

Natural Area Management Plan – Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board



Park properties considered to be natural areas do not receive the same level of service from the Forestry Section as do actively managed parks. In keeping with the environmental philosophy of the MPRB, the following guidelines apply to natural area tree management.

Dead trees will not be removed from natural areas unless they pose a hazard to the public. To be hazardous, a tree must be defective and within the vicinity of a target. A defective tree is one that has the potential to fail and/or is in an environment that may contribute to failure. A target is defined as a person or object that would be injured or damaged if the tree or a part of it fell. A tree near a path would be hazardous but a tree in the middle of an acre of a natural area would not be hazardous.

Diseased trees will be removed from natural areas in order to preserve and protect the Urban Forest.

Fallen trees in natural areas may be made safe when lodged between other trees or is resting on a weak limb. In these cases the Forestry Section will not remove the tree but will cause the tree to rest safely on the ground. This allows the tree to naturally decompose and eliminates damage that may occur to other trees by removing the fallen tree

Pruning in natural areas will be done to provide for the safety and welfare of the public. Examples include but are not limited to clearance for pathway access, elimination of areas that could harbor criminal activity and along roadways bordering natural areas.

The control of invasive tree species will be done in cooperation with the Environmental Operations Section and the MPRB plan for vegetation management.



The Forestry Section will not actively plant trees in natural areas. The succession of plant communities is a part of natural regeneration. This ensures that new trees will be provided naturally. In areas where it has been determined to control invasive species, the Forestry Section, in cooperation with the Environmental Operations Division, will plant trees that will hasten the natural regeneration process.