

Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas Unit

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Minnesota's Scientific and Natural Areas Unit

Primary Goal— *Ensure that Minnesota's natural heritage is not lost from any ecological region of the state.*

Secondary Goal — *Provide compatible nature-based recreation, education and scientific research opportunities.*



Scientific and Natural Areas



Native Prairie Bank



Native Prairie Tax Exemption

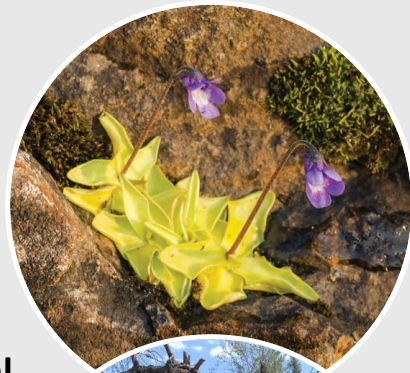


Natural Areas Registry

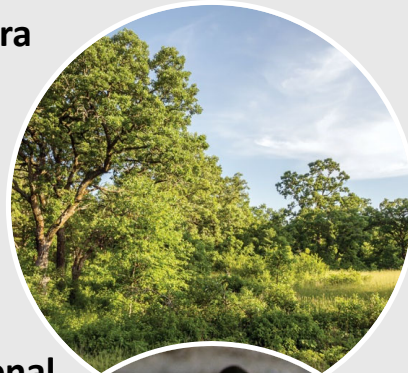
Preserving Natural Features



**Rare
Species**



**Relict Flora
or Fauna**



**Undisturbed
Native Plant
Communities**



**Geological
Formations**



**Successional
Processes**

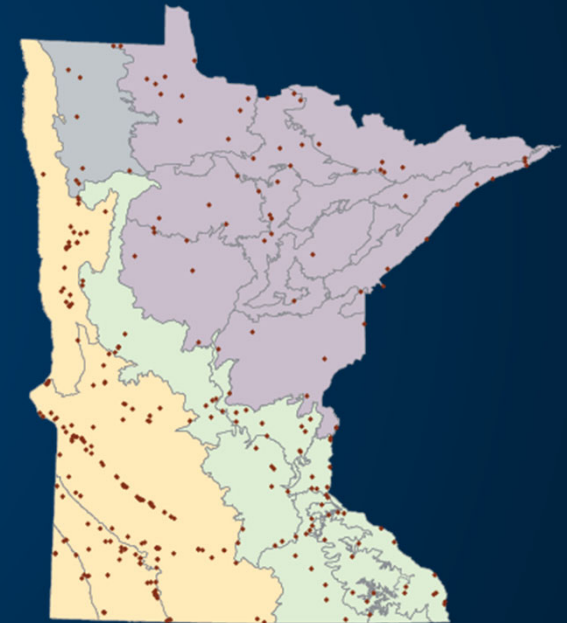


**Seasonal
Wildlife
Concentrations**

Current protected areas, easements, and agreements

There are **170** Scientific and Natural Areas protecting over **193,000** acres and **177** Native Prairie Bank easements protecting over **15,350** acres of prairie, these areas form the backbone of protected lands in the Unit.

Over **350** Native Prairie Tax Exemptions and nearly **50** Natural Area Registries provide incentives to protect almost **20,000** acres more.



Current staff and volunteers

There are **30** Scientific and Natural Areas Unit staff working full or part-time across Minnesota in the areas of land protection, management, and outreach.

About **170** volunteer site stewards make observations and assist with management tasks on 140 sites. Many more volunteers participate in stewardship events each year.





Dry hill prairie (Bonanza Prairie SNA)





Bluff prairie (Spring Creek Prairie SNA)



MN DNR, Justin Vorndran



Dry sand gravel prairie (Prairie Coteau SNA)



MN DNR, Kelly Randall



Mesic and wet prairie (Malmberg Prairie SNA)



MN DNR, Kelly Randall



New site (Purrington Prairie SNA)





New site (Icelandite Coastal Fen SNA)



Recent Challenges

Growing pains in
on-boarding and
training new staff
(see wins!)

**Continued
external pressures
from advocacy
groups and
politicians.**

Perceived and real
public use pressure
on sites

Recent Wins

Expanding from 20
full-time staff to 38
(currently at 30)

**New acquisitions
and catching up on
backlog of site
designations**

Statute change has
increased payment
rates for
Native Prairie Bank
easements

Thank You!

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mndnr.gov/snap