

National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior



Fairy Falls Day Use Area St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

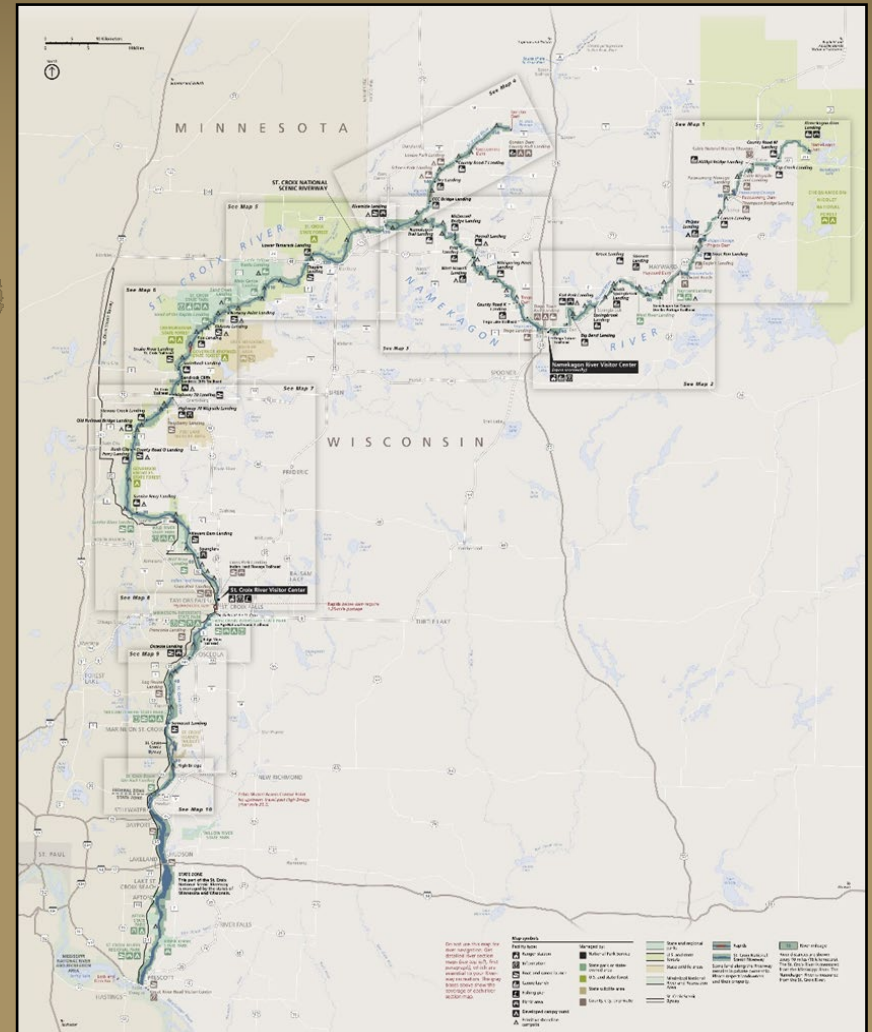
March 7, 2023

Open House: 5 – 7 pm

Presentation: 5:30 pm

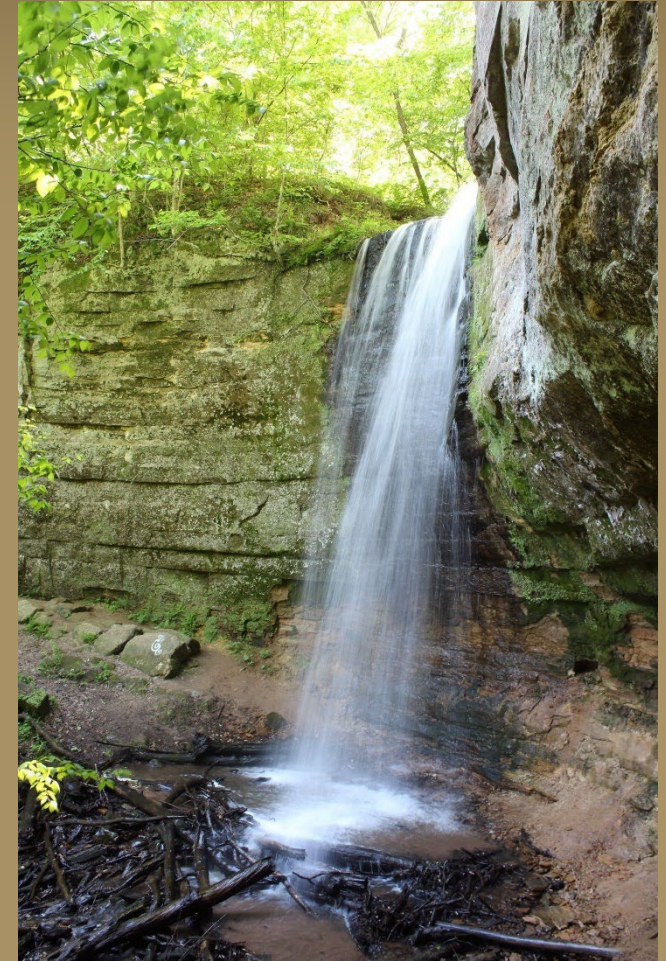
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

- The St. Croix National Scenic Riverway preserves, protects, and enhances the values of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers and their immediate environment for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

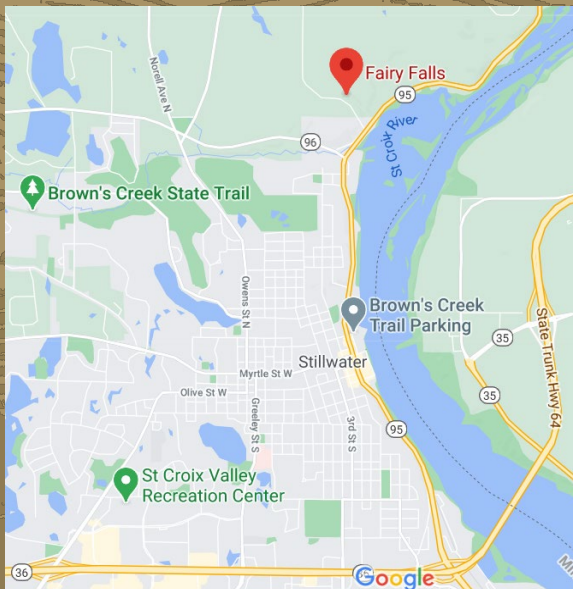
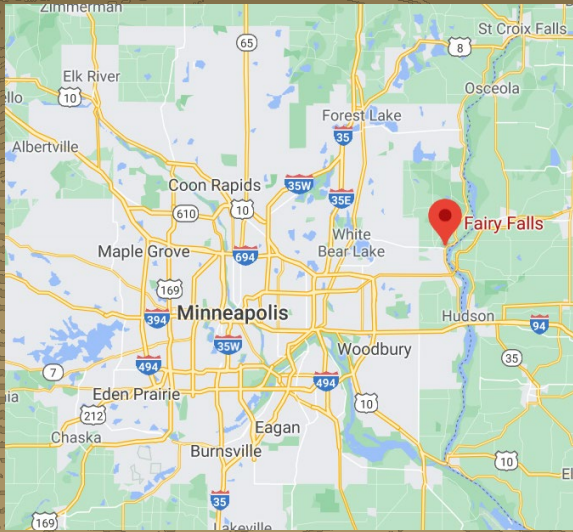


Meeting Objectives

- Introduction to Fairy Falls Day Use Area
- Challenges and opportunities
- Current status
- What's next for Fairy Falls Day Use Area
- How to get involved



Location of Fairy Falls Day Use Area



Introduction to Fairy Falls Day Use Area

- 54 acres
- Silver Creek creates a 50-foot waterfall into the gorge below
- Largely undeveloped
- National Park Service acquired in 1980 as part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway



Fairy Falls, 1901 (MNHS photo)

Challenges and Opportunities

- Identifying safe access and designated parking
- Improving or rerouting trails
- Enhancing visitor experience
- Protection of natural environment



Current Status

- The National Park Service rescinded the public closure that had been in place at Fairy Falls during the COVID-19 pandemic on December 19, 2022.
- The closure was originally implemented due to the lack of parking and safety concerns related to high visitation the site was receiving during the pandemic.
- NPS worked with the township to ensure parking would again be available in the area, and NPS closed the trails with the highest degree of erosion to allow for restoration to occur.



Planning for the Future

- Began public planning process in fall 2021
- Also working with Tribal partners and agency partners
- Developed two site options based on public input from 2021 and 2022
- Will compare one or both options against current management (not the preference of the National Park Service)



Fairy Falls, 1888 (MNHS photo)

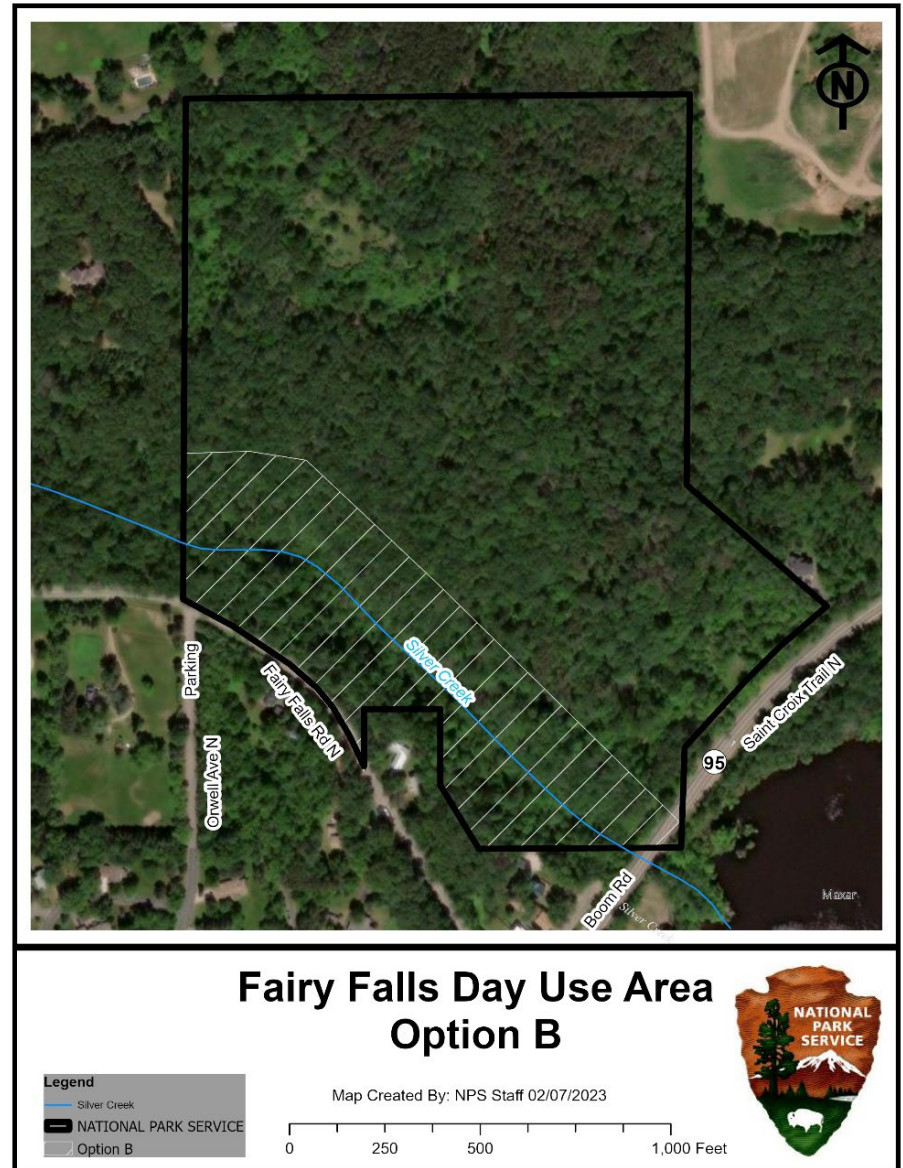
Site Option A

- The NPS is required to consider the current management or “no-action”
- The current management is not the preference of the National Park Service.
- Later in the environmental review process, one or both options will be compared against an option of continuation of current management



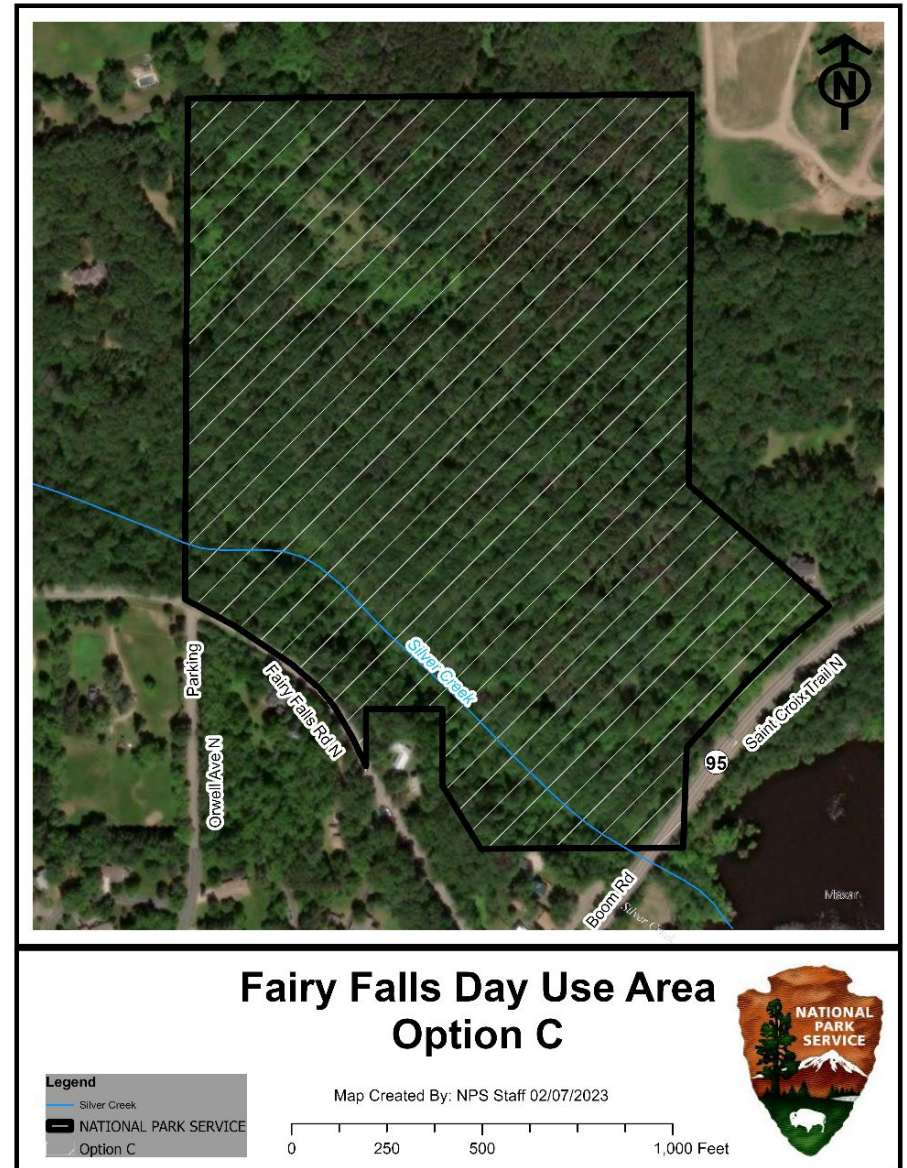
Site Option B

- Visitor use would be focused on the waterfall, but access would be allowed across the site
- Interpretive signage and educational focus on waterfall
- Continue to work with partners to provide parking and safe access
- Seek a permanent parking solution
- Primary visitor activities: visiting waterfall, photography, short hikes
- Visitors would have more encounters with other visitors near the waterfall



Site Option C

- Visitor use would take place at the waterfall and be dispersed site-wide with a natural-surface loop trail
- Interpretive signage and educational materials dispersed across site
- Continue to work with partners to provide parking and safe access
- Seek a permanent parking solution
- Primary visitor activities: visiting waterfall, longer walking loop
- Visitors may encounter others near the waterfall and also along loop trail system



Activities that would occur under either Option:

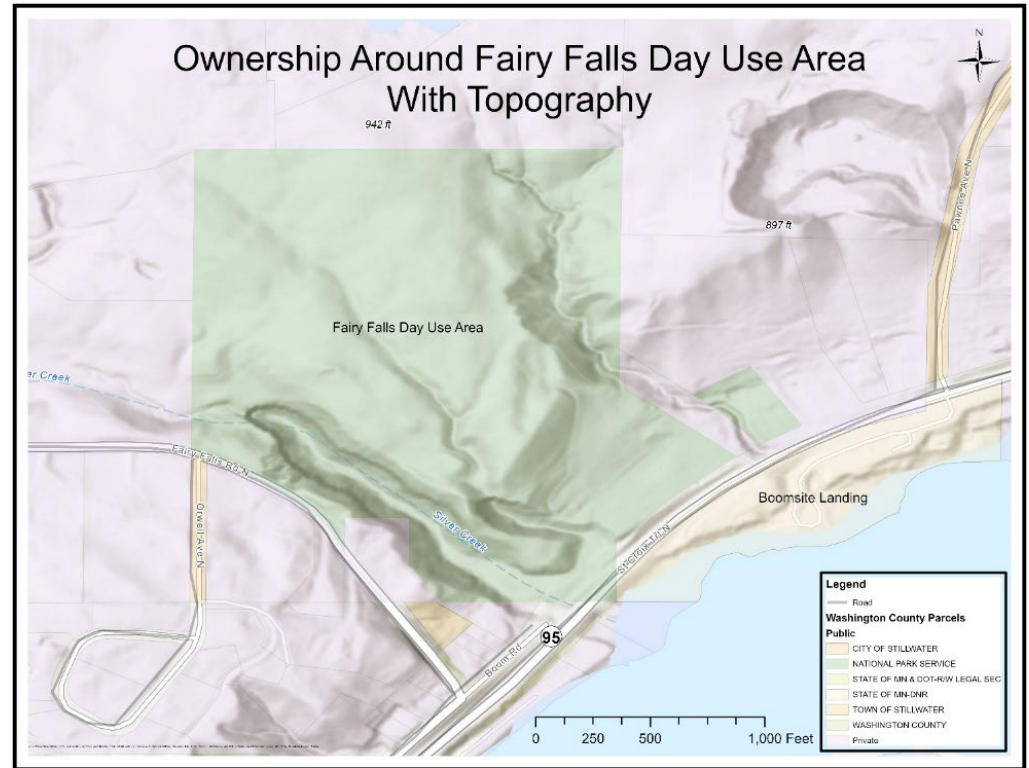
- Maintain a rustic and natural feel in the Day Use Area
- Continue partnerships with local communities and neighbors to provide parking and safe access
- Seek a permanent parking solution
- Allow use in Fairy Falls Day Use Area for daytime use only, from sunrise to sunset
- Prohibit overnight use, camping, and fires
- Provide improved maps and signs including safety and orientation information
- Provide opportunities for visitors with a range of skill levels and abilities

Activities that would occur under either Option, cont'd:

- Protect natural and cultural resources, such as invasive plant species management
- Continue engagement with Tribal partners
- Develop relationships and programs with community partners
- Carry out occasional management or closures due to unsafe conditions or highly eroded trails
- Continue law enforcement patrols and maintenance activities to support a safe, clean day use area
- Allow deer archery hunting in Fairy Falls Day Use Area in accordance with state and federal laws

Parking

- Currently, there is no parking available on Fairy Falls Day Use Area property
- Riverway staff are seeking a permanent parking solution
- Riverway staff are working with neighbors, community members, and partner agencies to identify options



Next Steps

- Review, analyze, and summarize public feedback on the two draft site options
- Continue conversations with Tribal partners, partners and local communities
- Undertake compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable regulations
- Continue to provide regular updates and opportunities for public input

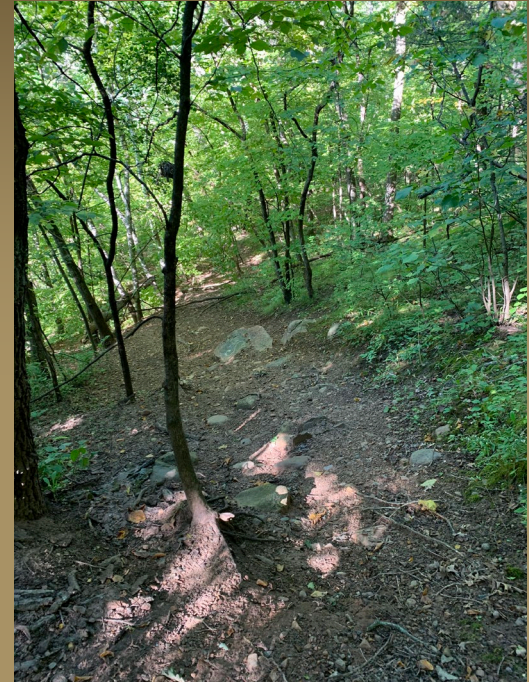


Next Steps

Approximate Schedule	Step in Planning Process
Ongoing	Information gathering; consultations
Fall 2021	Public meetings and comment
Winter 2021 – Spring 2022	Comments reviewed; Drafting of site options
Summer 2022	Meetings with local and regional partners
Fall 2022	Drafting of site options
February/March 2023	Public meetings and comment period
Summer 2023	Finalize documentation
Late 2023 and beyond	Seek funding to implement plan

How to Get Involved

- We want to hear from you!
- Comment period open February 13 through March 29, 2023
- How to share:
 - <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/fairyfalls>
 - In writing to:
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
Attn: Lisa Yager/Fairy Falls
401 N. Hamilton Street
St. Croix Falls, WI 54024



We want to hear from you!

- What do you like and/or dislike about Option B? (waterfall focus)
- What do you like and/or dislike about Option C? (waterfall focus and site-wide)
- What other comments or suggestions do you have?

How to Comment Online

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/fairyfalls>



National Park Service

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[Document List](#)

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Fairy Falls Day Use Area Site Planning Process

[Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway » Fairy Falls Day Use Area Site Planning Process » Document List](#)



The National Park Service is exploring opportunities for improving safety, protecting the natural environment, and enhancing visitor experiences at the Fairy Falls Day Use Area, located near Stillwater, Minnesota.

The Fairy Falls Day Use Area is a 54-acre natural area located in Stillwater Township. Deep ravines and steep bluffs surround Silver Creek as it passes through a marsh on its way the St. Croix River. The area has a long history of human use and its ecological diversity provides habitat for a variety of plants and animals. Fairy Falls Day Use Area is currently closed to the public due to lack of safe visitor access and deteriorating social trails along steep slopes.

In October and November 2021, we invited public comments to gather input before concepts or ideas for the future of Fairy Falls Day Use Area are formally developed. We invited comments from the public about:

- Identifying safe access and designated parking
- Improving or rerouting trails
- Enhancing visitor experience
- Protecting the natural environment