



# Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Division of Parks and Trails

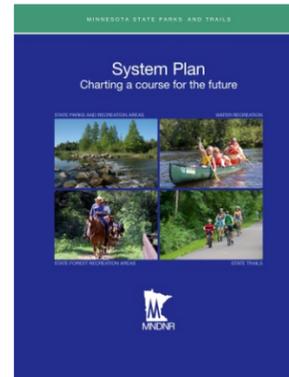
## Minnesota State Parks and Trails System Plan

### A New Approach

The system plan advances new approaches for managing DNR's state parks and state recreation areas, state trails, forest recreation areas, and water recreation system.

The plan recommends a [differentiated approach to managing the system](#).

The System Plan created three investment groups - *Rustic*, *Core*, and *Destination* - to differentiate the types of experiences state parks and state recreation areas (SRAs) offer and prioritize the kinds of investments to make across the state park system in the future.



### St. Croix State Park as a *Destination State Park*

Under the investment group framework, Croix State Park is one of 16 state parks designated as a *Destination State Park*.

### What does that mean?

*Destination State Parks and SRAs* offer a destination-quality experience, with . . .



an array of outdoor recreation and lodging opportunities, park facilities, . . .



and naturalist-led interpretive offerings.



They may have year-round camping (or other lodging) and staffing.



Parks in this group have high use and attract visitors from across the state.

### Moving forward at St. Croix State Park . . .

The Division will invest in *Destination State Parks and SRAs* at a high level over the next 10 years to enhance campgrounds and group camps, visitor centers, lodging opportunities, and other amenities.

The management plan process will help us determine the types of investments should be made to fulfill St. Croix's role as a *Destination State Park*. One approach to starting this process is to consider several questions about St. Croix State Park:

- Is there anything "missing" at the state park – experiences for visitors, types of facilities, amenities, etc. that are found elsewhere in the system?
- What can we enhance or improve – what facilities or visitor experiences?
- How can we make better use of what we already have?
- Are there new opportunities we could develop at the state park?

### Comparing Priorities, Strategies and Services across the Investment Groups . . .

	10-Year Division Investment –Resources and Funding		
	Rustic	Core	Destination
Acquisition	Acquisition focused on resource values.	Moderate priority to acquire in-holdings, adjacent lands.	High priority to acquire in-holdings, adjacent lands.
Development	Ensure basic suite of amenities* is in good condition.	Moderate priority to rehabilitate facilities, and provide additional lodging opportunities; ensure basic suite of amenities* is in good condition.	High priority to upgrade campgrounds, group camps, visitor centers, and trails; provide additional lodging opportunities; ensure basic suite of amenities* is in good condition.
Operations & maintenance	Moderate priority; seek partnerships for maintenance activities; park generally staffed by seasonal/shared staff; typically managed by another unit or area staff.	High priority to maintain quality park experience; park generally staffed by year-round employees; may manage satellite operations.	High priority to maintain quality park experience; park is staffed by year-round employees; often serves as an administrative hub.
Interpretive services	Messages presented primarily via signs and technology along self-guided trails, and occasional naturalist-led programming by shared regional/area staff.	Provide a mix of non-personal interpretation and naturalist-led programming and special events by on-site staff (where available) and shared regional/area staff.	Provide a mix of non-personal interpretation and naturalist-led programming and special events by on-site and sometimes shared regional/area staff.
Park amenities	Limited facilities and amenities (vault toilets for sanitation, orientation signage); predominately day use only or summer season camping; peaceful hiking, fishing, paddling, and picnicking.	Moderate level of amenities (visitor and/or trail center often present; predominately long-season or year-round camping; cabins in some units; some outdoor rec opportunities; running water and showers in some units, vaults in others; orientation signage, some interpretive signage).	High level of amenities (visitor and/or trail center, year-round camping, cabins & other lodging opportunities, many outdoor rec opportunities, running water sanitation, showers, orientation and interpretive signage).
Partnerships	Focused on maintenance agreements and fundraising.	Focused on acquisition and development opportunities and programming, special events, marketing.	Focused on acquisition and programming, special events, marketing.
Marketing & promotion	Market more toward local communities and visitors, and include convenience/ close- to-home messages.	Focus on attracting new users to adventurous recreation opportunities and through targeted outreach, programming, and special events; market more toward local communities and visitors, include convenience/close-to-home messages.	Focus on attracting new users to high amenity parks for their introductory experience, and on serving all visitors through new and enhanced facilities, and naturalist-led programming and special events.

**Rustic** – Likely to have low levels of overnight visitation and revenue; offer limited recreation opportunities and facilities; and possess comparatively less significant natural and/or cultural resources.  
**Core** – Likely to have moderate levels of overnight visitation and revenue; offer a moderate diversity of recreation opportunities and facilities; and possess significant natural and/or cultural resources.  
**Destination** – Likely to have high levels of overnight visitation and revenue; offer a broad diversity of recreation opportunities and facilities; and possess highly significant natural and/or cultural resources.

\* Note: Basic suite of amenities includes picnic tables, fire rings, orientation signage, and waste removal.