



Glacial Ridge Trail

SCENIC BYWAY

*History
Culture
Nature
Recreation*

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

On the Trail of a Glacier

Lakes, Streams, Woodlands and Prairie

The outstanding resources along the Glacial Ridge Trail are primarily the result of the last major glaciation of West Central Minnesota. The massive amount of ice, thousands of feet in thickness and loaded with unnumbered tons of rock material, ceased its forward movement and melted. The Alexandria Glacial Moraine Complex is a prime example of glacial end moraine. The rough, hummocky surface gives the area its distinct hill and lake appearance. The Moraine Complex offers some of the finest examples of “kame and kettle” glacial topography in the Upper Midwest. Kames (glacial hills), kettles (depressions) and eskers (elongated glacial deposits) abound.

The west central area of Minnesota was the land of the Dakota for centuries, before the Europeans arrived. As the United States expanded westward, the Ojibwa were pushed

into the area, displacing the Dakota to the west. The first settlers moved into the area in the 1850s.

The Byway offers something for everyone, whether their interests are historical, cultural or recreational. Its many scenic drives offer access to West Central Minnesota’s abundant natural resources, recreational opportunities, and historical and cultural character, all while offering modern, convenient travel accommodations.

The Glacial Ridge Trail Scenic Byway is not a linear experience, beginning at one end, finishing at the other. A labyrinth of roads, the trail can take many different routes. Create your own adventure, choose the points of interest to you and explore the trail often. Try a different route and be sure to experience the changing of the seasons.

State Parks

1 Lake Carlos

The park is located on the north shore of Lake Carlos, part of a “chain of lakes” that includes Lakes Darling, Geneva, Victoria and LeHomme Dieu. Activities include camping, picnicking, fishing, swimming, boating, hiking, horseback riding, snowmobiling and cross country skiing. The park is located in the hardwood transition zone between the prairies to the southwest and coniferous forest to the northeast.

2601 County Road 38 NE, Carlos, MN 56319
320-852-7200



2 Glacial Lakes

The park preserves a portion of a rare native prairie, which is home to prairie and woodland birds as well as a variety of grasses and flowers. Glacial landscape features such as kames, kettles, eskers, erratics and moraines, formed during the last glacial period 10,000 years ago, abound. The park offers cabins, camping, hiking, boat/canoe/paddleboard rentals and fishing in spring fed Mountain Lake.

25022 County Road 41, Starbuck, MN 56381
320-239-2860



3 Sibley

This beautiful state park, with over 2,500 acres, is ranked in the top 20 attractions in Minnesota. The park features camping, swimming and boating on Lake Andrew, a lookout point on Mount Tom and wonderful bird watching opportunities. Visitors can bike, snowshoe, or cross country ski on the many miles of park trails.

800 Sibley Park Road NE, New London, MN 56273
320-354-2055



4 Monson Lake

The park consists of 346 acres of lakes, wetlands and hardwood forests on Monson and Sunburg Lakes. Visitors can watch a variety of birds, or fish popular Monson Lake for fish species such as walleye, sunfish and crappies. The park includes a quiet campground, shady picnic grounds and a historic site. Monson Lake State Park is near the Alexandria Moraine Complex, a beautiful glacial landform consisting of lakes, hills and valleys formed 10,000 years ago.

1690 15th Street NE, Sunburg, MN 56289
320-354-2055



The Nature Conservancy

5 Ordway Prairie

Ordway Prairie combines 823 acres of grasslands and woods in a mosaic representation of millions of acres in the Midwest where once competition between forest and prairie was intense. Glacially-deposited hilltops are dry hill prairie. **Located on the east side of Highway 104.**



0.25 mile, then west for about a half mile after it bends. The preserve is on the north side of the road. Look for the preserve sign.

6 Sheepberry Fen

This 720 acre preserve is the home to one of Minnesota's most threatened wetlands, a fen. A fen is a wetland formed by the upwelling of ground water seeping onto the earth's surface. Many unique and rare plant's and animal's survival is dependent on the pure cool water. **From Highway 104, go west on County Road 84 about 1.75 miles. Go south onto 172nd Avenue. Sheepberry Fen is 1 mile south on the west side of 172nd Avenue. Look for the preserve sign.**



8 Moe Woods

Moe Woods, a parcel of 312 acres, represents a significant remnant of a mesic hardwood forest surrounded by a prairie. American basswood is the dominant tree species, along with American elm, bur oak and ironwood. Ferns, wild leeks, red baneberry and yellow lady's slipper can be found. **From County 37 turn onto 330th Street. Travel south for 0.25 mile, then west for about a half mile after it bends. Moe Woods is on the south side of the road, across from Lake Johanna Esker. Look for the small State Wildlife Management Area sign. Park here, on the side of the township road, unless you have a high-suspension vehicle.**



7 Lake Johanna Esker

This 807-acre preserve is named for its esker, a 70-foot high serpentine ridge of sand and gravel deposited by a stream that flowed below the ice of a retreating glacier. The landscape includes dry sand-gravel prairie, marsh and basswood-bur oak forest. **From County 37 turn onto 330th Street. Travel south for**



9 Leif Mountains

Leif Mountains features tallgrass prairie, rolling hills and prairie pothole wetlands. The site harbors four plant species listed as threatened by the state of Minnesota. The 800 acre preserve provides habitat for grassland nesting birds, waterfowl and shorebirds. **From County Road 1 turn west onto 273rd Avenue NW. Leif Mountain is located on the north side of the road. Look for the preserve sign.**



Bike Trails

10 Glacial Lakes State Trail

Hit the trail and have fun experiencing our rolling hills, prairie, wetlands and scenic lake country! This 22-mile Glacial Lakes State Trail starts at the Willmar Civic Center and ends near Hawick. The trail connects to several Willmar Lakes Area trails providing multiple options for riding fun. Some of our favorite connected routes include the Eagle Lake Trail, Robbins Island Trails and the beautiful road route around Green Lake. The towns along the trails provide access points, rest stops and other services to trail users. The many lakes and trails in the Willmar Lakes Area make this area a popular tourist destination. www.willmarlakesarea.com



11 Central Lakes Trail

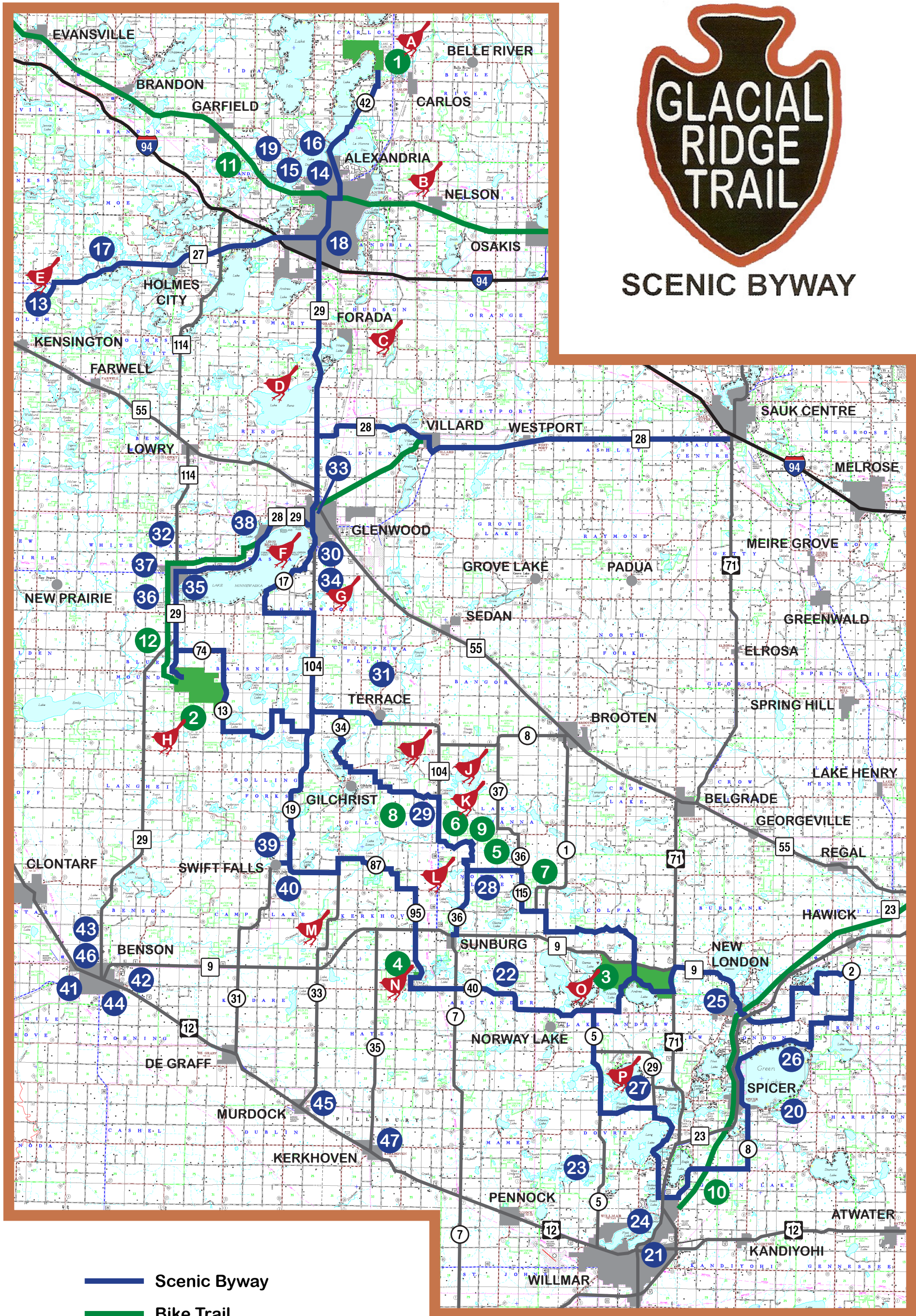
Engage in biking, hiking, skate boarding, in-line skating, walking and jogging on this 55 mile asphalt surface, which begins in Osakis and ends in Fergus Falls. www.centrallakestrail.com



12 Glacial Ridge Trail

Starting at Glacial Lakes State Park, north to Starbuck, then northeast to Glenwood and Villard, this 19 mile trail traverses miles of beautiful shoreland along Lakes Minnewaska, Amelia, Pelican and Villard.





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Douglas County

13 Kensington Runestone County Park

This 400 acre park is the homestead of Swedish farmer Olaf Ohman, finder of the Kensington Rune Stone. In the fall of 1898 he and his son noticed strange carvings on a large flat stone embedded in the roots of a tree they were grubbing. This stone became known as the Kensington Rune Stone. The discovery site, translation of the stone and the historic farmyard of the Ohman family are located inside the park. There are 12 miles of scenic trails winding through the lakes, woods and native prairie that make it a great place to take in the local wildlife, hike, run, cross country ski, snowshoe or mountain bike. The park has space to reserve for family gatherings and areas with fire rings and tables for picnics.

8755 County Road 103 SW, Kensington, MN 56343

320-762-2966

<http://www.co.douglas.mn.us/dc/parks.aspx>

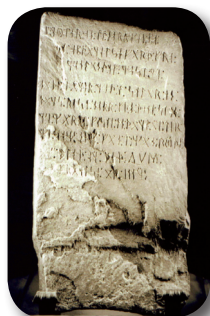


14 Runestone Museum

Take a journey through the long history of Douglas County from the early Native Americans, to the Norse explorers and early pioneer settlers. Very interesting exhibits are on display including the actual Runestone artifact, a 40 foot replica of a Viking Snorri ship, wildlife exhibits, period displays and much more! Also at the museum, discover what life was like in the 1800s at Fort Alexandria, a replica of the fort early settlers built in 1862 which features a log church, general store, log cabin, schoolhouse and a large agricultural building with many exhibits.

206 Broadway Street, Alexandria, MN 56308

320-763-3160 www.runestonemuseum.org



15 Legacy of the Lakes Museum

Lake fun in Minnesota has a long history reaching back nearly a century and a half, including handcrafted wood boats, grand hotels and fishing clubs. The Maritime Museum features dozens of exhibits, including history of resorts and grand hotels, Minnesota boat builders, history of Chris-Craft and Larson Boat Works, antique boats and launches, classic fiberglass boats, fishing gallery, kids' corner and more! There are also beautiful gardens at the museum



that host numerous events and live music in the summer.

205 3rd Avenue W, Alexandria, MN 56308

320-759-1114

www.minnesotalakesmaritimemuseum.org

16 Big Ole

Get your picture taken with a 28 foot tall Viking! Big Ole is a 4 ton Viking statue that was built in 1965 for the New York World's Fair. He commemorates the discovery of the Runestone as his shield reads, "Alexandria, Birthplace of America."



Big Ole is located in Alexandria just outside of the Runestone Museum at the trailhead of the Central Lakes Trail.

17 Andes Tower Hills

Who would expect a ski hill in the middle of farm country? More than a million skiers have enjoyed the slopes at Tower Hill in its over 30 year history. Enjoy the year round trails in addition to the ski hill. Downhill or cross-country skiing, snowboarding and tubing make up the winter fun at Andes. In the summer enjoy the beautiful trails on mountain bike, horseback, or simply hiking and running.

4505 Andes Road SW, Kensington, MN 56343

320-965-2455 www.andestowerhills.com

18 Douglas County Historical Society

Located in the historic residence of Knute Nelson, a former Senator and MN Governor, the house still has many of the original furnishings. The research library houses extensive historical and genealogical resources and over 125 years worth of area newspapers. Visitors are welcome to take a guided tour of the premises.

1219 Nakomis Street, Alexandria, MN 56308

320-762-0382 www.dchsmn.org



19 Lake Brophy County Park

Lake Brophy Park is unique because it is accessible through the Central Lakes State Trail (bicycle in summer and snowmobile in winter) and also through waterways linking Lake Brophy to the Alexandria chain of lakes. The park has areas for hiking, walking, biking, sledding, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding and boating.

2001 Brophy Landing Road, Alexandria, MN 56308

320-762-2966 www.co.douglas.mn.us/dc/parks.aspx

Kandiyohi County

20 Green Lake Bible Camp Chapel

Perched on a hill overlooking Green Lake is the Norwegian-style stave church. Originally constructed in 1940 and remodeled in the 1990s, the church replicates historic stave churches of Norway. The structure is a popular wedding chapel and sightseeing stop.

9916 Lake Avenue S, Spicer, MN 56288
320-796-2181 www.gllm.org



21 Kandiyohi County Historical Society

The Kandiyohi County Historical Society is a complex of six buildings across from Foot Lake in Willmar, MN. This includes the Sperry House, a Victorian farmhouse built in 1893, the impressive Great Northern steam Engine #2523 and the research library that is housed in a Great Northern Depot.

www.kandiyohicountyhistory.com



22 Old Log Church

A log church was built on this site in 1868 by Norwegian settlers. A marker commemorating the cemetery was

erected in 1975. A replica of the church was built by volunteer labor in 1998 with local logs and materials. An original log granary was moved to the site in 2001 and serves as an interpretive center.

Norway Lake Lutheran Historical Association (NLLHA)

9601 195th Avenue NW, Penock, MN 56279

www.nllha.org/index.html



23 Guri Endreson Cabin

The Guri Endreson Cabin was built by Lars and Guri Endreson in 1858. The cabin and the Endreson family were a part of the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. The cabin is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For viewing, contact the Kandiyohi County Historical Society.

www.kandiyohicountyhistory.com



24 Robbins Island

Robbins Island is surrounded by Willmar Lake and Foot Lake. At 55 acres, it is Willmar's largest park. The island has oak forested hills, winding trails, a sandy swimming beach with lifeguards, a Disc Golf course and shelters set in scenic areas. Public boat access is available for both Willmar and Foot Lakes, and peninsulas provide ample shoreline for fishing. Many events are held on the island each year.

Located between Foot and Willmar Lakes

North Highway 71, Willmar, MN 56201

www.willmarlakesarea.com

25 Veteran's Memorial Park

Veteran's Memorial Park sits on the site of the long-gone flour mill and overlooks the Crow River dam and mill site. The five granite monuments feature the early history of New London, the origins of the Crow River dam and mill, the fish hatchery and the Robert Ihlang American Legion Post 537, which funded the park. The largest monument has emblems of the different branches of the U.S. Military, in honor of their service to our country. This park was completed and dedicated in 2013.

60 Main Street South, New London, MN 56273

26 Green Lake

The crystal clear water of Green Lake provides a dazzling backdrop for the community of Spicer. The lake is over 5,400 acres. Spicer is a popular vacation spot offering a bounty of recreational activities.

Many festivals and events happen here throughout the year. Green Lake County Park is a beautiful campground located on the northeast side of Green Lake.

www.spicermn.com



27 Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center

PWELC provides a beautiful 500 acre outdoor classroom of rolling hills, prairie and wetlands. Activities include environmental education, outdoor recreation, self-guided interpretive walks and hiking/cross-country ski trails. The Westby Observatory and a renovated barn are popular for meetings, receptions, reunions and retreats.

12718 10th Street NE, Spicer, MN 56288 320-354-5894

www.prairiewoodselc.org

28 Threshing Rig Alley

This picturesque scene on the trail has large hills and boulders that serve as pedestals for these relic threshing machines from an earlier era.



Pope County

29 Fort Lake Johanna

Fort Lake Johanna Roadside Park provides a perfect departure point for a hike through the Nature Conservancy's Ordway Prairie. Fort Lake Johanna was built in 1863 in response to the Sioux Uprising the previous summer. When pioneer farmer, Urjans Iverson, returned to his claim in 1865 he used logs from the abandoned fort to build his home near the West Lake Johanna Church.

31039 State Highway 104 (near Terrace, MN)



30 Pope County Museum

Organized in 1931 to collect and preserve Pope County history, the museum includes a genealogy library, 11,000 square feet of exhibit galleries, five historic buildings and displays of agricultural and industrial equipment. A unique collection of Native American arts and crafts is a highlight of the museum tour. Pope County has 11 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

809 S Lakeshore Drive, Glenwood, MN 56334

320-634-3293 pcmuseum@wisper-wireless.com

31 Terrace Mill & Stone Arch Bridge

Terrace Mill and the Stone Arch Bridge are the picture of pastoral tranquility in downtown Terrace. The mill once produced flour and feed for area residents, then furnishings for churches throughout North America. Now a cultural center, the Terrace Mill Foundation hosts a number of arts events each year, most notably the Fall Fiddlers' Contest.

27165 Old Mill Pond Road, Terrace, MN 56334

320-278-3728 www.terracemill.org



32 Indherred Lutheran Church

Country church spires punctuate the prairie skyline. Indherred Church has been a Pope County landmark since 1872. The active congregation have been great stewards of this grand structure.

19119 Highway 114, Starbuck, MN 56244 320-239-2635



33 Mount Lookout

This scenic overlook and wayside rest on Highway 55 in Glenwood offers spectacular views of the city and Lake Minnewaska. The dressed granite retaining walls were built in 1938 by the National Youth Administration. A geological marker describes the glacial action that sculpted the terrain on the Glacial Ridge Trail Scenic Byway.

34 Barsness Park & Lake Minnewaska Recreational Area

Barsness Park consists of approximately 190 acres with nearly 4 miles of trails through hills and wooded areas. The park has an abundance of streams, wild flowers, birds and animals. The Barsness Park recreational area features overnight and seasonal camping facilities with full hook-ups and tent sites. Other amenities include: a bathhouse, restrooms, a dump station, playgrounds, picnic areas and building rentals. The recreational area also features: cross-country ski/snowshoe trails, soccer/baseball/softball fields, a Frisbee golf course, horseshoe pits, sand volleyball courts and a skateboard park.

1022 State Highway 104, Glenwood, MN 56334

320-634-5433

35 Starbuck Marina & Hobo Park

Many people call this "home" all summer long, as residents of Hobo Park on the shores of beautiful Lake Minnewaska in Starbuck. The park has 102 RV sites, tenting sites, restrooms, dump station, picnic shelter, playground and outside shower for swimmers. The marina has 174 boat slips, 4 sailboat slips and two wide public boat launches with plenty of parking. It is located within easy walking distance of Lakeshore Park and Starbuck Beach. **320-239-2336**

36 BeachSide RV Park

This brand new RV Park across from Starbuck Beach is in the development phase and will be open for business in late summer 2017. It will have over 100 RV campsites and plenty of room to park your vehicles and boats. With easy access to the beach, boat launches, bar/restaurants and city park, this promises to be a popular three season destination.

Located in Starbuck 320-424-2754

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37 Holly Skogen

This two acre wooded park has several springs, stone-lined paths, bridges and many unusual rocks, one of which is a Viking mooring rock. See three stone artworks done by renowned artist Phillip Rickey, including the *Thinking Rock*. Trolls and gnomes welcome visitors to a little bit of Valhalla on earth.

Located on E 6th Street and Holly Ridge Drive in Starbuck



38 Indian Mounds Park

Legend has it that Princess Minnewaska is buried here beside Chief White Bear, who captured Minnewaska and later won her love and her hand as his wife.

Located in Long Beach, MN (near Glenwood)

Swift County

39 Swift Falls Village

Swift Falls Village was founded in 1866 by Swedish immigrant J.M. Danelz. It gets its name from the series of waterfalls on the Chippewa river running through the area. In the 1870s, Mr. Danelz built a flour mill in the village, using the river to power the mill. Another former resident, Earl B. Olson, founder of the Jennie-O turkey store, raised his first turkeys in the Swift Falls area.

40 Swift Falls County Park

Located on the banks of the Chippewa river, Swift Falls Park provides a beautiful place to relax along the byway. With numerous tenting sites and several sites equipped with water and electric hook ups, Swift Falls Park is a great place to stay and explore this beautiful region. Spend a day fishing or hiking in the area, or use its central location to plan day trips up and down the byway. The park also features 6 picnic shelters and a newly renovated playground.

Swift Falls Park is owned by Swift County, and reservations can be made by calling 320-842-5920.



41 Swift County Museum

Located in Benson and managed by the Swift County Historical Society. Features numerous exhibits pertaining to Swift County history. Visitors to the museum have praised its genealogy library as one of the best. Open year round, Tuesday through Saturday.

2135 Minnesota Avenue, Benson, MN 56215
swiftmuseum@embarqmail.com
www.swift-museum.org

42 Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church

Located in Benson. On the National Register of Historic Places, it was designed by E. L. Masqueray, the same architect who designed the St. Paul Cathedral. Built in 1917, the congregation recently added on the "Gathering Place" making the church handicap accessible.

508 13th Street N, Benson, MN 56215

43 Swift County Courthouse

The Swift County Courthouse was completed and dedicated in 1898. Total cost of construction was \$35,000. Over the years the building has been renovated several times. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

301 14th Street N, Benson, MN 56215



44 Christ Episcopal Church

Built in Benson in 1879, Christ Episcopal Church is on the National Register of Historic Places. The congregation was organized with the consent of Bishop H. B. Whipple in 1876 who visited the church and confirmed its children in 1879.

310 13th Street S, Benson, MN 56215



46 Sabin House

Located in Murdock, Sabin House (Murdock House) was the home of the founder of Murdock, Samuel Sabin Murdock. The house is on the National Register of Historic Places and has been restored by the community.

Clara Avenue, Murdock, MN 56271



47 Ambush Park

Located on the west edge of Benson. The park offers modern camping facilities, hiking trails, picnic shelters, bathrooms, miniature golf, historic school house, canoe landing, wildlife habitat and native plant exhibits. Adjacent to the park is the new Benson swimming pool with diving, lap swimming, water slide and kids' play area. Next to the pool is Benson's 18 hole championship golf course.

2400 Atlantic Ave, Benson, MN 56215 320-843-4775



48 Pillsbury Park

Located in Kerkhoven, the park offers outdoor swimming pool, picnic shelter and facilities, playground equipment, restrooms and open space.

6th Street, Kerkhoven, MN 56252 320-264-2222

Thank You

The Glacial Ridge Development Association thanks the County Board of Commissioners in Douglas, Kandiyohi, Pope and Swift Counties and the Sauk Center Visitors Bureau, Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau and Explore Alexandria Tourism for their continued and generous support for the activities of the Glacial Ridge Trail Scenic Byway.

Explore Alexandria Tourism

324 Broadway Street Suite 101
Alexandria, MN 56308
1-800-245-2539
www.ExploreAlex.com
info@ExploreAlex.com

Benson Chamber of Commerce

1228 Atlantic Ave
Benson, MN 56215
320-843-3618
www.bensonareachamber.com
info@bensonareachamber.com

Glenwood Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

7 First Street NW
Glenwood, MN 56334
320-634-3636
www.GlenwoodLakesArea.org
chamber@GlenwoodLakesArea.org

Sauk Center Convention & Visitors Bureau

1220 Main Street S
Sauk Center, MN 56378
320-352-5201
www.visitsaukcentre.com
info@visitsaukcentre.com

Starbuck Chamber of Commerce

400 N. Main Street
Starbuck, MN 56381
320-239-4220
www.starbuckmn.org

Willmar Lakes Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

2104 East Highway 12
Willmar, MN 56201
1-800-845-8747
www.willmarlakesarea.com
info@willmarlakesarea.com

Cover photo courtesy Sue Chaplin
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www.glacialridgebyway.com