

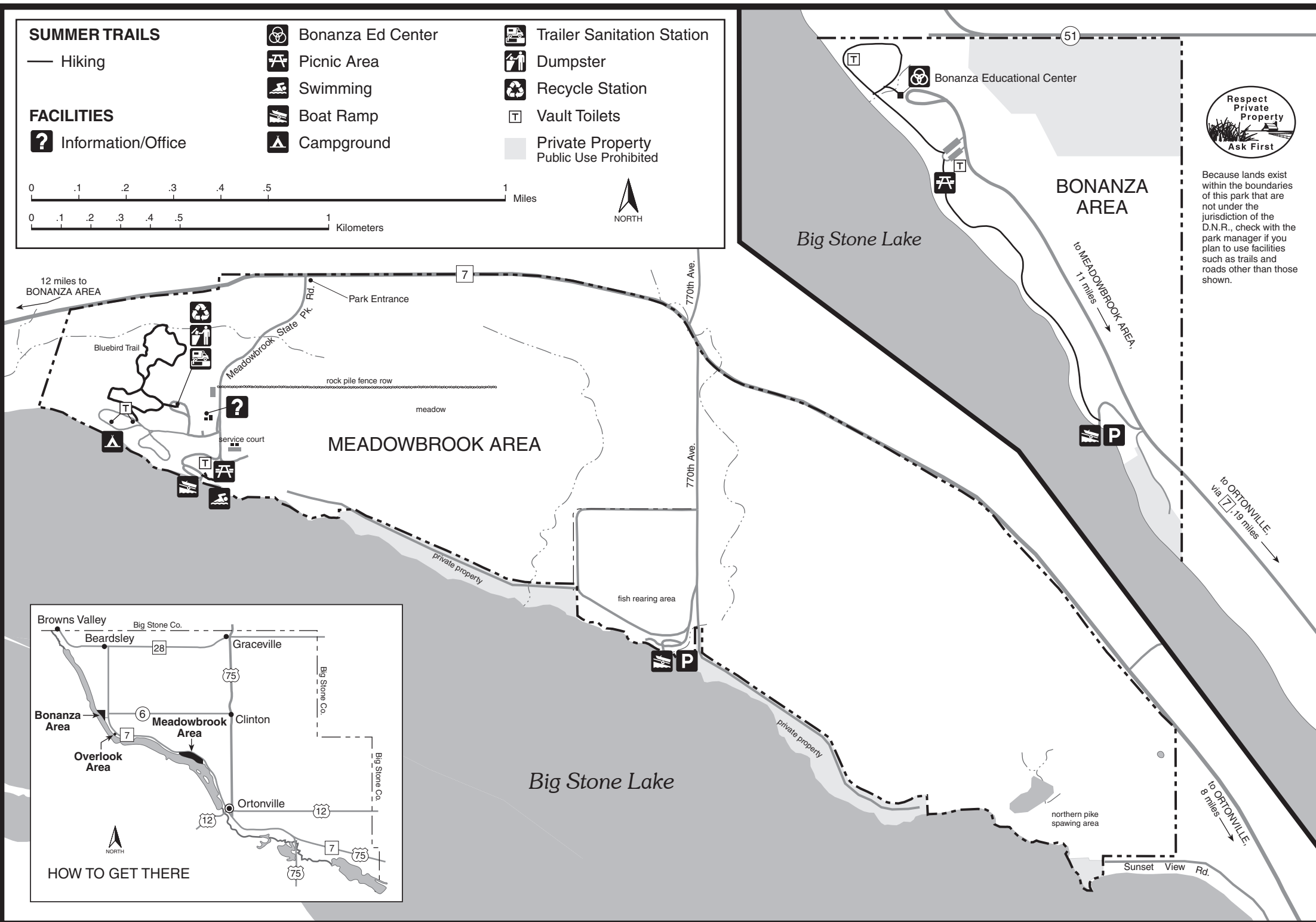
# BIG STONE LAKE STATE PARK

## FACILITIES AND FEATURES

- 37 semi-modern campsites, 10 with electricity
- Showers & flush toilets
- 15 picnic sites
- Swimming beach
- 3 boat ramps
- 2 miles of hiking trail
- Trailer dump station
- Public telephone

## VISITOR FAVORITES

- Hiking the Bluebird Trail
- Swimming
- Picnicking
- Fishing for walleye
- Camping by the lake
- Visiting the Bonanza Area Scientific & Natural Area (SNA)





# BIG STONE LAKE STATE PARK

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
 Big Stone Lake State Park  
 35889 Meadowbrook State Park Road  
 Ortonville MN 56278-9618  
 (320) 839-3663

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)

[mndnr.gov/parks](http://mndnr.gov/parks)

**Big Stone Lake State Park** is located on the shores of Big Stone Lake, a border lake between Minnesota and South Dakota and the source of the Minnesota River. Its quiet, restful setting offers visitors a chance to get away from it all and enjoy a few peaceful moments by the lakeside.

Established in 1961, the park consists of three distinct units: the *Meadowbrook Area*,

the *Overlook Area*, and the *Bonanza Area*. Eight miles northwest of Ortonville on Highway 7, the Meadowbrook Area is the largest of the three. Once farmland, this area is slowly being restored to prairie, woodland and wet-meadow communities.

The Overlook Area is a further ten miles northwest of Meadowbrook. This small rest stop offers a magnificent view of Big Stone Lake and the surrounding landscapes.

Another mile northwest past Overlook is the Bonanza Area. Its name reveals its character: the Bonanza Area is a wealth of wooded hillsides and tallgrass prairie. Remnants of native glacial-till prairie are found here, and for this reason part of Bonanza is designated as a state Scientific and Natural Area.

**Archeology:** Long ago, this area was the south end of glacial Lake Agassiz, and most if not all of this landscape was once submerged. Hidden in stone are the fossil remains of shark’s teeth and skeletons. Imprints of snails, clams, and other inhabitants of the sea have been found in fields that are now many feet above the level of Big Stone Lake. And yet scattered bison skulls and bones are found buried in soils not half a mile away. Humans, too, have lived in this area since the last glaciers receded; the Browns Valley Man found in 1934 is believed to be over 12,000 years old.

**History:** When Europeans first arrived in southwestern Minnesota it was inhabited by the Dakota, whose villages spread along the banks of the Minnesota River Valley. Evidence of Dakota campsites have been found in and around the park. Early European fur traders also used Big Stone Lake as part of their north-south travel route. Travelers could journey to Hudson Bay via the Red River, or to the Gulf of Mexico via the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. A short portage across the continental divide between Lake Traverse and Big Stone Lake was the only interruption. In the early 20th century Ortonville

became a popular tourist destination. In the summertime visitors flocked to Big Stone Lake to enjoy the area’s resorts and boat cruises.

**WILDLIFE:** The quiet and patient visitor will be well rewarded by the sight of various wildlife in the park. White-tailed deer are common, as well as raccoon, ground squirrels, meadowlarks, sedge wrens, and bluebirds. Less commonly-seen wildlife include red fox, coyote, weasel, wild turkey, and red-tailed hawk. Colorful butterflies can be seen among the prairie wildflowers, and crystalline-like spider webs covered in dew sparkle in the morning sun.

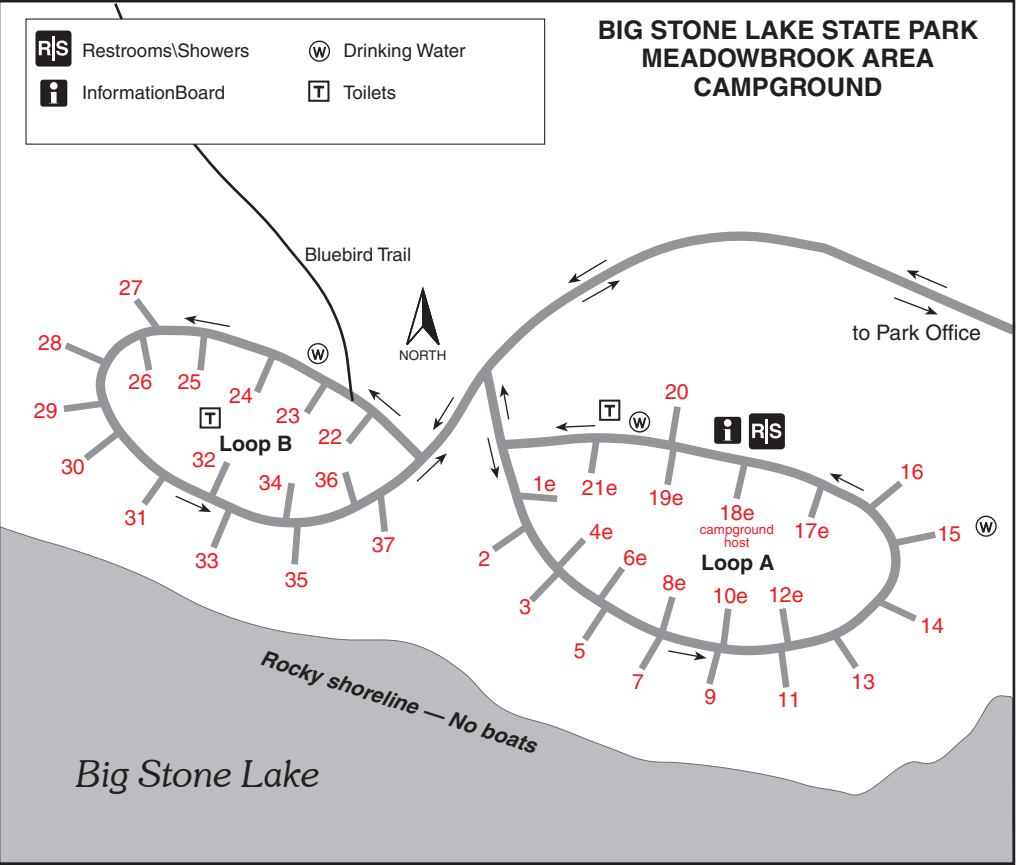
**Facilities:** Fishing is one of the most popular activities of park visitors. Big Stone Lake, besides being one of the best walleye lakes in the state, also contains bluegills, northern pike, perch, and channel catfish. Visitors can use boat landings in both the Meadowbrook and Bonanza areas, and can fish from shore anywhere in the park.

The campground at Meadowbrook has 37 sites, ten of which are electric, and boasts a modern shower/bath building. Also at Meadowbrook are a swimming beach, picnic area and one-half mile of prairie trail. In winter visitors can snowshoe or ski across open meadows and woodland along two miles of trail.

The Hiking Club Trail is located at the Bonanza Area, taking visitors through wooded lakeshore and past the park’s little-known waterfall. The Bonanza Area also has a picnic area and an interpretive center operated by local school districts. Visits to the center can be arranged by contacting the park manager.

**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 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 location—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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