



PINE ISLAND
900,153 ACRES
ESTABLISHED 1943

RED LAKE
84,107 ACRES
ESTABLISHED 1963

FOREST LANDSCAPE: Pine Island is the largest state forest in Minnesota. The landscape of these two state forests is fairly flat, covered by boreal forests and bogs and highly productive wildlife habitat. The Upper and Lower Red Lake system is Minnesota's third largest lake by area, covering 427 square miles.

A WORKING FOREST: From year to year, you may see changes in this forest. The DNR manages the trees, water, and wildlife in state forests to keep them healthy and meet recreational, environmental, and economic goals. Trees are harvested to make a variety of products, such as lumber and building materials, pulp for making paper, pallets, fencing, and utility poles. Through careful planning, harvesting, and planting, land managers work to improve wildlife habitat. The DNR manages state forests for everyone to use, while preventing wildfires and ensuring forests continue to keep air and water clean.

HISTORY: After the last ice age, glacial Lake Agassiz inundated the area. As the shallow lake slowly drained to the northwest, receding waters left teardrop-shaped "islands" of relatively higher land which today are covered with pine and balsam fir. Surrounding these islands are forested and non-forested peatlands, bogs, and swamps. Many rivers and streams drain the area north to the Rainy River.

Numerous species of orchids thrive here, with late May-early June peak viewing. Several large scientific and natural areas have been set aside to study high-quality peatlands.

A succession of Woodland Indians occupied the region for at least 2,500 years. The Dakota (or Sioux) inhabited the area until the Ojibwe (Chippewa) arrived. In the late 1800s, a group of Bois Forte Ojibwe lived along the Big Fork River in bark wigwams. Logging between the late 1880s and early 1900s profoundly transformed the area, as loggers removed millions of board feet of old growth white cedar and pine.

Grand Mound Historic Site near International Falls is the largest Indian burial mound in the upper Midwest. It is comprised of five sacred burial mounds, ancient villages, and sturgeon fishing sites developed approximately 2,000 years ago. Following the wishes of descendants who revere it as a cemetery, it is open only to American Indians for ceremonial and educational purposes.

Northern Minnesota contains some of the largest peatlands in North America. The expansive, very flat landscape was once the bottom of Glacial Lake Agassiz, today now filled in with up to 10 feet of peat. Hordes of blood-seeking insects dominate in warmer months, making this area relatively untouched by humans. Flying over the countryside, you may see a giant grid of drainage ditches, remnants of futile attempts to drain the area. In the 1940s, the U.S. Military used these remote sites to test bombs dropped from high-altitude planes. Hillman Lake, a 2-acre body of water in the middle of expansive flat peatlands, is a result of such bombing, as indicated by the discovery of an old bomb casing found in the middle of it.

TREES: Today, black spruce, tamarack, and northern white cedar grow in the lowlands. Aspen, pine, and balsam dominate the uplands.

WILDLIFE: Wildlife includes timber wolves, bobcats, beaver, otter, bald eagle, and osprey. Big game includes black bear, moose, and white-tailed deer. Ruffed grouse, trumpeter swans, boreal birds, and many species of ducks are common.

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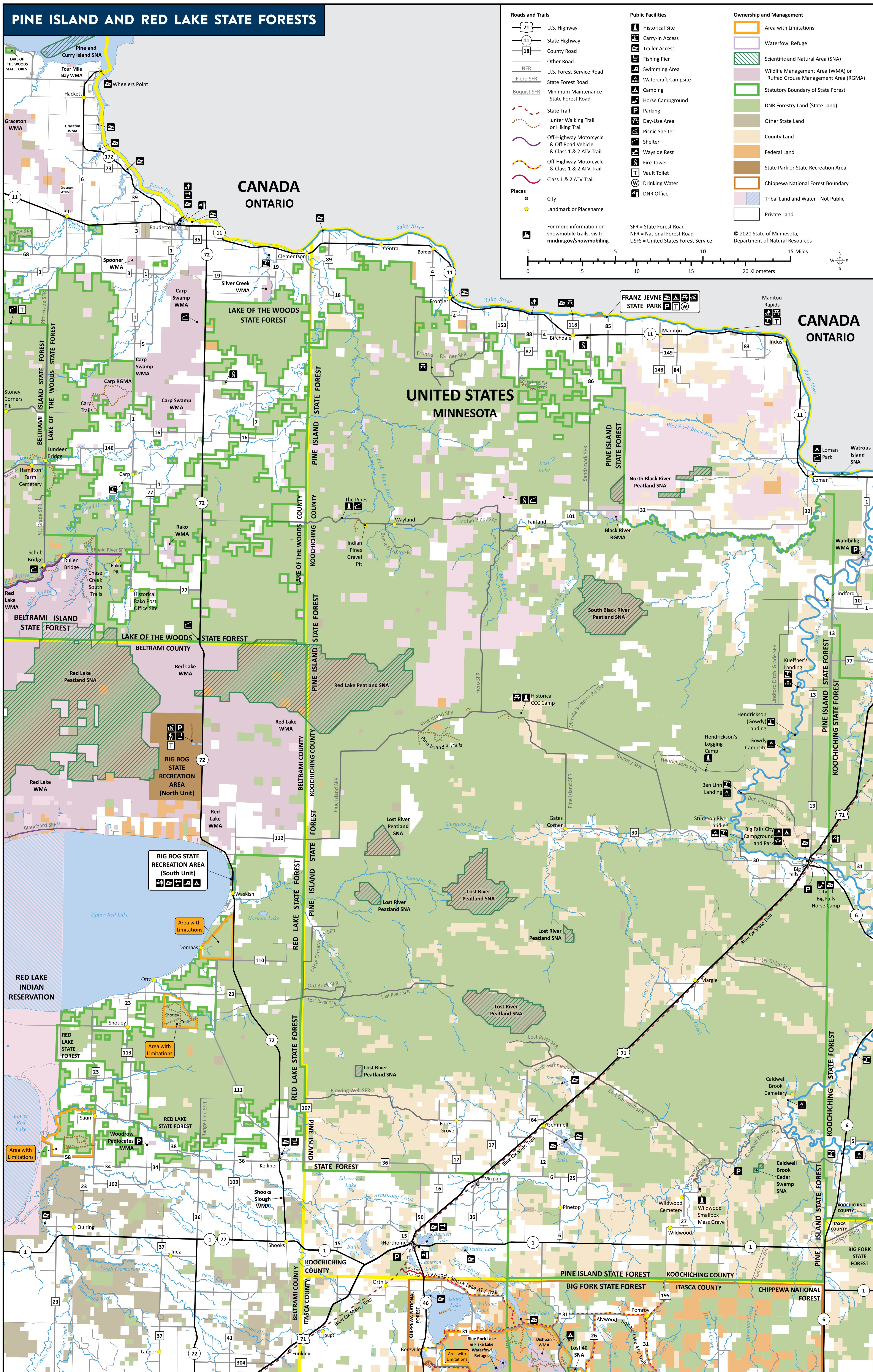
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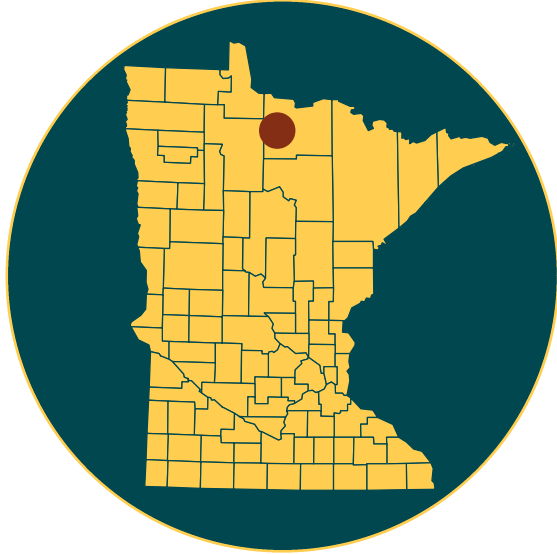
GENERAL STATE FOREST RULES

- Whether camping, hunting, riding, geocaching, skiing, or gathering berries, take care to leave the forest in good condition.
- Forest lands are open at all times unless otherwise posted.
 - Dispersed camping is allowed on state forest land at least 1 mile outside of campground areas for no fee.
 - On state forest land, summer camping is limited to 14 days. Winter camping is limited to 21 days between the second Sunday in September and the first Saturday in May. For rules about camping on federal land within the Chippewa National Forest , visit www.fs.usda.gov/chippewa
 - Pack out what you pack in. Remove all personal property. Do not burn litter or garbage.
 - Don't leave equipment unattended for more than 24 hours.
 - Building any permanent structures, including deer stands, is prohibited.
 - Use firewood purchased from vendors who harvested firewood in the same county as the state forest or harvested in Minnesota and certified by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture or USDA. Bring your receipt. You may also collect dead fuelwood on site. Kiln-dried, unstained, unpainted dimensional lumber free from metal or other foreign objects is also permitted. It is illegal to bring in any other firewood. These rules are to prevent accidentally introducing harmful pests such as emerald ash borer. mndnr.gov/firewood
 - Fireworks are prohibited on all state and federal lands.
 - Keep campfires no larger than 3 feet wide and 3 feet high. Attend the fire at all times. Completely extinguish fires before leaving the area. Ashes should be cold to the touch.
 - Bury human waste (if toilets are not available) and animal parts such as fish guts at least 150 feet from a water body and away from areas where it could cause a nuisance or hazard to public health.
 - Collecting berries, mushrooms, or dead fuelwood for personal use while in the forest is OK. However, collecting large amounts of these items to take home for personal use or sale requires a permit. Get permits from your local DNR forestry office. mndnr.gov/areas/forestry
 - Unless posted closed, hiking, horseback riding, and off-road biking are allowed on all trails except groomed ski trails.
 - This is a partial list of rules. For more information, visit the website listed below.

mndnr.gov/state_forests/rules.html



PINE ISLAND/RED LAKE
STATE
FOREST



CAMPING

Dispersed camping with no amenities is allowed on state forest land, without fee. Winter camping is limited to 21 days between the second Sunday in September and the first Saturday in May. Bury human waste (if toilets are not available) and animal parts such as fish guts at least 150 feet from a water body and away from areas where it could cause a nuisance or hazard to public health.

Please practice the “Leave No Trace” camping ethic.

Travelers on the Big Fork River State Water Trail may use boat-in campsites. Each site has a fire ring, toilet, and picnic table.

FRANZ JEVNE STATE PARK

Secluded and peaceful, this park offers picturesque views of Ontario and some of the most scenic views along the Rainy River, including the Sault Rapids. A small campground offers several campsites, including sites with electric hook-ups. Hike or ski on 2 miles of trails. Access to Rainy River. mndnr.gov/state_parks

BIG FALLS CAMPGROUND – CITY OF BIG FALLS

Open between May and October, this campground along the Big Fork River offers 14 campsites, many with electric hook-ups, restrooms, showers, and picnic tables. Popular activities swimming in the “deep hole” or small rapids. Boat and canoe access available. Reservations required and fee charged. **218-556-4825**

HORSE CAMPGROUND – CITY OF BIG FALLS

Located along the banks of the Big Fork River, this campground has six campsites with tether lines, a picnic table, fire pit, electric and water hook-ups, and access to showers. The campground is on 30 miles of marked multi-use trails. Reservations required and fee charged. **218-556-4825**

BOATING

BIG FORK RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL

Canoe, kayak, or motorboat on the Big Fork River, which flows north through Pine Island and Koochiching state forests to the Rainy River. Water levels vary greatly throughout the year, and beaver dams and rapids can make boating difficult. There are public access points, including those at Keuffner’s Landing, Benn Lynn Landing, Sturgeon River, and in the city of Big Falls. Overnight boat users may use one of several watercraft-accessible campsites. You’ll need to portage around the scenic Big Falls, near the city of Big Falls. mndnr.gov/watertrails/bigforkriver

Register your canoe, kayak, or motorboat at mndnr.gov/licenses/watercraft

TRAILS

All trails and roads are open to hiking, horseback riding, and off-road biking, unless posted closed. Off-trail hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing are also allowed.

BATTLE LAKE SKI AND HIKING TRAIL – KOOCHICHING COUNTY

This 5.5-mile trail is open to skiing and hiking. The trailhead is off Hwy 71 just south of Northome. No ski pass needed.

Great Minnesota Ski Pass required on all other ski trails.

mndnr.gov/licenses/skipass

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

Snowmobile trails (state and grant-in-aid) are open and groomed between December 1 and April 1 depending on snow conditions. Use caution at all times as logging operations often share the trails. Trails are marked with orange directional signs.

- Snowmobiles must be registered mndnr.gov/regulations/snowmobile
- Detailed trail maps are on mndnr.gov/state_trails/list.html

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE TRAIL CLASSIFICATION: MANAGED

All trails on state-managed lands are classified regarding motor vehicles. The Pine Island and Red Lake state forests allow highway-licensed vehicles on all roads unless posted closed, and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and off-road vehicles (ORVs) on all roads, routes, and designated trails. No motorized use is allowed off roads and trails.

- Unless posted closed, local forest roads are open to ATVs, OHVs, and off-highway motorcycles.
- OHV trail seasons vary and roads may close temporarily. mndnr.gov/regulations/ohv
- ATV trails are open as the spring and fall weather conditions allow. mndnr.gov/ohv/closures.html

Blue Ox Trail

Open to ATVs, this straight, flat 74-mile trail follows an abandoned railroad grade along Hwy 71 between Funkley and International Falls. Much of the trail cuts through stretches of black spruce swamps, and upland aspen stands. Ideal for viewing wildlife. Look for beavers, eagles, moose, wolves, and bobcats.

Chippewa National Forest Roads and Trails

- Detailed U.S. Forest Service maps showing allowed uses in Chippewa National Forest roads and trails are available on <https://go.usa.gov/xmu3p>
- ATVs and OHVs are not allowed for cross-country travel, including retrieving game or accessing tree stands.

HUNTING AND TRAPPING

Pine Island and Red Lake state forests provide habitat for hunting and trapping. In the appropriate season, licensed hunters can hunt for white-tailed deer, grouse, and other game. mndnr.gov/hunting

FIREARMS AND BOWS

Firearms and bows must be unloaded and cased while in or within 200 feet of a state recreation area (campground, day-use area, parking area, boat launch, etc.) or 450 feet of a national forest recreation area. Exception: During seasons open for hunting, a person may carry an unloaded, uncased firearm or strung bow from a forest recreation area to hunt outside of the area.

- Cutting shooting lanes is not allowed.
- Building permanent structures, including deer stands, is prohibited.
- For regulations about hunting, trapping, firearms, bows, limits, seasons, and deer stands on state-managed land, visit mndnr.gov/regulations/hunting
- For regulations about shooting on federally managed land, visit fs.fed.us/visit/know-before-you-go

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS

State Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) are managed to perpetuate and establish quality wildlife habitat to produce a variety of species, particularly harvestable species, emphasizing wildlife that lives in wetlands and young forests. They are also managed to provide opportunities for public hunting, trapping, and watching wildlife.

WMA Highlight: Red Lake Supplement

Bordering the Red Lake WMA, this 111,000-acre supplement is one of Minnesota’s largest WMAs. It is composed of ancient glacial Lake Agassiz beach ridges with upland forests surrounded by extensive wetlands of open bog, brush, and lowland forest. Species include white-tailed deer, bear, small game, and sharptail grouse. Dispersed camping is allowed with a permit from the WMA headquarters at Norris Camp. Trappers need a permit.

FISHING

The Rainy River is famous for Minnesota’s largest fish, the lake sturgeon, which can grow to more than 100 pounds. Anglers may find sturgeon, muskie, walleye, small mouth bass, and northern pike in area lakes and rivers. There are no special provisions or restrictions on fishing in state forests. You must have the proper license and abide by the same rules and seasons as anywhere else in Minnesota.

Avoid spreading invasive organisms such as zebra mussel larvae or spiny waterfleas by not transporting lake or river water, including in bait buckets. Pack out and dispose unused bait and live worms in trash containers where they can’t reach water or soil.

- Visit mndnr.gov/fishing for up-to-date regulations.
- Visit mndnr.gov/lakefind for current information on specific lakes.

SCIENTIFIC AND NATURAL AREAS

Scientific and Natural Areas (SNAs) protect natural features of exceptional scientific or educational value, including native plant communities, rare species, and significant geological features.

Visitors may enjoy the undisturbed natural quality of these sites. However, most SNAs have no trails, restrooms, or drinking water. SNAs do not allow camping, vehicles, or collecting plants and animals. SNAs do allow bird and wildlife watching, hiking, taking photographs, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.

SNA HIGHLIGHT: LOST RIVER PEATLAND

At 11,888 acres, this nationally significant site in the bed of Glacial Lake Agassiz is Minnesota’s third largest peatland SNA. A great diversity of peatland features have developed here in response to a range of chemical and hydrological conditions. High-quality examples of ribbed fen, teardrop islands, featureless water track, and raised bog are all found here. Especially notable are a number of spring fens, including a unique forested dome with braided stream channels. Core extractions of peat (partially decomposed organic matter) indicate that the origin of this fen can be traced to groundwater that began to discharge here roughly 1,200 years ago. Eleven state-listed rare plants have been documented, including four threatened species. A number of rare sundews are found in the large patterned peatland in the southern-most part of the SNA.

Scientists are currently working on unravelling the mystery of “bog breathing,” in which the surface of a bog or fen can rise or fall as much as 14 inches a day, at irregular intervals and to varying degrees. Recent studies suggest it may be associated with the accumulation and release of greenhouse gases.

SNA HIGHLIGHT: SOUTH BLACK RIVER PEATLAND

This 6,000-acre peatland contains a large, semi-circular raised bog with a patterned fen. Among its rare features are linear-leaved and English sundew that occur in sunny, shallow pools of water tracks, dominated by low-growing sedges and mosses. This site is largely inaccessible throughout the growing season. Six-foot-tall spruce can be more than 100 years old.

SNA HIGHLIGHT: NORTH BLACK RIVER PEATLAND

This 10,793-acre peatland shares the flat terrain of the Agassiz Lowlands with the meandering North Black River, not far from International Falls and the Canada border. Key landforms include a large water track, raised bog, ribbed fen, and highly developed oval-shaped islands.

NEARBY RECREATION

FRANZ JEVNE STATE PARK

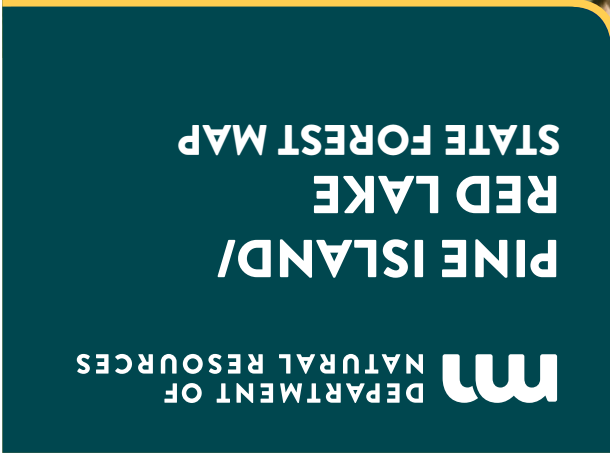
In 1967, Franz Jevne State Park was created to protect one of the most scenic areas along the Rainy River. Much of the land was donated by the family of Franz Jevne. Enjoy serene, picturesque views of Ontario, Canada and the Rainy River. Hike trails that stretch through a mixed forest with jack pine and birch. Listen for songbirds and woodpeckers and keep your eyes open for pelicans on the water and bald eagles in the trees. Beaver, wolf, and moose have been sighted in this park. Camping, fishing, and picnicking is available. mndnr.gov/state_parks

BIG BOG

STATE RECREATION AREA

Sometimes called Minnesota’s last true wilderness, this two-part recreation area includes a northern and southern unit. The northern unit is part of 500-square-mile peat bog, the largest in the lower 48 states, and features a mile-long boardwalk that enables visitors to get a first-hand look at the unique plant and animal life of this rare resource. Today, many of the native plants are on Minnesota’s endangered or threatened species list.

The southern unit on Upper Red Lake has campground with 31 campsites (26 electric), winterized cabins, a sandy beach, picnic grounds, and great fishing. mndnr.gov/state_parks



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
info.dnr@state.mn.us
651-296-6157 | 888-646-6367
TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf)
651-296-5484 | 800-657-3929

DNR TIP LINE (Turn in Poachers)
800-652-9093

EMERGENCY SERVICE - DIAL 911

KOOCHICHING COUNTY SHERIFF
218-283-4416

BELTRAMI COUNTY SHERIFF
218-333-9111

NEAREST HOSPITAL SERVICES

LakeWood Health
600 Main Ave. S. | Baudette, MN 56623
218-634-2120

Littlefork Medical Center
912 Main, St. | Littlefork, MN 56653
218-278-6634

Bigfork Valley Hospital
258 Pine Tree Dr. | Bigfork, MN 56628
218-743-3177

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