



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PAUL M THIEDE FIRE TOWER PARK IS OPEN

On Friday, June 12, the County officially opened the gate allowing access to the historic fire tower in Pequot Lakes. The tower is named after former County Commissioner Paul M. Thiede for his vision and leadership in protecting the tower. The park will be open sunrise to sunset, seven days a week.

The tower and surrounding 40 acres was under State ownership until November of 2018 when, thanks to Commissioner Thiede's efforts, it was given to the County for \$1. Since then, minor repairs have been made, walking trails with a crushed granite surface have been created, and numerous interpretive signs have been installed.

"This park provides a great opportunity to get outdoors, hike the trails, climb the tower, and learn about the diverse history of wildfires and forest management in Minnesota", stated Ryan Simonson, Environmental Services Supervisor.

An ADA accessible vaulted toilet has been installed near the parking lot, and a large picnic shelter is located just a short distance down the main trail. Future plans involve installing another picnic shelter next to the tower, along with additional interpretive signs along the trails.

The historic fire tower was built in 1935 and remains in excellent condition today. The site has been transformed into a natural and man-made habitat – a place of recreation, reflection and community to be enjoyed by families, residents and future generations. The Paul M. Thiede Fire Tower Park is located at 5230 County Road 11, Pequot Lakes, MN 56472, approximately one mile east of downtown Pequot Lakes.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping landowners make wise choices that protect Crow Wing County's extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to contact Crow Wing County Land Services at (218)824-1010, land.services@crowwing.us, or visit us at <https://www.crowwing.us/289/Recreation> to discuss recreation opportunities in Crow Wing County.

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