

Lower Root River

Conservation Challenges:

- * Conversion to agricultural uses
- * Changes in agricultural practices
- * Conversion to mining
- * Deforestation/logging
- * Increased dewatering makes stream flow more flashy, reduces groundwater for algific habitats
- * Waterways are more incised, with more alluvium, and higher turbidity
- * Invasive spp.: Common buckthorn, Eurasian honeysuckle, garlic mustard, leafy spurge
- * Habitat fragmentation
- * Valley bottoms prone to high-volume floods
- * Fire-dependent communities are likely to decline due to difficulty in restoring natural fire regimes

Conservation Opportunities:

- * Land Trusts
- * Root River Planning
- * Conservation Partners along Mississippi Flyway

Existing Conservation Network:

State Forests:

Richard J. Dorer Memorial
Hardwood

SNAs:

Mound Prairie

Aquatic Management Areas:

Dexter Creek

Wildlife Management Areas:

Mound Prairie WMA
Root River WMA

Reinvest in Minnesota: Yes

Rare Species:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| American Brook Lamprey | Prairie Vole |
| American Ginseng | Purple Cliff-brake |
| Bald Eagle | Rhombic-petaled Evening Primrose |
| Black Redhorse | Sandhill Crane |
| Blanchard's Cricket Frog | Shovelnose Sturgeon |
| Blanding's Turtle | Stemless Tick-trefoil |
| Blue Sucker | Sweet-smelling Indian-plaintain |
| Bluntnose Dart | Three-flowered Melicgrass |
| Canada Frostweed | Timber Rattlesnake |
| Clasping Milkweed | Western Fox snake |
| Common Galinule | Yellow Pimpernel |
| Goat's-rue | |
| Gopher snake | |
| Gravel Chub | |
| Henslow's Sparrow | |
| Jewelled Shooting Star | |
| Long-bearded Hawkweed | |
| Milk snake | |
| Narrow-leaved Milkweed | |
| North American Racer | |
| Northern Cricket Frog | |
| Old Field Toadflax | |
| Ovate-leaved Skullcap | |
| Plains Wild Indigo | |
| Prairie Moonwort | |

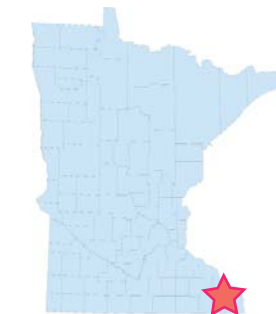


Photo courtesy of ColdSnap Photography

Lower Root River Opportunity Area

Ecological Significance:

The Root River is the major drainage of southeasternmost Minnesota, and the river has broadened into a mile-wide valley in its lowest reaches. North-facing slopes continue to be home for mesic hardwood forests. Southerly aspects frequently have goat prairies, mixed hardwoods occupy east- and west-facing slopes, and mesic hardwoods are found on north-facing slopes. Wetlands have a much greater presence in the lower valley, particularly in the main valley of the Root. Many NPCs and species are endemic to the Blufflands subsection, such as twinleaf and shagbark Hickory. *Large variations in terrain afford opportunities for a mosaic of community types within a small area.* In addition, a number of eastern hardwood forest species reach their northwesternmost aspects of their native ranges in the Blufflands. Some of the tree species include black oak, honey locust, chinkapin oak, swamp white oak, and shagbark hickory. The species may expand northward with climate change, and the Blufflands will be a route for southern forest species to reach the rest of the state. The Blufflands also are within the Mississippi Flyway and provide essential habitat for migrating birds and waterfowl.



Counties:

Houston

Rare Native Plant Communities:

- Calcareous Fen (Southeastern)
- Dry Barrens Oak Savanna (Southern), Oak Subtype
- Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie (Southern)
- Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh
- Red Oak - White Oak - (Sugar Maple) Forest
- Red Oak - White Oak Forest
- Sedge Meadow
- Seepage Meadow/Carr
- White Pine - Oak Woodland (Sand)



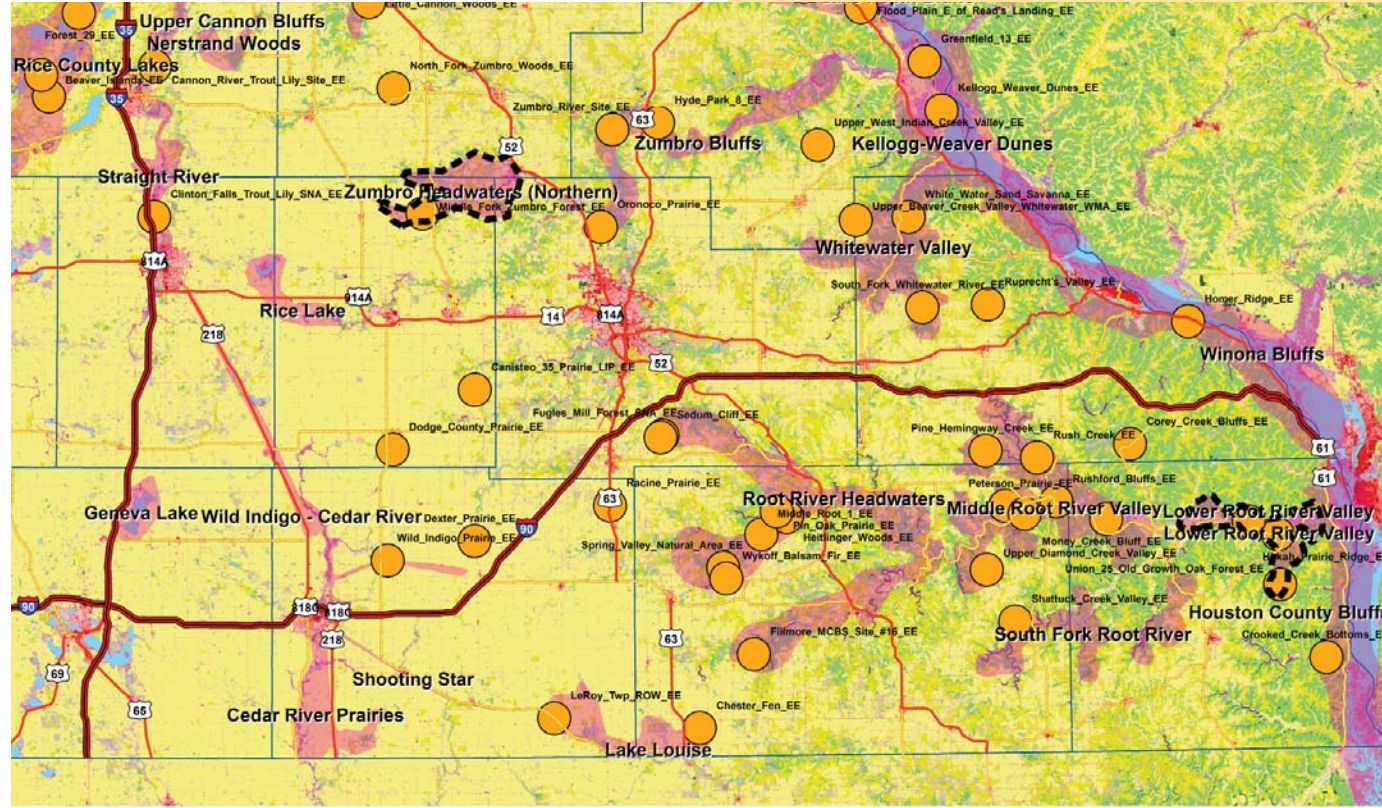
Ecological Evaluations:

- Mound Prairie
- Union 25 Old Growth Forest
- Hokah Prairie Ridge

Other Candidate Sites:

Lower Root River

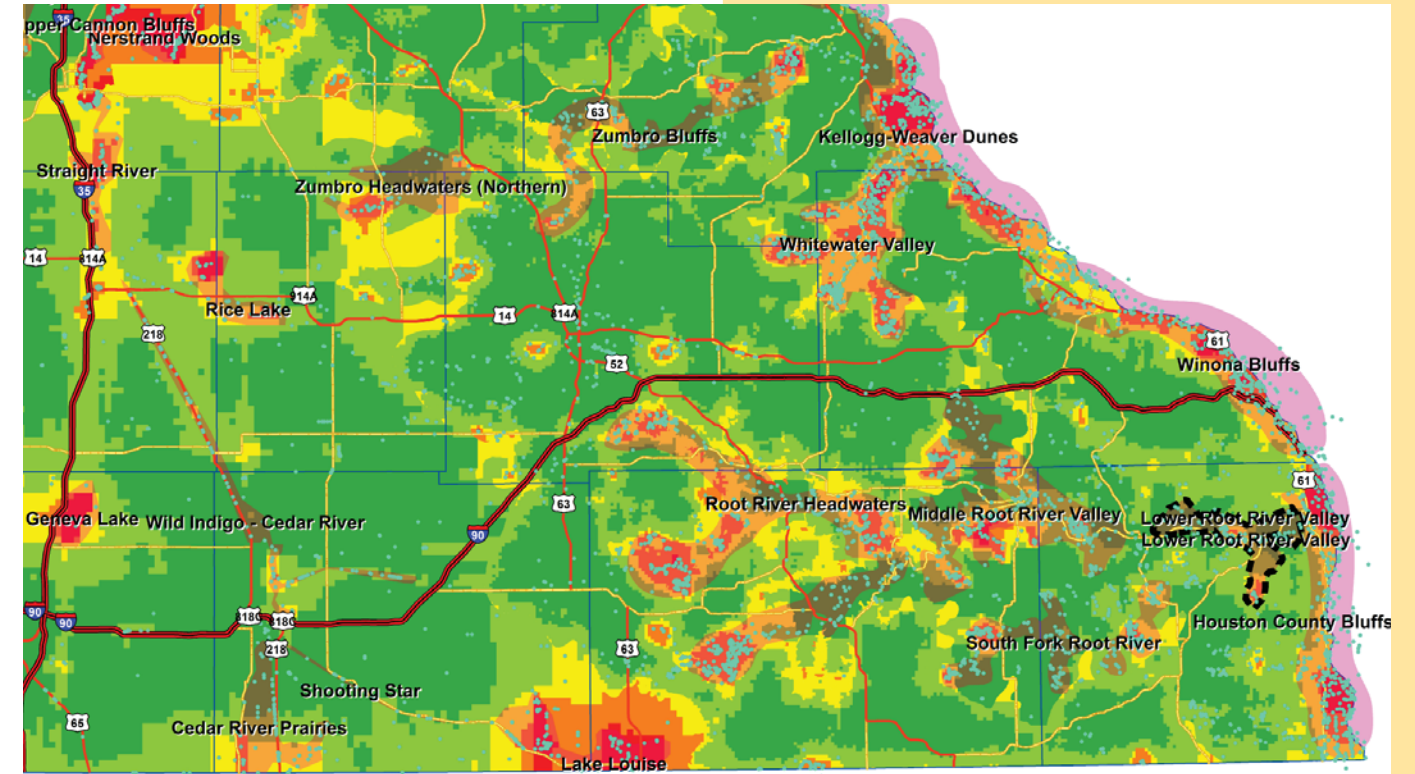
Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



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

Lower Root River

Marxan Prioritization, Element Occurrences



Legend

- Profiled COA
 - Conservation Opportunity Area
 - Rare Feature
 - County Boundary
 - Large Lake
- Marxan Conservation Prioritization**
- Lowest Priority
 - Low Priority
 - Medium Priority
 - High Priority
 - Highest Priority
 - Interstate Highway
 - U.S. Trunk Highway
 - MN Trunk Highway