

# Beltrami County Recreational Facilities Plan



Adopted by the Beltrami County Board

January 8, 2008

Including  
revisions of  
2011 & 2013



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# Acknowledgements

Beltrami County Natural Resources Management (NRM) would like to thank all of those who have supported the development of this Beltrami County Recreational Facilities Plan. This product is the first step towards transforming the County's park and recreational activities into a long term opportunity for the families and citizens of the County.

Without the commitment of a large group of people dedicated to this process, this plan would not be possible. We wish to publicly thank the dedicated citizens and volunteer user group participants for their time and effort.

In addition we wish to thank the County leadership, Headwaters Regional Development Commission, the Parks and Trails Advisory Council and NRM staff for their support in making this possible.

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# Overview

## Background

In 2005 Beltrami County committed itself to develop a first class parks and recreation system to serve its residents as well as to address the needs of visitors. Since that time, the County has hired a parks and recreations director and completed a Phase 1 Recreational Trails Plan. The plan has received national recognition, winning a NACO award for its excellence.

Subsequently, Beltrami County has enlisted the continued help of the Headwaters RDC in developing a more detailed Phase 2 planning effort that provides specific plans and designs for six parks/use areas within the County. This new planning effort used the policy framework and recommendations of the first effort as a foundation. The results of this effort are documented here.

The County's new commitment to parks and recreation services comes at a time of strong growth within the County and surrounding area. To remain a competitive community and to meet the increasing demands of its citizens, the County has committed to enhancing this quality of life amenity.

## Process

The process undertaken to develop this plan used a combination of thorough technical analysis and extensive public engagement activities. Many user groups, area residents, and other constituencies were brought into the effort through open houses, focus groups, public meetings, and individual discussions. Through these activities, every effort was made to satisfy user group needs and address individual concerns. To every extent possible, areas of disagreement were attempted to be resolved for mutual gain.

## Plan Contents

The contents of this plan include six separate sections that identify very specific plans for each park/use area. These individual sections each provide background information on the facility, an assessment of the park or use area, and a plan section that includes a specific design and supporting narrative. A seventh section is dedicated to a discussion of implementation. This section includes an improvement plan for each park and a summary improvement plan. While improvement phases are recommended for each park or use area, along with costs, specific capital improvements by year are not provided. Rather, these improvement programs are to act as a guide to County policy officials when an overall county CIP is developed.

## Section 1

# Rognlien Park Plan

## Background

Rognlien Park is located on Grant Lake about seven miles west of Bemidji and one mile southwest of the City of Wilton.

The site of the park was acquired in 1937 from M.A. Rognlien of Wilton who stipulated that the land was to be a memorial to his son who had recently died. In 1938 it was developed into a day use park using the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC created a picnic area with latrines, bath houses, a hand pump well, and garbage incinerator. For the first ten years it was used mainly by the surrounding residents. In the 1950's State



parks started charging admission, and many people who previously used Lake Bemidji State Park started to frequent Rognlien Park.

Use peaked in the late 1960's when as many as 1,400 people could be counted in a single day. Since then use has tapered off, but is still

heavy on summer weekends with as many as 400-500 individuals on busy days. In 2006 Beltrami County acquired the park from the State with the stipulation that the County continues to manage the site as a park.

**Rognlien is an intensive high use, day use park.**

Rognlien is an intensive high use, day use park. It is the intent of the County to continue managing the park in the role it currently serves. Over the next several years the County intends to make improvements to the park that would facilitate its role as an intensive day use area and elevate it to the status of the County's "signature park".

## Excellent Attributes

Vandalism - mostly  
by dirt bikes & atvs

## Manageable Challenges



## Assessment

Because of its attributes, Rognlien Park has the potential of being a very high quality facility. The following context briefly describes the park's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further park enhancement.

### Attributes

- *Location on an outstanding water resource.* Grant Lake has excellent water quality, and is a beautiful lake.
- *Potential for a high quality beach.* The existing beach is of high quality, although the access road is too close to the lake.
- *Existing public boat access.* A boat access now exists.
- *Presence of host site (new for 2007).* This site will help ensure appropriate behavior by park users.

### Challenges

- *Potential conflicts with surrounding residential properties.* Adjacent residents are concerned that improvements to the park will increase use and detract from their property.
- **Road Access.** The road that serves the park needs to be improved. There is presently no way to separate bike/pedestrian and vehicular use. However, there is little right of way, and some residences are close to the road.
- **Conflicting Park Uses.** There is little separation of existing uses in the park.
- **Resident access through the park.** Two different residences only have access to their property through the park.
- **Law enforcement challenges.** Large crowds on peak summer weekends have created enforcement problems and disrupted the daily activities of the nearby residents.

## Abundant Opportunities

## Two Phases of Improvement

**The key design feature is the realignment of the road through the facility.**

### *Opportunities*

- *Addition of shore fishing.* There is an excellent site available for a fishing pier. The lake is a high quality pan fishing lake.
- *Enough space to allow use separation.* There is enough space to redesign the park to separate appropriate, but potentially conflicting, uses.
- *Road Funding.* The County has received funding for road improvements.

### **Plan**

The design below provides a visual representation of the plan for Rognlien. The plan will occur in at least two phases.

#### *Phase I Major Improvements*

- Upgrade the road that serves the park
- Re-organize and improve parking
- Improve boat access
- Improve sanitation facilities
- Install a fishing pier
- **Create a group picnic area near the fishing pier.**

#### *Phase II Major Improvements*

- Continue improving sanitation facilities
- Install picnic shelters
- **Improve the beach and shoreline**
- **Rehabilitate historical marker**

The key design feature is the realignment of the road through the facility. This realignment expands the beach area, allows the creation of more parking, and contributes to the clear separation of use areas. The new parking will accommodate approximately 50 passenger vehicles and five vehicles with boat trailers. The road and parking areas will be paved and striped.

The realignment of the road and new parking layout will require the relocation of the current sanitation building. The County will take this opportunity to replace the current, inadequate building with a new, modern flush toilet facility. If it is unable to do this, it will move the flush toilet facility to Phase II, and install the two vault toilets it currently has planned for Phase II. Other improvements include a fishing pier, play structure, and upgraded picnic facilities and trash receptacles.



**Policing behavior has been one of the key issues for area residents.**

Policing behavior has been one of the key issues for area residents. The installation of a host family, in combination with the installation of quality facilities, the clear delineation of use areas, and the close coordination with the County Sheriff's Department should address most of the behavior issues.

The entrance road to the park will also be improved. Parts of the road are owned by the Township and the City of Wilton. While the design is not yet completed, the key issues to be addressed are the separation of vehicular and bike/pedestrian traffic, and the satisfaction of adjacent resident concerns.

Discussions will be continuing with one resident who now obtains access to their property through the park and an adjacent developer to see if the realignment of the driveway can enhance both the park and the adjacent properties.



# Pine Tree Park Plan

## Background

Pine Tree Park is located two miles east of Blackduck on Blackduck Lake.

The park was originally established as a State Park in 1947, and then transferred to Beltrami County in 1972. The County managed the park until 1997, when it entered into a Joint Powers Agreement with the City of Blackduck. The agreement transferred ownership of the park to the City with a commitment from the County to help pay operational costs. Today the County pays the City \$7,000/year to help with those costs.

The Park is approximately 60 acres with 14 modern RV sites and 19 rustic pull-in campsites. The park's campsites receive moderate to low use throughout the summer but are normally full on holiday weekends. The exception to this is the two to three week period between fishing opener and Memorial Day weekend when the park is full seven days a week. The park also sees a high amount of day use from local residents.

## Assessment

Because of its attributes, Pine Tree Park has the potential of being a very high use campground park. The following context briefly describes the park's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further park enhancement.

### *Attributes*

- *Location on an outstanding water resource.* Blackduck Lake is an outstanding fishery that consistently draws visitors for walleye fishing in the spring.
- *Existing public boat access adjacent to it.* A boat access is directly adjacent to the park.
- *Golf course nearby.* The City's public golf course is across the road and is a primary draw for many of the park users.
- *Presence of host site.* The host site gives the City better ability to manage behavior.
- *Proximity to the City of Blackduck.* The park is just minutes from the City.

**Pine Tree Park has the potential of being a very high use campground park.**

**Major Challenge:  
City's Financial  
Capacity**

**Cart-in campsites  
should prove very  
popular in this park.**

*Challenges*

- *Steep banks along much of Park.* The steep banks limit possible shoreland-related use, and also present design challenges.
- *Much of the Park contains mature trees; the Park could benefit from a vegetation management plan.* Changes in vegetation need to be actively managed for the site to retain its character.
- *City's financial resources are limited.* Improvements need to be planned with an eye on local financial capacity.
- *Questions about infrastructure capacity.* There is uncertainty about the ability of different systems, such as the electrical service, to accommodate increased usage.

*Opportunities*

- *Addition of a boat dock.* Currently park users have no place to park their boats during the day after they put them in at the access. The steep topography down to the lake would necessitate the installation of a stairway. The dock could also serve as an informal swim area.
- *Amphitheater/bonfire area.* The area between the RV campground and the look-out platform is ideal for this type of amenity. Currently when park users have a group fire, they have to use a small fire ring in an empty camp site.
- *Cart-In Campsites.* These types of campsites have proven to be very popular in the three State Parks in which they have been implemented. They offer campers more seclusion than a pull-in site, but the cart allows them to bring many of the same amenities to the site. The area north of the current look-out platform would be ideal for several of these sites.

**Plan**

The design shown below provides a visual representation of the plan for Pine Tree Park. The plan is broken into three priority areas. As local resources become available or grant funds can be obtained, improvements will be made roughly in the order outlined below.

**Improvements are  
proposed in three  
phases.**

*Priority I Major Improvements*

- *Self Registration Station*
- *Vegetation Management Plan*
- *Power to the Primitive Campsites*

*Priority II Major Improvements*

- *Cart-In Campsites*
- *Amphitheater*
- *Improved Entrance Sign*

*Priority III Major Improvements*

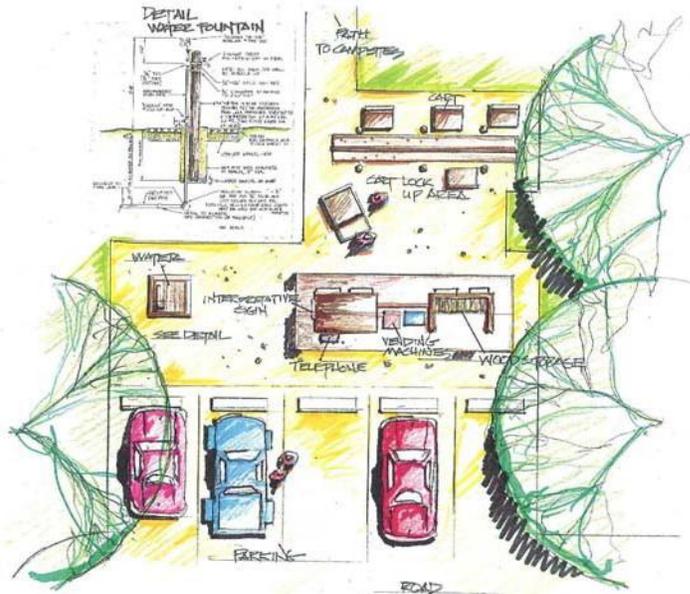
- *Additional Picnic Area*
- *Additional Play Structure*
- *Boat Dock*
- *Shelter near the Amphitheater*

The first improvement to be made would be an upgrade to the current self-registration station/park information board for campers and day use visitors. The current board would be replaced with a structure that would provide more weather protection, and the area would be designed to provide a pullover large enough for campers' vehicles with trailers.

Power will be extended to the primitive camping area so that each primitive site could be outfitted with at least one powered outlet. Power to these sites is one of the biggest requests by campers in the park. In addition, providing power could reduce the campground's vacancy rates during off-peak times. The camping sites in the north part of the park which have power are typically full every weekend all summer, but the primitive sites are often empty during these same weekends.

A new amphitheater and bonfire ring will be the centerpiece of the park. The bonfire ring will provide an area for large groups to gather in the evening. Presently no area in the park can serve this need; large groups currently must use one of the small fire rings in one of the campsites if they want to do this. The amphitheater will provide a place for groups such as the Boy/Girl Scouts or 4-H to conduct activities, or as a stage for small concerts or plays. Improved parking and an additional shelter would also be added near this facility.





The shoreline north of the overlook is ideal for cart-in campsites. Several sites would be constructed along a trail and a separate parking area would be provided at the trailhead.

The City would like to install a boat dock in the park next to the overlook. Currently campers with boats have no place to dock their boats during the day when they are not using them. Even though the boat landing is adjacent to the park, it is very inconvenient for park users to have to put in and take out their watercraft more than once in a day. The addition

of a dock at the park would also potentially free up parking spaces at the access, and provide other users of the lake a place to tie up so they could use the facilities at the park.

If use increases at the park, a shelter and play structure in the south part of the park near what is now the primitive camping area will be added.

#### SELECTING YOUR CAMPSITE

- ▲ Reservations for the current week are posted on the carts. Please do not alter, switch or remove these cards.
- ▲ Carts in the corral indicate available campsites numbers, except for any dates indicated on a reservation card.
- ▲ Put cart on your campsite to hold the site while you register. Register for your campsite at the park office.
- ▲ Park in assigned parking space. (Site numbers are on parking curbs.) Park additional vehicles and trailers in overflow lot.
- ▲ Put registration card or receipt on campsite post, and use cart to haul your gear. Keep cart at your campsite until checkout.
- ▲ When you check out, please return cart to proper location and place campsite card or receipt in box by parking lot.

**ENJOY YOUR STAY!**

As part of the overall plan the City proposes to implement a vegetation management plan. Some of the park's trees are old and will need replacements to fill the void. Also, some of the trees in the park have dead tops or large limbs that are dead that could pose a threat to users of the park. The City will put in place policies and a set of corrective actions to address these issues.

# Shooting Sports Park Plan

## Background

The need for a shooting sports park within the County is a relatively recent development. Historically, informal trap shooting or target practice was practiced using old gravel pits or other public open space. Encroachment on public lands by residential developments and increased use of public lands makes this practice less desirable today.

Other factors have played a role in the shooting sports park's inclusion in this park planning process:

**Need for a Shooting Sports Plan:**

- **Closure of existing facility**
- **No other ranges nearby**
- **No Law Enforcement Training Facility**

- The imminent closure of the Bemidji Trap and Skeet Club's facility at the airport due to a runway expansion;
- No rifle or pistol ranges nearby;
- Lack of a local range suitable for many of law enforcement's modern training methods.

The goal of the County is to provide a safe area for county residents to engage in shooting activities, and close those areas where this activity has become a nuisance or unsafe.

Extensive discussions have been held with user groups. Both the shotgun and rifle clubs felt strongly that the facility should be located on County lands. Nationally, many small local ranges located on private lands are closing due to encroachment of incompatible land uses and rising property values; the shooting sports groups desire a long-term solution not subject to that threat.

Other user desires include the ability to expand in the future; the ability to host regional competitions; and the need to provide facilities to provide training for law enforcement, DNR, local firearms safety instructors, and individuals involved in 4-H shooting activities.

In addition to user group desires, the design and location will need to minimize impacts off-site (principally noise and safety).

**Site's Chief  
Attribute: Remote  
but Accessible**

**Noise and safety are  
chief concerns.**

Analysis of sites used the following criteria:

- Close proximity to Bemidji
- Located on County land
- Area of sufficient size to maintain a one-half mile buffer from current and future development

The map on the following page displays the three candidate sites and identifies the site that was chosen. The following assessment is based on this site.

### **Assessment**

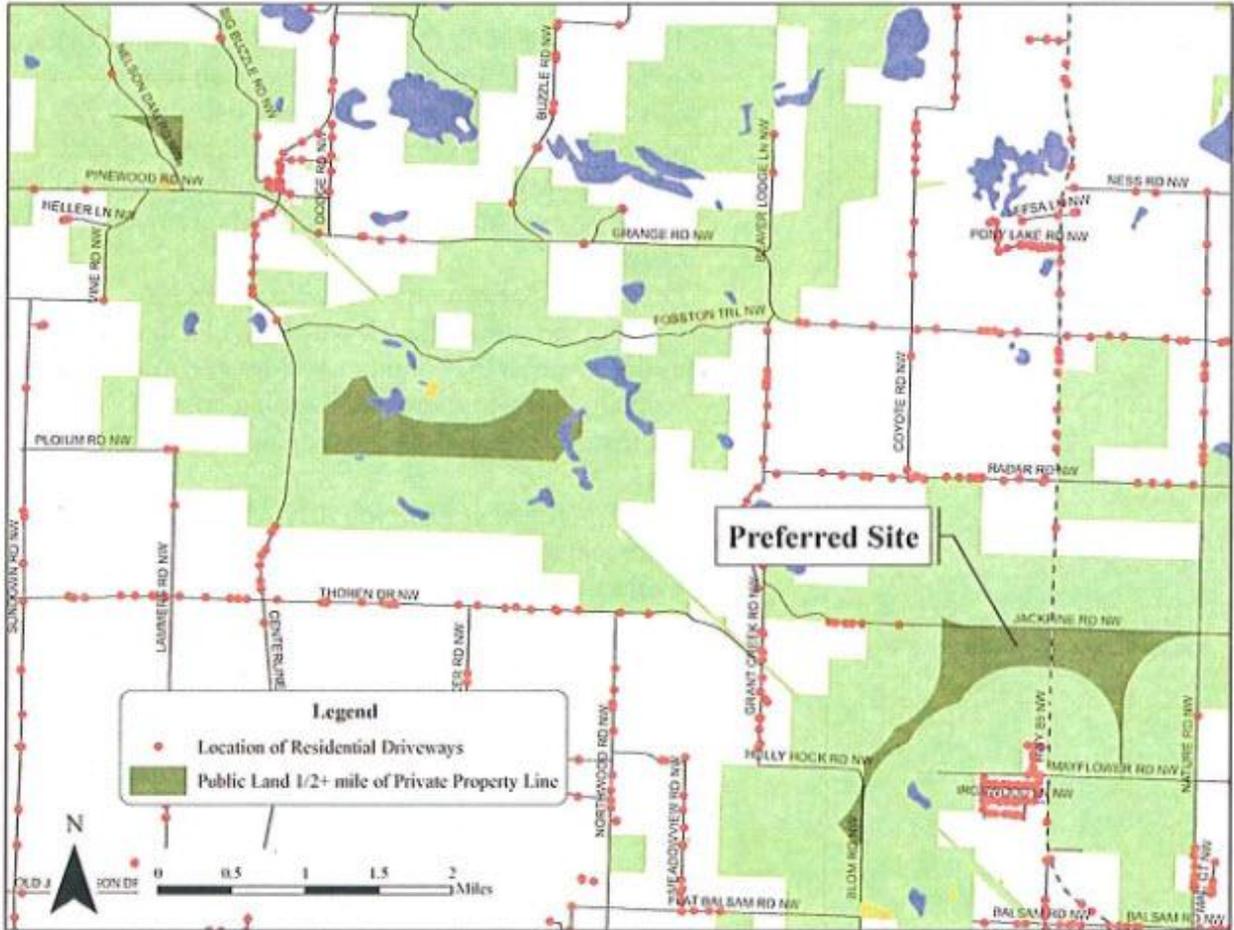
The following context briefly describes the area's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further enhancement of this location and facility.

#### *Attributes*

- *Proximity to Bemidji.* This site is close enough to Bemidji to serve the major population centers in the County.
- *Relative Remoteness.* Except for a residential development one-half mile away from the proposed facility, the surrounding area is sparsely populated.
- *Access.* The proposed facility would be located adjacent to Trunk Highway 89.
- *Topography.* The location is very flat and devoid of any wetlands where the firing ranges would be located.

#### *Challenges*

- *Safety.* Accidental discharges, stray bullets, and individuals engaged in unsafe activities or in unsafe places will always be a concern. Appropriate design and operating procedures will need to be followed to mitigate on and off-site risk to the extent possible.
- *Noise.* There are residences approximately one-half mile from this site. Fire-arms are inherently loud, but proper site design, vegetative management, and mechanical barriers can mitigate the noise to acceptable levels. Range orientation/direction of fire, berming, covered firing points, plantings and management of the surrounding forest can minimize and contain sound.



**Improvements include an education/training facility, indoor range and outdoor ranges for archery, biathlon, trap, skeet, rifle, pistol and sporting clays.**

- *Private vs. Public Use.* There is a need to control the site to prevent inappropriate and/or incompatible uses.
- *Lead Contamination.* Bullets will periodically need to be reclaimed from the rifle and pistol impact areas. The shotgun sports, shot-fall area will need to be maintained as an open area allowing the shot to be re-claimed.

#### *Opportunities*

- *Multi-use Training Center.* Gun safety instructors are in need of a facility where they have an indoor classroom located on the same site where they can practice live fire exercises. This building could serve many purposes given its close proximity to Bemidji and would be available to many different groups for various activities.
- *Facility Co-location with Trailhead Facility.* Co-locating the shooting park with the ATV focus area trailhead saves the County considerable monies by reducing infrastructure and building costs in comparison to building the two facilities on different sites.
- *Law Enforcement Training Area.* Modern law enforcement training methods no longer emphasize marksmanship to the degree they used to. Now the emphasis is on situational training where an officer is placed in a mock environment that replicates a potential real life situation where they may have to discharge their firearm. There are no facilities within the area that can meet this need. These needs can be met with minor modifications to a standard rifle or pistol range.

#### **Plan**

The Beltrami Shooting Sports Park will include an education/training facility, indoor range and outdoor ranges for archery, biathlon, trap, skeet, rifle, pistol and sporting clays. The park will be paid for and managed jointly by the County and the user groups through a joint powers agreement. The design shown on the following page provides the layout of the facility.

#### *Phase I Major Improvements*

- Trap and Skeet Fields
- Rifle/Pistol Ranges
- Perimeter Fencing



*Phase II Major Improvements*

- Training Center
- Indoor Shooting Range

The outdoor ranges will be gated and fenced from the training building, indoor shooting range, and trailhead facilities. In addition, the trap and skeet fields, rifle and pistol ranges, and police training area will all be fenced and gated individually. Both rifle and shotgun clubs will have individual clubhouses with sanitation and storage facilities located adjacent to their ranges.

**Indoor Facility**

The indoor rifle range and training facility will be located outside of the fenced area so that it can be operated independent of the outdoor ranges. The indoor range will have 10 lanes, 75 feet long, complete with bullet traps and modern air pollution collection and filtering systems. The training facility will be designed with an emphasis toward classroom activities, but will be able to serve double duty for other activities such as a warming shelter in the winter months for snowmobilers or dog sledders.

**Biathlon Course**

The biathlon course will be built along the inside perimeter of the fenced area and will utilize firing points at the rifle and pistol range.

The local archery club currently has a facility located on another piece of County land and there are no plans to move it from that location in the near future. However, land will be set aside for them within the facility in case it is needed.

## Section 4

# ATV/Multi-Use Trail Area Plan

**The goal: Move many of the users from the County's Forest Access Routes to designated recreational trails.**

**Opportunity for more multi-use trails in the future.**

## Background

The need for an area with a formal and signed ATV trail system was first identified in the County's Recreational Trails Plan adopted in 2006. **The goal of a formalized trail system for ATV's is to move many of the users from the County's Forest Access Routes to designated recreation trails.** The Recreational Trails Plan identified an area several miles northwest of Bemidji that was deemed ideal for such a system because of the large tracts of County land and the predominately dry, sandy soils found there.

HRDC and County staff have met several times with ATV enthusiasts to determine what such a trail system would need to look like for ATV riders to embrace and use. **Riders consistently voiced a desire for narrow, winding, scenic trails of different lengths and difficulty that traverse a variety of terrain and scenery.** Little desire was shown for a challenge park "Gilbert-type" facility. After listening to the ATV riders and local elected officials, and field checking the existing trails in the area for sustainability, it was decided the County should go forward with the ATV trail concept as outlined in the Recreational Trails Plan.

The planning process for this trail area highlighted an opportunity to expand this use area to include multiple trail uses, including horseback, sled dog, and mountain bike. While it is the long-term intent to use the trailhead for all of these uses, this "first generation" plan focuses on ATV's and horseback users.

## Assessment

The following context briefly describes the area's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further enhancement.

**Old Soo Line  
Railroad Grade  
serves as the  
backbone.**

**Attributes**

- *Close Proximity to Bemidji and Wilton.* The area's proximity to Bemidji makes it convenient for most of the County's residents to use, increasing the likelihood of its use over other areas.
- *Soils.* The predominately dry, sandy soils found throughout most of the area can sustain motorized use much better than some of the wetter and heavier soils found in other parts of the County.
- *Old Soo Line Railroad Grade.* This abandoned ROW, owned by the County, serves as the backbone connecting the various trail loops to each other.
- *Abandoned Gravel Pits.* Several old gravel pits are in the area on County lands and can serve as informal rest areas, secondary trailheads, or for open riding, should the County agree to this type of use in the future.

*Challenges*

- *Sensitive Areas.* The area contains some large and extensive wetlands. Grant Creek also runs through the area and will need special consideration.
- *Connection to Other Areas.* Local users will want to ride their ATV's to the area. Appropriate routes will need to be identified to allow this. In addition, local riders have expressed the desire to see this area connected to the trail system in Hubbard County.
- *Trail User Conflicts.* The planning effort for this area is primarily focused on addressing the needs of the ATV users, but trails formally designated for ATV use will also be available to hikers, mountain bike riders, and horseback riders during the warmer months when ATV use will be high.
- *Trail Damage.* ATV's will cause damage to some sections of the trail that are also part of the snowmobile trail system during the winter months. Systems will need to be in place to repair the damage before the start of the snowmobile season.

*Opportunities*

- *Grant-in-Aid Trail Dollars.* Formal designation of ATV trails will make the County eligible to access Grant-in-Aid trail moneys to improve and repair trails used by ATV's.

- *Trailhead Facility Co-location with Shooting Sports Park.* The trailhead for this area will be able to share some of the facilities that the shooting park will require. This co-location of facilities will result in cost savings.
- *Horseback Riding Trails.* The area is a popular destination with horseback riders and the County plans to formally designate most of the trails in the area for their use.
- *Horseback Campground.* Local horseback riders have expressed strong interest in a campground in this area. They have the funds to pay for approximately 80% of the facility.
- *Competitive Dog Sledding Course.* There is a small group of dog sledders in the County that host an annual race (currently at Buena Vista ski area). The trailhead and surrounding trails could easily be used to host this event.

## Plan

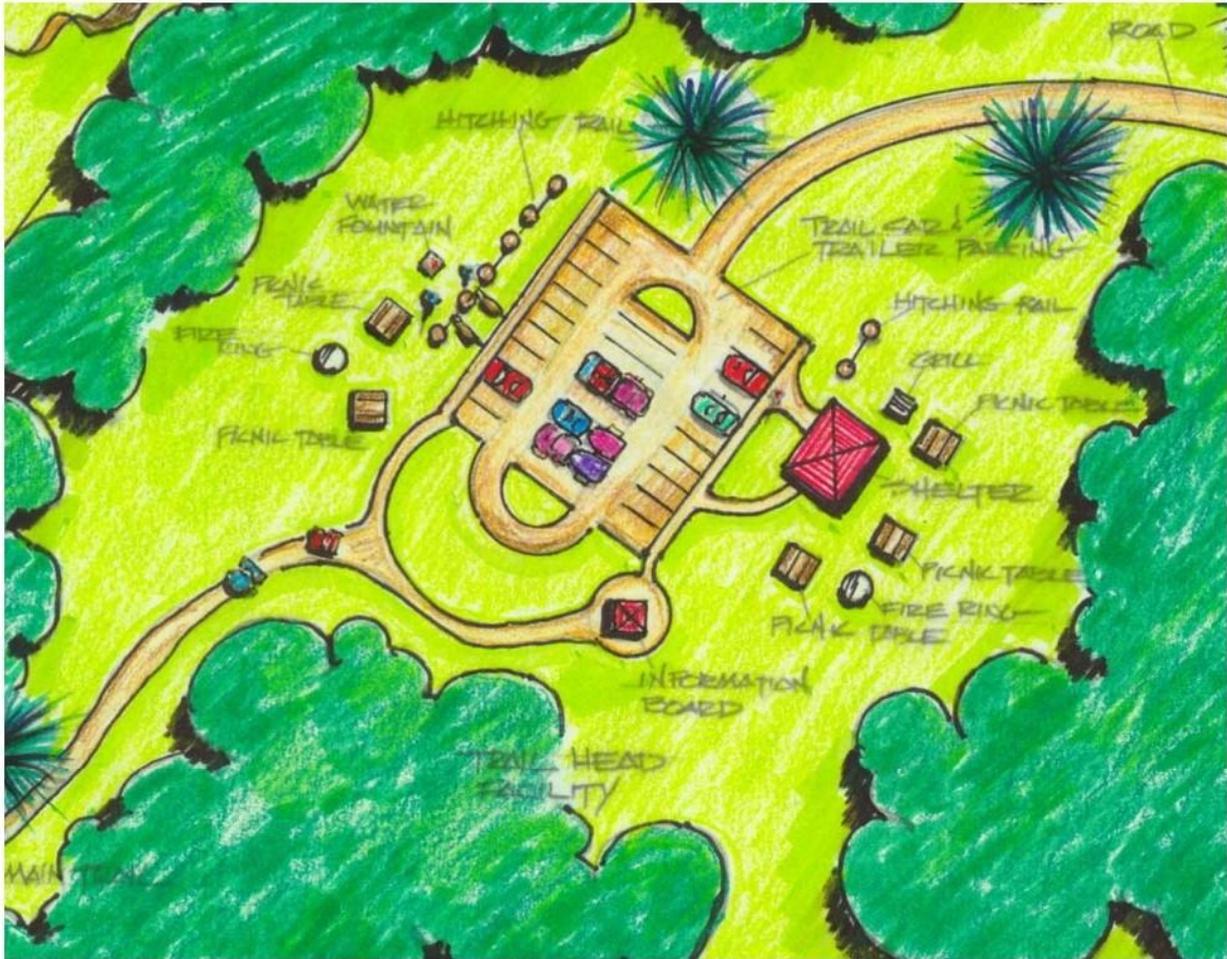
The maps shown on the next pages display the location of the trails in the area that the County plans to formally designate for the identified uses during summer and winter months. The number of designated trail miles available in the area are as follows:

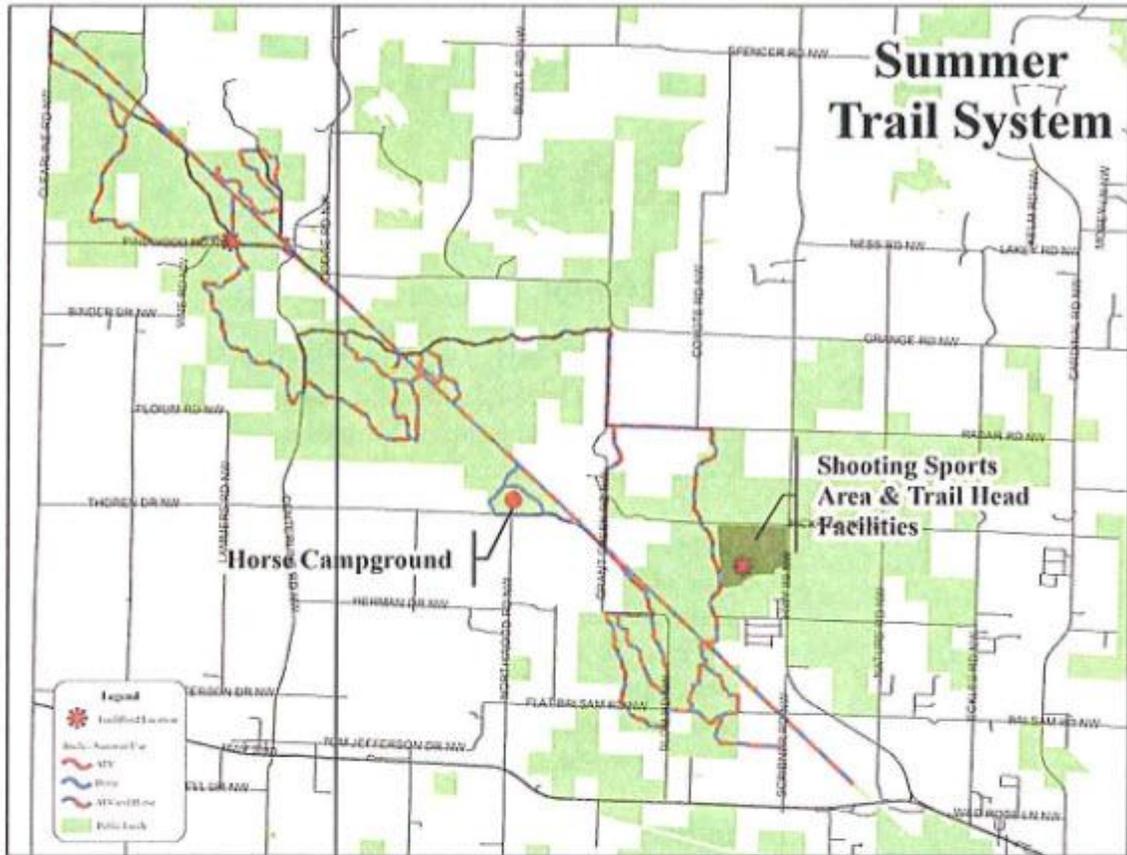
- 2.2 miles - Horse
- 51.1 miles - ATV and horse
- 53.3 miles total

No formal designation is provided for hikers or mountain bikers. At this time both user groups may use all county-managed lands. The maps also display where the County plans to locate the formal trailheads.

The design on the following page provides a visual representation of the proposed improvements at the main trailhead. The trailhead will have organized parking, vault toilet, picnic shelter, picnic tables, and fire rings.

**Plan includes  
about 50 miles of  
trail.**





# Three Island Park Plan

40 years of history

## Background

Three Island Park is located approximately 12 miles north of Bemidji on Three Island Lake. The County acquired the park in 1967 when the State of Minnesota deeded the land to the County to be used exclusively for a park and recreation area.

Improvements to the park began almost immediately. Over the years the County acquired DNR funding to create a boat access and establish a picnic/campground area near the dam site. In the mid-70's, the original set of x-county ski trails were developed, and from the late 70's into the 80's, a network of snowmobile trails were routed through the park using existing logging roads.

In 1989 the Bemidji Area Cross Country Ski Club and the County Land Department collaborated on the expansion of the ski trail system. The County's history of trail maintenance and grooming was sporadic, so shortly after the trail expansion the club took over responsibility for those tasks from the County.

In 1993 the ski club expressed its first concerns to the County regarding timber management practices following the cutting of a mature aspen stand. In response, the County Board established a 15 member citizen advisory committee to develop park management guidelines.

In 1995 the advisory committee submitted its final document to the County Board which included detailed timber management guidelines and general recreation guidelines. The document also recommended the establishment of a smaller permanent citizen advisory committee representing diverse interests. The Board adopted the guidelines and authorized the establishment of a seven member permanent citizen advisory committee.

In 1995 the County Board also voted to close the park to overnight camping, effectively restricting use of the park to daytime hours only.

## **Regional Park Aspirations**

In 2006 the citizen advisory committee for the Park was disbanded and replaced by the County Park and Trail Advisory Council. The County has subsequently revised their forest management guidelines and those guidelines supersede the previous guidelines that were adopted in 1995 by the County Board.

Currently, Three Island Park functions as a day use area, but it is of a size and nature that it is ideally suited to serve as a regional park. It is the intent of the County to move the park in that direction. In the next several years the County intends to make improvements to the park that will further enhance its role as a day use area and reinstate overnight camping.

### **Assessment**

Because of its attributes, Three Island Park has the potential of being a quality facility. The following context briefly describes the park's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further park enhancement.

## **Terrific Natural Assets**

### *Attributes*

- *Located on a lake.* Three Island Lake has a boat access providing park users with the opportunity to engage in fishing and other water-based recreational activities.
- *River runs through it.* Turtle River winds its way through the park offering trail users scenic views throughout the year. When conditions are right, it is also possible to navigate by canoe or kayak.
- *Dam site.* A small dam was constructed across the Turtle River at its outlet from Three Island Lake in 1936-37 to maintain lake levels. During the spring of the year the dam concentrates walleyes and suckers seeking areas to spawn providing a close-up viewing opportunity of this event. The area above and below the dam also holds other fish throughout the rest of the year.
- *Trail network.* The park has an extensive trail network used throughout the year by a variety of users: x-country skiers, horseback riders, mountain bikers, hikers, and hunters.
- *Large size.* The park is approximately 3,000 acres, which gives it the ability to accommodate a variety of users.

## Timber Management: On- going Concern

### Challenges

- **Timber management.** Historically the County has always managed the lands within the park for wood fiber production as the primary use. Management practices for certain species, such as aspen, often require clear cutting or other techniques that disturb the landscape in order to promote successful regeneration. Some of the park users find these practices to be detrimental to their use and enjoyment of the park. A more in depth discussion regarding this issue is located in the appendix.
- **Isolation.** Although not in the middle of “nowhere,” the park, or parts of the park, are remote enough that the monitoring and enforcement of some undesirable activities is difficult.
- **Large size.** The large size and extent of the trail system in the park makes it more expensive to maintain. Longer roads and distance from power and other utilities increase infrastructure costs, and the extensive trail network requires more signing and maintenance than smaller networks.
- *Poorly maintained entrance road.* The entrance road to the park is long, gravel, and is subject to washouts in certain areas.

### Opportunities

- *Upgrade the entrance road.* The County has acquired \$80,000 from the DNR to make repairs to the road.
- *Improve the day use area by the dam.* The dam is in need of improvement and the DNR is willing to cost share those improvements if they are done in a way that facilitates walleye spawning in the spring. The improvements will include improving the river crossing. The County could capitalize on that by making additional improvements to the area.
- **Interpretive signing for forest management activities.** The County would like to create a better understanding with the public at large regarding its management of county forest lands. The County will do this by explaining why it chooses to conduct forest management activities in the manner that is chosen at various stand harvest/treatment sites. The County will do this primarily with onsite interpretive signing within the park at the trail heads and stand treatment sites.

## Large Ambitions

### Plan

The attached design provides a visual representation of the plan for Three Island Park. The plan will occur in at least two phases.

#### *Phase I Major Improvements*

- Improve the road that serves the park
- Improve the boat launch
- Reconstruct the dam
- Minor picnic area improvements
- Trail upgrades and signing
- Upgrade the south parking lot

#### *Phase II Major Improvements*

- Electricity to the park
- Semi-modern campground with sanitation building and host site
- Day use area shelter with sanitation facilities
- Snowmobile/horse parking lot

Improvements to the park will focus primarily on improving the picnic area by the dam and enhancing trail user experience and safety. A secondary focus will be the reinstatement of overnight camping in the park.

Currently the day use area by the dam is loosely defined, unorganized, and has few amenities. When the dam is reconstructed it will be done in such a manner that a trail crossing suitable for skiers and horseback riders will be part of the design, and “fish-steps” will be included to facilitate walleye spawning movements. The area below the dam also attracts fishermen during the warmer months; improvements will be made that make that area more accessible and sustainable. The dam will serve as an anchor for the picnic area.

The area by the dam will also receive a shelter with modern sanitation facilities large enough for groups up to 100 persons, and capable of being enclosed in the winter to accommodate x-country skiers and snowmobile riders. The area will also have a three season shelter, picnic tables, fire rings, and grills. Improvements to the boat access near the picnic area will also be made. Traffic flow and parking will be organized and a vault toilet installed.





## Upgrades to trails

Upgrades to the current trail system will be made. This will involve the grading and shaping of some problem areas, minor re-routing of some trails, and the replacement of one of the bridges that cross the river. Installation of “You Are Here” signing at all of the trail intersections will be done, and information boards with complete maps of the park will be placed at each of the trailhead parking lots and major day use areas.

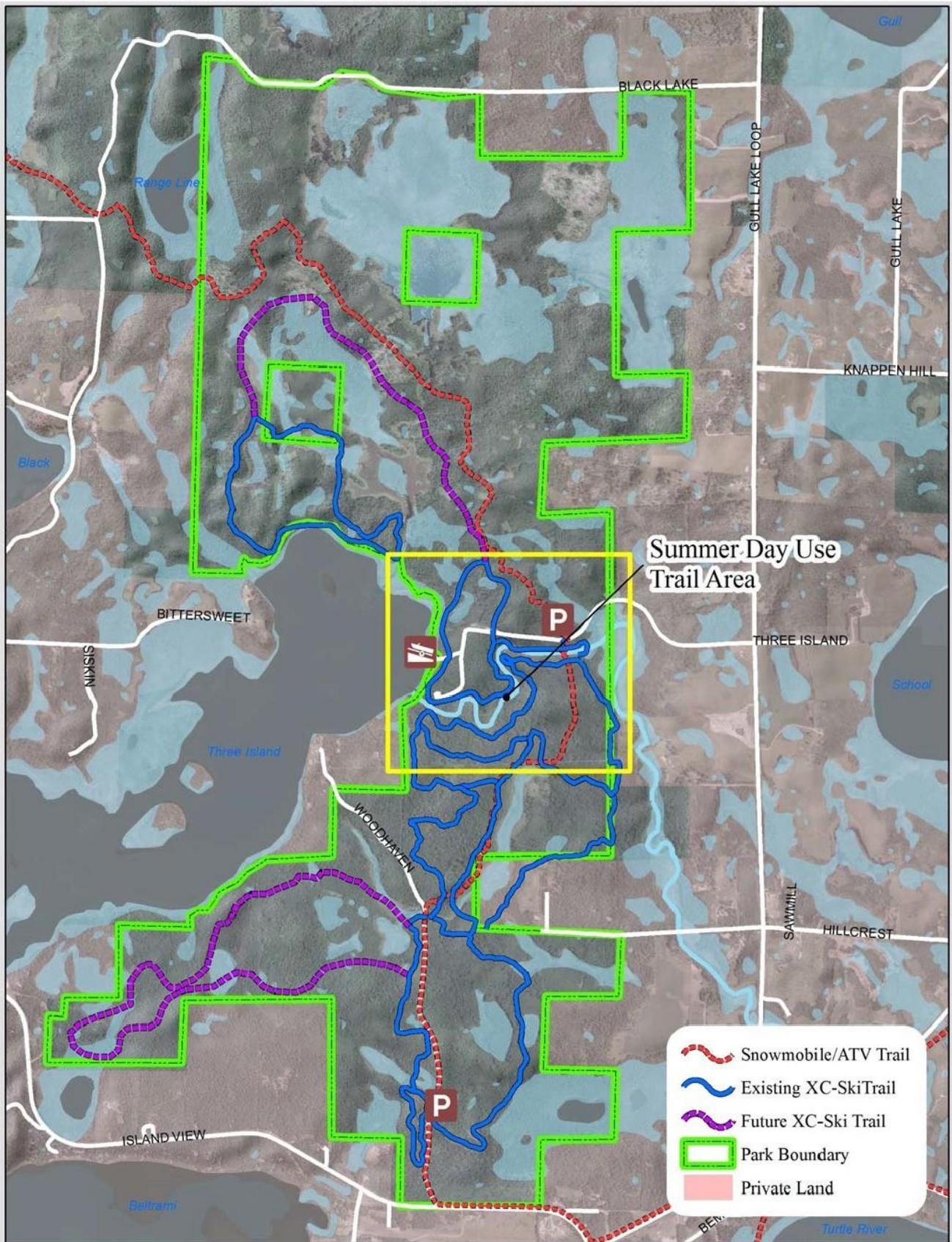
The south parking lot accessed off of C.R. 22 will also be improved. This parking lot is one of the more heavily used parking areas during the winter by x-country skiers. The parking area will receive a vault toilet, picnic table, and fire ring, turning the area into a mini day use area. Better highway signing to its location will also be erected. Currently directions to the site are not well signed and it is difficult to find if you are unfamiliar with the area.

The north parking lot located on the main entrance road will also receive the same treatment as the south lot, but will be reorganized to better serve snowmobile and horseback riders. Horse-specific amenities to be installed will include an unloading ramp and hitching posts.

## Overnight camping

Overnight camping will be reinstated in the park and an eight site semi-modern campground will be constructed. The sites will have electricity and be capable of accommodating RV's. A modern sanitation and shower building will be constructed to serve the campground. The County will place priority on creating a partnership with a private entity to develop and operate the camping area. If the County is unable to develop a feasible partnership they will explore other options that will be presented to the Beltrami County Park Advisory Council.

The map on the next page details the plans for Three Island Park.



# Movil Maze Area Plan

**Important trail use  
area in winter.**

## Background

Movil Maze is located approximately five miles from Bemidji. It contains 1,250 acres and was named for a popular network of ski trails constructed in 1979 for the first Minnesota Finlandia Ski Marathon. Although not a designated park, the Maze is managed as a day use, recreation area by the County.

**Predominant recreation use has been cross country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter months and hunting in the fall. The Maze is underutilized during the summer. It is the intent of the County to continue managing the area for winter trail users, and increase summer use.**

## Assessment

Because of its proximity to Bemidji and existing trail network, Movil Maze has the potential of becoming a high use trail area. The following briefly describes the Maze's attributes and challenges, and ends with a summary of the opportunities for further park enhancement.

### *Attributes*

- **Extensive trail network.** The Maze has 13 miles of trail that are in a compact interconnected system that offers users many different route options.
- **Rolling terrain.** The varied terrain provides the opportunity for a more physically challenging experience.

### *Challenges*

- **Summer time trail maintenance.** The County currently has no system in place for the mowing of trails or debris removal during the summer months.

### *Opportunities*

- ***Create a non-motorized trail network during summer.***  
A sufficient number of trails elsewhere in the County will allow the County to close trails in the Maze to ATV's except during hunting season. This will create an entire trail network free of motorized use for most of the warmer months.
- *Market the area to mountain bikers.* The nature of the trail network with its rolling terrain and multiple loop options makes the area ideal for mountain biking.
- ***Interpretive signing for forest management activities.***  
The County would like to create a better understanding with the public at large regarding its management of county forest lands. The County will do this by explaining why it chooses to conduct forest management activities in the manner that is chosen at various stand harvest/treatment sites. The County will do this primarily with onsite interpretive signing within Movil Maze at the trail head and stand treatment sites.

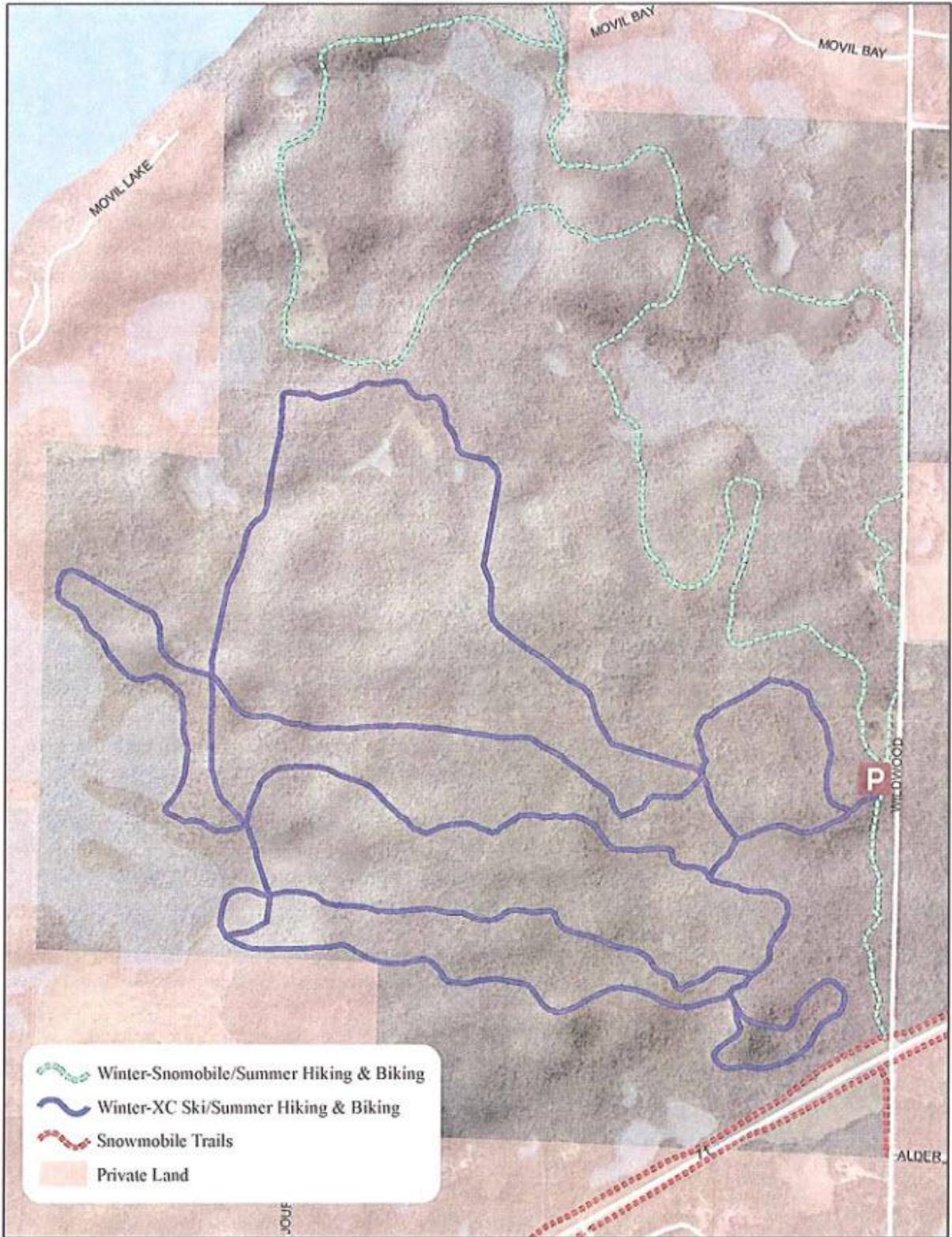
### **Plan**

The design on the following page provides a visual representation of the plan for Movil Maze Recreation Area. Improvements to the park will focus primarily on improvements to the trailhead and trail upgrades.

The County will make minor improvements to the parking area which currently has no amenities, and establish a summer trail maintenance program.

MOVIL MAZE RECREATION SITE





## Section 7

# Implementation

## Capital Improvements

The County has very limited funds for recreation and it will require the leadership of the County Board to select priorities for new facilities and improvements. The table below displays the total amount of money the County will need to implement the improvements outlined in this plan. Improvements are broken into two phases; Phase I is the next five years beginning in 2008, and Phase II is everything after 2012.

	<b>Phase 1 (1<sup>st</sup> Five Years)</b>	<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rognlien Park	\$ 713,400	\$ 139,000	\$ 852,400
Pine Tree Park	16,500	181,375	197,875
ATV/Multi-use Trail Area	202,950	NA	202,950
Shooting Park	1,959,900	490,000	2,449,900
Three Island Park	267,750	788,700	1,056,450
Movil Maze	58,950	21,600	80,550
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,219,450</b>	<b>\$ 1,620,675</b>	<b>\$ 4,840,125</b>

Individual Capital Improvement Plans for each park that give greater detail are provided at the end of this section.

It is suggested that highest priority status might be given to those projects that will serve the highest number of County recreation users or improvements that provide better organization such as trail signing.

Possible strategies that can be used to help obtain financial support for capital improvements include the following:

- Private donations may be obtained for projects especially when recognition is given to the individual or group through awards or plaques that identify the donor.
- The public or a park friend's group can hold special events or fund raisers to raise dollars for a special facility. This is a great opportunity to have local businesses provide local grants or donations.

**Partnerships can provide match for projects.**

- Trying to obtain various grants from State agencies such as the DNR or private foundations like the Neilson or Northwest Minnesota Foundation. It is important to realize that developing these grants are very time consuming and that only a few will prove to be successful. Many historical grant opportunities are now severely limited due to cutbacks by the State legislature and federal government. The internet system can provide very good sources or leads to help locate possible grant opportunities.
- State bonding should be investigated for large projects that may have a significant statewide impact such as the proposed shooting sports park. It will be important for private individuals and shooting sports clubs to take a very strong leadership role in working with local legislators to achieve any bonding goals. Additionally, special legislation may be required when partnering with a State agency for a capital request. This will then be able to become part the Governor’s budget.
- Partnerships can provide 50% match to important projects. These partnerships can be with other governmental agencies, clubs, or private individuals.
- Request a referendum levy for park and trail development or improvement.

**Operations**

The strong leadership of the County has identified the need for a quality recreation program to meet present and future needs. Last year they hired the County’s Parks and Recreation Director and have now completed the overall park and trail plans that identify new goals and facility development. As these new areas are developed, they will require more maintenance and management. **At the present time the County depends on volunteers, STS, and other outside operational assistance. This approach has been successful but in the future this will need to be strengthened to meet the operational demands of an expanding recreational system. Current staffing and traditional operational investments severely limit the ability to manage a larger system.**

The following are ideas on how the County could proceed in the future:

- Staff portions of the site maintenance and management operations between different departments to better

utilize staff and equipment. This may involve the County's Highway, Natural Resource, and Facility Management departments.

- Continue to strengthen volunteers, clubs, and organizations to better coordinate a joint effort in the maintenance and management of the County's recreation system.
- Strengthen the Park Host Program to other sites if feasible.
- Re-evaluate and strengthen the State's Grants-in-Aid Program. Make funds more available to meet needs and issues that exist that may need legislative change. An example is the Off Highway Vehicle Damage account.
- Request a referendum levy for the operation and management of trails and parks. This could include consideration for creating a park and recreation district.
- Where feasible, develop inter-agency operation agreements and efforts.
- Support legislative efforts to commit 1% of 3/8% sale tax to help State natural resources and operation. The County should take a leadership role to represent rural County parks and increase Beltrami County's funding opportunities.
- Charge a recreational user fee.

<b>Rognlien Park Capital Improvement Plan</b>					
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>	
Entrance Road	2 miles/\$100,000	\$200,000		\$200,000	DNR Park Rd. Account 100%
Restricted Access Gate		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	
Boat Access		\$100,000	\$25,000	\$75,000	DNR Water Access Program 75 %
Fishing Pier		\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	DNR Water Access Program 100%
Group Picnic Area Parking & Road		\$20,000	\$5,000	\$15,000	DNR Water Access Program 75 %
Beach Parking Lot		\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0	
Host Site Improvements (Paving & Landscaping)		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
Modern Sanitation Building		\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000	DNR Recreation Grant
Information Boards					
Level 2 Board	2 @ \$1,500	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	
Level 1 Board	1 @ 2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0	
		\$5,500	\$5,500	\$0	
Trail Upgrade		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	
Historic Marker		\$3,500	\$1,750	\$1,750	MHS Grant or local donations
Highway/Entrance Signing		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
Garbage Recepticles	4 @ \$500	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
Picnic Tables	12 @ \$350	\$4,200	\$4,200	\$0	
Fire Rings	12 @ 200	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$0	
Picnic Upright Grills	4 @ \$200	\$800	\$800	\$0	
<b>Phase I Total</b>		<b>\$713,400</b>	<b>\$91,650</b>	<b>\$621,750</b>	
<b>Future Phases</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>	
Vault Toilets	2 @ \$9,500	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$0	
Picnic Shelters					
34x16 Main Picnic Area		\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	DNR Recreation Grant and Volunteer and Local Donations
16x16 Group Picnic Area		\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000	
		\$42,000	\$0	\$42,000	
Play Structure		\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000	DNR Recreation Grant or Local Donations
Beach and Shoreline Improvement		\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000	DNR Eco. Grant
Garbage Recepticles	4 @ \$500	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	
Picnic Tables	8 @ \$350	\$2,800	\$2,800	\$0	
Fire Rings	2 @ 200	\$400	\$400	\$0	
Picnic Upright Grills	2 @ \$200	\$400	\$400	\$0	
Benches	4 @ \$600	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$0	
<b>Future Phases Total</b>		<b>\$139,000</b>	<b>\$27,000</b>	<b>\$112,000</b>	
<b>Total of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$852,400</b>	<b>\$118,650</b>	<b>\$733,750</b>	

<b>Pine Tree Park Capital Improvement Plan</b>				
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's/City's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>
<b>Entrance</b>				
Signing from Main Highway		\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
New Entrance Sign		\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
Pull Over Registration Station		<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
		\$6,500	\$6,500	\$0
<b>Host Site Improvements</b>				
		<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>
<b>Phase I Total</b>		<b>\$16,500</b>	<b>\$16,500</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Phase II</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's/City's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>
<b>Group Area for North Camp Ground</b>				
Group Grills	2 @ \$600	\$1,200	\$0	\$1,200
Large Fire Ring		\$450	\$0	\$450
Amphitheater		\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
34'x16' Picnic Shelter (Litchfield)		\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Picnic Tables	6 @ \$525	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000
Parking		<u>\$3,150</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$3,150</u>
		\$46,800	\$0	\$46,800
<b>Cart-in Campsites</b>				
Parking		\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Informaiton Kiosk/Cart Storage		\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Carts		\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
Campsite Prep Work		\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
Picnic Tables	5 @ \$525	\$2,625	\$0	\$2,625
Fire Rings	2 @ \$600	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
Water Fountian		<u>\$1,500</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$1,500</u>
		\$13,125	\$0	\$13,125
<b>Dock and Staircase</b>				
Kiosk		\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Staircase System		\$12,000	\$0	\$12,000
Docks		\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
Deck/Beach Improvement		<u>\$8,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$8,000</u>
		\$32,000	\$0	\$32,000
<b>South Picnic &amp; Group Area</b>				
34'x16' Picnic Shelter (Litchfield)		\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000
Picnic Tables	10 @ \$525	\$5,250	\$0	\$5,250
Group Grills	2 @ \$600	\$1,200	\$0	\$1,200
Play Structure (Playcraft System)		\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000
Parking and Road		<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>
		\$74,450	\$0	\$74,450
<b>General Rehab</b>				
Benches	5 @ \$600	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
Fire Ring Replacement	10 @ \$200	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
Signing & Interpretation		\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Roads		<u>\$5,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$5,000</u>
		\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
<b>Phase II Total</b>		<b><u>\$181,375</u></b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>	<b><u>\$181,375</u></b>
<b>Total Cost of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$187,875</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$181,375</b>

<b>Three Island Park Capital Improvement Plan</b>				
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>
Entrance Road		\$120,000	\$40,000	\$80,000 DNR Grant
Highway/Entrance Signing		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
Boat Launch		\$8,000	\$8,000	\$0
Renovation of the Dam		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000 DNR
Shelter/Warming Building		\$0	\$0	\$0 Local Trail Groups
Trail Upgrade		\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000 Local Trail Groups
Trail Signing "You are Here"		\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000 Local Trail Groups
Interpretive Signing		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Information Boards				
Level 1 Board	3 @ \$1,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0
Level 3 Board	1 @ \$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0
		\$11,500	\$11,500	\$0
Vault Toilets	2 @ \$9,500	\$19,000	\$19,000	\$0
Garbage Recepticles	3 @ \$500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
Picnic Tables	5 @ \$350	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$0
Fire Rings	4 @ 200	\$800	\$800	\$0
Picnic Upright Grills	1 @ \$200	\$200	\$200	\$0
<b>Phase I Total</b>		<b>\$267,750</b>	<b>\$142,750</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>
<b>Future Phases</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>
Host Site		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
Semi Modern Campground (8 sites)		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Modern Sanitation Building for the Campground		\$250,000		\$250,000 DNR Grant and/or Bonding
Electric to Picnic & Campground		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
Well/Water		\$6,000	\$6,000	\$0
Picnic/Winter Shelter & Modern Sanitation Building		\$350,000		\$350,000 DNR Grant and/or Bonding
Snowmobile/ Horse Parking Lot		\$16,000	\$8,000	\$8,000 Local Trail Groups
Level I Information Board		\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0
Vault Toilets	1 @ \$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$0
Garbage Recepticles	4 @ \$500	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0
Picnic Tables	22 @ \$350	\$7,700	\$7,700	\$0
Picnic Upright Grills	2 @ \$200	\$400	\$400	\$0
Fire Rings	12 @ 200	\$2,400	\$2,400	\$0
Benches	2 @ \$600	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$0
Other Signing		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0
General Landscaping		\$7,000	\$7,000	\$0
<b>Future Phases Total</b>		<b>\$788,700</b>	<b>\$180,700</b>	<b>\$608,000</b>
<b>Total of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$1,056,450</b>	<b>\$323,450</b>	<b>\$733,000</b>

<b>Shooting Park Capital Improvement Plan</b>					
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>	
Site Design		\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	
<b>Trap and Skeet</b>					
Club House		\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000	Local Club
Fields		\$120,000	\$0	\$120,000	Local Club
Landscaping		\$35,000	\$0	\$35,000	Local Club
Additional Equipment/Misc		\$30,000	\$0	\$30,000	Local Club
Clearing, Grubing, and Grading		\$400,000	\$0	\$400,000	Local Club
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$810,000</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$785,000</b>	
<b>Rifle and Pistol</b>					
Club House		\$200,000	\$0	\$200,000	Local Club
Sound Abatement		\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000	Local Club
Target Stands/ Misc. Equipment		\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000	Local Club
Clearing, Grubing & Grading and Earthwork for Berming*		\$809,900	\$0	\$809,900	Local Club
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$1,149,900</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,149,900</b>	
<b>Phase I Total</b>		<b>\$1,959,900</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	<b>\$1,934,900</b>	
<b>Phase II</b>					
Training Center		\$340,000	\$170,000	\$170,000	Bonding
<b>Phase II Total</b>		<b>\$340,000</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	
<b>Phase III</b>					
Indoor Shooting Range		\$1,150,000	\$0	\$1,150,000	Bonding
<b>Phase III Total</b>		<b>\$1,150,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$1,150,000</b>	
<b>Total of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$3,449,900</b>	<b>\$195,000</b>	<b>\$3,254,900</b>	

\* If off site materials are needed for the berm work the cost will be \$1,696,800

<b>ATV/Multi-use Trail Area Capital Improvement Plan</b>					
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>	
Entrance Road		\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	DNR or Bonding
Parking Lot		\$20,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	DNR or Bonding
Trail Improvements		\$35,000	\$35,000	\$0	
Level 3 Information Board	1 @ \$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0	
Trail Signing -"You are Here"		\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0	
Restricted Access		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$0	
16x16 Group Picnic Shelter		\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0	
Vault Toilets	1 @ \$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$0	
Garbage Recepticles	2 @ \$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	
Picnic Tables	3 @ \$350	\$1,050	\$1,050	\$0	
Fire Rings	1 @ 200	\$200	\$200	\$0	
Picnic Upright Grills	1 @ \$200	\$200	\$200	\$0	
<b>Total of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$202,950</b>	<b>\$167,950</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	

<b>Movil Maze Recreation Area Capital Improvement Plan</b>					
<b>Phase I</b>	<b>Unit/Cost</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>County's Expected Share</b>	<b>Other Funding Sources</b>	
Parking Lot		\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	Local Trail Groups
Level 3 Information Board	1 @ \$4,000	\$4,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	Local Trail Groups
Trail Signing -"You are Here" & Interpretive		\$16,200	\$8,100	\$8,100	Local Trail Groups
Interpretive Signing		\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	
Trail Improvements		\$7,500	\$3,750	\$3,750	Local Trail Groups
Vault Toilets	1 @ \$9,500	\$9,500	\$9,500	\$0	
Picnic Tables	1 @ \$350	\$1,050	\$350	\$0	
Fire Rings	1 @ 200	\$200	\$200	\$0	
Garbage Recepticles	1 @ \$500	\$500	\$500	\$0	
<b>Phase I Total</b>		<b>\$58,950</b>	<b>\$39,400</b>	<b>\$18,850</b>	
<b>Phase II</b>					
Trail Improvements		\$7,500	\$3,750	\$3,750	
16x16 Group Picnic Shelter		\$12,000	\$12,000	\$0	
Garbage Recepticles	1 @ \$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	
Picnic Tables	2 @ \$350	\$700	\$700	\$0	
Fire Rings	1 @ 200	\$200	\$200	\$0	
Picnic Upright Grills	1 @ \$200	\$200	\$200	\$0	
<b>Phase II Total</b>		<b>\$21,600</b>	<b>\$17,850</b>	<b>\$3,750</b>	
<b>Total of All Improvements</b>		<b>\$80,550</b>	<b>\$57,250</b>	<b>\$22,600</b>	

## **Forest Management within Beltrami County Parks and Recreation Areas**

With the adoption of this document, recreation will become the main priority to be addressed in managing these recreational land units, at times using timber harvesting as a tool. Harvesting stands of over-mature trees and replanting a more diverse array of trees is a very pressing need on these land units. Without forest management, serious disturbances such as blow down events, requiring major volunteer effort to clear trails are imminent. With harvesting, forest management can be a planned event and revenue will be generated to continue improving the recreational opportunities in these areas. Inevitably cutover areas will be seen as unsightly to some but this is a stage of regenerating a forest to achieve more desirable longer term aesthetics. Significant efforts will be made to maintain the scenic nature along trails as the transition from over-mature single species to younger, more diverse forests are achieved over several years.

### **The Situation**

Timber harvesting activities in Three Island Park and Beltrami County recreation areas have been contentious with the perception held by many that park and recreation units have been treated similarly to most other county forest lands in terms of forest management practices and respect for trails which are heavily used by recreationists. In addition to significant expenditure by the county to describe the ecological communities and to plan for their management, there are many hours invested in these areas by volunteers who maintain the trails by brushing and grooming.

A plan for forest management in Three Island Park and other County recreational units was adopted by the County Board on January 8, 2008 as a part of the Beltrami County Recreational Facilities Plan. In it are clearly stated priorities that are quite similar to those proposed in this document and these have been in practice for the past several years. However, the public's perception has often been unfavorable. The vision and mission are a source of tension as some individuals think that the resource management practices employed in the park and recreation units are inappropriate to achieve the goals put forth in the forest management plan. On the other hand, county NRM staff is acting in accord with the vision and practices as they understand them. They differ from the interpretations of some people and groups outside NRM as to how to achieve them. For the past few years, operators harvesting in the parks have, in fact, been following instructions that are intended to intentionally achieve ecological community outcomes and will continue to do so.

Specifically, there are significant issues that involve the following areas: road and trail buffers, management priorities, diversity of tree species and age structure, stand treatment methods, funding forest diversity, public involvement and cooperative efforts, and public education efforts.

These issues are addressed individually below. The overarching solution will involve a change of paradigm by which the county parks and recreation units are managed. These changes involve

re-thinking the fundamental approach to management in these areas. This shift may solve many problems while continuing to generate revenue for parks by employing local timber harvesters. Such harvesting may initially be more intensive than later after more goals have been achieved.

## **Solutions**

These are recreation areas with forests as the dominant vegetation, rather than timber areas in which there are recreational trails. With that prioritization in mind, the following addresses the specific points listed above with solutions that have been discussed with the concerned parties.

- 1) **Road and Trail Buffers:** To preserve or create visual and vegetative buffers along recreational trails, buffers will be proposed in every forest management prescription. Visual quality may be the most important aspect guiding forest management activities and will be treated as “most sensitive” in the visual sensitivity category. The default proposal is that within a minimum 50’ corridor along either side of the roads and trails, most understory vegetation, wind firm longer lived trees and younger trees will remain. In areas within the corridor where trees are predominantly mature, they will be thinned back to no less than 30 ft<sup>2</sup>/acre of basal area or approximately 1/3 of the original standing volume. Guidelines set forth in the manual “Sustaining Minnesota Forest Resources, Voluntary Site-Level Forest Management Guidelines” will be followed. Trails will be treated similar to riparian features using many of the riparian recommendations as trees are harvested.
- 2) **Management Priorities:** Similarity of stand prescriptions between park lands and other county lands will be removed by changing from the priority of economic revenue to ecological community management. The fundamental consideration is one in which habitat management or development for recreation is the emphasis and timber harvest is the tool to accomplish that objective.
- 3) **Diversity of Tree Species and Age Structure:** Management prescriptions will be written specifically for ecological community-based forest management. These prescriptions will result in retaining longer lived species where ecologically appropriate and may also require more of the short lived species (such as Aspen, Balsam fir, and Birch) to be selectively left standing.

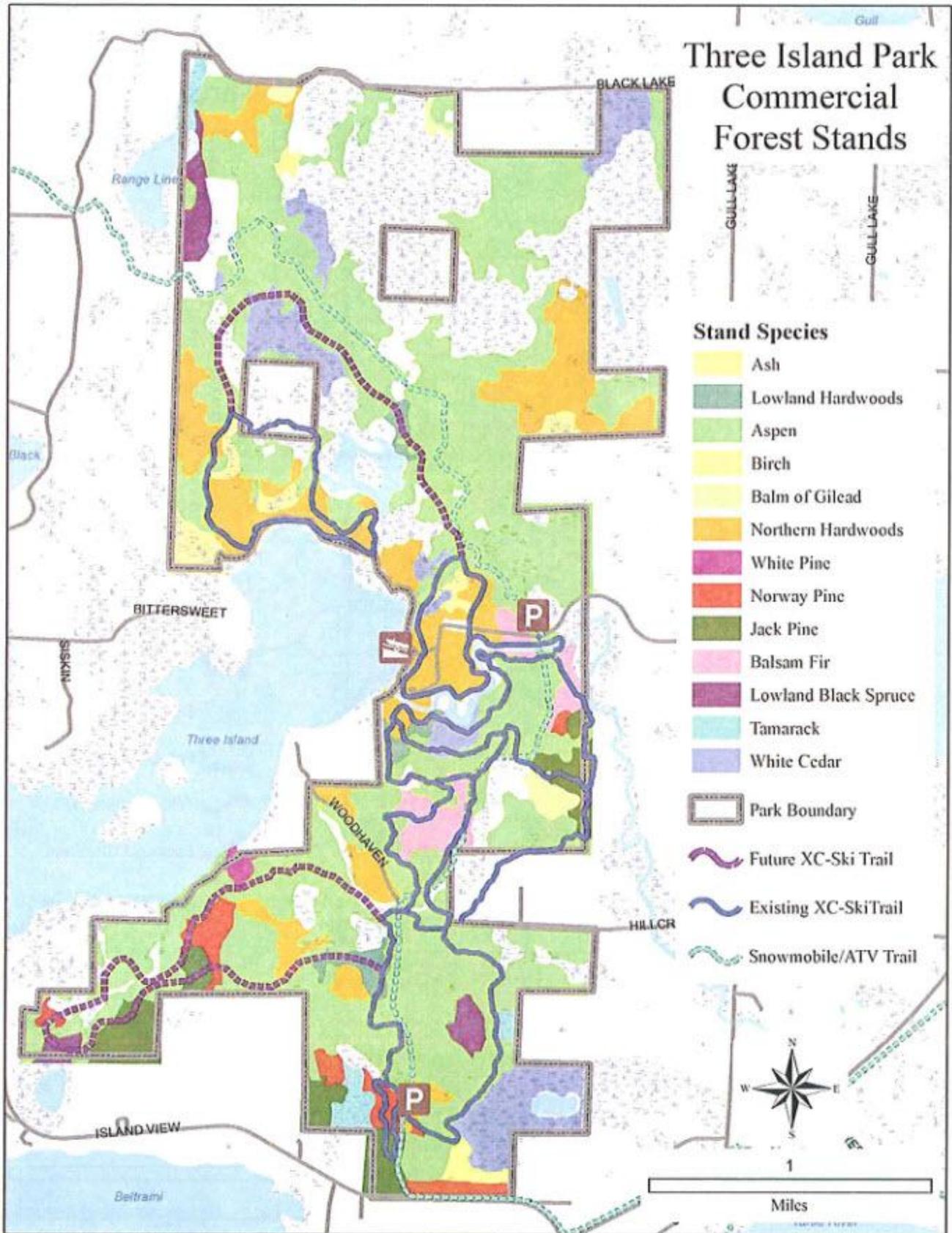
**Stand Treatment Methods:** Mechanisms under which forest management contracts are let within the park lands will be modified so that services are requested on the basis of landscape management outcomes. Harvest unit location, size, and shape, along with pre-determined landing locations will be key components in achieving visual quality goals. Operators who wish to do this work will be required to post a performance bond to assure that their work meets expected standards. Maps produced by NRM will show recommended locations of landings, haul roads, buffers, and skid trails where they directly impact a recreational trail. If necessary, these locations will be marked on the ground as well. Timber harvesting will be designed with smaller harvest areas than those that are typical of other county lands and the shapes of the harvest areas

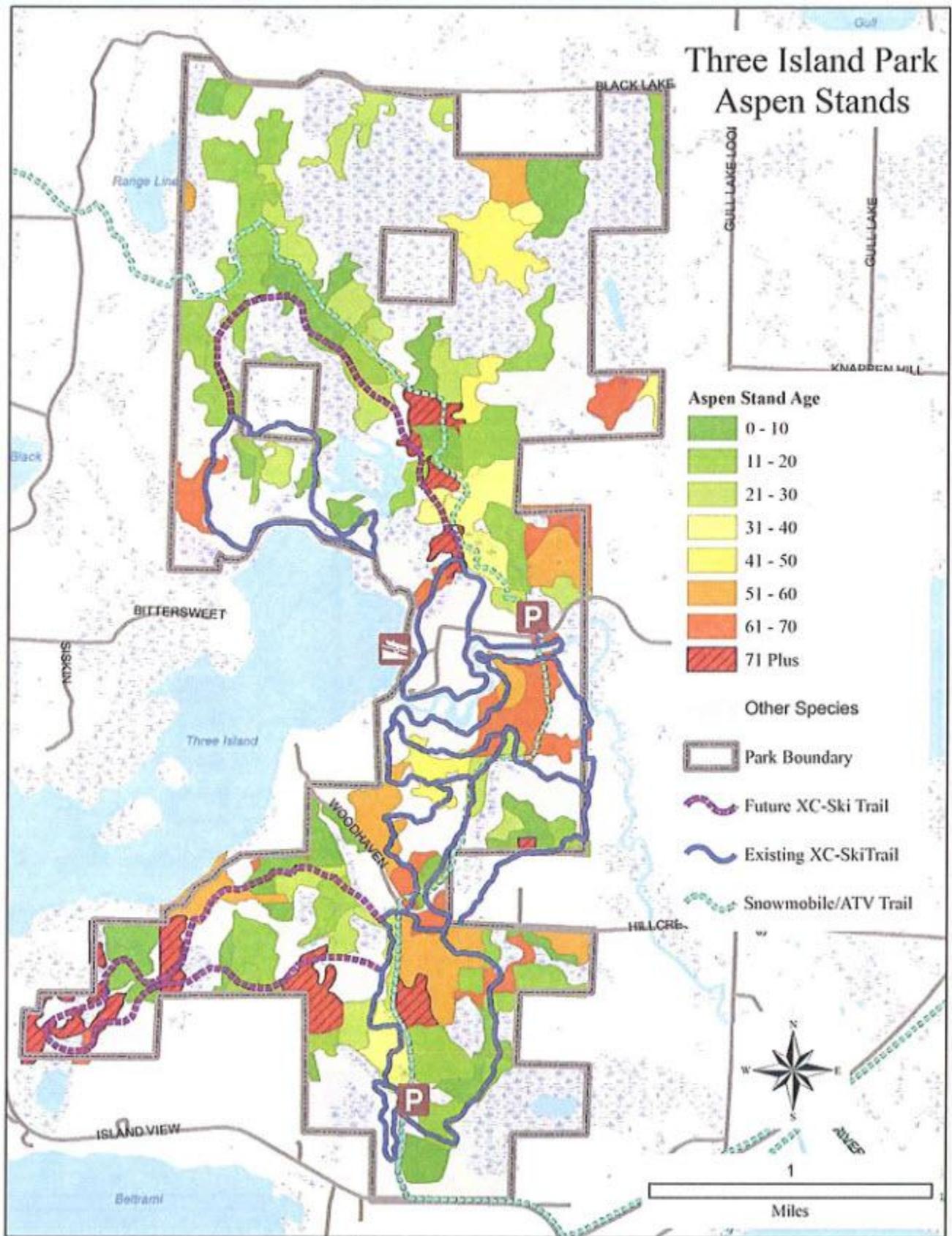
will be designed to decrease their visibility. Contracts with loggers will be used to achieve ecological community-based recreation goals.

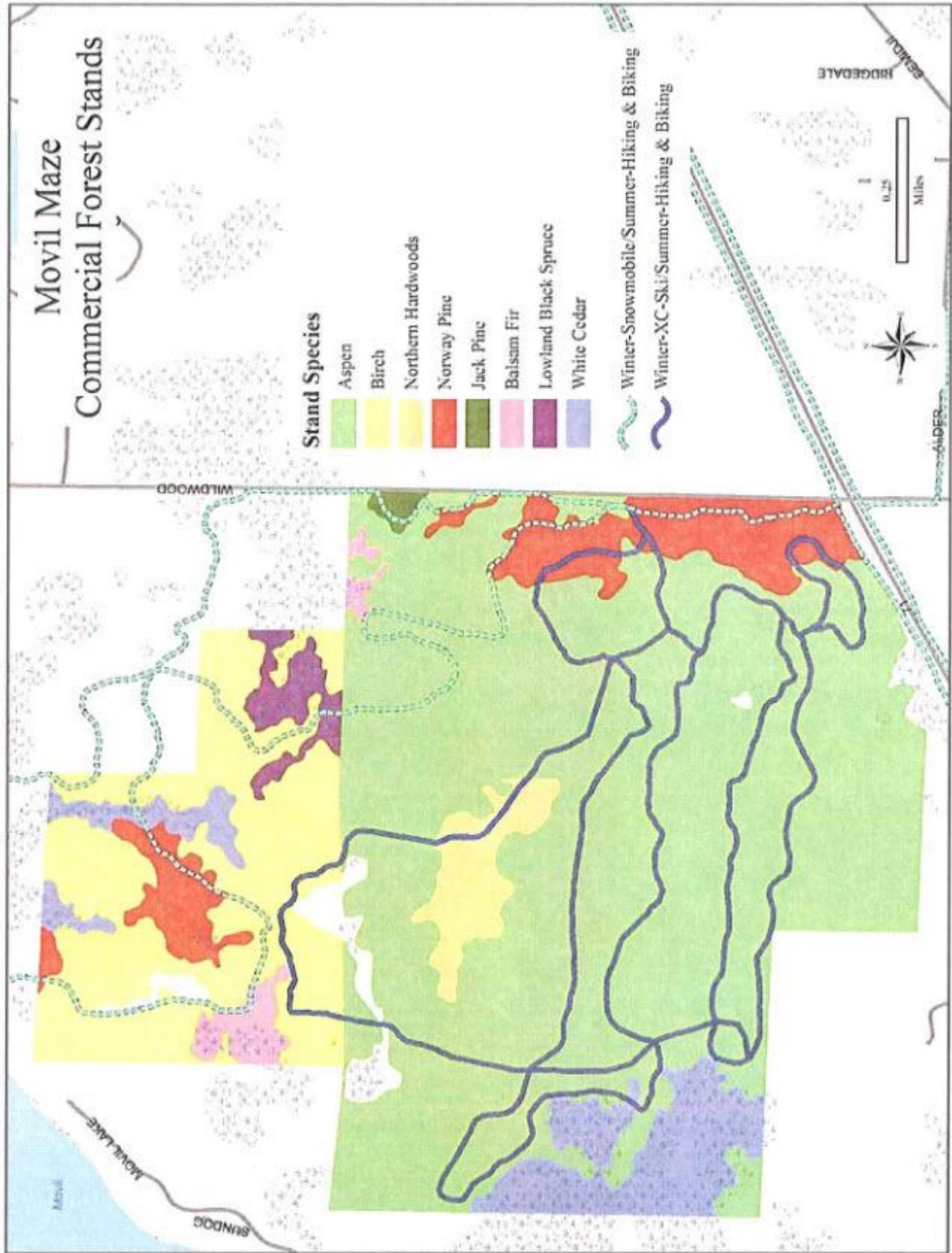
- 4) ***Funding Forest Diversity:*** The County will invest 15% of projected park timber sale revenues in re-forestation efforts (site preparation, seedlings, planting, protection, release) toward the end of promoting tree species diversity in the park and recreation areas. Tree seedlings recommended in reforestation project plans will be native species that are compatible with site conditions. Over the life of a reforestation effort, significant dollars will be spent for each mile of trail. It is acknowledged that intensive tree planting and maintenance along trail corridors will be expensive in these recreation areas.
- 5) ***Public Involvement and Cooperative Efforts:*** The process by which forest management activities are proposed and contracted will involve interested groups. NRM will make an annual public presentation to the PTAC and interested groups to review projects for the upcoming year. The NRM Department and PTAC will receive comments from those groups which may be used to modify plans. The PTAC may request a tour to see the proposed projects on the ground.
- 6) ***Public Education Efforts:*** The County is managing a resource where the decisions made today dictate what the forest will look like 40, 80, or 100+ years from now. What makes a trail a favorite of an individual may be the result of 40 years of forest management activities. The County will place appropriate interpretive signs at trailheads and along trails within the parks to explain forest management activities.
- 7) The County will also try to coordinate this effort with local schools and their environmental educational programs. The interpretive sites in Movil Maze and Three Island Park will serve as outdoor classrooms demonstrating how different forest management techniques help preserve, protect, and improve the health of the forest while providing for multiple recreational opportunities

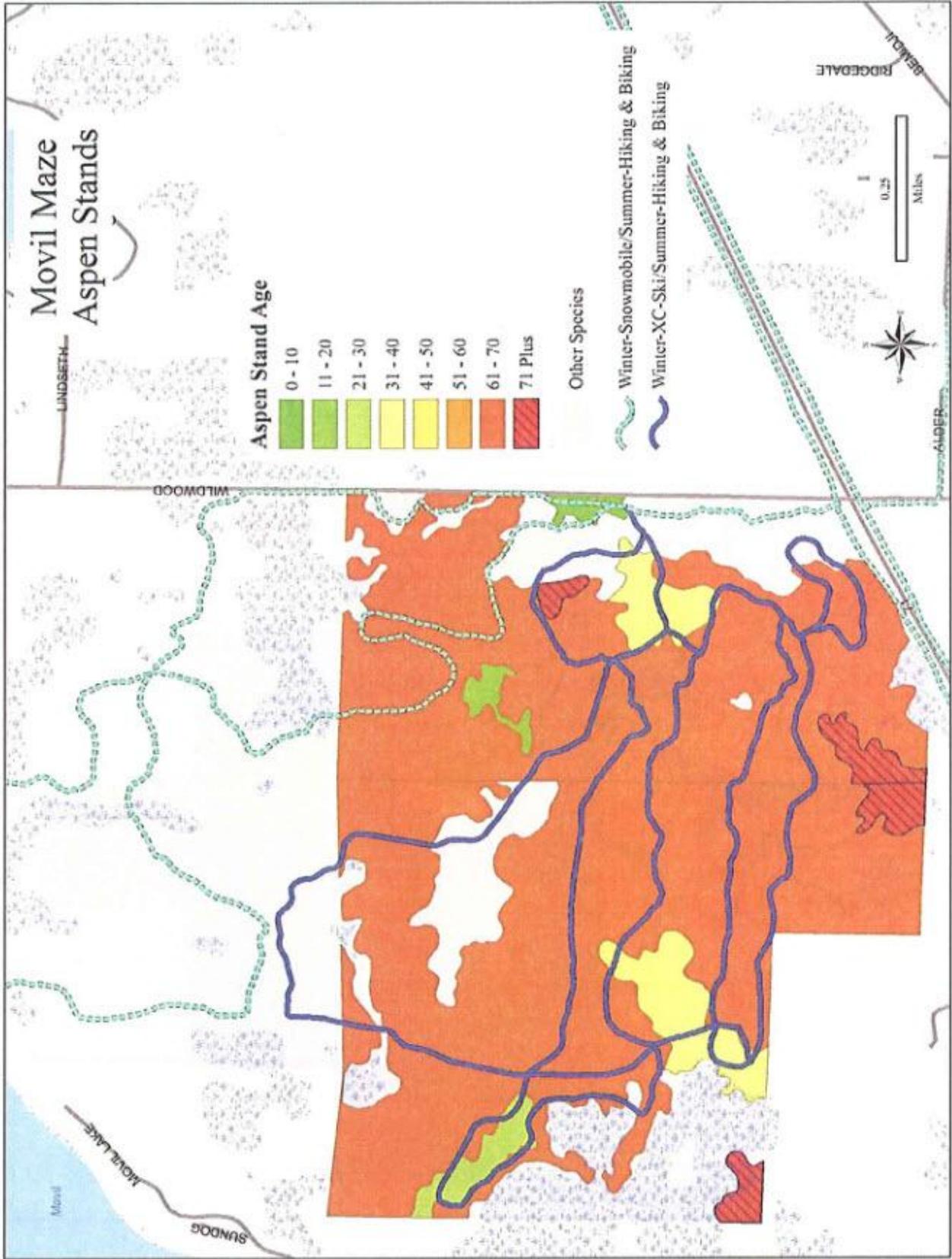
## **Conclusion**

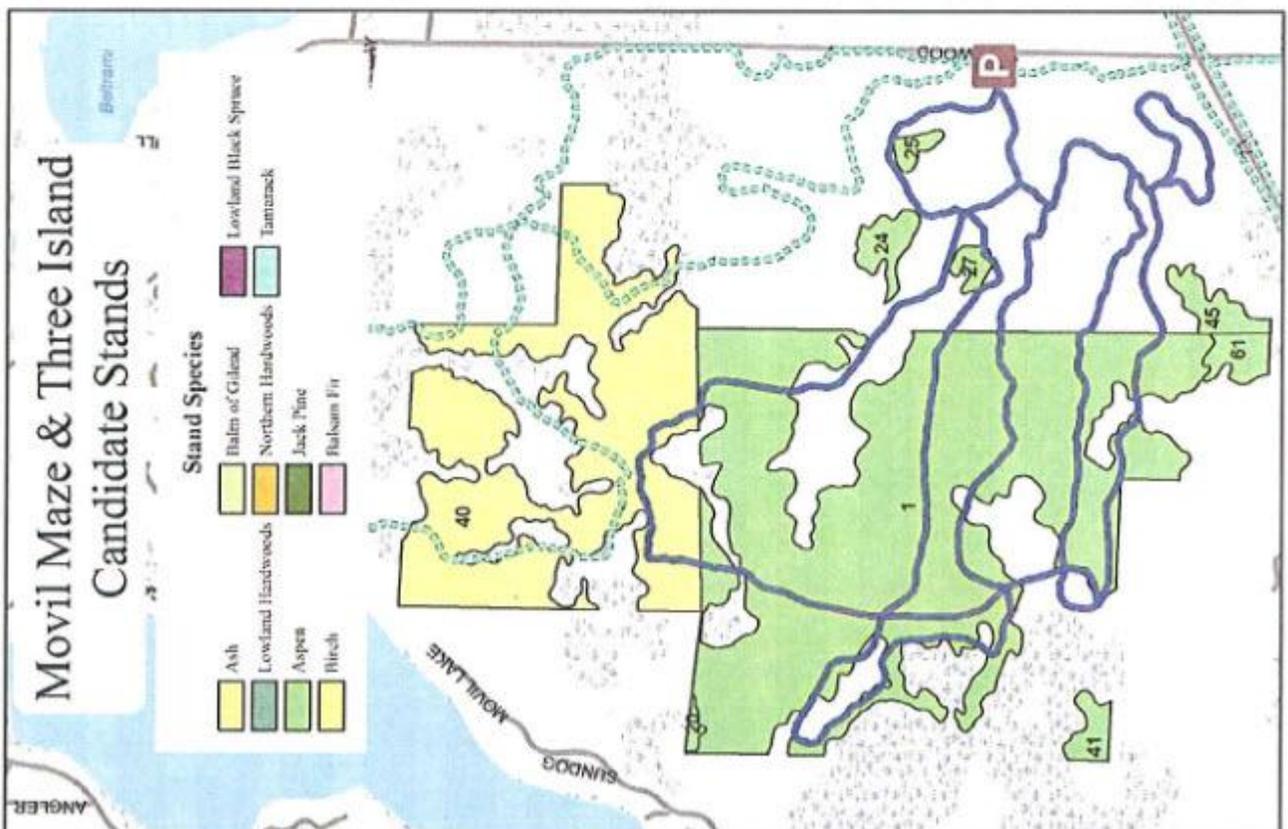
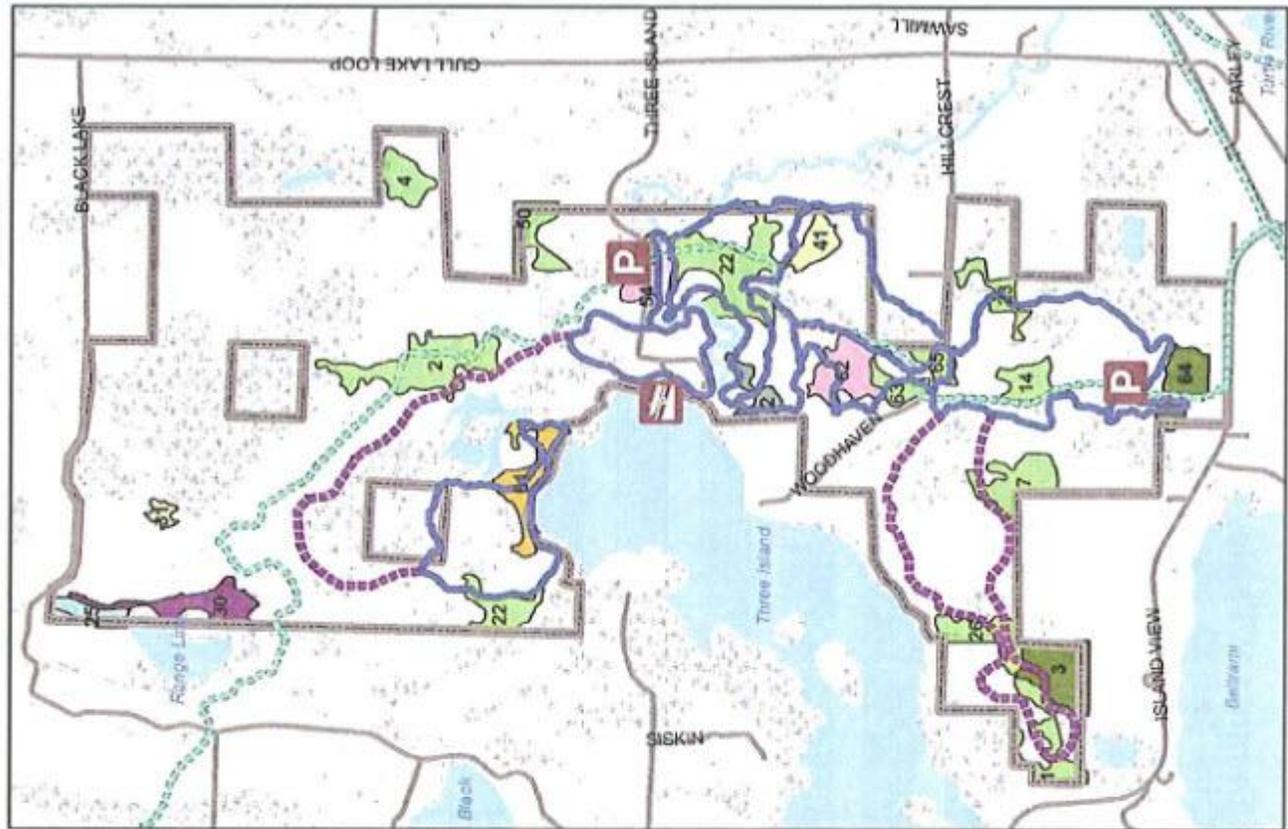
We are fortunate, in our county, to have forest resources that can meet numerous needs from timber harvest to hunting, and from recreational trail use to maintaining a very diverse habitat for native species. Within the Movil Maze and Three Island Park, the latter two uses predominate. As such, these areas need to be managed differently from other county owned forestlands. We will be guided by prescriptions utilizing the latest ecological community survey data and silvicultural interpretations. We will use timber harvesting, among other tools, to expedite progress toward a range of successional stages. Included are those stages characterized by more mature, longer lived trees, ecologically appropriate to the site, than are retained on most other county forest lands. Public involvement in management decisions will be overtly encouraged and the stamp of interest groups will be intentionally sought in operations that are carried out in this progression of ecological change to the extent that natural events allow it.











# 10 Year Desired Harvest Summary Table

Treatment-Acres	Rotation Age	Decade Total	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Ctype 1 Ash	Normal	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ERF	125	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ctype 9 LH	Normal	100	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	ERF	125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 12 Aspen	Normal	45	512	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
	ERF	60	64	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Ctype 13 Birch	Normal	50	70	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	ERF	65	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ctype 14 Balm of Gilead	Normal	40	15	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	ERF	60	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 20 Northern Hardwood	Normal	95	18	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	ERF	120	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 30 Oak	Normal	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ERF	125	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 51 White Pine	Normal	130	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ERF	200	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 52 Red Pine	Normal	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ERF	170	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 53 Jack Pine	Normal	50	104	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	ERF	65	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 61 White Spruce	Normal	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	ERF	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 62 Balsam Fir	Normal	45	55	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	ERF	60	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ctype 71 Black Spruce, Lowland	Normal	95	30	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	ERF	130	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ctype 72 Tamarack	Normal	80	16	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	ERF	105	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Desired Harvest Goals			916	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92	92

Management Guidelines for Forest Legacy Areas  
Within Three Island County Park (TIP) and Movil Maze (MM) Recreation Area

### Documentation and Mapping of Legacy Areas

In order to ensure long term retention of forest legacy areas, it is our expectation that these management criteria and limitations, along with mapped legacy areas will be included in the County's Parks and Recreation management plan. Legacy areas will be permanently designated within the NRM data base.

### Forest Legacy Area Desired Conditions/Purposes

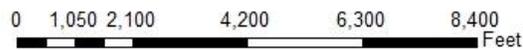
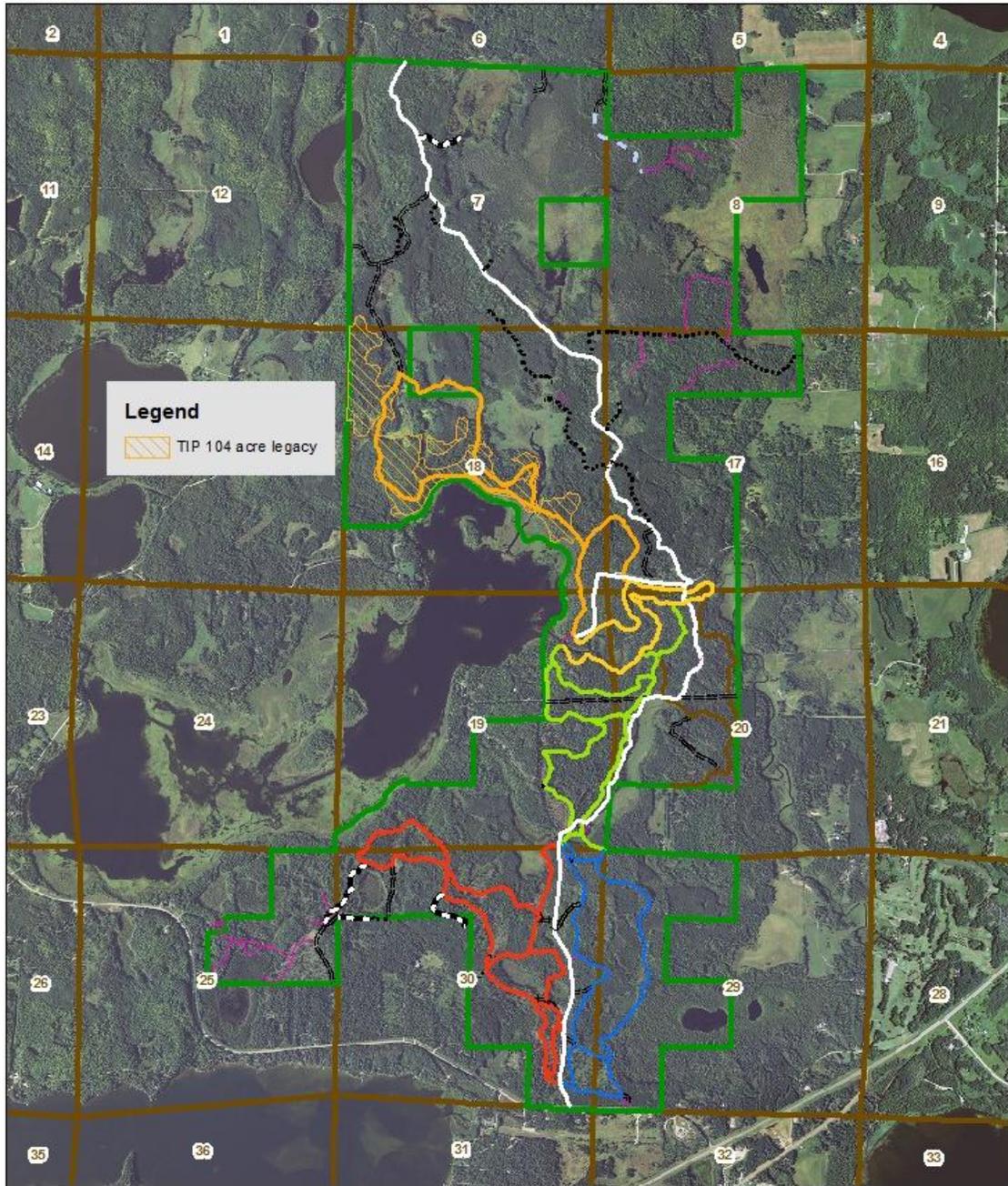
1. Legacy Areas, at the time of initial establishment, generally represent mature to old/old growth forest growth stages for the native plant communities they represent. Centered within the Beltrami County Park and recreation areas, these Legacy stands will provide comparative information and educational opportunities to help the NRM Department make informed decisions regarding the conservation and development of natural resources on other State-in-Trust Conservation lands in the County.
2. Ecological processes prevail with a minimum of human intervention. Land and resource conditions provide for maintenance of relatively undisturbed ecosystems (native plant communities) in the context of areas managed for a variety of recreational or educational activities.
3. Legacies are characterized by vegetation representative of the ecological capability of the area and generally have been less affected by forest management or other human activities than other forest stands within TIP or MM.
4. Despite catastrophic events that may change overstory conditions, legacy areas are maintained in perpetuity. Natural wind events or native insect outbreaks are normal events in the successional history of Minnesota forests.
5. Legacy stands serve as ecological reference areas. Therefore, baseline inventories of plants, animals, or cultural resources should be completed.

### Management Limitations within Legacy Areas

- a) **No timber harvest or timber stand improvement activities may occur within Legacy Areas.** Forest management activities adjacent to designated Legacy areas will be planned to minimize any potential for direct or indirect effects which would be adverse to the conditions and purposes noted above.
- b) The **use of herbicides for site preparation or tree release is not allowed.**

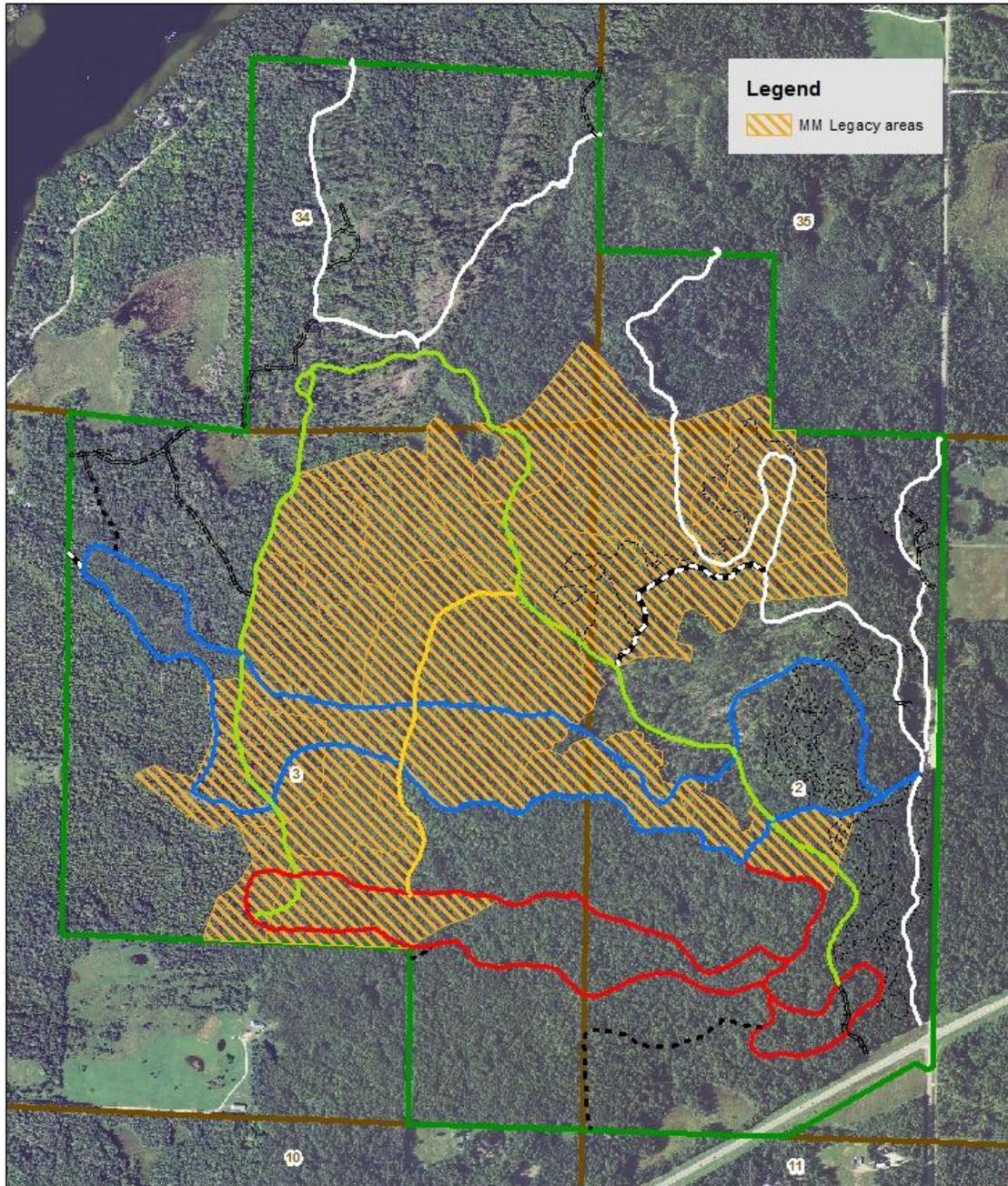
- c) Habitat improvement projects are not normally undertaken within Legacy Areas, but can be used where specifically needed to restore natural ecosystem conditions. Projects such as under-planting white pine or controlling buckthorn or other non-native plant invasive species would be appropriate. Creating wildlife openings or creating snags by tree girdling would be inappropriate.
- d) Occurrence of natural wind events or native insect outbreaks will not prompt management intervention within legacy areas. Treatment of a non-native insect outbreak should be consistent with regional control efforts on similar land bases such as state parks or federal research natural areas.
- e) Recreational uses that threaten or interfere with the desired conditions/purposes of the Legacy Areas are not allowed.
- f) New roads or trails are not permitted, except through an alternative practice review process where County NRM, a recreation user group and/or other interested members of the public determine that a new trail segment and the rehabilitation of the old trail segment would result in a net benefit to environmental conditions in legacy areas. Non-motorized recreational trail uses, which do not clear any trees, are not specifically prohibited, provided the purpose and conditions of the Legacy areas are not adversely affected.
- g) Wildfire suppression is under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota DNR – Division of Forestry. Providing for public and firefighter safety, the Incident Commander would select MIST (Minimal Impact Suppression Tactics) as a preferred option. If heavy equipment is utilized, rehabilitation of the suppression lines would be completed.
- h) Maintenance of recreational trails within Legacy Areas will be to a level that maintains the established use without altering the integrity of the forest canopy of the legacy. Cutting deadfall or windblown trees, maintaining the tread of the trail, and maintaining trail signing are appropriate activities.
- i) Buildings, structures and other improvements are generally not permitted.

### Three Island Legacy Map 104 acres



*PTAC Legacy subcommittee recommendation  
Approved by Beltrami Board of County Commissioners  
October 15, 2013  
Beltrami County Recreational Facilities Plan*

### Movil Maze Legacy Map 293 acres



*PTAC Legacy subcommittee recommendation  
Approved by Beltrami Board of County Commissioners  
October 15, 2013  
Beltrami County Recreational Facilities Plan*