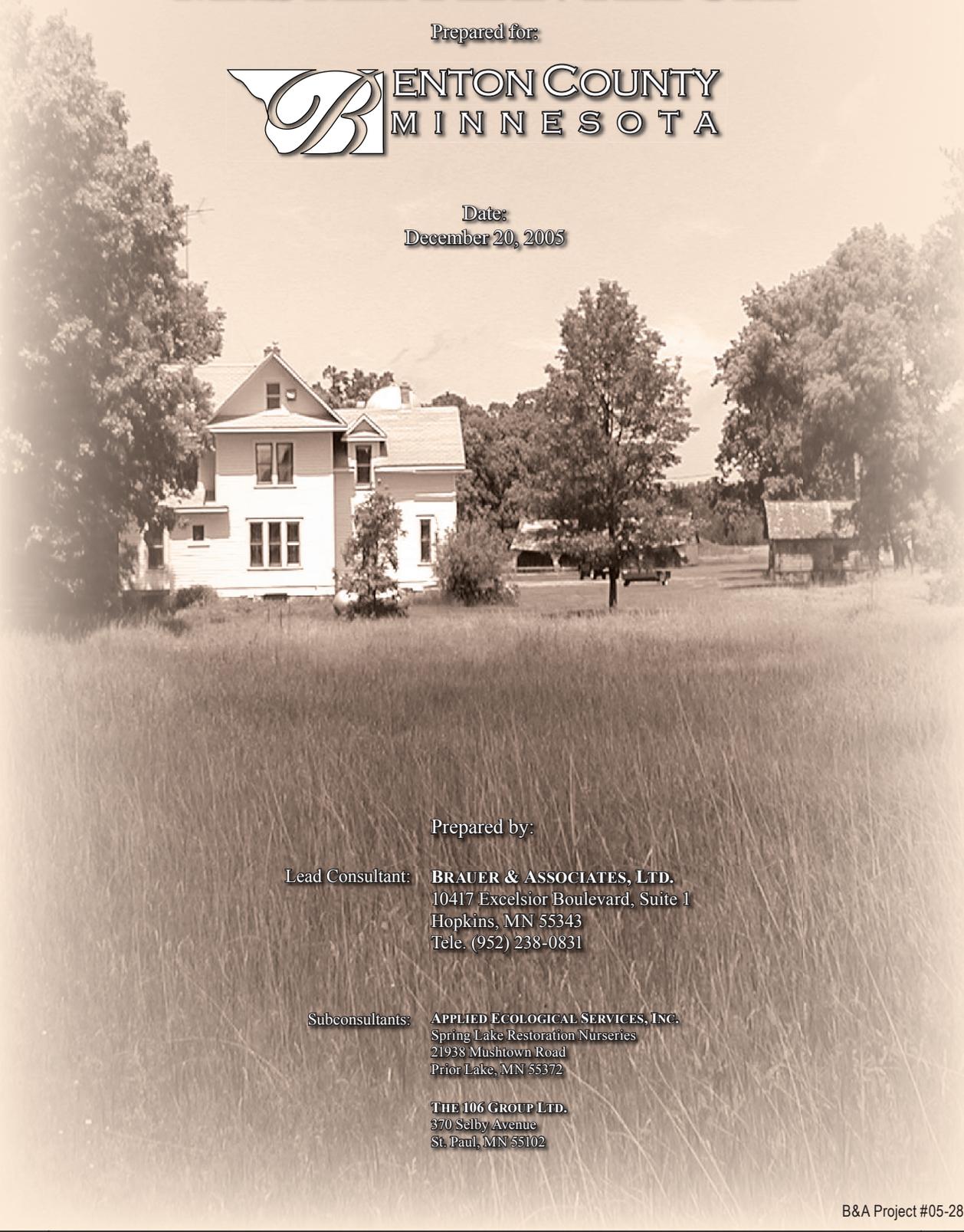


BEND IN THE RIVER REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN REPORT

Prepared for:



Date:
December 20, 2005



Prepared by:

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Acknowledgements

In July of 2005, Benton County retained Brauer and Associates, Ltd. to work with the County Board, Parks Commission, Technical Advisory Committee and residents to complete a comprehensive master plan for the newly acquired Bend in the River Regional Park. This document represents the results of the planning process, which was completed in December of 2005.

This project was funded in part by the Initiative Foundation, a regional foundation.

The consultant team would like to commend the Benton County Board and Parks Commission for undertaking an open and constructive public process for the project. This approach allowed for many perspectives to be considered on important issues that will affect recreational use, historical preservation and ecological restoration of this park for years to come. Through this process, it is believed that a responsible balance between human use and historic and ecological preservation was achieved.

The consultant team would like to thank the many individuals who participated in the planning process from beginning to end. Their collective insights were instrumental in drawing conclusions that are believed to be reasonable and responsible.

The consultant team would also like to thank the County staff. The openness with which they approached the project paved the way for public dialog that considered all opinions to be of merit and worthy of consideration.

Benton County Board

- Duane Walter, Chairman
- Earl “Butch” Bukowski
- Duane Grandy
- Dan Lieser
- Richard “Dick” Soyka

Benton County Parks Commission

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- Tammy Champion
- Duane Grandy
- Norm Esterberg
- Ellen Heneghan
- Michelle Hoppe
- Beverly Petron
- Lana Raupp
- Leah Swendra – Ziwicki

Project Technical Advisory Committee

- Nancy Anderson, Mayor, City of Rice
- Barb Bloomer, National Parks & Trails Coalition
- Larry Behrendt, Rice Sportsman's Club
- Butch Bukowski, County Board
- Tammy Campion, Parks Commission
- Duane Cekalla, Former County Commissioner
- Craig Gondeck, Watab Township Supervisor
- Duane Grandy, County Board
- Brenda Graves, Former Property Owner
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- Ellen Heneghan, Parks Commission
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Guidelines, Criteria and Program manuals for the Natural and Scenic Area and Regional Park Grant Programs – Minnesota
Department of Natural Resources

Appendix “B”B.1
Planning Process Graphics:
 Preliminary Alternate Concept Plans (1 through 3)
 Final Concept Plan
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 Final Master Plan

Appendix “C” C.1
Benton County Summary of Structural Status of Farmstead Buildings

Executive Summary

Purpose and Scope of this Report

This report was compiled in an effort to document the process and results of Benton County, Minnesota's master plan study for Bend in the River Regional Park. The information contained in this report commissioned by Benton County, is the result of a seven month study supervised by County staff and a technical advisory committee appointed by the County.

Report Conclusions:

The conclusions of the study are:

- That Benton County should pursue a balanced approach to recreational development and cultural and ecological restoration of the property,
- That the recreational development and restoration will need to be implemented over time,
- That the timing of development and restoration will be dependent upon the availability of public and private funding,
- That additional study should be concluded before a final determination is made regarding the potential for salvaging and restoring the parks farm buildings, and
- That change to public roads within the park will benefit park ecology, recreational quality of the park and adjacent developable properties.

Development Costs:

The following summary of development costs are presented in 2005 dollars and were calculated based upon the premise that all of the work would be completed by for-profit individuals or companies. As the County budgets for this work in the future, an appropriate factor should be added to the budget for inflation.

Phase	Anticipated Time Frame for Each Phase	Estimated Cost
1	FY 2007 - 2008 - 2009	\$933,222.13
2	FY 2010 - 2011 - 2012	\$2,079,343.75
3	FY 2013 - 2014 - 2015	\$2,857,540.13
Total		\$5,870,106.00

Recommendations:

1. Immediately implement the park boundary markers recommended in this report to establish the parks identity and alert people to the regulations that now apply to the use of this property.
2. Prepare a grant request for State matching regional park monies for further design and development of the park for the 2006 bonding cycle.
3. Seek private funding for future preservation and architectural studies of the farm buildings.
4. Develop a detailed plan for maintenance thinning of the farm field windrows and seek proposals from local timber harvesting companies. Reinvest any income from the windbreak timber harvest in the planning, maintenance and/or development of the park.
5. Research the possibility of using 'STS' crews, volunteers, Eagle Scouts, Minnesota Conservation Corp, or other resources to begin the removal of non-native shrubs and trees as outlined in this report.