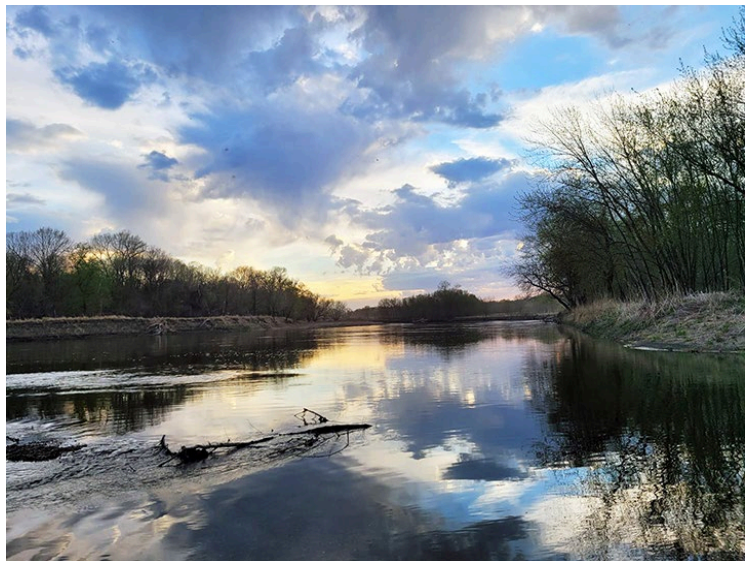




2023 Annual Report



Parks and Trails Committee

2023 Members:

Penny Macik - District 1
Louise A. Kiecker - District 2
Calvin R. Aarons - District 3
Stephen Altmann - District 4
Larry A. Eekhoff - District 5
Brad Bastian - At-Large
Dave Fischer - At-Large
OPEN – Youth At-Large
OPEN – Youth At- Large
Greg Snow - 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.

2023 Committee Highlights

- Recommended 2023 Parks Archery Hunt.
- Recommended 2023 Woodcutting Program.
- Recommended a land survey for Anderson Lake.
- Recommended a new fee schedule for 2024.
- Reviewed a five-year work plan and made recommendations.

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 who 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 four seasonal park maintenance

workers that assist the Lead Maintenance worker, generally between the months of May and August. The Parks Department also received assistance from the Highway Department when help is needed.

The primary focus of the maintenance crew is to maintain the current conditions of the parks, which included mowing common areas, cleaning of the shelters, restrooms, horse bunkers, and campsites and other routine maintenance.

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

- Assisted with camping reservations.
- Trail work and repairs.
- Cut, split and supplied wood at parks for campers.
- Re-mulched plants and flower beds in all of the parks.
- Attended the Willmar Outdoor Expo.
- Attended Farm Fest
- Attended the Renville County Fair.
- Attended Upper Sioux Agency State Park community meetings.
- Held the second annual Parks Outdoor Education Day at Birch Coulee.
- Fixed and stained picnic tables and benches.
- Cut trees along park roads and trails.
- Mow and maintained Birch Coulee Battlefield, County Highway Shops, Fairgrounds and the Government Services Campus.

Contracted Work

- Groomed winter trails at Beaver Falls and Skalbekken.
- Vicksburg Shelter reroofed and a ceiling installed
- Lake Allie Reroofed due to storm damage.

Upper MN Valley Trail Riders Association

All of the volunteers belong to one of five Saddle Clubs.

- Amigo Riders
- Granite Valley
- Hawk Creek
- Redwood Valley
- Triple T

Between 3 different outings there was 26.5 total volunteer hours.

Grants

- **SHIP Partner Grant** - \$5,000 Parks Education Day, printing of trail maps and kiosks.
- **DNR Outdoor Recreation Grant** - \$350,000 for new bathroom/shower/storm shelter facility at Lake Allie County Park.

Donations Received in 2023

- Sugar Employees Benefit Fund- \$5,500 to purchase six concrete picnic tables.
- Firewood Donations- \$335.53

2023 Park Usage

The Renville County Parks Department tracked camping usage within the park system via camping permits. Camping fees for rustic camping are the same in all parks. Campsites with electric and water have different rates.

The rates for 2023 are shown below:

- Rustic Camping all parks \$20 per night
- Birch Coulee Electric
 - \$25 per night
 - \$140 Weekly
 - \$450 Monthly
- Lake Allie Rates
 - \$27 Nightly
 - \$150 Weekly
 - \$550 Monthly
 - \$1630 Seasonal



2023 Data Collected from Camping Permits

<u>Park</u>	<u>Total Income</u>	<u>Nights Stayed</u>	<u>Shelter Reservations/ Large Events</u>	<u>New Guest in Reservation System</u>
Lake Allie	\$29,464	1635	1	54
Beaver Falls	\$9,083	484	1	83
Birch Coulee	\$8,353	380	8	42
Vicksburg	\$5,800	303	6	58
Skalbekken	\$5,435	289	1	48
Mack Lake	\$972	52	0	10
<u>Totals</u>	<u>\$59,289</u>	<u>3143</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>295</u>

Groomed Trails

The Parks Department and the EDA teamed up have the park road groomed at Beaver Falls and Skalbekken Parks. Both Parks have approximately 1.6 miles of winter groomed trails.

The total number of trail users were-

Beaver Falls- 163
Skalbekken- 212

There was a total of 310 people that walked, 36 snowshoed, 4 biked and 25 people cross country skied.



Parks Marketing/Communications

(In partnership with the Renville County EDA)

Facebook: Weekly posts promoting Renville County Parks. 1,779 Followers. (An increase of 600 followers from last year.)

Renville County Tourism Poster: Marketed the Renville County tourism poster promoting the parks, points of interest, dining establishments and historical points in the county.



Minnesota Trail Riders

Association Newsletter: Advertised in five Issues per year that are distributed to 1,000 subscribers throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North and South Dakota

Spring Outdoor Expo: Attended the Spring Outdoor Expo at the Willmar Civic Center to promote Renville County.

Farm Fest:

Attended Farm Fest, located in Redwood County, and shared a booth with the EDA to promote Renville County.



Renville County Fair: Had a “selfie station” with a fishing prize package and parks backdrop to interact with attendees (Selfie station was also used at the Spring Outdoor Expo and Farm Fest). Email addresses were collected from registrants and placed in database for marketing Renville County Parks and tourism.



RENVILLE COUNTY Learn more: www.renvillecountymn.gov

MORE THAN EXPECTED!

Whether you choose to visit for a day, or stay for a lifetime, you will discover **"More Than Expected"** in Renville County!

Visit 1,300 acres of County parkland located along the banks of the Minnesota River. You may want to bring your camera, tent, canoe, binoculars, horse, and a good pair of hiking shoes. *We hope to see you soon!*



RENVILLE COUNTY PARKS
320-523-3747
ParksDept@renvillecountymn.gov

RENVILLE COUNTY
HRA/EDA
320-523-3656
EDA@renvillecountymn.gov

PARK LEGEND:
1 - Skalkakkee
2 - Vicksburg
3 - Beaver Falls
4 - Birch Coulee
5 - Anderson Lake
6 - Mack Lake
7 - Lake Allie

Renville County Parks
Renville County Housing & Economic Development

Southern MN Tourism Association (SMTA):

Represented Renville County in the Southern MN Tourism Association regular, executive committee and marketing committee meetings. Placed a print ad in the STMA Tourism Guide. 300,000 copies will be printed and distributed throughout Minnesota, along with an electronic version.



Outdoor Education Day: Hosted the second annual Renville County Parks Outdoor Education Day. 166 students from Prairie Lutheran, GFW, BLHS, and RCW school districts attended the event, which was held at Birch Coulee County Park. Partners included the EDA, Extension Office, Sheriff's Office, Environmental Services Office, Public Works, GIS, SWCD, Master Gardeners, Historical Society, and RAPAD. *(Photo right: Hawk Creek Watershed District Staff used a stream table to help show students how rivers and streams form in our landscape and change in response to water flow.)*