

— Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance —



The View from Skyline

Skyline Parkway, Duluth, Minnesota - Roger's Boulevard - Lester River to Jay Cooke State Park (now Beck's Rd)

Trolley Tour



Sunday
October 8

1 PM
Starts at the Depot,
506 W. Michigan Ave.

Tickets are NOW on sale. \$28 per person.
\$22 for SPPA member or seniors over 65.

Fun opportunity! Full Skyline Parkway Tour
via the DTA trolley!
Fall colors. Interesting Skyline Parkway history.
Best views in town.

Make your reservations & pay by Oct. 4. Call 525-5098.

Skyline Watersheds

by Jesse Schomberg, MN Sea Grant

The streams along Skyline Parkway are perhaps one of the more intriguing features of the route, yet almost every stream is crossed but a single time (the exceptions are, west to east, Merritt, Tischer, and Amity Creeks). That's one brief, tantalizing glimpse of waterfalls, rapids, or glimmering pools snaking above and below the bridge you're zipping across. What you may not realize, however, is that all along those lonely, stream-free sections, you are passing through the watersheds that feed these streams. We can learn a lot about the streams by what we see in their watersheds. A watershed, very simply, is the area of land that drains to a certain river, stream, or lake.

It's these areas of land, and what happens in them, that drives much of what occurs in the streams, particularly related to

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Events

August 26

Hike to the Tunnel

Go hiking with avid historian,
Doug Stevens.

Meet at 10 AM at the far side of the
Zoo parking area. Bring water.

For more info, call 724-0820.

September 8

Spirit Mtn Campout

Dig out your tent and head up to Spirit
Mountain. SPPA is having a campout
with an outdoor potluck dinner at 6:30
PM and bonfire.

Cost is \$15 per tent
and includes s'mores.

Please call 525-5098 by Sept. 6 if you
intend on tenting. If you have a
camper, call Spirit Mt directly for
reservations at 624-8544 and ask to be
near the group camping area.

See inside for **September 9** Hikes
near Spirit Mt on the new Superior
Hiking Trail sections with the
Superior Hiking Trail Association.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- ◆ From the Planning Dept.
- ◆ Mystery Foundation
- ◆ Road Access

Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance Mission: *To be actively involved in short-term and long-term planning for protecting and preserving the aesthetic, environmental, and historic character of Skyline Parkway.*



A Chat with a Planner

by Wendy Grethen

Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance Board

Terry Brown
Barb Forrest (Treasurer)
Wendy Grethen
Tim Larson
Nancy Nelson
Doug Stevens
Margaret West

Newsletter editor:
Wendy Grethen

To submit announcements or articles to the newsletter, call 525-5098 or email contact@skylineppa.org. The next newsletter deadline is January 15, 2007.

SPPA Contact Information

Phone 525-5098
contact@skylineppa.org
www.skylineppa.org

Relevant Contacts for Skyline Parkway

Mayor Herb Bergson
730-5230
City Planner Bob Bruce
730-5580
City Planner Chuck Froseth
730-5580
City Council 730-5740
council@ci.duluth.mn.us

To report significant trash dumpings along Skyline call the Fire Dept at 723-3280
Call 911 if you have specific information (license #, etc)

Informative Website
www.amitycreek.com

Bob Bruce, City of Duluth Planning Department Director breathes a sigh of relief as Duluth's Comprehensive Plan is finally done – the plan was approved unanimously by the city council on June 26. Now Duluth has an updated plan and numerous recommendations to implement. When asked how Skyline Parkway fits in, Bob comments that Skyline Parkway is an organizing thread for the concept of open space. The comprehensive plan highlights Skyline Parkway: “Skyline Parkway really is the plan’s only individual item with its own discussion of policy and higher degree of specificity.” He’s interested in having people transfer the Skyline Parkway experience to the Lakewalk. Skyline Parkway was not built all at once, rather it was a cumulative effort of active construction which spanned many administrations. The Comprehensive Plan does not offer any certain protection for land along Skyline Parkway. A new zoning ordinance will follow the completed comprehensive plan so that future land use decisions are clarified. This should be done soon. Other cities have more advanced zoning systems and Bob feels such a system would help the comprehensive plan and future development combined with land preservation in Duluth.

Bob acknowledges that the Skyline Parkway Corridor Management Plan that was completed in August 2003 has no fundamental disconnects with this recent comprehensive plan. Bob just feels that it should not be approved by the city council because not all the recommendations may be able to be implemented. Limited money and time are the two key factors for Bob’s recommendation to not approve the plan. The Environmental Advisory Council recommends that the city adopt the Corridor Management Plan so that there would be expectation that the recommendations are followed over time.

One plan recommendation: improve wayfinding along the parkway, which had its own funding source through the Byways Program, should be done at some point. Chuck Froseth, also in the Planning Department, comments that we [the city] will resubmit a wayfinding proposal early this fall so that funds may become available in 2007.

Bob’s own preferences for priorities for Skyline Parkway include 1) re-establishing vistas and 2) establishing more continuity along Skyline Parkway, especially near the UMD gap area. Additional ideas he has for Skyline Parkway include standards for vegetation management on the lower side of Skyline Parkway. He’d recommend zones in the standard to specify how clear a section of Skyline Parkway should be. By doing this there would more dramatic scenes along the way. He’d want the city involved with the clearing and use of a chipper so that the tree material could be removed. Repaving the roadway is another suggested continuing

project for Skyline Parkway. The Corridor Management Plan recommends setting up a Skyline Parkway commission. Bob mentioned the city doesn’t have enough staff to help with this but would suggest SPPA serve as that commission. He feels volunteer groups are actually stronger models than city commissions and have more opportunity to get people involved. Groups can “nag

and fight” to spread their message and acquire grants to get some work done while the city is stretched too thin at this time.

Bob is aware of the special status of Skyline Parkway as a State Scenic Byway. Locally, the string of parks along the route also make it effectively a continuous park for most of its way. A special place for locals and tourists to enjoy.

To reach Bob Bruce, call 730-5322 or by email bbruce@ci.duluth.mn.us.

- Bob’s Priorities for Skyline Parkway:**
1. *Re-establish vistas*
 2. *Establish more continuity*
 3. *Set standards for vegetation management*
 4. *Repave*





Mystery Foundation

near Skyline & Gogebic Street

by Doug Stevens

At about 96th Ave West and Skyline Parkway sits an old bluestone foundation with a bluestone-lined creek running by. Who lived there? Who did this wonderful rock work? Why was it abandoned?

John Green gave me a clue that there was an old street nearby named Lanigan Blvd. Off to the library's Duluth room I went to look at the reverse directory to see if there was someone who lived at Lanigan Blvd at 96th Ave West. A man by the name of **Adolph Sorquist** lived in the house in 1930. The next step was to look in other directories to see how many years he lived there. Looking back to 1924-29 he had lived in Morgan Park and then moved to Riverside. In the directories, information about what a person did for a living is available. Adolph worked for the Diamond Calk Company having various common labor jobs. He continued to live there until 1945 according to the directories. In 1946 his address is listed as 226 N. 19th Ave West. This still left some unanswered questions that we may never know. Was Adolph the original builder? Was it a working farm? Why did he leave it?



Now it was time to find his obituary and see if it had more information. A library assistant looked it up for me on the internet and came up with the date, month and year to start looking at micro film from the Duluth News Tribune. July 18th 1955 was the date of his death. It was exciting to find out that he lived in Duluth for 55 years and was born in Sweden, and was married to Theresa. She died before him in 1951. He retired from the Diamond Calk Co. in 1940. They had three sons and three daughters. None of his children stayed in Duluth. They moved away with all the history of their home on Lanigan Blvd.

I have since been back to the site

to look at the old home site. My partner and I invited some friends to join us who had a metal detector so we could poke around a bit. We found a couple of old dumping sites loaded with glass bottles, beer cans, old appliances and junk. Chris was excited to find the old well for the property. He found an old flapper valve made of metal for a toilet and two wheat pennies one from 1944 and 1949. You can see grape vine hanging in the trees. If you walk below the foundation you will find more rock work. It looked like they had terraced the hillside and we found honey suckle and snow on the mountain in these rock beds. It must have been a beautiful place at one time.

The next time you take a hike on the Superior Hiking Trail below Skyline in western part of town you will know who lived there. Some day we may find out more, perhaps a picture will show up. Passing the word around may spark someone's memory?

My father worked at the Diamond Calk Co. for 42 years! He may have even known Adolph Sorquist? Too bad my father is gone too. I can't ask him. If you have information about the foundation and Adolph I would love to hear it. Call Doug Stevens at 724-0820.

TWO Superior Hiking Trail Hikes

Sept 9, 10 AM * Spirit Mtn. Chalet to Skyline Parkway (SP) at Highland St., 4.3 miles. Meet at SP at Highland St. parking lot. From I-35, take Boundary Ave Exit #249, turn right on SP and follow it about 2.5 miles to trailhead parking lot.

October 7, 10 AM *Beck's Rd. to Spirit Mtn. Chalet, 7.5 miles. From I-35, take Boundary Ave Exit #249. Go south on Boundary Ave. to T-stop. Turn left on SP (follow Spirit Mtn signs). Go 2 blocks to parking lot on left by Duluth Alpine Club

Spirit Mountain – Board & Master Plan

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area has a seven member board which acts as advisor and assists in oversight and long-term planning for Spirit Mountain. The current board is comprised of Pauline Olsen (Chair), Ken Buehler (Vice-Chair), Alan Johnson (Secretary), Nancy Nelson, C.J. Bird, Will Munger, and Lisa Augustine. The board meets monthly at 5 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month in the

Spirit Mountain Chalet.

The board is working on updating the master plan. At present, about \$10,000 has been raised, about one-fourth of the goal, toward a plan. Once the money is raised, a company will be chosen to perform the update. Renee Mattson, Executive Director of Spirit Mountain Recreation Area, says she would like to see the plan completed by spring of 2007.

Lake View Dr & Snively Blvd

by Doug Stevens

In the eastern section of town near Woodland Ave and Snively Blvd is a road that runs through a quiet Hunters Park neighborhood, the road connects Snively Road on the north end and Vermillion Road on the south end.

In February, I got wind of a meeting about the closing of Lake View Drive. This road is part of the designated bike route for Skyline Parkway and is stated in the Corridor Management Plan (page 56.) The UMD gap has always been a problem and the busy traffic on Woodland Avenue hinders safety. This route will allow bicycle travel and vehicle access would be limited.



On February 23rd I went to the District 10 meeting and it was well-attended by all who lived on Lake View Drive or on other roads near by in Hunters Park. Bob Bruce and Kyle Demming from City Planning led the meeting. About 50 people came out to voice their opinions. It was quite heated at times. Many people spoke of speeding cars coming through the neighborhood trying to avoid the stoplights at Woodland and Snively Rd. Many of the people living in the neighborhood had children and were worried about their safety. The consensus by a majority of the people was to close the road to car traffic.

After listening to this I asked to speak on behalf of the SPPA. I was able to tell them about the Corridor Management Plan and it was our hope to at least keep a bike path open and to not close the road completely. Bob Bruce and Kyle Demming listened and agreed that this will be taken into account. The discussion soon went back to the number of people coming through at a fast and reckless pace on Lake View Drive and other streets. No one in the audience said one thing about agreeing with leaving a bike path open. They were just determined to see the street closed at the north end.

On June 2nd the City mailed a letter to all of those residents invited to the neighborhood meetings several months ago. This letter explains the staff recommendation to close northbound Lakeview Drive access to Snively Road for six months and then to reevaluate. The closure would be accomplished by placing concrete barriers in the street. Kyle forwarded my concerns to the City Engineer regarding bike travel through the area and he will order the placement of the barriers so that enough space is left to allow for the passing of a bike and small trailer.

water quality. Three of the most important “things” in a watershed are **forest cover**, **wetlands**, and **impervious surfaces**. Each of these has been shown to play a critical role in how streams function, and in determining water quality.

Wetlands and forest cover both play a major role in protecting streams. Both help reduce erosion and sediment, slow the flow of water, and maintain steady streamflows throughout the year. Studies have found that as wetlands and forests are removed from a watershed, more water runs off the land faster, more sediment runs off, and stream temperatures are warmer.

Impervious surfaces are surfaces that do not allow water to soak, or infiltrate, into the soil. They include rooftops, roads, parking lots and sidewalks. Runoff from impervious surfaces has been shown to carry bacteria, nutrients, sediment, roadsalt, oil and grease, pesticides, and other contaminants directly to nearby streams. In addition, the vast amounts of extra water than runs off can cause serious erosion within the stream itself, leading to even more sediment and a loss of streamside vegetation that may have shaded the stream and helped keep it cool.

When there are too many impervious surfaces in a watershed, they can cause serious problems. Recent work completed by the University of Minnesota Duluth and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has calculated the amount of impervious surfaces in Duluth’s watersheds (Figure 1—on page 5).

Research has shown that water quality impacts are typically not apparent in watersheds with less than 5-10% of their area covered by impervious surfaces. In Duluth, this includes those watersheds on the edge of the city: Mission Creek, Amity Creek, and Lester River. Once a watershed is covered by more than 5-10%, the impacts become more and more

apparent. Many of the larger streams in the city fall into this in-between category, including Kingsbury, Chester, and Tischer Creeks, all designated trout streams. In each of these, monitoring by the Natural Resources Research Institute found impacts from

sediment, temperature, and roadsalt. Those watersheds with the highest amounts of impervious surfaces typically have serious problems. Of the larger streams, Miller Creek has the highest amount of impervious surface, with about 22%

Once a watershed is covered by more than 5-10% [of impervious surfaces], the impacts become more and more apparent.

Continues on page 5



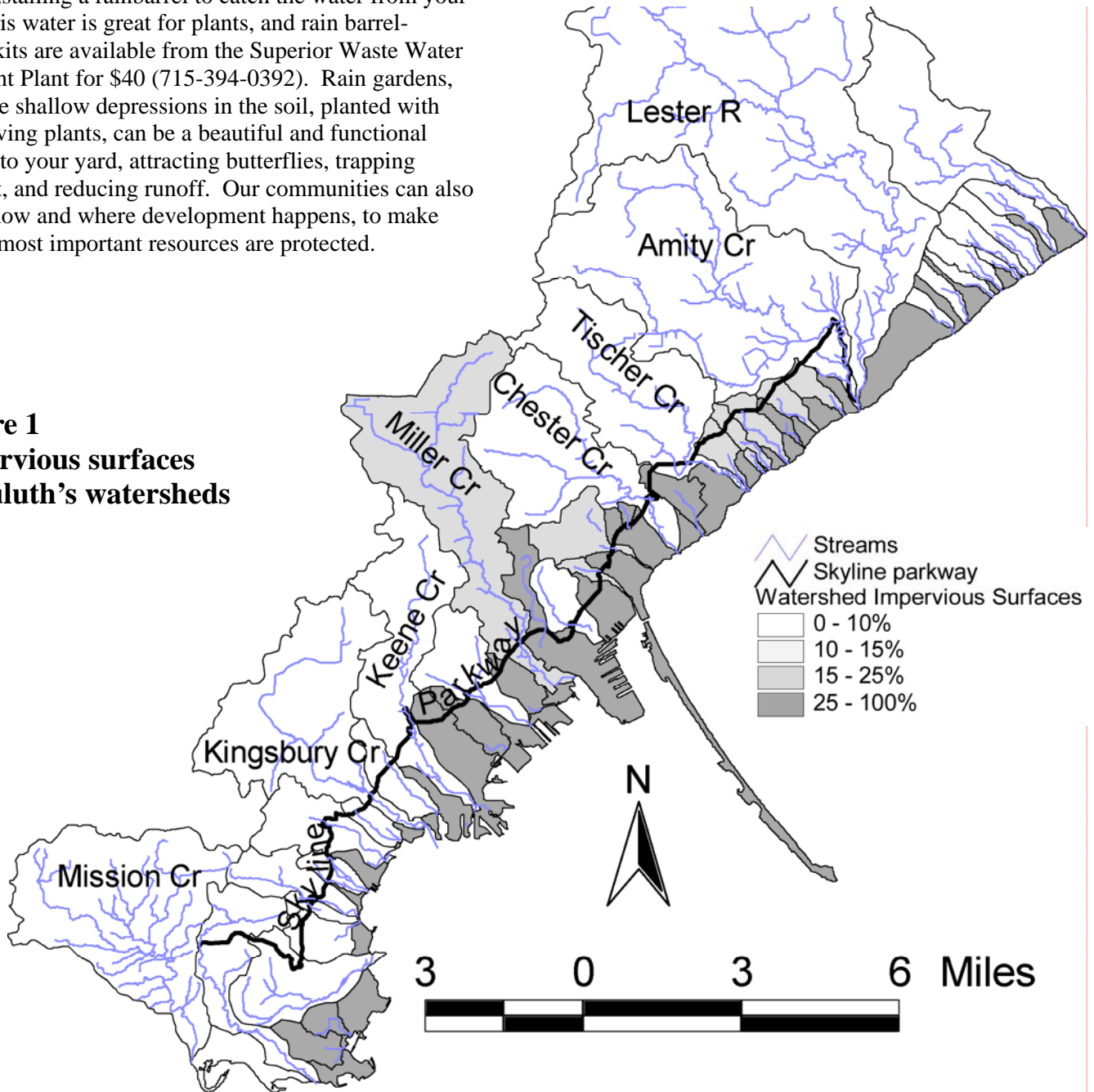


of its watershed covered by parking lots, rooftops, roads, and sidewalks. Not surprisingly, Miller Creek has serious water quality problems, and the brook trout in parts of this stream have reportedly been eliminated.

On the positive side is the fact that each and every one of us lives in a watershed, and we can each take steps to help protect water quality. There are many simple things we can do, such as washing our car on the lawn instead of in the street, picking up our pet's waste, and keeping leaves and grass out of the gutter. These are small steps that everyone should do, and while these won't suddenly fix our streams, they can help. Another idea is installing a rainbarrel to catch the water from your roof. This water is great for plants, and rain barrel-making kits are available from the Superior Waste Water Treatment Plant for \$40 (715-394-0392). Rain gardens, which are shallow depressions in the soil, planted with water-loving plants, can be a beautiful and functional addition to your yard, attracting butterflies, trapping sediment, and reducing runoff. Our communities can also change how and where development happens, to make sure the most important resources are protected.

For more information on what you or your community can do to protect watersheds, visit: www.lakesuperiorstreams.org, where you can find out how to build a rain garden, what "pervious pavement" is, and more information about every stream in Duluth.

Figure 1
Impervious surfaces
in Duluth's watersheds





Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance
www.SkylinePPA.org

Wendy Grethen
4005 McCulloch St.
Duluth, MN 55804

Welcome New Board Member
Margaret West

Good-bye to **Tom Ryther**.
He has headed East.

Spirit Mountain—Public Recreation in Every Season



Spirit Mountain is busiest in the winter, however a slew of activities go on at Spirit Mountain throughout the year. The new Supper Club has brought in people during these summer months who may not have visited Spirit Mountain before or for a long while. The menu has a variety of choices and the location offers a tremendous view! Now that Buena Vista restaurant is gone, the Supper Club at Spirit Mountain is one of the best views to enjoy while dining along Skyline Parkway (and in Duluth!). The Spirit Mountain campground occupancy has been going up and improvements have been made every year. There are seventy-three wooded sites which fill up on many of the prime summer weekends. (Note: SPPA is having a campout at Spirit Mountain on Sept 8). The chalet area (inside and outdoors) has had a full season with weddings and private events. A new event – the Duluth Outdoor Sports Show –was held in early August and plans are already being made for the event to be held at Spirit Mountain again next year.

(the Supper Club is open through the end of September). Perhaps, as there is more talk about the passenger train service returning to Duluth from the Twin Cities, there may be a return of the “Ski Train.” Reviving past activities and adding new ones may boost Spirit Mountain as a year-round destination for locals and tourists. If you have a suggestion for activities to be held at Spirit Mountain, let Renee Mattson at Spirit Mountain know. At the SPPA March meeting when Renee was the guest speaker, several ideas were brought up as to how Spirit Mountain could be a more year-round destination. Suggestions included turning the parking lot into a temporary trailer park area, offering guided hikes and naturalist, birding, and cultural educational activities. Also, some people would love to see the ski lift operate in the summer and fall for mountain bikers or for people just wanting to take in awesome views of the St. Louis River, Duluth and Superior. A summer alpine slide? A photographer’s “safari”? An annual Pow Wow? The ideas are endless.

Spirit Mountain is worth a visit – whether you’re a winter sport enthusiast, hiker, or want to dine with a view

Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance Membership Form

Date _____ New Member Renewing Member

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone # _____ Email _____

Annual Membership: \$10 Fixed-income \$20 Individual \$35 Family \$50 Business

I would like to be a clean-up volunteer I would like to help plan SPPA events.

Please make checks payable to: Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance (or SPPA)
and send to SPPA, 1101 W. Skyline Parkway, Duluth, MN 55806.

Thank you for your support!