

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

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DATE: March 27, 2012
TO: Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission
FROM: Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks (651-602-1360)
SUBJECT: (2012-xxx) Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Master Plan, Scott County
Metropolitan Parks & Open Space Commission District B: Robert Moeller

INTRODUCTION

Scott County has submitted a master plan for Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park that updates the current plan adopted in 2004 for Metropolitan Council review and approval. (See Attachment 1: Letter from Patricia Freeman, Scott County)

The updated plan proposes expanding the park from a total area of 918 acres (which includes 115 acre St. Catherine Lake) to 1,139 acres by adding 221 acres along the eastern border of the current park's boundary. The 2001 tax assessed value of the 493 acres within the modified boundary that is not publicly owned is \$3,484,664.

The updated plan proposes development of the park in phases with a total estimated cost of \$11,550,800. Natural resource restoration and management in the first 3 years of restoration of 487 acres in the park is estimated to cost \$1,224,800

This memorandum analyzes the master plan against the criteria for reviewing regional park master plans. It recommends approving the master plan because it is consistent with applicable portions of the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.

AUTHORITY TO REVIEW

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 1 requires Regional Park Implementing Agencies to, "...prepare, after consultation with all affected municipalities, and submit to the Metropolitan Council, and from time to time revise and resubmit to the council, a master plan and annual budget for the acquisition and development of regional recreation open space located within the district or county, consistent with the council's policy plan." (i.e., the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*)

Minnesota Statute 473.313, Subdivision 2 authorizes the Metropolitan Council to review, with the advice of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, master plans for the regional park system. Plans are reviewed for their consistency with the *2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*. If a master plan is not consistent with Council policy, the Council should return the plan to the implementing agency with its comments for revision and resubmittal.

MASTER PLAN ANALYSIS

1) Boundaries and Acquisition Costs

Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park is located in east central Scott County about four miles south of the City of Prior Lake. Figure 1 illustrates the park's location in a regional context.

Figure 1: Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Location



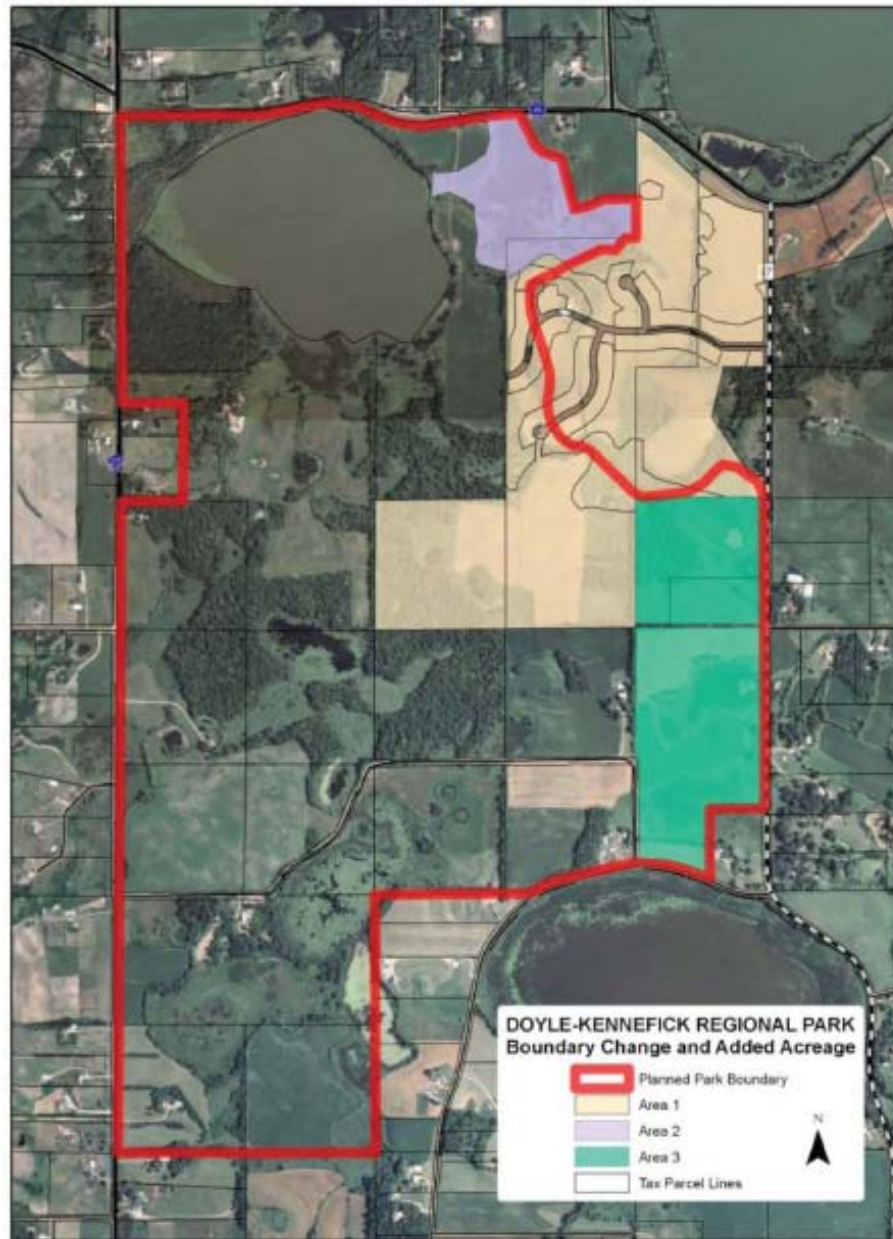
The updated plan proposes expanding the park from a total area of 918 acres (which includes 115 acre St. Catherine Lake) to 1,139 acres by adding 221 acres along the eastern border of the current park's boundary. The premise for the expansion is:

1. Development constraints associated with lands within the original park boundary presented considerable challenges to providing recreational facilities envisioned for the park.
2. Larger, non-residential lands adjacent to the park's original eastern boundary presented an opportunity for adding land to the park that would provide space for the recreational facilities proposed in the plan's development chapter, improve view sheds, buffer sensitive natural resource areas and create opportunities for more effective restoration and management of natural resource areas.

The 2001 tax assessed value of the 493 acres within the modified boundary that is not publicly owned is \$3,484,664. This is a conservative cost estimate since it does not include associated costs related to land acquisition including appraisals, payment in lieu of property taxes and the fact that assessed valuation may not be the negotiated purchase price based on an appraisal.

Figure 2 illustrates the park's modified boundary with lands that are proposed to be added (Area 1, 2 and 3) highlighted in color.

Figure 2: Modified Boundary Map for Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park



2) Stewardship Plan

Since the site was designated a regional park in 2004 and acquisition of 490 acres for the park since then, those acquired lands have been managed for natural resource purposes. About 52 acres of land that was in agricultural production at the time it was acquired continues to be leased for that purpose. In 2010, a 54-acre crop area was restored to prairie and wetland habitat. As other lands are acquired the master plan states that stewardship activities include general clean up of a site, location and identification of property lines and corners, grounds and building maintenance, noxious and invasive plant species control, and cultivation of lands currently being farmed.

3) Demand Forecast

To determine the demand and scale of recreation facilities that could be developed in the park, the updated master plan contains an analysis of:

- Demographic data
- Surveys of Scott County residents, the Twin Cities Metro Area and State residents regarding outdoor recreation participation
- Recreation facilities currently provided in other parks within Scott County and within a 20-30 minute travel time of the County

The findings of this analysis are:

- In the coming decades Scott County park visitors are going to be older and more ethnically and racially diverse. There is an opportunity to partner with schools, faith organizations, and community groups to deliver quality recreation opportunities for baby-boomers and the 65+ age cohort, diverse populations and youth.
- The most common forms of outdoor recreation provided in the Metropolitan Regional Park System are centered on trails (biking, walking, hiking), water (swimming, boating, fishing), and picnicking. These are among the most common recreation pursuits statewide along with pleasure driving, camping, and visiting nature centers and zoos. A strategy to remove barriers to these common activities and/or ensure barriers are not unintentionally introduced could have the widest benefit.
- To reverse the trend of declining outdoor recreation participation by people under age 45 and especially among youth, women aged 21-25 and minority groups a creative mix of recreational programming and fee structures that helps remove barriers (leisure time constraints, costs, and accessibility) should be implemented.
- Paved bicycle trails, mountain biking facilities in suitable terrain and hiking trails are facilities that could be provided in Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park to fill gaps in recreation facilities.

4) Development Concept

The development plan for the park reflects a consensus reached between the general public, a Citizen Design Team, the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission and the Scott County Board regarding how the park should be developed to meet local and regional needs.

The plan proposes three development areas as follows:

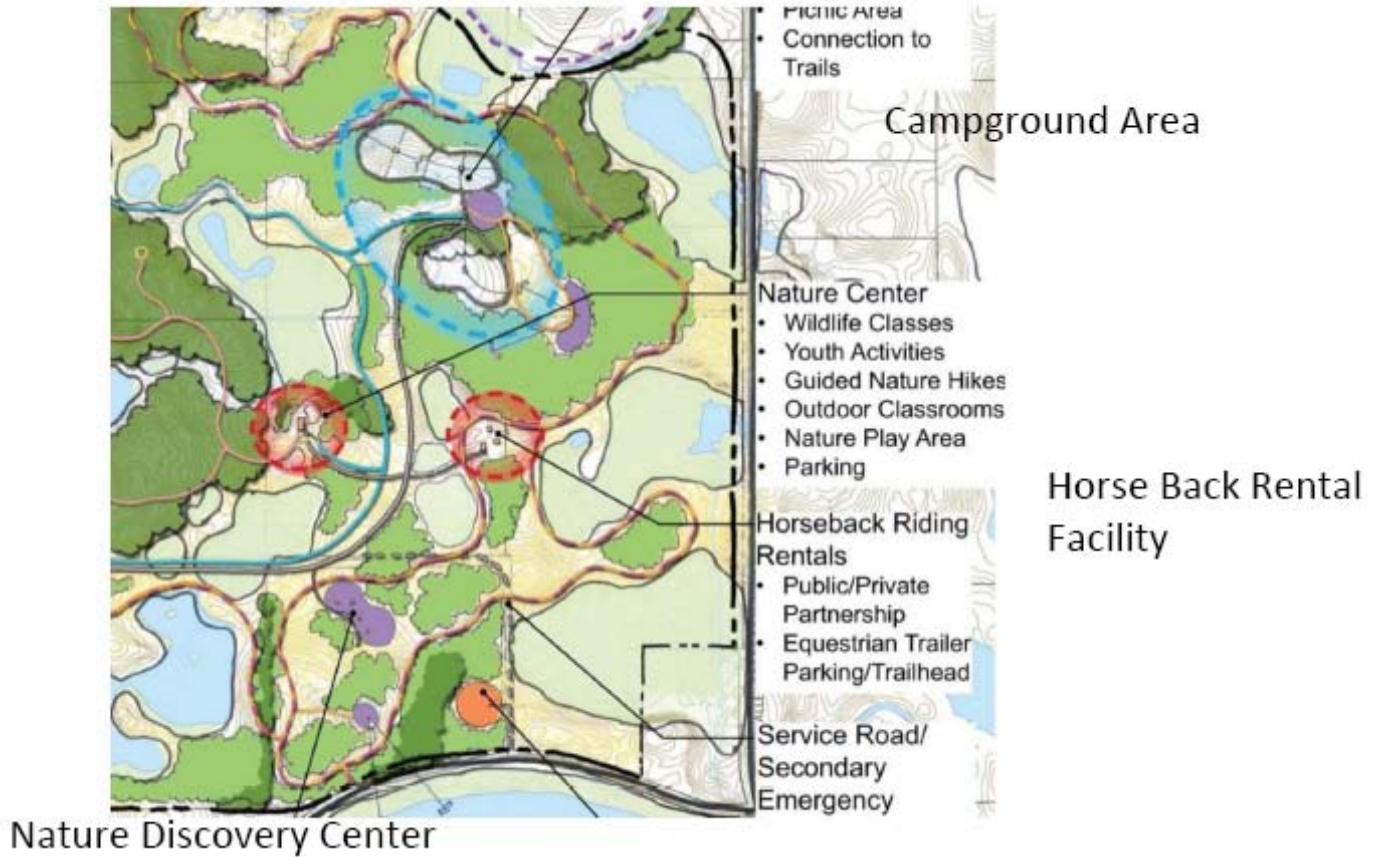
1. Pioneer Homestead and Trailhead (**Figure 3**) that would provide visitors and overnight 'Pioneer Camper Cabin' experience by reusing the Doyle-Kennefick 1860's homestead; and providing a trailhead and group rental space by reusing the using the adjacent 1940's dairy barn. Additional analysis is proposed to determine whether the barn can be effectively re-used for this purpose. Trails would converge from the north and south of this area.

Figure 3: Pioneer Homestead and Trailhead



- Outdoor Discovery Area (**Figure 4**) that includes a campground, a nature discovery center and a public equestrian facility. These facilities would be connected by trails. Development of this area of the park is anticipated to be a minimum of ten years and possibly twenty years in the future since it is dependent on acquiring land from willing sellers.

Figure 4: Outdoor Discovery Area



3. Lakeside Retreat Center (**Figure 5**) to include a main lodge, camper cabins, and canoe/kayak access to St. Catherine's Lake. It would provide space for multi-day group outings featuring programmed activities to meet interests and recreation demands of differing age groups.

Figure 5: Lakeside Retreat Center



In addition to these facilities the plan includes:

- 10 miles of hiking trail with overlooks for wildlife observation
- Cross country ski and snowshoe trail network that uses portions of the hiking trail
- 8.5 mile paved trail loop around St. Catherine's Lake
- 7 mile hiking and equestrian trail on the east side of the park

Exact trail alignments and length will be done to avoid habitat fragmentation, wildlife disruption and soil erosion.

The total development costs is \$11,500,800 as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Estimated Development Costs

Establish visitor parking facilities for farmstead site	\$200,000
Establish patio area around trailhead center	\$35,000
Establish informal picnic areas around farmstead site	\$60,000
Establish north and south trail loops from Trailhead center – soft surface only	\$155,000
Make barn structure weather-tight and secure, including silo	\$20,000
Make homestead structure weather-tight and secure	\$65,000
Phase 1 Total	\$ 535,000
Establish hard surface trail circulation and extend soft surface trail on north side of park as property is acquired	\$685,000
Establish hard surface trail connection around St. Catherine Lake (subject to Hwy 8 realignment)	\$350,000
Establish secondary access for canoe/kayak launch on St. Catherine Lake	\$45,000
Implement soft surface nature trail loops	\$110,000
Renovate homestead - main and upper level including mechanicals	\$95,000
Renovate barn – main floor and upper levels including mechanicals	\$625,000
Renovate outbuildings	\$50,000
Phase 2 Total	\$ 1,960,000
Extend park access road to serve horseback riding rental facility	\$80,000
Establish large group picnic shelter and restroom building	\$810,000
Develop playground facility within large group picnic area	\$250,000
Establish horseback riding rental facility and multi-use soft surface trail system	\$760,000
Construct maintenance facility	\$650,000
Extend park access road to serve campground facility	\$115,000
Establish modern campground facility and dump station	\$1,650,000
Establish primitive group camping sites	\$30,000
Complete paved multi-user trail loop connection to campground facility	\$44,000
Phase 3 Total	\$ 4,389,000
Construct nature center and outdoor learning areas	\$1,500,000
Establish retreat center on south side of St. Catherine Lake	\$1,200,000
Phase 4 Total	\$ 2,700,000
20% Contingency –All Phases	\$ 1,916,800
Grand Total	\$11,500,800

5) Conflicts

The plan noted that no conflicts with other existing or propose projects or land uses affecting Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park were identified. But future reconstruction of County Road 8 and its intersection with the County Rd. 23 will be aligned with construction of the paved trail loop around St. Catherine Lake to leverage funding sources and ultimately reduce total costs.

6) Public Services

The park is outside the Metropolitan Urban Service Area for wastewater treatment, but borders the New Prague Long-Term Sanitary Sewer Service Area. Sanitary sewer service is available for a portion of the park through the Cedar Lake Water and Sanitary Sewer District. There is no public transportation service available at this time.

7) Operations

In 2010, Scott County and Three Rivers Park District entered into a partnership agreement to collaboratively operate regional parks and trails in Scott County that were owned by each agency. Ultimate policy and management directions for facilities owned by Scott County will continue to be set by the Scott County Board but done in consideration of the partnership agreement. The plan does not contain estimated annual operations and maintenance costs. However, the plan does state that “anticipated operational resource needs, costs and a strategy for meeting those needs will be determined as specific development projects are planned.” It also states, “While an increase in operational funding will be necessary in the future as large portion of the development plan are implemented, near term improvements are expected to be operated within existing budget and efficiencies gained through the Partnership [agreement].”

8) Citizen Participation

Scott County formed a Citizen Design Team (CDT) made up of volunteers who actively participated in all aspects of the planning process. The CDT met monthly from July 2010 to March 2011 to evaluate park needs, identify unique features of the site and refine the design concepts.

A public planning workshop was held in August 2010, at which residents shared their knowledge related to the site and were able to ask questions and share concerns. Approximately 50 residents participated. This workshop followed a public policy workshop that was facilitated by the Citizens League. The workshop was set up like a focus group to engage discussion regarding opinions on the park and trail system overall. Two field trips to Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park were held in September and October 2010: one for the CDT and one for the public. Approximately 30 people participated in the field trip. The final resident input process came at a public open house on February 16, 2011 where the preferred park concept was presented. Approximately 80 people attended.

9) Public Awareness

Scott County uses a variety of resources to promote its park and trail system, including:

- Scott County SCENE newsletter
- Press releases
- Brochures, newsletters and direct mailings
- County website as well as city/township park and recreation websites
- Regional park and trail maps
- Advertisements in recreation and tourism publications
- GoScottGo.org website
- Potential collaboration with Three Rivers Park District marketing as part of the new partnership agreement between these two agencies

10) Accessibility

The master plan states that Scott County is committed to providing activities, access and resources for all park visitors, including people with disabilities and members of special population groups. Scott County supports equal access for all users to its facilities. Park facilities will be designed to meet or exceed ADA guidelines and will be aligned to accommodate a wide range of user groups. Current County policies strive to keep park, trail and open space facilities affordable for all residents.

11) Natural Resources

The master plan includes an extensive inventory of the natural resource features in the regional park.

The major land cover types in the planned park area are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Land cover Types in Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park

Land Cover	Acres	% of Park
Developed Areas (impervious surfaces, lawn, etc.)	20.85	2%
Planted Vegetation (e.g., crops, hayfield, pasture)	297.30	26%
Forests (closed canopy)	179.21	16%
Woodlands (moderate canopy)	19.37	2%
Shrublands (including shrub swamps)	0.70	<1%
Herbaceous (including upland grasslands and non-forested wetlands)	461.69	41%
Open Water	159.34	13%
Total	1,129.46	100

The estimated costs to restore and maintain natural areas in the park is shown in Table 3. However the plan states that this estimate is based on primarily using contracted labor to carry out these activities. Scott County's management approach utilizes volunteers and Sentence to Serve crews which can substantially reduce costs.

Table 3: Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Natural Resource Restoration and Management Cost Estimate

Management Unit Number	Acres	Yr. 1 costs	Yr. 2 costs	Yr. 3 costs	Future costs/acre	Future Annual Costs/Acre
1	80.39	\$ 45,900	\$101,300	\$ 100,000	\$ 550	\$ 44,215
2	93.01	\$ 74,300	\$ 80,400	\$ 84,300	\$ 550	\$ 51,156
3	77.6	\$ 18,300	\$ 45,200	\$ 47,800	\$ 550	\$ 42,680
4	34.86	\$ 27,500	\$121,400	\$ 123,100	\$ 525	\$ 18,302
5	6.47	\$ 12,700	\$ 23,500	\$ 23,900	\$ 525	\$ 3,397
6	69.63	\$ 29,100	\$ 64,600	\$ 67,200	\$ 450	\$ 31,334
7	73.73	\$ 17,700	\$ 19,700	\$ 13,500	\$ 300	\$ 22,119
8	51.39	\$ 37,000	\$ 25,300	\$ 21,100	\$ 400	\$ 20,556
Totals	487.08	\$ 62,500	\$481,400	\$ 480,900		\$ 233,757
First 3 years total				\$1,224,800		

REVIEW BY OTHER COUNCIL DIVISIONS:

Environmental Services (Roger Janzig)

Due to the fact that we do not have any facilities within the general vicinity of this project, we have no objections to the Plan Amendment.

Environmental Services (Jim Larsen)

The plan is complete. I have no comments.

Metropolitan Council Transportation (Ann Braden)

The plan is complete. I have no comments.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. In conformance with the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*, the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Master Plan (Referral No. 50021-1) provides details on estimated costs related to land acquisition and development. The master plan is complete and consistent with the requirements for master plans in the *Updated 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan*.
2. Acquisition of the remaining 313 acres in the initial park's master plan boundary and the addition of 180 acres proposed in the updated master plan has a 2011 tax assessed value of \$3,484,664. This is a conservative estimate since it does not include associated costs of appraisals and property tax equivalency payments.
3. Development of the park as proposed in the master plan is estimated to cost \$11.5 million in 2011 dollars. Natural resource restoration and on-going management of 487 acres in the first 3 years is estimated to cost \$1,224,800 in 2011 dollars. These costs, plus the acquisition described in point 2 are eligible for Metropolitan Council Regional Park Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding consideration if the master plan amendment is approved by the Metropolitan Council. However, Council approval of the master plan amendment does not obligate future funding from the Regional Parks CIP to finance those costs. Plan approval only allows Scott County to seek funding for projects in the plan through the Regional Parks CIP.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Metropolitan Council approve the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Master Plan (Referral No. 50022-1)

Attachment 1: Letter from Patricia Freeman, Scott County



SCOTT COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS PROGRAM
A Partnership between Scott County and Three Rivers Park District

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February 29, 2011

Arne Stefferud
Metropolitan Council
390 North Robert Street
St. Paul, MN 55101

Subject: Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park – Final Master Plan Submittal

Dear Arne,

On behalf of Scott County, I am pleased to submit the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Master Plan for consideration by the Metropolitan Council. The plan has been prepared as part of a comprehensive master planning and public review process along with two regional parks and two regional trails.

The enclosed master plan is an update to the 200 Doyle-Kennefick Acquisition Master Plan and includes the required elements for a regional park master plan. In addition, the master plan complies with Scott County's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The Scott County Board of Commissioners adopted the enclosed master plan at their December 13th Board meeting and authorized submittal to Metropolitan Council.

Please contact me at 952-496-8752 or pfreeman@co.scott.mn.us with any questions.

Sincerely,

Patricia Freeman
Principal Planner
Scott County Community Services Division

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