

1993 PROJECT ABSTRACT

For the period ending June 30, 1995

This project was supported by MN Future Resources Fund.

Title: Theodore Wirth Park Tamarack Bog Preservation Project

Program Manager: Jonalie Wosepka

Organization: People for Minneapolis Parks Fund

Legal Citation: M.L. 93, Ch. 172, Sec. 14, Subd. 12(k)

Appropriation Amount: \$40,000

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

To restore the Theodore Wirth Park Tamarack Bog, improve the access trail, construct a boardwalk, and develop and install self-guided interpretive signage.

RESULTS

Access to the bog is available to the public along cedar shaving-lined switchback trails to the bog edge. Boardwalk and a board-walk "bridge" across the moat allows visitors to cross over onto the bog island inhabited by over 225 tamarack trees. These trees provide shade for the sphagnum moss, orchids, wildflowers, and fauna that inhabit the bog. The boardwalk protects both the visitor and the habitat. Volunteers installed the boardwalk and planted over 600 native wildflowers. 5000 copies of the guidebook were printed. Directional and informational signs to the bog were also installed.

PROJECT RESULTS USE AND DISSEMINATION

The self-touring guidebook was copyrighted and published and is available at boxes leading to the bog. It is also disseminated at the Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden and Bird Sanctuary where naturalists lead tours every Saturday to the bog. People for Minneapolis Parks Fund is distributing the guide through their office and other Minneapolis park offices. It will also be distributed to schools and youth agencies. As a result of this project, the public has access to an acid tamarack bog that they would normally have to travel to northern Minnesota to enjoy and learn from the experience.

installing a culvert to direct this water in the event
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of future heavy rains.

- B.6 Benefits: Improved trail access and the boardwalk construction will increase accessibility into the bog and prevent destruction of this sensitive area.

C. Interpretive Education for Visitors to the Bog.

C.1 Narrative: Develop, design & install interpretive guide and signage.

C.2 Procedures: Work with staff/volunteers to design interpretive guide and signage.

C.3 Budget:

a. Amount Budgeted: \$8,000

b. Balance: \$0

C.4 Timeline:

7/93 1/94 6/94 1/95 6/95

Design guide and signage

XX

Bid and install signage

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

C.5 Status: The guidebook is now completed and several copies are enclosed. Directional signage is in place and the informational signs will be installed by July 15th. Parkway signage is under construction and should be in place by late July. Carpenters are making the boxes to hold the guidebooks to the signs. These will be in place by late July.

C.6 Benefits: Although interpretive programs and field trips will now be available to utilize this resource, a large number of residents and visitors will also be able to use these materials without staff to understand the history and unique natural history features of the area.

V. Evaluation:

- A. Monitoring of plant survival/growth by volunteer naturalists.
- B. Feedback from bog visitors via comments received via naturalists, phone and mail inquiries.
- C. Evidence of increased visitation.

VI. Context:

A. The tamarack bog in Theodore Wirth Park is one of the few remaining natural acid bogs within the metropolitan area. Since much of greater Minnesota's ecosystems contain bogs, restoring this bog allows park visitors to learn about and experience an important part of our state's environment, as well as Minneapolis' environmental history. Currently there is a severe lack of environmental education sites. Restoration of this bog created more

opportunities for hands-on environmental education.

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B. To date, interpretive programs led by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have only been able to come to the edge of the bog and observe from afar. The bog's inaccessibility deterred other groups from visiting the site. Groups prefer to tour the more accessible Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden across the parkway, which is not handicapped accessible. This project now allows the MPRB and other tour groups, including differently abled groups to venture into this habitat.

C. The restoration completed prior to 1993 in the tamarack bog was not funded by LCMR. Approximately fifty feet of boardwalk had been purchased and installed, some of the understory had been replanted, and two preliminary landscape design sketches had been created. We anticipate the completion of the entire LCMR project by the end of July 1995. No additional LCMR funding will be requested for this project.

VII. Qualifications:

1. Project Manager

- a. Familiarity with the bog project, proposal writing, budget monitoring, administrative organization, etc.
- b. Current Executive Director, sole staff person for People for Minneapolis Parks Fund.

2. Cooperators/Other Investigators

- a. Mary Maguire Lerman, Jeff Lee
- b. MPRB horticulturist (interpretive signage & guide, installation), MPRB Manager, Environmental Programs (environmentally sound construction tactics)

VIII. Reporting Requirements:

This is the final status report.