

Request for Board Action Details

File #: 2022-402
Type: Administrative Item
Status: Passed
In control: Board of Commissioners
On agenda: 8/16/2022
Final action: 8/16/2022
Title: Updated Fee Schedule for Cross-Country Ski and Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area
Sponsors: Parks & Recreation
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. Winter Recreation Fee Schedule, 2. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
8/16/2022	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

Sponsor: Parks & Recreation

Title

Updated Fee Schedule for Cross-Country Ski and Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area

Recommendation

Approve the updated fee schedule for cross-country ski and Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area.

Background and Rationale

In 2021, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved funding in conjunction with a Legacy Amendment Grant through the Metropolitan Council and Minnesota state legislature bonding funds, to build a snowmaking infrastructure at Battle Creek Regional Park on 4 kilometers of cross-country ski trails and a sledding hill that is free to the public. Following other similar park agencies in neighboring counties with snowmaking operations, such as at Theodore Wirth in Minneapolis as well as Hyland Hills and Elm Creek in Three Rivers Park District; Ramsey County Parks & Recreation proposes to enact cross country ski fees to offset the operational costs of the new Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area. The new fee structure replaces the previous use of the Department of Natural Resources Great Minnesota Ski Pass that Ramsey County has utilized.

In order to better serve residents, Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation have jointly developed a ski pass system, proposed to be implemented by the winter of 2022. There will be two tiers of ski passes, a "Natural Snow" pass and an "All-Access" pass that would include the snowmaking loops at the Battle Creek Regional Park Winter Recreation Area. Natural Snow ski passes will provide cross-country ski access to Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul's ski areas, which includes Vadnais-Snail Lake Regional Park, Tamarack Nature Center, Battle Creek Regional Park (excluding the artificial snow loops), Como Park Ski Center, Highland 9 Ski Area and Phalen Regional Park. The "All-Access" ski pass includes the natural snow loops mentioned above, as well as access to the artificially produced snow loops at the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area. Annual passes, day passes, student passes, as well as ski rentals will give residents a variety of options for participating in winter recreation. An equitable learn-to-ski program will accompany this new area to bring opportunities to communities that are new to skiing. Passes will be sold jointly online, as well as onsite at Saint Paul's Battle Creek Recreation Center, Como Ski Area and Ramsey

County's Tamarack Nature Center.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being

☐ Prosperity

☒ Opportunity

☐ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

On April 15, 2022, the Ramsey County Board approved racial equity grant funds of \$164,000 from the Metropolitan Council to develop an equitable learn-to-ski program. Ramsey County Parks & Recreation and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation will work together to leverage these resources to serve the community. This program will not only serve an established audience of youth and adult cross-country skiers but will provide free healthy amenities locally for racially diverse communities that may not have the funds, access, or the cultural tradition to make winter recreation a part of their lives. In addition, the existing sledding hill will be equipped with snowmaking infrastructure and will remain free and open for public use.

Community Participation Level and Impact

In May 2022, meetings were held with high school coaches, event organizers and ski community enthusiasts to solicit feedback on fee structure and other operational considerations for the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area. Additionally, during the Battle Creek Regional Park Master Plan process, numerous pop-up workshops, community meetings and collaborative design sessions were held at parks and nearby areas to gather community feedback and share their vision of what the park should look like.

☒ Inform

☒ Consult

☒ Involve

☒ Collaborate

☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

The overall budget for the cross-country ski operations was approved with the 2022-23 budget, but the updated fees had not yet been finalized in time to seek and include community and partner input. An anticipated \$171,016 of revenue generated by these new ski passes is intended to balance the \$171,016 of operational expenses for the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area and cross-country ski operations. It is anticipated that over 3,000 passes will be sold annually.

Last Previous Action

On December 21, 2021, the Ramsey County Board approved the Metropolitan Council 2021 Competitive Equity Grant awards which included Unlocking Winter Recreation - A Robust and Equitable Learn to Ski Program (Resolution B2021-282).

On October 5, 2021, the Ramsey County Board approved an amendment to the Grant Award from the Metropolitan Council Legacy Fund for the Improvement to the Battle Creek Winter Recreation Area (Resolution B2021-212).

Attachments

1. Winter Recreation Fee Schedule