

Hastings Sand Coulee Scientific Natural Area

An evening hike through one of the DNR's newest SNA



Photo from Friends of the Mississippi River's (FMR) website

A panoramic view of the Sand Coulee, a dry barrens prairie remnant southeast of Hastings, Minnesota, that local landowners, Friends of the Mississippi River, and the DNR are restoring.

Where: Hastings Sand Coulee SNA in Hastings, MN

Date/Time: June 9th, 2011 from 6-8PM

Leaders: Karen Schik (Ecologist, FMR)
Tom Lewanski (Conservation Director for FMR)
Dave Crawford (MNNPS Member and "retired" DNR naturalist from Wild River SP)

Come join other MN NPS members on an evening hike into the new addition to Hastings Sand Coulee SNA. With recent land acquisitions Hastings Sand Coulee SNA will triple in size from 80 acres to 263 acres. Hastings Sand Coulee is a dry sand prairie that is located just beyond the southern edge of the City of Hastings. As the largest of a few sand gravel prairies left in Dakota County it is home to rare plants like small-leaved pussytoes, James' polanisia, and sea-beach needle grass.

Hastings Sand Coulee SNA is situated in a sandy ravine or coulee formed by a tributary stream to the Vermillion River. The stream cuts through a large expanse of Des Moines Lobe outwash deposit, which is generally characterized by sandy and gravelly soils. The steep slopes of the coulee offer the most topographic relief in the otherwise level agricultural landscape of this area. In addition to the dry prairie, the SNA contains areas of dry oak woodland that were once savanna.

This is a joint field trip with Friends of the Mississippi River, and will be limited to 15 MN NPS members.