



People Saving Special Places



Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota



Annual Report 2006

Dear Friends

Minnesotans treasure our parks and trails because they give us access to the state's most outstanding natural, cultural and scenic resources. They are special places where we recreate, interact with nature and enjoy peaceful solitude. Since 1954, the Parks & Trails Council has protected, enhanced and expanded these great outdoor places for generations upon generations of people to enjoy.



Grant Merritt

On the pages of this annual report you will find evidence that the Parks & Trails Council continues to excel in fulfilling our mission. You will also find examples of how we have helped make Minnesota's park and trail systems the envy of the nation. Clearly, we could not do the important work we do without the generous support of our members and donors, and for that we thank each and every one of you who has made contributions to our wonderful organization.

Always determined and forward thinking, the Parks & Trails Council headed into the 2006 legislative session armed with a comprehensive agenda that helped secure nearly \$25 million for state park and trail acquisition, development and rehabilitation. The impact of these investments can be felt in nearly every corner of the state.

Our efforts at the Capitol were successful because of the strong bonds we've formed with more than 100 grassroots citizen groups around the state. We continued to cultivate these partnerships in 2006 by hosting events such as our biennial conference, our annual Day on the Hill and the first-ever North Shore Parks and Trails Leadership Summit with workshops designed to both energize and educate parks and trails advocates about the important issues of the day.



Dorian Grilley

Obviously, the Parks & Trails Council continues to serve the public good by acquiring critical land for incorporation into our state's park and trail systems. And while all of our land deals are important, we are especially proud to have secured the final riverfront link that now connects Crow Wing State Park to the 110-mile Paul Bunyan State Trail. That historic land deal culminated nearly five years of work in which we helped add 3.13 miles of scenic Mississippi River shoreline and 552 acres to Crow Wing State Park.

Parks and trails are part of what makes Minnesota great. With your help, we promise we will continue our work to preserve Minnesota's Great Outdoor legacy by making necessary and smart investments in these special places for current and future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive, appearing to read "Grant Merritt".

Grant Merritt, President

A handwritten signature in cursive, appearing to read "Dorian Grilley".

Dorian Grilley, Executive Director

Government and Community Relations

ability to effectively communicate the needs of the state's park and trail system and its users

to legislators and government officials has made it the preeminent voice for parks and trails throughout Minnesota and at the Capitol. Always

determined and forward thinking, the Parks & Trails Council heads into each legislative session armed with a comprehensive agenda seeking necessary and smart investments in our park and trail systems. Whether it is the high-profile purchase and preservation of aesthetic, ecological and cultural places such as Gold Rock Point

Legislative success in 2006

In 2006, the Parks & Trails Council worked with park and trail groups from throughout Minnesota to convince the Legislature to support a comprehensive package of park and trail investments that will benefit every corner of the state. The package's top priorities were to secure bonding appropriations for state park and trail acquisition, development and rehabilitation and funding for an initiative to build 75 new camper cabins in our state parks. By the end of the session, park and trail supporters were jubilant about securing \$25 million for park and trail projects, including funding for 14 different state trail projects. The Legislature showed a great commitment and a growing understanding of the Parks & Trails Council's vision of connecting our state parks and trails to local communities.

Parks and Trails for Future Generations conference

Parks and trails supporters from throughout the state descended upon Cragun's Resort and Hotel on Gull Lake near Brainerd on March 3-4 to attend the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota's *Parks and Trails for Future Generations* conference. In addition to several interactive workshops designed to energize and educate parks and trails activists, the conference featured critically acclaimed generations expert and best-selling author David Stillman and nationally renowned healthy living authority Dr. Michael O'Donnell, founder and editor of the *American Journal of Health Promotion*.

2006 Trails Initiative and Day on the Hill

Trail advocates from across the state enjoyed the rare opportunity to present our 2006 State Trails Initiative to both the House and Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance committees on the same day! In a room filled with

trails supporters, legislators listened to our members provide details of the comprehensive trail package.

Parks and trails advocates mobilized again in St. Paul later in the 2006 session as a part of our annual *Parks & Trails Day on the Hill* to meet with legislators and to advance the cause for making necessary and smart investments in our prized systems of parks and trails, which are so essential to our economy, our way of life and the health of our citizens.

Citizens working together

The Parks & Trails Council's Action Team is a vital enterprise that arms individuals and friends groups with the tools they need to join together to take collective action on behalf of Minnesota's parks and trails. Action Team members get the inside scoop on what is happening at the Capitol through monthly newsletters and electronic updates and alerts. Members help influence public policy by sending letters to the editor and communicating key messages to their legislators. In 2006, Parks & Trails implemented a new e-mail action network that effectively connects members with their legislators.

Day on the Hill participants Bob Nesheim (left) and Paula Pettit spoke with Sen. Thomas Bakk (DFL-Cook).



Land Acquisition

Parks & Trails Council works to acquire, protect and enhance land that is critical to our state's park and recreational trail systems so that Minnesota's aesthetic, ecological and cultural character can be preserved for the public's enjoyment now and in the future. Since 1954, we have been instrumental in adding more than 8,700 acres valued at more than \$11.75 million to key areas within the state's vast network of parks and trails.

Land acquisitions in 2006

Cascade River State Park

We completed appraisals of two parcels but were unable to negotiate purchase agreements. However, at year end the landowner had still not sold either parcel – leaving Parks & Trails in the position to purchase them at a price that can be supported by a professional appraisal.

Crow Wing State Park

In December, the Parks & Trails Council acquired the final Mississippi River shoreline link that connects Crow Wing State Park to the 110-mile Paul Bunyan State Trail. The historic 28-acre land deal culminated nearly five years of work in which we helped add 3.13 miles of Mississippi River shoreline and 552 acres to Crow Wing State Park.

Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park

In July, we sold the DNR 40 acres of land we acquired in January 2002. Located at the top of the Canfield Creek watershed, this key parcel will expand the park's trail system. The Parks & Trails Council also sold 21 acres near Mystery Cave to the DNR in February. As part of that transaction we donated \$33,000 in value to the state. The parcel straddles the Root River and will provide a link to the Harmony-Preston Valley State Trail.

Gateway State Trail

Three easements for extending the Gateway State Trail to Marine and Scandia were appraised, and negotiations were progressing on two acquisitions at year end. An appraisal was also completed for the right of way currently used by the Minnesota Zephyr Dinner Train. If purchased, this would provide a connection from the Gateway State Trail near state Highway 96 to the right of way through downtown Stillwater recently purchased by the city. Negotiations were ongoing at year end.

George Crosby-Manitou State Park

In June, we sold the DNR 420 of 1,640 acres originally acquired in a 2005 land exchange. The DNR will purchase an additional 680 acres in the future. This land in the heart of the park includes portions of Horseshoe Ridge with spectacular views of Lake Superior.

Executive Director Dorian Grilley conducted a television news interview at Crow Wing State Park after securing the final link connecting the park to the 110-mile Paul Bunyan State Trail.

Great River Bluffs State Park

In February, we sold 40 acres to the DNR that were acquired in June 2004. Portions of the parcel are adjacent to the park's entrance road and contact station. The part near the road will be restored to bluff top prairie. The other part of the parcel is a wooded hillside.

Charles H. Lindbergh State Park

Much of 2006 was spent correcting a legal description and removing a deed restriction on the 92 acres purchased in 2003 in preparation for sale to the DNR. Known as the Little Elk Heritage Preserve, this parcel contains about three-quarters of a mile of frontage on the Mississippi and Little Elk rivers and many significant archaeological resources including one on the National Register of Historic Places.

Mille Lacs Kathio State Park

In May, the Parks & Trails Council was notified of a small in-holding for sale on Shakopee Lake. The property was appraised in June and a deal was closed in July. This parcel was sold to the state at cost in December.

Nerstrand Big Woods State Park

An appraisal was completed for a 112-acre parcel, and negotiations extended throughout the year and on into 2007.



From the Land Acquisition Committee Chair

In 2006, the Parks & Trails Council's revolving Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund received the second half of a \$1 million gift from the WM Foundation. Land acquisition efforts also benefited from generous financial support from the Butler Family Foundation and many other members who contributed a total of about \$150,000.

Our tradition of generous pro-bono legal support also continued in 2006. Many thanks are due to Tim Eschweiler and Ken Rowe of the firm of Oppenheimer, Wolff & Donnelly; Steve Hettig of the firm Kraft, Walser, Hettig and Honsey; Alan Thiel of the firm Thiel, Campbell, Gunderson & Anderson; Jeff Benson of the firm Fredrikson & Byron; and Bill Buell, Kathy Connelly and Alan Tschida.

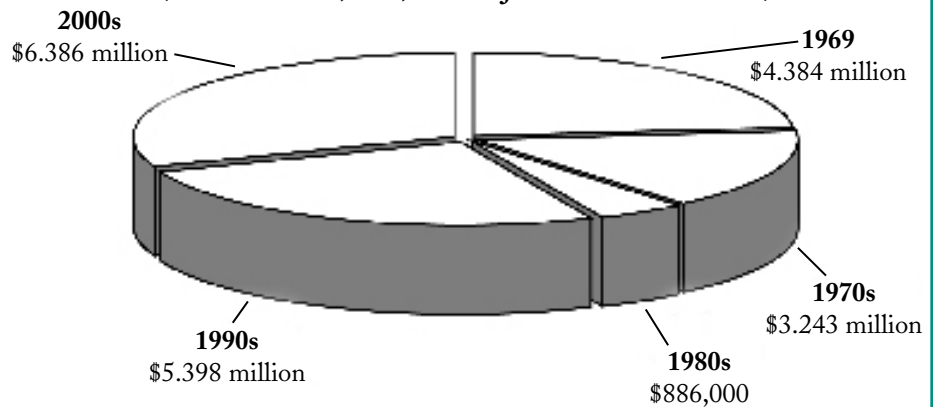
In 2006, the Legislature appropriated \$3 million in the bonding bill for state park land acquisition. The governor's request was \$2 million, so our advocacy efforts paid off. Unfortunately, this was far short of the \$7 million the Parks & Trails Council requested.

During the year, land purchases totaled \$565,287 and sales totaled \$1.36 million. At year end, Parks & Trails owned 10 parcels pending eventual transfer to the DNR and had active projects involving 19 other parcels. Special thanks are due to our committee members, other volunteer project managers and staff who made the 2006 program possible. See Page 4 for a summary of our land projects for 2006.

Land Holdings 2006

Park/Trail	Cost/Value	Acres	Notes
Crosby-Manitou State Park	\$302,710	680	Land exchange with Lake County. Sold 480 acres to the DNR in 2006
Crow Wing State Park	\$344,000	28	Completes Paul Bunyan Trail from Brainerd to Crow Wing State Park
Crow Wing State Park	\$412,000	59.99	Sold to DNR in 2006
Cuyuna Lakes State Trail	\$ 19,300	9.25	Trail easements (1.8 miles)
Forestville State Park	\$ 81,100	20	Sold to the DNR in 2006
Forestville State Park	\$100,400	40	Sold to the DNR in 2006
Gateway State Trail	\$ 11,000	1.4	Donated for Gateway State Trail extension
Great River Bluffs State Park	\$357,100	40	Sold to the DNR in 2006
Grey Cloud Island	\$ 5,400	10	Long-term holding
Charles Lindbergh State Park	\$265,500	96	Holding until title changes are completed
Mille Lacs Kathio State Park	\$220,000	1	Sold to the DNR in 2006
Superior Hiking Trail	\$ 28,000	40	Long-term holding of Devil's Track
Tettegouche State Park	\$ 12,900	40	Land exchange with Lake County
Tettegouche State Park	\$ 5,000	18.5	Right of first refusal
Tettegouche State Park	\$600,000	7.25	To be sold to the DNR in 2007
Whitewater State Park	\$970,000	215	To be sold to the DNR in 2007
	\$2,917,700		Total at start of 2006
	\$ 564,000		Total added in 2006
	\$1,320,500		Total sold to the DNR
	\$2,161,200	1,145	Total holdings at end of 2006

Value of land acquired 1969-2006
(Total of \$20,747,000 adjusted for inflation)



Membership and Development

MORE THAN 8 MILLION PEOPLE visit Minnesota state parks annually. Millions more visit regional parks and bicycle, hike or in-line skate on our trails. These users are able to enjoy these magnificent facilities, in part, because of the dedication and support of Parks & Trails Council members. Members are the foundation that allows the Parks & Trails Council to continue to advocate for these special places, to acquire important land and to build these facilities into the fabric of our communities. Parks & Trails Council members give time, money and testimony to support the value of providing special places – our beloved parks and trails – for people to use and enjoy today and tomorrow.

Planned gifts protect parks and trails for next generation

“In the woods is perpetual youth,” wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson. Many of our members would agree that a visit to one of our state’s magnificent parks or trails keeps them young. But the most important restorative is found in leaving a legacy of protected natural space for the next generation of Minnesotans to enjoy.

The Parks & Trails Council began a planned giving campaign in 2006, encouraging supporters to consider how they can make strategic gifts with a lasting impact. By including the Parks & Trails Council in their estate plans, our members are acting for the benefit of tomorrow’s advocates.

Planned giving options exist for every individual, often with substantial tax benefits. To leave your own legacy gift, call (651) 726-2457.



Membership continues to grow statewide

The word is spreading! Thanks to members like you, more people are hearing about the work of the Parks & Trails Council across the state. With their new support and your renewed support, total membership now stands at more than 3,300 people. As always, credit belongs to our dedicated volunteers, who give their time at events, talking with visitors about the efforts of the Parks & Trails Council!

Magney Circle members are invited to special events like this boat tour of Afton State Park and the St. Croix River on May 12, 2006.



Leadership-level giving inspires others

Motivated by their desire to protect the state’s trails and parkland, members of the Magney Circle give the Parks & Trails Council an unrestricted annual donation of \$500 or more. This type of support allows us to direct resources where they are most needed. In 2006, 18 new members were inspired to make the leadership-level gift, bringing the total membership in the Magney Circle to 63! The Magney Circle is named for a lifelong crusader for state parks and the founder of our organization, Judge Clarence R. Magney. If you would like to join this special group of supporters, call the Parks & Trails Council at (651) 726-2457.



Generations expert and best-selling author David Stillman entertained and informed the crowd at the Parks and Trails for Future Generations conference held at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd on March 3-4, 2006.

North Shore Leadership Summit

Called together by the Parks & Trails Council in January, 70 leaders from 26 organizations representing a diverse cross section of North Shore interests gathered at Lutsen Resort & Sea Villas to identify issues of consensus and looming challenges to North Shore parks and trails. Energized by the networking that took place during the two-day meeting, participants committed to building a stronger, more unified coalition and voice for parks along the North Shore and the Gitchi Gami and Superior Hiking Trails. The coalition followed up with letters to the editor in support of 2006 bonding initiatives and participated in *Parks & Trails Day on the Hill* and hearings at the Capitol in St. Paul. The coalition continued to work together in support of the Parks & Trails Council's 2007 legislative agenda focusing on operating and maintaining Minnesota's state parks and trails.

has long valued the creative ideas and energy that individual members and local groups bring to park and trail efforts. A statewide organization, the Parks & Trails Council serves as a hub for all of this energy. We are the coordinator that links individual efforts together and the conduit that brings knowledge gained on a project in one region to a developing idea in another one. The Parks & Trails Council attends local planning meetings in communities throughout the state and hosts training workshops, a biennial conference and a Labor Day bike adventure. In 2006, we continued to strengthen this vital network we call the

Biking Minnesota with Parks & Trails

For the second consecutive year, the Parks & Trails Council hosted the *Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails* event over the Labor Day weekend. Based out of Minneopa State Park near Mankato, the 2006 tour showcased the Minnesota River Valley and some of its natural, cultural and scenic treasures. Led by Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge and Parks & Trails Council Board Member David Minge, the adventure drew attention to some of the possible benefits that additional development

of Mankato's Minnesota River Trail could have on the region. The three-day, 140-mile ride was highlighted by several informative and thought-provoking presentations made along the way at such places as Rapidan Regional Park, the Minnemishinona Falls, the Treaty Site History Center, Kasota Prairie, the August Schell Brewery, Hermann Monument and Mankato's Sibley Park. Thanks once again to Judge Minge for sharing his deep understanding, passion and knowledge of the region.

Bike Minnesota with Parks & Trails event participants learned about the history, the landscapes and the communities of the Minnesota River Valley during a three-day Labor Day weekend adventure led by Minnesota Court of Appeals Judge David Minge. The group is shown here at Reconciliation Park in Mankato.

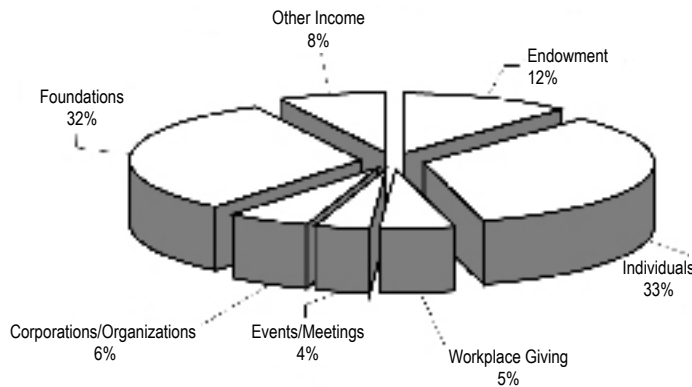


Statement of Financial Position

General Operating Fund

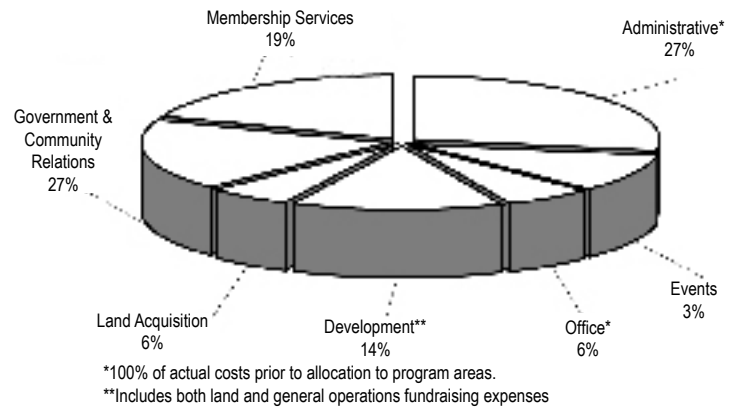
Income 2006

Total Income = \$552,326



Expenses 2006

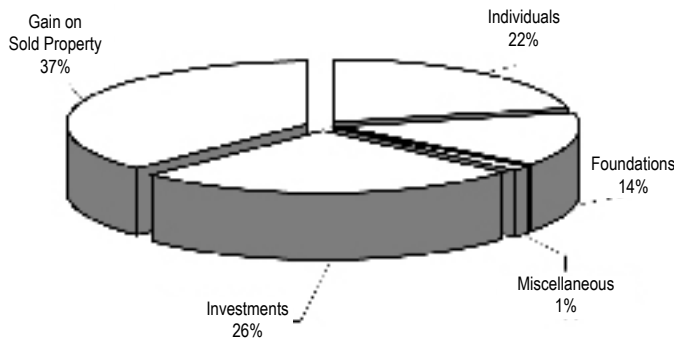
Total Expenses = \$523,913



Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund

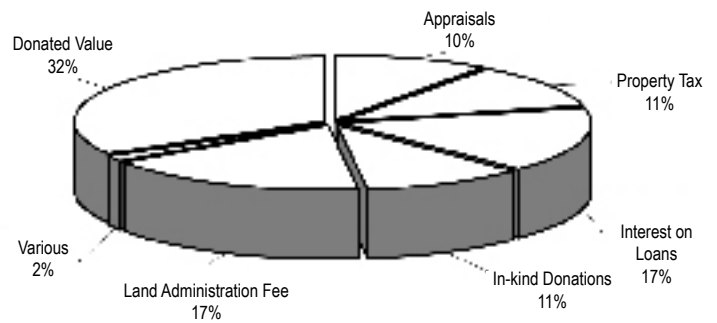
Income 2006

Total Income = \$423,044



Expenses 2006

Total Expenses = \$190,454



Fund Balances

	2006	2005	% Change
General Fund	\$303,562	\$168,680	80%
Samuel H. Morgan Land Acquisition Fund	\$4,804,958	\$4,315,940	12%
Reuel Harmon Endowment Fund	\$1,877,387	\$1,789,240	5%
TOTAL	\$7,021,907	\$6,273,860	12%

Functional Expenses in 2006 (combined land and operating funds)

Program Expenses	\$543,507	76%
Administrative Expenses	\$124,015	17%
Development Expenses	\$46,845	7%
TOTAL	\$714,367	100%

To obtain a more complete 2006 Financial Report, please contact the Parks & Trails Council office at (651) 726-2457 or (800) 944-0707 (outstate) or by e-mail at info@parksandtrails.org. **Note** – this is not an officially audited report.

With Special Thanks

THE PARKS & TRAILS COUNCIL OF MINNESOTA is supported solely by private donations and is grateful to all the individuals, community organizations, corporations and foundations that provided financial support in 2006. Donor generosity over the years has enabled the Parks & Trails Council to acquire and protect more than 8,700 acres in our parks and trails system. We would like to thank the following donors who have made gifts of \$100 or more in 2006. We have tried our best to be accurate. If we have erred, we are sorry. Please contact our office so we can correct our mistake.

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(\$500+ to General Operating Fund)

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(Note: Amounts include all gifts to both land and general funds)

\$5,000+

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