

## Conservation Challenges:

- \*Urbanization
- \*Conversion to agricultural uses
- \*Changes in agricultural practices
- \*Increased drainting makes stream flow more flashy, reduces groundwater
- \*Fluctuating/declining groundwater levels
- \*Invasive spp.: Buckthorns, Eurasian honeysuckle, garlic, mustard, leafy spurge, EAB
- \*Habitat fragmentation
- \*Agricultural water pollutants/sedimentation
- \*Fire-dependent communities are likely to decline due to difficulty in restoring natural fire regimes

## Conservation Opportunities:

- \*Watersheds are engaged in natural resource management planning

## Existing Conservation Network:

**State Parks:** Afton  
Interstate  
William O'Brien

### State Forests:

**SNAs:** Falls Creek  
Franconia Bluffs  
Lost Valley Prairie  
St. Croix Savanna

### Wildlife Management Areas:

### National Wildlife Refuge:

## Ecological Evaluations:

Cedar Bend White Pines  
Fairy Falls  
Franconia St. Croix Corridor  
Lost Valley

## Rare Features:

A Caddisfly  
A Jumping Spider  
Two Species of Fungus  
Acadian Flycatcher  
American Brook Lamprey  
American Ginseng  
American Water-pennywort  
Autumn Fimbristylis  
Bald Eagle  
Bat Concentration  
Beard-tongue  
Black Sandshell  
Blanding's Turtle  
Blue Sucker  
Blunt-lobed Grapefern  
Bog Bluegrass  
Bog Copper  
Bullfrog  
Butterfly  
Buttonbush  
Canada Frostweed  
Cattail Sedge  
Cerulean Warbler  
Colonial Waterbird Nesting Site  
Common Five-lined Skink  
Creek Heelsplitter  
Creeping Juniper

Crystal Darter  
Eastern Hognose Snake  
Eastern Spotted Skunk  
Ebonyshell  
Elephant-ear  
Elktoe  
False Mermaid  
Fawnsfoot  
Fernleaf False Foxglove  
Fluted-shell  
Forked Chickweed  
Georgia Bulrush  
Gilt Darter  
Goldie's Fern  
Gopher snake  
Halberd-leaved Tearthumb  
Henslow's Sparrow  
Hickorynut  
Higgins Eye  
Hill's Thistle  
Hooded Warbler  
Humped Bladderwort  
James' Polanisia  
Kitten-tails  
Lake Sturgeon  
Least Moonwort  
Leonard's Skipper  
Lilia-leaved Twayblade  
Long-bearded Hawkweed  
Louisiana Broomrape

Louisiana Waterthrush  
Matricary Grapefern  
Milk snake  
Monkeyface  
Mucket  
Mussel Sampling Site  
Narrow-leaved Pinweed  
North American Racer  
Northern Myotis  
Old Field Toadflax  
Paddlefish  
Peregrine Falcon  
Pistolgrip  
Plains Prickly Pear  
Powder-edged ruffle lichen  
Proglacial River Erosion (Quaternary)  
Pugnose Minnow  
Purple Wartyback  
Red-shouldered Hawk  
Red-Tailed Prairie Leafhopper  
Rock Pocketbook  
Rock Sandwort  
Rough-seeded Fameflower  
Round Pigtoe  
Salamander Mussel  
Salted shell lichen  
Sandy Stream Tiger Beetle

Shovelnose Sturgeon  
Skipjack Herring  
Smooth Softshell  
Snailseed Pondweed  
Snuffbox  
Southern Brook Lamprey  
Spectaclecase  
Spike  
Spiny Hornwort  
Spotted Pondweed  
St. Croix Snaketail  
St. Lawrence Grapefern  
Stemless Tick-trefoil  
Tall Nut-rush  
Timber Rattlesnake  
Tricolored Bat  
Trumpeter Swan  
Virginia Water Horehound  
Walter's Barnyard Grass  
Wartyback  
Washboard  
Western Fox Snake  
White Baneberry  
White Wild Indigo  
Wild Petunia  
Winged Mapleleaf  
Witch-hazel  
Yellow Sandshell

# Lower St. Croix Valley Opportunity Area

## Ecological Significance:

The St. Croix River Valley has great importance ecologically, recreationally, and as a scenic resource. A variety of plant communities and plant and animal species find suitable habitat outside of their native range along the varied niches that the valley provides. Species that vary from the Louisiana flycatcher to the prickly pear cactus are found here, sometimes a substantial distance from the nearest reported location. The valley is an important migratory flyway also. Some of the most familiar places of geological significance are located along the valley, such as Taylor's Falls/Interstate Park gorge, Cedar Bend, and the Kettle River Rapids. The St. Croix is familiar to many as it provides a conduit for northern species such as eastern white pine to extend its range much farther south within Minnesota, and thus brings features of the Laurentian landscape much closer to the Twin Cities.



## Counties:

Chisago  
Washington

## Rare Native Plant Communities:

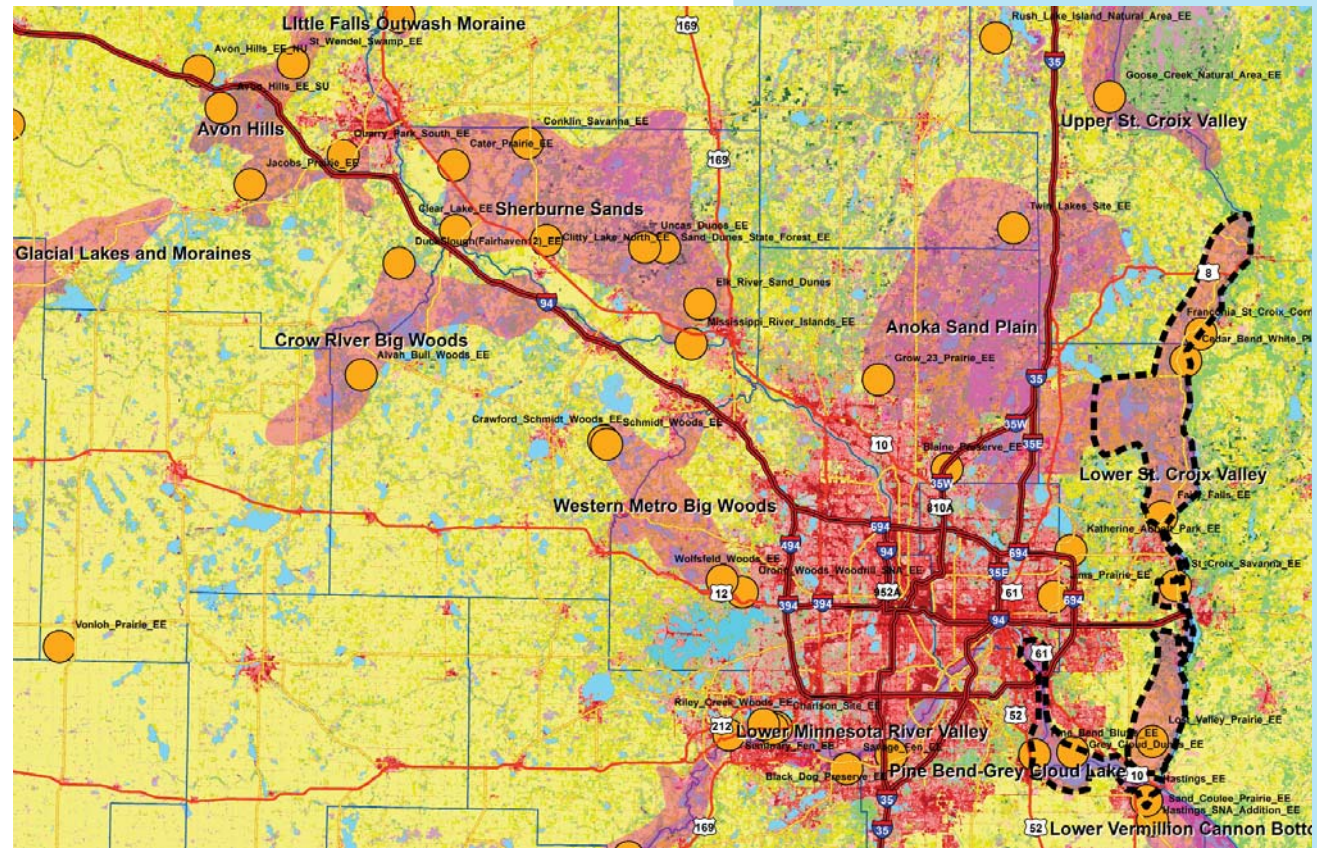
Alder - (Maple - Loosestrife) Swamp  
Black Ash - (Red Maple) Seepage Swamp  
Crystalline Bedrock Outcrop (Transition)  
Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie (Southern)  
Dry Sand - Gravel Oak Savanna (Southern)  
Dry Sand - Gravel Prairie (Southern)  
Elm - Ash - Basswood Terrace Forest  
Gravel/cobble Beach (River)  
Lake Bed  
Mesic Sandstone Cliff (Southern)  
Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh  
Oak - (Red Maple) Woodland  
Oak - Aspen - Red Maple Forest  
Prairie Rich Fen  
Red Oak - Basswood Forest (Noncalcareous Till)  
Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest  
Red Oak-Sugar Maple-Basswood-(Bluebead Lily) Forest  
Red Oak - White Oak - (Sugar Maple) Forest  
Red Oak - White Oak Forest  
Red Pine-White Pine Woodland (Eastcentral Bedrock)  
Sand Beach/Sandbar (River),  
Permanent Stream Subtype  
Sedge Meadow  
Seepage Meadow/Carr  
Seepage Meadow/Carr, Impatiens Subtype  
Seepage Meadow/Carr, Tussock Sedge Subtype  
Silver Maple - (Virginia Creeper) Floodplain Forest  
Spikerush - Bur Reed Marsh (Northern)  
Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest  
Tamarack Swamp (Southern)  
White Pine - Oak - Sugar Maple Forest  
White Pine - Oak Woodland (Sand)  
Willow Sandbar Shrubland (River)



Photo courtesy of sanderson, wikimapia

# Lower St. Croix Valley

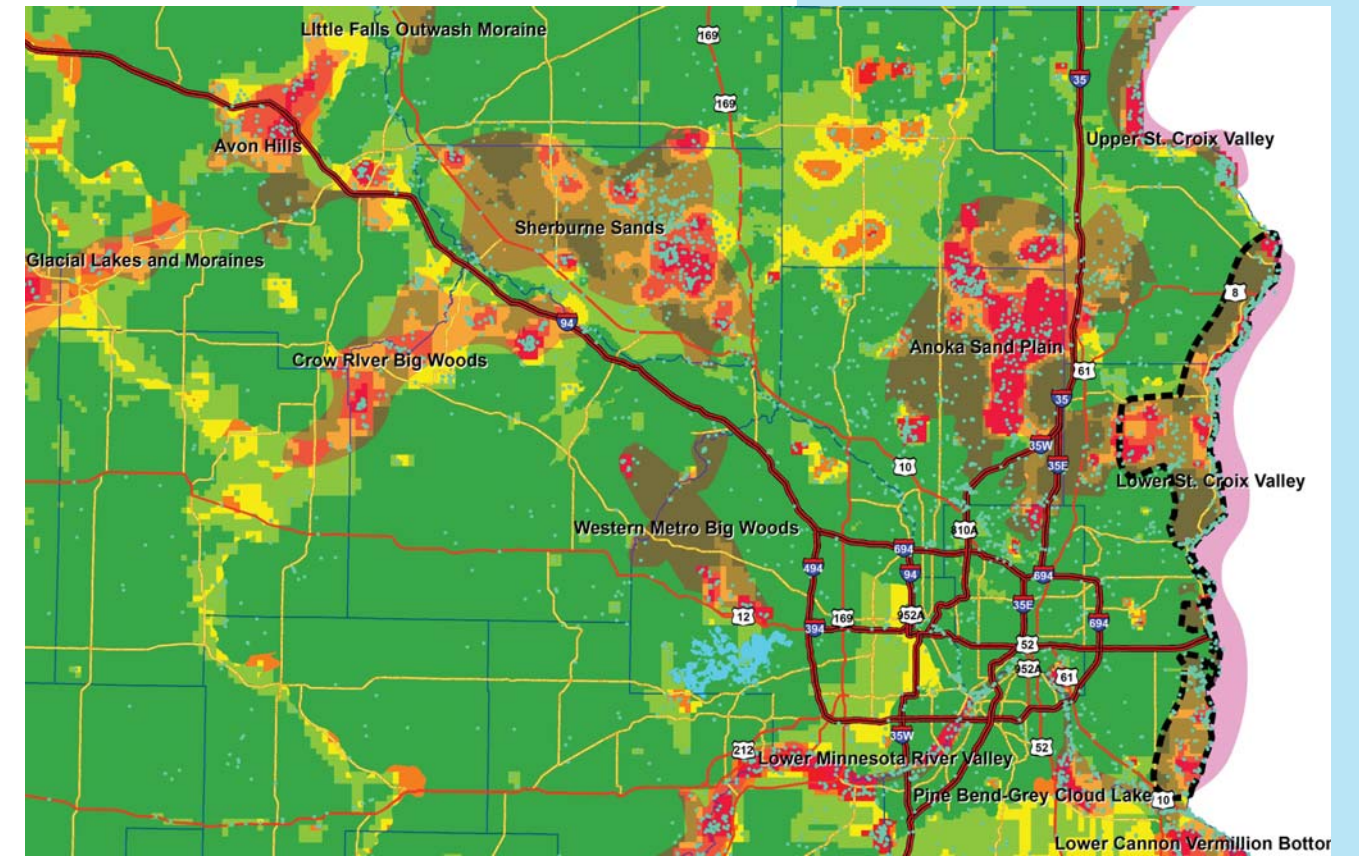
Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



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

# Lower St. Croix Valley

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