

INTERSTATE STATE PARK

FACILITIES AND FEATURES

- 37 semi-modern camp-sites (22 with electricity)
- Trailer sanitation station, flush toilets, and showers
- Primitive group camp (capacity 100)
- Nature Store
- Picnic area with 2 shelters (1 open, 1 enclosed) and 175 tables
- Canoe rental
- Drive-in water access
- 4 miles of hiking trail
- Visitor center

VISITOR FAVORITES

- Canoeing and canoe rental
- Rock climbing
- Excursion boats
- Hiking
- Dalles of the St. Croix
- Glacial potholes

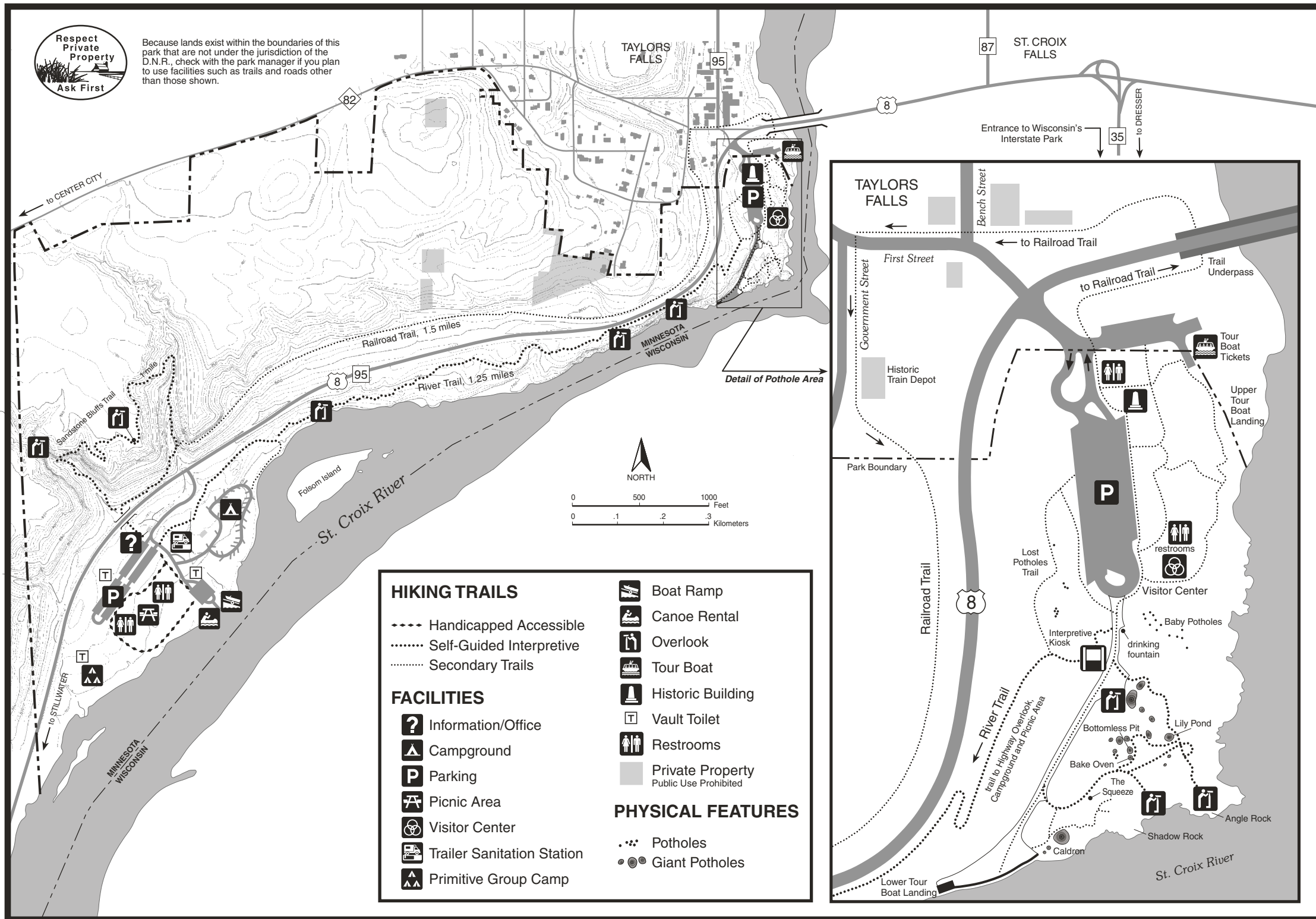
LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION ?

The DNR has mapped the state showing federal, state and county lands with their recreational facilities.
Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM) are available for purchase from the DNR gift shop, DNR regional offices, Minnesota state parks and major sporting and map stores.

Check it out - you'll be glad you did.



Because lands exist within the boundaries of this park that are not under the jurisdiction of the D.N.R., check with the park manager if you plan to use facilities such as trails and roads other than those shown.





INTERSTATE STATE PARK

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Interstate State Park
P.O. Box 254
Taylors Falls, MN 55084
(651) 465-5711

Department of Natural Resources
Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

(651) 296-6157 (Metro Area)
1-888-646-6367 (MN Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications
Device for Deaf)
(651) 296-5484 (Metro Area)
1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll Free)

DNR Web Site: www.dnr.state.mn.us
State Parks page: www.mnstateparks.info

INTERSTATE STATE PARK is located in Minnesota 45 miles northeast of Minneapolis/St. Paul on the southern edge of the city of Taylors Falls along the St. Croix River. The park entrance is located on U.S. Highway 8. Highway map index: L-15.

Interstate State Park is 293 acres in size. The park was established in 1895 in a joint venture with Wisconsin Interstate Park directly across the St. Croix River, creating the first interstate park in the nation.

In 1968, the U.S. Congress designated the St. Croix as a Wild and Scenic River.

GEOLOGY: The geology of Interstate State Park contains some of the most outstanding and unique geological features to be found anywhere in Minnesota.

About 1.1 billion years ago the North American continent began to tear into two parts along a line from present-day Lake Superior south, to what is now Iowa. Huge flows of lava erupted from the widening cracks, hardening into a strong, dark-grey rock called basalt. The scenic, towering cliffs at Interstate State Park are made of this basalt rock.

600 to 500 million years ago, this region of Minnesota was gradually covered by an encroaching sea. The sand and silt deposited by the seas was compressed and hardened over time to form sandstones and shales. These sedimentary rocks are found in the park and nearby areas.

In some areas, the ocean waves pounded high outcrops of basalt, loosening rocks which fell into the sea and were covered by sand. The rock and sand hardened to form a sedimentary rock known as a conglomerate.

As the global climate cooled, several glaciers pushed across Minnesota. The first glacier formed about one million years ago, the last melted about 10,000 years ago. As the last glacier thawed, its torrent of meltwater rushed south, carving a wide valley which is now known as the St. Croix Valley. Only the very resistant basalts were able to partially withstand the floodwaters, leaving behind the magnificent Dalles of the St. Croix River.

Interstate State Park's most outstanding resource may be the immense holes that formed in the bedrock when the Glacial St. Croix River rushed through the area. Giant whirlpools formed in the turbulent river, blasting a vortex of sand and silt-laden water against the bedrock. The holes these whirlpools carved are called glacial potholes. Interstate State Park contains more glacial potholes in a smaller area than any other location in the world. With a depth of over 60 feet, the world's deepest explored glacial pothole is the Bottomless Pit.

HISTORY: Humans lived in the St. Croix Valley at least 6,000 years ago. Here, attracted by the many plants and animals, many cultures of American Indians made their home. Evidence of their life here has been found in the park.

The first European explorer to visit the area was probably Daniel Greysolon Sieur Duluth in 1680. The St. Croix River was to become an important route of trade and travel over the next few centuries. Several fur trading posts were located on the banks of the St. Croix River in the 18th & 19th centuries. The St. Croix Valley provided excellent habitat for valuable fur-bearing mammals. The Columbia Fur Trading Company operated Fort Barbours, which was established at the falls of the St. Croix in 1825.

1837 treaties with the Ojibway opened up much of the St. Croix Valley to a new industry – logging. The

valley's vast forests of white pine were highly prized for their lumber. The St. Croix River was used to transport logs from the valley's forests to the sawmills downstream. The Dalles of the St. Croix may best be remembered for the immense log jams that formed between the high basalt cliffs. The largest jam occurred in 1886, when over seven miles of logs clogged the river upstream from what is now Interstate State Park.

Long before Interstate State Park was established in 1895, the Dalles of the St. Croix was a natural attraction for thousands of visitors. Steamboat service to Taylors Falls began in 1838, and the railroad came to town in 1880. Iron mooring rings set in the rock along the river and the remains of a railroad trestle remind visitors of the steamboats and trains that once brought visitors to the area.

WILDLIFE: Visitors will find a surprising diversity of habitat in this small park. A hike through the park will reveal maple-basswood forest, oak savanna, white pine forest, prairie, floodplain forest, and basalt bald habitats.

These habitats support a great variety of wildlife. Many types of rare and endangered species are found at Interstate State Park, including native cactus!

The park is an excellent birding spot during spring and fall migrations. Several trails in the park are excellent listening points for early morning birdsongs and evening owl-calling.

Spring wildflowers carpet the St. Croix Valley from mid-April through May. The Sandstone Bluffs Trail is one of the best spring wildflower walks in the region.

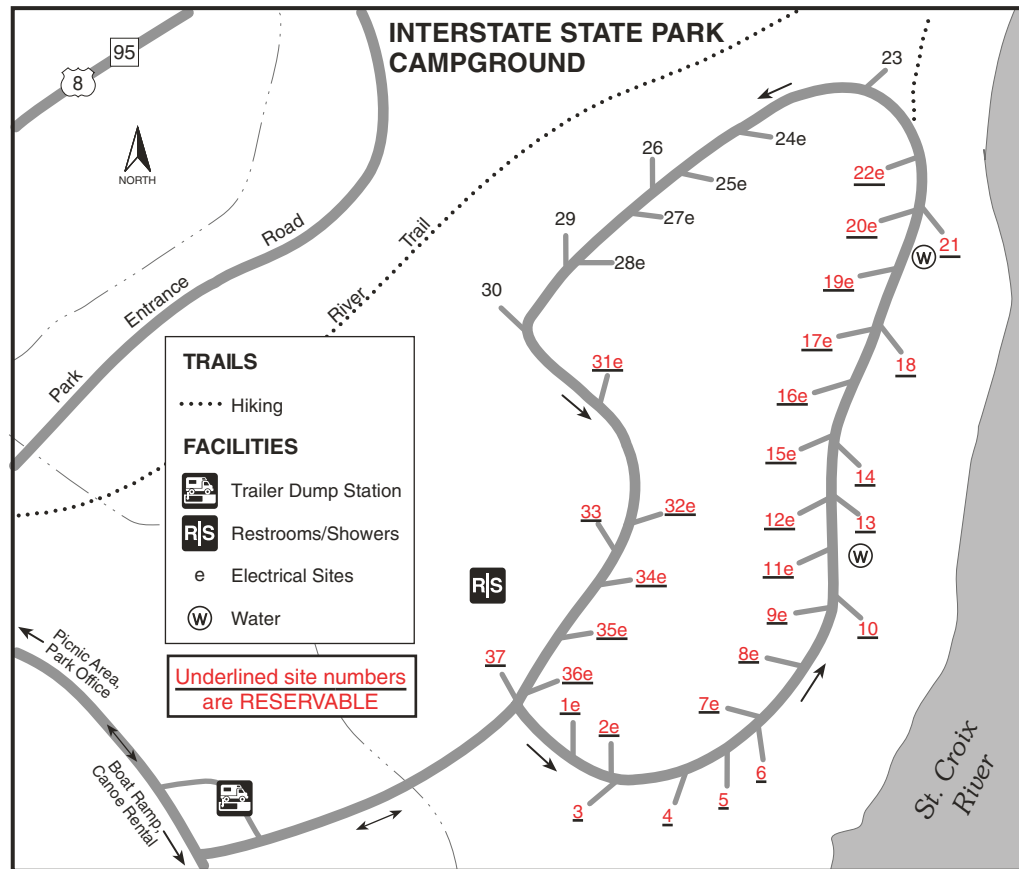
Such varied wildlife and superlative scenery make Interstate State Park an excellent area for everyone that enjoys beauty in nature.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM: The Visitor Center features information on the area's geologic, historic, natural and scenic resources. It is open seasonally from Memorial Day to Labor Day. An interpretive kiosk near the visitor center highlights the history and attractions in the Taylors Falls area.

The Glacial Pothole Trail takes you through one of the most unique geologic areas in the world! It begins near the Visitor Center and includes interpretive signs explaining the natural processes that formed the potholes. Don't miss it.

Other self-guided interpretive trails include the River, Railroad and Sandstone Bluffs trails.

Interpretive publications are available at the Park Office and Visitor Center. They provide orientation for canoe routes, birding and hiking in the park. Be sure to ask about the *Jr. Park Naturalist* activity book and program for kids.



WINTER FACILITIES: The northern end of the park and the campground are open each winter to walk-in traffic. Parking is available by the park office and by the boat ramp. Vault toilets are available year-round near the boat ramp.

SO EVERYONE CAN ENJOY THE PARK . . .

- The park belongs to all Minnesotans. Please treat it with respect and help us to protect it by following the rules.
- The park is open year-round. On a daily basis, the park is closed from 10:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M.
- Camp only in designated locations.
- The use of firearms, explosives, air guns, slingshots, traps, seines, nets, bows and arrows, and all other weapons is prohibited in state parks.
- Pets must be restrained on a leash no longer than six feet. Pets are not allowed in park buildings.
- Park in designated areas only.
- Enjoy park wildlife and plants but please respect them. Do not pick or dig up plants, disturb or feed animals, or scavenge dead wood.
- Build fires only in designated locations—fire rings

or fireplaces. Wood is available for purchase from park staff. Portable stoves or grills are permitted.

- Daily or annual permits are required for all vehicles entering a state park. They may be purchased at the park headquarters or the Information Center in St. Paul (see "FOR MORE INFORMATION" at left).

This information is available in alternative format upon request.

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Department of Natural Resources



DNR Maps