



General

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Last Update

13 Mar 2018 09:34:29

Park or Trail Name

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area

District

1

Location Description

Spirit Mountain RA is located off Interstate 35 at the top of the hill as one descends into the Lake Superior basin. It is across from Thompson Hill Visitor Center and overlooks Duluth, Lake Superior, and the St. Louis River estuary.

Park/Trail Address

9500 Spirit Mountain Place

City

Duluth

Park/Trail State

Minnesota

Zip

55806

Latitude

46.7182684

Longitude

-92.21673659999999

Map of Park/Trail

Description:

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/SpiritMt_AreaBoundary2008Legislation_bbd4a5.pdf

Facility Website

<http://spiritmt.com/>

Organization

City of Duluth

Lead Contact Person

Jim Filby Williams

Title

Director of Public Administration

Mailing Address

411 1st Ave West

City

Duluth

State

Zip

Minnesota

55802

Phone

218-730-5319

Joint Applicants

Joint Applicant #1

City of Duluth

Joint Applicant #2

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area Authority

Joint Applicant #3

Joint Applicant #4

Other project supporters

Email

jfwilliams@duluthmn.gov

Upload Resolution

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Spirit Mountain Resolution_2002df.pdf

Upload Resolution

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Resolution Spirit Mtn Draft_182195.pdf

Description

This section provides the basic information about the park or trail and the organizations responsible for it.

Regional Significance Statement

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area is a family-friendly recreation area providing the entire spectrum of four season adventure experiences from nature-based to built all within the context of the compelling natural resources of the Lake Superior watershed. Winter activities: downhill and Nordic skiing, snow tubing, fat tire mountain biking (fat biking), snowshoeing and snowmobiling. Summer activities: an adventure park (mountain coaster, zip line, mini-golf, jumping pillow) camping, mountain biking, hiking, bird watching, bouldering, and disc golf.

Classification

Special Recreational Feature Park

Overview/Description of Park or Trail

Spirit Mountain Recreation Area (Spirit) is a family-friendly recreation area providing the entire spectrum of four season adventure experiences from nature-based to built all within the context of the compelling natural resources of the Lake Superior watershed and the St. Louis River Estuary.

Groups served

Spirit is family friendly, serving all ages including adventure park activities that are kid friendly. User groups include:

Skiing and Snowboarding: Duluth Cross Country Ski Club (DXC), Team Duluth Race and Freestyle Teams, University of MN Alpine Team, College of St. Scholastica Outdoor Pursuit, and seven area high schools.

Mountain biking: Cyclists of Gitchee Gumees Shores (COGGS), the National Interscholastic Cycling Association, the Duluth Composite Team.

Hiking: Superior Hiking Trail Association (SHTA)

Snowmobiling: Hermantown and Over the Hill Night Riders Snowmobile Clubs.

Duluth Climbers Collation

Duluth Disc Golf

Facilities

Winter: downhill skiing, snowboarding, snow tubing, Nordic (cross-country) skiing, fat biking, lift-served downhill fat biking, snowshoeing and snowmobiling. 175 acres of skiable terrain has a capacity of 2,460 skiers; 26 trails have a length of 6.1 miles. Four terrain parks and a half-pipe provide interest for advanced users.

Summer: tent and RV camping; Adventure Park with an Alpine Coaster, Zip Line, Jumping Pillow; 9-hole Mini Golf; the primary trail head for the Duluth Traverse cross-country mountain biking trail as well as an all-weather mountain bike trail, downhill mountain bike trails, three pump tracks, and a skills park with progressing difficulty from beginner to advanced; bird watching and hiking on the SHT, hiking and biking on the accessible DWP multiuse trail, and disc golf.

Main Chalet houses banquet facilities, Mountain Top Shop equipment store, Mountain Top Cafe and Moosehead Bar and Grill. The Grand Ave Chalet at the bottom of the hill hosts the Riverside Bar and Grill. The Main Chalet and Grand Ave Chalet provide fee-for-service amenities that supplement and sustain Spirit Mountain: weddings and banquets account for 18.7% of revenues. Grand Ave Chalet which provides tickets, rentals, and restrooms for mountain bike activities.

Program summary

Thousands participate annually in year-round programming provided by Spirit or partner organizations for mountain biking, mountain biking, hiking, youth day camp, Adventure Camp, downhill skiing, Nordic, freestyle skiing, alpine racing, and snowboarding. These lessons and camps are offered for youth, families, women and teams from beginner to competitive. Spirit offers discounted and complimentary lessons to at-risk youth and is home to the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Program adaptive ski program. Attachment 1 lists Programs and Events.

Relationship to parks and trails

Multiple, multi-use trails come together at Spirit: the Duluth Traverse, Superior Hiking Trail, Western Waterfront Trail, DWP multi-use accessible trail and Willard Munger State Trail. These trails connect to state, regional and city parks. Snowmobile trails connect to 10 miles of groomed snowmobile trails in Duluth, 20,000 miles in Minnesota and 25,000 in Wisconsin. The Munger will eventually connect to the Cross City Trail. A future paddle access on the St. Louis River will link Spirit across Grand Ave.

Total Acreage or Mileage

1270

Acquisition and Development Status

Existing Park or Trail

N/A

100%

Development status

Some development, but more proposed

New facilities proposed

Facility Listing

This section provides an overview of existing and proposed site facilities and general site characteristics .

Existing Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Electric/water/sewer RV sites

Proposed Facilities

- Camping-cross-section of camper types
- Non-electric campsites

-
- Electric/water campsites
 - Non-electric campsites
 - Group campsites
 - Tent only sites
- Hiking Trails (natural)
 - Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
 - Cross-country Skiing Trails
 - Zip Lines
 - Restrooms/sanitation building
 - Roads and Parking Areas
- Group campsites
 - Mountain Biking Trails (natural)
 - Cross-country Skiing Trails
 - Visitor Center
 - Play areas, with an outdoor theme
 - Climbing (natural/man-made)
 - Restrooms/sanitation building
 - Roads and Parking Areas

Existing Facilities Other Information

Alpine coaster, jumping pillow, mini golf, disc golf, bike park

Proposed Facilities Other Information

Ropes Course

General Site Characteristics

Spirit Mountain is distinct from the surrounding landscape and is visible from across the river on the Wisconsin side as a prominent and visible feature. Volcanoes and glaciers created Lake Superior and the rugged mountain terrain of Spirit Mountain and the North Shore. The St. Louis River, the largest U.S. tributary to Lake Superior, becomes a 12,000-acre freshwater estuary at the base of Spirit Mountain. The upper section is characterized by wilderness-like areas, while the lower section is characterized by urban development and an industrial and international port. A freshwater estuary is ecologically unique. The current is slow and its wide expanse allows for small water and big water experiences as well as varied paddling experiences for all skill levels. Once on the estuary it's easy to forget that the river is in an urban environment.

Within sight is Lake Superior when, combined with the estuary, provides an overwhelmingly sense of place. Glacial Lake Duluth was five to six hundred feet above the present lake level. Duluth's Skyline Drive, with its wave-cut cliffs and terraces, remains one of the highest former shore lines of Glacial Lake Duluth and a popular scenic drive for residents and visitors alike. Erosion of the high bluffs and irregular shorelines composed of volcanic rock can expose veins thomsonite crystals in these cracks that form agates that are enthusiastically hunted by visitors. Lake Superior waves can grow to large size especially in the late fall and early winter. Waves can be 12 to 15 feet and were recently recorded at 28 feet. Wave watching and photography is a popular pastime and cold water surfing and diving are increasing in popularity.

Site characteristics upload

Description: General Site Characteristics

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 1 General Site Characteristics_a51dcf.pdf

Master Plan

Master Plan Status:

Master Plan meeting requirements of strategic plan is available

Upload Existing Master Plan

Spirit Mt MP Part I

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/I. Introduction September 2017_175b62.pdf

Upload Existing Master Plan

Spirit Mt MP Part II

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/II_Existing_Facilities_September_2017_197ded.pdf

Upload Existing Master Plan

Spirit Mt MP Part III

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/III-Market_September_2017_484c00.pdf

Upload Existing Master Plan

Spirit Mt MP Part IV

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/IV-Master_Plan_Concept_September_2017_e88547.pdf

Upload Existing Master Plan

Grant Ave Nordic Center MMP

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Grand-Avenue-Nordic-Center-1b6a2b.pdf>

Upload Existing Master Plan

Duluth Traverse - Spirit components

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Duluth_Traverse_Trail_Masterplan_Excerpt_e616c0.pdf

Additional Supportive Information:

Since 2011, the City of Duluth has increased planning and investment along the St. Louis River Corridor: Spirit Mountain is the gateway to Duluth and to the outdoor recreation activities available. Development of the mountain bike facilities resident within the Spirit Mountain Recreation Area were addressed within the Duluth Master Plan submitted to the Commission in 2017. The attached Duluth Traverse Master Plan Excerpt includes those sections that pertain to Spirit Mountain mountain bike facilities.

Classification Details

Special Recreational Feature Park Classification

Provides a High-Quality Outdoor Recreation Experience

- Located in a highly scenic and/or natural setting

Criteria #1 Images

Natural Features

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/>

Spirit Mt. provides some of the best elevation, topography, and scenic views in the region and Minnesota. Scenic overlooks from the top of Spirit Mt. take in the City of Duluth, Lake Superior, the St. Louis River Estuary, the Duluth-Superior Harbor and Aerial Lift Bridge, and Wisconsin. Spirit Mt is primarily forested: over 1,000 acres of old growth oak and maple forests provide stunning color displays in the fall and habitat for myriad species. These high quality hardwood forests are characterized by continuous, often dense, canopies of deciduous trees including sugar maple, basswood, paper birch, and northern red oak. Wild Leeks and Pennsylvania Sedge cover the ground under the hardwood forests. Ostrich and Lady Ferns, Forget-me-nots, nodding Trillium, Bouncing Bet, cedar, and Mountain-maple are found throughout. The landscape is dissected by rocky stream ravines and waterfalls that support aspens and birch mixed with white spruce, balsam fir, white cedar and white pine. Knowlton Creek is a designated trout stream and its dramatic valley flaunts bedrock, boulders, cobble and waterfalls. Mammals found in the area are black bear, deer, porcupine, rabbits, skunks, raccoons, mice, bats, an occasional wolf, and transient mountain lions and moose. Reptiles and amphibians, such as the common garter snake and American toad, are found in the forest wetlands and streams. Duluth sits in a principal migratory flyway making Spirit Mountain a premiere bird watching venue, as dozens of bird species nest in the area and hundreds migrate through in spring and fall. The Superior Hiking Trail, the Duluth Traverse, and the DWP Multiuse accessible trail allow a full spectrum of users to traverse these forests and the Alpine and Nordic trails are bounded by forests.

Attachment 2: Criteria 1 a. Natural features • Provides a very select and even unique set of recreational facilities/features well-suited to the site that will attract targeted user group(s) and population(s) A premier four seasons outdoor adventure recreation center, Spirit Mountain is a multi-faceted facility that meshes mountain terrain, the Lake Superior experience, a semi-wild river and estuary access, and a full spectrum of activities year round that utilizes and complements this unique combination of natural resources. Spirit Mountain provides the best alpine skiing within 90 miles, and has been a favorite destination for Nordic skiing as well as the home for area high school ski teams. Spirit Mountain tracks recreation trends and responds with activities that address those trends. Since 2008, Spirit Mountain added the alpine coaster, the zip lines, and snow tubing to take advantage of the mountain's rugged terrain. A jumping pillow and mini and disc golf also expand offerings year round and appeal to a larger

[17-0218-D/Attachment 2 Criteria 1.a. Natural Features_807270.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 2 Criteria 1.a. Natural Features_807270.pdf)

Criteria #1 Images

Activities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 3 Criteria 1b. Activity medley_30bd55.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Alpine Facilities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 4 Criteria 1.c. Alpine Facilities_324f81.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Nordic Facilities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 5 Criteria 1.d. Nordic Facilities_d2124f.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Mountain Bike Facilities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 6 Criteria 1.e. Mountain Bike Facilities_56c6d4.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Tubing Facilities

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 7 Criteria 1.f. Tubing Facilities_9f2c74.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Campgrounds

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 8 Criteria 1.g. Campground Facilities_9ab9d6.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Adventure Park

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 9 Criteria 1.h. Adventure Park_14148e.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Superior Hiking Trail

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 10 Criteria 1.i. Superior Hiking Trail_cebd19.pdf

Criteria #1 Images

Snowmobile Facilities

<http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/>

segment of families and individuals. The mountain bike facilities (bike park, pump track, downhill & cross-country trails, all weather trail, and lift service) are unique to the Duluth area and draw mountain bike enthusiasts from throughout the region and nation. Attachment 3: Criteria 1 b. Activity medley • Well-designed facilities using leading experts in the industry (relative to the most current design standards) that meet the contemporary needs of targeted user groups

Winter recreation at Spirit Mountain includes downhill skiing and snowboarding, snow tubing, Nordic (cross-country) skiing, snowmobiling, and fat biking. The Timber Twister alpine coaster can operate in the winter as well. On-site accommodation is offered at the Mountain Villas. The Main Chalet at the upper base and the Grand Avenue Chalet are open four seasons. Summer Recreation includes tent and RV camping; an adventure park complete with an Alpine Coaster, Zip Line, Jumping Pillow; 9-hole Mini Golf; bird watching and hiking on the Superior Hiking Trail, hiking and biking on the accessible DWP multiuse trail, and disc golf. The nationally recognized Spirit Mountain Bike Park includes multiple downhill trails, three pump tracks, a skills area with jump lines, cross-country mountain biking trails and an all-weather downhill trail and cross country loop supported by a trailhead at the Grand Ave Chalet. Alpine skiing/snowboarding Alpine skiing/snowboarding is the core winter activity at Spirit Mountain. The public ski area operation is supported by equipment rentals and both group and private lessons for all ages and Season Pass memberships. Spirit Mountain is open 7 days per week, weather permitting and also offers night skiing. Spirit has a total lift capacity of 4,150 at one time. It has 5 chairlifts – 1 High Speed Detachable Quad, 1 Fixed Grip Quad, 2 Triples and 1 Double and 3 surface lifts - 1 Handle Tow, 1 Moving Carpet and 1 High Speed Rope Tow. The high speed detachable quad is fast, modern, and allows Spirit to utilize it for mountain bikes in summer and fat bikes in winter. The high speed moves many people quickly to reduce the amount of time people wait in a chairlift line. This lift is ideal for beginners as the lift slows down to make loading and unloading easier. There are 89 acres of trails over 26 marked trails with a total length of 6.1 miles. While the existing terrain is predominantly beginner and low intermediate, the four terrain parks and half-pipe provide interest for the more advanced skiers and snowboarders. Terrain parks include jumps, boxes and rails.. A half-pipe is snow-covered sloping channel with a U-shaped cross section, used by skiers and snowboarders, to perform jumps and other maneuvers. Snowmaking Spirit Mountain's snowmaking system provides 100% snow coverage. A

[17-0218-D/Attachment 11 Criteria 1.j. Snowmobiles_a40587.pdf](#)

Criteria #1 Images

Buildings

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 12 Criteria 1.k. Buildings_361333.pdf

state of the art pump system draws 70 million to 90 million gallons of water annually from Lake Superior. Two pump stations with six pumps and motors deliver an average 4000 gallons of water pumped per minute when at full capacity to fourteen Super Pole Cat fans guns, six Standard Pole Cat fan guns, and 44 water/snow sticks. At the end of the winter season pipes and pumps move meltwater directly back into Lake Superior. Collection basins prevent runoff and debris from entering Lake Superior. Attachment 4: Criteria 1 c. Alpine facilities Nordic skiing Spirit Mountain is the crown jewel of the Duluth Nordic ski system. It has the most kilometers of any park as well as the most varied skiing terrain. When added to the adjacent Magney Snively Natural Area an additional 13.7 km through pristine woods becomes a full day of skiing from one trailhead: the only place in Duluth. One of the campground buildings is used as a warming chalet and the campground and chalet parking area provides parking. Attachment 5: Criteria 1 d. Nordic facilities Mountain/Fat bike Mountain bike trails are built per the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the International Mountain Bicycling Association sustainability specs and include beginner, intermediate, advanced and expert designs as well as trails that bridge the gap between levels. Spirit Mountain introduced high speed lift service for summer mountain biking in 2014. Spirit Mountain added in lift served, downhill winter fat biking in the 2015/16 ski season and was the first ski area in North America to do so. During summer months, the chairlift operates 4-5 days a week. In winter months, fat biking for lift service operates one day a week. The all-weather cross country mountain bike trail is hardened to prevent damage during shoulder season or wet weather and is the only all-weather trail in the region. The Duluth Traverse cross-country mountain bike trail crosses the entire city. Within Spirit Mountain, the Duluth Traverse trail extends from the end of North 80th Avenue West to the Grand Avenue Chalet over a distance of approximately 7,200 feet. It follows the DWP trail to western Duluth. The DWP is used by downhill bikers to return to the Spirit Express II lift from the bottom of the downhill bike trails. The Bike Park consists of four top to bottom gravity trails, with a few side trails, three progressively challenging pump tracks and a skills park with jump lines just above the Grand Avenue Chalet. A pump track is a continuous loop of dirt berms and "rollers" (smooth dirt mounds) that are ridden without pedaling. There are a total of 4.8 miles of trails in the downhill portion of the bike park. The existing trail mix tends to be more suitable for intermediate riders. Expansion plans call for a fun, flowing, novice trail, suitable for cross country bikes to

introduce more riders to downhill mountain biking.

Attachment 6: Criteria 1 e. Mountain Bike Facilities

Snow Tubing A multi-lane snow tubing park at the top of the mountain has its own handle tow lift that brings tubers from the bottom to the top of the tubing lanes.

The Adventure Park support facility provides tickets, concessions and washroom facilities. Parking is provided at the Adventure Park parking area. When weather conditions are favorable, the Alpine Coaster operates in conjunction with the tubing operation.

Attachment 7: Criteria 1 f. Tubing Spirit Mountain

Campground The campground is located in a wooded area and consists of 73 individual campsites equipped with fire pits, picnic tables and electricity, as well as an area for walk-in tent camping. Thirty-nine sites have water hook-ups. Campground guests can purchase discounted tickets to the activities at the Adventure Park and a walking trail links the two facilities. The campground is often fully booked during the peak summer season from mid-May to mid-October.

Attachment 8: Criteria 1 g. Campground Facilities

The Adventure Park The park includes an alpine coaster, zip line, mini-golf, disc golf, and a jumping pillow. An independent structure provides tickets, washrooms and a food concession that also supports the winter tubing operation. The Timber Twister alpine coaster descends on a 3,250-foot track that drops approximately 300 feet and then ascends back to the start. The Timber Flyer zip line drops 135 feet over a distance of approximately 700 feet. Riders can go solo or double on a bench seat complete with seatbelts.

There is mini-golf and 18 holes of disc golf, and a jumping pillow, which is a 30 by 60-foot in ground airbag. Participation in the activities can be purchased individually or as part of a package. The Spirit Express II chairlift also operates to provide transport for summer sightseeing.

Attachment 9: Criteria 1 h.

Adventure Park Sightseeing and Hiking The Superior Hiking Trail is a 310-mile long footpath that follows the ridgeline overlooking the north shore of Lake Superior from the Wisconsin border just East of Jay Cooke State Park in West Duluth to just east of the Grand Portage Reservation near the Canada-US border. The trail is designated for hiking and walking and varies in elevation from 600 to 1,300 feet above sea level. The trail traverses the mountain below the ski runs and there are spur trails connecting to the upper and lower base areas, as well as the campground and the USFS Superior National Forest Headquarters. The portion of the trail from the upper parking lot to the Grand Avenue parking lot is multi-use. From upper Spirit Mountain, there are panoramic views over the Saint Louis River and western Duluth. The Spirit Express II chairlift is open for summer sightseeing 5 days a week

from late June to early September, and on weekends in the fall. Spirit boasts a designated hiking only loop experience managed by the SHTA that connects the top of the mountain to the bottom allowing for a multi hour hiking experience looping off the main SHT spine trail. Attachment 10: Criteria 1 i. Superior Hiking Trail Snowmobiling A snowmobile loop on the east side of Knowlton Creek extends from the Duluth Cross City trail behind the Lake Superior Zoo and crosses the creek on the top of the mountain. This trail extends across Skyline Parkway and around the western perimeter of the mountain to the Magney Snively Natural Area. Spirit Mountain is the host for the opening event of the International Series of Champions' Championship SnoCross Series. SnoCross incorporates challenging natural and artificial terrain features. This event attracts high caliber racers and upwards of 30,000 fans. Attachment 11: Criteria 1 j. Snowmobiles Buildings The Main Chalet and the Grand Avenue Chalet provide the necessary skier services (tickets, rentals, washrooms, food and beverage etc.) for Spirit Mountain. The Main Chalet contains 50,405 ft² and the Grand Avenue Chalet 15,100 ft², for a total of 65,505 ft². Service facilities are those which provide functions specifically related to the operation and management of the recreation area. These are broken down into three categories:

- Operational: Services essential for the day-to-day operation of the recreation area include "back of the house" services such as administration space, employee lockers and ski patrol facilities. These facilities are located both on the mountain and in the base areas.
- Staging Facilities: Services that are required as visitors arrive include ticket sales, public lockers, equipment rental and repair, program check-in and daycare, and are located at both chalets.
- Commercial Facilities: Services required throughout the day as visitors are on the mountain including food and bar seating, kitchen and serving areas, restrooms and accessory retail space and are located at both chalets.

Attachment 12: Criteria 1 k. Buildings

- Overall uniqueness is high, with new or innovative "special feature" outdoor recreational facilities of regional significance being the basis for the park. The International Mountain Bike Association designated Duluth as a Gold Ride Center in part because of the high quality trails that Spirit Mountain offers. The Ride Center™ designation represents large-scale mountain bike facilities that offer something for every rider. IMBA Ride Centers serve as social and educational hubs, where visitors can connect and learn new riding techniques and provide the full range of mountain biking experiences today's riders crave. The Zip Line and Timber Twister are unique to the region at one of

two similar recreation areas in District 1 that provide this type of ride. It provides an exemplary experience when combined with the remarkable views and extensive, quality forest environment through which they travel. Coming soon is a new Grand Ave Nordic Center at the base of the mountain that will add lighted Nordic ski trails and snowmaking. The 2.0 mile trail will serve recreational cross country skiing and regional competitions. A 1.4 mile trail connection to the top of the mountain will connect these trails and the far west Duluth neighborhoods to Spirit Mountain Nordic Center at the top of the mountain. These investments will bring users from outside the region as studies show that ski teams are traveling as much as six hours to access snow covered trails for training and competition. Please see Master Plan - Development Section. Please see: Timber Twister Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7dyNgWMihk&feature=youtu.be&t=4>

Provides a Natural and Scenic Setting Offering a Compelling Sense of Place

- Exhibits a regionally-important natural anchor feature that establishes the essential character of the site – i.e., interesting landforms, geology, water feature, etc. Please see General Site Characteristics and Criteria 1 for descriptions of the regionally significant attributes of Spirit Mountain, the St. Louis River Estuary, and Lake Superior. Duluth provides some of the most concentrated scenery on the North Shore, lake view and waterfalls included. Knowl-ton Creek presents open gabbro ledges, boulders, and rocks under a cool canopy of spruce, cedar, and Yellow Birch, followed by White Pines and a view of Clough Island and the estuary. Attachment 13: Criteria 2 Natural Setting
- Exhibits man-made features – i.e., restored quarry sites and naturally-shaped ponds – if unique and in-keeping with an outdoor recreation theme Spirit Mountain is the perfect combination of natural and built environment. The built ski and bike facilities, the Adventure Park, campground and chalets provide 200 acres of modern recreational activities to appeal to today's fast paced adventure seekers. These are surrounded by over 1,000 acres of stunning natural resources that enhance the experience. Skiers, bikers, and like can leave the built environment to hike or bike for miles in the wonder that is the Lake Superior/St. Louis River watershed.
- Enough acres to accommodate desired recreational uses while preserving sense of place and protecting the natural features Destination features, both on and off the mountain, are abundant winter and summer. 200 acres of built activities provide sufficient facilities to make the area attractive for regional and local visitors.

Criteria #2 Images

Natural Setting

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_13_Criteria_2_Natural_Setting_4f97c9.pdf

Only 15% of Spirit Mountain is developed, including the ski runs. The Duluth Traverse trails and bike park, Superior Hiking Trail and Nordic trails as well as the alpine slide and zip line wind through the dramatic natural resources that cover the other 85% of the mountain. This provides an opportunity to attract those who may not have familiarity with a wild environment to experience and learn to appreciate Minnesota's natural world.

Well-located to Serve a Regional Need and/or Tourist Destination

• Park is located right in a densely settled, rapidly growing, and/ or an established regional center or well-established tourist destination – with most residents in the area not having to travel very far (within 5 to 10 miles driving distance) to get there Regional appeal: Spirit Mountain is the place where an outdoor adventure “Newby” can come and try nearly every destination quality outdoor experience Duluth has to offer and it is affordable. If one is looking for exercise, adventure, or solitude, appropriate activities are available year round. Warm weather activities include hiking, biking, bouldering, kayaking, stand up paddling, rowing, fishing, birding, swimming, camping, and picnicking. Winter activities include skiing, winter fat biking, snow shoeing, ice skating, ice fishing, ice kiting, dog sledding, and snowmobiling. Programs encourage participation and facilitate the development of skills that lead to lifelong active living. Thousands of participants visit Spirit Mountain on an annual basis simply through year-round programming for mountain biking, downhill mountain biking, hiking, youth day camp, Adventure Camp, downhill skiing, Nordic, freestyle skiing, alpine racing, and snowboarding. These lesson programs and camps are offered for youth, families, women and teams. The Adventure Park is part of a summer day camp experience for children aged 6 to 12. Programs serve beginners to expert as well as developmental and competition teams for skiing and snowboarding. For years, Spirit Mountain offers discounted and complimentary lesson programs to at-risk youth groups, schools and other youth focused centers. Spirit Mountain is home to the adaptive ski program through Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Program. Ski, snowboard, and mountain bike programs employ trained and/or certified instructors certified through the Professional Ski Instructors of America, American Association of Snowboard Instructors and Certified Bike Instructors. During operations, trained professional ski and bike patrols are on site. This provides an extra level of safety and allows for next level of care to be administrated. Spirit Mountain staffs the Chester Bowl

Criteria #3 Images

Programs and Events

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 14 Criteria 3.a.Programs & Events_d9b2f9.pdf

Criteria #3 Images

Tourism

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 15 Criteria 3.b.Tourism_4bd00e.pdf

Criteria #3 Images

Trail Maps

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 16 Criteria 3.c. Trail Maps_b86291.pdf

(a small inner city alpine ski area) ski patrol. Spirit Mountain partners with the local International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) chapter, COGGS. COGGS provides volunteer work for trail construction, teaches clinics and lesson programs and sponsors events and programs. Many programs encourage underserved groups to participate and focus on getting families moving. COGGS partners annually with Kraus Anderson Construction to host the Duluth Bike Festival at Spirit Mountain. DXC sponsors programs and Nordic skiing (skate and traditional) lessons with activities that build technique, stamina, and confidence in all ages. Events include everything from a 10km race for the competitive skiers, to lessons and free ski demos for beginners, ski soccer and obstacle courses for kids. In summer, hill bounding, ski walking, and roller skiing helps with strength and cross country skiing coordination and technique. Please see Attachment 14: Criteria 3 a. Programs and Events

Tourist destination: Duluth is the fourth largest City in Minnesota and serves the regional population of 279,601. Spirit Mt. is located within the city of Duluth, the regional hub for the North and South Shores of Lake Superior, Iron-Range, and "northwoods" of north-eastern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. Duluth is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the state, attracting well over 6 million visitors throughout all 4-seasons. By 2060, the number of adults participating in each of 10 different popular outdoor recreation activities is projected to increase. Depending on future demographic, economic, land use, and population changes, the activity demonstrating the most growth is day hiking. The growth in the number of participants in birding and day hiking is projected to exceed the growth of the overall population. Mountain biking is a very popular activity in the U.S., with nearly 40 million participants annually. Many mountain bikers travel with families and typically bike for only part of the day. Duluth's many family-based tourism facilities will draw these visitors and provide increased economic impacts to the Lake Superior Zoo, Hartley Nature Center, the Great Lakes Aquarium, Canal Park and the like. Hiking destination: One "could hike for days and not experience all that Duluth's trails have to provide" (Dave Cowardin, Duluth Outdoors). Duluth has some of the best hiking in the region along Lake Superior and its tributaries and through rocky wooded hills and spectacular views of the lake and St. Louis River. Many hiking/biking hubs are, or will be connected by, the Duluth Traverse Trail System that will travel the length of Duluth's ridgeline from Lester Park to Jay Cooke State Park. Biking destination: Duluth is a premier national mountain bike destination. COGGS, the local bike

club, has 650 active members, 4,515 Facebook followers, and has grown annually since its inception. The Traverse infrastructure facilitates downhill races and community-based events as part of the Bike Duluth Festival. The IMBA Gold Ride Center designation for the trail system boasts national and international appeal. Other facilities: Duluth has the needed tourism infrastructure to provide a high quality overall experience. The nearby restaurants, hotels, campgrounds, support services and other attractions are crucial to attract repeat outdoor recreation users especially those traveling with families. Attachment 15: Criteria 3 b. Duluth Tourism • Park is readily accessible by some combination of local, regional, or state trail from nearby neighborhoods and communities. Spirit Mt. is easily accessed via I35 from Duluth or communities to the south. Residents can access Spirit Mt via Grand Ave (Hwy 23) as well as public transportation: Duluth Transit Authority Route # 2 passes the Grand Ave Chalet. Spirit Mt. is the primary hub for activities in Duluth. Superior Hiking Trail, Duluth Traverse Multiuse Mountain Biking Trail, DWP Multiuse accessible Trail, Munger State Trail, Gitchi-Gami State Snowmobile Trail, eventual access to the waterfront for kayaking, C.J. Rams-tad/North Shore State Trail, Cross City Trail, and Lakewalk can all be accessed via Spirit Mt. This trail network connects visitors to:

- Special recreation facilities: Lake Superior Zoo, Piedmont Recreation Area, Quarry Park.
- City parks: Chambers Grove, Mission Creek, Fairmont, Keene Creek, Oneotta, Brewer, Bellevue, Lincoln, Enger, Central, Hilltop, Chester, Hartley, Downer, Amity, and Lester.
- Nature/ Environmental Learning Areas – Bagley, Hartley, Hawk Ridge Bird Observatory, F.R. Paine Forest Preserve, Magney-Snively Natural Area.

Attachment 16: Criteria 3 c. Trail Maps

Fills a Gap in Recreational Opportunity within the Region

No regional or state-level parks offering regional-type recreational facilities exist near enough to the location or offer the type of facilities provided, and a clear gap in service exists. A Regional ski facility is defined as an area with 500 to 2,000 feet vertical drop, ski trail area of up to 200 acres, and trails serviced by rope tows, handle lifts, T-bars and chairlifts. Spirit Mountain meets the regional classification because of the 700 foot vertical drop. Spirit Mountain has the second largest vertical drop in the regional market; only the Lutsen Mountains Resort has a larger vertical drop. Of the three resorts that could be classified as Regional (Spirit Mountain, Lutsen, Giants Ridge), Spirit Mountain is located closest to the large population

Criteria #4 Images

District 1 Resorts

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 17 Criteria 4.a. Resorts_6acb90.pdf

Criteria #4 Images

Mountain Bike Centers

http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 18 Criteria 4.b.Mountain Bike Centers_8a92b1.pdf

centers of Minneapolis/St. Paul and Duluth. There are four ski/resorts in Minnesota within the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails District 1 including Spirit Mountain and two nearby in Wisconsin. Mont du Lac and Mount Ashwabay in WI are not considered regional resorts as their vertical drops are 300 and 325 feet respectively. Only Spirit Mountain, Giant's Ridge, and Lutsen in Minnesota have the vertical drop meeting the definition of a regional facility. Only Giant's Ridge has the breathe of activities that mirror Spirit Mountain. Giant's Ridge is 1hr/20 minutes from Duluth and 2hr/15 min from Mps/St. Paul. Attachment 17: Criteria 4 a. Resort Distribution in District 1 The International Mountain Bicycling Association has designated the Duluth Traverse Trail System as a Gold Level Ride Center. In Duluth the system provides a 3-4 day riding experience, a wide variety of riding styles from cross country to gravity, progressive trails from beginner to expert, quality support services, strong community support and effective marketing. Few places in Minnesota have the varied elevation, topography, scenic destinations, extensive public land base, and close proximity to the well-established tourism infrastructure as does Duluth. Duluth is one of four Gold Ride Centers in the U.S. Other regional mountain bike systems exist but do not offer the acces-sibility to large regional and tourist populations that the Duluth Traverse does. The amount, variety, quality, connection, and prox-imity of the trails to population centers is un-precedented in the country. Attachment 18: Criteria 4 b. Mountain bike facility distribution

Attachments

| Doc Name | Description | Url |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Site Characteristics Upload | General Site Characteristics | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 1 General Site Characteristics_a51dcf.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Natural Features | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 2 Criteria 1.a. Natural Features_807270.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Activities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 3 Criteria 1b. Activity medley_30bd55.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Alpine Facilities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 4 Criteria 1.c. Alpine |

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| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Nordic Facilities | Facilities_324f81.pdf http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 5 Criteria 1.d. Nordic Facilities_d2124f.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Mountain Bike Facilities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 6 Criteria 1.e. Mountain Bike Facilities_56c6d4.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Tubing Facilities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 7 Criteria 1.f. Tubing Facilities_9f2c74.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Campgrounds | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 8 Criteria 1.g. Campground Facilities_9ab9d6.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Adventure Park | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 9 Criteria 1.h. Adventure Park_14148e.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Superior Hiking Trail | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 10 Criteria 1.i. Superior Hiking Trail_cebd19.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Snowmobile Facilities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 11 Criteria 1.j. Snowmobiles_a40587.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr1 Upload | Buildings | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 12 Criteria 1.k. Buildings_361333.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr2 Upload | Natural Setting | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 13 Criteria 2 Natural Setting_4f97c9.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr3 Upload | Programs and Events | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 14 Criteria 3.a. Programs & Events_d9b2f9.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr3 Upload | Tourism | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 15 Criteria 3.b. Tourism_4bd00e.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr3 Upload | Trail Maps | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/u |

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| Spcl Recreational Ftr4 Upload | District 1 Resorts | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 17 Criteria 4.a. Resorts_6acb90.pdf |
| Spcl Recreational Ftr4 Upload | Mountain Bike Centers | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 18 Criteria 4.b.Mountain Bike Centers_8a92b1.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Spirit Mt MP Part I | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/I. Introduction September 2017_175b62.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Spirit Mt MP Part II | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/II. Existing Facilities September 2017_197ded.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Spirit Mt MP Part III | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/III- Market September 2017_484c00.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Spirit Mt MP Part IV | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/IV- Master Plan Concept September 2017_e88547.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Grant Ave Nordic Center MMP | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Grant-Avenue-Nordic-Center-_1b6a2b.pdf |
| Existing Master Plan | Duluth Traverse - Spirit components | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Duluth Traverse Trail Masterplan Excerpt_e616c0.pdf |
| Additional Attachment | Support Letters | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Spirit Mountain Support Letters_9dea3a.pdf |
| Site Map Upload | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Spirit-Mountain.location.map_5638c4.gif |
| Regional Map Uploads | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/map_046ac1.jpg |
| Programming Plan Upload | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/ |

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| | | loads/applications/17-0218-D/Programs and Events_3a0413.pdf |
| Regional Map Uploads | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 19 Trail Connections_f03d54.pdf |
| Regional Demographic Upload | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 21 Research_651cff.pdf |
| Recreational Trends Upload | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 22 Overnight stays_0ff2e4.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Revenue Distribution | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 20 Revenue Distribution_0db950.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Existing Winter Activities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 24 Existing Winter Activities_ca7c16.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Life Specifications | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 25 - Lift Specifications_baf382.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Ski Trail Inventory | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 26 Ski Trail Inventory_959907.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Existing Summer Activities | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 27 Existing Summer Activites_00f0c3.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Bike Trail Inventory | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 28 Bike Trail Inventory_4ec05c.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Facilities Balance Chart | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 30 Facilities Balance Chart_4046bd.pdf |
| Development Acquisition Plan Upload | Parking Overview | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 29 Parking overview_580c2f.pdf |
| Development Feature Upload | | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 30 Facilities Balance Chart_4046bd.pdf |

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| | achment 31 Proposed Activity Maps_e9f8b8.pdf |
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| Development Feature Upload | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_33_Snow_guns_&_Groomers_824883.pdf |
| Development Feature Upload | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_34_Parking_Area_A_Upgrades_59b743.pdf |
| Development Feature Upload | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_35_Parking_Area_B_Upgrades_8be048.pdf |
| Development Feature Upload | http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_36_Parking_Area_C_Upgrades_f559db.pdf |
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AcqDev Cost Projections Upload

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Park Trail Map

[http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment 43 Phasing and Estimated Budget_8f46fe.pdf](http://dms.gmrptcommission.org/uploads/applications/17-0218-D/Attachment_43_Phasing_and_Estimated_Budget_8f46fe.pdf)

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