



Renville COUNTY PARKS

2020 Annual Report



Parks and Trails Committee

2020 Parks and Trails Committee Members:

Linda M. Callier- District 1	12/31/21 (term expiration)
Louise A. Kiecker- District 2	12/31/20 (term expiration)
Calvin R. Aarons- District 3	12/31/20 (term expiration)
Stephen Altmann- District 4	12/31/20 (term expiration)
Larry A. Eekhoff- District 5	12/31/21 (term expiration)
OPEN- Youth At-Large	
OPEN- Youth At-Large	
Thomas P. Gruendemann- At-Large	12/31/22 (term expiration)
Dave Fischer- At-Large	12/31/22 (term expiration)
Bob Fox- County Board Chair	
Randy Kramer- County Board Vice Chair	
Jesse Diehn- Parks Manager	



The nine-member Parks and Trails Committee meets quarterly. One member is appointed by the Renville County Board of Commissioners from each of the five commissioner voting districts with four members selected at-large, two of which are youth members. Members serve three-year terms with a term limit of nine consecutive years. Each Parks and Trails Committee Member is paid a per diem of \$65 per meeting plus compensation for mileage to and from meetings.

The Parks and Trails Committee has the following duties and responsibilities.

1. Study, report, and make recommendations on amendments to the Park Ordinance and the Parks and Trails Plain prior to adoption of an amendment by the Renville County Board of Commissioners.
2. Conduct public hearings, review all information, and prepare a report and recommendation to the County Board on park land acquisition and development.
3. Act as an advisory committee to the County Board reviewing all recreation, leisure, and park-related issues including park planning, operation, maintenance, protection, and improvement and trail related issues including trail planning, development, construction, operation and maintenance, and funding sources.
4. Study and recommend appropriate fees for park permits and trail system user fees.
5. Such other duties as the Renville County Board of Commissioners may recommend.

2020 Committee Highlights

- Meetings held four times in 2020.
- Recommended approval for a camping reservation system.
- Recommended not having a “hard closing date” for the Parks.
- Recommended a firewood program.
- Recommended a trail connection between Birch Coulee Battle Field and Birch Coulee County Park.
- Recommended a 2020 Parks Archery Hunt.

Parks Department Staff



The Renville County Parks Department maintains the seven county parks and provides grounds keeping at several of the Public Works buildings, the Government Services Center complex, Renville County Fairgrounds, and the Birch Coulee Battle Field grounds. The Department has two full-time employees. A Park Manager, whose primary duties are performed within the office but also provides direction and assistance in the field when needed and the Lead Maintenance Worker whose duties are performed in the field. There are also three seasonal park maintenance workers that assist the Lead Maintenance worker, generally

between the months of May and August. The Parks Department also received assistance in the Fall from a Highway employee when help was needed.

With the staffing that the department had in 2020, the primary focus of the maintenance crew from April through October was to maintain the current condition of the parks, which included mowing common areas, cleaning of the shelters, restrooms, horse bunkers, and campsites.

While maintaining the parks a few other things parks staff accomplished were:

- Trail directional signage, trail name signage, you are here map signage and park kiosk signage installed in Beaver Falls and installation began in Birch Coulee.
- Poured concrete pads for three donated concrete picnic tables and one memorial bench.
- Assisted with camping reservations.
- Cut, split and supplied wood at parks for campers.
- Re-mulched plants and flower beds in all of the parks.
- Added three new sites in Beaver Falls Recreational Area.
- Added new horse ties in Beaver Falls for day parking.
- Fixed, stained and numbered picnic tables and benches.
- Installed new hand sanitizer dispensers in bathrooms.
- Had a student ride along for a job shadow day.
- Assisted Highway Department in rerouting park road in Vicksburg.
- Cut trees along park roads and trails.
- Repaired and refurbished trash cans.
- Had a snow plow route with the Highway Department.

Contracted Work

- Service work on the water system at Lake Allie.
- Tree trimming at Beaver Falls, Birch Coulee, and Skalbekken.
- Repairs made to the Birch Coulee shelter fireplace.

Saddle Club Volunteer Hours

- Between six different Saddle Clubs, members volunteered 238 hours to keep up and improve Renville County's Horse Camps and Trails.

Grants

- Minnesota Trail Riders Association - \$6532 for Horse Campground/Trail improvements at Beaver Falls and Skalbekken.

2020 Park Usage

The Renville County Parks Department tracked camping usage within the park system via camping permits. Camping fees for rustic camping is the same in all parks, but different parks with electric and or water had different rates.

The rates for 2020 are shown below:

- Rustic Camping all parks
 - \$20 per night
- Birch Coulee Electric
 - \$25 per night
- Lake Allie Rates
 - \$27 Nightly
 - \$175 Weekly
 - \$550 Monthly
 - \$1630 Seasonal



2020 Data Collected from Camping Permits

<u>Park</u>	<u>Total Income</u>	<u>Fire wood</u>	<u>Nights Stayed</u>	<u>Large Events</u>
Lake Allie	\$29,924.22	\$45.00	1664	
Beaver Falls	\$5,781.40	\$174.00	250	
Birch Coulee	\$7,441.52	\$35.00	281	1
Vicksburg	\$5,788.07	\$62.75	245	
Skalbekken	\$6,520.44	\$45.60	313	
Mack Lake	\$580.01	\$29.00	19	
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$56,035.66</u>	<u>\$391.35</u>	<u>2772</u>	<u>1</u>

Parks Marketing

(In partnership with the Renville County EDA)

- Central Community Transit (CCT): Wrapped two CCT busses with advertisements.
 - Bus #1 Route: Olivia, Bird Island, Danube, Fairfax, Redwood Falls and Hutchinson
 - Renville County to Willmar
- Minnesota Trail Riders Association Newsletter: Five Issues per year distributed to 1,000 subscribers throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota
- Facebook: Weekly posts promoting Renville County Parks. 1,287 Followers/1,252 Likes
- Renville County Parks Rock: Kicked off a kindness-spreading treasure hunt for kids and families. Approximately 200 painted rocks, with inspirational messages and themes, were hidden throughout the parks to draw in visitors.
- Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Marketing Class: Partnered with the Renville County West LYFT class to promote marketing of the parks. Received many photos to use and assisted in critiquing class video clips about the parks created by students.
- Renville County Tourism Poster: Updated Renville County tourism poster promoting the parks, points of interest, dining establishments and historical points in the county.
- Park Kiosk Updates: Updated local tourism information in the kiosks located on all park restrooms/shelters.
- Renville County Fair: Planned to have a booth at the Renville County Fair. Canceled due to COVID.
- Spring Outdoor Expo: Planned to attend the 2020 Spring Outdoor Expo at the Willmar Civic Center to promote Renville County. Canceled due to COVID.
- Outdoor Education Day: Planned for 300 students from Renville County to attend an Outdoor Education Day held at Birch Coulee in partnership with the EDA, Extension Office, Sheriff's Office, Environmental Services Office, Public Works, GIS, SWCD, Master Gardeners, and Historical Society. Postponed due to COVID.

Donations Received in 2020

- Sons of The American Legion: \$300 for the Outdoor Education Day
- Olivia Kiwanis Club: \$100 for the Outdoor Education Day
- Revier Cattle Company: 408 pattied burgers and use of pull behind charcoal grill for the Outdoor Education Day
- Ag Country Farm Credit Services: Cups, plates, napkins and silverware for the Outdoor Education Day
- Bernicks: Bottles of water for the Outdoor Education Day
- Minnesota ATV Riders: Three cement picnic tables in memory of Nick Werner (*Vicksburg/Skalbekken*)
- Vagle Family: A tree in memory of Madison Vagle (*Beaver Falls*)
- Karen Krause and Mike Roos: A bench and a tree in memory of Larry and Jeanette Roos (*Beaver Falls*)
- Various Donors: \$247 Cash

