ABOUT THE PARK

Afton State Park was established in 1969 for visitors to experience unique natural features and enjoy outdoor recreation. Just forty minutes east of the Twin Cities, the park lies along bluffs overlooking the St. Croix River. Here you will see wildflowers and grasses in restored prairies that were once agricultural fields. Below, outcrops of limestone jut from the sides of deep, forested ravines that drop three hundred feet to the river. Make your way down to the water’s edge and watch for wildlife. The park’s diverse habitats make it a birdwatcher’s haven with over 190 species, some of which are rare.

TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS

All distances are from the park visitor center.

North River Trail 1.2 miles one-way
Snowshoe Trail • Flat
Put on a pair of snowshoes and follow the St. Croix River north along a former railroad grade. Pass through floodplain forest and the lower picnic area. Go past two railroad bridges and take the trail to the top of the bluff for scenic overlooks of the river valley.

Prairie Loop 2 to 3-mile loop
Ski Trail • Rolling terrain
Skiers, circle the park’s largest open area and imagine what the prairies looked like when the first European settlers arrived. Encounter views of the river valley and the Afton Alps Ski Area.

Trout Brook Loop 5.7-mile loop
Snowshoe Trail • Steep terrain • Wooden bridges
Be ready for a workout on this ungroomed snowshoe trail. Follow Trout Brook through a secluded ravine and then head up over a bluff top. Your effort will be rewarded with solitude and scenery.

Deer Valley Loop 3.5-mile loop
Snowshoe Trail • Steep terrain • Narrow
Snowshoe this seldom seen portion of the park. Follow an intermittent creek as this narrow trail brings you up hills and down ravines. Keep an eye out for wildlife in this wooded habitat. The southernmost trail loop climbs to the top of a bluff and a wide prairie with expansive views.

South River Trail 2 miles one-way
Ski Trail • Flat
Experience long, uninterrupted views of the St. Croix River on this groomed ski trail. You’ll be greeted by snow and ice along the river.

MORE TO EXPLORE AT THE PARK

• Join a free naturalist program.
• Enjoy a plowed walking trail (1.5 miles).
• Find a geocache.
• Borrow a GPS, birding kit or discovery kit.