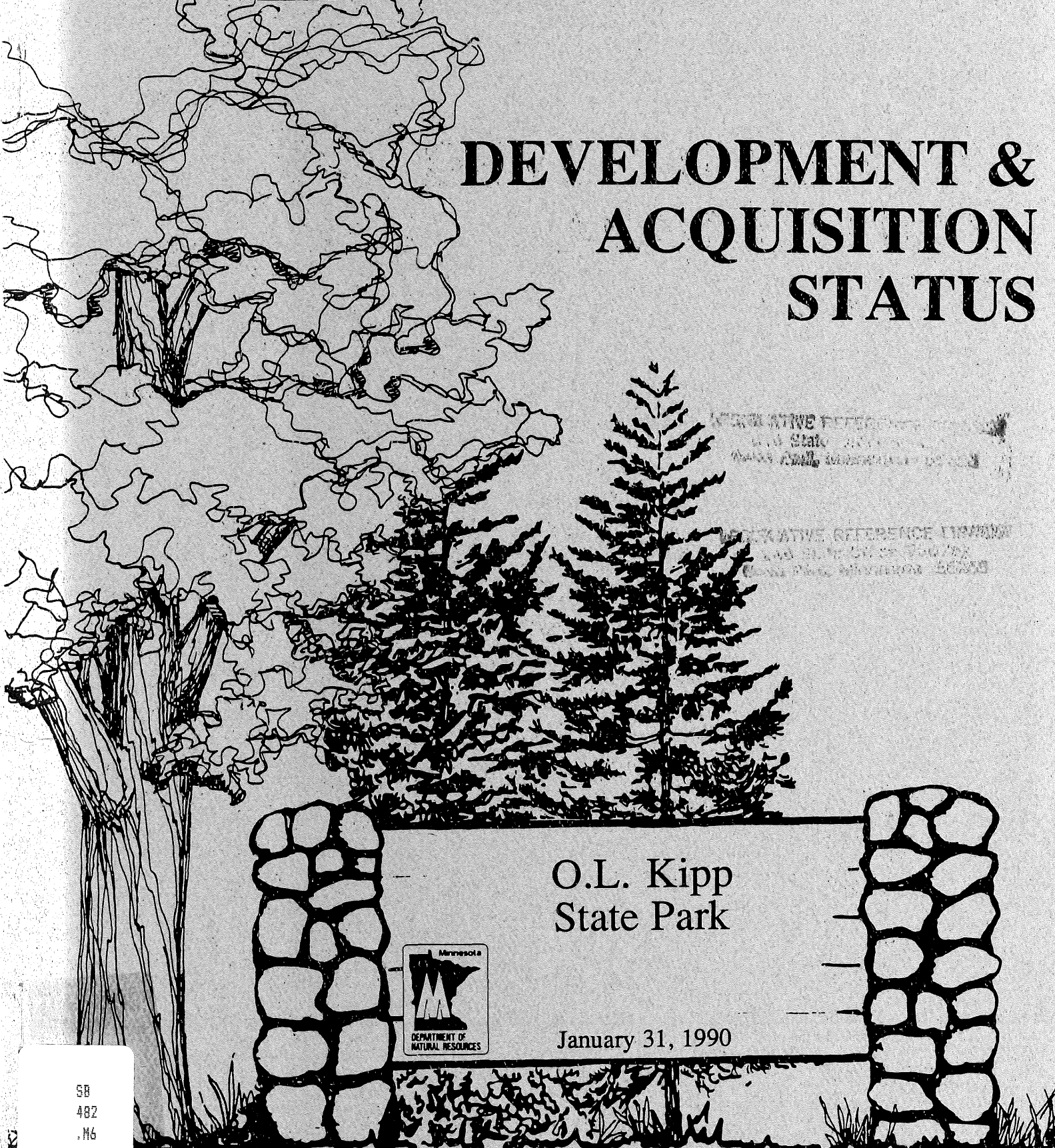




STATE OF
MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

900251

DEVELOPMENT & ACQUISITION STATUS



O.L. Kipp
State Park



January 31, 1990

SB
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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 O.L. KIPP STATE PARK

O.L. Kipp State Park is located in southeastern Minnesota, north of Interstate 90 on Winona County Highway 3 (Apple Blossom Drive), southeast of Winona. The park is named in honor of Orrin Lansing Kipp, the former Assistant Commissioner of Minnesota Highways who helped establish the Minnesota Trunk Highway System. Situated adjacent to Apple Blossom Drive, one of Minnesota's two designated scenic drives, the park's boundary encompasses 2,835 acres, of which 1939 are State-owned.

O.L. Kipp State Park lies in Minnesota's driftless area, a region of the state missed by the last two periods of glaciation. The area's striking topographic features are the result of meltwater erosion, and windblown sedimentation. As glaciers in the western portion of the state melted, water flowed with tremendous force down what is the present day Minnesota River and a portion of the present day Mississippi River valley, past their confluence. This huge waterway, much more powerful than the present day Mississippi, was known as the glacial River Warren. The tremendous force of this river resulted in the scouring and erosion of hundreds of feet of sandstone and limestone, leaving the bluffs and cliffs visible today. After the glaciers to the west melted, loess, fine windblown silt, accumulated up to 50 feet thick over portions of the area.

In prehistoric times, Native Americans inhabited the region, building burial mounds along the river bluffs. Some mounds were dome-shaped and used for burials, others were effigies of animals and probably had religious significance. Development over the last 100 years has obliterated many of these mounds, some from the immediate vicinity of the park. A great deal remains unknown about the cultural resources in the area surrounding O.L. Kipp State Park.

When European settlers came, much of the upland and floodplain of the park were plowed and utilized for crop production. The character of the upland slopes and soils resulted in serious erosion problems and check-dams had to be installed. Some fields were abandoned altogether.

In early 1960's the Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry purchased a substantial portion of the land that now makes up the park, as additions to the Richard Dorer Memorial Hardwood Forest. Plantations of red and white pine, green ash, and walnut were started. In 1971, these lands were transferred to the Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Recreation, to meet the growing demand for recreation. In the spring of 1977, O.L. Kipp State Park was opened.

Today, a diversity of plant communities and wildlife abound in this natural State Park. The most unique plant communities found are its "goat prairies", so named because of the steep slopes which make access to them difficult. South, southeast and southwest exposures give these areas a hotter and drier climate throughout the year (including winter), helping to maintain a dominant prairie community and limiting woody plant growth. Several rare species occur on these prairies. Some of these include white baneberry, wild indigo, purple cliff-brake, compass plant, and autumn coral root. In addition to the "goat prairies", a native stand of northern white cedar can be found on Queen's Bluff Scientific and Natural Area. The stand is a remnant from the glacial times when the climate of southeastern Minnesota was cool and moist. In addition to red and white pine plantations, the Division of Forestry also established plantations of green ash and black walnut. Other native hardwoods found include red, white, black, burr and pin oak, shagbark hickory, basswood, soft and sugar maples, birch and aspen.

EXISTING FACILITIES

These diverse plant communities host a variety of animals, including several rare species. Protected birds, such as bobwhite quail, marsh hawks, Henslow's sparrow, eastern bluebirds, peregrine falcons, and bald eagles reside in the park. Wild turkeys, Hungarian partridge, and numerous songbirds are present. While no shoreline is located within the park's boundary, the adjacent river provides habitat to many waterfowl and shorebird species. Threatened or rare amphibians and reptiles include the five-lined skink, western chorus frog, and the northern cricket frog. Timber rattlesnakes inhabit the bluffs. Several amphibians and reptiles with sensitive habitat requirements, including the six-lined racer, are park inhabitants. Mammals include the spotted skunk, long tailed and least weasels, foxes, white-tailed deer, coyotes and jackrabbits, among many others.

The two most prominent and popular features of O.L. Kipp State Park are King and Queen's Bluffs. Both of these bluffs have been designated as Scientific and Natural Areas. SNA's are established to protect and perpetuate natural features which possess exceptional scientific or educational value. They are places for the quiet appreciation and study of nature. Scientific and Natural Areas often protect the last remaining occurrences of a rare species or plant community.

Recreational opportunities abound in O.L. Kipp's bluffs, woodlands and prairies. Camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, and picnicking are popular activities. Birdwatching and wildlife observation opportunities are unique, and very popular. The panoramic vistas overlooking the adjacent Mississippi River Valley enhance visitor's experiences. The unique setting of O.L. Kipp State Park lends itself to unequalled recreation and interpretive opportunities.

Special concern has been taken in providing recreation opportunities, as much of the park is ecologically sensitive. Proactive management will enable recreation to continue in this sensitive but scenic site.

The following is an inventory of the existing physical plant of O.L. Kipp State Park.

Acres in Statutory Boundary - 2,835.00
Acres of state land - 1939.28
Acres of private land - 895.72

Campsites

Drive in - 31

Miles of Trails

Self-guided interpretive - 2.5

Hiking - 7

Cross Country Ski - 9

Playgrounds - 1

Miles of Road

Gravel - 3

Number of Picnic Tables - 20

Number of Buildings

Over 100 sq.ft. - 3

Under 100 sq.ft. - 15

Miles of Posted Boundary - 7

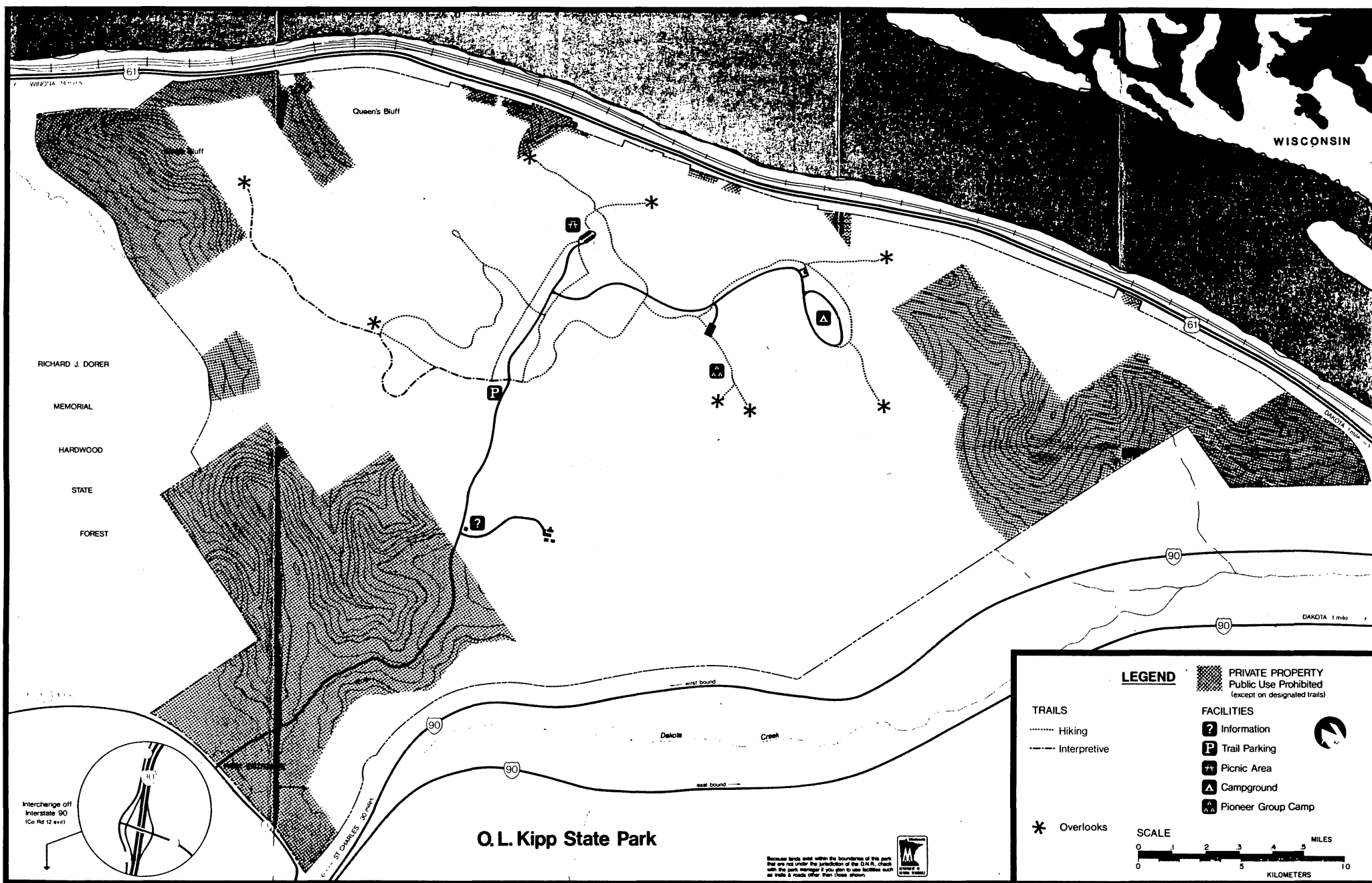
Park Utilities

Number of Septic Tanks - 2

Number of Wells - 3

Number of Individual

Water Distribution Systems - 3



PROBLEMS FACING O.L. KIPP STATE PARK

There are several public recreational facilities in O.L. Kipp State Park to maintain. Some new facilities are needed to meet growing recreational demands.

The park's natural and cultural resources are in need of protection, management and interpretation to ensure their perpetuation. In the past, facilities may have been developed in areas of cultural significance. These cultural resources must be identified, protected and interpreted.

Deer management has become a significant concern, demanding attention by resource managers. The O.L. Kipp habitats must be managed with sensitive and rare species in mind.

Increasing pressures for development in southeastern Minnesota's bluffland region pose potential problems to O.L. Kipp State Park. Development of surrounding lands may threaten the integrity of this park's unique and diverse resources. Increased recreational needs must be addressed in ways that do not compromise these sensitive resources. Existing plans call for significant development in areas now known to provide habitat for species of special concern. Planning efforts need revisions, concentrating on identifying critical resources and preserving their integrity, while providing for the recreational demands of visitors. A thorough and ongoing cultural and natural resource inventory of the entire park is needed.

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

RECENT DEVELOPMENT IN O.L. KIPP STATE PARK

Major development projects over the past few years have included:

1. Construction of a campground toilet/shower building (to be completed in summer, 1990).

O.L. KIPP STATE PARK CAPITAL NEEDS

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Natural and Cultural

Resource Assessments - \$30,000

Conduct thorough resource assessments to determine cultural and natural resource inventory. Habitats and cultural resources are extremely unique and sensitive, and only comprehensive research will enable appropriate management.

Resource Management - \$20,000

Removal of exotic species in woodlands, removal of brush and woody vegetation from the goat prairies and old fields to maintain prairie and habitat for species of special concern, including Henslow's sparrow.

Subtotal \$50,000

MAJOR REHABILITATION

Picnic Area

Rehabilitation and Expansion - \$60,000

Rehabilitate existing picnic area and expand slightly, including construction of an enclosed picnic shelter and sanitation facilities.

Trail and Overlook Rehabilitation - \$30,000

Rehabilitate existing trails and overlooks, through erosion control, strips, water bars and surfacing.

Subtotal \$90,000

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Contact Station - \$130,000

Construct a new office/contact station including orientation and interpretive displays.

Trailer Dump Station - \$20,000

Construct a new dump station to serve camper's needs.

New Shop/Storage Building - \$45,000

Construct a new shop/storage building with a heated shop and cold storage to facilitate maintenance and store State equipment and supplies.

Subtotal \$195,000

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS \$335,000

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 therefore 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 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.
- * Consistent and effective resource management efforts are hampered by private ownership within the park.

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

PRIVATE LANDS TO BE ACQUIRED IN O.L. KIPP STATE PARK

Parcel #	Acres	Parcel#	Acres
2	78.60	22	14.20
3 & 23	76.00	24	1.00
4	197.30	25	0.80
5	108.00	26	9.40
6a	16.50	27	0.95
7	20.00	28	0.30
13a	27.40	30	0.94
14	3.50	31	0.84
15	80.00	32	0.50
16	80.00	33	1.10
18a	5.00	34	27.00
19	83.39	36	40.00
20	16.00	37	1.00
21	4.00	38	1.70
		39	0.30

Total 895.72 acres

PARK POTENTIAL

What efforts will the completion of resource management, rehabilitation and new development projects have on O.L. Kipp 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 the park's natural resources. This will help to ensure that future generations will be able to experience the diversity of Minnesota's plant and animal communities.

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 O.L. Kipp State Park, and will facilitate effective and consistent resource management efforts.

A stable funding source is essential for effective long term resource management and capital budget planning for the Minnesota State Park System and O.L. Kipp Lake 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.

O.L. Kipp State Park acquisition costs will be determined by appraisals.

O.L. Kipp State Park development needs - **\$335,000**

**Help us celebrate the 100th anniversary of the
Minnesota State Park System in 1991!**

