

# BANNING STATE PARK

## VISITOR FAVORITES

- Canoeing and kayaking
- Hiking along the Kettle River
- Wolf Creek Falls
- The sandstone quarry
- Kettle River fishing
- The "Kettles"
- Log Creek arches
- Spring flowers and Fall colors
- The Bat Cave— for information and location of bat cave (Robinson Ice Cave) please contact park staff.

## FACILITIES

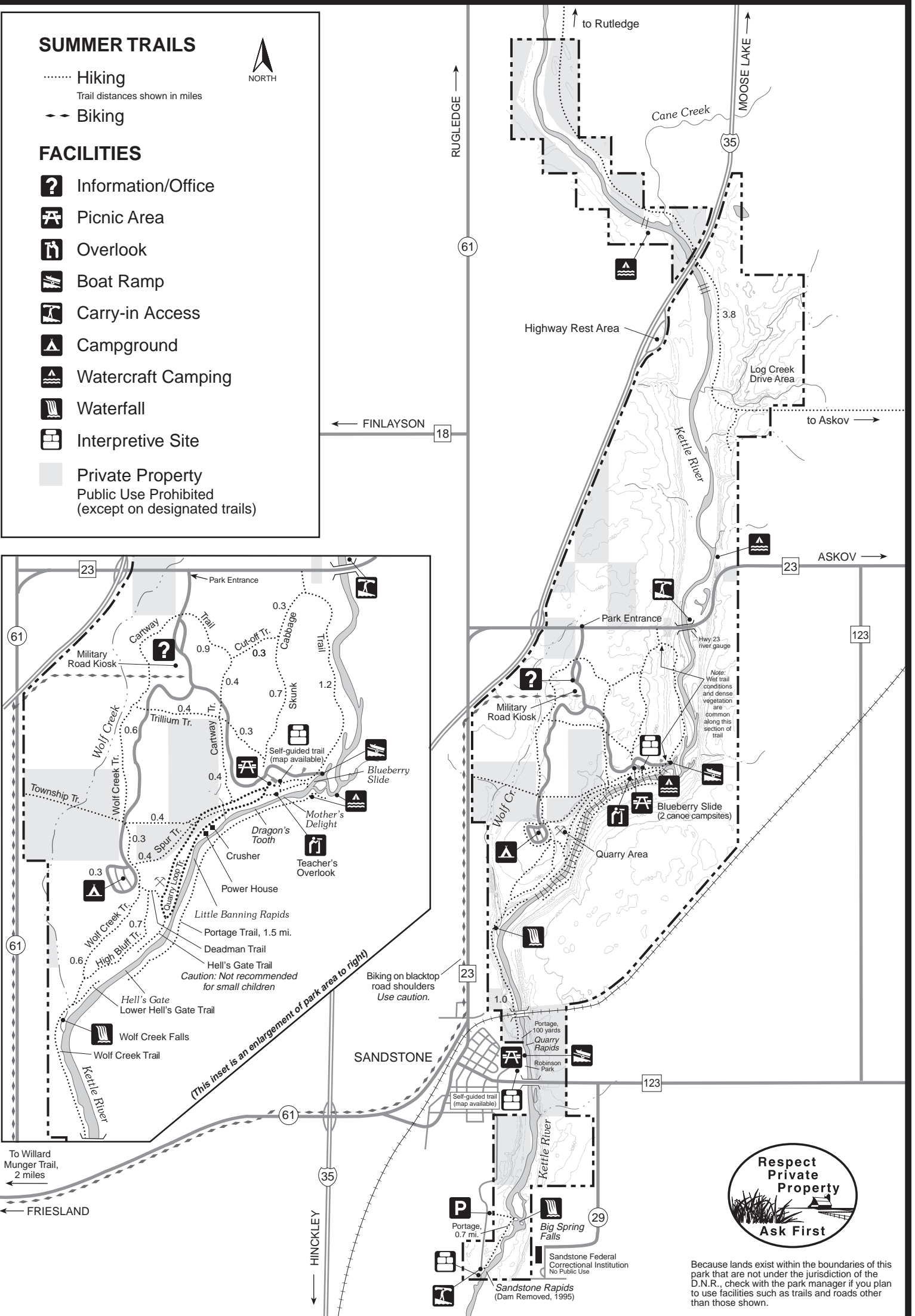
- 33 semi-modern campsites
- 1 Camper Cabin
- 4 canoe campsites
- 7 picnic sites with a total of 15 tables
- 3 small boat landings
- 14 miles of hiking trail
- 11 miles of skiing trail
- 5 miles of snowmobile trail

### LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

The DNR has mapped the state showing federal, state and county lands with their recreational facilities. Public Recreation Information Maps (PRIM) are available for purchase from the DNR gift shop, DNR regional offices, Minnesota state parks and major sporting and map stores.

Check it out - you'll be glad you did!

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Because lands exist within the boundaries of this park that are not under the jurisdiction of the D.N.R., check with the park manager if you plan to use facilities such as trails and roads other than those shown.



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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Banning State Park  
P.O. Box 643  
Sandstone, MN 55072  
(320) 245-2668

Department of Natural Resources  
Information Center  
500 Lafayette Road  
St. Paul, MN 55155-4040

(651) 296-6157 (Metro Area)  
1-888-646-6367 (MN Toll Free)

TDD (Telecommunications  
Device for Deaf)  
(651) 296-5484 (Metro Area)  
1-800-657-3929 (MN Toll Free)

DNR Web Site: [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)

**BANNING STATE PARK** is located in Pine County, four miles north of the city of Sandstone. The park entrance is off I-35 and Minnesota Highway 23. State highway map index: L-12.

The park was established by an act of the Minnesota State Legislature in 1963 with a statutory boundary of 5,246 acres. A 1971 expansion increased the park size to 5,877 acres. In 1986, the park boundary was ex-

panded to include the Log Creek Drive area, with 360 acres increasing the park size to 6,237 acres.

The park constitutes land adjacent to a ten-mile stretch of the Kettle River, a state Wild and Scenic River. The park's watersheds include the Kettle River, Wolf Creek, Log Creek, six streams, and three springs.

The Banning Rapids, a highly-scenic portion of the Kettle River, is comprised of five spectacular segments: Blueberry Slide, Mother's Delight, Dragon's Tooth, Little Banning, and finally, Hell's Gate. These rapids provide one of the state's most challenging river experiences for canoeing and kayaking. Other features which attract people from throughout the state include park trails, camping, picnicking, and an excellent site for natural history study.

**WILDLIFE:** One hundred and eighty-four species of birds inhabit or visit Banning State Park annually. Also, 17 species of reptiles and amphibians and 34 species of mammals live in the park. Common species include: white-tailed deer, black bear, coyote, fox, raccoon, beaver, red and grey squirrels, snowshoe hare, and ruffed grouse.

**TOPOGRAPHY:** One of the most dominant characteristics of the park is the shallowness of the soil over bedrock. The Kettle River extends the entire length of the park, exposing bedrock for much of the distance. In other large areas, boulders are exposed or lie just below the surface.

In the northern section, the river flows through a relatively shallow and narrow valley cut into glacial drift. Within a few miles, the river valley narrows to a gorge worn by the river through Precambrian sandstone to a depth of 100 feet. At "Hell's Gate," the river flows through sheer cliffs which rise to 40 feet above the water. Below the rapids, the valley once again begins to broaden. Beyond the valley walls, the topography is generally a level to gently-rolling glacial till plain.

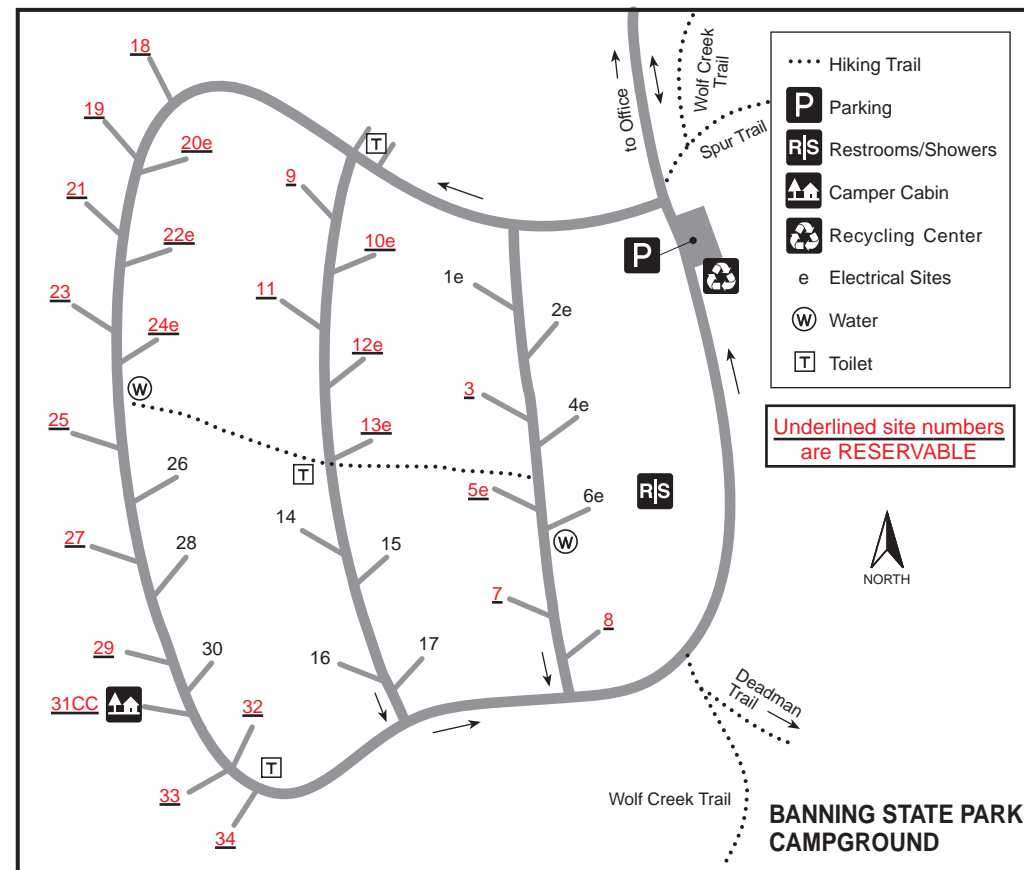
Original vegetation communities were composed primarily of Norway and white pine interspersed with aspen and birch. Today, as a result of logging and forest fires, vegetation communities are dominated by aspen and birch. Only remnant stands of pine remain.

**HISTORY:** Historic sites in the park include the former Banning townsite and associated sandstone quarries. During the early 1890s, the quarry was developed along the Kettle River near the area now known as "Hell's Gate". The durable strength and warm pink color of this sandstone made it very popular for building construction. In 1882, the quarrying company employed 500 stonecutters. On September 1, 1894, the great Hinckley forest fire swept through the area inflicting heavy financial losses on the company and on the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad line serving it.

Business resumed after the fire and by 1896, a village was platted on the fields above the quarry. This village was named in honor of William L. Banning, president of the St. Paul and Duluth Railroad at the time its main line was completed between the two cities. The village grew and, shortly after the turn of the century, was incorporated with a population of about 300. By this time, however, contractors were beginning to use structural steel for building construction and, by 1905, all work had ceased in the quarry. By 1908, the population of the town had declined to 150. Fires continued to plague the village and, by 1912, Banning virtually ceased to exist. Today, all that remains of the site are weathered concrete ruins in the second-growth forest along the river bank. Some of the old quarry processing buildings remain, along with some stone sliceways and long stretches of stone fragments along the river.

### SO EVERYONE CAN ENJOY THE PARK...

- The park belongs to all Minnesotans. Please treat it with respect and help us to protect it by following the rules.
- The park is open year-round. On a daily basis, the park gate is closed from 10 P.M.



- to 8 A.M. the following morning except to registered campers.
- Camp only in designated locations.
- The use of firearms, explosives, air guns, slingshots, traps, seines, nets, bows and arrows, and all other weapons is prohibited in state parks.
- Pets must be restrained on a leash no longer than six feet. Pets are not allowed in park buildings.
- Park in designated areas only.
- Motor bikes and other licensed vehicles are allowed only on park roads, not on trails.
- Enjoy park wildlife and plants but please respect them. Do not pick or dig up plants, disturb or feed animals, or scavenge dead wood.
- Build fires only in designated locations—fire rings or fireplaces. Wood is available for purchase from park staff. Portable stoves or grills are permitted.

- Daily or annual permits are required for all vehicles entering a state park. They may be purchased at the park headquarters or the Information Center in St. Paul (see "FOR MORE INFORMATION" to left).

*This information is available in alternative format upon request.*

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DNR Maps