

Belmont Park Off-Road Trails

Wheeling in a new generation.

Jackson County Parks & Trails
Friends of the Jackson County Trails

•

•

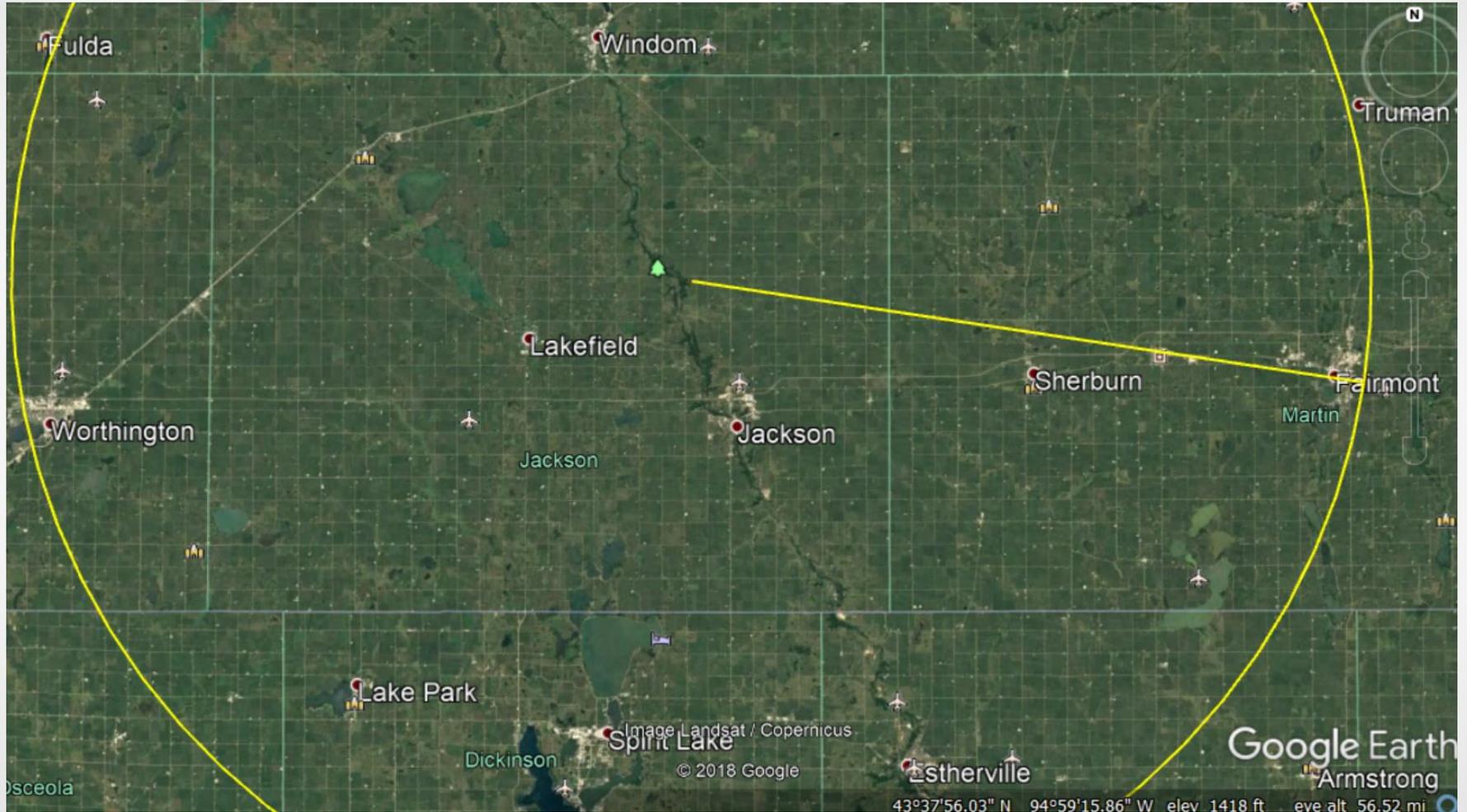
Why This Project?

- First certified Off-Road Trail for MSHSL Sanctioned MTB Riding.
 - Ability to form teams and host races.
- Opportunities for economic growth in area:
 - Potential for increased community revenues;
 - Visitors stay at area hotels, eat at restaurants, and ultimately enhance community “live/learn/work/play/age-in-place.”
 - New opportunities for current (and future) families visiting the off road trail will also offer recreational opportunities we have in Jackson County (parks, lakes, etc.) **Compliments our extensive & popular state & county parks**

Timeline Of Events

- Hired a trail designer to complete topography of Belmont County Park.
 - April 2018.
 - Created a 6.2 mile certified trail design.
 - 1.2 miles can be completed by volunteers.
- Cost of Project: \$150,000 for 5 miles.
 - Contractor will use whole environment, ensure no trail erosion, specialized equipment.
- Visited surrounding community off-road trails.
 - Kiwanis Park in Mankato, and other online park designs.
- Conducted a public hearing in August 2018.
 - Very little negative feedback on MTB park use.

Region:



Location:

Belmont County Park
52005 850th Street
Jackson, MN 56143



Why Belmont Park?

- Terrain.
 - Belmont Park has unique river bluff terrain that is not found in other parks in southwest Minnesota.
 - This type of terrain is great for off-road trails. When we went to visit Mankato's off-road mountain bike park, they were envious of our landscape.
- Utilization.
 - The park is being utilized very little, if at all.
 - The park doesn't have as special feature to highlight its good qualities.
- Filling a need.
 - Kilen Woods, the neighboring State Park, has seen an increased amount of overnight visitors. Visitors who hike and bike.
 - We have a local Club beginning, the West-Fork Off-Road Trail Club



What are off-road trails?

Off-road trails are one to four foot, narrow, unpaved trails that wind through the outdoors- like a bicycle rollercoaster.

Check out this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QopWLIjmSg8>



“Today, people don’t have
hobbies.

They have lifestyle changes.”

Dave DeJong, Friends of the Jackson County Trails President

“For many Minnesotans cycling is nothing more than a Sunday frolic, but a new report finds that the state’s bike industry produces \$780 million in annual economic activity, 5,519 jobs and millions of dollars in health care savings because of reduced obesity, diabetes and heart disease...And the study didn’t include estimates of how much individuals save in gasoline and car maintenance, or the environmental benefits from lower air pollution...” –Star Tribune, March 28, 2017

Source: <http://www.startribune.com/cycling-in-minnesota-creates-thousands-of-jobs-and-cuts-health-care-spending-state-report-concludes/417240963/>

A HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE!

Mount Kato hosted their Sixth Annual Minnesota High School Mountain Bike Championship in October 2017. This event welcomed over 1300 students, representing 100 schools across the state.

“There are no bench warmers, there are no student athletes that sit out, there are no try-outs, every student that wants to go off and ride a bike and race a bike has that opportunity.”

-Minnesota High School Cycling League, Director

Source: <http://www.keyc.com/story/36711864/mount-kato-hosts-sixth-annual-high-school-mountain-bike-championship>

This is Nationwide:

NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association)

Check out this video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=475&v=wimNfA_LLjg

BOOST LOCAL ECONOMY

Since Cuyuna Trails opened in 2011, the communities of Crosby, Ironton, and Riverton have seen “15 new businesses and \$2 million in additional annual revenue” (Star Tribune, February 11, 2018). Among those, they have welcomed new restaurants, a new brewery, and a new yoga studio.

“ We’ve been meeting all kinds of interesting people, that’s for sure,” Stoffel said. “Crosby is small, but it’s got kind of an international feel these days.””

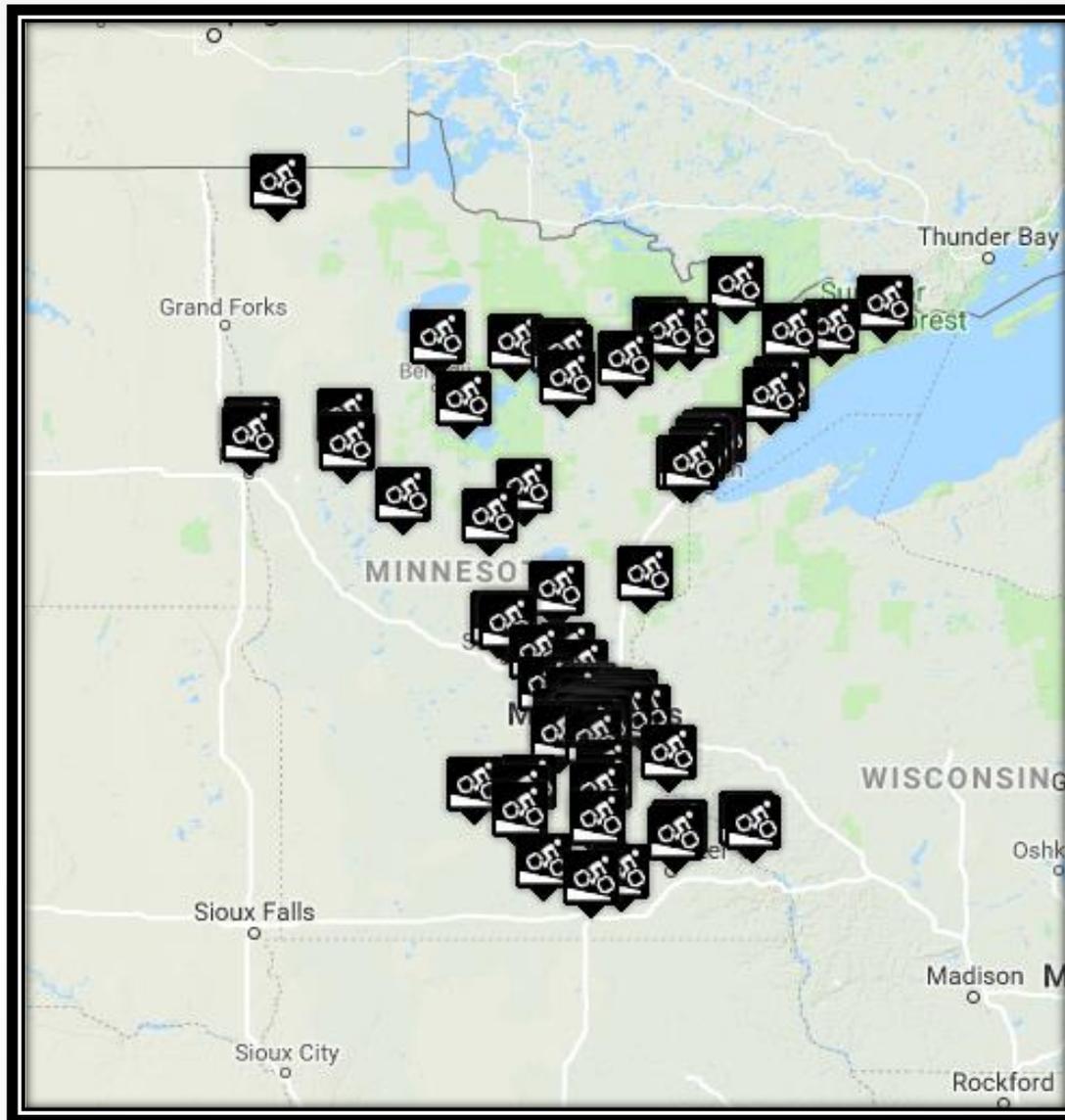
-Crosby local Café owner, Patrick Stoffel

Source: <https://www.minnpost.com/economy-0/2017/10/small-town-big-wheels-how-mountain-biking-saved-minnesota-mining-town>



MAMB: Mankato Area Mountain Bikers

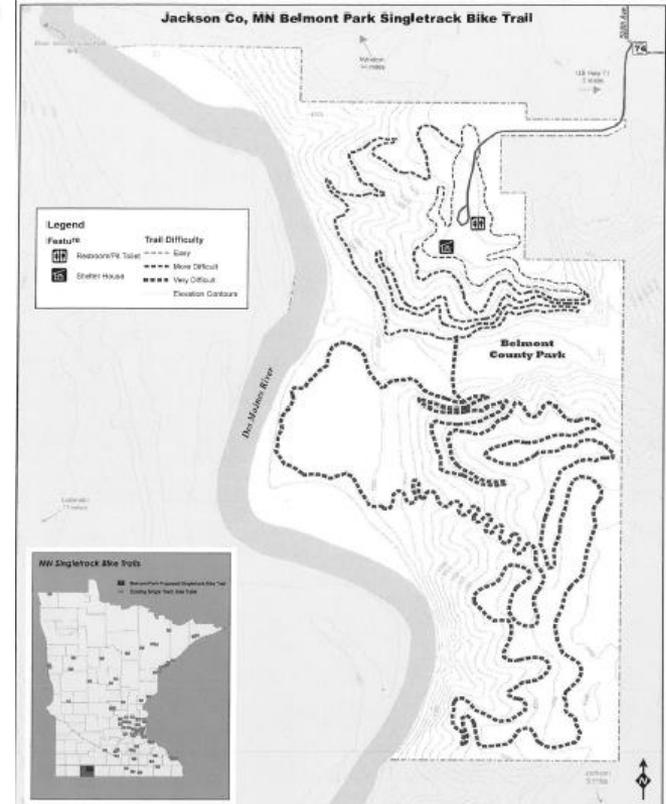
Source: <http://www.keyc.com/story/36282322/mt-kato-receives-help-in-its-bike-trails>



Map Source: https://www.singletracks.com/Minnesota-bike-trails_23.html

What will the park look like when it is finished?

- We are estimating 5 miles of trails based off our first draft.



- Signage to indicate hiking and biking routes, upgraded shelter house, upgraded vault toilet bathhouse.
- Future could hold primitive campsites, a dog park, and more!

Where are we going?

- Met with Bike Advocate Gary Sjoquist, Quality Bicycle Products;
- First Draft Design done by Tim Wegner, Trail Source;
- Friends of the Jackson County Trails are funding the design – other local organizations have shown interest in assisting with that cost;
- Letter to State Representatives for State Support;
- Start up a local Club for advocacy and volunteer maintenance;
- And begin searching for funding sources.



Thank You!

- Friends of the Jackson County Trails.
- Jackson County Parks/Trails Department.

