



Mark Lissick for P&TC

# Afton State Park



## Park Overview

Grand oaks and delicate prairie flowers grace the rugged, rolling landscape of this park. Trails traverse remnant and restored prairies, wind down deep ravines and rise up to the grassy ridge tops and bluffs overlooking the scenic St. Croix River.

The trails are perfect for hikers, horseback riders and cross-country skiers. The park offers visitors a swimming beach, backpack campsites and a visitor center with interpretive displays.

Birdwatchers can observe hawks and waterfowl on the St. Croix flyway, bluebirds and meadowlarks in the grasslands, and waves of migratory birds in the floodplain. Deer, fox, and badgers live here along with the thirteen-lined ground squirrel, turkeys, gray and fox squirrels.

The park is cut by deep ravines which drop 300 feet to the river. The ravines display spectacular outcrops of sandstone and the rugged terrain affords spectacular views of the St. Croix River Valley.



## Land Projects at a Glance



PROJECTS

5



ACRES PROTECTED

897



LAND VALUE  
(capitalized cost)

\$1.37M



LAST PROJECT

1996



## AFTON STATE PARK SUMMER MAP

### TRAILS

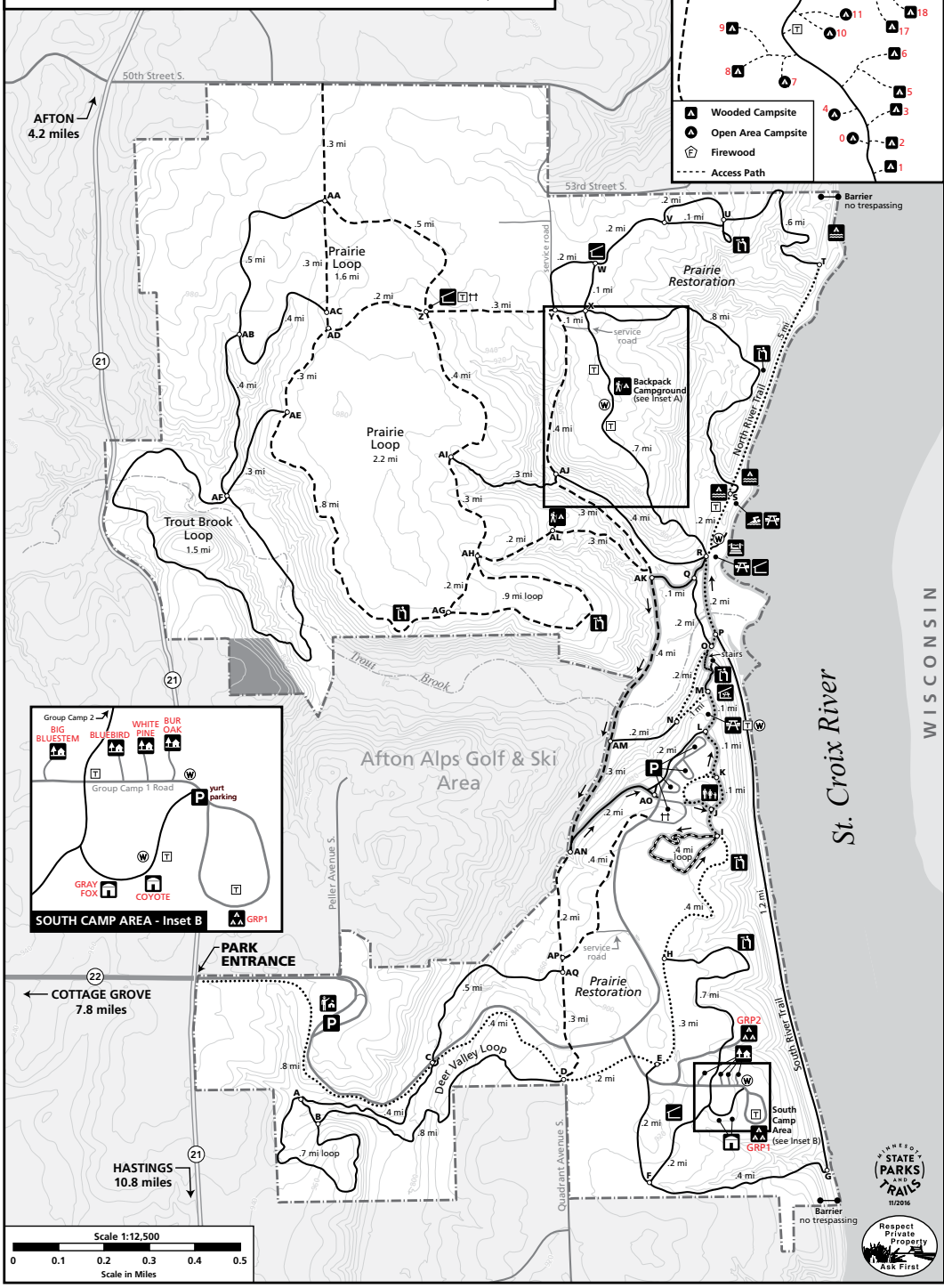
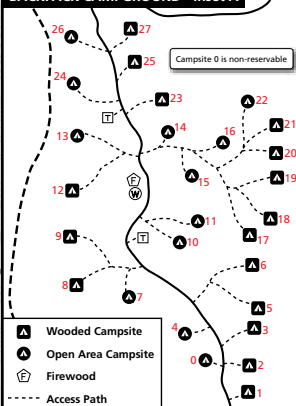
- Hiking
- - - Hiking/Horseback
- ..... Hiking/Biking
- - - Interpretive Trail
- Hiking Club Trail
- A Trail Intersection

### FACILITIES

- Park Office
- Parking
- Visitor Center
- Picnic Area
- Picnic Shelter
- Shelter
- Camper Cabin
- Yurt
- Watercraft Campsite
- Backpack Campground/Campsite
- Primitive Group Camp
- Overlook
- Swimming Beach
- Dock
- Primitive Toilet
- Drinking Water
- Hitch Rails
- Private Property  
Public use prohibited



### BACKPACK CAMPGROUND - Inset A



WISCONSIN





### 1-3) *The battle for the park*

1968 - 1969 | 827 acres | \$876,000

This marks the very first land acquired by leaders of Parks & Trails Council, and it established the organization's innovative model of land acquisition going forward. Samuel H. Morgan led the effort when he learned that the best beaches on the lower St. Croix River were up for sale. In the face of local opposition that at times threatened him violence, Morgan persisted in buying enough land from multiple owners to justify a state park. He then ushered along legislation that established the state park in 1969.



### 4) *Securing more shoreline*

1993 - 1995 | 30 acres | \$140,000

Originally part of a private trust, this 30-acre parcel provided 1,200 feet of spectacular shoreline along the St. Croix River. The property was optioned to the MnDNR, who could only offer the appraised value of \$584,000, well below the asking price. To fill this gap, Parks & Trails Council paid the trust a total of \$140,000.



### 5) *Adding prairielands*

1996 - 1996 | 40 acres | \$350,000

This 40-acre parcel was a private inholding, consisting of an old farmstead and agricultural field in the northwestern portion of the park. This property and the surrounding area had a high potential to be developed, so its addition to the park boundary would serve as a buffer. The unusable structures on the property were burned and buried with the help of the Lower St. Croix Fire Department, Friends of Afton and an excavation contractor.