



Banning State Park

Bruce Wise / P&TC photo contest



Park Overview

The wild and scenic Kettle River runs through Banning with its multi-faceted beauty. It's like a Jekyll and Hyde river that changes from dramatic sheer-cliffs along roiling rapids to grassy shorelines along gently meandering waters. The trails follow the river and traverse the boulder-strewn landscape covered in a mixture of pine trees and aspens and maples. It's a wonderland with many nooks and crannies created by the boulders.

In the late 1800s, Banning became famous as a sandstone quarry. That didn't last long though as steel became the material of choice by the early 1900s, prompting the quarry to close. This was shortly after the great Hinckley forest fire of 1894 that swept through the area. The area became a park in 1963 and today, visitors can see remains of the old quarry along a self-guided interpretive trail.



Land Projects at a Glance



PROJECTS

2



ACRES
PROTECTED

228



LAND VALUE
(capitalized cost)

\$318K



LAST
PROJECT

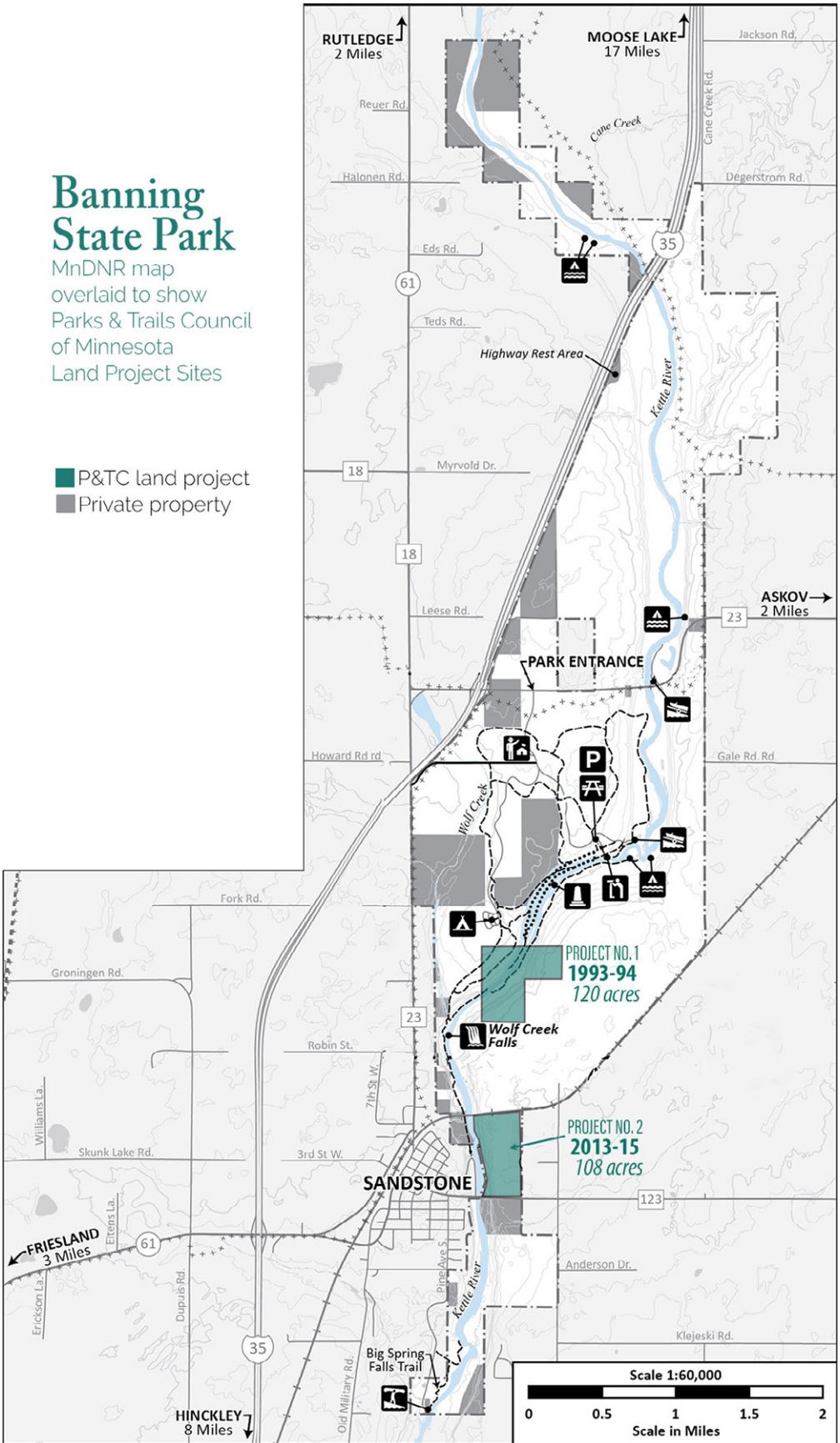
2015



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MnDNR map overlaid to show Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota Land Project Sites

- P&TC land project
- Private property





Gary Alan Nelson for P&TC

1) *Opening Key Riverfront*

1993 - 1994 | 120 acres | \$67,750

In 1993, a key area of Banning State Park was up for sale. The land was located just south of the most used area in the park with the Kettle River running through it. The scenic shoreline on both sides provides ideal land for recreational trails. The Minnesota DNR was originally given the option to purchase from the owners, but did not receive enough legislative funding to act. We were able to step in to act as an intermediary to purchase the land that year and incorporate it into the park the following year.



Jan Lasar/MN Trails

2) *Saving bouldering site*

2013 - 2015 | 108 acres | \$250,000

For years, the Minnesota Climbers Association (MCA) enjoyed access to the boulders located on privately owned land along the scenic Kettle River. In 2013, however, the landowners' put this land up for sale. MCA requested P&TC's assistance to acquire the 108-acre parcel for the park. During the 17 months when we owned the land, we facilitated discussions that led to Banning becoming the fifth state park to allow climbing in designated areas. We also worked with MCA to build a road, parking area and trails to the bouldering area. The land was officially added to the state park in 2015.