



## Foraging on State Lands

Background Information Presented to the  
Minnesota Sustainable Foraging Task Force

# Agenda



- **Review of Foraging on DNR-managed lands:**
  - Wildlife and Aquatic Management Areas
  - State Forests
  - State Parks
  - Scientific and Natural Areas
- **Seasonal and Safety considerations**
  - Road Right of Ways
- **Penalties for non-compliance**
- **Stay Connected (regarding State Parks rules)**

# Wildlife and Aquatic Management Areas Overview

AMAs provide angler and management access, protect critical shore land habitat and provide areas for education and research.

**700+ AMAs**

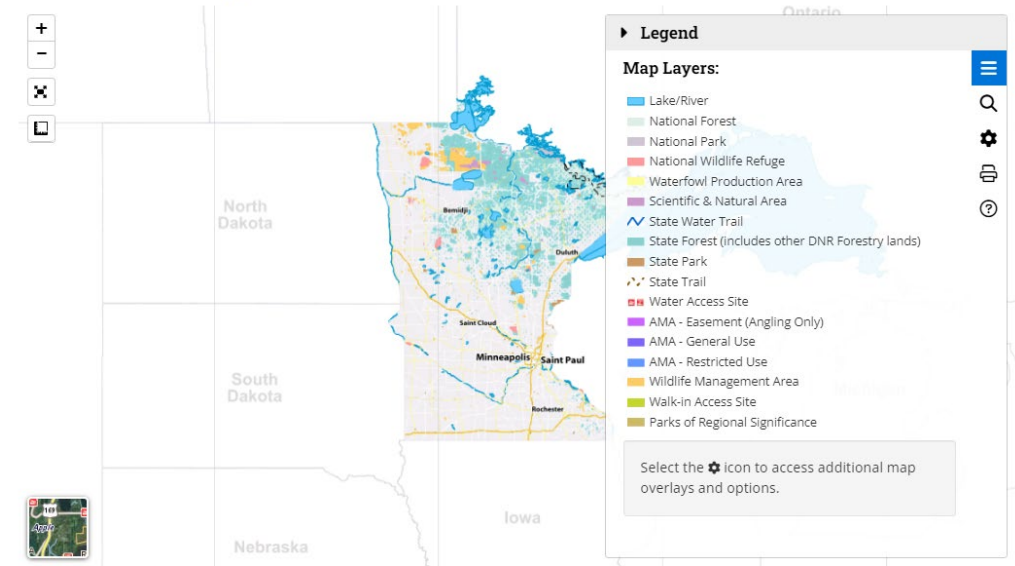
WMAs are for protection and development for wildlife production. These lands are open for hunting, trapping and fishing, along with opportunities such as bird watching, canoeing and other compatible uses.

**1,506 WMAs, 1.37 million acres**



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## Recreation Compass



[Terms and Conditions of Use](#)

# Wildlife and Aquatic Management Areas

- Individuals can harvest edible fruits, seeds/nuts, and mushrooms for personal use in AMAs and WMAs without a permit.
- WMAs also allow harvesting the decorative portions of plants for personal use without a permit.
- Removal of trees, whole plants, or other vegetative material is not allowed on AMAs and WMAs, except that you may harvest tree sap and dead/ downed trees to be used as fuelwood with proper permits(s) from Wildlife and Forestry.
- Wild rice harvest is allowed on public waters with a wild rice harvesting license (available at ELS agents, where hunting/ fishing licenses are purchased). WMAs and AMAs are open to ricing unless posted as closed.

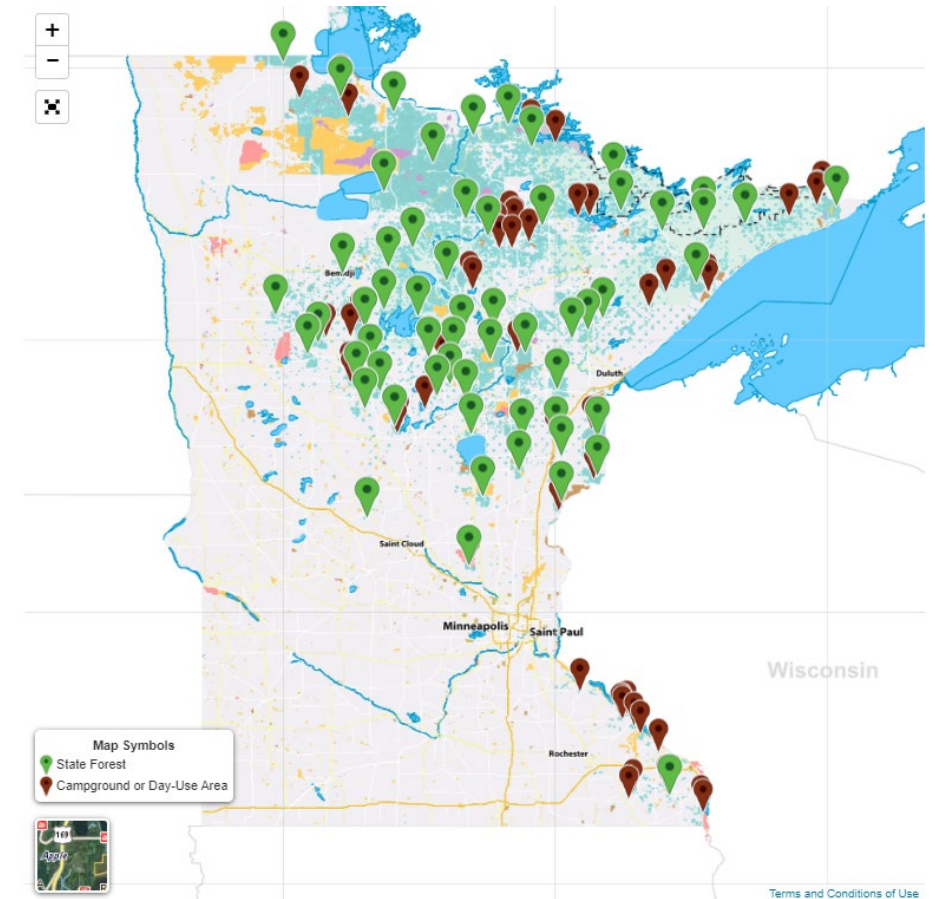
Wildlife management areas (WMAs) are part of Minnesota's outdoor recreation system and are established to protect those lands and waters that have a high potential for wildlife production, public hunting, trapping, fishing, and other compatible recreational uses.

Aquatic Management Areas (AMAs) are established to protect, develop, and manage lakes, rivers, streams, and adjacent wetlands and lands that are critical for fish and other aquatic life, for water quality, and for their intrinsic biological value, public fishing, or other compatible outdoor recreational uses.

# State Forests Overview

Minnesota forests are managed for sustaining long-term ecosystem integrity, healthy forest economics, and the communities that depend on these resources across multiple ownerships.

**60 State Forests; 4.2 million acres**



# Harvest Permits (for State Forests)

No permit needed to collect small amounts of berries, mushrooms, nuts/seeds or cones from a state forest for personal use.

Large amounts of berries, mushrooms, and seeds (gallons, bushels, etc.), cutting or removing any tree or plant, or any form of commercial harvest all require a household special product permit.

Permits are obtained from the DNR Forestry office near where you plan to harvest.

You need a permit to do the following:

- Cut or remove any trees or plants for any reason, such as: birch bark, trees or shrubs, fiddle head ferns, Solomon's seal, flowers, etc.
- Collect a large amount of berries, mushrooms, or dead fuelwood for personal use or sale.
- Tap trees for syrup for personal use or sale, regardless of amount.
- Harvest Christmas trees, decorative tops, or boughs.
- Harvest decorative forest products, such as birch sticks, spruce tops, boughs, etc.

# State Forest Permits

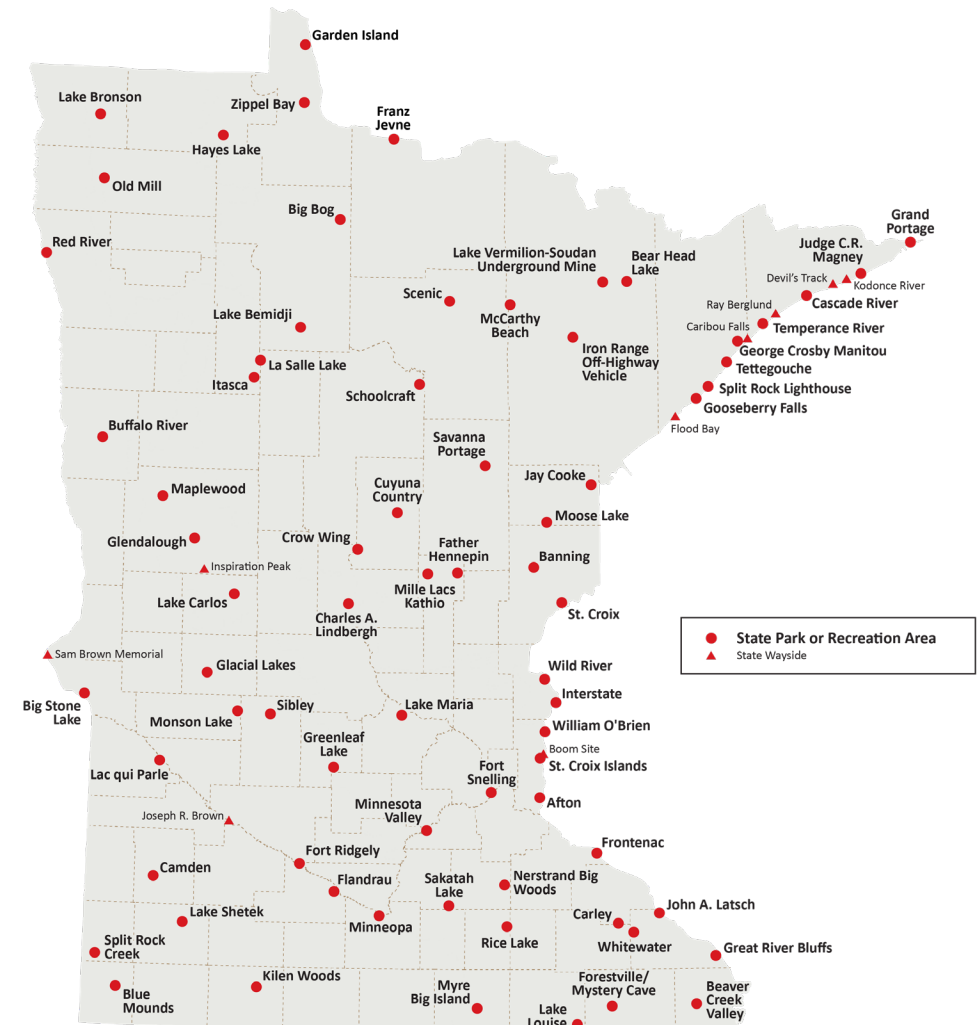
- \$25 minimum special product permit per product for a household from a DNR Forestry office is required to cut, remove or harvest any trees or plants for any reason or collect a large amount of berries or mushrooms.
- **All** commercial harvest or large amounts for personal use requires a permit.
- Permit fees are aligned to current market values.

State forest lands are available for a variety of recreational activities, including hunting, trapping, off-highway vehicle riding, camping, fishing, mountain biking, horseback riding, and wildlife watching.

# State Parks Overview

**Minnesota state parks and recreation areas** preserve the most scenic and historic areas in the state. They offer a variety of facilities, services, and outdoor recreation opportunities. State parks are well developed with modern facilities, but the degree of accessibility varies from park to park.

## 66 State Parks; 9 Recreation Areas, 235,000 acres



# State Parks and Recreation Areas

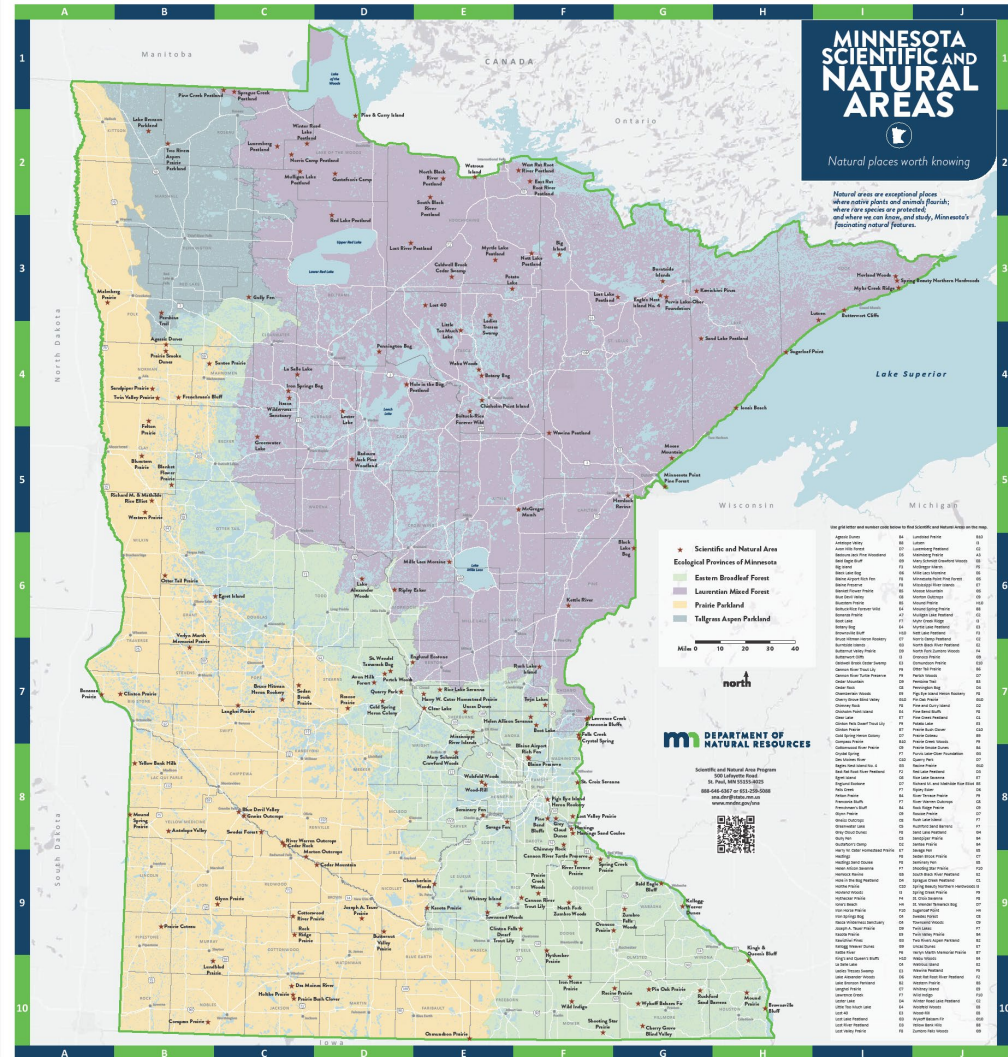
- Visitors can collect edible fruit and mushrooms for personal, non-commercial use.
- It is not allowed to pick wildflowers or other plants (edible or not), even for personal use.

*Management shall seek to maintain a balance among the plant and animal life of the park and to reestablish desirable plants and animals that were formerly indigenous to the park area but are now missing. Programs to interpret the natural features of the park shall be provided. Outdoor recreation activities to utilize the natural features of the park that can be accommodated without material disturbance of the natural features of the park or the introduction of undue artificiality into the natural scene may be permitted. Park use shall be primarily for aesthetic, cultural, and educational purposes, and shall not be designed to accommodate all forms or unlimited volumes of recreational use.*

# Scientific and Natural Areas Overview

Scientific and Natural Areas are exceptional places where native plants and animals flourish; where rare species are protected; and where we can know, and study, Minnesota's fascinating natural features.

**168 SNAs**  
**~190,000 acres**



# Scientific and Natural Areas

- Not allowed at any Scientific and Natural Area:
  - No collecting plants, animals, rocks and fossils
  - Leave plants, animals, rocks, and other natural elements (this includes shed deer antlers) in place to fulfill their life cycle and role in the environment.

Berry and mushroom picking for personal use are allowed at some sites with specific regulations.

Berry picking allowed at:

- Badoura Jack Pine Woodland
- Hovland Woods
- La Salle Lake
- Lutsen
- Moose Mountain
- Myhr Creek Ridge
- Prairie Bush Clover (also includes mushrooms)
- Spring Beauty Northern Hardwoods

Scientific and Natural Areas are exceptional places where native plants and animals flourish; where rare species are protected; and where we can know, and study, Minnesota's fascinating natural features. They protect natural features of exceptional scientific or educational value including:

- native plant communities,
- populations of rare species,
- and geological features.

# Safety Considerations

- Improperly identified wild foods can pose serious health risks. Make sure you know how to properly identify and prepare wild foods before eating them and do so at your own risk.
  - Foraging requires a careful understanding of the plants harvested and look alike species.
- Be sure to know where you are when foraging and what those lands permit or prohibit. Minnesota has a diverse landscape of private and public lands.
- Do not harvest from private property without written landowner permission.
- Be careful to avoid spreading invasive species.

# Road Right of Ways

- Due to safety concerns for all, MN DOT does not allow harvesting/foraging within road rights of way.
- Broadly discourages harvesting of plants along roadsides, due to:
  - Soil disturbances can cause erosion;
  - Plant population effects and potential overharvest;
  - Concern for sale of products, and
  - Potential consumption of herbicides used to control noxious weeds (required under M.S. 18D) and heavy metals.

# Penalties for Non-compliance

- Foraging rules and laws are complex, please be sure what you are harvesting and where you are foraging.
- Consider local rules and regulations to be sure you are foraging safely and legally.
- On state lands, non-compliance may result in a misdemeanor and immediate removal from the park or forest lands and revocation of any permits issued and possible fines.
- On SNAs, non-compliance may result in a petty misdemeanor and fine of up to \$300/violation.
- Ginseng may not be harvested on an AMA and only on a WMA with a special use permit from the Area Wildlife Supervisor.
  - Currently, the only WMA open to ginseng harvest is Whitewater WMA.

# Stay Connected

- Parks and Trails rules for recreational activities - including harvesting - in state parks, state recreation areas, state trails and forest lands are being revised.
- The proposed rule changes are not yet available for review.
- For updates, please visit our webpage and sign up to receive notifications.

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/parks/rule\\_revisions.html](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/parks/rule_revisions.html)

The screenshot shows the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) website. The header includes the DNR logo and navigation links: RECREATION, DESTINATIONS, NATURE, EDUCATION & SAFETY, LICENSES, PERMITS & REGULATIONS, EVENTS & SEASONS, and ABOUT DNR. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled 'Possible Amendments to Rules Governing Use of State Parks, State Recreation Areas and Waysides, State Trails, and Forest Lands'. It includes a sidebar with links to 'Active rulemaking projects' (Fisheries rules, Use of state parks and other recreational areas, Wildlife rules), 'Background information' (Commissioner's orders page, Natural Resources Rules, Types of Rules Processes, Overview of permanent rulemaking process, Minnesota rulemaking manual, Annual Report on Obsolete, Unnecessary, or Duplicative Rules, Annual Report on), and 'What are these rules about?'. The main text explains that these rules govern the recreational use of state parks, state recreation areas, state waysides, state trails and water trails, and forest lands. It also lists the purposes of the rule making and the individuals and organizations that might be affected by the proposed rule changes.

Home > Engagement > Rulemaking

**Active rulemaking projects**

- Fisheries rules
- Use of state parks and other recreational areas
- Wildlife rules

**Background information**

- Commissioner's orders page (authorized case-by-case in statute and specifically exempted from rulemaking procedures)
- Natural Resources Rules (Permanent): Minnesota Rules 6100 to 6290
- Types of Rules Processes (PDF)
- Overview of permanent rulemaking process (PDF)
- Minnesota rulemaking manual
- Annual Report on Obsolete, Unnecessary, or Duplicative Rules (PDF)
- Annual Report on

**Possible Amendments to Rules Governing Use of State Parks, State Recreation Areas and Waysides, State Trails, and Forest Lands**

**What are these rules about?**

These rules govern the recreational use of state parks, state recreation areas, state waysides, state trails and water trails, and forest lands. Together, this set of rules are sometimes called the outdoor recreation rules.

**What will this rule making do?**

The purposes of the rule making is to:

- Address emerging recreational activities, technologies, and federal requirements.
- Integrate the rules governing state trails and water trails into the rules for other recreation units.
- Provide common definitions and provisions for the recreation units where possible.
- Provide different regulations for state parks, state recreation areas, and state waysides, consistent with the purposes described in the Minnesota Outdoor Recreation Act (Chapter 86A). The current rules do not differentiate among these units.
- Respond to changing visitor needs and desires (for example, allowing pets in designated camper cabins, and use of alcohol in private areas such as campsites and lodging).
- Update and correct outdated and obsolete provisions.

**Who might be affected by these rule changes?**

The proposed rule changes would likely affect individuals and groups of people that use state parks, state trails and water trails, state recreation areas and state waysides, and forest lands for recreational purposes including trail users, campers, hunters, anglers, and others.

Individuals and organizations that use these lands for special events and commercial purposes may be affected, including timber harvesters, outfitters, recreation providers, media, and educational institutions.

# Questions?