



— 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)

Are you satisfied with the views along Skyline Parkway?

In May, several SPPA board members drove all of Skyline Parkway and analyzed overlooks based on their view (or potential), neighbors, and how open the view was. You can view photos and our notes at the SPPA website, www.skylineeppa.org.

In August, Kelly Fleissner (Duluth city forester), Jim Hakala with Amberjack Tree Service, and SPPA visited some "blocked" overlooks. The tree experts gave estimates on the amount of work, need to be wary about removal of debris to not cause a fire hazard, and suggestions for helping out. Stay tuned.

SPPA meets with Coordinator of the Scenic Byways Program (July)

Major topics discussed at the meeting included 1) marketing efforts, 2) wayfinding, 3) vegetation management, and 4) designation as a National Scenic Byway.

1) Marketing

Mark summarized the State's recent marketing efforts for Minnesota's Scenic Byways. He distributed copies of a new color brochure that includes a brief description and simple map of each state scenic byway.

Mark indicated that the www.byways.org website includes a section on Skyline Parkway.

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Celebrate Skyline Parkway



Fall is on its way. Spend the day outside

on **October 9** on West

Skyline Parkway Hiking and/or Riding a Carriage.

SPPA Interpretive Geology Hike (free)

to Bardon's and Ely's Peak lead by Dr. John Green.

Meet at 9 AM at Beaner's Café or 9:30 at the Magney-Snively Parking Lot.

Carriage Rides beginning at 1 P.M.—4 P.M.

SPPA is bringing back the Tally-hos that were held over 100 years ago!

\$25 for non-members, \$20 for members, Advanced Registration encouraged. First ride starts at 1 PM at the Magney-Snively Parking lot, west of Spirit Mountain.



Fresh cider and snacks will be provided at the check-in site at Russ Stover's home, 9613 W. Skyline Pkwy

Call 525-5098 to make reservations.

The Duluth Park Commission described Skyline Parkway in their 1st annual report (1891) as

"A drive that is the pride of our city, and one that for its picturesque and varied scenery, is second to none in the world."

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 Glimpse at SPPA Hiking Adventures this past summer

By Doug Stevens

SPPA's set of hikes began in MAY with local photography instructor WANDA PEARCY leading a "shooting" waterfall mini class and hike along **Tischer Creek** in Condgon Park. Over a dozen people armed with tripods and digital or conventional cameras took shots in their camera's manual mode to blur the falling water. The creek was rolling along thanks to the spring rains and melting winter snow. The day was sunny which made it a bit difficult to take uniform pictures but we all enjoyed the session and time by one of Duluth's most beautiful locations.

DOUG STEVENS lead the JUNE hike in the Oneota Forest bringing people above Skyline Parkway for spectacular views. The

hikers hiked on trails or deer trails out on rocky outcrops and through woods exploring a site that many people don't make it to.

The JULY hike was on Keene Creek also lead by DOUG STEVENS who shared information on the creek and Mr. Keene. Doug brought trekkers to an old abandon bridge off Skyline Parkway tucked in the woods. After hearing the history of this bridge we walked the old roadway and down along Keene Creek. There were many cool water falls and rock ledges on the way down to 57th Ave West and Cody St. There we looked at a monument to old Highway No 1 built in 1927. This is where we saw the creek go underground and then made our way back up the Creek to see the many features of this forgotten spot that had many swimming holes along the way for the area residents to enjoy.

AUGUST brought us to Mission Creek with storyteller JOHN DONAHUE leading this one. We learned so much about the history of the Skyline Parkway following this beautiful valley and river called Mission Creek. It was fun exploring the 5 stone arched bridges and the 2 railroad bridges. Just like old Roman ruins the bridges were still there with stone work done almost 80 years ago. The roadway closed in 1958 after a severe rainstorm never to reopen. John also showed us some wild flowers and plants that were used by the Native Americans to cure and heal problems. Afterwards we went to John's house and got some refreshments. He lives right on the St Louis River in Fond du Lac. What a beautiful spot and treat for all of us!

It is not too late! You can still

The SPPA annual June Picnic was held at Lincoln Park. Thanks to **Joe Perfetti** and **Lynn Ann Hollatz** for sharing information on several of the successful park improvements and community projects in the park.

The picnickers also had an impromptu tour of the main house overlooking Lincoln Park. It is the house on the cover of the *Images of America—Duluth* book by Aubut and Norton.

Thanks to **parkway cleanup volunteers** picking up litter (and assorted items) along west Skyline Parkway on August 17!

Thanks to all the SPPA hike volunteer leaders! **Wanda Percy** and **John Donahue** both lead outings for the first time. Fantastic!

Thanks to retiring SPPA board member **Ron Henrickson**.

go on a hike with the SPPA. In SEPTEMBER (the 18th) SPPA will host a hike in Lester Park and in OCTOBER (the 9th—please note this hike was originally announced it would be held on October 16, the 3rd Saturday of the month) on a new trail from Bardon's Peak to Ely's Peak along far West Skyline Parkway with geologist JOHN GREEN as the guide. Carriage rides will also be offered that afternoon. Come out and experience the fall and amazing views from Skyline Parkway.

We hope you will join us at the SPPA fall events. You won't be disappointed! See the calendar on page three for more information on upcoming events.

Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance

Board members :

Terry Brown,
Nancy Nelson,
Barb Forrest,
Wendy Grethen,
Tim Larson,
Doug Stevens

Newsletter editor:
Wendy Grethen

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Join SPPA email list by emailing your request to contact @skylineppa.org.

A membership form is located on the back side of the newsletter.

☞ In an article in the August 22, 1929 *Duluth News Tribune*, Duluth's Seven Wonders are selected; The Boulevard Drive was on the top of the list!





Skyline Parkway Events

2) Wayfinding

SPPA members and City staff explained that improved wayfinding is needed for Skyline Parkway before additional marketing efforts are undertaken locally. This led to a discussion of the Wayfinding Plan that the city is supposed to be working on. Chuck Froseth reported that the paperwork has been completed for receiving the funds. The next step is to prepare an RFP and hire a consultant. The city needs to decide where the matching funds will come from, but Chuck will try to do this soon (the match can be staff time rather than dollars). Mark Anderson indicated that there is no strict timeline for this project and the city is not in danger of losing the funding if the process moves slowly.

3) Vegetation Management

SPPA members explained our current project to improve the views along Skyline Parkway. Anderson indicated that the city should be eligible for National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grant funds to undertake a comprehensive project to prepare a vegetation management plan and carry out the needed vegetation management work on Skyline Parkway. But because the Transportation Reauthorization Bill has not yet been passed by Congress, there is currently no money available. Once the bill is passed, there will probably be a very short window of opportunity to apply for funds.

It was agreed by those at the meeting that at this time we should focus our limited resources on vegetation management and improved wayfinding rather than on applying for National Scenic Byway Status.

4) National Scenic Byways Designation

Mark Anderson raised the question of whether it is worth the effort to try to get Skyline Parkway designated as a National Scenic Byway. He indicated that the only significant advantage is that we would be eligible for \$25,000 of "seed fund" grants. As a State Scenic Byway, Skyline is already included in marketing materials and is already eligible for funds such as the National Scenic Byways Discretionary Grant program.

5) Other Topics

Chuck Froseth suggested that the SPPA could be helpful in the Tax Forfeit Land Review process by speaking to the Planning Commission, City Council, and/or County Board in support of the city retaining parcels of land along Skyline Parkway to protect the viewshed. Chuck will try to let us know when/where there are parcels that we should be aware of, but SPPA members should also make an effort to stay current on the process.

[Meeting note summary by Nancy Nelson]

Sept. 11, 10 AM—Walk for Wilderness
Walk along the new segment of the Superior Hiking Trail in Duluth along West Skyline Parkway. Wilderness Act 40th Anniversary Celebration
For more information, contact Kris at 724-5453
Sept. 11, 4-10 PM—Celebration of Quiet Places
at the Spirit Mountain Chalet. Music, silent auction, dinner. Call 740-3175 for more information.

SEPTEMBER 18, SPPA HIKE

Hiking adventure in Lester Park

We'll also stop at some of the Seven Bridges Road bridges. Meet at the New London Cafe, (just east of 47th Ave E on Superior Street) at 9 AM.

OCTOBER 9

SPPA END OF THE YEAR HIKE

Superior Hiking Trail Ely's Peak to Bardon's Peak

Meet at Beaner's Central at 9. Leader: John Green

OCTOBER 9, 1-4 PM

HORSE CARRIAGE RIDES ALONG WEST SKYLINE PARKWAY. The ride will start at the Magney-Snively Parking Lot and go to Bardon's Peak overlook and then return. Snacks & Food at Russ Stover's house. Please register in advance.

Please bring water and wear appropriate footwear on hikes.

Check www.skylineppa.org or call 525-5098 for any SPPA event updates.



Date: July 12, 2004

Skyline Overlook Is Scenic Again



Geologist John Green lamented that there used to be a nice view of Ely's Peak from this overlook on Skyline Parkway before shrubs and small poplar and birch trees obscured it. It's a commonly heard complaint along much of the 25-mile length of Duluth's Skyline Parkway. Formerly scenic views have been blocked by vegetation.

Today the view of Ely's Peak is scenic again thanks to the work of Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC), an independent non-profit organization with work crews stationed in Duluth, Eveleth, and Grand Rapids as well as other parts of the state. This summer, in addition to work at the Skyline overlook, MCC has been building the new segment of the Superior Hiking Trail in Duluth.

Duluth City Forester Kelly Fleissner and City Councilor Russ Stover were also on hand.



(Photos show the view of Ely's Peak before the clearing and Tim is showing off the view after.)

Skyline Parkway, a designated State Scenic Byway, represents a unique piece of Duluth's heritage, including features of aesthetic, natural, and historic significance. Efforts are underway to improve the roadway and install better way-finding signs. Now Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance (SPPA) hopes to work with the city to improve vegetation management and restore former scenic views along the parkway.

Sharing Skyline Parkway History

SPPA board member, Doug Stevens, delivered the "Duluth's 1st Attraction Skyline Parkway" program to over 100 Rotary Club Members at a mid-July meeting.

SPPA board member, Wendy Grethen, delivered the abbreviated Skyline Parkway powerpoint program at the August Parks & Rec. Commission meeting.

“I am greatly impressed with your city. It is big with possibilities of various kinds. Take for instance its natural physical characteristics, inviting park and boulevard development that for boldness and beauty and extent can be excelled in no municipality and which alone should serve to advertise most favorably your great city throughout the world. Edinburgh Scotland is famous for natural features something like Duluth, but they are small in comparison with those of your, city.”

-R. H. Dana of Boston, Mass,
prominent attorney and president of
the National Civil Service League
[1913]





Geology of Ely's Peak and Bardon's Peak

Approximately 1.1 billion years ago, Earth's crust began to rip apart, allowing hot magma (molten rock) to erupt onto the surface of the land, similar to what is occurring in modern times in East Africa. This activity, which geologists call *continental rifting*, shaped the landscape we see today in the Lake Superior basin.

Bardon's Peak and Ely's Peak, along with the rest of Duluth's ridgeline, are made up igneous rocks that formed as a result of this rifting.

Ely's Peak, composed of a fine-grained volcanic rock known as *basalt*, is a remnant of the earliest volcanic eruptions of the rifting event. This early lava flow was eventually covered by several hundred additional lava flows, creating a pile of volcanic rocks thousands of feet thick. Rocks formed by these volcanic eruptions can be seen all around the Lake Superior basin.

Bardon's Peak is composed of a coarse-grained intrusive rock known as *gabbro*, which formed later in the rifting event when magma was squeezed into the weak zones between the layers in the thick volcanic pile. Bardon's Peak represents the southern end of a large body of gabbroic rocks known as the Duluth Complex, that extends all the way to the Canadian border. The colorful, swirling patterns of crystals in this particular location have led scientists to speculate about how exactly it was formed. Although this gabbro formed deep below the surface, we see it exposed today after millions of years of erosion carried away the lava flows that once covered it.

ROAD OPENS SOON!

You can expect the detour and road closed signs near Skyline Parkway and Piedmont Avenue to be cleared by mid-October as the major bridge construction project has been complete. Roberta Dwyer, with the Department of Transportation, said the bridge looks wonderful and the local neighborhood meeting brought in positive comments. The project has taken two years and is ahead of the original three year plan. Twenty houses were cleared away for the project. The area will be landscaped in the spring of 2005 for some final beautifying features. The rock walls are looking natural and fitting in with surrounding landscape. The roadway over the bridge will have two lanes, plus a shoulder and a sidewalk on the lower side. A staircase has also been put in for pedestrians.

Check the new bridge and roadway out by foot or vehicle later this fall. Stop by along Miller Creek or look around for some cool views.

10 Things to Do Along (or near) Skyline Parkway

1. Enjoy the view at an overlook.
2. Visit a park along the Parkway—Enger Park, Chester Parks, etc. Attend Park concerts or festivals.
3. Bird Watch—Hawk Ridge area or any area along the ridge. Look for kettles of hawks anytime now.
4. Look for Northern Lights.
5. Swim (or Fish). That's right. The Twin Ponds area of Skyline Parkway has a one pond for swimming and one for fishing.
6. Ski at Spirit Mountain Recreation Area. Winter is around the corner.
7. Participate in artistic endeavors—photograph, paint, sketch some of the beautiful creeks nearby.
8. Admire the bridges. Stewart Creek is the only one listed on the Historic Register.
9. Learn more about Duluth industry's at the Rotary Club Skyline Parkway markers explaining what is seen below.
10. **Take a carriage ride. October 9. One day only. Pre-register to reserve your spot.**



Skyline Planning & Preservation Alliance

Wendy Grethen
4005 McCulloch St.
Duluth, MN 55804

LIMITED OPPORTUNITY:
CARRIAGE RIDES ALONG
SKYLINE PARKWAY
OCTOBER 9.

See www.skylinepppa.org for more information

Please help keep Skyline Parkway clean.

The latest issue of "VIEW" published by the Library of American Landscape History includes a one-page article about Skyline Parkway.

WANTED:
Donations to help with tree clearing at West Skyline Parkway overlooks.

Photos of Skyline Parkway throughout the year. The www.byways.org website has a listing for Skyline Parkway but no photos.

SPPA at Work—Check out the area.

On Memorial Day, SPPA board members cleared small brush and vegetation from the overgrown 1937 monument to Mayor Snively. The “buried” monument is directly east of the Stewart Creek bridge. The stone wall and basin were in remarkably good shape but the reflecting pond is covered in mud. The spring was flowing strong in May but by mid-summer was dry. SPPA plans to have more clearing efforts at the site and the city of Duluth will be clearing some of the bigger size trees.

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

Contribution toward fund to open the overlooks along W. Skyline Pkwy.

I would like to volunteer to help at clean-ups or other SPPA activities.

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

Thank you for your support!
Feel free to copy this form.

