

Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area

Location: 2301 Rhode Island Avenue North

Nature Area Size: 22.92 Acres

Description

Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area is a primarily wooded area surrounded by three large ponds. It is located within a mix of uses including residential, office/commercial and industrial areas in the north central section of the City. An internal loop trail system connects to the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Forest and Woodlands

The majority of land cover within the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area is the three large ponds. The remaining portions of the site are wooded, with a mixture of green ash, box elder and oak trees. A central portion of the site contains a remnant representation of maple-basswood forest, which is of higher quality. This remnant forest is located on an elevated hill in the center of the site.

Wetlands

Wetland is present within the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area as three large ponds, which are part of the DeCola ponds chain. These are deep water habitat, and have very little to no wetland fringe.

Aquatic Resources

Although classified as wetland, the three large ponds within the Pennsylvania Woods are an aquatic resource.

These ponds, known as DeCola Ponds A, B, and C, are part of a larger drainage system which extends into New Hope and Crystal and flows downstream into Bassett Creek. The three cities have been working collaboratively to study ongoing flood issues in the DeCola Ponds and Medicine Lake Road/Winnetka Avenue areas, and are evaluating long term flood mitigation solutions. Potential long term solutions could involve excavating portions of the upland areas immediately adjacent to the ponds to create additional flood storage; however, it is anticipated that the higher quality forest and woodland areas would remain, and that the wetland fringe areas would be restored to a higher quality ecological function and value than present.

Prairie and Grassland

No significant areas of prairie or grassland are present within the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area

Invasive Species

Buckthorn density is moderately high within the nature area, and has increased in density since the 2003 inventory.

Description	%Cover2003	% Cover 2013	% Change
Common Buckthorn – Maple Basswood	30	50	+20
Common Buckthorn – Mixed Deciduous Woods	40	60	+10

Site Recommendations

Natural Resources

Manage buckthorn (high)

Buckthorn is present within the nature area, but is at relatively lower density than other natural areas. Maintaining a low density would be an ongoing goal for this area.

Manage big woods (high)

The center of the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area contains an example of the historic maple basswood forest that was present in Golden Valley prior to settlement. Maintaining this high quality area is recommended to be a priority. This would be accomplished by removing competing species, maintaining a healthy understory, and facilitating reproduction.

Amenities

Improve maintenance access (high)

Maintenance staff is responsible for inspecting, removing debris, and maintaining the outlet pipe that exits the northeast pond. There is currently an unpaved access. This access could be paved to provide a safer, more reliable route for maintenance crews while improving the aesthetics and viewing opportunities for the public.

Install pet waste disposal system (high)

Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area should include waste disposal systems for dogs; one at each main entry. This keeps the park clean and attractive and helps to maintain water quality.

Install entry signs (high)

Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area has one entry sign along 23rd Avenue North. Signs should be installed at each of the main entrances, including residential access off of Pennsylvania Avenue North using approved style type.

Install educational sign (medium)

Pennsylvania Nature Area has a significant area of woodland and open ponds. Both attract wildlife and provide excellent educational opportunities. Locate a sign at an entrance to the woodland and along a trail that provides a significant view of a pond.

Upgrade bench (medium)

There are two bench styles within the nature area. One is a heavier wooden structure and the other the more typical style currently being used in Golden Valley – simple metal and wood construction; both are relatively new and in good condition. When the time comes to replace, they should adhere with an approved bench style for nature areas. This would provide visual continuity within the nature area system and also strengthen user distinction that Pennsylvania Woods is a nature area versus a park.

Upgrade trash Receptacle (low)

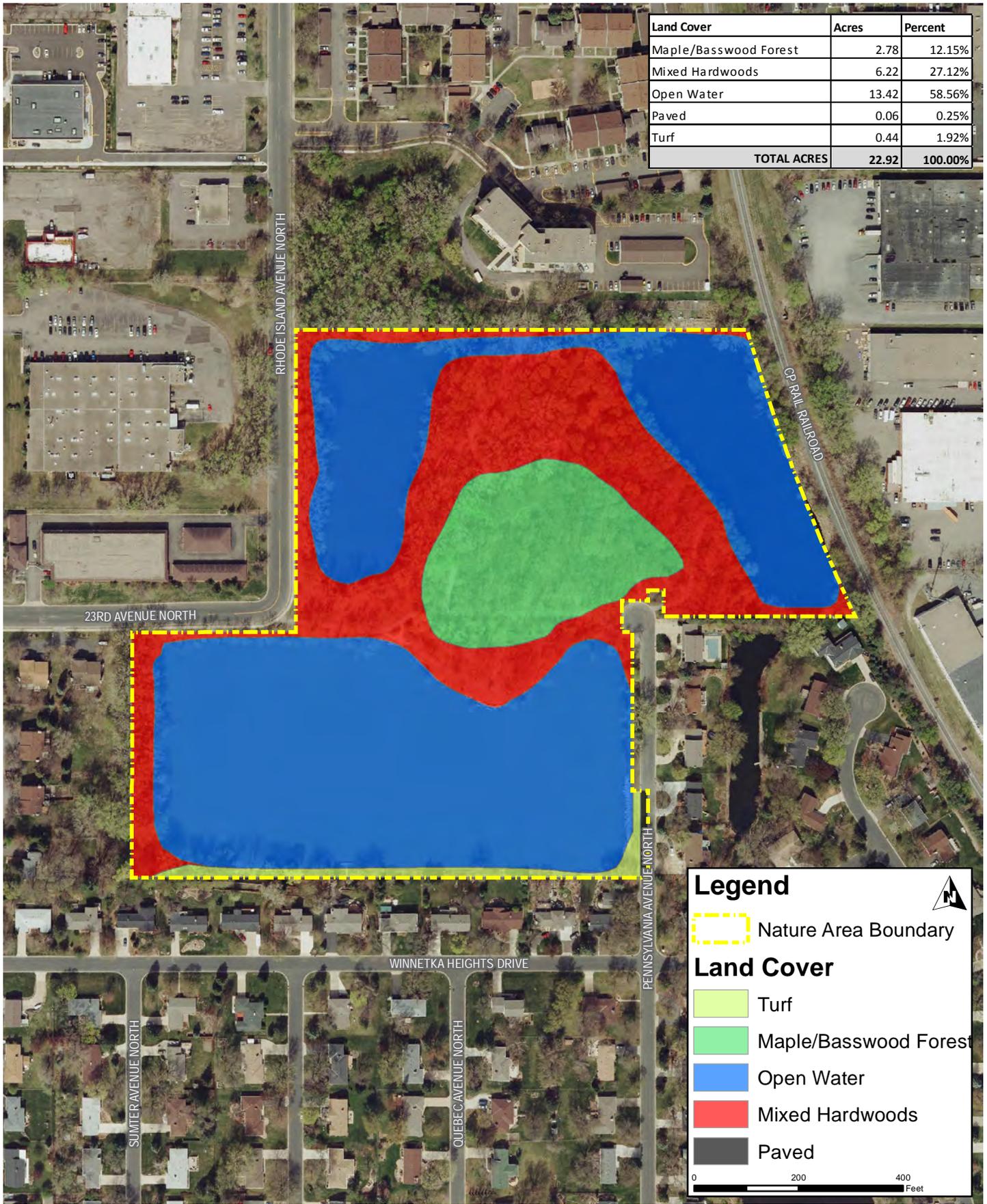
The trash receptacle is one of the first amenities viewed upon entering the nature area. As such, it should not only provide maintenance functionality and efficiency but should also be attractive and reflect the image of the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area. Two should be located within the park; one off of 23rd Avenue North and one at the Pennsylvania Avenue entrance.

Table 5.16 Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area Improvement Priorities

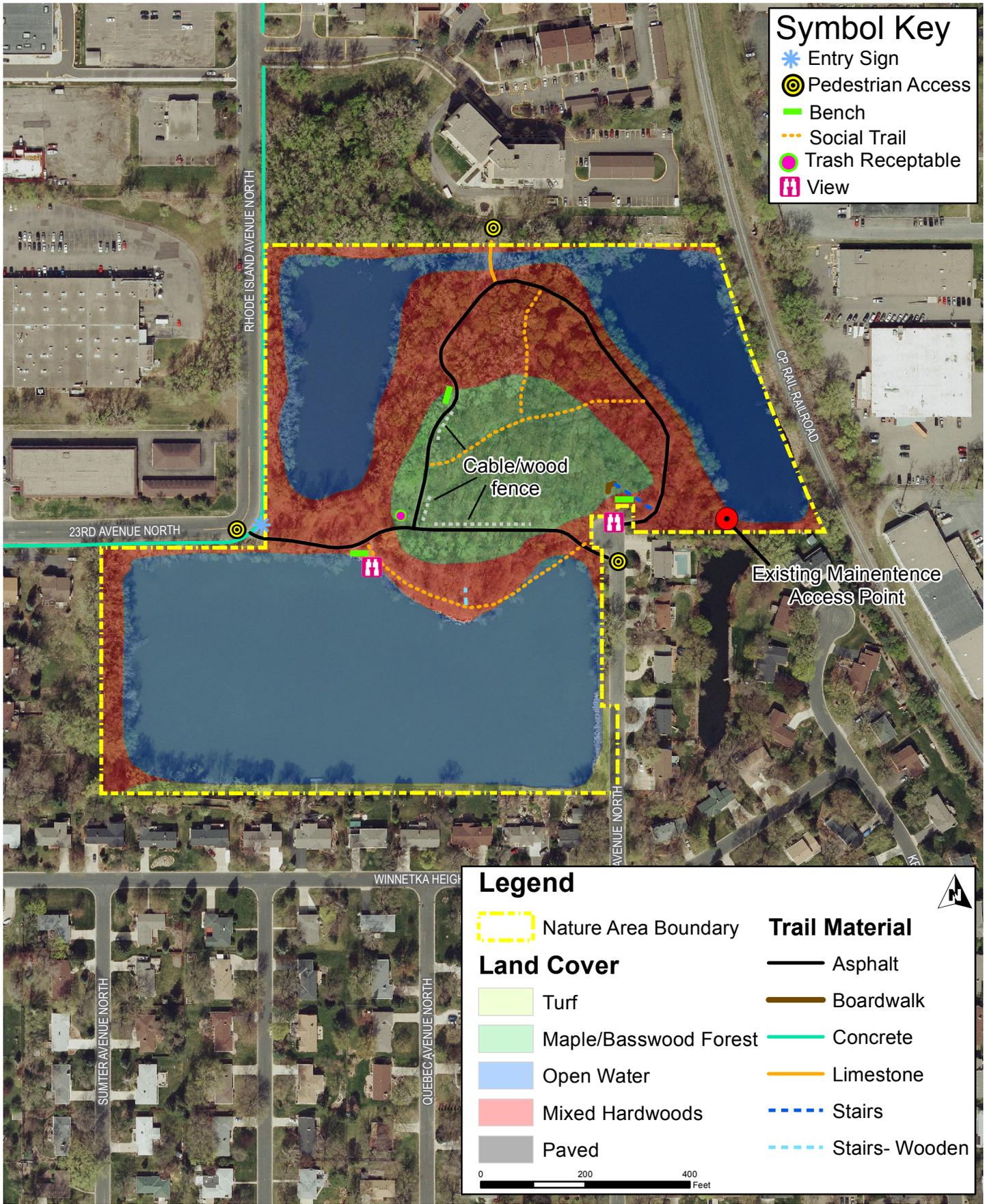
Priority (H, M, L)	Management Type	Description	Action	Qty	Unit	Unit Cost	Cost Opinion
High	Upland woods	Manage buckthorn	Remove buckthorn	2	Acre	\$4,000	\$8,000
High	Maple-basswood forest	Maintain high quality woods	Maintain maple-basswood community	3	Acre	\$3,300	\$10,000
High	Amenity	Improve maintenance access to the northeast pond	Pave maintenance access and provide bench and viewing area	1	Each	\$8,000	\$8,000
High	Amenity	Provide continuity of entry sign design through nature area system	Install new sign at entries	2	Each	\$5,000	\$10,000
High	Amenity	Provide dog walkers with pet waste disposal system at key access point	Install new pet waste disposal system	2	Each	\$600	\$1,200
Medium	Amenity	Provide natural resources educational	Install 2 types of educational signs	2	Each	\$3,000	\$6,000

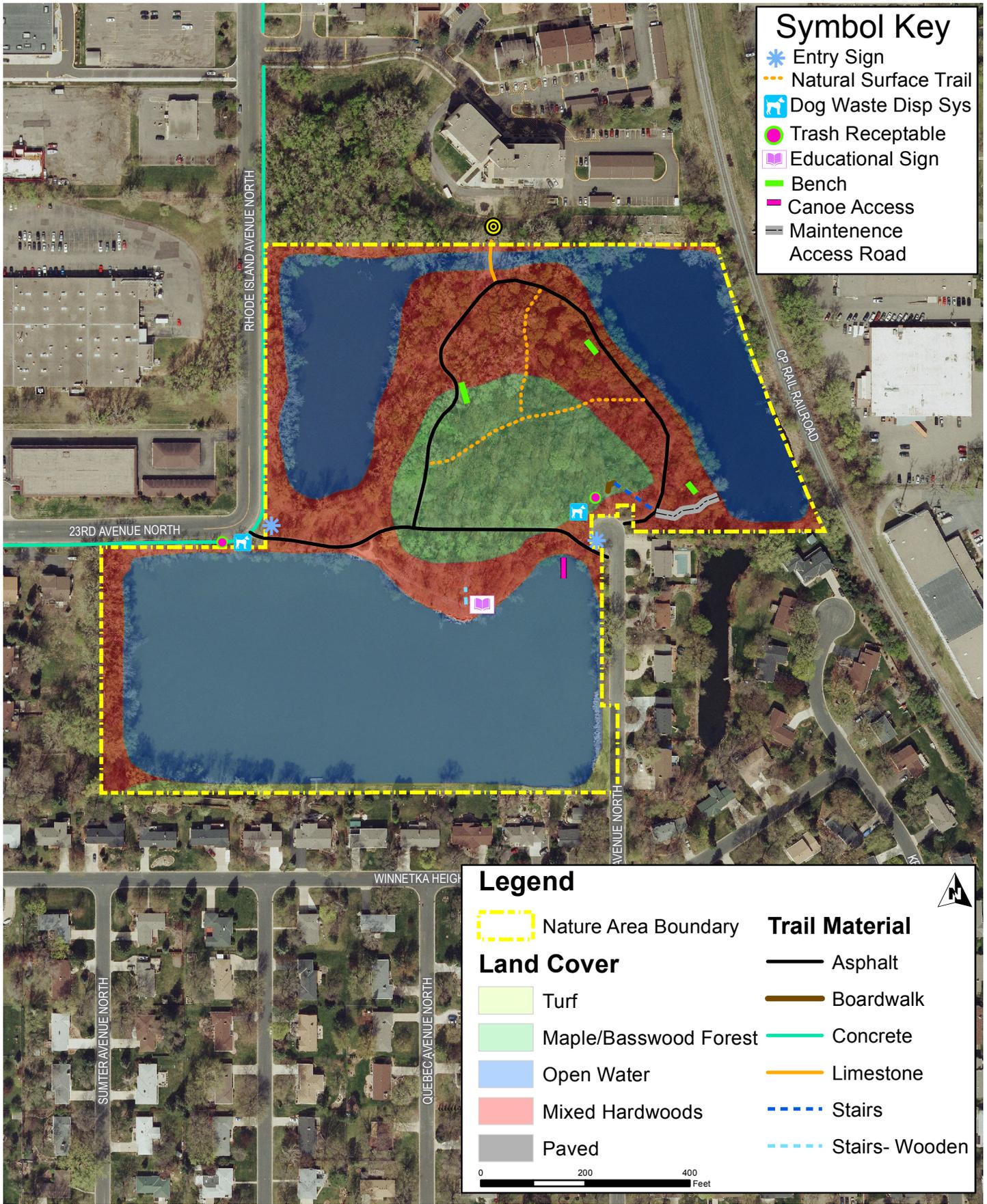
		opportunities	(woodland/storm water)				
Medium	Amenity	Provide continuity of bench design through nature area system	Install new benches along the trail at regular intervals or at key viewpoints	4	Each	\$1,500	\$6,000
Low	Amenity	Provide continuity of trash/recyclable receptacle design throughout nature area system	Install new waste/recycle trash receptacle at entry	2	Each	\$2,000	\$4,000







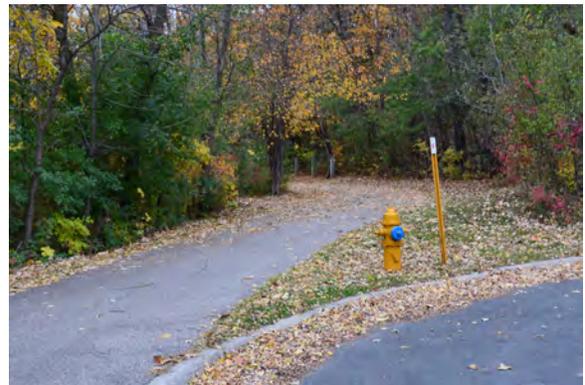




Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area - Photographs



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