

Conservation Challenges:

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

Conservation Opportunities:

- *
- *

Rare Features:

- Acadian Flycatcher
- American Ginseng
- Bald Eagle
- Black Sandshell
- Buttonbush
- Colonial Water bird nesting site
- Kentucky Coffee-tree
- Least Darter
- Loggerhead Shrike
- Louisiana Waterthrush
- Prairie Vole
- Sandhill Craine
- Spike
- Thread-like Naiad
- Trumpeter Swan

Existing Conservation Network:

State Forests:

SNAs: Whitney Island

Aquatic Management Areas:

- Cannon River
- Caron Lake
- Cedar Lake
- Circle Lake
- Dudley-Kelly
- Horseshoe Lake
- Lower Sakatah Lake
- Mazaska 2nd Addition

Wildlife Management Areas:

- Big Woods Heritage
- Boyd Sartell
- Cannon River
- Dwyer
- Milest
- Robert J. Lick
- Sakatah

Waterfowl Production Areas:

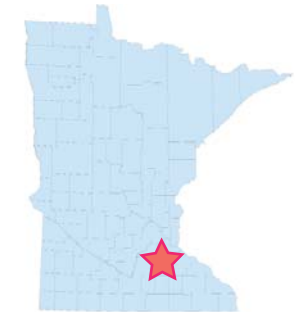
- Wolf Creek
- Erin Prairie

Reinvest in Minnesota:

Rice County Lakes Opportunity Area

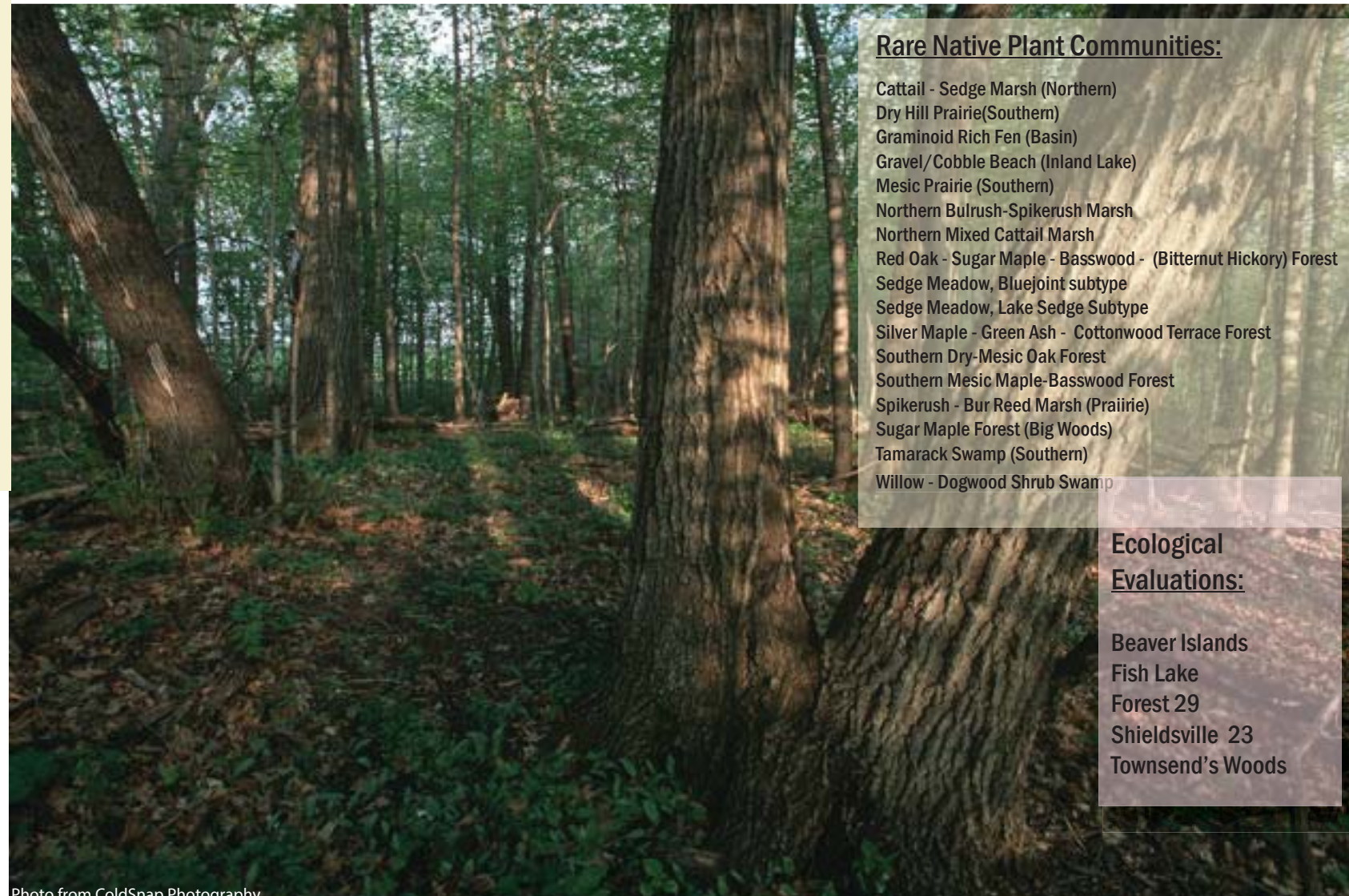
Ecological Significance:

Rich, mesic hardwood forests of sugar maple, basswood, red oak, and American elm dominated the landscapes of south-central Minnesota prior to European settlement. These forests were able to persist as the frequent lakes, wetlands, hummocky terrain of the glacial moraine topography of western Rice County. These were highly productive forests with a rich wildflower layer that is being lost to impacts from non-native earthworms, deer, common buckthorn, and garlic mustard. Fully intact forests are also disappearing quickly as they are also converted to residential development and agricultural cultivation. Only two percent of the Big Woods landscape remains forested, therefore these forest remnants should be a priority for conservation.



Counties:

- LeSueur
- Rice



Rare Native Plant Communities:

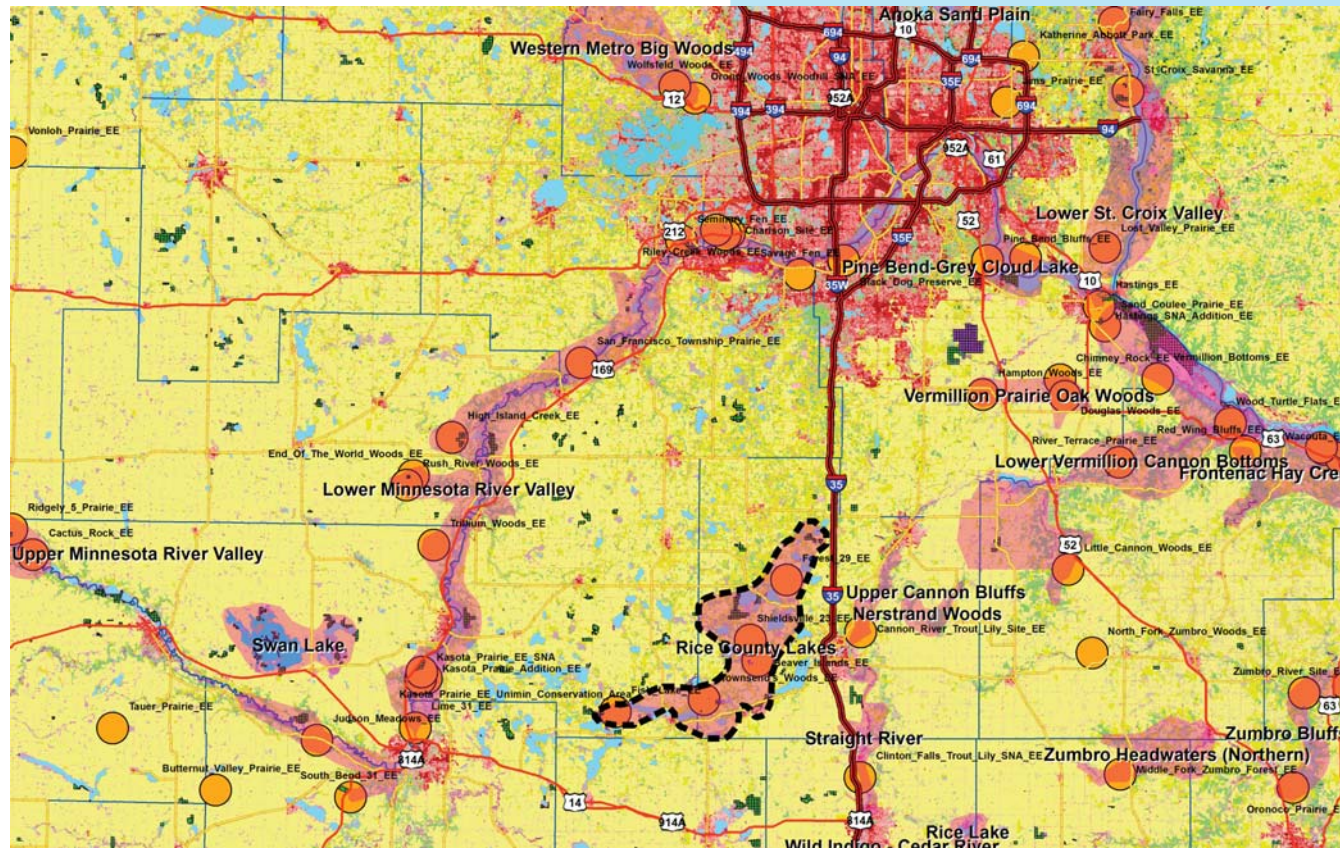
- Cattail - Sedge Marsh (Northern)
- Dry Hill Prairie(Southern)
- Graminoid Rich Fen (Basin)
- Gravel/Cobble Beach (Inland Lake)
- Mesic Prairie (Southern)
- Northern Bulrush-Spikerush Marsh
- Northern Mixed Cattail Marsh
- Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest
- Sedge Meadow, Bluejoint subtype
- Sedge Meadow, Lake Sedge Subtype
- Silver Maple - Green Ash - Cottonwood Terrace Forest
- Southern Dry-Mesic Oak Forest
- Southern Mesic Maple-Basswood Forest
- Spikerush - Bur Reed Marsh (Prairie)
- Sugar Maple Forest (Big Woods)
- Tamarack Swamp (Southern)
- Willow - Dogwood Shrub Swamp

Ecological Evaluations:

- Beaver Islands
- Fish Lake
- Forest 29
- Shieldsville 23
- Townsend's Woods

Rice County Lakes

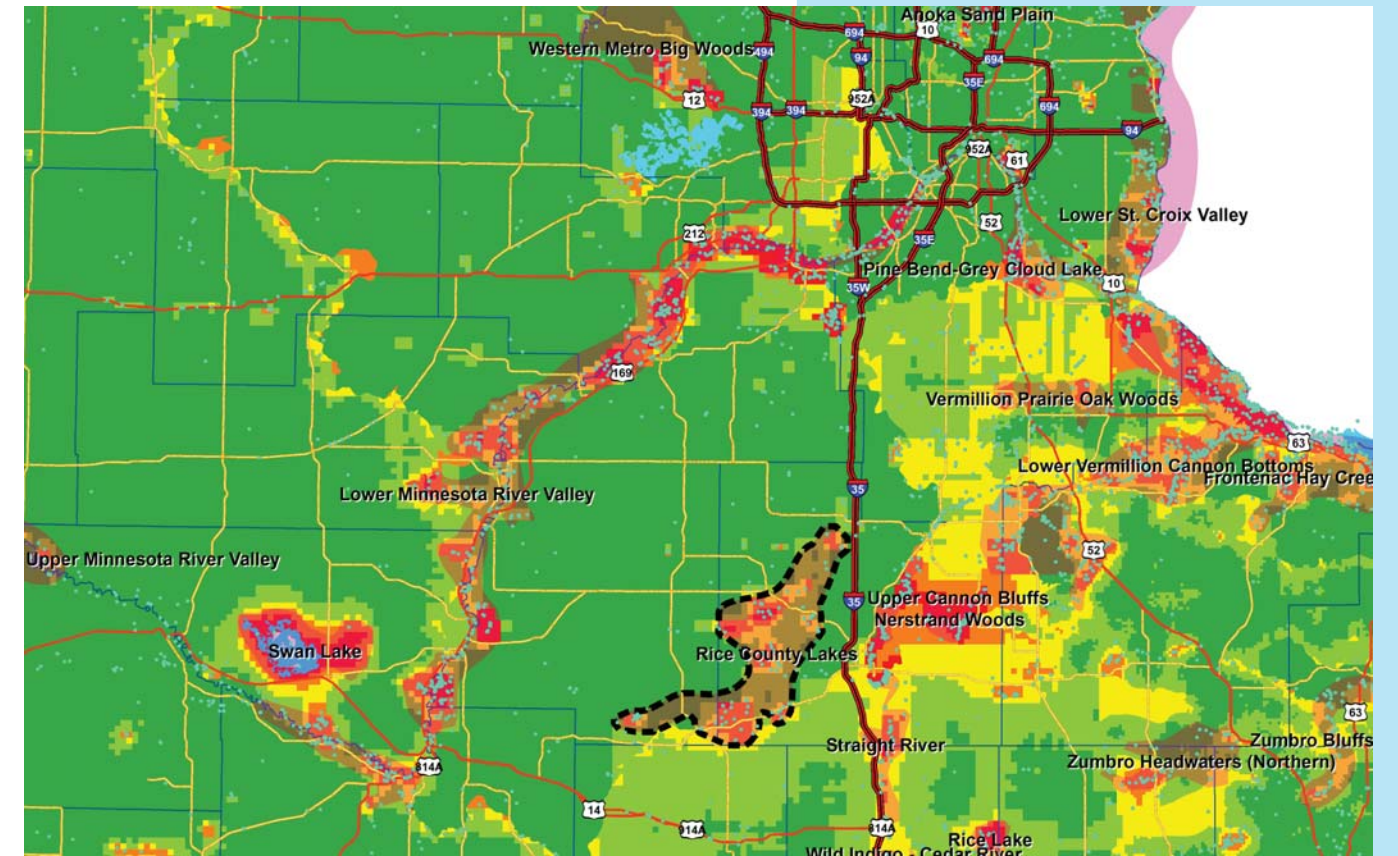
Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



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

Rice County Lakes

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