



## Outdoor Recreation Plan 2026-2030



**Resolution No. 52 (2025)**  
**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE ST. CROIX COUNTY 2026-2030**  
**OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN**

1       **WHEREAS**, St. Croix County recognizes the importance of parks and open space in  
2 enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors; and  
3

4       **WHEREAS**, the St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan (Plan) servers as a guide for  
5 the development and improvement of County parks and outdoor recreation facilities in St. Croix  
6 County; and  
7

8       **WHEREAS**, the Plan is required as supporting documentation for all county cost sharing  
9 and grant applications submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and  
10

11       **WHEREAS**, St. Croix County Community Development staff has actively promoted the  
12 Plan and gathered public input through direct outreach to local governments and outdoor  
13 recreation groups, a parks user survey, a project webpage, posts on the County Facebook page,  
14 notices in local newspapers and libraries, and by hosting a public open house; and  
15

16       **WHEREAS**, the St. Croix County Community Development Committee held a public  
17 hearing on the proposed Outdoor Recreation Plan on November 20, 2025; and  
18

19       **WHEREAS**, the St. Croix County Community Development Committee has reviewed  
20 the proposed Plan and recommends approval and adoption.  
21

22       **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the St. Croix County Board of  
23 Supervisors hereby adopts the St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2026-2030.

Community Development Committee Recommended

MOVER: Jerry VanSomeran


SECONDER: Kerry Reis

AYES: Scott Counter, Kerry Reis, Ryan Sherley, Jerry VanSomeran

EXCUSED: Dick Hesselink

**St. Croix County Board of Supervisors Action:**

This Resolution was ADOPTED by the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors on December 2, 2025:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Long, County Board Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Christine Hines, County Clerk

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **St. Croix County Board of Supervisors**

Bob Long, Chair  
Bob Feidler, Vice-Chair  
Lisa Lind  
District 2 - Vacant  
Cathy Leaf  
Kerry Reis  
Paul Adams  
Paul Berning  
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Jerry Van Someren  
Tim Ramberg

#### **Prepared by:**

St. Croix County Community Development Department

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## INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF NEED

The St. Croix County Vision Statement is:

**“To be the County that delivers service with compassion and respect for people and the environment.”**

The St. Croix County Mission Statement is:

**“We will strengthen our social and economic future by providing health, safety, and well-being for all.”**

Outdoor recreation plays an essential role in both community well-being and the health of the natural environment. Well-maintained parks and open spaces provide a wide range of benefits, such as reducing stress, preserving wildlife habitats, supporting the local economy through tourism, and promoting physical health and social connection.

As the population grows and recreational preferences evolve, the county must assess whether existing facilities meet residents' needs. **This plan is intended to serve as a guide for the development of St. Croix County parks and outdoor recreation facilities over the next five years.**

### THE SIGNIFICANCE AND NEED OF RECREATION

Findings from the *“2024 National Recreation and Park Survey “Engagement with Parks”*:

1. More than 276 million people in the United States visited a local park or recreation facility in the last year.
2. 86 % of Americans say proximity to park and recreation facilities is important when choosing a place to live.
3. Slightly over 90 % of Americans agree that parks and recreation is an important service provided by their local unit of government.
4. The top reasons for using parks and recreation facilities are to be with family and friends (58%), to exercise and be physically fit (52%), and to have a break from daily stress (52%).

(Margin of error for survey results is +/- 3.1% with a 95% confidence level)

### ST. CROIX COUNTY’S RECREATIONAL FOCUS

St. Croix County primarily provides nature-based, passive outdoor recreation opportunities, including:

- Shoreline fishing
- Boating
- Picnicking
- Walking & hiking
- Biking
- Swimming at beaches
- Camping

- 
- Birdwatching
  - Hunting & trapping
  - Snowmobiling
  - Nature observation & study

St. Croix County typically does not focus on active or organized recreation facilities, such as:

- Tennis courts
- Basketball courts
- Swimming pools
- Skate parks
- Motorized sports areas
- Organized league sports (e.g., baseball diamonds, soccer fields)

These facilities are typically provided by local towns, villages, cities, or school districts.

An updated Outdoor Recreation Plan also enables the county and its municipalities to participate in various grant programs administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) including, but not limited to:

1. Stewardship Program
  - a. Urban Green Space and Urban Rivers
  - b. Acquisition and Development of Local Parks
  - c. Recreational Trails Program
  - d. Streambank Protection
  - e. Land and Water Conservation Funds
2. Lakes Planning
3. Lakes Protection
4. Recreational Boating
5. Sport Fish Restoration
6. Conservation Aids
7. Targeted Runoff Management

These programs, administered by the WDNR, provide support for acquiring and developing new outdoor recreation facilities. They also assist in upgrading and modernizing existing facilities to comply with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements, safety standards, and public expectations. Additionally, these programs help with planning efforts and the protection of natural resources, water quality, and wildlife habitats. A state-submitted outdoor recreation plan, adopted within the previous five years, is required to receive recreational grant funds from the WDNR.

This document provides goals and objectives for St. Croix County Parks along with preliminary planning information for improvements, including timeframes, cost estimates, and funding sources, which are subject to change due to budget reviews, grant cycles, market fluctuations, and inflation.

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives provide the framework for meeting the existing and future outdoor recreation needs of St. Croix County residents. Goals represent broad ideals while objectives are more specific targets along the path towards those goals. Strategies for meeting these objectives are presented later in the plan.

The goals and objectives established in this plan will help guide development of the Parks Division's annual budgets, capital outlay plans and work plans. In some cases, the goals and objectives will be action items that will take place over the course of the next five years. In other instances, they will require further development by the Community Development Committee and the County Board and the involvement of towns, villages, cities, special interest groups and agencies. For example, plans will need to be developed for trail systems before some of the trail objectives can be implemented.

The goals and objectives in this plan also consider priorities, issues and strategies that have been identified in the 2025 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The SCORP identifies recreation priorities across the state, which are important funding considerations for outdoor recreation grants administered by the WDNR.

### **St. Croix County Parks Mission Statement**

**"Create and maintain a vibrant, efficient, and inclusive park system that supports community well-being and preserves natural, historical, and cultural resources."**

## **GOAL 1**

**Promote implementation of the St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to provide a comprehensive, countywide trail system for residents and tourism in cooperation with cities, villages, towns, special interest groups and the County Highway Department.**

### **Objectives**

1. Follow guidance provided in the St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan when pursuing bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects.
2. Continue to work with cities, villages, towns, special interest groups, the County Highway Department, adjacent counties and property owners to expand and implement the St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for multi-jurisdictional trail systems consisting of on and off-road bikeways throughout St. Croix County.
3. Identify compatible and incompatible trail uses when planning trail systems at county parks and natural areas considering topography, safety, noise, trail surfacing, user interaction, maintenance, support facilities and signage.
4. Consider and identify environmental impacts to land and natural resources from multiple trail systems development.
5. Consider and identify long-term maintenance to land and facilities from multiple trail systems development.

- 
6. Encourage planning for trail systems within future parks.
  7. Provide for lineal connections and access points into trail systems from local, county, state and federal parks and other public facilities, including schools, paths, and community connection points.
  8. The County Parks staff should work with the Land Use staff during the subdivision review and approval process to identify and develop trail connections to implement County-wide Trail System Plans.
  9. Develop walking and cross-country skiing trail systems within county parks and natural areas based on demand.
  10. To the extent economically and physically feasible, create American Disability Act (ADA) compliant accessibility.
  11. Encourage the continuation of the state-funded countywide snowmobile trail system, which is developed and maintained by the St. Croix County Snowmobile Association and its affiliated snowmobile clubs with continued fiscal administration provided by St. Croix County.

## **GOAL 2**

**Identify, evaluate, and secure lands to protect scenic landscapes, threatened species habitats, environmentally sensitive areas, historic and cultural sites, and native natural areas.**

### **Objectives**

1. Identify areas of water-based recreation, surface waters and wetlands to provide recreational opportunities and protect and restore water quality and scenic values.
2. Identify areas of historic and cultural value, unique plant or animal life, scenic view sheds and environmental sensitivity; native natural areas or areas threatened by development.
3. Identify areas for outdoor recreation.
4. Identify acquisition priorities based on citizen surveys and other forms of analysis.
5. Utilize fee title, donations, grants and conservation easements, where feasible, for acquisition of park or preservation properties.
6. Acquire land adjacent to existing parks for future expansion, as a use buffer or for resource protection.
7. Investigate abandoned railroad corridors for trail systems when available.
8. The St. Croix County Administration Committee should refer tax-deed deficient properties adjacent to existing parks or with water resources or sufficient size to provide recreation opportunities to the Community Development Committee for acquisition consideration prior to initiating tax-deed sale of these sites through foreclosure. The Community Development Committee shall evaluate these lands for recreational use and make a recommendation to the Administration Committee.



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## GOAL 3

**Develop County land to provide low impact, nature-based facilities, parks and natural areas to fulfill recreational needs with access to all residents and visitors.**

### Objectives

1. Evaluate current lands and facilities and assess the feasibility and economic possibilities of additional park development.
2. Design park and recreational facilities with the natural environment and historic and cultural resources in mind by considering project impacts to the environment.
3. Utilize County drainage ways, greenways, environmental corridors, utility and conservation easements for passive recreation use, including walking, wildlife habitat observation and preservation and trail development. Such environmental areas are not suitable as active parks because of topography and drainage limitations.
4. Consider the long-term expense of maintenance for land and facilities.
5. Update existing master plans for Homestead and Glen Hills on a regular basis.

## GOAL 4

**Continue to evaluate, maintain, update and improve existing County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas to meet the recreational needs of the increasing County population and changing demographics.**

### Objectives

1. Adjust to changing recreational activities, growing user base and continue to modernize facilities.
2. Consider changing demographics and societal trends when evaluating and planning park facilities and activities.
3. Periodically survey residents to solicit public input regarding parks and recreation needs.
4. Periodically survey park users to solicit public input regarding park facilities, customer service, activities, events and requested changes to park operations.
5. Identify the needs of residents at all age levels and physical requirements.
6. Identify private and commercial recreation activities to avoid duplication.
7. Evaluate county lands and parks to determine each site's capacity to support needed activities.
8. Continue to update existing County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas to meet changing recreational needs, maximize use of the resource and decrease user conflicts.
9. Consider ways to reduce long-term expense of maintenance to land and facilities.
10. Continue to maintain, replace and upgrade equipment for existing parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
11. Utilize this plan to establish capital improvement projects for county parks, trails and natural areas.
12. The Parks and Land and Water divisions staff will continue to work together to improve and expand habitat protection, improvement programs for fish and wildlife and provide access to fish and wildlife habitat areas and environmentally sensitive areas.

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13. The Parks and Planning divisions will continue to work together to develop and implement park plans and improvements to County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
  14. Community Development and the County Highway departments will continue to work together to develop and implement the Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
  15. Community Development and the Sheriff's departments will continue to work together to improve enforcement of the Parks Ordinance at County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
  16. Community Development and the Health and Human Services - Public Health Division will continue to work together to improve health and sanitation at County Park facilities.

## **GOAL 5**

**Improve public awareness of the County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.**

### **Objectives**

1. Continue to update promotional materials for use in improving the public's awareness of the county's facilities and to promote tourism.
2. Improve directional signage to County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
3. Purchase directional signage to major county parks on Interstate, Federal and State Highways to encourage tourism usage.
4. Distribute promotional materials to area businesses, Chambers of Commerce, etc.
5. Participate in regional and local promotion efforts such as providing information to statewide tourist information centers and regional tourist publications.
6. Plan and hold promotional activities at County Park facilities.
7. Utilize the county website and social media to publicize and promote the County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas; and activities, events, promotions, etc.
8. Update the County Outdoor Recreation Plan every five years and solicit input and participation from residents and local units of governments, neighboring counties and special interest groups.

## **GOAL 6**

**Update, as needed, regulations and policies for public use of county parks, facilities, trails, and natural areas.**

### **Objectives**

1. Bi-annually review the Park Ordinance to align with current State Statutes, Administrative Codes and local needs.
2. Annually review the policies and procedures for parks, facilities, trails, and natural areas.
3. Update, when needed, policies and procedures for the use and care of County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
4. Continue to operate the County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas in an efficient and effective manner.
5. Provide ongoing safety and maintenance inspections.

- 
6. Annually review staffing needs for parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
  7. Annually review fee schedules for parks, facilities, trails and natural areas.
  8. Continue to upgrade and improve the park reservation system used by the public.
  9. Evaluate sites for overuse and develop policies to prevent damage to the resources or facilities.
  10. Cooperate with the Department of Natural Resources on managing invasive species at parks and boat landing facilities.

## **GOAL 7**

**Encourage partnerships with groups interested in providing outdoor environmental education programs.**

### **Objectives**

1. Identify educational and interpretive needs of residents through periodic surveys and other mechanisms.
2. Identify existing educational programs provided by schools and municipalities, state and federal parks and private and nonprofit organizations in order to avoid duplication.

## **GOAL 8**

**Cooperate and coordinate with other units of government, special interest groups and property owners to provide recreational activities, access, education and preservation of natural historic and cultural resources for the enjoyment and benefit of all citizens.**

### **Objectives**

1. Provide assistance with park and recreation planning services to local municipalities.
2. Incorporate city, village and town plans into the St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan when requested by local communities.
3. Provide Community Development Department staff assistance and resources to local communities and nonprofit organizations to develop applications and apply for recreation grants.
4. Utilize, where practical, a multi-jurisdictional approach to acquiring and developing outdoor recreation facilities.
5. Encourage other governmental acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands and historical or cultural resources to preserve them and to provide public access to unique resources.
6. Coordinate park activities/facilities with municipal, private, state and federal agencies and organizations to compliment offerings without duplication.
7. Encourage the activities of local user groups as a means to obtain valuable ideas, comments, recommendations and resources.
8. Utilize private resources such as individuals, community organizations, friends' groups, land trusts, and nonprofit agencies, to donate time, labor, money, land and other resources to develop and maintain needed quality facilities.

- 
9. The Community Development Department will work with property owners during the subdivision review and approval process to protect and manage significant or unique environmental resources utilizing tools such as conservation easements or conservation design development.

## DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act  
ADLP – Acquisition and Development of Parks  
CRP – Carbon Reduction Program  
CDC – County Community Development Committee  
CIP – Capital Improvement Plan  
LWCF – Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Program  
NCO – Non-Profit Conservation Organization  
ORP – Outdoor Recreation Program  
RTP – Recreational Trail Program  
SCORP – Statewide Outdoor Recreation program  
TAP – Transportation Alternatives Program  
UGS – Urban Green Space Program  
URGP – Urban Rivers Grant Program  
WDNR – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

## PLANNING PROCESS

The St. Croix County Community Development Department and the St. Croix County Parks Division served as the primary contributor to the development of the St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan. Information regarding existing facilities and their conditions was collected through meetings and discussions with Parks staff, as well as on-site inspections.

Additional data was sourced and reviewed from previous St. Croix County studies and inventories, along with analyses of broader outdoor recreation trends detailed in the 2024 National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA) Survey, the 2025 Wisconsin Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan Survey, and the 2024 St. Croix County Comprehensive Plan.

Furthermore, in 2025, the County conducted a Parks User Survey to assess park user preferences and habits. These results will be detailed later in the plan.



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## SUMMARY OF PAST OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS

The 2026-2030 Outdoor Recreation Plan updates the 2022 plan and serves as a strategic guide for the Community Development Department—particularly the Parks Division—in developing parks and outdoor recreation facilities over the next five years. Previous plans were completed in 1970, 1976, 1994, 2000, 2006 and 2019.

## DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING REGION

### Demographics

St. Croix County’s 2020 population was 93,536 according to the U.S. Census. The 2024 Provisional U.S. Census population estimate for St. Croix County was 97,954. According to the United States Census Bureau, between 2000 and 2010, St. Croix County was one of the fastest growing counties in the State of Wisconsin, with a 2010 population of 84,345. This represented a 33.6 percent growth rate from the 2000 population of 63,155. The population increase has been constant for over 40 years. From 1970 to 1980, the growth rate was 25.9 percent. From 1980 to 1990, 16.2 percent and from 1990 to 2000, 25.7 percent. The growth rate from 2010 to 2020 was 10.9 percent.

St. Croix County’s population is expected to continue growing, but at a slower pace than in the past three decades. County projections show an increase of 10.3% between 2030 and 2040, followed by a 5.9% increase from 2040 to 2050. The chart below illustrates these trends and projections.

	<b>2000 U.S. Census</b>	<b>2010 Census</b>	<b>2020 Census</b>	<b>2030 Forecast</b>	<b>2040 Forecast</b>	<b>2050 Forecast</b>
St. Croix County Population	63,155	84,345	93,536	106,000	117,000	124,000

St. Croix County’s population growth is largely driven by its proximity to the Minneapolis–St. Paul metropolitan area, which it has been a part of since 1980. The metro area offers high-paying jobs, diverse entertainment and shopping options, and a wide range of educational opportunities—making the county an attractive place for commuters. Many new residents are former Minnesotans seeking a more rural lifestyle, along with longtime local residents who continue to rely on the metro area for employment.

Over the past 15 years, population growth has also been fueled by service, business and manufacturing development in the county’s larger cities and villages, including Hudson, New Richmond, Baldwin and River Falls. Development pressures are especially strong in the western half of the county due to its proximity to the metro area.

In 2019, the opening of the four-lane St. Croix River Crossing—replacing the two-lane Stillwater Lift Bridge—improved connectivity between the eastern Twin Cities and western St. Croix County. As the county’s population increases, so does the demand on its park system. Growth is bringing more families and visitors into the area, placing greater pressure on existing parks and creating a need for new and

updated recreational facilities. Additionally, ongoing development around lakes and rivers may limit their ability to meet public needs in the future. While growth rates may slow, St. Croix County must proactively plan to ensure adequate outdoor recreation opportunities for its evolving population.

#### St. Croix County Demographic Summary (2020 U.S. Census)

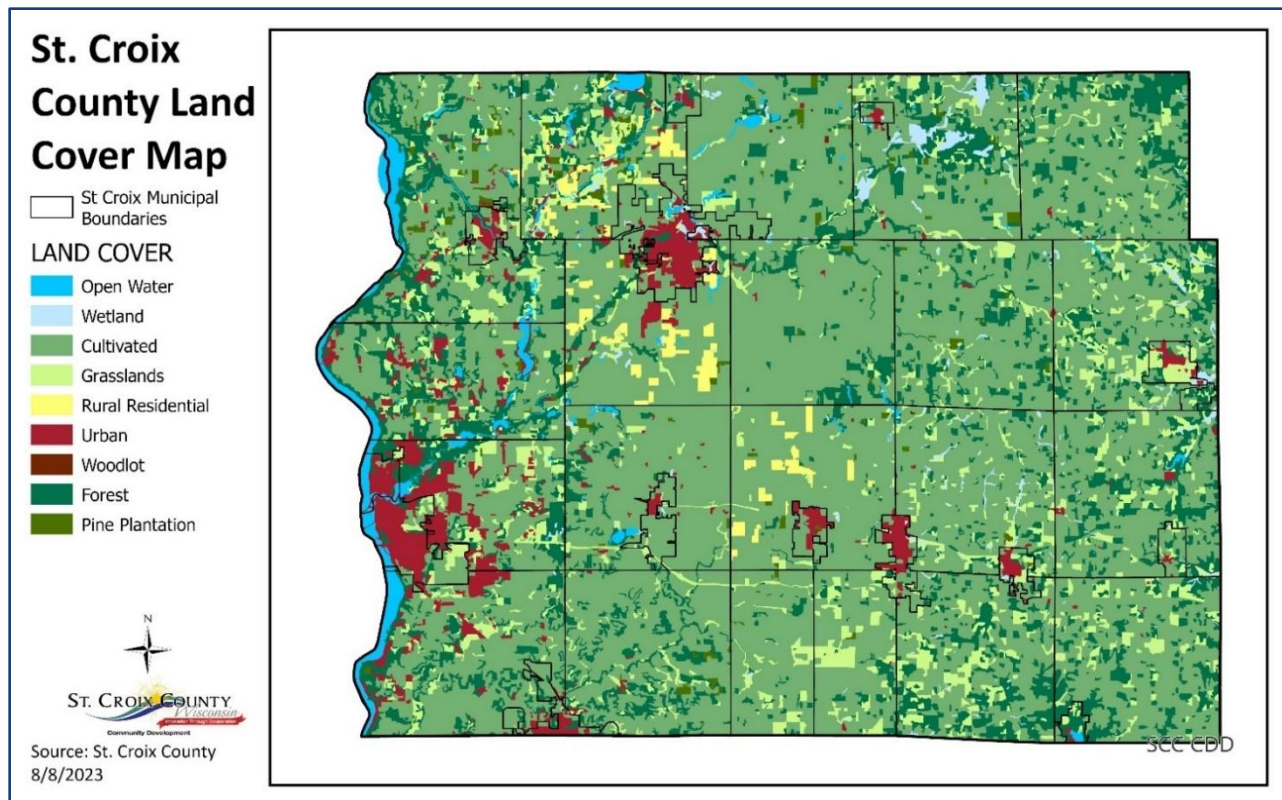
Total Population:	93,536
• Male	47,251 (50.5%)
• Female	46,285 (49.5%)
Ethnic Background:	
• White	86,227 (92.2%)
• Black or African American	653 (< 1%)
• American Indian and Alaska Native	324 (< 1%)
• Asian	984 (1.0%)
• Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	33 (< 1%)
• Some other race	1,073 (1.0%)
• Two or more races	4,242 (4.5%)
Median Age:	39.2
Education Attainment:	
• College Degree (Associate, Bachelor, Master and Above)	49.8%
Housing Units:	
• Occupied Housing Units	34,683
• Own	26,775 (77.2%)
• Rent	7,908 (22.8%)
Median Household Income:	\$84,985
County Residents in Labor Force:	50,492
Unemployment Rate:	2.1%
Average Commute Time to Work:	26.6 minutes
Employees Working in the County :	38,802
Top 5 Categories of Employment:	
• Education, Health Care, Social Assistance	21.0%
• Manufacturing	18.9%
• Retail Trade	9.6%
• Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative	9.0%
• Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Food Services	7.6%

## Land Use and Topography

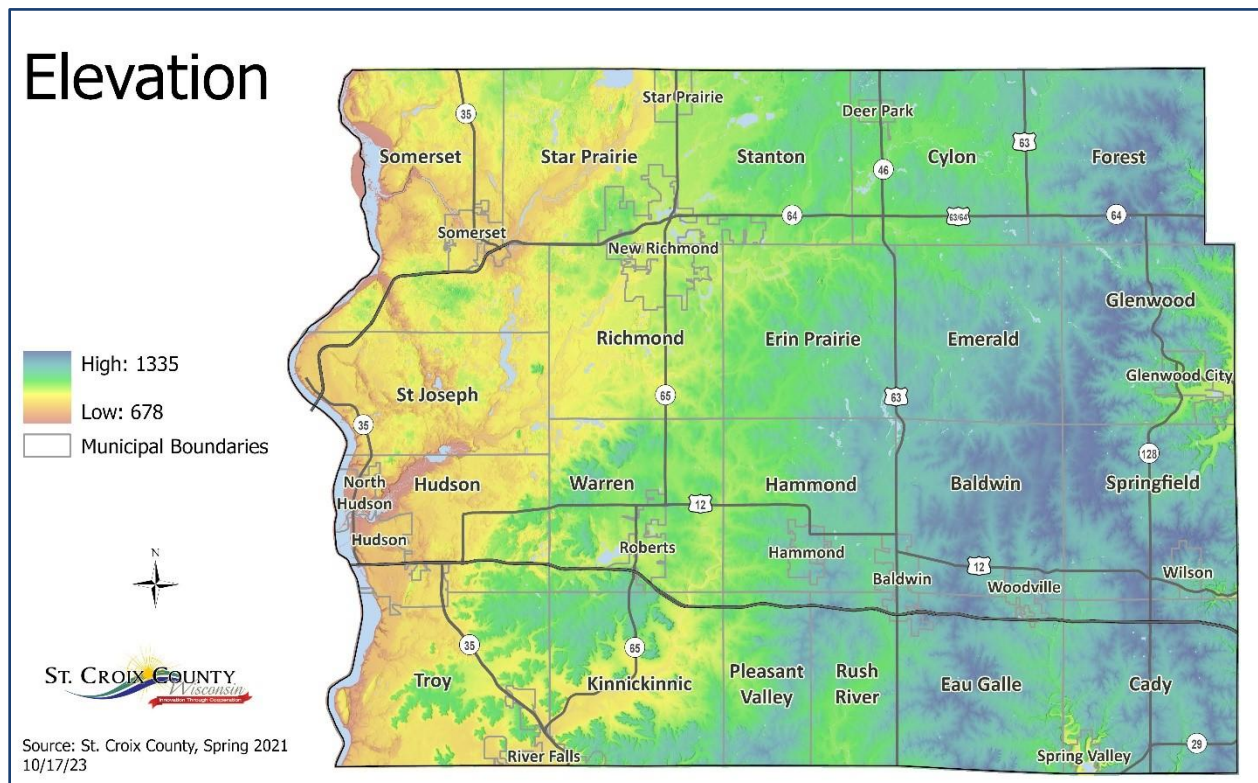
The total land area of St. Croix County is 470,977 acres or 735.90 square miles. County land coverage includes the following, based on Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources data from 2016:

Land Cover Type	Frequency	Acres	%
Cultivated	429	312,260	66.30%
Forest	1637	75,401	16.01%
Grasslands	1151	38,810	8.24%
Urban	644	20,371	4.33%
Open Water	119	9,240	1.96%
Rural Residential	133	6,033	1.28%
Wetland	245	4,613	0.98%
Pine Plantation	184	4,106	0.87%
Woodlot	17	143	0.03%

Surface topography in St. Croix County ranges from gently rolling to steep ridges along stream valleys. Much of the central portion of the County is a rolling plain, while mesas and resistant dolomite formations break the plain. Areas of more rugged topography are found in the northwestern portions and eastern side of the County. The scenic character of the County landscape was influenced by two principal factors: the landforms created by glacial deposits and the effects of water in creating stream channels, lakes and valleys.



Local elevation relief in the County is over 600 feet from almost 1,300 feet above sea level near Glen Hills Park in the eastern part of the County to 675 feet above sea level along the St. Croix River on the west edge of the County.



## Water Resources

Lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, intermittent waterways, and drainageways total 18,934 acres. These include:

33 lakes and two spring ponds, the largest of which are:

- 416-acre Bass Lake in the Towns of Somerset and St. Joseph
- A portion of the 1,107-acre Cedar Lake in the Town of Star Prairie
- 129-acre Squaw Lake in the Town of Star Prairie
- 107-acre Pine Lake in the Towns of Baldwin and Erin Prairie

Seven river systems and numerous creeks and other tributaries, most notably:

- Apple River
- Eau Galle River
- Kinnickinnic River
- Rush River
- St. Croix River
- Tiffany Creek
- Willow River

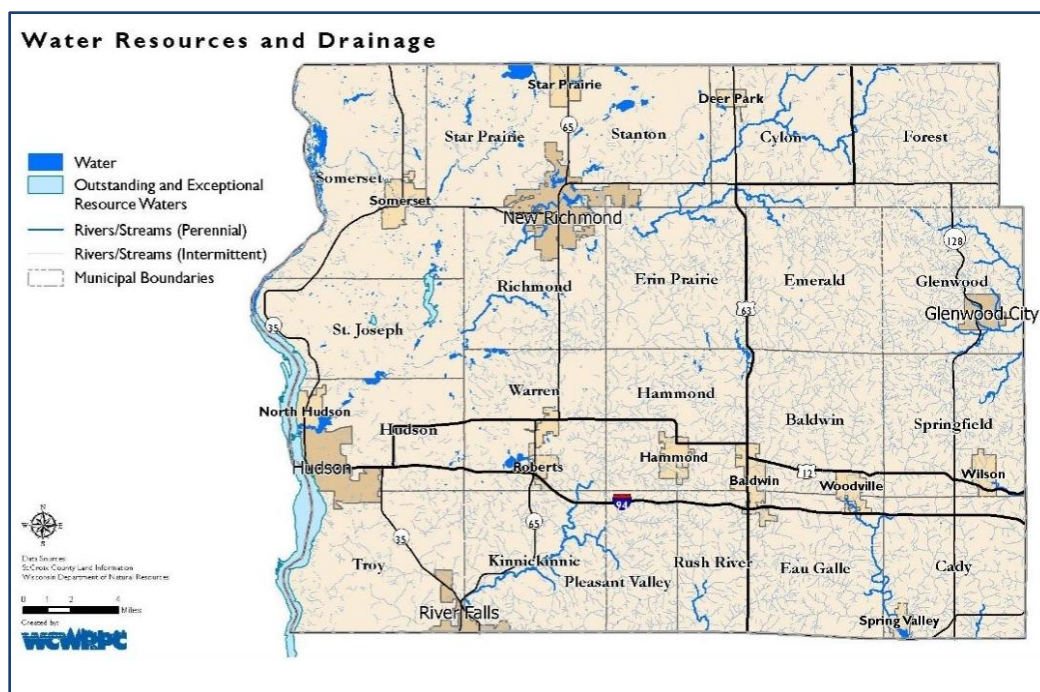


Seven flowages ranging from 35 to 270 acres, including, but not limited to:

- 270-acre Lake Mallalieu bounded by the Town of Hudson, City of Hudson and Village of North Hudson
- 172-acre Little Falls Lake in the Towns of Hudson and St. Joseph
- 142-acre New Richmond Flowage on the Willow River in the City of New Richmond
- A portion of the 150-acre Eau Galle Lake/Lake George in the Town of Cady and Village of Spring Valley
- 84-acre Glen Lake in the Town of Springfield
- 68-acre Riverdale Flowage on the Apple River in the Town of Star Prairie
- 35-acre Apple Falls Flowage in the Town of Somerset

The St. Croix River and its lake, Lake St. Croix, is the largest surface water in St. Croix County. Approximately half of the 9,336-acre lake is located on the Wisconsin side of the state border with Minnesota.

Beyond County parks, St. Croix County offers diverse recreational opportunities, including the St. Croix River and its watershed. The river supports boating, swimming, fishing, hunting, canoeing/kayaking, and cross-country skiing. Recognized as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System (1968) and designated a National Scenic Riverway (1972), the Lower St. Croix River forms part of the county's and state's western border and remains a valuable recreational asset.



## Soils

St. Croix County has a wide variety of soils ranging from heavy, poorly drained to light and droughty. Excessively drained and well-drained soils are generally found in the western half of the county. Moderately drained and somewhat poorly drained soils predominate in the eastern half. However, both extreme soil conditions are found throughout much of the county.

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## Climate

The climate of St. Croix County is considered to be sub-humid, continental with snowy and cold winters and relatively warm summers.

- Average annual precipitation is 33 inches
- Approximately 75% of the precipitation falls from April to September
- Average daily maximum temperatures range from 84 degrees in July to 23 degrees in January
- Average snowfall is 46" per year, most of which falls in February and March

\*\* Additional demographic and natural resource data can be found in the *St. Croix County 2024-2045 Comprehensive Plan* link below:

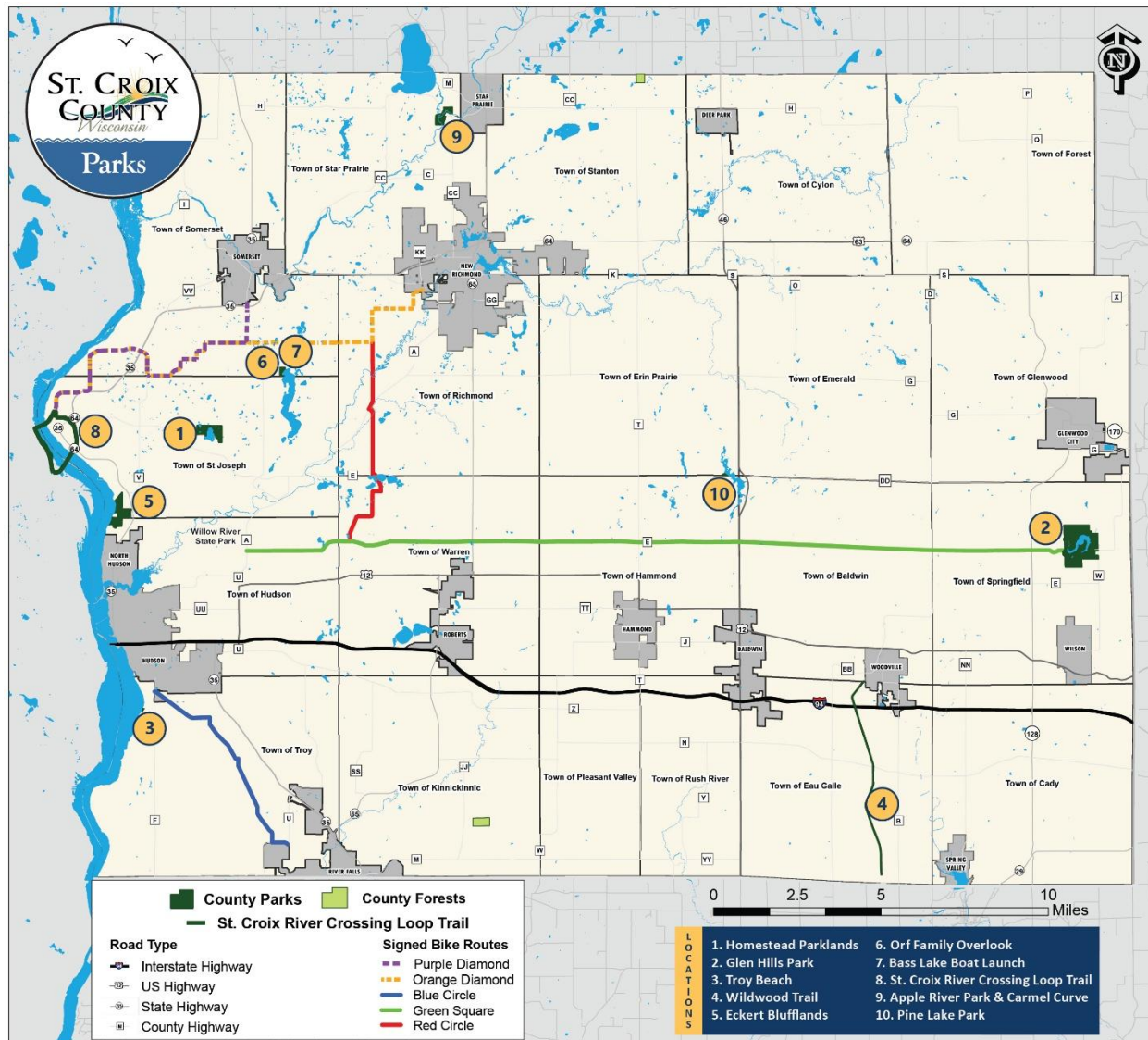
<https://sccwi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/8897/St-Croix-County-Comprehensive-Plan-2024-2045>

## OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY INVENTORY

Visitors and residents of St. Croix County have many recreational opportunities. There are parks, trails, beaches, boat landings, canoe landings and campgrounds. The majority of park and recreational planning in St. Croix County occurs at the local level or, for County and State facilities, under the direction of St. Croix County Parks Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

**The St. Croix County Parks System** consists of approximately 1,500 acres of greenspace for residents and visitors to enjoy. The Parks System consist of 10 parks and trails and two (2) forests. Within the parks there are 92 overnight campsites, three (3) boat landings, one (1) kayak/canoe landing, three (3) beaches, numerous off-road trails and more. **The following are St. Croix County facilities and will be detailed in the “St. Croix County Parks Recommendations and Action Plans” chapter of the plan:**

1. Homestead Parklands
2. Glen Hills Park
3. Troy Beach
4. Wildwood Trail
5. Eckert Blufflands
6. Orf Family Overlook
7. Bass Lake Boat Launch
8. St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail
9. Apple River Park
10. Pine Lake Park
11. Kinnickinnic Forest
12. Stanton Forest



Recreation facilities in the County are largely associated with the County's natural resources. St. Croix County has 9,598 surface acres of water fishing lakes and 80.9 miles of trout fishing on 27 streams. Its primary rivers: the St. Croix, Willow, Apple, Kinnickinnic, Rush and Eau Galle offer boating, fishing, swimming and natural scenery. The St. Croix, Willow, and Apple rivers are popular canoe waters. Tubing on the Apple River in the Somerset area is a regionally known attraction. The Somerset Amphitheatre in Float-Rite Park draws thousands each summer to outdoor concerts. There are 15 named lakes and flowages in the County. Of these, four, Bass Lake, Cedar Lake, Lake Mallalieu and Lake St. Croix and the St. Croix River, are large enough to accommodate water skiing, sailing and larger pleasure boats. Outdoor enthusiasts can also enjoy 13 golf courses and three (3) shooting ranges which are open to the public

During winter months, residents can enjoy over 247 miles of groomed, public snowmobile trails, approximately 40 miles of cross-country ski trails are available at numerous of locations (e.g., Homestead Parklands, Glen Hills Park, Willow River State Park, several golf courses). The Badlands Recreation Area in

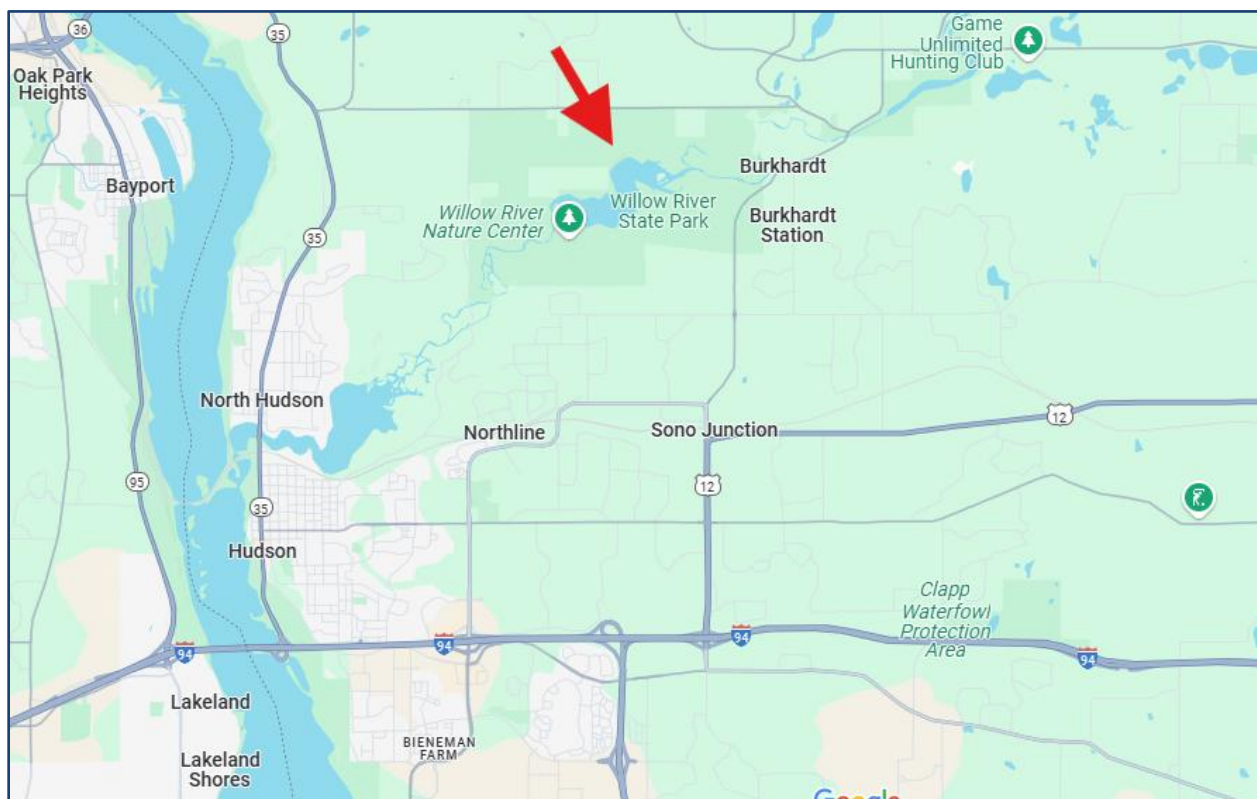
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the Town of Hudson is popular for snowboarding, snow tubing, and skiing. Many communities also provide ice-skating rinks.

There are approximately 36 miles of hiking trails in state, county and community parks in St. Croix County. The Willow River Trail runs through a portion of Willow River State Park. It has been proposed to extend this trail to the northeast, eventually connecting with the Cattail State Trail in Amery and the Wild Rivers State Trail in Rice Lake.

### State Public Lands in St. Croix County

There is one state park in St. Croix County. **Willow River State Park** is located in the western portion of St. Croix County, north of the City of Hudson. The park consists of 2,891 acres of prairie, forests, and river scenery. Willow River State Park has a campground, a boat launch, and a 400-foot beach and picnic area centered on 172-acre Little Falls Lake. Willow River State Park draws more than 900,000 visitors each year.



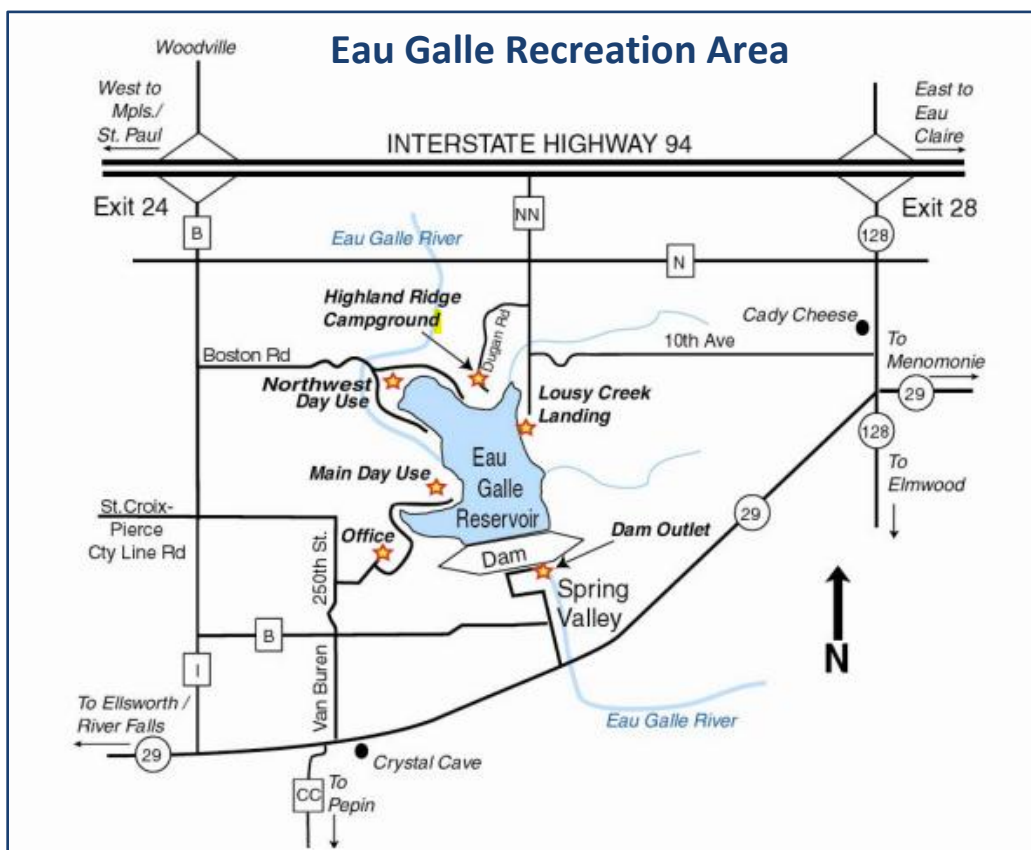
### U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

The **Eau Galle Recreation Area** is a 649-acre flood control project with a 139-acre reservoir surrounded by day use areas, a beach, two boat launches, campground and several miles of hiking and equestrian trails. It is located in the Village of Spring Valley in the southeast corner of St. Croix County.

There are electric, non-electric, walk-in tent and equestrian camp sites available. The trails provide a scenic and relaxing view of the woodlands and wetlands and will lead to a variety of places from picnic



areas and playgrounds to a sandy beach and volleyball courts. An abundance of largemouth bass, crappies, bluegills and sunfish are present for the year-round angler whether it is from shore, boat or accessible fishing pier. The Eau Galle Reservoir is only open to non-gasoline powered boats.



### State Designated Wildlife Areas and Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Areas (WPHRA)

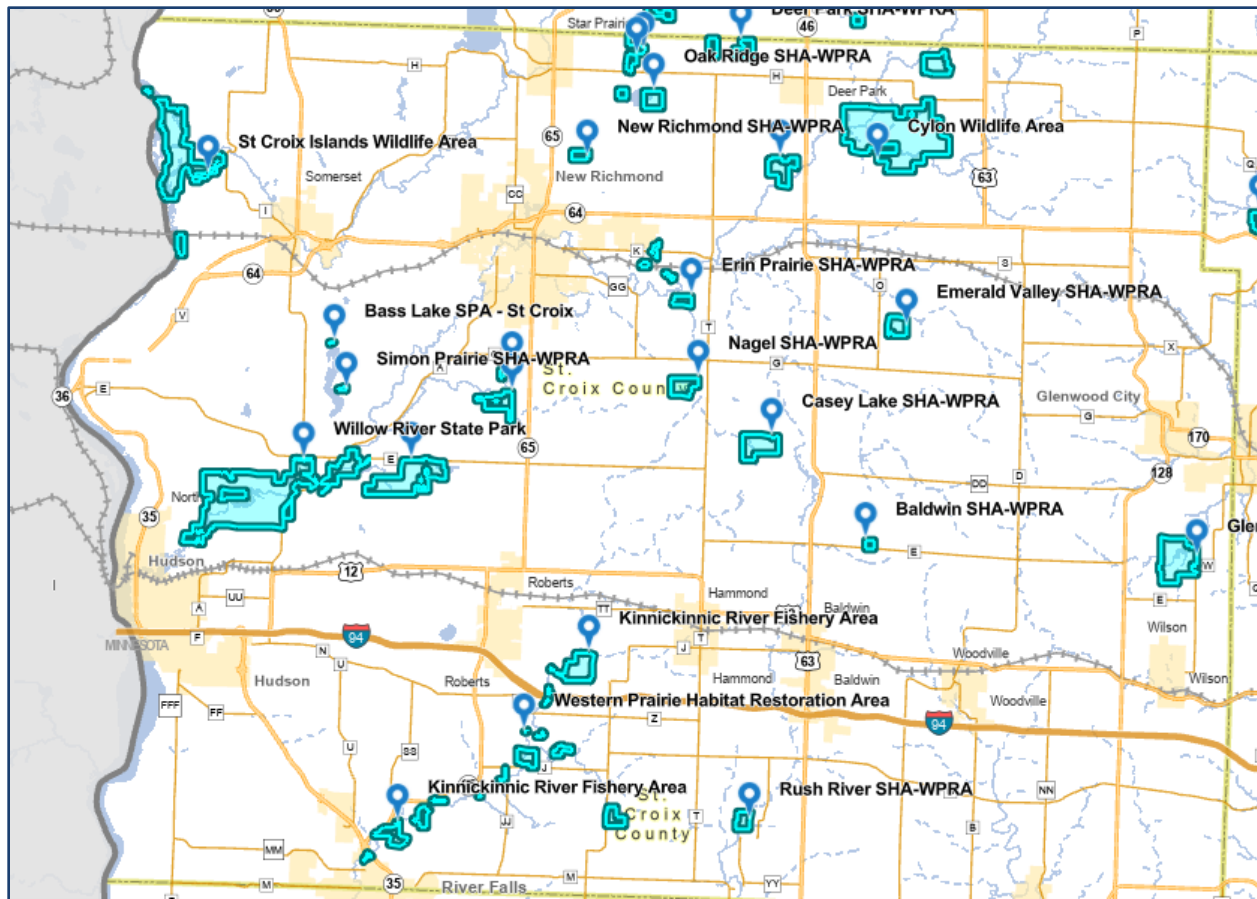
A variety of outdoor recreational activities may be pursued at the Wildlife Areas including hiking, fishing, hunting, trapping, nature study, bird watching and snowshoeing. The Wisconsin DNR's Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Area (WPHRA) is a region focused on restoring and managing prairie ecosystems. There are 26 State Wildlife and WPHRA properties totaling 7,157 acres in St. Croix County, owned and managed by the WDNR, and include:

Facility	Size	Location	Notes
Bierbrauer	65 acres	Five miles northwest of New Richmond	Shallow lake preservation/restored prairie and oak savanna
Casey Lake	364 acres	Six miles northwest of Baldwin	Grassland/restored prairie
Cylon	2,621 acres	Two miles southeast of Deer Park	Streambank protection/forest and wetland protection
Cylon Marsh Wildlife Area	507 acres	Four miles north of Deer Park	Forest/grass/wetland/open water
Emerald Valley	156 acres	Nine miles northeast of Baldwin	Restored grasslands/wooded areas
Goose Pond	32 acres	East side of New Richmond	Large pothole wetland
Johnson	213 acres	Five miles east of Star Prairie	Wetland/grassland restoration
Kinnick River Fish/Wildlife Area	289 acres	Two miles east of Roberts	Wetland/grassland restoration/trout stream

Kinnick River Fisheries - Potton	138 acres	Seven miles northeast of River Falls	Wetland/grassland restoration/trout stream
Kinnick River Fisheries – Oscar Lee	86 acres	Two miles northeast of River Falls	Wetland/grassland restoration/trout stream
Lundy Pond	35 acres	Two miles south of New Richmond	Protect large shallow lake
McAdams	21 acres	East side of New Richmond	Pothole wetland protection
Nagel	205 acres	Seven miles southeast of New Richmond	Grassland and restored wetland habitat
Oakridge	200 acres	Three miles east of Star Prairie	Wetland/grassland restoration
Oden	242 acres	Seven miles east of New Richmond	Prairie habitat restoration area
Pleasant Valley	120 acres	Eight miles southwest of Baldwin	Grassland habitat along Parker Creek and wet prairie habitat
Ray Extensive Wildlife Habitat Area	40 acres	Three miles northeast of Baldwin	Upland prairie/pheasant wintering habitat
Rush River	121 acres	Four miles southwest of Baldwin	Prairie habitat restoration area and Rush River shoreline protection
Schmit	78 acres	Four miles east of New Richmond	Prairie habitat restoration area and hardwood tree species
Sette	77 acres	Two miles north of New Richmond	Prairie habitat restoration and small pothole wetland restoration
St. Croix River Islands W.A.	1,082 acres	Four miles northwest of Somerset	Grass/wooded/backwaters, wooded bluff preservation
Star Prairie Seed Farm Wildlife Area	57 acres	Six miles northeast of New Richmond	Growing plant species for restoration efforts
Swinging Gate Fish and Wildlife Area	156 acres	One mile northeast of River Falls	Grassland habitat/parking/Kinnickinnic river access and shoreline protection
Ten Mile Creek	234 acres	Two miles south of New Richmond	Grassland/wetland animal habitat
Ulrich	18 acres	One mile east of New Richmond	Pothole wetland protection
Willow River	808 acres	Three miles east of Burkhardt	Restored prairie/red & white pines

\*\* additional information and maps for each property are available on the WDNR website

## State Wildlife and Western Prairie Habitat Restoration Areas



### State Natural Areas

State Natural Areas are managed to protect rare plants, animals, or native landscapes. State Natural Areas may be part of a larger State Wildlife Area, though permitted recreational activities may be less intensive. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, there are four State Natural Areas in St. Croix County listed below:

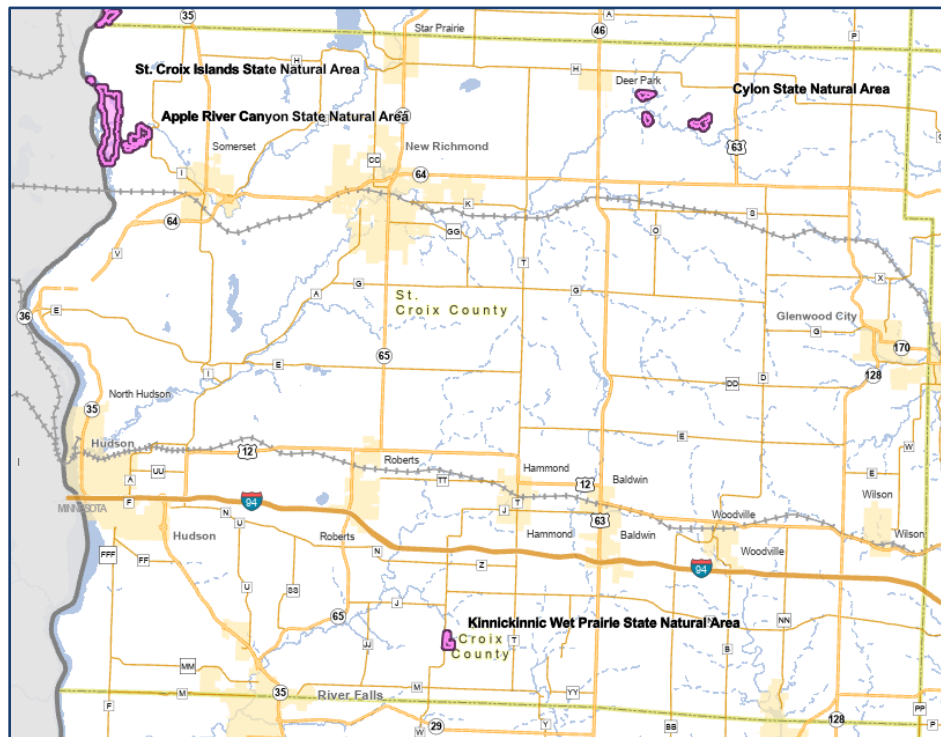
**Apple River Canyon** features a deep (100-140 feet), narrow (150 feet) gorge along the Apple River about two miles upstream from its confluence with the St. Croix River. Apple River Canyon, located in the Town of Somerset, spans approximately 185 acres. It is owned by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and was designated a State Natural Area in 1978.

**St. Croix Islands** features a diverse and extensive mosaic of running sloughs, backwater lakes, braided stream channels, stands of emergent aquatic vegetation, old-growth lowland forest, and the delta of the Apple River along the St. Croix River. St. Croix Islands is owned by the WDNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 2010.

**Kinnickinnic Wet Prairie** is 120 acres in size and supports many native prairie plants that have persisted despite having been grazed in the past. Kinnickinnic Wet Prairie is owned by the WDNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 2008. The property is located in the Town of Pleasant Valley.

**Cylon Natural Area** is located on nearly level topography just south of the Willow River in the Town of Cylon. It is owned by the DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 2010.

## State Natural Areas



## United States Fish And Wildlife Service – Waterfowl Protection Areas (WPA)

The St. Croix Wetland Management District was established in 1992 for the purpose of providing wetland and grassland habitat for breeding waterfowl. The district, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, encompasses eight counties in west central Wisconsin and is responsible for management of 8,700 acres of public lands on 44 separate tracts of the National Wildlife Refuge System called waterfowl protection areas (WPA). Within St. Croix County, there are 24 tracts in the program totaling 5,851 acres shown below:

Facility	Size	Location
Bass Lake WPA	417 acres	Four miles southwest of New Richmond
Betterly WPA	486 acres	One mile east of New Richmond
Bierbauer WPA	273 acres	Five miles northwest of New Richmond
Clapp WPA	238 acres	Four miles west of Roberts
Erickson WPA	466 acres	One mile east of New Richmond
Hammond WPA	26 acres	One mile east of Hammond
Hanten WPA	170 acres	Two miles east of Star Prairie
Kerber WPA	156 acres	Two miles north of Roberts
Kostka WPA	349 acres	One mile north of Deer Park
Lundy WPA	132 acres	Two miles south of New Richmond
Oak Ridge North WPA	422 acres	Two miles east of Star Prairie
Oak Ridge South WPA	310 acres	Two miles southeast of Star Prairie
Plum Brush WPA	151 acres	Two miles east of Star Prairie
Prairie Flats North WPA	218 acres	Four miles west of Star Prairie
Prairie Flats South WPA	502 acres	Five miles west of Star Prairie



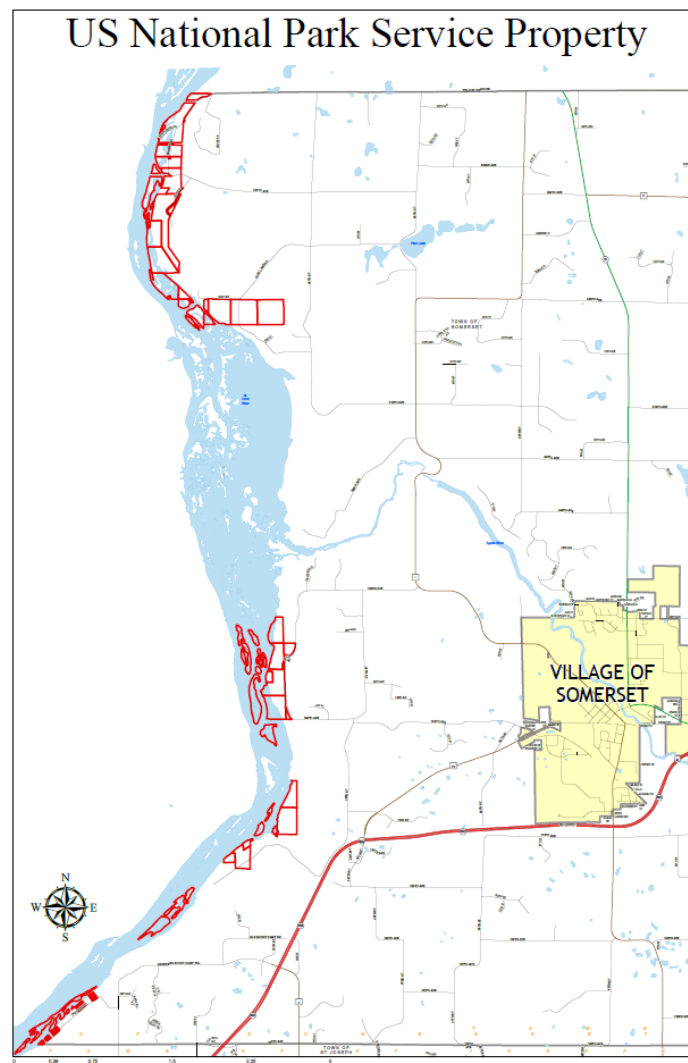


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## United States National Park Service

The National Park Service owns 54 properties, totaling approximately 811 acres along the St. Croix River, primarily in the Town of Somerset. These properties are managed as part of the St. Croix National Wild and Scenic River System.

Recognized as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System (1968) and designated a National Scenic Riverway (1972), the Lower St. Croix River forms part of the county's western border and remains a valuable recreational asset. Properties owned by the National Park Service in St. Croix County protect riverbanks, bluffsides, steep slopes and islands on the river from development and offer boating opportunities, fishing, hiking, picnicking and nature viewing. Starting in northern Wisconsin and running south to St. Croix County, the larger St. Croix National Scenic Riverway spans 200 miles of clean water that rushes through a forested landscape.





## Town, Village and City Parks

Below is a 2024 inventory of park facilities operated by the towns, villages and cities of St. Croix County. Websites of the individual jurisdictions can be viewed to obtain additional details:

### Town Parks

Cylon (1), Emerald (1), Hammond (1), Hudson (3), Kinnickinnic (1), Pleasant Valley (1), Richmond (1), Rush River (1), Somerset (4), St. Joseph (3), Stanton (1), Star Prairie (1), Troy (3), Warren (2)

Notable Town parks include:

Towns				
Cylon	Cylon Community Park	park		picnic area
Hudson	Hudson Town Park	park/sports		Town Hall, ballfields
Pleasant Valley	Town Hall Play Area	park	at Town Hall	playground, picnic
St. Joseph	St. Joseph Town Park	sports	CTH E & V	baseball, sledding, skiing
Stanton	Town Hall Play Area	park	at Town Hall	playground, picnic
Troy	Glover Park	park/sports	Glover Road	40 ac
Warren	Community Park	park/sports		
	Pemble's Access	conservancy		seasonal use

### Village Parks

Baldwin (6), Deer Park (1), Hammond (3), North Hudson (10), Roberts (4), Somerset (4), Star Prairie (3), Wilson (1), Woodville (1)

Notable Village Parks include:

Villages				
Baldwin	Bailey Park	park	E. Main St.	playground
	Baldwin Winter Green	park/camp	Hwy 63	sledding, primitive camp.
	Mill Pond Park	park/sports	E. Maple St.	softball, soccer, etc.
	Little Creek Park	park/sports	6th Ave.	playground, basketball
	Windmill Park	park/wayside	Hwy 63 & Park St	tourist center
	Creamery Park	park		
Deer Park	Deer Park Community Park	park/sports	Main St.	softball, volleyball, etc
Hammond	Hammond Community Park	park/sports	Park St.	softball, skating, playground
	Village Recreation Area	park	Hwy 12	1 ac, playground
	Hiking/Walking Trail	trail	around the village	2.5 miles
North Hudson	Brown's Beach	beach	3rd Ave.	50-foot sand beach
	Eagle Woods Park	park	Deer Path	playground
	Glen Oaks Park	park	4th St.	playground, history, basketball
	Green's Woodcrest Park	park/open	Partridge Lane	trails
	Jensen Memorial Park	open	Lund Street	passive rec.
	Pepper Fest Park	park/events	7th St.	Pepperfest, skating, playground
	Sommers Landing Park	park/sports	North End Rd.	soccer
	St. Croix Station Park	forest	Station Lane	8.59 ac
	Webster Park	forest	Webster St.	2.55 ac
Roberts	Woodcrest Park	park	10th St.	playground, trail
	Roberts Community Park	park/sports		festival, softball, playground
	Somerset Village Park	park/sports	River St.	baseball, canoe access, trail
Somerset	Veteran's Memorial Park	park/sports	Parnell St.	memorial, playground, volleyball
	Larry Forrest Memorial Park	park/sports		playground, ballfields
Star Prairie	Star Prairie Community Park	park/sports		ballfield, tennis, playground
	River Island Park	park	along Apple River	fishing, canoeing
	Lyngaas Nature Center	conservancy	Saratoga Avenue	25 ac, trails
Wilson	Wilson Community Park	park/sports	Wilson & Main	softball, playground
Woodville	Steven Memorial Park	park/sports		softball, playground, etc

## City Parks

Glenwood City (4), Hudson (17), New Richmond (23), River Falls (10 – St. Croix County portion)

Notable City Parks include:

Cities				
Glenwood City	Hinman Park	park/sports	6 <sup>th</sup> St.	beach, playground
	Glenwood City Picnic Area	Park	Hwy. 128	8 acres
	Glenwood City Ballfield	Sports/events		County fairgrounds
	City skating rink	Sports	E. Oak St.	0.5 acres
Hudson	Anderson Park	Park	River Ridge Rd	Playground, tennis, basketball
	Bandshell	bandshell	1st St.	
	Birkmose Park	Park/historic	Coulee Rd.	Indian burial mounds, scenic overlook
	Bridge Street Area	Open	North St.	Views of Lake St. Croix
	Burton Field	Sports	9 <sup>th</sup> & St. Croix Sts.	Ballfields, skating, playground
	Coons Hill	Open	Wisconsin St.	Sledding
	Grandview Park	Sports/dog park	Carmichael	Ballfields, batting cage, dog park
	Lakefront Park	Park/beach	1 <sup>st</sup> St.	Swimming, sailboat, seawall
	Lake Mallalieu Boat Launch - Corky's Pier	Boat Launch	2nd St.	Fishing dock, parking
	Meadows Park	Park	Canary Way	Play area
	Prospect Park	Park	Wisconsin St.	Overlook, playground, shelter
	Vine St. Square	Open	Vine St.	5 ac. Sledding
	Webster Park	Open	Laurel Ave.	2 ac. Play area
	Williams Park	Park	Laurel Ave.	4 ac. Playgrounds
New Richmond	Weitkamp Park	Park	O'Neil Rd.	Play area, benches
	Cherokee Park	Open	River Drive	1.75 ac., ballfield
	Citizen Field	Sports/events	3 <sup>rd</sup> St. East	Football, baseball, festival
	Cyclone Park	Historical	STH 65	Historical marker
	Glover Park	Park/events	1 <sup>st</sup> St.	Historic, concerts
	Greaton Park	Park	Grand Ave.	3.6 ac play area
	Hemenway Park	Park	2 <sup>nd</sup> St. E.	Fishing
	MaRita Park	Park	Minnesota Ave.	0.6 ac
	Mary Park	Park/events	Green Ave. N.	Playground, sports, art fair
	Mill Pond Walk	Trail	Mill Pond	Hiking
	Monette Park	Part/sports	Somerset St.	Playground, sports
	New Richmond Nature Center	Conservation	STH 64	1 mile nature trail
	Northside Park	Park	2 <sup>nd</sup> Ave.	Playground, iceskating
	Paperjack & Greenway Park	Park/museum	CTH GG	Playground, prairie, historic
	Pine Bluff Park	Open	Grand Ave.	9.5 ac., undeveloped
	Sports Center	Sports	5 <sup>th</sup> St.	Ice skating
	Victoria Memorial Park	Park	STH 64	Field games
	Woodland Creek Park	Park	CTH A	Playground
	Doar Prairie Savanna	Conservation	West Side	Undeveloped
	Fox Run Park	Undeveloped	East Side	Undeveloped
	Ted McCabe Park		Bus. 64	
	L.G. Peterson Park		Bus. 64	
	Dog Park			
	Freedom Park	Undeveloped	140 <sup>th</sup> St.	Undeveloped

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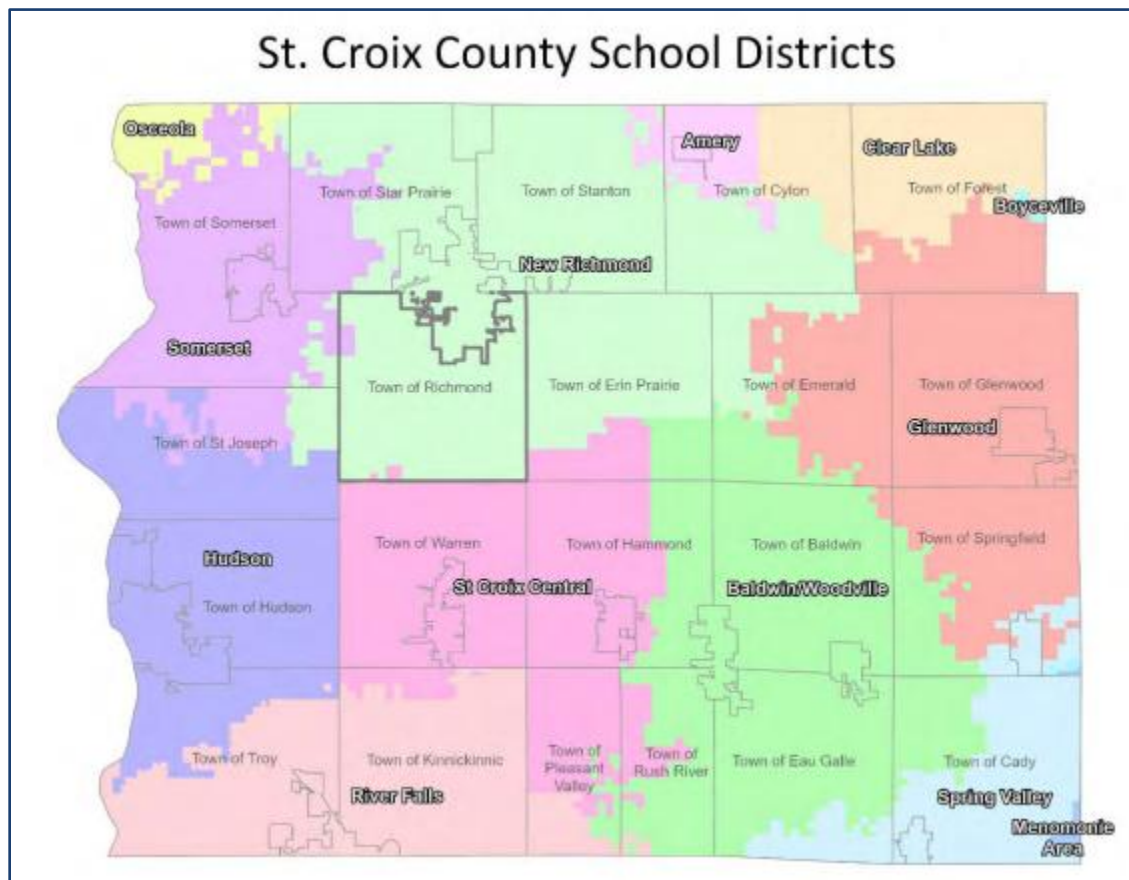
## School Districts

There are 13 school districts located entirely, or partially, within St. Croix County:

1. Baldwin Woodville Area
  - a. Baldwin-Woodville High School
  - b. Viking Middle School
  - c. Greenfield Elementary
2. Glenwood City
  - a. Glenwood City High School
  - b. Glenwood City Junior High School
  - c. Glenwood city Elementary School
  - d. Transitional Skills Center
3. Hudson
  - a. Houlton Elementary
  - b. Hudson High School
  - c. Hudson Middle School
  - d. Hudson Prairie Elementary School
  - e. North Hudson Elementary School
  - f. River Crest Elementary School
  - g. Rock Elementary School
  - h. Willow River Elementary School
4. New Richmond
  - a. New Richmond High School
  - b. New Richmond Middle School
  - c. New Richmond Hillside Elementary School
  - d. New Richmond Paperjack Elementary School
  - e. New Richmond Starr Elementary School
  - f. NR 4Kids Charter School
5. St. Croix Central
  - a. St. Croix Central High School
  - b. St. Croix Central Middle School
  - c. St. Croix Central Elementary School
  - d. St. Croix Central Virtual Academy
6. Somerset
  - a. Somerset High School
  - b. Somerset Middle School
  - c. Somerset Elementary School
7. River Falls
8. Clear Lake
9. Amery
10. Osceola
11. Boyceville
12. Spring Valley
13. Menominee Area

Most school districts, with facilities in St. Croix County, provide outdoor recreational areas near their elementary, middle, or high schools. These typically include ball fields (for soccer, baseball, softball, football, and lacrosse), tennis courts, playgrounds, outdoor basketball hoops, and running tracks.

Although these facilities are generally not available to the general public during school hours, many school districts permit public access during evenings, weekends, and other non-school times. Additionally, local community education/summer recreation programs—open to the public—often use these school facilities alongside those operated by local governments.



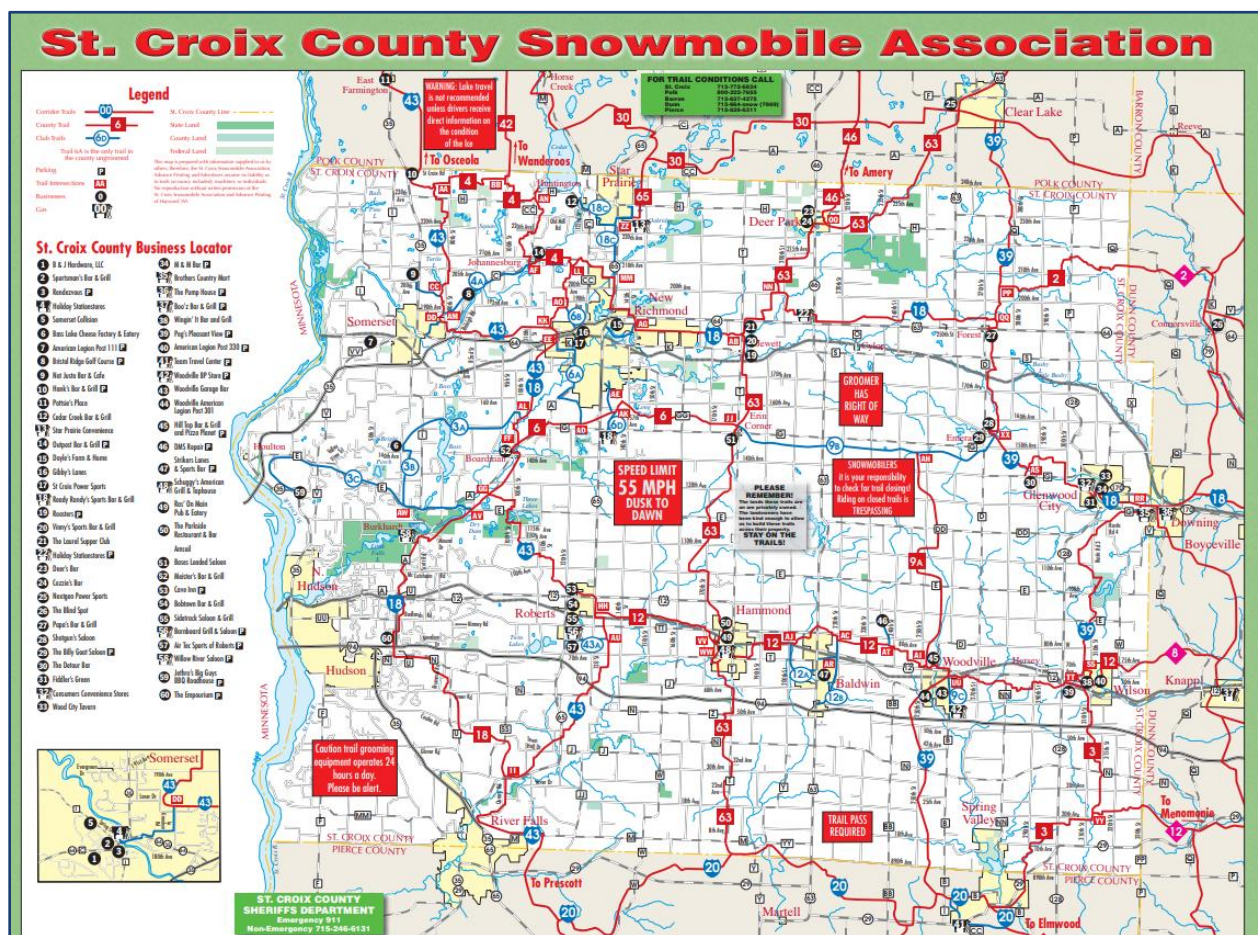


## Snowmobile Trail System

The St. Croix County Snowmobile Association is comprised of 12 snowmobile clubs from around the county. Club information is available on the St. Croix County website – Parks page. The Park Administrator serves as the trail coordinator for the state-funded county trail system. The Association works through the Parks Division in the maintenance and grooming of the trail system. The Department of Natural Resources provides funds for trail maintenance using snowmobile registration fees and gas tax revenue. Lands in which the trails are on are privately owned and are allowed by easement or agreement.

The snowmobile trail system is very well run and maintained. Due to the increasing population in the western portions of the county trail usage has been increasing. However, the growing population and new developments decrease the open land available for snowmobile trails. New trail segments are unlikely in the western portion of the county and some existing segments may be lost.

There are 247.6 miles of groomed state-funded trail. There are also segments of local trails which may not be groomed.





## Snowmobile Trail System Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Continue to assist the Snowmobile Association with grant applications and reporting and public notification of trail openings and closings	\$ 0	-	Ongoing
Encourage cities and villages to have designated trails through their communities so snowmobilers can access gas, food and lodging	\$ 0	-	Ongoing
Government jurisdictions are encouraged to cooperate with the Snowmobile Association in establishing trails across public lands	\$ 0	-	Ongoing
Consult with the Highway Department and Towns whenever major road improvements are considered to plan for ditch grades suitable for snowmobile crossings	\$ 0	-	Ongoing

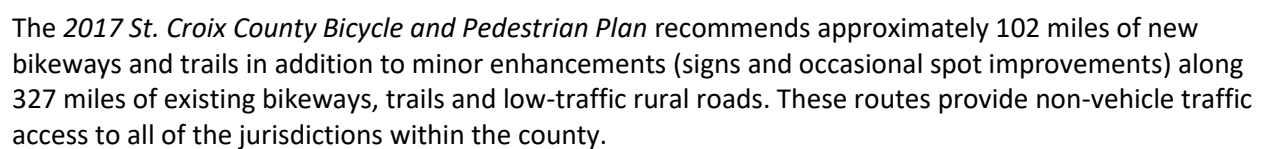
### St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

St. Croix County’s rolling hills provide excellent terrain for bicycle riding. The county’s agrarian vistas, miles of paved roads and proximity to urban populations attracts both resident and non-resident cyclists.

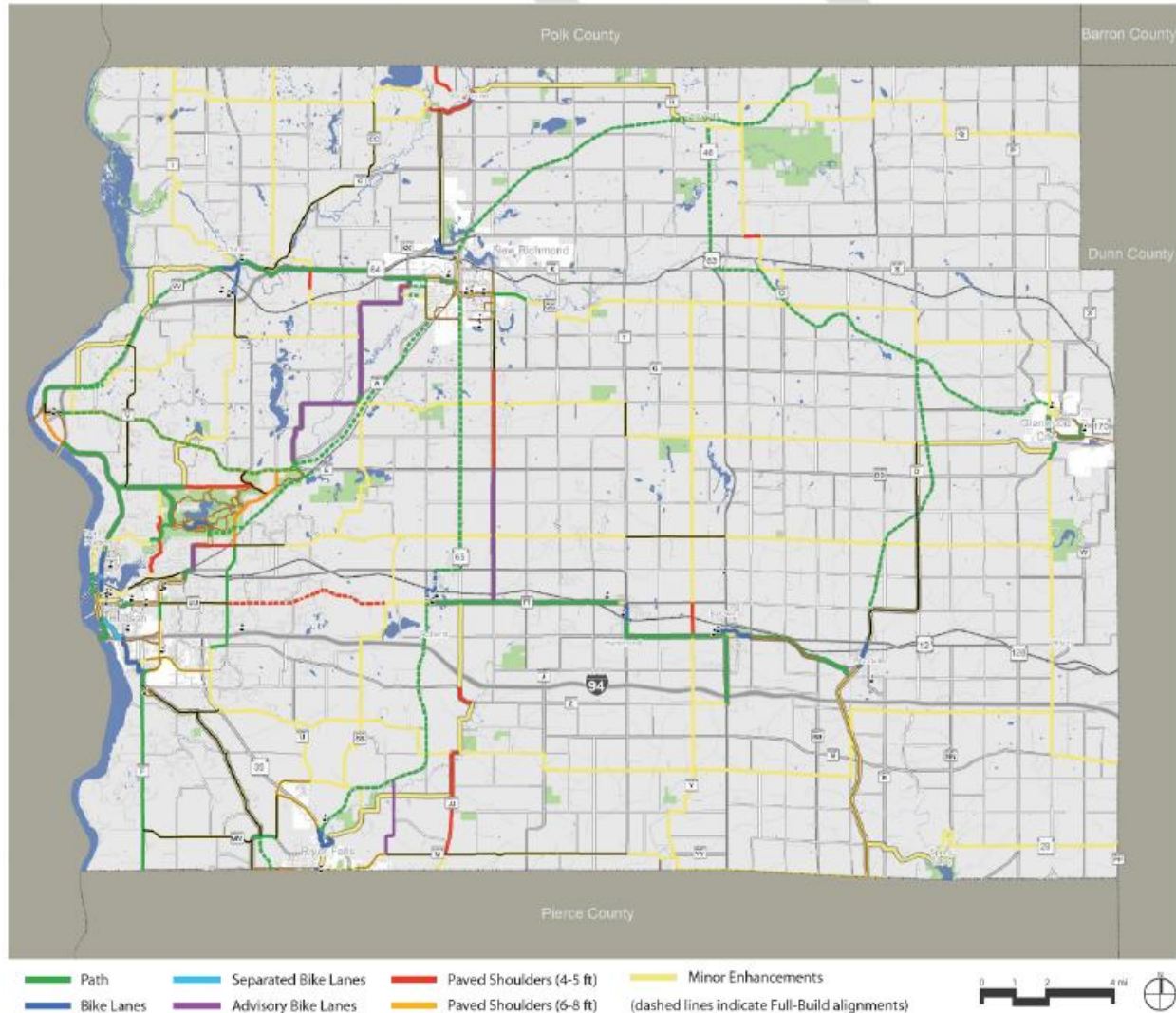
On May 2, 2017, the St. Croix County Board officially adopted the *2017 St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*, following a two-year planning process that incorporated extensive public input. This Plan serves as a strategic guide for expanding and improving bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the county. It aims to support a wide range of users—from school-age children and casual riders to avid cyclists—by recommending new and upgraded bikeways and trail facilities that offer a higher level of service than the existing network. The need for this updated plan was driven by anticipated population growth, as outlined in the plan’s demographic analysis.

The completion of the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge project in 2019 sparked renewed advocacy for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the county. As part of the project, the 4.7-mile St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail was developed as a key destination for bicyclists and pedestrians. The trail connects historic Stillwater, Minnesota, with Houlton, Wisconsin, offering scenic views of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. It incorporates a designated bike/pedestrian lane on the new bridge and repurposes the historic Stillwater Lift Bridge as a dedicated bike/pedestrian crossing. The loop is supported by connecting trails in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, linking to broader trail networks in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and Western Wisconsin. One such connection is the Highway #35 Off-Road Trail that will connect the Loop Trail to Hudson to the south. This project will be detailed later in this section. Currently, the county is focused on making areas beyond the loop safer and more attractive for cyclists.

## St Croix River Crossing Loop Trail



## St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Recommendations



St. Croix County's off-road bicycle trails are the Wildwood Trail, St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail and the Highway #35 Off-Road Trail. These are county-owned park facilities and are summarized later in the plan document.

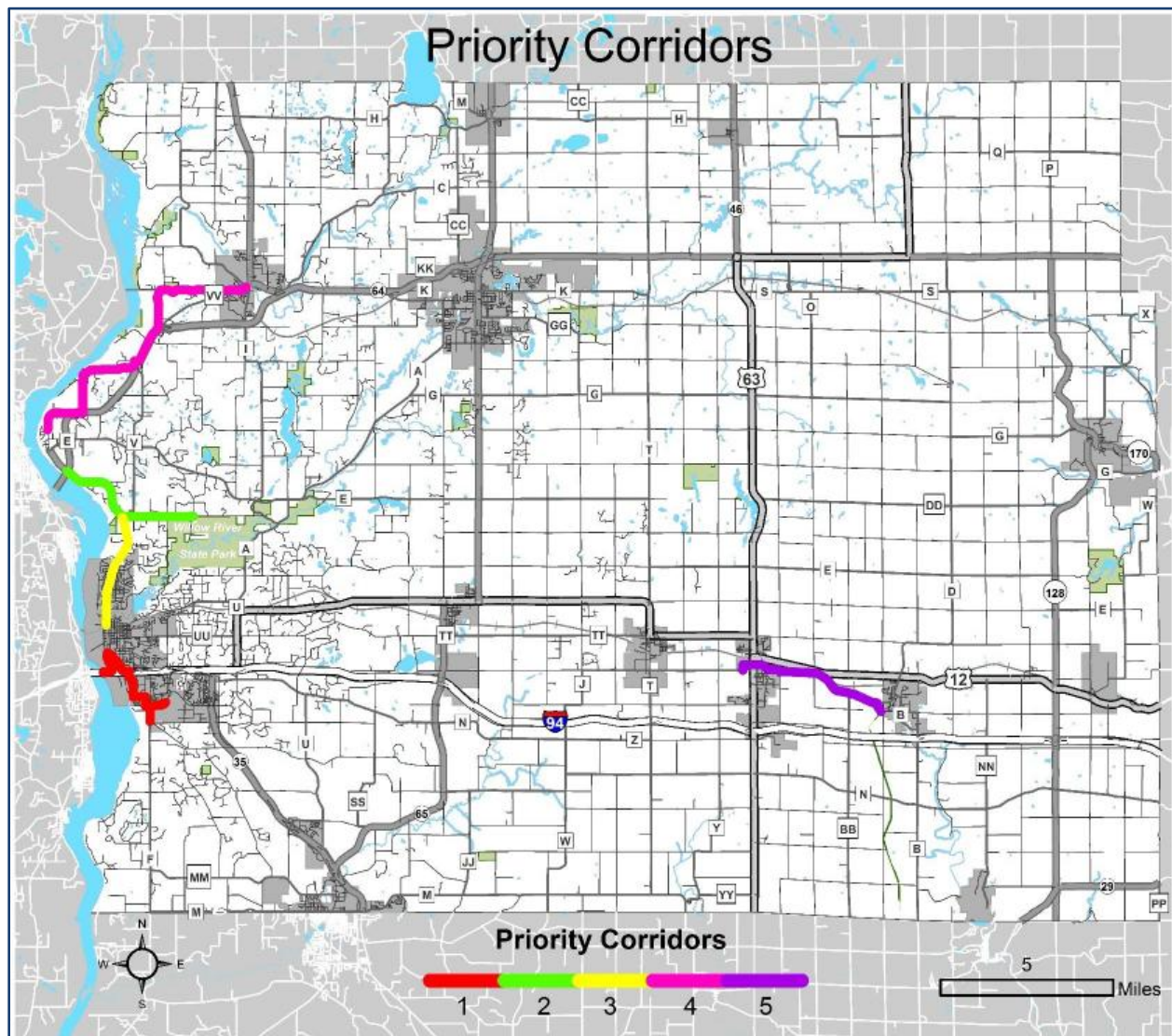
The Highway Department works on a continuous basis to address signage on the bike route system. This includes replacing aging and damaged signs as well as the installation of additional signs as the system expands. During the process of planning for construction projects on the county trunk highway system, the question of whether or not to include paved shoulders and the width of the paved shoulder is addressed.

The system of county and town on-road routes works well for adult cyclists and semi-professional touring cyclists. Because younger children need more supervision when utilizing shared bike path facilities, parents are looking for routes where children are more isolated from vehicular traffic. They desire off the road paths, wide paved shoulders or separate trails.



Other key themes identified in the 2017 Plan include a desire for more west-east bikeway connections, more bicycle infrastructure, separated paths that connect to the new Loop Trail, a sustainable maintenance program for trail facilities, and bicycle infrastructure that provides separation from motor vehicles.

Five priority corridors are identified in the 2017 *St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*. These represent the highest priority routes identified during the planning process.



### CORRIDOR 1: I-94-RIVER CREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONNECTION

The bikeway recommendations for Corridor 1 are intended to provide better connections between the south end of downtown Hudson and other existing bikeways and trails that create important regional connections. The segment along 2nd Street, between the intersection with Coulee Road and Interstate 94, improves upon the existing sidewalk connection to the separated path across the I-94 bridge, providing safer access for trips to and from Minnesota to the City of Hudson and its existing bikeways.

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With the connection to Coulee Road providing much needed access across the interstate highway at the 11th Street overpass, the commercial areas along and south of I-94 can be reached from the significantly lower-lying area along the river. Since Coulee Road ascends considerably from 2nd Street to 11th Street, this segment is best served with the proposed separated bike path.

To the south of I-94, the corridor serves bicycle and pedestrian trips to employment areas with connections to an existing path along Crest View Drive and to the industrial park. Continuing south in the Town of Troy, this corridor provides for safe travel to River Crest Elementary School and the YMCA's Camp St. Croix, while creating connections to existing trails along S. Carmichael Road and Coulee Trail, and to the trails and the bicycle/pedestrian underpass of County Highway F in the vicinity of the elementary school. This corridor also improves bicycle travel to Troy Beach, just south of the corridor along the river.

## **CORRIDOR 2: LOOP TRAIL-WILLOW RIVER STATE PARK CONNECTION**

This corridor provides a key connection from the new St. Croix River Crossing to the very popular Willow River State Park and its internal trail system. The segment along Highway 35 also provides a critical link from the new bridge and bikeways in Minnesota, to populations on the Wisconsin side, south of the bridge, including the Town of St. Joseph, Village of North Hudson and the City of Hudson. This segment will present some challenges for implementation. The busy and high-speed conditions of the highway (with a speed limit of 55 miles per hour in much of this section of Highway 35) indicate a need for a separated sidepath. This will provide a much-needed link to the new bridge and the Loop Trail being constructed as a part of the bridge project.

The River Road segment of the corridor would provide safe access to Willow River State Park, a destination for families and bicycle tourists from both Minnesota and Wisconsin. The sidepath is proposed to continue to another planned bikeway, north from Willow River State Park to Homestead Park and Perch Lake.

## **CORRIDOR 3: WIS-35 CONNECTION TO HUDSON**

Corridor 3 is the next segment between the Loop Trail and the Village of North Hudson and City of Hudson. Highway 35 north of North Hudson has higher speeds, indicating the need for the sidepath until a point in the Village where the speed limit drops to 25 miles per hour, allowing for safe bicycle travel in on-street bike lanes.

This connection is critical as bicyclists will need a route from the Loop Trail to the many destinations in Hudson. Also, this would allow a loop to be completed using trails at the new river crossing and the Interstate 94 river crossing.

## **CORRIDOR 4: LOOP TRAIL-SOMERSET CONNECTION**

This segment provides a critical connection to the St. Croix Crossing project and its Loop Trail component along a scenic route north to the Village of Somerset. In Somerset, the corridor provides access to a popular Apple River tubing site and the Somerset Amphitheater, which hosts large concerts and festivals. The corridor also connects to other planned bikeways north of Somerset along CTH I and 80th Street, linking to the Apple River Canyon State Natural Area and beyond to other bicycling opportunities in Polk County. This segment is also the first step in reaching another primary population



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and activity center in St. Croix County, the City of New Richmond. The combination of on-road facilities and separated sidepaths, where necessary, will provide a comfortable ride for most riders, while some significant terrain variation will keep the route interesting for fitness riders.

## CORRIDOR 5: BALDWIN-WOODVILLE CONNECTION

Corridor 5 connects Baldwin and Woodville, which are closely linked in terms of schools, sports, and community facilities, but have remained separated by a lack of safe bicycling routes. The elementary school and high school for the Baldwin-Woodville School District are both located in the Village of Baldwin, but the Middle School is located in Woodville. This necessitates many families living in either community to transport their child (or children) to the other community at some point during each child's school years. With the distance between the communities being approximately five miles, bicycling could serve some of those school trips, such as those after baseball or theater practice when a bus may not be available, but potentially also as a healthy or convenient choice for students and other bicycle riders of all ages.

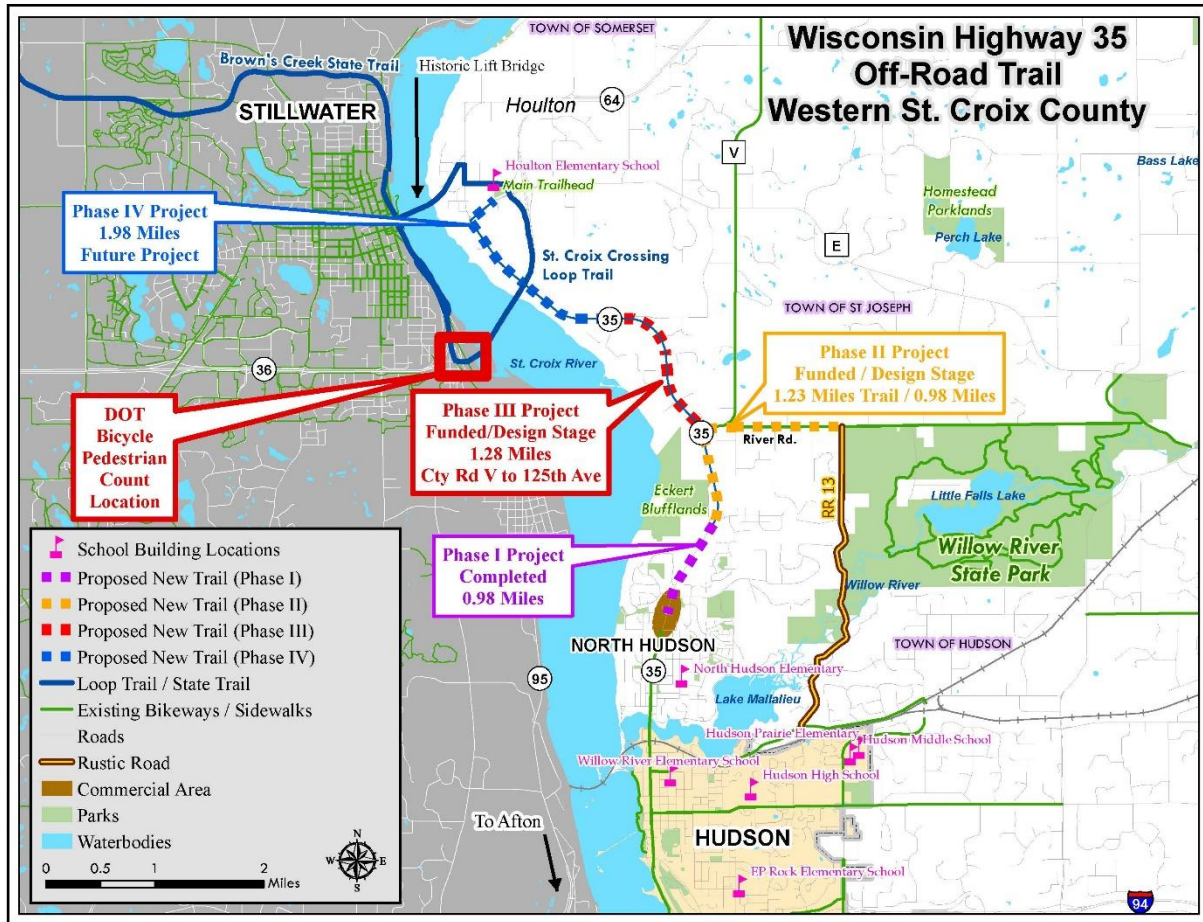
This corridor is seen as one of the most critical links in a much-requested connection between the communities in the Interstate 94/Highway 12 corridor running east-west through the county.

## RECENT TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS – Highway #35 Off-Road Trail

St. Croix County has successfully secured three separate grants— including funding from the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Federal Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)—to construct three of the four segments of the Highway 35 Off-Road Trail. This project aligns with Priority Corridors #2 and #3 identified in the *2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan*.

The trail is part of a multi-state initiative that will eventually connect off-road segments and walkways from downtown Afton, Minnesota, across the I-94 bridge trail, and northward through downtown Hudson and into the Village of North Hudson. It will also link key recreational areas including Eckert Blufflands Park, Willow River State Park, and the growing communities in the Towns of Hudson and St. Joseph, connecting them to the existing Loop Trail.

The Loop Trail itself provides connections to historic Stillwater and the Browns Creek/Gateway State Trails, which are part of the broader Twin Cities Regional Trail System. Along its route, the Highway 35 Off-Road Trail will provide safe, off-road access to neighborhoods, schools, libraries, churches, commercial areas, and parks at all levels—local, county, and state. Once complete, the entire network—spanning from Afton, MN, through western Wisconsin, and back into St. Paul via the Loop Trail and Minnesota's state trails—will cover approximately 33 miles, offering significant recreational and transportation benefits for both residents and visitors.



## Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail System Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Phase 2 of the Highway #35 Off-Road Trail (Old Hwy 35 to Cty Rd V and River Road)	\$ 943,528	80% Federal TAP Grant 20% St. Croix Cty Match	2025-2028
Phase 3 of the Highway #35 Off-Road Trail (Cty Rd V to 125 <sup>th</sup> Ave)	\$ 1,301,000	80% Federal TAP Grant 20% St. Croix Cty Match	2026-2029
Phase 4 of the Highway #35 Off-Road Trail (125 <sup>th</sup> Ave to Hwy 35/64 and Cty Rd E)	\$ 1,800,000	80% Federal TAP Grant 20% St. Croix Cty Match	2027-2030

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## **All-Terrain Vehicle(ATV)/Utility Terrain Vehicle(UTV) Usage**

Wisconsin State Statute §23.33 and Administrative Code NR 64 regulate ATV and UTV usage including operation, safety, speed, noise, age requirements and registration. These and other state regulations are designed to ensure these vehicles are operated safely and responsibly.

Since 2010, there has been interest among ATV organizations to designate more options for the usage of ATVs in St. Croix County. Currently, there are no official off-road ATV trail segments in St. Croix County. The ATV clubs have received approval from several Towns to allow ATV riding on their town roads.

Areas in the State where ATV riding is very popular are located where large blocks of public land are open for public use. For example, Clark and Jackson counties have thousands of acres of County and State Forests with hundreds of miles of off-road ATV trails. Other areas are located in Northern Wisconsin where large, wooded acreages of County, State and Federal lands provide a tourist destination such as Douglas, Polk, Washburn, Sawyer, Chippewa, and Barron counties, to name a few. These sites offer ATV riders recreational rides on scenic trails with the ability to cover 100 miles or more in a day.

St. Croix County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state, does not have large acreages of County, State or Federal lands that offer this type of recreational use. The largest blocks of public land in St. Croix County are Willow River State Park, Eau Galle Recreation Area, Glen Hills County Park and State and Federal wildlife areas. ATV riding is not allowed in any of these areas or on any county lands.

Chapter 79 (All-Terrain and Utility Terrain Vehicle Route Ordinance) regulates County Road usage by ATV's and UTV's.

### **St. Croix County Policy – ATV/UTV Routes on County Trunk Highways**

Wisconsin Statute § 23.33 provides St. Croix County the responsibility/authority to designate county highways, or sections of county highways, for use by ATV/UTV/LSV's (All-Terrain Vehicle/Utility Terrain Vehicle/Low Speed Vehicles). These sections/routes are generally recognized as connections of ends of off-highway trails when it is obstructed by a city, village, natural obstacle, or other impediment.

St. Croix County's primary concern when making a determination on designating a county highway as an ATV/UTV route is public safety. ATV/UTV's on county highways will create an additional conflict for the traveling public and safety will be considered a priority.

### **Application/Process**

Written applications are required for consideration by the St. Croix County Transportation Committee. Applications are available through the St. Croix County website ([www.sccwi.gov](http://www.sccwi.gov)) or from the St. Croix County Highway Department. All applications must be submitted by the local jurisdiction (City/Village/Town) to be considered. Applications will be considered annually, with the submittal deadline being the last Friday of January in the year to be considered. All application will be considered at the March St. Croix County Transportation Committee meeting. Upon recommendation of the St. Croix County Highway Committee, the route would be considered by the St. Croix County Board. The designation and opening of an approved ATV/UTV route will become effective upon adoption of a County Ordinance by the St. Croix County Board and erection of necessary signage by the St. Croix

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County Highway Department. All costs associated with erection and maintenance of necessary signs shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

Consideration of safety of the travelling public is the utmost concern for St. Croix County. Below is a list of factors that will be considered by the County in determining whether a county highway, or section of county highway could be designated as an ATV/UTV route. This list is not exhaustive, and as every county highway has unique features additional factors may be considered:

1. ADT (Average Daily Traffic)
2. St. Croix County Sheriff's Department – concerns
3. Accident Rate
4. Have all alternatives been considered
5. School zones/other special consideration areas
6. Does the requested highway/segment of highway connect segments of ATV/UTV trail networks
7. Speed limit
8. Vertical/horizontal highway alignment issues
9. Pavement width
10. Commercial truck volumes
11. Highway functional classification (Arterial/Collector/Local)
12. Length of requested route
13. Environmental hazard

#### **Other Items**

If a situation warrants closure of a designated ATV/UTV route on a county highway, the Highway Commissioner shall have the authority to temporarily suspend or close the route subject to a review and final determination by the St. Croix County Highway Committee. If the route is to be permanently closed all ATV/UTV signage shall be removed.

\*\* Check with individual governmental jurisdictions for ATV routes in each respective city, village or town OR the "[St. Croix County Riders ATV Club](#)" website for various maps and information.

## **OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

### **2025 ST CROIX COUNTY OUTDOOR RECREATION SURVEY**

St. Croix County launched a project webpage with a County Parks user survey from June 1 to August 31, 2025. The survey and project webpage were promoted using a direct email to all governmental jurisdictions, chambers of commerce, and outdoor interest groups within the County, along with a County Facebook page, promotion at County libraries and local newspapers, updates to the St. Croix County Towns Association Group and St. Croix County Community Development Committee as well as project boards at County Park facilities that included a QR code for park visitors to participate in the survey. An Open House was also hosted in July 2025 to solicit public input. A total of 162 respondents answered the County Parks user survey.

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**A summary of key findings from the survey include** (complete survey results in Appendix A):

1. 87 % of the survey respondents lived in St. Croix County.
2. The length of time the respondents lived in the County was fairly distributed between age groups. The average length of time respondents have lived in the county was 24.1 years.
3. The average age of the survey respondent was 49.
4. Female respondents outnumbered male respondents 53.8 % to 39.4 %; 6.8 % preferred not to answer.
5. Of the eight (8) stated goals in the Outdoor Recreation Plan, the following two goals received the highest number of responses as being “most important”:
  - a. Continue to evaluate, maintain, update and improve existing county parks, facilities, trails and natural areas to meet the recreational needs of the increasing population and changing demographics. (101 of 161 responses or 62.7 %)
  - b. Identify, acquire and retain lands for outdoor recreation and for protection of scenic, threatened and environmentally sensitive areas. (99 of 161 responses or 61.5 %)
6. Of the 13 St. Croix County outdoor recreation facilities, those that were used most in the last 12 months were:
  - a. Glen Hills Park - 67 of 157 respondents (42.6 %)
  - b. Homestead Parklands - 62 of 159 respondents (39.0 %)
  - c. St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail - 62 of 160 respondents (38.8 %)
7. Facilities that received the highest ratings (as rated being good or average) were:
  - a. St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail, Glen Hills Park and Homestead Parklands
8. 83 % of the respondents believed the daily and annual St. Croix County park fees are reasonable.
9. There was broad support (ranging from 66% to 78 %) for acquisition of land for the following purposes:
  - a. New outdoor recreation facilities; expansion of existing outdoor facilities; green space conservation and wildlife habitat
10. 73.6 % of respondents supported the year-round use/snow plowing of the St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail.
11. The top 3 improvements favored by respondents for Eckert Blufflands Park were restrooms, rustic trails and access to the St. Croix River shoreline. The least favored improvements were pickleball courts and an enclosed pavilion.
12. When asked to share their level of interest from a menu of outdoor recreation activities, the top three that respondents were most interested in were: hiking trails, county park and trail maps, and swimming beaches.



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## 2025 WISCONSIN STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP)

This plan incorporates findings from a 2023 statewide survey conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, titled *“Results from the 2023 Statewide Survey of Wisconsinites’ Recreation Behavior.”* The survey, which examined outdoor recreation habits, was distributed to 7,000 residents across the state.

When asked what activities you have participated in within the past 12 months, the top five responses are shown in each category:

**TRAIL BASED:**

1.	Walking, hiking, running on paved trails	65.7%
2.	Walking, hiking, running on unpaved trails	59.2%
3.	Bicycling (regular bicycle)	32.7%
4.	Riding a motorized vehicle (ATV, 4WD)	24.0%
5.	Mountain Biking	12.8%

**LAND BASED:**

1.	Wildlife watching, nature photography	45.1%
2.	Picnicking	43.9%
3.	Visiting a nature center	36.6%
4.	Gardening/Community Gardens	30.7%
5.	Visiting a dog park	23.6%

**WATER BASED:**

1.	Swimming in lakes, ponds or rivers	46.3%
2.	Fishing	40.0%
3.	Motorboating (including pontoons)	39.6%
4.	Canoeing, kayaking, paddle boarding	36.2%
5.	Using a splash pad or outdoor pool	30.3%

**WINTER BASED:**

1.	Ice Fishing	15.7%
2.	Snowmobiling	9.0%
3.	Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	8.4%
4.	Snowshoeing	8.2%
5.	Cross-country skiing	5.5%

## 2024 ST. CROIX COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE SURVEY

This plan includes insights from a 2023 resident survey conducted by the University of Wisconsin–River Falls (UWRF) Survey Research Center. Residents were asked to rate St. Croix County Parks, with 27% rating them as excellent, 58% as good, and 13% as fair. In total, 85% of respondents rated the parks as good or excellent—an increase from 75% in a similar UWRF survey conducted in 2008.

(Margin of error for 2023 survey results is +/- 4.6% with a 95% confidence level)

## ST. CROIX COUNTY PARKS RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS





## HOMESTEAD PARKLANDS

Address:	550 Perch Lake Road Hudson, WI 54022
Year Established:	1997
Year Park Opened:	2002
Acreage:	135
Location:	Town of St. Joseph, 6 miles north of Hudson and 5 miles south of Somerset

### History

Between 1994 and 1997, St. Croix County purchased the initial 90+ acres of the park. St. Croix County, in partnership with the Town of St. Joseph, used Bluffland Mitigation funds from both the County and Town—allocated as part of the four-lane St. Croix River Crossing project—to acquire 117 acres of land. Of this, 40 acres located just west of Perch Lake were incorporated into the existing Homestead Parklands in 2018. Habitat restoration and facilities development will be planned in the coming years.

The remaining 77 acres, owned by the Town of St. Joseph, have been designated as the "Town of St. Joseph Nature Preserve". The Preserve features diverse natural environments, including wetlands, prairie uplands, woodlands, a natural spring, three ponds, and important breeding habitats for waterfowl and other wildlife. A natural footpath connects the Nature Preserve to Homestead Parklands, entering the park near the northwest shore of Perch Lake, close to the beach area.

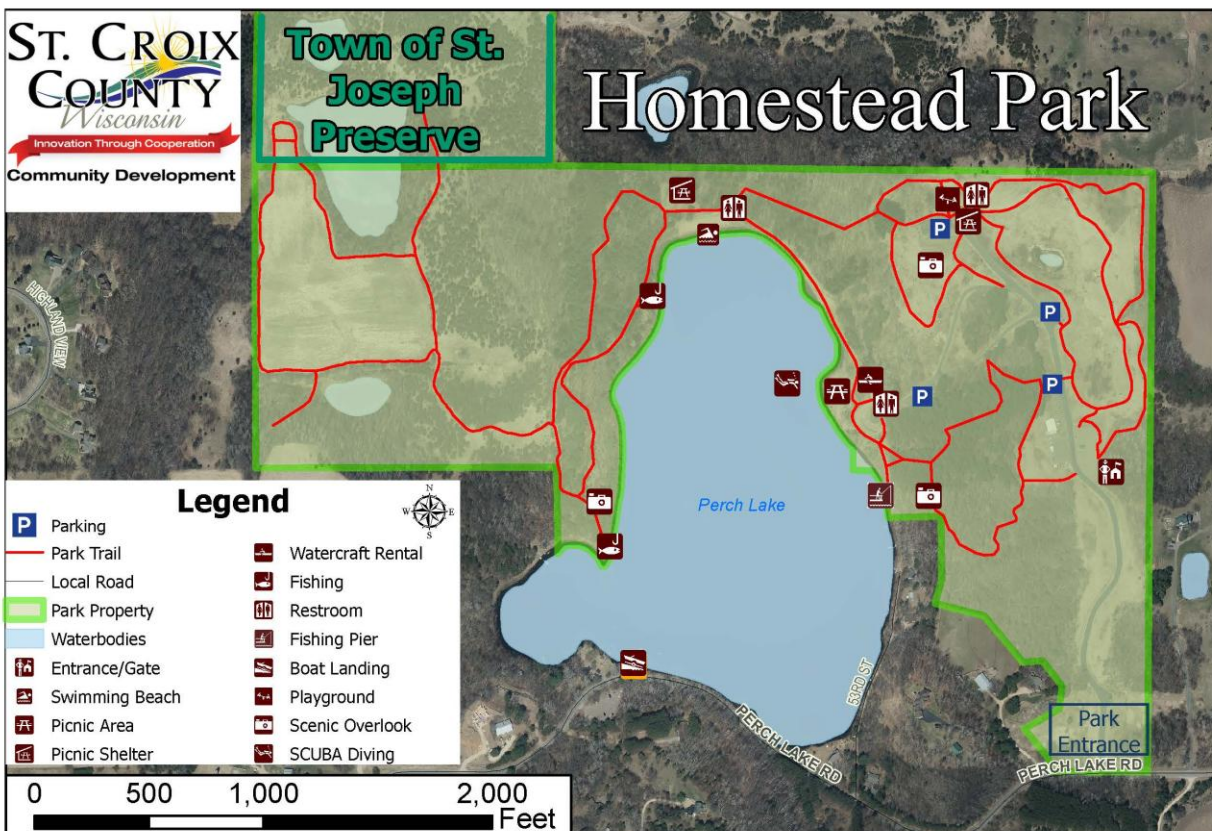


## Facilities

Park facilities/activities include:

Swimming Beach	Hiking Trails (including paved “Bookworm Trail”)
Watercraft Rentals	Shoreline Fishing
Scuba Diving (90’ foot depth)	Playground
Handicap Accessible Fishing Pier	Picnic Areas/Picnic Shelters
Restrooms (Handicap Accessible)	Entrance Station
Vehicle Parking Areas	Limited Hunting

Perch Lake has been designated as an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. An ORW are surface waters which provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, and are not significantly impacted by human activities. Fewer than 1% of Wisconsin’s lakes have this designation.



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## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- New Entrance station
- Picnic area improvements
- Development of additional parking stalls to address peak summer demand

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Over the past 5 to 10 years, attendance at Homestead Parklands has steadily grown, largely due to regional population increases and improved access. The park is situated just four miles east of the four-lane St. Croix River Bridge Crossing, which opened in 2019 and provides a direct connection to the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Looking ahead, efforts will focus on enhancing the visitor experience through the modernization of existing facilities and the addition of new amenities. One proposed improvement is a new hiking trail on the Waldroff property—the westernmost 40 acres of the park, acquired in 2018. This trail would link the Town of St. Joseph Nature Preserve to the north with existing Perch Lake amenities to the east, creating a more integrated and accessible park system. Other future projects include a Natural Resource Education and History Center, upgrades to playground equipment, as well as handicap accessible vault and flush toilets by the beach area (that also would serve as a storm shelter for that portion of the park).

## Homestead Parklands Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Natural Resource Education Center	\$ 800,000	CIP, Grants	2029-2030
1 vault toilet (2 stall) and 1 flush toilet (4 stall)	\$ 290,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2027
Chip seal driveways, parking lots and trails	\$ 200,000	Park Budget	2029-2030
Replace playground structure	\$ 150,000	CIP, Grants	2029-2030
Hiking trail between Homestead Parklands and the Town of St. Joseph Nature Preserve	\$ 150,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2029
Monitor and replenish engineered wood fiber playground safety surface	\$ 2,500	Park Budget	Ongoing





## GLEN HILLS PARK

Address:	1049 Rustic Road #3 Glenwood City, WI
Year Established:	1967
Year Park Opened:	1974
Acreage:	700
Location:	Town of Springfield, 3 miles south of Glenwood City and 5 miles north of Interstate 94

### History

Glen Hills Park, located in west central Wisconsin, is a 700-acre water-based recreation area centered around the 78-acre Glen Lake. Originally developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s by the Soil Conservation Service for flood control and erosion prevention under the PL-566 Floodwater Control Program, the site now also serves as a popular public recreation area. The County operates the park under a perpetual lease from the State of Wisconsin, and it officially opened in 1974. A portion of the site—72 acres—is subleased to the Glen Hills Golf Association, which runs a 9-hole golf course and related facilities including a driving range, practice green and food and beverage offerings.

### Facilities

Park facilities/activities include:

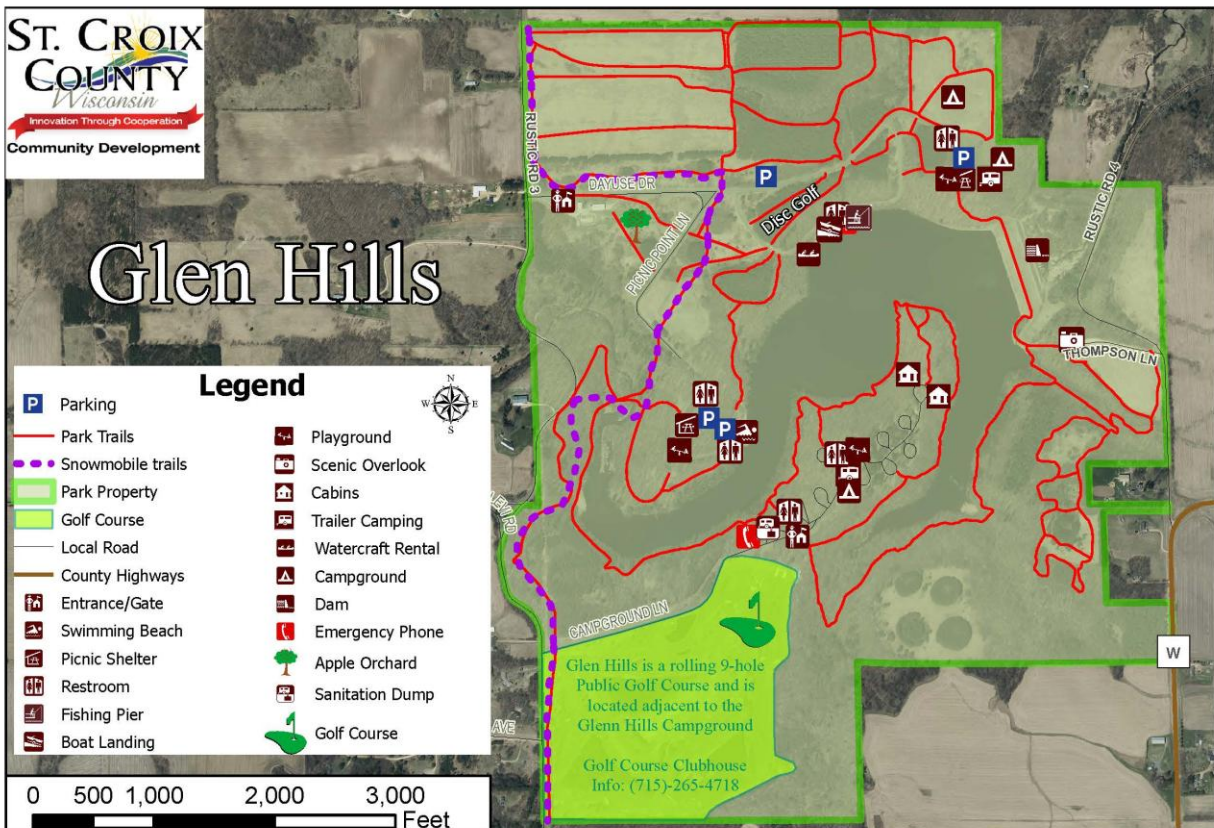
#### Campgrounds:

**Peninsula Campground** offers 55 electric-only campsites (two paved ADA-accessible sites), with many offering 20-, 30-, and 50-amp service. This campground provides a private shower/bathroom building, playground, potable water locations and a sanitary dump station. Two camper cabins are also located within Peninsula Campground.

**Vista Prairie Campground** offers 15 campsites with water and 20, 30, and/or 50-amp electric service campsites (one paved ADA-accessible site). This campground provides three small pavilions, a large group pavilion, and a sanitary dump station.

**Picnic Point Campground** offers 10 non-electric campsites. This tent/small RV campground provides a private shower/bathroom building, playground, potable water locations, and a large picnic shelter.

**Whispering Oaks Campground** offers 12 long-term RV pull-in camp sites with water and electric and includes a shelter/pavilion, playground, and shower/bathroom nearby.



## Other park amenities:

Restrooms/showers (ADA accessible)  
Sanitary Dumping Stations  
Boat Landing (non-motorized)  
Picnic Areas/Shelters  
ADA-Accessible Fishing Pier  
Hiking Trails  
Scenic Overlook  
Entrance Station  
Emergency Phone  
Vehicle Parking Areas

9-hole Disc Golf Course  
Swimming Beach  
Watercraft Rentals  
Adjacent to Public Golf Course  
4 playgrounds  
Multi-Use sports Field  
Earthen Dam  
Firewood  
Limited Hunting  
On-Line Camping Reservations

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(Winter activities)

Ice Fishing  
Skating on Glen Lake  
Sledding

Groomed Cross Country Ski Trails  
Snowmobiling  
Snowshoeing

## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- New Entrance Station
- ADA Bathroom/showers at Peninsula Campground
- Two camper cabins at Peninsula Campground
- ADA Bathroom/showers at Picnic Point Campground
- Picnic Pavilion/Shelter at Picnic Point Campground
- Trail connecting Peninsula and Picnic Point Campgrounds
- Established 15 campsites at Vista Prairie Campground with water and electric
- Established 12 RV pull-in camp sites with water and electric

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

On January 8, 2019, the St. Croix County Board adopted the Glen Hills Park Master Plan to guide the future development, maintenance, and stewardship of the park. The plan outlines strategies to improve the park's infrastructure and natural features, with key goals including:

- Assessing and enhancing the park's natural resources
- Recommending upgrades and additions to camping areas and related amenities
- Identifying smaller-scale improvements to increase park usage and enhance the visitor experience

Since adoption, several recommendations from the Master Plan have been implemented. These include the development of Whispering Oaks RV sites, the addition of camper cabins at the Peninsula Campground, and the establishment of the Vista Prairie Campground.

Some of the action items in this Outdoor Recreation Plan are drawn directly from the Glen Hills Park Master Plan. An update to the Master Plan is anticipated within the next 2 years. The emphasis of the Glen Hills Park Action Plan is to upgrade and replace dated facilities, promote water quality enhancements, and incorporate new features to enhance visitor and camper experiences.

A link to the *Glen Hills Park Master Plan* is provided below and incorporated into this Outdoor Recreation Plan document by reference:

<https://www.sccwi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9893/Glen-Hills-Park-Master-Plan>

## Glen Hills Park Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Install water service to remote campsites at Peninsula Campground	\$ 500,000	CIP, Grants	2029-2030
Install campsites on ridge overlooking boat launch with bathroom facility	\$ 500,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2030
Improve boat landing dock and associated facilities	\$ 250,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2028
Install four (4) stall unisex shower/bathroom facility by Vista Prairie and Whispering Oaks Campgrounds	\$ 200,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2027
Crack fill and chip seal all drives	\$ 200,000	CIP	2027-2028
Install two (2) stall unisex bathroom/shower facility in Peninsula Campground	\$ 175,000	CIP, Grants	2029-2030
Install electric and water to Picnic Point Campground sites	\$ 150,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2029
Install playground at Whispering Oaks Campground area	\$ 100,000	CIP, Grants	2028-2030
Enhance trail sections for multi-user groups	\$ 100,000	CIP, Grants	2028-2030
Upgrade equipment, roofs, electrical facilities, etc.	\$ 40,000	Grants, CIP, Park Budget	Ongoing
Construct bluebird, wood duck, robin houses and bat shelters for park	\$ 500	Work with 4-H, Eagle Scouts and youth groups	Ongoing





## TROY BEACH

Address:	490 County Road F Hudson, WI 54016
Year Established:	1967
Year Park Opened:	1967
Acreage:	5
Location:	Town of Troy, 1 mile south of the City of Hudson

### History

Troy Beach is a 5-acre day-use park on the St. Croix River, a national scenic riverway. Troy Beach was originally a town park and was donated to St. Croix County in 1967. Spring flooding can occur and may impact visitor availability and maintenance.

### Facilities

Park facilities include:

** Swimming Beach	Vault toilets
Picnic Tables	Limited Parking Lot Area
BBQ Grills	Hammock Village

\*\* No lifeguards are on duty





## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Rebuilt stairway from the parking lot to beach area due to flooding
- Established “Hammock Village” with assistance from Eagle Scouts

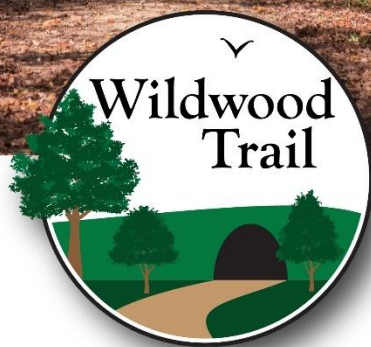
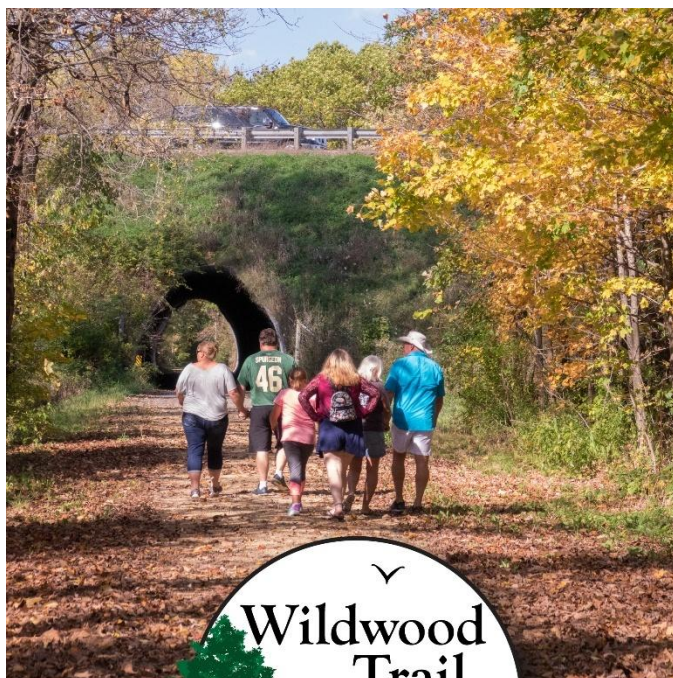
## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Troy Beach is a highly popular destination during the summer months. Due to the limited number of public beaches in the county, existing sites like Troy Beach experience heavy use. With only five acres of park space, there are constraints on how many amenities and parking spaces can be added. As a result, the focus for Troy Beach is on improving and modernizing existing features to maintain it as a high-quality recreational resource.

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## Troy Beach Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
4-stall Huffcutt bathroom – ADA accessible	\$ 150,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2027
Watercraft boating facility – kayaks/canoes	\$ 75,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2028
Add 5 parking stalls, including 1 ADA stall	\$ 25,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2029
Chip Seal parking/drive surfaces	\$ 25,000	Park Budget, Grants	2026-2027
Beach mat for ADA access to beach	\$ 10,000	Grants, Park Budget	2026-2028
Tree planting – replace dying ash trees	\$ 5,000	Grants, Park Budget	Ongoing



## WILDWOOD TRAIL

Address:	430 250 <sup>th</sup> Street
Year Established:	1970
Year Park Opened:	1971
Trail Length:	7 miles
Location:	Village of Woodville and Town of Eau Galle

### History

The Wildwood Trail is a seven-mile off-road hiking, biking and snowmobiling trail on a former railroad right-of-way. The Wildwood Trail runs from the Village of Woodville south to the St. Croix County line, through the Town of Eau Galle. St. Croix County purchased the railroad grade from the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway Company in 1970. It varies from 200 to 66 feet in width over the length of the trail. Since 1971, St. Croix County has signed, groomed, fenced, trimmed trees and brush, replaced culverts, installed surfacing, expanded usage, promoted and has maintained the Wildwood facility. It is a year-round recreation trail open to the public.

### Facilities

The trail is available for snowmobiling in the winter and jogging, bicycling and hiking during the spring, summer and fall. Motorized vehicle traffic, including four-wheel drive, off road motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles, are prohibited on the trail due to liability concerns and also to prevent damage to the trail surface. Adjacent landowners may have limited access for ATV and tractor use. Operational issues include surfacing, washouts, vegetation encroachment, littering and vandalism. The Parks Division does annual brushing, clean up and maintenance of the trail facility. Various organizations use the trail for fundraising runs/walks.



Two trailheads serve the Wildwood Trail. One is located at Steven Memorial Park in the Village of Woodville at 113 River Street. The trailhead provides off-street parking adjacent to the community ballfield. The second trailhead is located near 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and 250<sup>th</sup> Street in the Town of Eau Galle. This smaller off-road trailhead is located near Mile 3 of the trail and provides a limited amount of off-street parking stalls.



## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, improvements have been primarily focused on maintenance and operational items including surfacing, washouts, vegetation encroachment, littering and vandalism. The Parks Division does annual brushing and clean up.

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

The Wildwood Trail currently terminates at 890th Avenue, which serves as the boundary between St. Croix County and Pierce County. The 2017 St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identifies 890th Avenue for “minor enhancements,” including low-cost pavement markings and strategically placed signage. A long-term objective is to extend trail connectivity from this point south and east to the Village of Spring Valley and the Eau Galle Recreation Area. Accomplishing this will require collaboration with the

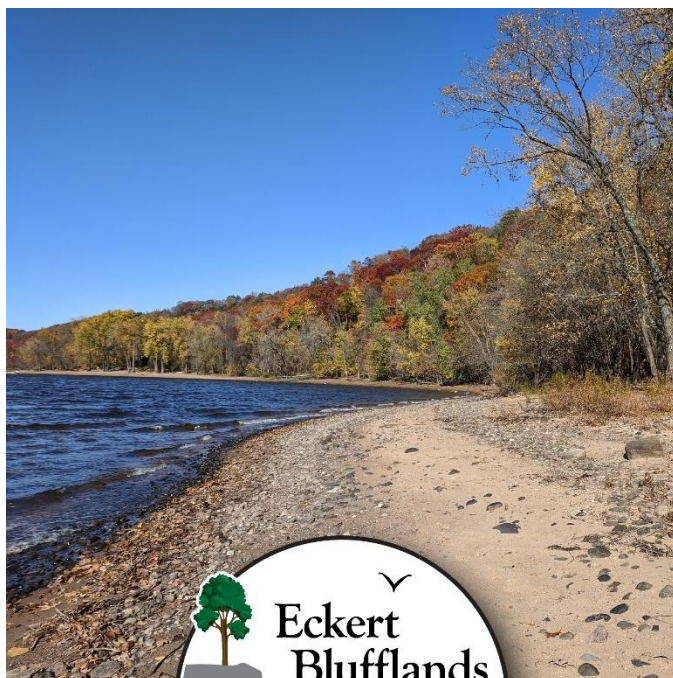
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Towns of Eau Galle and Gilman, as well as with Pierce County. Several potential route options may be considered and evaluated as part of the planning process.

### Wildwood Trail Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Explore adding off-street parking facilities for trail users at various locations	\$ 50,000	CIP, Grants	As Needed
Spraying to control brush and weeds	N/A	Park Budget	As Needed
Grading trail	N/A	Park Budget	As Needed
Brush mowing/General Maintenance	N/A	Park Budget	As Needed
Work with St. Croix County Sheriff's Department to enforce unauthorized motorized vehicles on the trail	N/A	Sheriff/Park Budget	Ongoing
Explore connectivity of the Wildwood Trail to the Village of Spring Valley and Eau Galle Recreation Area	N/A	CIP/Grants	Ongoing





## ECKERT BLUFFLANDS PARK

Address:	250 River Heights Trail Hudson, WI 54016
Year Established:	2015
Year Park Opened:	Under development (projected opening 2026)
Acreage:	169
Location:	Towns of Hudson and St. Joseph, 1 mile north of the Village of North Hudson

### History

In 2015, St. Croix County purchased 53 acres of land from C.A. and Jeanette Richards. This property has access off Old Highway #35, is located along the St. Croix River in the Town of St. Joseph and includes 1,300 feet of river shoreline and 2,000 feet of bluff line.

The County purchased the Eckert Family property in 2018. This 114-acre parcel is located in the Towns of Hudson and St. Joseph and includes 1,550 feet of shoreline and bluff line along the St. Croix River. The parcel is south and adjacent to the Richards property.

In 2020, the County obtained 1.99 acres of property from Gary Zappa. Combined, these acquisitions protect over 2,800 feet of shoreline and provide public access to nearly 170 acres of greenspace in the St. Croix Valley.

On March 4, 2025, the St. Croix County Board of Supervisors adopted the *Eckert Blufflands Park Master Plan*. The Eckert Blufflands Park Master Plan describes the history, existing conditions, public input, recommendations for natural resources and development, implementation actions, and costs for the park's proposed development. A link to the *Eckert Blufflands Park Master Plan* is provided below and incorporated into this Outdoor Recreation Plan document by reference:

<https://www.sccwi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9724/Amended-Master-Plan-for-Eckert-Blufflands-Park?bidId=>

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## Facilities

Eckert Blufflands Park is located on the St. Croix River, just north of Hudson, Wisconsin, and across the St. Croix River from Bayport, Minnesota. The park area covers approximately 170 acres between the St. Croix River and State Highway #35, contains steep bluffs and several ravines, and is adjacent to several private home sites and agricultural land.

The park's upland contains former agricultural fields that now exist as grassland areas. Dense tree stands exist throughout the upland, the ravines, and on the bluffs. A cabin formerly owned by the Eckert family is the only existing structure on the park site today. Several deep ravines cross the park descending to the St. Croix River. The shoreline provides spectacular views in all directions.

Additional site characteristics can be found in the *Eckert Blufflands Park Master Plan*. The park is currently used for hunting activities, hiking, and bird watching.

Proposed development items will be covered in the Needs Analysis, Recommendations and Action Plan portion of this chapter. The Master Plan emphasizes nature based outdoor recreation activities that will complement the topography and natural resources of the park property.

## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

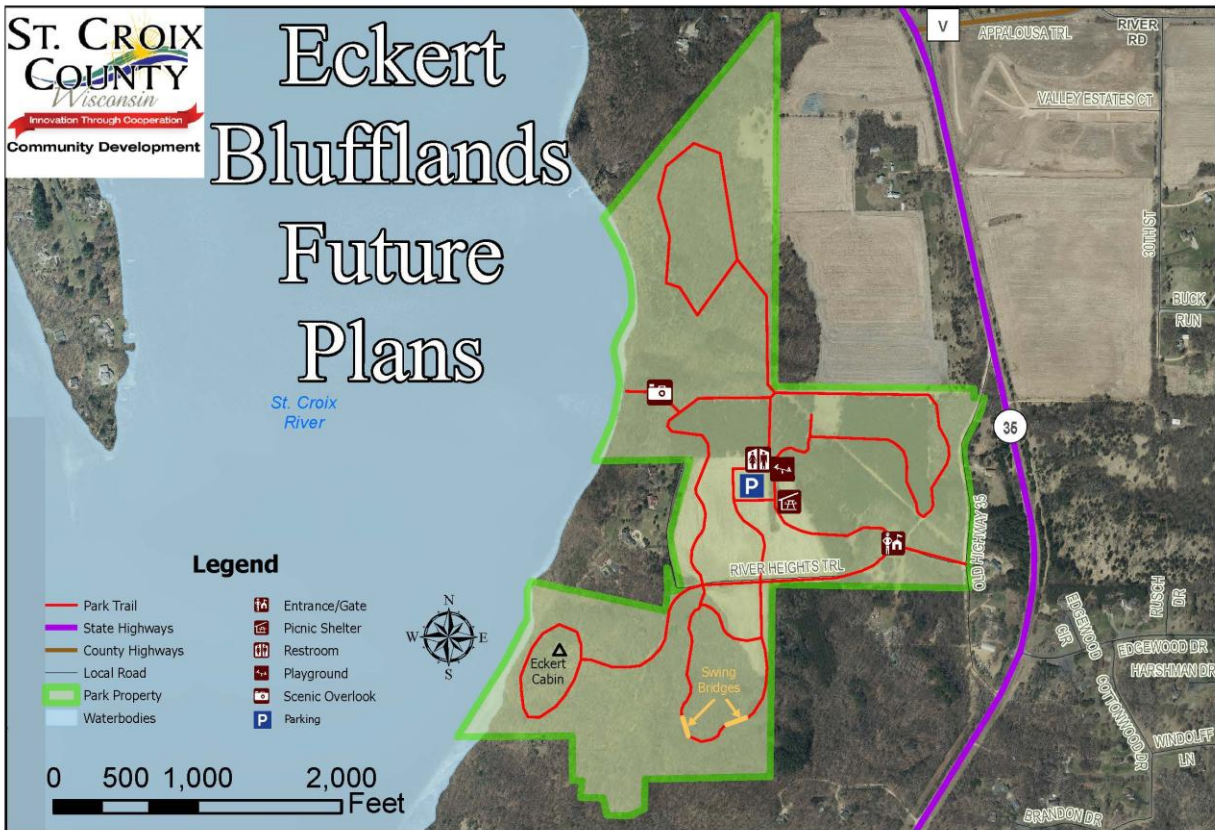
- Surveying and marking the boundary of the property
- Planting tree buffer along property line bordering residential dwellings
- Clearing of areas for trail improvements identified in the Master Plan
- Developed trail facilities
- Maintained future Visitors Center (former Eckert cabin)

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Compared to the Master Plan adopted in 2022, the 2025 Plan Update places a stronger emphasis on nature-based outdoor recreation. The updated plan removes previously proposed features including the entrance station, camper cabins, yurts, and hike-in camping, and relocates the park's main entrance to the intersection of Old Highway 35 (south leg) and River Heights Trail. The approved Amended Master Plan is shown below.

As a condition of grant funding received by St. Croix County for acquiring portions of the park property, the following recreational activities are required at Eckert Blufflands Park and will be reflected in future planning and public information materials:

- Hiking
- Cross-country skiing
- Fishing
- Bow and gun hunting
- Trapping



## Eckert Blufflands Park Action Plan

The park development recommendations outlined in the Action Plan below reflect the findings and conclusions of the planning process for the *Eckert Blufflands Park Master Plan*.

Items 1 through 8, on the project matrix below, are considered basic improvements in order to bring the park to a functional initial phase. These improvements have been funded in the 2025 St. Croix County Capital Improvement Budget.

Items 9 through 17 will be pursued during the 2026-2030 timeframe with a combination of St. Croix County Capital Improvement funding and applicable grant programs.

Project Items 1 though 8 – Initial Phase (2025-2026)	Estimated Cost
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reconfigured intersection of Old Highway 35 and Highway 35 with bituminous upgrade up to Old Highway 35/River Heights Trail intersection (includes striped bicycle lane)</li> <li>2. Vacate portion of Old Highway 35 north of River Heights Trail and establish private driveway easement to northernmost home on Old Highway 35</li> <li>3. Establish bituminous parking lot area and access drive to parking lot area off River Heights Trail – approxiamte area of parking lot (130' x 230')</li> <li>4. Establish gated access to park area and turn-around facility for vehicles to reverse direction when park is closed</li> <li>5. Install signage to delineate separate park access and access for residences</li> <li>6. Establsih storm water retention ponds along park access drive</li> <li>7. Layout and clear East Trail (if funding allows) – approximately 3,300 feet</li> <li>8. Establish West Trail (crusher fines and gravel surface) generally to the area of River Heights Trail – approximately 4,000 feet</li> </ol>	\$1,500,000
9. Flush Toilet Facilities, Electric, and Well	\$325,000
10. Playground and sitting benches	\$250,000
11. Picnic Shelter and Picnic Tables	\$125,000
12. Overlook to river, stairs to river, and picnic shelter	\$200,000
13. West Trail south of River Heights Trail and westward to Eckert Cabin and river shoreline - includes two (2) swing bridges and set of stairs near shoreline. Approx. 4,400 feet of trail. Includes property line signage	
14. East Trail signage, benches, and trail surface improvements	\$350,000
15. Active Sports area (northeast of main parking area)	\$150,000
16. Challenging terrain biking and hiking trails in north 1/3 of park property (with assistance of local organizations)	To be Determined
17. Maintenance Building Facility and related parking area	\$700,000
<b>ESTIMATED PARK IMPROVEMENT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,600,000</b>





## ORF FAMILY OVERLOOK

Address:	733 153 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue New Richmond, WI
Year Established:	2015
Year Park Opened:	2015
Acreage:	13.8
Location:	Town of Somerset, 3 miles southeast of the Village of Somerset

### History

In December 2015, St. Croix County purchased 13.8 acres on Bass Lake from Margaret Orf. Prior to the purchase, the property was primarily a corn/soybean field and pasture for grazing cattle. The property includes 1,360 feet of shoreline on the north side of Bass Lake in the Town of Somerset off 153<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The park is located adjacent to the Bass Lake Boat Landing and offers beautiful views of Bass Lake.

### Facilities

Park facilities include:

Hiking trails  
Scenic overlook  
Picnic tables and shelter  
Wildlife Boardwalk  
Prairie restoration  
Grills

Educational Interpretive panels  
Parking Lot Area  
Portable bathroom facility  
Trail connection to adjacent boat landing  
Shoreline Fishing





## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Entrance Sign
- Picnic shelter and benches along trails
- Parking lot blacktopping
- Viewing/overlook platform
- Shoreline trail/boardwalk
- Installation of educational panels

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Since St. Croix County acquired the land in 2015, significant improvements have been made to the park. The goal for this park facility is to enhance the visitor experience by adding amenities that complement and respect the natural environment. According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Bass Lake is classified as one of the state's top 1% Outstanding Resource Waters. Proposed amenities to be added or updated are identified in the Action plan below.

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## Orf Family Overlook Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Construct 5-foot-wide ADA paved trail	\$ 150,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2028
Add gravel base to trails to prevent erosion	\$ 75,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2029
Install ADA vault toilet	\$ 35,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2028
Install fence on south and west boundary per purchase agreement	\$ 20,000	CIP, Park Budget	2026-2028
Install entrance gate system	\$ 15,000	CIP, Park Budget	2026-2028
Plant Fruit Trees	\$ 5,000	Park Budget	2026-2030
Maintain prairie boundaries by mowing	\$ -----	Park Budget	Ongoing



## BASS LAKE BOAT LAUNCH

Address:	745 153 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue New Richmond, WI
Year Established:	1998
Year Park Opened:	1998
Acreage:	2
Location:	Town of Somerset, 3 miles southeast of the Village of Somerset

## History

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owns the Bass Lake Boat Launch property, which it acquired in 1980. In 1981, the DNR, in partnership with the St. Croix County Sportsmen’s Alliance, developed a gravel parking area. Initially, boat launching took place at the intersection of 153rd Avenue and 75th Street. Due to high water levels, the boat launch was redesigned in 1996 following earlier improvement plans from the early 1990s, with construction completed in 1998.

St. Croix County leases the boat launch property from the DNR at no cost, with the right to develop and maintain public access to Bass Lake. This includes constructing, operating, maintaining, repairing, removing, or replacing facilities—with or without state or federal grant support. The original 20-year lease was signed in 1998, and on February 19, 2019, the County renewed the agreement for another 20 years. The Bass Lake Boat Launch facility is adjacent to the Orf Family Overlook park property. Fish species found in the lake include blue gill, walleye, crappie, northern pike and largemouth bass.

## Facilities

Property facilities include:

Boat Landing	Parking Lot area
Two courtesy docks	Portable bathroom facility
Boat washing station	Pedestrian connection to Orf Family Overlook

Bass Lake has been designated as an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. An ORW are surface waters which provide outstanding recreational opportunities, support valuable fisheries and wildlife habitat, have good water quality, and are not significantly impacted by human activities. Fewer than 1% of Wisconsin’s lakes have this designation.



## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Updated signage
- Installation of portable bathroom facility
- Boat Washing Station

## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Bass Lake Boat Landing is a heavily used facility for public access to Bass Lake. The parking area has been maximized and is limited due to the small size of the property. Signage should be enhanced to prohibit power loading of watercraft. Power loading watercraft has created a scour hole at the end of the boat ramp and has resulted in on-going maintenance. St. Croix County should continue to be a participant with the Bass Lake Rehabilitation District on any lake management plan updates.

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Future improvements to the property will focus on adding and enhancing site amenities identified in the Action Plan below:

### Bass Lake Boat Launch Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
New ADA accessible dock facility	\$ 40,000	CIP, Grants	2028-2030
Entrance gate system	\$ 40,000	CIP	2026-2027
Install ADA vault toilet	\$ 35,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2028
Chip Seal parking lot area	\$ 20,000	CIP, Park Budget	2029-2030
Watercraft boating facility (kayak/canoe)	\$ 15,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2028
Repair scour hole at end of boat ramp	\$ 5,000	Park Budget	2026
Continue to work with Bass Lake Rehabilitation District on fish habitat, water quality and invasive species issues	Staff time	Park Budget	Ongoing





## ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING TRAILHEAD, LOOP TRAIL, AND HILLTOP TRAILHEAD

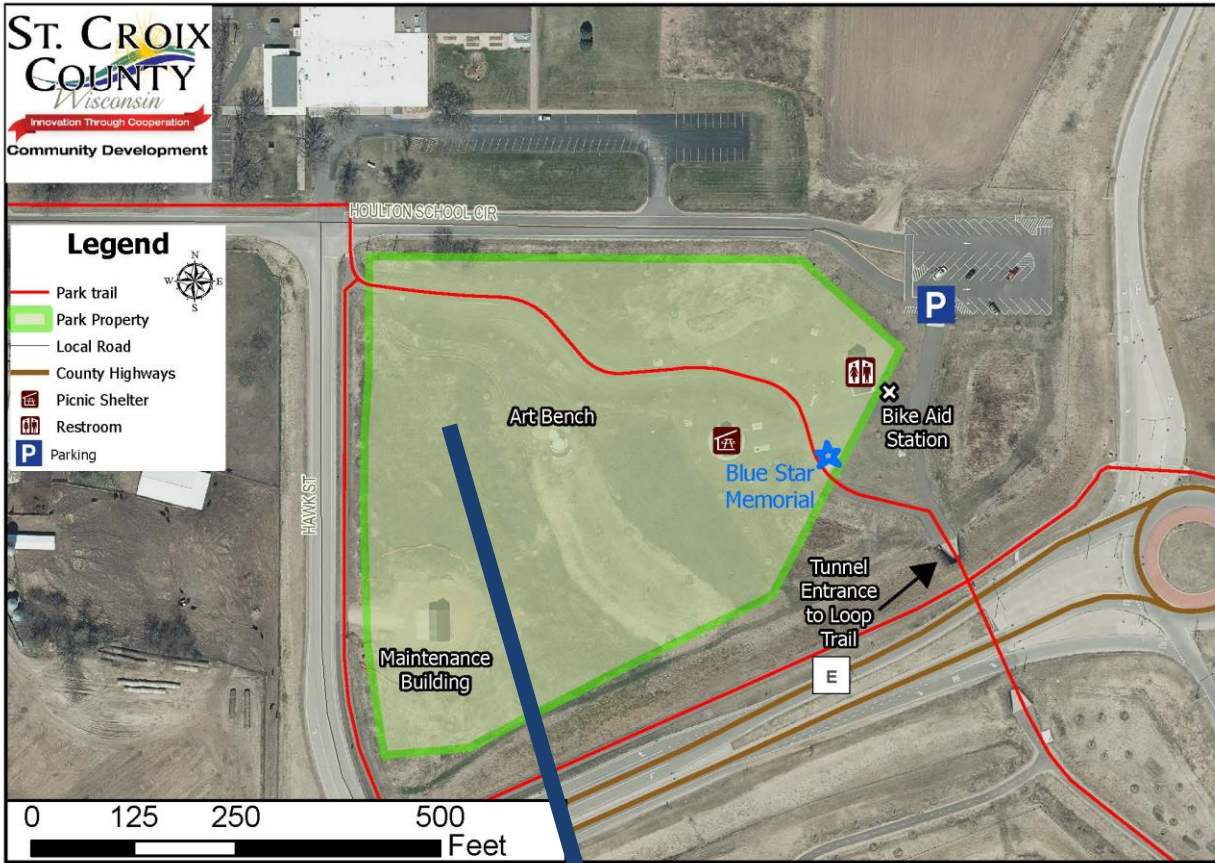
Address:	Blue Star Trailhead 77 Houlton School Circle Houlton, WI 54082
Year Established:	2019
Year Park Opened:	2019
Acreage:	6.8
Location:	Hamlet of Houlton, 1 mile east of Stillwater, MN and 4 miles north of the Village of North Hudson

### History

The 6.8-acre Joyce Trust property was acquired by St. Croix County in 2015 to develop the Blue Star Trailhead, which serves as a key access point for the St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail. This 4.7-mile trail was constructed as part of the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge project and was completed in 2020 (see map below).

The completion of the bridge and loop trail sparked renewed interest and advocacy for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout the county. The trail connects historic Stillwater, Minnesota, with Houlton, Wisconsin, and offers scenic views of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. It features a dedicated bike and pedestrian lane on the new bridge and repurposes the historic Stillwater Lift Bridge exclusively for non-motorized use.

The Loop Trail is further supported by connecting trail systems on both sides of the river, linking into broader networks across the Twin Cities metropolitan area and Western Wisconsin. One of these future connections is the Highway 35 Off-Road Trail, currently under phased construction, which will extend the Loop Trail southward to Hudson.



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In 2013, St. Croix County entered into an agreement with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to operate and maintain the new trail on the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix River, as well as the Blue Star and Hilltop Trailheads. Ownership of the trail and Hilltop Trailhead remains with WisDOT.

## Facilities

Facilities at the **Blue Star Trailhead** include:

Flush bathrooms	Drinking fountains
Picnic shelters/tables	Bicycle aid station
Bicycle racks	Information kiosk
Sitting benches	Houlton Hawk Art Project
Paved trails	Parking Lot Area

Facilities at the **Hilltop Trailhead** (located at 1395 Hilltop Road) include:

Portable bathrooms	Sitting benches
Information kiosk	Vehicle parking area

Facilities associated with the **4.7-mile Loop Trail** include:

The trail width across the repurposed Stillwater Lift Bridge is 23 feet wide. Other trail segments throughout the system vary in width from 10 to 12 feet with centerline markings. Additional vehicle parking areas to access the trail are available on the Minnesota side of the facility. There are three scenic overlooks designated on the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge with views of the St. Croix River as well as various historic viewing panels along the route.

## Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

15 interpretive panels were installed along the Loop Trail highlighting local history

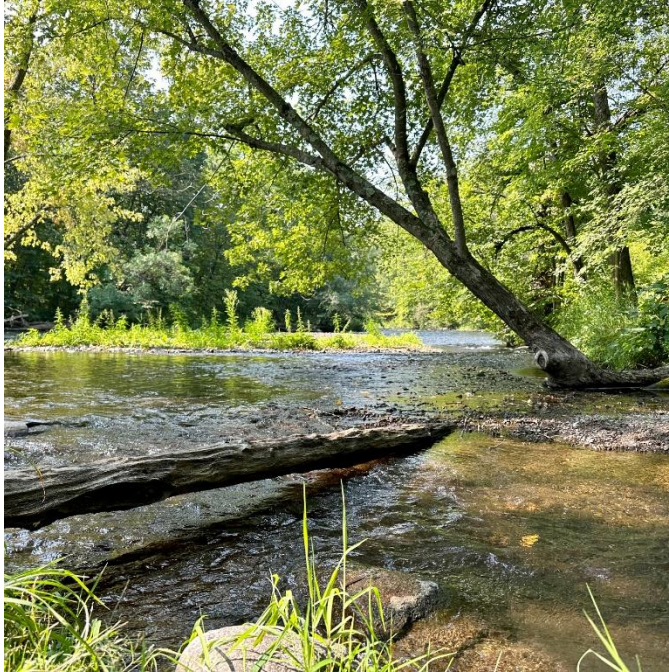
## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

With the trail and trailheads being relatively new, the focus will be on maintaining and preserving site amenities, trail surfaces and vehicle parking areas. This is reflected in the Action Plan.

### St. Croix River Crossing Trailhead, Loop Trail, and Hilltop Trailhead Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Trail and parking lot surface maintenance	\$ 100,000	CIP, DOT Maintenance Fund	2026-2030





## APPLE RIVER PARK

Address:	1271 County Road H New Richmond, WI
Year Established:	1964
Year Park Opened:	1964
Acreage:	49
Location:	Town of Star Prairie, 1 mile west of the Village of Star Prairie and 3 miles north of the City of New Richmond

### History

The Apple River Park was donated to St. Croix County by Northern States Power Company in 1964. The 49-acre parcel is located south of Road H and is used for hiking, canoeing/kayaking, fishing and hunting. The Apple River and Cedar Creek flow through the property.

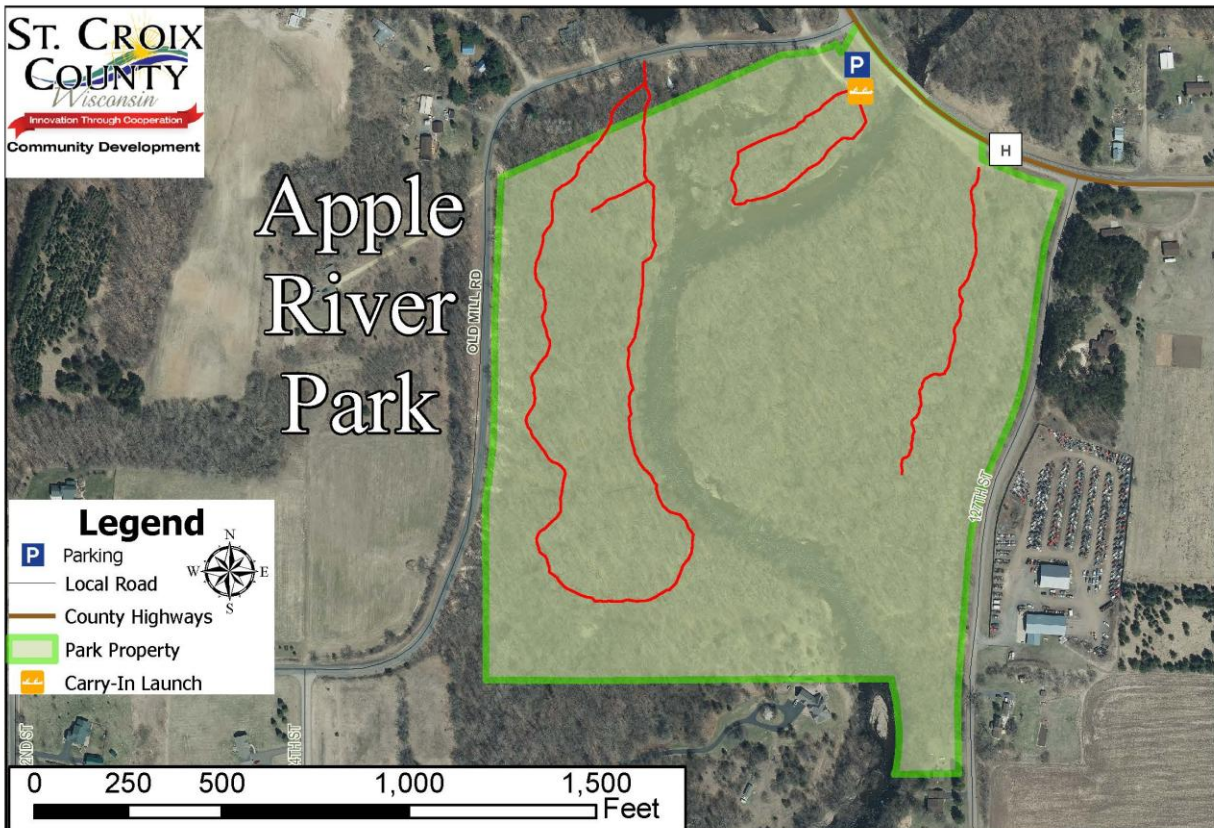
### Facilities

Graveled parking Lot area (off Old Mill Rd)	Hiking Trails
Canoe/kayak launch area	Picnic tables

### Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Parking area was graded, and gravel added to enhance parking surface



## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

The Apple River Property is a County open space and natural recreation resource. St. Croix County, along with the Sportsman's Alliance, Star Prairie Land Preservation Trust and Star Prairie Fish & Game should work together to protect the site to improve and encourage hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing, etc. at the site and preserve the resource for the future. The canoe/kayak launch should be improved, and additional hiking trails should be constructed on the parcel on the east side of the Apple River. A second entrance and parking area should be constructed either off 127<sup>th</sup> Street or Old Mill Road. Shoreline fishing stations should also be constructed.



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## Apple River Park Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Create a second entrance and parking area off of 127 <sup>th</sup> Street	\$ 75,000	Park Budget, Grants	2029-2030
Construct hiking trails on park property on east and west side of the Apple River	\$ 50,000	CIP, Grants	2027-2029
Vault bathroom facility	\$ 40,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2028
Improve canoe/kayak launch	\$ 25,000	CIP, Grants	2026-2027
Shoreline fishing stations on all sections of property	\$ 4,000	Sportsmen's Alliance, Park Budget	2027-2029



## PINE LAKE PARK AND BOAT LANDING

Address:	2056 120 <sup>th</sup> Ave. Baldwin, WI 54002
Year Established:	1975 as a County Park
Year Park Opened:	Pre-1975
Acreage:	10
Location:	Town of Erin Prairie 4 miles north of Baldwin

### History

Pine Lake Park is a day-use facility located at the intersection of 120th Avenue and 250th Street in the Town of Erin Prairie. The site was originally a town park, later donated to the St. Croix Rod and Gun Club, which in turn donated it to St. Croix County in 1975. Pine Lake has experienced significant water level fluctuations due to sinkholes in the lakebed. Another ongoing issue has been low dissolved oxygen levels, which have led to frequent winter fish kills. To address this, electrical service was installed to support aeration equipment.

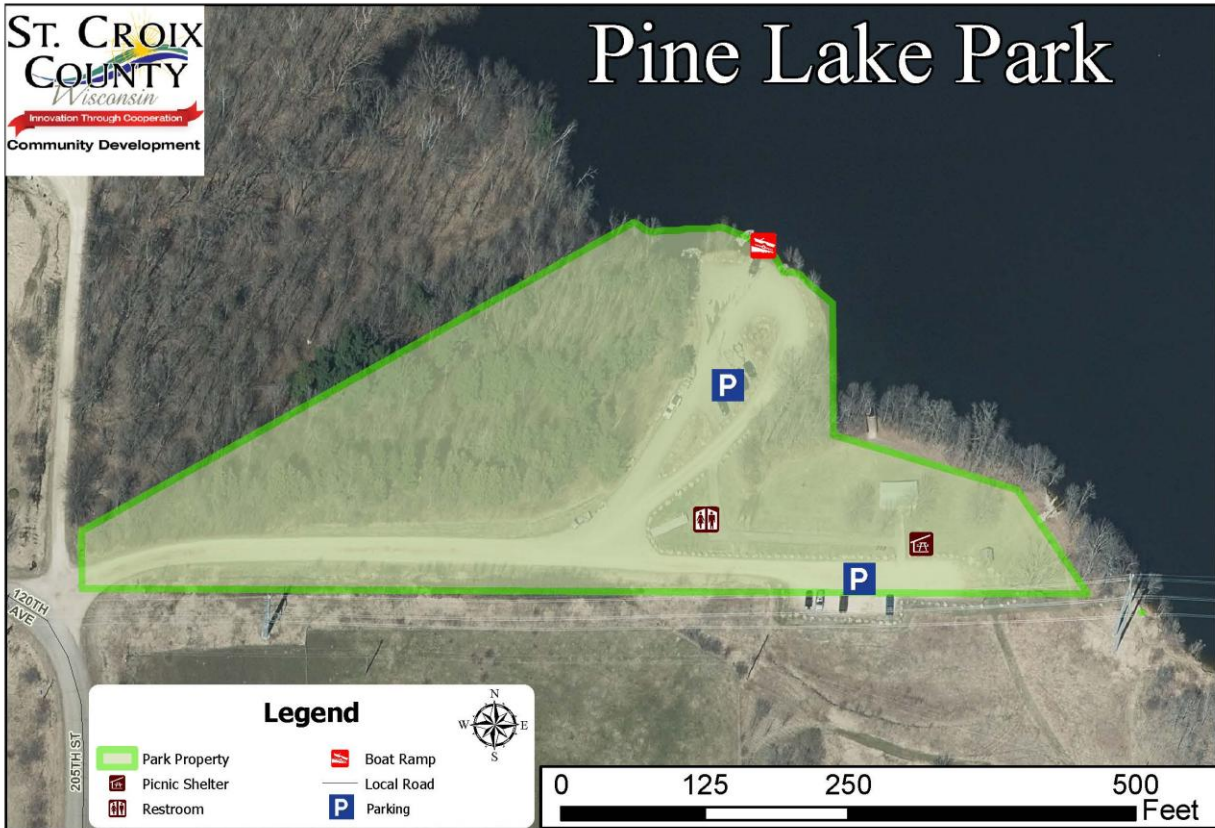
### Facilities

Boat Dock	Vault bathrooms
Boat Landing	Shoreline fishing
Parking lot area	Aeration system for Pine Lake
Pavilion with electric service	Picnic tables/grills

### Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Paved parking area for vehicle parking
- Boat ramp leveling and corrections and ADA accessible dock
- Vault toilets
- Pavilion with electric service
- Sidewalks connecting various park facilities



## Needs Analysis and Recommendations

Recent improvements have enhanced the park's usability and overall appeal. However, because of its remote location, the park receives only periodic patrols from the Sheriff's Department and limited maintenance from the Park Division. This has led to occasional issues with littering and vandalism. Increased use of the site by anglers, following fishing access improvements, has helped reduce these problems.

Continued maintenance of the park facility along with amenity upgrades will be the focus of attention for Pine Lake Park.

### Pine Lake Park Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Install Playground	\$ 50,000	CIP/Grants	2026-2028
Entrance Gate/Kiosk	\$ 45,000	CIP/Grant	2026
Chip Seal Parking areas	\$ 25,000	Park Budget	2029
Install Fishing Pier	\$ 10,000	CIP/Grants	2026



## KINNICKINNIC COUNTY FOREST

Address:	1335 Evergreen Drive, River Falls WI 54022
Year Established:	1959
Acreage:	80
Location:	Town of Kinnickinnic, 3 miles northeast of the City of River Falls

### History

St. Croix County has owned the property since 1959. The site was originally obtained for youth forestry education. The Kinnickinnic Forest is managed for multi-use purposes, including timber production, recreation and education. The forest was thinned in 2006, and the existing logging trails get consistent usage for hunting, hiking, snowshoeing and berry picking.

### Facilities

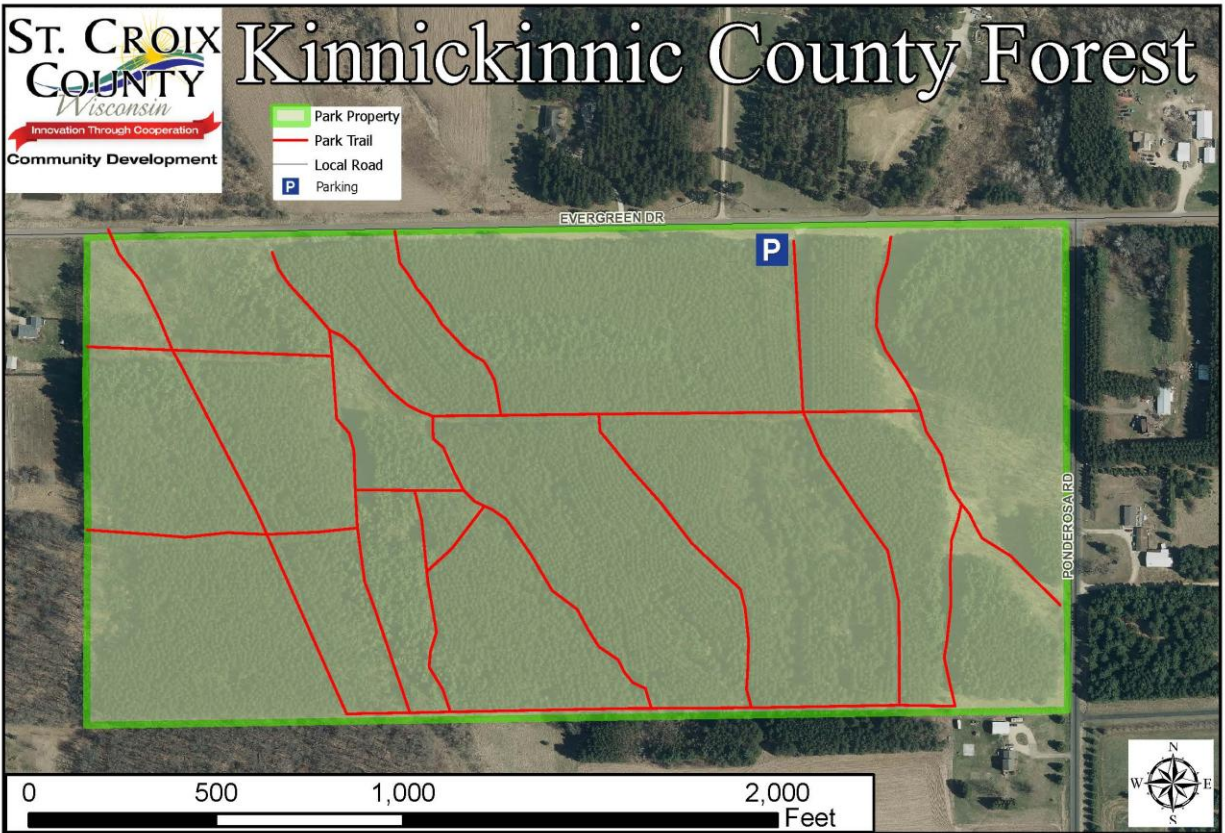
Forest property facilities include a graveled parking lot off Evergreen Drive, hiking and logging trails, and signage.

### Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Parking area was graded, and gravel added to enhance parking surface





## Needs Assessment and Recommendations

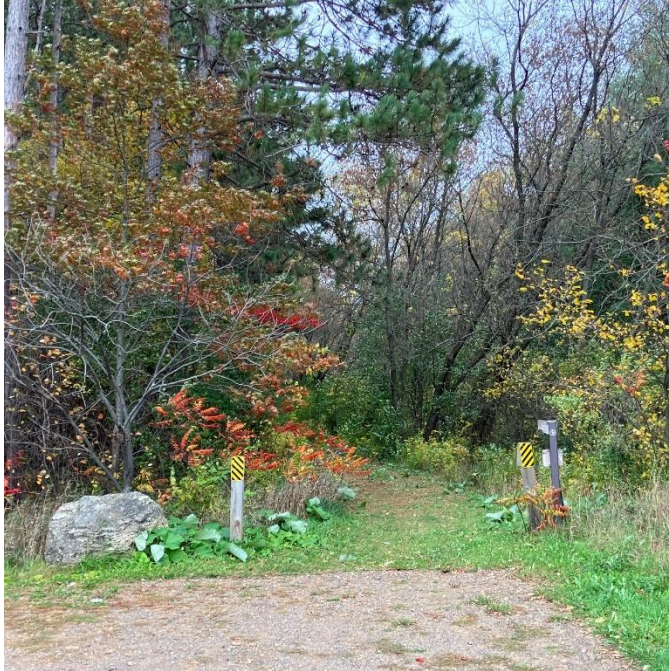
Enhancements are needed to support both timber production and recreational use, along with ongoing management of invasive species. Tree replanting and replenishment should occur on a periodic basis to maintain forest health. Existing logging roads should be mowed regularly to improve their function as trails, which also serve as essential fire lanes and must remain accessible for emergency response. Directional signage should be installed to increase visibility and improve public access.

The gravel parking area requires routine maintenance, and trail improvements should be made to support cross-country skiing and snowshoeing—activities well-suited to the site’s size and proximity to the River Falls School District and UW–River Falls. The property’s open meadows also offer an ideal setting for environmental education and hands-on learning as an outdoor classroom.

## Kinnickinnic Forest Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Timber harvest and clear-cut replanting	\$ 20,000	Park revenue from sale of timber	2026-2029
Invasive Species control	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing
Improve recreational and fire protection trails by brushing and mowing two times per year	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing
Promote usage of property	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing





## STANTON COUNTY FOREST

Address:	2375 185 <sup>th</sup> Street, Deer Park, WI 54007
Year Established:	1944
Acreage:	40
Location:	Town of Stanton, 2 miles northeast of the Village of Deer Park

### History

St. Croix County has owned the property since 1944 and has managed the land for forestry since 1950. The site was originally obtained for youth forestry education. The Stanton Forest is managed for multi-use purposes, including timber production, recreation and education. In the winter of 2005/2006, the second timber harvest was cut off the site. The existing logging trails are used for hunting, hiking, berry picking, etc.

### Facilities

Forest property facilities include a graveled parking lot off 185<sup>th</sup> Street, hiking and logging trails, and signage.

### Recent Improvements

Since 2021, notable improvements have included:

- Parking area was graded, and gravel added to enhance parking surface



## Needs Assessment and Recommendations

Enhancements are needed to support both timber production and recreational use, along with ongoing management of invasive species. Tree replanting and replenishment should occur on a periodic basis to maintain forest health. Existing logging roads should be mowed regularly to improve their function as trails, which also serve as essential fire lanes and must remain accessible for emergency response. Directional signage should be installed to increase visibility and improve public access. The gravel parking area will need monitoring and maintenance as needed.

## Stanton Forest Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Timber harvest and clear-cut replanting	\$ 20,000	Park revenue from sale of timber	2027-2030
Invasive Species control	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing
Improve recreational and fire protection trails by brushing and mowing two times per year	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing
Promote usage of property	\$ 0	Park Budget	Ongoing



## APPLE LAKE BOAT LANDING

Address:	Intersection of 100 <sup>th</sup> Street and 217 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Town of Star Prairie
Acreage:	4.8
Location:	Town of Star Prairie, 3 miles west of the Village of Star prairie and 5 miles northwest of the City of New Richmond

### History

The Town of Star Prairie owns the boat launch property. Maintenance of the boat launch is the cooperative responsibility of the Town of Star Prairie and St. Croix County.

### Facilities

The site has a boat ramp, courtesy dock, signage, and vehicle parking area. One handicapped accessible stall is adjacent to the boat ramp along with a handicapped accessible courtesy dock. A satellite bathroom and limited trash service is available on site.

### Recent Improvements

Additional parking lot created  
Upgraded dock facility





## Needs Assessment and Recommendations

The basic facilities at the site are adequate for the current users. Consideration should be given to add handicap restroom facilities.

## Apple Lake Boat Landing Action Plan

Improvements	Cost	Funding Source	Year
Continue to assess the need to dredge the channel to the lake	Unknown	DNR Grant	Ongoing
Chip Seal entrance road and parking lot	\$ 7,500	Town Budget	2029
Install portable bathroom facility for handicap accessibility	\$ 1,500	Town Budget, Park Budget	2026-2028
Continue to work with the Apple Lake Management District on their lake management plan, water quality improvements and fish habitat	\$ 0	N/A	Ongoing
Continue to provide dock installation and removal	\$ ---	Park Budget	Ongoing



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## **ST. CROIX COUNTY PARKS ADMINISTRATION**

The St. Croix County Community Development Committee is responsible for policy direction for the St. Croix County Park system. The Community Development Department oversees, develops, plans and directs the County park system's management operations, fiscal administration and long-range planning.

The Parks Division staff work out of various parks and oversee operations and maintenance of park properties and facilities. The Community Development Committee will revisit the park ordinance and policies, staffing needs, capital improvements, redevelopment and budget matters on an annual basis to ensure the parks are meeting the public's needs and expectations.

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## APPENDIX A – 2025 Outdoor Recreation Plan Survey Results

St. Croix County launched a project webpage with a County Parks user survey from June 1 to August 31, 2025. The survey and project webpage were promoted using a direct email to all governmental jurisdictions, chambers of commerce, and outdoor interest groups within the County, along with a County Facebook page, promotion at County libraries and local newspapers, updates to the St. Croix County Towns Association Group and St. Croix County Community Development Committee as well as project boards at County Park facilities that included a QR code for park visitors to participate in the survey. An Open House was also hosted in July 2025 to solicit public input. A total of 162 respondents answered the County Parks user survey.

- Of multiple-choice answers, top 3 are highlighted in yellow

### 1. Where do you live?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
St. Croix County	142	87.7 %
Polk County	5	3.0 %
Pierce County	4	2.5 %
Other	4	2.5 %
Washington County, MN	4	2.5 %
Dunn County	3	1.8 %
	162	100.0 %

### 2. How long have you lived in St. Croix County?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
Less than 1 year	3	2.1 %
1 to 5 years	16	11.4 %
6 to 10 years	30	21.3 %
11 to 20 years	20	14.2 %
21 to 30 years	20	14.2 %
31 to 40 years	19	13.4 %
41 to 50 years	20	14.2 %
More than 50 years	13	9.2 %
	141	100.0 %

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3. What age group are you in?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
19 or under	2	1.2 %
20-29	12	7.5 %
30-39	30	18.8 %
40-49	37	23.1 %
50-59	24	15.0 %
60-69	34	21.2 %
70-79	20	12.6 %
80 and over	1	0.6 %
	160	100.0 %

4. What is your gender?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
Male	63	39.4 %
Female	86	53.8 %
Prefer not to answer	11	6.8 %
	160	100.0 %

5. Share your level of importance of the following St. Croix County outdoor recreation goals.

Goals	Most Important	Somewhat Important	Less Important	Total # of Responses
Promote implementation of the St. Croix County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan to provide a comprehensive and countywide trail system in cooperation with cities, towns, villages and interest groups	73 (45.6 %)	46 (28.8 %)	41 (25.6 %)	160
Identify, acquire and retain lands for outdoor recreation and for protection of scenic, threatened and environmentally sensitive areas	99 (61.5 %)	36 (22.3 %)	26 (16.2 %)	161
Develop County land to provide low-impact, nature-based facilities, parks, and natural areas to fulfill recreational needs with access to all residents and visitors	78 (48.7 %)	59 (36.8 %)	23 (14.5 %)	160
Continue to evaluate, maintain, update and improve existing County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas to meet the recreational needs of the increasing County population and changing demographics	101 (62.7 %)	48 (29.8 %)	12 (7.5 %)	161
Improve public awareness of the County parks, facilities, trails and natural areas	37 (22.9 %)	78 (48.4 %)	46 (28.7 %)	161
Update, as needed, regulations and policies for public use of county parks, facilities, trails and natural areas	32 (19.8 %)	74 (46.0 %)	55 (34.2 %)	161
Develop and implement outdoor environmental education and interpretive programs designed to inform and educate residents and tourists	25 (15.6 %)	72 (45.0 %)	63 (39.4 %)	160
Cooperate and coordinate with other units of government, special interest groups and property owners to provide recreational activities, access, education and preservation of natural historic and cultural resources for the enjoyment and benefit of all citizens.	60 (37.2 %)	70 (43.5 %)	31 (19.3 %)	161



6. Are you aware of or have used the following St. Croix County outdoor recreation facilities?

Facility	Aware Of	Have Used in Last 12 Months	Unaware	Total # of Responses
Apple River Park	91 (57.7 %)	17 (10.7 %)	50 (31.6 %)	158
Orf Family Overlook	59 (38.1 %)	22 (14.2 %)	74 (47.7 %)	155
Bass Lake Boat Launch	93 (58.8 %)	40 (25.3 %)	25 (15.9 %)	158
Eckert Blufflands	76 (48.7 %)	7 (4.5 %)	73 (46.8 %)	156
Glen Hills Park	75 (47.8 %)	67 (42.6 %)	15 (9.6 %)	157
Homestead Parklands	64 (40.2 %)	62 (39.0 %)	33 (20.8 %)	159
Kinnickinnic County Forest	83 (53.5 %)	25 (16.1 %)	47 (30.3 %)	155
Pine Lake Park	71 (45.8 %)	31 (20.0 %)	53 (34.2 %)	155
St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail	76 (47.5 %)	62 (38.8 %)	22 (13.7 %)	160
Stanton County Forest	45 (29.3 %)	1 (0.6 %)	108 (70.1 %)	154
Troy Beach	113 (72.0 %)	23 (14.6 %)	21 (13.4 %)	157
Wildwood Trail	52 (33.5 %)	23 (14.8 %)	80 (51.7 %)	155
Highway #35 Off-Road Trail	44 (27.8 %)	16 (10.1 %)	98 (62.1 %)	158

7. Please rate the following St. Croix County outdoor recreational facilities.

Facility	Good	Average	Needs Improvement	Don't Know	Total # of Responses
Apple River Park	8 (5.1 %)	20 (12.8 %)	15 (9.6 %)	113 (72.5 %)	156
Orf Family Overlook	20 (12.8 %)	19 (12.2 %)	4 (2.5 %)	113 (72.5 %)	156
Bass Lake Boat Launch	44 (28.3 %)	31 (20.0 %)	6 (3.9 %)	74 (47.8 %)	155
Eckert Blufflands	6 (3.8 %)	5 (3.3 %)	23 (14.7 %)	122 (78.2 %)	156
Glen Hills Park	64 (41.3 %)	26 (16.8 %)	10 (6.4 %)	55 (35.5 %)	155
Homestead Parklands	62 (39.2 %)	21 (13.3 %)	8 (5.1 %)	67 (42.4 %)	158
Kinnickinnic County Forest	23 (14.7 %)	25 (16.0 %)	4 (2.6 %)	104 (66.7 %)	156
Pine Lake Park	24 (15.5 %)	30 (19.3 %)	11 (7.1 %)	90 (58.1 %)	155
St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail	84 (53.5 %)	9 (5.7 %)	3 (1.9 %)	61 (38.9 %)	157
Stanton County Forest	5 (3.2 %)	12 (7.9 %)	3 (1.9 %)	134 (87.0 %)	154
Troy Beach	22 (14.1 %)	29 (18.6 %)	15 (9.6 %)	90 (57.7 %)	156
Wildwood Trail	22 (14.2 %)	12 (7.7 %)	9 (5.8 %)	112 (72.3 %)	155
Highway #35 Off-Road Trail	19 (12.0 %)	5 (3.2 %)	8 (5.0 %)	126 (79.8 %)	158

8. Do you believe the daily and annual St. Croix County Park fees are reasonable?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
Yes	132	83.0 %
No	27	17.0 %
	159	100.0 %

9. Do you support acquisition of land in St. Croix County for the following?

Type of Facility	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total # of Responses
New outdoor recreation facilities	105 (66.0 %)	37 (23.3 %)	17 (10.7 %)	159
Expansion of existing outdoor facilities	117 (73.6 %)	28 (17.6 %)	14 (8.8 %)	159
Green space conservation	113 (71.1 %)	29 (18.2 %)	17 (10.7 %)	159
Wildlife habitat	124 (78.0 %)	23 (14.5 %)	12 (7.5 %)	159

10. Do you support the year-round use/snow plowing of the St. Croix River Crossing Loop Trail?

Answer Choices	Responses	%
Yes	106	73.6 %
No	38	26.4 %
	144	100.0 %

11. Do you support the following proposed improvements in Eckert Blufflands Park?

Improvements	Yes	No	Neutral	Total # of Responses
Rustic Trails	79 (54.5 %)	16 (11.0 %)	50 (34.5 %)	145
Paved Trails	49 (34.0 %)	31 (21.5 %)	64 (44.5 %)	144
Restroom	87 (59.6 %)	14 (9.6 %)	45 (30.8 %)	146
Enclosed pavilion	37 (25.3 %)	31 (21.3 %)	78 (53.4 %)	146
Playground equipment	49 (33.8 %)	25 (17.2 %)	71 (49.0 %)	145
Conversion of cabin to public space/education center	51 (35.2 %)	23 (15.8 %)	71 (49.0 %)	145
Access to St. Croix River shoreline	87 (59.6 %)	19 (13.0 %)	40 (27.4 %)	146
Pickleball	22 (15.2 %)	65 (44.8 %)	58 (40.0 %)	145
Mountain bike trails	50 (34.5 %)	25 (17.2 %)	70 (48.3 %)	145

12. Please share your level of interest in the following outdoor recreation activities in St. Croix County.

Activity	Very Interested	Somewhat Interested	Less Interested	Total # of Responses
Swimming beaches	70 (44.0 %)	62 (39.0 %)	27 (17.0 %)	159
Picnic facilities	45 (28.5 %)	75 (47.4 %)	38 (24.1 %)	158
Boat ramps	54 (33.7 %)	50 (31.3 %)	56 (35.0 %)	160
Playgrounds	47 (29.6 %)	62 (39.0 %)	50 (31.4 %)	159
Hiking Trails	120 (74.5 %)	32 (19.9 %)	9 (5.6 %)	161
Campgrounds	50 (31.5 %)	60 (37.7 %)	49 (30.8 %)	159
County park and trail maps	97 (60.6 %)	49 (30.6 %)	14 (8.8 %)	160
Shoreline fishing facilities	63 (39.4 %)	44 (27.5 %)	53 (33.1 %)	160
Snowmobile trails	21 (13.1 %)	28 (17.5 %)	111 (69.4 %)	160
Bike routes on existing roads	64 (40.0 %)	40 (25.0 %)	56 (35.0 %)	160
Canoe, boat, paddleboat rentals	57 (35.8 %)	56 (35.2 %)	46 (29.0 %)	159
Kayak, paddleboard rentals	57 (35.8 %)	60 (37.7 %)	42 (26.5 %)	159
Volleyball facilities	9 (5.7 %)	39 (24.5 %)	111 (69.8 %)	159
Frisbee golf	14 (8.7 %)	45 (28.1 %)	101 (63.2 %)	160
Horseshoe pits	3 (1.9 %)	44 (27.7 %)	112 (70.4 %)	159
Snowshoe and cross-country ski trails	59 (37.3 %)	49 (31.0 %)	50 (31.7 %)	158
Snowshoe/cross-country ski rental	27 (17.1 %)	57 (36.1 %)	74 (46.8 %)	158
ATV routes and trails	33 (20.8 %)	29 (18.2 %)	97 (61.0 %)	159
Pickleball	29 (18.2 %)	48 (30.2 %)	82 (51.6 %)	159
Community Garden	27 (17.1 %)	57 (36.1 %)	74 (46.8 %)	158