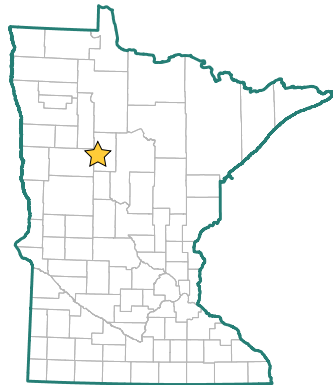


ITASCA-HEARTLAND CONNECTION TRAIL

CONNECTING ITASCA STATE PARK TO THE HEARTLAND STATE TRAIL



Photo credit: Deane Johnson.



\$6.25 MILLION



BUILDING OUT A STRATEGIC TRAIL



LOCAL PROJECT PARTNER:

ITASCA-HEARTLAND CONNECTION TRAIL TASK FORCE



MANAGEMENT AGENCY:

MINNESOTA DNR

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

This project will build on previous funding to construct 14 miles of trail from Itasca State Park on the east side of the trail tunnel under Highway 71 to Emmaville.

WHY THIS PROJECT IS IMPORTANT

The Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail will be a multi-use paved surface that will serve as a strategic connection between Itasca State Park and the Heartland State Trail just east of Park Rapids. Safe access routes to one of the state's most frequently visited parks have been a longstanding priority for trail users. The proposed trail, which will be located primarily on county and state-owned lands, would increase outdoor opportunities for cyclists, walkers, snowmobilers, and visiting families; these categories include both local residents, who are active trail users, and visitors to this region. The Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail is considered a Primary Corridor in the DNR Division of Parks and Trails' latest system management plan. Bonding money in 2023 went towards the successful construction of a tunnel under Highway 71, and this bonding request for 2024, determined in communication with the DNR, is for the continuation of the trail from the tunnel towards Emmaville.

THIS PROJECT IS READY TO GO!

The route for this 14-mile stretch of the trail is already established, and will be built on tax-forfeited land. Representative Krista Knudsen and Senator Paul Utke have introduced bills (HF 5447/SF 5505) in support.

WHO SUPPORTS THIS PROJECT



Rep. Krista Knudsen



Sen. Paul Utke

- Itascatur Outdoor Activity Club
- Hubbard Bike Group
- Park Rapids Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Hubbard County
- Park Rapids Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Heartland Lakes Development Commission
- Park Rapids Rotary Club
- Itasca-Heartland Connection Trail Steering Citizen Committee
- Forest Riders Snowmobile Club
- Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota
- Friends of Itasca State Park