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Winter's Early Arrival — A Season of Firsts at Wirth Park

First snow trail of the season opens, new community-based programming, and a first-of-its-kind 759-acre 'gym'

Minneapolis, MN — Staff and volunteers at the Loppet Foundation have been hard at work this season transforming Theodore Wirth Regional Park into a winter wonderland amidst uncertain weather conditions. Thanks to the completion of The Trailhead, Wirth Winter Recreation Area is kicking off its 2018-19 season sooner than ever before!

Earlier this week, Loppet staff were pleased to announce the opening of about 400 meters of skiable trail available just outside the doors of The Trailhead. This marks the earliest the Loppet Foundation has been able to open ski trails at Wirth Park, and the first cross-country ski trail to open in the Twin Cities this year. Loppet Foundation Trails Superintendent, Isaac Kasper, was especially pleased by his team's ability to pull this off.

"In this new era of the Loppet, we've been able to offer so much more in terms of outdoor recreation opportunities than we ever have before." Kasper said. "Our increased snowmaking capacity and new grooming equipment mean more trails earlier in the season, our growing trails team means our expertise continues to improve, and with the new building now in place, we're expecting community members to enjoy their best ski season yet."

In addition to the ongoing trail work happening outside of The Trailhead's doors, the Loppet Foundation has also been focusing its efforts inward to create a more hospitable outdoor recreation experience through its Club Trailhead. Leveraging Wirth Park as a 259-acre 'gym', Club Trailhead provides members with access to hot showers, lockers for personal storage, access to its strength studio, as well as group fitness classes — all with the goal of increasing community connection to this spectacular natural resource right in North Minneapolis.

"The Trailhead is part of a deeper connection to North Minneapolis," said Loppet Adventures Director, Anthony Taylor. "What this project is really about is helping us realize our goal of connecting our programming, and Theodore Wirth Park, to the community members that live closest to this amazing place "

A project nearly a decade in the making, The Trailhead is a long-term vision of the Loppet Foundation and part of the Theodore Wirth Regional Park Master Plan. Acting as a hub for year-round outdoor recreation, The Trailhead is poised to create a welcoming environment for community members to begin their own outdoor adventures while elevating Wirth Park as a model for improving and increasing access to the great outdoors.

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ABOUT THE LOPPET FOUNDATION

The Loppet Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that creates a shared passion for year-round outdoor adventure in the Minneapolis area, focusing on underserved youth and families. Since 2002, the Loppet Foundation has worked to create high-quality public events, youth education, and outdoor recreation programs for the local community. Learn more at loppet.org.