

SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS

INDICATOR: Number of sites protected in Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs)

WHY IS THIS INDICATOR IMPORTANT?

Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) preserve and perpetuate the ecological diversity of Minnesota's natural heritage, including landforms, fossil remains, plant and animal communities, rare and endangered species, and other biotic features and geological formations. We work to protect natural communities, rare species, and geological features in order to provide opportunities for nature observation, education, and research.

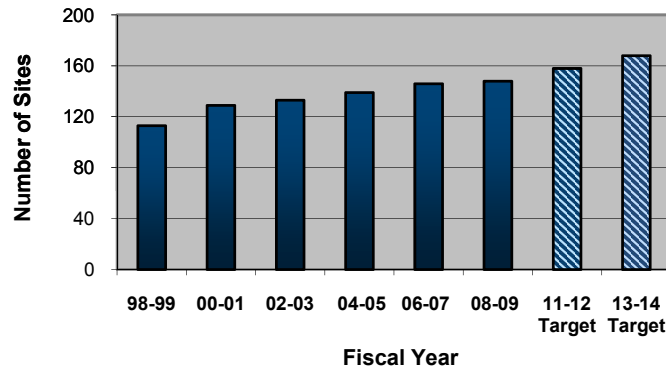
The SNA program's goal is to ensure that no rare feature is lost from any region of the state. This requires protection and management of each feature in sufficient quantity and distribution across the landscape. It is estimated that 500 natural areas are needed throughout the state to adequately protect significant features.

WHAT IS DNR DOING?

The SNA program, created by the 1969 Minnesota Legislature, administers about 150 natural areas across Minnesota. The program protects and manages land, educates citizens, promotes research, produces publications, and helps private landowners. DNR works with stakeholders to create long-term plans to acquire priority areas.

TARGET: Designate five to ten new SNAs in FY 2011-12 and in FY 2013-14. DNR's long-term goal for 2085, set with stakeholder input, is to manage a system of 500 natural areas by establishing at least five SNAs per ecological subsection for state significant natural communities, and establishing at least three SNAs per subsection for rare species and geological features. Protecting multiple sites in each landscape region is a vital means of capturing genetic diversity and preventing loss of important species and communities in the face of landscape and climate change.

Cumulative Number of Sites Protected as Scientific and Natural Areas



Number of sites protected as Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs). DNR aims to establish five to ten new SNAs by FY 2012 and another five to ten new SNAs by FY 2014.



Visitors to Pine Bend Bluffs SNA hike through a patch of restored bluff prairies to the Mississippi River overlook.

LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- Scientific and Natural Areas at: www.mndnr.gov/snass