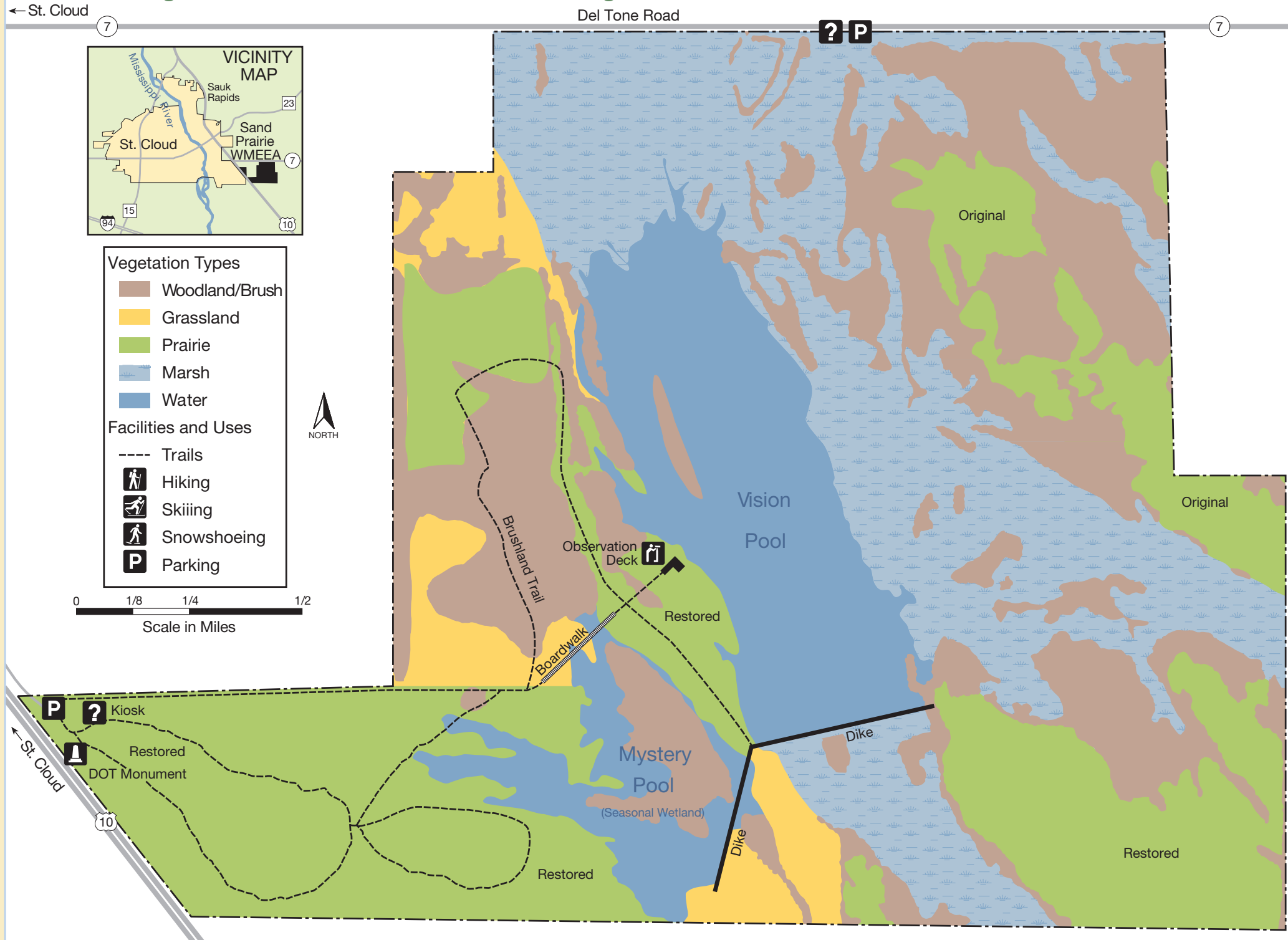


Do something wild—visit Sand Prairie Wildlife Management and Environmental Education Area



700 acres of wild land on
the edge of St. Cloud



A place to
explore
our natural
world

Established and managed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Wildlife and through the generous assistance of community donors.

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Sand Prairie
Wildlife Management and
Environmental Education Area





It's an
enchanting
place, a
place of
unexpected
sights and
sounds.

Experience the Magic

A sora rail might taunt you with its shrill laughing call. Deer graze peacefully, then slip silently out of sight. The eerie cries of sandhill cranes echo across the marsh. A hawk soars silently overhead. Wild prairie flowers create a colorful palette and scent the summer air with wild and refreshing fragrances.

This magic place is the Sand Prairie Wildlife Management and Environmental Education Area, the state's first education-based wildlife management area. It is located just minutes from downtown St. Cloud along Highway 10. Experience it and you'll be captured by its spell.

Explore and Discover

Visit Sand Prairie and you'll find more than 150 species of prairie and wetland plants, and many species of birds and mammals, all on 700 acres of marsh, prairie, and woodland.

Sand Prairie features trails, a marsh boardwalk, and an elevated deck with a striking view of a large restored wetland. If you are the adventurous type, hike anywhere you like and discover new sights off the designated trail.

Sand Prairie is a great place to explore and discover diverse natural communities. A place where you can experience a variety of natural sights, sounds, and smells that are ever changing with the season.

In spring you can listen to a chorus of frogs, watch migrating birds, and observe a variety of wildlife courtship behaviors.

In Late summer you can watch monarch butterflies taking nectar on the purple flowers of rough blazing star or waterfowl broods taking their first flights.



Visit the Prairies, Wetlands, and Woodlands

Prairies

A sea of waving grass stretching to the horizon greeted early travelers across Minnesota. Today less than one percent of those original prairies remain, mostly in small, scattered remnants. Original prairies contained more than 300 species of flowers and grasses. Restored prairies seldom have more than 30 species.

See more than 100 species of flowers and grasses along the trail in the restored prairie, or discover small original prairie remnants scattered throughout the area.

Wetlands

Wetlands are highly productive ecosystems that support a great variety of plants and animals. Closely connected to the cycle of life, they filter and recharge our water supply and buffer floodwater flows. Visit Sand Prairie and you will find wetlands ranging from small, scattered wet meadows to a large, open-water restoration project. Here you will find stands of wild rice and other interesting aquatic plants.



Woodlands

Aspens, oaks, and brush create a wooded mosaic around the prairies and wetlands on the eastern half of Sand Prairie. The woodlands add to the diversity of habitats and wildlife.

Follow a deer trail in spring and look for antler "sheds." Flush ruffed grouse and woodcock from their hiding places or watch migrating warblers.

Special Species

A number of uncommon species can be found at Sand Prairie. Such species, called species of special concern, include the red-shouldered hawk, yellow rail, "threatened" Blanding's turtle, plains hognose snake, and plains pocket mouse. Look carefully and you may spot one.

However, you are more likely to see common species such as wood ducks, blue heron, or white-tailed deer. Look for smaller species too—marsh wrens can often be found in the cattails and prairie skinks in the uplands.

Bring your
binoculars,
a field guide,
or just your
curiosity.



Sand Prairie is managed and maintained by the Sauk Rapids Area Wildlife Office
1035 South Benton Drive, Sauk Rapids MN 56379
320-223-7840

For more information contact:
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
DNR Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040
888-MINNDNR (646-6367)



Visit for Half an Hour or Half a Day

Take a short walk to renew your spirit and reconnect to the earth. Or do a more serious exploration and nature study in this huge natural laboratory.

Bring you binoculars, a field guide, or just your curiosity. Hike, snowshoe, or ski. Rediscover your sense of wonder.

Sand Prairie is open year-round. Its trails are for foot travel only and start from the Highway 10 parking lot. One trail, shaped like a figure eight, meanders through the prairie. The other, a rarely used road, leads directly to the boardwalk, Brushland Trail, Dike Trail and observation deck. Both trails have good accessibility; however, uneven ground, vegetation, or water may limit access to some areas. •

Renew

Photos by Carrol Henderson, Mike Maurer, Deborah Rose, and R.D. Bartlett

This document can be made available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. TTY: 651-296-5484 and 800-657-3929.

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