The Glacial Lakes State Trail is located on a former Burlington Northern Railroad grade, and is generally level and accessible. The trail is paved with asphalt for 22 miles between Willmar, Spicer, New London, Hawick, and the Kandiyohi/Stearns County line. An additional 7.5 miles from Roscoe in Stearns County to Cold Spring is also paved.

The segment from Willmar to New London has 10 miles of parallel, grass treadway for horseback riding, while the New London to the Kandiyohi/Stearns County line segment has grass shoulders to accommodate this activity. Between the Stearns / Kandiyohi County line to Roscoe, the trail is relatively undeveloped. Some railroad bridges are closed.

The gently rolling topography of Central Minnesota was created by glaciers retreating 10,000 years ago. The trail cuts across the border between Minnesota’s western tallgrass prairie and eastern deciduous forest. Though much of the area has been cultivated, remnants of virgin prairie, wetlands, and scattered woodlots can still be found along the railroad right-of-way. Whitetail deer, numerous small mammals, birds, reptiles and butterflies can be seen along the trail.

The many lakes make this area a popular tourist destination. The towns along the trail provide access points, rest stops and other services to trail users.

Primary summer use of the developed trail includes, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding and in-line skating. Within Kandiyohi County, the trail is groomed for winter snowmobile use, and in Stearns County, snowmobile use is allowed on signed sections only.

For more information or copies of this or other state trail maps, please contact the DNR Information Center:

DNR Information Center
500 Lafayette Road
Saint Paul, MN 55155-4040
(651) 296-6157 (metro area)
1-888-646-6367 (MN toll free)

Minnesota Department of Tourism
100 Metro Square
121 7th Place East
Saint Paul, MN 55101-2112
(651) 296-5029 (metro area)
1-800-657-3700 (toll free)

This trail requires a permit for anyone snowmobiling or horseback riding. For more information about the Snowmobile State Trail Sticker, or the Horse Pass, please call the DNR Info Center at 1-888-MINNDDNR or check the website at mndnr.gov.