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DEVELOPMENT & ACQUISITION STATUS

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Lake Shetek
State Park



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MINNESOTA STATE PARK SYSTEM

The mission of the Division of Parks and Recreation is to provide a state park system that perpetuates Minnesota's scenic beauty and its natural and cultural resources, while being responsive to public needs and expectations, and providing a diversity of recreational opportunities.

The Division of Parks and Recreation manages 64 state parks across Minnesota. The state park system is vital to Minnesota's tourism, an industry that is becoming the backbone of many economies in greater Minnesota. Our most unique and valuable cultural and natural resources are found within state park boundaries. It is the Division of Parks & Recreation's responsibility to acquire, protect and interpret these unique resources.

Prior to the 1989 legislative session, funding constraints and increasing visitor use seriously eroded the Division of Parks and Recreation's ability to provide quality recreational experiences and services. Since then the Governor and state legislators have responded to the need for increased funding for the operations budget. However, financing the maintenance of existing facilities and new development in the face of increasing visitor use remains a problem. This will be addressed during the 1990 legislative session when a capital bonding bill is considered.

The state park system has the Department of Natural Resource's (DNR) largest physical plant with over 2,800 major facilities requiring major rehabilitation. The Division of Parks & Recreation has identified more than \$55 million in capital budget needs. These projects include land acquisition, resource management, major rehabilitation or replacement of existing facilities and a few new facilities. Legislative funding requests to meet this need will be spread throughout future bienniums.

A recent study conducted by the Minnesota Historical Society identifies 515 historic structures located in the state park system. These structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Most of these structures are of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and Work Progress Administration (WPA) vintage. The CCC/WPA structures were constructed in the 1930's. These facilities are over 50 years old and many are in need of major rehabilitation which includes the electrical, sewage, and water systems associated with these buildings.

Many years of intensive use is also a consideration when looking at the current condition of campgrounds, picnic areas, group camps and trail systems. Lack of development and rehabilitation of these and other state park facilities will reduce park use. A reduction in state park use will adversely impact the economic development of adjacent communities and Minnesota's effort to improve tourism.

As capital development funds have become available we have completed the highest priority projects. As additional needs are identified, they are reviewed and placed on the statewide priority list for future completion.

In 1991, Itasca, Minnesota's oldest state park, will be 100 years old. For 100 years Minnesota has had a park system to be proud of. The present challenge is to manage the park resources and recreational development to ensure that Minnesotans will be proud of their state park system for another hundred years.

AN OVERVIEW OF LAKE SHETEK STATE PARK

Lake Shetek State Park is located in southwestern Minnesota, in Murray County. The park entrance is two miles north of the Town of Currie on Murray County 38 and two miles west on CSAH 37. The statutory boundary encompasses 1175 acres. Of these 193.30 acres are privately owned.

Lake Shetek State Park lies in the Coteau des Prairie Region of Minnesota, which means "slope of the prairie" translated from French. The park is situated on the eastern shore of Lake Shetek, the largest lake in southwestern Minnesota and the headwaters for the Des Moines River.

Gently rolling hills dotted with lakes and wetlands characterize Lake Shetek's landscape. These terrain features are the result of glacial activity which left several hundred feet of glacial till deposited over sandstone and a bedrock of Sioux Quartzite. The ice-deposited material derives from four major ice sheets which occurred between 11,000 and two million years ago. Lake Shetek was formed when glacial meltwater channels were dammed behind the Altamont Moraine; an accumulation of boulders, stones and other debris deposited by a glacier.

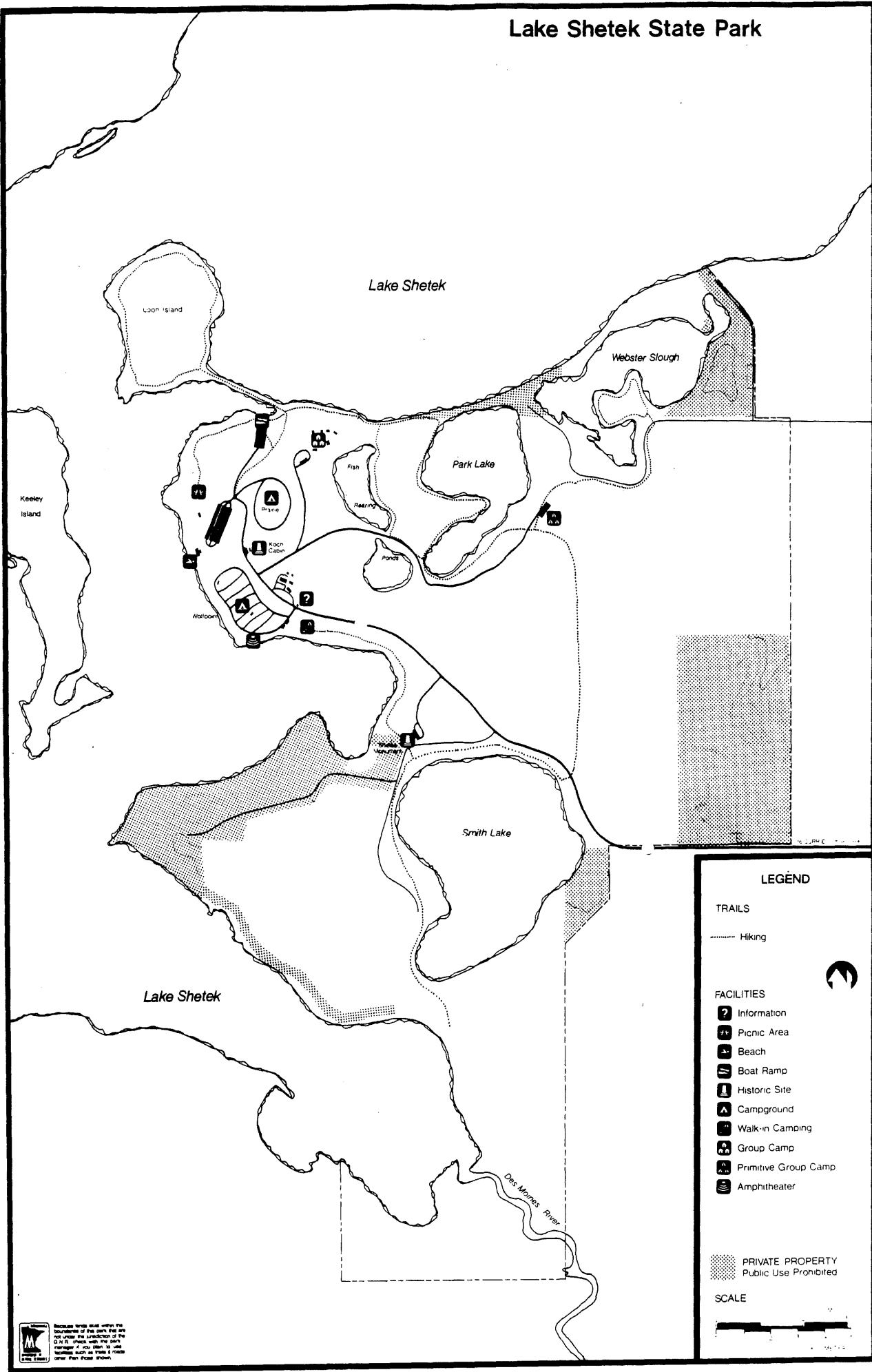
A century ago most of the Shetek area was treeless prairie. The prairie provided habitat for bison, elk, antelope, wolves, and prairie chickens. During the past century native vegetation has been removed from 99 percent of Minnesota's prairie lands. Most of this land was converted to agricultural uses.

After the area was settled wild fires were suppressed. Wildfires are necessary for prairie regeneration. In the absence of these fires tree species were able to become established in areas not cultivated or used for pasture. Today much of the area around the lake is dominated by Western Big woods vegetation. Species present include bur oak, basswood, green ash, and elm on the dry sites and black willow, cottonwood, and box elder on the wetter sites. Former agricultural

fields have been seeded to smooth brome or a mixture of brome when acquired by the DNR. In recent years there have been efforts to restore some of the old fields to native prairie consisting of Indian grass, sideoats gramma, switch grass, big bluestem and little bluestem. As a result of these seedings, a portion of the park resembles the prairie that once dominated the landscape.

In 1937 Lake Shetek State Park was established to commemorate those who lost their lives in the Dakota Conflict of August 20, 1862. The Lake Shetek State Monument was erected in the park at the mass grave site of those killed in the attack. During the summer months a park naturalist conducts tours through various sections of the park, interprets area history, points out places to see wildlife and flora and explains different ways to best enjoy the park.

Lake Shetek State Park



LEGEND

TRAILS

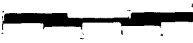
----- Hiking

FACILITIES

- Information
- Picnic Area
- Beach
- Boat Ramp
- Historic Site
- Campground
- Walk-in Camping
- Group Camp
- Primitive Group Camp
- Amphitheater

PRIVATE PROPERTY
Public Use Prohibited

SCALE



Because trails and other facilities are not shown on this map, visitors are urged to consult the park map for more information. The park map is available at the park office and at the Des Moines River State Park office.

EXISTING FACILITIES

The following is an inventory of the existing physical plant of Lake Shetek State Park.

Acres in Statutory Boundary - 1,175

Acres of state land - 1,015.70

Acres of private land - 193.30

Campsites

Drive in - 98

Walk in - 10

Showers

Modern toilets

Campsites with electricity - 67

Miles of Trails

Self-guided Interpret - 1

Hiking - 6.9

Cross Country Ski - 2.8

Snowmobile - 4

Playgrounds - 1

Beaches - 1

Boat & Canoe Rental

Miles of Road

Asphalt - 1

Gravel - 1

Enclosed and Open Picnic Shelter

Number of Picnic Tables - 114

Trailer Dump Station

Water Accesses - 1

Number of Buildings

Over 100 sq.ft. - 24

Under 100 sq.ft. - 15

Miles of Posted Boundary - 9

Seasonal Visitor Centers

Park Utilities

Sewage Lagoon - 1

Number of Sewage Lift Stations - 3

Number of Septic Tanks - 9

Number of Wells - 6

Number of Individual

Water Distribution Systems - 8

Miles of State Owned Power Line - 1.5

PROBLEMS FACING LAKE SHETEK STATE PARK

There are many public recreational facilities in Lake Shetek State Park to maintain. Many are in need of replacement or major rehabilitation. Most were constructed in the 1930's, and are now in need of rehabilitation. Many new facilities are needed to meet growing recreational demands.

The parks natural and cultural resources are also in need of protection and management to perpetuate Lake Shetek's resources. In the past, facilities were developed in prehistoric and historic use areas. These areas deserve to be protected and interpreted.

Major problems facing Lake Shetek include poor circulation in entering the park and controlling traffic entering the park.

Important improvements have been completed at Lake Shetek State Park in recent years. However, the goals identified in the ten year old management plan have not been achieved.

RECENT DEVELOPMENT IN LAKE SHETEK STATE PARK

Major development projects over the past few years have included:

1. Rehabilitation of campground sanitation building.
2. Improvements to boat launch area.

LAKE SHETEK STATE PARK CAPITAL NEEDS

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Prairie Restoration - \$35,000

Vegetate existing old farm fields by planting native prairie seeds.

Natural Resources Assessment - \$15,000

Includes inventories, releve's and permanent plots.

Shrub Planting and Deer Exclosure - #3,000

Includes a small shrub planting and exclosure to assess effects of deer management.

Subtotal \$53,000

MAJOR REHABILITATION

WPA Building Rehabilitation - \$40,000

Rehabilitation to include tuck pointing of stone work, fixture replacement and utility upgrade.

Subtotal \$40,000

NEW DEVELOPMENT

New Interpretive/Trail Center - \$150,000

Construct new interpretive trail center to facilitate interpretive programs and winter trail activities.

Office Contact Station - \$125,000

New office contact station to also include park orientation displays.

New Service Area - \$210,000

New service area will include a shop, storage building, and gravel service court.

New Entrance Road - \$100,000

Realign existing entrance road for better traffic control and improved circulation.

New Phone Service - \$10,000

Existing phone service is outdated and inadequate to service existing business.

Subtotal - \$595,000

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS - \$688,000

LAND ACQUISITION

There are approximately 20,000 acres of private land within the boundaries of Minnesota State Parks. Acquisition of these lands is an ongoing process that occurs as parcels become available for purchase and funds are available. Present acquisition costs are averaging about a \$1,000 per acre across the state. It would cost about \$20,000,000 to acquire all the private land within state parks at present values.

The park map shows the location of private holdings within the park. These properties should be purchased before private development increases within the park's statutory boundary.

The following issues highlight problems associated with private property within state parks.

- * Private lands within state parks are being sought out by developers.
- * Subdivision for residential use will cause such lands to be too expensive to acquire in the future.
- * Land uses such as gravel extraction and extensive clear cut logging adversely impact state parks and adjoining public lands.
- * Some private lands limit public use of existing park facilities and lands because of their location.

These issues associated with privately owned lands within state parks threaten existing public investment and limit public use.

PRIVATE LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED IN LAKE SHETEK STATE PARK

Parcel #	Acres
4	75.00
4a	13.00
5a	18.00
6	26.00
6a	20.00
7,7a,8a	29.00
9	66.00
9a,10,11	11.00

Total 258 acres.

PARK POTENTIAL

What efforts will the completion of resource management, rehabilitation and new development projects have on Lake Shetek State Park? These projects along with the acquisition of private lands within the park will assure the preservation of these unique resources and facilities for future generations. Active management will be required to maintain and regenerate existing forest stands. These will ensure that future visitors will be able to experience the diverse nature of Minnesota's forests.

Some improvements will not only increase park use but will greatly increase the quality of the visitors experience. Many of the rehabilitation projects will increase staff efficiency and cut the costs of maintaining facilities.

New facilities will improve customer service while giving the visitor a greater opportunity to learn about Minnesota's natural and cultural resources.

The acquisition of private lands within the park will assure that private and commercial development do not detract from the natural beauty of Lake Shetek State Park.

A stable funding source is essential for effective long term resource management and capital budget planning for the Minnesota State Park system and Lake Shetek State Park.

SUMMARY

Currently, statewide Capital needs for development and acquisition are **\$55,000,000**. The mission of the Minnesota State Park System can be achieved by funding support to meet this need over the next several bienniums.

Lake Shetek State Park acquisition costs will be determined by appraisals.

Lake Shetek State Park
development costs - **\$688,000**

