

## Technical Advisory Group Workshop

### Master Plan for Dakota County's New Regional Park in Empire Township



A Regional Park for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

## Workshop Purpose

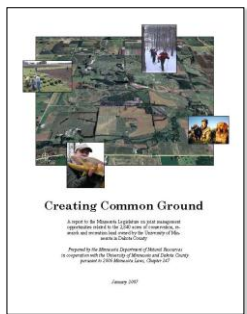
1. Share research on the new park
2. Generate ideas for the new park
3. Explore how we can innovatively integrate agency missions on Vermillion Highlands



## Framework

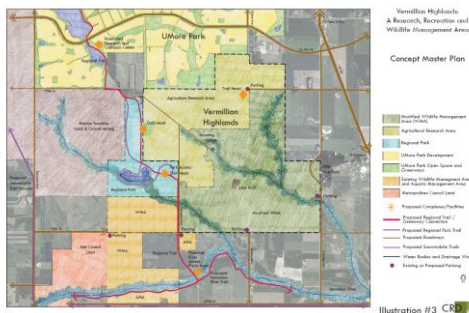
### Common Ground 2007 Legislative Report

1. Research will continue undiminished
2. High quality hunting experiences are provided
3. Access for multiple uses year-round (recreation)



## Framework

### Vermillion Highlands Concept Master Plan



## Framework

### Dakota County Parks, Lakes, Trails and Greenways Vision, 2030

#### What's New?

##### GREAT PLACES: Destination Parks

- New Regional Park in Vermillion Highlands
- New design for two parks
- Better access area
- Gathering and information areas
- Informing and water play areas
- More popular "park trails"
- Enhanced parking
- Biking and accessible trailways

##### CONNECTED PLACES: Greenway Trails

- Bring parks to people... Connect parks, centers, parks, schools, and trails, greenways, bluffs, and the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers.
- Walking, biking, and fun for all
- Public agencies work together to create 200 miles of greenways using already existing assets

##### PROTECTED PLACES: Green Infrastructure

- Enhance and protect park resources
- Protect critical resources in public/private partnerships
- Protect natural areas and open space to public/private partnerships

##### DAKOTA COUNTY PARK SYSTEM and COLLABORATIVE OPEN SPACE PROTECTION

- Dakota County Parks
- Dakota, Deere, and Other Regional Open Space
- Dakota and Regional Natural Resources
- Regional Open Space (including the Vermillion Highlands)
- Dakota County Open Space (including the Vermillion Highlands)
- Vermillion Highlands Open Space (including the Vermillion Highlands)
- Vermillion Highlands Open Space (including the Vermillion Highlands)
- Vermillion Highlands Open Space (including the Vermillion Highlands)

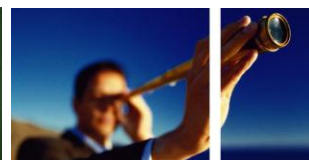


#### Concepts for Greenways



## Desired Workshop Outcomes

1. Enthusiasm (!)
2. Innovative ideas
3. Movement to the next step... concept alternatives





### View Analysis



Photo 3



Photo 4

### View Analysis



Photo 5



Photo 6

### View Analysis



Photo 7



Photo 8

### View Analysis



Photo 9



Photo 10

### View Analysis



Photo 11



Photo 12

### View Analysis



Photo 13



Photo 14

### View Analysis



Photo 15



Photo 16

### View Analysis



Photo 17



Photo 18

### View Analysis

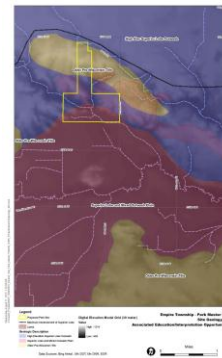


Photo 19



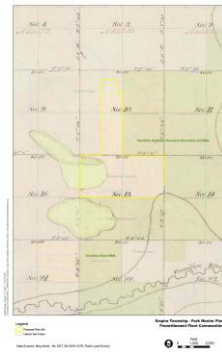
Photo 20

### Geology



1. Influence on Vegetation
2. Interpretation Opportunities

### Presettlement Vegetation



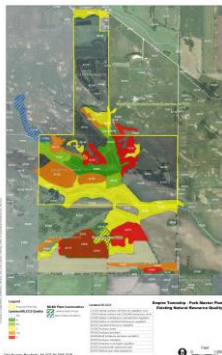
**Public Land Survey Notes:**  
*"This township being entirely destitute of timber and the soil only of medium quality it is not a valuable tracked of land for any purpose."*

### Water Resources



1. Subwatersheds
2. Groundwater
3. Agriculture and mining to the west
4. Pond (depth, vegetation, outlet, BMPs)

## Existing Land Cover



1. Updated MLCCS
2. Pasture and Tree Plantings
3. County Biological Survey
4. Quality

## Above-Ground Cultural Resources



Lone Rock, 1903 (Howard Crosby, photographer; MHS Collections)



Jim Corrigan Farm, Rosemount, ca. 1930 (MHS Collections)

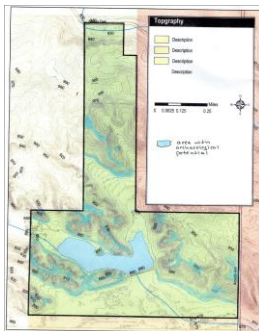


Great Northern Oil Refinery, Pine Bend, 1958 (Ver Kijak, MHS Collections)

### Major Historical Themes

1. Lone Rock – a landmark in the prairie
2. Treaties in 1851 open area to Euro-American settlers
3. Railroad service to Empire Township vicinity by 1860
4. Wheat is king – until frontier moves west
5. Dairying important by late nineteenth century
6. World War II: Gopher Ordnance Works (GOW)
7. GOW transfer to U of M
8. Post-war industrialization (refineries, quarries) and exurban development

## Potential Archaeological Sites



1. Native American archaeological sites have been recorded within the Vermillion Highlands, some within a few miles of the park.
2. All known sites are located on uplands, which overlook streams and wetlands.
3. Evidence suggest that the camps were short-term.
4. Prominent heights were often used as lookouts.
5. Potential for archaeological sites in the park is greatest along ridgelines and relatively level areas at the base of slopes.

## Demographic Changes

1. Anticipated population growth in the area surrounding the park
2. Aging of the population
3. Diversity
4. Active living goals



## Recreation Themes

Dakota County Parks:  
Great Places, Connected Places,  
Protected Places

1. Basic Activities:  
Picnicking, hiking, play areas
2. Common Activities:  
Swimming, interpretation,
3. Unique Activities:  
Houseboat camping, agriculture



## Questions and Comments



### Small Group Breakout Session #1

## What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

### What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

#### Research and Learning



### What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

#### Nature Based Recreation



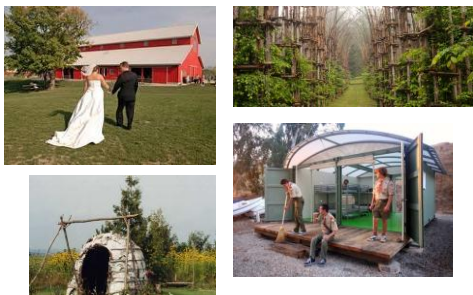
### What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

#### Education and Awareness



### What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

#### Facilities



### What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

#### Energy and the Environment



What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

Waste as a Resource



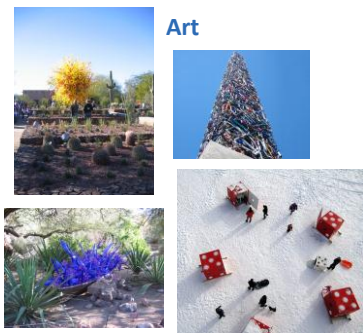
What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

Circulation and Transportation



What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

Art



What Could a Park of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Look Like?

Agricultural Research and Local Food



15 Minute Break!



Collaborative Opportunities

What can we gain by working together that we don't by working alone?



**Collaborative Opportunities**

**How can nature-based recreation help enrich wildlife management/hunting and research/education?**



**Collaborative Opportunities**

**How can research/education help enrich nature-based recreation and wildlife management/hunting?**



**Collaborative Opportunities**

**How can wildlife management/hunting help enrich nature-based recreation and research/education?**



**Thank You!**

**For more information contact :**

Mary Jackson: 952-891-7039

Steve Sullivan: 952-891-7088

**Website Technical Information:**

[www.swbinc.com/current\\_projects.html](http://www.swbinc.com/current_projects.html)

**Website Public Information:**

[www.co.dakota.mn.us/](http://www.co.dakota.mn.us/)