



Unique landforms and recreational areas located in Dakota County.

Ag Society Preserve: Farmington

Location: Off Ash Street/220th Street W., south on County Fairgrounds Road, south of the Fairgrounds; park near signage.

Coordinates: 44°37'24"N, 93°08'49"W

Things to see:

- Birds and wildlife
- Nature trail
- Diverse plant species
- Wetlands

No website available.

Black Dog Preserve: Burnsville

Location: Park in the Cliff Fen Park parking lot on the north side of Cliff Rd. OR by the observation platform on the south side of West Black Dog Rd.

Coordinates: 44°47'13"N, 93°16'32"W

Things to see:

- Black Dog Lake
- Prairie
- Birds and wildlife
- Trails
- Observation platform on the north shore off Black Dog Rd.

No website available.

Caponi Art Park: Eagan

Location: 1220 Diffley Road, Eagan, MN 55123

Coordinates: 44°48'15"N, 93°09'18"W

Things to see:

- Trails
- Sculpture garden
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Nature areas
- Wildlife

[Caponi Art Park Home Page \(https://www.caponiartpark.org/\)](https://www.caponiartpark.org/)

Carleton College Cowling Arboretum: Northfield

Location: Just south of the Dakota County border, on Three Oaks Drive, south of Hwy. 19.

Coordinates: 44°27'55"N, 93°08'56"W

Things to see:

- Geocaching
- Trails
- Cannon River
- McKnight Prairie
- Native and invasive plant species
- Wildlife

[Carleton College Cowling Arboretum Home Page \(https://www.carleton.edu/arboretum/\)](https://www.carleton.edu/arboretum/)

Carroll's Woods Park: Rosemount

Location: 3335 142nd Street West, Rosemount MN 55068; Enter off Dodd Boulevard, south of Connemara Trail.

Coordinates: 44°44'55"N, 93°07'47"W

Things to see:

- Trails
- Wildflowers
- Wildlife
- Nature areas

[City of Rosemount: Carroll's Woods Park Webpage](#)

Chimney Rock SNA: Marshan Township

Location: Joan Avenue, 4.3 miles south of Co, Rd. 47

Coordinates: 44°38'16"N, 92°53'37"W

Notes: Please respect surrounding private property. Beware that Chimney Rock SNA has no maintained trails or recreational facilities.

Things to see:

- Wildflowers and ferns
- Grasses and sedges
- Chimney Rock
- Trees and shrubs
- Birds

[Chimney Rock SNA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Chub Lake WMA: Greenvale Township

Location: Grenada Avenue, north of Co. Rd. 86

Coordinates: 44°33'03"N, 93°13'21"W

Note: Limited wheelchair access.

Things to see:

- Oaks
- Chub Lake
- Birds and wildlife

[Chub Lake WMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Dodge Nature Center – Lilly Preserve: Mendota Heights

Location: 656 Hwy. 62 (old Hwy. 110), south or eastbound side, between Dodd Road and Delaware Avenue; take the left fork and look for the red barn.

Coordinates: 44°52'57"N, 93°06'59"W

Note: No buildings or restrooms.

Things to see:

- Trails
- Prairie
- Wildlife

[Dodge Nature Center Lilly Preserve Page \(https://www.dodgenaturecenter.org/location/lilly-property\)](https://www.dodgenaturecenter.org/location/lilly-property)

Gores Pool #3 WMA: Hastings

Location: 1 mile east of Hastings on 4th Street, after it turns to gravel, stay to the left

Coordinates: 44°42'08"N, 92°45'31"W

Note: Limited wheelchair access.

Things to see:

- Backwater marshes and streams
- Birds
- Wildlife

[Gores Pool #3 WMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Hampton Woods WMA: Castle Rock and Hampton Townships

Location: 22000 Collier Ct, Hampton MN 55031; off Hwy. 50, 5 miles east of Hwy. 3

Coordinates: 44°37'37"N, 93°01'57"W

Note: Ranked by the MN DNR as having “outstanding biodiversity significance.”

Things to see:

- Birds
- Trees and shrubs
- Wildflowers and ferns
- Trails
- Oak trees

[Hampton Woods WMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Hastings Sand Coulee SNA: Hastings

Location: Red Wing Blvd. (Hwy. 316), 1.3 miles south of Hwy. 61 split

Coordinates: 44°42'25"N, 92°49'37"W

Things to see:

- Dry prairie
- Wildflowers and ferns
- Grasses and sedges
- Trees and shrubs
- Birds
- Trails

[Hastings Sand Coulee SNA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Historic Cedar Avenue Bridge: Eagan

Location: Parking lot under the Hwy. 77 bridge on the southeast side of the Minnesota River. From Hwy. 77/Cedar Avenue, take Hwy. 13 north, take a left on Silver Bell Road and then a right on Nichols Road/Black Dog Road. The parking lot will be on the right at the end of the road.

Coordinates: 44°49'50"N, 93°14'41"W

Note: Bridge is for pedestrian use only. A State Park sticker is needed to park in the lot; otherwise, park on the road.

Things to see:

- Historic bridge
- Long Meadow Lake

No website available.

Kaposia Park/Kaposia Landing: South St. Paul

Location: 1028 Wilde Avenue, South St Paul, MN 55075; Hwy. 52 to Butler Avenue, east to Wilde Avenue, head south to the park; or, east on Butler Avenue to Concord Street; head south to Bryant Avenue, turn left to Metzen Parkway for parking along the trails.

Coordinates: 44°54'26"N, 93°03'48"

Things to see:

- Log pavilion building
- Playground
- Recreational fields/courts
- Simon's Ravine
- River to River Greenway
- Picnic areas
- Trails

[South St. Paul: Kaposia Park Webpage \(https://www.southstpaul.org/355/Kaposia-Park\)](https://www.southstpaul.org/355/Kaposia-Park)

Lilydale Regional Park: West St. Paul

Location: 950 Lilydale Road, St Paul, MN 55118; Between the Mississippi River and Pickerel Lake

Coordinates: 44°55'02"N, 93°07'40"W

Things to see:

- Trails
- Birds and wildlife
- Pickerel Lake
- Harriet Island
- The Brickyards of St. Paul
- Urban tree and shrub species mixed with typical floodplain species

[St. Paul: Lilydale Regional Park Webpage \(https://www.stpaul.gov/facilities/lilydale-regional-park\)](https://www.stpaul.gov/facilities/lilydale-regional-park)

Lone Rock, Vermillion Highlands Research Recreation & WMA: Empire Township

Location: Central Dakota County, between Hwy. 3 and Hwy. 52, off of Co. Rd. 46, south on Biscayne Avenue, to 170th Street W., take a left and go east to Station Trail

Coordinates: 44°41'07"N, 93°04'44"W

Note: Please respect and do not interfere with agricultural operations. No bikes allowed.

Things to see:

- Prairie Overlook
- Pollinator gardens
- Lone Rock Trailhead
- Agricultural land
- Birds and wildlife

[Vermillion Highlands Research Recreation and WMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Miesville Ravine Park Reserve: Douglas Township

Location: 27970 Orlando Trail, Cannon Falls, MN 55009; Co. Rd. 91 south out of Miesville

Coordinates: 44°32'35.0"N 92°48'10.6"W

Things to see:

- Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Trailhead
- Cannon Picnic Shelter
- Trout Brook Picnic Shelter
- Birds
- Wildlife

[Dakota County Parks: Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Webpage](#)

Mud Creek WMA: Greenvale Township

Location: Hwy. 96 (320th Street), 2.75 miles west of Foliage Avenue (Co. Rd. 23), or 5.5 miles west of Hwy. 3 in far southwest Greenvale Township.

Coordinates: 44°29'08.7"N, 93°15'24.2"W

Things to see:

- Birds
- Wildlife
- Trees and shrubs

[Mud Creek WMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Oheyawahe/Pilot Knob: Mendota Heights

Location: Pilot Knob Road, .5- mile north of Hwy. 13

Coordinates: 44°52'43"N, 93°10'01"W

Notes: Contains interpretive signs and trails, but no other facilities. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2017. Located within the Mississippi Flyaway, a major bird migratory route.

Things to see:

- Scenic overlook of the Minneapolis and St. Paul skylines, Fort Snelling, and the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers
- Migratory birds
- Prairie grass and wildflowers
- Wildlife habitats

[Dakota County Land Conservation: Oheyawahe/Pilot Knob Webpage](#)

Pine Bend Bluffs SNA: Inver Grove Heights

Location: 111th St E, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077; Hwy. 52/55 (Courthouse Blvd.) take frontage road north of 117th Street interchange to 111th Street, go east to parking area

Coordinates: 44°47'17"N, 93°01'52"W

Things to see:

- Trails
- Birds
- Wildflowers and ferns
- Grasses and sedges
- Trees and shrubs
- Mississippi River Regional Trail
- Scenic overlooks

[Pine Bend Bluffs SNA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Rambling River Park: Farmington

Location: 17 Elm St, Farmington, MN 55024; About 3 miles east of Cedar Avenue (Co. Rd. 23) on Hwy. 50 (212th Street W./Elm Street), entrance to the right, off Pine Street

Coordinates: 44°38'30"N, 93°09'09"W

Things to see:

- Trees and shrubs
- Wildlife
- Birds
- Vermillion River

No website available.

Ritter Farm, Casperson & West Lake Marion Parks: Lakeville

Location: West and east of Interstate 35, south of 185th Street (Co. Rd. 60)

Coordinates: 44°39'56"N, 93°17'13"W

Things to see:

- Environmental Learning Center
- Dog park
- Trails
- Pavilion
- Picnic areas
- Birds and wildlife

[City of Lakeville: Ritter Farm Park Webpage](#)

Rudy L. Kraemer Nature Preserve: Burnsville

Location: 12799 Chowen Ave S, Burnsville, MN 55337; Hwy. 13 (east of Hwy. 5) and south on Chowen Avenue

Coordinates: 44°46'26"N, 93°19'30"W

Things to see:

- Birds
- Wetlands
- Cattails
- Boardwalk
- Trees and shrubs

[City of Burnsville: Rudy Kraemer Nature Preserve Webpage](#)

South Branch Vermillion River AMA, Subunit 8: Vermillion Township

Location: North side of Co. Rd. 66 (200th Street E.), 8/10ths of a mile west of Hwy. 52 – small parking area. Stay close to the river and off private property.

Coordinates: 44°39'33"N, 93°01'23"W

Things to see:

- Birds and wildlife
- Trees and shrubs
- Vermillion River

[Vermillion River AMA Minnesota DNR Webpage](#)

Vermillion Falls Park/Old Mill Park: Hastings

Location: 215 21st St E, Hastings, MN 55033; on the east side of Vermillion Street (Hwy. 61)

Coordinates: 44°43'27"N, 92°50'57"W

Note: The only trophy brown trout stream in a metro area in all of the US.

Things to see:

- Limestone gorges
- Waterfall
- Old Mill Park (downstream)
- Vermillion River Linear Park (upstream)
- Dry river

[Friends of the Mississippi River: Vermillion Falls Park \(https://www.fmr.org/vermillion-falls-park\)](https://www.fmr.org/vermillion-falls-park)

180th Street Marsh, IDS 200 Property: Vermillion Township

Location: Between Hwy. 55 and Co. Rd. 62, take Co. Rd. 85 (Goodwin Avenue) or Fischer Avenue to 180th Street; go west or east, respectively, to where the road straddles the water. Park safely along wider spots on the road, property is on south side of 180th Street; stay within restored prairie; do not enter private marsh property on the north side of the road.

Coordinates: 44°41'16"N, 92°56'57"W

Things to see:

- Breeding and migrating birds
- Wildlife
- Plant species
- Vermillion River

No website available.