Minocqua Winter Park Study

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Cover photo sources: Minocqua Winter Park

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This plan was developed by NCWRPC with guidance from the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and oversight provided by the Town of Minocqua Plan Commission.

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B. Grant Opportunities  (Summarized by NCWRPC)
C. Potential Parking Lot  (Created by NCWRPC)
CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of the Study

The Town of Minocqua identified Minocqua Winter Park as a regional facility due to its statewide draw of visitors. The Town is interested in achieving the following results from the study:

- Identifying all the possible uses that would be compatible throughout the year at Minocqua Winter Park; and
- Creating a master plan for possible year-round use of Minocqua Winter Park.

Identifying the issues and opportunities of Minocqua Winter Park requires an assessment of the existing conditions and current partnerships. A full assessment of the property includes: the surrounding landscape, current uses, existing partnerships, onsite facilities, and the service area, which will help identify additional uses for the park and potential partnerships that capitalize on the park's potential.

This report will identify the events and activities that currently take place at the park and make recommendations on new activities, improvements, and partnerships that can be created to maximize the site's potential for outdoor recreation.

The following goal for this study was identified during the SWOT analysis identified on page 15 of this study:

**Goal: Ensure the Park’s economic sustainability by adding non-winter uses through additional partnerships with local organizations.**

2. Overview of Minocqua Winter Park

Minocqua Winter Park is a town park operated by the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation. The Foundation’s board of directors hired an executive director to oversee the seasonal and minor off season operations of the facility. The executive director position turns to part time in the off season. The mission of the Minocqua Winter Park is to provide a quality winter silent sport experience for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages through the maintenance and development of the cross country ski trail system.
Minocqua Winter Park is located in the Town of Minocqua and is one of the most popular Nordic centers in the Midwest. Minocqua Winter Park is located on 40 acres of land with access to over 6,500 acres of wilderness area. The Town of Minocqua owns the 40 acre parcel of land and the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation maintains land use agreements with multiple owners of the surrounding land. The park includes over 105 km of trails; 72 km of 12-foot to 30-foot wide trails groomed for skating and striding, 16 km of narrow trails groomed for striding only, 16 km of snowshoe trails, and a telemark hill. A variety of activities are available in the winter—cross country skiing, tubing, skijoring (skiing with dogs), snow shoeing, sleigh rides, and ice skating. The Park is accessible by car via US Highway 51, State Highway 70, and by snowmobile (Trail Stop 14). Minocqua Winter Park’s winter operations are weather dependent and can be open as early as November 1st with sufficient snowfall, and has an anticipated season end date of March 31.

See Map 1 – Project Area.

3. History

Minocqua Winter Park was an endeavor that began in the mid 1950’s by Northwoods residents whose vision was to expand outdoor recreation beyond waterskiing and boating to include silent winter sports. The Town already had a smaller ski hill, Dorwin Hill, which was close to downtown, Town sponsored, and provided outdoor recreation to mainly the children in the area. Local desire for longer ski runs fueled the desire to develop a better ski hill.

A variety of committees and area businessmen commissioned a study of all existing hills that had downhill ski potential. Results were shared in the summer of 1956. The two major contenders for possible ski hills came down to Squirrel Hill in the Town of Minocqua, which measured at 1,790 feet above sea level; and Muskellunge Hill in the Northern Highland State Forest near Sayner, which came in at 1,860 feet. Both hills are about the same distance away from downtown Minocqua. Support was split between the ski locations, with each hill having its own group lobbying for that hill’s success.

The nonprofit Squirrel Hill Ski Corp. was created in October of 1956 by residents to develop Squirrel Hill into a downhill ski haven. An overwhelming amount of community support backed the project. Nekoosa-Edwards was glad to make the land available on Squirrel Hill and also helped build access roads to the hill as long as this was going to be a community project.
Squirrel Hill opened in December of 1956 to become a popular destination for visitors and residents alike. Two slopes catered to expert and intermediate skiers. In addition to the ski hills and tow rope, a 28 by 52 foot alpine style warming shelter was constructed.

As interest increased by visitors and residents into the early 1960’s, development of Squirrel Hill continued. The proposed layout would be able to handle 400 skiers per day. The new development included a proposal to add on to the shelter house and double its size to accommodate a ski repair shop with ski rentals and equipment sales, a complete kitchen, and indoor plumbing. In 1959, Squirrel Hill was authorized to install a first aid room and women’s and men’s bathrooms. Unfortunately, by 1966 enthusiasm for downhill skiing faded.

In the early 1970’s a new sport was introduced—cross country skiing. As a result, the Lakeland Ski and Touring Club was formed as an outlet for cross country enthusiast to share their passion for the sports. In 1978, cross country skiing became a significant sport for Squirrel Hill. Although cross country skiing was becoming more popular, Squirrel Hill was on a slow and steady decline, and eventually the downhill skiing at the hill faded. Minocqua town officials also had a hard time finding someone to run the hill. With the hill and site in need of repair, the town of Minocqua designated Squirrel Hill as a town park, creating the Town Park Commission. The new commission approved renovation work on Squirrel Hill to rebuild the chalet and improve the park. This sequence of events led to the creation of Minocqua Winter Park.

Minocqua Winter Park’s first season was a major success. Although downhill skiing only lasted about a month, cross country skiing was popular and successful. Operated by volunteers from the Lakeland Ski and Touring Club, the park became too popular, needing more than just volunteers to keep it running. To keep up with demand, the Lakeland Ski and Touring Club created the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation in 1981. The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation still operates Minocqua Winter Park today.

In the 1960s another winter sport was on the rise – snowmobiling. Individual snowmobile clubs maintained their own un-connected trail systems, some of which were connected to other club’s trails by water routes.

In the late 1960s, Oneida County maintained a 40 mile loop trail on county forest land, and the state maintained a 22 mile loop trail in what is now the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest.
As of about 1975, Oneida County maintained three loop trails totaling about 125 miles on county forest land. The 22 mile loop trail on the NHAL land still existed, and numerous clubs continued to maintain their own mainly un-connected or un-marked trail systems. In the late 1970s the state recognized the benefit of connecting various county and club trails, and began grant programs in 1978 to support connected snowmobile trails.

With snowmobiling continuing to gain popularity, and clubs looking to upgrade their trail grooming equipment, club mergers started happening to provide better economies of scale. As snowmobile clubs were able to acquire written easements from private landowners and then apply for trail maintenance grants, the county and state turned over maintenance of their trails to the clubs for continued maintenance. The Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club (Club) was formed in 1988 & 1989 by the merger of three other clubs—Squirrel Lake Squirreleys, Diamond/Booth/Buckskin Lake Club (DBBs), and Lakeland Scenic Trails.

At the time of these three clubs merging, they approached the Town for a spot to construct a larger garage to store the newly combined club’s equipment. In 1989 the current maintenance shed was constructed at Minocqua Winter Park in cooperation with the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation (Foundation) for their equipment too (2/3s Club usage and 1/3rd Foundation usage). The Town cleared the land, and funding for this building came from the Club and the Foundation as well as a newly created room tax.

Now with additional support and volunteered labor, the whole maintenance building is insulated and new energy efficient high bay lighting exist on the Club’s side. Both the Club and Foundation maintain the building in a partnership that continues to this day.
CHAPTER 2 - PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process includes the research and analysis of existing conditions, visitor surveys, future growth trends, and future partnerships, uses, and upgrades to the Minocqua Winter Park. The planning process included working with Town of Minocqua officials, members of the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation, and members of the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club to understand the existing conditions, park potential, and future opportunities.

To assist in the research and discussion of Minocqua Winter Park and the potential uses and opportunities of the park, the Town of Minocqua and North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission invited participation from a variety of clubs and foundations. The group discussed Minocqua Winter Park’s strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats, which further assisted with identifying the issues and opportunities that should be addressed in order to expand the uses and services at the Park. The community panel discussed potential partnerships, additional activities and events that could expand the overall use of the park and make Minocqua Winter Park a yearlong attraction for the Town of Minocqua.

A chronological history of the study activities is as follows:

- **May 2015** – Phone interviews with Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation current and past board members, Minocqua Winter Park Executive Director, and Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club members.

- **June 1, 2015** – Tour of the Chalet and Minocqua Winter Park site. The group also completed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the site and identified the desire to expand the uses at Minocqua Winter Park into a year round destination. 9 people participated in this event.

- **July 2015** – Town of Minocqua officials, members of the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation, and members of the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club each reviewed the plan and suggested revisions.

- **Late Summer 2015** – The study was presented to the Town Board of Minocqua.
CHAPTER 3 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter provides a brief summary of the existing conditions at Minocqua Winter Park. Some of the information was taken from the Town of Minocqua, the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation, the Lakeland Times, and the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance.

1. Natural Resources

Yukon Creek runs north to southeast through the upper northeast corner of the Town’s 40 acre parcel and north to south in the southeast corner. Almost half of the 40 acre parcel is in the Yukon Creek floodplain. In addition to being in a floodplain, the entire northeast section of the 40 acre site and the land directly to the east of the site is wetlands. The west side of the 40 acre parcel is made up of steep slopes (>20%) and some moderately slopes (12-20%). The south side of the site includes floodplains and wetlands in the southeast and some moderately sloped terrain in the southwest. The north and northeast side of the parcel includes floodplains and wetlands. Based on the natural resources on the site, additional development of the site is limited. Future developments must take place in the middle of the 40 acre site, in the south/southeast section, or off Squirrel Hill Road in the northwest section of the site.

SEE MAP 2 – NATURAL RESOURCES

2. Zoning and Land Use

Current zoning for the 40 acres parcel and the surrounding area is Forestry 1A. Existing land use on the 40 acre parcel includes commercial, woodlands, and open lands. There are currently two commercial uses on site, the ski chalet and a maintenance facility. The land surrounding the 40 acres is predominately woodlands with some wooded wetlands and two state natural areas. A few acres of open space for the tubing hill (on the Town’s 40 acres) and around the chalet exist, and a small parcel at the top of a hill, south of the Town’s 40 acres, is “utility” for a telecommunications tower that is not on Squirrel Hill.

SEE MAPS 3 and 4 – ZONING and LAND USE
“DISTRICT 1-A FORESTRY” per the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance

Purpose

The purpose of the District 1-A Forestry is to protect the integrity of the County's forested lands by preserving such land in a relatively natural state. Any human habitation is intended to be limited in duration and seasonal in nature, not year round. It is not intended, for example, that services such as snow plowing or school busing would be provided in this district. Since forest, wildlife, water and minerals are the chief resources to be developed in District 1-A Forestry, no building, land or premises shall be used except for one or more of the specified uses listed below. Year-round dwellings, principal residences, or uses requiring year-round dwellings are prohibited.

Forestry Use / Structure Agreement

Before any County permit will be issued relating to the construction, placement, or use of a dwelling in District 1-A Forestry, a forestry use structure agreement in a form approved by the Committee and available from the Department shall be executed by the property owner and recorded with the office of the Oneida County Register of Deeds. Such agreement shall acknowledge and agree to the limitations on residential uses in District 1-A Forestry and shall be binding on successors and assigns. In the event the County Board changes the district in which a property subject to such agreement Chapter 9 ARTICLE 2 – ZONING DISTRICTS Article 2 - 5 is located to one in which year-round dwellings, principal residences, or uses requiring year-round dwellings are permitted, the Department shall execute a release of such agreement at the written request of the property owner or his/her successors or assigns.

Permitted Uses

- Silviculture
- Portable sawmills and debarking operations
- Growing and harvesting of any wild crop such as wild rice, ferns, mosses, berries, mushrooms, tree fruits and seeds, and marsh hay
- Fire detection and control structures
- Agriculture, including animal and poultry husbandry, beekeeping, dairying and grazing, field crops, orchards, or horticulture
- Seasonal dwelling
- Private parks and playgrounds
• Wilderness and recreational uses
• Historical markers

Administrative Review Uses

• Licensed fur farms, deer farms, fish hatcheries and fisheries
• Seasonal recreational camps with more than 1 principal structure
• Wildlife preserves
• Public parks and playgrounds
• Boat liveries and sale of bait
• Telephone and public utility lines
• Religious shrines.

Conditional Uses

• Hydroelectric dams and power plants
• Aircraft landing fields
• Non-portable sawmills and debarking operations
• Metallic mineral exploration
• Non-metallic mining
• Governmental uses
• Campgrounds and golf grounds
• Structures used in communications subject to section 9.54
• Flowage areas, transmission lines and substations.

Minimum Lot Sizes

Chapter 9 ARTICLE 2 - ZONING DISTRICTS Article 2 - 6 The minimum lot size requirements for District 1-A Forestry are contained in Appendix A to this ordinance, which is incorporated herein by reference. For any lot or tract of land that does not meet the minimum size requirements for this district as set forth in Appendix A, see Section 9.75 of this ordinance in the Oneida County Zoning Ordinance.
3. Land Ownership

In October 1956, the Squirrel Hill Ski Corp. was formed to develop the site. The property belonged to Nekoosa-Edwards, who stated they would cooperate fully if this was to become a community project.

Nekoosa-Edwards Paper Co. (NEPCO) promised a renewable 25-year lease and permission to clear two slopes for winter recreation. NEPCO also removed the merchantable timber from the ski hill area to be used for skiing, which cut the local costs of clearing considerably.

Squirrel Ski Hill was in decline in the 1960s and 1970s. Squirrel Hill Ski Corp. (operator of the ski hill) and NEPCO (property owner) agreed that the best option was to sell the property to the Town of Minocqua.

In November of 1979, Minocqua Winter Park was designated as a town park. Today, the Town of Minocqua still owns the 40 acre parcel that includes the eastern slope of Squirrel Hill, the chalet, a parking lot, a tubing storage garage, and maintenance building on Squirrel Hill Road.

There are about 6,500 acres where cross country ski trails and snowshoe trails are allowed on.

In 2011, about 3,195 acres surrounding the Town's 40-acre parcel was privately purchased from a timber development company to preserve the trail system from development in perpetuity, while also allowing limited timber harvesting to continue. The property's development rights were donated as a conservation easement to the Northwoods Land Trust, and the land ownership was transferred to Minocqua Winter Park Preservation Inc. (MWP Preservation LLC), which was set up to accept this generous land gift. As part of the conservation easement terms, MWP Preservation LLC has a trails management agreement with the Northwoods Land Trust, to maintain the trails.

Roughly 3,300 remaining acres, of the total 6,500 acres available for trails, are privately held by 16 individuals or trusts. SEE MAP 5 LAND OWNERSHIP for further details regarding land ownership. Most of the land is enrolled in Managed Forest Law, which allows public access for hunting, fishing, cross-country skiing, sight-seeing, and hiking. Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation maintains liability certificates with all landowners who's land is used for trails.
4. Existing Partnerships

Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation Inc. maintains and manages the Minocqua Winter Park facility for public use on behalf of the Town of Minocqua. The Foundation has acquired winter use agreements and maintains liability certificates with all landowners and user groups (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, high school) of the Park. The Foundation and Forest Riders Snowmobile Club jointly operate the maintenance shed (1/3 Foundation and 2/3 Club). Operating within the chalet is an independent restaurant and independent ski shop. The Foundation maintains contracts with the restaurant and ski shop operators.

5. Current Use of Minocqua Winter Park

Activities currently taking place at Minocqua Winter Park are silent winter sports. Between December and April the Park offers cross country skiing, snow shoeing, ice skating, skijoring, tubing, a youth cross country skiing program, and a Locals Learn to Ski Free program. Ice skating and snow tubing take place within the Town’s 40-acre parcel. Cross country skiing, snow shoeing and skijoring originate on the Town’s 40-acre parcel, and then extends more than 100 kilometers over thousands of adjacent acres of forested land (see “Land Ownership” for details). Although the site does not include snowmobile trails, trail stop 14 is located at the park, and the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club keep their trail maintenance equipment in a storage garage on the Town’s 40-acre parcel.

Roughly 20 events and races took place at Minocqua Winter Park during the 2014/15 season hosting roughly 776 participants. Events range from 5k running races to cross country races to skijor races. The Park hosts the Buck Rut 5k Run in the fall, the Squirrel Hill Skiathlon, the Moose Tracks Snowshoe Race, a candlelit ski event, Winter Park Bark (a skijor race), and Wolf Tracks Rendezvous Ski Marathon. Minocqua Winter Park also hosts a Community Appreciation Day, the Light Up the Night Concert and Party, and the Inga Lami of the Northwood’s women’s retreat.

Minocqua Winter Park is also an official CXC Opportunity Center. As an opportunity center, Minocqua Winter Park offers stand up and sit ski equipment to provide cross country skiing to people with any manner of physical disabilities including spinal cord injuries, amputees, and those with visual impairments. Individuals are not only offered full service facilities at no initial charge, but may make appointments for free lessons from accomplished instructors from each area.

There was only one summer event at Minocqua Winter Park, the Muggy Buggy 5K & Xtreme Mud Run. Since 2014, Minocqua Winter Park is the home of the Lakeland Union
High School Cross Country Running Team’s events, including the Ted Voigt Invite, a pre-season meet in late August for other regional teams.

Overall, there are 11 specific events/ races at Minocqua Winter Park per year.

6. Facilities

Minocqua Winter Park facilities include buildings, cleared open field, tubing hills, and a gravel parking lot.

Four buildings exist on site: ski chalet, maintenance building, tubing storage garage, and open air log shelter at the pond. The main facility is the ski chalet, at 7543 Squirrel Hill Rd, that includes a cafe, restrooms, ski rentals, ski shop, ski school, first aid station, self-serve ski waxing stations, and warming lounge. The maintenance building, at 7588 Squirrel Hill Rd, stores trail grooming equipment for both Minocqua Winter Park (1/3 of shed), and the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club (2/3s of shed), with both groups paying their own utility costs. Both groups also share in maintaining the maintenance building. Other facilities on the Town’s 40-acre parcel include a tubing hill with tow rope, gravel parking lot, and pond with water hydrant to flood the pond for ice skating.

About 3 acres of cleared open fields exist around the chalet. Fields west of the chalet provide space for cross country ski race start & stop lines. Additional open field exists south of the chalet for outdoor ski racks, entrance path, and initial ski trail access.

One cleared former downhill ski run, with a vertical height of 229 feet, now operates as a tubing hill with a tow rope that takes users halfway up the hill. The other cleared former downhill ski run (south of the tubing run) on the same hill is currently unused.

The gravel parking lot provides about 160 parking spots in summer, or about 140 in winter due to on-site snow storage. SEE ATTACHMENT C: POTENTIAL PARKING LOT.
CHAPTER 4 - SERVICE AREA

Minocqua Winter Park is mainly a cross country ski facility attracting visitors from Wisconsin, the neighboring states of Illinois and Minnesota, and a few from all over the world. There are dozens of cross-country ski trail systems in the state that have day-use lodges and rentals, but only a couple of these trail systems provide nearly as many groomed trails and the variety of services that Minocqua Winter Park has.

1. User Data Analysis

The attraction of visitors from outside the north central region to the park has an impact on the local economy. Hotels, restaurants, retail, and services all experience an increase in seasonal business and employment as a result of tourism. Although it is unknown if the Minocqua Winter Park is the main reason that Park visitors come to the Minocqua area, Minocqua Winter Park is one of the few locations in Minocqua with dedicated winter activities, and at the very least encourage visitors to extend their stay additional days.

Annual Visitors-Activities

Minocqua Winter Park had roughly 17,911 visitors between October 1, 2014 and March 31, 2015. About 1,000 users participate in events hosted outside of the winter months. The two primary activities that attract the most visitors are cross country skiing and tubing. Visitors participating in cross country skiing accounted for 68 percent of all users, and visitors participating in the tubing hill accounted for 25 percent of all users. The remaining 7 percent of the Minocqua Winter Park visitors was split between skijoring, snowshoeing, and visitors purchasing a park pass that allows them to participate in all activities.
Annual Visitors - Demographics

Roughly 40 percent of the 9,988 skiers visiting Minocqua Winter Park in the 2014/15 season were adults. The ski park attracts an equal share of youth cross county skiers (556 people) and senior cross country skiers (569) during the season.

Over 3,500 tubers visited the Minocqua Winter Park tubing hill during the 2014/15 season. Of the 3,541 tubing visitors, 35 percent of the visitors were families. Tubing attracts an equal share of adults (804) and youth (889) to the site. Only one cross country skier also purchased a tubing pass during the season.

Snowshoeing and Skijoring attract the least visitors to the park. Only 567 people visited the park for snowshoeing and 52 visitors for Skijoring. Snowshoeing a predominately an adult sport with roughly 75 percent of all snowshoeing visitors being adults. Only 22 youth and 3 children visited the park for snowshoeing during the season. A total of 459 visitors purchased a park pass. Over half of all park passes were purchased by families. An estimated 800 visitor's ice skated in 2014/15. (See Table 1.)

Peak Season Visitors

Over 36 percent of all Minocqua Winter Park visitors visit the park between December 20th and January 4th. Over 30 percent of the total skiers visiting the park visited during this two week period. This two week period is typically when area schools are on winter break and the park experiences it heaviest use. However, the type of skier visiting the park during the winter break mimics the type of visitor for the entire season. Over 43 percent of the skiing visitors during the two week winter break were adults, compared to 40 percent over the entire season. Families (389 visitors) make up 12 percent of the visitors during the winter break period. Youth (8 percent) and Seniors (3.5 percent) make up just 11.5 percent of the winter break skiing visitors, similar to the percentage of youth and senior users over the entire season.

Between December 20th and January 4th, 1,894 visitors used the tubing facility, over half (54%) of the tubers for the entire season. With schools on vacation, tubing is a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Annual Visitors by Activity</th>
<th>Oct '14 - Mar '15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>9,988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skier Passes</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skijor Passes</td>
<td>3,541</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuber Passes</td>
<td>459</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Passes</td>
<td>567</td>
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<tr>
<td>Snowshoer Passes</td>
<td>800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ice Skaters (Estimate)</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nordic Wolves &amp; Pups</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeland Nordic Ski Team</td>
<td>1,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Visitors</td>
<td>17,911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation
popular activity for youth and families at the park. Family tubing passes (801) and youth passes (495) make up roughly 70 percent of all tubers during the two week period.

Roughly 193 visitors went snowshoeing during the winter break, 146 of which were adults. Over 33 percent of all snowshoeing activity for the season took place during the winter break. Over half of all park passes (56%) are sold during the winter break period. A majority of which are sold to families. Only 10 visitors went Skijoring during the winter break.

2014 - 2015 Event Visitors

In addition to the daily visitors at Minocqua Winter Park, the foundation hosts 20 events and races drawing an additional 1,630 visitors. Community Day is the largest event held at the park by hosting 750 visitors. The second largest event is the Muggy Buggy with 309 visitors. Total event visitors decreased by 118 people from the 2013/4 season (1,748 event visitors) after increasing steadily from 2008/9 (445 event visitors). (See Table 2.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Oct. '14- Mar.'15</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buck Rut Run</td>
<td>48</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Day</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inga Lami of the Northwoods</td>
<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lakeland Loppet</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moose Tracks Snowshoe Race</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muggy Buggy</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squirrel Hill Skiathlon</td>
<td>195</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter Park Bark</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf Tracks Rendezvous</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Visitors</strong></td>
<td><strong>1630</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation
Economic Impact of Visitors

In 2013/14, roughly 15,500 people visited Minocqua Winter Park—both for day use and at all events. The number of total visitors increased to roughly 18,000 for the 2014/15 season. Between October 2013 and November 2014, the room tax equaled $330,053; $74,182 of which was accounted for during the winter months. Room tax is generated by hotel visitors paying an additional tax that is allocated for tourism activities and marketing. As of March 2015, the 2014/15 room tax was $86,623. Historically, a majority of the room tax is collected during the summer months of July, August, and September.

Over the past 10 years, the room tax collected in Minocqua during the winter months has ranged between $91,362 in 2006/7 and $56,422 in 2009/10 (Note: A major event, “beef-a-rama was held in September in 2006 adding room tax revenue to October (Winter) total. Typically this event has been held in early September adding to the September (Summer) total). There seems to be very little correlation between Minocqua Winter Park visitors and the room tax. During the 2006/07 winter season, the Park experienced the lowest number of visitors and the room tax was the highest it has been in the 10 year period. Even minus the $20,000 estimated room tax from beef-a-rama, the 2006/07 year would have the 6th highest winter room tax total. The 2005/06 winter season had the 4th highest room tax collection at $80,140 and only the 8th most visitors to Minocqua Winter Park. The 2011/12 winter season had the 2nd highest number of visitors at the Park and only the 3rd highest room tax (4th highest if you eliminate the $8,000 FY2012 Q4 delinquent payments).

Over the past 5 years (Oct 2010 to Mar. 2015), it is possible that there is a correlation between the increase in attendance at Winter Park and room tax growth during the winter season. Additional multiple regression analysis is necessary to confirm any correlation between the increase in visitors to Minocqua Winter Park and an increase in room tax. The increases in room tax could also be explained by the recovery of the U.S. economy, increase in average snow fall during a particular season, average winter temperatures, and multiple other variables. (See Table 3.)
Table 3: Room Tax Per Year*

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<td>12030</td>
<td>16432</td>
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<td>Apr-Jun</td>
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<td>68718</td>
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<td>63264</td>
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<td>Jul-Sept</td>
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<td>169279</td>
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<td>Summer Total</td>
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<td>Fiscal Year Total</td>
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Source: Minocqua Area Chamber of Commerce

*FY 2007 Q1 (Oct-Dec '06): Revenue is $20k above normal because Beef-a-Rama was held 9/30 shifting tax revenue to 10/1 or later. FY 2012 Q1 (Oct-Dec '11): Revenue includes approx. $8k in delinquent FY2011 Q4 payments. Revenue does not match the newspaper’s reported value of $40,333. FY2013 Q1 (Oct-Dec '11): Lake Tomahawk added to room tax zone.

2. Service Area of Visitors Surveyed

Minocqua Winter Park attracts visitors from all over the world. During the 2014/15 season, 19 of the 14,607 visitors were International. A majority (29%) of all visitors travel from the local North Central Wisconsin area which includes the Minocqua, Rhinelander, and all other North Central Wisconsin. Over 2,600 visitors (18%) travel from the Madison, WI area. Minocqua Winter Park visitors from Illinois are the third largest group, with over 2,200 visitors per year, followed by visitors from Milwaukee with 1,951 visitors per year. Overall, visitors from the state of Wisconsin accounted for 74 percent of all visitors during the 2014/15 season while visitors from the bordering states of Illinois and Minnesota accounted for 19 percent of all visitors. Together, the three state area accounts for 93 percent of all visitors to the park during the winter season (See Table 4).

A shift in visitors takes place during the peak season between December 20th and January 4th. During this timeframe, a majority of the visitors travel from Illinois and Madison, Wisconsin. Of the 5,389 visitors over the peak weeks, 21 percent travel from Illinois and 19 percent travel from Madison. Over half of all visitors from Illinois and Minnesota visited Minocqua Winter Park during this two week period. Minocqua Winter Park visitors from North Central Wisconsin are the third largest group. Only 18 percent of the visitors are from the local North Central Wisconsin area during the peak season, compared to 29 percent for the entire season. Overall, visitors from the state of Wisconsin accounted for 65 percent of all visitors during the peak season, compared to 74 percent for the entire 2014/15 season. The two week period also accounts for a
The majority of the visitors from outside of the Midwest region (Plains, N.E. & Atlantic, South, Rust Belt, Mountain, and Pacific). SEE MAP 6: CUSTOMER SERVICE AREA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4: Minocqua Winter Park Visitors Surveyed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2014/15 Season</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dec. 20 to Jan. 4 (Peak Weeks)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Central WI (Minocqua, Hazlehurst, Rhinelander)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central WI (Wausau, Marshfield, Stevens Point)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Central WI (Green Bay, Fox Valley)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Crosse WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eau Claire WI</td>
</tr>
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<td>Superior WI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WI Total</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois (Chicago, Rockford)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota (Twin Cities, Duluth)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England &amp; Atlantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rust Belt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season Pass Holder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Surveyed Visitors</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation
2014-2015 Event Visitors

Minocqua Winter Park hosted 20 events and races during the 2014/15 season drawing 1,630 visitors. Participants travel from all over the World with participants traveling from all 50 states, Canada and various other International locations. A large majority of the visitors travel from the state of Wisconsin and the surrounding states bordering the state of Wisconsin (Minnesota, Illinois, Iowa, and Michigan). The number of visitors participating in these events has experienced a steady increase since 2008/9 season. Event visitors have increased each year from 445 in 2008/9 to 1,630 in 2014/15. Event visitors peaked in 2013/14 with 1,748 visitors.
CHAPTER 5 - FUTURE GROWTH

Minocqua Winter Park is primarily used between the months of December and April for silent winter sport activities. Snowmobile trail grooming equipment is also stored onsite. Occasional meetings and summer events do take place, but land agreements and conservation easements currently limit the use of the Park’s trails to hiking, hunting, & fishing during the summer months. The Town’s 40-acre parcel could be used during summer months if additional gates and boulders were installed to contain all motorized traffic to roads and the parking lot on Town property.

The Town of Minocqua, and the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation are interested in compatible summer opportunities that can make Minocqua Winter Park into a year round publically used facility. The addition of summer activities would reduce the dependency on snow specific activities to support maintenance of the site.

Members of the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation, Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club, and Town of Minocqua staff identified the following goal for Minocqua Winter Park:

**Goal: Ensure the Park’s economic sustainability by adding non-winter uses through additional partnerships with local organizations.**

1. Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

To achieve this goal, the Town of Minocqua and its partners must understand the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Minocqua Winter Park. Understanding these unique issues helps identify the key action items necessary to improve the park and increase use. North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission staff facilitated a SWOT analysis on June 1, 2015 the Minocqua Town Hall with members from the Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation, the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club, and the Town of Minocqua identifying the key issues helping and prohibiting the park from becoming a year round destination. (See SWOT Chart)
**Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Premier Nordic Ski Facility</td>
<td>• Natural snow dependent, no snow making machines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Central location for snowmobile shed</td>
<td>• Condition and size of Chalet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Current land owner agreements</td>
<td>• Limited parking expansions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protected land in land trust for recreation and nature conservation</td>
<td>• Parking currently maxed out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintained and cleared areas</td>
<td>• Limited space for additional buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 6th highest point in WI</td>
<td>• Limitations of using land outside of the towns 40 acres (covenants, wetlands etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Partnerships with town ski club and forest riders</td>
<td>• Gravel Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Active Community Support</td>
<td>• No 3 phase power available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Little advertising and small budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Limited budget to maintain and improve chalet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expand into summer activities</td>
<td>• Other venues already doing summer and winter activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Additional partnership opportunities</td>
<td>• Remote site location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Many acres of protected recreational land available for summer activities</td>
<td>• Two clubs absorb maintenance costs for park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other silent trail oriented silent winter sports</td>
<td>• Other cross-country ski facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ski Hill that could be used for downhill sports</td>
<td>• Town only owns 40 of the 6000+ acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Most trails are on private land, not part of the Northwood’s Land Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agreement between Foundation and Town can be canceled with a year’s notice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Natural snow dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Costs of maintaining trails increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Older demographic of participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Potential Future Uses and Recommendations

Before moving forward with any of the following engineering related recommendations, a consultant should be hired to perform an analysis to identify costs.

**Recommendation 1: Continue Existing Partnerships**

**Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and Town of Minocqua**

The Town of Minocqua should continue to support the Foundation and their management of the site. Increasing the use of the park into a year round destination, the Town should increase its partnership with the Foundation and help with a year round manager of the park and the facilities.

**Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and café in chalet**

The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation annually contracts with a vendor to operate the café inside the chalet.

**Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and ski shop in chalet**

The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation annually contracts with a vendor to operate the ski shop inside the chalet.

**Forest Riders Snowmobile Club and Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation**

The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club should continue to strengthen their partnership. Minocqua Winter Park is located in a key area of the snowmobile trail system and provides a much needed stop for food, restrooms, and first aid. Working with the snowmobile club, some of the cost associated with the sites improvements and maintenance can be shared. The two organizations should also continue to work together on the expansion of the maintenance facility.
Recommendation 2: Facility Upgrades

Chalet Expansion Opportunities

Overall, the current chalet location and orientation (e.g. main entrance on the south side, and wall of windows facing Squirrel Hill) on the property still remains the best location and orientation to continue existing operations, or to expand operations.

Review the chalet analysis conducted by the Foundation and located in Attachment B: Chalet Improvement Requirements for a full analysis of the chalet building.

Major Long Term Recommendation

The amount of use the chalet receives daily during the winter season, has far exceeded the space available for visitors over the past decade. A space is generally considered crowded if it is 70% full, 70% of the time. The chalet is 110% full, 100% of the time (except some mid-week days) to the point where it is difficult to walk in the chalet at times due to people and ski bags filling the isles, and the ski shop is more popular that space exists to serve those needs. Many more people do not enter the chalet to pay for their tickets, use the restrooms, use the ski shop, or patronize the café due to the chalet being crowded.

Recommendation: In order to address all the existing and anticipated winter space needs and maximize space for additional future uses, this recommendation is to construct a new two or three story chalet on the existing chalet site with an elevator. One of those floors would be a full walk-out basement. Space needs for additional non-winter uses would just replace existing winter space needs. The only difference would be a need to store ski shop merchandise off-site if the shop would be stocked for non-winter user merchandise.

Due to the existing chalet roof slop, expansion of the existing building is limited to the north and south; and due to the chalet built on the side of the hill, the east side allows for basement expansion, and an un-covered deck.
Note: A facility needs analysis should be performed for the chalet, maintenance building, and support facilities.

Chalet expansion possibilities off each side of the chalet:

**North of Chalet**
There is ample room to expand to the north. Chalet expansion to the north could include adding changing areas to the restrooms, creating a new office, and large meeting room. The septic system would need to be relocated as the field is generally on the north side. Restroom expansion would need a new septic system anyway. A glass door and window would allow others to know that the meeting room was in use. This room could be used for training, banquets, birthday parties, and as an emergency area for ski patrol. When not in use for these tasks, the room could be opened for additional general area space during peak days.

**South of Chalet**
There is also ample room to expand to the south. Additional common space and room for a larger ski shop would occupy any new space to the south.

**East of Chalet**
Some room exists to add about a 15-foot wide wooden deck the full length of the chalet for outdoor eating. Snow “avalanche” stops would need to be added to the roof, along with heated gutters to prevent ice dams. Adding outdoor propane patio heaters would provide additional patron comfort.

**West of Chalet**
A full wall of ceiling to floor windows exists along the west wall of the chalet. Due to the low roofline, expansion of the current chalet is limited on the west side. Plenty of land is available for an outdoor patio the full length of the chalet.
**Ticketing**

The chalet needs a new ticketing location, because long, constant, back-ups exist at the current location just inside the chalet entrance.

**Short term upgrade**
Due to space limitations within the chalet, this recommendation is to temporarily add an outdoor shed, just east of and next to the entrance for ticketing operations. Adding electric space heaters would provide comfort in the ticketing booth.

The Foundation should also consider adding online ticketing to allow skiers to purchase tickets at home. Once purchased, skiers could easily show up to the chalet, scan their ticket at a kiosk adjacent to the ticketing office, and enter the trails cutting down on wait times and ticket congestion.

**Long term upgrade**
The south side of the building is the best location for a new ticketing office, also creating a new entrance and additional room for the ski shop. The ticketing booth would have outside windows to sale to skiers as the approach the chalet, no longer requiring them to enter the chalet and will eliminate congestion and lines in the chalet.

**Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning**

The chalet was built for only winter use. None of the windows open, and there is no air conditioning. Several ceiling fans exist in the chalet common areas.

**Short term upgrade**
Add windows with screens to provide natural ventilation.

**Long term upgrade**
Investigate the possibility of adding air conditioning. Installing a heat pump may more efficiently heat and cool the chalet.
**Expand Chalet Common Space**

The chalet appears to comfortably seat about 50 people, with another 40 spots available for café patrons.

**Short term upgrade**  
Expand the wooden café patio’s width to provide outdoor seating for the café. Provide chairs, tables, and patio heaters.

**Long term upgrade**  
Investigate the possibility of expanding the building to provide more interior space for gathering, ski shop, restrooms with locker rooms, and café.

**Remodel Café**

Food ordering lines form in the doorway, which blocks walking traffic into or out of the café.

**Short term upgrade**  
Extend the current no glass window opening next to the fire place, between the café seating area and the common area, to the floor to allow people to walk through this opening away from the ordering lines.

**Add Generator & Exit Lights**

Currently, the chalet does not have a back-up electrical source. In the event of a power failure, the site would not have running water due to the private well pump not operating. This eliminates the ability to provide drinking water and flush toilets, a major health concern. The chalet is also a resting and first aid spot for snowmobiles.

Recommendation: The site should have drinking water and flushable toilets in a power outage, so this recommendation is to install a propane or diesel back-up electrical generator to at least power the well water pump. Exit signs exist, but emergency floodlights should also be installed, both inside the chalet, and outside each entrance to the chalet (3 entrances).
**Relocate First Aid, Add Restrooms, & Add Locker Rooms**

Currently, the AED and general first aid kit are located in the main office on the north end of the main floor in the chalet, sharing space with general office records and portable radio chargers (only four people can operate in this area). In the event of a medical necessity to lie the person down, then injured individuals are taken to the basement area. Accessing the basement area requires the navigation of a small staircase or to avoid stairs the injured must go out the front entrance and come in through the walk out basement entrance. The ski patrol first aid area is difficult to navigate in the basement, due to the floor and ceiling not being handicapped accessible (floor changes slope, and ceiling has different heights lower than 6 feet high). This area is cold and uninviting and is not a good location should someone need serious medical attention.

**Short term upgrade**
Relocate the basement ski patrol first aid cot room to the basement area used for self-service ski maintenance. Add electric space heating to provide the injured person with additional comfort. Move the self-serve ski maintenance area to benches just outside the basement door, possibly into a newly created cinder block room under the wooden porch. Wooden fence walls faced with old skis could be installed next to this cinder block room to hide seasonally installed portable toilets.

**Long term upgrade**
A new office constructed off of a second new conference room on the main floor is needed, or add an elevator to access a heated and furnished basement first aid room with new basement restroom and locker rooms.

**Upgrade Maintenance Building**

The maintenance building was constructed in 1989 without a well or septic system, and without a phone line. With cell phone coverage still spotty in this area of the Town, a land line is a necessity for emergency purposes.

**Short term upgrade**
Install an internet and phone connection. Seasonally install a portable toilet inside the maintenance building.

**Long term upgrade**
Create a bathroom, office, and additional space for equipment.
**Create Additional Parking Lot**

About 160 vehicles may park on the existing gravel lot in summer, or about 140 in winter due to on-site snow storage. A parking attendant directs vehicles to specific areas as spots open up to maximize parking and minimize congestion circling around for available spots. Wetlands, and the Yukon Creek floodplain surround the southern and eastern sides of the parking lot.

Expansion to the west is limited by the actively used space for cross country skiing, and tubing. The cleared space north of the chalet is actively used space for cross country skiing. Land that is directly east of Squirrel Hill Road between the vehicle storage shed and the ice skating pond is wooded flood fringe for the Yukon River. In winter, flooding would not be a problem. Nothing can be constructed in a floodway except for structures that allow free flow of a river—a parking lot would not obstruct flow. Local delineation of the flood way, flood fringe, and any wetlands will be necessary before determining how much of this area may be constructed as a parking lot. Expansion to the south is limited by the wooded wetlands. There may be enough land to clear potentially one or two lines of trees for an additional 10 parking spots. Care should be taken not to expand in this direction in order to keep an alpine feel by having coniferous trees so close to the tubing hill. SEE ATTACHMENT C for viewshed buffers. Expansion to the east of the existing lot may have some potential to expand, depending upon local delineation of water features and preserving an appropriate amount of viewshed buffer. The limiting factors are the same as expanding east of Squirrel Hill Road, and a viewshed buffer should be maintained between any expansion of the lot and Yukon Creek as would be visible from the water.

**Viewshed buffers** (see Attachment C) should be kept to maintain the aesthetic beauty of the site. Views of coniferous trees so close to all of the existing uses provide users with a unique location to enjoy their activities, and keeps them coming back. As the terrain changes from high ground to flood fringe to wetland and floodway, so does the vegetation—pine trees to scrub bush to wetland plants respectively. Viewshed buffers are meant to preserve the view of pine trees, which in this landscape are farthest from Yukon Creek.

**Short term upgrade**
Periodically remove the snowbanks along the parking lot. This may provide up to 20 additional spaces.
**Long term upgrade**
Perform local delineation of flood way, flood fringe, and wetlands to determine how much space exists to construct a second parking lot per Map 6. To promote people using this partially remote lot, provide ski-in and walk-in paths to access the trails and chalet. As soon as someone parks in this lot, they could strap on their skies, pass a remote ticket kiosk, and not worry about entering the chalet before enjoying the trails.

**Recommendation 3: Add Snow Making Capability**

To become less dependent on natural snow fall during the winter season, the Town and Foundation may want to consider acquiring snow making machines. The machines would be most useful on the 40 acres owned by the Town and would primarily serve the tubing hill, base ski area, and a potential terrain park. The ability to make snow would ensure that these uses are open for a longer period of time.

**Potential Limitations**

Since groundwater is too warm (~50 degrees F.) to make snow directly, then a pond will need to be filled with the groundwater to draw cooler water out of to make snow. Further analysis will be needed to determine the size of the pond. Three phase power does not exist on-site, so a generator will need to be rented for about the month necessary to make snow. Renting a generator is typical for locations making snow.

**Recommendation 4: Expand site management to include summer time usage**

The Town of Minocqua should partner with The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation to expand the Foundation's management of Minocqua Winter Park to the summer months.

The Foundation understands the opportunities and limitations of the site the best because they helped create what currently exists. The Foundation also currently manages Minocqua Winter Park during the winter months via a paid executive director who oversees a small paid chalet and grooming staff, many volunteers, and contracts for the café and ski shop.

Funnelling all the potential new organizations that may operate summer uses at the site through an executive director, who may be the same person that the Foundation uses in winter, allows for better coordinated use of the site. The alternative would be for Town staff that has other duties to coordinate summer usage.
Most importantly, the Foundation has developed and maintains relationships with the surrounding land owners for winter uses. Any additional summer uses outside of the Town’s 40-acre parcel will need to be agreed upon by all land owners if the use goes beyond hiking, hunting, & fishing, which are the only uses allowed year-round on most of the surrounding property—some lands are not open to the public for any use in summer. The Foundation has the best opportunity to successfully expand the land agreements beyond the Town’s 40-acre parcel.

Funding to support the summer extension of a full time executive director to oversee the Park would come from new partnerships with other organizations and through rental fees for the chalet and Park. The Town of Minocqua may want to consider increasing funds dedicated to year round Park management, which could be done by contracting with the Foundation or by opening up management of the Park to other organizations.

All uses of the Park should utilize outside organizations to run the events and activities. The Foundation would only be responsible, via their winter executive director, for the chalet, scheduling of the facilities, maintenance needs and management, and land use agreements.

**Recommendation 5: Expand Winter and Summer Uses**

Activities that can be utilized year round help expand the winter opportunities at the park while attracting new summer visitors. Year round activities allow for the greatest return on investment for Minocqua Winter Park. Introducing new winter activities that can be modified and offered over the summer also allows the Park to encourage winter users who are already aware of the Park to revisit over the summer, reducing marketing costs.

The introduction of summer activities at the Park will help Minocqua Winter Park become a year round destination. These additional events will also reduce the Park’s dependency on snow to pay for chalet maintenance. Summer uses should complement existing activities in the Town of Minocqua. Summer recommendations will focus on activities the park can add that do not directly compete with existing festivals and/or activities (e.g. Beef-o-rama, Live Music at Torpy Park). Due to direct competition from other Minocqua Parks and the remote location of Minocqua Winter Park, additional summer uses that capitalize on the Park’s remote location may do well.
The addition of new and expanded winter sports at Minocqua Winter Park will increase total visitors to the park and revenues for the Foundation. The Park already has a wide range of activities taking place during the winter months (e.g. cross country skiing, snow shoeing, skijoring, ice skating, and tubing). The ability to diversify and expand existing uses beyond cross country skiing will allow the Foundation to cover operating expenses by not relying solely on cross country skiing.

**Biathlon/ Shooting Range**

Minocqua Winter Park is known as a world class cross country skiing location. With access to long run, difficult terrains, and well groomed trails that cross country skiers from around the state visit annually. A unique and popular Olympic sport that could be accommodated on-site is the biathlon. Biathlons combine cross country skiing and target shooting. This activity would increase the winter activities while providing a target shooting site during the summer months. Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would identify the best location for the target shooting and should work with the U.S. Olympic Organization to ensure the course meets their qualifications. A biathlon range needs a 50-meter range with a 150-meter penalty lap. This use would not become a full gun range, because none of the potential sites to target shoot on are located on the Town’s 40-acre parcel, and more conveniently located gun ranges exist in the area.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would have the ability to manage this event with their current winter staff and would not require another group to manage the winter aspect of the sport. Summer target practice may need another group.

**Land Use Limitations**

There are no land use limitations if the shooting course is located on the acreage owned by the Town of Minocqua. Part of Squirrel Hill is on the Town’s property, so the topography would allow for target practice to shoot toward the hill.

**Chalet Limitations**

As identified in the facilities section, winter space in the chalet is limited. The addition of a new sport may benefit from equipment and accessories being sold and rented from the ski shop sales space, which has no additional space. The attraction of additional park users would also put additional capacity stress in winter on the facilities' infrastructure.
Fat Bike/ Winter Mountain Biking / Summer Mountain Biking

A fat bike, also called a winter mountain bike, is a bicycle with over-sized tires, typically 3.8 in (9.7 cm) or larger and rims 65 mm (2.6 in) or wider, designed for low tire pressure (~10 psi) to allow riding on soft unstable terrain, such as snow and sand. Creating a fat bike course during the winter months will add an additional activity to bring visitors to the Park. Specific fat bike trails would need to be marked and identified to ensure biking and other winter activities can coexist.

Summer mountain biking routes on the ski trails are not possible due to current land agreements. The area’s remote roads could be the bike routes though, and Minocqua Winter Park could be the trailhead. Developing road trails for mountain bikers would help attract cross country skiers who bike to visit Minocqua during the summer months.

Partnership Opportunity
The Park and Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation should partner with a mountain bike organization like the Lakeland Area Mountain Bike Organization (LAMBO). LAMBO can rent space to house rental bikes and the necessary tools to maintain both fat bikes and mountain bikes. LAMBO would be responsible for staffing a potential summer bike shop in the chalet, and coordinating any rides or races that may originate at the Park.

Land Use Limitations
The surrounding land use agreements prohibit summer use for any activity beyond walking, hunting, and fishing—some lands are not open to the public for any use in summer. Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would need to work with surrounding land owners to amend their winter agreement to allow mountain bikes on the same ski trails during the summer months. Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would also need to work with LAMBO to ensure that mountain bikes in summer would not damage the trails.

No land use limitations exist if the surrounding roads were marked as bike routes per §349.23 Wis. Statutes.

Chalet Limitations
As identified in the chalet facilities section, the chalet is at maximum capacity to store additional equipment and people during the winter months. A temporary outdoor lockable storage container could store rental bicycles in summer or winter. In summer, the chalet’s ski shop could be outfitted to sell and service mountain bikes, but there is no space to sell or service bikes in winter. The attraction of more winter users would put additional strain on the facilities’
capacity to provide all users with a good experience due to the existing over usage of the chalet.

**Hiking and Trail Running**

Working with the Town of Minocqua, Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation can switch from seasonal ski trail signage (wooden) to all-season trail signage (aluminum) and include hiking trail information. The same trails used for cross country skiing can also be used for hiking and trail running (see Land Use Limitations). Many cross country skiers run during the summer months, which may generate year round traffic to the Park. Foot traffic has minimal impact on the trail system, and is an allowable summer use with current land use agreements.

**Partnership Opportunity**

Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation should explore a partnership with the local high school to use the site for high school cross country events and tournaments. The Foundation may also collaborate with the Thunderbird Track and Field Club, a member of USA Track and Field (USATF), to have them organize and run events.

**Land Use Limitations**

Most of the cross country ski trails are on land that is open to the public to walk and run on in the summer months, along with hunt and fish on. Some land is closed to all summer public access. Some of the trails cross wetlands, so boardwalks would need to be constructed, or summer routes around wetlands would be necessary. Since hunting is allowed, then traps could be placed on the land, and that may become a hazard to runners if the trap is too close to a trail.

**Chalet Limitations**

Most cross country facilities are located in areas with few resources. Typically, they are part of a park system that includes access to drinking water and restrooms. The chalet in its current conditions would be adequate for basic trail running needs. Should the site host an event, there would be a need for temporary air conditioning in the chalet, as the building has no windows that open. The ski shop has an exterior door that could be opened and fitted for an air conditioning access pipe.
Wilderness Camping

Wilderness camping implies camping in a naturally wild and remote area far from civilization. This type of camping involves backpacking in a wilderness like forested area that is away from developed campgrounds. Only individual campsites, possibly with a fire ring and basic latrine, off of a trail are developed. Campers would obtain a permit for the date desired to enter on and for the entry point the camper wishes to embark from. The permit could be obtained online, at the Town Hall, or at Minocqua Winter Park—all using the same online computer reservation system. Minocqua Winter Park chalet could be used as a trailhead and outfitter.

Partnership Opportunity
Minocqua Winter Park could partner with Nicolet College to offer wilderness camping experiences as a part of their summer activity program, Outdoor Adventure Series, or partner with any other group that wishes to maintain the online reservation system and other aspects of wilderness camping. The parking lot could also be used as a park and ride lot for outfitters transporting people and canoes to Squirrel River, Tomahawk River, or Willow Reservoir. There may not be a market for paying for this type of camping at Minocqua Winter Park, because free water accessible remote camping exists in the Willow Reservoir.

Land Use Limitations
Two state natural areas are part of the cross country ski trails in winter, but do not allow camping on them at any time of year. Hiking is allowed though.

The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would need to expand their land use agreements to allow camping at specific remote sites with the surrounding land owners, since camping is currently not allowed at any time of year.

Chalet Limitations
There are no chalet limitations for the activity. The existing chalet with ticketing area can be used to buy camping access permits. The ski shop could be filled with camping supplies.
**Winter Festival**

A winter festival would be held prior to or after the peak two weeks at the park and would include free introduction to cross country skiing courses, live music, sleigh rides, and other unique winter activities. The festival could include professional ice sculpting and other festival activities. The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation would host this event and work with area sponsors to fund the event.

Minocqua Winter Park began holding an annual Community Appreciation Day in 2014 and again in 2015. The Park was open to residents of Oneida, Vilas, Iron, and Price Counties. All activities (skiing, tubing, skating, and snow shoeing) were free and cross-country ski lessons were given for free too. This recommendation is to at least continue this event, and maybe expand it.

**Partnership Opportunity**
Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation could partner with the Town of Minocqua, Chamber of Commerce and others to provide various activities, advertise the festival, and fund the events.

**Land Use Limitations**
There are none if all the activities would take place on the Town’s 40-acre parcel in Minocqua Winter Park. Sleigh rides are allowed on adjacent land.

**Chalet Limitations**
Depending on the size of the event, additional restrooms and heated tents would be needed to allow people to enjoy the outside area. The chalet is not big enough to house live music or accommodate large groups of people. Additional facilities would be necessary, and are easy to secure.

**Terrain/Snow Park**

Originally, Minocqua Winter Park included two downhill skiing runs as its main attraction. Introducing snowboarding on the non-tubing run (the south run) would provide additional opportunities for the park to generate interest and revenue. Snow parks are able to utilize shorter runs by adding different park elements for skiers and snowboarders. Elements like table tops, boxes, rails, and jumps are often included in snow parks.
Partnership Opportunity
Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation should identify different companies specializing in park terrain (e.g. snowparksolution.com; or uniqueparks.com) and partner with them to build a park on the cleared south run at Minocqua Winter Park.

Land Use Limitations
Due to the need for downhill speed, the terrain park would take place on part of the Town’s 40 acres. However, identifying a good site for a terrain park will be difficult without impacting existing activities like cross country skiing and tubing.

Site Limitations
The chalet is already at maximum capacity. Adding an additional activity could increase the use of the chalet by 30 additional users, and increasing the need for parking by at least 20 spots. The park also does not have adequate chair lifts, magic carpet, or tow ropes. The addition of a terrain park would require a second lift separate from the tubing hill tow rope.

Improve Tubing Hill Capacity
Currently, a tow rope takes snow tubers halfway up one of the two tree cleared runs. The south tree cleared run is not used at this time. The current north run could be expanded to provide three lanes the full length of the tree cleared run. Soil will need to be hauled onsite to add grassed berms all the way up the run to create the three lanes. The tow rope should also be extended to the top of the tree cleared run, and dedicated to the tubing hill. If a snow park is created on the other tree cleared downhill run, then a second tow rope dedicated to snow park users would be needed to fully service the hill.

Partnership Opportunity
No additional partnerships are necessary, as the Foundation already operates the tubing hill, and another entity already operates the chalet café that many tubing customers will use as a snack bar.

Land Use Limitations
There are none, because the tubing hill is on the Town’s 40-acre parcel in Minocqua Winter Park.

Site Limitations
Expanding the tubing run from 1 to 3 lanes triples the capacity of the tubing hill, which may triple the visitors that will use the tubing hill. At full tubing hill
capacity, there may need to be 30 additional (50 total) parking spots, and space in the chalet for an additional 50 people. A new location may be necessary if the tubing rope tow is extended the full height of the hill to the top of the cleared lane, because no turns are possible on a rope tow. If the rope tow is relocated to the wooded section south of the current tubing run, then make sure space exists for the rope tow, and a ski rope tow for a potential terrain park.

**Recommendation 6: Install an Observation Tower**

A unique activity that is only possible on the tallest hills in an area is to look out from an observation tower built above the trees. This would not be a money making venture, but would add value for visitors if Minocqua Winter Park is open to summer uses.

**Partnership Opportunity**

No additional partnerships are necessary, since there would be no tickets to collect for admission to the potential tower. Since this tower could not be constructed higher on Squirrel Hill than the DNR fire tower, then the DNR may want to locate their fire room on top of the observation tower and remove their metal tower.

**Land Use Limitations**

The observation tower would not exist on Town property, so getting DNR approval to construct the new tower close to their tower may be needed. Additional approval may be necessary from Northwoods Land Trust, who owns the development rights to the land.

**Site Limitations**

Only Squirrel Hill is tall enough to consider installing an observation tower on. A second hill exists south of the parking lot, where a telecommunications tower exists, but the distance to that hill requires a hike that is at least twice as long as it would take to get to the potential Squirrel Hill tower. High numbers of visitors do not show up to observation towers all at one time, so the existing parking lot and chalet (if opened) are sufficient.
CHAPTER 6 – IMPLEMENTATION

There are a number of different strategies available for implementing this study—in kind service & volunteerism and material donations, grant funding, and policy modifications. The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation and the Minocqua Forest Riders Snowmobile Club have both been successful in attracting individual and local business donations of materials and services to maintain the chalet and equipment shed. The Lakeland Ski Touring Foundation has also been successful maintaining a dedicated group of volunteers that operate many aspects of the Minocqua Winter Park.

Now is the time to expand opportunities at the Park through additional volunteerism by introducing other organizations to operate summer programs. A variety of commonly used state and federal funding programs that local governments or non-profit organizations can apply for are described in Attachment B. This list was compiled not as an exhaustive list of possible grants, but of the highly attainable grant opportunities that may be a wise use of time to apply for. Other limited grant opportunities may also become available during this study's implementation from various local or national corporations and recreation groups that may align with this study's recommendations.

Policy modifications may be necessary at the Town and Foundation levels to allow expansion of Minocqua Winter Park to include summer uses. The Town may need to coordinate additional staff resources, unless an executive director is retained to coordinate summer uses. The Foundation may need to expand their charter or other procedures to allow for summer management of Minocqua Winter Park too.
Insert Maps:

Map 1  Project Area
Map 2  Natural Resources
Map 3  Existing Land Use
Map 4  Zoning
Map 5  Land Ownership
Map 6  Customer Service Area
Appendix A:

Chalet Improvement Requirements

The following document was provided by Minocqua Winter Park Foundation (MWPF) and is in draft form. The document represents features and amenities identified by MWPF to be possibly incorporated into a new facility to benefit their current uses. Any new facility and/or improvements in the future shall be approved by the Town of Minocqua and will include uses for multiple community service type organizations, including MWPF, as needed to create a year round facility.
The Minocqua Winter Park Chalet, which was built in 1956 and expanded in 1988, is a limitation to growth. The goal is to identify and implement chalet changes which will accommodate increased customer volume, improve the customer experience, improve safety, accommodate potential future uses, and improve the general use of the building.

Current Customer Base and Uses

- Cross-country skiers: Over 75km of trails for all skiers.
  - Beginners
  - Intermediate
  - Advanced/Elite
  - Skijorers (skiing with a harnessed dog)
  - Lakeland Nordic Ski Team
  - Nicolet College Continuing Education cross-country skiing classes
- Snowshoers: 15km of dedicated trails
- Snow Tubers
- Ice Skaters
- Participants of fund-raising events
  - Moose Tracks snowshoe race
  - Inga Lami women’s ski/snowshoe event
  - Wolf Tracks Rendezvous ski race
  - Squirrel Hill Skiathlon ski race
  - Winter Park Bark skijor race (skiing with a harnessed dog or dogs)
  - Muggy Buggy Fun Run and Xtreme Run trail runs
  - Buck Rut trail run
  - Light Up The Night, New Year’s Eve snow tubing and music
- Participants of non fund-raising events
  - Demo Days
  - Community Appreciation Day
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements
DRAFT as of April 2015

Potential Future Customers and Uses
The items below have not been prioritized, and no analysis has been completed to determine cost/feasibility.

- Winter
  - Snow/fat tire biking
  - Expand snow tubing capacity – additional lanes, possible magic carpet lift (ex. tubing@camelback youtube video)
  - Nordic skiing skills area
  - Terrain and fun-park – requires 200 ft vertical (snow park solutions.com, unique parks.com). Snow is shaped to develop skill and have fun. Could possibly charge if there was a lift service (magic carpet) available
  - Winter sleigh rides (wagon/sleigh pulled by a John Deere Gator)
  - Snow making
  - Biathlon range
  - Additional ice skating (skating ribbon) through the woods with ice (example: Maggie Dailey Park Skating Ribbon)
  - Sit-skiing/Adaptive skiing event
  - Ski in yurt dinner

- Summer/Fall
  - Mountain /single track biking (existing and new single track trails)
  - Fall hay rides - wagon/sleigh pulled by a John Deere Gator
  - Educational hikes - Nicolet College, Northwoods Wildlife Center, etc.
  - Outdoor music events
  - Weddings, family reunions, meeting space
  - Hiking
  - Community Garden West - straw bale gardening only
  - Foot golf course - pasture/tundra model (use soccer ball on rugged terrain)
  - Wetland boardwalks for wildflower, natural garden and bird watching (Eloise Butler Wildflower Garden Theodore Wirth Park est. 1907)
  - Frisbee/Disc Golf
  - Observation Tower at the top of Squirrel Hill (like Timms Hill)
  - Outdoor ice/hockey rink
  - Dog park with agility equipment
  - Geo-caching
Chalet Improvement Requirements

Building Main Floor
The main floor of the chalet contains a trail ticket/merchandise sales area, restrooms, customer seating and gear storage area, an office, a ski shop with rentals and merchandise, and a restaurant with a kitchen, serving and seating area.

- Trail Ticket and Merchandise Sales
  - Location - The ticket sales area is located just beyond and to the left of the entry. On busy days and/or when tickets for snow tubing sessions are being sold, there is a large bottleneck of people at the ticket sales area which blocks the entry doors.
  - Space – The tickets sales area is small and does not accommodate having multiple sales lines and point of sales systems. On busy days and/or when tickets for snow tubing sessions are being sold, the line is long.
  - Storage – The storage area is small and does not accommodate storing merchandise for sale.
  - The Needs:
    - A location that is easy in/out for customers and that does not create congestion for entering the seating area and restaurant.
    - Larger area that can accommodate multiple customer lines and multiple point of sales systems.
    - Additional and more efficient storage space for merchandise, tickets, maps, waiver forms, etc.
    - Adequate space for the media center controls: 2-way communication radios, sound system, TV control

- Potential Future Implementation:
  - Move toward electronic ticket sales: on-line and/or kiosk sales
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements

DRAFT as of April 2015

- Restrooms
  - Location - The location of the restrooms are on the opposite end of the building from the entry doors.
  - Space – There is one Men’s and one Women’s restroom. The Men’s restroom has 1 stall, 2 urinals, and 2 sinks. The Women’s restroom has 3 stalls, and 2 sinks. The space does not service large crowds well. Port-o-potties are rented to handle the volumes of the busiest times.
  - Storage – The Men’s restroom has no storage space for supplies. The Women’s restroom has a sink vanity for some supply storage.
  - Changing Area – There is no area in the restrooms for changing in/out of ski clothes. Customers must try to use the restrooms or the general seating area.
  - The Needs:
    - Larger restrooms with more facilities
    - Area for changing, showers, and lockers
    - Location where lines would not interfere with the general seating space and flow of the building
    - Storage within each restroom or between each restroom (for TP, paper towels, soap, cleaning supplies, mop, etc.).
    - New or enlarged septic system. Most likely the system was not engineered for the current volume or increased volume.
  - Nice to Haves:
    - Sauna area

- Customer Seating and Gear Storage Area
  - Location/Space - The customer seating and gear storage area covers approximately half of the main floor. A wood pellet stove sits in the middle of the area for supplemental heat and ambiance.
  - Seating - Wooden benches, a picnic table, a love seat, and chairs are used for customer seating.
  - Gear Storage – Several metal racks exist for customer gear storage. Customers also store their gear under and around the wooden benches.
  - The Needs:
    - Additional space for customer seating and gear storage (lockers, cubbies, etc.)
  - Nice To Haves:
    - Private space for mother nursing and child napping
    - Customers desire a more rustic fireplace
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements

** Draft as of April 2015 **

- **Office**
  - **Location** - The office is small and is located on the opposite side of the building from the ticket sales area between the restrooms and the kitchen.
  - **The Needs:**
    - A separate room with work areas and storage which is connected to the ticket sales area. Chalet ticket sales staff could easily access supplies and cash, etc.

- **Restaurant**
  - **Location/Space** – The restaurant area covers approximately 2/3rds of the other half of the main floor. The area is split between a kitchen which includes a storage area and a beer keg cooler and seating area.
  - **The Needs:**
    - A larger seating area
    - Better tables/chairs
  - **Nice to Haves:**
    - A more functional storage area and beer storage/serving area

- **Retail Shop (Rentals, Sales, Service, and Lessons)**
  - **Location/Space** – The ski shop area covers approximately 1/3rd of the other half of the main floor. Attic space above the ski shop is used for storage. A pull-down ladder is used to access the attic storage space.
  - **The Needs:**
    - An expanded and separate rental area with easy entry/exit
    - An expanded sales floor
    - An area that is more visible to customers
    - An office area
    - Storage space that is not attic space
    - Separate shop space that includes a thermal waxing bag and a stone grinder (destination services for elite skiers/racers). There are electric requirements for the stone grinder.
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements
*DRAFT* as of April 2015

- **General**
  - **Need to Remain:**
    - Water fountain/bottle filler
    - Big screen TV
    - Business Sponsor Brochures Rack
    - Large Trail System Map
    - Trail Conditions Map - visible from ticket sales area for staff to reference and customers can easily see
    - Bulletin Board
    - Magazine Rack
    - Coat Racks
    - Security System
  - **The Needs:**
    - Storage area for vacuum, mops, extension cords, ladder, cleaning supplies, etc.
    - Adequate electrical outlets for customer personal electronics
    - One space for legacy plaques, achievements, etc. (currently scattered throughout the building with one cabinet in the restaurant seating area)
    - A medium-sized, partitionable multi-purpose room for meetings, event staging, race registration, groups, visiting ski teams, parties, massages, etc.
Minocqua Winter Park  
Chalet Improvement Requirements  
*Draft* as of April 2015

Building Lower Level
The lower level of the chalet is composed of a ski waxing room, ski patrol room, utility room including a toilet and sink, restaurant pantry, restaurant freezer, storage shelves and two storage cabinets. Wood pellets for the pellet stove are also stored in this area. There is one garage door and one entry/exit door. A stairwell connects the main floor to the lower level.

In general this space is not customer friendly and is poorly laid out. Heat in this space is poor. Stairwell lighting is poor and the stair treads are slippery in ski boots. The garage door is not well sealed and enables entry of cold air and rodents.

- General Lower Level
  - The Needs:
    - Additional space and space that is more functional
    - Adequate heat with a separate zone
    - A tighter and better insulated space

- Ski Waxing Room
  - The Needs:
    - Additional space with easy and safe access from outside
    - Exhaust fan
    - Adequate waxing benches and electrical outlets for wax irons
    - Good lighting
  - Nice to Haves:
    - Natural lighting
    - A larger area which includes a ski team meeting room

- Ski Patrol / Emergency Response Area
  - The Needs:
    - An area on the ground level with direct access to the driveway for the ski patrol snowmobile and ambulance
    - A separate space with a private patient area, sitting area, a small office area, and with or close to a sink and toilet

- Storage (restaurant pantry, event supplies, tools, paints, etc.)
  - The Needs:
    - One securable area with adequate storage and shelving for folding tables, event supplies, tools, paints, ice skates, etc.
    - One securable area for the restaurant pantry and freezer. Ideally this would be located on the main floor in or near the kitchen.
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements
DRAFT as of April 2015

- Ice Skating Pond Warming Area
  - The Needs:
    - An area with easy access to the ice skating pond

- Utility Room (hot water heater, power equipment for the tubing hill lift, furnace)

- Stairwell
  - The Needs:
    - Safe stair treads
    - Improved lighting
    - Safe handrails
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements
DRAFT as of April 2015

General
• The Needs:
  o A tighter and better insulated building
  o A more energy efficient building
  o Opening, energy efficient windows to enable usage/rental of the building in the offseason.
  o All electrical panels in one easy to access and safe location (currently there are three panels: one in the men’s restroom, one outside the men’s restroom, and one in the lower level utility room)
  o Upgraded electric service to meet the current needs of the business
  o Heating to meet the current needs of the business
• Nice to Haves:
  o A green building. The current location lends itself to solar energy.
  o Geothermal, high-efficiency heating system
  o A Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)- Certified building
  o All rooms on the main floor at the same grade

Outside Building
• The Needs:
  o A larger chalet-attached deck, grilling, and seating area with a wind-break.
  o Building-attached storage for 3-4 tons of wood pellets (if a pellet stove continues to be used) which has easy access for deliveries and for staff to bring bags of pellets into the building.
  o Building-attached, partially heated storage with a drain for grills, shovels, snow blower, ice pond hoses, and all other regularly used outdoor items.
  o Building-attached or adjacent shelter for ski patrol toboggan and ski shop’s pulk.
  o External electrical outlets near the deck, the stadium area, and entry/exit areas
Minocqua Winter Park
Chalet Improvement Requirements

DRAFT as of April 2015

Short-term Improvements

- Purchase and install safety treads on the stairs to the lower level. The stairs are slippery with ski boots on.
  o Safety treads were purchased in March 2015 and will be installed prior to November 2015.
- Purchase and install a 2nd railing in the lower level stairwell.
  o The stairwell may not be wide enough to install the 2nd railing. Investigate prior to November 2015.
- Make the road area safer for people using the skating pond. Barricade the driveway prior to the garbage area so traffic cannot enter the parking lot between the chalet and the pond.
  o Cones are used to block the driveway.
  o Possibly add a sign that says Service/Employee Entrance DO NOT ENTER
- Purchase and install a programmable or automatic floodlight to illuminate the US flag at night.
  o Bill Kopanda will fund the purchase. An electrician is required for the installation.
- Purchase and install new water fountain/water bottle filler.
  o A free, used water fountain was installed in April 2015. A bottle filler spout was added and can be operated separately from the fountain.
- Make the walkway/driveway area to the Wax Room safer.
  o Need to investigate
- Install motion sensor floodlights outside the main and basement entrances.
  o Need to investigate
- Add one or two, 20 amp circuits to the front desk area for the radio repeater and audio equipment.
- Repair two outside outlets. The outlet off the deck outside of the front desk windows gets buried in snow, and the outlet on the webcam pole is broken.
Appendix B:

Grant Opportunities

Summarized by NCWRPC
Wisconsin DNR Administered Programs

All DNR grant applications are due May 1, annually, to the Community Service Specialist serving that region of the state.

Community Service Specialist
Rhineland Office
107 Sutliff Ave
Rhineland WI 54501

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Money is available to encourage nationwide creation and interpretation of high quality outdoor recreational opportunities. The program funds both state and local outdoor recreation projects. Counties, cities, villages, towns, school districts, and Indian tribes are eligible for funding with an approved Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans. Up to 50% matching grants from the fund are available to state and local units of government. Priorities include acquisition of land where a scarcity of outdoor recreational land exists. Also, projects that provide access for the greatest number of potential users and provide the greatest opportunities for outdoor recreation are also desirable.

Eligible projects include acquisition of land for public outdoor recreational areas and preservation of waterfront and open space. Development of public outdoor park and recreational areas and their support facilities. Applications are available from the DNR regional Community Service Specialist.

Stewardship Program

The Stewardship Program is a comprehensive program that addresses a broad spectrum of land conservation and recreation needs across the state. Stewardship has four major components:
- **Nonprofit Grants**
  Acquisition of land and easements for a wide range of conservation and outdoor recreation purposes.
- **Local Assistance Grant Programs**
  Grants for local governments or NCOs to acquire land and conservation easements of land and development projects that support nature-based outdoor recreation.
  - Acquisition and Development of Local Parks
  - Urban Rivers
  - Urban Green Spaces
  - Acquisition of Development Rights

Stewardship Grants for Nonprofit Conservation Organizations
Review specific guidelines for each of the following programs online at:

Natural Areas
State Natural Areas are set aside for protection of their natural values for future generations, scientific research, and teaching conservation and natural history. They are not intended for intensive recreational use such as picnicking or camping.
**Habitat Areas and Fisheries**
The purpose of the Habitat Areas Program is to protect, restore, and enhance wildlife habitat in Wisconsin in order to expand opportunities for wildlife-based recreation such as hunting, bird watching, fishing, nature appreciation, and viewing of game and non-game species. The goals of the program are achieved through the use of easements, land acquisition, and habitat restoration.

**Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (a Stewardship Program)**
Funds may be used for both land acquisition projects and development projects for nature-based outdoor recreation, such as fishing piers, hiking trails and picnic facilities. Applicants compete for funds on a regional and county basis. NCOs may only apply for funds for land acquisition; they are not eligible for funds for development on property.

DNR considers the following factors when evaluating projects:

- Implements priorities contained in state and local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans
- Meets needs and deficiencies identified in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the approved local comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, or the approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plans of other units of government including regional or integrated management plans
- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan
- Is regional or statewide in nature and can be documented as such
- Documentation shows benefits to tourism
- Results in a first of a kind facility for the project sponsor or service area
- Provides or supports a water-based activity
- Serves the greatest population
- Involves volunteers, local donations or cooperation by two or more service clubs
- Applicants that have never received an outdoor recreation program grant
- Provides for completion of a project already started where the sponsor has shown the ability to provide quality outdoor recreation facilities for its citizens without grant assistance
- Sponsor has completed prior LWCF, ADLP, UGS, URGP or projects successfully.
- Involves two or more governmental agencies
- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan;
- Serves as a demonstration project for other project sponsors
- Corrects a documented health or safety problem
- Renovates existing facilities which are in danger of being lost for public use
- Sponsor is able to adequately maintain and operate the area or facility
- Provides multiple season, multiple activity use
- Serves the recreation needs of elderly persons, minorities and disabled persons. Facilities provided must exceed those required by state or federal regulations
**Acquisition Of Development Rights (a Stewardship Program)**

The program’s purpose is to buy development rights (easements) to protect natural, agricultural, or forest lands from development that enhance nature-based outdoor recreation. Applicants compete for funds on a statewide basis.

Priority parcels criteria:

- Property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, or estuaries;
- Property that creates a buffer between land that has been permanently protected for natural resource and conservation purposes and potential or existing residential, commercial, or industrial development;
- Property that is within the boundaries of an acquisition project established by the DNR, a government unit, or a NCO where the uses of the property will complement the goals of the project and the stewardship program.

DNR considers the following factors when evaluating acquisition of development rights:

- Recreational opportunities provided or enhanced;
- Proximity to other permanently protected land;
- Natural, scenic, geologic, and archaeological values of the property;
- The degree of development pressure;
- Whether the project has been identified in a comprehensive plan pursuant to s. 66.1001, WI Stats., another plan that has as one of its purposes the protection of natural resources, or the natural heritage inventory database.

**Recreational Trails Act (RTA)**

The Recreational Trails Act (RTA) provides funds to local units of government through the transfer of federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles. These funds are used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized (30% of RTA funds), non-motorized (30% of RTA funds), and both (40% of RTA funds) types of recreational trail uses.

Eligible projects in order of priority are: maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, construction of new trails with certain restrictions on federal lands, and acquisition of easement or property for trails.

**Snowmobile Club Signs**

Funds are available to provide free cardboard trail signs and reflective material to snowmobile clubs agreeing to open their trails to public use as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Funds are limited to no more than $15,000 per year for the purchase of signs and reflective material. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.
**Snowmobile Route Signs**

Funds are available to provide costs for initial signing of snowmobile routes and trail crossing warning signs as per s. 23.09(26) and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Towns, cities, and villages are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. No local match is required, but state funding is limited to no more than $30,000 per year for the route sign program. Applications are due in the Region offices by April 15 of each year for the following season.

**Snowmobile Enforcement Patrols**

Funds are available to encourage county snowmobile patrols to function as a law enforcement unit for the enforcement of State Statute 350 as per s. 350.12(4)(a)(4), Wis. Stats. and NR 50.12, 20.370(4)(ft), Wis. Adm. Code. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the Department on or before July 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the Department on or before June 1 of the year following the 12-month period for which the claim is made. Salaries of officers engaged in the enforcement of ch. 350, Wis. Stats., at a rate no more than the regular straight-time rate are eligible. Fringe benefits cannot exceed 29% of the gross salary. Travel, materials and supplies are reimbursable. Depreciation is calculated at a rate of 20% annually on all equipment over $1,000.

**Snowmobile Trail Aids**

Funds are available to provide a statewide system of well-signed and well-groomed snowmobile trails for public use and enjoyment as per s. 23.09(26), and Chapter 350, Wis. Stats. Counties are eligible to apply on forms provided by the Department. 100% cost sharing is provided with limits on maintenance costs of $250, and development costs of $500 per mile. Applications are due in the appropriate Region Office by April 15 of each year. Eligible projects include maintenance of trails, which includes signing, brushing, and grooming of snowmobile trails, purchase of liability insurance and acquisition of short term easements, development of trails which may include general trail construction, bridges, gates and signs, major rehabilitation of existing snowmobile bridges and rehabilitation of existing trail segments.
Other Private Assistance Programs

These funding opportunities are provided by non-governmental sources:

**ABSF Skier Development Grant Program**
To encourage sport growth, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation annually provides grant funding opportunities to skier development programs. Priority will be given to organizations that are cross country ski focused, but organizations that support running, biking, and other off-season programs for skiers are also encouraged to apply. About $20,000 is available annually for grants.

Review specific guidelines online at:

**C.D. Besadny Conservation Grants**
The Natural Resources Foundation’s C.D. Besadny Conservation Grant Program provides small, matching grants to conservation organizations in support of projects that promote the responsible stewardship of Wisconsin’s natural resources at the local level. Grants up to $1,000 are awarded annually to projects or programs in Wisconsin that: benefit the public, involve management and restoration of Wisconsin’s natural resources, and/or contribute to knowledge about Wisconsin’s natural resources through education. Recipients are required to match the grant award on a 1:1 basis with funds or in-kind services.

Review specific guidelines online at:
http://www.wisconservation.org/how-we-work/c-d-besadny-conservation-grants/

**Norma & Stanley DeBoer Quiet Trails Fund**
This fund provides funding to DNR property managers or qualified 501(c)(3) organizations for managing walking trails open to the public on public land. The primary purpose of this fund is the creation and maintenance of walking trails open to the public on public lands, including, but not limited to the following activities: identification or trail locations; surveying; purchase of materials; construction; clean-up activities; repairs of trail surfaces, railings, or existing signage; and fees for necessary professional services, and the secondary purpose is the enhancement and promotion of walking trails accessible to the public on public lands, including, but not limited to: habitat improvement adjacent to the trail; development, creation and installation of directional or explanatory signage and trail guide booklets; and modest costs of events designed to increase awareness and/or use of walking trails.

Applicants must be the WDNR or tax exempt. The fund cannot be used for activities associated with any trail open to motorized vehicles (except for authorized maintenance or construction vehicles or motorized equipment for the disabled). This includes, but is not limited to: trails for snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, and motorcycles.

Review specific guidelines online at:
http://www.wisconservation.org/how-we-work/donor-advised-competitive-grants/
Appendix C:

Potential Parking Lot

Created by NCWRPC
Wooded buffer keeps parking lot hidden from Yukon Creek and Squirrel Hill Rd.

- = Potential ticket kiosk, portable toilet, and remote camera.
- = Possible ski-in routes from potential parking lot.
- = Possible walk-in route from potential parking lot.
- = Driveway to access potential parking lot.

Note: Snowmobiles may park wherever vehicles are allowed to park, so special parking is not delineated.