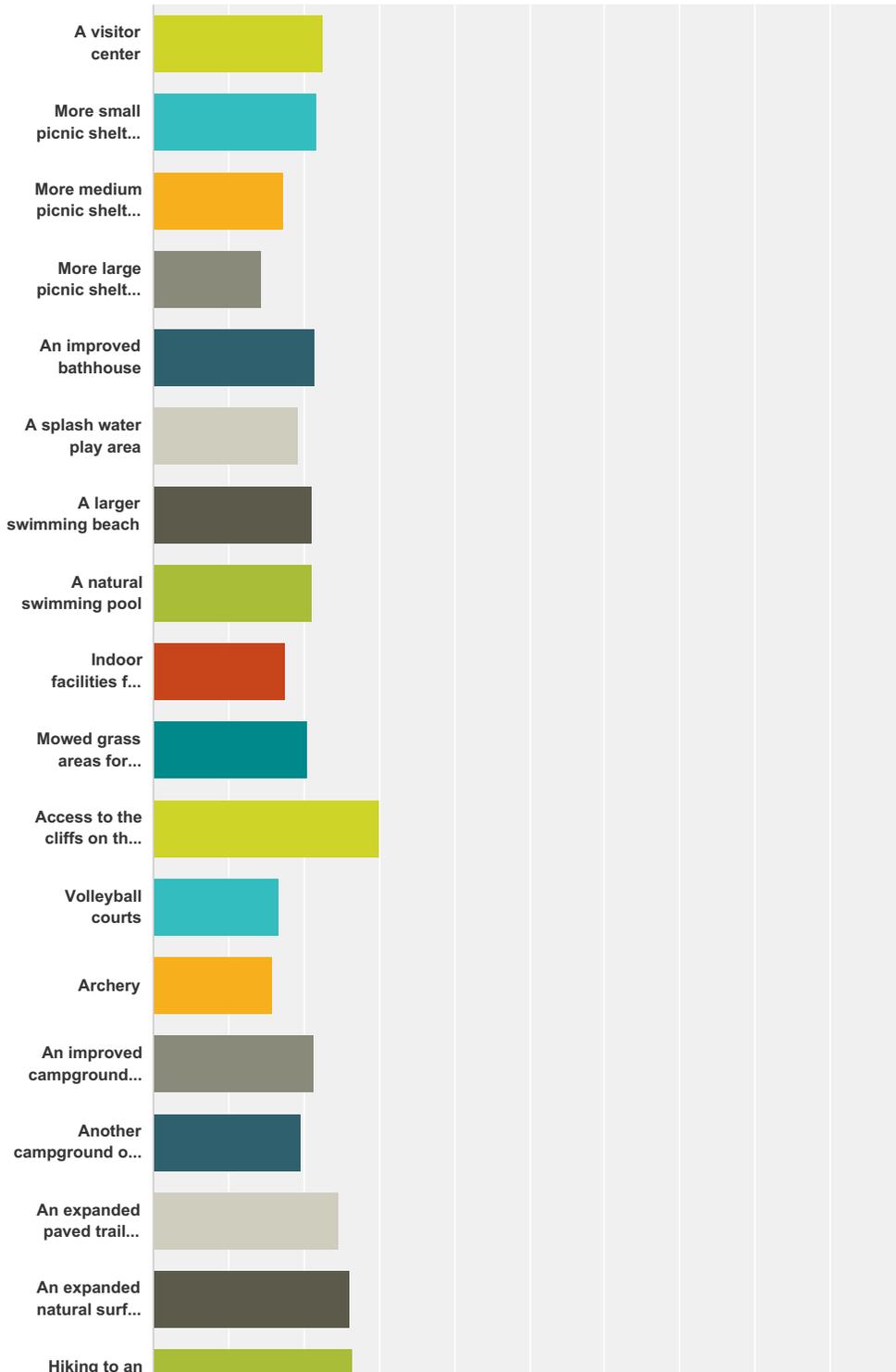
## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

Indoor visitor center activities	<b>32.14%</b> 54	<b>42.26%</b> 71	<b>25.60%</b> 43	168	2.07
Skating	<b>29.24%</b> 50	<b>46.20%</b> 79	<b>24.56%</b> 42	171	2.05
Bicycling	<b>33.33%</b> 58	<b>30.46%</b> 53	<b>36.21%</b> 63	174	1.97

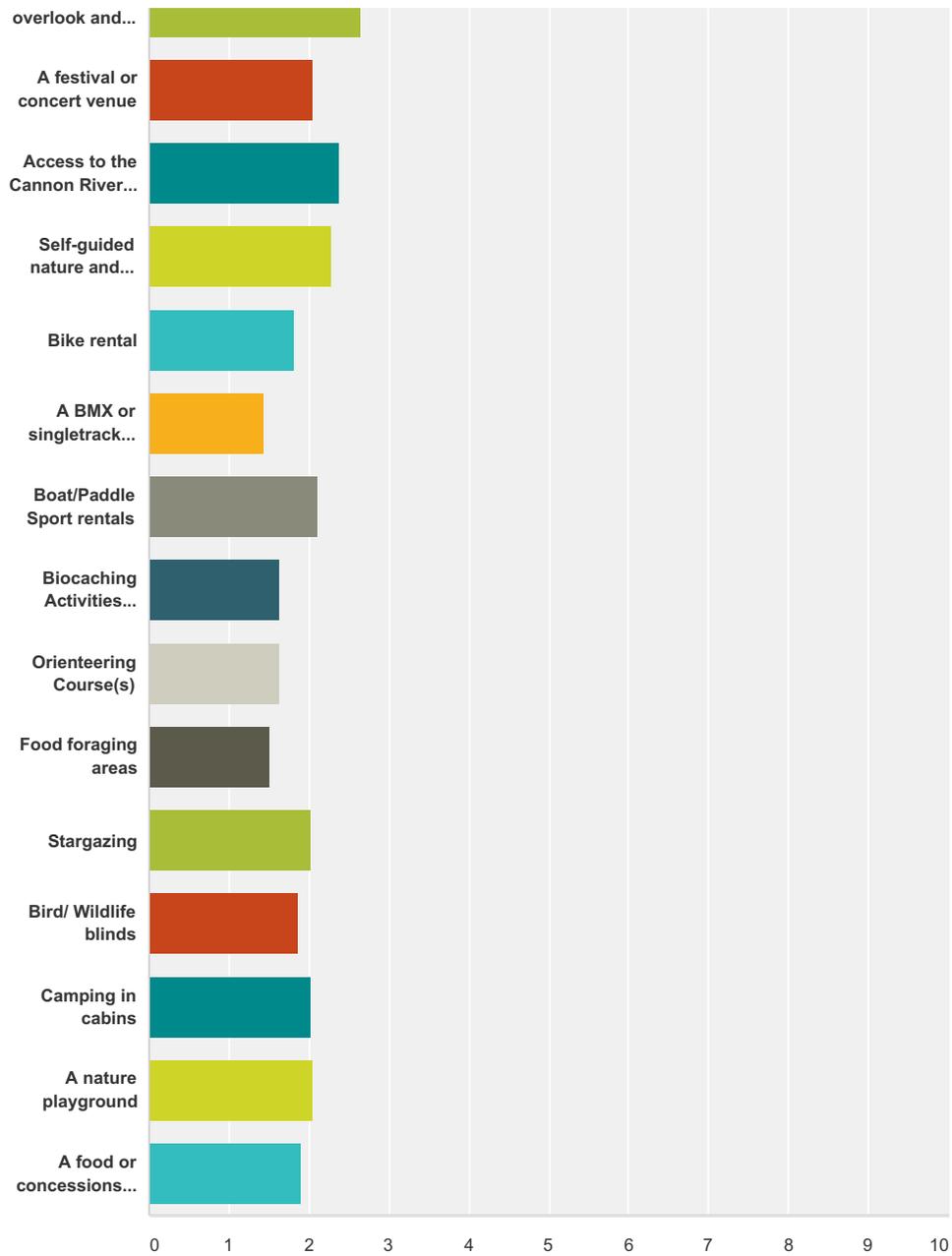
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Snowmobiling!! An access trail from Cannon Falls to the Lake!! Live a 1/4 mile from lake, folks go through my ditch, you can make a safer route for them to use!	9/26/2016 9:36 PM
2	Byllesby winter activities never promoted	9/26/2016 2:15 PM
3	Birding	9/24/2016 10:25 PM
4	Large scale use of paved trails distracts from the wilderness use of parks for hikers and birders.	9/24/2016 12:37 PM
5	Same. Answers are for Byllesby. I thought the whole point of the survey was to answer questions about Byllesby, not THE parks	9/23/2016 6:31 PM
6	Not a winter camper	9/23/2016 9:19 AM
7	Do people even dog sled anymore?	9/22/2016 6:26 PM
8	Many cleared, paved trails already available in our communities. Concerned about adding more of these to County parks. Many of our parks already have very compromised water quality. Adding ice control/i.e. Salt, will further impact. Have noticed significant use of ice for safety near VC at Lebanon. This has to be detrimental for nearby lakes, but is necessary for safety. The more paved trails that are added to parks, the more County will need to rely on chemical ice treatment for safety.	9/22/2016 9:21 AM
9	Mountain biking?	9/22/2016 9:15 AM
10	assume you mean this park-Byllesby	9/21/2016 2:03 PM
11	Given the algae and coeliform bacteria problems, I will wait until there is a sewer in Randolph City and Stanton Township before considering using the park.	9/10/2016 1:10 PM
12	Please see note above, pls keep dog sledding trails	9/10/2016 11:09 AM
13	Geocaching	9/10/2016 10:19 AM
14	Winter geocaching	9/9/2016 5:21 PM

### Q7 How likely would you be to use the following facilities if they were available at Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park?

Answered: 177 Skipped: 30



## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire



	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely	Total	Weighted Average
A visitor center	40.94% 70	43.27% 74	15.79% 27	171	2.25
More small picnic shelters for 20 people	37.65% 64	41.76% 71	20.59% 35	170	2.17
More medium picnic shelters for 20-50 people	14.97% 25	43.71% 73	41.32% 69	167	1.74
More large picnic shelters for 100+ people	8.59% 14	27.61% 45	63.80% 104	163	1.45
An improved bathhouse	38.41% 63	39.63% 65	21.95% 36	164	2.16

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

A splash water play area	<b>30.72%</b> 51	<b>30.72%</b> 51	<b>38.55%</b> 64	166	1.92
A larger swimming beach	<b>33.73%</b> 56	<b>43.37%</b> 72	<b>22.89%</b> 38	166	2.11
A natural swimming pool	<b>33.73%</b> 56	<b>43.37%</b> 72	<b>22.89%</b> 38	166	2.11
Indoor facilities for family reunions or weddings	<b>16.56%</b> 27	<b>42.33%</b> 69	<b>41.10%</b> 67	163	1.75
Mowed grass areas for informal games	<b>29.52%</b> 49	<b>46.39%</b> 77	<b>24.10%</b> 40	166	2.05
Access to the cliffs on the Goodhue County side of the lake	<b>100.00%</b> 1	<b>0.00%</b> 0	<b>0.00%</b> 0	1	3.00
Volleyball courts	<b>12.05%</b> 20	<b>41.57%</b> 69	<b>46.39%</b> 77	166	1.66
Archery	<b>12.96%</b> 21	<b>32.10%</b> 52	<b>54.94%</b> 89	162	1.58
An improved campground (more shade, privacy, etc.)	<b>34.55%</b> 57	<b>43.03%</b> 71	<b>22.42%</b> 37	165	2.12
Another campground on the Goodhue County side of the lake	<b>28.66%</b> 47	<b>39.63%</b> 65	<b>31.71%</b> 52	164	1.97
An expanded paved trail network	<b>63.53%</b> 108	<b>20.00%</b> 34	<b>16.47%</b> 28	170	2.47
An expanded natural surface trail network	<b>66.47%</b> 111	<b>26.95%</b> 45	<b>6.59%</b> 11	167	2.60
Hiking to an overlook and along bluffs on the Goodhue County side of the lake	<b>74.14%</b> 129	<b>17.82%</b> 31	<b>8.05%</b> 14	174	2.66
A festival or concert venue	<b>35.54%</b> 59	<b>34.34%</b> 57	<b>30.12%</b> 50	166	2.05
Access to the Cannon River below the dam	<b>49.70%</b> 83	<b>37.72%</b> 63	<b>12.57%</b> 21	167	2.37
Self-guided nature and history programs	<b>40.36%</b> 67	<b>46.99%</b> 78	<b>12.65%</b> 21	166	2.28
Bike rental	<b>24.26%</b> 41	<b>33.73%</b> 57	<b>42.01%</b> 71	169	1.82
A BMX or singletrack course	<b>12.88%</b> 21	<b>17.79%</b> 29	<b>69.33%</b> 113	163	1.44
Boat/Paddle Sport rentals	<b>33.13%</b> 55	<b>43.98%</b> 73	<b>22.89%</b> 38	166	2.10
Biocaching Activities (Learn more about Biocaching here)	<b>14.11%</b> 23	<b>34.36%</b> 56	<b>51.53%</b> 84	163	1.63
Orienteering Course(s)	<b>13.50%</b> 22	<b>34.97%</b> 57	<b>51.53%</b> 84	163	1.62
Food foraging areas	<b>11.18%</b> 18	<b>27.95%</b> 45	<b>60.87%</b> 98	161	1.50
Stargazing	<b>30.30%</b> 50	<b>41.21%</b> 68	<b>28.48%</b> 47	165	2.02
Bird/ Wildlife blinds	<b>19.51%</b> 32	<b>46.95%</b> 77	<b>33.54%</b> 55	164	1.86
Camping in cabins	<b>32.14%</b> 54	<b>37.50%</b> 63	<b>30.36%</b> 51	168	2.02

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

A nature playground	<b>29.70%</b> 49	<b>44.85%</b> 74	<b>25.45%</b> 42	165	2.04
A food or concessions stand	<b>24.24%</b> 40	<b>41.21%</b> 68	<b>34.55%</b> 57	165	1.90

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Sand for Beach area on both sides and Sand for volleyball court	9/28/2016 7:34 PM
2	Paddle boarding or kayake rentals! Family friendly splash pad would be awesome! Walking paved paths for us stroller moms!!	9/27/2016 9:26 PM
3	restaurant on the lake and accessible by boat, biking, and car	9/27/2016 9:59 AM
4	Hiking Trails (not paved) most important being in a county that will continue developing.	9/24/2016 2:16 PM
5	Mountain bike trails a plus, as well as on-groomed ski trails for off lease dog activities in winter	9/24/2016 12:39 PM
6	paved bike trail to connect to Mill  Towns Trail	9/23/2016 1:51 PM
7	The biggest reason I would go to Byllesby would be if I knew there were areas of natural restoration, native plants etc. This would improve habitat for wildlife, birds, pollinators etc. No need to build special bird blinds. I believe natural restoration of prairies, woodlands, wetlands and lakes would create much interest in Byllesby, and would improve attendance.	9/22/2016 9:37 AM
8	BMX? Really??!!! No Way!	9/22/2016 9:17 AM
9	while I am not likely to use a large picnic area, it is a big draw in other large regional parks	9/21/2016 2:05 PM
10	Skatepark	9/10/2016 7:27 PM
11	Raising wild rice next to the Boy Scout camp.	9/10/2016 1:11 PM
12	Built amenities and large picnic areas should be part of city parks, which regional parks complement by offering something different -- nature and nature-based recreation.	9/3/2016 9:45 AM

Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

**Q8 Do you participate in activities at Lake Byllesby with an organized group, club, or association? (i.e. bicycling, canoeing, kayakers, RV campers, skijorers...) If so, please list which group(s).**

Answered: 68 Skipped: 139

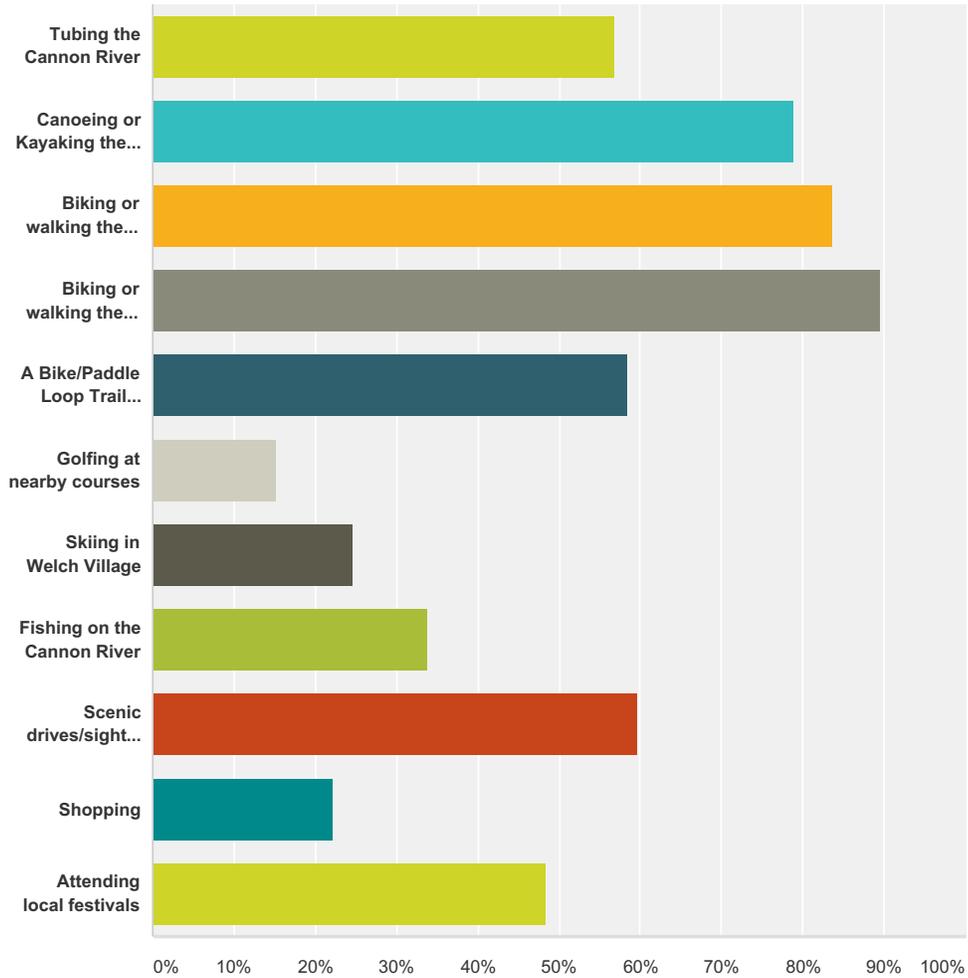
#	Responses	Date
1	Northfield senior bike club, Lakeville senior bike club.	9/29/2016 6:43 PM
2	large shelter activities. Boating	9/28/2016 8:46 PM
3	No, I have my own kayaks and sailboat. I do bike and bring my grandchildren to the play grounds.	9/28/2016 7:36 PM
4	No, but I've starting using the trail ( and park) a lot since it opened!! We love it.. We just get nervous for safety the closer I get to 52, when it's just me and my two little kids. Going under 52 worries me that someone will be there and hurt someone.. Cameras or something might be nice there..	9/27/2016 9:30 PM
5	LBIA	9/27/2016 2:15 PM
6	Boating with friends	9/27/2016 10:08 AM
7	Church picnic	9/27/2016 9:17 AM
8	Cannon Valley Velo Club	9/27/2016 8:29 AM
9	lake Byllesby Improvement Assoc. Various scouting groups	9/26/2016 7:11 PM
10	no	9/26/2016 4:25 PM
11	no	9/26/2016 3:21 PM
12	no	9/26/2016 2:18 PM
13	employee picnics/gatherings	9/26/2016 2:16 PM
14	Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club, Cannon Valley Velo Club	9/26/2016 9:03 AM
15	Bicycling - CVVC	9/25/2016 9:17 PM
16	Mill Towns Trail bike group	9/25/2016 3:50 PM
17	None	9/25/2016 1:13 PM
18	Birding groups	9/24/2016 10:27 PM
19	Kayaking, TV camping, trail walking	9/24/2016 8:50 PM
20	Nfld peddlers	9/24/2016 2:30 PM
21	No	9/24/2016 2:17 PM
22	No	9/24/2016 12:43 PM
23	Bicycling -- Cannon Valley Velo Club	9/24/2016 12:40 PM
24	Scouts	9/24/2016 10:12 AM
25	No, bur do bicycle with two groups that use the Cannon Trail and would bike to Lake Byllesby.	9/24/2016 8:58 AM
26	bicycling, kayakers	9/24/2016 8:27 AM
27	Northfield peddlers	9/24/2016 4:28 AM
28	Cannon Valley Velo Club, CROCT	9/23/2016 11:23 PM
29	Bicycling. - seniors from Northfield	9/23/2016 8:32 PM
30	Cannon Valley Velo Club	9/23/2016 5:30 PM

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

31	biking group visits, rides	9/23/2016 3:18 PM
32	No	9/23/2016 3:14 PM
33	no	9/23/2016 1:52 PM
34	bicycling	9/23/2016 1:25 PM
35	Girl Scouts	9/23/2016 12:05 PM
36	Biking	9/23/2016 11:23 AM
37	Northfield Pedalers, a biking group	9/23/2016 11:14 AM
38	NO	9/22/2016 10:12 AM
39	Years ago chaperoned scout group at park.	9/22/2016 9:41 AM
40	no--groups of friends through (kayaking and canoeing).	9/22/2016 9:17 AM
41	no	9/21/2016 2:06 PM
42	no	9/20/2016 3:24 PM
43	Skijorers/Dogsledding	9/19/2016 12:14 PM
44	no	9/16/2016 3:06 PM
45	at this time I do not	9/16/2016 1:38 PM
46	no	9/15/2016 1:58 PM
47	bicycling	9/15/2016 8:20 AM
48	dog sledding	9/14/2016 7:23 AM
49	NO. I live on the lake.	9/12/2016 10:21 AM
50	We have done dog sledding with HHH Ranch before down there and really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun.	9/12/2016 9:08 AM
51	No	9/12/2016 7:05 AM
52	dog sledding	9/11/2016 8:41 PM
53	Minnesota Geocaching Assoc.	9/11/2016 7:57 PM
54	Minnesota Geocaching Society - Geocaching events/gatherings	9/11/2016 7:09 PM
55	I havent as of this time. Would maybe attend geocaching events if held there in the future.	9/11/2016 8:27 AM
56	HHH Ranch	9/10/2016 7:28 PM
57	Yes	9/10/2016 6:15 PM
58	No	9/10/2016 1:13 PM
59	Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and Minnesota Geocaching Society	9/10/2016 10:23 AM
60	Dogsledding on weekends. The best.	9/10/2016 8:52 AM
61	GEOCACHING	9/10/2016 8:26 AM
62	Dog Sledding- personal hobby	9/10/2016 2:58 AM
63	Not at this time	9/10/2016 12:16 AM
64	Minnesota Geocaching Association	9/9/2016 11:05 PM
65	Geocaching	9/9/2016 6:34 PM
66	Minnesota Geocachers Association	9/9/2016 5:23 PM
67	yes-- boy scouts, girl scouts, school groups	9/9/2016 10:19 AM
68	No	9/1/2016 9:12 AM

**Q9 The park is envisioned as a recreational node for the region, providing access to a variety of regional activities. Which of the following activities might you participate in during your visit to the parks?**

Answered: 171 Skipped: 36



Answer Choices	Responses
Tubing the Cannon River	56.73% 97
Canoeing or Kayaking the Cannon River	78.95% 135
Biking or walking the Mill Towns State Trail	83.63% 143
Biking or walking the Cannon Valley Trail	89.47% 153
A Bike/Paddle Loop Trail Experience	58.48% 100
Golfing at nearby courses	15.20% 26

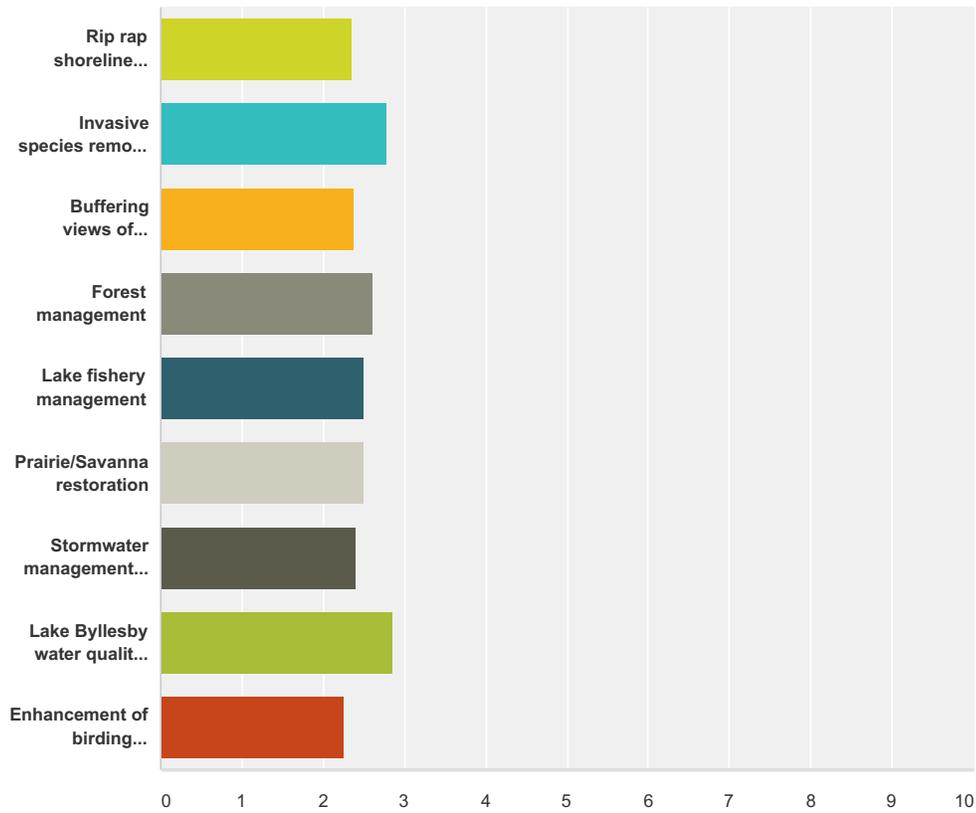
## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

Skiing in Welch Village	24.56%	42
Fishing on the Cannon River	33.92%	58
Scenic drives/sightseeing	59.65%	102
Shopping	22.22%	38
Attending local festivals	48.54%	83
<b>Total Respondents: 171</b>		

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	A restaurant on the lake would be ideal, and accessible by boat, car, and bikes	9/27/2016 10:00 AM
2	Birding, Lake Byllesby west end, especially during March and April.	9/25/2016 3:13 PM
3	Need more miles of off-leash dog trails	9/24/2016 12:40 PM
4	Playing with grandkids on play equipment	9/23/2016 1:25 PM
5	Hiking at Nerstrand or other natural areas in the region. May go mushroom foraging in region.	9/22/2016 9:41 AM
6	Cannon River Winery	9/22/2016 9:00 AM
7	visiting nearby vineyards and restaurants	9/21/2016 2:06 PM
8	Dogsledding	9/10/2016 7:28 PM
9	When there is a \$15 million water/sewer project completed, I will look forward to visiting friends on the lake front in Randolph Township.	9/10/2016 1:13 PM
10	Dogsledding	9/10/2016 12:16 PM
11	Dog sledding	9/10/2016 11:56 AM
12	Geocaching	9/10/2016 10:23 AM
13	dogsledding	9/9/2016 10:19 AM
14	We use the park today as a recreational spot - a place to meet friends for a picnic, take the kids to the park, go canoeing, for winter walks etc. We love and use the park today, and hope the facilities can be even better for those of us who live in the southern half of the county. The fancy stuff is fine and good, but we really would just appreciate expanded, everyday uses that are accessible without need for a lot of special equipment or planning. Playground, picnic shelters, year round grooming of trails, more walking trails, canoes/kayaks for rent - they'd be great. How about a little programming too - a kids or family activity?	9/6/2016 8:24 PM
15	walking on bike trails is not a pleasant experience -- ON YOUR LEFT is not a good nature experience.	9/3/2016 9:47 AM

### Q10 How important is it to implement the following natural resource improvements at Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 37



	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Total	Weighted Average
Rip rap shoreline removal and shoreline restoration	45.78% 76	43.98% 73	10.24% 17	166	2.36
Invasive species removal and management	79.04% 132	19.16% 32	1.80% 3	167	2.77
Buffering views of adjacent development	49.70% 82	38.18% 63	12.12% 20	165	2.38
Forest management	64.63% 106	31.10% 51	4.27% 7	164	2.60
Lake fishery management	57.93% 95	34.76% 57	7.32% 12	164	2.51
Prairie/Savanna restoration	56.97% 94	36.36% 60	6.67% 11	165	2.50
Stormwater management features like raingardens	48.75% 78	43.75% 70	7.50% 12	160	2.41

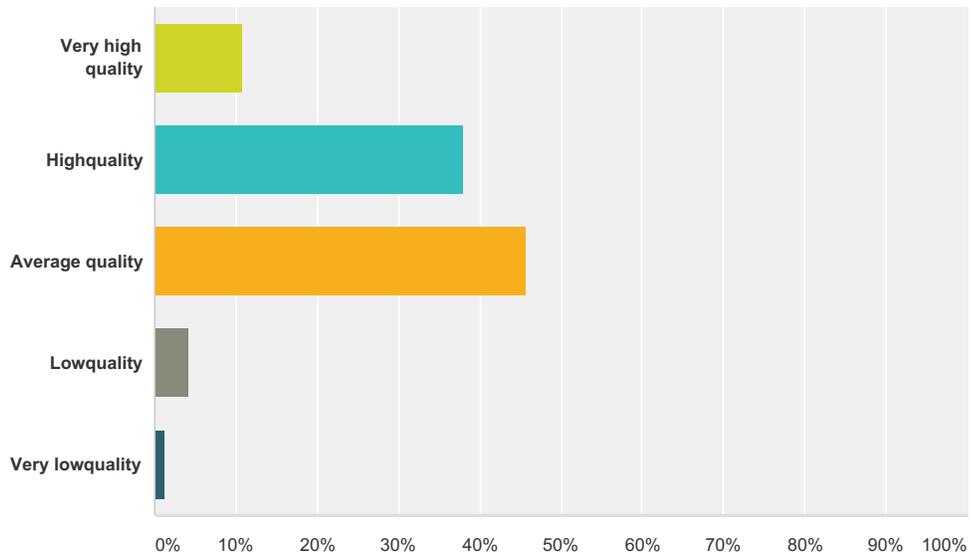
## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

Lake Byllesby water quality improvements	<b>87.57%</b> 148	<b>11.83%</b> 20	<b>0.59%</b> 1	169	2.87
Enhancement of birding opportunities and bird habitat	<b>38.79%</b> 64	<b>48.48%</b> 80	<b>12.73%</b> 21	165	2.26

#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	Plant native vegetation as an alternative to expensive rip rap solutions.	9/26/2016 2:21 PM
2	Enhance & maintain Milltown Towns trail	9/26/2016 9:06 AM
3	Natural resources important to highlight with Dakota County continuing to develop. I am a young adult and in the future would want my family to visit an area where natural resource work is present.	9/24/2016 2:18 PM
4	Evasive species control (milfoil/algae) key to enhance recreational use of lake, as well as drastically improving water quality (which may require stricter upstream management of water shed to minimize pollutant and sedimentation runoff into Cannon River). Right now the water shed is very impart greatly diminishing the potential use of the Park and its surroundings.	9/24/2016 12:44 PM
5	WATER QUALITY is #1. This Lake was nice when I was a kid, now it's frighteningly electric green.	9/23/2016 6:34 PM
6	Think this is the first area that should be focused on at Lake Byllesby! The natural resources in all of our County Parks need to be addressed thoroughly, and in a sustainable way before adding new infrastructure. Feel that natural resources have been far too low a priority in Dakota County for a long, long time. Very glad to hear a natural resource management plan is being developed. The leadership in the County needs to fully commit to funding this plan in a sustainable, ongoing way. We owe it to following generations to get going on this now. We need to be good stewards and restore that which we have allowed to degrade.	9/22/2016 9:50 AM
7	Birding area should be protected.	9/22/2016 9:18 AM
8	Do something to prevent ugly algae build up!	9/14/2016 12:51 PM
9	Lake Bottom Restoration	9/13/2016 8:13 PM
10	improving water quality is VERY important to me. Also invasive species removal & management	9/12/2016 10:23 AM
11	Dredge the delta, restor proper channels for Cannon River and Chubb Creek, enhance wildlife and fisheries and canoeing in the delta and further west, just south of Randolph City and Township west of MN 56.	9/10/2016 1:15 PM

### Q11 How would you rate the parks' scenic quality as part of experiencing nature?

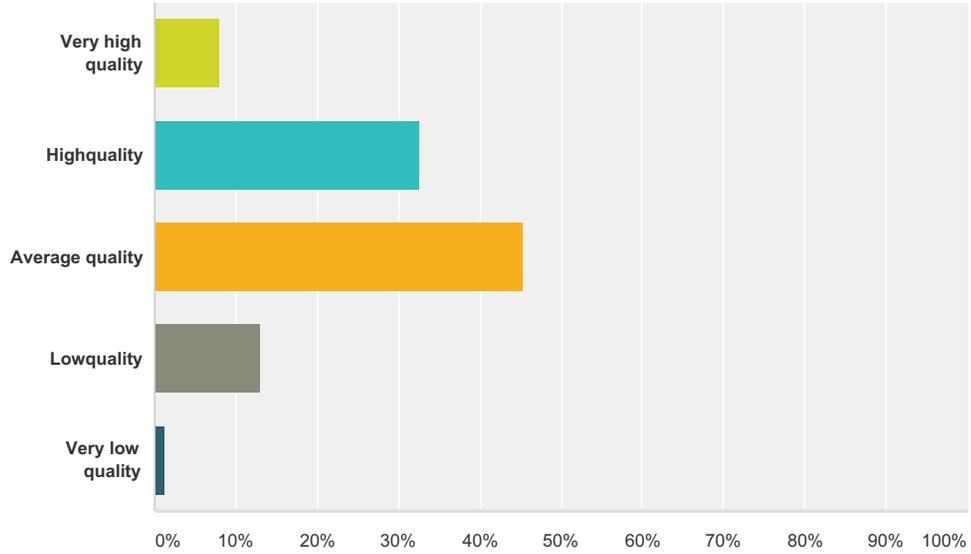
Answered: 166 Skipped: 41



Answer Choices	Responses	
Very high quality	10.84%	18
High quality	37.95%	63
Average quality	45.78%	76
Low quality	4.22%	7
Very low quality	1.20%	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>166</b>

### Q12 How would you rate the parks'river, stream, lake, and wetlandquality as part of experiencing nature?

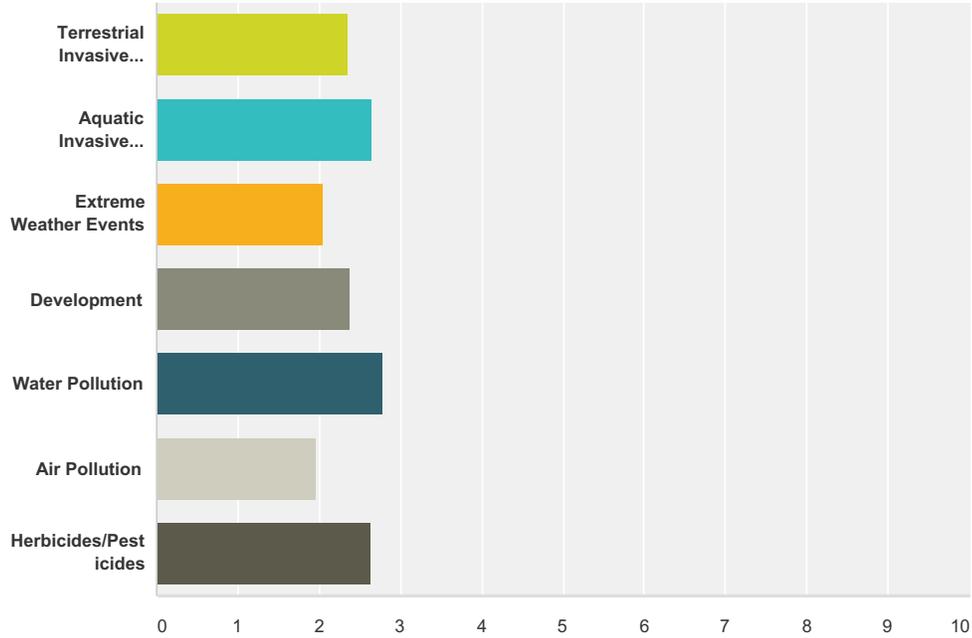
Answered: 163 Skipped: 44



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Very high quality	7.98%	13
Highquality	32.52%	53
Average quality	45.40%	74
Lowquality	12.88%	21
Very low quality	1.23%	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>163</b>

### Q13 What do you see as the biggest threats to natural resource quality and experience around Lake Byllesby?

Answered: 162 Skipped: 45



	MajorThreat	Minor Threat	Not a Threat	Total	Weighted Average
Terrestrial Invasive Species	40.79% 62	53.95% 82	5.26% 8	152	2.36
Aquatic Invasive Species	66.88% 103	32.47% 50	0.65% 1	154	2.66
Extreme Weather Events	20.95% 31	63.51% 94	15.54% 23	148	2.05
Development	44.59% 70	48.41% 76	7.01% 11	157	2.38
Water Pollution	78.48% 124	19.62% 31	1.90% 3	158	2.77
Air Pollution	18.00% 27	61.33% 92	20.67% 31	150	1.97
Herbicides/Pesticides	65.41% 104	32.70% 52	1.89% 3	159	2.64

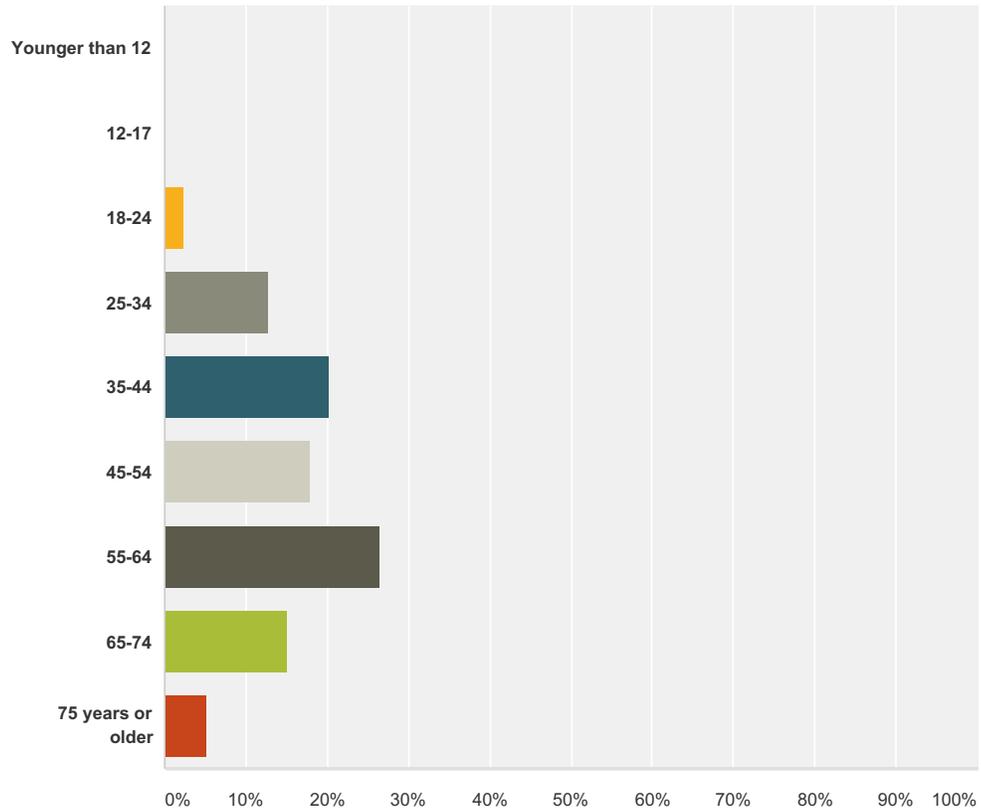
#	Other (please specify)	Date
1	siltation throughout the lake	9/26/2016 7:13 PM
2	Nothing on Farm run off and Algae?	9/26/2016 11:46 AM
3	Trash along the lake shore and in the shallows.	9/25/2016 3:15 PM
4	All major	9/24/2016 2:42 PM

## Lake Byllesby Regional Park/Byllesby County Park Community Input Questionnaire

5	Dam failure and lack of adequate spill ways for fish migration.	9/24/2016 12:45 PM
6	Very concerned about degraded conditions in all of our County Parks including Lake Byllesby.	9/22/2016 9:52 AM
7	threats to pollinators	9/21/2016 2:08 PM
8	don't know	9/16/2016 3:58 PM
9	Farm land run off and silt fill in the lake bottom (Major Threat)	9/13/2016 8:15 PM
10	There are over 50 FAILED septics in Randolph City and probably 45 failed or failing septics in Stanton Township.	9/10/2016 1:17 PM
11	lack of dedicated funding to NR management is a threat to natural resource quality.	9/3/2016 9:49 AM

### Q14 What is your age?

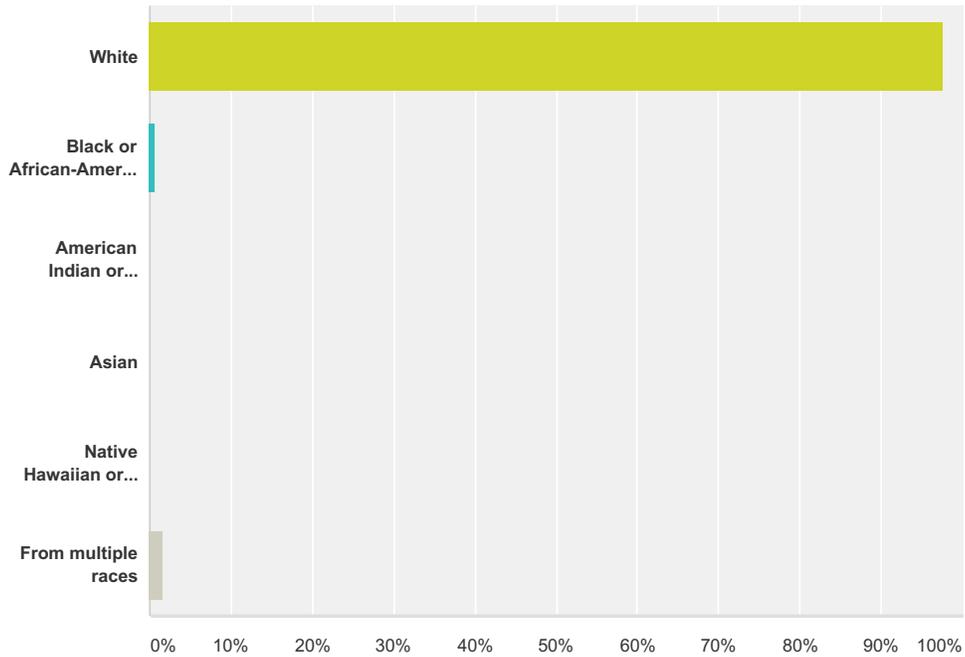
Answered: 173 Skipped: 34



Answer Choices	Responses	
Younger than 12	0.00%	0
12-17	0.00%	0
18-24	2.31%	4
25-34	12.72%	22
35-44	20.23%	35
45-54	17.92%	31
55-64	26.59%	46
65-74	15.03%	26
75 years or older	5.20%	9
<b>Total</b>		<b>173</b>

### Q15 What is your race?

Answered: 170 Skipped: 37

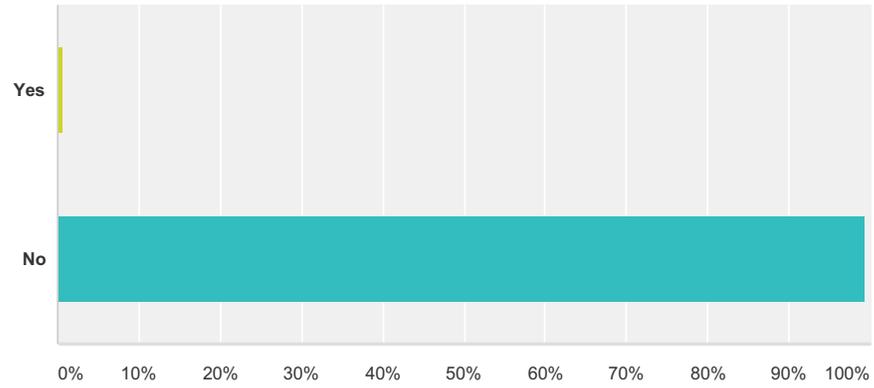


Answer Choices	Responses
White	97.65% 166
Black or African-American	0.59% 1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.00% 0
Asian	0.00% 0
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.00% 0
From multiple races	1.76% 3
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>

#	Another race (please specify)	Date
1	Absurd quest from a government agencies. Citizens and visitors should enjoy the park irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, handicaps, etc	9/10/2016 1:20 PM

**Q16 Are you Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Cuban-American, or some other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino group?**

Answered: 166 Skipped: 41



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	0.60% 1
No	99.40% 165
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Park Neighbors

### Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

### Dakota County Lake Byllesby Park Neighbors Meeting

August 30, 2016 6:00-7:00 PM

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Picnic Shelter

### Summary

**Residents and property owners directly adjacent to Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park were invited to information meeting regarding the master plan. Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks Director and Lil Leatham, Dakota County Planner introduced the project purpose and process. The overview was followed by informal discussion among the approximately 25 neighbors attending the meeting.**

- Several expressed the desire to keep the nature based themes in the park and to not make the park too commercial.
- Several expressed that watershed level initiatives have resulted in improved water quality.
- The idea of creating a natural reef to improve water quality was suggested.
- The dam improvement project has resulted in more stable water levels, which most homeowners prefer.
- The accumulation of silt continues to be an issue and is making access to some docks on the west side of the lake difficult/impossible. This will impact boating recreation on the lake.
- There was concern from some about the number of boats on the lake at any given time and discussion about the relationship between available public parking spaces and number of boats on the lake at any given time.
- There was a lot of discussion among those living on Echo Point about the parking lot near the point recommended in the 2005 plan. Concerns focused on increased traffic on the park roads, and potential conflicts with adjacent homeowners due to the potential for increased public use of the point. Participants suggested providing for parking elsewhere in the park.
- A suggestion was made to allow for later campground check out times on Sundays.
- Programs during the week, such as naturalist programs, may draw visitors.
- Lilac landing was identified as important for winter lake access.
- Several expressed the desire for screening between recreation uses and trails and adjacent private properties.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Dakota County Township Officers

### Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

### Dakota County Township Officers Meeting

September 29, 2016

#### Summary

**Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks Director presented an update on the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan and received the following comments:**

- Several expressed the need for additional camping at Lake Byllesby Regional Park (LBRP). The public demand for weekends and holidays exceeds available campsites. Recommendation to add camping capacity at park to increase availability and serve more residents.
- Several expressed the need to both increase and diversify camping opportunities through adding camper cabins. There is a need to include camper cabins in LBRP. There are only three camper cabins in the entire Dakota County park system and current demand requires up to a one-year wait. Beyond meeting public demand, camper cabins offer year-round use.
- Camping is an affordable recreational opportunity that accommodates most people. Provide opportunities for camping alternatives, e.g. tenting, RV, camper cabins.
- With the connection to Mill Towns State Trail, coordinate year-round recreational opportunities, e.g. cross country skiing, biking, walking
- Include cross country skiing in the park.
- Provide increased access to the lake and river, e.g. canoe portage/access, docks
- LBRP provides close to home, unique and affordable recreational opportunities. The LBRP master plan should focus on desirable recreational opportunities to cater to this regional service area population.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Agency Water

Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## Agency Water Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Cannon Falls City Hall

Thursday, Sept. 15, 2016

11:00am-12:00pm

## Attendees

Ryan Malterud, Army Corps of Engineers

Beau Kennedy, Goodhue Co Soil and Water Conservation District

Brian Watson, Dakota Co Soil and Water Conservation District

Josh Peterson, Dakota County

Lil Leatham, Dakota County

Joe Walton, Dakota County

Greg Isakson, Goodhue County

Kevin Biehn, EOR

Gabrielle Grinde, HKGI

## Discussion

### ***What land use and watershed context issues affect the park?***

- The lake impacts the parks more than the parks impact the lake.
- The agricultural land use is the biggest impact on the lake- makes it hypereutrophic. The lake acts as a sediment reset system for the river downstream of the dam.
- A One Watershed One Plan is being undertaken (but has not yet started) which will address larger watershed issues in the Cannon River Watershed. The 13 local units of governments (LGUs) are statutorily responsible for local water planning within the Cannon River Watershed received the recent State grant award for developing a new watershed plan. When the project begins, the 13 LGUs will discuss a stakeholder process and a schedule to gather input as the new watershed plan develops. Stakeholders may include:
  - Other local units of government not statutorily charged with local water planning under State statute such as Dakota County (Metro County), cities and townships.
  - Non-profit organizations including Cannon River Watershed Partnership, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, etc.
  - Lake associations and citizens
  - State agencies such as DNR, BWSR, MPCA, MDA, etc.
  - Federal agencies such as Corp of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.
- Lake Byllesby is a reservoir, which is different than a lake. The dam slows water and sediment is deposited in the lake. A natural lake typically has 7 acres of wetland per acre of water. There needs to be public education on the role of a reservoir and the eutrophic nature of the lake in order to set realistic expectations for sedimentation and water quality.
- Suspended solid data from MPCA provide clues as to the rate of sedimentation.
- There have been requests from LBIA to dredge the lake.

- The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has lake specific standards for Byllesby. Chlorophyll amounts near the east end of the lake are higher than on the west end.
- Over the past 20 years, no statistical change has been seen.
- High nutrients in the lake create big fish, including Walleye. There are carp in the lake as well.
- Army Corps approves dredging activities all the time throughout the county.
- Lake Zumbro is a place where dredging will occur. It is \$6-7million project-homeowners are getting charged about \$6,000 per property.

#### ***Improvements to the parks?***

- Aquatic Invasive Species study was done last year by the DNR by Kevin Stauffer. Zebra mussels were not found. There is a state protected mussel in the lake.
- Interpretative signs/kiosks could inform the public about the role of the reservoir, where the water in the lake comes from, lake species, natural sedimentation, etc.
- The number of boat slips should be analyzed per DNR recommendations.

#### ***Rip rap as a FERC requirement? Could this be eliminated?***

- Rip rap north of the beach, near the new gates is a FERC requirement and needs to stay as it serves as a dyke. Rip rap on the east side of the lake could be removed. The dam is not affected by the eastern rip rap.
- Dakota County SWCD has tried various shoreline bioengineering methods that have failed on the lake. The land is relatively flat, so there aren't steep slope issues.

#### ***Could there be a longer draw down to impact the migratory birds?***

- The draw down was implemented 30 years ago by the DNR because farmers could not plant in the spring due to wet fields. The draw down has affected ground water. The lake is drawn down 3 ft in October 1 – Nov. 30. It stays drawn down until May 15. After that, what the river does upstream is directly related to the downstream flow. The goal is to keep the lake level constant. The FERC license outlines the draw down agreement. Changing this plan is problematic.
- While the lake could be drawn down longer to improve habitat quality for migratory birds, the lake homeowners have been vocal about restoring lake levels by Memorial Day.
- The reservoir is a hydroplant and the goal is for the plant to generate enough revenue to pay for dam improvements over the next 30-40 years.

#### ***What is your agency's role in regulating the Lake?***

- Goodhue SWCD oversees regulatory approvals
- Dakota SWCD oversees shoreline improvements, which could be affected by safety and FERC approval

#### ***Could bridge abutments be removed along the Cannon River on the west side of Lake Byllesby Regional Park?***

- Army Corps would review an application to see how the removal would affect the downstream resources.

***Are dam tours a possibility?***

- Yes, the idea could be explored when the current dam generator upgrade is complete – timeline is unknown. The County is pursuing State bonding to fund the project. It may be complete by 2020.

***Chub Creek realignment***

- MNDOT straightened Chub Creek adjacent to Hwy 56 when the highway was built.
- 10 years ago the North Cannon River Watershed Management Organization conducted a feasibility study to see if Chub Creek could be realigned. That plan determined the realignment was unfeasible. Old Chub Creek pipe under Hwy 56 is still there but blocked. This could be cleaned out for water and habitat.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Campground Hosts

### Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## Campground Hosts Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Monday September 19, 2016, 10:30—11:30 pm

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Office

## Attendees

Janna Bodette, Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Host

Peter Bodette, Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Host

Los Dalaska, Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Host

Diane Tuttle, Lake Byllesby Regional Park Campground Host

Doug Gross, Dakota County

Lil Leatham, Dakota County

Jennifer Ziemer, Goodhue County

Rita Trapp, HKGi

## Discussion

### What is the most attractive feature of Lake Byllesby for campground users?

- The lake view campsites are the most popular.
- The new Mill Towns Trail is a huge asset to the campground. Biking 3 miles to Cannon Falls will be a very popular activity next year.
  - Include wayfinding/ distances to nearby attractions (3 miles to winery, etc.)

### Are there campground or park facilities or services that are missing that would help make Lake Byllesby a more attractive place to camp?

#### *Campground*

- Study and address the one-way road system – it is confusing for visitors
- The dump station is a dead end which is difficult to get out of. A system where the dump station is located near the park exit and you can pull the RV through instead of backing up/turning around would be best. Many State Parks are designed this way.
  - Relocate and link to road.
  - Hook up to drain field
- Pull through campsites.
  - Can charge more for these
- Concrete parking pads.
- A youth group camping site
- A communal fire pit/ gathering space
- Tent camping should be improved. People like to drive up to their tent camping space and a little more privacy/screening. Tent camping could also be expanded, there may be more demand now that the Mill Towns trail connects to the park.
  - More lakeside campsites
  - Can you tie into existing trail system?
  - Cart-in may be okay
  - Would sacrifice direct lake view for privacy (think more like a state park)
  - Some trees have died at existing tent camp sites because people want to drive right up

- Electric at tent sites would be helpful for filling up air mattresses, etc.
- Other camping options: camper cabins, bunk house.
- Washroom and clothes lines.
- Dish washing area
- More permanent restrooms. Portable toilets are not desirable, particularly in the middle of the night.
- Full hook ups (with sewer) would be great for people who want to stay for the whole week.
- Nice shower facilities. This is particularly important if we expect people to camp and also go to events in Cannon Falls, such as the wine tasting.
  - Open shower facilities for bikers along the trail
- Handicapped accessible camping spaces.
- Charging station with outlets
  - Could this be solar?
- Wi-Fi
- Storm shelter for campers.

*Park improvements that would benefit campers*

- Fishing pier.
- Fish cleaning station.
- Bike racks and dog-tie up areas (especially near restrooms/info center)
- Bike rental.
- Canoe/kayak rental
  - May not be enough demand to have a manned rental, but maybe a station
- Private tubing rental vendor is allowed
- Need access to river for tubes, canoes/kayaks with a well-signed portage route
- Need canoe/kayak tie-up or storage racks for overnight campers (currently allowed at little beach)
- Basketball hoop near the playground.
- Ice cream/pop (these are now available at the campground office).
  - Concessions would definitely get more use if along bike trail
- Off-leash dog area (many people bring their dogs camping)
- Perhaps a Cannon Valley Trail pay station in the park.
  - Or as an option with campsite rental?
- Pier/docks for boats either for day use or that can be rented for the week.
- Finer sand for the beach.
- Desired arrangement with golf course to leave carts here overnight and have pick up periodically
- Mini golf would be fun
- Playground is in tent camping area- distracting. Not a good location
- Improvements to West Byllesby: access for birders, access to the cascades area.

## **What concerns do you have about future recreation facilities at the Lake Byllesby parks?**

### *Lake Sedimentation*

- The park is dependent on the Lake Byllesby's recreation. The park character and recreation are dependent on the lake.
- Lake Byllesby is filling in to the point where navigation is difficult.
- People are waterskiing in 24" water, which is unsafe.

### *Water quality*

- The water quality of the lake has improved over the last 10 years.

### *Number of boats on the lake*

- Boat trailer parking in the Goodhue County side should be better delineated and the overall number of parking spaces should be limited so that there are not too many boats on the lake. The number of boats on the lake is starting to be unsafe.

### *Cliffs on Goodhue County side of the lake*

- The trail on the Goodhue County side of the lake provides access to the Cliffs on the Boy Scouts property. Jumping has increased and fortunately there have been no deaths.

## **What guidance or decisions do you hope this master planning process will accomplish to help maintain and improve the Lake Byllesby Parks as a resource to the area?**

- Though sedimentation and water quality are watershed scale issues, the LBIA would like these issues addressed to the extent possible in the Master Plans.

## **If you use the parks today, what do you think needs to be done to improve it? If you don't use the parks, why don't you use it? What would attract you to come to the parks?**

- Camping in the Dakota County Park a great asset. There was consensus that there is demand for additional camping. Some felt it would be nice to expand camping to the Goodhue County Park. Others pointed out that camping expansion in the Goodhue County park would be impacted by noise from the rumble strips on the road and would have visual impact to the nearby homes.
- The Goodhue County Park has easier highway access than the Dakota County Park. It would make a great trailhead.
- The Mill Towns Trail will attract new park users. Trailhead facilities should include parking and bike/rollerblade rentals.
- Improvements for boating could include:
  - Washout stations
  - Dock improvements
  - A small pier for residents and visitors that includes a gas station/bait shop/ice cream shop.
  - Pier with boat slips that could be rented for the season.
  - Some felt that the Goodhue County park could be the main boat access because it is easier to get to from Highway 52 than the Dakota County park. Others felt the Goodhue boat launch should be smaller and the main launch on the Dakota County Side.
- Fire-pits are really nice elements. This is nicely done in Como Park. Como Park also has a hidden dutch oven, which is a simple, fun activity.
- Concessions.
- More hiking.
- Camper cabins.

- More picnic tables.
- Suggestions for the Gaudy property included:
  - Camping
  - Sports fields
  - Prairie
  - Skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Archery course similar to the one in Spring Lake Park
  - Any recreational use on the Gaudy property should include screening to/from the neighbors.

**What is your favorite part of Lake Byllesby and the surrounding park land?**

- The west side of the lake is an Important Birding Area (IBA). It is important to preserve the marshes for the birds.
- It would be exciting for the Boy scouts to use the lake/have better lake access through the park.
- The Goodhue County picnic pavilions are used extensively.
- Bluebird watching/nesting on Echo Point.
- Lake Byllesby feels like being in Northern, MN with the cliffs and the white pines. It is a spectacular landscape. An observation deck on the cliffs would negatively impact this feel/look.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## DNR

Dakota County & Goodhue County  
Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## DNR Stakeholder Meeting Summary

September 19th, 2016  
Cannon Falls City Hall  
2:00-3:00 pm

### Attendees:

Jennie Skancke, DNR Area Hydrologist  
  
Joel Wagar, MnDNR Parks and Trails,  
  
Kevin Stauffer, MnDNR Fisheries  
  
Scott Haugen, MnDNR Parks and Trails  
  
Scott Roepke, Cannon Valley Trail  
  
Greg Isakson, Goodhue County  
  
Steve Sullivan, Dakota County  
  
Lil Leatham, Dakota County  
  
Jason Naber, EOR  
  
Sarah Evenson, HKGi

## Meeting Overview

Jason Naber reviewed the project process so far- site visits, data collection and review, and mapping.

Lil Leatham gave overview on coordinated processes between Dakota and Goodhue Counties with Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan and Byllesby Regional Park (and also Cannon Valley Trail). The goal is to unify visions and objectives for the parks and implementation and keep ecological health at the core of the projects.

## Discussion

### What do you think is the #1 natural resource issue facing Lake Byllesby and the Cannon River today?

- Water quality- phosphorous loading. In-basin approach will not work, this issue must be addressed throughout the watershed.
  - Most pronounced during summers with low rain.
  - Affects the recreational experience.
  - The new DNR Buffers law could positively impact water quality. Dakota County has already buffered creeks, but Goodhue may have some improvements. Straight River/Steel County systems don't have natural settling out of nutrients, so they could potentially be targeted for improvements.

- One Watershed One Plan Cannon River was selected by BWSR. 13 agencies collaborating on the watershed. Implementation Plan that tackles responsibilities and funding to achieve the watershed improvements. This is where improvements should be addressed.
- Common message across all three plans should be about the need to address impairments to the Cannon River and Lake Byllesby at the watershed level to maintain recreational value.
- The lake and river create a very altered system and the DNR is interested in maintaining quality fish habitat.
- Some areas of the Cannon River, below the dam, have experienced erosion, particularly during times of extreme flows. This is difficult for downstream fish and fish habitat, though it does keep lake levels constant. At times during the dam project construction, the flow downstream sometimes doubled in just a few hours.
- There is a dam management/operations plan that the DNR has approved.
  - There is a long history of coordination/compromise and permits balancing natural resource desires with needs of the dam, but during gate construction some of that became less balanced. Dam operations plan reflects the mutual compromises moving forward.
  - Anytime a reservoir is involved, the interests of residents around the reservoir versus downstream interests may conflict.
  - Moving forward, efforts to dial in the gates in a way that mediates the hydrograph flow should be made.
  - Bounce of river effects spawning habitat in the spring and erosion/moisture regime along banks of river.
- A lake/river issue is planning for climate change. There will be larger, more intense rain events and we should be thinking about they will impact natural resources.
- Over time, the Important Birding Area has become more of a part of the Natural Resources discussion.
- When the reservoir is high, area farmers have drainage issues (groundwater). The current practice of keeping the water level low until May is a bit out of sorts with natural processes, where spring is typically a high water period.

**What are future proposed or planned natural resource and trail improvements that could impact Lake Byllesby and the surrounding park land?**

- Many native mussel species found during last drawdown.
  - Takings Permit would prohibit dredging possibilities.
  - Dakota county has this survey Mike Davis is a mussel specialist. Could promote propagation of mussel habitat within Lake Byllesby and also teach people about their benefits (water clarity, etc.).
  - Major fish kills have happened in the past (1980s).
  - Usually not major stratification in LB, but in low flow years, it's possible.
    - When you release a lot of flow from the bottom and it's highly anoxic, the river below can see major effects.
    - Flush slough skates at certain cfs.

**As a biotic barrier, what are your opinions on the dam?**

- The dam is helpful in regard to Asian Carp. There would be major upstream impacts if the Cannon River had Asian Carp.
- Logistically, attempting fish passage would be extremely expensive.

**Anything we could do in the lake to improve shore fishing?**

- Always been a lot of interest in rock piles for access.
- Bunkers have not been effective for attracting fish.
- Fish Attracting Devices (FADs) can concentrate fish in an area where they are more easily caught, but it doesn't affect numbers of fish in the lake- just concentrates them, makes them more predictable. Permits required for FADs.

**In what ways could the shoreline of Lake Byllesby be reshaped to provide a more natural shoreline in areas of rip rap and revetment?**

- A more vegetated shoreline would help promote crappies and other clear water, vegetation preferring species- trouble establishing emergent vegetation with downriver bounce.

**Is there ecological value in reconnecting Chub Creek crossing of road in western LBRP?**

- Delta formation would have impacts in new areas along the shoreline if it was reconnected but there is probably a ecological benefit.

**There are 4 road/rail crossings in the floodplain- create spits or peninsulas that constrain the floodplain's normal function. Should these be retained for access, or removed to see if functions better?**

- Leave access near old Cascades mill (not as constraining as some of the road crossings).
- Geomorphology of river has already adapted to those structures, so leaving them in place is probably the most sensible.

**What are current thoughts regarding the Mill Towns Trail alignment from the park southwest to Northfield?**

- 2 miles acquired between Lake Byllesby and Cannon Falls. Complete except for last stretch into Byllesby County Park where there is some restoration work left this fall and spring (prairie).
- The DNR recent acquisition between Dundas and Faribault from the railroad.
- Connection from Northfield to Lake Byllesby will likely be one of the last segments done, but so much investment is in play on south end and will need to be completed over next 3-5 years.
- Some initial investigation into routes around Lake Byllesby- working with Steve Sullivan on potential routes through/along western side of Lake Byllesby Regional Park in Dakota County.
  - CR88 is being reconstructed and the geometry may be reconfigured, in which case acquisition may be considered, which could work with the trail.
  - Augustine property is for sale. Close to Waterford Bridge.
  - Could use trail corridor for some upland service access/ mgmt. access of lowlands on west side of Byllesby.

- DC has been buying conservation easements along river. Could encourage landowners to sign off on conservation and recreation easements moving forward to allow trail use.
  - The DNR does not eminent domain; the policy is to work with willing land owners.
- Arboretum bridge in Northfield is being looked at for a river crossing.
- Peddle-Paddle and Shared River/Trail Camping along the corridor as broader visions for recreation utilizing the existing natural resources.
  - Would love to see remote canoe only campsites in western portion of LBRP.
  - DNR cannot promote camping facilities themselves- must be left up to local units.
    - Root and Zumbro rivers have great camping sites, Cannon is lacking.
    - Would have to be “rustic campsites” based on new health rules that prohibit non-rustic camping in potential high water areas.
    - Screens with dug-containers that can be removed, cleaned, and replaced.
    - Composting toilets/ outhouses may be viable options.
- Tourism could transition from day use only of Cannon Valley Trail to overnight use with proposed connections to LBRP/BCP, Mill Towns Trail, Mississippi Bluffs Trail, multiple river-based activities, etc.
- DNR works with MnDOT cultural resources unit and Historical Society .
  - Knife river flint was found recently along corridor. Some follow up connections to be made between 106 Group and other contacts.
  - Ron Schermer with Mankato State is an archaeologist that could be a good resource for this area.
  - Mounds have been found nearby, and within the lake bed (in 1988?).
- No portage around the Lake Byllesby Dam right now and this would be nice feature for better boat access to the Cannon River.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## History and Interpretation

Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## History and Interpretation Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Thursday, Sept. 15, 2016

4:00 pm-5:00 pm

Cannon Falls City Hall

## Attendees

Dustin Heckman, Goodhue County Historical Society

Matt Carter, Dakota County Historical Society

Will Grovender, Randolph Area Historical Society

Steve Dabelow, Cannon Falls Historical Society

Nicole Staudt, Prairie Island Indian Community

Joe Walton, Dakota County

Lil Leatham, Dakota County

Jennifer Ziemer, Goodhue County

Autumn Hubble, Dakota County

Rita Trapp, HKGi

Regine Kennedy, 106 Group

Nicole Foss, 106 Group

## Discussion

### ***What are important or interesting stories that should be told to the youth/campers/seniors/general park users/etc., at Lake Byllesby?***

- The 'big falls' on the Cannon River - this site was a favorite destination of early residents of Cannon Falls and also for Native Americans, for centuries. That area is now in the lake close to where the cliffs are presently located. The big falls was named for the width, not the height of the falls. A book was written about the falls Eumeemie: A Legend of Cannon Falls, by S. S. Lewis was editor of the Cannon Falls paper for many years.
  - Mural of it painted on the post office
  - In the late 1800s, Big Falls was the place to go
- Hunting and fishing in the 1930s and 1940s.
- In the 1940s and 1950s an amusement park was located in the area.
- Mr. Byllesby and the dam, and the electrification of Randolph.
- The Cascade Area.
  - Lakeside Cemetery has headstones from early settlers
- The Sanatorium, the area had a Tuberculosis sanatorium.
- Natural History.
- Railroads had a big influence in the Randolph area (can still see remnants of bridges)

- E-W 2 lines
- N-S Chicago line
  - There were hotels and restaurants there (working on a walking tour)
- President of Progressive Rail has expressed interest in doing something in the area
- Were 2 RRs to Red Wing
  - 1 on each side of the river
  - 1 went only to the Sanatorium
  - I went all the way
- 18 Cultural Sites within the Lake Byllesby area
  - None are within the park boundary (11 are in the lake bed)
    - These were recorded during the drawdown
    - There are potential for others on higher terraces (there have not been systematic surveys)
  - There are 3 bridges within the park (1 existing, 2 remnants)
  - Submerged cheese factory when the lake was built
- The dam (1910)- was important to Randolph/ Cannon Falls
  - Began rural electrification

***What types of interpretation would you like to see in the park?***

- Choose your own adventure type opportunities (self-guided interpretation)
  - Walking tours/ podcast episodes available on demand
- Audio/visual displays.
- QR Codes
  - Digitize stories/ Allow people to tell their own stories
- A pamphlet vending machine/ dispensary
- Incorporating interpretation into park features. For example, a children’s water play element could be designed in the shape of the lake basin and contain the historic sites that are now located underwater. The lake could be ‘filled’ by pressing a button to release water.
- Should be a balance between natural interpretation and signed interpretation
- Dakota County has a grant with 4-5 other organizations for archeological digs throughout the county
  - A way to get kids out to do digs
  - Summer field tours
- Tribal HPO is in the process of hiring
  - Could reach out to tribal members
    - Ron S. may be a good resource
- Special events

***Resources***

- Cannon Falls Historical Society has many photos, some from before the dam was constructed.
- As I Remember: Lakeside Reflections of Mary Gilson Ferguson Paperback, by Teri Ferguson Thompson.
- Eumeemie: A Legend of Cannon Falls, by S. S. Lewis.
- Dan Lions and Ron Sherman may be resources for Native American stories.
- Letter written by Thomas Edison from Mr. Byllesby’s funeral

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Lake Byllesby Improvement Association Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

### Lake Byllesby Improvement Association Board Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Thursday September 15, 2016, 7:00-8:00 pm

Cannon Falls City Hall

#### Attendees

Rita Trapp (HKGi), Lil Leatham (Dakota County), Greg Isakson (Goodhue County), Jennifer Ziemer (Goodhue County), Ken, Dave, Earl, Nancy, Jason, Scott, Leslie D, Julie

#### Discussion

##### **What concerns do you have about future recreation facilities at the Lake Byllesby parks?**

###### *Lake Sedimentation*

- The park is dependent on the Lake Byllesby's recreation. The park character and recreation are dependent on the lake.
- Lake Byllesby is filling in to the point where navigation is difficult.
- People are waterskiing in 24" water, which is unsafe.

###### *Water quality*

- The water quality of the lake has improved over the last 10 years.
- Buffer strips have helped
- Clarity has improved

###### *Number of boats on the lake*

- Boat trailer parking in the Goodhue County side should be better delineated and the overall number of parking spaces should be limited so that there are not too many boats on the lake. The number of boats on the lake is starting to be unsafe. Parking full in the spring with 30 on overflow parking area in grass.

###### *Cliffs on Goodhue County side of the lake*

- The trail on the Goodhue County side of the lake provides access to the Cliffs on the Boy Scout's property. Jumping has increased and fortunately there have been no deaths.

###### *Park Experience*

- Focus development/ new activities in already developed areas
- Try not to affect long views of cliffs/across the lake like those from Echo Point
- Screen parks/camping areas from homes and from CR 19 noise

##### **What guidance or decisions do you hope this master planning process will accomplish to help maintain and improve the Lake Byllesby Parks as a resource to the area?**

- Though sedimentation and water quality are watershed scale issues, the LBIA would like these issues addressed to the extent possible in the Master Plans.

**If you use the parks today, what do you think needs to be done to improve it? If you don't use the parks, why don't you use it? What would attract you to come to the parks?**

- Camping in the Dakota County Park a great asset. There was consensus that there is demand for additional camping. Some felt it would be nice to expand camping to the Goodhue County Park. Others pointed out that camping expansion in the Goodhue County park would be impacted by noise from the rumble strips on the road and would have visual impact to the nearby homes.
- Dredging could be used to create marshland elsewhere
- Don't duplicate activities/facilities between the two parks, unless that activity needs add'l capacity
- The Goodhue County Park has easier highway access from 52 than the Dakota County Park.
  - It would make a great trailhead.
  - Boat Launch on Goodhue Co side is slightly better than DC boat launch
- The Mill Towns Trail will attract new park users. Trailhead facilities should include parking and bike/rollerblade rentals.
- BMX or archery in the pit area
- Improvements for boating could include:
  - Washout stations
  - Dock improvements
  - A small pier for residents and visitors that includes a gas station/bait shop/ice cream shop.
  - Pier with boat slips that could be rented for the season.
  - Some felt that the Goodhue County park could be the main boat access because it is easier to get to from Highway 52 than the Dakota County park. Others felt the Goodhue boat launch should be smaller and the main launch on the Dakota County Side.
- Fire-pits are really nice elements. This is nicely done in Como Park. Como Park also has a hidden dutch oven, which is a simple, fun activity.
- Concessions.
- Paddle boating/ Paddle Boarding/ Kayak/ Canoe rental by west end of park (with boat access)
- More hiking.
- Camper cabins.
- More picnic tables.
- Suggestions for the Goudy property included:
  - Camping
  - Sports fields
  - Prairie
  - Skiing
  - Snowshoeing
  - Archery course similar to the one in Spring Lake Park
  - Paved walking paths with picnic areas and benches and additional pavilion
  - Any recreational use on the Goudy property should include screening to/from the neighbors.
  - Keep about "park" not RV use

**What is your favorite part of Lake Byllesby and the surrounding park land?**

- The west side of the lake is an Important Birding Area (IBA). It is important to preserve the marshes for the birds.
- It would be exciting for the Boy scouts to use the lake/have better lake access through the park.
- The Goodhue County picnic pavilions are used extensively.
- Bluebird watching/nesting on Echo Point.
- Lake Byllesby feels like being in Northern, MN with the cliffs and the white pines. It is a spectacular landscape. An observation deck on the cliffs would negatively impact this feel/look.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Park Operations

Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## Park Operations Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Thursday, Sept. 15, 2016

1:00pm-2:30pm

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Maintenance Building

## Attendees

Scott Powers, Goodhue County Sheriff's Office

Ryan Holmquist, Dakota County Sheriff's Office

Paul Schutz, Dakota County Parks

Richard Otterness, Dakota County Parks

Meagan Keefe, Dakota County Parks

Autumn Hubbell, Dakota County Parks

Sarah Pronschinske, Dakota County Parks

Ben Humlie, Dakota County Parks

Lil Leatham, Dakota County

Joe Walton, Dakota County

Greg Isakson, Goodhue County

Kevin Biehn, EOR

Gabrielle Grinde, HKGi

## Discussion

### ***What do you think are key issues at Lake Byllesby?***

- Lake water quality is a major issue – algae situation is particularly bad in the late summer. Watershed level projects/programs are needed to preserve the recreational value of the lake.
- Parking – on weekends, the boat launch parking gets full. Parking on the Goodhue County side has been expanded to grassy areas on the weekends. The tent camping has limited parking, cars are not allowed to park on the grass.
- There is a lack of extensive hiking trails for natural resource programs.
- Basic access facilities are needed on the west end of the park. This area of the park has potential. For example, birding or interpretive walks to the cascades area.
- The campground fills up on weekends. The campground is at capacity for water and electric sites.
- Circulation - the one-way roads in the campground are challenging and need to be made more intuitive.
- Portable toilets - add more permanent restroom facilities.

- Limited activities that are attractive to regional users. The main draws at this park are the camping and the lake recreation – the motorized boat launch is a unique asset in the Dakota County Park System. At Lebanon Hills Regional Park the paddleboard rental is popular; we should consider adding this at Lake Byllesby.
- There is no place for year-round indoor gathering and programs.
- The trash area needs to be re-designed. Recycling and trash seem to be confusing to park visitors, they need to be separated from each other, need new vendors, or better layout/signage. The dumpsters are too big for people to use.
- 

***What guidance or decisions do you hope this master planning process will accomplish to help you in your work?***

- The tent area needs reevaluation with some different camping options. Needs more screening and privacy.
- The tent camping area should be retrofitted to allow for group camping or individual use (for either campers or tents).
- There a lot of turf grass in the park. It would be improved with more natural areas and require less mowing.

***Are there locations where there are safety concerns for park users and how could these be best addressed?***

- Access to the cliff area on Goodhue County side is an issue that has gotten better recently. Guardrails may not be a deterrent to jumping.
- There have not been major safety concerns with boating on the lake. Occasional boat fires, a few driving complaints, there were no collisions last year. Dakota County has counterclockwise direction for boating in the lake posted at boat ramps at other lakes. In the future, if conflicts occur/boat traffic significantly increases this could be done at Lake Byllesby.
- Emergency storm shelter areas are needed.

***What do you think is the most important physical improvement that could be done in the next 10 years at Lake Byllesby?***

- A shelter area is needed for emergencies for campers – another bathroom building or stable/enclosed picnic shelter.
- The beach shelter has not been fully realized as a concessions location.
- Address invasive species and add prairie.
- Better restrooms – the trail connection will bring more users to the park.
- If the campground is expanded, another restroom/shower building should be added.
- Better signage, particularly for Lake Byllesby Regional Park west.

***What is the typical boat usage on the lake? Are there times that there are capacity issues?***

- 90% of boats are recreating, fisherman are out earlier in the day.
- Boat-launch management is needed on weekends.

***What are thoughts on winter activities?***

- The weather really affects winter attendance and potential for activities.
- Cross country skiing could be promoted – the Cannon Valley Classic used to be held at the park, but has not been held because of the lack of reliable snow.
- Will the paved trail and bridge be maintained/plowed in the winter?
- Potential for camper cabins along the ski trails in the northern part of the park.
- Dogsledding and skiing use the north side trails.
- Lilac Landing is used as a non-motorized boat launch and access for ice fishing.

***What are other activities / visitor services that could be added to the parks?***

- Bike and watercraft rentals.
- Docks where boats could be left parked in the water overnight.
- A fishing pier.
- Café/ restaurant, if there is adequate use in the park to support food service.
- Potential camper cabins along the river downstream from the dam have been discussed; restroom facilities would be needed within a certain distance.
- A gathering/community center that's open year-round, similar to Schaar's Bluff Gathering Center but less than a nature center.
- A splash pad.
- The signage, wayfinding, and habitat throughout the park, mostly on the north side, could be improved – it is not a high quality habitat today.
- Goodhue County receives many calls about renting their picnic shelters. They do not have staff to provide rentals, could there be a partnership with Dakota county staff to manage rental of the Goodhue County park shelters?
- Visitors are interested in the dam - historic interpretation signage with historic photos and current statistics about the power generation.
- Campfire program.
- Small infrastructure investments on the west side of the park would be used by birders – parking area, bird blind, overlooks, etc.
- West Side: a water access; trails at the Cascades area; basic restroom building; Hwy 56 bridge area has an unofficial fishing area today – Dakota County staff does maintain this area by picking up trash; a kayak loop through the braided marsh; duck hunting does occur on the west side of the lake.
- Cannon River non-motorized boat launch below the dam.
- Steps or a formal trail near the new bridge for people who want to get down to the river for fishing.
- Carve out 'Echo Channel' for boats.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Park User Groups

### Dakota County & Goodhue County

Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## Park User Groups Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Thursday September 15, 2016, 5:30-6:30pm

Cannon Falls City Hall

## Attendees

Dawn Lanning, HHH Ranch

Jennifer Ziemer, Goodhue County

Lil Leatham, Dakota County

Autumn Hubble, Dakota County

Rita Trapp, HKGi

Regine Kennedy, 106 Group

Nicole Foss, 106 Group

## Discussion

**If you use the park today, what do you think needs to be done to improve it? If you or people you know don't use the park, why don't you use it? What would attract you or them to come to the park?**

- HHH provides YMCA riding day camps, trail rides, farm day camps, and dog sledding.
- HHH runs dogsledding programs in the park. The trails on the north side of the park are used. It is a good location because there are few sharp turns, not many steep hills, low brush.
- Skiing, skijoring and dog walking are compatible uses with dogsledding. Snowmobiling is not.
- Packed snow is the best condition for dogsledding.
- Due to variable snow conditions, Byllesby is a hard place for winter events. In addition, dog sled events are better when the number of people are limited/controlled or there is a private staging area for the dogs.

**What facilities or services are needed at the parks to make your activity more enjoyable and/or accessible?**

- HHH Ranch utilizes the existing parking area north of 300<sup>th</sup> (space for a 16' trailer is required) and the port-a-potty. Improvements desired include:
  - Permanent restrooms
  - Hitching posts (for the dogs)
  - Need education about trail etiquette
    - People need to get out of the way for 12-dog teams
    - People walking their own dogs present a challenge
  - A retreat center similar to Lebanon Hills
  - The trails on the north side of the park have a few sharp turns that could be smoothed
  - Peg boards for kids to put belongings on?
  - Fire pit?

**What are recreational opportunities that are not being realized at the lake and park?**

- Kite boarding (school groups would use)
- Ice fishing
  - Would be nice to have rentable equipment/ ice houses
- Winter scavenger hunt

**Desired Summer Use Facilities**

- A pier for boat tie up if staying overnight and also fishing
- Sufficient boat parking
- Central fire pit
- Off-leash dog area near campground

**What do you think is the most important recreational improvement that could be done in the next 10 years at Lake Byllesby?**

- Indoor winter space
- Boat slips for campers who bring boats to the lake
- Interpretive signs
- Fishing pier
- Equipment rental – paddleboards, kayaks, etc.

# STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS (SEPTEMBER 2016) NOTES

## Regional Recreation Providers

Dakota County & Goodhue County  
Lake Byllesby Regional Park & Byllesby County Park Master Plans

## Regional Recreation Providers Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Monday September 19th, 2016  
Cannon Falls City Hall  
3:30-4:30 pm

### Attendees

Scott Roepke, Cannon Valley Trail  
Peggy Prowe, Mill Towns Trail  
Willy Lacefield, Cannon Falls Bike, Canoe & Kayak Rental  
Patricia Anderson, Cannon Falls Chamber of Commerce  
Gary Schmidgall  
Sandy Whitworth, Summit Golf Club  
Jason Jech, Red Wing Environmental Learning Center  
Greg Isakson, Goodhue County  
Steve Sullivan, Dakota County  
Lil Leatham, Dakota County  
Sarah Evenson, HKGi

### Discussion

#### ***What are the key recreational assets of Lake Byllesby and the surrounding park land?***

- When you look at the Dakota County and Goodhue parks total acreage, Goodhue County Byllesby Park would qualify for Greater Minnesota regional status, although the Goodhue County on its own is a little short (only 60 acres). The two counties are willing partners.
- Cannon River frontage downstream of the dam is underutilized, there is an opportunity to work with the DNR to include recreation on their river front land.
- The 26 acre Goudy property is an asset and what should be done there will be determined through the master planning process. Some possibilities are camping or a trail center
- There should be a portage trail around the dam.
- More fishing opportunities would be welcomed (provides cross-generational recreation).
  - Pier, maybe below the dam.
- Whitewater training course like in Wausau below the dam would be a major regional attraction.

#### ***Where are key connections to the park or future recreational amenities in the surrounding area that could impact Lake Byllesby?***

- The master plan looks specifically within the park boundaries, but will be influenced by broader regional recreation opportunities, especially with the existing and proposed trail connections.
- Cross promotion of regional activities is needed, one idea is a recreation pass.
  - Today there is Camper Coupon book- 3,000 printed and all used.

- Sheer amount of camping throughout the week has grown and there is a need for more camping available (RV and tent)

***What is the status of the Mill Towns and Cannon Valley Trails and how will it be connected to Lake Byllesby?***

- Planning process for connection of the Mill Towns Trail is just starting out. So many connections to amenities.
- Cannon Valley Trail first highlighted the overall regional value of recreation in this area. How can we capitalize on that and enhance it? Economic and recreation opportunities.
- Excited about two parks and trails being planned together. “Tourists don’t see borders.”
- The more we can do cooperatively, and the better we can communicate, the more we can accomplish.
- Progressive rail/union pacific needs to be worked with for future acquisition.

***Are there additional winter recreational opportunities that should be explored in the area?***

- Today, winter uses are minimal with skijoring/dog sledding and some ice fishing.
- Winery, Brew Pub (to open in late November), and Cannon Valley Trail are open in the winter.
- Marketing is necessary for winter events, but success of these are weather dependent and winters are more unpredictable.
- Rentals requested for the occasional skier. More requests for skiers than snowmobiles.
- Snowmobiling is a possible winter use. Fairgrounds to 52 will have snowmobile access. Crossing at Riverwood church up to 19.
  - DNR trying to buy Dauphine property to serve snowmobiles.
  - Snowmobiling used to be big in Cannon valley, now not as popular.
- Sleep-in ice houses suggested.
  - Novelty experience.
  - Rhino’s local sporting goods store sells ice castles- may be interested .
  - Not many lakes in the area- should capitalize on that in the winter.
- Fat bikes are gaining in popularity. They don’t require snow.

***What do you think is the most important recreational improvement that could be done in the next 10 years at Lake Byllesby?***

- Watercraft rental adjacent to river, along with bikes, canoes, kayaks, paddleboards.
  - Could rent hourly if located adjacent to lake.
- Golf course benefits from campers wanting to golf.
- Cannon Valley Trail would appreciate more camping/ camper cabins/ yurts
  - Overnight stays will be desired.
  - Marvel Falls in Texas has proper accommodation for tourism, despite their small size (7000 people)
- Need accommodations for bikers/ paddlers to shower, clean up before heading to dinner/ heading into town after an active day.

- Having access to activities that can cater to different weather.
  - Boat rental, golfing, bikes
- Desire for more RV camping could potentially occur in the Goodhue County Park.
- With increase in bikers, potentially desire for more tent camping.
- With winter use, camper cabins would really promote use.
  - Camper cabins are also more equitable for people who don't own camping gear or RVs.
  - Offer good intro experience to camping.

***What potential future partnership opportunities are there for programming or marketing?  
What type of lease agreements could work to provide equipment or services within the parks?***

- There are plenty of events that happen in the local areas that could be partnered with the park.
- As soon as visitors realize how quickly they can get to Byllesby, they are more apt to drive there.
- Having a large event can be a great introduction to a place that breaks the perceived distance barrier.
- Great meeting spot between the Metro and Rochester.
- Attraction for people from Iowa.
- The Parks need a brand. Need to be related to the larger corridor as an attraction.
  - Work through the chamber of commerce offices to unite recreational opportunities and branding across the corridor.
  - Work with the colleges.
  - Use the bridge as an icon for the region.
  - Root River communities all band together to support recreation along the corridor.

# OPEN HOUSE (SEPT. 19, 2016) COMMENTS

Lake Byllesby Regional Park and Byllesby County Park Master Plans  
September 19th, 2016  
Cannon Falls City Hall  
5:00-6:30 pm

## Open House Comment Cards

### 1. Goodhue Neighbors:

- Don't want lights
- There is not enough patrol – should patrol parks
- There are still drug & back packers
- Put Tennis Courts or Pickleball on Goudy Property
- Plant Goudy property with prairie
- Create access at the east end for trail
- Love the trail connection to Cannon Falls
- Need trash cans and doggy waste disposal
- Promote day use only
- Want sports fields
- Want more parking
- Boat launch is a problem
- Stairway is a problem
- Fishing Dock is great
- Want day use tie up slips
- Add picnic areas
- Add a fish cleaning station
- Need drinking fountains, especially by the bike trail
- Add a washout area for boats on the lake

### 2. Linda Thompson ([seleskyL@gmail.com](mailto:seleskyL@gmail.com)) (906) 553-1383)

- Keep the sled dog trail
  - If changed, keep some crossovers
  - No 90° turns
  - Keep the outhouse
  - Add a decent size parking lot for truck and trailers
- Consider allowing multiple uses along the Cannon Valley Trail
- Add dog waste disposal stations

### 3. Keep birding access at Knot farm, but address the problem with birders at the cemetery

- Parks don't need to be connected by a trail- the west side impedes on family/farm properties
- Park is taking away from the rural feeling of the community
- Why should we landowners give up land when there are other parks?
- This park development is at whose expense? (the people who live in the county)

- The trail should be multi-use. Bicycle special interests are being catered to. Allow ATVs, snowmobiles, and horses.
4. Bill Callister (29324 Endress Way, Cannon Falls, (507) 271-2160)
    - What entity will financially support needed roads like Harry Ave?
    - Should motorized watercraft be prohibited on Lake Byllesby to keep additional carbon particles out of the lake?
    - Should all septic systems on homes near the lake go through water treatment?
    - Should there be more focus on controlling fertilizer application to adjacent lawns?
  5. Rosie Schluter (Cannon Falls)
    - This is a wonderful opportunity, so I appreciate your effort to create a lasting experience for people to enjoy nature and the outdoors. Keep up the good work!

## Open House Boards

- Add a bike fix-it station along the Cannon Valley Trail on the Goudy Property
- Look at Clear Lake, Iowa for dredging ideas
  - Farmers could use the nutrient rich soil
  - Sand could be used for beaches
  - Implement wetland restoration along with dredging to catch future sediments/ control where they go and build habitat.
- Ideas for the Goudy Property:
  - 3-season restrooms
  - A 4-season building
  - Add parking
  - Add an event area (make sure it's shaded)
  - Add camping, but not extensive (maybe 15 RVs)
- Goodhue County's Byllesby County Park:
  - Plant the western overflow parking area as prairie and allow the master gardeners to be involved in plantings if desired
    - Area could still be mown for overflow parking if needed
  - Convert wet/underutilized areas to natural plantings
  - Increase the size of the beach and add changing rooms and showers
  - Add trail to top of cliff (could be rough/natural surface trail or a stairway)
    - Make a loop experience if possible
    - Add an overlook/stargazing platform or observatory there if possible
    - Is wilderness camping possible on cliff?
    - Could it be a stargazing campsite?
  - Eliminate trails to the cliff to prevent jumping
  - Sand bars are an issue at the beach
  - Add pickleball/tennis

- After hours users are present on the Goodhue County side
- There would be noise from the Goodhue County campground if built
- Make boat launches better by limiting parking so as not to overload the lake
  
- Lake Byllesby Regional Park
  - Keep the dog sledding trails
    - Make the connecting trails multi-use or add a parallel trail
  - Add tie-offs for dogsledding further from the trailhead
  - Don't duplicate features between the two parks

## General Comments

- Try not to replicate services across counties
- Figure out which services each county does best, and have each one focus on those
- Consider an ice skating rink somewhere at East Byllesby in Dak Co.
- Consider installing a Visitor Service's Center on the Goodhue Co side, similar to that at Schaar's Bluff
- Underscore the connection of Dak Co side to that of Goodhue to emphasize the proximity to Cannon Falls, since that is such an interesting city/destination

# INDIVIDUAL INPUT

Lake Byllesby Improvement Association (LBIA) Comments from Dr. Earl Benson  
received via email

## 2017 Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan

Planning processes, regardless of size and scope and whether they are for private or public ventures, typically include a vision statement and a list of fundamental principles from which to build the plan. These principles are used to focus the resources of the decision making body in their development and implementation of the plan.

The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association (LBIA) has had board members in attendance for each of the “public” meetings held to date regarding the “New” or “Up-dated” Dakota/Goodhue Counties Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan; and have observed that the fundamental principles, upon which the Master Plan is to be built, were not presented adequately, nor were they clearly defined preceding discussions. A vision statement should succinctly express the Master Plan’s intent while the guiding principles should help identify broad directives for development, management and implementation. The following represents a vision statement and a list of guiding principles which the Lake Byllesby Improvement Association feels should be addressed as the Master Plan moves forward:

### Vision Statement

The Dakota County/ Goodhue County Regional Parks on Lake Byllesby are envisioned as regional parks focused on the resources of Lake Byllesby, the Cannon River, and the connecting bicycle and pedestrian trails. The primary focus of the recreational experience at these combined parks should be the aforementioned resources. Activities within the park should be focused on providing a safe environment for visitors and local residents as they enjoy the natural beauty of these resources and a comfortable and enjoyable variety of recreational and educational activities.

### Guiding Principles

- \* Focus on the preservation, enhancement, restoration (natural resource), and enjoyment of Lake Byllesby/Cannon River environment as the reason for the park.
- \* Make this regional park safe and accessible for visitors and residents (i.e. trails, roadways, lake)
- \* Create this park as a family/group destination with a wide variety of recreational activities and educational opportunities while at the same time recognizing that its physical location is shared by local lakeshore residents, neighboring residential single-family homes, and a Boy Scout Reservation with upwards of 28,000 visitors annually.
- \* Develop a “shared Master Plan” to utilize the resources of both Goodhue and Dakota Counties to the maximum extent possible, while not minimizing the values already established and ongoing for lack of focus and commitment.

## Visions for Goodhue County Park Master Plan

**Boating:** Provide launch facilities, parking and personnel to encourage enjoyable and safe boating on Lake Byllesby. Total boat trailer parking for all three launch sites should be consistent with DNR recommendations for high speed boat density. Signage and wash facilities should be included at boat ramps to prevent invasive species. The plan should consider a day-use docking facility just West of the boat ramps, as many boaters pull up their boats on the gravel beach/grass shoreline while using park facilities. The swimming area should be well-separated from the active launch area for safety.

**Bicycle Trailhead:** With the Mill Town Trail coming into the Goodhue County Park and its link to the Cannon Valley Trail and the City of Cannon Falls, facilities should be provided to encourage the use of the park as a starting and ending point. Bicycle-friendly visitor parking, trail signage, drinking water, and possibly an information kiosk and seating in the park would encourage visitors to begin and end their bicycling day in the park. For Cannon Falls residents and visitors bicycling to the park on the new connecting trail and bridge, a safe bicycle parking area (racks) should be provided at a location that encourages use of the other facilities in the park.

**Recreational Opportunities:** New recreational opportunities such as **day-use** ball diamonds, tennis courts, archery range, and an enhanced soccer field could make the park more of a destination for Cannon Falls residents/visitors to the park.

**Swimming/Picnicking:** The beach area could be enhanced significantly by making it larger (wider/longer), providing a simple change facility, ideally with showers. There is considerable public usage of the picnic shelters on weekends, and consideration should be given to adding strategically placed shaded picnic tables on concrete pads. Would an ice cream/refreshment vendor be economically viable? Perhaps a privately owned mobile vendor could be used in the short term to determine usage?

**Exercise/Walking Trail:** The current “in Park” walking trail experiences significant daily use at all times of the year except when there is snow on the ground. The current design of the paved path is excellent, but additional shade trees on the South and East sides would enhance the experience. This paved path could be extended into the old Goudy property if retained, perhaps around a new day-use ballpark or native prairie experience.

Stanton Township residents strongly discourage ideas for the park’s use outside the daylight hours. These folks are not in favor of overnight camping or lighted ballparks, or lighted tennis courts. Along with the LBIA, they also recommend **ABANDONING THE HILL-TOP TRAIL** as it encourages/contributes to illegal cliff-jumping on and immediately adjacent to private land (98% of trail users). The Goodhue County Sheriffs’ Department has encouraged this action as well, as it requires a constant police presence/enforcement, and presents a significant liability issue for property owners and Goodhue County.

The current Goodhue County Regional Park at Lake Byllesby is physically small. Stanton Township residents, and the LBIA, encourage that high use activities be located centrally in the park to buffer sights and sounds from nearby neighbors, and recommend further tree planting especially in the Southeast segment of the park. This would also improve the nature-like setting for visitors.

## Visions for the Dakota County Park Master Plan

Dakota County should be congratulated for almost fifty years of establishing, improving, maintaining their Lake Byllesby Regional Park. They have consistently developed and acted upon meaningful Master Plans for this park in 1987 and 2005. The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association (LBIA), and its elected leadership, looks forward to participating in helping formulate the 2016-2017 Master Plan, much as it did in previous plans. Our observations for improvements for the Dakota County Lake Byllesby Regional Park include:

**Boating:** High speed boat density on Lake Byllesby is a major concern for residents and visitors to the lake. The 1 boat maximum per 20 acres of navigable water should be strictly enforced as Goodhue/Dakota County merge their collective Master Plans for 2016-2017, to allow for a *safe and enjoyable boating experience for everyone on the lake*. The DNR recommendation calibrates lakeshore residents as having an average of 1.5 boats per residence with 10% of these boats on the lake at any one time (20 boats). With 134 residents on Lake Byllesby (now estimated at approximately 1400 acres) this equates to 70 high speed boats on the lake at one-time. Dakota County Regional Park maintains 27 parking spaces for boat/motor vehicle. With resident boat usage at 20, and Dakota County allowing 27 parking spaces, the **Goodhue County (2 access boat ramps) must be restricted to 23 spaces total**. This would be the combined maximum number of vehicle with trailer parking spaces permitted on the Goodhue County side of the lake to comply with DNR Boating safety recommendations. It must be noted that Dakota/Goodhue County Water Patrols on Lake Byllesby have been exemplary.

**Resource Preservation and Boating Navigation Safety:** The increase of sediment throughout Lake Byllesby is a major concern for the LBIA. Numerous damaged props and boat hulls have been reported in the past several years as previous navigable waters are no longer safe on the reservoir. Five areas of the lake have been reported to Dakota County officials as particularly dangerous for safe boating, although several others have been reported by boaters on the reservoir. **The 2016-2017 Master Plan for the lake should include soil sampling and future reclamation effort discussions (sediment removal) if Lake Byllesby is to remain the resource which is the “crown jewel” of this current regional park system.**

**The natural resource (Shoreland):** According to local residents AND visitors to Lake Byllesby, the South shore is one of the visual highlights of their experience at the lake.

Basically uninhabited, the view of the South shore and particularly the cliff area and surrounding Boy Scout Reservation are viewed by many as the “highlight” of their time on the reservoir. The LBIA continues to be thankful for the “view-experience” offered for over 106 years to local residents and visitors to Lake Byllesby, and strongly supports abandoning the “hill-top trail” to the cliff area on the South shore of Lake Byllesby. Abandoning the trail not only maintains the integrity and beauty of the resource, but it helps to insure the safety of trespassers, and helps law enforcement in protecting private property. The addition of an Observation Deck/Fishing Deck on the South shore of Echo Point (Dakota County) would also be a valuable resource for viewing the cliffs/pines of Goodhue County.

**Buffers for Private Landowners:** The real estate development adjacent to Harry Avenue East of the Dakota County Regional Park is rapidly expanding to include several neighborhood single family dwellings. There is considerable interest in establishing a buffer to help mask the park from neighbors to the East of Harry Avenue. Reestablishing the entrance off Harry Avenue to the Dakota County Park (further to the North) would help in this regard, as would a berm on the Eastern portion of the park. Additionally, a berm just South of the residents on Echo Point would help shield private residences from activities on the South shore of Echo Point. Trying to keep parking as far East as possible from these residences is recommended as the park expands.

**Swimming Activity:** The water quality in Lake Byllesby continues to improve with the addition of upstream septic treatment plants, shore land buffering, rough fish eradication, and improved fertilizer application techniques. However, the addition of a fresh water swimming pool in the Dakota County Regional Park would make the swimming experience more desirable throughout the swimming season.

**Additional Camping Areas:** It is recommended that additional camping areas and social fire-ring experiences be constructed North of the current RV camping areas in the Dakota County Regional Park. Tent camping is currently limited and could well be expanded.

**Winter Activities:** Groomed cross-county skiing and snow-shoeing trails should be included in the plan. Plowing the bike trail and trail bridge should also be included to facilitate year-round use of the trail for winter biking and walking.

**Educational Activities:** The LBIA board recommends that the plan include educational opportunities such as a year-round nature center that could include displays and classroom experiences(i.e.naturalists, environmentalists,etc.)

The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association and their elected leadership, representing the residents on the Lake Byllesby reservoir and visitors and friends of the lake, are huge stakeholders in the planning/virtual outcome of the regional park master plan. We

appreciate the opportunity to voice our collective concerns in this process as it moves forward.

Respectfully,

Dr. Earl Benson, President and LBIA Board of Directors

cc: Mr. Brad Anderson, Goodhue County Commissioner District 2

Mr. Mike Slavik, Dakota County Commissioner, District 1

Mr. John Andrews, Boy Scouts of America CEO (Phillippo Scout Reservation)

### Lake Byllesby Park Planning Process

Input to the planning process for Goodhue County Park from Ken Burns, representing both Stanton Township and the Lake Byllesby Improvement Association. Ken is a board member and vice chair of both organizations. Full disclosure: Ken lives adjacent to County parkland along Lake Byllesby.

#### Vision for the Goodhue County Park

- 1) Boating: Provide launch facilities, parking and personnel to encourage enjoyable and safe boating use on Lake Byllesby. Total boat trailer parking for all three launch sites should be consistent with DNR recommendations for high speed boat density. Signage and prop wash facilities to encourage cleanup of invasive species. Consider a day-use docking facility just west of the boat ramps, as many boaters simply pull up their boats on the gravel/grass shoreline today while using park facilities.
- 2) Bicycle Trailhead: With the Mill Town Trail coming into Goodhue Park and its link to the Cannon Valley Trail and the City of Cannon Falls, facilities should be provided to encourage use both starting and ending in the Park. Bicycle friendly visitor parking, trail signage, drinking water and possibly an information kiosk and seating in the park encourage visitors to begin and end their bicycling day in the park. For Cannon Falls residents bicycling to the park on the new connecting trail, a safe bicycle parking area / racks should be provided at a location that encourages use of the other facilities in the park. New recreation opportunities such as day-use ball diamonds, tennis courts and an enhanced soccer field could make the park more of a destination for Cannon Falls recreation.
- 3) Swimming and picnicking: The beach area could be enhanced significantly by making it larger (wider and longer), using real sand (not gravel mix) and providing a simple change facility, ideally with showers. There is heavy usage of the picnic shelters on weekends. Consider adding strategically placed shaded picnic tables on concrete pads. Would an ice cream / refreshment vendor be economically viable? Perhaps a mobile vendor in the short term to determine usage?
- 4) Exercise / walking trail: This trail gets significant daily usage at all times of the year except when there is snow on the ground. The current design of the paved path is excellent, but additional shade trees on the south and east sides would enhance it greatly. This paved path could be extended into the old Gaudy property if retained, perhaps around a new day use ballpark.

Stanton Township residents strongly discourage ideas for park use outside the daylight hours. We are not in favor of overnight camping or lighted ballparks or lighted tennis courts. Along with the LBIA, we also recommend abandoning the "hilltop trail" because it has encouraged heavy use for illegal cliff-jumping on immediately adjacent private land (98% of trail users), and the sightlines from the hilltop are blocked by mature growth hardwoods and pines on the adjacent property anyway. A recommendation from the Sheriff's department is encouraged. This has been an ill-advised concept with significant liability concerns.

Goodhue County Park is physically small. We would like to encourage the highest usage activities be located centrally in the park to buffer sights and sounds from the neighbors, and recommend further tree planting especially in the southeast segment, also improving the nature-like setting for visitors.

Response to Advisory Group Meeting 1 discussion questions:

**#1 issue facing Lake Byllesby Park today:** Goodhue County Park is inadequately funded to make major changes and improvements.

**Most Important Improvement:** Our biggest asset is Lake Byllesby itself, which is threatened by regular algae blooms and by silt filling in the west end of the lake. Algae blooms are outside the scope of this group, but a strategy to dredge (or bulldoze during winter) the west end of the lake to maintain historical depths is the most important project needed to preserve the heart of our Lake Byllesby Parks over the long term. The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association has begun a series of core samplings to determine makeup of the silt fill at the west end of the lake and to understand what might be required to dispose of it. A material removal strategy that balances the wealth of birding opportunities and other marshland wildlife resources with boating and fishing depth requirements, as well as reservoir hydroelectric capacity needs, should be part of the Regional Park Master Plan.

**What do you hope the Master Planning Process will accomplish:** Goodhue County Park is physically small, yet its location, with easy access from the City of Cannon Falls and from State Highway 52, makes it a critical gateway for enjoyment of Lake Byllesby, the new pedestrian/bicycle bridge overlooking the Cannon River Gorge and connecting bicycle trail systems, and the amenities of the Park itself. Stanton Township residents would like to see development “right-sized” so that as many visitors as possible can enjoy these assets without overcrowding either the lake or the park, and to minimize disturbance to the park’s neighbors. To that end, Stanton Township residents would like development limited to day-use activities only, and while improving and encouraging greater use of the current paved exercise trail system, to abandon the hilltop trail to the west of the park. The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association has also lobbied for abandoning the western hilltop trail. A lengthy discussion on this topic, including reasoning, liability concerns and lack of benefit can be made available. Ultimately, if the land containing the cliffs themselves were purchased by Goodhue County to add to the park, and personnel dedicated to ensure safe enjoyment of the views (no cliff-jumping), then the desired benefit of such a trail is possible. If the cliffs remain Boy Scouts of America property, then the western 7 acres of Goodhue County Property should be sold either to the Boy Scouts or highest bidder, to eliminate ongoing and serious concerns with encouraging trespassing cliff jumpers who are by far the main users of the western trail today.

**Important question to ask the general public:** 1) Do you want any overnight use in Goodhue County Park?  
2) Do you want the Park to pursue the western hilltop trail?

**Favorite part of Lake Byllesby:** The beautiful view of the cliffs from the lake all around cliff bay on Boy Scout property, and the terrific new views of the Cannon River gorge from the new pedestrian bridge. Also, the access now added between the two parks by the new pedestrian bridge is fantastic.

## Resident Tim Bresnahan's input received via email

**From:** Tim Bresnahan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 19, 2016 8:23 PM  
**To:** Leatham, Lil  
**Subject:** Master Plan

Lil,

Thank you for all the info you had for us at the Master Plan meeting in Cannon Falls. Below are several suggestions we have.

Dredging of the west end of Lake Byllesby

NO we repeat "NO" bike trail on the north side of Lake Byllesby. A bike trail should follow Hwy 19 to Northfield on the south side of the lake.

Keep the work up on cleaning the water.

Wild plant and flower buffer areas are beautiful and would be beneficial.

Set up a way to limit the number of boats on Lake Byllesby on the busiest week ends of the summer

Tim & Sue Bresnahan

# DAKOTA CO FAIR (AUGUST 2016) INPUT

Dakota County  
Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan

## 2016 Dakota County Fair

August 8 – 14, 2016

Dakota County Fairgrounds (Farmington, Minnesota)

### Input Summary

An issues and opportunities map for Lake Byllesby Regional Park was displayed in the Dakota County building at the fairgrounds in Farmington. Visitors to the building recorded suggestions on the map.

- Provide increased access to water recreation e.g. interest in splash pad and swimming infrastructure (swimming pond, beach for sand castle building, etc.) and “jumping in the water” and “rope swing.” Construction of a boat launch at Holland Lake. Introduce canoe/kayak rentals.
- Interest in bike, sled, and camping equipment rentals. Further increase in bike trail infrastructure. Desire for park to facilitate archery, golf, hunting land, and hiking.
- Desire for more police patrolling and increased lighting. Navigation concern, noting it is “hard to find,” and distinction between east and west side unclear. Desire for “trail etiquette education and signage.”
- Provide programs for orienteering and trout fishing (especially for women), and food opportunities.

### Ballot Results

Dakota County voting machines were used to collect input on current park planning efforts. Note that only the responses in bold are specific to Lake Byllesby Regional Park. The rest are park system wide.

#### **Adult ballot responses (216 participants)**

- Recreation equipment wanted: canoe/kayak (45%), pontoon or motorboat (30%), and bicycle (28%). These were followed by cross-country skis, snowshoes, and archery equipment.
- Food trucks were the number one desired food service option, but almost 20% of respondents desired a combination of food trucks, café/restaurant, concession/snack bar, *and* vending machine snacks/beverages.
- Discounted park services (29%) were the best way to motivate respondents to volunteer in the parks. Swag (t-shirts and gear) (12%) and complimentary food (10%) could also be effective. 12% of respondents were not interested in volunteering.
- Strong community support for natural resource management efforts. 57% of respondents felt “restoring native plant communities in Dakota County parks” was very important. 71% of respondents felt “improving quality of lakes, streams, and wetlands in Dakota County parks” was very important. 78% of respondents felt “improving habitat size for native animal species in Dakota County Parks” was either important or very important.

- Boating (15%), picnicking (15%), and camping (15%) were the top three reasons for visiting Lake Byllesby Regional Park. 50% of respondents had not visited the park.
- Interest in new water-based amenities was highest for water play (swimming pond or spray pad) (31%), canoe/kayak rental (29%), and fishing dock (26%). 31% of respondents “did not know” because they had not been to Byllesby Regional Park.
- Respondents would most likely attend festivals or events (concerts, canoe festival) (37%), environmental education (animal tracking, astronomy) (30%), and history themed events (29%) in Lake Byllesby Regional Park

**Kid ballot responses (85 participants)**

- Respondents wanted to swim (30%) and go fishing (18%), and “look for animals” (12%) in the park. They wanted to find deer (18%), fish (12%), and rabbits (10%) in the park.
- Respondents also wanted to climb rocks (32%), make forts (20%), and wade in water (18%) in the park.

## **SPRING 2017 ENGAGEMENT**

**Online Social Pinpoint Comments - 581 visits and 297 responses (March/April 2017)**

**Open House & Stakeholder Meeting Comments (March 30, 2017) & Online Survey Comments**

County Staff *(held March 30th, 2017 at Cannon Falls City Hall)*

Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users *(held March 30th, 2017 at Cannon Falls City Hall)*

Lake Byllesby Improvement Association *(held March 30th, 2017)*

City of Randolph *(presentation to City Council April 12th, 2017)*

Randolph Schools *(held April 13th, 2017 at Randolph Schools)*

Randolph Township *(presentation to Town Board April 18th, 2017)*

Lake Byllesby Improvement Association General Meeting *(presentation April 20th, 2017)*

Randolph High School Students *(held April 25th, 2017 at Randolph Schools)*

### **Individual Input**

Ken Burns, representing Stanton Township and Lake Byllesby Improvement Association

Dawn Lanning

Dr. Earl Benson, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association

Dave Pederson

Scott Wheeler

Joshue Peterson

John and Mary Fischer

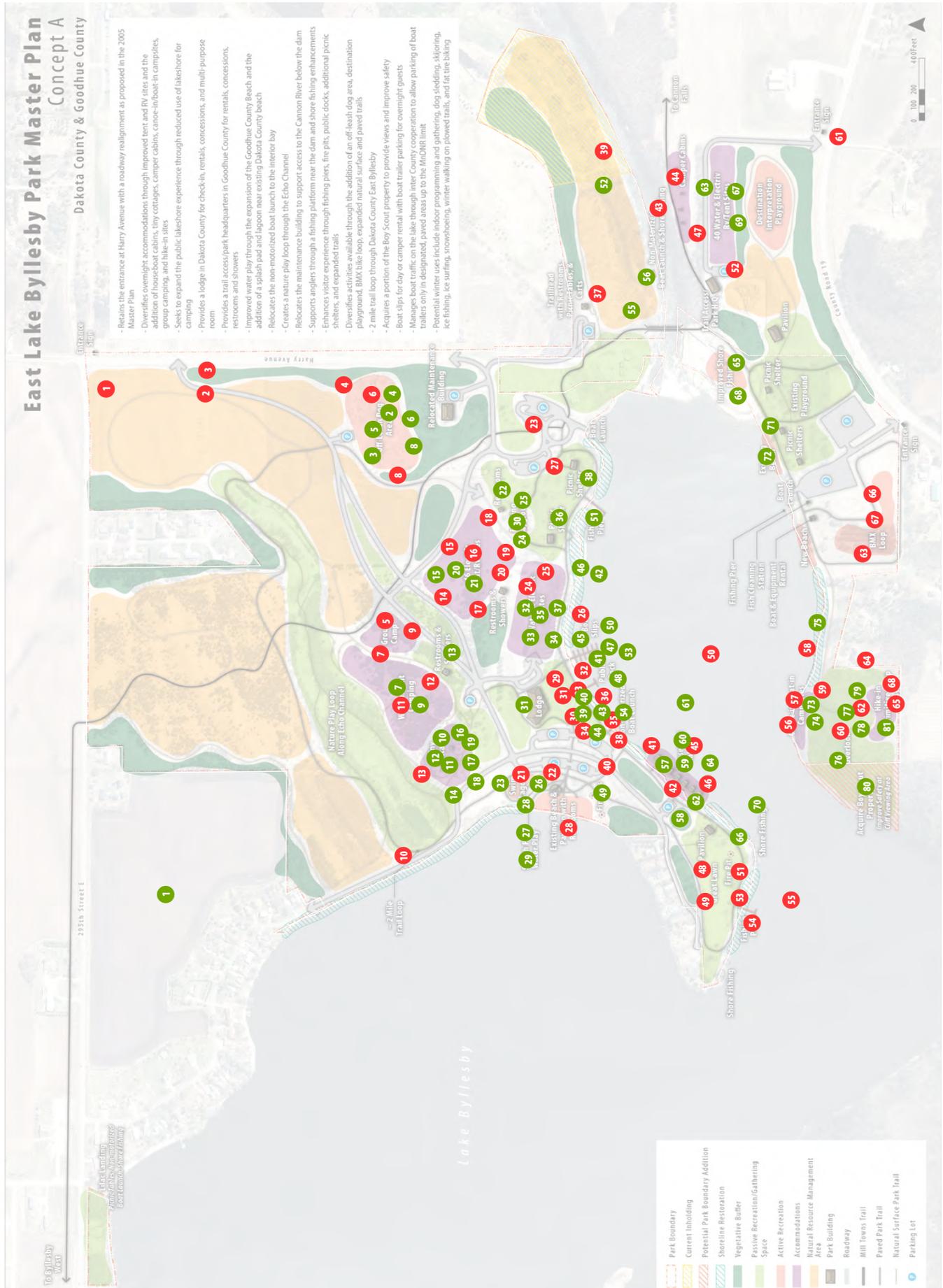
Dr. Earl Benson, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association

Jim and Mary Bassett

Isaac Ophoven-Baldwin

Ryan Renneke

# Social PinPoint Comments on Concept A



**Concept A Likes (number of up votes, number of down votes)**

- 1 Consider this parcel for acquisition. (0, 0)
- 2 Off-leash area to be able to exercise pets is great! (0, 2)
- 3 Excellent idea (0, 2)
- 4 Love this!! (0, 2)
- 5 This is a needed amenity. Good idea. (0, 1)
- 6 Excellent idea!! (2, 2)
- 7 I always enjoy walk in tent sites. Gives those of us who don't own campers a better experience. (0, 0)
- 8 Wonderful! (3, 3)
- 9 good (0, 0)
- 10 Great idea to have little cabins. Can they be winterized for year-around use? Or perhaps ice-fishing cabins could be rented? Ice fishing and cross-country skiing trails would be a great addition. (0, 0)
- 11 Sounds like a great idea. I know the cabins at White Tail woods are very hard to get for a weekend. (0, 0)
- 12 Again, sounds like a fun addition (0, 0)
- 13 Is this in the most central, intuitive location to serve the cottages, tent camper and group campers? (0, 0)
- 14 Nice idea and I believe will be utilized much more than a houseboat. (0, 0)
- 15 Adding more sites is a great idea. These would be more appealing to us if they had water and electric. But this would be a good option for those that didn't need water. (0, 0)
- 16 Fun ideal (0, 0)
- 17 great (0, 0)
- 18 Fun idea for those who don't want to tent or rv camp. (0, 0)
- 19 Great option for those who want to camp but don't have their own dwelling (tent/camper) to bring to the park. Super!! (2, 1)
- 20 Waterfront (electric) campsites remain my top priority! However, adding other non-waterfront options are great too - especially for larger groups. (1, 0)
- 21 I wouldn't mind not camping on the water's edge. I stay at Byllesby because the other campers are generally very courteous, children are well-behaved, and the park keeps the grounds well-maintained. (0, 0)

- 22 I like having restrooms to better serve the playground. Running water hopefully :) (0, 0)
- 23 Love the idea to offer inland swimming experience. (0, 0)
- 24 Not opposed to adding playground area(s), but like the more central location of this one. (1, 0)
- 25 If the existing playground is to stay in it's location, it's used by general park users and campers alike--evaluate parking proximity and accessibility. (0, 0)
- 26 From a maintenance perspective, the swim lagoon is ideal, no debris from the reservoir and treatable for algae (2, 0)
- 27 Love the splash pad option for those that have little ones, or prefer not to swim in the lake. Great for cooling off pets as well. (1, 0)
- 28 Yes. (2, 0)
- 29 Great thing for young kids! (4, 1)
- 30 Keep the park the way it is (0, 0)
- 31 Will this function as a campground office? Visitor Center? What's the scope of service for this building? (0, 0)
- 32 We RV camp here because of the lake views from our site. Without sewer, no reason to come if we are stuffed back in the trees away from the lake. (0, 0)
- 33 Like RV site access to water (1, 0)
- 34 What's changed? (2, 0)
- 35 RV sites along the waterfront is extremely important! (3, 0)
- 36 Like the addition of additional picnicking. It looks like this area is all general use for picnicking, correct? (0, 0)
- 37 Maintaining (or expanding) the waterfront camp sites is top priority - it's the thing we enjoy most about camping here!! Like adding other site options too - but agree non-waterfront should cost less. (5, 0)
- 38 Will the existing shelter be replaced and updated to include restrooms or a serving kitchen? (0, 0)
- 39 Please add tent camping and open green space or, better yet, TREES. (2, 0)
- 40 Removing these would sites would vastly improve the quality of the park. With all the RVs right off the lake it looks more like a trailer or used RV sales. This space would be better for families. (0, 0)

- 41 the only good idea in this plan (0, 0)
- 42 Shoreline restoration is very badly needed all along this lake. Some spots reserved for fishing would help. (1, 0)
- 43 Right now, access to waterfront is limited to the RV campers. I like the idea of providing access to lake views to all park visitors vs. just to those in RV's. (0, 0)
- 44 Excellent! Remove all of the RV camping along the shoreline, it currently looks exactly like a used RV lot every weekend, what a crime. (1, 2)
- 45 Love slips, is 20 enough? (0, 1)
- 46 By restoration, I'm assuming that refers to replanting all the trees that were so horribly removed from the shoreline. (0, 0)
- 47 LOVE adding boat slips! We camp and boat at the park but have to pull the boat on and off the water to come in for lunch, etc. You should charge a fee to reserve/use the slips. Well worth the fee! (2, 0)
- 48 If you could fish from it, even better! (1, 0)
- 49 I like the fire pits for informal group gathering to enjoy the sun set. Consider the needs for larger group gathering area(s) e.g. for a special event, amphitheater, etc. (0, 0)
- 50 Love the idea of boat slips. Not sure about this location, but its a great idea since there really is not a place to 'park' a boat right now. (0, 0)
- 51 Yes please! Always love more opportunities to fish. Especially with the fishing equipment loaner program at the park. (1, 0)
- 52 Nice place to have a picnic on a bike ride. (0, 0)
- 53 Boat slips are good but this style would stick out too far. Lined up bow to shore would be better. (0, 3)
- 54 Would make it way less crowded at the main boat launch. (0, 0)
- 55 Very nice to see downriver access improved. (3, 2)
- 56 This portion of the river to Cannon Falls gets minimal canoe/kayak use due to the lack of accessibility. Great concept. (3, 2)
- 57 wonderful attraction assuming the houseboats are not permanently anchored and can navigate the lake (0, 0)
- 58 I like the development of this area. (1, 0)

### Concept A Likes (number of up votes, number of down votes)

- 59 Cool idea. Not sure it's possible. (2, 0)
- 60 great idea if you mean for rental. (0, 1)
- 61 Love the idea for unique house-boat camping. A trademark for the park, for sure! Iconic. (0, 1)
- 62 Unique concept for the area. I've always wanted to stay in a houseboat just for the experience (2, 1)
- 63 I use the State Park camper cabins quite frequently. I'm sure these cabins would be utilized. (6, 3)
- 64 Sounds like a fun thing to do (1, 1)
- 65 I think this would be a great spot to fish. Improved shoreline would be welcome. (4, 0)
- 66 Great view of the limestone bluffs (1, 0)
- 67 More RV sites here would be a great idea. (0, 5)
- 68 Great idea. Not everyone has a boat. (3, 1)
- 69 More sites are good. (3, 5)
- 70 Absolutely love the additional shore fishing opportunities. (1, 1)
- 71 would be nice to improve current beach (3, 0)
- 72 leave the park the way it is (6, 0)
- 73 great (0, 11)
- 74 We love the chance to do some overnight camping at the hike in campsites. Great addition to the park. The trail is a nice touch too. (5, 10)
- 75 I think shoreline restoration is important. (0, 12)
- 76 I LOVE the hiking trail to a scenic destination. It is badly needed in this park which has trails mostly in the open. (5, 12)
- 77 Trail to the overlook is a great idea. (0, 13)
- 78 Like the idea, but concerned about enforcement. (0, 7)
- 79 Spectacular views from up on top. It will be worth the effort to get to the top and look out over the water body. Thank you. (5, 13)
- 80 Highly supportive of additional acquisitions in this area of the park to protect MBS-identified native oak and white pine forest. (3, 10)
- 81 Hike in sites would be a good fit here (4, 11)

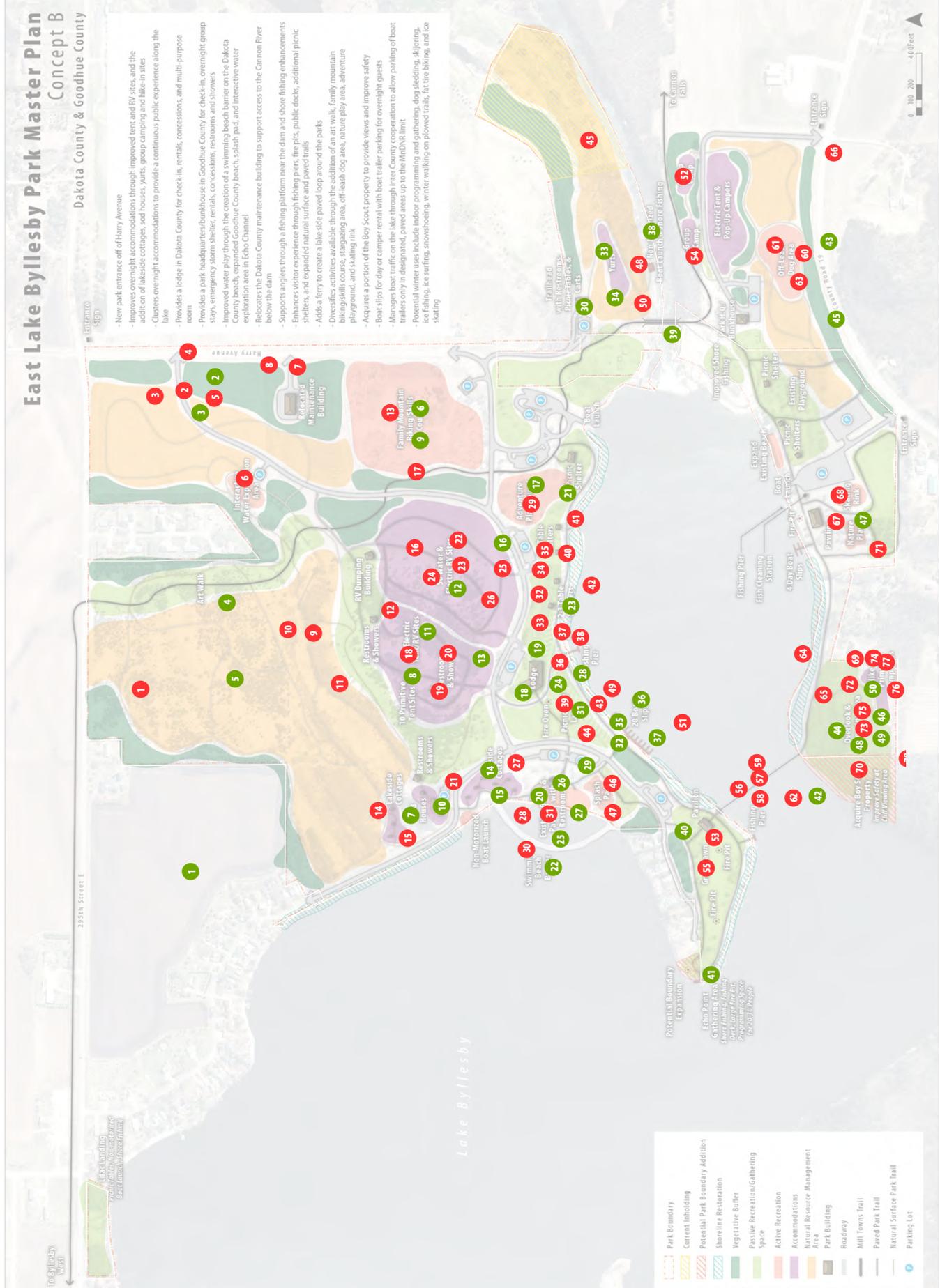
## Concept A Concerns (number of up votes, number of down votes)

- 1** I think this whole plan borders on insanity. Where is "Forever Wild?" We will have to change the motto to "Forever Asphalt" or "Forever Coney Island." Where has common sense gone? (1, 0)
- 2** Everything about this plan stinks. Leave this beautiful natural park just the way it is. (2, 0)
- 3** terrible spot for the entrance (2, 0)
- 4** Please start planting a lot of trees to block the beautiful Cannon Greens neighborhood from this zoo you are creating (1, 1)
- 5** Recommend re-routing high use bike trail away from group camping (group campers want some privacy and separation from busy paved bike trail) (0, 0)
- 6** Brilliant idea to have an off leash dog park right next to a residential neighborhood on what is to become a very busy road with all the extra campsites. Did anyone think at all when designing this!! (1, 1)
- 7** repair and paint the picnic tables. (1, 0)
- 8** terrible idea ,dog park across from cannon greens housing development. We have a barking dog ordinance in Randolph Township, and it is to close to road (1, 0)
- 9** No additional campsites required at this park! (3, 0)
- 10** Now is the time to reroute the road over the old dike. Repairs on the dam now make this plug and ditch unnecessary. Hundreds of feet of new lake front area gained (0, 0)
- 11** No additional campsites required at this park! (2, 0)
- 12** Evaluate. People car-camp here and it's easiest to car-camp when you can pull your car up to your site vs. parking and hauling supplies overland. (0, 0)
- 13** No additional campsites required at this park! (1, 1)
- 14** No thanks, without water why bring an RV. Just make it tents. (0, 0)
- 15** No additional campsites required at this park! (1, 0)
- 16** These sites would need to be priced differently, or be provided better amenities since they are not on the water. It would be nice to have more sites, that's the good news. (3, 2)
- 17** Adding all the camping sites in the proposed plan will triple the amount of traffic in the park. So much for enjoying nature. Would you want triple the amount of traffic next to your house? (1, 0)
- 18** Enjoy having a breeze off the lake at the tent sites. Feel this removes us from what we like about this park and the sites may be too hot in the summer time. (2, 0)
- 19** No water hookups for these RV sites? Most parks try to add amenities rather than take away. Why not consider full hookups similar to Lebanon Hills? (0, 1)
- 20** What I like most about this campground is that all sites are on the water. This is a large amount of sites that are not on the water and I don't like that. I agree that these should cost less. (4, 0)
- 21** Instead of digging a hole in the ground, how about Dakota County holds the MPCA accountable to the clean water act and actually solves a problem, versus digging a hole in the ground. (1, 0)
- 22** "completely agree with this comment - Instead of digging a hole in the ground, how about Dakota County holds the MPCA accountable to the clean water act and actually solves a problem! (3, 0)"
- 23** Motorized boat launch is busy, often with overflow. Are we able to increase boat/trailer parking (will DNR allow?) if yes, we should expand. (0, 1)
- 24** No additional campsites required at this park! (0, 0)
- 25** Are you moving all tent sites away from the waterfront? If so, this very discriminatory. We're a tent-camping family, and love to tent camp on the shore. (2, 0)
- 26** Please move all of these sites somewhere not visible, at all. (1, 2)
- 27** Consider a restroom that serves the motorized boat launch people and the shelter people. (0, 0)
- 28** Existing beach should be re-evaluated. As-is, poor water quality and high winds blowing sand make it a poor user experience. This is the best viewshed in the park--utilize for something else. (0, 0)
- 29** The waterfront sites are what we love about this campground. (0, 0)
- 30** Taking away RV sites and adding way to many boat sites for size of lake area here. it is already very busy on weekends when most of the people would be there. (2, 0)
- 31** Would prefer to leave these as electric/water camp sites. If you only keep 34 water/electric sites, will be very hard for people to enjoy this great place. (0, 0)
- 32** please do not removed lakeside camping (1, 0)
- 33** We have serious concerns about giving up these prime RVing sites. Is it not possible to put the boat slips to the west instead? Thank you for considering our input. (0, 0)
- 34** These are our favorite sites. Eliminating waterfront sites diminishes the park for RV users. (1, 0)
- 35** Removing these RV sites would be detrimental. I would rather see more sites added to the west. (0, 1)
- 36** Leave the park the way it is and spend the \$\$ on fixing the water quality (0, 0)
- 37** The colored area is overlaid onto a portion of holes #3 and #4. How does this effect the golf club and its those holes. (1, 2)
- 38** These waterfront sites need to stay. When making reservations, sites 1 through 17 are generally the ones that go first. I agree more campsites would be nice, but not by losing waterfront ones. (2, 0)
- 39** leave our golf course alone. (3, 0)
- 40** Will this parking area eliminate the RV camping sites? These are terrific sites. (0, 4)
- 41** High waves from passing boats will make these houseboats really rock (0, 0)
- 42** Has a study been completed to determine that there is actually a market for this type of product? (2, 0)
- 43** Don't have what will be a very popular paved bike trail running past camper cabins (people renting cabins want privacy). (3, 1)
- 44** Too close to the trail for bike riders. I like the idea of camper cabins. Just further away from the actual trail (2, 0)
- 45** Houseboat Cabins = lake pollution - terrible idea (3, 0)
- 46** I did not know you were trying to make this Prior Lake, so much for nature! (2, 0)
- 47** leave this natural! (4, 2)

### Concept A Concerns (number of up votes, number of down votes)

- 48** "Great Lawn": Evaluate BMP's for stormwater management and buffers. This is an impaired lake and river--we want to improve water quality and be a role model for BMP's. (0, 0)
- 49** I like the idea of open space for picnics and recreation, but agree that low-maintenance prairie would be a better fit. (3, 0)
- 50** spend the money on the water quality!!! (5, 0)
- 51** Why does this have to be a "Great Lawn," why can't it be prairie so maintenance has less to mow and the county leans more towards sustainability. (3, 0)
- 52** 40 is too many - 20 would be ok (6, 0)
- 53** Is there a reason the boat docks can't be located in this area rather than displacing the existing RV sites? (0, 1)
- 54** This is very shallow fishing. Would be better for boat up docks for shore picnics. Fishing dock moved east where channel is deeper and better fishing. (2, 0)
- 55** Very shallow, poor fishing (0, 0)
- 56** concern for shoreline and limestone damage with heavy traffic (8, 1)
- 57** There is a whole camp ground right across the lake sufficient to handle the people who want to camp. This camp site is not needed and unwanted. (5, 0)
- 58** leave shoreline restoration to residents to save on expenses, esp for an area that would rarely be used (7, 1)
- 59** View from hill is not worth the expense or risk to build out (8, 0)
- 60** This trail is a safety concern, most of the people using these trails are teenagers jumping of the cliffs (7, 0)
- 61** This is not a good entrance to the park. I have lived here 30 years(5256 hwy 19 blvd) and know how fast vehicles drive on hwy 19. I have had numerous close calls there turning into my driveway. (0, 1)
- 62** View from here is really poor relative to the Boy Scout property due to tall hardwood canopy. Wait until the Boy Scout land is acquired and then build a lookout with a really worthwhile view. (12, 0)
- 63** this is not an amusement park --go somewhere else for that (9, 1)
- 64** Unless you put a 10 foot fence around this. I already have problems with trespassing from people going up to the cliffs. Close the trail up to the cliff area permanently. (8, 0)
- 65** This small area is way too close to the nearest residence to have primitive campsites. (12, 0)
- 66** This is a quiet lake community. Adding a BMX park would only increase traffic and noise. (1, 0)
- 67** Is there a demand for this type of use? This image is what comes to my mind when I see BMX bike loop. I don't think this type of use fits with either park. (7, 0)
- 68** These campsites look down into back yards of residential homes, which provides an unnatural view for campers and removes the privacy of the homeowners (10, 0)

# Social PinPoint Comments on Concept B



## Concept B Likes (number of up votes, number of down votes)

- 1 Consider acquisition of this parcel. (0, 0)
- 2 I like all the passive, quiet trails for hiking--more loops for more options. I'm sure the growing neighborhoods will enjoy the access for walking dogs, etc. (0, 0)
- 3 I really like embracing the forever wild theme and keeping the large section of trails. Property values will be just fine. (0, 0)
- 4 I like this idea of a trail side art segment that could change with different installations each year. Trail users would look forward to it, it's a destination. (0, 0)
- 5 I like the updated trail network. As-is, the trails are just so-so layout wise, this looks much more scenic and appealing. (0, 0)
- 6 Love this idea as a park feature that's unique. (0, 0)
- 7 lake side cottages are awesome!! they will be all booked up! build more.:) (4, 1)
- 8 This appears to be better suited to car camping where cars can pull up to each site, but it's hard to tell from the illustration. (0, 0)
- 9 I like this idea. The current land topography is almost perfect for this idea. (3, 1)
- 10 I like the idea of unique camping. Sod houses though? What about yurts instead? (0, 0)
- 11 Great spot for the RV camping. (1, 0)
- 12 Best idea ever, move all the RV camping away from the waters edge. (1, 2)
- 13 I think the placement of these campgrounds is better than on the waterfront. Everyone should be able to enjoy the waterfront, not just campers. Just so you know, I camp with a travel camper. (1, 0)
- 14 Love this. I can see people on a bike trip, wanting these. (0, 0)
- 15 Great concept!! Nice to have some lakeside accommodations for non- camper/tenters. (3, 0)
- 16 THERE ARE MORE CAMPING SITES, AND THAT'S THE BIGGEST REASON WE LIKE BYLLESBYE IS FOR CAMPING. IT LOOKS BIGGER TOO (4, 1)
- 17 improved playground would be great. (1, 0)
- 18 What's the scope of the lodge? Is it a new campground office? Visitor Center? I like the fire oven as a unique activity. (0, 0)
- 19 I like how all the lake front space is now open and flexible, general use space. This park could host some great community festivals and events, and having this area open would be perfect. (0, 0)
- 20 I do like this idea. However the lake is very poor water quality as others have stated. (0, 0)
- 21 The existing playground is used heavily by campers and general park users. If the traditional playground goes away, make sure this play area appeals to that audience, is accessible to kids of all ages (0, 0)
- 22 Not many people swim at the current beach. Hopefully a barrier would improve water quality. (4, 0)
- 23 I like that everyone can enjoy the lakefront, not just campers. (1, 2)
- 24 Really can't say enough about utilizing this space. It looks really odd with RVs all around the lake. They can still walk over and enjoy the view with everyone else. (0, 0)
- 25 Bad location for swimming beach. A "curtain" has been tried before and was a failure. Spend the money on cleaning up the lake, not pretending that it will be cleaner with a curtain! (0, 0)
- 26 leave the park the way it is (0, 0)
- 27 Great new design for the swimming area! (1, 2)
- 28 Love it! Finally the used RV lot is gone. The county is true embracing "Forever Wild". Best idea of the entire master plan. (1, 1)
- 29 What if there was a smaller-scale Lake Harriet Bandshell type of amenity? I would love live music and programming here! (0, 0)
- 30 I like the idea of an area that's away from the business of the park--for very quiet camping. Yurts are cool. (0, 0)
- 31 As others have stated, the RV waterfront sites are the main reason this campground is appealing. Sacrificing them for alternative development would be a mistake. (2, 0)
- 32 Very much prefer keeping these sites intact. These are very nice sites along the lake. The RV sites looking toward the water are great. (4, 0)
- 33 Yurts would be an excellent addition. Winter time ski trails off of them would be even better. (0, 0)
- 34 Yurts are super cool. These seem a long way away from "the action". (1, 0)
- 35 Great idea! Is this enough boat slips? (0, 0)
- 36 I think people who are camping would appreciate a boat slip, so they don't have to take their boats out every night. (6, 0)
- 37 would love to have a place to dock boat while camping (1, 1)
- 38 I would like to launch a canoe here, good idea! (2, 0)
- 39 whitewater launch and development of whitewater course. (2, 1)
- 40 I like the access to this part of the park! (1, 1)
- 41 I like the idea of a gathering area here. I can see people wanting to get married here or take pictures here. (0, 0)
- 42 The ferry idea is brilliant. A nice attraction. (0, 3)
- 43 Off leash dog area is necessary to give folks a designated place to run their dogs away from the pathway. (3, 0)
- 44 We would be excited to have a hike in camping area similar in nature as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area. Nice touch. (3, 10)
- 45 A dog park would be alright. (0, 0)
- 46 A trail to the hike in location is the best part of this entire plan. This is the most scenic location of the entire east park property. (2, 10)
- 47 I like this idea. (5, 1)
- 48 Lousy location for an observation point. Leave it natural so ALL users of the lake can view the cliffs/woods. Would not be able to view the lake without removing several beautiful trees, Bad idea! (5, 1)
- 49 With the focus on health and well being these days, trails located in scenic wooded areas are an important part of any park system. This should be completed in the first phase of the park plan. (2, 12)
- 50 Cool unique idea. I would love to canoe in to camp. (0, 10)

**Concept B Concerns (number of up votes, number of down votes)**

- 1** Too much....overcrowding/lack of sufficient space for all of the activities planned. (0, 0)
- 2** This plan is certain to destroy property values/the integrity of a recent housing development. Try to be a bit more considerate of your neighbors.... (0, 0)
- 3** Nice three ring circus next to a housing development!!! Thank you for destroying my property value. Go buy a park somewhere else. Why wreck a beautiful park?? (1, 2)
- 4** I second this - I think this whole plan borders on insanity. Where is "Forever Wild?" We will have to change the motto to "Forever Asphalt" or "Forever Coney Island." Where has common sense gone? (1, 0)
- 5** I think this whole plan borders on insanity. Where is "Forever Wild?" We will have to change the motto to "Forever Asphalt" or "Forever Coney Island." Where has common sense gone? (4, 0)
- 6** Is this the best location for this? I like the idea, just seems like it's located off in the boonies. (0, 0)
- 7** Start planting trees now - to block out this terrible idea from the beautiful Cannon Green neighborhood (1, 2)
- 8** Terrible plan. Keep the current entrance to the park. Don't needlessly infringe on Cannon Greens housing development. They pay taxes too! (0, 1)
- 9** This is an amusement park, so much for nature. And nothing like a crowded lake! (2, 2)
- 10** Way too much for such a small area. The integrity of the park will be destroyed with the sheer numbers of activities/camp sites... (0, 0)
- 11** AGREED - This is an amusement park, so much for nature. And nothing like a crowded lake! (1, 2)
- 12** This should be located centrally. (0, 0)
- 13** disgusted! (1, 2)
- 14** just say NO! (1, 2)
- 15** If the county wants more campsites in this "limited area" why not sell real estate and charge taxes. Neighbors, who pay the taxes shouldn't have to ENTERTAIN VISITORS IN THEIR BACKYARDS... (0, 1)
- 16** NO NEW CAMPING SITES! (1, 0)
- 17** Welcome to Wisconsin Dells!!! (1, 2)
- 18** please do not take away lake side camping. During the week these are the only sites used at park (2, 0)
- 19** NO NEW CAMPING SITES! (1, 0)
- 20** No views. See other comment (1, 1)
- 21** Sod house concept...not good. cottages are much more appealing. (1, 0)
- 22** no new camp sites 34 is enough (1, 0)
- 23** Too many camp sites already. The tranquility of the lake is diminished with EACH new campsite. (0, 0)
- 24** You are moving all the RV camping away from the water. (1, 0)
- 25** These sites are no longer as appealing if not on the water the way the original design was. It would be nice to have more sites, not at the expense of putting them all off the water with no views. (1, 2)
- 26** Won't bother to come back if we aren't able to be lakeside. (0, 0)
- 27** Like the lakeside cottage idea, but just realized these are where the swim lagoon might otherwise go. I'd take the swim lagoon and keep the cottages further down instead. (2, 1)
- 28** "I second this -
- Dakota County do you job and hold the MPCA to the clean water act. This is the second silliest idea yet for the swim beach, the silliest being option A's hole in the ground. (1, 0)"
- 29** The playground could be back further doesn't need to be on the waterfront. you guys cannot handle the reservations as they are today, let alone all this expansion? What plans to improve that???? (1, 0)
- 30** Dakota County do you job and hold the MPCA to the clean water act. This is the second silliest idea yet for the swim beach, the silliest being option A's hole in the ground. (1, 0)
- 31** Similar to Plan A comments, request evaluation for the beach as it is. Given this is the best view in the park, with such a poor user experience, review alternative uses. (like a large gathering area) (0, 0)
- 32** love the on water rv sites (0, 0)
- 33** Please consider not taking away these lake-view RV sites. (1, 0)
- 34** Please don't get rid of the waterfront campsites - it's the best feature of this park! (5, 2)
- 35** I don't see any yay or nay comments about the "great lawn". Would that be better served as a location for picnic shelters? This spot is better left for RV sites. (0, 1)
- 36** Please reconsider and do not take away the lakeside RV sites. (2, 0)
- 37** I much prefer Concept A that keeps some of the waterfront sites. Adding the boat slips is a great addition - but would like to see both in the plan long term. (1, 0)
- 38** Leave this space for the RV sites. (0, 0)
- 39** Please don't eliminate the waterfront RV sites. It's why we come to Lake Byllesby. (4, 0)
- 40** We won't return to Lake B if there are no longer any waterfront tent sites. It's unfair to take those of us who really enjoy nature and relegate tent campers to walk-in site so far from the water. Sad (2, 0)
- 41** Please allow tent camping near the lake. (3, 0)
- 42** Leave the RV sites as is. Only reason we come to the campground. (1, 0)
- 43** picnicking just is not popular---people who are not camping are at home in air conditioned comfort (1, 0)
- 44** It's a terrible solution to use all the shorefront for picnic/lawn use. That is day-use activity. Not camping activity. We would not return (we're not local) if this is the case. (3, 0)
- 45** leave our golf course alone. (2, 1)
- 46** spend the \$\$ on improving the water quality (1, 0)
- 47** Continue to work on water quality, not more activities... (0, 0)
- 48** no more campsites! (2, 2)
- 49** Add boat slips ONLY if counted in the total number of boats allowed on the lake at any one time. 63 total boats....PERIOD. (0, 0)
- 50** Don't continue to infringe on local neighbors. Keep the neighborhoods intact...Much too close to the golf course. (0, 2)

### Concept B Concerns (number of up votes, number of down votes)

- 51** There is already enough boat traffic in this small space. Adding boat slips at this location will be subject to severe wave action and only clog an already unsafe boating experience for everyone. (0, 0)
- 52** no more campsites! (5, 0)
- 53** Please consider the long term residents. Dakota County continues to "hem in" local residents, for the benefit of visitors/not longtime tax payers. (0, 1)
- 54** no more campsites! (5, 0)
- 55** Similar comments to Plan A regarding BMP's for buffers and stormwater management. We want to improve lake quality and model the best possible BMP's for lakeshore. (0, 0)
- 56** time at this park. The whole this is terrible! Leave the park the way it is and spend the \$\$ on improving the water quality (1, 0)
- 57** this whole plan is really stupid but this takes the cake and seriously dangerous! it is fairly obvious the people who came up with this ridiculous plan to not live in the area and have not spent much (2, 2)
- 58** I don't think this is realistic, this can be a busy lake. (3, 0)
- 59** There is a lot of traffic through here from the launch to the lake. Ferry across that traffic seems dangerous. (6, 0)
- 60** Not a big fan of dog parks. (1, 1)
- 61** terrible idea! (1, 0)
- 62** This "ferry idea" located at the narrows in the lake will prove to be a disaster "waiting to happen": Too much boat traffic already. Forget the ferry! (3, 0)
- 63** Like the addition of the dog park, but would prefer it closer to the camping sites. (1, 1)
- 64** Money should be used on water quality rather than shoreline restoration. Leave the shoreline to the residents! (5, 1)
- 65** building out a trail here would only encourage cliff jumpers and is NOT worth the risk to our children (10, 0)
- 66** A dangerous entrance road. Too many speeders on hwy 19. My car was totalled there as I was turning into my driveway. (0, 0)
- 67** There is absolutely no need for a skating rink at the lake. It will not be used and will only cost money. (3, 0)
- 68** I don't think skating rinks are used by many. Plus, I'm not sure our climate will support an ice skating rink. (6, 2)
- 69** Unless you put a 10 foot fence around the property, I already have problems with trespassing from people going to the cliffs. Close the access to the cliff area permanently. (7, 0)
- 70** This trail is a safety concern, most of the people using these trails are teenagers jumping of the cliffs (6, 0)
- 71** This shoreline should not have ANY access. The trail contributes only more congestion on the Goodhue County side of the lake.... (4, 1)
- 72** Do not encourage the kids further to jump off the cliffs. There is already enough of that going on! (5, 0)
- 73** Here is the best possible view from the hilltop. The hardwood canopy will block any potential panoramic lake view in the summer/spring/fall without significant hardwood removal. (10, 0)
- 74** no more campsites! (12, 3)
- 75** Trying to achieve a viable lookout will only destroy the view from the lake by thousands each year. Forget the trail and the overlook! Barnes Bluff in Red Wing is/was magnificent until planners! (11, 1)
- 76** not large/remotely enough area to bring this concept to life when only a stones throw from houses (9, 0)
- 77** These campsites provide views into residential back yards. Unnatural views for campers and removing the privacy of homeowners is bad for both parties. (8, 0)
- 78** Any access to the "cliff area" should be restricted to viewing from the lake ONLY. Tranquility and the wooded area should be left in its' natural state for ALL to enjoy, INCLUDING LOCAL RESIDENTS! (12, 1)

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

<b>Board</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comment</b>
A All	Concern	Just keep it the same as it is now
A All	Concern	As a birder I've enjoyed this peaceful area. Please cut down on so many changes!
A All	Concern	Winter use - not have winter trails corss plowed trails. Way to go over/under
A All	Concern	Off-leash dog area - proximity to winter skjoring/dog sledding - visitor/sound barring
A All	Concern	Would waves in bay area cause problems with houseboat cabins and boatslips
A All	Concern	Missing tent sites near lake
A All	Concern	Beach (G.C.) added is of concern with G.C. boat launch
A All	Concern	Destination playground - closer to parking
A All	Concern	Canoe campsites need to not be too close to trail
A All	Concern	Off leash dog area - between 2 housing subdivisions - noise
A All	Concern	Way too busy
A All	Concern	Lose the off leash dog area
A All	Concern	No more camping sites
A All	Concern	No RV sites adjacent to Hwy 19
A All	Concern	Hwy 19 is too busy for an entrance/exit
A All	Concern	House boats :( not good option
A All	Concern	40 RV and Tent sites trying to turn into park (traffic)
A All	Concern	Light pollution from RV site
A All	Concern	Smoke from campfires
A All	Keep	Camper cabins - like along river
A All	Keep	Keeping of some sites right along water
A All	Keep	Road separation of camp area good to break it up
A All	Keep	Like 2 mi trail loop
A All	Keep	Down from dam river uses
A All	Keep	Accommodations relatively close to bike trail
A All	Keep	Make the trail to the cliffs a priority
A All	Keep	Love having some boat slips available
A All	Keep	Non-motorized boat launch!
A All	Keep	Lodge
A All	Keep	Like the idea of tiny cottages
A All	Keep	Like the idea of the swim lagoon
A All	Map	D.C. - contact station earlier in park?
A All	Map	C.F. City - Joint pool onsite - explore opportunities
A All	Map	Afton S.P. e.g. of outdoor fireplace at back of pavilion
A All	Map	Positive of having shades, concessions, etc.
A All	Map	No wake area in main landing bay
A All	Map	Stairway on South side to get to river
A All	Map	Fishing Pier at Lilac Landing
A All	Map	Good to make [Lilac Landing] feel like a place
A All	Map	Fishing Pier on SE corner of Echo Point
A All	Map	Burr Oak Remnant to Presrve - Maybe short grass prairie [South Echo Point]
A All	Map	Emphasize signage on [Mill Town] trail - x miles to caseys, supplies, tourist destinations, etc.
A All	Map	Buffer Property [east of new CR 19 entrance road]
A All	Map	Intersection Safety (speed/trucks) [at CR 19 and new entrance road]

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

Board	Question	Comment
Active	A Concerns	Get ride of house boats
Active	A Concerns	The camp sites between the boy scout camp and the residential homes are not a good idea. They look into the yards of residential homes are bad for campers and residents.
Active	A Concerns	More campsites means more traffic, the area is not set up for this.
Active	A Concerns	Very concerned about the lack of lakeside RV sites, which is popular amenity with many.
Active	A Concerns	I LOVE the addition of boat slips and totally willing to give up some of the lakeside camping sites for the additional boating accommodations!!
Active	A Concerns	Do not need Cabins Boathouses Yerts, etc.
Active	A Concerns	Although I like tent sites instead of walk-in camping, don't like the location of the tent sites. One of the things we enjoy about Byllesby is being able to see the lake and getting a breeze off the lake when it is hot. I feel this puts us out of the perspective.
Active	A Concerns	Removal of existing lakeside sites is not well thought out and essentially a stupid idea. I think the houseboat cabin idea is interesting but could end up costing the tax payers too much.
Active	A Concerns	again - the traffic, the area is not set up for this
Active	A Concerns	Don't like the picnic area forces the movement of the tent campsites.
Active	A Concerns	No concerns.
Active	A Keep	Keep lakeside RV sites, tiny cottages
Active	A Keep	BMX loop
Active	A Keep	Splash Pad
Active	A Keep	Non-motorized boat launch
Active	A Keep	Want more RV electric/water sites by the lake.
Active	A Keep	I love the idea of unique accommodations like yurts or sod houses in concept B. Any thought to making sure winterized accommodations are available for promoting winter activities like ice fishing, hiking, snow shoeing or cross-country skiing?
Active	A Keep	NO MORE CAMP SITES!
Active	A Keep	I like that you kept half of the lake side camping sites. Addition of cottages is great. I do prefer the option B lake side cottages better. Houseboat cabins are a cool idea.
Active	A Keep	Like the addition of cottages, cabin houseboats, fishing piers as well as the addition of more restrooms and showers.
Active	A Keep	EXPAND camping opportunities. Just moving sites away from the water is not a solid idea.
Active	A Keep	Waterfront campsites (w/electric & firepit) are top priority for me - it's why we love to camp there!!
Active	A Keep	Not sure, we just come to relax and enjoy the view of the lake from our campsite.
Active	A Keep	Love the idea of nature play and interactive nature activities.
Active	A Keep	I hate them - the activity is the lake. If you want an amusement park go to one.
Active	A Keep	Love the addition of the swim lagoon and the off leash area. Also like that there are more paved trails for use.
Active	A Keep	Activities listed in concept A seem far more practical than concept B.
Active	A Keep	Splash pad is great for little ones and/or those that want to cool off quick w/o going in the lake. Like swim lagoon area, added fishing piers and TRAILS!! The more trails for hiking the better ðŸ˜Š
Active	A Map	Love that idea [BMX loop]
Active	A Map	Noisy, high-traffic area [houseboats]
Active	B Concern	This is a lot of tax dollars being spent - will user fees recoup any of the cost? We like the park just as it is and most campers obviously agree.
Active	B Concern	Keep the rental price down to make it more accessible to lower income families.
Active	B Concern	To many campsites - the area is not set up for this increase in traffic.
Active	B Concern	Is there actually a market for Sodd Houses in this area? Please consider not moving the existing RV sites.
Active	B Concern	The lake shore camp sites are a unique and wonderful feature to the park. Losing all the lake sites is not good. I do support the addition of boat slips and realize to add one thing you must remove something else. Just please don't take ALL the lake sites. Not thinking sod houses will be a hit. Cottages and yurts seem more appealing.

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

<b>Board</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Active	B Concern	Do not like the movement of the campsites off the lakeshore. This is one of the best features of Byllesby.
Active	B Concern	the whole plan stinks!
Active	B Concern	Ferry across the busy path from launch to lake seems like a crash waiting to happen. Yikes!
Active	B Concern	Disappointed that some of the activities will take away lakeshore camping. That is one of the reasons we come to Byllesby frequently.
Active	B Concern	Too much.
Active	B Keep	Family bike skill area
Active	B Keep	Non-motorized boat launch
Active	B Keep	Swim beach barrier
Active	B Keep	No sod houses
Active	B Keep	Do not like the RV sites where they are in this plan.
Active	B Keep	I love the idea of unique accommodations like sod houses and yurts. Any thought to making sure winterized accommodations are available for promoting winter activities like ice fishing, hiking, snow shoeing or cross-country skiing?
Active	B Keep	To many campsites - the area is not set up for this increase in traffic.
Active	B Keep	Love the addition of more electric sites, lakeside cottages, and yurts.
Active	B Keep	Like the addition of cottages, cabins, houseboat cabins, and more campsites.
Active	B Keep	The Goodhue side is ok. The Dakota side, and the lack of thought into moving sites from the river, just isn't a good idea.
Active	B Keep	Not interested.
Active	B Keep	Improved shore fishing and dog friendly areas.
Active	B Keep	the activity is the lake - spend the \$\$ improving the water quality instead of turning it into an amusement park
Active	B Keep	I like the changes to the swimming beach area.
Active	B Keep	Love the ideas, although not sure how much some of them will be used. Especially like the increased water activities.
Active	B Keep	I like the idea of having facilities out on the point.
Active	B Map	No Ferry
B All	Concern	Adventure Play to Interpretative Play
B All	Concern	Winter skijoring/dog sledding trail currently go to NE in prairie area - confirm
B All	Concern	Move campsites away could be barrier from drawing campers
B All	Concern	What about tent camping near H2O - just RVs?
B All	Concern	Waves impact for boat slips
B All	Concern	No camping nearby lake
B All	Concern	Skating rinks - how much use; winter extent; amt of personnel
B All	Concern	Supervision of GC campsite overnight on same side (not DC)
B All	Concern	Hike-in near residential homes - lights, noise - could it work?
B All	Concern	No new camping spots
B All	Concern	Too busy
B All	Concern	Ferry looks like a waste of money
B All	Concern	Don't like trail on 295th
B All	Concern	Trail should be for snowmobile, horses, everything, all people not just special interest group
B All	Concern	Keep it in the park not willing to connect to them
B All	Concern	Ferry is dangerous
B All	Concern	Sod houses
B All	Concern	Repurpose existing amenities where possible (lodge)
B All	Keep	Mill Town Trail - better buffer to camping area; art walk good
B All	Keep	Boat slips more protected in this concept

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<b>Board</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comment</b>
B All	Keep	Biking trail separated from campers - even along lake
B All	Keep	Like clustering of active use areas/Mill Towns Trail
B All	Keep	Downstream activities from dam
B All	Keep	Nothing - leave it as is
B All	Keep	West end should be kept quiet for bird watchers
B All	Keep	Lots of lake side cottages!
B All	Keep	Swimming beach barrier - super!
B All	Keep	Lots of electric camp sites
B All	Keep	Consider moving the splace pad away from the lake
B All	Keep	Non-motorized boat launch!
B All	Map	Winter group camp need water
B All	Map	Fish houses for rent?
B All	Map	Charles City, IA - whitewater park - could be explored below dam (Wausa, WI)
B All	Map	Cannon only has scenic and recreational - below dam to CF is scenic might be challenging
B All	Map	Northfield - did [whitewater] as part of dam removal
B All	Map	Whitewater - 1-3 waves, build, maybe slolm course?, add waves not D course of river
B All	Map	DNR - would leave to local as to whether plowed or not - Mill Town - Coordinate with C.V.T
B All	Map	Like diverse camping areas - willing to explore on state land
B All	Map	Dog sledding/skijoring keep in both - way to make unique
B All	Map	[Potential winter uses] - wind kiting as a use; events; snowmaking?
B All	Map	Winter fat tire park area? [family mtn biking]
B All	Map	Potentail paved trail [along NW side of park]
B All	Map	Stage/bandhill w/ lodge - open area at end
B All	Map	Portage from lake to river
B All	Map	Not in my front yard, why do we have to have a bike trail [along 295th street] - along RR better
B All	Map	Deep irrigation well [along N side of 295th]
B All	Map	I don't want [Mill towns trail along 295th]
B All	Map	Buffer [boy scout and surrounding prop]
B All	Map	Like overlook [boy scout]
Circulation	A Concerns	It is awkward having the boat launch and beach areas so close. They are such different activities. When you are launching a boat the people on the beach have a front row seat to your progress and there is always concern about hitting someone. Conversely, when you are on the beach and boats are coming and going it's not very relaxing. Perhaps the beach could be expanded and boat launches moved elsewhere for better separation?
Circulation	A Concerns	Too much traffic to the area - it is not set up for this increase.
Circulation	A Concerns	Keep it simple. More RV and Tent camping sites. The sites by the water are very popular. Concentrate on clean and not overly crowded.
Circulation	A Concerns	Would be nice to have more roads, parking on both sides of the walk-in tent area.
Circulation	A Keep	Looks OK.
Circulation	A Keep	Improved shore fishing, expanded beach on Goodhue County side and developing the cliff area and peninsula.
Circulation	A Keep	I hate everything about it - I moved here specifically for this park and I mean the way it is now, natural, peaceful. Not an amusement park. Leave it just the way it is!
Circulation	A Keep	Do not remove lakeside RV sites. Without the lakeside sites there is no reason to camp at Byllesby. Additional are needed but at proposed site would be a last resort choice.
Circulation	A Keep	What does "circulation" mean??
Circulation	A Keep	Seems okay, although difficult to determine until traffic levels are measured.

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

Board	Question	Comment
Circulation	A Keep	By far the better proposal between A and B. I love the Goodhue proposed improvements more than I do the Dakota side.
Circulation	A Map	Concept A; high traffic [on N side of bay]
Circulation	A Map	Concept A; move echo point parking lot closer to beach parking
Circulation	B Concern	The concept of the Ferry is silly and very impractical. Very high boat traffic through these narrows makes the concept dangerous.
Circulation	B Concern	Everything! More traffic, more litter, less nature. Terrible ideas.
Circulation	B Concern	The removal of all existing full service campsites from the shoreline is not very thought out. Have any park staff actually camped here? The riverside at dusk while camping is not something you can get many places in the state let alone on the outer fringe of the metro.
Circulation	B Keep	Traffic through Dakota Park is good except access to Gerlach way should somehow be limited or eliminated. Gerlach is a neighborhood street and cannot support heavy park traffic.
Circulation	B Keep	Looks OK.
Circulation	B Keep	Love the Mill Town Trail concept. Would love if Cannon Falls was the main visitor's center for that trail system.
Circulation	B Keep	HATE EVERYTHING - leave the park the way it is and spend the money on improving the water quality.
Circulation	B Keep	I'm not sure what "circulation" is referring to.
Circulation	B Keep	The addition of the ferry is a unique concept. I am wondering if it is affordable. The new park entrance is appealing.
Circulation	B Keep	There isn't much to like.
Circulation	B Map	This road [295th street] is the main "drag" between Randolph and CF - 60+MPH - Not a safe road for a bike trail. Think people!
Circulation	B Map	Concept B; Move [echo point parking lot] away from narrow point of echo pt.
General	Concern	Avoid duplication of activities between the two parks
General	Concern	Use of Gerlach Road as a park access
General	Keep	The canoe portage around the dam is needed
General	Keep	Gathering place that could be used for school groups would be desirable
General	Keep	Providing dependable water play would be an improvement
General	Keep	Like the idea of camper cabin type accommodations
General	Keep	Like the idea of the Mill Towns Trail in the park
General		Not conducive due to zebra mussels - blue green algae
General		Wirth precedent - ADA accessibility
General		Army corps: no earthen barrier, sheet piling - need precedent, sediment contain?
General		Place to do bigger events
General		More great lawns will require increased investment by D.C. in maintenance as will require increased monitoring
General		Family mtn biking - similar to BMX loop? (Cottage Grove/Eagan Existing)
General		Strike a balance between formal nature play, water loop, and not
General		Energy Theme
General		Wind power - need to be woven in
General		Make sure to have adequate support facilities for event space
General		E.g. party in the party - Richardson N.C., 3 rivers - maybe e.g. on way no great lawn in E.P.
General		Echo Point - has lots of gophers, hard to maintain lawn
General		Beach - flexible space to have "community festival area" - decreased tents, lake events (1,000), R night Thursday Music
General		Maybe design trails so could be cross country skiing if best snow in D.C.
General		Places to program: Echo point, picnic shelter, want fire pit, lodge - good to have
General		Not park for winter use - other options? Climate change?
General		Katie - if goes away okay - but one person
General		Is worth effort to have winter rec (groomed) - maybe just on N side of DC

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

Board	Question	Comment
General		Good to have paved bike loop in park that includes GC
General		Would be better to put buffer between private camp areas and Mill Towns Trail
General		If do winter access snow mobile trail through
General		Could do all-season camping to extend visitor use
General		Like having some type of signature accommodations
General		Large scale fire pit? Plaza for activities when not windy? Pavilion expanded?
General		Beach - should it really be in the same location. Decreased wind inland oversized for current use - but with extra folks?
General		Circulation - could we eliminate road? Could we loop to N the main road?
General		Dog off leash park Plan A
General		Mountain Biking Plan B
General		Both too close to residences on Harry Ave and Hagan Ave - noise complaints are very common to others in residential areas
General		I move to this area specifically for this park. I mean the way it is right now! I don't like any of the added "activities." The lake is the attraction. We already have issues with dogs constantly barking and do not need added noise with a dog park. I am disgusted by this plan and plan to fight it at every level.
General		Hate it all. Very commercial. Park is perfect now. Will make park and lake too busy. Cannon Greens housing development will not be happy. Buy a park somewhere else!
General		Don't need these items - keep the park more natural: Cottages, lodge, boat slips (2 or ?), Houseboat cabins, pavilion - a second one, BMX loop, Acquire boy scout property, ferry boat, biking skills course, RV dumping building, sod houses
General		Consider pontoon boat rental
General		Like the addition of fishing piers
General		Ice fishing is popular, consider an ice fishing tournament as a winter event
General		If a whitewater course is desired below the dam, the DNR would need to permit it; the Cannon River is a Wild and Scenic River; there is a management plan that guides water flow/release from the dam
General		Bicyclists may prefer camp sites that are away from drive in sites
General		Keep natural play areas natural
General		Wellspring partnership with Goodhue County Park?
General		Wind kiting could be a winter use
General		The school doesn't use the park much; a tour to make teachers aware of the resource would be a good idea
General		Would be interested in education resources and field trip opportunities. Cost has been an issue in the past with other providers such as [Maltby?]
Interpretation	A Concerns	This interactive website is great, but the green thumb stating the hike-in campsites are a good idea defaults to 'like' even when you click 'dislike' which is misleading!
Interpretation	A Concerns	Everything about this plan stinks!
Interpretation	A Concerns	Anything new is better than the nothing we have now.
Interpretation	A Keep	Gross!!!
Interpretation	A Keep	I have always considered a recreation area and not an education area, but like the opportunities of including this in the plan.
Interpretation	A Keep	No comments.
Interpretation	B Concern	Leave the park the way it is.
Interpretation	B Keep	I like nothing about this plan
Interpretation	B Keep	Intriguing. Especially the interactive water feature.
Interpretation	B Keep	no thoughts.
Interpretation	Map	Historical ice fishing contest area [by dam]
Interpretation	Map	Pioneers area [echo point]
Interpretation	Map	Big falls area [echo point]

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

Board	Question	Comment
Interpretation	Other	From the view of historic photo - similar to augmented reality
Interpretation	Other	Embosser - passport-style collecting stamps for prize
Interpretation	Other	Cliff area may be area where pioneer woman photo and small book
Interpretation	Other	Was popular area for hunting
Interpretation	Other	Local water and land species, plants and history. I think the local "mill towns" and their economies should also be promoted.
Interpretation	Other	What is used to be and how you destroyed it with this plan!
Interpretation	Other	History and geology of the area.
Interpretation	Other	The history of the dam and river beneath the reservoir would be fun.
Interpretation	Other	Nearby mill town history, lake species, local plants and animals.
Interpretation	Other	how you destroyed this natural park and made it into an theme park instead
Interpretation	Other	History and geology of the area are a must.
Passive	A Concerns	The Goodhue side overlook trail has a very poor view due to the hardwood canopy. I tried to attach a picture from the hilltop, but the little circle just kept going round and round for 10 minutes. If the Boy Scout property were acquired, then there would be a very worthwhile view. 90% of the foot traffic on the proposed trail will be young people going to the cliffs to jump anyway.
Passive	A Concerns	Again - leave it the way it is, you are destroying this natural park.
Passive	A Concerns	Enjoy the Lakeshore camping, and see that you are providing lakeshore experience in other areas. Feel you don't need to take this away from tent campers, but leave the experience for RV campers.
Passive	A Concerns	Add canoe and kayak rentals?
Passive	A Keep	You are taking away all the natural areas. The area is natural the way it is - leave it!
Passive	A Keep	Like the addition of resources on the Goodhue county side.
Passive	A Keep	I like the existing trails and the addition of new trails and water routes.
Passive	B Concern	Not excited about "art" walk - prefer to take in natural beauty on a walk
Passive	B Concern	The trail to the hilltop is a bad idea. The existing trail gets definitely less than 20 people a year of the intended variety (hikers and walkers) but THOUSANDS of young people to jump off the cliffs on Boy Scout property. Going to the hilltop with its terrible lookout view will not change that proportion significantly. Wait until the Boy Scout land is acquired and build a really good lookout with a fantastic view and barriers to stop cliff jumping.
Passive	B Concern	Leave the park the way it is.
Passive	B Concern	I like the existing trails. But they need to be mowed more often and should be de-ticked with insecticide.
Passive	B Keep	Love idea of yurts for all seasons, also sod houses
Passive	B Keep	Outdoor fireplace/bribe oven stove
Passive	B Keep	Like adventure playground
Passive	B Keep	Lots of people walk dogs on the paved trails on the Goodhue side. Adding an off-leash area would be very helpful and maybe keep the poop off the paved trails.
Passive	B Keep	you have destroyed all the natural resources!!
Passive	B Keep	Like the expanded use of the Goodhue county beach and the access to the Goodhue side by trail. Also like the stargazing area at the former boyscout land.
Passive	B Keep	The existing trails are wonderful and very under utilized.
Passive	Precedents	Like more of them close to camp sites [picnic shelter photo]
West	Concern	There is trash and are people camped out both east and west of Dixie Way. It would be a good idea to send patrol down there
West	Keep	Trail connection to town
West	Keep	A trail connection between Randolph and the park that would allow students to access the park without crossing Highway 56 is desired
West		Town of Cascade, road, and railroad remnants are interesting features
West All	Concern	Impact of construction/restoration on NR/birding

**Comments from Open House, County Staff, Lake Byllesby Improvement Association, Randolph City Council, Randolph Schools, & Regional Recreation Providers & Park Users**

<b>Board</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Comment</b>
West All	Keep	Paddle in campsites
West All	Map	Hickman property: do not include in Master Plan - Trail is very close to house
West All	Map	Concerns: Bird in the delta area - people should not interact with nesting areas
West All	Map	DNR - like to provide sites that cannot get to from shore could do that?
West All	Map	GC does own area by cascades - very minor - could add to map
West All	Map	Look at current structures [Mill towns between delta and bluff]
West All	Map	Maltby - potential collaboration for programming
West Natural	Keep	Guides or other nature expert staff at park

# INDIVIDUAL INPUT

## Resident Dawn Lanning's input received via email 2/6/2017

**From:** [Dawn Lanning](#)  
**To:** [Leatham, Lil](#)  
**Cc:** [Jennifer.ziemer@co.goodhue.mn.us](mailto:Jennifer.ziemer@co.goodhue.mn.us); [greg.isakson@co.goodhue.mn.us](mailto:greg.isakson@co.goodhue.mn.us); [Sullivan, Steve](#)  
**Subject:** Lake Byllesby MP  
**Date:** Monday, February 6, 2017 5:59:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.gif](#)

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Hi Lil,

I was just checking in for an update on the Master Planning process for Lake Byllesby. I noticed that Goodhue County Parks Board will be meeting on Thursday evening to discuss the Master Plan and that there has already been three Advisory Group meetings to discuss two different concepts for the park. I would have liked to have been a part of that Advisory Group since I was the only person that was present for the Park Users Stakeholders meeting back in September. However, I have reviewed what has been posted thus far. While I like some of the new ideas for this park, I am very concerned that there is little consideration for winter trails or activities in the master plan. Looking at the maps for both concepts I do not see any planned changes in winter trail designations but both concepts show that much of the dogsledding trail currently used will be paved, it will cross an actual road with car traffic 2-3x (twice in concept B, three times in concept A), past an off leash dog area in one concept and a fat tire biking area in the other, all of which are not favorable for dogsledding/skijoring use and frankly not good even for cross country skiing use. Pictures of our teams running in the park are used on the county website for this park but yet there is not any dogsledding pictures included in the "precedent imagery" section and there is nothing noted for a dogsledding/skijoring trail head. These all just make me wonder what the plans are for the current users of the dogsledding and skjoring trails in this park?

I think dogsledding has a long history in this park, in fact Lake Byllesby Park is where I first learned to enjoy this winter activity while taking dogsledding classes with Pat Jones through Dakota County's programs over 20 years ago. It can be an important draw to promote this park since this is the only park available to this user group. I know I have brought many people not only from the Twin Cities metro area but from all over the country and even the world into this park in addition to media attention for the park including reporters from Northfield News, Star Tribune, WCCO and had the weather cooperated this season KARE11. I have numerous youth groups learning to enjoy winter activities in this park and even a boy scout troop visiting from the Chicago area this season that will be staying at Phillippo Scout Camp and participating in a program in the park provided the weather cooperates.

As a Goodhue County resident and a long time user and supporter of Dakota County Park trails, just wondering how to stay involved in this process so I can continue enjoying this park?

Thanks,

**Dawn Lanning**  
Process Engineer

## **2017 Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan Item: Goodhue Overlook, Stargazing and/or Primitive Camp**

Everyone loves a nature walk with a climb to an overlook of a spectacular vista.

Now, let us be honest about what has previously been planned and is now currently being proposed for the 7 acre Goodhue hilltop area.

**The View:** From Boy Scout property right on top of the cliffs, the view to the west and northwest is spectacular. The lake undulates through two bays, the closest having beautiful cliffs continuously along the shoreline ahead, the further largest bay reflects sky blue surrounded by forested shores and on the south side, gorgeous forested ridges. The height of the sandstone cliffs one is standing on, spectacular in themselves, ensures an excellent, unrestricted view.

Unfortunately, the Goodhue County owned portion of the hilltop has a very restricted view. There is a narrow unrestricted view to the NNE from the edge of a north facing bluff. Present in that view is primarily the Dakota Park campground, a portion of the east bay in front of that campground, and a fairly uninteresting, flat landscape beyond. To the west and northwest which one would like to view, there are 60 to 80 foot tall hardwoods, and further down the slope are stands of tall pines, both of which entirely block the view to the lake and surrounding hills and ridges to the west and northwest, and all of these trees stand on Boy Scout land. Unless an agreement is made with the Boy Scouts to cut down the mature hardwoods, the primary purpose of this trail and lookout is lost. Has anyone from HKGI actually gone to the 7 acre hilltop (not the Boy Scout clifftop) to assess the view from May through October when leaves are on the hardwoods? The potential benefit is minimal, and we in the LBIA strongly view that the following negatives far outweigh any benefit from the poor potential view, even with scrub trees removed.

**The Trees:** When looking south across the lake from just about anywhere on the north shore of Lake Byllesby, or from the lake surface by boat, one is overwhelmed by the beauty of the tree covered ridges and hills that climb upward from the shoreline and cliffs on the southern shore. Eagles and vultures soar high above the clifftop ridges. Mature hardwoods present a deep green curving hilltop canopy punctuated by tall pines closer to the shore. We in the LBIA are extremely concerned that in order to obtain any significant view from the proposed hilltop trail and lookout, not only would scrub trees need to be removed, but the 60 to 80 foot tall hardwoods to the north and west of the hilltop bluff would need either removal or significant thinning. The resulting ridgeline as viewed from the north would be scarred by a void of trees surrounding the overlook. Stand at the east end of Echo Point today and look up at the ridgeline across. Imagine where that lookout will be and picture the angles required for a view from that lookout. Now trim those beautiful hardwoods to a level that ensures that view. What remains would look nothing in comparison to the beauty of hilltop and bluff before you today. **Since preservation of natural resources is a primary guiding principle of the Master Plan, this desecration of the mature hardwoods must not occur.**

**The Cliffs:** The spectacular cliffs that rise above the middle bay of Lake Byllesby on private Boy Scout property have been used by local youth as a daring cliff jump into the lake for decades. The difficult geography and surrounding residents and landowners have kept thrill seeking trespassers to a minimum, and those daring enough to sneak by private lake homes and woods or climb up from boats in the 1900s had to be cautious in their jumping as well.

Today, and since 2006 when the Goodhue Park trail was cut through the woods, the number of adventurous youth trespassing on Boy Scout land to jump from the cliffs has gone up by a factor of at least 10 to 20 times. The trail cut by Goodhue County through the woods and along County owned lakeshore, terminating just short of the Boy Scout property, has strongly encouraged such an influx, with daily and weekend counts of cliff jumpers in 2012 resulting in an estimate of 3000 to 5000 youths using the cliffs for this very dangerous adventure in a single year, most from various suburbs of the Twin Cities. For those not familiar with it, there is only a narrow section of a few yards of cliff that is not potentially fatal to jump from. Jumping 10 feet further along the cliff lands a 25' to 40' jump in only inches of water. Also, jumpers who do not leap far enough are exposed to an underwater slope of the cliff that cannot be seen from above the surface. Serious injuries regularly occur. Broken backs have been documented online, and in 2015 a jumper landed on a canoe going by below, with very serious injuries resulting.

It is only a matter of time before a fatality occurs. The Boy Scouts and Goodhue County Sherriff department struggle to warn away trespassers and ensure safety. Local residents cannot inhibit trail users with obvious intent to cliff jump because the trail is public and use encouraged. Ironically, the same counts of trail users have found less than a total of 20 users of the intended variety (families and nature walkers) to be using the trail annually. The exception was in 2016 with several large groups of park, county and HKGI officials toured the trail.

Inevitably, the loved ones of a fatality or a seriously injured person will sue. Not only will the Boy Scout landowners of the cliffs be liable, but Goodhue County will also be liable if the trail was used for access. It can readily be determined that the Goodhue County Park trail encourages this unlawful use of the Boy Scout's cliffs.

**Stargazing:** It's already been determined that the cliffs and bluffs can be dangerous. Stargazing requires darkness. (i.e. no lighted paths or lights in the viewing area). Encouraging people to use this dangerous area at night, in the dark, is foolhardy. Secondly, encouraging use after dark is a security threat to very close homeowners. Goodhue Park is already commonly known as a place for drug deals in the parking lot after dark. Please do not encourage young people with the wrong ideas to be lurking in the woods near residences after dark. There is nothing unique that makes the hilltop better for stargazing than 90% of the rest of rural Goodhue County. The altitude has a truly insignificant benefit and the trees would block more of the sky and provide no more darkness than any rural field not immediately adjacent to a yard light.

**Hike-in Primitive Campsites:** Proximity to residences just 300 feet away ruins the ambiance intended by this idea. Insuring security for those nearby residences is a major concern. Stanton Township ordinances do not allow overnight camping.

**Summary: The Lake Byllesby Improvement Association strongly discourages including the hilltop trail to Goodhue's 7 acre parcel in the Park's Master Plan, and further recommends vacating the existing trail.** The danger and liability associated with the trail encouraging illegal cliff jumpers, as well as its potential to spoil the currently pristine view from the north, make the minimal benefit unworthy. The LBIA has long stated its position that this trail concept is ill advised and its benefit not technically demonstrated (lack of views). A moratorium should be placed on all concepts of use for the Goodhue County owned 7 acres and the trail to that location.

Respectfully,

Dr. Earl Benson, President and LBIA Board of Directors

## Resident Dave Pederson's input received via email 2/9/2017

**From:** [Dave Pederson](#)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 09, 2017 9:42 AM  
**To:** [KenCrys](#) ; [John Banaszewski](#) ; [Dr. Earl Benson](#) ; [Ms. Leslie Davies](#) ; [Nancy Dungy](#) ; [Julie Maxson](#) ; [Mr. Scott Wheeler](#) ; [Jason Otto](#) ; [Mr. Joe O'Gorman](#)  
**Subject:** Trail to Nowhere

Ken,

You can make sure this group understands that the Boy Scouts are against anything that would bring people to the cliff area, and we all know this is a public safety concern!

**David Pederson**  
Senior Ranger, Phillippo Scout Reservation

## Resident Scott Wheeler's input received via email 2/20/2017

**From:** [Wheeler, Scott \(DLI\)](#)  
**To:** [mike.slavik@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:mike.slavik@co.dakota.mn.us); [brad.anderson@co.goodhue.mn.us](mailto:brad.anderson@co.goodhue.mn.us); [Rita Trapp](#)  
**Subject:** Lake Byllesby Master Plan Concepts Response  
**Date:** Monday, February 20, 2017 5:17:25 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[2-9-17 Planning Commission Packet Highlighted.pdf](#)

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Gentlemen and Lady:

I'd like to thank HK Group Inc. for their fine work in the development of the two park concepts and the combined planning boards and HK Group Inc. for their recognizing those in attendance (not on the planning board(s) and soliciting our thoughts regarding the same. I was truly impressed with the creative use(s) of the park(s) and the range of infrastructure and activities proposed. I really don't have a preference in concept. I do have a handful of concerns related to the inclusions in the proposals and have made those known in the modified version (my comments are in yellow text boxed and or clouded boxes) of the prepared materials made available for the February 09, 2017, meeting at Cannon Falls City Hall that is attached. I also provided comments related to structure and material types that were a part of the "Precedent Imagery" with and "color key" to assist in highlighting "likes" or "dislikes".

In closing, I understand that not everyone will be pleased with everything included or excluded in the final Master Plan and that many of the inclusions in the plan are most likely years in the making. That said I think it important to preserve the integrity of the lake and its surrounding landscape. The lake combined with its surrounding landscape are what keeps people coming back to the park(s). It is these same elements that are treasured by those of use that live on the lake or near the lake and use/visit the lake on a daily basis year round.

If either or you should have questions regarding my thoughts regarding the concepts, please feel free to contact me using the contact information in the title block below or on my mobile phone at 651.278.1376.

Thanks again for your work and dedication in making Dakota and Goodhue Counties and the regional park at Lake Byllesby the best place(s) to live and play. It is truly appreciated.

Respectfully,

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**SCOTT WHEELER | CONSTRUCTION CODE REPRESENTATIVE 2 |**  
Construction Codes and Licensing Division |

new-DLI-logo



- = Opposed to this concept or inclusion
- = Agree to this concept or inclusion
- = Note/Comment/Concern

# East Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan Concept B

Dakota County & Goodhue County  
Draft for Advisor/PC Rep Review 02.02.2017

- Create a new entrance to the park extending south from 23rd St
- Improves overnight accommodations through improved tent and RV sites and the addition of lake-side cottages, southwires, yurts, canoe-in canopies, group camping and lean-tos
- Cluster overnight accommodations to provide continuous public experiences along the lake
- Provides lodge in Dakota County for check-in, rentals, concessions, and multi-purpose room
- Provides park headquarters in Goodhue County for check-in, overnight group stays, rentals, concessions, restroom and showers
- Improved water play through the creation of an amphibian bar on the Dakota County beach, expanded Goodhue County beach, splash pad, and interactive water exploration areas in Echo Channel
- Relocate the Dakota County maintenance building to support access to the Common for the dam
- Support a guided fishing job from near the dam and shore fishing enhancement
- Enhance visitor experiences through fishing pier, fire pit, public dock, seasonal picnic tables, and expanded trail and paved paved trails
- Adds a ferry to cross the lake side and loop around the park
- Drive areas to be resurfaced through the addition of an artwork, family mountain biking skills course, signage area, off-leash dog area, a play area, adventure playground, and doging link
- Acquire a poor lot of the Boy Scout property to provide a view and improve safety
- Boat slip for day or overnight rental with boat trailer parking for overnight guests
- Manage boat traffic on the lake through inter County cooperation to allow parking of boat trailer only in designated paved areas up to the 100 ft limit
- Potential winter uses include indoor programming and ge heating, dog sledding, skiing, ice fishing, ice skating, snowshoeing, winter walking on paved trails, ice fishing and ice skating



Gerlach Way is a sub-standard roadway (only 20 feet in width) with a dozen or so small children living on it. As a result I'm opposed to promoting its use even as a secondary exit or entrance from the park. Additionally I believe there should be, on County 88 and at the dike road bend, roadway signs that state something similar to the following "Do Not Enter. This is A Substandard Road. Local Resident Access Only."

The LBIA, Boy Scouts and others in Starkton Township would prefer the trail be vacated and removed.

I'm opposed to the overlook and the hilltop camp sites unless assurances are made to preserve the current hilltop canopy. (As required to remain in concert with the Guiding Principles - see Bull et 3 of the Master Plan for the park). If the Boy Scout property is acquired by Goodhue County, the "bluff" should be able to serve as the "lake view" vantage point and should alleviate the need to construct a viewing platform.

<span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Park Boundary
<span style="border: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Shoreline Reclamation
<span style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Negative Impact Buffer
<span style="background-color: lightgreen; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Passive Recreation/ Gathering Space
<span style="background-color: lightblue; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Active Recreation
<span style="background-color: lightorange; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Accommodation
<span style="background-color: lightpurple; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Support Building
<span style="background-color: lightpink; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Trail Building
<span style="background-color: lightgrey; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span>	Trail Deck
<span style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px;"></span>	Hill Tower Trail
<span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 10px;"></span>	Paved Park Trail
<span style="border-bottom: 1px dotted black; display: inline-block; width: 10px;"></span>	Shared Surrounding Park Trail
<span style="color: blue;">●</span>	Parking lot

Approved only to the use of treated wood for the guardrail, floor framing and decking.

■ = Opposed to this concept or inclusion  
■ = Agree to this concept or inclusion

# PRECEDENT IMAGERY

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## Residents John and Mary Fischer's input received via email 3/25/2017

**From:** John and Mary ..... [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 25, 2017 5:51 AM  
**To:** Dakota County Parks  
**Subject:** Re: Help Shape the future of Lake Byllesby Regional Park

We stayed last summer in a motor-home. From a park standpoint (what man has done) it is a wonderful park. However, the lake water quality was very bad and the main beach had a thick algae layer 2-3 feet up the shore all the way across. I realize it is possible that nothing can be done about this; it is a Southern MN lake/river i.e. warmer water, the river probably runs through farm country and there is probably a lot of silt/muck.

From a camping standpoint the most important things to us are the following. Of course a clean, well kept, attractive park overall is desired.

- 1.) Very clean and modern shower facilities with individual shower and dressing areas for privacy. Including handicap showers.
- 2.) Safe drinking water and 30 amp hook-ups. Must have sewer connection at site or dump station.
- 4.) Spacious, level sites with attractive surroundings. Some shade is good also.
- 5.) Store with basic needs is nice i.e. milk, bread, ice, drinks, etc.

Thank you.

## Resident Ryan Renneke's input received via email 3/29/2017

**From:** Ryan Renneke [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 29, 2017 10:44 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** Opinion

Dear Dakota County Parks,

I saw this ad in the paper but couldn't find where to input comments.

My family loves this park but we find the beach needs work. It would be great if the county bought a small tractor and beach rake and cleaned it up weekly.

Removing sticks, plant debris, large rocks, etc...

They do this at the Lake City Park and the beach is fantastic.

Thank you,

Ryan Renneke

## Resident Earl Benson's input received via email 3/30/2017

To: Lake Byllesby Master Plan Committee  
From: Dr. Earl Benson, President (Lake Byllesby Improvement Association)  
3/30/17

In regard to the Dakota/Goodhue County Lake Byllesby Master Plan the following “**collective COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS**” received to date from 1) Lakeshore Property Owners, 2) Cannon Greens Residents, 3) local non-lakeshore residents (Cannon Falls/Randolph).

### Pro:

- Boat ramps (access to the lake)
- Additional Camping opportunities
- Bicycle trail extension via Byllesby Dam Bridge
- Cooperative law enforcement involving both parks
- Non-motorized watercraft access points
- Scenic views from the water preserved
- Several mentioned that the enhanced park involvement by both Goodhue and Dakota County will help preserve the natural resource and help preserve the property values for lakeshore residents over time.

### Con:(no specific order)

- Indifference, yet by Goodhue County, to recognize the adversity, loss of property values, and disrespect for the lakeshore property owners on their side of Lake Byllesby by allowing the “trail” to continue to exist. The existence of this trail, over several years, has also **contributed significantly** to a major safety issue on the lake, and numerous civil trespass citations.
- Gerlach Way, as an alternate entrance/exit from the Dakota County Regional Park should be restricted to **local resident access only**. Families and small children are endangered with the existing planned access to/from the park.
- Both Master Plans (concept A & B) “overextend” the capability of the resource. The vast majority of the lakeshore property surrounding Lake Byllesby is private property, and **significant portions** of the (DNR) 1,253.94 acre lake are not navigable due to dangerous siltation or safety issues in several portions of the lake (including the central park area between Echo Point and the Byllesby Dam.
- MNDNR, so as to avoid **crowded/unsafe boating experiences**, recommends 20 acres per high speed watercraft, and allowances for 10% of resident lakeshore owner boats on the lake at any one time. Using the DNR formula, 134 lakeshore properties=13.4 boats + 29 currently at the Dakota County boat ramp. **Applying the DNR formula there should be NO MORE THAN 63 Launching spaces on Lake Byllesby. 21 boat/auto spaces for Goodhue County boat launch accesses (2) . This number is not indicated on either plan and must be included.**
- **Two boat launches and park areas directly across from each other with “limited” water acreage, dam avoidance buoys, 150 yd. boating restrictions for beach areas, planned boat docks/slips, house boat configurations, shore fishing areas, piers, with constant wave action, etc. is too crowded and will be an unpleasant boating experience for all.**

**General Recommendation: Scale back activities involving boating/lake access!**

## Resident Kim Freymiller's input received via email 3/31/2017

**From:** Kim Freymiller [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 31, 2017 7:56 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** Lake Byllesby Master Plan

After going to the community meeting last night and seeing the plan for this natural, beautiful park, I went home and cried! I moved to the Cannon Greens development specifically because I love the Lake Byllesby park, just the way it is! I am disgusted that you are trying to turn this into some kind of amusement park, it literally makes me sick! Has anyone considered the effects on the neighborhood across the street? You are planning on over tripling the amount of traffic, which is already dangerous in the summer. Does someone have to get hurt or heaven forbid be killed before someone realizes what a terrible idea this whole thing is. If you have so much money to burn, spend it on improving the water quality and saving the natural resource.

Dakota County Parks new theme - Pave paradise to put up a parking lot! Disgusting!!

Thank you for your time.

## Goodhue County Staff Member Greg Isakson's input received via email 3/30/2017

**From:** Isakson, Greg [mailto:greg.isakson@co.goodhue.mn.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 30, 2017 8:24 AM  
**To:** Rita Trapp  
**Cc:** Ziemer, Jennifer; Leatham, Lil  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Park Master Plan

Last fall when we had the stakeholders meetings we invited Red Wing's Environmental Learning Center (ELC). They suggested the concept of using the new dam gates to control flow and use the river below the dam for a White Water Kayaking Park. I was a bit concerned that playing with the reservoir water levels would generate concerns from the LBIA.

Earlier this week I received a follow up call from a different ELC instructor. Brad has actually kayaked the stretch of the river just below the dam. He thought there was enough 'flow through' water that a White Water park could run most of the time without playing with the gates. And as I think about, we could open up the gates for a few hours a weekend without causing much of a bounce in the reservoir's water level. We also discussed access down to the water and Brad mentioned that he climbed down the south side (about where the new bridge is located) with kayaks. He suggested building a stair system down to the water and I know we have discussed this concept in the past since it is popular with the fishermen.

He said this stretch of river is similar to the Wausau Whitewater Park over in WS.. (I checked it out on U-Tub, it is fantastic, but would take quite an investment to recreate.)

A white water park at Byllesby could be a big draw of park users/campers. Besides active kayakers, a park also draws a lot of spectators (everyone loves watching a kayaker flip). We have discussed that the DNR would allow us to use their riverside property (for a park use) and building a few view points over the river to watch the kayakers would be very doable. There could be some great viewing points from up on the cliffs on the south side.

Besides a white water park, there is local interest (Mr. Lakefield) to run canoes from the park to Cannon Falls.

When we first met at the park on that beautiful June evening last summer, we stopped on the bridge and someone (Steve S.?) mentioned that this new bridge opens up a new part of the park system, the river below the dam.

As we have progressed with the planning process, we haven't given a lot of time of effort on this part of the park. I don't think we would need to make any last minute changes to the boards for the meeting tonight, but we should include a discussion in the master plan concerning the river below the dam.

Greg Isakson  
Goodhue County Public Works  
(651) 385-3025

## Resident Isaac Ophoven-Baldwin's input received via email 4/3/2017

**From:** Isaac Ophoven-Baldwin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 03, 2017 8:25 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan

Dakota County Parks Planning,

I would like to voice my continuing confidence in your department. The development of Whitetail Woods was a huge win, particularly the boldly designed camper cabins. It's great to see that the department is continuing to propose innovative ideas through the Lake Byllesby master planning process.

The only thing of real concern to me is the amount of negative comments on the interactive Concepts sites from people who appear to be residents of the new subdivision on the eastern border. I would ask that the opinions of these residents be given the same weight as any other resident of Dakota County. The park was here first.

Thank you,  
I.O.

## Resident Jim Bassett's input received via email 4/1/2017

**From:** [Jim Mary Bassett](#)  
**To:** [Leatham, Lil](#)  
**Subject:** Parks planning meeting  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1, 2017 1:01:54 PM

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Lil,

Good meeting Thursday -- even though I still wonder about the loss of "Forever Wild" and the replacement, "Forever Asphalt."

Anyway, many thanks for listening to my rants and raves. I guess it will be what it will be and at my age, I won't be around to see it anyway.

I told you I would try to find out more about the platform tents/cabins they have at Camp du Nord. My oldest son, Tony, is very closely connected to du Nord, having been on the board for a number of years, and I've asked him to try to get me some information. I looked at the camp website and the pictures they have are of the old platform tents which I believe have now been replaced by kind of hard sided tents which are very nice. They also have some platform cabins which you might want to look at as you wend your way through this process.

Glad Dorry Felton Wollop came along after I did. Heck, she was steaming so much I'm sure you forgot all about me after she accosted you. Actually, we know the Felton family very well and, although we've had some issues with them (Dorry's father spent many years not talking to me because of a perceived sin I committed while on the Randolph School Board) we like them and think they are really good people, even though they go off-track sometimes -- in my opinion.

I'll let you know what I find out about the cabins.

Jim B

**From:** [Jim Mary Bassett](#)  
**To:** [Leatham, Lil](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: FW: Camper cabins cost how much?!  
**Date:** Monday, April 3, 2017 9:25:56 PM

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Lil,

I got a couple of responses from son Tony to my query about small "cabins" at du Nord and how they might fit into the Lake Byllesby Park (and possibly the Whitetail Park) TJN Woodworking is a guy named Tim Nelson who has done a lot of building work at Camp du Nord. Niki Geisler is the du Nord camp director. It sure looks to me like Dakota County (to which I pay taxes) could do way, way better with its money than what is proposed. Oh, \$320,000 for a restroom and some showers? Can someone actually be serious about that? It's almost beyond comprehension!!

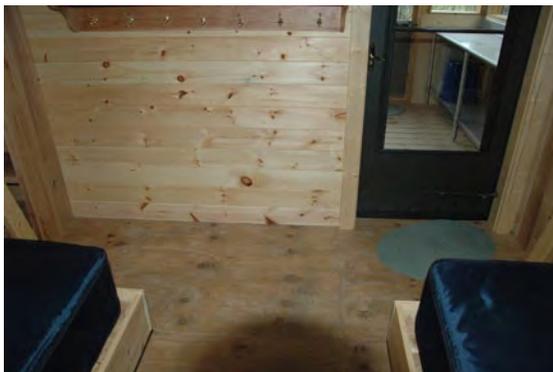
Looking forward to seeing you and the LBIA annual meeting.

Jim B

Resident Tony Bassett's input received via email 4/3/2017

From: **Tony Bassett** [REDACTED]  
Date: Mon, Apr 3, 2017 at 8:07 AM  
Subject: Re: Du Nord platform tents  
To: Jim Mary Bassett [REDACTED]

Here are some photos of du Nord's "platform cabins." Very nice permanent structures: good windows, insulated walls and ceilings, steel roofs, high-quality construction. du Nord's cost per structure in 2013 was \$13k plus some amount of volunteer labor to build. Based on press reports I have seen, it seems like an exorbitant amount of taxpayer money is being spent to build similar structures in Dakota County parks.



# OPEN HOUSE: OCTOBER 2017 COMMENTS

## Lake Byllesby Open House 3 Comments

### Review of the Master Plan

Dakota County- Goodhue County Lake Byllesby Park Master Plan Community Open House

Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Cannon Falls City Hall Council Chambers, 918 River Road

### Comment Cards:

- Add that surrounding properties are not in favor of campground (p.19)
- It is great to see the Goudy property on Goodhue Parks east designated as PARK and camping
- I'm delighted at the inclusion of the Mill Towns State Trail through the Dakota Parks!
- Do not develop a "scenic overlook" above the cliff area in the back side of the lake – no tree removal stick to your guiding principles.
  - Preserve natural areas
  - Preserve scenic areas
- I would suggest having our Randolph Historical Society relocated along the trail.
- Any trail on County Road 88 needs to accommodate snowmobiles. Trails should be designed for all uses; stop discriminating against motorized recreation.

### Comments on Boards:

- Connect Randolph to the Mill Towns Trail
- Additional signage (wayfinding to the park) – (comment located on 295<sup>th</sup> street on the east of the park).
- Signage is too small – (comment located on 295<sup>th</sup> street on the west of the park).
- Let campers stay in their sites until 4:00 PM
- Need natural history interpretive signs throughout the park
- Addition of an underpass to maintain the trail integrity, especially in the winter (on the park entrance road).
- Possible smoke into the neighborhood (comment located in the potential park boundary addition on Echo Point).
- Keep at a habitat area (comment located on east side of Echo Point next to fishing Pier).
- More this (Parking) over further from point (Echo Point) – (comment located at parking closest to Echo Point).
- Better site for fishing, not cabins (house boats) – (comment located at house boat dock parking on east side of Echo Point).
- Buffer/fencing to prevent access (comment located on the scenic bluffs on the south side of Byllesby Bay).
- Rental facilities on either side
- Highest priorities
  - Canoe-kayak launch below the dam
  - Keep the park low key – not Minnetonka, Nokomis, Calhoun, etc. Too busy!
  - Clean lake – no exotic/bad species (ie milfoil, etc.)

### General Comments:

- Concern about subgrades at cliffs supporting structure and additional stress due to traffic.

## Questionnaire Input related to the October 2017 Draft Master Plan

### Comments on the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Draft Master Plan

#1

COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Wednesday, October 11, 2017 7:49:33 AM  
**Last Modified:** Wednesday, October 11, 2017 7:55:31 AM  
**Time Spent:** 00:05:57  
**IP Address:** 207.138.218.16

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#### Page 1: Leave Your Feedback

**Q1** Please share any comments you may have on Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park Draft Master Plan.

It was be nice to have space for food truck(s) or some small food possibilities.

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**Q2** Please share any comments you may have on Dakota County's Lake Byllesby Regional Park Draft Natural Resources Management Plan.

Thank you for your work. I appreciate anything that will keep the water clean and allow it to become more clear and healthy.

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## Resident Douglas Jones' input received via email in October 2017

**From:** Douglas Jones [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 03, 2017 3:32 PM  
**To:** Leatham, Lil  
**Cc:** Slavik, Mike; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Lake Byllesby Regional Parks Master Plans and Open House

Greetings from Rice County.

I attended your second meeting and provided extensive input. I see no acknowledgement of those views in your current plans. It seems to me that excessive planning effort has gone in to thinking up "improvements" for every part of the parks, reflected in a cost estimate of \$10 million near term and double that longer term. It looks like some "parks planner" people have day dreamed flowers, paths, bath rooms, boat launches, play grounds, picnic facilities, etc., ad nauseum.

What I do not see is emphasis on clean water. Who wants to swim (drink), boat, fish, etc. in fetid water? Is it not correct that the water leaving the lake has significantly higher coliform bacteria count than the Cannon River water entering the lake? Is it not apparent why the Camp Fillippo Boy Scout Camp does not allow the boys to swim in the lake? It is fetid with algae and pollution, unhealthy for swimming.

What should be the top priority of the Lake Byllesby Parks Master Plan? CLEAN WATER. MN Dept of Health and MN Pollution Control Agency agree that Lake Byllesby is the ONLY "Point Source" pollution problem in the entire Cannon Valley Watershed. There is currently under way an action by Dakota County to condemn 65 septic systems in Randolph City. There are another suspected 30-40 faulty or failing septic systems in Goodhue County just west of Cannon Falls City.

Randolph City is considering a limited scale community septic system to deal with its problem.

This might "solve" the problem for a while. But since you are planning on behalf of Goodhue and Dakota Counties for the next ten years and beyond, you should closely review the possibility of a sanitary sewer serving Randolph City and industrial and residential areas of Randolph Township and Stanton Township, Goodhue County. The cost is on a magnitude of \$15 million. The funding sources include 1) MPCA point source grants, 2) Goodhue and Dakota Counties, 3) taxpayers via assessment in Randolph and Stanton Townships, and 4) the property owners in Randolph City, plus 5) possible sources of state bonding.

If you wish to pursue CLEAN WATER as relevant to your 10-year study of the parks, may I suggest you contact Dakota County Commissioner Mike Slavik, and Mayor Bob Applegren as the most involved and knowledgeable public officials.

Douglas Jones  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Douglas Jones [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 04, 2017 6:40 PM  
**To:** Leatham, Lil  
**Cc:** Kevin Green; Slavik, Mike  
**Subject:** Re: Draft Lake Byllesby Regional Parks Master Plans and Open House

Thanks. You mention Cannon River Watershed Partners (CRWP) has a One Watershed One Plan. That plan, about the watershed, focuses on the fact that there is only one major pollution source in the watershed that probably qualifies for MPCA "Point Source" pollution remediation grants, and that source is Lake Byllesby and the coliform bacteria comes from human waste from failing septic systems, draining into the huge sand lens that underlies the valley west of Cannon Falls. From there it enters lake waters.

I am sorry that I had not read your Appendix B. If CLEAN WATERS are a high priority, why did you not high light it in the summary up front?

The Met Council member representing Dakota County favors the sewer project and favors lobbying MPCA for pollution remediation grants to support a sewer to provide a PERMANENT solution to the pollution.

Is the group of planners working on the ten year plan for the two parks doing any planning about a sewer solution to pollution other than dilution into the Mississippi?

Doug Jones

## Responses to Douglas Jones via email October 2017

On Oct 4, 2017, at 6:11 PM, Leatham, Lil <[Lil.Leatham@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US](mailto:Lil.Leatham@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US)> wrote:

Mr. Jones,

Thank you for taking the time to review and comment on the draft master plan. Community concern about water quality was expressed repeatedly during the public engagement process, as documented in Appendix B of the draft plan <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/parks/Planning/ParkPlans/Documents/AppendixBCommunityInput.pdf>. Lake Byllesby water quality is an important aspect of the park experience and was discussed by the Joint Goodhue – Dakota County Lake Byllesby Regional Park Planning Advisory Committee during the process. Water quality is addressed in both the Draft Master Plan and in the Natural Resources Management Plan.

Dakota County has an interest in improved water quality and sediment reduction in the reservoir. This is a watershed scale issue and Dakota County is a participating partner in the Cannon River Watershed's One Watershed One Plan. For more information on the One Watershed One Plan visit <http://www.dakotacountyswcd.org/1w1p.html>.

Your comments, along with other input received during the public review period, will be forwarded to the Dakota County Board and considered in draft plan revisions prior to adoption later this year.

Kind regards,

**Lil Leatham, PLA**  
Planner  
952-891-7159  
Dakota County Office of Planning | 14955 Galaxie | Apple Valley, MN 55124



Fri 10/6/2017 9:21 AM

Leatham, Lil <[Lil.Leatham@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US](mailto:Lil.Leatham@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US)>

RE: Draft Lake Byllesby Regional Parks Master Plans and Open House

To Douglas Jones

Cc Slavik, Mike; Kurt Chatfield; Becker, Brad; Fischer, Georg; Stwora, Erin; Mielke, Steve; Smith, Matt

Mr. Jones,

The purpose of the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan and Natural Resource Management Plan is to guide County investment within the park boundaries. As you note, these plans do not address sewer and septic issues outside of the park. The currently underway One Watershed One Plan's goal is to align local water planning among the 14 Local Government Units within the Cannon River Watershed.

If you would like more information on the One Watershed One Plan, sewer and septic solutions, or other efforts to monitor and improve water quality in the Byllesby Reservoir, please contact Brad Becker, Dakota County Environmental Resources Supervisor (952-891-7044). He will be able to provide more comprehensive information on the range of efforts and agencies involved.

Kind regards,

**Lil Leatham, PLA**  
Planner  
952-891-7159  
Dakota County Office of Planning | 14955 Galaxie | Apple Valley, MN 55124

## Response to Open House Attendee via email 10/12/2017



Thu 10/12/2017 11:59 AM

Leatham, Lil <Lil.Leatham@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US>

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan - Mill Towns State Trail

To: d.wallof@gmail.com

Cc: Slavik, Mike; Smith, Matt; Mielke, Steve; Stwora, Erin; Kurt Chatfield

Dory,

Following up from our conversation last night at the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan Open House, here is the link to the Mill Towns State Trail Master Plan. [http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/milltown/mill\\_towns\\_master.pdf](http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/trails/milltown/mill_towns_master.pdf)

The plan describes multiple alignment options north and south of the Cannon River. On the first page it says:

**Recommended Trail Uses**

*The Mill Towns State Trail is a multi-use trail but the limitations of width dictate that not all uses can be accommodated at all times on the entire length of the trail. The following are the recommended trail uses: bicycling, hiking and walking, cross-country skiing, dog walking, running/jogging, in-line skating/skate skiing, horseback riding, snowmobiling, hunting (except where discharge of firearms is regulated by community ordinance) and environmental education/interpretation.*

I also want to let you know that Dakota County Transportation is proposing to reconstruct a portion of County Road 88 in 2019. A trail will be evaluated as part of that project. <https://www.co.dakota.mn.us/Transportation/PlannedConstruction/CR88/Pages/default.aspx>

Your comments, along with other input received during the public review period, will be forwarded to the Dakota County Board and considered in Draft Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan revisions prior to adoption later this year.

Kind regards,

**Lil Leatham, PLA**

Planner

952-891-7159

Dakota County Office of Planning | 14955 Galaxie | Apple Valley, MN 55124

## MTST graphic designer input received via email 10/13/2017

**From:** Kari Alberg [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 13, 2017 4:03 PM  
**To:** Leatham, Lil; Hubbell, Autumn  
**Subject:** interpretive panel at Dundas for the "Mill Towns State Trail"

Thanks you Lil for the good conversation and for your introduction to Autumn.

As I mentioned I was hired to work as the content creator/coordinator/graphic designer and illustrator on the Dundas DNR interpretive panel for the Mill Towns State Trail by the City of Dundas.

Here are a few photos of the DNR kiosk in Dundas. This kiosk has three interpretive panels. The panel facing the parking lot is a history of the mills in Dundas and their place and contribution within Minnesota and U.S. milling history. The reverse side shows the biome regions and wildlife that existed before the milling and the watershed region to show effects that the dams had on the Cannon River. The horizontal map has located and listed with dates and names all the mills along the Cannon River water trail.

Our goal was to orient the viewer to their location in the Cannon Valley on the wild and scenic Cannon River, the Dundas millings place in history and to explain the naming of the trail "Mill Towns State Trail" Also when we started working on the project we looked at the other locations that had mills and thought about what topics might be covered at each location. I have been in discussion with the DNR regarding additional trail signs as the trail is developed.

I am now working with the Cannon Falls Historical Society to develop signs for two mill locations in the city. One is near both a mill and the railroad. These signs will serve to help cyclists get through the city to either the Cannon Valley Trail or the Mill Town State Trail from the city trail. They will have the same design as the DNR panels and frame so as to link them to the Dundas trailhead. The hope is to clarify to the cyclists the relationship and name of the three trails.

I worked with the mill historian Bob Frame who is researching and writing a book for the U of M press on Minnesota Milling history and all the mills of Minnesota. Mary Savina in the geology department of Carleton College and Diane Angell in the biology department of St. Olaf College. They are all interested in working on additional signs for the trail. I was hired as a freelance designer / illustrator and therefore I retain copyright for my work.

I wanted to make certain you knew about this effort and I would enjoy having an opportunity to meet to discuss the work.

Kind regards,

Kari

Kari Alberg, Artist | Graphic Designer

STUDIOKARI



## Responses to MTST graphic designer via email in October of 2017



Fri 10/20/2017 3:23 PM

Hubbell, Autumn <Autumn.Hubbell@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US>

RE: interpretive panel at Dundas for the "Mill Towns State Trail"

To: Kari Alberg

Cc: Leatham, Lil

Hi Kari,

I apologize for the delayed response. Thanks so much for sharing photos of the panels. They look great and I look forward to seeing them in the field.

Interpreting the rich history of the area is so important, and I am excited it is happening already on stretches of the Mill Towns State Trail. And as Lil mentioned, as we move into implementation and develop and the design of the interpretation within Lake Byllesby, we will keep in mind the work you have done.

Thanks, Autumn



Autumn Hubbell  
Outdoor Education Coordinator  
Dakota County Parks  
860 Cliff Road  
Eagan, MN 55123  
651.554.6536  
[Autumn.hubbell@co.dakota.mn.us](mailto:Autumn.hubbell@co.dakota.mn.us)  
[www.dakotacounty.us/parks](http://www.dakotacounty.us/parks)

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**From:** Leatham, Lil

**Sent:** Wednesday, October 18, 2017 8:00 AM

**To:** Kari Alberg; Hubbell, Autumn

**Subject:** RE: interpretive panel at Dundas for the "Mill Towns State Trail"

Kari,

Thanks for letting us know about this effort & the samples. We will consider adding language in the MP revisions to recognize these efforts and support future coordination. After the plan is adopted and we move to implementation, it will likely be beneficial to meet.

Thank you,

Lil

## Comment summary from Randolph Township Board Meeting 10/19/2017



Thu 10/19/2017 11:03 AM

Sullivan, Steve <Steve.Sullivan@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US>

Randolph Twp Comment on LBRP Master Plan

To: Leatham, Lil

Cc: Kurt Chatfield; Landahl, Beth

**Lil:**

Comments from 10-17 Randolph Twp. Board Meeting:

- Several mentioned that the level of improvement the April concept plan alternatives was too intense and not affordable. The County was commended on responding and preparing the current 10 year priority graphic that was appropriate and affordable.
- Multiple attendees expressed the importance to maintain DNR guidelines as a manageable capacity for boats on Bylesby Reservoir. LBIA asked that Dakota County provide the metrics and method confirming that both park master plans meet the guidelines.
- Multiple attendees expressed concern regarding Goodhue County's commitment to managing the capacity of boat access from Bylesby County Park.
- There was interest in the possibility of additional discussion beyond the master plan of zoning the lake as warranted to increase safety with no wake zones and working with LBIA to remove deadheads and logs.

Steve :)

## Resident Wade Murray's input received via email 11/12/2017

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Sunday, November 12, 2017 4:33 PM

**To:** Leatham, Lil

**Subject:** Re: Draft Lake Byllesby Regional Parks Master Plans and Open House

Lil, Wade Murray, I just spoke to you at the Randolph City Council meeting in the hallway. Thanks for listening to me. I support the trail going along the Cannon River on the west end of the park. That is a must. However, it would be nice to parallel the railroad and not bypass Randolph. Split at the bird watching location and then meet up again west of the cascades so there would be a loop. Also, I think the trailheads need to be further looked at. I don't really have a great suggestion on this but I would like to have our history building along the trail with bathrooms, picnic tables and to be the main trailhead for the area. However, the Dixie Ave railroad crossing is my first choice of location because of train watching and it brings people into Randolph. My second choice location would be the bird watching area. Also, canoeing should be encouraged between Northfield and the Lake. Northfield does not have a loading access for canoes. That is why they go from Faribault to Dundas. Lastly, I think the trail should be more of a focus than the Byllesby park. That park is very nice compared to what it was when I was a kid but the trail will bring in new people too. Thanks Wade

**Wade RAHS**

## Goodhue County input via email 11/14/2017



Tue 11/14/2017 4:17 PM

Isakson, Greg <greg.isakson@co.goodhue.mn.us>

GC Park Board Comments on Master Plans

To: Rita Trapp; Leatham, Lil

Cc: Ziemer, Jennifer

Rita and Lil,

I believe Dakota County is still reviewing their master plan and hopefully the following comments could be added to the Goodhue County plan in a manner that is not inconsistent with the Dakota County Plan.

We discussed the master plans with the park board this afternoon. If the master plan for Byllesby does not address these three issues, they would like it revised to include:

1. Goodhue County hopes that in the future as the need arises, Dakota County Park staff could provide security in the Goodhue County park under a mutually acceptable contractual agreement.
2. There should be coordinated signage within the two parks, and these signs should work with the Mill Towns Trail and Cannon Valley Trails logo/signs.
3. Improvements in the lower main Goodhue County park (including the Goudy property) should be a priority over improvements to the higher western 7.5 acre portion of the park.

Do you see any concerns with incorporating these recommendations?

Greg Isakson  
Goodhue County Public Works  
(651) 385-3025

## Met Council Comments via email 11/14/2017



Tue 11/14/2017 3:46 PM

Peterka, Michael

Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan

To: Leaham, Lil

Hello Lil,

Thanks for sending the Lake Byllesby Regional Park Master Plan for a preliminary review. I have a few minor comments regarding the plan. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding my comments or our discussion about the connecting trail.

**Natural Resources** – According to the Council’s master plan requirements, there should be a natural resource management component included in the master plan. It must include a natural resources inventory which contains a land cover inventory map consistent with the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System; information on how surface and groundwater resources will be protected; and information on how vegetation will be managed. I understand a separate natural resources management plan is being developed for the park. I hope you can pull out the required sections and insert them in the master plan.

**Stewardship Plan** – This is something that may also be in the complementary Natural Resources Management Plan. The stewardship plan must include a program for managing park property which includes activities, expenses, and anticipated revenue prior to developing the property for recreation purposes. Planned non-recreation uses and disposition of revenue from such uses should be detailed.

**Public engagement and participation** – This section should identify content in the master plan that resulted from the engagement efforts.

**Accessibility** – Affordability should be addressed in this section of the plan.

**Operations** – Operations and maintenance costs should be included in this section of the plan.

**Boundaries and Acquisition** – Include information on natural resources and potential contamination for the parcels to be acquired. This can be done by using data from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency.

-Page 100 should include information on why parcels 2 and 22 have been removed from the park boundary.

-The Q5 graph on page 8 would benefit from a scale.

-Regional Parks Policy Plan should be removed from the first line of page 17. It should read “Thrive MSP 2040 projects that the Twin Cities Metro will grow by 824,000 residents between 2010 and 2040.”

Michael



Michael Peterka

Planner | Regional Parks and Natural Resources

## Summary of Sciota Twsp Board Meeting comments via email on 11/16/2017



Thu 11/16/2017 3:07 PM

Sullivan, Steve <Steve.Sullivan@CO.DAKOTA.MN.US>

Sciota Twp Board Meeting - LBRP Master Plan

To: Slavik, Mike

Cc: Hoopingarner, Taud; Mielke, Steve; Smith, Matt; Singer, Al

### Commissioner Slavik:

I met with Sciota Twp Board this week to review the draft LBRP master plan and share the recommended boundary addition with the proposed Augustine acquisition. The Board was very agreeable to the 10 year vision and prioritization. The Board had no issue with the boundary addition into the Twp. The Board acknowledge the need for a subdivision of the property which Al Singer has made a formal request for their consideration at a future meeting.

The Board's only concern was the Mill Towns State Trail future alignment . The DNR was present and mentioned that they would work w/ the Twp to look at alignment options. The Board suggested that while all the alignments likely have consequences that some may be better than others. The Board didn't suggest no trail and seemed open to options along as they were involved.

Please let me know if you need additional information.

Take care, Steve : )



Steve Sullivan RLSA  
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Dakota County Parks  
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[www.dakotacounty.us/parks](http://www.dakotacounty.us/parks)

## Resident Bryan Frandrup's input received via email 11/16/2017

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**From:** Bryan Frandrup [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 16, 2017 8:48 AM  
**To:** Leatham, Lil  
**Subject:** Mill Towns Trail

Good morning Lil –

I am a lifelong Dakota County resident, born in Hampton township and current resident of Rosemount. I was speaking to Wade Murray, Executive Director of the Randolph Area Historical Society and he mentioned about having a trail stop in Randolph as part of the Mill Towns Trail. This is simply a short email of support for that idea. Searching on the County website, I wasn't able to determine what the current proposed trail route would be, so I'm not clear if a trail stop in Randolph is a possibility. Regardless, as I'm sure you know, Randolph has a tremendous amount of history with the railroad, and is a very scenic area as you pass by Lake Byllesby. Randolph has a gem of a museum where the Randolph Area Historical Society is housed. If you haven't been to the museum, I'd encourage you to go. For a small town like Randolph, it is a huge asset to the community. So I think a trail stop in Randolph has a lot to offer.

Thanks for your time, and good luck with the continued planning of the trail.

Regards,

**Bryan Frandrup | VP & Commercial Loan Officer**