

St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park Boat Launch Improvements



Washington County is seeking \$500,000 in state funding to construct improvements to the boat launch in St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park during the 2021 Legislative session. This funding will be matched with \$500,000 from Washington County funds.



Issue At-A-Glance

- The boat launch in St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park is deteriorating due to its high use and long service life.
- St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park provides access to the St. Croix River as the only publically managed boat launch south of Bayport.
- In 2018, Washington County confirmed that the boat launch is in need of reconstruction. The bottom of the boat launch has a steep slope break and the bottom of the ramp has scoured from users power-loading their boats. When water levels are low, users have a difficult time launching their boats - causing damage to trailers and axles.
- Washington County has since identified solutions to this problem that are responsible, cost-effective, and minimize the duration of the launch closure and is in need of funding to deliver this project.
- Gaining access to this portion of the St. Croix River is a challenge for many. This is the only public boat launch south of Bayport - a nearly 20 mile stretch of the river. There are very few locations where access, even shore access is available.
- This improvement will provide easy and equitable access to the river and the recreation it provides, for everyone.

Support

Local partners and agencies support this project. The general public has provided comments supporting the need for boat launch improvements.

Previous Consideration

Washington County submitted a request in 2020. This request was not funded.

No Action

The current boat launch is beyond its life expectancy. If funding is not allocated, the county will continue to implement low cost repairs but over time the launch will continue to decline in condition and may eventually need to be closed.

Financial Implications

The Metropolitan Regional Park System depends on State bonding for ongoing acquisition, capital improvements, and parks operations and maintenance.

Project Improvements

- Dredge the bay to remove built up sediment and provide many years of safe operation.
- A new boat ramp that is constructed to accommodate current boat designs.
- New accessible pedestrian access to the boat launch and boat slip area
- New boat slips with additional capacity and easier access.
- A new accessible fishing pier to provide access for all.

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