

# MILLE LACS KATHIO STATE PARK

## FACILITIES AND FEATURES

- 20 electric campsites.
- 2 accessible electric campsites.
- 19 semi-modern campsites.
- 26 rustic campsites (showers available, 1.5 mile drive).
- 3 semi-modern walk-in campsites.
- 4 backpack sites.
- 5 camper cabins w/ electricity and heat.
- 10 rustic horse campsites (no showers).
- Primitive group camp w/ hand pump and vault toilets (60 capacity, no showers)
- Bundled firewood, ice, pop.
- Picnic grounds.
- Modern playground.
- Swimming beach.
- Canoe, kayak, and rowboat rental.
- Cross-country ski and snowshoe rental.
- 2 boat/ canoe water accesses (Rum River, Shakopee Lake).
- 35 miles of hiking trail.
- 1 mile of self-guided trail.
- 22 miles of horseback trail.
- 30 kilometers of cross-country ski trail.
- 19 miles of snowmobile trail.
- Modern trail center/ winter chalet.
- Year-round visitor center, interpretive center.
- 100-foot observation tower (available in summer only).

## SUMMER TRAILS

- ..... Hiking
- Hiking Club
- Horseback/Hiking
- Interpretive
- ⊙ Trail Junctions

## FACILITIES

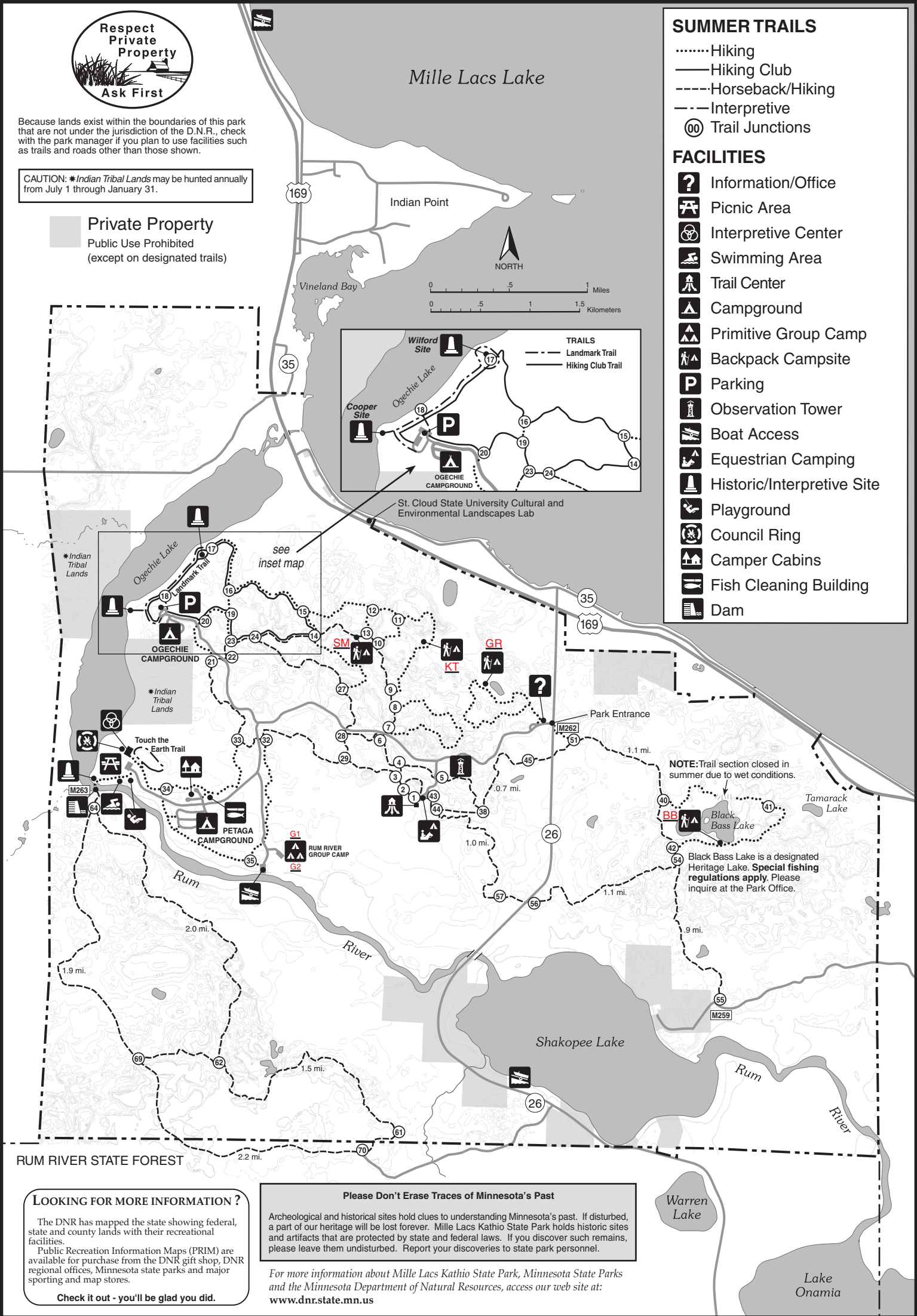
- ? Information/Office
- ⛶ Picnic Area
- ⓘ Interpretive Center
- 🏊 Swimming Area
- ⛶ Trail Center
- ⛶ Campground
- ⛶ Primitive Group Camp
- ⛶ Backpack Campsite
- P Parking
- 🏰 Observation Tower
- 🚤 Boat Access
- 🐎 Equestrian Camping
- 🏰 Historic/Interpretive Site
- 🎡 Playground
- 🏠 Council Ring
- 🏠 Camper Cabins
- 🚰 Fish Cleaning Building
- 🏰 Dam



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.

CAUTION: \*Indian Tribal Lands may be hunted annually from July 1 through January 31.

**Private Property**  
Public Use Prohibited  
(except on designated trails)



**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.**

**Please Don't Erase Traces of Minnesota's Past**

Archeological and historical sites hold clues to understanding Minnesota's past. If disturbed, a part of our heritage will be lost forever. Mille Lacs Kathio State Park holds historic sites and artifacts that are protected by state and federal laws. If you discover such remains, please leave them undisturbed. Report your discoveries to state park personnel.

For more information about Mille Lacs Kathio State Park, Minnesota State Parks and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, access our web site at: [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us)





# MILLE LACS KATHIO STATE PARK

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
 Mille Lacs Kathio State Park  
 15066 Kathio State Park Road  
 Onamia, MN 56359-9534  
 (320) 532-3523

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 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)  
 State Parks page: [www.mnstateparks.info](http://www.mnstateparks.info)

**MILLE LACS KATHIO STATE PARK** is approximately 80 miles north of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. The main park entrance is one mile off U.S. Highway 169 on County Road 26. Highway map index: 1-12. (Note: The map index for the Mille Lacs Wildlife Area is 1-13).

Mille Lacs Kathio, over 10,000 acres in size, is the fourth largest state park in Minnesota.

What's in a name? In this case, plenty of history. Mille Lacs, a French term used by early explorers and traders,

means "1,000 lakes," and originally referred to the region. The word Kathio has a more curious pedigree. French explorer Daniel Greysolon, Sieur duLhut (known today as Duluth), referred to the settlements here as "Izatyts," his phoneticism of a Dakota word. This word has also been recorded as Issatis, Isanti, and Santee. An error in transcribing Duluth's journal for the publication of a major history book resulted in the word "Kathio," apparently through the reading of the letters *Iz* as *K*, and *ys* as *hio*. Regardless, Izatyts, or Kathio, is the oldest village name preserved in the history of the state of Minnesota.

Mille Lacs Lake, on the northern border of the park, is the source of the Rum River, which flows through the park and eventually joins the Mississippi 146 miles downstream at Anoka. Within the park are two lakes, Ogechie and Shakopee, and the rolling hills support abundant wildlife.

For over 9,000 years people have lived in this area. The Dakota (Sioux) and later the Ojibwe (Chippewa) Indians recognized its natural wealth and made it one of their important settlements. Noted as the ancient homeland of the Mdewakanton Dakota, the historic homeland of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, and as a place of early European-American Indian contact, the park is a National Historic Landmark District.

**GEOLOGY:** The park's geological history is a story of immense natural forces at work over thousands of years.

The rolling hills were formed approximately 12,000 years ago when a lobe of the Wisconsin glacial advance stopped here.

As the glacier melted, it deposited gravel, rocks and boulders that it had accumulated in its grinding passage over the land from the north and east. The resulting land form is referred to as a terminal moraine.

The glacial debris partially blocked the land's natural drainage pattern and in effect became a huge dam, creating an extensive lake of meltwater—a lake even larger than present-day Mille Lacs. This ancient lake had a shoreline 15 feet higher than the present lake.

A long period of geological and vegetational succession followed. The Rum River cut its present channel. Ponds and small lakes drained away. Wave and ice action built up beach ridges. Drainage patterns and the shapes of lakes altered. Silt and vegetation filled many of the depressions. The present park—its soil, vegetation and wildlife—is the result of these thousands of years of constant natural progression.

**HISTORY:** Mille Lacs Kathio has a long history of human occupation and is one of the most archaeologically significant places in Minnesota. So far, 30 sites have been identified, covering over 9,000 years of habitation. One site, dating from 3,500 years ago, shows evidence of copper tool manufacture associated with the "Old Copper Tradition."

Hundreds of years before Europeans entered the region, people established permanent villages along the shores of Mille Lacs and the Rum River outlet lakes. The people of the greater Dakota nation who lived in this vicinity were known by the band name Mdewakanon, a reference to their living near Mdewakan, the *Spiritual*, or *Sacred*, Lake. (Mille Lacs)

The forests, lakes and streams of the area provided a variety of food sources, and the river offered transportation to the nearby prairies for additional dietary staples.

The first European to accurately record a visit to the region was Daniel Greysolon, Sieur duLhut (known today as Duluth). On July 2, 1679 Duluth planted the flag of France at the Rum River outlet of Mille Lacs, on the northern boundary of the park. In 1680 Father Louis Hennepin also visited the region on behalf of France's King Louis XIV. His book, *Description of Louisiana*, was published in 1683 and included his description of a six-month stay at Dakota villages in the area of the park.

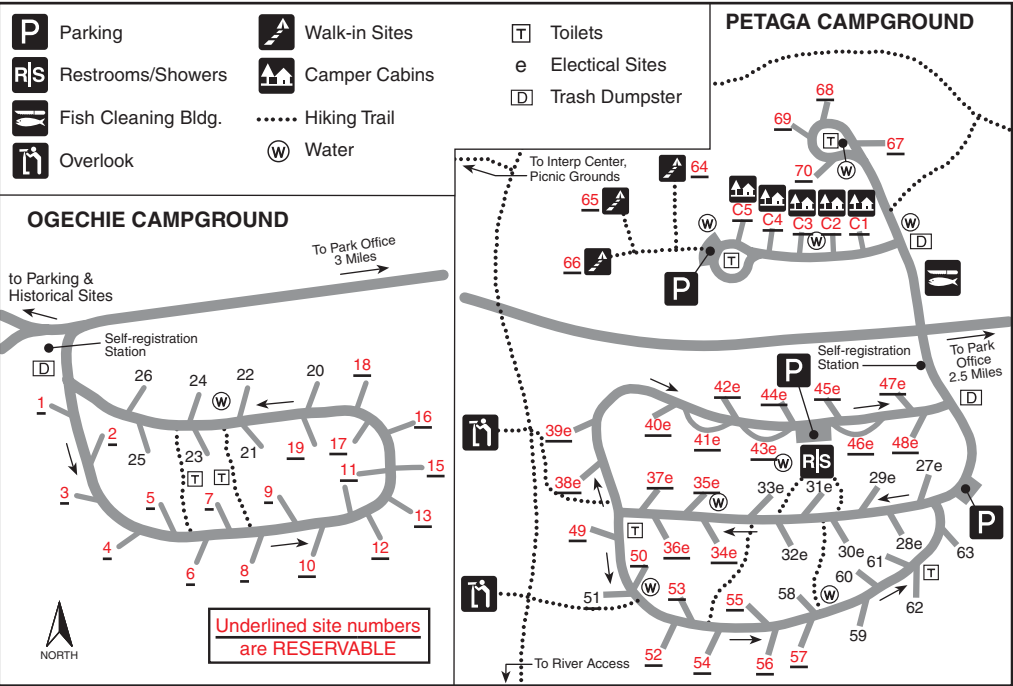
The 18th century increasingly became a time of change. By now many bands of Dakota had relocated on the prairies, lakes and rivers of what is now southern Minnesota. At the same time, Ojibwe people were entering the region from the east. Ojibwe oral tradition, recorded by historian William Warren, tells of a massive, three-day "Battle of Kathio" in which the victorious Ojibwe forever drove the Dakota from the area. Archaeologists have not found evidence to support this, and suggest that although many small skirmishes may have occurred, Dakota migration was well under way when the Ojibwe entered the area.

The Ojibwe brought their own rich cultural tradition with them from the east and settled along the shore of Mille Lacs. Ogechie Lake and other natural areas thus continued to supply the needs of yet another group of people, providing wild rice, fish, waterfowl and other foods. The Ojibwe continue to live in the Mille Lacs region today.

In the 1850s, loggers came to the area. Within 50 years, the vast forest of white and red (Norway) pine had been cut and floated down the Rum or across Lake Mille Lacs to sawmills. Today the park is primarily a second-growth forest of aspen, birch, maple, oak, and other northern hardwoods. A few isolated remnant stands of conifers provide diversity to the landscape and a hint of what the forest looked like a century ago.

Much of the park's natural and cultural history is presented at the Interpretive Center in the picnic area. Further information on Ojibwe history and culture is provided at the Mille Lacs Indian Museum north of the park on U.S. Highway 169.

**WILDLIFE:** The varied habitats of Mille Lacs Kathio provide homes and food sources for a variety of



wildlife. Hawks, osprey, owls and eagles are common. Over 200 species of birds have been observed in the park. A bird checklist is available at the Park Office or Interpretive Center. White-tailed deer are often seen browsing at the forest edge. Tracks of raccoon, porcupine, otter, pine marten and fisher can be seen in the snow or soft earth.

**FISHING:** Fishing opportunities are available in the Rum River and in Ogechie, Shakopee, Black Bass and Mille Lacs lakes. In these waters you will find northern pike, walleye, bass and panfish. Black Bass Lake is a designated Heritage Lake. Special fishing regulations apply. Please inquire at the Park Office.

**INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM:** Visitors should check bulletin boards at park headquarters, interpretive center, campgrounds and picnic grounds for scheduled activities, film, and slide programs. A naturalist conducts organized walks and other activities. School groups and others are encouraged to arrange special visits and programs with the park naturalist.

**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 10:00 P.M. to 8:00 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).

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 This information is available in alternative format upon request.

"Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is available to all individuals regardless of race, color, creed or religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age or disability. Discrimination inquiries should be sent to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4031; or the Equal Opportunity Office, Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240