



RUM RIVER STATE FOREST
40,605 ACRES
ESTABLISHED 1943

SNAKE RIVER STATE FOREST
9,635 ACRES
ESTABLISHED 1969

FOREST LANDSCAPE: Both forests are located in east-central Minnesota. The Rum River State Forest is fairly level with few hills. A long hill—a glacial esker—cuts across the south end of the forest. The Snake River State Forest is hillier, especially in the north section where ancient glaciers and rivers created steep drainages.

A WORKING FOREST: From year to year, you may see changes in these forests. 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, while preventing wildfires and ensuring forests continue to keep air and water clean.

HISTORY: About one-third of the Rum River State Forest is marsh and swamp. The soils consist of glacial deposits of very fine, sandy loams with intermixed rocks. The most recent glaciation occurred about 10,000 years ago and created the earthen dam that still holds Minnesota's second largest (207 square miles) inland lake, Mille Lacs Lake.

People have lived on the shores and surrounding woodlands for thousands of years. In fact, the upper Rum River valley has one of the highest concentrations of prehistoric sites in Minnesota, showing evidence of at least 9,000 years of human interaction with the landscape. The Dakota nation, who lived here between A.D. 1100 and 1750, called the lake Mde Wakan, meaning "sacred," or "spiritual" lake. The Ojibwe nation, who came to the area around 1750, call the lake Misi-zaaga'igan meaning "great" or "vast" lake. The river's outlet located at the southwest shore was also known as wakan. Europeans later misinterpreted the meaning with spirits associated with alcohol, and named the waterway "Rum River."

The French explorers and fur traders who visited in the 1600s called the region Mille Lacs, meaning "thousand lakes." Eventually only the largest lake in the area came to be known as Mille Lacs.

Kanabec is derived from the Ojibwe word Ginebig, meaning "snake." People of the Ojibwe nation gave this name to the Snake River that flows through Kanabec and Pine counties. Today, both the Snake and Rum rivers are popular canoe routes.

In the early 1800s, the area supported hardwood and boreal pine forests. Massive logging operations removed millions of board feet between the late 1800s and the early 1900s. In the winter, lumber companies cut timber and hauled the logs onto the ice of Mille Lacs Lake. In the spring, large rafts of logs were towed across the lake or to the Rum River and floated to sawmills downstream. Loggers used other waterways, too, such as the Snake River that drains to the St. Croix. After the loggers removed forests, people attempted to farm the cleared land. However, people abandoned the farmsteads when much of the land proved unsuitable for farming. The Minnesota Legislature established the Mille Lacs and Rum River state forests in 1935 and 1943, and combined the Mille Lacs forest into the Rum River State Forest in 1963. Today, Mille Lacs-Kathio State Park borders the north unit of the Rum River State Forest.

TREES: Northern hardwoods grow in upland areas: aspen, basswood, red and sugar maple, red and bur oak, ash, and paper birch. Yellow birch and butternut are also present. Trees growing in lowland areas include black ash, red maple, and willow. Stands of tamarack and black spruce are also present in wetland pockets.

WILDLIFE: Wildlife includes white-tailed deer, black bear, ruffed and sharp-tailed grouse, wild turkey, woodcock, waterfowl, gray wolf, bobcat, beaver, fisher, snowshoe hare, otter, mink, muskrat, trumpeter swan, and eagle.

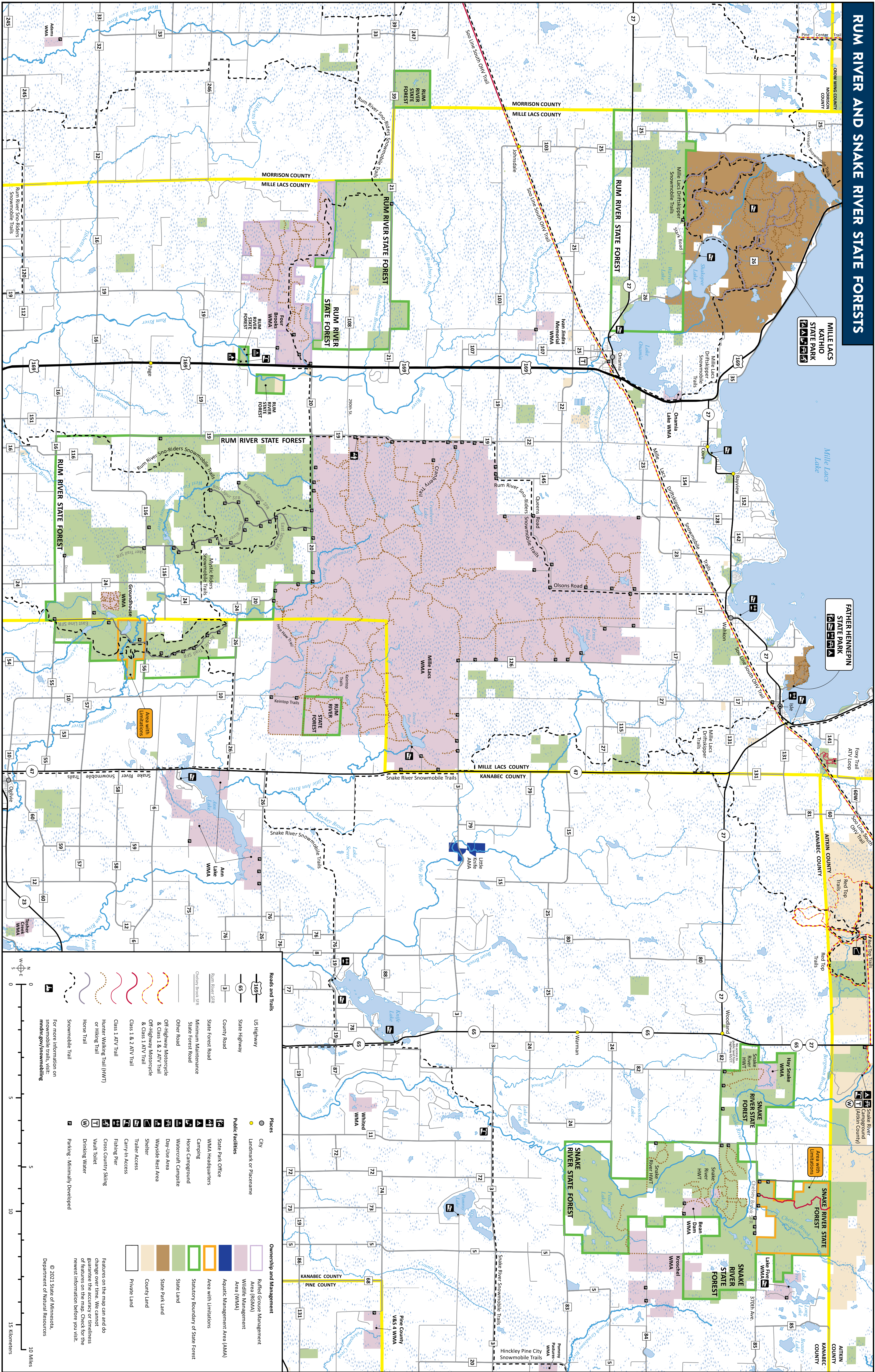
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RUM RIVER AND SNAKE RIVER STATE FORESTS



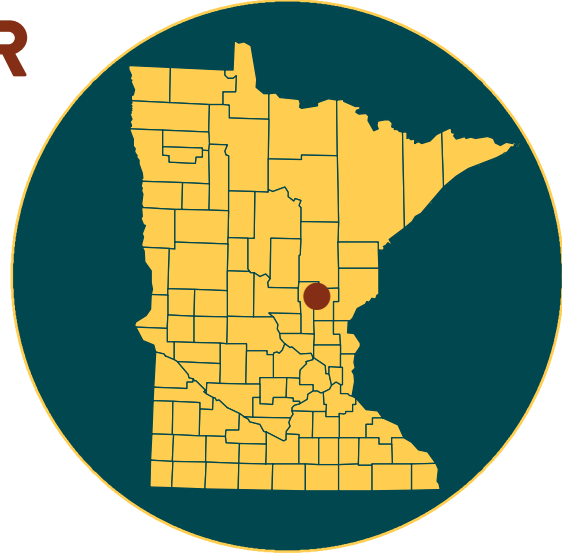
GENERAL STATE FOREST RULES

- Whether you are 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 closed.
 - Summer camping on state forest land is limited to 14 days. Winter camping is limited to 21 days between the second Sunday in September and the first Saturday in May.
 - 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, county, 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. It 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 small amounts of berries, mushrooms, or dead fuelwood for personal use while in the forest does not require a permit. However, collecting large amounts of these items to take home for personal use or sale does require a permit. Get permits from your local DNR forestry office. [mndnr.gov/areas/forestry](#)
 - Wild rice, Minnesota's state grain, may be harvested when ripe unless posted otherwise. Collecting wild rice requires a license. [mndnr.gov/regulations/wildrice](#)
 - This is a partial list of rules. For more information, visit the website listed below.

[mndnr.gov/forestrules](#)



RUM RIVER/SNAKE RIVER
STATE
FOREST



CAMPING AND
DAY-USE AREAS

Please practice the “Leave No Trace” camping ethic.

MILLE LACS-KATHIO STATE PARK
This state park is located between the southwest shore of Mille Lacs Lake and the northern border of the Rum River State Forest. It has two campgrounds, walk-in sites, backpack sites, horse camp, group camp, and camper cabins. Over 30 miles of trails are designated for popular activities such as hiking, horseback riding, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. Visitors can enjoy interpretive programs, an observation tower, and river access. Vehicle permit required to enter the park. Camping reservations and fees required.

FATHER HENNEPIN STATE PARK
This state park located on the southeast shore of Mille Lacs Lake features two campgrounds and more than 100 campsites with access to showers and flush toilets. Visitors can enjoy a swimming beach, two wheelchair-accessible fishing piers and a boat access. Vehicle permit required to enter the park. Camping reservations and fees required.

WATER CAMPSITES
Scattered campsites along the Snake and Rum River state water trails are accessible only from the water. Campsites have a picnic table, fire ring, and pit toilet. No reservations or fees required. First-come, first-served.

DISPERSED CAMPING
Dispersed camping with no amenities or fees is allowed in state forests at least one mile outside of a designated campground. Summer camping on state forest land is limited to 14 days. Winter camping is limited to 21 days between the second Sunday in September and the first Saturday in May. No fee.

SNAKE RIVER CAMPGROUND–AITKIN COUNTY
This campground offers 12 campsites, vault toilets, drinking water, and a canoe landing. It is located on the Snake River approximately 6 miles south of McGrath. The access road is off State Highway 65 at the Kanabec-Aitkin county line. No electricity. Trails connect to the Redtop and Soo Line ATV (all-terrain vehicle) trails. Reservations available or first-come, first-served. Fees charged on site.

BOATING
Public water access is available at various points along the Rum and Snake Rivers.

SNAKE RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL
Where the Snake River passes through the state forest, paddlers can enjoy Class I to IV rapids, waterfalls, and portages. Canoe carry-in accesses are located at Bear Creek Landing, Silver Star Road, or the Snake River Campground. The river supports excellent fishing for walleye, smallmouth bass, channel catfish, lake sturgeon, northern pike, and various sucker species. [mndnr.gov/watertrails/snakeriver](#)

RUM RIVER STATE WATER TRAIL
A federally designated Wild and Scenic River, the Rum River starts its journey at Mille Lacs and continues through picturesque forests 154 miles south to the Mississippi River. Hazards include pilings, rock weirs and dams. The river supports excellent fishing for walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, and various sucker species. [mndnr.gov/watertrails/rumriver](#)
Register your watercraft at [mndnr.gov/licenses/watercraft](#)

TRAILS
Non-motorized uses such as hiking and mountain biking are allowed on state forest trails and roads. Off-trail hiking, skiing, and snowshoeing are also allowed.

MILLE LACS-KATHIO STATE PARK
Thirty-five miles of hiking trails wind through the park, including self-guided interpretive trails. The 0.5-mile Touch the Earth Trail treks along a boardwalk over a tamarack bog. The 1-mile Landmark Trail takes you to the sites of former American Indian villages and part of the Kathio National Historic Landmark District.

Explore Kathio State Park's winter trail system by walking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing on designated trails.

SNAKE RIVER HUNTER-WALKING TRAILS
This 18.7-mile trail system winds through oaks and young forest. Park off 350th Ave. Detailed map on [mndnr.gov/hunting/hwt](#)

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS
Enjoy more than 850 miles of groomed snowmobile trails in and around the Rum River and Snake River state forests. Five snowmobile clubs groom and maintain the trails: Rum River Sno Riders, Mille Lacs

Drift Skippers, Morrison County Recreation Trail Association, Mystic Riders, and East Central Riders.

Trails are marked with orange signs and are open and groomed between December 1 and April 1 depending on snow conditions. Logging operations occasionally share these trails—exercise caution. [mndnr.gov/snowmobiling/interactive_map](#)

- Snowmobiles must be registered. [mndnr.gov/regulations/snowmobile](#)

OFF-HIGHWAY VEHICLE CLASSIFICATION
All state-managed lands are classified regarding motor vehicles use on roads and trails. [mndnr.gov/regulations/ohv](#)

RUM RIVER STATE FOREST: LIMITED
The Rum River State Forest is classified as “limited,” which allows off-highway vehicle (OHVs), all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and off-highway motorcycles (OHMs) to operate on signed and mapped routes open for that type of OHV use. Off-road traffic is prohibited, except when needed to retrieve big game when hunting and trapping during the proper season and with the proper license.

SNAKE RIVER STATE FOREST: CLOSED
All land within the Snake River State Forest is closed to motor vehicles. The only exception is the Snake River ATV Trail in the northern part of the forest.

- Both state forests contain posted Areas of Limitations, where no motor vehicles are allowed.
- Unless posted closed, local forest roads are open to ATVs, ORVs, and OHMs.
- OHV trail seasons vary and roads may close temporarily. [mndnr.gov/trailconditions](#)
- ATVs, ORVs, and OHMs must be registered. [mndnr.gov/licenses/ohv](#)
- Wildlife Management Areas are closed to OHVs.
- Current trail maps can be found at [mndnr.gov/ohv](#)

HUNTING AND TRAPPING
State forests provide opportunities for hunting and trapping. In the appropriate season, licensed hunters can hunt for big and small game. [mndnr.gov/hunting](#)

FIREARMS AND BOWS
Firearms must be unloaded and cased and bows must be cased while in or within 200 feet of any recreation area (campground, day-use area, parking area, boat launch, etc.).

- Cutting shooting lanes is not allowed on any state land.
- 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](#)

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: MILLE LACS
This large, 38,712-acre WMA is located between the north and south units of the Rum River State Forest. Sixty percent of the WMA is forested. The rest is wetland, bog, and forest openings. Many fields around the area are planted in corn or hay. Forests on the WMA are managed to enhance wildlife diversity, forest openings, and edges between different vegetation types. Game species include white-tailed deer, bear, small game, forest upland birds, and waterfowl. Trapping permits required.

Access the WMA using county, township roads, or WMA roads. The WMA has walking trails, carry-in boat accesses, and two boat ramps. Most of the interior of the WMA is closed to motorized access. Hunters, bird watchers, and outdoor recreationists may use the approximately 100 miles of roads and trails that traverse the WMA. Foot travel is welcome year round.

WMA maps: [mndnr.gov/maps/compass](#)
WMA information: [mndnr.gov/wmas](#)

AQUATIC MANAGEMENT AREAS
Aquatic Management Areas (AMAs) provide angler access, protect critical shoreland habitat and offer areas for education and outreach.

FISHING
Angling opportunities abound in this area. The Rum and Snake rivers and their tributaries, and one trout stream offer anglers the chance to find smallmouth bass, northern pike, walleye, crappie, sunfish, yellow perch, various sucker species, and even lake sturgeon in the Snake River. Some waters have special regulations—know the rules before venturing out.

You must have the proper license and abide by the same rules and seasons as anywhere else in Minnesota. Anglers fishing for trout must have a trout stamp.

Mille Lacs Lake has special harvesting rules for fishing. [mndnr.gov/fishing/millelacs.html](#)

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

Visit [mndnr.gov/fishing](#) for up-to-date regulations

NEARBY RECREATION

MILLE LACS-KATHIO STATE PARK
Located on the northern border of the Rum River State Forest, this beautiful state park contains a variety of recreational opportunities. Vehicle permits required.

- Camping available, including drive-in sites, hike-in sites, group camp, horse camp, and camper cabins. No dispersed camping.
- Climb the 100-foot observation tower.
- Visit the interpretive center to learn about the area's rich history and diverse wildlife.
- Enjoy 35 miles of hiking trails. These wooded trails take you to river, lake and beaver pond over looks through Kathio's rolling glacial moraine.
- Explore 3.2 miles of trail near Ogechie Lake which winds through scenic backcountry.
- During winter, explore the 19.8 miles of cross-country ski trails and 7.7 miles of snowshoe trails.

Off-highway vehicles are not permitted.

FATHER HENNEPIN STATE PARK
This park is located on the southeast shore of Mille Lacs Lake between the Rum and Snake River State Forests. Vehicle permits required.

- Two campgrounds and a large group camp available. No dispersed camping.
- Sandy swimming beach.
- Hikers can explore 4.5 miles of trail that wind through hardwood forest and along the rocky shoreline.
- Follow the one-half-mile, one-way trail to Pope Point for a peaceful view of the water.
- Two wheelchair-accessible fishing piers.
- Boat access.
- Off-highway vehicles are not permitted.

SOO LINE SOUTH ATV TRAIL
This multi-use regional trail provides ATV, motorcycle, and snowmobile trail riding opportunities. Allowed uses change seasonally and differ between counties. Private clubs maintain much of the trail. Refer to detailed trail map on the Minnesota DNR website.



KNOW WHERE YOU ARE
This area contains a patchwork of state-managed land within areas of private land. Rules may change as you cross boundaries.

RESPECT PRIVATE PROPERTY
Many state forests contain private land within their boundaries. Watch for posted “No Trespassing” and “No Hunting” signs and stay off private property. You must have permission before entering private land, even to cross it to access public land. Trespassing is a misdemeanor. If convicted, you could lose your license to hunt. All conservation and peace officers enforce trespass laws.

STAY ON TRAILS
Whether you're riding or walking, tread lightly on the land. Be courteous to others, respect private property, and obey the law.

AREAS WITH LIMITATIONS
These lands are designated to protect unique natural resources and provide other non-motorized recreation opportunities. Motorized vehicles may not operate off designated trails within “Areas With Limitations” for any reason, including retrieving big game.

LEAVE TROUBLE BEHIND
Help prevent the spread of invasive plants and animals.

- Clean your gear before entering and leaving the recreation site.
- Remove mud, seeds, and plants from clothes, pets, boots, gear, vehicles, and watercraft.
- Stay on designated trails.
- [PlayCleanGo.org](#)

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FORESTRY
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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

EMERGENCY SERVICE - DIAL 911

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

MILLE LACS COUNTY SHERIFF
320-983-8250

NEAREST HOSPITAL SERVICES
Mille Lacs Health System, Onamia
320-532-3154
Wellia Health, Mora
320-679-1212

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