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Lac qui Parle WMA

ABOUT LAC QUI PARLE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Size: 33,500 acres
Year created: 1936

Lac qui Parle Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is the fifth largest WMA in the state and is part of one of the largest blocks of contiguous public land units in southern Minnesota. The WMA is located about 140 miles west of the Twin Cities in the Minnesota River Valley, northwest of the town of Montevideo. Lac qui Parle WMA lies in Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, and Swift counties. It is about 25 miles long, 1 to 3 miles wide and encompasses more than 33,500 acres. Lac qui Parle Lake (6,400 acres) and Marsh Lake (5,100 acres) are the most predominant features. Most visitors come from Montevideo and Appleton. Visitors to the WMA also travel from the Saint Cloud and the Twin Cities Metro area. Due to its size and excellent public hunting opportunities the WMA is a popular destination for outdoor recreation.

LAC QUI PARLE WMA HISTORY

The area that is now Lac qui Parle WMA was first established in 1936 as a state-sponsored flood control project under the federal Works Progress Administration. The unit was authorized as a federal flood control project later in 1936. By 1939, the state completed the water control structures and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) improved and completed the project between 1941 and 1951. Operational authority was transferred from the Minnesota Commissioner of Drainage and Waters to the Corps of Engineers in 1950. In 1957, the Minnesota Legislature placed project lands, except for a small acreage near the water control structures, under the management of the Minnesota Conservation Department, today the DNR, for use as a wildlife refuge and public hunting grounds. The acreage at the time of transfer was 22,877 acres. Since 1957, Lac qui Parle WMA has expanded to

increase the area's potential for wildlife production; to protect, restore, and enhance native plant and animal communities; and to increase outdoor recreation. In 2023, Lac qui Parle WMA included 33,567 acres.

The Lac qui Parle WMA has two unit designations:

- The State Game Refuge, centered on lower Lac qui Parle Lake, is most famous for its role in the restoration of Canada geese and for goose hunting.
- The larger area of WMA designated lands generally lies east of Chippewa County Road 32 and northwest of State Highway 40.

WILDLIFE

Lac qui Parle is home to a variety of wildlife. Commonly hunted species include waterfowl, pheasants, white-tailed deer, turkeys, and doves. Waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and aquatic furbearers benefit from 17 impoundments that are drawn down every few years to mimic natural drought cycles and to encourage aquatic plant regeneration that attracts invertebrates and improves water quality. Management of moist soil units simulates a seasonal wetland by adding and removing water, most often artificially, in a systematic way to maximize food production for waterfowl and shorebirds. An area managed for moist soil is typically flooded in the spring and then maintained moist during the growing season to target the summer production of annual wetland plants that produce large amounts of seed. The unit must be dry enough to till and plant if crops are planted in lieu of natural seed production. When reflooded in late summer or early fall, the decomposing plants also provide ideal habitat for aquatic invertebrates, an important source of duck and shorebird nutrition. Wildlife watchers can spot ducks, geese, swans, pelicans, hawks, eagles, and many other birds, both residents and those passing through during spring and fall migrations.



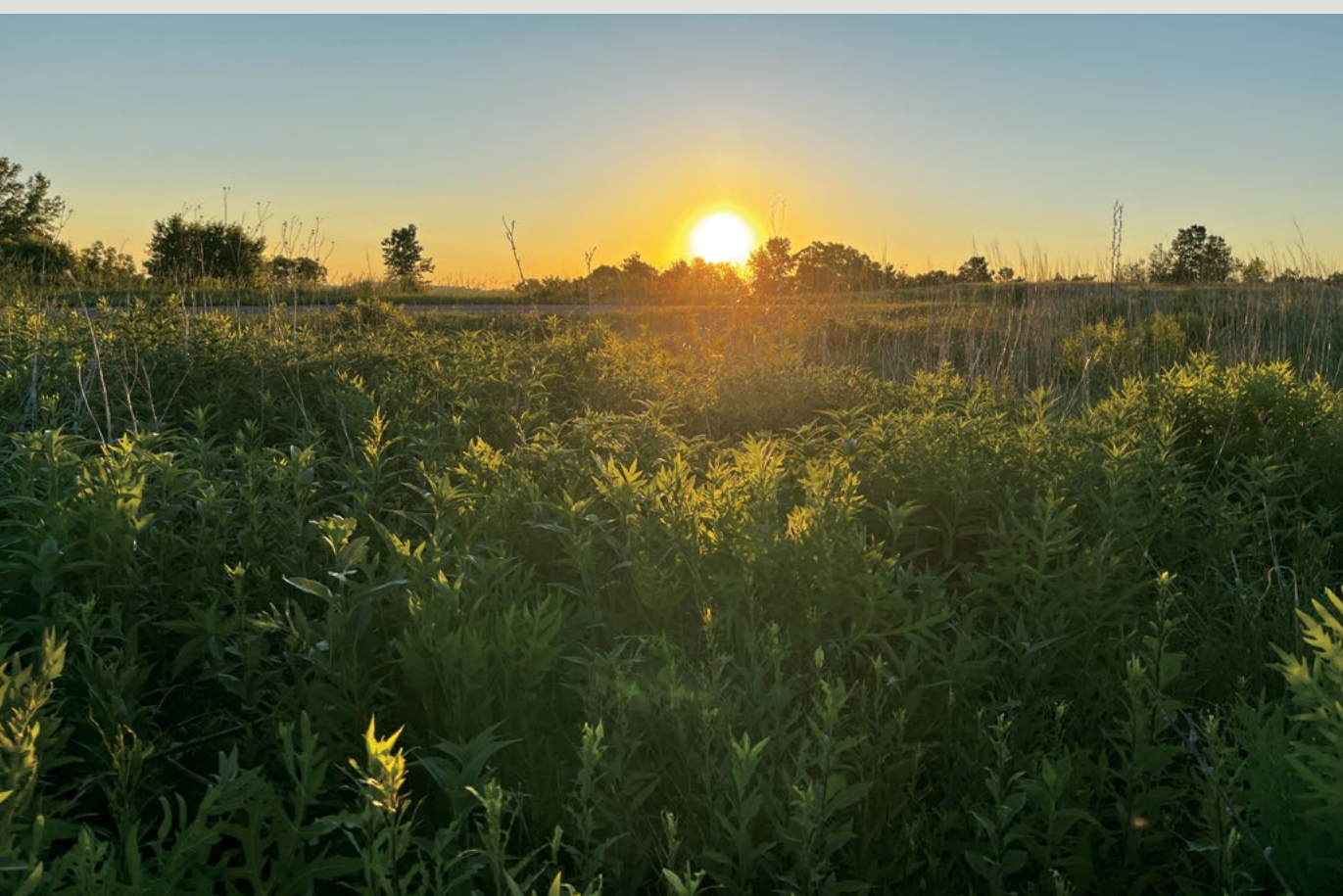
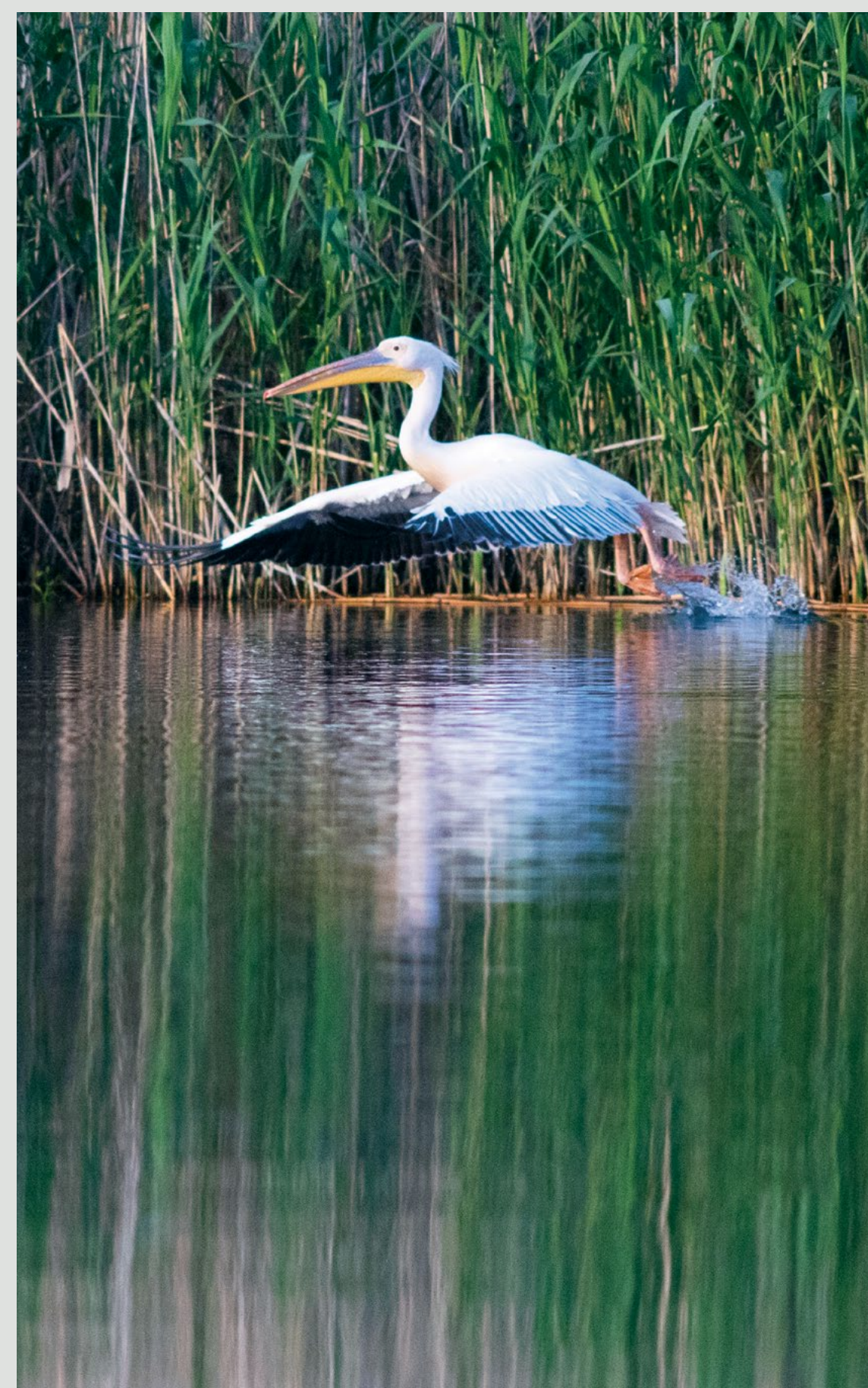
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Lac qui Parle's size and sense of remoteness make it a popular destination. Recreation in the WMA is dominated by hunting and fishing. The majority of hunting is dominated by waterfowl, pheasant, and deer. Hunters also pursue dove, wild turkey, squirrel, and rabbit. Trappers also pursue furbearing mammals like beaver, muskrat, and raccoon. The waters of Lac qui Parle and Marsh lakes are popular with anglers and have excellent crappie, walleye and northern pike fishing. Birdwatchers enjoy many songbirds and waterfowl that use the WMA for nesting and as a migratory stopover. Springtime brings many shed hunters looking for deer antlers.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Overall management at Lac qui Parle WMA emphasizes maintaining a diverse range of native plant communities with a heavy emphasis on native prairie and restored grasslands. Typical management may include a variety of activities:

- Prescribed fire to regenerate native plants and maintain prairie, savanna, and floodplain forest communities.
- Woody invasives control through mechanical removal, chemical treatments, and prescribed fire to maintain open landscapers.
- Cooperative farming agreements and food plots where consistent with management goals.
- Control of aquatic invasive species.
- Maintaining and enhancing user access and facilities via improvements to parking lots, trails, and boundary signs.
- Water level management in impoundments and moist soil units to maintain and improve habitat for shorebirds, waterfowl, amphibians, insects, and furbearers.
- Manage Marsh Lake to maintain less turbid water conditions to benefit diverse fish and wildlife and vegetative communities.



LAC QUI PARLE STATE GAME REFUGE

The following areas are closed to hunting except for participants permitted for disability hunts or those with specific authorization: The portions of the refuge within the Lac qui Parle State Park, Lac qui Parle Mission Site, Rosemoen Islands, or portions that are posted with "State Wildlife Sanctuary – Do Not Trespass" signs.

The remainder of the refuge is open to:

- Deer hunting.
- Waterfowl hunting at designated hunting stations only from the third Thursday in October through the end of the goose season. Stations are first-come, first-served.
- Small game (including turkey) other than waterfowl, except from the second Saturday in October through November 30. Small game hunting is not allowed on closed Canada goose hunting days during a split goose season.

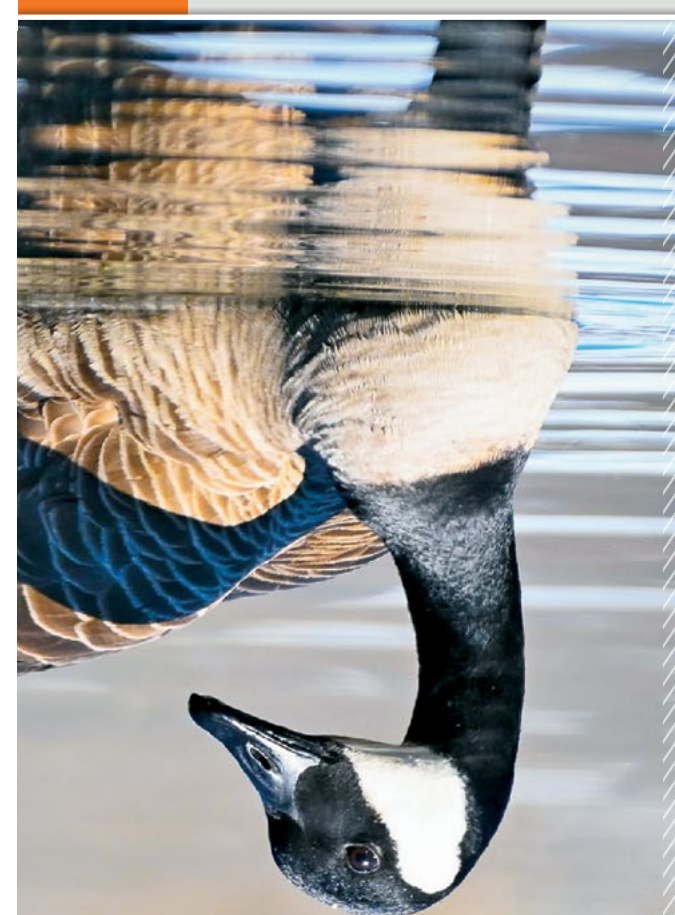
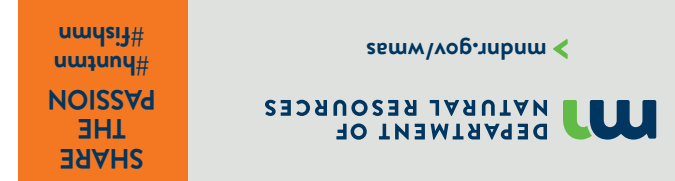
No unauthorized person may trespass during the dates posted on any part of the refuge posted with "State Wildlife Sanctuary – Do not Trespass" signs.

The exceptions are:

- Ice fishing.
- Open water fishing is permitted in the posted closed area except from November 1 through the close of the open Canada goose season.

General Restrictions for waterfowl hunting at designated hunting stations on Lac qui Parle State Game Refuge:

- Hunters must use designated hunting stations on a first-come, first-served basis.
- No person may park in or otherwise occupy any designated controlled hunting zone parking lot or any hunting station from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m.
- General regulations for WMAs and state game refuges apply to hunters using designated blinds.
- Hunters must also comply with all other waterfowl and general hunting regulations.
- No person may leave any refuse, offal, or feathers on public lands in the controlled hunting zone, parking lot, or designated overnight use area.
- No alcoholic beverages may be consumed or possessed at any hunting stations on public lands.

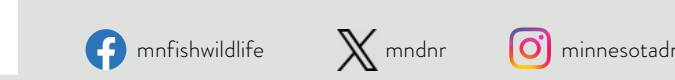


Lac qui Parle WMA
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS



Located in Big Stone, Chippewa, Lac qui Parle, and Swift Counties

CALL US
Interpreters are available to answer all of your questions.
License, titling and registration: M-F 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
General information: M-F 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
888-MINNDNR (646-6367) or 651-296-6157
info.dnr@state.mn.us



DNR TIP LINE (Turn In Poachers)
800-652-9093
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
888-MINNDNR (646-6367) or 651-296-6157
mndnr.gov

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WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA RULES

These activities are **permitted** on Lac qui Parle WMA:

- Hunting and fishing in accordance with state regulations
- Hiking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing, both on and off designated trails
- Foraging for wild edibles such as mushrooms for personal use

These activities are **allowed only with a permit** available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) area wildlife manager:

- Trapping
- Cutting fuel wood for home use
- Bowfishing after 10 p.m.

These activities are **prohibited** on Lac qui Parle WMA:

- Camping
- Riding horses
- Target shooting
- Operating snowmobiles or all-terrain vehicles
- Operating a motorized personal watercraft
- Collecting plants or animals for commercial purposes
- Leaving equipment overnight, including boats, decoys, deer stands, hunting blinds, and trail cameras
- Consuming alcoholic beverages
- Please do not park in front of gates, respect "No Motorized Vehicle" signs, and pack out what you packed in.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Minnesota has more than 1,500 WMAs that protect about 1.37 million acres of habitat all across the state, providing opportunities for people to explore, watch wildlife, hike, hunt, fish, and trap. You can find more information about Lac qui Parle and other WMAs, including detailed maps, on the DNR's website: mndnr.gov/wmas

Minnesota DNR
Lac qui Parle Area DNR Headquarters
14047 20th St. NW
Watson, MN 56295
320-734-4451

Minnesota DNR
Region 4 Headquarters
21371 State Highway 15
New Ulm, MN 56073
507-233-1229

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

911 | MINNESOTA STATE PATROL DISPATCH 320-839-3588 | CHIPPEWA COUNTY SHERIFF 320-269-2121
LAC QUI PARLE COUNTY SHERIFF 320-598-3720 | SWIFT COUNTY SHERIFF 320-843-3133

LEAVE TROUBLE BEHIND

Help prevent the spread of invasive plants and animals.

- Clean your gear before entering and leaving the recreation site.
- Remove mud and seeds from clothes, pets, boots, gear, and vehicles.
- PlayCleanGo.org

