

Lower Minnesota River Valley

Conservation Challenges:

- *Conversion to agricultural uses
- *Changes in agricultural practices
- *Deforestation/logging
- *Increased draitling makes stream flow more flashy, reduces groundwater
- *Fluctuating/declining river levels
- *Invasive spp.: Buckthorns, Eurasian honeysuckle, garlic mustard, leafy spurge, EAB
- *Habitat fragmentation
- *Urbanization/lakeshore development
- *Eutrophic lakes
- *Agricultural water pollutants, TMDL
- *Frac sand and bedrock mining
- *Fire-dependent communities are likely to decline due to difficulty in restoring natural fire regimes
- * Mining

Conservation Opportunities:

- * Watershed is engaged in natural resource management planning
- * Green Corridors Initiative
- *Friends of Minnesota River Valley
- *Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
- *Audobon Important Bird Area

Existing Conservation Network:

State Parks: Fort Snelling
Minnesota Valley

State Forests:

SNAs: Chamberlain Woods
Kasota Prairie
Seminary Fen
Savage Fen

Wildlife Management Areas:	Aquatic Management Areas:
Carver Highlands	Riley Lake
Ney	Eagle Creek
O. A. Vee	High Island Lake
Ottawa	St. Peter
Raguet	
Vale	

Rare Features:

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3 jumping spiders | Goldie's Fern |
| A Species of Lichen | Gopher snake |
| Acadian Flycatcher | Groundwater Process (Holocene) |
| American Bittern | Hair-like Beak-rush |
| American Brook Lamprey | Henslow's Sparrow |
| American Ginseng | Hickorynut |
| Arogos Skipper | Higgins Eye |
| Bald Eagle | Hill's Thistle |
| Bat Concentration | Hooded Warbler |
| Beaked Spike-rush | Kentucky Coffee-tree |
| Bell's Vireo | Kettle (Quaternary) |
| Big Tick-trefoil | Kitten-tails |
| Black Buffalo | Leadplant Flower Moth |
| Black Sandshell | Loggerhead Shrike |
| Blanding's Turtle | Louisiana Broomrape |
| Blue Sucker | Louisiana Waterthrush |
| Butterfly | Low Milk-vetch |
| Carolina Foxtail | Marsh Arrow-grass |
| Cerulean Warbler | Milk snake |
| Clustered Broomrape | Monkeyface |
| Common Gallinule | Mouse-ear Chickweed |
| Cowbane | Mousetail |
| Eared False Foxglove | Mucket |
| Eastern Hognose Snake | Mussel Sampling Site |
| Ebonyshell | North American Racer |
| Elephant-ear | Northern Myotis |
| Elktoe | Northern Poor Fen |
| Fluted-shell | Paddlefish |
| Forget-me-not | Peregrine Falcon |
| Forster's Tern | Pistolgrip |
| | Plaiins Hog-nosed Snake |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Plains Pocket Mouse | Three-leaved Coneflower |
| Prairie Moonwort | Tricolored Bat |
| Pugnose Shiner | Trumpeter Swan |
| Purple Wartyback | Tuberous Indian-plantain |
| Rattlesnake-master | Twig-rush |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | Upland Sandpiper |
| Red-Tailed Prairie Leafhopper | Valerian |
| Regal Fritillary | Wartyback |
| Rhombic-petaled Evening Primrose | Washboard |
| Rock Clubmoss | Water-hyssop |
| Rock Pocketbook | Western Foxsnake |
| Rough-seeded Fameflower | Western Harvest Mouse |
| Round Pigtoe | White Wild Indigo |
| Salamander Mussel | Whorled Nut-rush |
| Sandy Stream Tiger Beetle | Winged Mapleleaf |
| Sessile-flowered Cress | Wolf's Spike-rush |
| Sheepnose | Yellow Sandshell |
| Short-beaked Arrowhead | Yellow-fruited Sedge |
| Shovelnose Sturgeon | |
| Skipjack Herring | |
| Small White Lady's Slipper | |
| Smooth Rock Cress | |
| Smooth Softshell | |
| Snow Trillium | |
| Spike | |
| Sterile Sedge | |
| Stream Composite (Quaternary) | |
| Sullivant's Milkweed | |

Lower Minnesota River Valley Opportunity Area

Ecological Significance:

The Lower Minnesota River Valley contains a variety of habitats including floodplain forest and wet meadows, Big Woods along its bluffs, rock and sand terrace prairies, calcareous fens, and river channel and sandbar habitats. The valley is increasingly subject to human-induced impacts from intensive agriculture, draitling, and urbanization. While the much of the river's source is from the drier western part of the state, and hence flows are subject to the vagaries of prairie precipitation, the river's flows are becoming even more variable, and filled with sediment and agricultural chemicals. In spite of these factors, some of the highest concentrations of rare species reports for birds, reptiles, amphibians, mussels, and plants are within the valley. *Therefore, it is critical to preserve unique habitats to improve the resilience of the valley ecosystem as it faces increasing disturbance from more intensive land use practices.*



Counties:

- Blue Earth
- Nicollet
- LeSueur
- Sibley
- Scott
- Carver
- Hennepin
- Dakota

Rare Native Plant Communities:

- Black Ash - (Red Maple) Seepage Swamp
- Calcareous Fen (Southeastern)
- Crystalline Bedrock Outcrop (Transition)
- Dry Barrens Prairie (Southern)
- Dry Hill Oak Savanna (Southern)
- Dry Hill Prairie (Southern)
- Dry Sand - Gravel Oak Savanna (Southern)
- Dry Sand - Gravel Prairie (Southern)
- Elm - Basswood - Black Ash - (Hackberry) Forest
- Mesic Prairie (Southern)
- Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest
- Seepage Meadow/Carr
- Seepage Meadow/Carr, Tussock Sedge Subtype
- Silver Maple - (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest
- Southern Mesic Maple-Basswood Forest
- Southern Wet Ash Swamp
- Southern Dry Prairie
- Spikerush - Bur Reed Marsh (Prairie)
- Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest
- Sugar Maple Forest (Big Woods)
- Wet Prairie (Southern)

Ecological Evaluations:

- Judson Meadows
- South Berid 31
- Lime 31
- Kasota Prairie SNA/ Unimin Conservation
- Kasota Prairie Addition
- Trillium Woods
- Rush River Woods
- End of the World Woods
- High Island Creek
- San Francisco Twp. Prairie
- Riley Creek Woods
- Seminary Fen
- Charlson Site
- Savage Fen
- Black Dog Preserve

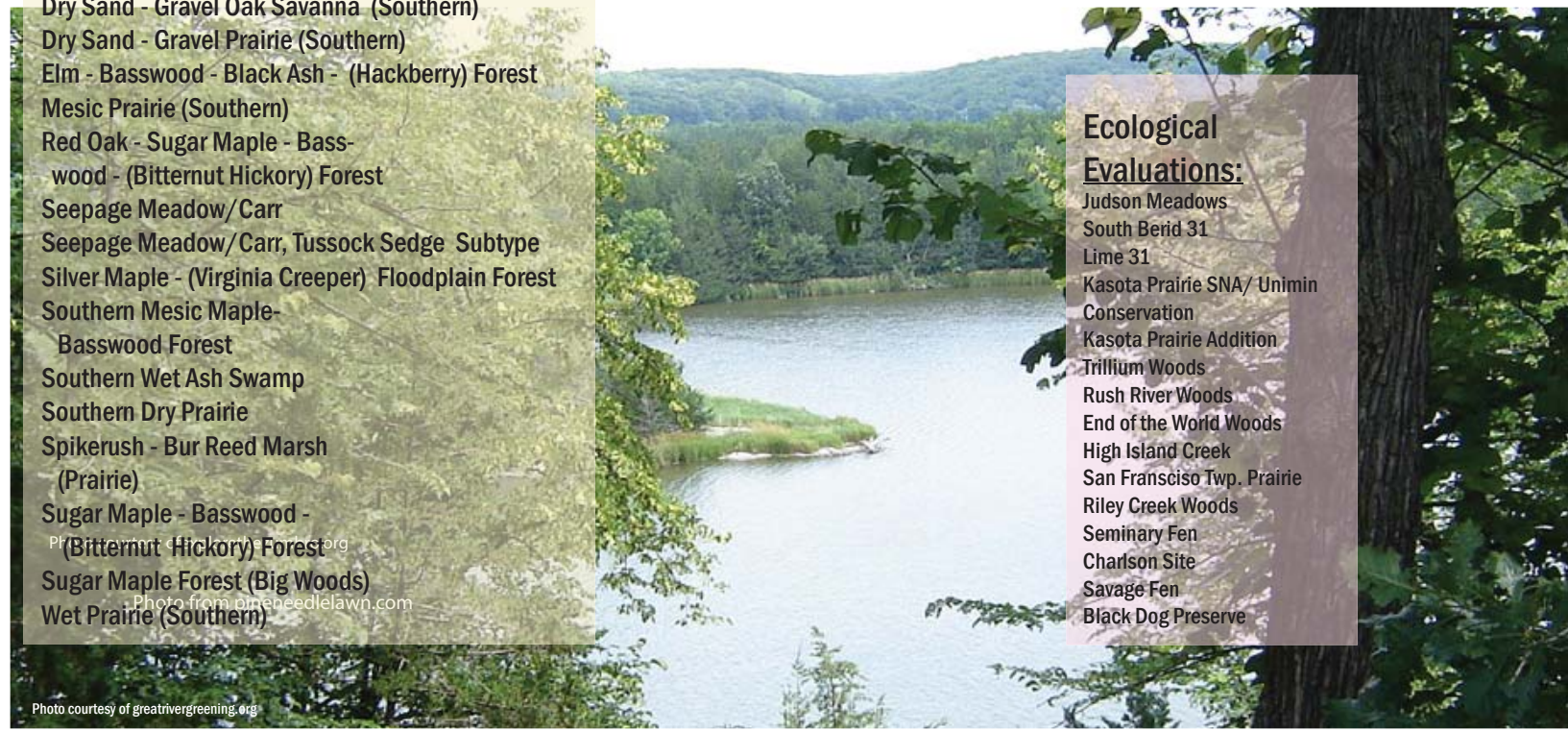
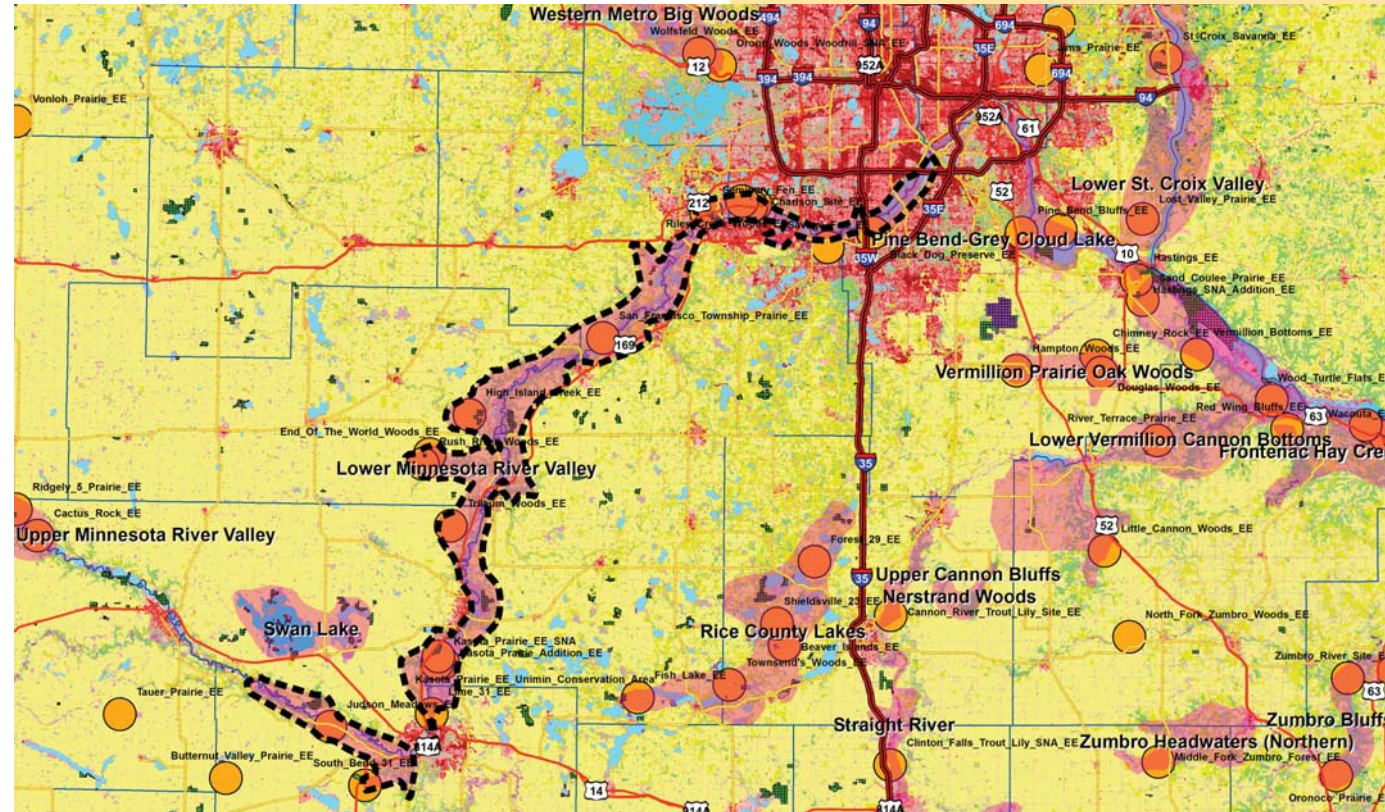


Photo courtesy of greatrivergreening.org

Lower Minnesota River Valley

Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



Please see Legend at the front of the Opportunity Area Descriptions for a key to this map

Lower Minnesota River Valley

Marxan Prioritization, Element Occurrences

