

Conservation Challenges:

- *Conversion to agricultural uses
- *Changes in agricultural practices
- *Conversion to mining
- *Deforestation/logging
- *Increased draitiling makes stream flow more flashy, reduces groundwater
- *Waterways are more incised, with more alluvium, and higher turbidity
- *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:

Existing Conservation Network:

State Forests:

SNAs: Chimney Rock

Aquatic Management Areas:
Vermillion River

Wildlife Management Areas:

Reinvest in Minnesota:

Rare Species:

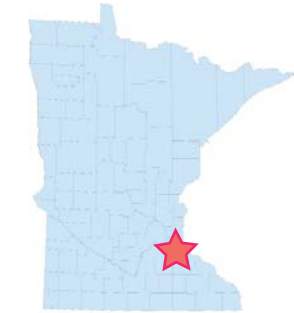
- American Ginseng
- Beach-heather
- Big Tick-trefoil
- Canada Frostweed
- Kitten-tails
- Loggerhead Shrike
- Long-bearded Hawkweed
- Milk snake
- Rattlesnake-master

Vermillion Prairie Oak Woods

Opportunity Area

Ecological Significance:

The oak woods of southern Dakota County provide interesting elements within the former prairie-dominated plains of the area. Outlier formations of St. Peter sandstone capped by Platteville dolomite create escarpments and mesa-like formations that the steep slopes provided shelter for woodlands and forest to be protected from the prairie fires that burned most of the county. These slopes afforded the development of a variety of woodland types from savannas to mesic hardwood forests. A few xeric northern species such as blueberry and red pine are present. Rare species such as kittentails, beach heather, Canada frostweed and narrow-leaved pinweed are also present. Many of them still have a rich ground layer that persists on the bluff slopes. These woodland habitats have remained resilient in spite of fragmentation due to their locations on rocky outliers in a prairie matrix. Some of these lands are starting to experience land development pressure.



Counties:

Dakota

Rare Native Plant Communities:

- Dry Bedrock Bluff Prairie (Southern)
- Dry Sand - Gravel Oak Savanna (Southern)
- Mesic Prairie (Southern)
- Pin Oak - Bur Oak Woodland
- Red Oak - Sugar Maple - Basswood - (Bitternut Hickory) Forest
- Red Oak - White Oak Forest

Ecological Evaluations:

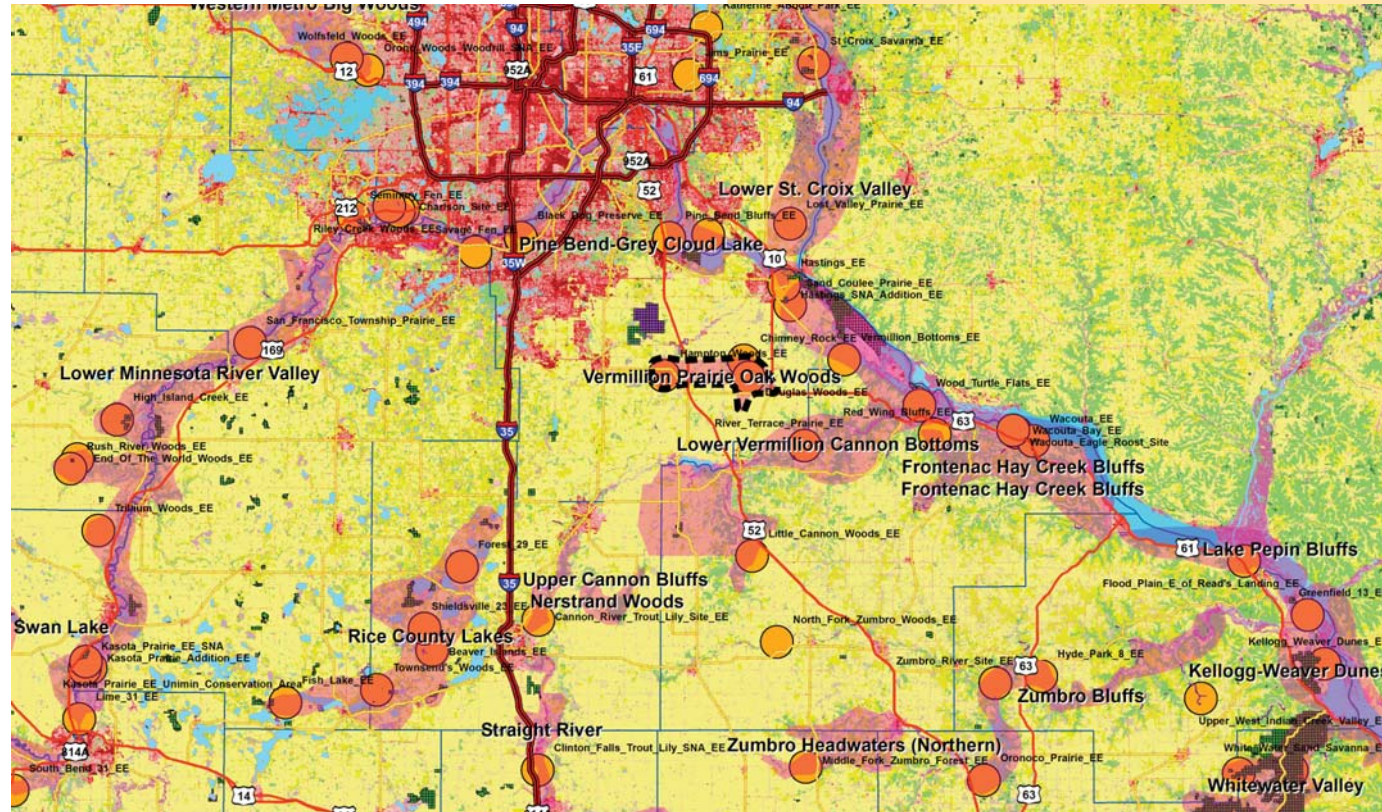
- Chimney Rock
- Douglas Woods
- Hampton Woods



Photo from jnaithani, Panoramio

Vermillion Prairie Oak Woods

Ecological Evaluations, Land Cover, Public Ownership



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

Vermillion Prairie Oak Woods

Marxan Prioritization, Element Occurrences

