



## *Parks and Recreation Department*

### **Parks Tree Maintenance**

The Parks Department has been very busy pruning trees in the parks and boulevards including alleys. The late winter early spring when trees are still dormant is the ideal time to prune trees and with the lack the snow the Parks Arborist and Superintendent were able to plan and implement a pruning schedule for trees. Tree pruning promotes healthy trees, improves appearance, and protects people and property! So many benefits for the community and our natural resources. The Crew pruned over 2,800 trees! The Public Works Street Department was able to assist in keeping the community and workers safe on some of the busier streets. We thank the community and all our partners for their assistance. The crew was also able to save time and money by utilizing the new chipper! The map demonstrates the area in which trees were pruned!



### **Slow the Mow....**

The Birds, Bees, Butterflies-Bemidji will be implementing a sustainable initiative this spring called, "Slow the Mow." This program will allow City residents to register their yard and be given the opportunity to not mow their lawn during the month of May and into June to promote pollinators. Although registration would be required, this is a free program.

The month of May/June is an important period for many pollinators in our region. This is when they emerge from dormancy or migrate back to this area and begin searching for flowering plants. Early-blooming flowers like violets and dandelions provide food for hungry pollinators. Available nectar and pollen sources are dramatically reduced with early spring grass-mowing. In addition, by allowing the grass to grow out, the grass can develop a stronger root system, which improves water retention and drought resiliency.



Slow the Mow requires the suspension of the enforcement of City Code Section 14-32 and the voluntary delay of homeowner lawn-care practices until June to allow pollinator species to emerge and early flowering grasses and forbes to grow and bloom. Registration is free and available online at [www.ci.bemidji.mn.us](http://www.ci.bemidji.mn.us) or in person at the Tourist Information Center at Paul Bunyan Park. The program will begin on May 1st and end on June 7th. Yard signs will also be available for pick-up at the Tourist Information Center. These will help explain to neighbors what the initiative is all about and to identify their yard as participating in the program.

**Birds, Bees, & Butterflies-Bemidji** is a grassroots group including-The Mississippi Headwaters Audubon Society, Mayor Monarch Pledge committee and several other local organizations and businesses who have joined together in a campaign to promote the planting of native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers in our community to benefit birds and pollinators. More information about the initiative- <https://www.spearheadmhas.org/birds-and-bees.html>

For more information visit [www.ci.bemidji.mn.us](http://www.ci.bemidji.mn.us) or call 218-333-1862

### **Pollinator Project! Grants Awarded to Bemidji Parks and Recreation**

The Beltrami Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is pleased to announce the receipt of several grants aimed at bolstering habitat and food sources for native pollinators in the region. These grants not only contribute to the preservation of vital pollinator species, but also foster stronger partnerships between the City of Bemidji and local organizations. The grants have enabled the enhancement of green spaces throughout the area, providing essential resources for pollinators while simultaneously creating aesthetically pleasing landscapes for the community to enjoy.



The Bemidji Parks and Recreation Projects are focused on promoting native plantings in park and city owned/property. The four projects are diverse in application and size and located throughout the community.

- Brinkman Park – The project is the establishment of an 8-acre native prairie. The existing open field area will be transformed into an intentional and educational native prairie and serve as habitat for pollinators. After establishment the goal is to provide education signage.
- Lake Boulevard Right-of-Way – this project is a two-part project. Working with the Conservation Corp of Minnesota the first step is removal of buckthorn and invasive species. Next will be seeding the area with a native seed mix that will prevent erosion and inhibit invasive species.
- Diamond Point Park – planting a demonstration garden around the buildings.
- Fire Station 2 – planting a demonstration native planting area to reduce mowing and beautify the area. In addition, Park and Fire will be planting trees to provide shade.

The success of these projects underscores the importance of continued investment in pollinator conservation efforts. Looking ahead, the Beltrami SWCD is committed to seeking additional funding to expand upon the achievements thus far, and further promote the well-being of pollinators in the region.

### **Bikes and Docks!**

Although it's a little cold at the moment, docks have been installed! The new dock for Paul Bunyan Park has arrived and will be installed next week as well as the Fishing Pier. The new fishing pier for Diamond Point should be here mid-May and will be installed with assistance from the DNR! This will be a great asset for our community!

The rental bikes are back at the Tourist Center! Stop by and rent a bike! Get some exercise or just take a slow ride along the lake and check out all the migrating ducks!

### **Dog Park Improvements!**

The Nymore Dog Park will see some improvements this spring! Shade structures were installed this week, benches are on order and will be installed as soon as they arrive. This will provide much needed relief for the users of the park. The Street Department is also working with parks to improve the drainage in and around the dog park. Using skill and equipment – providing proper drainage will keep the park open and available for our friend to socialize and get exercise.

