



*Our Mission is to Provide Quality Public
Services in a Fiscally Responsible Manner
While Preserving the City's Open Space
Character*

NOTICE OF MEETING

**City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission
3800 Laverne Avenue North
April 19, 2021 6:30 PM**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Approve Agenda
4. Approve Minutes
 - a) February 17, 2021 minutes
5. Public Comments
6. Mike Zeno – Lions Park Volleyball Court Courtesy Rules Discussion
 - a) Court Usage Rules
7. Ami Voeltz-Schakel – Sunfish Lake Park
 - a) Park Usage Community Group Representative
8. Communications
 - a) May 6th APWA member's community service day.
 - b) County Deer Hunt.
 - c) Bee Keeping in Sunfish.
9. Adjourn

****Note: Every effort will be made to accommodate person or persons that need special considerations to attend this meeting due to a health condition or disability. Please contact the Lake Elmo City Clerk if you are in need of special accommodations.*

City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission Minutes February 17, 2021

Members Present: Commissioners- Weeks, Schumacher, Hoelscher, Kastler, and Rivera
Ames attended at 6:50 PM.

Staff Present: City Planner- Prchal, Public Works Director- Powers

The meeting was called to order by Weeks at 6:30 PM.

Select Chair and Vice Chair

Schumacher motioned to nominate Weeks as Parks Commission Chair for 2021, Kastler provided a second. Unanimously passed 4-0 with Weeks abstaining.

Weeks motioned to nominate Schumacher as Parks Commission Vice Chair for 2021, Rivera seconded. Unanimously passed 4-0 with Schumacher abstaining.

Approval of Agenda

Agenda was unanimously approved as presented 5-0.

Approval of Minutes

Weeks motioned to approve the December 21, 2020 Parks Commission Minutes as presented, Schumacher provided a second. Unanimously passed 5-0.

January 2021 Meeting was cancelled.

Public Comments

None

Select two members for Capital Improvement Committee.

Prchal provided a power point presentation describing what the Capital Improvement Committee duties are and background information. (Ames joined the meeting.)

Ames motioned to nominate Hoelscher and Schumacher for the Capital Improvement Committee; Rivera seconded. No discussion; motion unanimously passed by voice vote 6-0.

Bee Keeping in Sunfish Lake Park

Prchal provided a presentation on the background, location, and ordinance. Staff recommends a license agreement.

Mr. Liedel, the applicant, provided a power point and presented his request. "Bees are very important and our main proposal is to start an education program on pollination. You need observation bees/hives to support this program. (Mr. Liedel provided some educational details on bees and honey.) The electric fence is needed because of bears. Once a bear locates a hive it is destroyed. The fence will be off during park hours. Thank you for your consideration."

The commission discussed bear reports, if the electric fence is needed, license vs. lease agreements, and liability to the City.

Public Comment:

Tony Menzara – First I would like to thank Paul for his presentation. I think this would be a great thing we can do. Second I would like to respond to John's questions about liability. The

Friends of Lake Elmo Sunfish Lake Park have liability insurance. The City of Lake Elmo is a named insured on that policy according to the lease agreement. If someone got hurt by the fence or bees, the City is covered by the policy.

Rivera motioned to approve the bee keeping request at Sunfish Lake Park as presented – two (2) production colonies, with up to five (5) nucleus colonies, and an electric fence that will be operational during closed park hours; Ames provided a second.

(Discussion focused on the need for conditions and clarification on what a colony/hive is defined as.) **Kastler friendly amended the motion to include a list of conditions with the proposed request - 1) limit the hives to two (2) production colonies and (5) nucleus colonies, 2) requirement of a timer on the electric fencing to be operational in such a way that the fence is only on when the park is closed, 3) appropriate signage that addresses any safety concern, including signage indicating hives and electric fencing are present, and 4) the area and hives be maintained. Ames provided a second. The friendly amendment unanimously passed 6-0. Motion passed unanimously as amended by voice vote 6-0.**

Park Name St. Corix Sanctuary

Prchal provided the commission with several potential park names gathered from a survey. From there, the commission narrowed down the list of park names to present to City Council.

Rivera motioned to recommend Hidden Knoll Park or Lily Park as the two selected park names to present to City Council, Hoelscher provided a second; no discussion. Motion unanimously passed 6-0.

Park Improvement Inventory

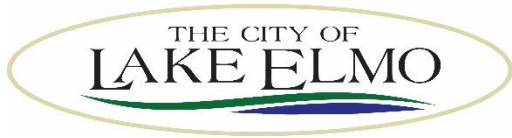
Prchal provided a presentation on the City's twenty-four (24) parks, focusing on the parks with amenities. Schumacher suggested encouraging a community survey when thinking about replacing any amenity to see what would benefit the surrounding community. Prchal mentioned that a CIP is a five (5) year plan and would like to see a focus on parks that need more attention. The commission agreed that the primary focus moving forward is trail connectivity, Demontreville Park, and Pebble Park.

Communications

- a) Pocket prairie at Lion's Park: 5x10 area. Powers suggested placing it in the NW corner, not far from the sign.
- b) Sunfish Park winter use concern - complaint about walkers using the ski trails. The Public Works Department grooms it after every snowfall and it compacts the snow. Hoelscher was out there last Sunday and he didn't see any issues. There were a lot of people and everyone was respectful about where they were. Commission agreed to leave the trails as is.
- c) Term Schedule (FYI)

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM

**Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca McGuire, Deputy Clerk**



STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 19, 2021

DISCUSSION

AGENDA ITEM: Volleyball Courts – User Expectations
TO: Parks Commission
SUBMITTED BY: Ben Prchal, City Planner
Marty Powers, Public Works Director

BACKGROUND:

Mike Zeno has stated that the Lions Park Volleyball courts are being misused and common courtesy is not being used between players. Because there is a limited number of courts at Lions Park, groups will need to share the courts between games so that all who arrive can reasonably play. Because of an incident in the summer of 2020 he has request that the Commission allow him to speak on the issue.

ISSUE BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

Is an additional rules sign needed for the Volleyball court(s)?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

With Lions Park being the only park in the downtown area that has volleyball courts it is understandable that they will be frequently used. What the Parks Commission should then consider is what action should be taken. Staff would like to Commission to consider the frequency that the courts are used but not shared. Although, this happened it is also the first time that Staff has been made aware that courts were not shared. What the City should try to avoid is installing new signs and rules when common courtesy is not used, unless it becomes a frequent occurrence.

RECOMMENDATION:

Have a discussion about the use of the courts and make a recommendation as to what, if anything should be done concerning the volley ball courts in Lions Park.



STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 19, 2021

DISCUSSION

AGENDA ITEM: Sunfish Lake Park – Park User Expectations
TO: Parks Commission
SUBMITTED BY: Ben Prchal, City Planner
Marty Powers, Public Works Director

BACKGROUND:

Ami Voeltz-Schakel has aided in assembling a community group that is focused on user expectations of the Sunfish Lake Park Trails. Ami established the group to work on removing confusion between different user groups as they use the park in the summer and winter seasons. The group has requested to present their findings at the April 19th, 2021 Parks meeting.

ISSUE BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

Are additional corrections to the park required at Sunfish Lake Park? If so, what should be done?

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

The group has requested to speak at the Parks Commission meeting and would like to outline some of the issues that they have identified within their discussions. At this time Staff believes there is some confusion with the new single track trail and growing pains are being worked out as new users begin to understand where the single track trail is located as well as existing users getting used to the new use. It also is my understanding they have had a discussion around the winter use of the park.

The Goals of the groups meeting were to:

1. To respectfully listen to others and share ideas for realistic solutions to priority topics listed.
2. Map out realistic solutions through collaboration with users and key park players during meeting.
3. Develop a presentation of concerns and possible solutions to the Lake Elmo Parks Commission at their April 19th meeting.

With these goals as their baseline, Staff is expecting the group to outline their identified issues and then present ideas on how to improve the Sunfish Lake Park user experience.

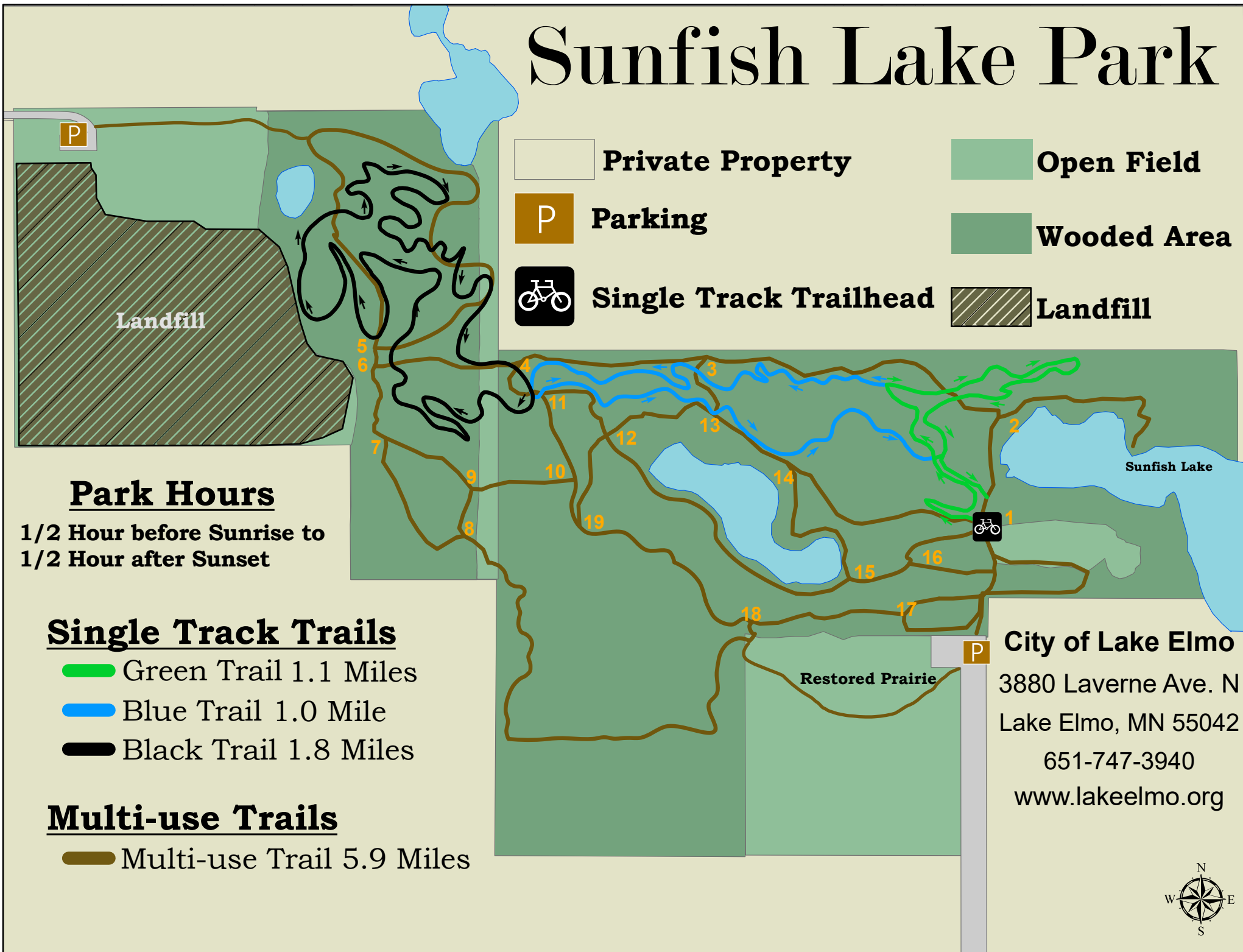
RECOMMENDATION:

Listen to the group's presentation about the activities and possible issues in Sunfish Lake Park and make a recommendation as to what, if anything should be done to improve the safety and user experience.

ATTACHMENTS:

Presentation from Sunfish Lake Park User Group.

Sunfish Lake Park





Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

Goal: To present priority safety concerns and possible solutions discussed during two zoom meetings with park users and other key people of Sunfish Lake Park.



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

Why a roundtable discussion?

Users of the park had shared concerns about safety in the park due to increased usage, addition of bikers in the park, trail usage confusion, planning for nature center programming and outdated maps/park signage.

A group of community members representing different types of users came together to respectfully listen, share and document our experiences.

The participants agreed to a second meeting to discuss possible solutions to shared concerns to bring to the Parks Commission in a clear, organized manner. Other key players of the park were invited to participate in this discussion.

The Mayor, multiple city council and parks commission members shared messages of support for these community discussions to make the park safer and more user friendly for all users.



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

Meeting #1 Summary:

- Ten users of Sunfish Lake Park
- Monday, March 29th
- Shared perspectives and experiences using the park
- Documented concerns and possible solutions to make Sunfish Lake Park safer for all users



Meeting #2 Summary:

- Fifteen participants including park users and other key people
- Monday, April 12th
- Shared ideas for solutions to issues identified in meeting #1
- Goal to present these shared concerns and possible solutions to the City of Lake Elmo Parks Commission for recommendation to the City Council





Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

SUMMER

- Hikers/walkers
- Bikers
- Horseriders
- Dog walkers
- Mountain bikers
- Nature center group programs/events

WINTER

- Cross country skiing
- Snowshoeing
- Hiking
- Dog Walking
- Fat tire bikers
- Nature center group programs/events



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

Rules/Ordinances/Easements/Agreements

- Lake Elmo General Parks Ordinance
- Dogs on Leash law
- Nature Center agreement
- MORC mountain bike trail management agreement
- Map approval by city council
- Conservation easement through Minnesota Land Trust
- Usage: allow bikes on multi use trails approved at 9/15 or 10/20 City Council meeting?

Management Information

- All Sunfish Lake Park trails maintained by City of Lake Elmo Public Works except mountain bike trails
- All trails/area by nature center (1 acre) managed by SMINC nature center
- Mountain bike trails managed by MORC through an MOU (Memorandum of Use)
- Maps - large parking lot sign by Lake Elmo Public Works, mountain bike trails GPS by Trail Source LLC, signage on trails by SMINC



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

User Roundtable Participants share these concerns and all support these proposed actions to make the park safer and improve the experience for all park users:

1. **Separate bike, ski and walking trails for safety of all park users**
 - a. Create new bike only access routes to and from the parking lot
 - b. Designate hiking trails for foot traffic only, no biking
 - c. Create designated winter hiking area and separate skier only trails
2. **Clarify and enforce dogs on leash law**
3. **Update all signage within the park designed as separate winter/summer signs** in the park and online to reflect current trail usage and user guidelines



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

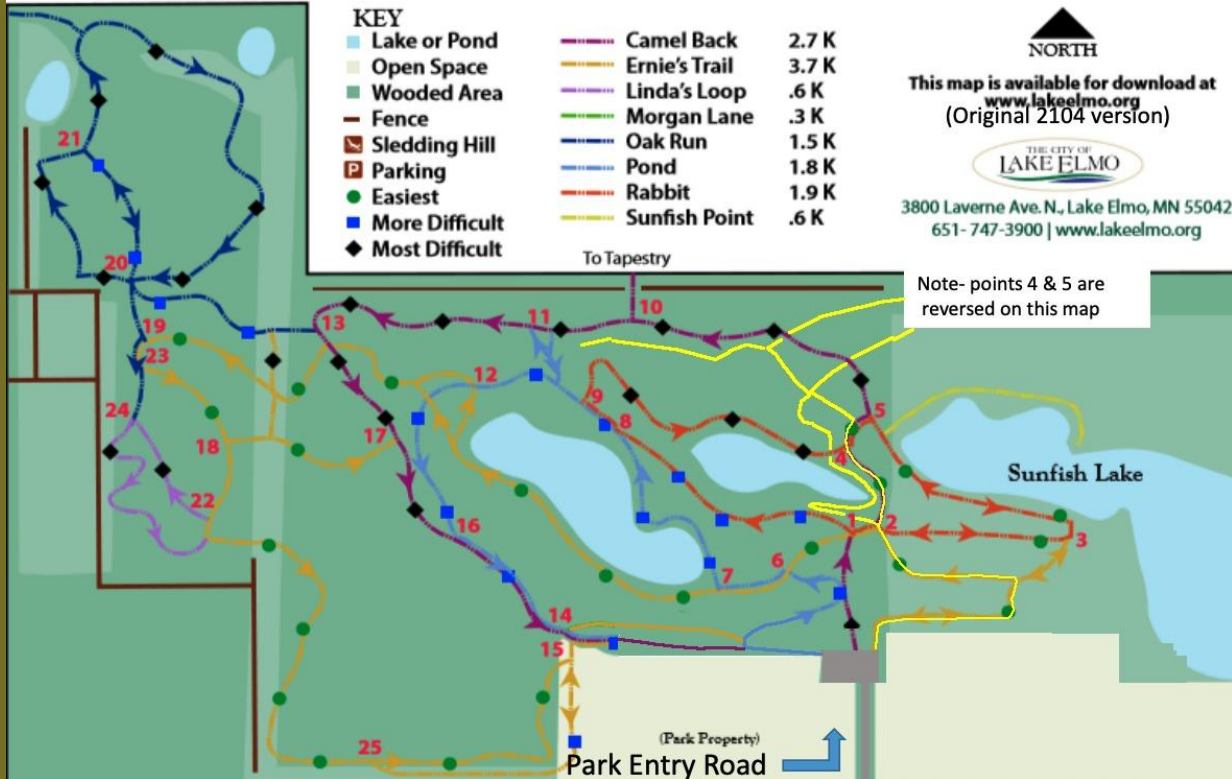
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Existing bike route to trailhead and exit

Map copy courtesy of Friends of Lake Elmo's Sunfish Lake Park www.sminc-lake-elmo.org

Sunfish Lake Park Trails

Update 11/201



1.a. Separate bike, ski and walking trails for the safety of all park users.

Foot-use:

1. Create new hiking-specific trails.
2. Reroute flooded hiking trails.
3. Reintroduce previously abandoned hiking trails to expand trail options lost to biking trail development.

Biking:

1. Create new, bike-only access routes from and to the parking lot.

Safety concerns for all users



1. Existing trails are currently shared by all users, including bikers.
 - a. Bi-directional, multi-use trails are a safety hazard that leads to user group conflict and potential injuries.
2. User groups are forced to cross paths at multiple points that can be dangerous.
 - a. High speed.
 - b. Low visibility.
3. Existing trails run down the hill which has led to issues with erosion over the years.
 - a. Knee-deep in some areas.
4. Lack of an official biking trailhead at the parking lot.
 - a. Does not promote a high-quality user experience.
 - b. Creates an opportunity for interpretation, especially for new users.

Proposed trail reroutes

Map copy courtesy of Friends of Lake Elmo's Sunfish Lake Park www.sminc-lake-elmo.org

Sunfish Lake Park Trails

Update 11/201

KEY

- Lake or Pond
- Open Space
- Wooded Area
- Fence
- Sledding Hill
- Parking
- Easiest
- More Difficult
- Most Difficult

- Camel Back 2.7 K
- Ernie's Trail 3.7 K
- Linda's Loop .6 K
- Morgan Lane .3 K
- Oak Run 1.5 K
- Pond 1.8 K
- Rabbit 1.9 K
- Sunfish Point .6 K



This map is available for download at
www.lakeelmo.org
(Original 2104 version)



3800 Laverne Ave. N., Lake Elmo, MN 55042
651-747-3900 | www.lakeelmo.org

To Tapestry

Note- points 4 & 5 are
reversed on this map

Sunfish Lake

(Park Property)
Park Entry Road

Goals:

1. Minimize user group contact in problem areas.
 - a. Centralize mountain biking into parallel corridors.
 - b. Route hikers to safer trails.
2. Promote user safety by designating specific trails to specific user groups.
 - a. Separate hiking, biking, and ski trails.
3. Provide a sustainable environment for all user groups.
 - a. Resolve erosion issues by running bike trails across the problem areas.
 - b. Close eroded trails, per recommendation of the trail contractor.

Hiking trails:

- Reroute South of Sunfish Lake
- New trail to Point 7

Biking trails:

- Dedicated trailhead entrance
- Dedicated exit to parking lot

Approximately 1 additional mile of separate hiking and biking trails to be built.

Total estimated cost of fuel, machine rental, and other overhead: \$8,156

- Cost per foot: \$1.24

Information:

- Average trail cost per mile: \$15,000 to \$25,000
 - Avg. cost/ft: \$3 to \$6



1. Tim Wegner to donate his time to run the machines.
2. MORC to fund the biking and partial hiking trails.
 - a. To show support and appreciation to all user groups.
3. Volunteer work to complete the trails.
 - a. MORC trail school opportunity.
 - b. Volunteer database.



Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

1. Separate bike, ski and walking trails for safety of all park users
 - a. Create new bike only access routes from and to the parking lot
 - b. Designate hiking trails for foot traffic only, no biking
 - c. **Create designated winter hiking area and separate skier only trails**
 - Safety concerns with hikers and skiers on same trails
 - Trails are narrow with big hills and sharp turns with low visibility
 - Poor and dangerous trail conditions for skiing, freezing and melting of trails with walking creates unsafe surface for skiers
 - Creates user conflict to ask hikers/snowshoers to stay on side of trail
 - Other parks separate hikers and skiers
 - Reduces user conflict and improves both user experiences in the park

Sunfish Lake Park



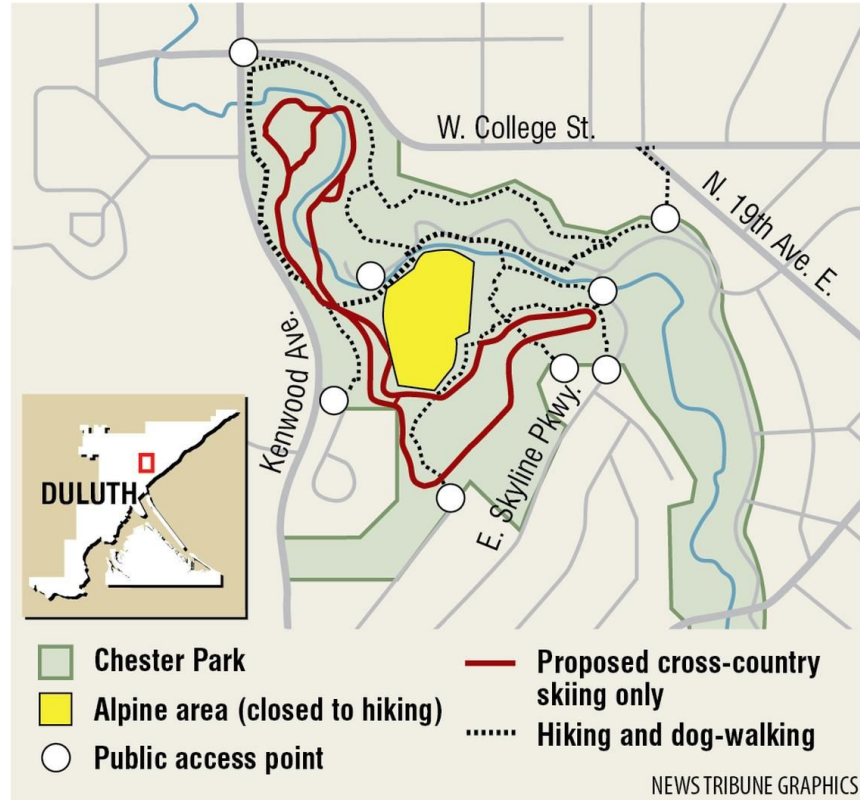
Lake Elmo Park Reserve



Chester Park Trail example in Duluth, MN

Peterson said there have been dangerous encounters between fast-moving skiers and pedestrians, sometimes walking dogs off leash.

She pointed out that seriously damaged grooming also has posed a hazard to skiers in places.





Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

2. Clarify and enforce dogs on leash law

Dogs on Leash

- What is the current leash law in Sunfish Lake Park?
- Dogs have bitten other dogs and hikers, caught wildlife
- Improve signage with consistent messaging and number to call to report
- What type of enforcement is possible?
- Use park ambassadors and other communications to increase knowledge of leash law
- Add doggie bag holder with leash law sign at parking lot





Sunfish Lake Park

User Roundtable Discussion Presentation

3. Update all signage within the park to reflect current user guidelines as separate winter/summer signage

- Add visual images on hiking trails info posts: no bikes on hiking trails, no walking on ski trails
- Change winter trails to no walking on groomed ski trails
- Create winter/summer maps in the park and on the city website to download
- Sandwich sign for seasonal/daily info at sign & bike trailhead area
- Intersection signs updated to reflect user info and new mapping in a clear and simple way

Sandwich sign board to communicate seasonal information at trailhead



WINTER NOTICE

- No hiking or snowshoeing on marked ski or bike trails. Stay on hiker designated trails only.
- Fat tire bikers stay on marked bike trails only.
- Dogs must be walked on leash only \$300 fine. Call 651-439-9381 to report.

*Download summer/winter park maps or to contact for park feedback contact
City of Lake Elmo lakeelmo.org or 751-747-3900*

Enjoy Sunfish Lake Park!

SUMMER NOTICE

- No biking on hiking trails.
- Bikers yield to hikers.
- No biking on wet trails. Check trail closings at MORCmtb.org.
- Dogs must be walked on leash only \$300 fine. Call 651-439-9381 to report.

Download summer/winter park maps or to contact for park feedback contact City of Lake Elmo lakeelmo.org or 751-747-3900

Enjoy Sunfish Lake Park!

Trail post user information signage needs to be updated and consistent throughout the park



Afton State Park
side by side Winter/Summer map



Lake Elmo Park Reserve
reversible Winter/Summer map





Next Steps?

1. Add in feedback from Parks Commissioners
2. Prepare final presentation/proposal for Parks Commission at next meeting
3. Parks Commission recommends to City Council
4. City Council votes to approve
5. Keep connecting with different users of the park to improve all user experiences through signs, city and public communications, social media and Park Ambassadors