

2025 Joint Powers Board Members

Cannon Falls:

Lisa Zimmerman - council member
Ryan Jeppesen - council member
Lisa Groth – citizen

Red Wing:

Janie Farrar - council member
Donald Kliewer - council member
Chuck Richardson - citizen

Goodhue County:

Brad Anderson - commissioner
Linda Flanders - commissioner
Dan Bender - citizen



Cannon Valley Trail



2024 Annual Report



Prepared by:
Scott Roepke, Trail Manager
Karen Slininger, Administrative Assistant

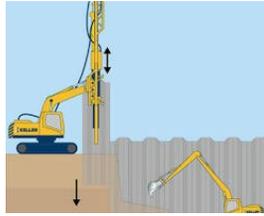
Cannon Valley Trail
825 Cannon River Avenue
Cannon Falls, MN 55009

August 2025

Cannon Valley Trail 2024 Year in Review

March 26, 2024

The Mile 14 & 16 Slope Failure Repair project was put on hold after the MNDNR denied a permit that would have allowed bank armoring and river redirection on DNR land. A new sheet piling solution was proposed, which added an estimated \$200,000 to the original \$654,000 cost. To cover this additional expense, the Joint Powers Board (JPB) approved applying for a GMRPTC grant, which would include a 25% Cannon Valley Trail (CVT) JPB match.



Goodhue County Public Works Representatives Wersal, Rezac, and Greenwood presented information regarding Cannon Valley Trail bridges. They covered the rationale behind bridge inspections, repair recommendations from the 2023 inspection, replacement priorities, and opportunities for partnering with the county on maintenance, design, and construction. They emphasized their close collaboration with the trail manager on previous bridge and construction projects and expressed confidence that the CVT was on track with bridge repairs and replacements to ensure user safety.

May 29, 2024

Goodhue County representatives Knott and Byholm delivered a presentation on the CVT's access to MN DNR rare species data. In 2022, the JPB had updated the CVT Biological Plan, and in 2023, the Trail Manager and Volunteer Coordinator sought access to the DNR data to supplement this plan. The JPB successfully secured a data license in August 2023 and subsequently partnered with Goodhue County GIS to upload the data to the CVT network. This initiative provided free access to approved staff via office and mobile devices, enabling the CVT to contribute to the data by adding rare species sightings. This enhanced access was seen as a significant improvement for resource management and for ensuring that construction and maintenance projects avoided impacting sensitive species.



In recent years, rising inflation significantly increased the Cannon Valley Trail's operational costs, including wages, insurance, and supplies. Previous cost-of-living adjustments to the CVT budget proved insufficient. Although the CVT had prided itself on its self-sufficiency, generating revenue through user fees, matching-fund grants (which effectively tripled contributions), and donations, it remained committed to financial responsibility. To maintain services, the trail manager requested, and the JPB approved, a 10% operational support increase from local government units for the years 2025, 2026, and 2027.

To enhance communication among trail maintenance workers, the trail manager proposed a six-month Trail Lead Laborer position for the peak season, which would involve overseeing three to four laborers. The proposed hourly rate for this position was set to begin at \$19.59, progressing through a three-step plan to \$23.27. The Joint Powers Board unanimously approved the proposal, authorizing the hiring of the Lead Laborer for 32 hours per week, with duties focused on directing maintenance activities according to established procedures and compensation based on the proposed pay steps.

Public Safety/Violations Report Summary

The Trail Staff is often the first to encounter a violation of Trail ordinances and enforcement is an important part of the Trail Manager's job. Certain law enforcement related events and situations occur, some frequently. Two different law enforcement agencies help with enforcement on the Trail. Goodhue County provides a recreation officer and the State of Minnesota provides a conservation officer.

In addition, staff members occasionally participate in locating separated families or missing persons, summoning assistance for injured persons and assisting storm stranded visitors.



Violation Description

	<u>2024</u> Violations	<u>2023</u> Violations
<u>motorized related:</u>		
vehicles	2	1
ATVs/motorcycles	3	4
snowmobiles (early)	0	4
<u>snowmobiles (late)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>
Total motorized related	5	13
<u>non motorized related:</u>		
pets/animals	23	21
general vandalism (not signs)	11	9
weapons/hunting/trapping	3	2
horses	0	0
sign damage/theft	7	5
litter	3	2
dumping	1	1
alcohol	2	0
theft	1	2
harassment	2	0
failure to pay	17	21
camping	2	2
fires	0	0
fireworks	0	0
<u>graffiti</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>
Total non motorized related	78	69
TOTAL	83	82

NOTE: *To be recorded here, Trail staff either observed directly or discovered evidence or received first person reports of the above violations.

These totals do not include events reported or observed by law enforcement agencies, unless Trail staff was notified or involved.

Web Site Statistics Summary

The Trail website is helpful by providing information to current or potential trail users. The website provides information such as: trail conditions, history, directions, wheel passes, trail ordinances and programs.

Visitors

Visitors represent the number of actual people who visited the site.

Visits

Visits represent the number of times the website was visited, without regard to repeat visitors.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Visitors:	63,448	103,995	82,916	29,567	31,176	22,568
Total Visits:	212,053	363,285	336,423	120,053	43,342	50,074

The amount of website Visits and Visitors drastically dropped in 2022. The reason for this is the Trail switched web hosting companies in July 2022 from GoDaddy to HostGator. GoDaddy and HostGator calculate Visits and Visitors differently.

Newsletters—Emails

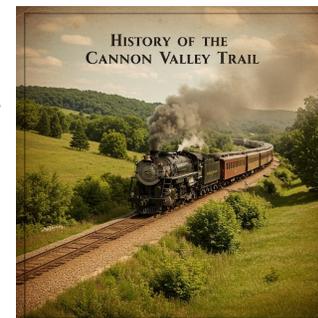
Newsletters are being emailed to as many readers as possible, this helps keep expenses down. Currently the CVT has an e-mail list of 9,132 contacts.



Cannon Valley Trail 2024 Year in Review

August 27, 2024

The trail manager discussed writing a history of the CVT. He reported that MN Historical & Cultural Heritage grant funds were available for such a project. The Joint Powers Board approved proceeding with writing the history of the CVT.



September 24, 2024

Goodhue County Public Works representatives Wersal and Greenwood reported the condition of Bridge R0495 at Mile 14.8, as observed on August 29, 2024. The bridge showed advanced decay throughout the deck and timber pier caps. Bridges R0485, R0489, R0491, R0492, R0494, and R0497 also showed moderate to advanced decay. They expressed concern about the bridges' capacity to hold maintenance vehicles, including light-duty pickups. They recommended structural reviews of all remaining timber bridge structures on the trail.

The trail manager reported BLA Properties expressed interest in purchasing CVT property (Parcels 55.988.0040 and 55.988.0030), both located in an archeologically significant area. The board approved not to sell.

October 22, 2024

A neighboring landowner told the board she planned to sell her 15.5-acre property next to the Cannon Valley Trail's Welch Station Access. The property, Fort Sweney, has significant archaeological value. The owner wanted interpretive signs installed later to educate the public about Fort Sweney's history. The board supported the Archaeological Conservancy preserving the property.

The Cannon Valley Trail received a donation from John and Gary Diercks to preserve railroad history. The donation was a rare star-shaped Great Western Railway sign. This sign warned train operators to raise the flanger plow to avoid damaging crossings, rails, and other track components. The Diercks said the sign came from near Claybank, MN. The Joint Powers Board approved installing the sign along the trail with interpretive information.



November 26, 2024

CVT, Goodhue County, and Erickson Engineering discussed evaluations for older bridges. Erickson Engineering created a proposal with recommendations, cost estimates, bridge replacement/repair priorities, and hydraulic studies for culvert replacements. Completion of this proposal will aid in securing grant funds. The Joint Powers Board approved Erickson Engineering's evaluation and reporting on CVT bridge conditions.

Joint Powers Board Summary

The Cannon Valley Trail is administered by a nine-person Joint Powers Board comprised of members from the cities of Red Wing and Cannon Falls, as well as Goodhue County. Members as of December 31, 2024 were:

Cannon Falls:

Lisa Groth—council member
Laura Kronenberger - council member
Paul Korkowski - citizen member

Red Wing:

Donald Kleiwer - council member
Janie Farrar - council member
Charles O. Richardson - citizen

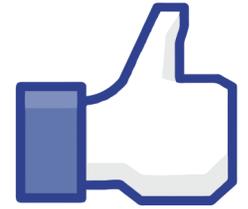
Goodhue County:

Linda Flanders - commissioner, vice-chairperson
Brad Anderson - commissioner, secretary/treasurer
Dan Bender - citizen member, chair

Ten Joint Powers Board meetings were held in 2024.



User Comments Summary



The Cannon Valley Trail receives a considerable amount of constructive feedback from those who use and enjoy the Trail. Some written comments are received on the back of the self-pay envelopes left at the pay stations. It is also popular for users to post on FaceBook, Google, Trip Advisor and other media sites. Below are some the many comments.

For what it's worth, I definitely do not appreciate the 20% price hike. Hristo Y. 04-13/-24

\$30 is too much. I'll just ride for free 8/4/24

Beautiful. Warm ride in rain with wife and sisters-in-law. Wonderful day. Thank you, Keep up the good work for all! Jim P 08/05/24

We love this trail! Thank you! Jennifer G 08/09/24

Need a porta potty here! Lower A.P. Anderson Park – 08/23/24

Love your trail. I don't mind paying. Let's keep it going! Ty 8/23/24

Why is this trail in such poor condition? Where are the fees going? Not riding again... Mark G. 09/01/24

My favorite trail. I drive 119 miles each Sept, the day after Labor Day. When it's not busy to ride this trail entire length usually makes a 53-mile ride. You all maintain it better than any trail I ride!! Thank you. Scott L, Decorah, IA 9/03/24



Fund Balance Summary

Account Balance	31-Dec-24	31-Dec-23
Total Equity	\$1,025,809.29	\$846,864.83
Commitments		
Contingency fund	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Asphalt escrow balance	\$224,762.23	\$214,762.23
Bridge escrow balance	\$51,621.31	\$49,121.31
Technology Fund	\$5,999.99	\$3,499.99
Special Project Fund	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Capital Improvement	\$0.00	0.00
Trail Maintenance Fund	\$268,312.24	\$268,312.24
Total Commitments	\$700,695.77	\$685,695.77
Non-committed Funds	\$325,113.52	\$161,169.06

Technology Escrow Fund Summary	
Beginning balance	\$3,499.99
Contributions	\$2,500.00
2024 Expenses	<u>0.00</u>
Balance	\$5,999.99

Bridge Escrow Fund Summary	
Beginning balance	\$49,121.31
Contributions	2,500.00
2024 Expenses	<u>0.00</u>
Balance	\$51,621.31

Asphalt Escrow Fund Summary	
Beginning balance	\$214,762.23
Contributions	10,000.00
2024 Expenses	<u>0.00</u>
Balance	\$224,762.23

Staff/Office Summary

16 part-time employees and numerous volunteers assisted Trail Manager, Scott Roepke. The employees were:

Administrative /Financial Assistant—*Karen L. Slininger*

Lead Laborer
* Leroy Bauer

Trail Laborers
* *Darwin Bartlett*
* *Luther Luhman*
* *Gary Anderson*
* *Glen Lundell*

Trail Attendants
* *Karen J. Slininger*
* *Bill Betcher*
* *Judy Betcher*
* *David Anderson*
* *Byron Hanson*
* *Ryan Cooper*
* *Manyara Groebner*
* *Rich Zurich*

Voices of the Valley Coordinator—Brenda Owens

Volunteer Coordinator—Gene Groebner

Trail Facts:

- Hours worked by staff throughout the year totaled 7,433. This is less than the budgeted hours of 8,924.
- About 30 volunteers assisted with Voices of the Valley and maintenance projects.

Trail Use Summary

Use of the Trail in 2024 decreased by 9% compared to use numbers in 2023.

Estimated visitor use days:



The number of visitors on the trail is estimated using counter numbers, sales records, and assumptions based on survey results.

A visitor use day is one person on the trail for up to one day.

Guests from 54 Minnesota cities, 14 other states and 3 other countries signed the guest book in Welch. Many others posted comments on Google.

Activity	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bicycling	146,247	106,864	95,748	96,685	89,170
Inline Skating	9,335	6,821	6,112	6,171	5,692
Pedestrian	15,558	11,369	10,186	10,286	9,486
Skiing	800	800	800	400	0
Total	171,940	125,854	112,846	113,542	104,348



Wheel Pass Program Summary

Wheel Pass sales are a major source of revenue for the Trail. Passes are required for those age 18 and older who are on bicycle, in line skates, or similar. 2024 rates were \$7.00/day or \$30.00/season (including sales tax). Discounted rates for the season pass were available to purchasers of 50 - 99 or 100+ passes. In addition, discounted daily rates are available to organizers of group events. On an annual basis, about 65% of all trail users are required to have Wheel Passes. The other 45% are trail users who are under the age of 18 or the activity the trail user is enjoying does not require a pass.

Pass	Value	2024 Total Sold	2024 Total Value	2023 Total Sold	2023 Total Value
Daily	\$7/\$5	5,018	\$35,126	5,392	\$26,960
Daily - self purchase	\$7/\$5	7419	51926	7,201	\$36,005
Daily - Internet	\$7/\$5	3,197	\$22,379	3,618	\$18,090
Season	\$30/\$25	1,500	\$45,000	1,743	\$43,575
Season - Internet	\$30/\$25	1,077	\$32,310	1,128	\$28,200
Group	Varies	403	\$2,821	95	\$475
Total Value			\$189,562		\$153,305
Expenses (Pre-Deposit Deductions)					
Friends Coupons Redeemed			\$950.05		1,021.00
Discounts/Pass Replacements			\$5,194.77		5,373.85
Donated Passes			\$2,370.00		2,275.00
Deposited			\$181,047.18		\$144,635.15
Sales Tax Liability			-\$12,442.99		-\$9,940.47
Net Wheel Pass Revenue			\$168,604.19		\$134,694.68



Capital Improvement Account Expenses

Project 1. Asphalt Fund - Every year the Trail puts money into a separate account specifically for maintaining the asphalt. This year, the Trail put \$10,000.00 into the asphalt account. The total number of dollars in this account now stands at \$224,762.23 as of December 31, 2024. Money in the asphalt account can only be spent on asphalt repair, general asphalt upkeep and for asphalt replacement.

Project 2. Bridge Fund - The bridge fund account is set up for bridge replacement and repairs in the future. The Joint Powers Board put \$2,500.00 into the bridge fund in 2024. The total number of dollars in this account stands at \$51,621.31 as of December 31, 2024.

Project 3. Technology Fund - Every year the CVT allocates funds to a dedicated account specifically for maintaining and upgrading its technology infrastructure. This year, the company allocated \$2,500.00 to the technology fund. The total amount in this account now stands at \$5,999.99 as of December 31, 2024.

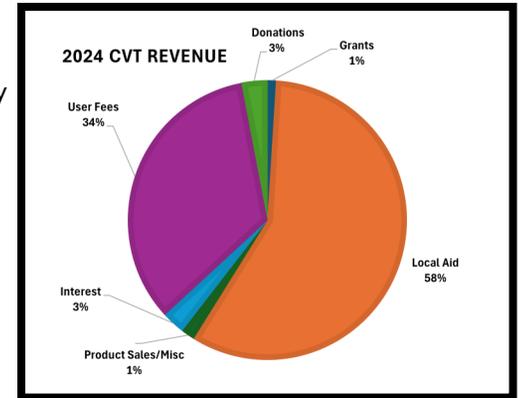
Project 4. Mile 14 and Mile 16 Slope Failure Repair Project – \$417,035.50 The Mile 14 and 16 Slope Failure Repair Project (funded by GMRPTC Legacy Funds) presented significant challenges throughout the year. In late 2023, the original engineered design for both Mile 14 and 16 was deemed infeasible due to permitting issues at Mile 14. Following discussions beginning in January 2024, engineers explored alternative solutions, proposing a sheet piling installation at Mile 14, which significantly increased project costs. To address this funding gap, the JPB successfully applied for and was awarded a second grant from GMRPTC Legacy Funds. Engineering work on the revised design for both Mile 14 and 16 commenced in late 2024, with construction anticipated to begin in the fall of 2025.



Financial Reports

The Cannon Valley Trail has one main account that includes four sub-accounts: **Revenue, Maintenance and Operations, Friends of the Trail and Capital Improvement.** The financial accounts of the Cannon Valley Trail are administered by the City of Red Wing. The accounts are tracked concurrently at the Trail office.

The financial summaries presented here are either condensed versions of the sub-accounts prepared by the City of Red Wing or reports prepared by Trail staff. Only the City of Red Wing reports are considered official.



2024 Revenue Summary

Grants & Aids	5,000.00
Goodhue County Share	142,850.10
Red Wing Share	99,166.00
Cannon Falls Share	49,565.48
Wheel Pass Sales	168,604.19
Ski Pass	1,932.00
Book Sales	31.49
T-shirt Sales	3,565.00
Interest - deposits/investments	13,609.11
Donations - Friends of the Trail	11,558.80
Donations - Special Projects	11.00
Donations - CVT Wall	1,201.00
Donations & contributions	2,383.00
Refunds/wheel pass refunds	0.00
Other Misc/Rebates	245.93
Sale of Assets	4,248.00
	-
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 503,971.10

