# Minnesota State Parks

HOW TO GET THERE | WHAT TO DO | WHERE TO DO IT



## Introduction

#### A GUIDE TO MINNESOTA'S STATE PARKS

As a native Minnesotan and an avid camper, I've always felt blessed by all of the amazing places in my home state. Back in 1998, I visited all 68 of Minnesota's state parks to gather information for my book, Minnesota State Parks. In 2012, the original book needed to be updated, as additional parks and recreation areas had been added, so I revisited all of the 75 parks and state recreation areas in the Land of 10.000 Lakes. And now the book is in need of updating, once again, this time for a fifth edition. This time, I decided to bring in my daughter, Signy Sherman, as co-author.

My goal in updating this book was to gather all the essential information about Minnesota's state parks and assemble it into an easy-to-use package. When describing the parks, I tried to be as nonjudgmental as possible, allowing others to find the parks that fit their needs. One of the beauties of our park system is that there really is something for everyone.

#### ABOUT THE STATE PARK SYSTEM

Preserving land for the future requires foresight. Thankfully, Minnesotans have demonstrated it by creating and supporting a remarkable park system. Established in 1891, Itasca State Park is Minnesota's oldest state park. Like Itasca, many of the early state parks were established around historical sites. As Minnesota's population began to grow, some parks were also established to provide recreation near larger cities.

Today there are 66 established Minnesota state parks and 8 recreation areas, and they encompass everything Minnesota has to offer, from lush woodlands and prairies to river bluff lands, wild rivers, and lakeshore.

#### WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU VISIT

Each Minnesota state park offers plenty of places to relax, explore, and enjoy the outdoors. Here are some of the most popular activities at our state parks.

#### Camping

Camping is offered at most parks, and camping facilities vary widely, from the ultra-primitive to the ultra-modern. No matter what type of camping you desire, there's a park that will meet your needs. Campsites designated as walkin sites are generally more rustic and are located less than a quarter mile from a parking area. Backpack-in sites are typically more than a quarter mile from the parking areas, and water may not be readily available at these sites. Canoein sites are accessible from lakes or rivers. Thirteen parks also offer equestrian campsites, which provide hitching posts, water, and room for horse trailers.

#### PARK OVERVIEW CHECKLIST

For a quick glance at what every park has to offer, see the "Park Overview Checklist" on pages 318–321. It includes everything from what type of camping is available and the park's trail system to information about RV length limits and whether ADA-accessible campsites are present. We verified this content with information provided by the DNR, but the facilities at each park are subject to change, so contact the park directly for the most up-to-date information.

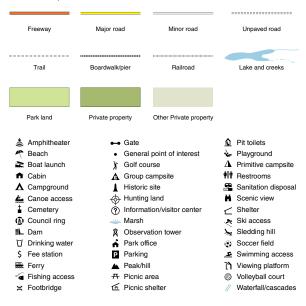
#### **HOW TO USE THIS BOOK**

This book is organized geographically and is divided into six sections: northwest, northeast, central, metro, southwest, and southeast. For an overview map of Minnesota and all of its state parks and recreation areas, see page 11.

- Each park write-up begins with a description of the park and its history and a "Why You Should Go" section where we highlight our favorite reasons to visit each park.
- In each park account, you'll also find out what the park has to offer, including how many campsites are present; how many miles of hiking, biking, and skiing trails it boasts; and the many other amenities, programs, and recreational opportunities that the park offers.
- This book also features an overview map for each park that shows you just how much each park has to offer. A legend explaining the map symbols used throughout the book appears at right. (Note: For a few of the smallest parks, we don't include maps.)

## Anne's Tips and Nearby Attractions

 The "Anne's Tips" section includes insider information you won't get anywhere else—



my personal recommendations about what not to miss at each park. If you want to venture outside of the park, I have included a list of interesting nearby attractions.

#### ANNE'S FAVORITES

#### **Best State Parks for Families**

- Itasca State Park (pg. 38)
- St. Croix State Park (pg. 186)
- Forestville/Mystery Cave State Park (pg. 278)
- Minneopa State Park (pg. 248)
- Gooseberry Falls State Park (pg. 94)

#### **Best State Parks for Camping**

- Split Rock Lighthouse State Park (pq. 136)
- Jay Cooke State Park (pg. 108)
- Sibley State Park (pg. 256)
- Great River Bluffs State Park (pq. 286)
- Savanna Portage (pg. 182)

#### **Best State Parks for Hiking**

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- Nerstrand Big Woods State Park (pg. 302)
- Savanna Portage State Park (pq. 182)
- Maplewood State Park (pg. 60)
- Blue Mounds State Park (pg. 218)

#### **Best State Parks and SRAs** for Biking

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- Sakatah Lake State Park (pg. 310)

- Fort Snelling State Park (pg. 200)
- Itasca State Park (pg. 38)
- Lake Louise State Park (pg. 294)

#### **Best State Parks for** Winter Activities

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- Scenic State Park (pg. 128)
- Itasca State Park (pg. 38)
- Lake Carlos State Park (pg. 56)
- Temperance River State Park (pg. 140)

#### **Best State Parks for Fishing**

- Whitewater State Park (pg. 314)
- Zippel Bay State Park (pg. 72)
- Franz Jevne State Park (pg. 86)
- Bear Head Lake State Park (pg. 78)
- · Lake Vermilion-Soudan Underground Mine State Park (pg. 116)

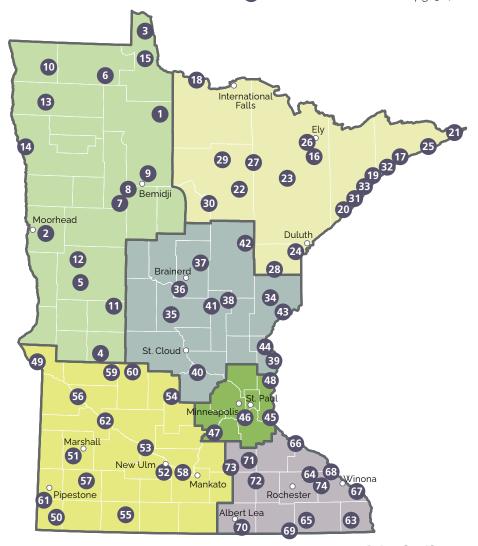
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## Itasca State Park (EST. 1891)

36750 Main Park Drive, Park Rapids, 56470; 218-699-7251

Located 22 miles north of Park Rapids on Highway 71.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Itasca State Park is Minnesota's oldest and most popular park, as well as its most developed. The park was established in 1891 to protect and celebrate the Headwaters of the Mississippi River. Today it encompasses over 32,000 acres and has something to offer for everyone.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

There are many reasons to visit Itasca, but, not surprisingly, the Headwaters of the Mississippi are the park's biggest draw. The Mary Gibbs Headwaters Center has information about the Headwaters, and there are convenient trails where you can see the often-photographed marker at the official headwaters of the river. There is a walking bridge you can use to cross the river, or if it's shallow enough you can wade across or hop across the rocks. (If you opt for the latter option, be careful, as they can be slippery.)



Go to the Jacob V. Brower Visitor Center first. Make sure to grab the Itasca State Park map and guide. It is full of great information.

The Wilderness Drive is a must. The park map and guide has a detailed description of all the attractions along the drive. Here are a number of popular stops:

- Landmark Interpretive Trail and Wilderness Sanctuary, a self-guided interpretive trail describing the history of the area
- Blowdown Trail, a self-guided interpretive trail describing the 1995 blowdown that felled thousands of trees
- Bohall Trail, a rugged trail through old-growth red pine
- CCC Forestry Demonstration Site, a self-guided interpretive trail dating back to the days of the Civilian Conservation Corps
- Bison Kill Site, an archaeological site dating back over 8,000 years
- Large Red Pine, a trail to a former champion red pine
- Nicollet Trail, which leads to a restored 1917 cabin
- DeSoto Trail, which passes through a variety of conifers and hardwoods
- Aiton Heights Fire Tower, a 100-foot restored fire tower
- Deer Park Trail, which runs past several beautiful lakes
- Ozawindib Trail, named to honor Henry Schoolcraft's guide

Other places to visit along Lake Itasca include:

- Preacher's Grove, named for a preachers' convention
- Peace Pipe Vista, the homestead location of settlers Mary and Peter Turnbull
- Pioneer Cemetery, for the area's early pioneers
- Wegmann's Store, a replica of an early store
- Indian Mounds, a burial site that is 500-1,000 years old and was created by Woodland Period Indigenous peoples
- Forest Inn, constructed by the Veterans Conservation Corps
- Dr. Roberts Trail, a self-guided interpretive trail that goes by the Old Timer's Cabin
- Boat tours of the lake, which are a great way to see the park

#### **TRAILS**

There are 49 miles of hiking trails, of which 1.5 miles are accessible for those with disabilities. There are 3.25 miles of self-guided interpretive trails split between the Dr. Roberts Trail, the Landmark Trail, the Forestry Demonstration Trail, and the Blowdown Trail. The Aiton Heights Trail also has interpretive signage. There are 16 miles of paved bike trails. For winter users, there are 13 miles of groomed skiing trails, and snowmobilers have access to 31 miles of trails and connections to other trails. Snowshoeing can be done anywhere in the park except on groomed trails. The Jacob V. Brower Visitor Center also serves as a warming house.

#### RECREATION

The North Arm of Lake Itasca has many recreational opportunities. The picnic area has an open shelter and is located next to the swimming beach. A playground and a volleyball court are also in the area. The park's concessionaire, Itasca Sports, provides rentals for bikes, canoes, kayaks, pontoons, boats, and motors.

Fishing in the park's many lakes is popular. There are boat launches on Lake Itasca, Elk Lake, Lake Ozawindib, and Mary Lake. There is also a fishing pier on the south end of Lake Itasca.



The park has three gift shops, and there are two dining facilities in the park, one at Douglas Lodge and the other at Mary Gibbs Mississippi Headwaters Center.

For winter visits, check out the park's suggested itinerary on the recreation facilities portion of the website.

#### CAMPGROUND

There are 223 campsites at the park, including 160 with electricity and 4 that are wheelchair accessible. The campsites are located in two campgrounds: Bear Paw and Pine Ridge. The park also has 11 backpack-in sites, 11 cart-in sites, and the Elk Lake Group Camp. Lake Ozawindib Group Center features a staff cabin, a dining hall, a kitchen, a sanitation building, and room for tent camping.

Itasca also offers other accommodations: the Douglas Lodge, built from 1903 to 1905, has two guest rooms, as well as meeting rooms and a dining area. The compound also includes a fourplex unit, the Four-season Suites, and the Douglas Lodge Cabins (12 cabins). In addition, the park has 21 cabins in five different groups (not including the Douglas Lodge Cabins): Historic East Cabin (1 cabin). Bear Paw Cabins (6 cabins), Bear Paw Guesthouse (1 cabin), Bert's Cabins (12 cabins), and Lake Ozawindib Cabin (1 cabin).

The Clubhouse, built in 1910, can house up to 21 people and is ideal for large groups. The Headwaters Inn features six individual rooms that share a common area.

#### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Naturalist programs are offered year-round. For more information, visit the website or contact the Jacob V. Brower Visitor Center for details. The visitor center has many displays and exhibits, making it the first place to stop when visiting the park. A 2-hour boat tour of Lake Itasca is offered during the summer months

#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

The Heartland State Trail is a 49-mile paved multiuse trail that leads from Park Rapids to Cass Lake.

dnr.state.mn.us/state trails/heartland/index.html

The northern trailhead for the Paul Bunyan Trail starts at Lake Bemidji State Park. The trail heads 120 miles south to Baxter.

dnr.state.mn.us/state\_trails/paul\_bunyan and paulbunyantrail.com

The Hubbard County Historical Museum is located at Third Street and Court Avenue in Park Rapids. It is open May through September.

301 Court Avenue, Park Rapids, 56470; 218-732-5237;

hubbardcountyhistory.org

Beltrami County History Center is located in downtown Bemidji in the restored 1912 Great Northern Depot.

130 Minnesota Avenue SW, Bemidji, 56601; 218-444-3376; beltramihistory.org

The Headwaters Science Center is also located in downtown Bemidji. It features lots of hands-on interactive exhibits.

413 Beltrami Avenue NW, Bemidji, 56601; 218-444-4472; hscbemidji.org







## y Cooke State Park (EST. 1915)

780 Highway 210, Carlton, 55718; 218-673-7000

Located 3 miles east of Carlton on Highway 210.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

This area was originally inhabited by the Dakota, who largely left the area when the Ojibwe forced them to move west. With the advent of the fur trading industry, river transportation became even more important, and the rapids and rugged terrain of the St. Louis River led to the creation of a "Grand Portage" to bypass that section of the river. The 7-mile portage trail connected the Savanna Portage, Big Sandy Lake, and the Mississippi River. Later, in anticipation of the need for hydroelectric power, the land surrounding the river was purchased for the city of Duluth, and it was never farmed. Eventually, the St. Louis Power Company donated the initial acreage, which covered almost 9,000 acres.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

The views of the river cascading through the area are fantastic. The park also has wonderful trails along the river.



Check out the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), including the River Inn Visitor Center and the buildings at Oldenburg Point.

Have a picnic at Oldenburg Point.

Check out the overlooks of the St. Louis River.

Bring your bike. The Willard Munger Trail intersects with the park.

#### **TRAILS**

The park has 50 miles of hiking trails. The 3.5-mile Silver Creek Trail is the Hiking Club Trail, which can be accessed by crossing the famous swinging bridge.

There are 13 miles of mountain biking trails, along with 8 miles of paved trails going into the city of Carlton and connecting to the Willard Munger Trail. There are also 6 miles of equestrian trails.

In winter, there are 32 miles of cross-country skiing trails, but only 20 are groomed at a time. There are 6.8 miles of groomed snowshoeing trails, but snowshoeing can also be done anywhere in the park other than on groomed skiing trails. When the park office is open, snowshoes are available for rent.

There is less than a mile of a snowmobiling trail in the park, but it connects to the much longer Willard Munger Trail.

#### **RECREATION**

There are two picnic areas in the park. One is at the River Inn Visitor Center area, and the other is at Oldenburg Point. The shelter at Oldenburg Point is open and includes a fireplace.

In winter, the River Inn Visitor Center also serves as a warming house. Geocaching is available in the park, and GPS units are available for loan.

#### **CAMPGROUND**

There are 79 campsites at the park spread out over five loops; 21 have electricity and 3 are wheelchair accessible. There are four backpack-in sites; the High Landing and Ash Ridge sites are close to the river. There are four walk-in sites by the campground. For larger groups, two group sites accommodate 24 people each. The park's five camper cabins are open year-round.

#### **INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS**

Programs are offered year-round. The River Inn Visitor Center features displays and exhibits about the park. There are several historic sites nearby. Thompson Cemetery is located off Highway 210 or can be accessed via the Thompson Trail.

The 7-mile Grand Portage Trail was once used by Voyageurs to get around the rapids of the St. Louis River. The trailhead is located east of the visitor center. There is also a 5-mile option.

#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

The Willard Munger Trail runs through the park. The Duluth-to-Hinckley segment is 70 miles long and paved. It offers hiking, biking, in-line skating, horseback riding, and snowmobiling.

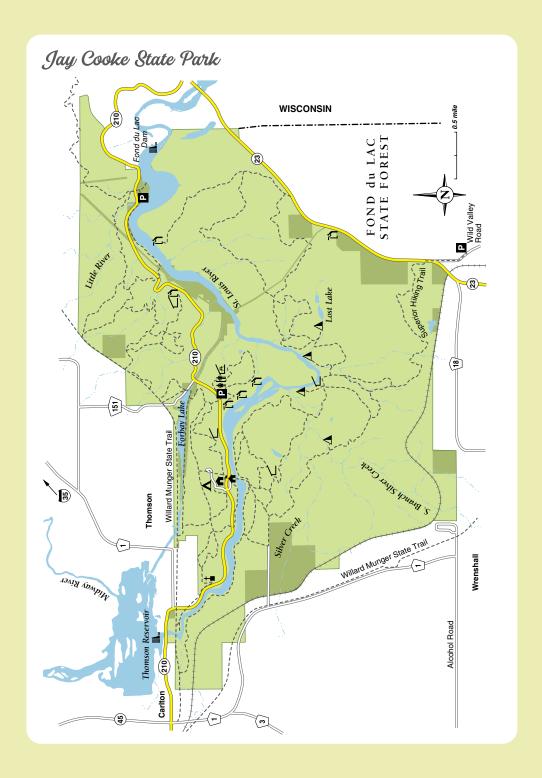
dnr.state.mn.us/state\_trails/willard\_munger/index.html

Lake Superior Zoo

7210 Fremont Street, Duluth, 55807; 218-730-4500; Iszooduluth.org

Carlton County Historical Society 406 Cloquet Avenue, Cloquet, 55720; 218-879-1938; carltoncountyhistory.org







## **Father Hennepin** State Park (EST. 1941)

41294 Father Hennepin Park Road, Isle, 56342; 320-676-8763

Located on Lake Mille Lacs off Highway 27 in Isle.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

At 320 acres, Father Hennepin State Park is relatively small, but its location on Lake Mille Lacs makes it very popular. Established through tax-forfeited lands, the park was named for Father Louis Hennepin, a Jesuit priest and the first European to visit the area. Indigenous peoples have lived in the region for thousands of years.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

Lake Mille Lacs is the second-largest lake entirely in the state, and this is the only state park on the lake, ensuring the park's popularity. Lake Mille Lacs is renowned for its walleye and perch fishing, but it is also a recreation destination, with opportunities for camping, hiking, and boating.



Hike to Pope Point on the western edge along the lake. A 1-mile roundtrip, the trail is easy and starts at the picnic area. Watch for ducks along the water's edge.

Bring your binoculars to see the threatened common tern. The terns nest on a rock island directly offshore from the park.

If you have trouble getting a campsite, gather together a few friends and reserve one of the group campsites.

#### **TRAILS**

The park has 4.5 miles of hiking trails, with 0.75 mile of wheelchair-accessible trail. The Hiking Club Trail is a 2-mile loop that goes by the lake and around through the woods. Snowshoeing can be done anywhere in the park.

#### RECREATION

There are two fishing piers that are wheelchair accessible and two boat launches in the park. The boat launch at Lakeview Campground is dedicated to campers and includes boat slips. There are no boat rentals in the park, but rentals are available in the nearby town of Isle.

The park sports a beautiful sandy beach, which has been called one of the top beaches in the state. A large picnic area and a playground are located near the beach. There is also an enclosed picnic shelter in the park. Geocaching is a very popular pastime here, and GPS units are available for loan.

#### **CAMPGROUND**

There are 103 campsites, 51 with electricity and 4 that are wheelchair accessible. Campsites are spread out over two campgrounds. Lakeview Campground is the most popular because it is close to the lake and has a boat ramp. Maple Grove Campground is more shaded, and its sites are more secluded. Site 92 is very popular, as it is more secluded and faces the lake. Six group campsites can accommodate from 12 to 25 people each. Two wheelchair-accessible shower buildings and a dump station are open seasonally.

#### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

Signs and kiosks provide information. Programs may be offered on occasional weekends.

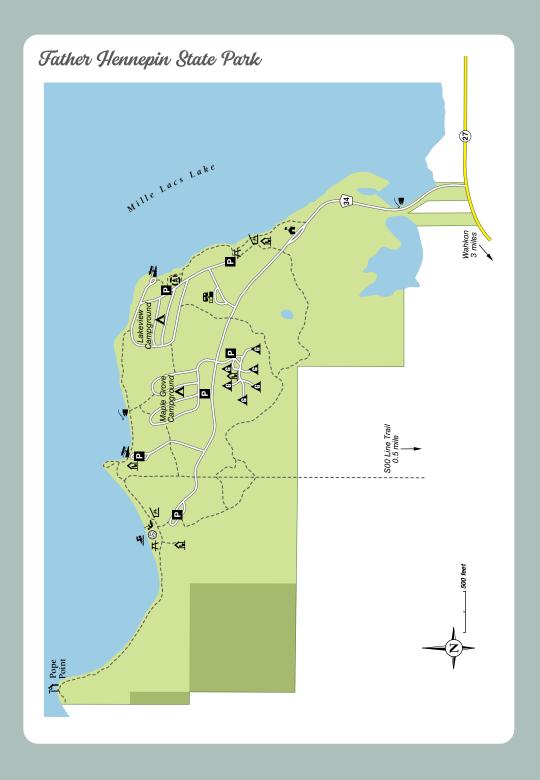
#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

The Soo Line Trail can be accessed just outside of the park. A paved section heads west for 10 miles into Onamia. West of Onamia and east of the park, the trail is unpaved.

dnr.state.mn.us/ohv/trail\_detail.html?id=44

Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Trading Post is located on the west side of Lake Mille Lacs, about 12 miles north of Onamia. The Minnesota Historical Society administers this museum, which features exhibits pertaining to Ojibwe culture. The museum also includes a restored 1930s trading post. 43411 Oodena Drive, Onamia, 56359; 320-532-3632; mnhs.org/millelacs







## William O'Brien State Park (EST. 1945)

16821 O'Brien Trail N, Marine on St. Croix, 55047; 651-539-4980

This park is located 2 miles north of Marine on St. Croix on Highway 95.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

William O'Brien was a logger who bought up much of the St. Croix riverfront after it was logged in the mid-nineteenth century. His daughter, Alice, donated 180 acres of that land to establish this park, which has since grown to 2,200 acres.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

The park is located an hour from the Twin Cities, making it quite popular. This is a great place for boating, canoeing, or kayaking. Fishing is popular, too, and the St. Croix is home to northern pike, walleyes, bass, and trout.



Bring a canoe (or rent one) and circumnavigate Greenberg Island.

Check the park's event calendar for naturalist programs.

For a short, easy hike, find the River Trail at the picnic area. It is a pleasant, self-guided, 1.5-mile stroll along the St. Croix.

#### **TRAILS**

The park features 12 miles of trails. The 5.3-mile Hiking Club Trail passes through some hilly terrain that highlights the area's prairie and its oak savanna. There are 1.5 miles of biking trails. In winter, 12 miles of trails are groomed for classic and skate-style cross-country skiing. Snowshoeing is only allowed on the Riverside Trail.

#### RECREATION

A spacious picnic area with an open shelter is located between Lake Alice and the St. Croix River. A boat launch is located near the picnic area, along with a fishing pier. Lake Alice has a nice swimming beach and another shelter. The park also has volleyball, horseshoes, and a ball field. Geocaching is available, and GPS units are available for loan. Canoes, kayaks, and snowshoes are available for rent at the park.

#### **CAMPGROUND**

There are 114 campsites spaced out over two campgrounds, with 71 electric sites overall. Riverway Campground is located in the lower portion of the park and is close to the river. It is open and more popular. Savanna Campground is open year-round, with many secluded campsites, especially those numbered in the 90s. Four group campsites accommodate up to 35 or 50 people. There are four camper cabins, three of which are available year-round.

#### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

The visitor center has interpretive displays. Check the park's event calendar for naturalist programs.

#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

The nearby Gateway State Trail is an 18-mile trail going from St. Paul to Pine Point Regional Park near Stillwater.

dnr.state.mn.us/state\_trails/gateway

Take the walking tour of Marine on St. Croix. Visit the website to download a brochure: marineonstcroix.org/historicwalkingtour.

Check out Swedish Walking Tours (swedishcircletours.com) for information about a driving tour to eight towns in the "Ki-Chi-Saga" area.



# William O'Brien State Park Taylors Falls 16 miles Lake Alice Old Marine Trail N. Broadway Street Stillwater 14 miles



## **Split Rock Creek** State Park (EST. 1938)

336 50th Avenue, Jasper, 56144; 507-348-7908

Located 6 miles south of Pipestone on Highway 23.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Pipestone County does not have a natural lake, so Split Rock Creek was dammed in 1938, creating Split Rock Lake, and the surrounding area was designated as a state park. The nearly 2,000 acres provide numerous recreational opportunities for the residents of southwestern Minnesota.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

The lake is the draw here. Plan to enjoy time relaxing on the shore or in the water. Wildlife enjoy the park too; migratory birds frequent the water and the woodlands.



Rent a rowboat for some old-fashioned fun on the lake.

Hike over to the dam; it was built by the Works Progress Administration in 1938.

Hike or boat up Split Rock Creek and look for the heron nests.

#### **TRAILS**

There are 4.5 miles of hiking trails, including 2.5 miles of self-guided interpretive trails and a half mile that is wheelchair accessible. The Hiking Club Trail circles the park along the creek, the lake, and historic sites. In winter, snowshoeing is allowed anywhere in the park.

#### RECREATION

Anglers can fish for panfish in Split Rock Lake by boat or from the park's fishing pier. A boat ramp is located in the park. When the office is open, boats, paddle boats, and canoes are available for rent.

The picnic area has an enclosed shelter, and the park's swimming beach is nearby. There are also two playgrounds, a volleyball court, and horseshoes.

In winter, sledding is available and the trail center serves as a warming house.

#### **CAMPGROUND**

There are 34 sites, 21 with electricity and 1 that is wheelchair accessible. Check out sites 2, 4, and 6, as they are shaded and on the lake. Site 10 is the most spacious. One group campsite can accommodate up to 50 people. The sanitation building and dump station are seasonal.

#### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

There are no regular programs, but interpretive kiosks are located around the park.

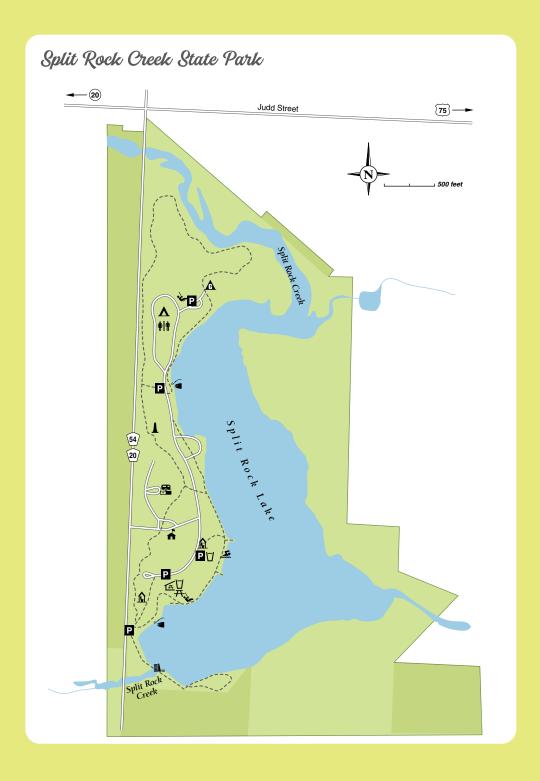
#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

Pipestone National Monument is the site of the pipestone quarries where Indigenous peoples have long obtained the stone for ceremonial pipes. The site features interpretive programs, a nature walk, and a picnic area. 36 Reservation Avenue, Pipestone, 56164; 507-825-5464; nps.gov/pipe

Jeffers Petroglyphs: Indigenous peoples carved the ancient pictographs on the rocks here. They are an incredible 7,000 years old. There is an interpretive center at the site.

27160 County Road 2, Comfrey, 56019; 507-628-5591; mnhs.org/jefferspetroglyphs







## Rice Lake State Park (EST. 1963)

8485 Rose Street, Owatonna, 55060; 507-414-6191

Located 7 miles east of Owatonna on Steele County Highway 19.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Rice Lake, a peaceful park covering 1,400 acres, is home to the headwaters of the Zumbro River. When European settlers first arrived in the area, they found well-established trails, as Indigenous peoples had already been harvesting wild rice in the lake for many years.

In the late 1850s, the town of Rice Lake was established, but the town disappeared when the railroad bypassed it.

#### WHY YOU SHOULD GO

A shallow lake with many marshes, Rice Lake attracts a variety of waterfowl and is also home to seven species of woodpeckers. It is the last natural lake in this portion of the state, which is also a major migration route. Because of this importance, the park manages for waterfowl. If you want to bird-watch, binoculars are available for loan at the park office.



Bird-watching is a must. Bring your binoculars and camera, and get a free copy of the birding checklist.

The observation deck is a great spot to observe spring and fall migration.

Bring a canoe or kayak (or rent one) to paddle around the lake.

#### **TRAILS**

There are 5 miles of grassy, mostly flat trails within the park. The Hiking Club Trail circles the park, traveling near the lake and through prairie and hardwoods, for 2.4 miles. There are no groomed cross-country skiing trails, but winter visitors can enjoy 3 miles of snowmobile trails, which connect to the Steele County state grant-in-aid trails. Snowshoeing is also allowed anywhere in the park, except on groomed trails.

#### RECREATION

The picnic area has a shelter, a playground, and an observation/fishing pier.

There is a boat launch in the park, but since water levels are typically low, canoes and kayaks are the preferred method of boating. When the park office is open, canoes and kayaks are available for rent. Because the lake is shallow, fishing isn't ideal, but perch and northern pike can be present.

#### **CAMPGROUND**

There are 40 sites, including 18 electric sites, all of which are located in the B loop. Five walk-in sites are located near the campground, and four cart-in sites lie along the lakeshore. Five canoe-in sites are also along the lakeshore, but if water levels are low these may not be available. One group campsite has space for up to 40 people.

#### INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

An interpretive exhibit is at the park office. Programs are sometimes offered.

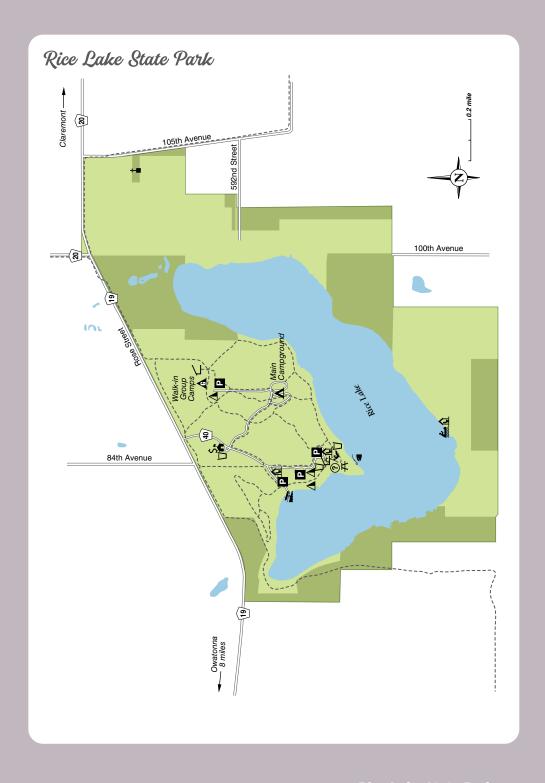
#### **NEARBY ATTRACTIONS**

Owatonna is home to important historical sites. There you can visit the Village of Yesteryear, which is located on the Steele County Fairgrounds. It features a collection of 11 buildings, as well as a caboose dating back to the 1850s. visitowatonna.org

Hythecker Prairie SNA is a remnant of native prairie. 640th Street, Claremont, 55924; 507-832-6041; dnr.state.mn.us/snas/connect-minnesotas-wild-places.html

Kaplan's Woods is a 225-acre park located along the Straight River. 1205 SW 18th Street, Owatonna, 55060; owatonna.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/Kaplans-Woods-Park -Kaplans-Woods-Parkway-13





## Connect with Nature in Minnesota's State Parks

Find a perfect escape for your favorite outdoor activities: hiking, bicycling, camping, fishing, swimming, bird-watching, or simply relaxing beside a babbling river. There's so much to do in Minnesota's state parks—a multitude of unique experiences and new adventures! You'll have opportunities to try everything from archery to snowshoeing, to stay in a cabin or yurt, or even to go scuba-diving.

This comprehensive guide spotlights all 75 state parks and state recreation areas. Each entry includes full-color photography, a map, and the details you want to know—including a park overview, descriptions of the trails, campgrounds, and interpretive programs. Plus, the authors' tips help to ensure that you maximize the fun.

#### INSIDE YOU'LL FIND

- Guide to all 75 state parks and state recreation areas
- Maps that show hiking and biking trails at a glance
- Expert tips from the authors
- · Nearby attractions that help you make the most of each trip

Get outside and enjoy nature. It's as easy as finding a nearby state park. Choose a destination that's right for you, or begin your quest to visit them all!

Adventure Adventure KEEN

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