



St. Croix National Scenic Riverway is exploring opportunities for improving safety, protecting the natural environment, and enhancing visitor experiences at Fairy Falls Day Use Area, located near Stillwater, Minnesota.

Fairy Falls Day Use Area is a 54-acre natural area that has been managed by the National Park Service since 1980. Deep ravines and steep bluffs surround Silver Creek as it passes through a marsh on its way to 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 was closed to the public from summer 2020 to winter 2022 due to lack of safe visitor access and deteriorating social trails along steep slopes.

Based on public and partner input, Riverway staff have developed a draft site plan that provides a range of visitor opportunities while protecting natural and cultural resources at the day use area. As part of the environmental review process, the action alternative is compared to a no action alternative. The NPS also identified actions that would occur under either alternative.

### **NPS Management Activities that Would Occur Under Either Action Alternative:**

- 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
- Protect natural and cultural resources, such as invasive plant species management
- Continue engagement with Tribal 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

### **What are the Next Steps for Fairy Falls Day Use Area Site Planning?**

- Review, analyze, and summarize public feedback received on the draft site plan
- Continue conversations with Tribal partners, agency partners, and local communities
- Finalize compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable regulations
- Seek funding for implementation

#### **Proposed Action Alternative (NPS preferred)**

- A 1-mile loop natural surface trail with a waterfall view would be established to maintain a rustic and natural feel
- Site management would continue, with targeted invasive species management
- Additional interpretive and educational options may be developed
- Active law enforcement patrols and heightened NPS presence would occur
- Partnerships would be maintained and additional opportunities may be explored
- Current parking spots would remain available while other options are pursued

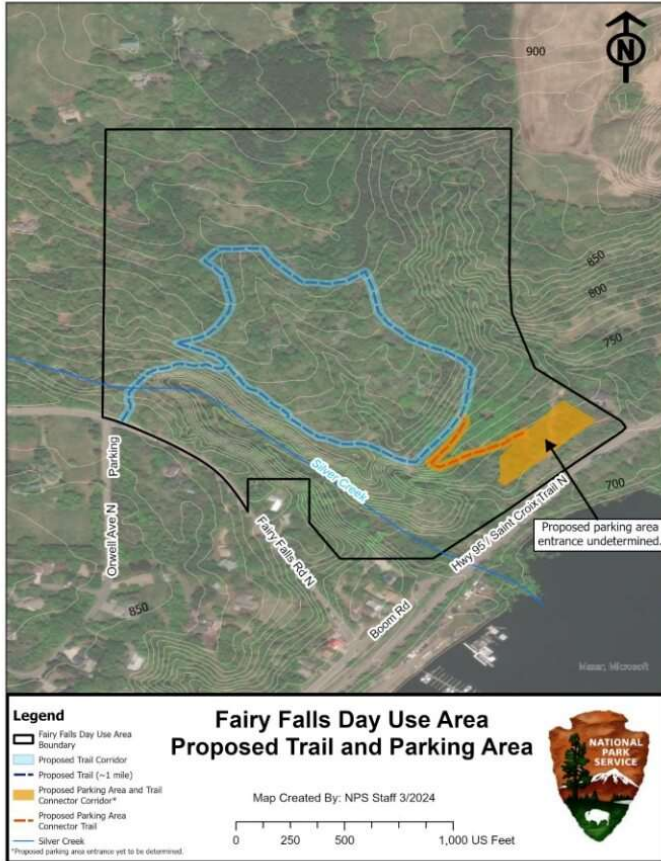
#### **Current- No Action Alternative**

- No new trails or facilities would be developed on federal lands in the project area
- Visitors would continue to access the area under existing conditions
- Occasional management actions would occur to mitigate erosion, address human safety concerns, and remove hazard trees
- Law enforcement would continue to regularly patrol the area
- Parking would continue to be managed through partnerships
- All current rules and regulations for the area would continue



**Proposed Action Alternative (NPS preferred)**

**Current- No Action Alternative**



**Your input is very important to us! Please provide comments.**

To review the full draft site management plan and to provide feedback, please visit our planning website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/fairyfalls>.

The preferred method for receiving public comments is through our planning website. You may also submit written comments to Allissa Reynolds at St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, Fairy Falls Day Use Area Site Planning, 401 N. Hamilton Street, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024.

Please submit comments by July 16, 2024.