



Spring Lake Regional Trail Master Plan

Scott County Parks & Trails



The mission for Scott County parks and trails is to enhance the health and spirit of our residents and guests by creating a sustainable system that connects people to the natural world.



Scott County is a regional park implementing agency of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. Funding for Scott County's regional parks and trails master planning has been provided through a grant received under the Minnesota Clean Water, Land, & Legacy Amendment, in which 14.25% of the funds generated from the 3/8% increase in the state sales tax will provide funding for regional and state parks and trails.

September 13, 2011

Acknowledgements

This master plan was completed as part of a comprehensive effort to prepare five master plans (three parks and two trails) within a thoughtful and broad analysis of system-wide recreational needs. Special thanks to the Citizen Design Team members for guiding the development of this master plan to meet the needs of current and future Scott County residents.

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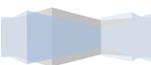
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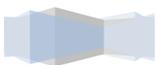
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Background

Introduction

Scott County's Parks and Trails system is a burgeoning part of the Twin Cities Metropolitan Regional Park System. Rapid population growth in the last two decades has resulted in an increased demand for park and trail development. In 2004, Scott County took a more active role as a regional park implementing agency and now owns two future regional parks (Spring Lake and Doyle-Kennefick), and in 2009 began limited park operations at a third site, Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. In 2011, Scott County established a new partnership with Three Rivers Park District to gain efficiencies in the operation and maintenance of all regional park and trail facilities in the county, including Cleary Lake and Murphy-Hanrehan which are owned by Three Rivers. Scott County also has one partially developed regional trail that will ultimately connect Cleary Lake Regional Park with Prior Lake, Shakopee, and the Minnesota River. Roughly 130 miles of regional trail corridors are proposed in the County's 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

In 2010, Scott County began a major planning process to complete five master plans (three parks and two trails), with a thoughtful and broad analysis of system-wide recreational needs. A major goal for this planning process was to implement a creative, open, and welcoming public process that incorporates county and regional considerations along with site specific opportunities and local needs/expectations. The overall approach stressed the following:

- Use of practical, creative, and responsive public input techniques that fully engage stakeholders and allow County officials and consultants to openly hear and respond to feedback; and a fully welcoming process that respects and utilizes recent in-depth public input through the Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update.
- Identification of trail corridors and lands to provide natural resource based recreation and alternative transportation opportunities for the next 100 years, buffering of natural and cultural resources, and a regional park agency that is a good neighbor.

This document is intended to satisfy master planning requirements for the Spring Lake Regional Trail. This search area has been recognized for regional connections in the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan and the Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor is envisioned as a "destination trail" connecting Spring Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake to Lagoon Park in Jordan (a future hub of regional trails), the Minnesota Valley State Trail, and a future Carver County regional park along the Minnesota River Bluffs (see Figure 1 for corridor map). Through Spring Lake Regional Park, a connection will also be made to the Scott West Regional Trail. Along the way, this 13.5-mile corridor is proposed to journey along a number of natural landscapes and unique features, including lakes and wetlands, drainageways, forests, prairies, and the Minnesota River bluffs. This is expected to be a long-term corridor with trail segment development happening incrementally as the cities of Jordan and Prior Lake continue to develop outward and land uses change.



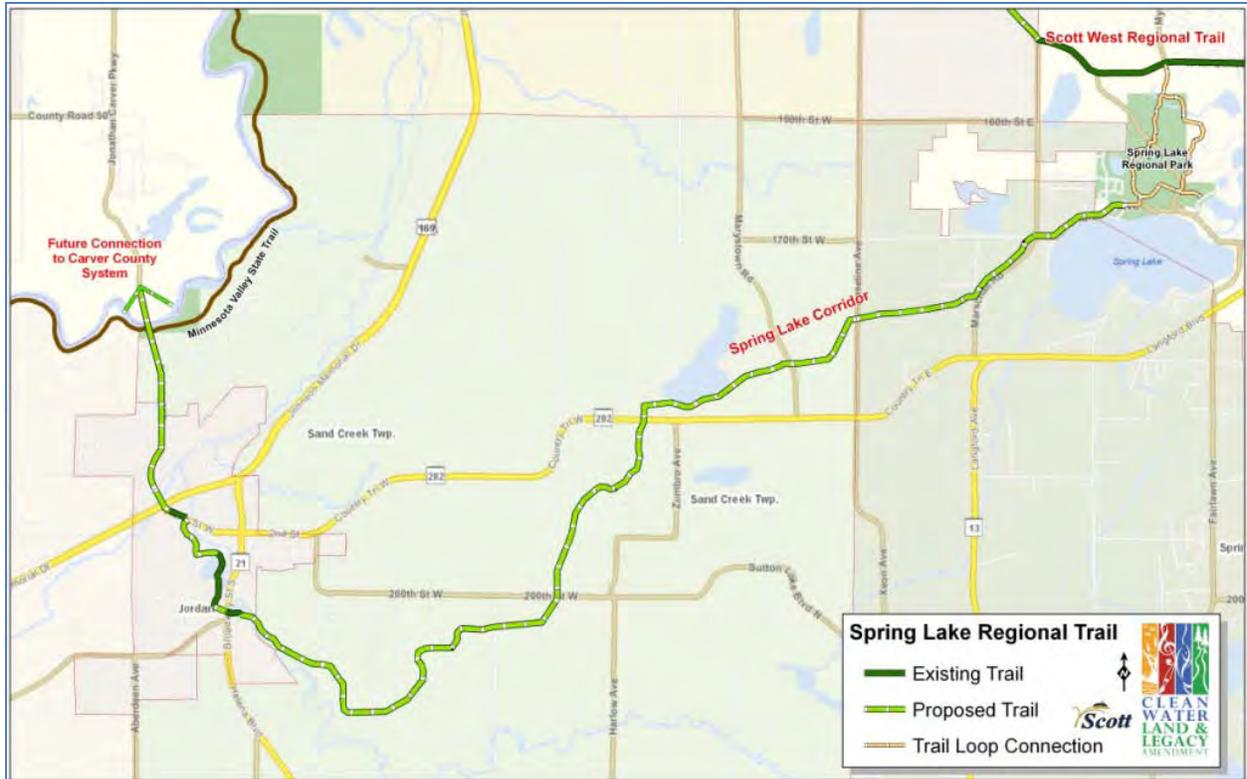


Figure 1: Planned Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor

Planning Framework

The mission for Scott County parks and trails is to enhance the health and spirit of our residents and guests by creating a sustainable system that connects people to the natural world.

The overall master planning process was influenced and shaped by a number of inputs including regional and local plans and policies, demographic data, community and outdoor recreation surveys, landscape and facility analysis, and extensive public participation. The master planning process and individual master plans were prepared consistent with the goals and policies of the Scott County 2030 Parks and Trails Plan (Chapter VII of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update) and the policies and framework of the Metropolitan Council’s 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan. The Scott County 2030 Parks and Trails Plan continued the primary objectives established in the 2004 Interim Parks, Trails, and Open Space Plan, and identified new outcomes that help further define the County’s system. In addition to updated goals and policies, the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan generally serves the following functions:

- provides the County and its residents and guests with an inventory of existing regional recreational opportunities, the natural resource base and distribution, and anticipated needs and costs for future generations;
- guides County priorities for a system of parks and trails within the county including location, development, and connectivity;

- serves as a resource in reviewing plans, land use applications, environmental review documents, and other matters referred to the County to encourage their compatibility with the overall parks and trails system; and
- proposes strategies to be successful at meeting the mission.

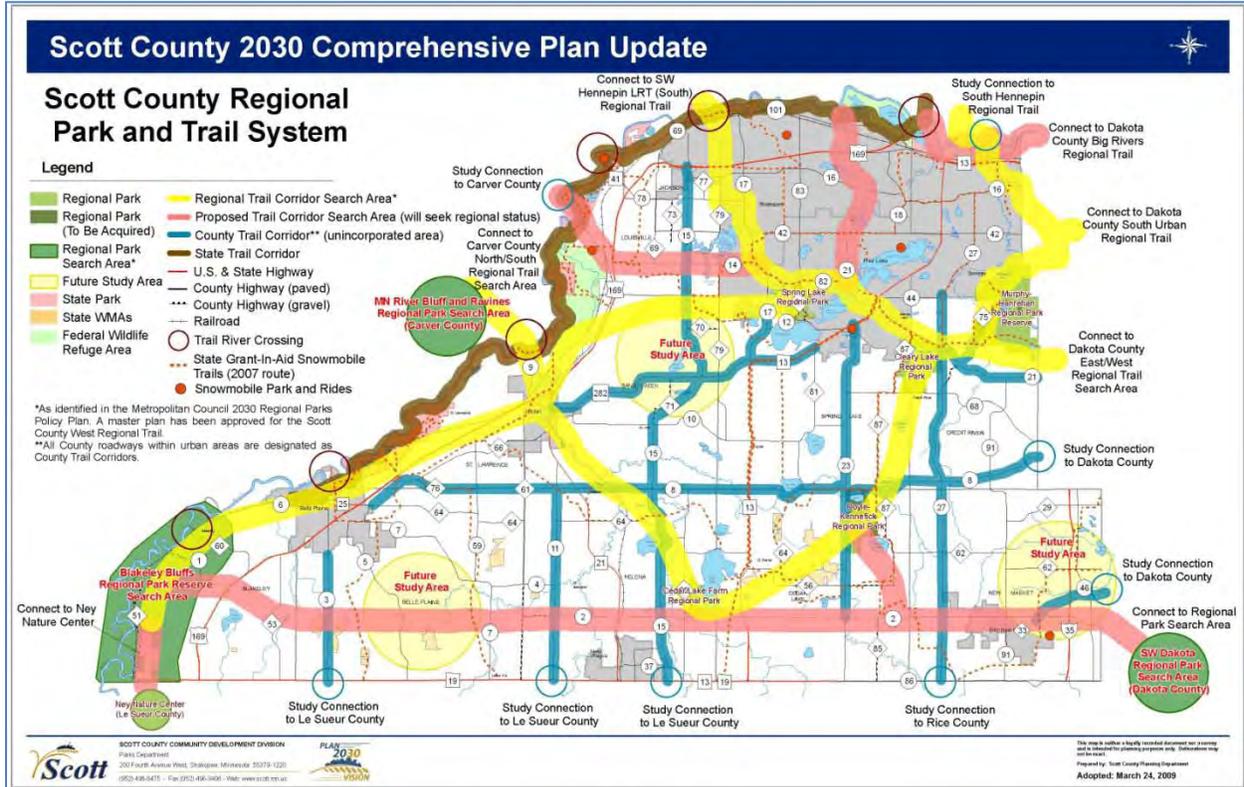


Figure 2: Scott County Park and Trail System

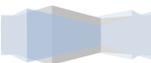
The 2030 Parks and Trails Plan identifies existing and future regional parks and trails (see following list of units) and their connections to each other and to regional facilities across county borders. Master plans must be prepared for each park or trail unit before any regional funding can be used for acquisition or development purposes. Each master plan must also be consistent with the regional system and the goals and policies in the 2030 Parks and Trails Plan.

Existing Regional Parks

- Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park (interim operations underway since 2009)
- Cleary Lake Regional Park (Three Rivers Park District)
- Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve (Three Rivers Park District)

Future Regional Parks/Search Areas

- Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve Search Area
- Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park (undeveloped)
- Spring Lake Regional Park (undeveloped)



Existing Regional Trails

- Scott County West Regional Trail (partially developed)

Future Regional Trails/Search Areas

- Big Rivers Regional Trail Connection Search Area
- Blakeley Bluffs Regional Trail Extension Search Area
- Elko New Market-Blakeley Regional Trail Corridor Search Area
- Louisville/Union Pacific Rail Line Trail Corridor Search Area
- Prior Lake Outlet Trail Corridor Search Area
- Southern Scott County Regional Trail Corridor Search Area
- Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor Search Area

In 2010-2011, master planning for Spring Lake Regional Trail, Scott County West Regional Trail, Doyle-Kennefick and Cedar Lake Farm Regional Parks, and Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve was initiated under an integrated planning process and within the framework described above. Since Scott County's regional park and trail system is in its early years of planning and development, there was an opportunity to make more effective decisions based on system-level needs. This approach allowed the County to fully consider how best to apply these system needs to individual units based on each unique landscape. The end result will be a network of regional parks and trails with complementing facilities and activities that fit naturally within the high-quality Scott County landscape.

Existing Plans & Policies

The following policy documents and previous master plans helped shape the outcomes of this planning study:

Policy Documents

- 2030 Regional Parks Policy Plan (Metropolitan Council, 2005, updated in 2010)
- Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update – Chapter VII, 2030 Parks and Trails Plan (2009)
- Scott County Rural Residential Detailed Area Plan (DAP) – Rural Trail Analysis (2009)
- Scott County Rural Regional Trail Development & Design Guidelines (2009)

Previous Master Plans

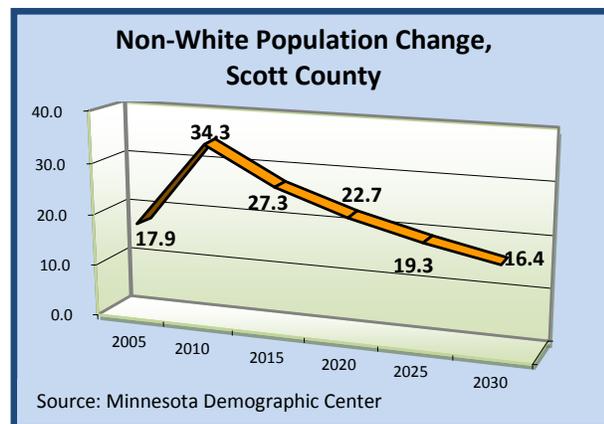
- Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District Master Plan for a System of Parks – Scott County West Regional Trail & Cleary Lake Regional Park (1998)
- Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan (2003)
- Spring Lake Regional Park Development Master Plan (2006)
- Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Acquisition Master Plan (2007)
- Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve Master Plan (Three Rivers Park District, 2007)
- Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Scott County & Carver County, 2011)

Demographics

Demographic information is an important consideration in the planning of regional park and trail facilities to guide both decisions for today and the future. In 2010, Scott County's population approached 130,000 residents. This is an increase of about 40,000 residents (45 percent) since 2000. The growth in Scott County resulted from the completion of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge in the late 1990s, providing an efficient transportation connection south of the Minnesota River to the rest of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The latest population forecasts produced by the Metropolitan Council anticipate 220,000 residents in Scott County by 2030, an increase of nearly 90,000 more individuals over the next twenty years. Most of the growth is expected in the urbanizing areas, with a projected 85 percent of the population residing in the cities and 15 percent in the townships. While these forecasts were developed before the recent economic recession occurred, the overall trend of population expansion is expected to continue in Scott County over several decades.

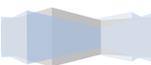
Scott County's 65+ population is forecasted to grow from six percent to fourteen percent by 2030. This age group increase follows statewide trends. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the state will have 1.5 million baby boomers over the age of 65 by the year 2030, meaning one out of four Minnesotans will be over the age of 65.

While the percentage of 65+ residents will continue to increase, Scott County still has a relatively young population. In 2008, Scott County's median age of 32.7 years was the youngest of all metropolitan counties and well below the state median (37.1). Scott County also has the highest average household size (2.86) in the metro due to a number of young families moving to the county because of affordable housing choices and quality school districts. The anticipated population growth will also result in an increase in the toddler (0-4), school-age children (5-19), and adult (20-64) age groups, albeit at a slower pace than the 65+ group.



While diversity percentages in Scott County are lower than the rest of the metropolitan area, the county is expected to encounter many changes to its non-white population based on the Minnesota State Demographic Center forecast from 2000 to 2030. The non-white population is expected to increase 243.5 percent. The county has begun experiencing significant increases in Asian, Eastern European and Hispanic populations over the past decade.

According to 2007-2009 American Community Survey data, of the county's population age 25 and older, 94 percent attained a high school level education. Approximately 35 percent of this same age group in the county had attained a college level education. The number of college level graduates is slightly below the metropolitan area's average, but the percentage within Scott County has grown significantly since the US Census 2000 estimate of 23.1 percent.



As a whole, the high education rates reflect higher income levels. According to the 2006-2008 American Communities Survey, the county’s median household income was \$81,393 in 2008. For comparison, the median household income was \$71,920 for the Twin Cities metropolitan area and \$57,795 for the state. Scott County residents maintained the highest median income of all the metropolitan counties over the past decade. However, the county’s median household income is unevenly distributed with the eastern communities generally having households with higher incomes than those in the western part of the county.

Recreation and Open Space Survey Findings

Scott County Resident Findings

Past Scott County resident surveys have shown residents value parks and trails for recreational opportunities, but they also recognize the value parks and trails provides for open space preservation and environmental, wildlife, and habitat protection. Residents have been generally satisfied with existing recreational services the County provides, however residents are mixed on how to pay for additional services as the system expands.

When you hear the word “greenway corridor,” what do you envision?

- 4% Hiking and walking trails
- 11% A linear system of open space trails
- 8% Rivers, streams, wetlands
- 6% Wildlife trails and habitat areas
- 66% All of the above
- 5% None of the above

Source: Responses from 235 participants at Scott County 2030 Visioning Workshops, 2006

To collect more up-to-date information from residents on their future expectations for the Scott County Parks and Trails system, Scott County hosted four workshops in August 2010 as part of this master planning process. Roughly 150 people participated in the four workshops. The Citizens League, an independent public policy consulting firm, facilitated the events through small group discussions focused on a set of questions. The questions and corresponding answers were used to stimulate more robust conversations between participants about their values and priorities for parks and trails.

Trails should be built alongside development, rather than being developed separately.

-Group discussion response, Trails Policy Workshop, 2010

Several major themes emerged throughout conversations with the participants. Most of these themes fit within the issue areas that questions were posed: quality, funding, priorities and timeline. For example, a question was asked about where to focus funding (i.e., park development, land acquisition, or regional trail development). The funding focus varied by location, with the response consistent to the local need. Participants near Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park noted development of parkland should be the focus. Likewise, participants in the northern part of the county emphasized a focus on trail development where there is a larger population to support the use of trails.

When discussions focused on regional trails, themes emerged regarding development phasing, public safety, and maintenance. Residents acknowledged the challenges and added costs of developing trails in a built environment, and the benefit of planning ahead to avoid future obstacles and resident “headaches.” Through trail planning, participants noted it should be made clear where the trails are going to go, even if they’re not developed, so that it doesn’t become an issue later on when



development actually happens. In addition, participants noted trails must be patrolled to ensure safety for trail users and nearby residents once developed. Also, participants noted that the County should not develop more trails than it can maintain and patrol for safety.

Overall, the responses and dialogue from the workshops do not provide a statistical representation of the Scott County population. Rather, the results were treated more like a focus group, and the general themes and conversations were incorporated into the design of park and trail concepts for Blakeley Bluffs, Cedar Lake Farm, Doyle-Kennefick regional parks and the Scott West and Spring Lake regional trails search areas.

Metro Area Survey Findings

Metropolitan Council coordinates annual surveys and user counts at all regional facilities. Figure 3 lists the top activities that attract users to the regional system. The primary uses are trails activities (hiking/biking), water uses, and picnicking. Their popularity is also related to their availability, as these are generally the most common activities provided at regional facilities. 40.9 million visits were made to metro area regional parks and trails in 2010.

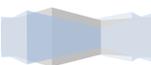


Figure 3:
Top Activities in the Regional Park System, 2010

Activity	Percent of Park Activity Occasion	Percent of Trail Activity Occasion	Percent of Total Visits
Walking/hiking	21%	30%	23%
Biking	10%	45%	18%
Swimming	16%	2%	13%
Picnicking	10%	0%	8%
Relaxing	9%	2%	7%
Jogging/running	5%	10%	6%
Playground use	7%	1%	6%
Dog-walking	5%	7%	5%
Sunbathing	6%	1%	5%
Fishing	6%	1%	5%
Boating	4%	0%	3%
Zoo visits (Como)	4%	0%	3%
In-line skating	2%	4%	2%
Camping	2%	0%	2%

Source: Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System for 2010, Metropolitan Council

State Survey Findings

At the state level, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) continues to survey state park users and get an understanding for current and future needs. Top recreational activities for Minnesota adults (walking/hiking, water activities, picnicking) are similar to those in the regional system. According to the 2008-2012 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), “a majority of residents—57 percent—believe outdoor recreation is a ‘very important’ part of their life and another 25 percent believe it is ‘moderately important.’ Outdoor recreation is at least moderately important to the vast majority of Minnesotans, but they often don’t feel they have enough time to participate as often as they’d like. Expense, effort, outdoor pests and lack of companions all keep people from taking part in outdoor activities.” The planned regional system may help address this concern of limited time availability for Scott County residents. Providing recreational opportunities close to home will increase the availability of outdoor recreation and reduce the amount of travel time required to access these facilities.

Trends in Outdoor Recreation and Community Health

A number of recent studies have shown a decline in nature-based recreation at the state and national level. In Minnesota, declines have been recorded in fishing, hunting, state park visitation, and state bicycle trail use. The 2007 Minnesota State Parks Research Summary Report found participation declines are most prevalent in age groups 45 and younger. The trend in declining outdoor recreation use can have lasting impacts, as this study found the

strongest association with adult park use is the direct experience with parks as a child. Thus, the decline in childhood visitation today may lead to reduced adult visitation decades later.

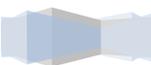
Studies at the national level stress this same concern for declining use in outdoor recreation. The 2009 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report (Outdoor Foundation) found declines in youth participants, women aged 21-25 (who prefer to recreate indoors), and minority groups. Increased technology, less free time, costs, and accessibility all factored in to the reduction of participation. However, the survey also found more Americans participating in outdoor activities in 2008, likely due to the changing economy where many people are choosing to take shorter vacations closer to home and return to a simpler lifestyle. Activities like camping, hiking and mountain-biking saw increases in participation. The study found gateway activities such as fishing, bicycling, running/jogging, camping, and hiking tend to lead to participation in other outdoor activities.

Improving the health of community residents is a major concern as obesity rates and health care costs related to preventable diseases continue to climb. Sixty-five percent of Minnesota adults do not perform the recommended amount of physical activity (30 minutes per day). A more sedentary lifestyle can be attributed to a variety of factors, including people driving more and walking less, work habits and activities limiting the need for physical activity, and a change in community design around the automobile. Research shows a connection between the built environment and health conditions associated with physical activity, such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. The addition of a more connected trail system can help provide safer access for residents to improve their health.

People with access to walking or jogging trails are 55% more likely to be physically active.

Source: Brownson, Ross et al., Environmental Determinants of Physical Activity in the United States. American Journal of Public Health (2001), Vol. 91, No. 12

Other non-recreational trends may also impact the regional trail system. Nationwide, concerns for climate change, energy independence, active living, and sustainability have led many to explore ways of driving less and incorporating healthy activities into their daily lives. The aging society is also having a significant impact on changing needs for recreation. The Baby Boomer generation is currently using the regional park system at rates that are higher than their actual proportion of the metropolitan area population; visitation by people over the age of 60 is expected to increase as this generation ages. Facilities will need to be kept up to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards, and more opportunities for low-impact and educational learning opportunities will need to be provided to meet the needs of this growing user base.



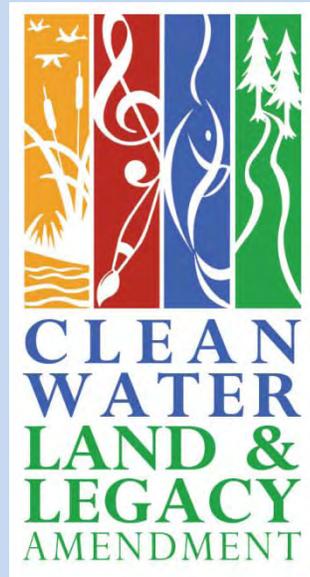
Parks and Trails Legacy Plan

This regional trail master plan is consistent with the strategic directions identified in the recently adopted statewide *Parks and Trails Legacy Plan*. The Minnesota State Legislature mandated that the Department of Natural Resources develop the 25-year, long-range plan to help guide how the Legacy Funds, as well as other traditional sources of funding, should be spent for parks and trails of state and regional significance.

Figure 4:

Minnesota Parks and Trails Legacy Plan – Four Strategic Directions:

- **Connect People and the Outdoors:** better develop Minnesota’s stewards of tomorrow through efforts to increase life-long participation in parks and trails.
- **Acquire Land, Create Opportunities:** create new and expanded park and trail opportunities to satisfy current customers as well as to reach out to new ones.
- **Take Care of What We Have:** provide safe, high-quality park and trail experiences by regular re-investment in park and trail infrastructure, and natural resource management.
- **Coordinate Among Partners:** enhance coordination across the large and complex network of public, private, and non-profit partners that support Minnesota’s parks and trails to ensure seamless, enjoyable park and trail experiences for Minnesotans.



Source: Parks and Trails Legacy Plan, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 2011.

The Spring Lake Regional Trail will “connect people to the outdoors,” providing new opportunities to access high-quality natural resource areas (within regional parks and along the Minnesota River). This master plan also addresses priorities to “acquire land, develop opportunities.” These priorities include “making high-priority trail connections and filling critical gaps,” and “focus on near-home, convenient opportunities near regional centers and areas of shortage.” The trail requires collaboration with local, regional and state partners to implement the trails and provide connections beyond Scott County’s boundary.

Demand Forecast

As of 2010, Scott County’s population is roughly 130,000 residents. This is a 45 percent increase in population since 2000. Population forecasts produced by the Metropolitan Council anticipate nearly 100,000 more individuals by 2030. While these forecasts were developed before the recent economic recession occurred, the overall trend of population expansion is expected to continue in Scott County over several decades.

Studies performed by the Metropolitan Council indicate that 50 percent of regional trail users live within 0.75 miles of the trail, and 75 percent live within 3 miles of the trail. The 0.75-mile area around the trail is considered the core service area, and the 3-mile area around the trail is considered the primary service area. The forecasted service area population breakdown for the subject regional trails is provided in Figure 6.

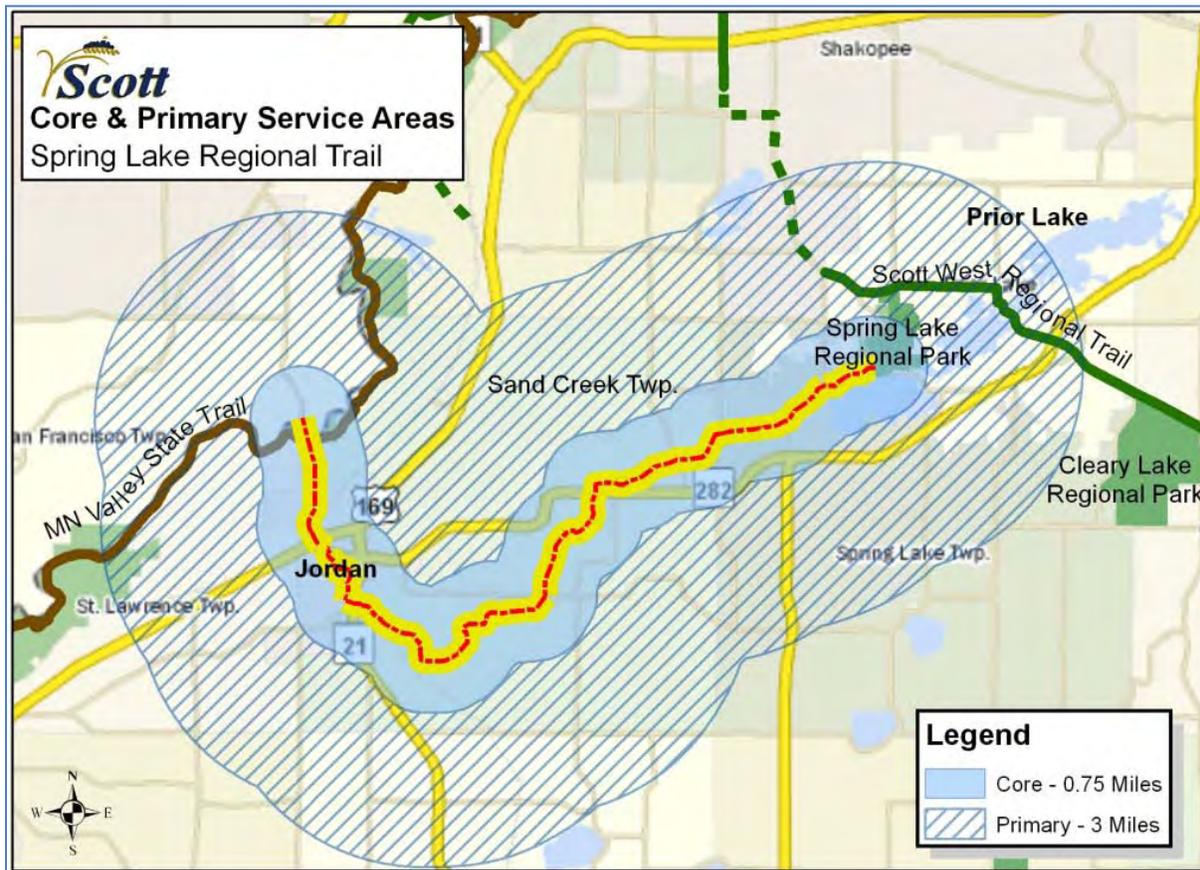
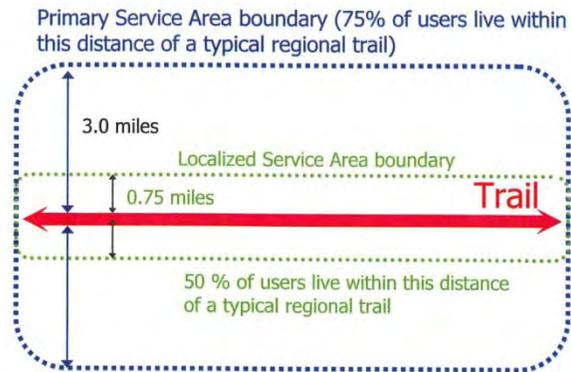


Figure 5: Trail Service Areas

The Spring Lake Regional Trail will connect the cities of Jordan and Prior Lake. Both cities forecast future growth following this proposed corridor. Current population levels within the trail’s service area and lack of dedicated right-of-way do not warrant construction of this trail until more urbanization occurs. Working through the development process to preserve this trail corridor will be integral in establishing a unique and desirable trail route.

Figure 6: Spring Lake Regional Trail Population Estimates & Forecasts, 2000 to 2030				
City/Township	Census 2000	Census 2010	Forecast 2020	Forecast 2030
<i>Core Service Area - communities within 0.75 miles of trail</i>				
Prior Lake	15,917	22,796	33,300	40,000
Jordan	3,833	5,470	9,700	13,500
Spring Lake Twp	3,681	3,631	4,880	5,500
Sand Creek Twp	1,551	1,521	1,850	2,100
St. Lawrence Twp	472	483	800	1,400
Core Service Area Sum	25,454	33,901	50,530	62,500
<i>Primary Service Area - communities within 3 miles of trail (excluding core service area)</i>				
Shakopee	20,568	37,076	48,500	52,000
Louisville Twp	1,359	1,266	1,500	1,700
Belle Plaine Twp	806	878	790	1,300
Helena Twp	1,440	1,648	1,800	2,200
Primary Service Area Sum	24,173	40,868	52,590	57,200
Total Core and Primary Service Areas	49,627	74,769	103,120	119,700
<i>County-wide</i>				
All Scott County	89,498	129,928	182,620	220,870

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census, Met Council Population Forecasts (Regional Development Framework Revised as of December 31, 2009).

Natural Resources

Scott County and its residents value their natural resources, which form the foundation to all life in the county. Sustainable management of the County’s natural resources provides invaluable “ecosystem services,” which include clean water, clean air, food production, and natural areas that benefit wildlife and humans.

Figure 7: Benefits of Healthy Natural Systems

- High quality forests, savannas, prairies, wetlands, lakes, and streams support a variety of life: trees, shrubs, wildflowers, groundcover, fish, birds, and other wildlife.
- Clean lakes, streams, and wetlands support aquatic life and recreational opportunities.
- Undeveloped land will provide essential ecosystem services, such as water infiltration and groundwater recharge, maintenance of lake and stream water levels, and the sustenance of fish and wildlife populations.
- Vegetation will help prevent sediment, phosphorus, nitrogen, and other contaminants from reaching lakes, streams, and wetlands.
- Rainwater infiltrates into the soil, which reduces flooding and feeds groundwater.
- Groundwater is recharged, which feeds cold, clean water to lakes, streams, and wetlands.
- Water levels are more stable, which prevents erosion of shorelines and stream channels.
- Beautiful places exist for people to see and visit.

From a long-term economic perspective, sustainable management of natural resources can save money while conserving natural systems and functions. Scott County recognizes the role that natural resources play in sustainable land planning, management, and providing a quality recreational experience. Maximizing opportunities to integrate the regional trail system with quality natural areas is a priority for Scott County. This approach enables natural resources to be preserved, expanded, enhanced, and connected, while allowing for smart, sustainable, context-sensitive park development and use, improving the quality of life for trail users and county residents.

Regional Context

The Spring Lake Regional Trail is envisioned to meet Metropolitan Council’s definition of a “destination trail,” establishing a linear trail corridor that incorporates and protects medium and high-quality natural resources. The majority of the trail corridor currently consists of rural landscapes (agricultural fields with scattered farmsteads, ditches, wetlands, and woodlots), while the western portion of the trail (north and south of Jordan) is dominated by a combination of suburban development, downtown Jordan, and a commercial/industrial area.



Within the 7-county metropolitan area, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) has conducted assessments of Regionally Significant Ecological Areas (RSEAs) and related Conservation Corridors. In 2007, Scott County completed a conservation planning initiative, which identified Natural Area Corridors throughout the county. These inventories and assessments indicate that the proposed Spring Lake Regional Trail alignment would traverse and/or connect several RSEAs and natural resource



Falls at Sand Creek, Lagoon Park

corridors, including Spring Lake Regional Park, the Geis Lake natural area, the Swamp Lake natural area, the lower Sand Creek corridor, and the Minnesota River Valley bluffs and river bottoms (including the southern terminus of the Minnesota Valley State Corridor Trail). Map 2 illustrates the trail’s regional ecological context with regard to mapped conservation areas.

Current Ecological Conditions

A limited natural resource inventory and assessment was conducted along publically accessible portions of the Spring Lake Regional Trail alignment. The trail is proposed to follow some existing roads, but the majority of the trail is proposed to traverse private land currently in agricultural production. As described above, the proposed trail alignment will intercept many small to large natural areas. Map 3 illustrates existing land cover and related natural resources data along the preferred trail alignment.

Conservation Priorities, Issues and Opportunities

Sensitive trail alignment planning will be critical to balance the trail user’s experience with natural resource protection and conservation. Specifically, the MNDNR’s “Trail Planning, Design & Development Guidelines” provide useful trail planning, design, construction, and management recommendations. Special attention should be given to minimizing adverse impacts to Spring Lake Regional Park’s forests, lake shorelines (e.g., Spring Lake, Geis Lake, and Mill Pond), Sand Creek, other waterways, and the large natural areas along the Minnesota River bluffs and floodplain.

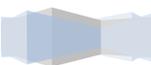
In addition to minimizing adverse impacts to natural resources, trail development offers a unique opportunity for advancing Scott County’s conservation goals. While fee title or easement acquisitions are being pursued for developing the regional trail, consideration should be given to the County’s Natural Area Corridor mapping. Many priority conservation areas and

sensitive natural resources exist along the proposed trail alignment, and protection and conservation of these areas can be incorporated into trail planning and acquisition. This could provide additional County parkland along the trail, as well as further protect the County's Natural Area Corridors. Ecological restoration and management of these natural areas will further benefit the natural resources, improve and sustain the ecosystem services provided by them, and increase people's enjoyment of these areas.



Natural Resource Summary

The Spring Lake Regional Trail is designed to provide a variety of trail experiences, including natural trail segments through a diversity of natural communities as well as more developed/urban segments, primarily through the Jordan area. Since the majority of this trail will be constructed in currently undeveloped areas, it is critical that sensitive trail planning, design, construction, and maintenance be conducted, particularly along aquatic features and other sensitive natural areas. This conservation approach to trail planning and development will provide a unique experience for trail users while minimizing adverse impacts from trail development and use.



recommended for trail users to safely cross County Road 17. Current topography makes an underpass possible near the 17/12 intersection. Further evaluation and analysis will be required to determine the final crossing alignment. Estimated costs for a grade-separated crossing are provided in the trail construction costs.

Once across County Road 17, the trail is envisioned to provide a cross-country experience, connecting to (and providing the opportunity to preserve) natural areas, wetlands, woodlands, drainageways, and lakes. The eastern segment is within the City of Prior Lake’s 2030 annexation area, and the trail corridor will be established with future development opportunities. The regional trail utilizes a planned trail route defined within the City’s 2030 Parks and Trails Plan. Local trail connections will be encouraged to provide future neighborhood access to the regional trail.

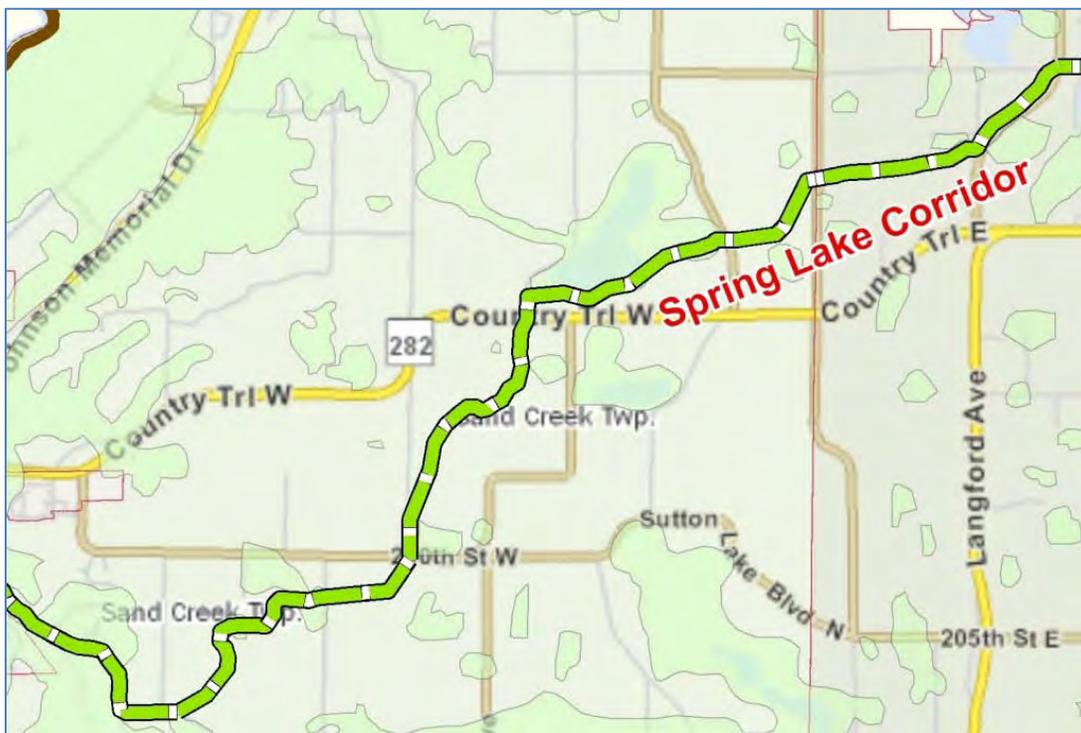
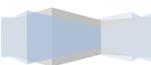


Figure 8: Planned Trail Route – County Road 17 to Sawmill Road

Midway, connections to the Geis Lake area are encouraged. This will provide a great visual experience for trail users and also offers an opportunity to incorporate conservation goals into the corridor. The trail approaches the southeast corner of Jordan and follows Sawmill Road. This route provides the opportunity for a more gradual descent down the bluffs into the city of Jordan. The route also follows Sand Creek, utilizes an existing trail underpass at Trunk Highway 21, and makes a connection into Lagoon Park. This area is guided for future single-family residential in the City of Jordan’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The regional trail is consistent with a planned trail route identified in the City’s recently adopted Parks and Trails Plan.



Lagoon Park to the Minnesota River

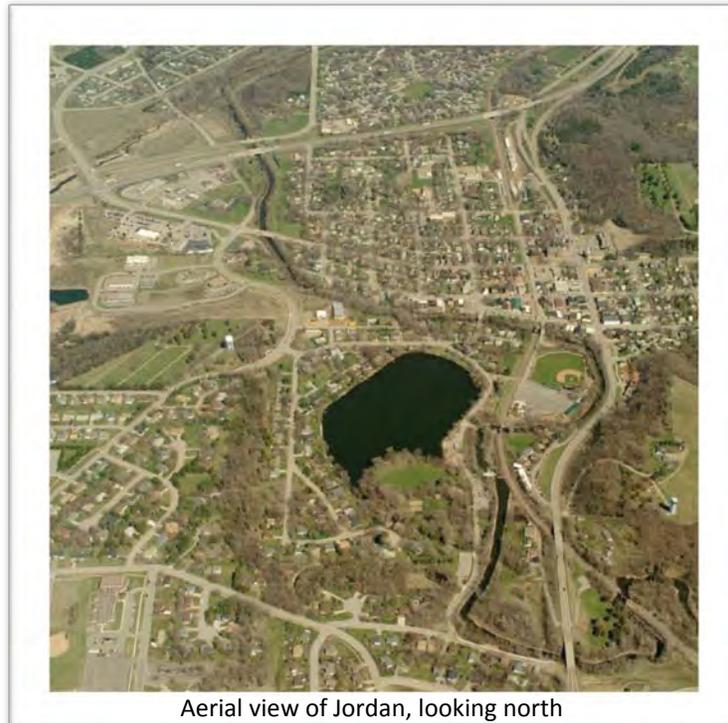
Lagoon Park is in the center of Jordan and offers paved trails, fishing access, playground, and a swimming beach. The park is adjacent to the Mini-Met baseball stadium and the Falls at Sand Creek, with close access to downtown Jordan. Lagoon Park has the opportunity to become a major trailhead hub for the Scott County regional trail system as other trail search areas are further defined.

From Lagoon Park, the trail will follow local roads (possible options include Sunset Drive and Creek Lane) to make a connection to a future pedestrian crossing at US Trunk Highway 169. The City of Jordan prepared a study evaluating alternatives for the grade separated crossing (see Appendix B). Scott County Parks & Trails will coordinate future efforts related to the 169 pedestrian crossing to ensure consistency with this master plan.



Support facilities at Lagoon Park

Once across US Trunk Highway 169, the trail will follow County Road 9 and connect to the existing Minnesota Valley State Trail access at the Scott County border. A future connection to Carver County and its planned regional park and trail system would be made via an existing bicycle/pedestrian crossing on the County Road 9 river bridge.



Aerial view of Jordan, looking north

Establishing the Trail Corridor

A generalized trail route, along with privately owned parcels where land acquisition or trail dedication will be needed to establish the trail corridor, are identified on the Corridor Maps 4A-D. The actual trail alignment and trail corridor will be defined on a parcel-by-parcel basis by working with land owners, developers, and local jurisdictions.

As much as possible, the Spring Lake Regional Trail Corridor should be located within or along Natural Area Corridors and/or other high-quality natural resource features to provide trail users a connection to the natural environment and accommodate environmental stewardship

Figure 9: Regional Trail Corridor Width Guidelines

Minimum corridor width:*	Twenty (20) feet
Typical corridor width:	One hundred (100) feet
Maximum corridor width:	Based on size of Natural Area Corridor/unique natural feature

*Minimum corridor widths may be appropriate for trail segments that utilize local roadways (on-road or off-road) or are retrofitted into existing developments via private property easements. In these instances, the design and width of the trail corridor shall limit impacts to private property, provide adequate area for appropriate screening techniques, and ensure safe trail use.

Source: Scott County Rural Regional Trail Development & Design Guidelines (2009)

practices. Potential alignment along or through a natural feature will be reviewed for impacts. Placement of trail will occur only if it can be done with minimal impacts and if the trail results in improved stewardship of the site. Within existing urban areas and established neighborhoods, the design and width of the trail corridor shall limit impacts to private property, provide adequate area for

appropriate screening techniques, and ensure safe trail use. Trail alignments and their associated facilities should be sited and designed to be in harmony with surrounding natural and cultural settings and to retain natural appearances and values.

Since the majority of this trail corridor is envisioned to be established through the development process, it is difficult to determine actual corridor widths through this plan. However, existing Scott County Regional Trail Guidelines anticipate an average corridor width of 100 feet. At a minimum, the proposed extension of the trail requires a corridor twenty feet in width. Ideally, the corridor width will be sufficient to provide natural screening for both trail users and adjacent homeowners.



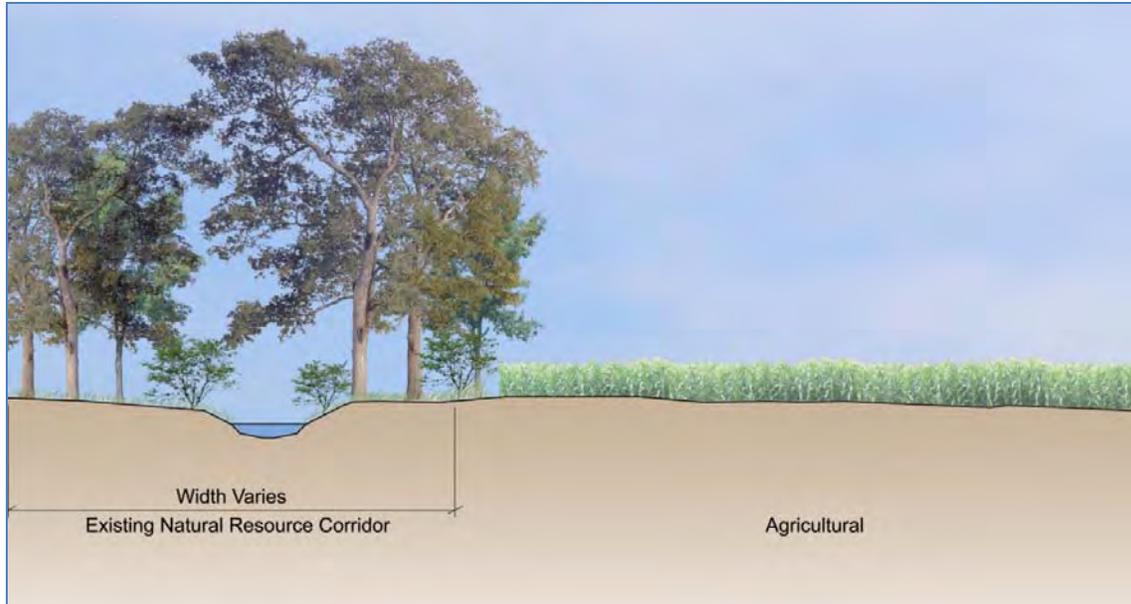


Figure 10: Typical Corridor Setting - Existing Conditions

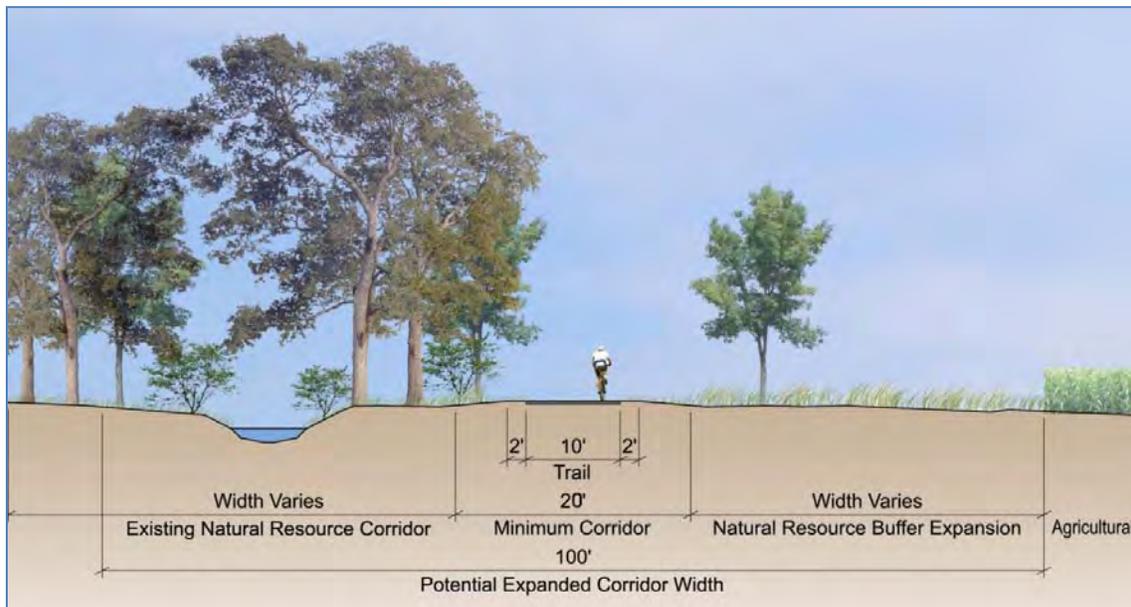


Figure 11: Typical Corridor Setting - Trail Corridor Integrating Natural Resource Protection

There may be opportunities to expand the corridor width to include high-quality natural resource areas, and incorporate portions of Natural Area Corridors (as defined in the Scott County 2030 Comprehensive Plan). Scott County will examine and consider expansion of the corridor width on a case-by-case basis as opportunities arise. For trail corridor segments located within or along Natural Area Corridors, considerations should be made to adequately buffer the natural resources from adjacent uses and reduce impacts from trail construction.

With the exception of retrofitting a trail into existing neighborhoods, regional trail segments that are proposed to generally follow roadways should provide additional corridor width (100+ feet) to adequately separate the trail from the roadway. The trail corridor should be designed to provide a natural buffer of trees and native plantings between the trail and the roadway that helps establish a parkway setting.

The local planning authority has an important role, as developers often contact the City or County Zoning Administration office (within townships) about zoning and other development issues. Through the development review process, Scott County Parks & Trails will work with the local agencies, developers, and property owners to formulate a development plan that incorporates the trail corridor. Park dedication, right-of-way dedication, planned unit development (PUD), and public values incentive program (rural development only) are all potential development tools that will be explored during the subdivision process.

Trail Design

The planned 13.5-mile trail will be designed in accordance with applicable American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 1999, and Minnesota Department of Transportation’s, Minnesota Bikeway Facility Design Manual, 2007. The optimal trail width will be ten feet wide with a minimum two-foot aggregate clear-zone on each side. There may be instances of existing trail surfaces having an eight-foot surface width. Any trail sections less than ten feet wide should be upgraded to ten feet (assuming it is physically and fiscally possible) at time of surface reconstruction. Reconstruction will not occur until the useful life of the existing surface is expired.

The trail will have a bituminous or crushed rock agricultural lime surface. A bituminous trail surface is the preferred long-term surface treatment because it is durable, dependable and is cost effective through its life cycle. Bituminous trails accommodate a wide variety of uses including bicycling, walking, running, and in-line skating, which are all popular regional trail activities. However, a crushed rock or agricultural lime surface may be used as an interim trail improvement. The typical constructed trail section is shown in Figure 12 and consists of a 2.5-inch-thick minimum bituminous trail section, 10 feet wide, supported on 6 inches of compacted Class 5 aggregate fill.

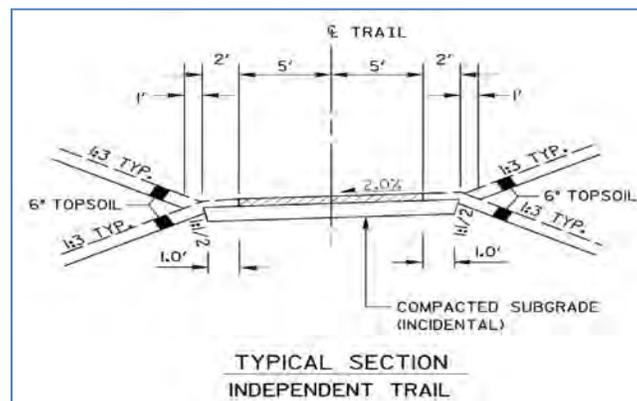


Figure 12: Typical Section – Trail Design

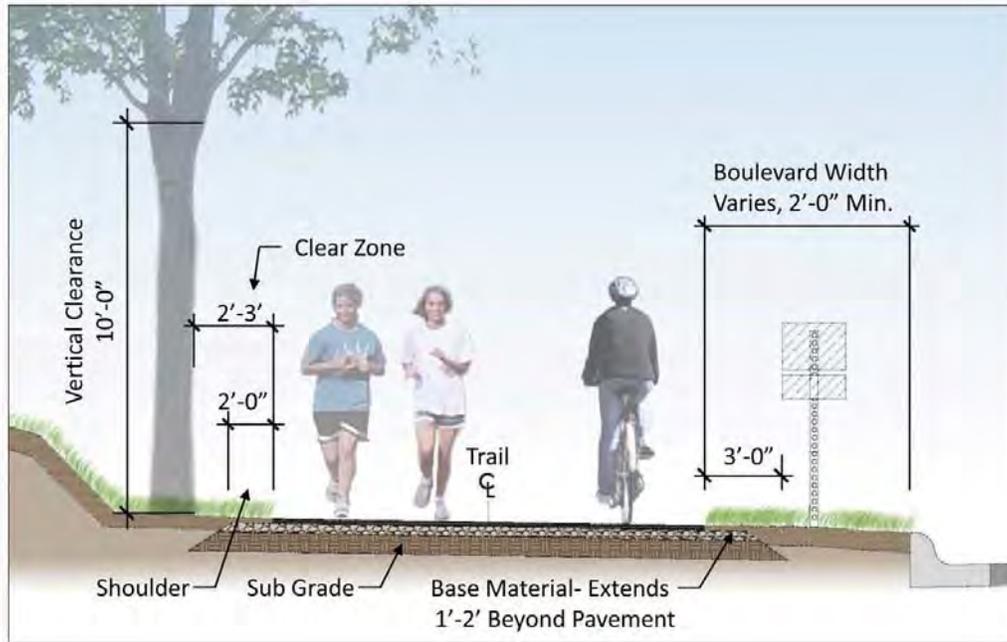
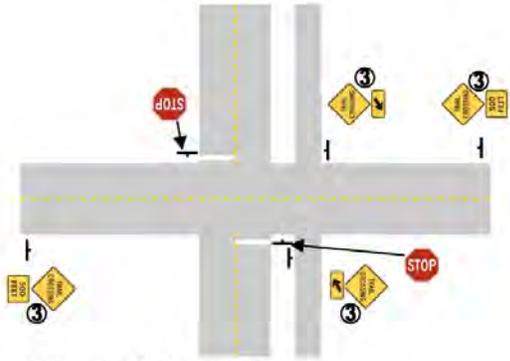


Figure 13: Typical Section – Multi-Use Trail

Road Crossings

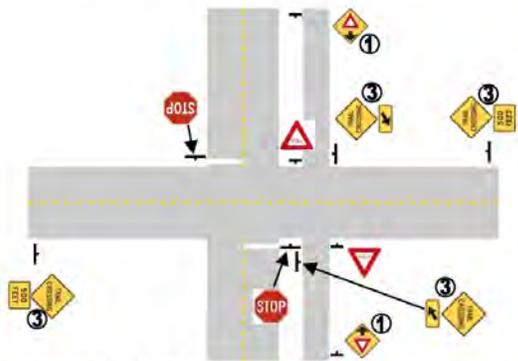
Most road crossing locations will not be identified until development proposals are available. However, it is expected the majority of road crossings will be (and should be encouraged) on local, low-traffic roadways where at-grade crossings are appropriate. Sight lines, topography, and driveway and intersection spacing should be evaluated when determining the most appropriate road crossing location.

Each road crossing should be evaluated on an individual basis, and all trail crossing striping and signage will be designed consistent with Mn/DOT standards. The graphics in Figure 14 identify typical best practices for crossing uncontrolled intersections and mid-block crossings. Where roadway traffic controls are clearly visible to trail users, additional traffic control signage exclusive for trail users may not be appropriate. Exclusive signs and crosswalk striping may be provided as needed (per site conditions and design standards), but is not required for all trail crossings at road intersections. When improvements to intersections are explored, other potential safety improvements should be considered in addition to traffic control devices, including median refuge islands, beacon lights, and street lighting.



Uncontrolled & Unmarked

Considered a legal crosswalk if the crossing is part of the intersection. If the space between the trail and the roadway is excessive, treat as a midblock crossing.

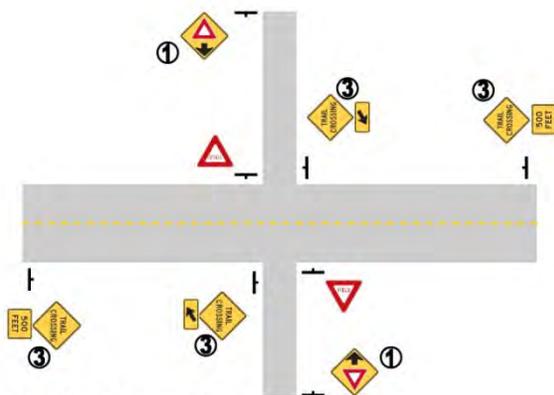


Trail Yield Control

May be used when the cross traffic is uncontrolled, even if the parallel street is stop controlled. Do not mark crosswalk if using trail yield control.

- ① Stop Ahead or Yield Ahead signs are required only when the stop or yield sign is not visible for a sufficient distance to permit the approaching user to respond to the device. Otherwise, they are optional, but consider ongoing maintenance costs and the creation of an additional fixed object hazard versus the expected benefit.
- ② Crosswalk markings may cause drivers and trail users to believe that the intersection is an all-way stop. Crosswalk may be marked, but may degrade safety in some circumstances. Refer to FHWA table for markings on uncontrolled approaches.
- ③ Warning signs are optional and may be used with or without a marked crosswalk. Other W11 series warning signs may be substituted. Such warning signs have not been shown to improve safety.

Source: Best Practices for Traffic Control at Regional Trail Crossings, A Collaborative Effort of Twin Cities Road and Trail Managing Agencies, 2011.



Trail Yield Control

Do not mark crosswalk if using trail yield control.

- ① Stop Ahead or Yield Ahead signs are required only when the stop or yield sign is not visible for a sufficient distance to permit the approaching user to respond to the device. Otherwise, they are optional, but consider ongoing maintenance costs and the creation of an additional fixed object hazard versus the expected benefit.
- ② Crosswalk may be marked, but may degrade safety in some circumstances. Refer to FHWA table.
- ③ Warning signs are optional and may be used with or without a marked crosswalk, however pavement markings are required in order to legally designate a crosswalk. Other W11 series warning signs may be substituted. Such warning signs have not been shown to improve safety.

Source: Best Practices for Traffic Control at Regional Trail Crossings, A Collaborative Effort of Twin Cities Road and Trail Managing Agencies, 2011.

Figure 14: Typical Road Crossings

The regional trail will be required to cross County Roads 79, 15, and 10. These road crossings are recommended as at-grade crossings. These crossings should be designed similar to the best practices graphics in Figure 14 and implemented at road intersections when possible. However due to the high speeds of these roadways, a combination of treatments may be necessary at these crossings, including traffic controls and signals, surface paint, median refuge islands, beacon lights, and street lighting.

Long-term, grade separated crossings will be most appropriate at County Road 17 and Trunk Highway 282, although an at-grade crossing may be utilized initially. Since the entire trail corridor is envisioned to take decades to complete, the appropriate road crossing method (i.e., at-grade or over/underpass structure) will be re-evaluated as part of future roadway studies and as the adjacent trail corridor is established.

As an example of this approach, the City of Jordan prepared an evaluation of potential pedestrian crossings (see Appendix B) for US Trunk Highway 169 in 2011. Six alternatives were evaluated in the study and the preferred alternative is expected to be identified by the City of Jordan in 2011. Scott County has worked with the City of Jordan to evaluate crossing alternatives and support the crossing to also serve as part of the Spring Lake Regional Trail. Scott County Parks & Trails will coordinate future efforts related to the 169 pedestrian crossing to ensure consistency with this master plan.

Supporting Elements

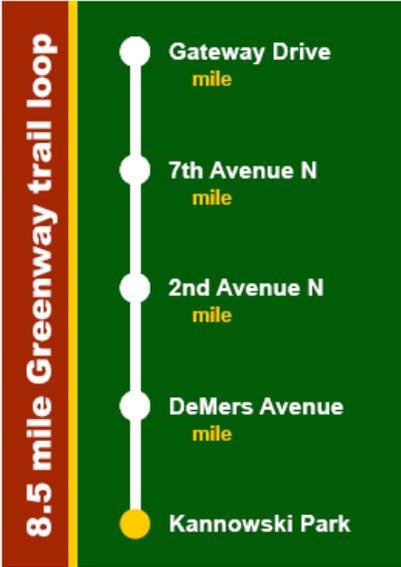
Access, connections, and rest areas are important elements of regional trails that add aesthetic and functional value to the trail. Trailheads provide the amenities visitors need to prepare for trail use and a location for visitors to access the trail. Parking lot and trailhead access points have been identified at Spring Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake, Lagoon Park in Jordan, and the Minnesota State Valley Trail access north of Jordan. An additional trailhead or an expanded rest area should also be considered around the Geis Lake and Hwy 282 area as the trail corridor becomes established.

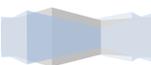
The Spring Lake Regional Trail corridor passes through scenic wetland, agricultural, river valley and bluffs settings. Rest areas should be constructed along the trail in locations that offer scenic views beyond the trail corridor itself. Rest areas should provide amenities such as trash receptacles, benches, picnic tables and bicycle racks. Final rest area locations and amenities will be determined during the design phase prior to trail construction.

Connections between local park and trail systems and the Spring Lake Regional Trail will be encouraged. Providing connections to local trails will promote trail use from nearby neighborhoods and increase the ability for residents to bike or walk to the regional trail. Trail connection points will be coordinated with local agencies as part of the development process and future improvement projects to ensure safe trail intersections.

Navigational Signs

Proper signage along the trail is important for safety and way finding. At trailhead locations, kiosks will be installed to provide information on the Spring Lake Regional Trail corridor and highlight nearby regional and local attractions. Directional signage will be installed at key trail intersections to keep the trail user on the regional trail and also identify local connections and destination areas. Kiosks and directional signage will be designed to be consistent and maintain a uniform style with the Scott County regional park and trail system and its partner agencies.

Figure 15: Signage Guidelines and Examples	
<p>Directional Signs should be used to provide destination information at decision points or along routes. The goals of directional signage are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Inform users of current location ○ Direct users to connecting facilities and destinations from trails ○ Inform users of major destinations or trail end points ○ Point to trails from street network 	<p>Directional Signage Example</p> 
<p>Kiosks provide a system or regional overview of the network. They are most appropriate for trail heads or points with multiple decisions. The goals of kiosks are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide a map with street and trail types and major destinations or attractions ○ Promote connectivity to other regional trails ○ Identify connections to and from street network ○ Provide address or emergency location ○ Provide information about what is along the trail – photos, interpretive, historical 	<p>Kiosk Example</p> 



Construction Cost Estimates

Construction Costs

Total approximate trail length = 13.5 Miles

Approximate existing trail length = 0.78 Mile

Approximate programmed trail length = 0.84 Miles (County Road 12 expansion)

Approximate remaining trail length = 11.9 Miles

Cost per foot is \$70/lineal foot, or \$375,000 per mile

11.9 miles of trail x \$375,000 = \$4,463,000

Bridges and Structures

	<u>Low Cost Estimate</u>	<u>High Cost Estimate</u>
Separated Crossing @ 169:	\$703,000 Overpass (Alt. 3);	\$1,402,000 Overpass (Alt. 2)
Separated Crossing @ 17:	\$600,000 Underpass;	\$1,500,000 Overpass
Separated Crossing @ TH 282:	\$600,000 Underpass;	\$1,500,000 Overpass

Road Crossings Striping and Traffic/Safety Signage

Upgrades/Enhancements: \$250,000

Directional Signage/Kiosks

Kiosks: 4 x \$15,000 = \$60,000

Directional Signage: 5 x \$5,000 = \$25,000

Note: Estimates are based on 2011 construction costs.

Development Timeline and Funding Sources

As referenced throughout this document, it will likely take decades to connect each end of the trail corridor through the development process. However, opportunities may arise through willing land sellers to speed up the process, should expectations for this trail corridor change over time. Trail construction will likely occur through a series of smaller segments coordinated with future development and similar infrastructure improvements.

Not all segments will be completed through the subdivision process. For example, the trail segment between Lagoon Park and the Minnesota River in Jordan will likely be located within existing road right-of-way and be constructed along with roadway improvements. Scott County will actively pursue recreation and transportation grant funding opportunities for development of the regional trail. Primary funding sources include federal transportation programs (transportation enhancement and surface transportation program), Minnesota Clean Water, Land, and Legacy funds, and Metropolitan Council programs and implementing agency allocations. Local sources include park dedication and potential funding in the County's park improvement programs.

Boundaries & Acquisition Costs

This master plan serves as an acquisition and preservation plan for the Spring Lake Regional Trail corridor that will ultimately connect the city of Jordan to Spring Lake Regional Park and the city of Prior Lake. This plan establishes the long-term vision for a dedicated trail corridor within an area that is anticipated to continue urbanizing. Along the way, this 13.5-mile corridor is envisioned to connect and help preserve natural landscapes and unique features (including lakes and wetlands, drainageways, forests, prairies, and the river bluffs).

Corridor Preservation Tools

A variety of land use tools, acquisition approaches, and coordination with local agencies, landowners, and developers will be required over time to fully connect this trail corridor.

Available tools include:

- a) **Subdivision Process:** As part of a proposed development, the dedication of land that has been identified to serve a public purpose in local and county planning documents. Park dedication, right-of-way dedication, planned unit development (PUD), and public values incentive program (rural development only) will all be explored with the developer through the subdivision process. This will be the primary method for establishing the Spring Lake Regional Trail corridor.
- b) **Fee Simple Acquisition:** A complete transfer of land ownership from one landowner to another party, usually by purchase. Land donation would also be encouraged. This method may be most appropriate for small parcels with limited development opportunities or larger parcels containing a significant natural resource feature that could be protected or enhanced as part of the trail corridor. Scott County Parks & Trails will only pursue land acquisition with willing sellers.
- c) **Easement:** Grants the right to use a specific portion of land for a specific purpose or purposes. Easements may be granted in perpetuity and survive transfer of landownership. Easements may be most appropriate for completing trail “gaps,” in instances with limited space, and when fee title of land is not an option.
- d) **License/Lease Agreement:** The temporary grant of an interest in land upon payment of a determined fee. The fee does not have to be monetary, but some consideration must be given for the right to use the land, or the lease will not be legally binding.
- e) **Joint Powers Agreement:** A contract between a township, city, county, and/or a special district in which the organization agrees to perform services, cooperate with, or lend its powers to, the other party. This will involve coordination of other public projects to help implement the trail corridor while also meeting other public needs.
- f) **Eminent Domain:** The power of a governmental body to acquire private property that has been identified for a public purpose. The property owner must be compensated fair market value for the acquired land. Eminent domain is only used when all other opportunities to purchase the land have been rejected. Historically, Scott County has not used eminent domain for any park or trail related projects.



Trail Corridor Alignment

Privately owned parcels where land acquisition or trail dedication will be needed to establish the trail corridor are identified on the Corridor Maps 4A-D. Scott County Parks & Trails will pursue land acquisition with willing sellers. This means acquisition will occur when landowners plan to sell or are considering development of their property. In working with landowners and developers, parcel acquisition alternatives to discuss with owners include the following:

- Routing of the trail to utilize portions of the property with marginal development potential. This could include land adjacent to wetland or flood fringes.
- Acquire easements for the trail that may allow the owner/developer to count some or all of the acreage toward development densities.
- Work with the LGU and owner/developer to secure park dedication lands for the trail in advance of the actual development.
- Acquisition of the entire property/parcel, with the intent to resell the property subject to easements for the trail.
- Acquisition of the development rights to the property. The areas of development would then be negotiated with the developer.
- Donation of a portion of the property for a trail corridor.
- Acquisition of entire property to provide trail and other function (i.e., natural resource value, parking, trail head, scenic views).

Land Acquisition Cost Estimates

The following describes required trail corridor and easements to complete the Spring Lake Regional Trail. **Since much of this corridor is expected to be established through the development process, actual land costs will be considerably lower than the estimates provided.** Two options are shown for the off-road section (through currently undeveloped lands), based on a minimum 20-foot easement and an average 100-foot easement that includes adjacent natural resource areas (recommended).

Right-of-Way – Jordan Section (Sawmill Road to MN River)

20,930 Linear Feet x 20 foot easement = 418,600 sq ft = 9.6 acres
9.6 Acres x \$80,000/Acre = \$769,000

Off-Road Section (County Road 17 to Sawmill Road)

Assumes Minimum 20-foot easement

41,735 Linear Feet x 20 foot easement = 834,700 sq ft = 19.2 acres
19.2 Acres x \$25,000/Acre = \$479,000 (assuming entire corridor is purchased)

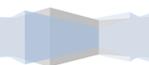
Assumes Typical 100-foot easement

41,735 Linear Feet x 100 foot easement = 4,173,500 sq ft = 95.8 acres
95.8 Acres x \$25,000/Acre = \$2,395,000 (assuming entire corridor is purchased)

Public Services

To ensure maximum safety possible for trail visitors and its neighboring residents, Scott County will work closely with local public safety organizations to monitor trail use and take preventative measures to deter unauthorized activity. Future arrangements for trail patrolling with Three Rivers Park District Public Safety will also be explored.

New non-recreational public service improvements are not required to support trail facilities, but are expected to help facilitate trail development. The Spring Lake Regional Trail will be further defined as part of future developments in Prior Lake, Jordan, and Sand Creek Township. At the time of land development, trail alignment, neighborhood connections and open space preservation will be coordinated with subdivision designs and public service improvements (roads, sewer, utilities, etc.). Population growth and land development will generate the need (and cost) for these public services improvements, not the regional trail.



Conflicts & Mitigation

Surrounding Land Uses

The majority of the trail corridor currently consists of rural land uses (agricultural and scattered low-density rural residential), while the western portion of the trail (north and south of Jordan) is dominated by a combination of suburban development, downtown Jordan, and a commercial/industrial area. Most of the land within the future trail corridor is guided for long-term urban expansion, primarily as single-family residential. Since the trail corridor is expected to be established through development, potential conflicts and appropriate mitigation efforts should be evaluated as part of the development process.

Where necessary, boundary marking signage will be installed as a way to delineate the regional trail corridor property from private property. Proper boundary marking and “future trail corridor” signage will be used to ensure public awareness of the trail corridor and limit neighborhood and adjacent property owner opposition to future trail construction projects. Making the planned trail location clear to property owners before they buy a property will help prevent future issues when construction begins. It may also help market adjacent developments to residents interested in living near a regional trail.

Aesthetic Design

The trail design may incorporate a paved asphalt or unpaved aggregate surface with two-foot aggregate shoulders on both sides of the trail. The shoulders are required for safety purposes. Specific plantings, fencing, trestle design, and other amenities will be identified during the design phase of the project.

Parking

Parking lot and trailhead access points have been identified at Spring Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake, Lagoon Park in Jordan, and the Minnesota State Valley Trail access north of Jordan. An additional trailhead or an expanded rest area should also be considered around the Geis Lake and Hwy 282 area as the trail corridor becomes established.

Trail Surface

The master plan recommends that the regional trail ultimately be paved the entire length. However, in the best interest of completing the trail, an aggregate surface may be an appropriate interim solution if inadequate funding is available to pave the entire trail. Several factors led the decision making process for determining trail surface. They were: 1) past public input efforts and county guidelines; 2) the obligation to provide a diversity of opportunities on its trail network; 3) consistency with existing and planned paved segments of local and regional

trails in Scott County; 4) costs associated with construction and maintenance of the trail surface; and 5) eligibility for federal funding for paved surface.

Bituminous trails, despite the higher construction cost, provide a durable maintenance resistant surface that reduces erosion issues, is reliable during freeze thaw cycles, and is not susceptible to tire rutting caused by maintenance vehicles or heavy trail use. A bituminous surface expands the use of the trail to other wheeled uses such as in-line skating, skateboards, scooters, and accessibility devices. The surface is also dependable and smooth for activities of walking and hiking, which is a benefit to those who are less mobile.

Appropriate Uses of the Trail

Scott County allows walking, running/jogging, bicycle riding, in-line skating, skateboarding, kick scooters, bird watching, and dog walking on regional trails. Motorized vehicles not allowed include, but are not limited to, motorized scooters, all-terrain vehicles, golf carts, motorcycles, automobiles, trucks, sport utility vehicles, and snowmobiles.

Snowmobiles

Scott County has a 248-mile snowmobile trail system maintained by local snowmobile clubs and partially funded through the DNR's grant-in-aid program. Scott County continues to support snowmobiling on existing snowmobile trails and act as the local sponsor for the grant-in-aid program. This master plan does not support snowmobiling on Scott County's regional trail system due to potential winter use conflicts, an existing network of snowmobile trails, possible damage to bituminous surfaces through misuse, and conflicts with city ordinances.

Snowmobile trail crossings and short snowmobile trail connections may be permitted within the regional trail corridor, but only to maintain the existing snowmobile trail system.

Equestrian

Scott County supports equestrian use on existing equestrian trails. Equestrian use is not recommended for the proposed regional trail corridor since the trail will be located within existing and planned urbanized areas, equestrian activities are not generally compatible with bituminous surfaces, and equestrian uses would require more land and a separate trail surface adequately buffered between other trail users. The Minnesota Valley State Trail is nearby to accommodate equestrian users, with 30 miles of horseback riding trails along Minnesota River. Equestrian trails are also offered in Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve and planned for future use in the Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park Master Plan.

Dog Walking

Dogs are allowed on all Scott County trails. Dog-walkers are required to keep their dogs on leashes no longer than six feet and must clean up after the pets. These policies will also be in effect for the proposed trail corridors.



Operations & Maintenance

Overview

Implementing the master plan will require significant initial and long-term capital investments for physical development, operations, and maintenance. Implementation is expected to occur over a number of years as funding and other resources become available and plans become refined and ready for implementation. The following considers an overall strategy for implementing the master plan and managing the trail once it is completed. This section also considers Scott County's approach to operations and management as it pertains to the trail.

Governance

The Scott County Board of Commissioners is the governing and policy board with jurisdictional and operational authority for Scott County regional parks and trail facilities. The Scott County Parks Advisory Commission, appointed by the County Board, serves as ambassadors for the citizens of the county and to inform and make recommendations to the Board on policy, planning, operational, and financial matters related to the Scott County regional parks and trails facilities and system.

In December 2010, the Scott County Board and Three Rivers Park District Board entered into a unique partnership to collaboratively and efficiently operate the regional facilities within Scott County – both those under Scott County ownership and those under Three Rivers Park District ownership (with the exception of The Landing). Under the Partnership, Three Rivers will take a leading role in operating and maintaining the park and trail units owned by Scott County and will continue to operate the Three Rivers facilities within Scott County. Scott County will make available its existing operating resources (parks staff, trail maintenance agreements, county programs, volunteers, etc.) and successful collaborative efforts with local partner agencies.



Ultimate policy and management direction for Scott County facilities, including the Spring Lake Regional Trail, will continue to be set by the Scott County Board, with guidance from the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission. But as part of the new Partnership, it will be done in consideration of the collaborative implementation effort of the two agencies. Under the Partnership, a Three Rivers Board Member will serve as a liaison to the Parks Advisory Commission. A Policy Committee comprised of the Chair and Vice Chair (or designee) of both Scott County and Three Rivers Boards has been established to oversee and resolve policy conflicts and issues related to the Partnership.

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This Partnership is new and implementation will evolve over the years. But this Partnership is expected to improve efficiencies and provide additional resources to operate and maintain the regional park and trail system in Scott County.

Regulation and Enforcement

Scott County has adopted Park Ordinance, Number 29 to provide for the safe and peaceful use of the parks, trails, and corresponding facilities. Scott County's Park Ordinance, Number 29 will be enforced for all users and activities within the designated regional trail system.

The Scott County Sheriff's office is responsible for patrolling County parks and trail facilities. A Sheriff's Deputy or a Community Service Officer will respond to calls for service needs on the trail. In addition to responding to calls for service, the 911 First Responder system will answer emergency calls made from the trail. Scott County participates in a statewide mutual aid program that facilitates the sharing of public safety resources in times of emergency or other unusual conditions. This program facilitates assistance received from surrounding police agencies, including Jordan, Prior Lake, and Three Rivers Park District police forces.

Trail Operation

Existing regional trail segments have been treated similar to County Road trails in terms of operations and maintenance practices (and the fact the existing regional trail segments follow County Roadways). County Road trails within city boundaries are maintained by the cities. County Road trails in rural areas are maintained by the County. Currently there are no operations/maintenance agreements between the County and cities regarding County Road trails, however, it is the County's intention to enter into a future comprehensive agreement. Winter use is determined by each city, and the city is responsible for snow plowing. It is expected that this informal policy will continue for the near term. As Scott County's regional trail system becomes more established, trail operation practices will be re-examined to determine best practices.

Trail Maintenance

Proper trail maintenance is necessary to provide a safe and enjoyable recreational experience for trail users. But it is also important to perform on-going maintenance to get the maximum value out of major infrastructure investments. Preventive trail maintenance has been proven to be more cost-effective long-term (and is also a requirement of any federally funded trail projects). Addressing issues, such as cracks and erosion, early on and performing routine pavement treatments can double the life of the trail surface. Coordinating related pavement treatments with nearby roadway upgrades can also lead to significant cost savings.

As described with the trail operations, Scott County works collaboratively with cities and Three Rivers Park District to maintain its existing regional trail system. Regardless of who is responsible for performing the work, trail maintenance activities should be consistent with the schedule in Figure 16. Anticipated maintenance costs are anticipated to be \$15,000 for Scott County annually (2011 dollars) once the regional trail is fully developed. Scott County will explore collaboration and cost-sharing opportunities with municipalities and Three Rivers Park District to find cost efficient methods to provide operations, maintenance, and public safety services within the proposed regional trail corridors.

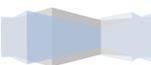


Figure 16: Trail Maintenance Practices – Recommended Schedule	
On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation – mow shoulders (maintain 2-3 feet clearance) and blow trail surface • Litter and debris cleanup • Trash removal • Use/Safety inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ROW encroachment inspections • Verify safety for trail users (no fallen/hanging branches, slippery spots, etc.) • Graffiti/Vandalism/Criminal Activity • Inventory surface failures (cracks, dips, crumbling edges) • Drainage/Culvert clearings
1 to 3 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noxious weed control as needed • Trim trees/shrubs to maintain clearance • Other annual resource management activities • Pavement Survey Inspection • Trail surface sweeping (Spring) • Overpass/Underpass structure inspections – every 2 years • Asphalt crack repair – perform where needed
4+ Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs and lane/crossings striping – replace as needed • Fog Seal – every 4 to 6 years • Sealcoating – every 6 to 10 years • Overlay – every 15 to 20 years

Funding and Revenue

Funding sources to cover on-going operations and maintenance costs for the Scott County regional trail system include general operating funds from Scott County Parks and Trails. A portion of operating and maintenance costs will be funded by the Metropolitan Council and distributed to Scott County consistent with MN Statute 473.351. The Metropolitan Council and State of Minnesota provide funding for acquisition, development, and redevelopment projects through the Regional Parks CIP. Additional funding opportunities through federal, state, and county programs will be solicited when applicable.

It is not anticipated that regional trails will generate revenue for Scott County. Scott County will maintain a no fee use of the proposed regional trails due to their major connections to other regional, state, and local trails.

Stewardship Plan

For the majority of natural resources within and adjacent to the planned regional trail corridor, the focus will be on land stewardship in partnership with both public and private landowners. As steward partners, Scott County Parks & Trails will work with partner agencies (Scott WMO, Scott Soil and Water Conservation District, Prior Lake-Spring Lake Watershed District, local agencies) to assist landowners with funding or expertise to meet natural resource goals. Scott County Parks & Trails will also perform enhancement projects (wetland restoration, prairie restoration, buckthorn removal, etc.) on lands within the trail corridor owned by the County.

Stewardship activities will begin immediately upon acquisition of any portion of the planned trail corridor. These activities include, but are not limited to general cleanup of the site, location and identification of property lines and property corners, ground maintenance, noxious weed control, and invasive species control. Additional on-site inspections will be scheduled as necessary to evaluate the site for health, safety, and welfare concerns. Current infrastructure systems such as water systems, sewer systems, electrical, and building conditions will be analyzed.

At the time of acquisition, the site will be secured and appropriate measures taken to protect it until trail development and operations occur. Where necessary, boundary marking signage will be installed as a way to delineate the regional trail corridor property from private property. Proper boundary marking and “future trail corridor” signage will be used to ensure public awareness of the trail corridor and limit neighborhood and adjacent property owner opposition to future trail construction projects. Making the planned trail location clear to property owners before they buy a property will help prevent future issues when construction begins.



Citizen Participation

The entire master planning process was driven by direct citizen involvement. A Citizen Design Team (CDT), consisting of over forty Scott County residents, volunteered their time to provide direction and input on the preparation of site design concepts and types of programming/activities desired at five park/trail sites. The Citizen Design Team was divided into two groups, with one focused on parks master plan concepts (Blakeley Bluffs, Cedar Lake Farm, and Doyle-Kennefick) and the other focused on trail concepts (Spring Lake and Scott West search areas). The CDT met monthly, from July 2010 to March 2011, to evaluate park and trail system needs, identify unique features of each site, and refine the design concepts.

Another major public input component was through public workshops and site tours. Four public workshops were held in August 2010 to gather input from residents on the types of programming and activities desired at each park/trail site, and to gain insight on what types of concerns or issues related to development needed to be addressed through the master planning process. Approximately 150 residents participated in the public workshops and provided a great deal of feedback (see page 10 for a more detailed summary).

The CDT participated in a bus tour of potential trail routes in October 2010. CDT members discussed a number of issues during the bus tour, including major road crossings, key destinations and connections, and design features to improve the recreational experience. A direct outcome from the bus tour was the identification of Lagoon Park and Sawmill Road as the key connection into the City of Jordan for the Spring Lake Regional Trail corridor.

Trail concepts developed by the Citizen Design Team were shared with local parks commissions and township boards in November 2010 through February 2011. Input was given based on consistency with local plans, current and projected needs, and coordination with other projects.

A public open house was held on February 26, 2011, to review the trail concepts. Thirty residents attended the open house. In general, public response was

positive for the Spring Lake Regional Trail and comments were consistent with those received from local officials. No major changes to the proposed trail route were made as a result of the public comments from the open house.



Parks CDT Field Trip, September 2010

Throughout the master planning process, the Scott County Parks Advisory Commission and Scott County Board of Commissioners were updated with results of the public input and Citizen Design Team’s site concepts. The Parks Advisory Commission and Board of Commissioners provided direction based on existing plans and park policies. The Parks Advisory Commission recommended approval of this master plan at their July 6, 2011, meeting. On September 13, 2011, the Scott County Board of Commissioners approved this master plan.

A detailed list of public meetings and public comments received throughout the master planning process is provided in Appendix A.



Public Awareness

Scott County uses a variety of resources to promote its regional park and trail system. Available resources include:

- Scott County SCENE
- Press releases to local media outlets
- Brochures, newsletters, and direct mailings
- On-line presence (website, e-mail lists, maps)
- City/township park & recreation websites
- Regional park & trail maps (Met Council, Cyclopath.org)
- Advertisements in recreation and tourism publications



GoScottGo.org

New technologies and improved access to public databases have greatly enhanced the ability to share accurate trail information with residents. Scott County recently partnered with Carver County to develop GoScottGo.org, which includes a clearinghouse of recreational activities,



programs, and facilities in Scott County. This website and the underlying initiative is based upon a national “active living” effort, which has found that the overall health of a community is impacted by its built environment and residents’ safe access to recreational opportunities.

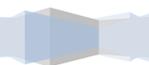
GoScottGo.org will be a key component for promoting the Scott County regional trail system. The website includes an interactive park and trail mapping application that assists users in charting out their walking, biking, and running routes, as well as find parks and trails close to their home. As trail segments are completed, the interactive map will be updated to provide the latest data available.

Partnership Opportunities

In addition to the above resources, other new opportunities for promotion may arise as part of Scott County’s new partnership agreement with Three Rivers Park District. Three Rivers could provide an increased role in marketing all regional park and trail facilities in Scott County, and as such future regional trail segments could be incorporated into any promotional materials. Scott County will continue to explore additional promotional opportunities (and efficiencies gained) with Three Rivers and other park/trail partner agencies.

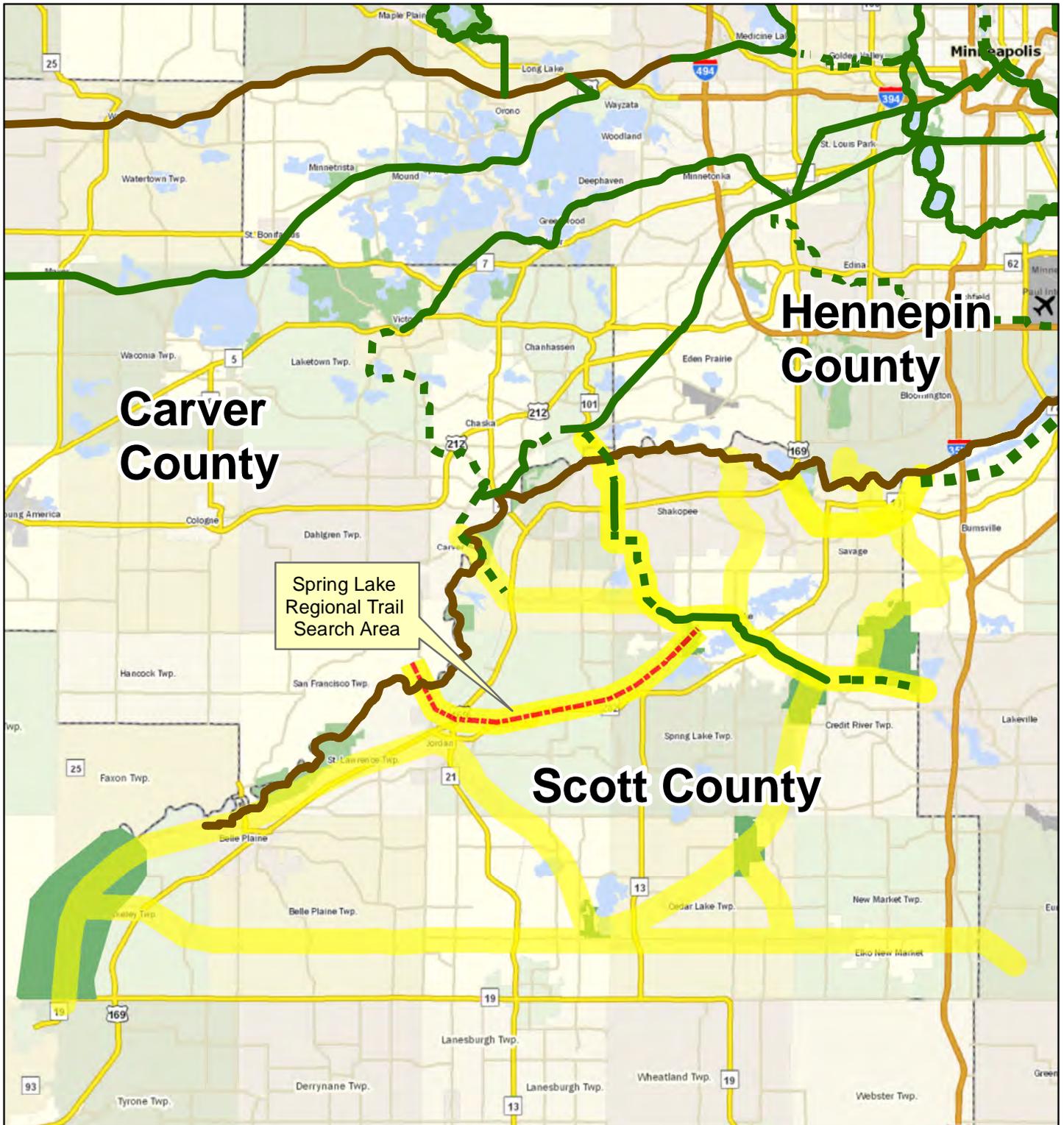
Trail Construction Projects

As trail development and construction plans are proposed, public information meetings will be held as a means to inform the public, collect input and have dialogue on ideas and potential conflicts. Scott County is committed to working with residents and other agencies once the design process commences for new trail segments.



Accessibility

Scott County is committed to providing activities, access and resources for all trail visitors, including persons with disabilities and members of special population groups and will do so throughout planning, development, and operation and maintenance activities of the regional trail system. Scott County supports equal access for all users to its park and trail facilities. Trail facilities will be designed to meet or exceed guidelines established by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The proposed regional trails are aligned to accommodate a wide-range of user groups with varying abilities and offers access to many populations. Scott County's current policies strive to keep public park, trail, and open space facilities affordable for all residents.



Map 1

Study Area and Overview Spring Lake Regional Trail

Legend

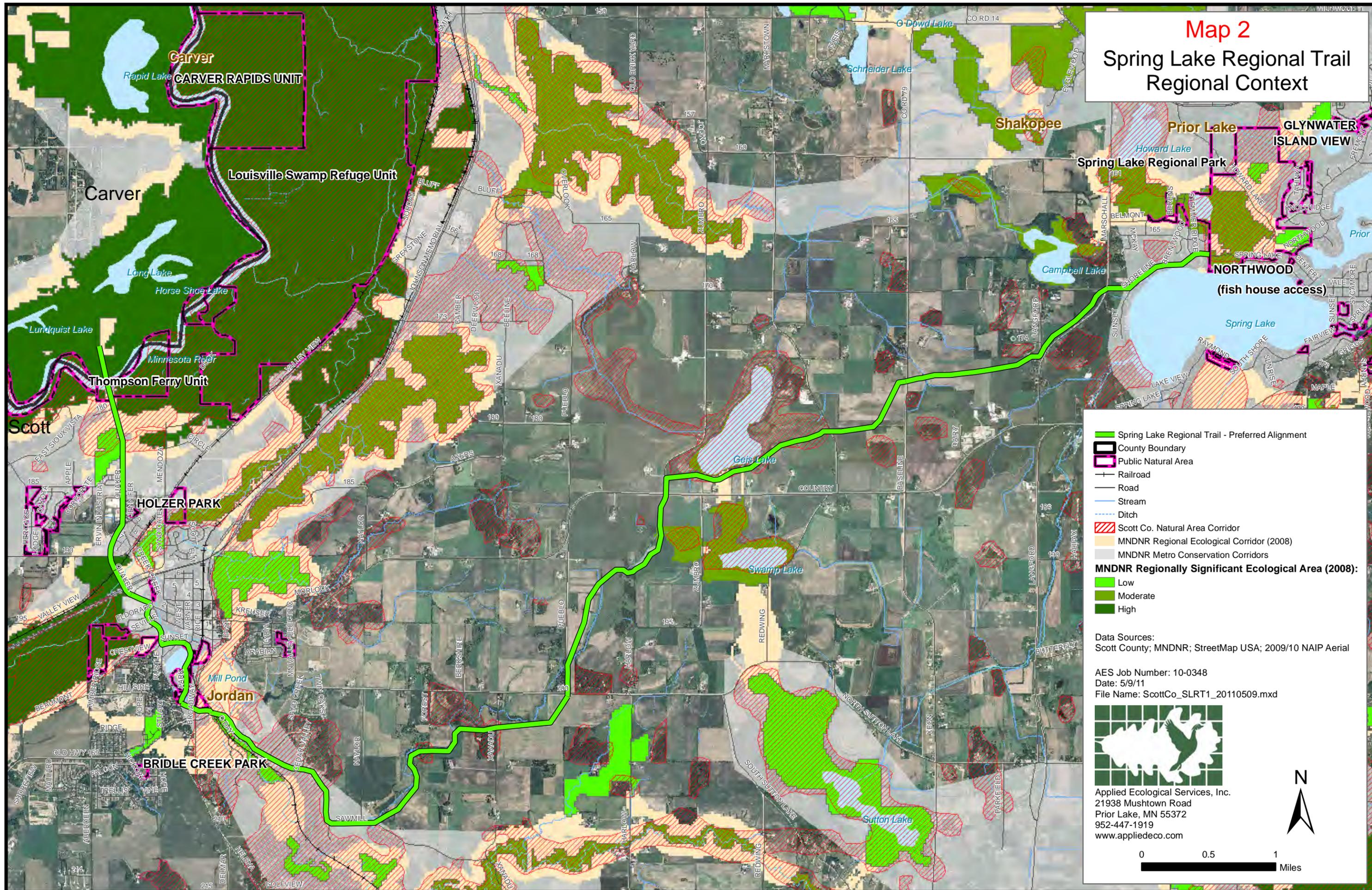
- Regional Trail Existing
- - - Regional Trail Planned
- State Trail Existing
- Other 2030 Trail Search Areas
- Spring Lake Search Area
- Regional Park/Park Search Area



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Map 2 Spring Lake Regional Trail Regional Context



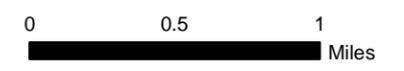
— Spring Lake Regional Trail - Preferred Alignment
 County Boundary
 Public Natural Area
 Railroad
 Road
— Stream
 Ditch
 Scott Co. Natural Area Corridor
 MNDNR Regional Ecological Corridor (2008)
 MNDNR Metro Conservation Corridors
MNDNR Regionally Significant Ecological Area (2008):
 Low
 Moderate
 High

Data Sources:
 Scott County; MNDNR; StreetMap USA; 2009/10 NAIP Aerial

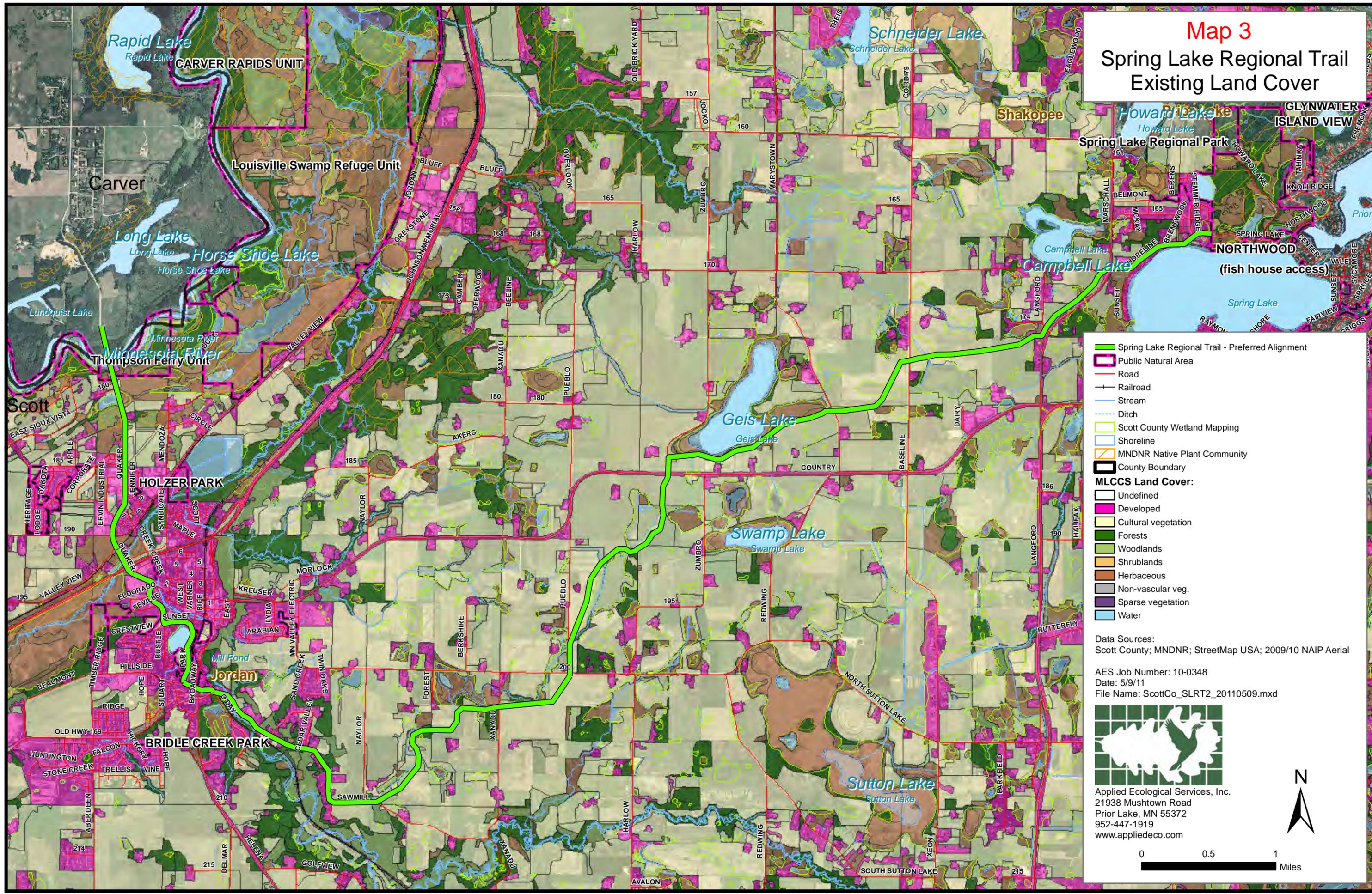
AES Job Number: 10-0348
 Date: 5/9/11
 File Name: ScottCo_SLRT1_20110509.mxd



Applied Ecological Services, Inc.
 21938 Mushtown Road
 Prior Lake, MN 55372
 952-447-1919
www.appliedeco.com



Map 3 Spring Lake Regional Trail Existing Land Cover



Legend

- Spring Lake Regional Trail - Preferred Alignment
- Public Natural Area
- Road
- Railroad
- Stream
- Ditch
- Scott County Wetland Mapping
- Shoreline
- MNDNR Native Plant Community
- County Boundary

MLCCS Land Cover:

- Undefined
- Developed
- Cultural vegetation
- Forests
- Woodlands
- Shrublands
- Herbaceous
- Non-vascular veg.
- Sparse vegetation
- Water

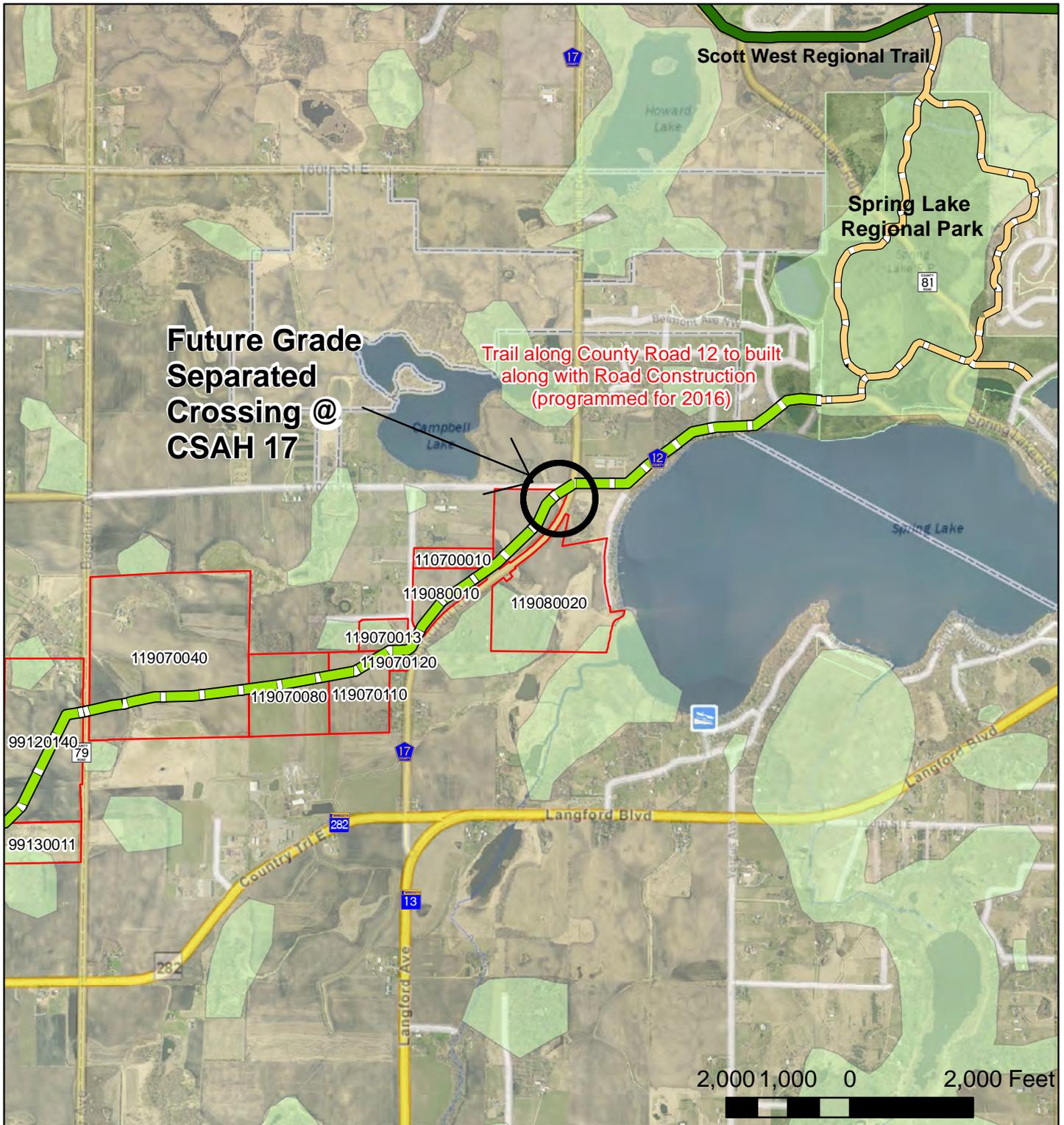
Data Sources:
Scott County; MNDNR; StreetMap USA; 2009/10 NAIP Aerial

AES Job Number: 10-0348
Date: 5/9/11
File Name: ScottCo_SLRT2_20110509.mxd



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Map 4A

Corridor Map (1 of 4) Spring Lake Regional Trail

Legend

-  Existing Segment
-  Planned Segment (general route)*
-  Trail Loop Connection (planned)
-  Partial Land Acquisition Required

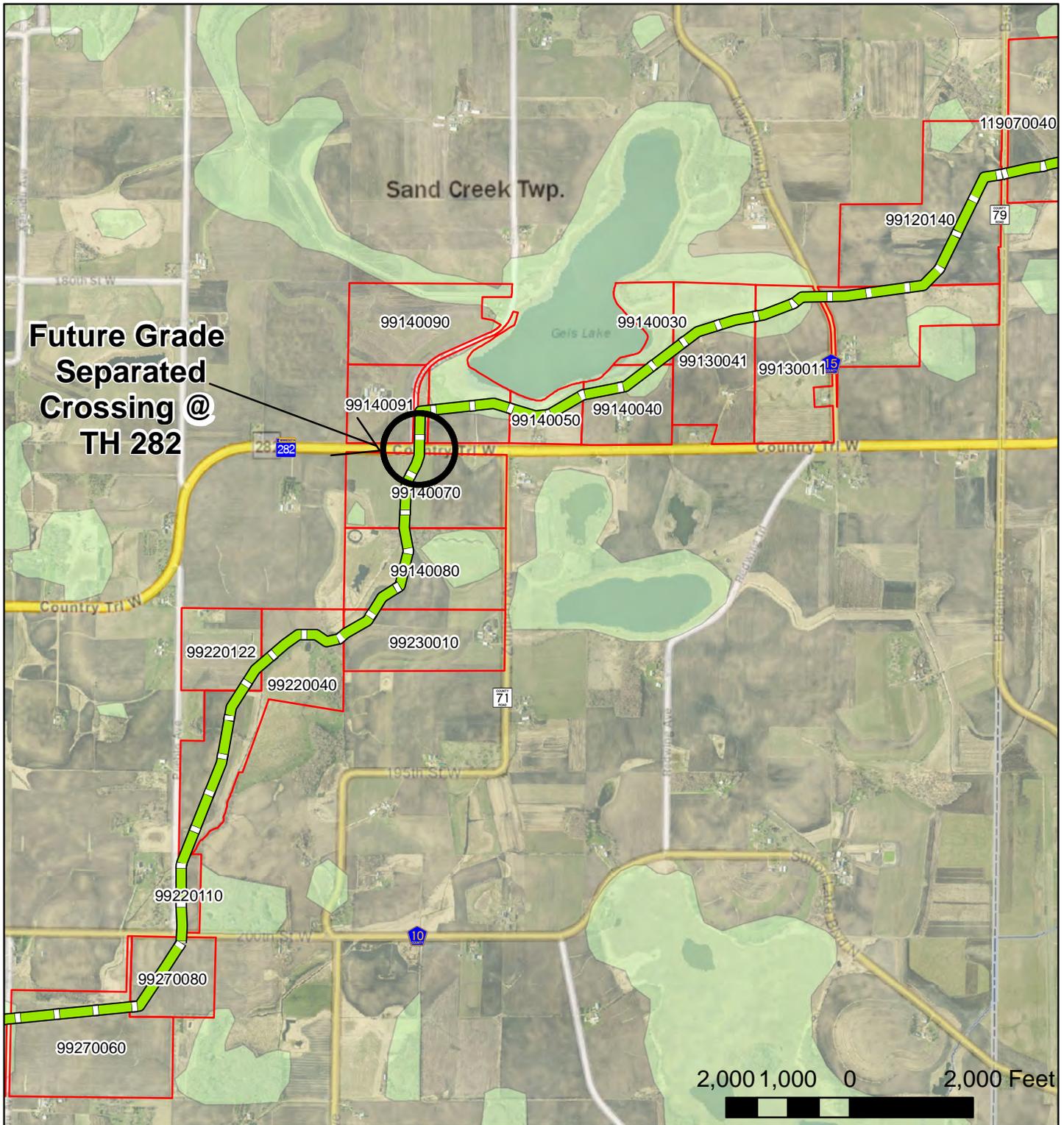


* Final trail corridor and alignment will be defined on a parcel-by-parcel basis by working with landowners, developers, and local jurisdictions.



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Corridor Map (2 of 4)

Spring Lake Regional Trail

Map 4B

Legend

-  Existing Segment
-  Planned Segment (general route)*
-  Trail Loop Connection (planned)
-  Partial Land Acquisition Required

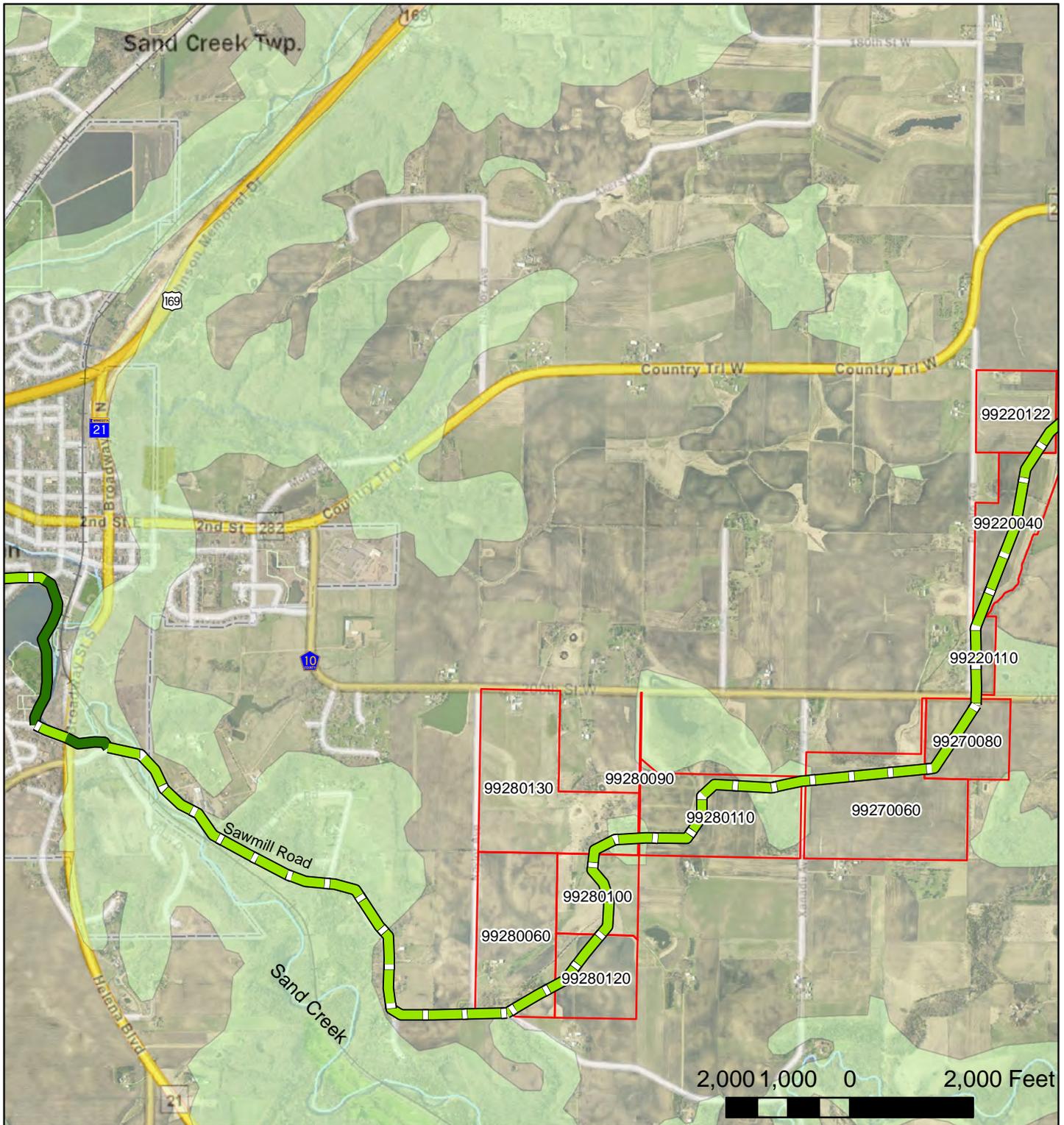


* Final trail corridor and alignment will be defined on a parcel-by-parcel basis by working with landowners, developers, and local jurisdictions.



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Corridor Map (3 of 4)

Spring Lake Regional Trail

Map 4C

Legend

-  Existing Segment
-  Planned Segment (general route)*
-  Trail Loop Connection (planned)
-  Partial Land Acquisition Required

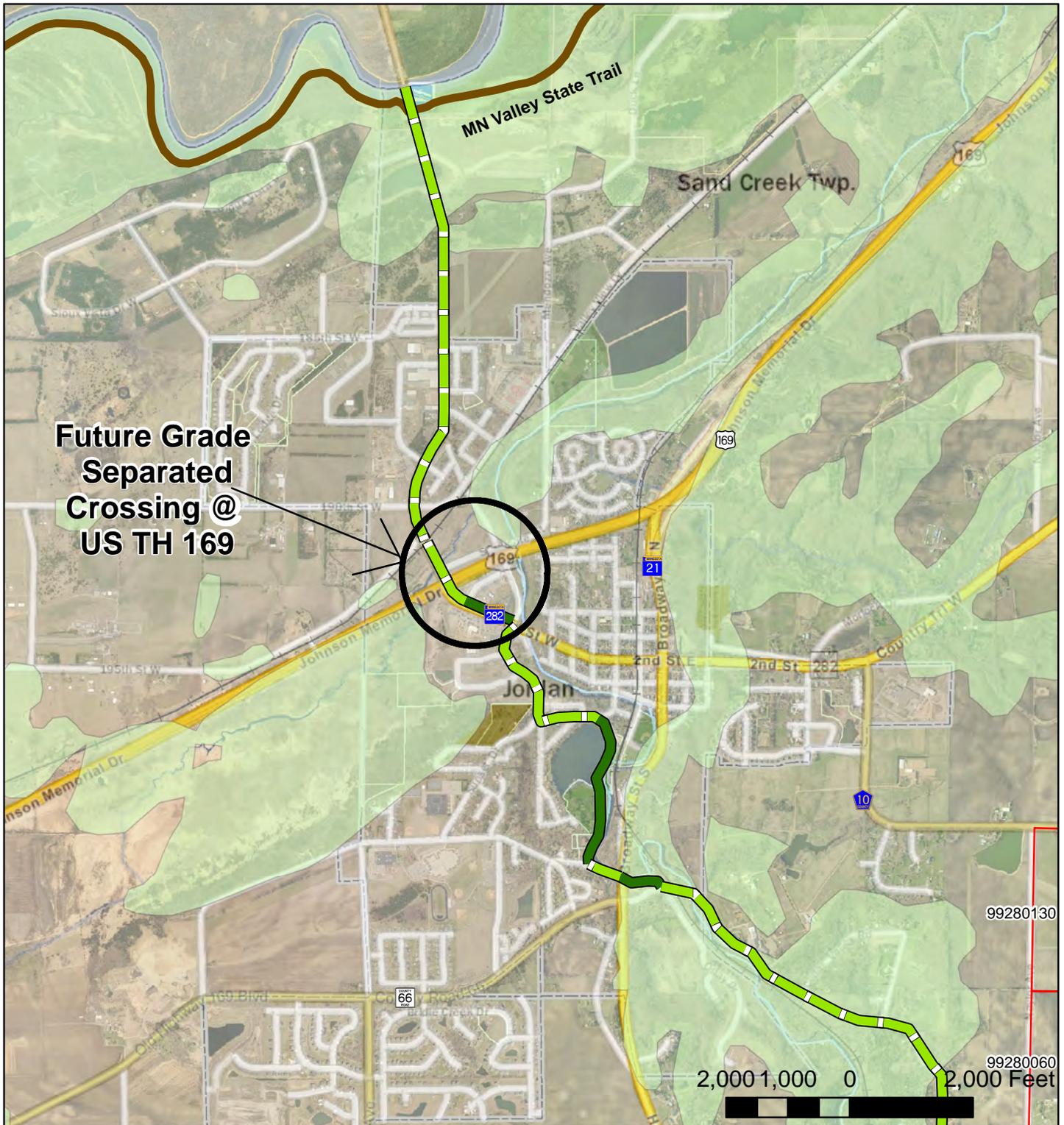


* Final trail corridor and alignment will be defined on a parcel-by-parcel basis by working with landowners, developers, and local jurisdictions.



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Corridor Map (4 of 4)

Spring Lake Regional Trail

Map 4D

Legend

-  Existing Segment
-  Planned Segment (general route)*
-  Trail Loop Connection (planned)
-  Partial Land Acquisition Required



* Final trail corridor and alignment will be defined on a parcel-by-parcel basis by working with landowners, developers, and local jurisdictions.



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Appendix A

1 – List of Public Meetings and Events

2 – Summary of Public Input Comments for Regional Trail Master Planning

3 – Master Plan Concept Open House Public Comments

4 – Notes from Trails Technical Meeting



Scott County Park and Trail Master Planning Process

List of Public Events and Meetings

FIELD TRIP EVENTS – On-Site Field Trips with Citizen Design Team and Public

DATE	TOUR LOCATION/FOCUS
Saturday, September 11, 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:30am to noon – CDT only • Noon to 2:00pm – Public 	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park
Saturday, September 18, 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:30am to noon – CDT only • Noon to 2:00pm – Public 	Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park
Saturday, September 25, 2010 9am to Noon – CDT only	Trails Field Trip
Saturday, October 2, 2010 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9am to Noon – CDT Only • Noon to 2:00pm – Public 	Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve Area

CITIZEN DESIGN TEAM MONTHLY MEETINGS

All meetings scheduled 5:30 to 8:00 pm

MEETING	DATE	LOCATION
#1	Thursday, July 22, 2010	Scott County Law Enforcement Center
#2	Thursday, August 12, 2010	Scott County Regional Training Facility
#3	Thurs, September 16, 2010	PARKS CDT - Ney Nature Center TRAILS CDT - Scott County Government Center
#4	Thursday, October 21, 2010	Cleary Lake Regional Park
#5	Thursday, November 18, 2010	PARKS CDT - State Bank of New Prague TRAILS CDT - Scott County Government Center
#6	Thurs, January 20, 2011	PARKS CDT - Scott County Law Enforcement
#6	Thursday, January 27, 2011	TRAILS CDT - Scott County Conference Center
#7	Thursday, March 10, 2011	Scott County Regional Training Facility
#8	Thursday, September 28, 2011	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

First Set of Workshops: Public Policy Discussion and Collection of Park/Trail Ideas

DATE	WORKSHOP FOCUS
Wednesday, August 18, 2010	Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park
Thursday, August 19, 2010	Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park
Wednesday, August 25, 2010	Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve Search Area
Thursday, August 26, 2010	Scott West and Spring Lake Regional Trail Search Areas

Second Set of Workshops: Presentation of Master Plan Concepts and Input/Feedback

DATE	WORKSHOP FOCUS
Wednesday, February 16, 2011	Doyle-Kennefick Regional Park
Thursday, February 17, 2011	Cedar Lake Regional Park
Wednesday, February 23, 2011	Blakeley Bluffs Park Reserve Search Area
Thursday, February 24, 2011	Scott West and Spring Lake Regional Trail Search Areas

LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNIT (LGU) MEETINGS – DISCUSSIONS AND INPUT

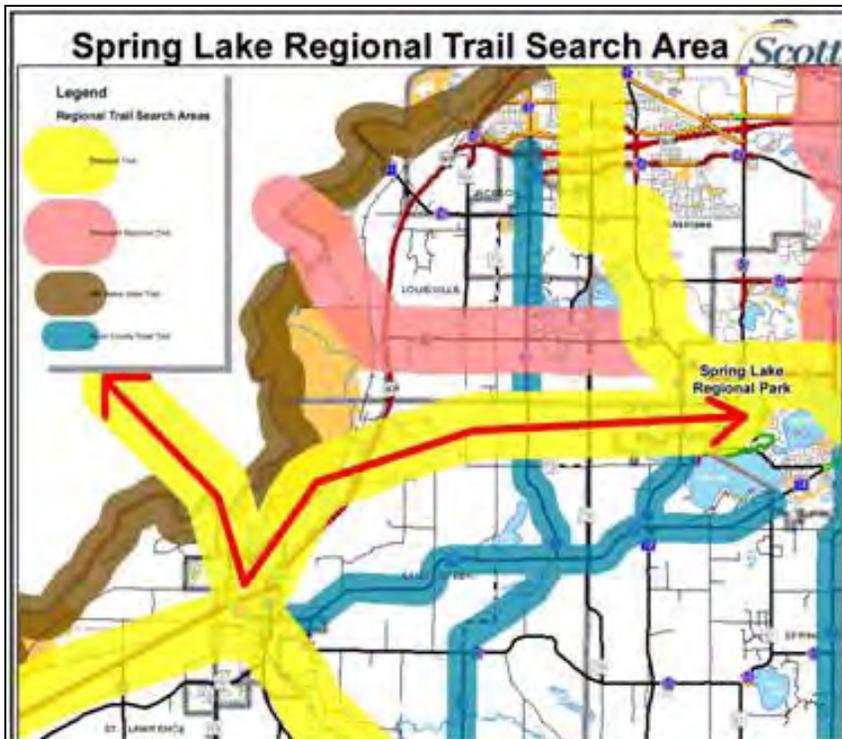
DATE	GOVERNMENTAL BODY	MEETING FOCUS
November 4, 2010	Sand Creek Township Board	Spring Lake Trail search area
November 22, 2010	Shakopee Park and Rec. Board	Scott West Trail search area
November 22, 2010	Jordan Parks Commission	Spring Lake Trail search area
December 6, 2010	Credit River Township Board	Scott West Trail search area
December 7, 2010	Blakeley Township Board	Blakeley Bluffs search area
January 4, 2011	Cedar Lake Township Board	Doyle-Kennefick concepts
January 4, 2011	Helena Township Board	Cedar Lake Farm concepts
January 20, 2011	Prior Lake Parks Commission	Scott West and Spring Lake Trails
February 1, 2011	Downtown Shakopee Partnership (business group)	Scott West Trail/Downtown route
February 1, 2011	Blakeley Township Board	Blakeley Bluffs concepts
February 1, 2011	Helena Township Board	Cedar Lake Farm concepts
February 8, 2011	Shakopee City Council - Workshop	Scott West Trail/Downtown route
February 8, 2011	New Prague Parks Commission	Cedar Lake Farm concepts
February 10, 2011	Elko New Market Parks Commission/New Market Township Joint Meeting	Doyle-Kennefick concepts
May 3, 2011	Shakopee City Council	Scott West Trail/Downtown route – Selection of preferred alignment

SCOTT COUNTY MEETINGS – INPUT AND AUTHORIZATION

DATE	GOVERNMENTAL BODY	MEETING FOCUS
October 6, 2010	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission	Shared findings from 1 st round of public workshops
October 12, 2010	Scott County Board of Commissioners - Workshop	Shared findings from 1 st round of public workshops
February 2, 2011	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission	Presented preferred concepts from CDT
February 8, 2011	Scott County Board of Commissioners - Workshop	Presented preferred concepts from CDT
July 6, 2011	Scott County Parks Advisory Commission	Recommended Approval of Trail Master Plans
September 13, 2011	Scott County Board of Commissioners	Approved Trail Master Plans and Submittal to Metropolitan Council

Summary of Public Input Comments for Regional Trail Master Planning

Spring Lake Regional Trail Public Workshop #1 Comments:



Group Discussion:

- Potential for Green Space Trail
- Options for Road R.O.W.
- Property rights issue - use public ROW where possible
- Off road vs. on-road - how to create a nicer experience
- Trail use conflict between pedestrians and bikers (commuters)?
- There are different types of bikers looking for different experiences (recreation vs commuting, slow vs fast)
- Topography will be an issue due to the many bluffs and ravines – How do you get down the bluffs?

Map Comments:

- Route to follow 170th St from Spring Lake Park to Valley View Dr into Jordan
- Co. Rd. 21 under 169-propose interchange?
- Make a side loop at Grass Lake
- Long, straight stretches of trails are boring and won't be popular
- Trails will be used more by walkers than bikers
- Crossing along River near Jordan
- City Park around Campbell Lake?

Comments from Tour with Citizen Design Team (September 25, 2010)

Spring Lake Trail - Group Discussion:

- The bluffs area will be very difficult to cross with a trail. Existing roads are very steep for bikers and walkers.
- Jordan has a new underpass trail connection under Hwy 21.
- Lagoon Park is a great destination/trailhead opportunity within Jordan.
- To provide more gradual declines along the bluffs, the trail may be most appropriate coming into Jordan from the southeast. Sawmill Road and Naylor Avenue may be opportunities to explore.
- Jordan is looking at potential pedestrian crossings over Hwy 169. These crossings should be considered along with the regional trail routes.



30 Participants Signed-In – 20 non-CDT/PAC members

General Trail Questions

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how safe would you (and your family) feel as trail users on the following design alternatives? (please circle)

A. Separated trail facility (i.e., trail separate from vehicle traffic)

Scale from 1 (Very Unsafe) to 10 (Very Safe) with '+' markers above each number.

5, 10, 8, 8, 1, 1 Average Score = 5.5

B. Bike lanes (i.e., painted lanes on each side of road)

Scale from 1 (Very Unsafe) to 10 (Very Safe) with '+' markers above each number.

5, 7, 8, 6, 1, 1 Average Score = 4.7

C. Bike boulevard (i.e., bikes and cars share roadway)

Scale from 1 (Very Unsafe) to 10 (Very Safe) with '+' markers above each number.

5, 3, 8, 4, 1, 1 Average Score = 3.7

2. What types of features (trail amenities, surfaces, signage, etc.) and/or promotional materials would help enhance and encourage use of the regional trail system?

- I think that in urban areas some road paint is plenty.
• Probably the best option especially since the trail is going through "Old Shakopee" is minimal impact which would be the bike boulevard.
• Bike Boulevard concept – more compared to "deer crossing" sign.

Spring Lake Regional Trail

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate the preferred route for the Spring Lake Regional Trail? (please circle)

Scale from 1 (Poor) to 10 (Excellent) with '+' markers above each number.

8, 10, 8, 2 Average Score = 7

4. Please describe any issues or concerns you may have regarding the Spring Lake Regional Trail.

- *Love the idea of a scenic route, away from traffic and residential.*
- *Hard to really envision it but like concept of a more natural visually pleasing route versus along roadside. Our kids will have to decide where it will end up.*

Comments from Open House Participants During Q & A Session

Spring Lake Trail:

- **Concern about cost and ability to maintain trail.**
- **General support for long-term concept, destination trail.**



SCOTT COUNTY PARKS AND TRAILS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Summary of Regional Trails Master Planning Technical Meeting - September 30, 2010

Attendees:

Ken Ondich, City of New Prague
Bob Pieper, Louisville Township
Cy Wolf, Sand Creek Township
Marty Walsh, Carver County Parks
Jon Allen, City of Savage
Ann Rexine, Three Rivers Park District
Craig Jenson, Scott County Public Works
Charlie Blair, US Fish & Wildlife
Tony Winiecki, Scott County Public Works
Jamie Polley, City of Shakopee
Tamara Simonich, MN DNR
Joe Janish, City of Jordan

Lisa Freese, Scott County Public Works
Luanne Lemke, Louisville Township
Kathy Nielson, Spring Lake Township
Mark Nagel, City of Elko New Market
Jason Swenson, Scott County Natural Resources
Marty Schmitz, Scott County Planning
Steve Albrecht, City of Prior Lake
Bruce Loney, City of Shakopee
Bryan Tucker, City of Savage
Mark Themig, Scott County Parks & Trails
Andy Hingeveld, Scott County Planning

The group convened to discuss two regional trail corridors being considered in Scott County: 1) Scott County West Regional Trail Search Area; and 2) Spring Lake Regional Trail Search Area. The purpose of the meeting was to provide more technical input on the identification of trail routes and how they can be incorporated with local planning efforts. Major considerations discussed during this meeting included: overall project timeline, purpose/expected use of regional trails, development timeframes, and consideration of trails on communities and planned projects. The following is a summary of main points and outcomes from the discussion.

Summary of Comments on Scott County West Regional Trail Search Area

- There is value in providing two regional trail connections north-south in Scott County (i.e., maintaining Scott West and Prior Lake Outlet Channel/21 search areas as separate corridors). They serve different parts of the county and do not duplicate connections, but rather augment each other. Both provide key connections to MN Valley State Trail and river crossings.
- Trail search area along 21 would likely have a shorter segment to complete than Scott West, requiring connection from Southbridge area to 101 and River Road. Crossing Hwy 169 and the busy UP rail line will be key issues to address. This trail may have more priority due to its commuting connection to Hennepin County.
- The primary issue in Shakopee will be identifying a trail route in the downtown area. Existing streets are single-family residential with parking and sidewalks on both sides of road. Options for route would likely require an on-street bike lane and loss of parking on one side of road. These would be difficult issues to address and need to be considered thoroughly.
- Other routes to explore are along Marschall Road and connections via the City's drainage trail system.
- The master plan for Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve identifies a horse and dog trail parking lot/trailhead at the southwest edge of the planned park boundary. This land is currently private-

owned and is not within the District's five-year plan for purchase or construction. Within the park, paved trails are not planned or supported.

- The northern part of Murphy-Hanrehan may be more appropriate of a connection due to the development on the north part of the park and the population base in Savage. The County should work with Three Rivers Park District to explore opportunities to provide trail connections to the north part of the park.

Summary of Comments on Spring Lake Regional Trail Search Area

- There is value in maintaining the Union Pacific/14 regional trail search area and the Spring Lake regional trail search area as separate corridors.
- It will be very difficult, likely unrealistic, to locate a trail in the bluffs area north of Jordan. Due to the topography, steep decline down the bluffs, and unsafe crossings at Hwy 169, the trail should be explored further south. The decline down the bluffs is more gradual on the south side of Jordan and may have better opportunities to locate a trail.
- The DNR and USFW stated it will be unlikely that a paved/gravel trail will be provided within their lands along the MN River due to flooding and high costs for maintaining a constructed trail in floodplain areas. Existing trails are turf and are regularly re-routed due to maintenance/flooding.
- While it has been discussed in the past that trails utilizing road corridors will likely be built sooner than off-road trails, this may not be the case since there are no major road construction projects planned in the County's current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in the Jordan area. Some road corridors may be conducive to retrofit with a trail, but most are not due to narrow right-of-ways, ditches, and drainage issues.
- County Road 15 at Highway 282 will likely be realigned in the future (at undetermined date). The long-term alignment for this corridor is unknown at this time, and how it could interact with the trail is uncertain. This area may need to be avoided or be determined at a later date.
- Louisville Township has identified a trail to be built along Zumbro Avenue.
- This trail corridor has the potential as a destination trail utilizing off-road areas and connecting to quality natural resource areas. If the trail followed busy County roads, it would likely not generate as many trips as if it were a destination trail. The destination trail will likely take 30+ years to complete (likely through development). Interim on-road routes could be identified until the ultimate route is completed.
- The group discussed the need to coordinate the trail with development of Jordan, Prior Lake, and Sand Creek Township.
- Fitting a trail into farming areas will be an issue. Trail may need to wait until farming practices are no longer in operation.
- Many agricultural ditches in this area have flooding issues and crossings need to be examined if trail routes will traverse.

Outcomes from Meeting/Direction Moving Forward

- County staff will meet with Sand Creek and Louisville Town Boards further on potential routes before more detailed analysis is prepared.
- County staff will meet further with City of Shakopee and City of Jordan staff further to review potential alignments through their communities and especially their downtown areas.
- The search areas for Scott West and Prior Lake Outlet Channel/21 will remain as separate corridors, with the Scott West alignment being identified through this master plan process and the Prior Lake Outlet Channel/21 alignment being identified at a future date.

- The search areas for Spring Lake trail and Union Pacific Rail Corridor/14 will remain as separate corridors, with the Spring Lake alignment being identified through this master plan process and the Union Pacific/14 alignment being identified through a separate process.
- The Spring Lake trail should be focused on a more southern route to find a connection into Jordan that avoids the steep bluffs and ravines north of Jordan. This trail alignment will likely be a destination, off-road trail, which will be completed through the development process. This trail corridor will likely take 30+ years to complete. The primary purpose of the master plan will be to preserve the corridor.
- Since the Spring Lake trail will be a long-term effort, a more near-term connection for Jordan to the northern part of the county should be examined. The master plan will identify a search area (potentially connecting to the UP line in the process of being abandoned) that could serve as an interim route.
- Carver County and Scott County are working jointly to prepare a master plan for the purchase of the Union Pacific rail corridor from Merriam Junction to Chaska. Scott County should explore the ability to add the County Road 14 search area segment into this master plan. Utilize Louisville Township's previous planning studies for this analysis.