

Section Two
Past Plans and Studies

To obtain an understanding of the Geneva Park District, as well as to present the framework which has laid the foundation upon which this plan is built, a review of the Geneva Park District's *1993 Master Plan*, the *Master Plan for Peck Farm Park*, and the *Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)* are highlighted below.

1993 Master Plan

The previous Geneva Park District Master Plan was completed in 1993, and kept current by an annual review of goals and objectives, and a revised capital budget and park map. The 1993 Plan presented an inventory of all open space and recreation within the Geneva Park District, established standards for open space and recreation provision, identified potential park sites, and listed detailed actions that could be undertaken to successfully implement the plan.

In December 2003, the Geneva Park District Board and Staff updated the Master Plan with capital projects, expenditures, and goals through 2007. The 2002 update was necessary due to the successful implementation of most of the recommendations from the original plan. Some of the revised goals have already been completed, including preparing the Peck Farm Park barn for educational and meeting space. Incomplete objectives within the plan include adding additional full time and part time staff, new office equipment and software, constructing a Park District gymnasium, developing additional trail connections, constructing water playgrounds, maintaining and expanding natural areas and open space, and developing baseball and soccer fields as needed.

The successful implementation of most of the objectives of the original plan and the 2003 Master Plan Update, coupled with the residential growth occurring west of Randall Road, has created the need for this update of the Geneva Park District's Master Plan.

Peck Farm Park Master Plan

Peck Farm Park is an Illinois Heritage Park that is a showcase for biorestation techniques, a cross-section of all Northern Illinois plant communities, and a recreation and learning amenity for the Geneva Park District. The Peck Farm Master Plan was completed to seamlessly connect the Peck Farm Park core (131 acres consisting of 3 ball fields, 2 soccer fields, a path/trail system, and the farmstead), to the Peck Farm Park extension (247 acres) into a single unified park site that "provides an additional active recreation component, takes cues from the historic agricultural uses of the site, and [provides] a vision for future acquisition."

The Peck Farm Park Master Plan presents detailed design and development recommendations for the park, and itemizes costs associated with the improvements. The Plan presented 4 alternatives for the park's extension, and the plan that was ultimately developed for Peck Farm Park recommended a landscape consisting of mostly Mesic prairie, with some dry prairie, wet prairie, scattered oak groupings, and woodlands and the following recreation facilities:

South of Kaneville Road

- An educational center
- Overlooks and rest areas around Peck Lake
- A paved trail around the perimeter of the site
- Mowed trails within the interior of the site
- A hilltop picnic area
- A council ring and boardwalk

North of Kaneville Road

- 2 street crossings connecting the north and south parts of the park
- A gymnasium, fitness facility, classrooms and parking area
- 4 soccer fields
- A sundial landscape and picnic area
- A paved trail extending north
- Mowed trails throughout the interior of the site

Implementation of the plan was divided into 6 units, referred to as Units A through F, each with 2 implementation phases. The Plan proposed that Peck Farm Park develop south of Kaneville Road first with Units A and B, then north of Kaneville Road with Units C through F. The Geneva Park District has successfully completed Units A & B of the implementation, and is currently implementing Unit C (the soccer fields have been graded and seeded, the gymnasium and parking areas have not yet been completed).

Despite the fact that the Peck Farm Park Master Plan is only partially completed, the Geneva Park District has won several awards for Peck Farm Park and its Master Plan. In 1998, Peck Farm Park was selected as the Outstanding New Facility from the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, and received an Environmental Improvement Award from the American Landscape Contractors of America. In 1999, the park's architects received the Design Award from the Illinois Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects, the Planning and Analysis Award from the Illinois Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects and the program for Peck Farm was awarded Best New Project from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. In 2003, the Illinois Park and Recreation Association selected Peck Farm's Butterfly House and Sensory Garden for the Outstanding Facility & Parks Award.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a guide and vision for outdoor recreation in Illinois. The Plan has been developed, and is revised regularly, by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). The Plan is required to maintain the State's eligibility for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a federal grant program providing a 50% match for acquisition and development of outdoor recreation land and facilities.

More specifically, SCORP is a five year plan that assesses a) the state's natural resources; b) demographic trends; c) outdoor recreation demand, supply, and needs; and, d) priorities for the LWCF Program.

Natural Resources

The SCORP identifies the forests, prairies, savannas, wetlands, and lakes and ponds as natural resources that should be preserved as the State becomes increasingly urbanized. Potential park and open space sites are identified in the final section of this report.

Demographic Trends

The demographic overview within the SCORP concerns the state as a whole. A more specific demographic overview of the Geneva Park District's population is provided in the next section of this report.

Outdoor Recreation Demand & Needs

To identify demand for outdoor recreational activities IDNR has conducted an Open Space Survey. The 10 most popular activities according to the IDNR Open Space Study are listed below.

- Walking – 81% of respondents participate in this activity.
- Driving/sightseeing – 64%
- Gardening – 56%
- Observing wildlife – 53%
- Picnicking – 51%
- Fishing – 39%
- Bicycling – 37%
- Swimming – 36%
- Hiking – 32%
- Camping – 28%
- Golfing – 27%

When comparing the 2001 SCORP to the 1997 SCORP survey, a trend towards more unstructured and passive recreation is apparent. The following recreational trends can be identified through this comparison:

- Ice-skating and inline skating have experienced a significant decrease in participation.
- Participation in softball or baseball has moderately declined.
- Participation in running or jogging has moderately declined.
- Golf and hiking have both experienced a 50% increase in participation.
- Fishing and observing wildlife have had significant increases in participation.

Priorities for the LWCF Program

The priorities for state and local project and grant priorities, as presented within the SCORP are as follows:

- Accessibility and underserved populations
- Water resources
- Greenways and trails
- Visitor information and conservation education
- Land acquisition
- Natural areas
- Wildlife habitat
- Wetlands
- Adaptive reuse and redevelopment of urban lands
- Local planning and coordination
- Basic facilities