

Wirth Lake Construction Update

Theodore Wirth Park around the vicinity of Wirth Lake (Glenwood Avenue and Wirth Parkway) has undergone significant updates this year. Construction for the year is now completed and visitors can enjoy upgraded trails that encircle the lake, thanks to the installation of a boardwalk along the north side of the lake.

These updates are part of an extensive capital improvements project that has been broken into phases. Earlier phases included a renovation of the beach and beach house and construction of a new playground and volleyball courts. Current projects include trail improvements, parking lot renovation, wetlands restoration, improved access to the picnic pavilion, and tree replacement. Future projects under consideration include a renovation of the pavilion, additional trail improvements, improved picnic facilities, and water quality improvement initiatives.

Originally scheduled to be done by mid-summer, these activities were delayed by the May tomado

and discovery of contamination in the wetlands area. The tomado devastated many trees in the area, cutting a swath from the quaking bog in a north-northeasterly direction, through the Wirth Beach area, crossing the lake, and continuing into North Minneapolis. Fortunately there was little damage to the beach house and playground, but the new beach dock was destroyed and the boardwalk took major damage. The beach was closed all season as Park staff struggled to manage cleanup and damage claims.

As a regular park patron I found the delays to be frustrating, but I commend Park staff for completing the work this season despite the difficult delays. I highly recommend that you enjoy a walk around the lake on one of these warm fall days.

Information on this project, as well as design considerations for all of Wirth Park (including the area north of Highway 55) is available at: <http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/default.asp?PageID=1150>, or call Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board at 612-230-6400.

- Karen Soderberg, Area 7



Along the horizon, you can see where new improvements to Wirth Park include a boardwalk along Hwy 55, completing a trail around Wirth Lake for walkers and runners. The walkway was destroyed by last summer's tornado shortly after completion but has been restored. Keep watch for more improvements which are on the way.



This is the view looking north from the west end of the floating walkway which now surrounds the beach in front of the beach house.

-Photos by Marlin Possehl, Area 3